

**Socio-Economic Status and Non-Voting**  
A Cross-National Comparative Analysis

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### **ABSTRACT**

This study examines the relationship between socio-economic status and non-voting using data from the first module of the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems project. SES influences non-voting in all countries included in the first module, regardless of economic, political or institutional characteristics. The strength and patterns of the relationship between SES and non-voting vary cross-nationally. The main finding is that four SES variables are consistently related to non-voting even after contextual factors, like economic conditions, electoral history (whether a new or consolidated democracies), electoral rules, and party systems are taken into account, low SES is still associated with non-voting.

### **Introduction**

The vast majority of research on electoral behavior is based on voting (or non-voting) patterns in a single country, and often, in a single election. The Comparative Study of Electoral Systems project (CSES) represents an important collaborative effort that provides researchers with a valuable new tool for undertaking cross-national analyses of voting behavior. Indeed, the CSES data have significant advantages over other available cross-national data sets used for making cross-national generalizations about voting behavior. This paper draws on the first module of the CSES to examine the question: To what extent do SES factors explain non-voting in eighteen countries? The analysis is exploratory and proceeds in two stages. The first stage uses CSES individual level data to probe variations in the extent

to which SES factors do, or do not, “facilitate” voting. The second stage of the analysis introduces contextual factors as controls and explores whether, and to what extent, key SES variables remain as significant predictors after a variety of macro economic and institutional variables are taken into account.

## **The CSES Data**

The first module of the CSES now includes data from Argentina,<sup>1</sup> Australia, the Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Japan, Israel, Lithuania,<sup>2</sup> Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Romania, Spain, Taiwan, the Ukraine, the United Kingdom and the United States. Data from the 1997 Canadian Election Study, which will soon be added to the CSES module, are also included in the following analysis.

The CSES project contains a number of important features that enhance the reliability of comparative electoral research. First, the CSES items are explicitly designed to improve the reliability of the cross-national analysis of voting behavior. Election studies have been undertaken in most advanced industrial states for several decades but cross-national comparisons with these data confront significant obstacles because even where researchers have aimed to explore the same concepts there have been significant cross-national variations in the wording of the questionnaire items tapping those concepts. Added to the difficulties associated with variations in question wording are cross-national variations in the protocols for coding similar items. The introduction of standardized question wordings for common items, particularly with the SES items, significantly improves the reliability of cross-national collaborative research as does adherence to shared coding procedures.

A second clear advantage of the CSES project concerns the use of data from *national* election studies. The relatively few available cross-national comparative studies of voter turnout sometimes rely

on data that in some respects may be regarded as atypical. For example, a number of the previous “benchmark” studies of comparative voting behavior have had to rely on data from the European Election Studies (EES) 1989 and 1994 (Dalton 1996; Franklin 1996; Franklin and Eijck, 1996; Oppenhius 1995).<sup>3</sup> The indications are, however, that voting behavior in the European Parliament elections may well be significantly different from voting behavior in national elections (Eijck, Franklin and Marsh 1996; Reif and Schmitt 1980). The levels of voter turnout in EP elections, for example, are typically significantly lower than those from the national elections of the same countries (See Table 1). Governing parties generally do not fare as well in EP elections and smaller parties often do better in EP elections than they do in national elections (Eijck, et. al. 1996). It is not entirely clear, then, that the motivations for voting (or not) in EP elections are the same as those that apply to national elections (Eijck, Franklin and Marsh 1999). The CSES project allows us to make direct comparative analyses of voting behavior in national elections.

**[Table 1 about here]**

A third and related issue concerns the time lags between elections and data collection. Some cross-national studies of voting behavior (for example, Powell 1986) rely on data from such cross-national public opinion surveys as the *Political Action Study* (Barnes, et. al. 1979) or the Eurobarometer surveys. These data are valuable from a number of vantage points but from the perspective of voting behavior they nevertheless confront the problem that the data used for the analysis were sometimes being gathered years removed from the most recent national election. As such, the data have to be interpreted cautiously because the likelihood is that they are susceptible to problems of recall and social desirability effects: Voting tends to be over-reported (Granberg and Holmberg 1991; Anderson and Silver 1991; Swaddle and Heath, 1989; Silver, Abramson and Anderson 1986). The

CSES project, by contrast, relies on data collected in the immediate aftermath – usually within a few weeks- of the national elections and so they are likely to contain more reliable respondent reporting of voting and non-voting. By the same token, the evidence is that CSES data also tend to under-report non-voting. (The details of data collection are included in Appendix A).

Finally, the data included in this first module of the CSES are particularly useful in another noteworthy respect; they include election data from a very diverse set of countries that exhibit significant variations in aggregate wealth and distribution, regime structures, and electoral rules. Earlier cross-national studies often rely on data from advanced industrial states.<sup>4</sup> As a result, there is little variance in the form of government and such other important contextual factors as economic performance. The first module of the CSES does not yet have data from all of the countries included in the project, but there are a sufficient set of varied cases available to allow us to make exploratory comparisons across a relatively wide variety of regions, including both consolidated and newer democracies, presidential and parliamentary regimes, consensus and majoritarian governments.

### **Socio-Economic Status<sup>5</sup> and Non-voting**

Non-voting is an individual, micro-level phenomenon (Lane and Errson 1990). Citizens make a conscious decision to vote or abstain. Fortunately, most people vote. Even in countries with high proportions of non-voters, the majority of citizens in most states vote in national elections (Table 1). The exceptional behavior that we want to account for here is *non-voting*. To explain non-voting, we must examine individual characteristics. Electoral rules and institutional arrangements undoubtedly do have some effect on levels of turnout. But if "turnout" could be wholly explained by structural factors, then

there would be no patterns in the personal characteristics of non-voters. The weight of evidence is however, that non-voters are concentrated in particular pockets of society.

Individual-level explanations of electoral behavior typically argue that non-voting is determined by a combination of facilitative and motivational factors (most recently Franklin 1996; Dalton 1996; Oppenhius 1995; Verba et. al. 1995). "Motivational" factors include ideology, political attitudes and such basic orientations as efficacy whereas "facilitative" factors refer to those elements that influence political behavior in ways "irrespective of motivations" (Oppenhius 1995). Political participation is more difficult for some people than for others, regardless of their interest in politics. The weight of evidence is that greater access to particular resources, such as higher levels of income or education, *facilitates* participation (Franklin 1996; Oppenhius 1995; Verba et. al. 1995; Verba et. al. 1978; Verba and Nie, 1972). Conversely, those without these kinds of resources are less likely to participate in politics. There are also indirect and reciprocal effects associated with high SES. Verba and Nie (1972) demonstrate that high SES has a motivational "effect of 'civic attitudes' conducive to participation: attitudes such as the sense of efficacy, psychological involvement with politics and a feeling of obligation to participate" (13).

Findings from cumulative research sources suggest that each of these socio-demographic indicators is related to voting behavior in systematic ways.

(1) First, a large body of research indicates that there is a robust correlation between *age* with electoral turnout: voting generally increases with age (Dalton 1996; Franklin 1996; Topf 1995; Powell 1986; Crewe 1981).<sup>6</sup> In some cases it has been shown that when age is controlled, the effects of other SES predictors become insignificant (Norris 1991; Wolfinger and Rosenstone 1980). The prevailing

explanation for the negative relationship between age and voting is that younger people tend to be less settled (single and geographically mobile) than older people, and less involved in politics (Oppenhius 1995). And political attachments and interests accumulate with age (as one begins to pay taxes, becomes a parent or a homeowner, the effects of government policy become apparent). Higher levels of non-voting among the young may be evidence of such life-cycle effects (Dalton 1995).

**H<sub>A</sub>: A1**      *Non-voting is negatively associated with age, after other SES facilitating factors are controlled.*

(2) *Education* is also repeatedly shown to be an important predictor of voting (Dalton 1996; Franklin 1996; Oppenhius 1995; Topf 1995; Verba et. al. 1995; Teixeira 1992). The impact of education on voting behavior is usually characterized in two ways: First, with higher levels of formal education citizens gain cognitive skills, and the accumulation of these skills has the effect of lowering barriers to participation. When voting regulations are more complicated and the act of voting itself, therefore, may require greater cognitive skills (Verba et. al. 1978). Second, citizens with higher levels of formal education are also more likely to have been socialized to embrace those civic norms that place a higher value on participation (Nie, Junn and Stehlik-Barry 1996).

**H<sub>A</sub>: A2**      *Non-voting is negatively associated with education, after other SES facilitating factors are controlled.*

(3) *Religious involvement* is also associated with the production resources that promote all forms of political participation including voting (Verba et. al. 1995; Miller and Wattenberg 1984). Frequency of attendance at religious services has been repeatedly documented as a significant predictor of American voting behavior (especially Verba et. al. 1995; Verba et. al. 1995b; Teixeira 1992; Wolfinger and Rosenstone 1980) but that general finding also applies to other national settings. Franklin

finds that frequent attendance of religious services decreases the likelihood of non-voting in British, German and French elections (1996). There is also evidence indicating that "frequent churchgoers have a stronger sense of voting duty" than those not or only loosely affiliated with a religious community (Oppenhius 1995). Finally, in some countries, where parties identify with religious communities, deeply religious voters are encouraged to express their support for those parties, and by consequence, are not expected to number highly among non-voters.

**H<sub>A</sub>: A3**      *Non-voting is negatively associated with the frequency of attendance of religious services, after other SES facilitating factors are controlled.*

(4) With respect to *household income*, the prevailing finding is that those with low levels of income are more likely than their wealthier counterparts to abstain from voting. (Teixiera 1992, Kleppner 1982, Wolfinger and Rosenstone 1980). Wolfinger and Rosenstone (1980) argue that voters who are insecure in their basic needs are less interested in politics; they have more pressing concerns. Consequently, they are less likely to vote than those in more secure income brackets.<sup>7</sup>

**H<sub>A</sub>: A4**      *Non-voting is negatively associated with household income, after other SES facilitating factors are controlled.*

(5) Voting behavior is also influenced by whether or not voters live in *rural or urban regions* (Oppenhius 1995; Wolfinger and Rosenstone 1980). The effects of urban living appear to vary cross-nationally. American voters in rural areas, suburbs or cities vote more frequently than do those in mid-sized towns (Verba and Nie 1972). European voters living in cities are, by contrast, less likely to vote than those in rural areas (Oppenhius 1995).

**H<sub>A</sub>: A5**      *Non-voting is associated with rural or urban residence, after other SES facilitating factors are controlled.*

(6) Then there is evidence concerning the impact of *marital status* on voting behavior (Teixiera 1992, Wolfinger and Rosenstone 1980). Single, divorced or widowed individuals are less likely than married people to vote. The prevailing explanation is that married people are more settled than those who are not, they are free to develop political attachments within their communities, and may feel more obligated to vote (Wolfinger 1980). Cross-national studies of voting behavior have rarely included marital status as a predictor of non-voting, but data drawn from a number of single-country studies would lead one to expect:

**H<sub>A</sub>: A6**      *Non-voting is negatively associated with marriage, after other SES facilitating factors are controlled.*

(7) As with religious identification, there are also reasons to believe that union membership has a "mobilizing" effect. Cross-national research indicates that *union affiliation* usually decreases the incidence of non-voting (Dalton 1996; Franklin 1996). Individuals may develop attachments to political parties that are affiliated with the union to which they belong, and would be expected to vote as a consequence (Dalton 1996).

**H<sub>A</sub>: A7**      *Non-voting is negatively associated with union affiliations, after other SES facilitating factors are controlled.*

(8) *Gender* is also a common predictor of voting behavior (Dalton 1996; Oppenhius 1995; Topf 1995, Powell 1986, Worcester 1983, Wolfinger and Rosenstone 1980). Women apparently, are more frequently non-voters than are men. Others suggest that gender differences are largely attributable to age, education and occupational composition differences of the two groups. When these are taken into account, gender differences in voting behavior disappear (Norris 1987, Crewe 1981; Wolfinger and Rosenstone 1980). Dalton's (1996) analysis suggests that in cross-national comparisons, women

are slightly less likely to vote than men. In some countries, such as Denmark and the Netherlands, the reverse appears to hold (Oppenhius 1995; Oppenhius and Eijck, 1990).

**H<sub>A</sub>: A8**        *Women are less likely to vote than men, after other SES facilitating factors are controlled.*

(9) *Employment Status* has been conceptually linked to political participation, including voting behavior, in two different ways. Like marital status, being in the full-time paid work force is sometimes taken to signify a measure of stability that is sufficient to encourage the development of political attitudes. Employment is also linked to holding some politically relevant skills such as letter writing and attending meetings that facilitate political participation (Verba et. al. 1995b). Thus, the expectation is that citizens who are not in the paid labor force are more likely to be non-voters than those who are in the paid workforce.

**H<sub>A</sub>: A9**        *Non-voting is negatively associated with being employed, after other SES facilitating factors are controlled.*

(10) Finally, our model includes an indication of *minority community status*.<sup>8</sup> Members of minority communities, especially in countries in which political parties represent certain ethnic identities, may be more likely to participate in electoral politics (del Castillo 1999; Ackaert et. al. 1999).<sup>9</sup> One might suppose that where the barriers to the formation of political parties are comparatively low, for instance in some PR systems, or in countries where minority communities are geographically concentrated, minority community status might encourage voting. On the other hand, where barriers to the formation of political parties are somewhat higher, minority communities feel excluded from the political process, they may be less likely to vote than members of the ethnic majority (Ackaert et. al. 1999). There may also be differences in the socio-economic resources of majority and minority language communities. For these reasons, one might suppose that minority status influences non-voting.

**H<sub>A</sub>: A10**      *Non-voting is negatively associated with minority community status, after other SES facilitating factors are controlled.*

## **Approach and Methods**<sup>10</sup>

Because the CSES components of the election survey undertaken in participating countries contain directly comparable measures and use standardized coding protocols for those measures, we are better positioned to conduct a basic test of each of these hypotheses. The key empirical research questions in the first stage of the analysis are: Which hypotheses consistently hold up in multiple national settings? And, which do not?

Following standard procedure we estimate the direct effects of these SES factors on non-voting in each country using logistic regression and rely on the Cox and Snell coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ), rather than the Nagelkerke  $R^2$ , to compare how well SES accounts for the variance in non-voting.<sup>11</sup>

## **Findings**

### **A. GENERAL PATTERNS IN THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SES AND NON-VOTING**

The data reported in Table 2 are somewhat cumbersome; they individually report the basic SES model for each country singly because we are interested in exploring the extent to which there are consistent cross-national patterns between SES and non-voting. Following standard procedure, Table 2 reports the estimated effect of each SES factor on non-voting (log-odds).

**[Table 2 about here.]**

The primary finding is that there is evidence of common patterns. SES indicators are significantly related to non-voting in every country regardless of substantial variations in economic performance and political and institutional arrangements. By the same token, there are significant cross-national differences in the extent to which SES explains the variance in non-voting. On average, SES explains about 9% of the variance in non-voting; these factors explain the most variance in the United States, and the least in Australia (2%).

Second, cumulative logistic regression analysis (data not reported here) indicate that four key variables- age, education, religious attendance and household income- explain most of the variance; they have consistent effects on non-voting in most of the countries in the analysis. Specifically,

(1) Age has significant and consistent effects in almost all of the countries included in this module: the likelihood of non-voting decreases with age.<sup>12</sup> In Australia, the proportion of non-voters is small (1%), and as a result of this limited variance, there are no significant predictors of non-voting. In Israel, when the influence of linguistic and religious identity are excluded from the model, age does exert a significant negative effect on the likelihood of non-voting. Finally, the negative relationship between age and non-voting in Romania is marginally significant ( $p=0.1$ ), and therefore, does not deviate from the general pattern.

**H<sub>A</sub>: A1**      *Confirmed. Non-voting is negatively associated with age, after the SES facilitating factors are controlled.*

(2) Education also has a consistent and significant effect on non-voting in 11 out of the 18 countries under consideration: Canada, Germany, Hungary, Israel, Mexico, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Romania, the United Kingdom and the United States. Non-voting is substantially less frequent among those who have completed secondary school, and especially among those who have attended

post-secondary schools than those who have little education. These findings are consistent with other findings (most recently Dalton 1996; Franklin 1996; Oppenhius 1995; Topf 1995; Verba et. al. 1978).

**H<sub>A</sub>: A2**      *Confirmed. Non-voting is negatively associated with education, after the SES facilitating factors are controlled.*

(3) Household income (measured in quintiles) has statistically significant influence on non-voting in 9 of the 17<sup>13</sup> countries included in this analysis: Canada, Hungary, Japan, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Romania, the United Kingdom, and the United States. As hypothesized, high-income citizens are consistently less likely to be non-voters than those in the lowest income quintile. This finding also confirms findings from past research (Dalton 1995; Oppenhius 1995; Wolfinger and Rosenstone 1980).

**H<sub>A</sub>: A3**      *Confirmed. Non-voting is negatively associated with household income, after the SES facilitating factors are controlled.*

(4) Finally, the influence of frequent attendance of religious services on voting behavior is somewhat less clear than the effects of age, education or income. Religious attendance is significant in 9 of 16<sup>14</sup> countries included in this analysis: Germany, Hungary, Mexico, the Netherlands, Poland, Taiwan, Ukraine, the United Kingdom, and the United States. As expected, those who attend religious services frequently are less likely to abstain from voting than those who never attend (Verba et. al. 1995b). Further, those with some religious identifications also are less likely to abstain from voting than those with no religious identifications in Canada (Protestants and Catholics), Germany (Catholic, Protestant), Mexico (Catholic), and Spain (Catholic).<sup>15</sup>

**H<sub>A</sub>: A4**      *Confirmed. Non-voting is negatively associated with the frequency of attendance of religious services, after the SES facilitating factors are controlled.*

Support for the remaining hypotheses is much less systematic. For instance, there appear to be no systematic patterns in the way rural or urban residence influences non-voting. Being married decreases the likelihood of non-voting in only 3 of the countries under consideration (Poland, the United States and the United Kingdom). Union affiliations decrease the likelihood of non-voting in five of the CSES countries (the Czech Republic, Hungary, the Netherlands, Norway and the Ukraine). Men are significantly more likely to vote than women in some countries (Hungary, Poland and Romania), though less likely to vote in Norway. When compared with those not in the labor force, those who are unemployed or employed part-time are more likely to abstain from voting in Hungary and the Netherlands, while those who are employed full-time in Israel are much more likely to vote than those not in the labor force.

**H<sub>A</sub>: A5-9**      *Not confirmed as a cross-national pattern.*

The influence of minority status is also somewhat unclear. It is reasonable to suppose that members of minority communities may feel excluded from the political system, and so be less likely to vote as a consequence. There is evidence consistent with that interpretation in the case of Israel where Arabic speaking Israelis are significantly less likely to vote than others. But, in other countries with significant communal minorities (e.g. New Zealand, Romania, Spain, Taiwan, and the Ukraine), identification with a minority community does not appear to have a significant effect on non-voting after other SES factors are controlled. And in some cases, for instance, where political parties claim that they speak for the interests of minority communities, members of minority communities may be more likely to vote. But the evidence is uneven. In Canada, francophones are more likely to vote than other

Canadians. However, in Spain, the CSES data indicate that minority status does not appear to influence non-voting, contrary to past research (del Castillo 1999).

The initial basic finding from the individual-level data is that though there are few SES factors that influence non-voting cross-nationally, SES does matter in determining non-voting behavior in a variety of contextual settings. From these results, two significant questions arise: Are these patterns maintained when the effects of contextual factors are controlled? To what extent does SES influence non-voting, net the effects of economic, historical and institutional variables?

## B. THE IMPACT OF CONTEXTUAL FACTORS

So far, the analysis has relied entirely on individual level data, but there are strong reasons to suppose that a variety of systems-level characteristics could be related to levels of turnout:

First, there is the argument that economic conditions may have an effect on levels of non-voting. Powell (1982) speculates that in countries with poorly performing economies, citizens may well be less concerned about politics and less likely to vote; they have more pressing concerns. At the same time, "the human development that accompanies [economic] modernization should enhance political participation" (Powell 1982, 37). Relatedly, there may also be reasons to suppose that the distribution of wealth within a society may have some effect on voter turnout. In countries with a large wealth gap and where most wealth is concentrated in a small segment of the population, individuals in the lowest income groups may feel relatively powerless and so less inclined to vote. It is not clear whether aggregate wealth, or its distribution, is related to turnout in a linear way (Blais and Dobrzynska 1998), but there are at least two dimensions of aggregate economic conditions that warrant investigation.

**H<sub>A</sub>: B1a**      *Aggregate wealth is negatively associated with non-voting, when the effects of other contextual factors are controlled.*

**H<sub>A</sub>: B1b**      *The distribution of wealth is positively associated with non-voting, when the effects of other contextual factors are controlled.*

Secondly, there are historical factors to consider. Consolidated democracies are routinely distinguished from the newer ones, and the first module of the CSES includes 6 countries that qualify as “new”; they have held their first elections relatively recently: the Czech Republic (1990), Hungary (1990), Poland (1989), Romania (1992), Taiwan (1991) and the Ukraine (1994). The thresholds for distinguishing “new” from “consolidated” democracies<sup>16</sup> are neither clear nor precise.<sup>17</sup> But it is plausible to suppose that citizens in consolidated democracies have had a more sustained and continuous experience with the “habit” of voting than is the case for citizens in regimes with a briefer electoral history of open electoral competition.

**H<sub>A</sub>: B2**      *Citizens of new democracies will be more likely to abstain from voting than citizens of consolidated democracies, when the effects of other contextual factors are controlled.*

A third, and widely evaluated system level characteristic linked to levels of voter turnout concerns the impact of electoral rules.<sup>18</sup> Here the longstanding expectation, supported by a considerable body of empirical evidence is that electoral systems operating under proportional representation rules (PR), the levels of non-voting are usually lower (Powell 1986; Jackman 1986; Blais and Carty 1990; Jackman and Miller 1995; Franklin 1996; Blais and Dobrzynska 1998). Single member, simple plurality systems (SMSP), by contrast, are usually associated with higher levels of non-voting. The widely accepted principle is that SMSP systems are more likely than PR systems to

produce outcomes where there is a greater discrepancy between the proportion of votes received by a party and the distribution of the seats for parties. And so, SMSP systems are more likely to be perceived as producing "unfair" outcomes, more "wasted votes," and so discourage voting (Blais and Dobrzynska 1998). From this logic, we would expect

**H<sub>A</sub>: B3**        *Citizens of PR systems will be less likely to abstain from voting than citizens in systems with other electoral rules are, when the effects of other contextual factors are controlled.*

Conventional wisdom once was that the reason PR systems experience higher voter turnout could be explained by the fact that PR rules produce more parties, and more political parties present voters with a wider selection of electoral choices (Karp and Banducci 1999). But the available empirical evidence supporting the claim is far from clear (Blais and Carty 1990). Indeed, evidence produced by Jackman and Miller (1995) suggests that the presence of many parties is associated with lower turnout, probably because multiparty systems increase the likelihood of coalition outcomes, outcomes that are negotiated by elites, rather than decided by voters directly (Karp and Banducci 1999). The CSES data allow us to evaluate the impact of the number of parties on voter turnout net the effects of electoral rules. As Lijphart (1999) suggests, it is the effective number of parties, and not the absolute number of parties, that is most vital because it is the effective number of parties that more adequately captures the viable choices available to voters.<sup>19</sup>

**H<sub>A</sub>: B4**        *Citizens in party systems where there are more effective parties will be less likely to abstain from voting than citizens in party systems with fewer parties.*

### C. COMBINING CONTEXTUAL AND FACILITATIVE FACTORS

The typical practice when using micro-level survey data in predictive models is to enter SES factors before any other variables. But in this analysis, we are more concerned with the influence of SES, above and beyond the various contextual factors under consideration. For this reason, the contextual factors are entered into the model first, and then the influences of the SES factors are estimated. Table 3 reports the preliminary model (Model 1), where the contextual factors only are included. The final model (Model 2) combines the contextual and facilitative factors. This allows us to explore both changes in the estimates for the contextual factors and increases in the proportion of explained variance attributable to SES.<sup>20</sup>

### FINDINGS

Table 3 presents the results of a two-stage set-up which shows the impact of contextual factors on non-voting for the merged data (Model 1), and also shows what impact the standardized CSES SES factors have on non-voting after the effects of contextual factors are controlled (Model 2).

**[Table 3 about here].**

As for the results for Model 1 indicate, most but not all of the contextual factors are significant predictors of non-voting. With respect to the economic context, there are two findings: There is evidence confirming earlier research (Blais and Dobrzynska 1998; Powell 1982) that as the levels of aggregate wealth increase the likelihood of non-voting decreases. The log-odds estimate for the effects of the distribution of wealth, -0.64, however, points to an unexpected finding: as wealth become more unequally distributed, the likelihood of non-voting decreases. The expectation was that we would find a positive relationship (non-voting *increases* as does the gap between rich and poor). Results from a

step-wise model indicate that the relationship between wealth distribution and non-voting is positive until electoral rules are controlled. But this interaction is difficult to examine in greater detail: electoral rules provide categorical data while the Gini index is based on interval data. Exploratory analysis, entering electoral rules in successive models as dichotomous variables (i.e. PR vs. others, SMSP vs. others, etc.) does not illuminate the nature of this interaction; it seems that all electoral rules have the same association with the distribution of wealth.

**H<sub>A</sub>: B1a**      *Confirmed. Non-voting is negatively associated with minority community status, after the SES facilitating factors are controlled.*

**H<sub>A</sub>: B1b**      *Not confirmed. The distribution of wealth does not have a clear association with non-voting, when the effects of other contextual factors are controlled.*

Differences between new and consolidated democracies also have significant effects on non-voting. The log-odds coefficient of 0.5 indicates that citizens in new democracies are more than one and a half times more likely to abstain from voting than citizens in consolidated democracies, after the effects of economic conditions are controlled. The hypothesis assessing the impact of new versus consolidated democracies is supported:

**H<sub>A</sub>: B2**      *Confirmed. Citizens of new democracies are more likely to abstain from voting than citizens of consolidated democracies, when the effects of other contextual factors are controlled.*

According to Table 3, electoral rules also influence non-voting. When compared with SMSP systems, the odds of non-voting in PR systems are about half as high (odds coefficient 0.50). In fact, of all the contextual factors considered in the model, PR systems seem to exert the largest effect on non-

voting. Non-voting in mixed (corrective or otherwise) or majoritarian systems, however, does not seem to be significantly different from non-voting in SMSP systems.

**H<sub>A</sub>: B3**      *Confirmed. Citizens of PR systems will be less likely to abstain from voting than are citizens in systems with other electoral rules, after the effects of other contextual factors are controlled.*

The CSES data also indicate that the number of effective parties also seems to matter to non-voting. The likelihood of non-voting decreases as the effective number of parties increases, and this finding confirms earlier evidence (Blais and Carty 1990). The log-odds coefficient of  $-0.23$  suggests that for each party in a particular system, the odds of non-voting for each citizen in that country are decreased by a factor of 0.79. The significant interpretive point is that these effects hold after party systems have been taken into account.

**H<sub>A</sub>: B4**      *Confirmed. Citizens in party systems where there are more effective parties will be less likely to abstain from voting than citizens in party systems with fewer parties.*

Together, these contextual factors confirm that economic conditions, a history of participation through voting, electoral rules and the effective number of parties influence to some degree an individual's decision to vote or abstain. But the question that is more central to this paper, however, is whether individual factors exert an influence on non-voting net the effects of these contextual factors.

## **Discussion**

The results from the fully specified estimation (Model 2) indicate that most of the SES factors have significant influences on non-voting, and they work in the expected direction. First, older and

middle-aged citizens are much less likely to abstain from voting than younger citizens. Significantly, old age (with a log-odds coefficient of  $-1.31$ ) exerts the largest impact on non-voting of all of the contextual and facilitative factors included in the model. Second, those with higher levels of formal education are significantly less likely than others to abstain from voting. Third, the odds of non-voting decrease substantially as income rises. Finally, while those who attend religious services infrequently are less likely to abstain from voting, those who “frequently” attend religious services are no more likely to vote than those who never attend. This is a somewhat surprising finding given that the apparent effects of frequent attendance of religious services (Table 2) are typically significant in the country-by-country models.

The primary finding, then, is that SES, and particularly age, education, attendance of religious services, and household income, continue to influence non-voting, regardless of levels of aggregate economic wealth, electoral history, electoral rules and number of parties. Moreover, it is clear that these key SES variables alter the effects of the contextual factors reported above. The influence of aggregate wealth is considerably reduced (from a log-odds coefficient of  $-0.48$  to  $-0.23$ ) when SES factors are considered. And, the effect of the distribution of wealth is muted entirely: the log-odds coefficient becomes insignificant.

The effects of SES also reshape the impact of some of the contextual factors. For example, the odds of non-voting in new democracies are increased by a factor of 1.43, when SES is taken into account, which means that, regardless of the SES of individual voters, citizens in new democracies are much less likely to vote than citizens of consolidated democracies. Further, the odds of non-voting in PR systems are further reduced by a factor of 0.80, after the SES factors are controlled. The implication is that citizens of regime with PR electoral rules are much less likely to abstain from voting

than citizens of SMSP systems, irrespective of their socio-economic status; low SES citizens in PR systems are more likely to vote than citizens of comparable SES in SMSP systems.

Finally, the influence of the number of parties disappears when the SES of individual non-voters is taken into account. This suggests that the number of options may not be equally available for to citizens. If the effective number of parties continued to exert negative, significant effects on non-voting, even when the SES of individual voters was taken into account, one would expect the relationship between SES and non-voting to be weakened in countries with a high number of parties. However, the data suggest that only those of high SES benefit from a large number of available options. One plausible reason for this finding is that those with low SES may lack information about more marginal parties, or the motivation to acquire that information. They may be less aware of the range of parties or options than those who have high SES voters and who are relatively better informed.

## **Conclusion**

The CSES data provide researchers with a research tool that is valuable from a variety of standpoints. The data are relatively even in the sense that they were collected in the immediate post-election environment, and they provide us with standardized indicators and coding protocols. They also include a sufficient number of cross-national cases that vary across system level characteristics to allow us to examine more fully how both system and individual level characteristics influence voting and non-voting.

This paper represents an initial exploration of non-voting using the most recently available data set, and with these data we are positioned to re-evaluate findings about non-voting.

One central findings is that SES influences non-voting in a wide variety of economic, political and institutional settings: Citizens with low facilitative resources are less likely to vote than others, and that finding is consistent with other cross-national research results (Dalton 1996; Franklin 1996; Franklin and van Eijck 1996; Oppenhius 1995; Verba et. al. 1995, 1995b).

Not surprisingly, there are significant cross-national variations in the strength and patterns of the linkages between SES and non-voting. No single SES indicator works in exactly the same way in all national settings but there is evidence that four SES indicators- age, education, religious attendance and income- do generally work in a significant and consistent direction in multiple settings.

The first module of the CSES data contains 18 usable cases and given that sample size, there are reasons to be cautious about drawing conclusions about the impacts of system level factors on turnout. But the preliminary evidence is that such contextual factors as aggregate wealth, electoral history, electoral rules, and the number of effective parties do have an impact on voter turnout. There is also evidence that SES influences non-voting net the effects of these contextual factors.

There are a number of findings, and non-findings, that clearly merit much closer investigation with an expanded CSES data set. First, the evidence of the relationship between communal pluralism and voter turnout is unclear, and the question of whether communal minority membership, defined by language, religion or ethnicity, and voter turnout is not satisfactorily answered here. One limitation with the present CSES data set is that there are too few cases for analysis. The same limitation applies to the distinction between voting requirements that are compulsory versus those that are not: Is non-voting in compulsory regimes influenced by the same factors as in countries where voting is voluntary? The effects of wealth distribution on non-voting also warrants further investigation. The parochial implication

of these observations is that it might be useful for partners in the CSES project to consider adding an expanded array of system-level variables to the core CSES data set.

APPENDIX A. METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION

Country	Type of Election	Official Turnout (Voters/VAP)	Date of Election; Dates of Survey	Survey Methods	Sample Characteristics	Sample Size
<b>Australia</b>	Parliamentary	85%	2 March 1996; 2 March-24 June 1996	Mailback	From Australian Electoral roll: citizens of 18 years or older, randomly selected from listed, stratified (by region) sample	1,798
<b>Canada</b>	Parliamentary	56%	June 2, 1997;	Telephone	RDD, stratified by province. The CSES module was included in the second part of the Canadian Election Study. During the campaign period, a rolling cross-section of the population was sampled daily. These same respondents were contacted again during the eight weeks following the election for inclusion in the post-election study, and again, by mail, for the last stage of the study.	1,800
<b>Czech Republic</b>	Parliamentary	77%	31 May-1 June 1996; 10 June-18 June 1996	In person, and panel	Citizens, 18 years or older randomly stratified for regions and size of locality, then according to quotas defined by SES characteristics; AND willingness to be re-interviewed, and give address	1,229

Country	Type of Election	Official Turnout (Voters/VAP)	Date of Election; Dates of Survey	Survey Methods	Sample Characteristics	Sample Size
<b>Germany</b>	Parliamentary	83%	28 Sept, 1998; 28 Sept.- 17 Oct. 1998	Telephone	Citizens, 18 and over, sampled with RDD procedures, and randomly selected within households.	2,019
<b>Hungary</b>	Parliamentary	59%	10 May, 1998			
<b>Israel</b>	Presidential and Parliamentary	85%	29 May 1996; 13 July-7 August 1996	Telephone	Listed sample of respondents 18 years. and older (citizenship not probed) with listed phone numbers (roughly 15% of eligible population excluded from sample); concern for representation of the various cultural minorities	1,091
<b>Japan</b>	Parliamentary	60%	20 Oct. 1996			
<b>Israel</b>	Presidential and Parliamentary	85%	29 May 1996; 13 July-7 August 1996	Telephone	Listed sample of respondents 18 years. and older (citizenship not probed) with listed phone numbers (roughly 15% of eligible population excluded from sample); concern for representation of the various cultural minorities	1,091
<b>Mexico</b>	Parliamentary	54%	6 July 1997			

Country	Type of Election	Official Turnout (Voters/V AP)	Date of Election; Dates of Survey	Survey Methods	Sample Characteristics	Sample Size
<b>Netherlands</b>	Parliamentary	73%	6 May 1998; 31 March- 5 May 1998	In person	Citizens 18 and older by the day of the election, randomly selected from electoral registers of stratified sample (based on 4 regions and 5 degree of urbanisation).	2,101
<b>New Zealand</b>	Parliamentary	83%	12 Oct. 1996; 13 Oct.- 24 Dec. 1996	Mailback	Note that the New Zealand study includes three waves. Only the post-election wave of the study was included in this analysis.	1,396
<b>Norway</b>	Parliamentary	77%	15 Nov. 1997	In person	Citizens 18-79, sampled from electoral registers in 109 strata (based on municipalities).	2,055
<b>Poland</b>	Parliamentary	49%	21 Sept. 1997 29 Sept. Oct. 6 1997	In person	Citizens 18 years or older selected by probability proportional to size in statistical districts, then randomly selected by address within these districts	2,003

Country	Type of Election	Official Turnout (Voters/V AP)	Date of Election; Dates of Survey	Survey Methods	Sample Characteristics	Sample Size
<b>Romania</b>	Presidential and Parliamentary	78%	3 Nov. 1996; Oct. 1996 - July 1997	In person	Citizens 18 years or older were randomly selected from electoral lists, from a population stratified according to region and the size of the locality.	1179
<b>Spain</b>	Parliamentary	81%	3 March 1996; 11 March-16 March 1996	In person	Citizens 18 years and older, randomly selected through "random routes"	1,212
<b>Taiwan</b>	Parliamentary	76%	March 23 1996;	In person		1,200
<b>Ukraine</b>	Parliamentary	68%	29 March 1998;	In person	Citizens less than 75 years old, not randomly selected, by quota	2,315

Country	Type of Election	Official Turnout (Voters/V AP)	Date of Election; Dates of Survey	Survey Methods	Sample Characteristics	Sample Size
<b>United Kingdom</b>	Parliamentary	69%	1 May 1997; 1 May-29 July 1997	Self-completion supplement following in person interview	Eligible voters 18 years or older, resident in private households in mainland Britain selected from stratified sample of postal sectors, concerned for socio-economic group profile, then households were randomly selected by interviewer using a Kish grid and random numbers	2,931
<b>United States</b>	Presidential and Parliamentary	47%	Nov.1996	In person	Stratified random sample of American households. Citizens over the age of 18.	

Source: Comparative Studies of Electoral Systems (2000).

## APPENDIX B. NOTES ON THE ANALYSIS

### **B.1 Logistic Regressions (Tables 1-4)**

This analysis relies on logistic regression. Coefficients reported are the log-odds factors, which indicates the increase (or decrease) in the log-odds of non-voting given a particular characteristic, relative to the log-odds of non-voting in the reference category for that trait, when all other SES factors are held constant.

### **B.2 Canadian Sample**

Canadian data have not yet been merged with the CSES. However, the 1997 Canadian Election Study does include the CSES items and will eventually be included in the merged data file. The common items from the CES were added to the existing CSES data file, so that Canada could be studied in this comparative analysis.

### **B.3 Weights**

- (1) New Zealand, Poland, Spain, the United Kingdom and the United States

Several weights were included in the first module of the CSES (in file 'cswt0799.por', available from ISR). The cases of New Zealand, Poland, Spain, the United Kingdom and the United States are weighted to correct for sampling procedures, skewed demographic distributions, etc. With the exception of the New Zealand sub-sample, the application of these weights made little or no difference in the substantive findings of this analysis. Full explanations about the construction of the weights are reported in the "Supplementary Weight File," also available from the ISR.

- (2) Canada

The Canadian sample was weighted using the Campaign-Period National Weight Number 1, which corrects for the unequal probability of selection at the provincial level (some of the smaller provinces were over-sampled to allow for regional comparisons) and at the household level. Please refer to the *1997 Canadian Election Survey: Technical Documentation* (Institute for Social Research, York University, Toronto 1998).

## APPENDIX C. CODING AND DISTRIBUTIONS

The complete documentation regarding standardised coding convention is reported in the *Comparative Studies of Electoral Systems, 1996-2000: Micro-Level Codebook*.

### C.1 The Dependent Variable: Frequency of Non-Voting

	<b>Respondent voted</b>	<b>Respondent did not vote</b>
AU	99.0%	1.0%
CDA	69.6%	30.4%
CZ	89.6%	10.4%
GR	93.0%	7.0%
HU	71.0%	19.0%
IS	91.3%	8.7%
JP	83.7%	16.3%
ME	74.6%	25.4%
NE	90.8%	9.2%
NZ	79.7%	20.3%
NO	85.9%	14.1%
PO	57.1%	42.9%
RO	89.5%	10.5%
SP	89.9%	10.1%
TA	92.3%	7.7%
UKR	77.0%	23.0%
UK	82.6%	17.4%
USA	71.8%	28.2%

Note: These reported rates of non-voting are somewhat different from official reports. Official turnout rates are included in Appendix A.

### C.2a Predictors of Non-Voting: Age Tertiles

The CSES includes the age of the respondents, in years. To facilitate analysis, this data was standardised, by country, into tertiles, as follows:

	<b>Young</b>	<b>Middle-Aged</b>	<b>Older</b>
AU	18-35	36-52	53+
CDA	18-34	35-47	48+
CZ	18-35	36-51	52+
GR	18-35	36-52	53+
HU	18-40	41-59	60+
IS	18-26	27-42	43+
JP	18-42	43-57	58+
ME	18-28	29-42	43+
NE	17-34	35-50	50+

	<b>Young</b>	<b>Middle-Aged</b>	<b>Older</b>
NZ	18-38	39-55	56+
NO	18-34	35-50	51+
PO	18-38	39-56	57+
RO	18-37	38-54	55+
SP	18-32	33-54	55+
TA	18-32	33-45	46+
UKR	18-35	36-53	54+
UK	18-34	35-57	58+
USA	18-37	38-55	56+

### **C.2b Predictors of Non-Voting: Highest Level of Education**

For simplicity, education was recoded in the following way:

<b>CSES Category</b>	<b>Indicator</b>
None	Incomplete Secondary
Incomplete Elementary	(Reference)
Complete Elementary	
Incomplete Secondary	
Complete Secondary	Complete Secondary
Trade or Vocational	Incomplete Post-Secondary
Incomplete University Degree	
Complete University	

NOTES:

<sup>a</sup> Measure for AU estimated using: a) the respondent's age when left school, and b) highest qualification since leaving school, and c) years of tertiary education.

<sup>b</sup> Measure for UK Estimated using: a) terminal education age, b) current economic activity, and c) highest educational qualification.

<sup>c</sup> Response category 'trade or vocational training' not included in American survey.

### **C.2c Predictors of Non-Voting: Attendance of Religious Services and Religious Identification**

(i) Frequency of Religious Service Attendance<sup>a</sup>

<b>CSES Category</b>	<b>Indicator</b>
Never	Never (Reference)
Once per year	Infrequent
2- 11 times per year	
Once per month	Frequent
Two or more times per month	
Once per week	

NOTES:

<sup>a</sup> This item was not included in Canadian or Spanish surveys.

(ii) Religious Identification

The following table reports religious identifications, entered as dummy variables in the logistic regression models (only those which had significant effects on non-voting were reported). “Other” provided the reference category.

<b>Country</b>	<b>Religion Identified by Respondent</b>
AU	Catholic (29%), Episcopalian (27%), Methodist (12%), Other religions (9%), No religion (16%)
CDA	Catholic (44%), Protestant (34%), No religion (15%)
CZ	Catholic (45%), No religion (47%)
GR	Catholic (25%), Protestant (39%), No religion (35%)
HU	Catholic (37%), Presbyterian (12%), No religion (48%)
IS	Jewish (87%), Muslim (10%)
JP	(Item not included in Japanese study)
ME	Catholic (88%), No religion (5%)
NE	Catholic (28%)
NZ	Episcopalian (24%), Catholic (14%), Other religions (10%), No religion (27%)
NO	Protestant (100%)
PO	Catholic (97%)
RO	Eastern Orthodox (89%)
SP	Catholic (90%), No religion (9%)
TA	Confucianism (71%), Buddhist (8%), Taoism (7%)
UKR	Eastern Orthodox (67%), Agnostic (19%), Atheist (6%)
UK	Episcopalian (33%), Atheist (30%), Presbyterian (11%), Roman Catholic (11%), Christian (no denomination given, 5%)
USA	Catholic (25%), Baptist (19%), Methodist (9%), No religion (12%)

### **C.2d Predictors of Non-Voting: Household Income**

The CSES includes household income data, standardised by country in quintiles.

### **C.2e Predictors of Non-Voting: Rural/ Urban Residence**

NOTES:

<sup>a</sup> This item was not included in either the British or Japanese survey.

<sup>b</sup> “Suburb:” this response category was not included in Hungarian, Israeli, Mexican, Canadian and Ukrainian surveys.

<sup>c</sup> “Small or mid-sized town:” this response category was not included in the Canadian survey.

### **C.2f Predictors of Non-Voting: Marital Status**

<b>CSES Category</b>	<b>Indicator</b>
Widowed	Not Married
Divorced or Separated (Married but Separated/ Not Living with Legal Spouse)	(Reference Category)
Single, Never Married	
Married or Living Together as Married	Married

### **C.2g Predictors of Non-Voting: Union Affiliation**

This item combines CSES v92 and v93, as follows:

<b>CSES Category</b>	<b>Indicator</b>
Not a Union Member, nor is anyone in R’s household	No Union Affiliations (Reference category)
R or member of R’s household is a member of a union	Union Affiliations

## C.2h Predictors of Non-Voting: Gender

Coded simply, Male (1) and Female (0).

## C.2i Predictors of Non-Voting: Employment Status

CSES Category	Indicator
Student, in school, in vocational training	Not in Labor Force (Reference Category)
Retired	
Housewife, home duties	
Permanently disabled	
Others, not in labor force	
Unemployed	Employed part-time, or unemployed
Employed part-time, less than 15 hours per week	
Employed part-time, 15-32 hours per week	
Helping family member	
Employed full-time, +32 hours per week	Employed full-time

### NOTES:

- <sup>a</sup> Includes housewives, students, those who are permanently disabled, and others who are not members of the labor force.
- <sup>b</sup> Includes respondents who are employed less than 32 hours per week, and those who are employed helping a family member.

## C.2j Predictors of Non-Voting: Minority Linguistic Communities

The following are minority linguistic identities, entered as dummy variables in the logistic regressions (reported only when statistically significant):

<b>Country</b>	<b>Language Usually Spoken at Home</b>
CDA	French (25%)
IS	Arabic (Levantine, 14%), Russian (10%)
NZ	Maori (3%; Statistics New Zealand reports the Maori population to be approximately 15%, 1996)
RO	Hungarian (5%)
SP	Catalan (11%), Galician (5%)
TA	Chinese (Mandarin, 28%)
UKR	Russian (49%)

## Notes

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<sup>1</sup> Several SES factors, including age, income, etc. are missing from the Argentinean data. As a result, Argentina is not included in this analysis.

<sup>2</sup> Lithuanian vote data are not available, and so Lithuania is not included in this analysis.

<sup>3</sup> Franklin indicates that he uses Eurobarometer 41.1 (EES, 1994), however it is unclear whether “vote” measures votes cast in the European Parliament election, or in the last national election.

<sup>4</sup> Powell's (1986) analysis includes the Austria, Canada, Finland, Italy, West Germany, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the United States. Oppenhius (1995) studied only the European Community countries. Dalton (1996) included Germany, France, the United Kingdom and the United States. Franklin's (1996) study is the broadest, including Belgium, Bulgaria, Denmark, Czech Republic, Estonia, France, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Poland, Spain, the United Kingdom and the United States.

<sup>5</sup> Although ‘SES’ traditionally refers to income, education and occupation, in this discussion it will include all of the facilitative factors listed in this part of the discussion.

<sup>6</sup> Niemi and Barkan (1987) have shown that the reverse effect may hold in transitional democracies, like Kenya and Turkey. Under some political circumstances, younger people may be more trusting of electoral politics, and consequently are more likely to vote. In consolidated democracies, some have found a curvilinear relationship between age and non-voting: non-voting is more frequent among the young and the elderly than among the middle-aged, though it generally decreases with age (Wolfinger and Rosenstone 1980; Milbraith and Goel 1977; etc.). Aside from the impact of infirmity, others attribute the higher levels of non-voting among older cohorts to lower levels of education (Wolfinger and Rosenstone 1980; Verba and Nie 1972).

<sup>7</sup> To avoid the complications posed by absolute income levels the CSES measure of income is categorized into quintiles for each country.

<sup>8</sup> Here “language spoken at home” is used to indicate identification with a linguistic community (i.e. Quebecois in Canada). Only those communities with linguistic minorities exceeding 5% of the respondents are included in this analysis.

<sup>9</sup> Del Castillo (1999) finds that turnout rates for national elections between 1977-1993 differ considerably among Spain's minority communities. Further, the presence of nationalist parties like the Basque National Party encourage turnout, even in the European Elections, where these parties are not likely to gain influence over the decision making process (del Castillo 1999, 259). Ackaert et. al. (1999) found both the turnout rate and voting behavior generally to vary among the minority communities in Belgium. These differences are attributed to variations in the party system, particularly to differences in the salience of elections.

<sup>10</sup> Details of methods, including the use of weights, are reported in Appendix B.

<sup>11</sup> Usually, the Nagelkerke  $R^2$  is reported as a measure of explained variance when using logistic regression models. The Nagelkerke measure builds upon the Cox and Snell, by reporting the proportion of the total possible explained variance attributable to the specified model (the maximum value for a Cox and Snell  $R^2$  is dependent on the specifications of the model and especially the distribution of the sample). Under some circumstances, the Nagelkerke measure can be misleading. For example, the Nagelkerke  $R^2$  value for this model for Australia is 16%, as opposed to the Cox and Snell measure, 2%. As it turns out, the maximum  $R^2$  for Australia is only 11%. The maximum  $R^2$  value varies considerably among the

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countries included in this study (because the characteristics of the national samples with regards to non-voting vary considerably), it is very difficult to interpret the relative strengths of the models in explaining variance in non-voting. Further, as in the case of Australia and a few other countries, the Nagelkerke  $R^2$  reports large proportions of explained variance when there is little variance to explain. When logistic and OLS models are compared, the Cox and Snell  $R^2$  consistently matches the Adjusted  $R^2$  in relative strength with cross-national comparison. This would suggest that the Cox and Snell  $R^2$  may be a more reliable measure for cross-national comparisons. When the merged model is used, the maximum  $R^2$  value is constant across the models, and the Nagelkerke  $R^2$  is reported.

<sup>12</sup> These findings do not indicate the curvilinear relationship found by Wolfinger and Rosenstone (1980). However, this could be because age was categorized into tertiles. In most countries, the oldest age group ranges from mid-50s upwards, with individuals in the 70+ range- the category likely to be effected by infirmity.

<sup>13</sup> This item is not included in the CSES data for Mexico or Germany.

<sup>14</sup> This item is not included in the CSES data for Canada, Japan, or Spain.

<sup>15</sup> Ukrainians who are Atheist and Agnostic are also more likely to vote.

<sup>16</sup> Here "democracy" refers only to the presence of elected governments, without judgement on the quality of the election itself. With the exception of Mexico and the Ukraine, all of these countries received a ranking of '1' or '2' by Freedom House (1998) with regards to political rights, indicating a 'free' and democratic political system. Both Mexico and the Ukraine received a ranking of '3,' and were determined to be 'partly free'.

<sup>17</sup> Following Lijphart (1999), new "democracies" are distinguished from the old in that they have less than twenty years of elected government.

<sup>18</sup> This follows Blais and Dobrzynska's (1998) modification of Powell's list: they referred to "constitutional arrangements" rather than "institutions." Arguably, emphasis on electoral institutions is more appropriate.

<sup>19</sup> The number of effective parties is entered as a covariate with non-voting. Where possible, the effective number of parties, as reported in Lijphart (1999) is used. Otherwise, it was calculated from vote data reported by IDEA (Laasko and Taagepera 1979).

<sup>20</sup> Note that because the maximum  $R^2$  value is constant across both models, and reliable comparisons can be made, the Nagelkerke  $R^2$  value is reported as a measure of explained variance.

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**Table 1. The Discrepancy between National and EP Election Turnout**

Country	Turnout Rates		Difference between EP and National Turnout
	European Parliament Elections <sup>a</sup>	National Parliamentary Election <sup>b</sup>	
Austria	49%	79%	+30%
Belgium <sup>c</sup>	95%	91%	-4%
Denmark	50%	83%	+33%
Finland	30%	71%	+31%
France	47%	60%	+13%
Germany <sup>d</sup>	45%	72%	+27%
Greece	70%	76%	+6%
Ireland	51%	67%	+16%
Italy	71%	87%	+16%
Luxembourg <sup>c</sup>	90%	87%	-3%
Netherlands <sup>d</sup>	30%	75%	+45%
Portugal	40%	79%	+39%
Spain <sup>d</sup>	64%	81%	+13%
Sweden	38%	84%	+46%
United Kingdom <sup>d</sup>	24%	69%	+45%

<sup>a</sup> **Source:** Elections and Electoral Systems ([www.psr.keele.ac.uk/election.html](http://www.psr.keele.ac.uk/election.html)).

<sup>b</sup> **Source:** IDEA (1997). Data reported are proportions of votes cast per voting age population. Where there are compulsory voting requirements, proportions are of registered voters.

<sup>c</sup> In these countries, voting in both national and European elections is compulsory.

<sup>d</sup> These countries are included in the CSES data set.

**Table 2. SES Predictors of Non-Voting**

		United States		Poland		Canada		Hungary		Israel		Ukraine	
		B	S.E.	B	S.E.	B	S.E.	B	S.E.	B	S.E.	B	S.E.
<b>Age</b>	<i>Young</i>												
	Middle Aged	-0,57 **	(0,16)	-0,53 **	(0,13)	-0,37 **	(0,15)	-0,64 **	(0,16)	-0,08	(0,43)	-0,53 *	(0,22)
	Older	-1,74 **	(0,23)	-1,01 **	(0,17)	-1,33 **	(0,18)	-0,97 **	(0,22)	-0,81	(0,50)	-1,23 **	(0,31)
<b>Education</b>	<i>Little or No Education</i>												
	Complete Secondary	-0,90 **	(0,20)	-0,80 **	(0,14)	-0,39 **	(0,18)	-0,83 **	(0,18)	-0,69	(0,44)	0,24	(0,28)
	Some Post-Secondary	-1,90 **	(0,21)	-1,20 **	(0,20)	-0,94 **	(0,17)	-1,45 **	(0,26)	-0,93	(0,45)	0,03	(0,28)
<b>Religious Attendance</b>	<i>Never</i>												
	At least Once per Year	-0,30	(0,23)	-0,61	(0,32)	NA		-0,33 **	(0,15)	-0,46	(0,44)	-0,40	(0,22)
	At least Once per Month	-0,82 **	(0,19)	-1,47 **	(0,31)	NA		-0,65 **	(0,24)	-0,74	(0,49)	-1,07 **	(0,33)
<b>Income Quintile</b>	<i>Lowest Quintile</i>												
	Second Quintile	-0,15	(0,28)	-0,15	(0,19)	-0,51 *	(0,22)	-0,19	(0,21)	0,55	(0,49)	0,09	(0,29)
	Third Quintile	-0,37	(0,24)	-0,22	(0,18)	-0,48 *	(0,21)	-0,45 *	(0,22)	0,26	(0,55)	-0,04	(0,30)
	Fourth Quintile	-0,37	(0,24)	-0,37	(0,19)	-0,91 **	(0,15)	-0,61 **	(0,23)	0,04	(0,66)	0,17	(0,30)
	Highest Quintile	-0,89 **	(0,30)	-0,42 *	(0,20)	-0,84 **	(0,13)	-0,26	(0,23)	0,36	(0,64)	0,27	(0,30)
<b>Place of Residence</b>	<i>Rural</i>												
	Town	-0,29	(0,39)	-0,23 *	(0,14)	NA		-0,23	(0,14)	-0,13	(0,51)	0,75 **	(0,25)
	Suburb	-0,75	(0,39)	0,11	(0,21)	NA		NA		NA		NA	
	City	-1,28 *	(0,40)	-0,24	(0,15)	0,10	(0,13)	-0,25	(0,21)	0,89	(0,56)	0,21	(0,27)
<b>Marital Status</b>	<i>Not Married</i>												
	Married	-0,80 **	(0,15)	-0,48 **	(0,12)	-0,19	(0,12)	-0,14	(0,15)	-0,46	(0,39)	-0,15	(0,20)
<b>Union Affiliation</b>	<i>No Affiliation</i>												
	Membership or Household	-0,44 *	(0,20)	-0,28	(0,15)	0,03	(0,19)	-0,62 **	(0,19)	0,02	(0,35)	-0,45 *	(0,20)
<b>Gender</b>	<i>Female</i>												
	Male	0,13	(0,15)	-0,55 **	(0,12)	0,01	(0,16)	-0,31 *	(0,13)	0,53	(0,40)	-0,33	(0,20)
<b>Employment Status</b>	<i>Not in Labor Force</i>												
	Part-time or Unemployed	0,29	(0,23)	0,03	(0,18)	-0,06	(0,27)	0,48 *	(0,24)	0,10	(0,44)	0,27	(0,27)
	Employed Full-time	0,03	(0,21)	0,16	(0,15)	0,34	(0,25)	0,25	(0,18)	-1,43 **	(0,47)	-0,05	(0,26)
<b>Religious Denomination</b>	(Specific to country)												
						-0,83 **	(0,25) <sup>a</sup>					-0,94 *	(0,33) <sup>d</sup>
						-0,66 **	(0,16) <sup>b</sup>					-1,03 *	(0,37) <sup>e</sup>
<b>Minority Community</b>	(Specific to country)												
						-0,62 **	(0,16) <sup>c</sup>			3,17 **	(1,04)		
<b>Constant</b>		2,21 **	(0,49)	2,64 **	(0,43)	1,48 **	(0,31)	0,93 *	(0,46)	-3,56	(1,36)	0,23	(0,51)
<b>Variance Explained</b>		19%		14%		11%		11%		10%		9%	
<b>% Non-Voters</b>		28%		43%		31%		29%		8%		23%	
<b>N</b>		1 385		1 681		1 581		1 388		554		813	

a. Protestant  
b. Catholic

c. Agnostic  
d. Atheist

e. "No religion"

**Note:** Logistic regression coefficients (log-odds) predict non-voting. \*p<0.05, \*\*p<0.01.

**Source:** CSES Module 1.

**Table 2. SES Predictors of Non-Voting**

		Norway		Germany		United Kingdom		Japan		Czech Republic		Mexico	
		B	S.E.	B	S.E.	B	S.E.	B	S.E.	B	S.E.	B	S.E.
<b>Age</b>	<i>Young</i>												
	Middle Aged	-0,59 **	(0,18)	-0,64 **	(0,25)	-0,54 **	(0,14)	-0,81 **	(0,23)	-0,51	(0,29)	-0,73 **	(0,14)
	Older	-1,39 **	(0,21)	-1,00 *	(0,27)	-1,24 **	(0,20)	-1,57 **	(0,30)	-1,17 **	(0,35)	-1,19 **	(0,15)
<b>Education</b>	<i>Little or No Education</i>												
	Complete Secondary	-0,06	(0,17)	-0,86 **	(0,30)	-0,24	(0,21)	0,32	(0,28)	-0,41	(0,41)	-0,55 **	(0,16)
	Some Post-Secondary	-0,56 **	(0,22)	-0,51	(0,36)	-0,30 *	(0,16)	-0,11	(0,31)	-0,51	(0,29)	-0,64 **	(0,15)
<b>Religious Attendance</b>	<i>Never</i>												
	At least Once per Year			-0,56 *	(0,25)	-0,68 **	(0,18)	NA		0,14	(0,30)		
	At least Once per Month	-0,29	(0,19)	-1,10 **	(0,39)	-0,63 **	(0,21)	NA		-1,45	(0,76)	-0,67 **	(0,12)
<b>Income Quintile</b>	<i>Lowest Quintile</i>												
	Second Quintile	-0,24	(0,22)	NA		-0,55 *	(0,19)	-0,53 *	(0,27)	-0,61	(0,43)	NA	
	Third Quintile	-0,60 *	(0,27)	NA		-0,30	(0,20)	-0,61 *	(0,29)	0,09	(0,37)	NA	
	Fourth Quintile	-0,67 *	(0,30)	NA		-1,02 **	(0,24)	-1,38 **	(0,36)	-0,49	(0,41)	NA	
	Highest Quintile	-0,77 *	(0,34)	NA		-0,43	(0,23)	-0,90 **	(0,32)	-0,64	(0,45)	NA	
<b>Place of Residence</b>	<i>Rural</i>												
	Town	-0,08	(0,18)	-0,28	(0,33)	NA		NA		0,40	(0,32)	0,04	(0,18)
	Suburb	-0,17	(0,19)	-0,04	(0,25)	NA		NA		0,91 **	(0,35)	NA	
	City	-0,52 *	(0,22)	-0,10	(0,29)	NA		NA		0,39	(0,48)	-0,19	(0,18)
<b>Marital Status</b>	<i>Not Married</i>												
	Married	-0,27	(0,20)	-0,50	(0,21)	-0,37 **	(0,20)	NA		-0,41	(0,26)	0,10	(0,13)
<b>Union Affiliation</b>	<i>No Affiliation</i>												
	Membership or Household	-0,30 *	(0,15)	-0,18	(0,23)	-0,21	(0,19)	-0,32	(0,32)	-0,61 *	(0,28)	-0,07	(0,19)
<b>Gender</b>	<i>Female</i>												
	Male	0,40 **	(0,15)	0,03	(0,20)	-0,02	(0,27)	-0,14	(0,21)	-0,17	(0,24)	0,10	(0,14)
<b>Employment Status</b>	<i>Not in Labor Force</i>												
	Part-time or Unemployed	0,25	(0,23)	0,08	(0,30)	-0,19	(0,21)	-0,11	(0,37)	0,06	(0,44)	-0,20	(0,28)
	Employed Full-time	0,07	(0,21)	-0,30	(0,25)	0,12	(0,38)	-0,02	(0,25)	-0,05	(0,30)	-0,19	(0,15)
<b>Religious Denomination</b>	(Specific to country)			-2,44 **	(0,50) <sup>b</sup>							-0,53 **	(0,19) <sup>b</sup>
				-2,51 **	(0,49) <sup>a</sup>								
				-2,54 **	(0,50) <sup>c</sup>								
<b>Minority Community</b> (Specific to country)													
<b>Constant</b>		-0,49 *	(0,24)	1,37 *	(0,57)	1,18 **	(0,31)	-0,45	(0,36)	-1,47 *	(0,71)	0,82 **	(0,29)
<b>Variance Explained</b>		8%		7%		7%		6%		6%		6%	
<b>% Non-Voters</b>		14%		4%		17%		16%		10%		25%	
<b>N</b>		1 919		1 936		2 931		934		954		1 860	

**Note:** Logistic regression coefficients (log-odds) predict non-voting. \*p<0.05, \*\*p<0.01.

**Source:** CSES Module 1.

**Table 2. SES Predictors of Non-Voting**

		Netherlands		Romania		Taiwan		Spain		New Zealand		Australia ***	
		B	S.E.	B	S.E.	B	S.E.	B	S.E.	B	S.E.	B	S.E.
<b>Age</b>	<i>Young</i>												
	Middle Aged	-0.39	(0.23)	-0.38	(0.27)	-0.78 *	(0.36)	-0.50	(0.31)	-1.11 **	(0.42)	-0.08	(0.67)
	Older	-0.62 *	(0.27)	-0.59	(0.31)	-1.24 *	(0.44)	-1.44 **	(0.43)	-1.84 **	(0.52)	-0.48	(0.80)
<b>Education</b>	<i>Little or No Education</i>												
	Complete Secondary	-0.63	(0.47)	-0.15	(0.27)	-0.11	(0.38)	-0.27	(0.44)	0.16	(0.55)	0.91	(0.70)
	Some Post-Secondary	-0.70 **	(0.21)	-1.80 **	(0.55)	-0.41	(0.41)	0.38	(0.34)	-0.50	(0.41)	-0.64	(0.74)
<b>Religious Attendance</b>	<i>Never</i>												
	At least Once per Year	-0.11	(0.25)	0.06	(0.38)	-1.07 *	(0.49)	NA		-0.32	(0.45)	-0.17	(0.69)
	At least Once per Month	-0.81 **	(0.31)	0.13	(0.39)	-0.21	(0.43)	NA		-0.63	(0.58)	-0.87	(0.94)
<b>Income Quintile</b>	<i>Lowest Quintile</i>												
	Second Quintile	0.53	(0.29)	0.16	(0.29)	0.21	(0.43)	0.25	(0.43)	-0.95 *	(0.48)	0.41	(0.88)
	Third Quintile	0.51	(0.30)	0.07	(0.36)	0.23	(0.47)	0.22	(0.41)	-0.96	(0.50)	0.06	(0.96)
	Fourth Quintile	-0.46	(0.36)	-1.40 *	(0.58)	0.37	(0.46)	-0.29	(0.51)	-1.81	(0.99)	-1.35	(1.34)
	Highest Quintile	-0.29	(0.38)	0.26	(0.41)	0.65	(0.47)	0.13	(0.51)	-0.46	(0.59)	-0.29	(1.15)
<b>Place of Residence</b>	<i>Rural</i>												
	Town	0.04	(0.33)	-0.07	(0.38)	-0.68	(0.41)	0.85 **	(0.30)	-0.83	(0.51)	-0.13	(1.20)
	Suburb	0.15	(0.28)	0.12	(0.34)	-0.43	(0.37)	0.00	(0.53)	-1.40 **	(0.52)	0.85	(0.80)
	City	0.18	(0.35)	0.02	(0.29)	-0.44	(0.36)	-0.08	(0.37)	-1.18 **	(0.44)	0.52	(0.74)
<b>Marital Status</b>	<i>Not Married</i>												
	Married	-0.28	(0.22)	-0.41	(0.23)	-0.61	(0.31)	0.20	(0.29)	-0.19	(0.37)	1.20	(0.84)
<b>Union Affiliation</b>	<i>No Affiliation</i>												
	Membership or Household	-0.88 **	(0.22)	-0.30	(0.29)	-0.45	(0.28)	0.21	(0.38)	-0.25	(0.43)	0.45	(0.55)
<b>Gender</b>	<i>Female</i>												
	Male	-0.05	(0.22)	-0.56 *	(0.23)	0.02	(0.28)	-0.01	(0.29)	-0.15	(0.37)	0.58	(0.59)
<b>Employment Status</b>	<i>Not in Labor Force</i>												
	Part-time or Unemployed	0.88 **	(0.26)	0.05	(0.41)	-0.55	(0.52)	-0.19	(0.37)	-0.57	(0.59)	0.79	(0.72)
	Employed Full-time	0.32	(0.27)	0.21	(0.29)	-0.07	(0.34)	-0.28	(0.37)	0.20	(0.51)	-0.49	(0.77)
<b>Religious Denomination</b>	(Specific to country)							-1.34 *	(0.64) <sup>b</sup>				
<b>Minority Community</b> (Specific to country)													
<b>Constant</b>		-1.74 **	(0.41)	-1.08	(0.66)	-1.06	(0.80)	-0.90	(0.78)	-6.92	(19.34)	-5.81 **	(1.54)
<b>Variance Explained</b>		6%		5%		5%		5%		5%		2%	
<b>% Non-Voters</b>		9%		11%		8%		10%		3%		1%	
<b>N</b>		1 612		1 043		933		814		1 396		1 449	

**Note:** Logistic regression coefficients (log-odds) predict non-voting. \*p<0.05, \*\*p<0.01.

**Source:** CSES Module 1.

**Table 3. SES and Non-Voting: Controlling for System-Level Effects**

	<u>Model 1</u>			<u>Model 2</u>		
	(Contextual Effects)			(Model 1 + SES)		
	B	SE	Exp(B)	B	SE	Exp(B)
<b>CONTEXTUAL FACTORS</b>						
<b>Economic Conditions</b>						
Wealth (LN GNP per capita) ***	-0,48	(0,06) **	0,62	-0,23	(0,06) **	0,79
Distribution (LN Gini Index) ***	-0,64	(0,13) **	0,53	-0,02	(0,15)	0,98
<b>New vs. Consolidated Democracies</b>						
<i>Consolidated</i>						
New Democracy	0,50	(0,07) **	1,65	0,86	(0,08) **	2,37
<b>Electoral Rules</b>						
<i>SMSP</i>						
Mixed / Majoritarian	-0,05	(0,04)	0,95	-0,17	(0,05) **	0,84
PR	-0,65	(0,07) **	0,52	-0,83	(0,07) **	0,44
<b>Effective Number of Parties ***</b>	-0,23	(0,03) **	0,79	-0,05	(0,03)	0,95
<b>FACILITATIVE FACTORS</b>						
<b>Age</b>						
<i>Young</i>						
Middle-Aged				-0,78	(0,04) **	0,46
Older				-1,31	(0,04) **	0,27
<b>Education</b>						
<i>Incomplete Secondary</i>						
Complete Secondary				-0,18	(0,04) **	0,83
Post-Secondary				-0,64	(0,04) **	0,53
<b>Religious Attendance</b>						
<i>Never</i>						
Infrequent				-0,18	(0,04) **	0,84
Frequent				-0,03	(0,05)	0,97
<b>Household Income</b>						
<i>Lowest Quintile</i>						
Second Quintile				-0,24	(0,05) **	0,79
Third Quintile				-0,37	(0,05) **	0,69
Fourth Quintile				-0,52	(0,06) **	0,59
Highest Quintile				-0,54	(0,06) **	0,58
Constant	5,68	(0,87)		1,50	(1,00) **	4,49
<b>Nagelkerke R<sup>2</sup></b>	4%			12%		
<b>% Correctly Classified</b>	81%			81%		
<b>-2 Log Likelihood</b>	26 453			24 954		
<b>n</b>	27 946			27 946		

\*\*\* Entered as covariates. \*\* p< 0.01, \* p<0.05 .

**Note:** Logistic regression coefficients (log-odds and odds) predict non-voting. Australia and Mexico not included.  
**Source:** CSES Module 1.