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1 ARTICLES

2 **Subjective Well-Being and Political Participation:**
3 **A Comparison of Unemployed and Employed Youth**

4 **Jasmine Lorenzini**

5
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13 of long-term unemployed youth, their life dissatisfaction, fosters their participation in two
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18 unemployed youth.

19 **Keywords** Youth · Unemployment · Life satisfaction · Political participation
20

21 **1 Introduction**

22 Youth unemployment in Europe is growing and lasting longer. Thus, unemployment can
23 lead to youth long-term exclusion from the labor market. Yet, unemployed youth have not
24 become a highly visible group on the political stage. Unemployed youth are not taking the
25 streets to express their dissatisfaction with the lack of opportunities for youth to enter the
26 labor market and neither are they turning to political action to protest against unemploy-
27 ment rates that can be as high as 50 % among youth in southern Europe. In this context,
28 it is all the more important to understand how unemployment contributes to youth political
29 participation.

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30 Research has found that unemployment reduces life satisfaction (see Dolan et al. 2008
31 for a literature review) and that life dissatisfaction fosters youth potential for protest
32 activities (Marsh 1977; Barnes et al. 1979). However, this knowledge about the negative
33 impact of unemployment on subjective well-being has not been applied to the study of
34 unemployed youth political participation. Research in this field has found that unemployed
35 youth were more dissatisfied with politics (Bay and Blekesaune 2002; Bynner and Ashford
36 1994) and displayed more favorable attitudes toward radical political action and law-
37 lessness (Clark 1985; Breakwell 1986; Gaskell and Smith 1985). However, unemployed
38 and employed youth share similar degrees of political participation in voting (Banks and
39 Ullah 1987; Bynner and Ashford 1994) and the former are not more likely to vote for
40 extreme right or left political parties (Banks and Ullah 1987).

41 In this paper, I focus on voice-based political participation defined as forms of political
42 participation used to explicitly express an opinion or a preference (Teorell et al. 2007). More
43 specifically, I analyze protest and contacting activities. According to Verba et al. (1995),
44 protest and contacting activities permit the transmission of specific messages by groups with
45 fewer political resources. Through protest activities citizens transmit specific messages by
46 taking the streets and through contacting activities they do so by writing to elected bodies or
47 representatives. Thus, contacting and protest activities are forms of political participation
48 that unemployed youth could use to express discontent with their current situation.

49 I analyze the situation of long-term unemployed youth in Switzerland. Unlike Spain,
50 Greece, or Italy, Switzerland has a low youth unemployment rate of less than 10 %.
51 Nonetheless, Switzerland is an interesting case to analyze when studying the relationship
52 between unemployment and political participation, even more so when focusing on the role
53 of life satisfaction. Youth who are unemployed, in Switzerland, are confronted with a
54 strong social norm of work (Chabanet 2007), which reduces the unemployed persons'
55 subjective well-being (Stutzer and Lalive 2004). Moreover the effects of unemployment on
56 subjective well-being are stronger in Switzerland than in other contexts (Frey and Stutzer
57 2000). Thus, the Swiss context offers an interesting case for the study of the interplay
58 between the personal and the political consequences of youth long-term unemployment.

59 More specifically, I conduct this research on long-term unemployed and employed youth
60 living in one Swiss canton,¹ namely Geneva. The political context in Geneva is represen-
61 tative of the Swiss political context, characterized by political participation through direct
62 democratic tools, moderate public demonstrations, and signing petitions (Kriesi et al. 1995;
63 Kriesi 2008). Working, more specifically, on unemployed persons, della Porta (2008) found
64 that unemployed persons used both conventional and demonstrative protest forms of
65 political participation in Switzerland and Giugni (2008) showed that the Swiss political
66 context offered low to moderate opportunities for claim making related to unemployment.²
67 The major implication for my study is that I test the contribution of subjective well-being in
68 a context of intermediary to low mobilization of unemployed persons. Therefore, if any
69 effects of subjective well-being are evidenced in a context of low mobilization, it can be
70 expected that these effects will be stronger in contexts of higher mobilization.

71 This research contributes to the literature on subjective well-being and political par-
72 ticipation by showing the effects of life satisfaction on specific forms of political partici-
73 pation enacted by certain social groups. Contrary to Flavin and Keane (2012) who find that
74 life satisfaction does not contribute to protest activities, I find that life satisfaction fosters

1FL01 ¹ In the Swiss federal state, the term "canton" denotes the member states.

2FL01 ² Claim making is defined as "the expression of a political opinion by verbal or physical action in the public
2FL02 space" (Giugni 2008: 302).



75 unemployed youth protest activities. In addition, I find that life satisfaction hinders
76 employed youth contacting activities. The comparison of unemployed and employed youth
77 shows that the effects of subjective well-being on political participation vary across social
78 groups. Lastly, I test four causal mechanisms to explore the effects of subjective well-being
79 on political participation.

80 **2 Theoretical Framework**

81 2.1 Subjective Well-Being and Political Participation

82 A wide array of studies in economy and psychology has addressed life satisfaction. In this
83 literature, the authors have referred to life satisfaction and happiness as equivalent terms
84 that can be defined as “[denoting] the degree to which people judge the overall quality of
85 their life as a whole favourably” (Veenhoven 1988: 334). Moreover, Frey and Stutzer
86 considered life satisfaction the best empirical approximation to the concept of subjective
87 well-being (2010). These studies analyzed the role of social and personal factors in
88 explaining life satisfaction (see Dolan et al. 2008 for a literature review).

89 Although less research has been conducted on the links between life satisfaction and
90 politics, scholars working on political participation have shown a growing interest for
91 subjective well-being potential to explain democratic life. Several researchers have used
92 subjective well-being to explain political participation (Flavin and Keane 2012; Weitz-
93 Shapiro and Winters 2011; Barnes et al. 1979). Others have analyzed it as resulting from
94 political institutions and participation (Tavits 2008; Frey and Stutzer 2000; Dorn et al.
95 2008). I discuss both approaches and their contribution to the study of life satisfaction and
96 political participation.

97 In a precursory work on happiness, Veenhoven (1988) explained that happy people were
98 more satisfied with various aspects of their lives and in turn were more empathetic and
99 socially sensitive; they were less absorbed by personal problems. He then turned to the
100 consequences of happiness for democracy and discussed two potential outcomes. On one
101 hand, he discussed the idea that happy people withdrew from politics and that discontent
102 drove political participation. On the other hand, Veenhoven (1988) proposed that happy
103 people were more involved in the community, they felt more concerned by social and
104 political problems, and were less preoccupied with themselves.

105 Research has found empirical support for both arguments. Indeed, the effects of life
106 satisfaction vary across forms of political participation. Flavin and Keane (2012) found that
107 life satisfaction increased individual political participation with regard to voting and insti-
108 tutional forms of participation, but did not contribute (positively or negatively) to protest
109 activities. Yet Barnes et al. (1979) found that the influence of personal dissatisfaction on
110 protest varied across sub-groups of the population. Personal dissatisfaction, measured
111 through dissatisfaction with one’s life as a whole, contributed to youth protest potential.
112 Barnes et al. (1979) did not work on behaviors, they worked on protest potential measured
113 through approval of seven protest activities, including signing petitions, joining boycotts,
114 attending demonstrations, refusing to pay taxes or rent, joining wildcat strikes, occupying
115 buildings, and blocking traffic. Moreover, Marsh (1977) confirmed that the effects of life
116 dissatisfaction on protest potential were significant for certain age groups. He added that
117 variations also appeared among social classes and political affiliations: middle- and working-
118 class supporters of the left were more keen to protest when they were dissatisfied. Thus to
119 understand the effects of life satisfaction on forms of political participation other than voting,



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120 one needs to consider that life satisfaction may only influence the participation of certain
121 groups of the population. Here I propose to test this argument analyzing specific political
122 behaviors of long-term unemployed and employed youth. I will examine protest activities,
123 focusing on taking part in public demonstrations, as well as on contacting activities.

124 However, some works have contended that life satisfaction derived from political
125 participation and the specificities of political institutions. Tavits (2008) showed that in
126 European countries, being represented by candidates for whom one voted and living in a
127 country with low corruption rate increased individual happiness. Frey and Stutzer (2000)
128 studied the specificities of the Swiss direct democracy and showed that in cantons offering
129 more direct democratic rights, people tended to be happier. Yet, Dorn et al. (2008) showed
130 that these findings were no longer statistically significant when controlling for cultural
131 differences across the country.³ Weitz-Shapiro and Winters (2011) found empirical support
132 for the argument that life satisfaction affected political participation. They used three
133 alternative methods to test the direction of the link between voting and life satisfaction in
134 Latin America and found that life satisfaction caused political participation. Additionally,
135 Thoits and Hewitt (2001) analyzed engagement in volunteering depending on life satis-
136 faction. They found that life satisfaction supported civic engagement. In this study, Thoits
137 and Hewitt (2001) also discussed the direction of the causality and tested two alternative
138 hypotheses: that subjective well-being contributed to civic engagement, or that civic
139 engagement increased subjective well-being. They found support for a model of causality
140 running from subjective well-being to political participation.

141 Research on unemployed youth political participation has not analyzed their subjective
142 well-being. These studies focused on unemployed youth political attitudes (Clark 1985;
143 Breakwell 1986; Gaskell and Smith 1985) and their voting behaviors (Bynner and Ashford
144 1994; Banks and Ullah 1987) to understand whether unemployed youth were more dis-
145 satisfied with politics, less politically active than employed youth, or supportive of extreme
146 political parties. Hence, I address three research questions related to subjective well-being
147 and political participation: Does life dissatisfaction foster youth voice-based political
148 participation? Is the effect of life dissatisfaction stronger for unemployed youth than for
149 employed youth? How does life dissatisfaction contribute to political participation?

150 2.2 Subjective Well-Being and Unemployment

151 Since the seminal study on the consequences of unemployment for the inhabitants of
152 Marienthal conducted by Jahoda et al. (2002 [1932]) many studies have reassessed the
153 detrimental consequences of unemployment for subjective well-being (Clark and Oswald
154 1994; Winefield 1997; Whelan and McGinnity 2000; Oesch and Lipps 2012; Ervasti and
155 Venetoklis 2010). Moreover Winkelmann and Winkelmann (1998) have convincingly
156 demonstrated, with the use of panel data, that the direction of causality ran from unem-
157 ployment to reduced life satisfaction. Their study ruled out the self-selection hypothesis
158 stating that unemployed persons became unemployed due to their subjective well-being, as
159 well as the omitted variable hypothesis proposing that third variables, health-related or
160 family-related problems, contributed to both unemployment and subjective well-being. In
161 their literature review of factors associated with life satisfaction, Dolan et al. (2008)

3FL01 ³ Running the same analyses as Frey and Stutzer (2000) while taking into account the Swiss multilingual
3FL02 division, indicators of cantonal and individual language, as well as controls for religion and income, Dorn
3FL03 et al. (2008) found that the effects of direct democracy institutions were no longer significant predictors of
3FL04 happiness.



162 discussed other studies that came to the same conclusion. Therefore, it is widely accepted
163 that unemployment reduces life satisfaction.

164 3 Hypotheses

165 3.1 Testing the Effect of Subjective Well-Being on Political Participation

166 My hypotheses are derived from studies that used life satisfaction as an independent variable.
167 According to this literature, two expectations can be formulated. On the one hand, life
168 satisfaction may foster participation in voting (Flavin and Keane 2012; Weitz-Shapiro and
169 Winters 2011). On the other hand, life satisfaction may hinder participation in protest. In other
170 words, it is life dissatisfaction that fosters protest activities (Barnes et al. 1979; Marsh 1977).
171 However, a qualification has to be made regarding the latter argument, since life dissatis-
172 faction has been found to have an effect only on the protest potential of specific groups, youth,
173 working and middle class, but not for the general population. Indeed, working on the overall
174 population, Flavin and Keane (2012) found no effect of life satisfaction on protest activities.

175 Here I analyze the political participation of unemployed and employed youth in two
176 alternative voice-based forms of participation; working on two forms reveals whether the
177 results are contingent upon a specific form of political participation. Working on a specific
178 population for which life dissatisfaction increases the potential for protest, youth, I expect
179 that life dissatisfaction fosters youth's participation in both voice-based forms of partici-
180 pation. My first hypothesis is that youth who are dissatisfied with their lives participate
181 more in protest and contacting activities.

182 3.2 Comparing the Effect of Subjective Well-Being on Political Participation Across 183 Employment Statuses

184 Life dissatisfaction increases youth potential for protest, but also that of individuals per-
185 taining to certain social classes: the working and middle class. This can be related to
186 variations in the relative deprivation faced by individuals pertaining to different social
187 classes. Subsequently, I anticipate the effect of life dissatisfaction to be stronger for
188 unemployed youth than for employed youth. My second hypothesis states that the effects
189 of life satisfaction are stronger for the unemployed youth than for the employed youth.

190 3.3 Exploring Causal Mechanisms

191 I explore four alternative causal mechanisms linking life satisfaction to political partici-
192 pation. I test the effects of life satisfaction on political participation when controlling for
193 socioeconomic status, civic attitudes, social capital, and psychological well-being. The
194 effects of omitted predictors may be captured by life satisfaction when they are not
195 included in the model. So including them may reveal causal mechanisms through which
196 life satisfaction affects political participation.

197 Firstly, life satisfaction can vary across socioeconomic groups; for instance those who
198 face less financial difficulties may be less dissatisfied with their lives (Boes and Winkel-
199 mann 2010). Moreover, in examining the effects of unemployment on political partici-
200 pation, it is important to control for socioeconomic status. Burden and Wichowsky (2012)
201 found that the unemployed were less likely to vote in presidential elections in the US than
202 employed individuals. Yet, in their views this is due to their socioeconomic status and not



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203 to the experience of unemployment. Indeed, Scott and Acock (1979) showed that the
204 impact of unemployment on political participation varied depending on the socioeconomic
205 status of the unemployed. Schlozman and Verba (1979), analyzing different forms of
206 political participation, concluded that unemployment was more prevalent among certain
207 socioeconomic groups. In their view, what affected political participation was not the
208 unemployment, but other characteristics of the persons confronted with unemployment.
209 Hence, including predictors of socioeconomic status allows me to test the first causal
210 mechanism—life satisfaction affects political participation due to its correlation with
211 socioeconomic statuses—and to test the effects of life satisfaction while controlling for an
212 important set of predictors of political participation.

213 Secondly, life satisfaction varies depending on the satisfaction with political repre-
214 sentation. Tavits (2008) found that citizens were more satisfied with their lives when they
215 voted for the elected representatives and live in a context of low corruption. Furthermore,
216 research in political science has found that civic attitudes affect political participation
217 (Almond and Verba 1963; Dalton 2006; Conway 2000). These arguments are related to the
218 socioeconomic model, which is the dominant model in the field of political participation
219 (Leighley 1995). Socioeconomic status contributes to both political resources and civic
220 attitudes, which in turn spur political participation (Verba et al. 1995). Civic attitudes are
221 “attitudes which individuals hold toward themselves or the political system which pre-
222 dispose them toward political action” (Leighley 1995: 183). Including civic attitudes
223 permits to test the second causal mechanism according to which life satisfaction captures
224 the effects of civic attitudes. Moreover, it permits to test the effect of life satisfaction while
225 controlling for a second set of important predictors of political participation.

226 Thirdly, the literature working on the consequences of unemployment has shown that
227 unemployment hindered social inclusion (Gallie et al. 2003; Paugam 2006; Hammer 2000) and
228 research on life satisfaction has shown that social inclusion contributed to life satisfaction
229 (Dolan et al. 2008). Regarding protest activities, analyses of collective mobilizations by the
230 unemployed have shown the importance of organizational resources derived from associational
231 membership (Maurer 2001; Chabanet 2008; Faniel 2004). Therefore, in accounting for the role
232 of subjective well-being for unemployed youth political participation, I include in my analysis
233 measures of involvement in civil society organizations. Thus, it allows testing the third causal
234 mechanism, life satisfaction fosters political participation due to the association of life satis-
235 faction with social capital. Again including these predictors permits to test the effect of life
236 satisfaction on political participation while controlling for predictors of political participation.

237 Fourthly, life satisfaction is related to psychological well-being (Dolan et al. 2008) and
238 psychological well-being is also expected to account for unemployed adult political par-
239 ticipation (Rosenstone 1982; Rosenstone and Hansen 1993). Analyzing the 1974 presi-
240 dential election in the US, Rosenstone (1982) found that unemployed persons were less
241 likely to vote. Although the effect was stronger during the first phase of unemployment
242 when individuals needed to register and invest time in the administrative work related to
243 unemployment, the lower propensity to vote lasted throughout the unemployment span. He
244 contended that the unemployed persons’ main concerns were related to solving their
245 personal problems and highlighted the psychological impact of unemployment to explain
246 their lower propensity to vote. In a later study, Rosenstone and Hansen (1993) found that
247 unemployed persons were less likely to engage in contacting activities and used the same
248 argument to explain their lack of contacting. I include a measure of mental health based on
249 the General Health Questionnaire that can be used to assess psychological well-being. This
250 allows me to test the fourth causal mechanism that is life satisfaction captures the effect of
251 psychological well-being on political participation.



252 **4 Method**

253 4.1 Procedure and Participants

254 I use original survey data on long-term unemployed youth residing in Geneva constructed
255 within a European research project on youth unemployment and exclusion (name of the
256 research project). The data resulted from computer-assisted telephone interviews con-
257 ducted on 301 long-term unemployed youth and 317 employed youth residing in Geneva at
258 the time of the interview in 2010. Reaching long-term unemployed youth in a context of a
259 low youth unemployment rate is not an easy task. The survey included two sub-samples of
260 unemployed youth. The first sub-sample was drawn from the population of Geneva resi-
261 dents aged 18–34 years old; long-term unemployed youth were found through a screening
262 procedure including questions on their employment status. The second sub-sample was
263 drawn from a list of long-term unemployed youth constructed by contacting the registered
264 unemployed youth through a mailing and recruiting them in the unemployment office. I
265 tested the two sub-samples with regard to key sociodemographic characteristics, social and
266 political inclusion measures, as well as subjective well-being, to confirm that I could merge
267 both samples.⁴ The control group of employed youth included youth aged 18–34 who had
268 an open-ended contract for at least 1 year. The sample of employed youth was drawn from
269 the youth population of Geneva and was constructed through screening as well. The survey
270 included questions on employment status, social and political inclusion, subjective well-
271 being, and sociodemographic information.

272 4.2 Measures

273 4.2.1 *Dependent Variables*

274 Protest and contacting activities are dichotomous variables. I measure protest activities
275 through a single item: taking part in public demonstrations.⁵ I code the respondent's
276 contact score as a 1 when the respondent engaged in any one or more of the following
277 political acts: contacting a politician, a national or local government official, the media,
278 and/or a judicial body (for non personal reasons). The Cronbach's alpha for the contacting
279 activities index reaches conventional levels (.615). Descriptive statistics for unemployed
280 and employed youth on all the dependent and independent variables are presented in
281 Appendix 1.

282 4.2.2 *Independent Variable*

283 The main independent variable measures subjective well-being. The survey measures
284 subjective well-being with a question on life satisfaction. The question asked, "Taking all
285 things together, how happy would you say you are?" on a scale from 0 to 10. Following
286 Dorn et al. (2008: 233), I aggregate the four lowest categories (from 0 to 3) to avoid

4FL01 ⁴ Additional information about the sample design and the tests I conducted to merge the sub-samples of
4FL02 long-term unemployed youth can be found in my thesis (author).

5FL01 ⁵ For protest activities, I tried also to construct an index using participation in illegal and violent actions in
5FL02 addition to participation in public demonstration, but the Cronbach's alpha for this index was rather low
5FL03 (.385). Therefore, I decided to focus only on participation in public demonstration the most widespread
5FL04 protest activity among the three.



287 inference problems due to the small number of individuals in these categories. Hence, I
288 measure life satisfaction on a scale from 0 to 7, where 0 reflects life dissatisfaction and 7
289 the highest degree of life satisfaction. Life satisfaction is normalized on a 0–1 scale for the
290 analyses.

291 4.2.3 Control Variables

292 The respondents' socioeconomic statuses include sex, age, nationality, education, and
293 financial difficulties. Sex is a dichotomous variable coded 0 for male and 1 for female. Age
294 ranges from 18 to 35 years old, but is normalized on a 0–1 scale. Nationality is a
295 dichotomous variable coded 0 for foreigners and 1 for Swiss citizens. I measure education
296 through a three-state categorical variable measuring educational levels. The three states are
297 below secondary education (the reference category), secondary education, and tertiary
298 education. I measure financial difficulties through a dichotomous variable based on a
299 subjective question asking to what extent it is difficult to cope on present income.

300 Civic attitudes include political interest, political efficacy (internal and external), and
301 left–right self-placement. I measure political interest through a subjective question asking
302 the respondent to what extent he or she was interested in politics. Two dichotomous
303 variables measure the political efficacy: internal political efficacy measuring one's per-
304 ceived influence on politics and external political efficacy addressing political actors'
305 responsiveness. The three dichotomous variables are coded 0 when the political attitude is
306 absent and 1 when the respondent is either interested in politics or feels he or she has
307 political efficacy. I measure left–right self-placement through a three-state categorical
308 variable. I compare those individuals who placed themselves on the left or on the right of
309 the scale to those who did not place themselves on the scale or chose the middle point,
310 which I use as reference category.

311 I measure social inclusion through household composition, interpersonal networks, and
312 associational networks. The household composition includes two dichotomous variables:
313 living with one's partner and living with children. A three-state categorical variable on
314 frequency of contacts with friends during the last month measures interpersonal networks.
315 The three states are: no contacts (reference category), few contacts (once or twice), and
316 frequent contacts (weekly or daily contacts). A dichotomous variable on membership in
317 civil society organizations measures associational networks.

318 Lastly, I measure psychological well-being through four items from the 12-item General
319 Health Questionnaire (GHQ). The four items correspond to one dimension identified with a
320 factor analysis. These items are: "I have lost much sleep over worry," "I feel that I cannot
321 overcome my difficulties," "I have been losing confidence in myself," and "I think of
322 myself as a worthless person." The index I construct with these four items has a Cron-
323 bach's alpha of 0.78. I reverse the item coding so that on this additive scale, a high score
324 measures mental health.

325 4.3 Data Analyses

326 I use logistic regressions to test the two hypotheses: (1) life dissatisfaction fosters political
327 participation and (2) the effect of life dissatisfaction in fostering political participation is
328 stronger for the unemployed youth than for the employed youth. I construct the logistic
329 regression model through a stepwise procedure. The stepwise procedure allows me to
330 explore four causal mechanisms that could explain the effect of life dissatisfaction on
331 political participation. The first Model includes only employment status and life



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332 satisfaction as predictors. Then, in the second Model, I introduce an interaction effect
333 between employment status and life satisfaction to account for the differential effect across
334 groups. In the further four models, Models 3–6, I subsequently add four sets of predictors
335 to explore the proposed causal mechanisms related to socioeconomic status, civic attitudes,
336 social capital, and psychological well-being.

337 I test the two hypotheses using Model 7, which is the full model including employment
338 status, life satisfaction, an interaction term between employment status and life satisfac-
339 tion, as well as the socioeconomic, the civic attitudes, and the social capital predictors. I
340 present predictive margins to discuss the results of these analyses. For logistic regressions,
341 predictive margins show the changes in the probability of participating in either protest or
342 contacting activities for individuals who have specific characteristics (Cameron and
343 Trivedi 2009). I calculate both adjusted predictions and marginal effects to account for the
344 contribution of life satisfaction in explaining unemployed and employed youth participa-
345 tion in protest and contacting activities. I use predictive margins and present graphical
346 visualization of the effects of life satisfaction on political participation for both groups to
347 show the different effects across groups and forms of political participation. I use Marginal
348 Effects at Representative value (MER) to see the effect of moving from the lowest to the
349 highest value on one variable of interest for the two groups, unemployed and employed
350 youth, while holding all the other independent variables to the observed values.

351 I run multicollinearity tests on my models and find that VIF and tolerance scores show
352 no sign of multicollinearity. Additionally, the results based on logistic regressions are
353 robust, I find similar results using linear probability models following the procedure
354 proposed by Mood (2010), as well as full interactions (separate models for unemployed
355 and employed youth).

356 5 Results

357 5.1 Effects of Life Satisfaction on Political Participation

358 In this section, I report statistical tests addressing hypothesis 1—life dissatisfaction fosters
359 political participation—and hypothesis 2 anticipating a differential effect of life dissatis-
360 faction on the political participation of unemployed and employed youth. Figures 1 and 2
361 present graphically the probability that both unemployed and employed youth participate
362 in protest and contacting activities, while Tables 1 and 2 present MER.

363 In Fig. 1 we see that the effects of life satisfaction on the probability of participating in
364 protest activities differ across employment status groups. Life satisfaction increases the
365 probability that unemployed youth participate in protest activities, while for employed
366 youth life satisfaction reduces the probability of doing so. Yet, the difference between
367 unemployed and employed youth is only statistically significant at the highest levels of life
368 satisfaction. Among those who are satisfied with their lives, moving from employed to
369 unemployed significantly increases the likelihood of participating in protest activities. At
370 the lowest levels of life satisfaction, the difference does not reach conventional levels of
371 statistical significance and, among employed youth, the dispersion is large due to the small
372 number of employed respondents confronted with very low levels of life satisfaction.

373 Table 1 shows the substantial effect of life satisfaction in predicting employed youth
374 contacting activities. Moving from the lowest to the highest level of life satisfaction
375 increases unemployed youth probability of protest activities by 14.2 percentage points, and
376 this increase is significant at a 10 % threshold, which is acceptable for a small sample.

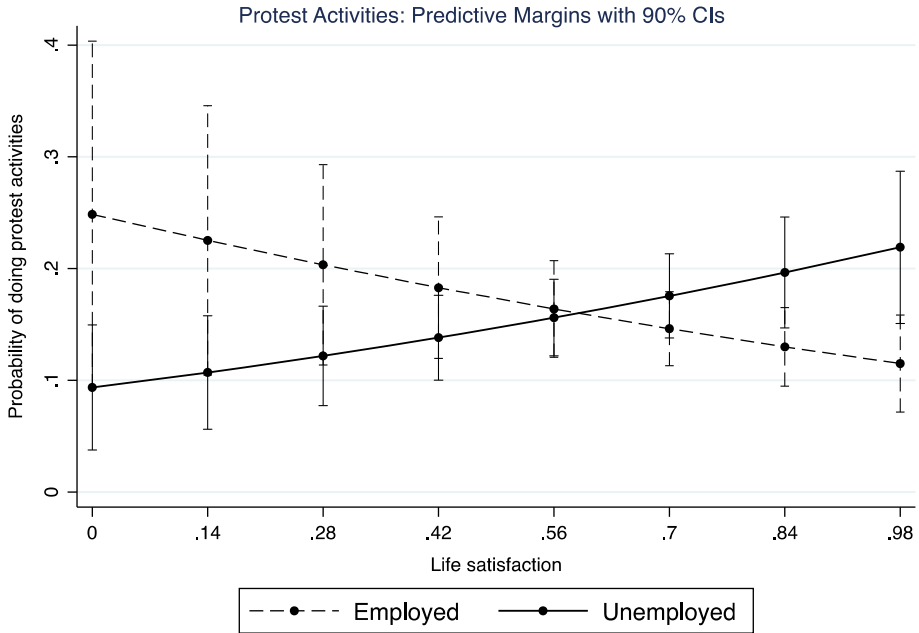


Fig. 1 Probability of doing protest activities by employment status. *Source:* Appendix 2, model 7 (full model)

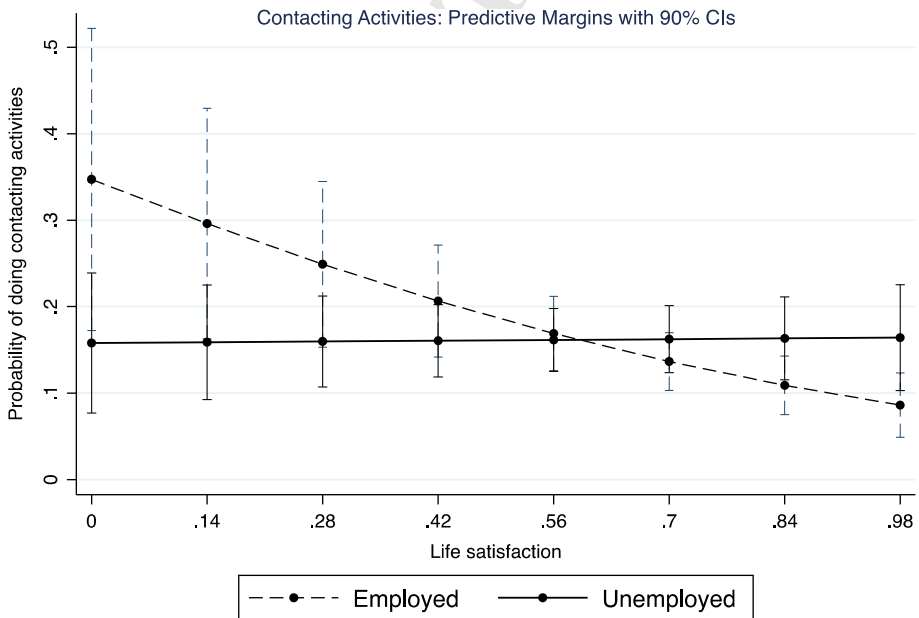


Fig. 2 Probability of doing contacting activities by employment status. *Source:* Appendix 3, model 7 (full model)



Table 1 Marginal effect of main predictors on protest activities by unemployed and employed youth (95 % confidence intervals in brackets)

	Protest activities	
	Model 7	
	Employed dy/dx	Unemployed dy/dx
Life satisfaction	-0.124 [-0.31,0.06]	0.142 ⁺ [-0.02,0.30]
<i>Socioeconomic status</i>		
Education (Ref. below secondary)		
Secondary education	0.068* [0.00,0.13]	0.075* [0.00,0.15]
Tertiary education	0.116* [0.02,0.21]	0.127* [0.02,0.23]
<i>Civic attitudes</i>		
Political interest	0.097** [0.04,0.16]	0.106*** [0.04,0.17]
Left–right (Ref. center)		
Left self placement	0.143*** [0.07,0.22]	0.157*** [0.07,0.24]
Right self placement	-0.041 [-0.10,0.02]	-0.046 [-0.11,0.02]
<i>Social capital</i>		
Associational membership	0.122*** [0.06,0.18]	0.133*** [0.07,0.19]

Source: Appendix 2, model 7 (full model)

Model 7 includes: life satisfaction, employment status, interaction term between life satisfaction and employment status, socioeconomic status, political attitudes, and social capital

⁺ $p < 0.10$; * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$

377 Moreover, life satisfaction reduces employed youth probabilities of protest activities by
 378 12.4 percentage points. This reduction is not statistically significant, however the confi-
 379 dence intervals range from -0.31 to 0.06 and the overlap of the zero is slight. Furthermore,
 380 comparing the substantial effect of life satisfaction with other predictors shows that the
 381 effect of life satisfaction on the probability of protest activities is equivalent, in magnitude,
 382 to that of associational membership or left self-placement and stronger than political
 383 interest or education. Thus, it appears that life satisfaction is among the strongest predictors
 384 of protest activities.

385 For protest activities, I fail to confirm the first hypothesis. Life satisfaction fosters
 386 protest activities for unemployed youth, while it hinders protest activities for employed
 387 youth. Nonetheless, the analyses reveal a substantial effect of life satisfaction and confirm
 388 the second hypothesis. I find different effects across groups. Yet, the effects do not differ in
 389 the anticipated way. The results show that life satisfaction plays an altogether different role
 390 for the protest activities of both groups—increasing that of unemployed youth, while
 391 reducing that of employed youth.

392 Turning to Fig. 2, we see that life satisfaction also reduces employed youth participation
 393 in contacting activities. Those employed youth who are most dissatisfied with their lives
 394 have a higher probability of participating in contacting activities than those who are most



Table 2 Marginal effect of main predictors on contacting activities by unemployed and employed youth (95 % confidence intervals in brackets)

	Contacting activities	
	Model 7	
	Employed dy/dx	Unemployed dy/dx
Life satisfaction	-0.224* [-0.40, -0.04]	0.006 [-0.14, 0.16]
<i>Socioeconomic status</i>		
Education (Ref. below secondary)		
Secondary education	0.054 [-0.02, 0.13]	0.058 [-0.02, 0.14]
Tertiary education	0.045 [-0.04, 0.13]	0.049 [-0.05, 0.15]
<i>Civic attitudes</i>	0.074* [0.01, 0.13]	0.081* [0.02, 0.14]
Political interest		
Left–right (Ref. center)		
Left self placement	0.034 [-0.03, 0.10]	0.037 [-0.04, 0.11]
Right self placement	0.080* [0.01, 0.15]	0.087* [0.00, 0.17]
<i>Social capital</i>		
Associational membership	0.116*** [0.06, 0.17]	0.125*** [0.06, 0.19]

Source: Appendix 3, model 7 (full model)

Model 7 includes: life satisfaction, employment status, interaction term between life satisfaction and employment status, socioeconomic status, political attitudes, and social capital

+ $p < 0.10$; * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$

395 satisfied with their lives. Regarding contacting activities, employed youth differ again from
396 unemployed youth since life satisfaction does not contribute to unemployed youth par-
397 ticipation in contacting activities. Unemployed youth who are most dissatisfied with their
398 lives have a statistically significant lower probability than employed youth to participate in
399 contacting activities and the reverse is true for unemployed youth who were most satisfied
400 with their lives.

401 MER presented in Table 2 confirm, on a second form of political participation, the
402 substantial contribution of life satisfaction. For employed youth, moving from the least to
403 the most satisfied with their lives reduces the probability of participating in contacting
404 activities by 22.4 percentage points. The marginal effect of life satisfaction for the
405 employed youth is higher than that of associational membership and political interest, two
406 important predictors of political participation. However, for the unemployed youth life
407 satisfaction does not contribute at all to their contacting activities (0.006).

408 In this second form of political participation, I fail again to confirm the first hypothesis.
409 Life satisfaction hinders employed youth participation in contacting activities, but it has no
410 effect on that of unemployed youth. Thus, it confirms the second hypothesis; life satis-
411 faction has a differential effect across groups. Furthermore, analyzing the effects of life
412 satisfaction on a second form of political participation corroborates the finding that life



413 satisfaction has a substantial effect more important than political interest, left–right self-
414 placement, and associational membership.

415 5.2 Exploring Causal Mechanisms

416 Turning to the exploration of causal mechanisms, Tables 3 and 4 present the effects of
417 moving from the lowest to the highest level of life satisfaction for both unemployed and
418 employed youth on the probability of participating, respectively, in protest and contacting
419 activities with different sets of control variables.

420 MER presented in Table 3 are calculated from the seven logistic regressions models
421 analyzing protest activities.⁶ In Table 3, we see that the effects of life satisfaction on
422 unemployed youth protest activities only appear in the full model controlling for socio-
423 economic status, civic attitudes, and social capital. In Models 3–5, MER fail to reach
424 statistical significance. However, the confidence intervals seem to point at a positive effect
425 of life satisfaction on unemployed youth protest activities, life satisfaction appears to
426 increase unemployed youth participation in protest activities. For instance, in Model 3, the
427 confidence intervals range from -0.06 to 0.29 . Thus, the confidence intervals suggest that
428 the effect is likely to be positive for unemployed youth and this effect may become
429 statistically significant with a bigger sample.

430 Moving to the specific contribution of different sets of predictors to protest activities,
431 we see that rather than reducing the effects of life satisfaction they permit to reveal them
432 (Model 7). First, in Model 2 with the interaction effect between life satisfaction (the
433 variable of interest) and employment status (the moderator), we see that the effect of life
434 satisfaction is likely to differ across groups. While the coefficients are not statistically
435 significant, the confidence intervals reveal divergent tendencies—life satisfaction reduces
436 the protest activities of employed youth (with CI ranging from -0.28 to 0.10) and
437 increases those of unemployed youth (with CI ranging from -0.09 to 0.23). This
438 divergence persists in further models including different sets of predictors, Models 3–6,
439 and the coefficient becomes statistically significant for the unemployed youth in the last
440 model.

441 Adding socioeconomic status, civic attitudes, and social capital discloses the effect of
442 life satisfaction on protest activities. Thus, life satisfaction is not capturing the effect of
443 other sets of predictors and cannot be related to the four causal mechanisms proposed.
444 Substantially, we see that civic attitudes contribute the most to the model with a pseudo
445 r-square around 0.119 for Model 4. Socioeconomic status and social capital also contribute
446 to the model, although in smaller proportions with pseudo r-squares of, respectively 0.041
447 for Model 3 and 0.066 for Model 5, while in Model 6 we see that psychological well-being
448 adds little to the model (0.009). Comparing the fit of the different models using the Akaike
449 Information Criterion (AIC), the lower the AIC, the better the model fit, confirms that the
450 predictors added to Model 3, 4, and 5 improve the model. But psychological well-being
451 does not improve the model, in Model 6 the AIC is bigger. Lastly, Model 7 has the lowest
452 AIC and a pseudo r-square of 0.187 .

453 In Table 4, the MER calculated for the 7 Models analyzing contacting activities show
454 that adding the different sets of predictors does not reduce the substantial effect of life
455 satisfaction.⁷ Model 1, without the interaction between life satisfaction and employment
456 status, shows a significant effect of life satisfaction for both groups. Life satisfaction

6FL01 ⁶ Appendix 2 presents the seven Models of the logistic regressions.

7FL01 ⁷ Appendix 3 presents the seven Models of the logistic regressions.



Table 3 Marginal effect of life satisfaction on protest activities by unemployed and employed youth (95 % confidence intervals in brackets)

	Protest activities						
	Model 1 dy/dx	Model 2 dy/dx	Model 3 dy/dx	Model 4 dy/dx	Model 5 dy/dx	Model 6 dy/dx	Model 7 dy/dx
<i>Life satisfaction</i>							
Employed	0.008 [-0.10, 0.12]	-0.089 [-0.28, 0.10]	-0.103 [-0.29, 0.08]	-0.114 [-0.30, 0.07]	-0.089 [-0.28, 0.10]	-0.125 [-0.31, 0.07]	-0.124 [-0.31, 0.06]
Unemployed	0.009 [-0.12, 0.13]	0.071 [-0.09, 0.23]	0.114 [-0.06, 0.29]	0.081 [-0.07, 0.23]	0.094 [-0.07, 0.26]	0.032 [-0.14, 0.21]	0.142 ⁺ [-0.02, 0.30]
AIC	489.0	489.3	484.0	444.1	469.6	489.1	433.0
Pseudo R ²	0.001	0.005	0.041	0.119	0.066	0.009	0.187
N	570	570	570	570	570	570	570

Source: Appendix 2, model 1–7 with the following independent variables

M1: life satisfaction and employment status

M2: life satisfaction, employment status, and interaction term between the two variables (=main predictors)

M3: main predictors + socioeconomic status (education, financial difficulties, sex, age, nationality)

M4: main predictors + civic attitudes (political interest, left–right self placement, internal and external political efficacy)

M5: main predictors + social capital (partner, children, contacts with friends, associational membership)

M6: main predictors + mental health (GHQ)

M7: main predictors + socioeconomic status, political attitudes, and social capital

⁺ $p < 0.10$; * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$

457 reduces the contacting activities of both unemployed and employed youth and is signif-
 458 icant at a 10 % level. Yet, introducing the interaction between both variables in Model 2
 459 reveals that the effect of life satisfaction differs across groups. Life satisfaction reduces
 460 the probability that employed youth participate in contacting activities by 24.3 percentage
 461 points and is significant at a 5 % level, while it has no significant effect for unemployed
 462 youth. In Model 3–5, the different effects across groups are confirmed and, importantly,
 463 the effect of life satisfaction on the probability that employed youth participate in con-
 464 tacting activities does not change, it remains over 20 percentage points. Apart from the
 465 change between Model 1 and Model 2, when I introduce the interaction term, we see that
 466 changes in the marginal effects of life satisfaction are minimal. Thus, the stepwise anal-
 467 ysis shows that the effect of life satisfaction is not capturing that of socioeconomic status,
 468 civic attitudes, social capital, or psychological well-being. Thus, this exploratory analysis
 469 of causal paths does not permit to uncover mechanisms through which life satisfaction
 470 contributes to political participation.

471 Lastly, regarding the fit of the model, it improved slightly when adding the interaction
 472 effect and is further improved with the set of predictors included in Models 3–5, but not in
 473 Model 6 testing the effect of psychological well-being. Again Model 7 has the lowest AIC,
 474 thus, it offers the best model fit. Moving to the contribution of different sets of predictors to
 475 the models, we see that socioeconomic status, civic attitudes, and social capital contribute
 476 similarly to the models with pseudo r-square around 0.07, while psychological well-being
 477 adds little to the model. Model 7, the full model, has a pseudo r-square of 0.162.



Table 4 Marginal effect of life satisfaction on contacting activities by unemployed and employed youth (95 % confidence intervals in brackets)

	Contacting activities						
	Model 1 dy/dx	Model 2 dy/dx	Model 3 dy/dx	Model 4 dy/dx	Model 5 dy/dx	Model 6 dy/dx	Model 7 dy/dx
<i>Life satisfaction</i>							
Employed	-0.099 ⁺ [-0.21, 0.01]	-0.243* [-0.43, -0.05]	-0.232* [-0.42, -0.05]	-0.243** [-0.43, -0.06]	-0.243** [-0.43, -0.06]	-0.266** [-0.46, -0.07]	-0.224* [-0.40, -0.04]
Unemployed	-0.107 ⁺ [-0.22, 0.00]	-0.020 [-0.17, 0.13]	0.043 [-0.12, 0.20]	-0.030 [-0.18, 0.12]	-0.017 [-0.16, 0.13]	-0.050 [-0.21, 0.11]	0.006 [-0.14, 0.16]
AIC	478.3	476.6	462.3	459.2	458.0	477.5	439.5
Pseudo R ²	0.009	0.017	0.072	0.074	0.077	0.019	0.162
N	570	570	570	570	570	570	570

Source: Appendix 1, model 1–7 with the following independent variables

M1: life satisfaction and employment status

M2: life satisfaction, employment status, and interaction term between the two variables (=main predictors)

M3: main predictors + socioeconomic status (education, financial difficulties, sex, age, nationality)

M4: main predictors + civic attitudes (political interest, left–right self placement, internal and external political efficacy)

M5: main predictors + social capital (partner, children, contacts with friends, associational membership)

M6: main predictors + mental health (GHQ)

M7: main predictors + socioeconomic status, political attitudes, and social capital

* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$

478 6 Discussion and Conclusion

479 In concluding this paper, I discuss the implications of my findings for research on life
 480 satisfaction and political participation, but also to understand more generally why young
 481 unemployed in Europe are not a highly visible group. Young citizens are confronted with
 482 raising unemployment rates across European countries. Thus, as I argued in the intro-
 483 duction, it is important to understand why unemployed youth are not expressing political
 484 dissatisfaction stemming from their situation on the labor market by taking the streets. In
 485 this paper, I have dealt with the specific role played by life satisfaction in explaining
 486 unemployed and employed youth voice-based political participation. More specifically, I
 487 have analyzed the effects of life satisfaction on protest and contacting activities, two forms
 488 of voice-based participation. Thus, I addressed the question of why unemployed youth are
 489 not protesting by focusing on the mediating role of life satisfaction.

490 My analysis shows the contribution of subjective well-being to youth political partic-
 491 ipation, while controlling for predictors that influence life satisfaction (Dolan et al. 2008)
 492 and political participation (Verba et al. 1995). Contrary to the results found by Flavin and
 493 Keane (2012), it appears that life satisfaction contributes both to protest activities and to
 494 contacting activities. However, life satisfaction contributes to voice-based political par-
 495 ticipation in a more complex way than expected.

496 Following the existing literature on personal dissatisfaction and protest (Marsh 1977; Barnes
 497 et al. 1979), my first hypothesis states that life dissatisfaction fosters voice-based political



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498 participation. Partly confirming this hypothesis, I found that life dissatisfaction fosters employed
499 youth participation in contacting activities, but not in protest activities. Yet, for unemployed
500 youth, life dissatisfaction does not foster either protest or contacting activities. Quite on the
501 contrary, life dissatisfaction hinders participation in protest, falsifying my first hypothesis.

502 My results reveal that the more satisfied with their lives, the more the unemployed youth
503 engage in protest activities. Overall few long-term unemployed youth engage in protest
504 activities: on average 17.2 % of them have done protest activities in the last twelve months.
505 Nonetheless, I find that life satisfaction fosters their participation in protest activities.
506 Moreover, the effect of life satisfaction on protest activities is comparable, in magnitude, to
507 that of associational membership, slightly lower than that of left–right self-placement, and
508 higher than that of political interest. Additionally, life satisfaction appears as an even more
509 important predictor of contacting activities for employed youth. Life satisfaction reduces
510 the probability that employed youth participate in contacting by 22.4 percentage points.
511 This change is important considering that the average rate of contacting activities by
512 employed youth is of 15.4%. In fact, this effect is stronger than that of political interest,
513 left–right self-placement, and associational membership, which are important predictors of
514 political participation (Verba et al. 1995). Thus, my analysis shows that life satisfaction is
515 important to consider when studying the political participation of specific social groups.
516 Furthermore, comparing two groups of youngsters, long-term unemployed youth and
517 employed youth, my analyses confirm that life satisfaction only affects the voice-based
518 political participation of certain groups (Barnes et al. 1979; Marsh 1977). Further analyses
519 on other social groups are needed to extend these findings.

520 Although these results are interesting, they are also challenging. In this paper, I also explored
521 four causal mechanisms to understand how life satisfaction contributes to youth political
522 participation. However, none of the proposed explanations find empirical support. First, I
523 controlled for socioeconomic status to account for variations in terms of life satisfaction across
524 socioeconomic statuses (Boes and Winkelmann 2010) and to control for socioeconomic status
525 effects on political participation (Verba et al. 1995). However, the effect of life satisfaction on
526 the protest activities of unemployed youth does not change when controlling for socioeconomic
527 status. In the next model, I control for civic attitudes associated with life satisfaction (Tavits
528 2008) and political participation (Verba et al. 1995; Leighley 1995). Yet again including civic
529 attitudes does not reduce the effect of life satisfaction for the protest activities of unemployed
530 youth. Then, I included controls to account for social inclusion, both in associational and
531 interpersonal networks, which increase life satisfaction (Dolan et al. 2008) and, according to the
532 social capital literature, political participation (Chabanet 2008; Faniel 2004). But including
533 predictors associated with social capital did not reduce the effect of life satisfaction on protest
534 activities by unemployed youth. Lastly, I controlled for psychological well-being, which is
535 expected to have an effect on life satisfaction (Dolan et al. 2008) and on the political partici-
536 pation of unemployed persons (Rosenstone 1982; Rosenstone and Hansen 1993). The explo-
537 ration of this last causal mechanism shows again that the effect of life satisfaction in predicting
538 unemployed youth protest activities remains. Regarding contacting activities by employed
539 youth, the causal mechanisms explored reveal the effects of life satisfaction. Hence, life sat-
540 isfaction captures a specific mechanisms contributing in explaining contacting activities. But
541 this effect only appears when differentiating social groups and controlling for socioeconomic,
542 civic attitudes, and social capital jointly.

543 Thus, my analysis of both protest and contacting activities shows that the effects of life
544 satisfaction on political participation are not due to socioeconomic resources, to civic
545 attitudes, to social capital, or to psychological well-being. This raises an important ques-
546 tion: Why does life satisfaction foster unemployed youth protest activities? More research



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547 is needed to understand how life satisfaction contributes to the political participation of
548 unemployed youth, but also to that of employed youth. Future studies should explore the
549 possibility that, in the case of protest activities, political participation fosters life satis-
550 faction. In order to explore the direction of causality between life satisfaction and political
551 participation one would need to work on panel data, with sufficient observations of
552 unemployed and even better unemployed youth.

553 Yet, there are a number of methodological challenges facing the study of unemployment
554 and political participation. When studying long-term unemployed youth through survey
555 methods in a context of low unemployment, it is challenging to accumulate a large enough
556 sample to run statistical models. Here I analyzed the contribution of unemployed youth
557 subjective well-being for political participation in contacting and protest activities. I found
558 that subjective well-being, in particular life satisfaction, played a different role for the
559 political participation of unemployed and employed youth. Although the small number of
560 respondents included in my sample made it difficult to reach conventional levels of sta-
561 tistical significance, the empirical results suggest that the effect was substantial.

562 In future research, life satisfaction should be used more systematically in the study of
563 political participation. In order to understand its contribution to different forms of political
564 participation, as already suggested by Flavin and Keane (2012), and to test its effects on
565 different sub-groups of the population. My research only started to untangle the complex
566 effects of life satisfaction working on unemployed and employed youth. Obviously, more
567 research is needed to understand the contribution of life satisfaction for the political
568 participation of unemployed persons, not focusing on youth.

569 Moreover, future studies should test the effect of life satisfaction on the political partici-
570 pation of youth living in different socio-political contexts, in particular in contexts of higher
571 youth unemployment, to see whether the effects of life satisfaction are contingent upon the case
572 studied here. As mentioned in the introduction, youth unemployment is very high in some
573 European countries. In these contexts my findings suggest that unemployed youth are not
574 visible because they are too dissatisfied with their lives to engage in protest activities. Con-
575 sidering the limited protest activities by unemployed youth in contexts of high youth unem-
576 ployment and the findings I presented here, we could hypothesize that life satisfaction does not
577 depend on unemployment rates. In fact, Oesch and Lipps (2012) show that unemployment does
578 not hurt less when there is more around. Moreover, in southern Europe, familialist welfare
579 regimes offer few or no social benefits to unemployed youth. Thus, where youth unemployment
580 is high, social protection is limited. Therefore, we may find very few unemployed youth who are
581 satisfied with their lives and this may explain the absence of protest by unemployed youth in
582 Europe. Future research should compare the effects of unemployment on life satisfaction and
583 protest activities across countries to test this hypothesis. Alternatively, it should address first the
584 effect of unemployment on grievances and on life satisfaction in different contexts and, in a
585 second step, test how grievances and life satisfaction contribute to political participation.

586 Lastly, different measures of life satisfaction could be used and tested against specific
587 measures of deprivation that could account for the situation of unemployed youth. In
588 addition, the ideal design to test the impact of unemployment on political participation
589 through subjective well-being would require longitudinal data that would permit testing the
590 subjective well-being of unemployed youth before and after their lived experience of
591 unemployment, as well as their political participation at the time of unemployment.

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 599 Unemployed” (YOUNEX). This project was funded by the European Commission under the 7th Framework
 600 Programme (grant agreement no. 216122).

601 **Appendix 1**

602 See Table 5.

Table 5 Descriptive statistics on dependent and independent variables

	Unemployed youth		Employed youth		Coding	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Min	Max
<i>Dependent variables</i>						
Contacting activities	0.16	0.37	0.13	0.34	0	1
Protest activities	0.16	0.37	0.14	0.35	0	1
<i>Independent variables</i>						
Main independent variable						
Life satisfaction	4.09	2.00	5.19	1.51	0	7
Socio-economic status						
Female	0.51	0.50	0.49	0.50	0	1
Age	28.26	4.44	28.83	4.26	18	35
Citizen of the country	0.50	0.50	0.61	0.49	0	1
Below secondary education	0.24	0.43	0.11	0.31	0	1
Secondary education	0.55	0.50	0.54	0.50	0	1
Tertiary education	0.21	0.41	0.35	0.48	0	1
Perceived financial difficulties	0.37	0.48	0.07	0.26	0	1
Civic attitudes						
Political interest	0.42	0.50	0.43	0.50	0	1
Internal political efficacy	0.35	0.48	0.28	0.45	0	1
External political efficacy	0.61	0.49	0.54	0.50	0	1
Left self-placement	0.33	0.47	0.36	0.48	0	1
Right self-placement	0.21	0.41	0.35	0.48	0	1
Center or no self-placement	0.46	0.50	0.29	0.45	0	1
Social inclusion						
Lives with partner	0.37	0.48	0.46	0.50	0	1
Lives with children	0.27	0.45	0.27	0.44	0	1
Contacts with friends	1.70	0.57	1.80	0.47	0	2
Associational membership	0.45	0.50	0.39	0.49	0	1
Health						
Mental health (GHQ score on 4 items)	8.49	2.32	9.80	1.95	0	12
Observations	276		294			

603 **Appendix 2**

604 See Table 6.



Subjective Well-Being and Political Participation

Table 6 Logistic regressions on protest activities (exponentiated coefficients, standard error)

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7
Life satisfaction	1.066 (0.493)	0.489 (0.363)	0.419 (0.323)	0.362 (0.296)	0.481 (0.369)	0.357 (0.277)	0.310 (0.270)
Long-term unemployed youth	1.214 (0.297)	0.526 (0.359)	0.437 (0.314)	0.401 (0.296)	0.423 (0.299)	0.552 (0.379)	0.243 ⁺ (0.192)
<i>Interaction</i>							
Unemployed*Life satisfaction		3.405 (3.211)	5.343 ⁺ (5.260)	5.275 (5.406)	4.296 (4.205)	3.508 (3.337)	11.07* (12.02)
<i>Socio-economic status</i>							
Education (Ref. below secondary)							
Secondary			1.858 (0.756)				2.180 ⁺ (0.972)
Tertiary			3.465** (1.586)				3.276* (1.696)
Perceived financial difficulties			1.393 (0.443)				1.305 (0.459)
Female			0.576* (0.141)				0.580* (0.159)
Age			0.474 (0.245)				0.171** (0.104)
Citizen of the country			1.572 ⁺ (0.399)				1.226 (0.345)
<i>Civic attitudes</i>							
Political interest					2.634*** (0.691)		2.507** (0.711)
Left-right scale (Ref. center)							
Left self placement				3.373*** (1.013)			3.155*** (1.024)
Right self placement				0.600 (0.245)			0.573 (0.244)
Internal political efficacy				0.889 (0.243)			0.848 (0.252)
External political efficacy				0.943 (0.241)			0.923 (0.252)
<i>Social capital</i>							
Lives with partner					0.591 ⁺ (0.170)		0.612 (0.199)
Lives with children					1.110 (0.343)		1.294 (0.465)
Contacts with friends (Ref. no contacts)							
Few contacts					1.920 (1.571)		1.401 (1.254)
Frequent contacts					2.226 (1.712)		0.922 (0.789)
Associational membership					3.454*** (0.869)		3.171*** (0.880)

Table 6 continued

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7
<i>Health</i>							
Mental health (GHQ)						2.963 (2.189)	
χ^2 (df_m)	0.637 (2)	2.298 (3)	19.59 (9)*	57.57 (8)***	32.04 (8)***	4.501 (4)	90.64 (19)***
AIC	489.0	489.3	484.0	444.1	469.6	489.1	433.0
N	570	570	570	570	570	570	570

+ $p < 0.10$; * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$

Appendix 3

See Table 7.

Table 7 Logistic regressions on contacting activities (exponentiated coefficients, standard error)

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7
Life satisfaction	0.439 ⁺ (0.199)	0.142** (0.103)	0.141** (0.107)	0.125** (0.0935)	0.131** (0.0979)	0.114** (0.0867)	0.125* (0.102)
Long-term unemployed youth	1.112 (0.278)	0.350 ⁺ (0.222)	0.266 ⁺ (0.181)	0.354 (0.233)	0.307 ⁺ (0.201)	0.365 (0.233)	0.285 ⁺ (0.203)
<i>Interaction</i>							
Unemployed*Life satisfaction		6.040 ⁺ (5.558)	9.883* (9.620)	6.353 ⁺ (6.035)	6.651* (6.275)	6.093 ⁺ (5.639)	8.432* (8.593)
<i>Socio-economic status</i>							
Education (Ref. below secondary)							
Secondary			1.391 (0.532)				1.723 (0.746)
Tertiary			1.483 (0.642)				1.602 (0.790)
Perceived financial difficulties			1.440 (0.447)				1.268 (0.435)
Female			0.380*** (0.0988)				0.453** (0.126)
Age			4.334** (2.406)				2.973 ⁺ (1.853)
Citizen of the country			1.002 (0.253)				0.878 (0.241)
<i>Civic attitudes</i>							
Political interest				2.366*** (0.612)			1.995* (0.560)
Left-right scale (Ref. center)							
Left self placement				1.646 (0.524)			1.410 (0.486)
Right self placement				1.972* (0.647)			2.087* (0.727)



Table 7 continued

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7
Internal political efficacy				1.651* (0.417)			1.650 ⁺ (0.462)
External political efficacy				1.249 (0.319)			1.141 (0.312)
<i>Social capital</i>							
Lives with partner					0.847 (0.242)		0.806 (0.250)
Lives with children					1.219 (0.370)		1.235 (0.424)
Contacts with friends (Ref. no contacts)							
Few contacts					0.249* (0.151)		0.197* (0.131)
Frequent contacts					0.501 (0.250)		0.397 (0.232)
Associational membership					3.121*** (0.794)		2.926*** (0.800)
<i>Health</i>							
Mental health (GHQ)						2.096 (1.549)	
χ^2 (df_m)	4.314 (2)	8.103 (3)*	34.32 (9)***	35.45 (8)***	36.70 (8)***	9.119 (4)	77.20 (19)***
AIC	478.3	476.6	462.3	459.2	458.0	477.5	439.5
N	570	570	570	570	570	570	570

⁺ $p < 0.10$; * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$



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