

**Voter Mobilization of Low Income Citizens in
Advanced Industrial States:
The Effects of Party Identification and
Programmatic Party Positions**

by

Natalia Vaia Tzemis

B.A., University of British Columbia, 2010

Research Project Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts

in the

Department of Political Science
Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

© Natalia Vaia Tzemis 2012

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

Spring 2012

All rights reserved.

However, in accordance with the *Copyright Act of Canada*, this work may be reproduced, without authorization, under the conditions for "Fair Dealing." Therefore, limited reproduction of this work for the purposes of private study, research, criticism, review and news reporting is likely to be in accordance with the law, particularly if cited appropriately.

Approval

Name: Natalia Vaia Tzemis
Degree: Master of Arts (Political Science)
Title of Thesis: *Voter Mobilization of Low Income Citizens in Advanced Industrial States: The Effects of Party Identification and Programmatic Party Positions*

Examining Committee:

Chair: Andrew Heard, Associate Professor

Steven Weldon
Senior Supervisor
Associate Professor

David Laycock
Supervisor
Associate Professor

Laurent Dobuzinskis
External Examiner
Associate Professor, Political Science
Simon Fraser University

Date Defended/Approved: April 18, 2012

Partial Copyright Licence



The author, whose copyright is declared on the title page of this work, has granted to Simon Fraser University the right to lend this thesis, project or extended essay to users of the Simon Fraser University Library, and to make partial or single copies only for such users or in response to a request from the library of any other university, or other educational institution, on its own behalf or for one of its users.

The author has further granted permission to Simon Fraser University to keep or make a digital copy for use in its circulating collection (currently available to the public at the "Institutional Repository" link of the SFU Library website (www.lib.sfu.ca) at <http://summit/sfu.ca> and, without changing the content, to translate the thesis/project or extended essays, if technically possible, to any medium or format for the purpose of preservation of the digital work.

The author has further agreed that permission for multiple copying of this work for scholarly purposes may be granted by either the author or the Dean of Graduate Studies.

It is understood that copying or publication of this work for financial gain shall not be allowed without the author's written permission.

Permission for public performance, or limited permission for private scholarly use, of any multimedia materials forming part of this work, may have been granted by the author. This information may be found on the separately catalogued multimedia material and in the signed Partial Copyright Licence.

While licensing SFU to permit the above uses, the author retains copyright in the thesis, project or extended essays, including the right to change the work for subsequent purposes, including editing and publishing the work in whole or in part, and licensing other parties, as the author may desire.

The original Partial Copyright Licence attesting to these terms, and signed by this author, may be found in the original bound copy of this work, retained in the Simon Fraser University Archive.

Simon Fraser University Library
Burnaby, British Columbia, Canada

revised Fall 2011

Abstract

With electoral participation decreasing disproportionately among low-income citizens in advanced democracies, understanding factors that contribute to this decline becomes increasingly important. By distinguishing among various partisans, I reveal how programmatic positions of the dominant left party affect the mobilization of this cohort. A comparative empirical analysis reveals that strong partisans, weak partisans, and nonpartisans are more likely to vote when the left party is further left on a unidimensional policy scale. However, the effect of left party positions on turnout is strongest among weak partisans. When left parties become increasingly right in their position, the likelihood of voting among weak partisans becomes smaller than individuals with no party attachments. Thus, the effects of policy positions are influential enough to alter the positive impact of party identification on turnout. Furthermore, supplementary analyses indicate that the mechanism behind the voting behaviour of low-income voters is consistent with directional models of voting rather than proximity models.

Keywords: voter mobilization; low-income; advanced democracies; party identification; party positions

Dedication

I would like to dedicate this project to those who offered me their support over the past two years. In particular I would like to thank my supervisor, Steven Weldon. Your encouragement, kindness, and faith in me made this project possible.

Acknowledgements

It is my pleasure to thank Steven Weldon, David Laycock, and Laurent Dobuzinskis for their helpful comments on earlier versions of this project.

Table of Contents

Approval.....	ii
Partial Copyright Licence	iii
Abstract.....	iv
Dedication.....	v
Acknowledgements.....	vi
Table of Contents.....	vii
List of Tables.....	ix
List of Figures.....	x
Introduction	1
Theory	3
Sociopsychological/Partisan Factors.....	3
Socioeconomic Factors.....	5
Rational Choice Explanations.....	7
Method, Data and Measures	13
Dependent Variable.....	13
Main Explanatory Variables.....	14
Individual-Level Control Variables	15
Country-Level Control Variables.....	16
Preliminary Analysis.....	18
Results	25
Baseline Models.....	25
Full Multilevel Models.....	27
Alternative Hypothesis.....	35
Supplementary Analysis.....	36
Limitations.....	38
Discussion	41
References	44
Appendices	48
Appendix A. List of Countries and Left Parties	49
Appendix B. One-Way ANOVA Test.....	50
Appendix C. T-Test for Categorical Variables.....	51
Appendix D. Full Aggregate Level Model with Low-Income Turnout as Dependent Variable.....	52
Appendix E. Model Checks for Aggregate Level Model	53
Appendix F. Correlation between Interval Country-Level Variables with Vote Gap as Dependent Variable	54

Appendix G.	Interaction of Left Party Programmatic Position and Education	55
Appendix H.	Calculations	56
Appendix I.	Interaction of Left Party Programmatic Position and Strong Partisans	57

List of Tables

Table 1.	Correlation between Interval Country-Level Variables.....	19
Table 2.	Preliminary Country-Level Model With Low-Income Turnout as Dependent Variable	22
Table 3.	Country-Level Model with Vote Gap as Dependent Variable	23
Table 4.	Baseline Models	26
Table 5.	Determinant of Low-Income Citizens' Propensity to Vote	28
Table 6.	Effect of Left Party Position on Party Identification	35
Table 7.	Effect of Left Party Position on Feeling of Representation.....	37

List of Figures

Figure 1. Relation of Low-Income Voters' Self-Placement to Party Positions and Perceived Party Positions	8
Figure 2. Placement of Low-Income Strong Partisans, Weak Partisans and Nonpartisans	10
Figure 3. Model of Low-Income Voter Turnout	11
Figure 4. Interaction Effect between Left Party Position and Left-Right Distance on Low-Income Voter Turnout	32
Figure 5. Interaction between Left Party Position and Partisan Attachments.....	34

Introduction

Few subjects in political science have received as much attention as electoral participation. With turnout rates declining in recent decades, political scientists continue to investigate what some consider a malaise in contemporary democracies. Moreover, the decrease in turnout is disproportionately among low-income citizens (Pacek and Radcliff 1995, 138; see also Solt 2008; Gray and Caul 2000), and several scholars have found this affects the policy programs of government. When turnout levels are higher, we often see higher levels of welfare spending, redistributive taxation, and social expenditures (Fumagalli and Narciso 2012; Pontusson and Rueda 2010). Low-income citizens, who are net beneficiaries of such economic policies, are thus victims of their own absence in the electoral process. Understanding the factors that inhibit this cohort from voting can yield to solutions that may increase their electoral participation and revive the democratic process in this sense.

Previous research on turnout among low-income citizens focuses largely on socioeconomic and group mobilization explanations, paying less attention to the role of political parties. Furthermore, of the three party features that influence voter turnout—organization, competitiveness and programmatic positions—few scholars have systematically examined the latter, instead focusing on factors such as candidate spending, the closeness of the election, and party competitiveness (e.g. Huckfelt and Sprague 1992; Patterson and Caldeira 1983). I draw on the literature on voting and party behaviour to develop and empirically test a theory of electoral turnout that incorporates parties' programmatic positions and party identification. With the notable exception of Heath (2007) and Degan (2006) most of the literature does not explore degrees of partisanship among voters and its affect on turnout.¹

I argue that we have good reasons to hypothesize that one's degree of partisan attachment conditions the effect that dominant left parties' programmatic positions have

¹ Unfortunately, Degan (2006) does not empirically test her model.

on turnout for low-income citizens. The effect of programmatic positions should be strongest among those who do not identify with any political party but should also have an effect on those who feel somewhat close to the dominant left party. Whereas weaker partisans and nonpartisans are more likely to vote when the left party's programmatic position is increasingly moderate, I argue that strong partisans vote independently of its position on a left-right scale.

Using data from Model 2 of the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSESII), which provides both individual and macro-level data, this comparative approach supplements existing research on the effects of programmatic positions on turnout levels that are generally confined to single country analyses. The theory and method of this project, therefore, contribute to a generalized understanding of how political parties' policy positions and citizens' feelings of partisan attachment interact with one another to affect turnout in advanced democracies. This study shows that partisan attachments do mediate the way in which party positions affect turnout, though not as hypothesized. All low-income individuals (strong partisans, weak partisans, and nonpartisans) are more likely to vote when the left party is further left on a unidimensional policy scale. The effect of left party programmatic positions on turnout is strongest among weak partisans. When left parties become increasingly right in their programmatic position, the likelihood of voting among weak partisans becomes smaller than individuals with no party attachments. Thus, the effects of policy positions are influential enough to alter the positive effect of party identification on turnout. Furthermore, supplementary analyses indicate that the mechanism behind the voting behaviour of low-income voters is consistent with directional models of voting rather than proximity models.

Theory

The importance of electoral participation attracts a multitude of perspectives to explain patterns of voter turnout. Theories of voting behaviour can be categorized into the three main approaches: sociopsychological, socioeconomic, and rational choice. In each perspective, the cost-benefit analysis of voting is central and, thus, explaining turnout patterns requires that we understand how factors increase either the costs or benefits of voting. Below, I review these approaches to develop a model of how partisan attachments mediate the effect that programmatic positions have on turnout levels. I focus on individuals from the two lowest household income quintiles and examine their voting behaviour in reaction to variations in dominant left parties' positions on a left-right scale. This approach allows me to establish how partisan attachments and programmatic positions interact to affect turnout decline among this cohort across countries.

Sociopsychological/Partisan Factors

In order to overcome the collective action problem of voting, one must assume that voting provides utility to individuals.² Theorization of party identification is one of the most important developments in contemporary democracies in this sense. A prominent aspect of party identification is that it provides a clear and low-cost cue for electoral choice, especially among unsophisticated voters (Dalton 2000b). In advanced democracies, party identification formed from historical class-structures and the left has been representative of working-class interests. Although increases in education and expansions in issue voting are changing the basis of this, class-based opinions on

² Olson (1965) argues that individuals have an incentive to “free ride” on the efforts of others when a collective goal is pursued. He stresses the importance of material incentives to overcome the free-riding problem while Riker and Ordeshook (1973) introduce expressive incentives.

socioeconomic issues remain in the foreground of partisan attachments and vote choice (Dalton 2006, ch. 6).

Expressive utility can be largely accounted for by party identification and predict the electoral behaviour of individuals. Therefore, contextual factors, such as programmatic positions can be expected to have different effects (or at least varying degrees of effects) on those with party attachments and those without them. For this reason, when exploring how programmatic positions of the dominant left party affect turnout, I do so in relation to one's identification (or lack of) to this party. A distinction is made between three types of citizens who are likely to be influenced by policy positions of the left: strong partisans, weak partisans, and nonpartisans.

For individuals who have strong partisan attachments to the dominant left party, there should be no significant change in turnout levels with shifts in programmatic positions. This is for three reasons. First, strong partisanship provides individuals with a greater sense of personal motivation (or loyalty) to show up to the polls and support their preferred party, independent of other factors. Much research supports this claim by illustrating that declining turnout levels are often explained by the weakening of party identification (Heath 2007; Dalton 2000b). For this same reason, those with strong partisan attachments are also more easily mobilized by political parties to turn out to the polls when contacted (Dalton 2000b, 21). Second, partisan attachments reduce information and decision making costs, which perpetuates a habit of voting. Those with strong partisan attachments often adopt the position that their preferred party takes, which entrenches their electoral support for this party. As an individual ages and has repeatedly supported the same party, the strength in partisanship increases and contributes to the personal motivation discussed above (Converse 1969). Finally, strong partisans are unlikely to be disloyal to the dominant left party because they generally do not acquire information about elections and party positions (Degan 2006), which may potentially influence their electoral support for this party. Without exposure to information that may contradict deeply held values, the possibility of abstention decreases dramatically. Strong partisans are found to be much more likely to vote than those with no identification at all (Heath 2007) and should, therefore, be relatively unaffected by shifts in programmatic positions. The expressive benefit from voting, for these individuals, largely outweighs any costs that inhibit the probability of voting out.

Voters' identification with political parties has been on the decline in advanced industrial states (Dalton 2000b; 2006). With party identification—which is largely responsible for mobilizing some voters to show up to the polls—absent or weakening in an increased number of individuals, contextual factors can be expected to have a larger role in voting decisions. Thus, expressive utility among low-income individuals varies and, therefore, so should the way contextual factors influence them. The effect of programmatic positions should increase as party attachments decrease. This is because the expressive benefit from asserting one's loyalty to a party decreases with the weakening of party identification. Thus, in order for the benefit of voting to outweigh the costs among weak partisans or nonpartisans, individuals must be influenced by other factors that increase utility in place of this expressive benefit.

Socioeconomic Factors

Socioeconomic factors have been the main focus for theories attempting to explain why turnout rates are particularly low for low-income citizens. This is because the behaviour of the electorate can be largely explained by its political abilities. Though the consensus is that development of political abilities depends on “time to take part, money to contribute to campaigns and other political causes, and skills to use time and money effectively” (Verba et al. 1995, 16), scholars disagree on the electorate's degree of political sophistication (see Dalton 2000a). Nonetheless, even with this ongoing debate, if political abilities depend on resources, then low-income voters, on average, should have less sophistication. We know, for example, that individuals with lower incomes tend to have lower political knowledge (Delli Carpini and Keeter 1991).

When resources are limited, voters become increasingly dependent on external groups to reduce the cost of obtaining information. This is evident from the impact on turnout that declining unionization rates have on low-status individuals (Gray and Caul 2000). Accompanied by growing patterns of party dealignment, where ties between individuals and parties are eroding, low-income individuals are increasingly short of decision-making clues. Thus, there are an increasing number of low-income individuals who are ill-equipped to deal with the complexities of political life. For those with weak or no party identification, the cost of voting should be higher than for those with strong party

attachments because the vote choice decision-making process requires additional information and skills. These resources are especially hard to obtain when individuals have greater urgency to concentrate on personal welfare instead of political participation. As costs of acquiring information accumulate, the benefits to voting are more likely outweighed, leading to abstention in electoral politics.

Recent literature has distinguished between two types of citizens without party attachments: the apartisan and the apolitical (Dalton 2006, ch. 9). Dalton argues that rising education levels coupled with growing information availability has increased the number of sophisticated nonpartisans. These apartisans, as Dalton terms them, tend to identify as independents and base their vote choice more on issue preferences than party loyalties. They are comfortable navigating the complexity of politics and gathering the necessary information to make an informed choice. Apoliticals are similar to apartisans in that they lack partisan attachment; however, critically, they differ in terms of political sophistication. In this way, apolitical citizens have, as earlier research claims, “somewhat poorer knowledge of the issues [and] their image of the candidate is fainter” (Campbell et al. 1960, 143).

While for citizens of high status, the apartisan may be emerging in the way recent literature contends, apoliticals are likely to be concentrated among low-income citizens as they continue to lack resources needed to be politically involved, making them less interested in participating in political life (Solt 2008). Unfamiliarity with politics increases decision making costs as individuals are troubled by the possibility of making the wrong choice, that is, casting a ballot for a candidate/party that will not provide the instrumental benefits conceived of by the voter. For this reason, they may choose to entrust electoral decisions to informed voters by abstaining in elections (Feddersen and Pendorfer 1996). Degan (2006) argues that citizens without party attachments acquire information when it is not too costly but abstain if they remain uninformed. Abstention in electoral participation is greatest among uninformed individuals (Downs 1957, 260-76; Palfrey and Poole 1987) and should be particularly high among low-income apoliticals who have fewer resources to obtain information.

Rational Choice Explanations

For those without strong party attachments, the political context is found to have an increasing influence on voter turnout. Most scholars who explore this, though, do not distinguish between apartisans and apoliticals. Some do not make distinctions between weak and strong partisans. It is therefore uncertain whether their findings apply equally among these subgroups. I therefore make an assumption that these results apply to weak partisans and, even more so, to low-income nonpartisans whom I categorize as apoliticals as they should be more unfamiliar with politics than weak partisans. In contrast to strong partisans, weak partisans and apoliticals should be more likely influenced by programmatic positions of the dominant left party. Heath (2007) finds that individuals without party attachments are more strongly influenced by the political context than strong partisans. He concludes that short term factors and variations are becoming increasingly important in determining whether people vote, especially as the number of nonpartisans increases. If the added utility from partisan loyalty is absent (or significantly diminished) in the cost-benefit analysis of voting among individuals without party attachments, some other form of utility must be present in order for us to make sense of the relatively high turnout levels in advanced democracies. Without this utility, the cost of voting will largely outweigh the benefit (especially when considering that, in large democracies, the chances of one's vote being pivotal is so small that it is negligible), and we should therefore expect turnout rates to be much smaller than observed.

To varying degrees, individuals will obtain some expressive or instrumental value from voting. That is, they expect some benefit from either the act of voting (such as a sense of civic duty) or from their preferred party's success at elections (such as the implementation of a particular policy). Whether this expected benefit leads to voting depends on whether its value is sufficient enough to outweigh the particularly high costs of voting among this cohort. This sufficiency can be influenced by a number of factors including the policy positions of electoral parties which should affect instrumental utility most prominently. In other words, utility is manipulable and policy positions can alter the perceived benefits to a voter and, thus, potentially outweigh the costs of voting.

When the link between parties and voters is strengthened, it increases the propensity of voters to turn out. This link can be strengthened by the extent that a party represents the interests of its constituents (Pacek and Radcliff 1995, 138). Hence, representation becomes a mechanism for motivating particular classes to vote for particular parties. Despite a higher pay-off for low-income citizens from programmatic positions that advocate increased egalitarianism, programmatic positions of the dominant left parties which are moderate should increase voting among this cohort.³ This is because moderate left party positions are ideologically closer to where low-income voters place themselves. Figure 1 shows that low-income individuals place themselves closer to the dominant left party than the dominant right party making it rational for them to turnout for the left. The figure also shows that low-income individuals are slightly right of where they place the left party and that they place this party accurately on a left-right scale.

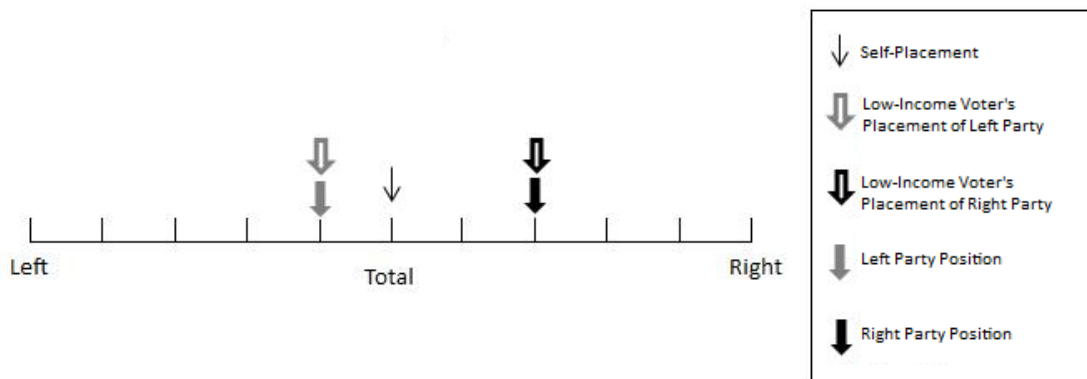


Figure 1. Relation of Low-Income Voters' Self-Placement to Party Positions and Perceived Party Positions

Note. All positions and placements are derived from the CSESII dataset.

³ It should be noted here that this may actually goes against Heath's (2007) conclusion. Heath uses an individual's perception of ideological difference between the two dominant parties as an indicator of whether or not short-term political factors are salient. A larger difference indicates that an individual perceives the political context to be of increased salience. Heath finds that when there is a larger ideological difference, the odds of voting increase. However, if we are to take this ideological difference more literally as to representing where an individual places the two parties on a left-right scale (and not simply as a general indication of how intense short-term factors are), it could mean that an individual is, therefore, more likely to vote when the two parties are more extreme (as this would widen the gap between the left and the right which was shown to increase voting). However, it could also mean that the individual perceives one party to be extreme (for us, the right), and the other rather moderate (for us, the left) which would not contradict the theory in this paper.

I argue that low-income individuals place themselves at a more moderate position on a left-right scale due to shifting values. In recent decades, as inequality has increased, higher status citizens are increasingly dominating politics (Solt 2008). The effect of this is that low-income citizens start internalizing the consequences of capitalism as natural, internalizing the values of the wealthy and powerful (Gaventa 1980, 17). As nations satisfy basic economic and physical needs for its citizens, attitudes are shaped less by one's perception of their economic status and more so by their socialization (Inglehart 1990). Thus, when left parties advocate for policies that go against free enterprise, low-income citizens view these policies with increased skepticism. Moderate party positions should, therefore, better mobilize this cohort to vote as it does not conflict with capitalist values that are increasingly internalized by individuals in recent decades.

Figure 2 displays the placements of low-income individuals with various partisan attachments on a left-right programmatic scale. Among strong and weak partisans of the dominant left as well those with no partisan attachments, strong partisans place themselves furthest left on this scale, meaning that their policy preferences are most leftist. Weak partisans are slightly more moderate than strong partisans on the same scale, while those with no party attachments see themselves relatively to the right in comparison to both these groups. Since this is the case, we can expect these individuals to show up to the polls in greater numbers when the dominant left party takes on programmatic positions that converge towards them; hence, when these parties are more moderate. This follows from Downs (1957) classic spatial modeling assumption that when the ideological proximity between a party and mass partisans is closer, turnout should increase.⁴ Since the number of voters without party attachments is significant in contemporary democracies, such a rightward shift should increase turnout among this cohort.

⁴ This assumption does not apply to strong partisans as these individuals vote largely out of expressive benefits.

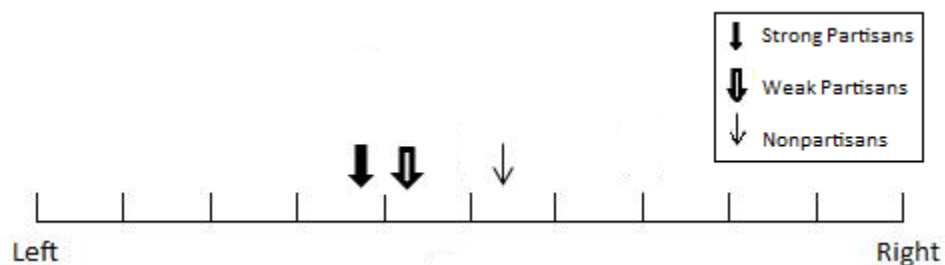


Figure 2. Placement of Low-Income Strong Partisans, Weak Partisans and Nonpartisans

Note. All placements are derived from the CSESII dataset.

A rightwards shift should increase turnout among weak partisans and apoliticals without deterring turnout among strong partisans, who are expected to show up to the polls independently of shifts in programmatic positions. This conforms to Schuessler’s (2000, ch. 7) argument that definitive policy positions do not always increase turnout because of expressive crowding out. That is, a focus on instrumental utility (through assertions of definitive policy routes) cannot always mobilize voters because it diminishes the effectiveness of expressive utility. Thus, if these parties are too far left, their policies diverge from a large pool of voters (particularly apoliticals) by decreasing both perceived instrumental and expressive utilities of voting. In light of where these individuals place themselves on a left-right scale, dominant left parties with more moderate positions should appeal to a greater number of low-income voters and increase turnout among this cohort. This is supported by Pontusson and Rueda’s (2010) finding that left parties (that generally win the largest left vote share from election to election) move rightward when turnout is low, implying that this shift aims to obtain votes from those positioned closer to the median voter’s position.

However, the dominant left party cannot shift towards the median voter to the extent that it will risk losing its position as a true “left” party and fail to turnout votes. Since parties do not have a clear understanding of where the median voter lies in each election (Adams and Merrill 2006, 404), the dominant left party must be cautious of shifting too far rightwards for fear of losing a substantial amount of electoral support in two ways. First, doing so provides an opportunity for competing left parties to represent themselves as the catalyst for increased egalitarianism, thus reducing support from voters who place themselves relatively left from the median voter on a left-right scale

(abstention due to alienation) and would have otherwise voted for the dominant left. Second, doing so will position the dominant left party too close to the dominant right party, thus losing votes from those who perceive little or no distinguished policy alternative to the right (abstention due to indifference). Thus, there is a point on the programmatic scale that the dominant left party cannot overstep in order to increase votes among weak partisans and apoliticals.

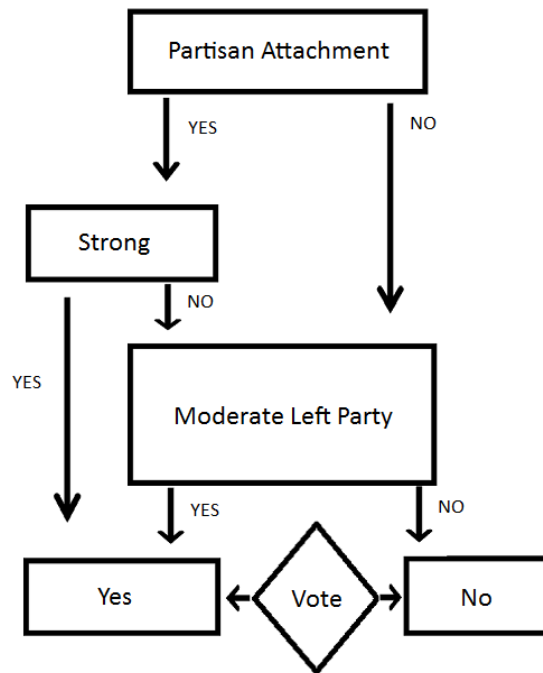


Figure 3. Model of Low-Income Voter Turnout

Figure 3 illustrates the causal direction of the theory developed in this project. Individuals are perceived as either having partisan attachments or not. If they do have strong attachments, they are expected to vote because of the expressive utility derived from loyalty to this party. The act of voting occurs independently of where parties are located on a left-right scale for strong partisans. For weak partisans and apoliticals, programmatic positions of the dominant left party should affect their propensity to vote. Because low-income citizens have fewer resources to be politically sophisticated, moderate policy positions should increase turnout. This is because low-income citizens increasingly adopt values of capitalist societies as they lack resources to influence policy

direction and be politically active at levels which can compete with higher income individuals. Internalizing capitalist values places low-income individuals at a more moderate position on a left-right scale. These individuals are more moderate than the dominant left party and so shifts rightwards by the left party should decrease its ideological proximity to low-income citizens and encourage turnout.

The effect that party positions have on low-income individuals should be stronger among apoliticals than weak partisans because apoliticals lack expressive utility derived from party attachments. Thus, apoliticals should be more influenced by contextual factors. Moderate party positions should increase turnout among apoliticals to a greater extent than it does for weak partisans because apoliticals are, themselves, more moderate on a left-right scale in comparison to weak partisans (and even more so compared to strong partisans). Left parties which are more moderate should decrease the proximity between them and apoliticals. Lastly, left parties must be wary of shifting too far rightwards to avoid causing abstention due to indifference among weak partisans and apoliticals. This is will be induced when the ideological distance between two parties decreases.

Method, Data and Measures

This cross-national analysis includes 27 lower house elections from 2001-2006.⁵ I use data primarily from CSESII which provides both individual and aggregate level data to test the probability of voting among low-income individuals. I employ multilevel models as this approach has several advantages over more conventional approaches, such as Ordinary Least Squares Regression (OLS). First, at its most basic, it allows for the inclusion of variables at different levels into a single model, avoiding model misspecification that would result from single level models. Second, it allows researchers to determine whether the interaction of an effect at the lower level is caused by some factor at the higher level— causal heterogeneity—which can then assist in the goal of generalizability. Third, ignoring the hierarchical characteristic of data increases the likelihood of considering some variables as significant when the null hypothesis is true (Type I error) (Steenbergen and Jones 2002, 219-220).

Dependent Variable

A logistic multilevel model is appropriate for this analysis as the dependent variable is dichotomous. The dependent variable is a micro level variable drawn from the CSESII dataset in which the respondent answered either “yes” or “no” to having cast a ballot in the current election (regardless of whether or not the ballot was valid). Rather than choosing parameters that minimize the sum of squared errors as in regression analyses, parameters that maximize the likelihood of observing the sample values are estimated in logistic regression.

⁵ This analysis includes 26 countries with two elections for Portugal (2002 and 2005). The countries chosen from the CSESII dataset are those that score the highest on the Economist Intelligence Unit’s democracy index. These countries more or less correspond to the ones with the highest human development scores according to the Human Development Index. All are considered “very high” in human development except for Romania and Bulgaria which are considered as “high”.

Main Explanatory Variables

The main explanatory variable, the programmatic position of the dominant left party, is drawn from the Comparative Manifesto Project dataset (CMP) created by Laver and Budge (1992).⁶ It is measured along a scale of -100 (extreme left) to +100 (extreme right) and has been converted to a scale of 0-10 for this project. The CMP score is calculated by subtracting the percentage of favourable mentions towards leftist positions from rightist ones. While the same party often scores quite differently from one election to the next, reflecting measurement error,⁷ averaging a party's position over a certain period will introduce an endogeneity problem (Pontusson and Rueda 2010, 684). For this reason, the current position for each election is used to avoid explaining how turnout of low-status citizens affects party positions of dominant left parties. Finally, despite the absence of estimates of measurement error in the CMP dataset, studies have asserted that the left-right scores assigned to the parties are rather accurate and that such a score are meaningful to voters (Powell 2000).⁸ This is apparent as Figure 1 displayed that low-income individuals can locate party position accurately on a left-right scale. The dominant left party in each country is that which has won the largest "left vote" share

⁶ I use CMP party scores rather than the CSESII party scores of parties because the values in the CSESII data set are not comparable between countries. For example, both the Republicans in the USA and the Conservatives in Canada score 7 in the CSESII dataset when it is clear to both electorates that the Republicans are further right than the Conservatives in absolute terms. The CSESII party scores are useful to locate party positions relative to where respondents place themselves and their competing parties. However, in this project, I am interested in drawing a generalized conclusion of how the rightward shift of left parties in advanced democracies has affected participation among low-income citizens. Therefore, I use the CMP values which are comparable between countries and across time.

⁷ For example, Australia's Labour Party scored 5.2 in the 2001 election but 5 in the following election in 2004; the Liberal Party of Canada was placed at 5.3 in the 1997 election, but at 4.4 in the following election in 2001; France's Socialist Party scored a 4.2 in 2002 but 4 in the next election of 2007.

⁸ Due to the nature of the decentralized characteristic of party organization in the USA, this generalized party score is likely to have the least impact among its citizens. Whereas in other candidate-based electoral systems, such as Canada and Britain, candidates are subject to party lines due to the functions of parliamentary systems, US candidates have a greater ability to vary in their policy stances and thus deviate to a greater degree from the CMP score. Nonetheless, this score should capture where Democratic candidates are generally located and be apparent to the electorate for two reasons. Firstly, the Democratic Party is furthest right (at 5.4) of all left parties in this analysis. Secondly, there is a large difference between it and the party closest to it, the Labour Party in Great Britain, which scores a 4.9. Both these characteristics should make the CMP party score of the Democratic Party meaningful.

(see Appendix A). This party should be easily identified by voters as it has generally not changed over the past twenty years from the election dates sampled.⁹

Burnham (1982, 121-57) finds that parties are most successful in mobilizing voters when they offer notably different ideological positions from other parties. I therefore create a variable that measures the distance between the dominant left and dominant right party in each election. This variable determines whether low-income voters abstain in elections when competing parties are ideologically similar (abstention due to indifference). In particular, it indicates whether there exists a threshold for how far the left can shift rightwards (to increase turnout among low-income weak partisans and apoliticals) before inducing abstention.

Party identification measures partisanship and is constructed using a variable for party attachment and a variable measuring closeness to a party. The former asks whether individuals feel close to any political party. Those who indicate that they do make up one group and those who answer “no” or “don’t know” are combined to make up another.¹⁰ The latter distinguishes partisans as those who feel “very close” (strong partisans) and those who feel “somewhat close” or “not very close” (weak partisans) to a party.

Individual-Level Control Variables

Past literature on turnout has acknowledged a number of mobilizing factors which are taken into account. At the individual level gender, marital status, and religious service attendance are all found to affect turnout (Verba et al. 1995). Age is included as

⁹ Only in seven countries has there been such a change. These countries are Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Iceland, Italy, South Korea, Romania, and Slovenia. (Poland is not considered one of these seven countries since the center-left coalition formed and elected in 2001 was comprised mainly of the dominant left party of the past: the Democratic Left Alliance). Five of these seven countries are newly established democracies where party fluctuations are expected. In three (Bulgaria, Korea, and Romania) the left party considered in the analysis became dominant during the year considered in the analysis. In the Czech Republic, the transition occurred in 1996 and since then the Social Democrats remained dominant; in Slovenia the transition occurred in 1994.

¹⁰ I affirm that those who “don’t know” whether they have a party attachment as being equivalent to those who do not have one. Both should lack the expressive utility derived from party identification making contextual factors more influential in voting behaviour.

a continuous variable as the propensity to vote increases with age (Teixeira 1992, 38). Education is a strong determinant of electoral participation (Almond and Verba 1963) and is viewed as an intervening factor in my theory, effecting political sophistication. Therefore, it is especially important to include it in my models. Finally, employment status should have an effect with unemployment decreasing the likelihood to turnout (Rosenstone 1982).

Party contact is found to have a strong effect in mobilizing citizens to vote and has been a prominent topic in much of the recent literature (Karp et al. 2007; Gerber and Green, 2000). A variable for whether one voted in the previous election should indicate the phenomenon of habitual voting (see Plutzer 2002). I also include variables which measure feelings of representation and satisfaction with democracy, expecting higher values here to have positive impacts on turnout. Lastly, union membership should also increase turnout among low-income voters because unions are clearly associated with left-wing parties and therefore make vote choice simpler for these voters (Powell 1986, 22). This variable is also transformed into an aggregate variable which measures the union density within a country because high unionization should affect even those who are not union members by absorbing a significant amount of the costs associated with participation (Rosenstone and Hansen 1993).

Country-Level Control Variables

In addition to union density, many country level variables are found to correlate with turnout. Institutional variables such as the number of elected legislative chambers and type of electoral system have been found to increase turnout (Jackman 1987). Drawing from rational choice theory, it is reasonable to expect that financial sanctions associated with abstention should affect turnout, and so the variable for this factor distinguishes between countries which do not have compulsory voting, those which have weakly enforced compulsory voting and those where compulsory voting is strictly enforced.

Following Powell (1982) whose study on electoral turnout classifies socioeconomic variables as having distant effects on turnout, scholars have identified a

number of these variables at the aggregate level that affect turnout. Powell's argument that economic development increases turnout is supported throughout the literature (Blais 2006, 117) and is considered for the analysis due to the inclusion of many newly developed democracies that have relatively low economic development compared to long established democracies. Economic development is measured as the gross domestic product (US\$) for each country as reported by the World Bank and corresponds to the election years in this analysis for each country. Income inequality has also become a concept of considerable interest in the subject of political engagement. Some theorists argue that inequality should increase political engagement since divergence in politics will fuel debate (Brady 2004). Others argue that income inequality tends to depress political engagement, particularly among low-status citizens (Solt 2008; Dahl 2006, 85-86). Others, still, contend that inequality as a phenomenon does not have an effect, but rather, whether or not individuals have sufficient resources to participate in political life will determine if they participate (Verba et al. 1995). Because Pontusson and Rueda (2010) found that inequality moves left parties to the left, it is especially important to control for inequality to avoid any possibility of spurious results.¹¹

Lastly, a number of variables measuring various aspect of the party system have a relationship with turnout such as party competition and the number of effective parties. Party competition is meant to reflect the closeness of elections, as voter turnout is said to increase when the election is more salient. It is measured by the percentage point difference between the vote shares of the two largest parties for each election. The second variable is measured as the number of parties receiving more than five percent of the vote share. Increases in the number of parties should have a negative impact on turnout because the likelihood that government will be made up of a coalition of parties also increases (Jackman 1987) and, therefore, decrease a citizen's incentive to vote as elections become less decisive (Downs 1957).

¹¹ This variable is measured using the Gini coefficient which measures the extent to which income is distributed evenly among households with 0 being perfect equality and 100 being perfect inequality. Where available, the Gini coefficient was used for the particular country-election-years used in this analysis. These countries are Bulgaria, Hungary, Poland, and Romania. In other cases, the coefficient closest to the election year is used. For Iceland, there is no Gini coefficient available and, thus, the value is a mean imputation.

Dummy variables for the existence of left-wing competitors and center parties are created in order to determine whether low-income individuals feel alienated by dominant parties. If voters do feel alienated, these variables should increase turnout as they provide an alternative party to vote for. In order to be considered as an effective alternative to the dominant left party to vote for, the competing party must have obtained at least five percent of the vote share.

Preliminary Analysis

Prior to developing the multilevel model, I first examine which country-level variables to include with preliminary analyses at the macro-level. Using the percentage of low-income voters who responded “yes” to casting a ballot for each election as the dependent variable, I run a multiple linear regression model to determine which variables affect turnout among low-income voters. In combination with theoretical justifications, the results of this aggregate level model reduce the number of country level variables for the multilevel models.

To begin, I explore the properties of the country-level variables in order to validate their inclusion in the multivariable linear regression model. Table 1 shows the correlation between all interval variables. Though none of the independent variables have a high correlation with the dependent variable—union density is the highest at 36%—only the variables measuring party competition and the number of effective parties have a relatively poor relationship with turnout among low-income individuals. Both of these variables can be excluded from the models for theoretical reasons. Generally, with more parties competing in elections, there is a larger ideological span. However, increases in the number of parties generally have a negative impact on turnout indicating that the electorate does not respond positively when there are more parties to choose from (Blais 2006, 118) and, thus, more intense parties. This is taken into account with the main explanatory variable in this project, party position, and I therefore exclude the effective number of parties from the analyses. Party competition is meant to directly measure the closeness of an election. However, because in large electorates the chance of being pivotal is negligible, we should not expect voters to turnout in larger numbers

even as the closeness of the election increases. For this reason, the variable for party competition is excluded from the analyses as well.

Table 1. Correlation between Interval Country-Level Variables

	Vote	Position	Distance	Party Compet.	Effective Number of Parties	Inequal.	Econ. Develop.	Union Density
Vote	1.000	-0.128	0.133	-0.096	-0.062	-0.280	0.284	0.361
Posit.	-0.128	1.000	-0.514	-0.097	-0.017	0.362	-0.221	-0.200
Dist.	0.133	-0.514	1.000	-0.212	0.157	-0.310	0.393	0.317
Party Comp.	-0.097	0.142	-0.212	1.000	0.407	0.105	-0.403	-0.022
Effect. Num. Parties	-0.062	-0.018	0.157	0.407	1.000	-0.179	-0.250	0.327
Inequal	-0.280	0.362	-0.310	0.105	-0.179	1.000	-0.025	-0.449
Econ. Dev.	0.284	-0.221	0.393	-0.404	-0.250	-0.025	1.000	0.465
Union Dens.	0.361	-0.200	0.317	-0.022	0.327	-0.449	0.465	1.000

Collinearity between the continuous independent variables is not an issue. The two aggregate level variables which have the highest correlation (51%) are those of

interest in this paper: the dominant left party's programmatic position and the distance between the left and right parties. To verify that this relationship is not problematic for the analysis, I look at the variation inflation factor (VIF) which quantifies the degree of collinearity among the independent variables. Party position and distance do have the highest VIF value of all the relationships but it is negligible at 1.36. Therefore, looking at correlation and VIF values, there is no sign of major collinearity between the independent variables and none are excluded from my model on this basis.

The appropriate tests for categorical variables are conducted. The variable for compulsory voting has three categories: strictly enforced voting, weakly enforced voting, and no enforcement. A one-way analysis of variance (one-way ANOVA) indicates that there is no difference in low-income turnout among these three groups, and thus, this variable may be excluded from the model (see Appendix B). However, every study on turnout in advanced democracies confirms that compulsory voting increases turnout (Blais and Dobrzynska 1998), making it appropriate to include in any model that predicts voter turnout. For the remaining categorical country-level variables—electoral formula, number of electoral chambers, center party competitor, and left-wing competitor—a t-test indicates that only the means for the existence of a left-wing competitor are statistically significant (see Appendix C). Left-wing competitor is therefore retained for the analysis, while the other three (electoral formula, number of electoral chambers, and center party competitor) are dropped in combination with theoretical justifications. For one, PR systems are known to have higher turnout rates, but our understanding of why this is remains unclear. Therefore, “the pessimistic reading that there is no generalized correlation between electoral system and turnout seems justified” until researchers identify the underlying factors that foster turnout in PR systems (Blais 2006, 119).

Programmatic positions may explain variations in turnout between countries using PR systems versus those using majoritarian systems. In PR countries, governments have been further left in their programmatic positions than those in majoritarian systems (Iversen and Soskice 2009, 451). This reflects the reality that left parties are generally further left on a left-right scale in PR systems than majoritarian ones. Therefore, programmatic position of left parties in the analysis should take into account this aspect that differentiates the variation between the two electoral systems and I therefore exclude the variable for the type of electoral formula in the analysis. The

existence of a center party is also excluded for two reasons. Firstly, voters are likely to view center parties as too similar to either the dominant left or right party in which the center party is positioned between. Thus, even if voters find that their views are closer to those taken on by this center party, the party suffers from lacking sufficient policy distinction. In combination with the fact that low-income voters should be more responsive to political parties that have some dominance in the political system, it can be expected that the existence of this party will not affect turnout. Instead, voters will allocate their vote to another party.

Lastly, in countries where power is shared between two chambers, it is argued that turnout is lower because the lower house has a less decisive role in the production of legislation (Jackman 1987, 408). As a consequence, the incentive to vote decreases among citizens since the salience of the election lessens. However, the variable, party competition, which directly tests the salience of elections, is also indicated to be insignificant to the analysis. Thus, both the variable for the number of elected legislative chambers and the variable directly testing the mechanism behind it indicate that there is no theoretical reason to include the number of legislative chambers in the analyses.

The next step is building an aggregate level model with the variables shown to have some relationship with low-income turnout (as well as compulsory voting). The unit of analysis for the aggregate level models is “country election year” and the results are based on estimating the standard multivariable linear regression model:

$$y_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 * (\text{POSITION})_i + \beta_2 * (\text{DISTANCE})_i + \beta_3 * (\text{COMPULSORY})_i + \\ \beta_4 * (\text{INEQUALITY})_i + \beta_5 * (\text{ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT})_i + \\ \beta_6 * (\text{LEFT-WING COMPETITOR})_i + \beta_7 * (\text{UNION DENSITY})_i + \varepsilon_i$$

where y_i is the value of the independent variable in the i th trial, β_0 is the general intercept, and β_1 to β_7 are the slopes of the explanatory variables specified in brackets. The variation is reflected in the normally distributed random error term, ε_i , which has a mean of zero and a constant variance σ^2 .

In the full model, no variables—including the variables of interest—are significant (see Appendix D). The large difference between the R^2 value and the adjusted- R^2 value

indicates that there is an issue with the model as there are no significant variables. Thus, I reduce the number of variables to union density and the existence of left-wing competitors to achieve a more parsimonious model through backward elimination (Table 2). When reducing the model further to only the existence of a left-wing competitor, this variable becomes significant at $\alpha = 0.05$. However, the R^2 value and adjusted- R^2 value are better when union density is included, meaning that keeping union density in the model does a better job of predicting turnout among low-income voters. Though left-wing competitor does not meet the 0.05 cut off when union density is included, $\alpha = 0.05$ may be too conservative of a cut off. This is because there are not many degrees of freedom due to the small number of observations at the aggregate level. Therefore, it is appropriate to set α at 0.1 meaning that the existence of a left-wing competitor is significant in this model and increases turnout among low-income citizens by 8%. Given that the R^2 and adjusted- R^2 values are better in this model, I conduct the appropriate checks to assure that the normality, homoscedasticity, and linearity assumptions of multiple regression are not violated. Based on the residual and Q-Q plots for this model, there are no clear violations of any model assumptions (see Appendix E). I therefore retain the variables measuring union density and the existence of a left-wing competitor for the multilevel analysis from this analysis.

Table 2. Preliminary Country-Level Model With Low-Income Turnout as Dependent Variable

	Estimate	Std. Error
Constant	71.250 ***	3.681
Left-wing Competition	7.919 .	4.127
Union Density	0.135	0.091
R-squared: 0.246		Adjusted R-squared: 0.183

Note. Signif. codes: 0 '***' 0.001 '**' 0.01 '*' 0.05 '.' 0.1 ' ' 1

Before moving on to the multilevel analysis, I repeat the steps above using “vote gap” as the dependent variable. This variable measures the difference in turnout

between low- and high-income voters.¹² The independent variables are meant to predict the discrepancy in turnout among these two cohorts. Those variables that have a relationship with vote gap can be expected to have a relationship with turnout among low-income citizens in the multilevel analysis. This is because a factor that increases or decreases the turnout gap must be because it affects turnout among one or both of the cohorts used to construct this variable. Since turnout levels are more volatile among low-income citizens than high-income citizens, it is reasonable to assume that variables affecting vote gap do so because they have an impact on low-income citizens' turnout. Thus, this analysis may indicate that some other variable(s), not captured by the first model, be included in the multilevel analysis.

Table 3. Country-Level Model with Vote Gap as Dependent Variable

	Estimate	Std. Error
Constant	7.382 *	0.011
Left-wing Competition	-4.335 .	0.072
Economic Development	0.001	0.258

R-squared: 0.154 Adjusted R-squared: 0.084

Note. Signif. codes: 0 '****' 0.001 '**' 0.01 '*' 0.05 '.' 0.1 ' ' 1

Again, before running the multivariable linear regression model, I ran the appropriate tests to determine which independent variables to include. I determine that these variables are left party position, left-right party distance, party competition, compulsory voting, economic development, inequality, left-wing competitor, and union density (see Appendix F for correlation matrix).¹³ In the full model, no variables were significant. Backward elimination reveals that only the existence of a left-wing competitor is significant in the model when $\alpha = 0.1$ (Table 3). Left-wing competitors decrease the vote gap between low and high income citizens because (taking into account the results above) it increases the turnout rate among low-income individuals. The R^2 and adjusted-

¹² Low-income voters are those within the two lowest income quintiles; high-income voters are those within the two highest income quintiles.

¹³ Inequality has a poor correlation with vote gap but I include it in the model for theoretical reasons (see Solt 2008); party competition is included in this model due to its high correlation with vote gap.

R^2 values are better for a model when the variable for economic development is included than without it and there is no violation of any model assumptions. Thus, for the multilevel analysis, in addition to the main country-level variables of interest, the programmatic position of the left and the distance between the two dominant parties, I retain three other country-level variables. These variables are left-wing competitors, union density, and economic development which the preliminary analyses indicate have some affect on turnout levels among low-income citizens.

Results

Baseline Models

The first step in constructing the logistic multilevel model is to run the baseline models with only the key explanatory variables of interest and compulsory voting as a control. This baseline models provide an initial indication as to whether party positions affect turnout among low-income individuals and how this effect may be conditioned by party attachments. For all multilevel models, I use $\alpha = 0.05$ as the threshold for statistical significance. The basic two-level baseline model for voting is as follows:

$$Y_{ij} = p_{ij} + \varepsilon_{ij}$$

where Y_{ij} takes a value of 0 (not voting) or 1 (voting) for each individual i in country j and ε_{ij} is an individual level error. And

$$\text{logit}(p_{ij}) = \beta_0 + \beta_1 * (\text{POSITION})_i + \beta_2 * (\text{DISTANCE})_i + \beta_3 * (\text{COMPULSORY})_i + \beta_4 * (\text{PARTY ID})_i + u_j$$

where u_j in the country level error. The logit transformation is the log odds:

$$\text{odds} = p_{ij} / (1 - p_{ij}) = \text{probability of voting} / \text{probability of not voting}$$

and

$$\text{logit}(p_{ij}) = \ln(p_{ij} / (1 - p_{ij}))$$

Table 4 reports the results of three baseline models and lists the odds ratio of the main explanatory variable: the programmatic position of the dominant left party. The variables for the distance between the dominant left and right parties and a voter's party identification are included as they are necessary for the interaction terms in Models 2

and 3.¹⁴ These interaction terms will provide an indication as to whether there is evidence of voter alienation due to indifference and whether programmatic positions of the left influence strong partisans, weak partisans, and nonpartisans differently.

Table 4. Baseline Models

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
	Odds Ratio	St. Error	Odds Ratio	St. Error	Odds Ratio	St. Error
Main Explanatory Var.						
Position	0.887	(0.260)	0.472	(0.488)	0.475	(0.488)
Distance	0.935	(0.135)	0.259	(0.864)	0.260	(0.863)
Party ID						
(weak)	2.716 ***	(0.059)	2.714 ***	(0.059)	3.516 **	(0.398)
(strong)	5.291 ***	(0.115)	5.288 ***	(0.115)	2.336	(0.666)
Interaction Terms						
Position: Distance	----	----	1.017	(1.370)	1.017	(0.209)
Position: Party ID						
(weak)	----	----	----	----	0.941	(0.093)
(strong)	----	----	----	----	1.223	(0.163)

Note. Models include the main explanatory variables of interest as well as compulsory voting which is not listed in the table. Signif. codes: 0 '***' 0.001 '**' 0.01 '*' 0.05 '.' 0.1 ' ' 1

It is clear from Models 1 and 2 that having a party attachment has a positive effect on turnout. For example, those who have a weak attachment to a political party are 2.7 times more likely to vote than those who do not identify with a political party. The effect is even more prominent among those who have a strong party attachment. These individuals are 5.3 times more likely to vote than those who do not have a party attachment. In Model 3, the effect of having a strong party attachment becomes insignificant when an interaction is introduced between left party position and party identification. Because the interaction itself is not significant, I can only conclude that, according to this model, party positions do not interact with party attachments to affect turnout. In terms of party attachments, then, the baseline models indicate that those with

¹⁴ There are 13217 observations in this model.

weak party attachments are more likely to vote than those with no party attachments, and that strong partisans are even more likely to vote than those with no party attachments and, in turn, weak partisans.

Contrary to the hypothesis developed in the project, the results of the three baseline models suggest that the relationship between the programmatic position of the dominant left party and low-income individuals' propensity to vote is negative. That is, dominant left parties that are further right on a left-right scale decrease turnout among this cohort. The effects of this, however, are insignificant and I therefore fail to reject the null hypothesis. According to these models, programmatic positions do not have an impact on low-income citizens' propensity to vote. In addition, this project hypothesized that when the dominant left and right parties become increasingly similar in their political views, it would decrease turnout by inducing alienation due to indifference. However, the results of these models show that the relationship between turnout and distance is negative: the more ideologically opposed the two parties are the less likely low-income individuals will show up to vote. Again, this result is insignificant and I therefore cannot conclude that this effect is true from the evidence presented in this model.

When introducing the interaction terms in Models 2 and 3, the relationships between turnout and programmatic position as well as turnout and distance remain in the same direction. However, the variables are not significant and neither are the two interactions. Model 2 indicates that there is no significant interaction between the position that a party takes on a left-right scale and its distance from the dominant right party. According to Model 3, there is no significant interaction between left party positions and partisan attachments as noted above.

Full Multilevel Models

Next, I incorporate the control variables to develop a full multilevel model (Table 5). Model 4 does not include any interaction terms. Model 5 includes an interaction between the party position of the left and its distance to the dominant right party. This interaction is meant to determine whether party positions to decrease turnout by

Table 5. Determinant of Low-Income Citizens' Propensity to Vote

	Model 4		Model 5		Model 6	
	Odds Ratio	St. Error	Odds Ratio	St. Error	Odds Ratio	St. Error
Main Explanatory Variables						
Position	0.994	(0.096)	0.389 ***	(0.202)	0.454 ***	(0.210)
Distance	0.940	(0.049)	0.135 ***	(0.366)	0.135 ***	(0.367)
Party ID						
(weak)	1.350 ***	(0.089)	1.357 ***	(0.090)	8.837 **	(0.709)
(strong)	2.489 ***	(0.180)	2.415 ***	(0.179)	13.052 .	(1.328)
Individual Level Controls						
Age	1.005 .	(0.002)	1.005 .	(0.002)	1.005 *	(0.002)
Contacted	1.384 **	(0.108)	1.250 *	(0.109)	1.259 *	(0.011)
Democratic Satisfaction	1.080	(0.050)	1.074	(0.050)	1.070	(0.050)
Education	1.085 ***	(0.027)	1.110 ***	(0.028)	1.111 ***	(0.028)
Feeling of Representation	1.931 ***	(0.083)	1.917 ***	(0.083)	1.927 ***	(0.083)
Female	1.005	(0.076)	0.076	(0.076)	0.581	(0.076)
Married	1.002	(0.008)	1.002	(0.008)	1.002	(0.008)
Religious Service Attendance	1.036	(0.021)	1.068 **	(0.022)	1.069 **	(0.022)
Unemployed	0.724 **	(0.123)	0.727 *	(0.124)	0.723 **	(0.123)
Union Membership	1.058	(0.117)	1.062	(0.118)	1.058	(0.012)
Vote in Previous Election	8.568 ***	(0.083)	8.584 ***	(0.083)	8.611 ***	(0.083)
Country Level Controls						
Compulsory Voting	4.112 ***	(0.350)	2.729 **	(0.358)	2.721 **	(0.358)
Economic Development	1.001	(0.001)	1.001 **	(0.001)	1.001 **	(0.001)
Left-wing Competitor	1.400 **	(0.103)	1.143	(0.111)	1.151	(0.111)
Union Density	1.020***	(0.003)	1.012 ***	(0.004)	1.012 ***	(0.004)
Interaction Terms						
Position: Distance	-----	-----	1.620 ***	(0.090)	1.616 ***	(0.090)
Position: Party ID						
(weak)	-----	-----	-----	-----	0.655 **	(0.159)
(strong)	-----	-----	-----	-----	0.682	(0.297)

Note. Signif. codes: 0 '***' 0.001 '**' 0.01 '*' 0.05 '.' 0.1 ' ' 1

inducing abstention due to indifference, depending on where this party is on a left-right scale (as noted above). Finally, Model 6 also incorporates an interaction between left party position and party identification to draw conclusions on how party identification mediates the way that party positions affect turnout.

None of the control variables have a relationship with turnout that goes against conventional wisdom on electoral behaviour. There are four individual level control variables that are not significant in any of the three models: satisfaction with democracy, gender, marital status, and union membership. The three models indicate that these variables do not have a relationship with low-income individuals' propensity to vote.

Of the four variables, the most surprising result is that union membership does not have an effect on turnout. This is because declining unionization rates over the past decades has decreased turnout among low-status individuals. This has affected the general turnout rates in advanced democracies (Gray and Caul 2000). However, the country-level variable measuring union density is significant in all three models above and has a positive effect on turnout. This indicates that unions increase turnout by effectively mobilizing both those who are members and those who are not. Unions' impact on turnout is relative to their size: a larger union density means more success at mobilizing low-income voters to turnout. Such organizations help solve collective action problems associated with political engagement because they absorb a significant amount of the costs associated with participation (which they have an incentive to do as they benefit from electoral victory) (Rosenstone and Hansen 1993). As a result, the overall benefit of voting for citizens outweighs the costs and increases turnout levels.

Lastly, age is positively related to turnout in Model 6 but does not meet the 0.05 significance level in Models 4 and 5. Age becomes significant when there is a negative interaction between party identification of weak partisans and the party position of the left. Thus, it seems that party positions affect the partisan attachments of weak partisans negatively. When these individuals no longer have an attachment to a political party, age becomes significant meaning that the tendency to vote stems from habitual behaviour rather than from paying loyalty to a political party in this circumstance.

Many of the individual level control variables incorporated into the multilevel models are significant in all three. Feeling represented by a political party increases turnout by 1.9 times compared to those who do not feel represented by a political party. (This result will be discussed in greater detail below). Being contacted by a political party during an election significantly increases one's likelihood to vote. Individuals who are contacted are 1.4 times more likely to vote than those who were not contacted which is consistent with the literature. Employment status also has an impact on low-income voter turnout. Someone who is unemployed is 28% less likely to vote than a person who is employed. This is because these individuals are occupied with the more pressing issue of finding employment which dominate their time and energy (Rosenstone 1982). Having a history of voting has a strong relationship with turnout and is consistent with the consensus that voting behaviour is habitual. Individuals who voted in the previous election are 8.6 times more likely to vote in the current election than those who did not vote in the previous election. An increase in education also has a positive effect on one's likelihood to vote. This is largely because political awareness and sophistication enhances with education, reducing the costs of voting (Verba et al., 1995; Jackson 1995).

The theory in this paper made the distinction between apoliticals and apartisans. According to the theory developed in this project, party positions should affect those who are politically sophisticated (apartisans) differently than those who are not (apoliticals). For this reason, apartisans are less reliant on decision-making clues such as party positions than apoliticals. Therefore, apartisans should be less likely to adopt capitalist values as left parties have shifted rightwards in advanced democracies. Instead, apartisans should hold on to more leftist positions and turnout should increase among these individuals when the left party is further left. Apoliticals, on the other hand, should be more likely to vote when the left is further right. I test this with an interaction term between an individual's level of education and the left's programmatic position. The results indicate that there is no significant interaction between education and party position (see Appendix G). Absolute party positions do not influence turnout differently among apartisans and apoliticals.

At the country level, compulsory voting is significant in all three models. Strictly enforced compulsory voting increases one's propensity to vote by 4.1 times compared to

when there are no enforcements in place according to Model 4. The models tell us that low-income citizens turn out to vote in larger numbers when the economy is better. This is consistent with the results for unemployment. When the economy is better, the unemployment rate should be lower and thus individuals should be able to dedicate more time and resources to voting rather than being occupied with finding employment. It also worth noting that economic development only becomes significant when an interaction term is introduced in Models 5 and 6 that makes the left's programmatic position and its distance from the right party significant. This suggests that a healthy economy increases turnout because political parties use the context of the economy to mobilize voters. Parties may battle each other to credit themselves for upsurges in development, which garners votes from the electorate.

Finally, when there is a left-wing competitor, the odds of voting increase by 1.4. Competing left parties seem to provide an alternative to low-income individuals who, based on the results and contrary to the hypotheses of this project, seem to favour parties that are further left. When an interaction between the position of the dominant left party and its distance from the dominant right party is introduced, left-wing competitors are no longer significant. This is because the dominant left party becomes a more favourable option to vote for when positioned relatively left. When the dominant left party is too far center, individuals support left-wing competitors that are more ideologically distinct instead.

Looking more closely at the dominant left party, Model 4 shows that when there are no interaction terms introduced, its programmatic position and distance from the dominant right party is not significant. In the baseline models, these variables were not significant under any specified conditions. The baseline models, however, do not adjust for confounders which can affect the relationship between the left party's programmatic position and low-income individual's propensity to vote. Models 5 and 6 reveal that without taking these confounders and the interaction effects into consideration, the true relationship between party position and turnout is masked. Because the variables measuring absolute position and distance are significant only when there is an interaction introduced, both conditions must be present in order to influence turnout.

Figure 4 illustrates the way in which left party positions and their distance from the dominant right party affects turnout among low-income individuals in which the position 4.2 (roughly that of the Socialists in France during the 2002 election) is critical. In terms of the absolute programmatic position of the dominant left party, turnout is higher among low-income individuals when this party is further left at any position on the scale. For example, according to Model 5, individuals in a country with a dominant left party that places at 4 on a 0-10 scale are 21% less likely to vote than those in a country where the dominant left party places at 3.5 under the same condition (see Appendix H).¹⁵ Likewise, when a left party places at 6 on this same scale, low-income individuals are 37% less likely than those in a country where the left party places at 5.5 under the same condition. Thus, low-income individuals prefer left parties that are further left.

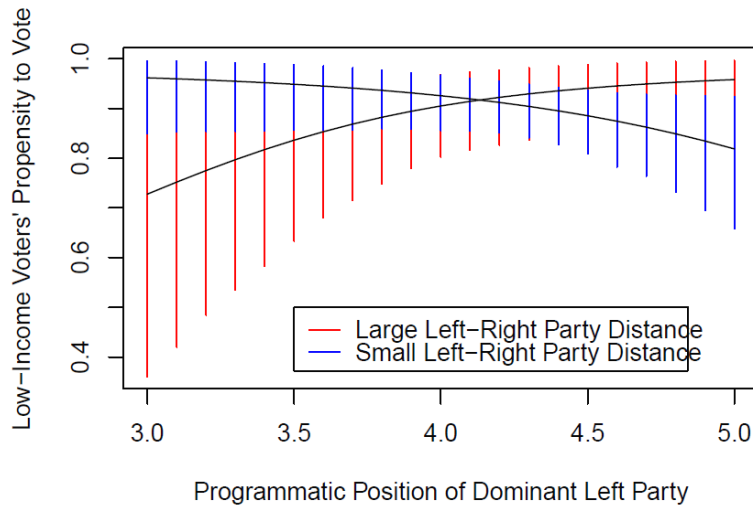


Figure 4. Interaction Effect between Left Party Position and Left-Right Distance on Low-Income Voter Turnout

The effect of the left's distance from the right is more complex. Distance has a different effect on low-income individuals depending on where the left party is on the scale. When the left party places further right of 4.2, distance has a positive effect on turnout. That is, the larger the distance between the left and right parties, the more likely a low-income individual will turn out to vote. For example, in a country where the left party places at 5 on a left-right scale, individuals are 2.6 times more likely to vote if the

¹⁵ This condition is that the distance between the two dominant parties is 1.

distance between the left party and right parties is 4 points, as opposed to 2 points. This confirms that voters abstain due to indifference between parties in this context. Because these variables are significant only when there is an interaction introduced, the programmatic position of the dominant left party increases the probability of voting among low-income individuals when two conditions are met: it must be sufficiently left on a left-right scale *and* it must be perceived as relatively different from the right.

In countries where the left party is further left of 4.2 on a 0-10 scale, the effect of the variable for distance changes voters' propensity to vote. If a left party places at a position of 3.5, low-income individuals are 47% *less* likely to vote when it has a distance of 4 points from the right party compared to if it had a distance of 2. In this context, then, voters do not abstain due to indifference. Instead, they are more likely to vote when the left is increasingly similar to the right in ideology. It is not clear from the analysis why the effect of left-right party distance should change when parties are relatively left. One possibility is that the effect of the left party's position and distance to the right party is related to the party politics of countries using PR systems. As noted earlier, in PR systems, left parties are generally further left than those in majoritarian systems. In PR systems, political parties also operate in a context where they are more likely to form coalition governments than parties in majoritarian systems. If they do form a coalition, parties are likely to be more successful in implementing policies when they are not ideologically opposed to the other parties that make up the coalition. For this reason, low-income individuals in the electorate may prefer a left party but be mobilized to vote when its distance to the right party is small because it increases the chances of producing a more cooperative and productive governing coalition.

Party identification is significant in all three multilevel models. According to Model 4, low-income individuals with weak partisan attachments are 1.6 times more likely to vote than those without any attachment to a party. Strong partisans are 2.5 times more likely to vote than nonpartisans according to this same model. Thus, partisan identification does have an impact on voter turnout and that the propensity to vote increases as the degree of party attachment does. Unlike the baseline models, however, Model 6 shows that there is a significant interaction effect between partisan attachment and the dominant left party's programmatic position. Figure 5 shows that weak partisans and nonpartisans are less likely to vote when the left party is increasingly right. However,

the effect of a party's position is more prominent among weak partisans when compared to nonpartisans. As the left moves rightwards, the likelihood of voting decreases among weak partisans to a greater extent than it does for nonpartisans. When a left party is positioned further right of 5.5 on a policy scale, weak partisans become less likely to vote than nonpartisans. This is important because nonpartisans generally turn out at consistently lower rates than those with some party attachment. Thus, the effects of policy positions are influential enough to alter conventional turn out patterns. Strong partisans, on the other hand, do not have a significant interaction with party positions (see Appendix I). Therefore, strong partisans are affected by party positions in a similar way to weak partisans: their likelihood to turn out decreases as left parties move rightward and the degree of this influence is almost identical between these two groups.

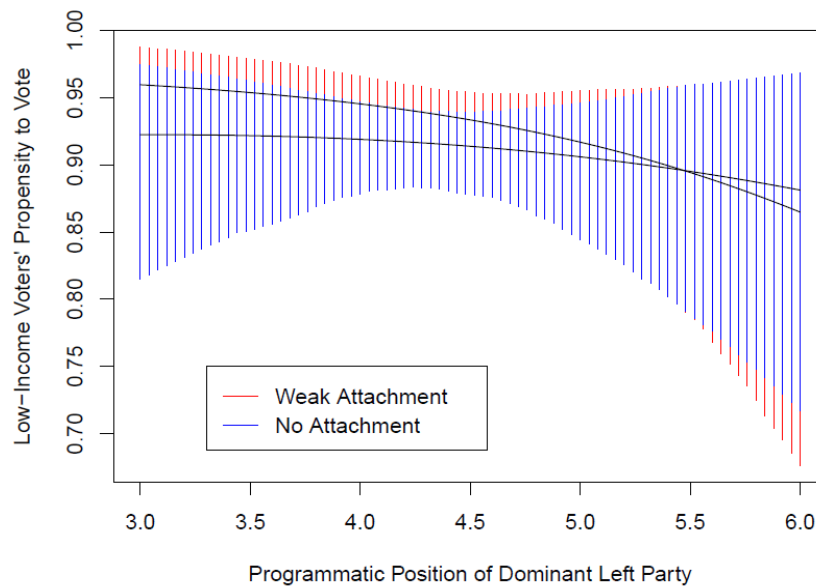


Figure 5. Interaction between Left Party Position and Partisan Attachments

As the theory developed in the project suggests, partisan attachments do mediate the way that contextual factors influence turnout among low-income citizens. I hypothesized that the propensity of strong partisans to vote should be unaffected by changes in party positions and that both weak and, to a greater extent, nonpartisans should be influenced by this factor. The empirical results show, however, that all three groups turnout at smaller rates when the left is further right. Moreover, weak partisans

are, in fact, most affected by programmatic positions, as their likelihood to vote decreases more dramatically than both strong and nonpartisans when the left is further right.

Alternative Hypothesis

Since weak partisans are the most affected by programmatic positions, it begs the question as to whether left party shifts have an effect on party attachments which in turn affect turnout levels. The conventional view is that left parties have moved rightwards in advanced democratic states. In combination with the results above that indicate low-income voters prefer parties that are further left, it seems that the rightward shift of left parties may contribute to partisan de-alignment and, therefore, decreased turnout. What may be occurring is that low-income individuals have become increasingly dissatisfied with the policy position of the party they identify with. As this dissatisfaction grows, their party attachment decreases until they no longer identify with a political party. Hence, low-income voters, most prominently weak partisans as indicated by the above results, have been politically isolated by the rightward shift in left party positions and, therefore, abstain in elections.

Table 6. Effect of Left Party Position on Party Identification

	Model 7		Model 8	
	Odds Ratio	St. Error	Odds Ratio	St. Error
Position	1.064	(0.074)	1.084	(0.160)
Distance	1.178 ***	(0.037)	1.225	(0.230)
Position: Distance	-----	-----	0.990	(0.072)

Note. Variable for the dominant left party's programmatic position, the distance between the dominant parties, and interaction effects between these two variables are listed. Full model includes all variables listed in Table 5. Signif. codes: 0 '***' 0.001 '**' 0.01 '*' 0.05 '.' 0.1 ' ' 1

Table 6 explores this by running a logistic multilevel model with party identification the dependent variable. Model 7 shows that the position a left party takes on a left-right scale does not have a significant effect on a voter's party identification. Thus, the rightward shift has not contributed to partisan de-alignment in advanced

democracies among low-income voters. However, the distance between the two dominant parties does have an effect. When there is a greater ideological proximity between the left and right parties in a country, voters are more likely to identify with a party. In Model 8, an interaction between the two variables, the left party's position and its distance from the right party, is added to be sure that the effect of former is not masked as it was when analyzing turnout. There is no significant interaction, however, between left party position and left-right party distance and, thus, party position does not have a relationship with party identification in either of the models. Therefore, the negative effect that the left's rightward shift has had on turnout is not spurious in this sense. That is, it does not decrease turnout by contributing to partisan-dealignment, which has a large effect on voting behaviour.

Supplementary Analysis

Before arriving at the discussion, a simple, but telling, test is conducted. Returning to one of the results of Models 4, 5, and 6, it is evident that an individual who feels represented by a political party is 1.9 times more likely to vote compared to an individual who does not feel represented. This is consistent with the theory developed in this project. I argue that moderate party positions should increase turnout among low-income citizens because it increases representation among these voters. This is because low-income voters place themselves slightly further right of the dominant left party. As shown in Figure 1, low-income voters accurately locate the dominant political parties on a left-right scale and there is therefore no discrepancy between the actual positions of the parties and low-income voters' perception of party positions. For this reason, a left party that shifts rightwards should decrease the proximity between it and low-income voters to induce turnout. This variable, therefore, directly tests and asserts that representation does increase turnout. I expect that because low-income voters indicate that they are generally more moderate than the dominant left party, turnout should increase when a left party shifts rightwards because representation should increase. However, the empirical evidence contradicts this argument. Based on the results of Models 5 and 6, turnout among low-income voters decreases when the left is more moderate in its policy position.

I explore this further with a logistic multilevel model that describes how moderate left party positions increase feelings of representation among low-income citizens. Table 7 reports the results which indicate that the position a left party takes on a left right scale does not have an effect on an individual feeling represented by a political party. The relationship between a dominant left party's position and feeling represented is negative as shown in Model 9, meaning that when a party is further left on a left-right scale, the likelihood of low-income voters feeling represented increases slightly. However, this result is insignificant. It is also indicated in Model 10 that there is no effect of the left's absolute position on feelings of representation when an interaction term is introduced.

Table 7. Effect of Left Party Position on Feeling of Representation

	Model 9		Model 10	
	Odds Ratio	St. Error	Odds Ratio	St. Error
Position	0.881	(0.087)	0.839	(0.176)
Distance	1.407 ***	(0.043)	1.253	(0.350)
Position: Distance	-----	-----	1.029	(0.085)

Note. Variable for the dominant left party's programmatic position, the distance between the dominant parties, and interaction affects between these two variables are listed. Full model includes all variables listed in Table 5. Signif. codes: 0 '****' 0.001 '***' 0.01 '**' 0.05 '.' 0.1 '.' 1

What is significant, however, is the distance between the two dominant parties. According to Model 9, low-income voters feel more represented when the ideological difference between the two parties is greater. Together, these results suggest that low-income voters do not vote based on the assumptions of proximity models. The closeness of the left party's programmatic position to an individual's own policy position does not affect whether they feel more represented by a political party and, in turn, does not increase turnout. This is consistent with the results of left party's programmatic positions in Models 5 and 6. These models indicate that when the left party is further right on a left right scale—hence, ideologically closer to low-income voters—turnout decreases. Thus, there is some other micro-foundation behind the effects of party positions on turnout. The results for low-income individuals are consistent with the directional theories of voting. These models assert that issues are perceived diffusely by the electorate due to low levels of information. Thus, individuals are not concerned with

the specifics of a policy but rather how well parties advocate for a particular policy direction without being viewed as an “extremist” (Rabinowitz and Macdonald 1989). This is partly supported by the results for the distance between two parties in Model 9. Feelings of representation increase when policy positions of the two parties are clearly defined. Thus, it seems that low-income voters react to the symbolic cues of party politics and policy issues as argued by the directional theorists, rather than absolute policy positions.

Limitations

A number of limitations of this model should be addressed. For one, the best way to conclude how programmatic positions, which vary from election to election, affect turnout is to study them over time. In addition, one can pay particular attention to how changes in partisan cleavages interact with programmatic positions. Because the individuals surveyed are not followed over time, a time-series using the CSES data set would rely on the construction of pseudo-panels where individuals are grouped according to some criterion (in this case, income) that does not change from one survey to another. However, due to the nature of the CSES data sets, there is a trade-off between designing a time-series-cross-sectional analysis and a simpler cross-sectional one. For one, the number of countries included in the time-series-cross-sectional would decrease substantially from twenty-seven to thirteen if all three models were used.¹⁶ This creates a problem of having too many macro-level variables for the number of countries included in the analysis. Also, I would lose some survey-level control variables that cannot be retrieved from other data sets, as CSESI (in particular) has fewer variables.¹⁷ Lastly, as Kramer (1983) points out, one of the limitations with cross-sectional data is that it accounts for only one historical context. A time-series-cross-sectional analysis using all three CSES modules comprise elections from the year 1996-2011, a fifteen year time span. However, this would still not do a good job of taking into account different time periods (such as the pre-neoliberal policy paradigm) or account for generational effects which may affect turnout.

¹⁶ If I were to use only the CSESI and CSESII data sets, for example, the number of countries would be reduced to twenty-two; this is still a significant decrease.

¹⁷ For example, there is no variable for whether an individual voted in the previous election.

Another limitation of this data set is that the dependent variable is a survey level variable. We know, however, that people report voting in higher frequencies than national registries indicate (Clausen 1969). This creates a systematic measurement error which can potentially bias the results. For this reason, compiling a data set from various national election registries can provide more accurate results and should be used to supplement the results of this project.

Finally, the theory in this paper does not take into account cultural aspects that, for some countries, may negate the premise for why low-income individuals place themselves in the center on a left-right scale. I borrow from the relative power theory to argue that with the removal of leftist issues from the political agenda, low-income citizens internalize capitalist values and, as a result, shift their policy preferences rightwards. However, not all low-income citizens in advanced democracies may fit this description and these cultural differences may alter their voting behaviour.

In France, for example, even though most governments have been center-right, its citizens expect high levels of social security from the state (Iversen and Soskice 2009, 473-4). As a result, we see high levels of redistribution in France, a country with larger inequality, when in advanced democracies redistribution is generally found in countries with low inequality. Since unions (which shape political discourse in favour of lower classes) are weak in France, demands for redistribution, social security, and the like stem in large part from the masses instead.

Public demands for leftist policies can be explained by the way French citizens orient themselves with politics. There has been a long debate as to whether party identification or ideology is the mechanism driving voting behaviour in France. The results of studies examining these mechanisms, more often than not, indicate that ideology (rather than party attachments) shapes political behaviour among the French electorate. The fluidity of political parties in their policy stances and labels make it difficult for French citizens to form attachments to these parties and so the electorate is inclined to hold on to personal ideological positions to make political judgements (Belanger et al. 2002, 513). Thus, French citizens are less likely to adopt the positions of political parties as these parties shift rightward and continue demanding egalitarian policies. This is apparent from the electoral downfall of one of the strongest proponents

of privatization reforms and proposed austerity measures in the 1995 French election; the violent public reaction against Alain Juppe unprecedented downsizing that almost crippled the economy which followed; and the resulting electoral victory of the left in the 1997 election. Furthermore, public disapprovals towards such policies are sure to encompass the reactions of low-income individuals as opinion polls reveal that negative views of privatization are just as likely held by low-income individuals as those with higher incomes (Durant and Legge 2002, 316).

Discussion

The empirical results of this paper show that party attachments do mediate the effect of left programmatic positions on turnout as suggested in the theory, though they do not align with the hypotheses developed. Both partisans (strong and weak) and nonpartisans are more likely to vote when the left party is further left on a unidimensional policy scale. However, the effect of left party programmatic positions on turnout is strongest among weak partisans. When left parties become increasingly right in their programmatic position, the likelihood of voting among weak partisans becomes smaller than individuals with no party attachments. Thus, the effects of policy positions are influential enough to alter the positive effect of party identification on turnout. This adds to growing amount of literature that asserts contextual factors are becoming increasingly influential on turnout levels especially in the context of partisan dealignment.

As Downs (1957, 36) states, “in order to plan its policies so as to gain votes, the government must discover some relationship between what it does and how citizens vote.” The results of this analysis, however, are not as clear cut as one might hope. Political parties must determine the relationship between its policy position and distance from the right that can garner votes from the electorate. This relationship differs, however, depending on where a party is placed on a left-right scale. When the left is further left, a small distance from the right will increase voters’ propensity to vote. However, if it is further rightwards, it needs to become ideologically distinct from the dominant right party to increase votes. I suggest that this interaction may be conditioned on the context that political parties operate in. That is, generally, parties that are further left are those within PR electoral systems where parties are likely to form a coalition government. Thus they need to be perceived by the electorate as relatively similar in ideology to their coalition partners in order to for these voters to anticipate that they will govern successfully together.

These results may also explain why countries with PR electoral systems have higher turnout rates. As Pacek and Radcliff (1989, 391) contend, when the link between low-status voters and left parties is strengthened, overall turnout levels should increase. Dominant left parties in PR systems take on more leftist programmatic positions than those in majoritarian/plurality systems and, therefore, strengthen the party-group linkage between the cohort in contemporary democracies with volatile turnout rates (low-income citizens) and the party that most successfully represents their interests (the dominant left party). This, however, needs to be examined in more detail and thus I leave it as a topic for future research.

Furthermore, with new demands and issues emerging from an electorate with post-material values, the task of representing lower class individuals may be increasingly difficult for left parties. Left parties have been found to lag behind both right and center parties in the ability to respond to public opinion (Adams et al. 2009). If left parties continue to shift rightwards as they have in recent decades after the wave of right electoral victories in 1980s and early 1990s (see Kitschelt 1999), we can expect turnout levels to continue declining since more rightist positions discourage low-income voters from voting. Declines in turnout rates may be substantial since many scholars have found that the general rightward shift in politics has resulted in increased inequality (see Brady and Leicht 2007).

Lastly, the analyses indicate that the mechanism behind the voting behaviour of low-income voters is consistent with directional models of voting rather than proximity models. A number of the results point to this. Firstly, low-income voters place themselves to the left of the dominant left party, yet, they are more likely to turn out when the left party is further left, even though this which decreases its proximity to these voters. Secondly, low-income voters are more inclined to vote for left-wing competitors (who are positioned even further left of low-income individuals than the dominant left party) when they view the dominant left party as too far rightwards. Thirdly, when the distance between the dominant left and right parties in a country increases, low-income individuals feel more represented by a political party and are more likely to have a party attachment. This directional model seems to apply equally to sophisticated and nonsophisticated voters based on the analysis of this project. There is no evidence that those with higher levels of information react differently towards contextual factors such

as party positions. Again, this is a topic that should be examined in more detail in the future. Such an analysis would benefit from observing contextual factors and political sophistication among low and high income individuals.

References

- Adam, J., and S. Merrill III. 2006. Why Small, Centrist Third Parties Motivate Policy Divergence by Major Parties. *The American Political Science Review* 100(3): 403-417.
- Adams, J., A.B. Haupt, and H. Stoll. 2009. What Moves Parties? The Role of Public Opinion and Global Economic Conditions in Western Europe. *Comparative Political Studies* 42: 611-693.
- Almond, G. and S. Verba. 1963. *The Civic Culture*. Boston: Little Brown.
- Belanger, E., M.S. Lewis-Beck, J. Chiche, V. Tiberj. 2002. Party, Ideology, and Voter Intentions: Dynamics from the 2002 French Electoral Panel. *Political Research Quarterly* 59(4): 503-515.
- Blais, A. 2006. What Affects Voter Turnout? *Annual Review of Political Science* 9: 111-25.
- Blais, A. and A. Dobrzynska. 1998. Turnout in Electoral Democracies. *European Journal of Political Research* 33(2): 239-61.
- Brady, H.E. 2004. An Analytical Perspective on Participatory Inequality and Income Inequality. In K. Neckerman (ed.) *Social Inequality*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation: 667-702.
- Burnham, W.D. 1982. *The Current Crisis in American Politics*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Campbell, A., P., Converse, W. Miller, and D. Stokes. 1960. *The American Voter*. New York: John Wiley & Sons.
- Clausen, A. 1969. Response Validity: Vote Report. *Public Opinion Quarterly* 32: 588-606.
- Converse, P. 1969. Of Time and Partisan Stability. *Comparative Political Studies* 2: 139-172.
- Dahl, R.A. 2006. *On Political Equality*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Dalton, R.J. 2006. *Citizen Politics: Public Opinion and Political Parties in Advanced Industrial Democracies*, 4th ed. Washington: CQ Press.

- Dalton, R.J. 2000a. Citizen Attitudes and Political Behavior. *Comparative Political Studies* 33: 912-940.
- Dalton, R.J. 2000b. The Decline of Party Identification. In R.J. Dalton and M.P. Wattenberg (eds). *Parties Without Partisans: Political Change in Advanced Industrial Democracies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Degan, A. 2006. Policy Position, Information Acquisition, and Turnout. *Scandinavian Journal of Economics* 108(4): 669-682.
- Delli Carpini, M., and S. Keeter. 1991. *What Americans Know About Politics and Why it Matters*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Downs, A. 1957. *An Economic Theory of Democracy*. New York: Harper and Row.
- Durant, R.F., and J.S. Legge, Jr. 2002. Politics, Public Opinion, and Privatization in France: Assessing the Calculus of Consent for Market Reforms *Public Administration Review* 62(3): 307-323.
- Feddersen, T. J. and W. Pesendorfer. 1996. The Swing Voter's Curse. *American Economic Review* 86: 408-24.
- Fumagalli, E. and G. Narciso. 2012. Political Institutions, Voter Turnout, and Policy Outcomes. *European Journal of Political Economy* 28: 162-173.
- Gray, M. and M. Caul. 2000. Declining Voter Turnout in Advanced Industrial Democracies, 1950 to 1997: The Effects of Declining Group Mobilization. *Comparative Political Studies* 33(9): 1091-1122.
- Gaventa, J. 1980. *Power and Powerlessness: Quiescence and Rebellion in an Appalachian Valley*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.
- Gerber, A.S., and D.P. Green. 2000. The Effects of Canvassing, Telephone Calls, and Direct Mail on Voter Turnout: A Field Experiment. *American Political Science Review* 94(3): 653-663.
- Heath, O. 2007. Explaining Turnout Decline in Britain, 1964-2005: Party Identification and the Political Context. *Political Behaviour* 29(4): 493-516.
- Inglehart, R. 1990. *Culture Shift*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Jackman, R.W. 1987. Political Institutions and Voter Turnout in Industrial Democracies. *American Political Science Review* 81: 405-24.
- Jackson, R.A. 1995. Clarifying the Relationship Between Education and Turnout. *American Politics Quarterly* 23(3): 279-299.
- Karp, J.A., S.A. Banducci, and S. Bowler. 2007. Getting out the Vote: Party Mobilization in a Comparative Perspective. *British Journal of Political Science* 38: 91-112.

- Kitschelt, H. 1999. European Social Democracy: Between Political Economy and Electoral Competition. In H. Kitschelt, Q. Lange, G. Marks, and J. D. Stephens (eds). *Continuity and Change in Contemporary Capitalism*. New York: Cambridge University Press: 317-345.
- Kramer, G.H. 1983. The Ecological Fallacy Revisited: Aggregate Versus Individual-Level Findings on Economics and Elections and Sociotropic Voting. *American Political Science Review* 77: 92-111.
- Olson M. 1965. *The Logic of Collective Action: Public Goods and the Theory of Groups*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Pacek, A. and B. Radcliff. 1995. Turnout and the Vote for Left-of-Centre Parties: A Cross-National Analysis. *British Journal of Political Science* 25: 137-143.
- Palfrey, T.R., and K.T. Poole. 1987. The Relationship between Information, Ideology, and Voting Behavior. *American Journal of Political Science* 31: 511-30.
- Patterson, S.C., and G.A. Caldeira. 1983. Getting Out the Vote: Participation in Gubernatorial Elections. *American Political Science Review* 77: 675-89.
- Plutzer, E. 2002. Becoming a Habitual Voter: Inertia, Resources, and Growth in Young Adulthood. *American Political Science Review*. 96: 41-56.
- Pontusson, J. and D. Rueda. 2010. The Politics of Inequality: Voter Mobilization and Left Parties in Advanced Industrialized States. *Comparative Political Studies* 43: 675-705.
- Powell, G.B. 2000. *Elections as Instruments of Democracy*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Powell, G.B. 1986. American Voter Turnout in Comparative Perspective. *American Political Science Review* 80(1): 17-43.
- Powell, G.B. 1982. *Comparative Democracies: Participation, Stability and Violence*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Rabinowitz, G., and S. E. Macdonald. 1989. A Directional Theory of Voting. *American Political Science Review* 83: 93-121.
- Riker, W.H., and P.C. Ordeshook. 1973. *An Introduction to Positive Political Theory*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Rosenstone, S., and J.M. Hansen. 1993. *Mobilization, Participation, and Democracy in America*. New York: Macmillan.
- Rosenstone, S., and J.M. Hansen. 1982. Economic Adversity and Voter Turnout. *American Journal of Political Science* 26: 25-46.

- Schuessler, A.A. 2000. *A Logic of Expressive Choice*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Solt, F. 2008. Economic Inequality and Democratic Political Engagement. *American Journal of Political Science* 52: 48-60.
- Steenbergen, M.R., and B.S. Jones. 2002. Modeling Multilevel Data Structures. *American Journal of Political Science* 46: 218-137.
- Teixeira, R. 1992. *The Disappearing American Voter*. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution.
- Verba, S., K.L. Schlozman, and H. Brady. 1995. *Voice and Equality: Civic Voluntarism in American Politics*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Appendices

Appendix A.

List of Countries and Left Parties

Country Election Year	Left Party Family	Programmatic Score
Australia (2004)	Labour	4.41
Bulgaria (2001)	Liberals	4.46
Canada (2004)	Liberals	4.39
Czech Republic (2002)	Social Democrats	4.49
Denmark (2001)	Social Democrats	4.33
Finland (2003)	Social Democrats	3.76
France (2002)	Socialist	4.20
Germany (2002)	Social Democrats	4.77
Great Britain (2005)	Labour	4.85
Hungary (2002)	Socialist	4.49
Iceland (2003)	Social Democrats	4.03
Ireland (2002)	Labour	3.89
Italy (2006)	Social Democrats	4.11
Japan (2003)	Socialist	3.02
Netherlands (2002)	Labour	4.63
New Zealand (2002)	Labour	3.60
Norway (2001)	Labour	3.09
Poland (2001)	Social Democrats	4.82
Portugal (2002)	Socialist	4.51
Portugal (2005)	Socialist	4.47
Romania (2003)	Social Democrats	3.56
Slovenia (2004)	Liberals	4.31
South Korea (2004)	Liberals	4.09
Spain (2004)	Socialist	4.38
Sweden (2002)	Social Democrats	4.08
Switzerland (2003)	Social Democrats	3.09
USA (2004)	Democrats	5.43

Appendix B.

One-Way ANOVA Test

	DF	Sum Sq	Mean Sq	F value	Pr (>F)
Compulsory Voting	2	320.34	160.172	1.6649	0.210
Residuals	24	2308.95	96.206		

Appendix C.

T-Test for Categorical Variables

	T	Df	P-value
Electoral System	0.382	25	0.706
Numb. Legislative Chambers	0.050	25	0.960
Center Party Competition	0.724	25	0.476
Left-wing Competition	-2.319	25	0.029

Appendix D.

Full Aggregate Level Model with Low-Income Turnout as Dependent Variable

	Estimate	Std. Error
Constant	0.010 **	0.287
Position	-1.351	4.265
Distance	-0.064	0.143
Left-wing Competitor	0.629	4.684
Inequality	-0.203	0.551
Economic Development	0.001	0.001
Union Density	0.116	0.130
Compulsory		
(weakly enforced)	0.134	0.148
(none)	-0.163	0.108

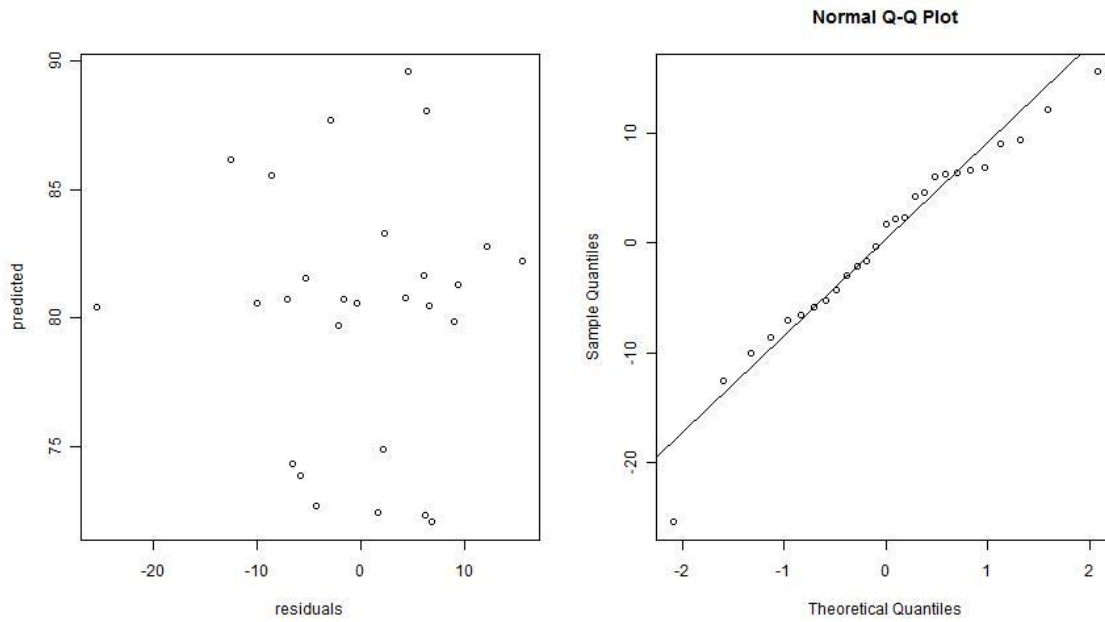
R-squared: 0.359

Adjusted R-squared: 0.074

Note. Signif. codes: 0 '***' 0.001 '**' 0.01 '*' 0.05 '.' 0.1 ' ' 1

Appendix E.

Model Checks for Aggregate Level Model



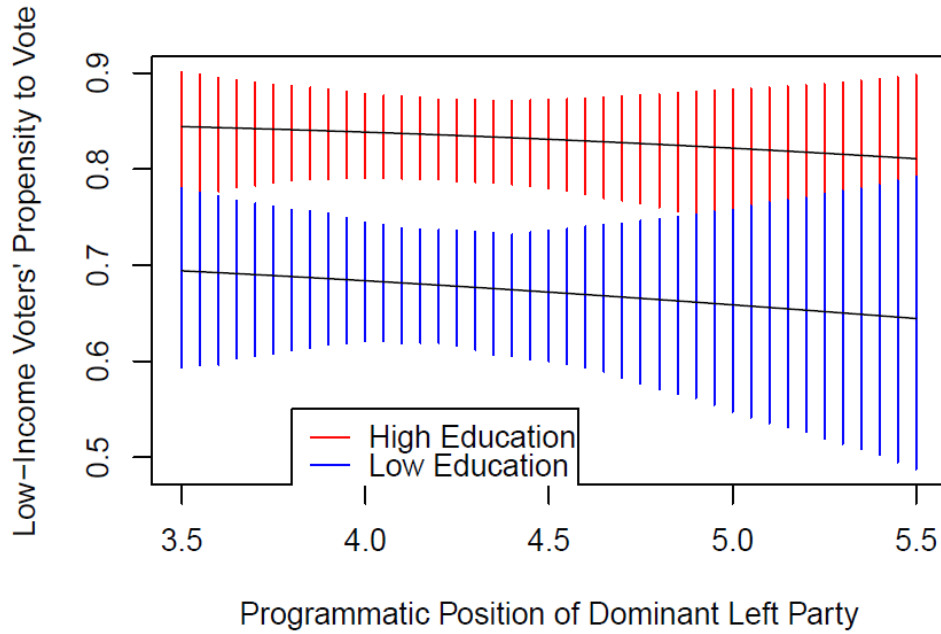
Appendix F.

Correlation between Interval Country-Level Variables with Vote Gap as Dependent Variable

	Vote Gap	Position	Distance	Party Compet.	Effective Number of Parties	Inequal.	Econ. Develop.	Union Density
Vote Gap	1.000	0.182	-0.019	-0.235	0.005	-0.035	0.173	0.070
Posit.	0.182	1.000	-0.514	0.142	-0.018	0.362	-0.221	-0.200
Dist.	-0.019	-0.514	1.000	-0.212	0.157	-0.310	0.393	0.317
Party Comp.	-0.235	0.142	-0.212	1.000	0.406	0.105	-0.403	-0.022
Effect. Numb Parties	0.005	-0.018	0.156	0.407	1.000	-0.179	-0.250	0.327
Ineq.	-0.035	0.362	-0.310	0.105	-0.179	1.000	-0.025	-0.449
Econ. Dev.	0.173	-0.221	0.393	-0.403	-0.250	-0.025	1.000	0.465
Union Dens.	0.070	-0.200	0.317	-0.022	0.327	-0.449	0.465	1.000

Appendix G.

Interaction of Left Party Programmatic Position and Education



Appendix H.

Calculations

Effect of Position on Turnout	Effect of Distance on Turnout
Conditions: Distance = 1 Position = 3.5; 4 $y = \beta_1 * \chi_1 + \beta_2 * \chi_2 + \beta_3 * \chi_1 * \chi_2$ $= -0.9453 * 3.5 + -2.004 * 1 + 0.4822 * 3.5 * 1$ $= -3.62485$ $\exp(-3.62485) = 0.0266531$ $y = \beta_1 * \chi_1 + \beta_2 * \chi_2 + \beta_3 * \chi_1 * \chi_2$ $= -0.9453 * 4 + -2.004 * 1 + 0.4822 * 4 * 1$ $= -3.8564$ $\exp(-3.8564) = 0.02114398$ $0.02114398 / 0.0266531 = 0.7933028$	Conditions: Party Position = 3.5 Distance = 2; 4 $y = \beta_1 * \chi_1 + \beta_2 * \chi_2 + \beta_3 * \chi_1 * \chi_2$ $= -0.9453 * 3.5 + -2.004 * 2 + 0.4822 * 3.5 * 2$ $= -3.94115$ $\exp(-3.94115) = 0.01942586$ $y = \beta_1 * \chi_1 + \beta_2 * \chi_2 + \beta_3 * \chi_1 * \chi_2$ $= -0.9453 * 3.5 + -2.004 * 4 + 0.4822 * 3.5 * 4$ $= -4.57375$ $\exp(-4.57375) = 0.01031919$ $0.01031919 / 0.01942586 = 0.5312089$
Conditions: Distance = 1 Position = 5; 6 $y = \beta_1 * \chi_1 + \beta_2 * \chi_2 + \beta_3 * \chi_1 * \chi_2$ $= -0.9453 * 5 + -2.004 * 1 + 0.4822 * 5 * 1$ $= -4.3195$ $\exp(-4.3195) = 0.01330654$ $y = \beta_1 * \chi_1 + \beta_2 * \chi_2 + \beta_3 * \chi_1 * \chi_2$ $= -0.9453 * 6 + -2.004 * 1 + 0.4822 * 6 * 1$ $= -4.7826$ $\exp(-4.7826) = 0.008374198$ $0.008374198 / 0.01330654 = 0.6293295$	Conditions: Party Position = 5 Distance = 2; 4 $y = \beta_1 * \chi_1 + \beta_2 * \chi_2 + \beta_3 * \chi_1 * \chi_2$ $= -0.9453 * 5 + -2.004 * 2 + 0.4822 * 5 * 2$ $= -3.9125$ $\exp(-3.9125) = 0.01999046$ $y = \beta_1 * \chi_1 + \beta_2 * \chi_2 + \beta_3 * \chi_1 * \chi_2$ $= -0.9453 * 5 + -2.004 * 4 + 0.4822 * 5 * 4$ $= -3.0985$ $\exp(-3.0985) = 0.04511683$ $0.04511683 / 0.01999046 = 2.256918$

Appendix I.

Interaction of Left Party Programmatic Position and Strong Partisans

