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## Contexts of political protest in Western democracies: Political organization and modernity

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**Contexts of Political Protest in Western Democracies:  
Political Organization and Modernity**

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Berlin, March 1996

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## **Abstract**

This paper provides a comparative analysis of two contextual determinants of protest participation in 17 Western democracies at the beginning of the 1990's. The two determinants are the individual's organizational context and the national context of political and socioeconomic conditions. The organizational context is defined as the close context of political protest arising due to social interaction, while the national context is defined as the wide context, constituting of extra-individual factors. The relationship between the close context and political protest is specified by theories of mobilization, whereas in the case of the wide context modernization theories are used. Individual-level analysis of the effects of the close context reveals that protest participation increases with an individual's embeddedness in political organizations. This holds true not only for memberships in new but also in traditional political organizations. However, the organizational context does not contribute equally to all forms of protest. Its impact is stronger on legal than on illegal forms of protest. Concerning the wide context of political protest, evidence is provided by aggregate-level analysis that variations in the extent of legal protest between countries can be explained by different levels of political and socioeconomic modernity of societies. The more modern a society, the higher the extent of legal protest participation and the less legal protesters articulate demands for radical change to the societal order. To the contrary, the extent of illegal protest participation cannot be explained by a modernization approach. The research on the close and wide context of political protest indicates that the enlargement of the action repertory of citizens to include legal protest, is part of the modernization of politics.

## **Zusammenfassung**

Für 17 westliche Demokratien wird für Anfang der 90er Jahre im internationalen Vergleich der Einfluß von zwei Kontextfaktoren auf die Beteiligung an politischem Protest untersucht. Zum einen ist dies der organisatorische Kontext von Individuen, der als enger Kontext definiert wird, weil er auf sozialen Interaktionen basiert. Zum anderen ist dies der nationale politische und sozioökonomische Kontext, der hier als weiter Kontext definiert wird, da er sich auf extra-individuelle Faktoren bezieht. Der Zusammenhang zwischen engem Kontext und politischem Protest wird durch Mobilisierungstheorien spezifiziert, der Einfluß des weiten Kontextes mithilfe von Modernisierungstheorien. Die Individualdatenanalyse der Effekte des engen Kontextes zeigt, daß die Beteiligung an politischem Protest mit dem Ausmaß der individuellen Einbettung in politische Organisationen zunimmt. Dieser Zusammenhang gilt nicht nur für die Mitgliedschaft in neuen, sondern auch in traditionellen politischen Organisationen. Der organisatorische Kontext trägt hingegen nicht in gleicher Weise zu legalen und illegalen Protestaktivitäten bei. Er fördert in stärkerem Maße die Beteiligung an legalen Protestformen. Die Aggregatdatenanalyse der Effekte des weiten Kontextes zeigt, daß Unterschiede im Ausmaß der individuellen Beteiligung an legalen Protestformen zwischen Ländern durch deren unterschiedliches politisches und sozioökonomisches Modernitätsniveau erklärt werden kann. Je moderner eine Gesellschaft ist, desto höher ist das Ausmaß legaler Protestbeteiligung und um so weniger werden Forderungen nach einer radikalen Veränderung der Gesellschaft von den Bürgern artikuliert, die legale Protestformen einsetzen. Im Gegensatz zu legalen Formen kann das Ausmaß der Beteiligung an illegalen Formen des Protests nicht mithilfe von Modernisierungsansätzen erklärt werden. Insgesamt weisen die Ergebnisse daraufhin, daß die Ausweitung des Aktionsrepertoires der Bürger um den legalen Protest Teil der Modernisierung des Politischen ist.



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# **Contexts of Political Protest in Western Democracies: Political Organization and Modernity**

*Edeltraud Roller and Bernhard Wessels*

## **1. Introduction\***

One of the most striking developments in political participation in Western democracies since the 1960s is what Kaase (1984) called the "participatory revolution". It is characterized by a significant increase of non-institutionalized forms of political participation, in particular of different forms of political protest. It appears as if political protest has become for many a regularly practiced mode of political participation. This development has been described as the "normalization of the unconventional" (Fuchs 1991). Empirical research, survey-based research in particular, has provided a great deal of knowledge about the individual-level explanations of who protests and why (Barnes, Kaase et al. 1979; Jennings, van Deth et al. 1990; Parry, Moyser and Day, 1992; Topf 1995; Verba, Schlozman and Brady 1995). In conceptual terms, these authors not only focused on individual characteristics, of protest participants, but have included the influence of contextual factors. Most explicitly, Barnes, Kaase et al. (1979: 43) developed a broad conceptualization of political protest which included two contextual factors, specifically collective actors and political and socioeconomic conditions of countries. They understand political protest as arising from an interaction between individual and collective actors such as parties, interest groups and movement organizations; this interaction is shaped by different political and socioeconomic conditions of countries such as the duration of democracy and economic wealth.

Given the vast amount of studies demonstrating persuasively the effect of individual characteristics on political protest, this paper concentrates on the proposed but unexamined contextual factors of protest participation. We have selected the following specific contextual factors to represent these two general types of influence on political protest. The

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first is the individual's organizational context which may mobilize him or her to political action. The second context is determined by the political and socioeconomic characteristics of the country in which the individual lives and which may influence his or her opportunities and resources to protest. The leading research questions are to what extent the organizational context on the one hand and the national political and socioeconomic context on the other favor protest participation. A supplementary question is whether the national political and socioeconomic context influences the content of demands raised by political protesters.

Applying basic concepts of contextual analysis (Huckfeldt and Sprague 1993: 289), these two dimensions of explanation of political protest can be regarded as two different kinds of contextual factors. The organizational context refers to effects that arise due to social interaction within an environment while the national political and socioeconomic context is referring to extra-individual factors. We define the organizational context as *close context* of protest participation and the national political and socioeconomic conditions as the *wide context* of protest participation.<sup>1</sup> In specifying the relationship between the close context and political protest we apply theories of mobilization. The relationship between the wide context and political protest, on the other hand, is specified with the help of modernization theories. The influence of the organizational context will be investigated by individual-level data analysis based on a comparative survey conducted in 17 Western democracies. The impact of political and socioeconomic conditions of countries will be investigated by combining macro data on these conditions with aggregated individual-level data of the Western democracies studied.

At this point, we will describe the theoretical and empirical bases in the literature for our concept of close context and wide context and briefly introduce our research hypotheses. To begin with the close context, collective actors mobilize citizens to participate in certain activities. In principle, mobilization by collective actors is relevant for all modes of political participation. However, there are two studies demonstrating unequivocally that mobilization processes by others are especially important in the case of protest activities. These studies ask for the origins of various modes of political participation - whether they were self-initiated or initiated by others. They reveal that a clear majority of protest activities such as signing petitions, attending demonstrations and joining boycotts are mobilized by other individuals or groups (Kaase 1990: 58; Parry, Moyser and Day 1992: 86-87). Contacting public officials is the opposite case where a clear majority of activities

<sup>1</sup> Huckfeldt and Sprague (1993: 289) limit the concept of context to the first type while defining the second type as environment. However, we use a broad concept of context covering both types because our research perspective is focussing on characteristics outside the individual neglected in research so far.

are self-initiated.<sup>2</sup> Based on these results, it seems quite obvious that studies concentrating on individual characteristics are particularly misleading in examining protest participation. By excluding the collective actor context, it disregards the fact that not only the activity itself but also the mobilization for this activity is a collective process involving other actors.

It is easy to agree on the conceptual necessity of including the collective actors context and studying its mobilizing effects. However, it is difficult to develop an adequate research design, especially a research design that is based on a traditional survey approach. By introducing the already mentioned question on the origins of participatory activities, Kaase (1990: 57) argued that the structural limits of a traditional survey research design are already reached. Although these structural limits are obvious, the possibilities of traditional survey research in studying the close context of protest participation are not yet exhausted. In the past, this has been demonstrated by Verba and his colleagues (Verba and Nie 1972: 174-228; Verba, Nie and Kim 1978: 94-111) who have integrated the collective actors context into a traditional survey research design. As a measure for this context they introduced individual affiliation with organizations such as political parties. They studied the relationship between organizational involvement and the level of individual participation, and they revealed positive effects of organizational involvement on the level of individual participation. Verba et al. (1972: 176; 1978: 15, 112) interpreted these positive effects as mobilizing effects of these organizations. Furthermore, they demonstrated that the strength of mobilizing effects is dependent on the specific organization and the specific mode of participation at hand (voting, campaigning, communal activity). Significant mobilizing effects exist only with respect to political organizations (in contrast to non-political organizations). Mobilizing effects are highest for voting and lowest for communal activity; campaign activities lie in between (Verba et al. 1972:194; 1978:130).

Verba et al. studied only *conventional* modes of participation. The organizational context of political *protest* and its mobilizing effect have not yet been examined. In the first part of our paper we take up this question by applying the survey based research design introduced by Verba et al. (1972, 1978).<sup>3</sup> However, from the outset and different from Verba et al., we limit ourselves to political organizations that are the main

2 The two measures are not directly comparable. For the Netherlands, Germany and the United States studied in 1979-81 by Kaase (1990: 58), he recorded between 20 and 30 percent mobilized actions for contacting and between 54 and 76 percent for protesting. For Britain in 1984-85, Parry, Moyser and Day (1992: 87) found 33 percent mobilized action for contacting and 81 percent for protest activities.

3 The most effective way of studying the context is by means of a network approach (see Huckfeldt 1979 who studied the neighborhood social context of political participation). However, in this case we are no longer dealing with a traditional research design. Moreover, it is very difficult to implement a network approach in comparative surveys.

entrepreneurs of political action. Three competing hypotheses are examined. The first is a general mobilization hypothesis and the second and third are specific mobilization hypotheses. The first hypothesis states that individuals who are affiliated with any political organization are more likely to protest than people who are not so affiliated. The second hypothesis argues that mobilizing effects for protest participation are limited to a specific type of, political organizations i.e. "new politics" organizations such as environmental groups who developed or reactivated protest activities in the sixties and seventies. The third hypothesis argues that mobilizing effects of the organizational context are limited to a specific form of political protest, i.e. legal protest as opposed to illegal protest.

Like the close context, the wide context of national political and socioeconomic conditions has been neglected in studies on protest participation based on survey research. The available comparative studies are mainly interested in identifying patterns of relationships common to the countries investigated (Barnes, Kaase et al. 1979: 20; Jennings, van Deth 1990; Topf 1995). Although there are clear differences in the level of political protest between countries, survey researchers have made no attempts to explain them by differences in national political and socioeconomic conditions.<sup>4</sup>

This research deficit cannot be justified with the absence of theoretical explanations for national differences in protest participation. We can find at least two different kinds of explanations in the literature. One strand of literature refers to political opportunity structures, i.e. the characteristics of the political system that favor political protest (Eisinger 1973; Kitschelt 1986). The degree of centralization of the state apparatus or the number of political parties are examples for such characteristics. These characteristics have often been used in empirical studies on the emergence and development of new social movements (Kriesi et al. 1992; Rucht 1994). Another strand of literature makes use of modernization theories (e.g. Bell 1973) for explaining the level of political protest recorded in modern societies. It refers to socioeconomic factors such as wealth and education as well as political factors such as democratic experience. These factors have been typically used as a frame of reference for deducing hypotheses or interpreting empirical results on protest participation in Western democracies (Barnes, Kaase et al. 1979; Fuchs and Klingemann 1995). However, they have not been used up to now for explaining national differences in the extent of protest participation empirically. In the second part of the paper we consider important socioeconomic and political factors that have been suggested by *modernization theory* as favorable factors for political protest. More specifically, we study the effects of the following *socioeconomic* factors: the level of wealth, education, urbanization and the size of the service sector. As *political* factors we

4 Of course, there are studies trying to explain national differences in political participation (e.g. Gurr 1970; Tilly 1975; Powell 1982). However, these studies deal with a very specific form of collective behavior, i.e. political violence, and they are not based on survey data.

examine the effects of organizational density, duration of freedom of association and duration of democracy. The general hypothesis put forward here is that the higher the level of modernity of societies the higher the extent of protest participation.

To summarize, the goal of this paper is to study two different contextual factors of protest participation. First, in the research tradition established by Verba et al. (1972, 1978), we study the organizational context of protest participation by a traditional survey research design. With this design we attempt to take into account the fact that political protest is mobilized by collective actors. Second, using theories of modernization we study important aspects of the national political and socioeconomic context of protest participation. In so doing we try to explain national differences in the extent of political protest. We also try to explain national differences in the content of demands raised by political protesters.

The data for this study is drawn from the second wave of the 1990-91 World Values Survey. This study has been conducted in 42 countries, among them 17 Western democracies. The Western democracies are Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany (West), Great Britain, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and the United States of America. The 1990-91 World Values Survey is the only survey that allows the study of protest participation in such a wide range of Western democracies.

The following empirical analysis starts with a description of the dependent variable, i.e. the level of protest participation in the Western democracies studied. The second part deals with the organizational context of political protest and the third part is devoted to modernity as a context of political protest. Both empirical parts start with a deduction and specification of the leading hypotheses.

## 2. Political Protest

Political participation in general refers to activities of private citizens intended to influence state structures, authorities and/or decisions regarding the allocation of public goods.<sup>5</sup> Political protest is a direct and non-institutionalized mode of participation (Barnes, Kaase et al. 1979: 42-50; Verba, Nie and Kim 1978: 1-2) that appears in two different forms: *legal* forms such as attending lawful demonstrations and *illegal* forms which can be further differentiated in non-violent forms such as joining unofficial strikes and violent forms such as damaging property (Ühlinger 1988; Fuchs 1991).

<sup>5</sup> This definition is a concentration of various definitions suggested by Milbrath and Goel (1977: 2), Verba, Nie and Kim (1978:1), Barnes, Kaase et al. (1979: 42), and Conge (1988: 246).

In the 1990-91 World Values Study, participation in protest activities is measured by an indicator which asks for three legal and two non-violent illegal protest activities: whether the respondents "have actually done", whether they "might do" or "would never, under any circumstances, do" such an activity.<sup>6</sup> The three legal activities are signing petitions, joining boycotts and attending lawful demonstrations. The two non-violent illegal activities are joining unofficial strikes and occupying buildings or factories.<sup>7</sup> Since we are interested not in a single protest activity but in legal and (non-violent) illegal forms of protest, we excluded one legal activity to have an equal measurement of both forms. Based on factor analyses<sup>8</sup> we excluded the 'joining of boycotts' item. This activity seemed to be the most ambiguous one. In some countries it shows significant loadings on both the legal and illegal factors.

Thus, two legal (petition, lawful demonstrations) and two illegal protest activities (unofficial strikes, occupation of buildings) are used to construct altogether four indices measuring the extent of different forms of protest participation. Since we are interested in explaining protest behavior and not behavioral intentions (Barnes, Kaase et al. 1979) the indices are based on the "have done" category. The first three indices are:

- (1) The *extent of participation in legal protest* which is based on an additive index counting whether citizens have been engaged in none, one or two legal protest activities.
- (2) The *extent of participation in illegal protest* which is based on an additive index counting whether citizens have been engaged in none, one or two illegal protest activities.
- (3) The *extent of protest participation* which is based on an additive index counting whether citizens have been engaged in none, one, two, three or four protest activities, irrespective of its concrete form.

Based on these three indices a clear pattern emerges on the average level of the 17 Western democracies (Table 1). According to the overall protest participation index, the majority of citizens (57 percent) participated in protest activities. However, the differentiation in legal and illegal protest reveals that the majority of citizens (57 percent) participated in legal protest, whereas only a small proportion of citizens (8 percent) participated in illegal protest. These comparative data impressively demonstrate for a wide range of democracies what has been aptly coined the result of the "participatory revolution" (Kaase 1984) or the

6 No time frame in which the activity was performed is given in the question.

7 To give an overview: Based on a pooled cross-sectional analysis of the 17 Western democracies 51 percent of the respondents have actually signed petitions, 22 percent have attended lawful demonstrations, 11 percent have joined boycotts, 7 percent have joined unofficial strikes and 3 percent have occupied buildings or factories.

8 Country-specific factor analyses were performed with two pre-defined factors and oblique rotation of factors.

"normalization of the unconventional" (Fuchs 1991), i.e. that protest activities now have become very prominent modes of political participation. However, there is a clear limit: the prominence is mainly restricted to legal protest.

*Table 1: Participation in Protest Activities*

	Non- protesters	Protesters (legal protest only)	Protesters (both legal and illegal protests)	Protesters (illegal protest only)
	in percent			
Austria	51	48	1	0
Belgium	50	43	6	1
Canada	22	70	8	0
Denmark	41	40	15	4
Finland	54	37	6	3
France	42	46	11	1
Germany (West)	42	55	3	0
Great Britain	23	66	10	1
Iceland	47	47	5	1
Ireland	54	41	4	1
Italy	44	45	10	1
Netherlands	47	49	4	0
Norway	33	42	21	4
Portugal	62	34	4	1
Spain	68	24	7	1
Sweden	26	71	3	0
USA	26	69	5	0
Cross-national average	43	49	7	1

Like other comparative studies, the World Values Survey data show significant country differences. These differences are very large with respect to legal protest participation. On the one hand, there are countries like Canada, Sweden, Great Britain, and the United States where more than 70 percent of the citizens exercised legal protest. On the other hand, there are Portugal and Spain where the respective figures are less than 40 percent. National differences are clearly lower with respect to illegal protest participation. Nevertheless, it is interesting to note that there are two countries where illegal protest participation is clearly overrepresented. In Norway 25 percent of the citizens and in Denmark 18 percent of the citizens practiced illegal protest. Finally, regarding the overall protest participation (both legal and illegal) the national differences are very large. Again, in Canada, Great Britain, Sweden and the USA protest participation covers more than 70 percent of the citizens

whereas in Portugal and Spain it is less than 40 percent. However, if one takes into account the intensity of participation measured by the mean number of activities, there are altogether eight countries with high protest participation. Besides Canada, Great Britain, Sweden and the USA these countries are Denmark, France, Italy and Norway. The common characteristic of these nine countries is that the mean number of activities of citizens is well above the cross-national average of 0.83. We take up again the discussion of country differences in protest participation and try to explain them in the section on political protest and modernity.

*Table 2: Types of Political Protest*

	Non- protesters	Protesters (legal protest only)	Protesters (both legal and illegal protests)	Protesters (illegal protest only)
	in percent			
Austria	51	48	1	0
Belgium	50	43	6	1
Canada	22	70	8	0
Denmark	41	40	15	4
Finland	54	37	6	3
France	42	46	11	1
Germany (West)	42	55	3	0
Great Britain	23	66	10	1
Iceland	47	47	5	1
Ireland	54	41	4	1
Italy	44	45	10	1
Netherlands	47	49	4	0
Norway	33	42	21	4
Portugal	62	34	4	1
Spain	68	24	7	1
Sweden	26	71	3	0
USA	26	69	5	0
Cross-national average	43	49	7	1

The third index of overall protest participation mentioned deals equally with legal and illegal protest and does not take into account the substantial differences between both forms of protest. Illegal protest is not necessarily antisystemic in character but by breaking the law it has clearly more disruptive effects on the political process. Generally, it is assumed that disturbance by protest is higher the more illegal protest is used, and the more illegal protest occurs in isolation as non-complementary to legal protest. To be able to measure whether citizens restrict themselves to legal protest and whether illegal protest is used complementary to legal protest or not we constructed the following fourth index:

- (4) This index, *types of political protest*, is based on a combination of dichotomized indices of legal and illegal protest. It covers "non-protesters" (neither legal nor illegal protest activities) and three different types of protesters: "legal protest only" (only one or more legal protest activities), "both legal and illegal protests" (at least one legal and one illegal protest activity) and finally "illegal protest only" (only one or more illegal protest activities).

Based on this index we can describe the dominant type of protesters in the 17 Western democracies under observation (Table 2). The majority of citizenry restricts itself to "legal protest only" (49 percent). Illegal protest is almost always used as an add-on to legal protest (7 percent). Only a small minority of citizens used "illegal protest only" (1 percent). Country-specific analyses show that high protest participation in Canada, Great Britain, Sweden and the United States is predominantly "legal protest only". The high rates of illegal protest in Denmark and Norway are mixed protest, i.e. illegal protest goes together with legal protest. Accordingly, the majority of illegal protest activities is used in complement to legal protest. The amount of "illegal protest only" is negligible. Thus, most societies are only insignificantly confronted with this most disruptive type of protesters.

### **3. Political Protest and Its Organizational Context**

#### *3.1. Mobilization Hypotheses*

Very recently, Rosenstone and Hansen (1993: 3) criticized participation theories and studies because they concentrate on personal characteristics such as socioeconomic status and personal grievances as determinants of political participation. They argue that certain phenomena cannot be explained adequately based on personal characteristics alone. One paradox clearly demonstrates the limits of the individualistic approach: It is well-known that education promotes political participation. However, in the United States voting turnout is decreasing despite an increasing level of education. Therefore, Rosenstone and Hansen (1993: 5) suggest a theory that conceptualizes political participation as a result of personal elements such as individual characteristics and political elements such as strategic choices of political leaders. These strategic choices refer to the decision to mobilize citizens to action (Rosenstone and Hansen 1993: 36). The argument that individual characteristics are not sufficient for explaining participation is not a new one. In research on social movements resource mobilization theory (McCarthy and Zald 1977) started off with a similar premise that the existence of grievances and dissatisfaction is not sufficient



for explaining the emergence of social movements and political protest. Political entrepreneurs and organizations are needed to define discontent and transform it into political action. Rosenstone and Hansen have not only emphasized the role of political leaders or, more generally, of initiators of political actions as determinant of political participation. Their specific contribution is a general theory of mobilization (Rosenstone and Hansen 1993: 20-36). They differentiate between direct and indirect forms of mobilization. Direct mobilization takes place when initiators of political action contact citizens personally and encourage them to take action, indirect mobilization is contacting citizens through social networks such as family, friends, neighbors or colleagues. Since initiators of political action want to get the most effective number of people involved with the least possible efforts they are eager to contact people who they already know, who are centrally positioned in social networks, whose actions are most effective at producing political outcomes and who are likely to respond by participating. Rosenstone and Hansen (1993: 31-33) identify several groups of people who fulfill these criteria. Among them are people who are affiliated with political organizations.

One specific feature of Rosenstone and Hansen's mobilization theory is that it is a general theory, i.e. it states these laws for all kinds of political organizations and for all modes of political participation. Consequently, based on this theory we can deduce our first hypothesis. It is a *general mobilization hypothesis* which argues that citizens who are affiliated with any political organization are more likely to protest than citizens who are not so affiliated. However, there are reasonable arguments which speak against the universality of this mobilization hypothesis and call for a specification concerning the form of organization and the form of protest at hand. As far as the form of organization is concerned, a second hypothesis can be formulated. This *organization-specific mobilization hypothesis* argues that organizational affiliation is only supportive for protest activities if the affiliation refers to so-called "new politics"-organizations like environmental groups and peace movements.<sup>9</sup> This is because protest activities have been developed or reactivated in the context of these political organizations (Barnes, Kaase et al. 1979). As far as the form of protest is concerned a third hypothesis, i.e. a *protest-specific mobilization hypothesis* is suggested here. Research has shown that legal protest activities such as attending lawful demonstrations and illegal protest activities such as joining unofficial strikes are two very different forms of behavior not only in terms of legality but also in terms of determinants, structure and consequences (Ühlinger 1988; Fuchs 1991). Especially, it has been demonstrated that only legal protest - not illegal protest - is used as a complement to institutionalized forms of political participation (Fuchs 1991). Therefore,

9 For this argument with respect to established and green political parties see Finkel and Opp (1991).

it could be suggested that affiliation with political organizations is only favorable for legal protest activities.

In the following section we are going to study these three mobilization hypotheses by relating membership in political organizations to political protest. Any organization is defined as political that is overtly engaged in politics (Almond and Verba 1963: 303). According to this definition, political organizations in a strict sense such as political parties, and political movements like peace movements are included as well as interest organizations like trade unions and business organizations. Excluded are social organizations like sport clubs and religious groups.<sup>10</sup>

Before moving on to the empirical analysis an additional remark on the empirical analysis of mobilization is necessary. We study the relation of membership in political organizations with political protest and interpret a positive relationship as an effect of mobilization processes. Since membership in political organizations and political protest are measured independently we cannot measure the specific mobilization process that led to the specific protest activity reported. What we measure instead is whether people who can be reached relatively easily by initiators of political actions or political entrepreneurs - because of their membership in political organizations - are more often involved in protest activities.

### *3.2. Membership in Political Organizations*

In the 1990-91 World Values Survey, affiliation with organizations' is measured by an indicator which asks for a list of 1.6 voluntary organizations whether respondents belong to any of these organizations and/or if they are currently doing unpaid work for any of them. The list covers a wide range of political and non-political organizations. Based on our conceptual guideline we identified six organizations that can be regarded as relevant political organizations: three traditional political organizations (political parties or groups,<sup>11</sup> trade unions and professional associations) and three new organizations (conservation/the environment/ecology, peace movement and animal rights). Additionally, the list includes organizations that in some countries are overtly engaged in politics.<sup>12</sup>

10 The primary goal of religious groups is to create and reproduce beliefs. They may also act like interest groups. However, their principle target groups are individuals and not political and governmental institutions.

11 Unfortunately, the data did not allow the exclusion of the members of the "new politics"-organization of the Green parties from this category. However, due to low membership rates of the Green parties the effect of this group can be neglected.

12 For example local community action on issues like poverty, employment, housing, and racial equality in the USA.

However, for comparative reasons we looked for identical sets of traditional and new political organizations in every country studied. Country-specific factor analyses demonstrated that the selected six organizations are the only organizations that in almost all the countries show high loadings on the respective factors.<sup>13</sup> This indicates that our conceptual differentiation holds up in empirical terms in the structure of affiliations of individual respondents, too.

Applying the same logic we used to construct indices of political protest we computed four indices measuring the extent and type of organizational membership. We defined individuals as members of these organizations if they stated that they belong to this organization or if they are currently doing unpaid work for it. By also including individuals who do not belong to an organization but are currently doing unpaid work for it we take into account the fact that organizations differ with respect to their formal membership rules. The four indices are:

- (1) The extent of *membership in traditional political organizations* which is based on an additive index counting whether citizens are members in none, one, two or three traditional political organizations.
- (2) The extent of *membership in new political organizations* which is based on an additive index counting whether citizens are members in none, one, two or three new political organizations.
- (3) The extent of *membership in political organizations* which is based on an additive index counting whether citizens are members in none, one, two, three, four, five or six political organizations, irrespective of its concrete type.
- (4) And finally, *types of membership in political organizations* which is based on a combination of dichotomized indices on membership in traditional and in new political organizations. It covers "non-members" (membership neither in traditional nor new political organization), "traditional type members" (membership in only one or more traditional political organizations), "mixed type members" (membership in at least one traditional and one new political organizations) and finally "new type members" (membership in only one or more new political organizations).

According to the overall membership in political organizations, a significant proportion of the citizens, an average of 36 percent are members of political organizations (Table 3). However, the protest participation rate of 57 percent of the citizens exceeds this membership rate quite strongly. This is a first hint that membership in political organizations is not a necessary condition for political protest. Differentiating into traditional and new political organizations, there are clearly more citizens who are

13 The country-specific factor analyses (three pre-defined factors, oblique rotation) shows one factor defined by social organizations such as sport clubs and religious groups, a second factor defined by traditional political organizations and a third one defined by new political organizations.

affiliated with traditional political organizations (32 percent) than with new political organizations (10 percent).

Country-specific distributions are instructive, too. Significantly higher membership rates in *traditional political organizations* than the cross-country average can be found in all Scandinavian countries: Denmark, Finland, Norway, Sweden as well as in Iceland. Here almost half the citizens or more than half of them are organized in traditional associations. With less than 20 percent, membership is significantly lower in France, Ireland, Italy, Portugal and Spain. Regarding *new political organizations* where on average 10 percent of the citizens are members, the Netherlands show an extraordinarily high membership rate of 30 percent. Accordingly, the Netherlands is the only country where the new social movement sector is so highly institutionalized. The pattern in national differences with respect to overall *membership in political organizations* (both traditional and new) is identical with the one we found for traditional political organizations. However, due to their high membership rates in new political organizations the Netherlands also belong to the group of countries with significantly higher overall membership rates that is comprised of the Scandinavian countries and Iceland.

Table 3: Membership in Political Organizations

	Membership in traditional organizations				Membership in new organizations				Membership in political organizations			
	None	One	Multiple	Mean <sup>a</sup>	None	One	Multiple	Mean <sup>a</sup>	None	One	Multiple	Mean <sup>a</sup>
	in percent				in percent				in percent			
Austria	72	20	8	.37	93	6	1	.08	69	20	11	.45
Belgium	77	19	4	.27	87	10	3	.16	71	20	9	.43
Canada	71	22	7	.37	89	9	2	.14	66	22	12	.51
Denmark	42	50	8	.68	85	12	3	.19	38	44	18	.87
Finland	51	34	15	.67	92	6	2	.10	49	33	18	.76
France	89	8	3	.14	95	4	1	.06	86	10	4	.21
Germany (West)	73	22	5	.32	90	8	2	.12	68	23	9	.44
Great Britain	75	20	5	.30	93	5	2	.09	72	21	7	.38
Iceland	32	49	19	.90	93	6	1	.09	30	48	22	.99
Ireland	84	14	2	.18	96	3	1	.04	82	15	3	.22
Italy	87	11	2	.16	95	4	1	.07	83	12	5	.22
Netherlands	66	26	8	.44	70	20	10	.41	51	27	22	.84
Norway	47	36	17	.72	93	6	1	.08	45	36	19	.80
Portugal	90	8	2	.12	98	2	0	.02	89	8	3	.14
Spain	94	5	1	.08	97	2	1	.03	92	6	2	.12
Sweden	36	49	15	.81	83	13	4	.22	32	43	25	1.02
USA	70	22	8	.39	87	9	4	.17	65	22	13	.56
Cross-national average	68	24	8	.41	90	7	2	.12	64	24	12	.53

<sup>a</sup> Based on original scales: traditional (range 0-3), new (range 0-3), and political organizations (range 0-6).

The distribution for the fourth index *types of membership in political organizations* shows (Table 4) again that membership is predominantly restricted to "traditional type members" (on average 26 percent). However, it reveals some interesting results with respect to new political organizations. About half the people who are affiliated with these organizations are "mixed type members" who at the same time are affiliated with traditional political organizations (6 percent). The other half belongs to "new type members", i.e. it is only affiliated with new political organizations (4 percent). Accordingly, in the Netherlands with a relatively high rate of membership in new political organizations the two groups are represented almost equally (14 vs. 15 percent).

*Table 4: Types of Membership in Political Organizations*

	Non-members	Traditional type members	Mixed type members	New type members
	in percent			
Austria	69	24	4	3
Belgium	71	17	6	7
Canada	66	22	7	5
Denmark	38	47	11	4
Finland	49	43	6	2
France	85	9	2	4
Germany (West)	68	23	4	5
Great Britain	72	21	4	3
Iceland	31	62	6	1
Ireland	82	15	1	2
Italy	83	11	2	4
Netherlands	51	19	14	15
Norway	45	48	5	2
Portugal	89	9	1	1
Spain	92	5	1	2
Sweden	32	51	13	4
USA	65	23	7	5
Cross-national average	64	26	6	4

### *3.3. Membership in Political Organizations and Political Protest*

In the following section, we will test the mobilization hypotheses developed above. Following the sequence of the argument, we begin with the investigation of the general

mobilization hypothesis and then test the two more specific hypotheses, the organization-specific and the protest-specific hypotheses.

### The General Mobilization Hypothesis

According to the general mobilization hypothesis citizens who are members of any political organization are more likely to protest than citizens who are not. Following Rosenstone and Hansen's mobilization theory, this hypothesis could be specified further. The greater the individual's number of memberships, the greater the number of direct and indirect contacts with political entrepreneurs mobilizing for citizen participation. Therefore, it could be suggested that the probability of protest participation increases with the number of memberships. To put it in another way: There exists a linear relationship between the number of organizational memberships and protest activities.<sup>14</sup> Therefore, the general mobilization hypothesis suggests a) significantly lower protest for non-members than for members of political organizations and b) a linear relationship between the number of organizational memberships and protest activities.

In studying the linearity of this relationship, we classify the number of organizational memberships into three categories, "none", "one" and "multiple memberships". Collapsing two or more memberships into a "multiple" category is not only due to practical reasons of data presentation, but also to substantive reasons. It is clear that the more important qualitative difference exists between individuals with single and multiple memberships than between individuals with different numbers of multiple memberships. This is because individual relationships are more homogenous for single members while they are more heterogeneous and complex for multiple members. Earlier studies have also summed up multiple memberships in this way (Verba and Nie 1972: 185).

This general mobilization hypothesis is tested on the basis of a variance analysis where *membership in political organizations* is the independent variable and *protest participation* is the dependent variable (Table 5). Looking at all 17 Western democracies together, individuals who are members of political organizations protest more often than individuals who are not members. Moreover, there exists a linear relationship between the number of protest activities and the number of memberships/The number of protest activities for non-members is 0.66 increasing to 1.04 for single and to 1.42 for multiple memberships. Pearson's *r* which measures the strength of a linear relationship shows a highly significant value of 0.28. Additionally, these results are also valid within countries. In every single country protest rates are higher for members than for non-members and a linear

14 Former research on the organizational context of participation has already shown that the number of membership organizations matters. The greater the number of organizations people are involved in, the greater the level of participation (Verba and Nie 1972:184; Parry, Moyser and Day 1992: 97-116).

Table 5: Membership in Political Organizations and Political Protest

		Mean number of protest activities by membership in political organizations											
		Political organizations				Traditional organizations				New organizations			
Protest		None	One	Multiple	r <sup>a</sup>	None	One	Multiple	r <sup>a</sup>	None	One	Multiple	r <sup>a</sup>
Austria	Total	0.50	0.73	0.95	0.23**	0.52	0.72	0.95	0.20**	0.57	1.00	0.62	0.12**
	Legal	0.49	0.72	0.90	0.22**	0.51	0.71	0.91	0.19**	0.56	0.92	0.62	0.11**
	Illegal	0.02	0.01	0.05	0.04	0.02	0.01	0.04	0.03	0.02	0.05	0.00	0.03
Belgium	Total	0.62	1.03	1.39	0.27**	0.65	1.11	1.57	0.26**	0.72	1.06	1.49	0.16**
	Legal	0.56	0.93	1.17	0.27**	0.60	0.98	1.27	0.25**	0.65	0.98	1.24	0.18**
	Illegal	0.08	0.13	0.23	0.12**	0.08	0.16	0.30	0.13**	0.10	0.10	0.27	0.06**
Canada	Total	0.90	1.29	1.78	0.35**	0.92	1.37	1.82	0.33**	1.03	1.54	1.77	0.20**
	Legal	0.85	1.16	1.43	0.32**	0.88	1.21	1.45	0.29**	0.94	1.37	1.32	0.21**
	Illegal	0.05	0.14	0.33	0.24**	0.05	0.17	0.37	0.25**	0.09	0.18	0.37	0.12**
Denmark	Total	0.76	0.98	1.36	0.20**	0.79	1.04	1.38	0.17**	0.90	1.26	1.63	0.17**
	Legal	0.64	0.78	1.10	0.20**	0.67	0.82	1.11	0.15**	0.73	1.08	1.30	0.18**
	Illegal	0.12	0.22	0.29	0.15**	0.12	0.23	0.30	0.15**	0.18	0.22	0.32	0.06
Finland	Total	0.46	0.70	0.97	0.24**	0.47	0.75	0.91	0.21**	0.59	1.05	1.43	0.19**
	Legal	0.41	0.57	0.85	0.24**	0.42	0.62	0.79	0.20**	0.51	0.96	1.25	0.21**
	Illegal	0.05	0.14	0.10	0.08	0.05	0.14	0.10	0.09	0.09	0.04	0.13	-0.01
France	Total	0.90	1.53	2.28	0.29**	0.92	1.64	2.60	0.30**	0.99	1.76	1.67	0.14**
	Legal	0.79	1.23	1.63	0.26**	0.80	1.34	1.77	0.26**	0.85	1.30	1.33	0.12**
	Illegal	0.13	0.31	0.68	0.23**	0.14	0.32	0.84	0.23**	0.16	0.50	0.33	0.12**
Germany (West)	Total	0.65	0.95	1.35	0.28**	0.67	1.03	1.33	0.24**	0.74	1.11	1.59	0.18**
	Legal	0.67	0.95	1.26	0.26**	0.70	0.99	1.21	0.21**	0.75	1.12	1.44	0.18**
	Illegal	0.02	0.04	0.10	0.10**	0.02	0.06	0.10	0.11**	0.03	0.05	0.13	0.06**
Great Britain	Total	0.91	1.19	1.49	0.23**	0.92	1.23	1.46	0.21**	0.98	1.26	1.83	0.15**
	Legal	0.81	1.02	1.34	0.25**	0.82	1.03	1.30	0.21**	0.86	1.26	1.52	0.20**
	Illegal	0.10	0.18	0.15	0.07**	0.10	0.20	0.16	0.10**	0.12	0.03	0.29	0.01
Iceland	Total	0.55	0.69	1.21	0.26**	0.57	0.71	1.22	0.25**	0.71	1.32	1.71	0.21**
	Legal	0.53	0.65	1.09	0.27**	0.55	0.67	1.08	0.23**	0.67	1.20	1.43	0.20**
	Illegal	0.03	0.04	0.14	0.15**	0.03	0.05	0.16	0.16**	0.05	0.14	0.29	0.12**
Ireland	Total	0.54	0.97	1.70	0.30**	0.55	1.01	1.94	0.29**	0.63	0.89	1.57	0.11**
	Legal	0.50	0.86	1.53	0.29**	0.51	0.89	1.72	0.28**	0.57	0.85	1.43	0.12**
	Illegal	0.04	0.11	0.17	0.12**	0.05	0.11	0.22	0.13**	0.06	0.04	0.14	0.01
Italy	Total	0.82	1.53	1.97	0.31**	0.86	1.52	2.02	0.25**	0.91	1.83	1.95	0.20**
	Legal	0.74	1.31	1.53	0.29**	0.77	1.29	1.62	0.25**	0.82	1.47	1.48	0.17**
	Illegal	0.10	0.25	0.45	0.20**	0.11	0.25	0.44	0.15**	0.12	0.38	0.48	0.15**
Netherlands	Total	0.59	0.95	1.17	0.26**	0.70	1.10	0.99	0.16**	0.69	1.12	1.15	0.21**
	Legal	0.57	0.89	1.06	0.26**	0.77	0.83	0.80	0.16**	0.65	1.02	1.07	0.21**
	Illegal	0.03	0.06	0.11	0.11**	0.04	0.10	0.07	0.07**	0.04	0.09	0.09	0.07**
Norway	Total	0.76	1.13	1.64	0.33**	0.79	1.19	1.55	0.29**	1.00	1.92	1.57	0.21**
	Legal	0.63	0.83	1.18	0.28**	0.66	0.86	1.12	0.23**	0.76	1.48	1.30	0.23**
	Illegal	0.12	0.31	0.46	0.28**	0.13	0.34	0.43	0.27**	0.24	0.45	0.57	0.13**
Portugal	Total	0.47	0.96	1.29	0.24**	0.47	1.01	1.36	0.25**	0.53	0.82	1.50	0.07
	Legal	0.43	0.92	1.03	0.24**	0.43	0.96	1.14	0.25**	0.49	0.78	1.00	0.07**
	Illegal	0.05	0.03	0.17	0.05	0.05	0.03	0.22	0.06**	0.05	0.00	0.00	-0.03
Spain	Total	0.44	1.35	1.94	0.35**	0.46	1.41	2.20	0.33**	0.51	1.58	1.19	0.15**
	Legal	0.40	1.02	1.40	0.30**	0.41	1.05	1.62	0.29**	0.44	1.19	1.00	0.14**
	Illegal	0.07	0.32	0.53	0.27**	0.07	0.36	0.58	0.26**	0.09	0.37	0.31	0.11**
Sweden	Total	0.79	0.90	1.33	0.27**	0.81	0.96	1.37	0.23**	0.90	1.29	1.24	0.18**
	Legal	0.77	0.89	1.27	0.27**	0.81	0.95	1.29	0.22**	0.89	1.26	1.20	0.18**
	Illegal	0.02	0.03	0.06	0.07**	0.02	0.03	0.06	0.07**	0.03	0.04	0.08	0.05
USA	Total	0.80	1.10	1.41	0.30**	0.82	1.18	1.41	0.27**	0.89	1.30	1.49	0.21**
	Legal	0.75	1.03	1.26	0.30**	0.78	1.08	1.26	0.26**	0.83	1.17	1.31	0.20**
	Illegal	0.04	0.08	0.16	0.14**	0.04	0.10	0.16	0.13**	0.05	0.13	0.21	0.12**
All	Total	0.66	1.04	1.42	0.28**	0.69	1.10	1.44	0.26**	0.77	1.28	1.44	0.17**
	Legal	0.61	0.92	1.21	0.28**	0.63	0.95	1.21	0.24**	0.69	1.15	1.24	0.18**
	Illegal	0.07	0.14	0.22	0.15**	0.07	0.15	0.24	0.15**	0.09	0.15	0.22	0.07**

\* p ≤ 0.05

\*\* p ≤ 0.01

<sup>a</sup> Correlation (Pearson's r) between number of protest activities and number of organizational memberships.

relationship between the number of organizational memberships and protest activities exists. The range of Pearson's  $r$  across countries is 0.23 to 0.35 and it is significant in every single country at the 1-percent-level. Finally, on the level of all countries as well as on the country level the two parts of the general mobilization hypothesis are confirmed.

### The Organization-Specific Mobilization Hypothesis

The expected relationships exist on the general level of membership in political organizations. But does it equally exist for membership in traditional and in new political organizations like the general mobilization hypothesis suggests? The organization-specific mobilization hypothesis suggested here argues that membership in political organizations is only supportive for protest activities if membership refers to new political organizations. Consequently, the expectation is that a) only membership in new political organizations favors political protest and b) the linear relationship between the organizational memberships and protest activities is limited to new political organizations.

*Table 6: Membership in Traditional and New Political Organizations with Political Protest*

	Mean number of protest activities by membership in political organizations	
	Traditional organizations	New organizations
Austria	0.79	0.95
Belgium	1.19	1.15
Canada	1.49	1.57
Denmark	1.09	1.34
Finland	0.80	1.13
France	1.88	1.74
Germany (West)	1.08	1.19
Great Britain	1.27	1.41
Iceland	0.85	1.37
Ireland	1.12	1.03
Italy	1.61	1.86
Netherlands	1.06	1.13
Norway	1.31	1.88
Portugal	1.08	0.89
Spain	1.59	1.47
Sweden	1.06	1.28
USA	1.25	1.36
Cross-national average	1.21	1.34

To study the first part of this hypothesis suggesting that only membership in new political organizations favors political protest, we compare the average number of protest activities for *membership in traditional organizations* and *membership in new political organizations* (Table 6). When averaging out the figures for all the 17 democracies, members in traditional political organizations participate less in protest activities than members of new political organizations (1.21 vs. 1.34). Hence, there are differences



between both membership types but not those strict ("black and white") differences stated in the original hypothesis. The results rather support a liberal interpretation ("more or less") of the organization-specific hypothesis according to which membership in new organizations is more favorable to protest participation than is membership in traditional political organizations. However, the results on the level of countries do not support either a strict or a liberal interpretation of this hypothesis: In nine countries members in new political organizations show higher protest rates than members in traditional political organizations (Austria, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Great Britain, Iceland, Norway, Spain and Sweden). But in four countries the protest rates are almost identical (Belgium, Canada, Ireland, and the Netherlands) and in three countries members in traditional organizations show higher protest rates than members in new organizations (France, Portugal and Spain). These different participation rates may result from different strategies pursued by traditional and new political organizations in different countries. For example, in France, unions have traditionally organized protest events whereas in Germany primarily the new political organizations organize protest events. Consequently, we cannot find any generalizable pattern across countries. The only generalizable result is that membership in traditional as well as in new political organizations favor protest participation. And this again supports the general mobilization hypothesis.

*Table 7: Types of Membership in Political Organizations and Political Protest*

	Mean number of protest activities by type of organizational membership				
	Non-members	Traditional	Mixed	New	Eta <sup>a</sup>
Austria	0.50	0.76	0.98	0.91	0.22*
Belgium	0.62	1.14	1.35	0.99	0.26*
Canada	0.90	1.40	1.79	1.78	0.33*
Denmark	0.76	1.01	1.41	1.14	0.20*
Finland	0.46	0.74	1.27	0.71	0.26*
France	0.90	1.76	2.53	1.38	0.29*
Germany (West)	0.65	1.01	1.45	0.98	0.27*
Great Britain	0.91	1.23	1.54	1.24	0.22*
Iceland	0.55	0.79	1.49	0.90	0.25*
Ireland	0.54	1.11	1.20	0.96	0.27*
Italy	0.82	1.55	2.00	1.79	0.30*
Netherlands	0.59	0.93	1.22	1.04	0.27*
Norway	0.76	1.22	2.13	1.36	0.34*
Portugal	0.47	1.06	1.38	0.55	0.24*
Spain	0.44	1.55	1.87	1.25	0.34*
Sweden	0.79	0.98	1.35	1.03	0.24*
USA	0.80	1.15	1.54	1.10	0.30*
All	0.66	1.11	1.49	1.11	0.28**

a Association (Eta) between number of protest activities and type of organizational membership.

Nevertheless, it is possible that the suggested difference between membership in traditional and in new political organizations is blurred because of multiple memberships in

traditional and new organizations. The effect of mixed membership can be separated by using the index *types of membership in political organizations*, which identifies individuals who are only members in traditional organizations and individuals who are only members in new organizations. If at least a liberal "more or less" interpretation of the organization-specific mobilization hypothesis is true, protest activities should be used much more often by "new type members" than by "traditional type members". The corresponding variance analysis shows on the general level of all democracies no differences between "traditional type members" and "new type members" (Table 7). Both categories show an average of 1.11 protest activities. The fact that on average "mixed type members" apparently engage in more protest activities (1.49) indicates that it is less the type but more the number of organizational memberships that determines the level of protest. Country-specific analysis reveals the highest amount of protest for "mixed type members", too. But countries differ with respect to the amount of protest for "traditional type members" and "new type members". In six countries protest participation is higher with respect to "new type members" (Austria, Denmark, Iceland, Italy, The Netherlands, and Norway). In five countries the level of protest participation is almost equal for both categories (Finland, Germany, Great Britain, Sweden, and the USA). And in six countries protest participation is higher with respect to "traditional type members" (Belgium, Canada, France, Ireland, Portugal, and Spain). Consequently, the country-specific pattern with respect to this index is comparable to the pattern emerging for the two indices membership in traditional organizations and in new political organizations analyzed before. Hence, we cannot find any evidence supporting the first part of the organization-specific hypothesis.

The second part of the organization-specific mobilization hypothesis suggests that the linear relationship between the number of organizational memberships and protest activities is limited to new political organizations. The pooled analysis for all 17 countries reveals a linear increase of protest with the number of memberships in new as well as traditional political organizations (Table 5). In the case of membership in new organizations protest activities increase from 0.77 (non-members) to 1.28 (one) to 1.44 (multiple), compared to membership in traditional political organizations where the corresponding figures are 0.69, 1.10 and 1.44. This pattern holds also on the country level. However, in some countries the differences between single and multiple memberships, especially in the case of new political organizations, are not as clear as expected. But in every country Pearson's  $r$  is positive and highly significant at the 1-percent level.<sup>15</sup> Based on these results, a strict interpretation of the second part of the organization-specific hypothesis can be rejected. Moreover, we cannot find any support for a liberal

15 At first sight, Portugal seems to be an exception to this rule in the case of membership in new organizations. However, this irregularity is not of substantial character but a simple effect of low cases in multiple membership (N=2).

interpretation of this hypothesis stating that the strength of the linear relationship between the number of organizational memberships and protest activities is higher for new political organizations compared to traditional organizations. At the level of all countries, the strength of the linear relationship is higher for traditional organizations than for new organizations. At the level of individual countries, the strength of the linear relationship is in some cases higher for new political organizations and in some cases higher for traditional political organizations.

To summarize the results for the organization-specific mobilization hypothesis, the original and strict interpretation of this hypothesis limiting the favorable effect of membership only to new political organizations is unanimously rejected by the data. The same is true for a liberal interpretation of this hypothesis stating more favorable effects of membership in new political organizations compared to traditional political organizations. Both contexts, membership in traditional and in new political organizations have a) mobilization effects on political protest and b) these effects increase in a linear manner with the number of organizational memberships. The country studies hint at the existence of some organization-specific mobilizations. However, the fact that we cannot detect any generalizable pattern across countries supports the general mobilization hypothesis more than the organization-specific one.

### The Protest-Specific Mobilization Hypothesis

Besides the organization-specific hypothesis we suggested a protest-specific mobilization hypothesis, that expects mobilization effects to be limited to legal protest activities. According to this hypothesis a) members in political organizations protest more than non-members only with respect to legal activities and b) the linear relationship between the number of memberships and protest exists only with respect to legal activities.

Again, this hypothesis can be examined for the effect of membership in political organizations in general and for specific organizations. We start with *membership in political organizations* in general, looking at the first part of this hypothesis, i.e. the differences between members and non-members with respect to legal and illegal protest (Table 5). In the case of pooled as well as country-specific analyses, members in political organizations compared to non-members are more active in legal as well as in illegal protest activities. But members in political organizations participate to a greater extent in legal than in illegal protest. Consequently, a strict version of the protest-specific hypothesis is rejected but a liberal version is supported by the data. The same is true for the second part of the hypothesis referring to a linear relationship between the number of memberships and protest. Looking at all democracies together, the extent of legal and

illegal protests increases with the number of organizational memberships and the strength of the linear relationship is higher for legal compared to illegal protest. On the country level, legal and illegal protests also increase with increasing numbers of memberships. In some countries the differences between single and multiple memberships are not as clear as expected but the strength of the linear relationship is higher for legal compared to illegal protest in every single country. The only exception is Norway which demonstrates no difference in linearity with respect to legal and illegal protests. Accordingly, the results seem to support a liberal version of the protest-specific hypothesis because empirically we find a) more legal than illegal protest for members in political organizations compared to non-members and b) a stronger linear relationship between protest and membership in political organizations for legal than for illegal protest.

In general, this liberal version of the hypothesis is supported also with respect to the two *indices membership in traditional organizations* and *membership in new organizations* (Table 5). Concerning only membership in traditional organizations, Norway constitutes a clear exception to the rule. It demonstrates a stronger linear relationship for illegal than for legal protest. In some respects Norway seems to constitute something of a special case.

### The Organizational Context of Political Protest

Empirical analyses have clearly demonstrated that the close context, i.e. the organizational context favors individual protest behavior. Individuals embedded in organizational contexts protest more often than those who are not affiliated with any political organization. The stronger the embeddedness of individuals in terms of the number of memberships, the more often they protest.

However, organization-specific and protest-specific analyses lead to further important qualifications of these results. On the one hand, empirical evidence shows that mobilization for political protest does not differ with respect to old and new political organizations. Thus, an organization-specific mobilization hypothesis proposed in the literature has to be rejected. This indicates that in the early 1990s protest is not a specific instrument of the new political organizations which reinvented and popularized them in the sixties. By now, it is well integrated into the political action repertory of traditional organizations, as well. On the other hand, results demonstrate that mobilization is protest-specific. Mobilization effects of organizational contexts are higher for legal than for illegal protest. Since there is also a small effect of organizational context on illegal protest, results allow for a liberal rather than a strict interpretation of the protest-specific hypothesis. Hence one might argue that, to some degree, the use of illegal and legal protest follows the same logic of mobilization via political organizations. The fact that the

strength of effects is rather low for illegal protest might indicate that other sources are more important in determining the extent of illegal protest.

While the rejection of the organization-specific hypothesis reinforces the general mobilization hypothesis, the empirical support for a liberal protest-specific mobilization hypothesis requires a modification of the general mobilization hypothesis. Consequently, our empirical results suggest the following modification of the general mobilization hypothesis: a) members of any political organization protest to a greater extent than non-members and the legal protest rate is higher than the illegal protest rate and b) the level of protest increases in a linear manner with the number of organizational memberships and the strength of the linear relationship for legal protest is greater than that for illegal protest.

Finally, our comparative empirical analyses have demonstrated unequivocally that membership in political organizations is a favorable context for political protest, especially for legal protest participation. While the differences between members and non-members are relatively clear - 0.66 vs. 1.17 protest activities taking all countries together - it is interesting to note that even non-members engage in 0.66 protest activities. Logically, membership in political organizations itself is a favorable but not a necessary precondition for protest. There are other routes to protest than mobilization via political organizations. This is especially true for illegal protest. These alternative paths can include self-initiation, but they can also involve mobilization by other networks outside the political organizations such as non-political organizations, friends, neighborhood and workplace.

## **4. Political Protest and Modernity**

### *4.1. Macro-Contextual Determinants of Political Protest*

After having dealt with the close context of protest participation we are now turning to the wide context of protest participation. That is, we are turning from the context of social interaction of individuals to extra-individual contextual factors facilitating protest participation. The wide context refers to the political and socioeconomic conditions of countries. These conditions determine the resources and opportunities available in a society which may facilitate the political protest of citizens.

Although resources and opportunity are intertwined they are also separable. *Opportunities* are attributed to groups or collectivities, if not to society as a whole. *Resources*, however, can be regarded as the aggregation of individuals' properties. In principle, resources can be accumulated individually, whereas opportunity structures can not. Opportunity structures are universal, in principle available to all members of a society.

We thus make a clear distinction between opportunity structures and resources, which other approaches have neglected. Kitschelt (1986: 58) for example defines political opportunity structures as comprised of "configurations of resources, institutional arrangements and precedents for social mobilization". Our distinction makes it possible to differentiate between the effects of opportunities and resources on the extent of protest participation. For example, if opportunity structures for political protest exist, yet the resources are missing, this should produce a level of political protest different from the opposite configuration.

Differentiating between political resources and opportunities and socioeconomic resources and opportunities we define four different factors which we regard as relevant for the extent of protest participation. Each factor may contribute to the extent of protest participation in a unique way. In the following, hypotheses will be developed for each factor on the basis of general considerations of modernization theory and related research. However, modernization theory has first of all named factors conducive to citizens' political participation in general and not for political protest in particular. Since political participation includes political protest this approaches can be also exploited for hypotheses on political protest. Furthermore, based on modernization theory we specify conditions which favor protest participation in particular. Thus, two types of hypotheses will be generated for each factor. The first is a *general hypothesis* which applies to political participation in general and is therefore also relevant to political protest. The second is a more *specific hypothesis* which applies to political protest in particular.

In a first step general and specific hypotheses will be formulated for socioeconomic resources, socioeconomic opportunities, political resources and political opportunities. These hypotheses will be drawn from a short review of arguments of modernization approaches. In a second step, these four general and four specific hypothesis will be tested. In a final step, we analyze whether different levels of modernity have different consequences for political systems in terms of content of demands of political protesters.

### Socioeconomic Resources

A classic topic of political science is the relation between socioeconomic development and participation. In modernization theory, the relation between socioeconomic resources available in a society and the number of existing interest groups and associations is often emphasized. Stinchcombe, for example, notes that wealthier and more literate societies "carry on more of their life in special-purpose organizations", while poor or illiterate societies use more functionally diffuse social structures (Stinchcombe 1965: 146; see also Eckstein 1963: 395). Olson is more specific on wealth and participation, relating the

ability of generating surplus directly to the potential to 'finance' activities that can provide a collective good (Olson 1982: 39). These hypotheses are mainly related to the phenomenon of structural differentiation of participation opportunities, i.e. the number of interest groups and associations. Yet Stinchcombe and Olson explicitly assume (and other authors as well

- even if only implicitly) that there is also a relation to participation, i.e. the degree to which individuals actually engage in the diversifying landscape of groups and associations.

Olson also pointed out that the institutionalization of agencies for collective action needs socioeconomic resources, i.e. a certain level of wealth or, in his terms, of surplus, allowing for an investment of money and time. Only relative wealth of the average citizen allows for political engagement different from mere material reproduction. This consideration applies to political participation in general, thus also to political protest. The general hypothesis on socioeconomic resources and participation is straightforward:

- *The higher the level of wealth of a society (measured by per capita income) the larger the extent of political participation (including political protest) in general.*

However, political protest, in terms of modernization theory, is a product of ongoing modernization and indicates a differentiation process in the political-behavioral arena (Barnes, Kaase et al. 1979; Rucht 1994: 33-70). Thus, besides the wealth of a society, additional factors influence the extent of protest participation. As Allardt and Parsons have stressed, the most important one is the educational revolution. Allardt (1968: 72-73) regards the increase in the amount of information and knowledge about society and the declining gap in sophistication between elites and others as very important. These factors have given rise to new issues of equality and new demands for participatory democracy. He also stresses the phenomenon of new and non-institutionalized forms of participation. Parsons (1977: 190) puts the educational revolution in relation to the industrial and democratic revolution as a third characteristic of modernity. "The educational revolution was a crucial innovation with its emphasis on the associational pattern as well as on openness of opportunity." (Parsons 1985: 331). He detected a trend toward "associationalism" as an effect of the educational revolution by which two symbols are stressed: community and participation, especially in the formula of participatory democracy (Parsons 1985: 333-334). Both Allardt and Parsons point to the crucial importance of the educational revolution for the differentiation of the action repertory beyond institutionalized forms of political participation. From here a more specific hypothesis on the impact of socioeconomic resources on the extent of protest participation can be drawn and formulated as follows:

- *The higher the level of education in a society the higher the extent of protest participation.*

### Socioeconomic Opportunity Structures

Most of the approaches to social change and modernization show that the size of the population living in urban settlements plays an important role for political involvement (see Rokkan 1970; Lerner 1979 [1958]; Deutsch 1979 [1961]; Tilly 1980). Lerner especially stresses the importance of urbanization for mobilization because of its implications for communication structures. Diffusion research explicitly argues that the variety of population types in cities and the increase of personal contact and network density foster the concentration of 'critical masses', enlarging the probability of an emergence of subcultures (Fischer 1978: 152). Lerner stresses urbanization as a "key variable" for modernization, since the process of modernization in Western societies started with urbanization (Lerner 1979: 369). Thus one could expect a general influence of the degree of urbanization on social mobilization as well as on political participation. Urbanization seems to be a relevant factor for political participation in general and not only for political protest. The general hypothesis on the relation of socioeconomic opportunity structures and political participation, which includes political protest, then is: *The larger the proportion of the population in urban settlements, the higher the extent of political participation (including political protest) in general.*

Applying the model of an expanding polity, proposed by Lerner, a more specific factor can be determined which characterizes the change in the meaning of urbanization. Lerner states "while new communication is promoting new articulation of interests among the existing generation, it is also preparing a new generation who will incorporate these interests and go beyond them" (Lerner 1963: 348). This model of polity growth can be applied to a second process or step of modernization which in view of modernization theory has influenced the communication capacity of a society even more than industrialization. This process is the development of the service sector in modern economies. It is Bell (1973), in particular, who points to the fact that the relative importance of production factors has changed entirely, with knowledge and technology becoming most important. Information becomes the central basis of technology in post-industrial societies. The structural changes connected to the emergence of the service sector are manifold. Production processes are completely different in the service sector, which is almost exclusively based on communication and information. The need for the 'production' of qualified personnel has also changed immensely. Cities, in particular, are characterized by large numbers of large institutions producing knowledge and qualified people. Mass communication has changed the extent and role of information and knowledge entirely. Information flows are larger now than ever before. All these factors influence the opportunity structures for communication considerably, and in such a way



that the promotion of new interest articulations becomes likely (Lerner 1963: 348). Like higher education, the density of the communication network in a service-sector-dominated society is a late development of modernization. Its impact has been strongest since the beginning of the sixties, the period in which the number of people employed in the service sector exceeded those of other sectors in most countries. Therefore one can expect that it is more relevant for the development of political protest than urbanization. These considerations lead to the following specific hypothesis:

*The larger the employment in the service sector the higher the extent of protest participation.*

### Political Resources

Political resources are manifold. The most prominent view is that resources facilitate the execution of power (Dahl 1961:266ff). However, we are not looking at resources which could be related to the ability to mobilize, but for those which are related to the likelihood of an individual being mobilized. What are the individually attributable political conditions that increase chances for political mobilization? Thus, here we deal with the same question as on the individual level but on the macro level. The connection between the micro and the macro level is obvious in this case: The close context, i.e. embeddedness in political organizations, facilitates the chance of the single individual to become involved in political protest. The extent to which this is the case in a society characterizes one element of the wide context of political participation. This context is strongly influenced by historical processes by which institutions for participation came into existence. The first step was the 'participatory revolution' in the second half of the previous century in most nations, which was the sunrise for most traditional organizations. On this ground, a second participatory revolution started in the 1960s and gave most intermediary systems a new shape by establishing new organizations and new organizational forms. This aspect of accumulation of resources for collective action is emphasized by Stinchcombe (1965: 150), who states that "variables immediately affecting the likelihood of starting new organizations and the likelihood of their living" is "the density of social life, including especially an already rich organizational life". In mass society theory and its critique the likelihood for further mobilization of the already mobilized is regarded as an important factor as well. Pinard, for example, predicts "that integrated individuals and pluralist societies will be more prone to social and political movements than atomized people and mass society". Already existing intermediate structures "potentially ... can act as communication and mobilization centers for a new movement" or organization (Pinard 1968: 311f.). Thus the existence of interest organizations and the extent of integration in interest organizations via membership may

influence participation in general. The general hypothesis can therefore be formulated in the following way:

- *The greater the extent of organizational membership in a society in general) the greater the likelihood of political participation (including political protest) in general*

More specifically, existing intermediate structures might serve as a springboard for the formation of new organizations of collective action. The spread of new organizations might be even more important for political protest than the existence of traditional organizations, since political protest is one of their central means to articulate demands. This consideration leads to a more specific hypothesis:

- *The greater the extent of membership in new organizations in a society the higher the extent of protest participation in a society.*

### Political Opportunity Structures

The openness of political systems is most important for political opportunities for participation. It characterizes the inclusiveness (Dahl 1975) of a political system. Here, opportunity structures are narrowly defined as those legal rules, i.e. formal political structures, which facilitate participation. We are looking to structural political universals which are valid for all citizens of a society. The crucial point of political opportunity structures in this sense is how the barriers for participation are defined, for example by the degree of freedom of association. Dahl has emphasized the relation of political opportunity structures in this narrow sense on participation. His observation is that "the lower the barriers, the greater the variety. The lower the barriers to - or the greater the opportunities for - expressing, organizing, and representing political preferences, the greater the number and variety of preferences represented in policy-making" (Dahl 1975: 125). However, the development of variety needs time and is based on experience. Olson points to this fact with respect to organized collective action (Olson 1982). Combining the argument of low barriers and time, a general hypothesis can be drawn:

- *The longer the experience with freedom of association, the more widespread is political participation (including political protest) in general*

But Olson goes beyond this by formulating a model which can be described as an accumulation model. He writes that "a stable society will see more organization for collective action as time passes... The more time that passes, the larger the number of those groups... and the greater the likelihood that the organizations that have been created will have achieved their potential" (Olson 1982: 40). From his considerations, taking Dahl's argument into account, a more specific argument can be put forward. The lower the barriers in general (not only with respect to associational behavior) and the longer the

experience with low political barriers in a society, the more chances exist for citizens to experiment with participation and to set up new organizations and new means of collective action. Thus a more specific hypothesis relates to the duration of political openness of a system in general, The hypothesis is straightforward:

- *The longer the democratic experience, the more differentiated political participation becomes and therefore the higher the extent of protest participation.*

#### 4.2. Testing of Hypotheses

The previous section has presented eight hypotheses to be tested. They are all related to political protest in general. However, political protest has to be distinguished in its legal and illegal forms. We do not expect high explanatory power of the factors considered in the hypotheses with respect to the extent of illegal protest. If one regards political protest as a product of differentiation of the regular modes of political participation due to modernization, there is no reason to assume that this process will lead to participation crossing the border of legality. Taking action beyond the limits of legality might be an unintended consequence of modernization but it cannot be regarded as product of the differentiation process of regular modes of participation. Thus a ninth general hypothesis has to be taken into account and will be explored as well: - *Levels of modernity cannot explain the extent of illegal protest participation.*

Table 8: Hypotheses: Indicators and Expected Positive Impact on Legal Political Protest

		Socioeconomic	Political
Resources	General hypotheses	GNP per capita (moderate correlation)	% organizational membership (moderate correlation)
	Specific hypotheses	% more highly educated (large correlation)	membership in new organizations (large correlation)
Opportunity Structures	General hypotheses	% living in urban settings (moderate correlation)	duration of freedom of association (moderate correlation)
	Specific hypotheses	% employed in service sector (large correlation)	duration of continuous popular elections (large correlation)

Within each of the four factors, i.e. socioeconomic and political resources and opportunity structures, we expect a different explanatory power of the variables considered in the general and the specific hypotheses. The variables related to specific hypotheses should

have higher correlations with the extent of protest participation than the variables related to the general hypotheses. Thus, the degree of education, the size of the service sector, the membership density of new organizations and the length of democratic experience should show a higher influence on the extent of protest participation than the other four more general factors, which are the wealth of a society, the degree of urbanization, the extent of organizational membership in general, and the experience with freedom of association.

*Table 9: Socioeconomic and Political Resources and Opportunity Structures, and Political Protest<sup>a</sup>*

	Participation in Political Protest		
	% None	% Legal	% Illegal
	Pearson's r		
<i>Socioeconomic Resources -</i>			
GNP per capita 1991 <sup>b</sup> - %	-.57**	.54*	.28 -
more highly educated <sup>c</sup>	-.71**	.71**	.00
<i>Political Resources - % organizational</i>			
memberships <sup>d</sup> - % memberships in new	-.47* -	.43*	.27 -
organizations <sup>e</sup>	.32	.32	.13
<i>Socioeconomic Opportunity Structures</i>			
- % urban population <sup>f</sup> - % employed in	-.45* -	.45*	.19
service sector <sup>f</sup>	.77**	.75**	.36
<i>Political Opportunity Structures -</i>			
Years of freedom of association <sup>g</sup> -	-.68** -	.65**	.29
Years of democracy <sup>h</sup>	.70**	.67**	.34

\*  $p \leq 0.05$

\*\*  $p \leq 0.01$

a Number of cases (countries): 16. Iceland excluded due to missing values for some independent variables.

b World Bank (1993).

c % population between 25-64 years of age with education level of upper secondary and higher (OECD 1992).

d % population being members in traditional political organizations (trade unions, professional association or parties) and

new political organizations (environmental, peace or animal rights groups) (World Values Survey 1990-91).

e % population being members of environmental, peace or animal rights groups (World Values Survey 1990-91)

f Fischer Weltalmanach (1994).

g 1990 minus first year of introduction of association of freedom (Armingeon 1992: 91).

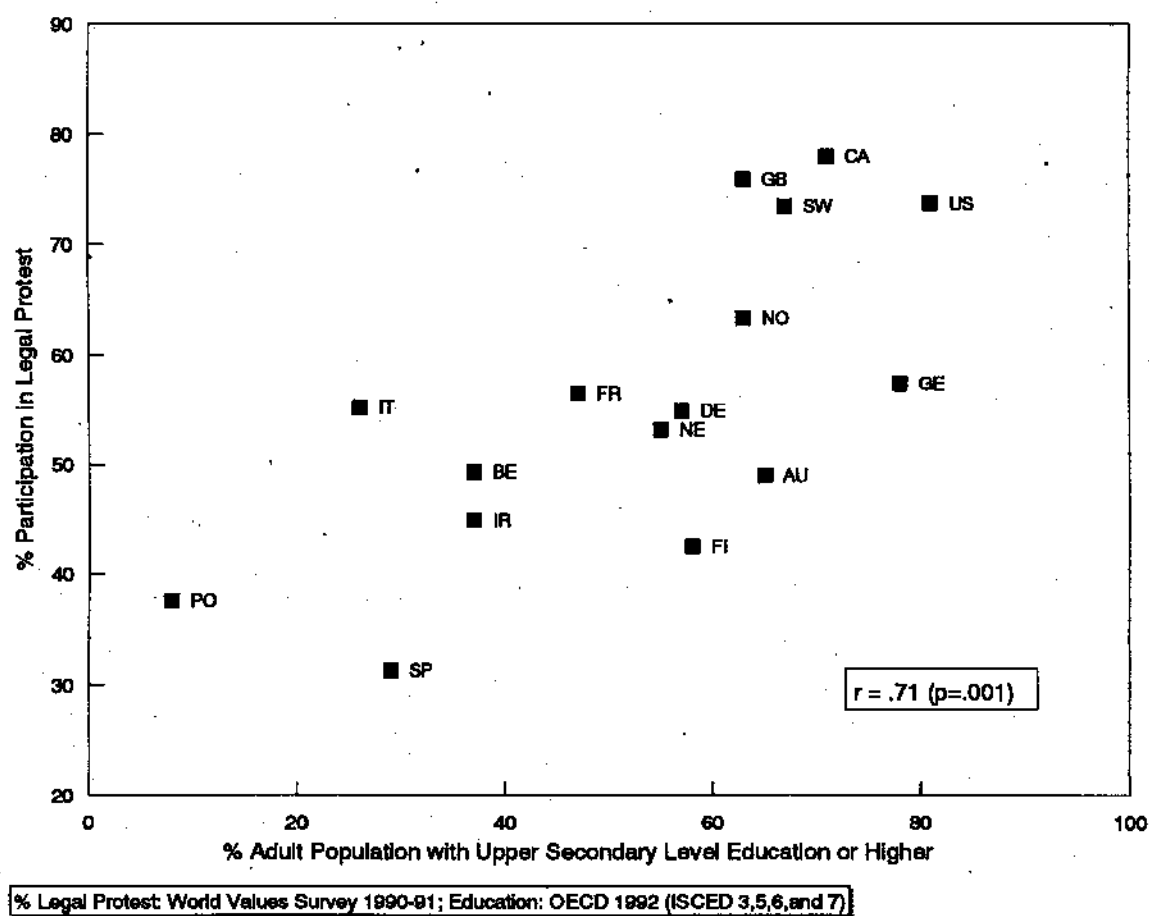
h 1990 minus year since when there have been continuous popular elections (Dahl 1971: 249 and extension)

The hypotheses formulated above point already to the measurement of the independent variables. Relevant Socioeconomic resources are per capita income and the proportion of more highly educated members of a society. Socioeconomic opportunity structures are characterized by urbanization and the size of the service sector. They are measured as a proportion of the population living in urban settings and the proportion of employment in the service sector. Political resources are the extent of organizational membership and the extent of membership in new organizations. They are measured as percentage of the population according to figures taken from the World Values Survey 1990-91. Political opportunity structures as defined here are the length of experience with freedom of

association (measured from the year of first implementation) and the length of democratic experience (measured from the year when continuous popular elections have been experienced). Table 8 gives a summary of the hypotheses and the independent variables used.

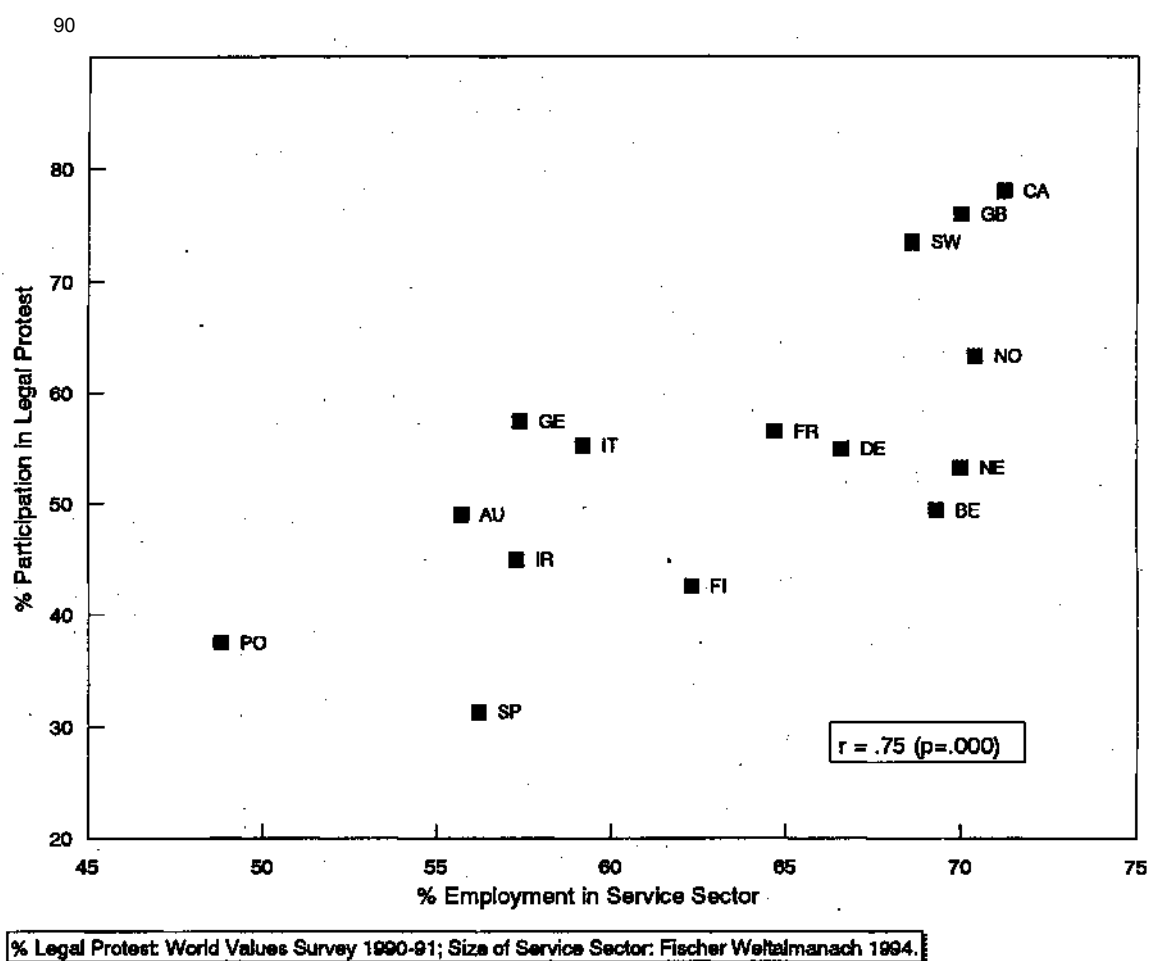
Turning to results on legal protest, the analysis shows that different levels of modernity indeed have an impact on the extent of legal protest in a society (Table 9). Socioeconomic resources show the expected relationship with the extent of legal protest participation. Per capita income has a moderate though statistically significant positive effect ( $r = 0.54$ ). The proportion of the more highly educated affects the extent of legal protest in a much stronger way than GNP per capita. This was expected from the hypothesis formulated in accordance with Allardt (1968: 72-73) and Parsons (1985: 331) who emphasized strongly the effect of the educational revolution ( $r = 0.71$ , see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Level of Education and Extent of Legal Protest



Concerning political resources, a positive correlation can be found between both membership variables (percent membership in general and percent membership in new organizations) and the amount of legal protest in a society. However, for aggregate data the correlation is quite low and in case of memberships in new organizations insignificant. Results point clearly to a relation different from our expectation: general membership shares show a stronger relation to legal protest ( $r = 0.43$ ) than memberships in new organizations ( $r = 0.32$ ).

Figure 2: Size of Service Sector and Extent of Legal Protest

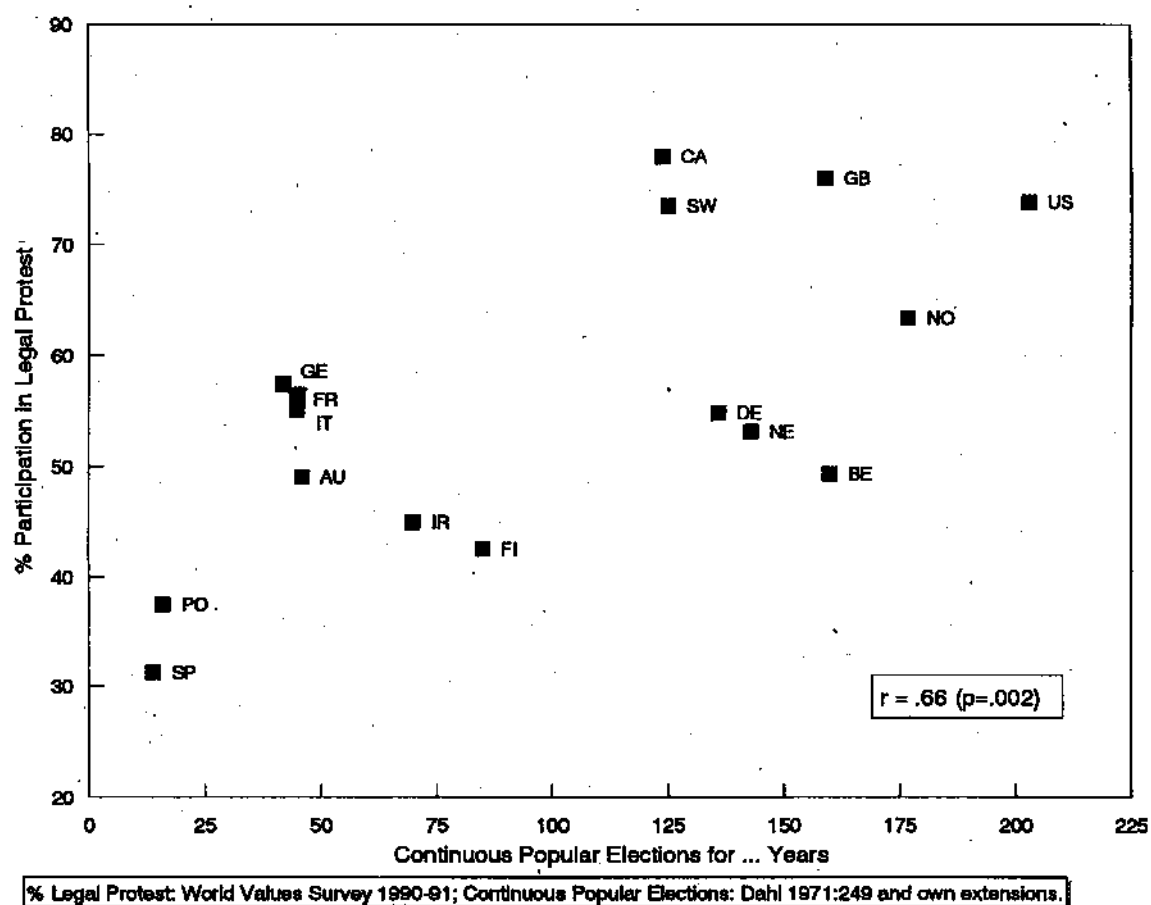


Of the variables defined as indicators for socioeconomic opportunity structures, the degree of urbanization does have an impact on legal protest ( $r = 0.45$ ). The correlation is positive and thus pointing in the theoretically expected direction. However, the relation is quite weak which does not necessarily mean rejecting the hypothesis, but it is not a strong validation either. This may be the case because modernization started with urbanization, as Lerner (1979: 369) has pointed out and it is therefore too unspecific for the

discrimination of modern societies with respect to political protest. The size of the service sector, on the contrary, has a strong effect on the extent of legal protest ( $r = 0.75$ , see Figure 2). This result might indeed indicate that the changes in the communication structure caused by the growth of the service sector as argued above have promoted the articulation of new interests using the specific means of legal protest.

The hypothesis put forward with respect to the relation of political opportunity structures and the extent of legal protest is generally supported. But the results are not totally in accordance with the expected difference in effects of duration of freedom of association and popular elections. Both factors influence the extent of legal protest with about equal strength (around 0.65 for popular elections, see Figure 3).

Figure 3: Democratic Experience and Extent of Legal Protest



Taking findings together, all factors of modernity show a positive impact on the extent of protest participation in its legal forms. Legal protest can obviously be regarded as companion to modernity. Three additional points have to be made. First, the results

support the hypothesis concerning illegal protest. Resources as well as opportunity structures, no matter whether socioeconomic or political, show no or weak and insignificant correlations with illegal protest (see Table 9, right column). Thus illegal protest is not related to indicators of modernity. Second, variables representing the levels of modernity in a society are also significant predictors of non-protest: the more modern a society, the less non-protest. Third, the results support the expectation that those variables which are theoretically more specific with respect to the determination of political protest indeed show a higher correlation than those connected with the general hypotheses. This indicates that, in particular, special features of modernity facilitate political protest.

Examining the combination of the four factors of modernity, four four-fold tables have been constructed: a) with respect to the combination of socioeconomic and political *resources*; b) with respect to the combination of socioeconomic and political *opportunity structures*; c) with respect to the combination of *socioeconomic* resources and opportunity structures; and d) with respect to the combination of *political* resources and opportunity structures.<sup>16</sup> In general, the results show that societies whose values on the independent variables are below average have also the lowest rate of legal protest. Countries showing values on the independent variables above average show in all classifications but one the highest portion of legal protest.<sup>17</sup> With this one exception, differences in the extent of legal protest are always largest between the countries with the lowest and the highest levels of modernity as measured by the combination of resources, opportunity structures, socioeconomic and political characteristics. Analysis also reveals an independent effect of each variable, thus validating the bivariate analysis performed above. However, it is most interesting that the strength of the effect of one variable is contingent on the level of the other variable: the effect of one variable is almost always stronger in cases where the other variable characterizes a higher than average level of modernity. This holds true when controlling in both directions.

An analysis of variance between the measures of modernity (political and socioeconomic resources and opportunities) and the extent of legal protest also shows clearly that there is no hierarchy between effects. It is not possible to argue on empirical grounds that resources are more important than opportunity structures for the extent of legal protest or vice versa, nor is it possible to argue that socioeconomic factors have a

16 The mean of the respective independent variables serves as a cutting point for this dichotomous bivariate classification of countries. The four tables have been constructed separately for those variables related to the general and those related to the specific hypotheses. These four-fold tables have been used to conduct an analysis of variance to estimate the impact of each combination on the extent of legal protest.

17 The one and only exception applies to the combination of the amount of memberships in new organizations and the length of democratic experience. In this case, countries which have democratic experience longer than average and a portion of members in new organizations lower than the average, show the highest amounts of legal protesters. This deviation is caused by Great Britain and Norway.



greater impact than political factors or vice versa. The only significant difference is between the classification based on variables related to the general and the specific hypotheses. As in the bivariate analysis, it holds also true for the combination of factors that those related to the specific hypotheses reveal a greater discriminating power than those related to the general hypotheses. Summarizing empirical results, the most important finding is that it is the *combination* of characteristics of modernity which is of crucial importance for the extent of protest participation. Single characteristics of modernity have an impact, but only in combination do the characteristics of modernity reveal their full effect.

#### *4.3. Modernity, Protest and Demand for System Change*

Empirical evidence from the previous section shows that political and socioeconomic conditions characterizing the level of modernity of a society explain quite well as what proportion of citizens participate in legal protest. The results allow legal protest to be viewed as a product of the differentiation of the modes of participation facilitated by political and socioeconomic modernization. Thus, the question arises what consequences legal protest might have for the political order. Most often, political protest is understood as an indication of discontent, as hostility to the order of society expressed by demands for radical change and thus as a threat to the political order. The close relationship between modernity and legal protest suggest a different view. Thus, two alternative hypotheses can be formulated which entail different consequences for the societal and the political order.

One view found in the discussion is that new forms of non-institutionalized participation are indeed a consequence of modernization, but not a phenomenon of the differentiation of the modes of participation. Instead it is regarded as means of defense against the risks of modernity. It is argued that the risk of unintended consequences has increased in modern society for example consequences resulting from the use of nuclear and genetic technologies, the impact of growth on the environment, etc. At the same time the increase of individual resources has led to a higher level of information and sensitivity about possible, likely or existing risks of modernization. Habermas argues that these factors generate demands to change the course of societal development (Habermas 1981: 578-593). He and other authors (Brand 1982; Narr 1979) argue that new social movements and political protest aim at the defense of the life-sphere ("Lebenswelt") against system imperatives from the economy and the state. In this case, political protest would clearly be related to demands for radical change.

Applying a modernization approach a different hypothesis can be formulated. Modernization enables the individual citizen not only to rely on organization for the articulation of demands, but to act themselves in less structured, totally voluntary and self-organized collectivities to articulate demands. Enabled by more resources and opportunity structures, citizens in modern societies have looked at other forms of articulation than the institutionalized ones. They have reactivated legal protest on the basis of individual efficacy, competence, etc. Thus political protest under this approach is seen as a phenomenon of differentiation. If this is true and political protest is only a new tool, there is no reason to assume that it is related to demands for radical change at all.

Opposing expectations concerning the kind of demands related to legal protest arise from these two hypotheses. According to the first, one would expect a significantly high proportion of demands for radical change among protesters. The expectation ensuing from the second hypothesis is just the opposite. If the genesis of new participatory forms can be explained by modernization processes and is thus a process of differentiation of forms, one would not expect more radical demands connected with this new form. However, this expectation is only well founded with respect to legal protest since empirical evidence from the last section shows that only the extent of legal protest can be explained by indicators of modernity.

In order to explore the relationship between protest participation and demand for radical change two groups will be compared: non-protesters and those taking part in legal protest. Radical demands have been measured by the agreement or disagreement to the statement that "the entire way of our society is organized must be radically changed by revolutionary action".<sup>18</sup> The strength and direction of the relation between legal protest and demand for radical change has been measured on the individual level by gamma correlations between these two dichotomized variables.

Interestingly enough the mean gamma coefficient across countries is almost very small and negative. However, this finding hides a great range of variety of the strength and direction of the relationship between protest and demand for radical change across countries. As would be expected from Habermas' (1981) interpretation of protest behaviour a positive relation between legal protest and radical demands can be found in some countries. But contrary to this and more in line with the modernization approach pursued here, negative correlations can be found in most of the countries under investigation. Gamma across 17 countries ranges between -0.38 and 0.43 (Table 10). It is quite large

18 The full question wording is: "On this card are three basic kinds of attitudes vis-à-vis the society we live in. Please choose the one which best describes your own opinion: 1) The entire way our society is organized must be radically changed by revolutionary action; 2) Our society must be gradually improved by reform; 3) Our present society must be valiantly defended against all subversive forces; 4) Don't know."

positive (above 0.20) in three countries, small and negative in another six countries and quite large negative in eight countries (above 0.20). However, most coefficients are statistically insignificant. This does not challenge the general thrust of the argument since results show a clear structure and statistical insignificance is not a substantive problem, but a problem of the number of cases.

*Table 10:* Individual-Level Association between Legal Protest and Demand for Radical Change

	Gamma <sup>a</sup>
Iceland	-0.38*
Ireland	-0.38*
United States	-0.34**
Norway	-0.29
Sweden	-0.28*
Netherlands	-0.27
Canada	-0.23*
Austria	-0.21
Denmark	-0.19
Finland	-0.17
Germany	-0.17
Great Britain	-0.17
Belgium	-0.16
France	-0.09
Italy	0.23*
Spain	0.35**
Portugal	0.43**

\*  $p \leq 0.05$

\*\*  $p < 0.01$

a Gamma coefficient for association between legal protest and radical demands. Calculated with dichotomized variables on legal protest (none vs. legal) and demand for radical change (no, yes).

\*  $p \leq 0.05$

\*\*  $p \leq 0.01$

a Gamma coefficient for association between legal protest and radical demands. Calculated with dichotomized variables on legal protest (none vs. legal) and demand for radical change (no, yes).

What do these findings mean in substantive terms? Obviously, legal protest carries radical demands to a certain extent in some countries. But in others just the opposite is the case, i.e. a higher proportion of non-protesters articulate demands for radical change than do legal protesters. An explanation of the negative association of legal protest activity and radical demands could be found in the relation between the extent of legal protest and level of modernity in a society. This consideration brings us back to the modernization hypothesis pursued here. According to this hypothesis, one would expect *that the higher the level of modernity of a society the weaker the positive association of legal protest and demands for radical change of the existing order*. In investigating this hypothesis we rely on a 'classical' macro-micro study design. Rokkan (1962: 57) proposed a design which asks whether variations in structural contexts affect the strength and direction of micro-micro relationships. Concerning the micro-micro relationship we ask to which extent legal protest is related to demands for radical change. Concerning the macro-context we ask whether variations in the level of modernity affect the strength and direction of this micro-

micro relationship. The expectation simply is that the higher the level of modernity of a given society the less positive is the relationship between protest and radical demands as measured by gamma coefficients. Thus the correlation between the gamma coefficients (for individual-level association of legal protest and demand for radical change within countries) and indicators of modernity of these countries should be negative. More specifically, one can expect first of all, that those factors which turned out in the last section to be most strongly related to legal protest correlate more negatively with the association of protest and demands for radical change. The previous analysis has shown that these factors are the size of the service sector, the proportion of the more highly educated and the democratic experience in a society.

Correlations between the levels of modernity and the gamma coefficients support the hypothesis. All indicators of modernity are negatively correlated with the gammas. Education shows the highest impact. It has also shown to be the best predictor of the proportion of legal protesters in a society. Second comes democratic experience, third size of the service sector. Organizational membership and per capita income show a smaller but also a significant impact (Table 11).

*Table 11:* Association Between Legal Protest and Radical Demands and Levels of Modernity<sup>a</sup>

	Gamma of Legal Protest and Radical Demands <sup>b</sup>
	Pearson's r
<i>Socioeconomic Resources</i>	
- GNP per capita 1991	-0.61**
- % more highly educated	-0.77**
<i>Political Resources</i>	
- % organizational memberships	-0.57*
- % memberships in new organizations	-0.49*
<i>Socioeconomic Opportunity Structures</i>	
- % urban population	-0.40*
- % employed in service sector	-0.65**
<i>Political Opportunity Structures</i>	
- Years of freedom of association	-0.39*
- Years of democracy	-0.67**

\*  $p \leq 0.05$

\*\*  $p \leq 0.01$

<sup>a</sup> For number of cases and measurements see Table 9.

<sup>b</sup> Dependent variables are Gamma coefficients on the individual-level association of protest and radical demands as presented in Table 10.

The results support the hypothesis that the higher the level of modernity the less is legal protest related to demands for radical change. This provides some evidence for

the assumption that the spread of protest is an indication of a differentiation process of participatory forms accompanying socioeconomic and political modernization. If this is true, new forms of participation which were 'invented' first for specific issues and policies will be more and more used in traditional policy areas. What we find is strong support for the thesis of the "normalization of the unconventional" (Fuchs 1991) not only with respect to the quantities of protest but also with respect to the content of the demands.

## 5. Conclusions

Scholars of political participation have advanced important explanations of the widespread use of political protest. Although this research concentrated empirically on individual characteristics of political protesters, the authors nevertheless maintained that contextual factors also influence protest participation. In particular, two types of contextual factors - the organizational context and political and socioeconomic conditions of countries - were suggested. However, by omitting these contextual factors from empirical research these authors have failed to provide a full understanding of the determinants of political protest on the individual level and to explain cross-country differences in protest participation on the aggregate level. This paper has been aimed at filling both of these gaps. First, the impact of the organizational context has been investigated by making use of mobilization theories. Second, the impact of political and socioeconomic conditions of countries on political protest have been analyzed, utilizing modernization theories. Additionally, the question has been explored whether political and socioeconomic conditions of countries have an impact on the degree to which protest participation is a challenge to the political system in terms of the content of the demands.

Conceptually, the organizational context characterizes the close context while political and socioeconomic conditions of societies characterize the wide context of political protest. The close context refers to effects that arise due to social interaction within an environment while the wide context is referring to extra-individual factors. Individual-level analysis of the *close context* has revealed that protest participation indeed increases with an individual's embeddedness in organizations. The attempt to specify the relationship by using an organization-specific hypothesis has failed. We distinguish between new . political organizations (environmental, peace, animal rights groups) and traditional political organizations (political parties, trade unions, professional associations). It is not the specific context created by new political organizations that increases individual protest behavior, but any organizational context. Turning to a protest-specific hypothesis, a distinction was made between legal and illegal forms of political protest. Results show that

the organizational context contributes more to the explanation of legal than illegal protest. Illegal protest seems to be facilitated more by other factors than by the organizational context. Illegal forms of participation are only weakly encouraged by organizational context because such activities do not fit into the standard repertory of organizations.

Shifting the focus to the *wide context* of political protest, evidence has been provided by aggregate-level analysis that variations in the extent of protest participation between countries can be explained by different national socioeconomic and political conditions. These conditions have been specified in terms of resources and opportunities which may favor political protest and which at the same time represent different factors of modernity of a society. Analysis indicates, that the more modern a society, the higher the extent of protest participation. Although each of the factors of modernity investigated has its independent impact on the extent of protest participation, it is only in combination that characteristics of modernity unfold their full effect. Furthermore, empirical results demonstrate that illegal protest cannot be regarded as a general phenomenon of modernization or levels of modernity. Modernity "explains" large proportions of the cross-country variance in legal protest but not illegal protest. Searching for the consequences of political protest for the political order, aggregate-level analysis has revealed that the degree to which political protest is related to the demand for radical change is dependent on the levels of modernity of societies. The more modern a society, the less do legal protesters articulate the demand for radical change.

Based on the findings of this paper three general conclusions concerning protest participation can be drawn. First, contextual factors matter for the occurrence of political protest. They add an important element to existing individualistic explanations of protest participation. Contextual factors influence protest participation in a specific way which can be addressed theoretically fruitfully with mobilization theory for the close or organizational context and with modernization theory for the wide context of political and socioeconomic conditions in a society. Second, comparative individual-level and aggregate-level analyses show an impact of contexts on protest participation in all countries, which indicates the universal relevance of contextual determination for protest participation. Third, the fact that political protest is contextually integrated explains on the one hand its popularity and is at the same time an indication of the adoption of legal protest as a regular mode of citizens for political participation. That shows that the enlargement of the action repertory of citizens to include legal protest, is part of the modernization of politics.

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