Participation & Representation in the Digital Age (PRD)

Jennifer Oser | Ben-Gurion University, Israel

**Ben-Gurion University of the Negev
Rector's Lecture Series
November 26, 2024**

Topics

First and foremost: Note of appreciation! 🎉

1. ERC project overview, including select papers

2. Present 1 work-in-progress

3. Invitations to upcoming ERC project events

#1: ERC project overview, including select papers

ERC Project Website

https://www.prd-erc.eu/

Slides for today

Home   Team   Publications   News   Webinars   Contact

News

Lecture

November 26, 2024

Slides for Jenny's talk on the ERC project in the "Rector's Lecture Series" at Ben-Gurion University. This series is designed for academics from all departments in the university to share the fruits of their research and ideas.

ERC project motivating puzzle:
Trends in Political Participation and Representation in the Digital Age

ERC Project's Theoretical Framework

Repertoires of participation

Vote   *Protest*
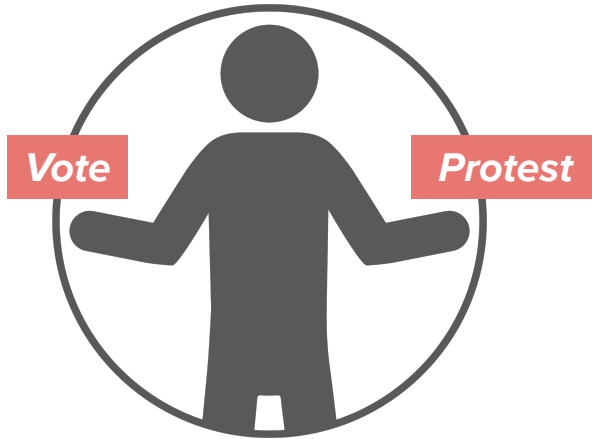
Including digital behavior

Subjective representation

"Political Efficacy"

Mobilizing & organizing

15M

Focus: Lower status groups

New Integration of Hypotheses

H1: Communication

versus

H2: Grievance

Oser 2022, Oxford Handbook chapter

Research Design

WP1
How do people combine political acts?
- Harmonized variables
- Method innovation, LCA

WP2
Participation-representation connection?
- Merged data analysis
- Interview fieldwork

WP3
How to mobilize & organize lower-status groups?
- Big data + survey
- Field experiments
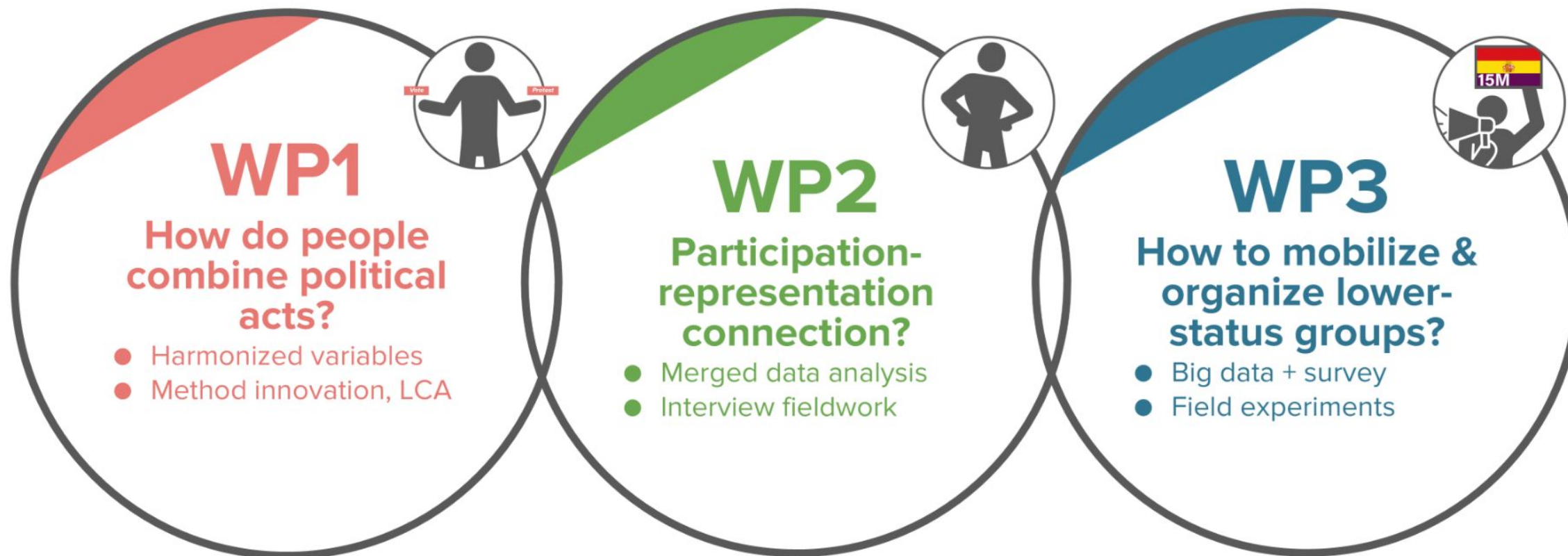
Contributions

Data: Originally harmonized dataset

Methods: Innovations in analyzing repertoires

Theory and findings: Participation-representation connection

How to Recruit a Research Team?

Raya Even David

Administrative Manager of PRD

Ben-Gurion University, Israel

Dr. Jesper Lindqvist

Postdoctoral Researcher

University of Gothenburg, Sweden

Dr. Aya Shoshan

Postdoctoral Researcher

Ben-Gurion University, Israel

PRD's Core Team

Francisca Castro

Postdoctoral Researcher

Humboldt University of Berlin & ISDC

Johan Lyrvall

PhD Student

University of Catania, Italy

Barak Zur

PhD Student

Tel Aviv University, Israel

PRD's Extended Team

Collaborators on Planning the Project's Work Packages

Dr. Zsuzsa Bakk
Leiden University,
Netherlands
Latent Class Analysis

Dr. Roberto Di Mari
University of Catania,
Italy
Latent Class Analysis

Dr. Nir Grinberg
Ben-Gurion University,
Israel
Big Data, Experiments

Prof. Hahrie Han
Johns Hopkins University,
United States
Political Organizing

Project's International Expert Network

https://www.prd-erc.eu/team

Paper #1
Organizing & Democracy
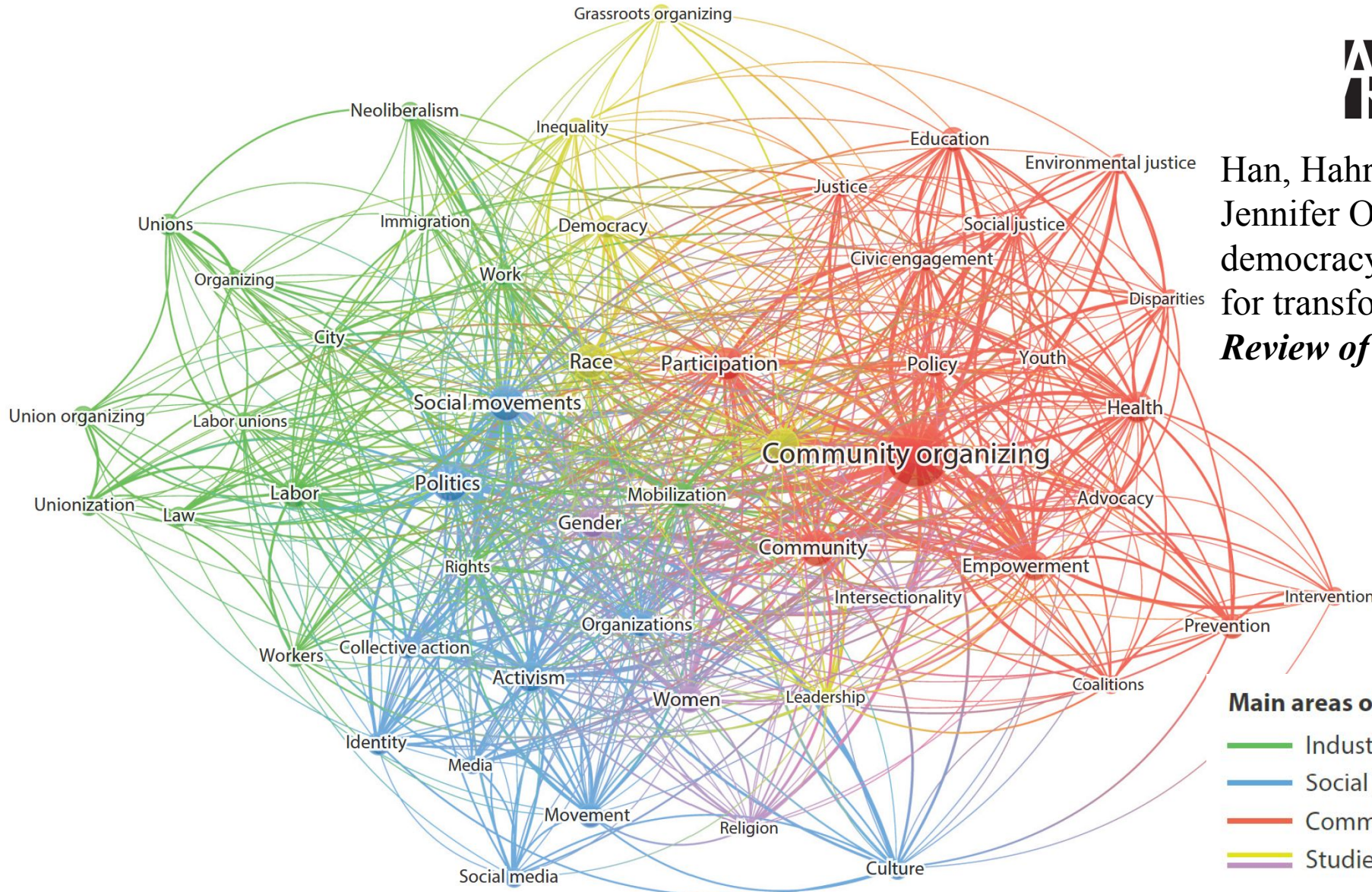
Main areas of study

— Industrial relations and labor
— Social movement studies
— Community organizing and community empowerment
— Studies of gender, race, ethnicity, and inequality

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Figure 3. Democracy in the Terms Co-Occurrence Map.
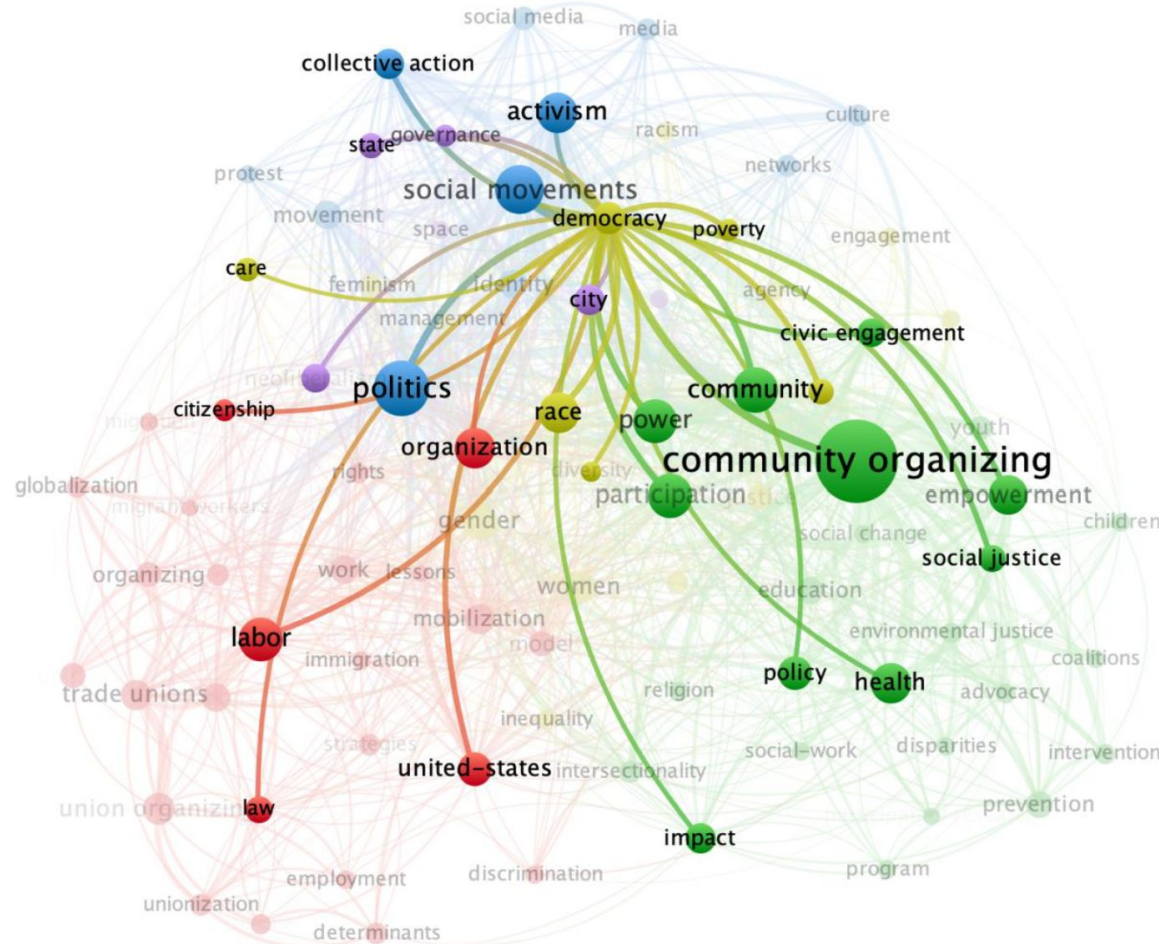
Shoshan Aya, and Jennifer Oser. In press. Visualizing scientific landscapes: A powerful method for mapping research fields. *PS: Political Science & Politics* [doi](), (APSA pre-print)

Note: This map, structurally identical to figure 2, visually highlights the keyword "democracy" and its relationship with other keywords.

Lyrvall, Johan, Zsuzsa Bakk, Jennifer Oser, and Roberto Di Mari. 2024. **Bias-adjusted three-step multilevel latent class modeling with covariates**. Structural Equation Modeling: A Multidisciplinary Journal 31 (4): 592-603. doi

Di Mari, Roberto, Johan Lyrvall, Zsuzsa Bakk, Jennifer Oser, and Jouni Kuha. (2024). **multilevLCA: Estimates and Plots Single-Level and Multilevel Latent Class Models**. CRAN, version 1.5.2, published 2024-10-12.
https://CRAN.R-project.org/package=multilevLCA
9,134 downloads as of Nov. 17, 2024

Lyrvall, Johan, Roberto Di Mari, Zsuzsa Bakk, Jennifer Oser, and Jouni Kuha. (2024). **multilevLCA: An R package for single-level and multilevel latent class analysis with covariates, v2**. arXiv. doi
R&R requesting light revisions received Nov 14, 2024 to a Q1 journal

Accepted co-edited symposium proposal:

Kołczyńska, Marta, Sylvia Kritzinger, and Jennifer Oser, eds. Accepted. **"Data harmonization in political science and related fields: Innovations, challenges, and visions for the future."** PS: Political Science & Politics. *[Proposal accepted October 10, 2024]*

PRD proposed article:

Oser, Jennifer, and Barak Zur. "Strategizing About Data Harmonization Visions: The Case of Political Participation."

Additional proposed contributions (selected)

Yue, Hu and Frederick Solt "Wranging Pre-Harmonized Data"

Lindberg, Staffan I. et al. "DEMSCORE: Solving the Universal Harmonization of Data Across Any Unit of Analysis

Paper #5
Meanings of Protest

➤ **Pivot from original plan of longitudinal fieldwork in Israel and Spain starting October 8, 2023**

➤ **Collaboration with Prof. Carolina Plescia, ERC PI on "Meanings of Voting"**

➤ **Preliminary findings from first interviews in Israel**

➤ **Plan to organize a panel for the Association of Israel Studies conference (submission Jan 17), conference in Haifa July 7-9**

PRD pipeline
Other papers and projects in progress (selected)

(1) "**Becoming Architects of Political Change"** with Julia Schulte-Cloos & Hahrie Han

➢Online lab experiment - visual conjoint - approximating social media activity to identify mechanisms for how democratic micropractices may strengthen pro-democratic norms

(2) **"Politicians Theories of Protest"** with Jamie Druckman, Lior Sheffer, Devorah Manekin, Tamar Mitts, Jae Yeon Kim, and Elizabeth McKenna

➢Experimental survey design planned to be fielded in the US in December 2024 - comparing theories of protest of politicians, citizens, and civic leaders.

(3) "**Political Influencers on Social Media"** with Nir Grinberg and John Wagner

➢Building on our prior work on "Who is Curating my Feed?" (Shamir, Oser & Grinberg 2024, IJPP, link) characterizes political influencers and their audiences using big data analysis

#2: Work-in-Progress

Are the Politically Active Better Represented?

Jesper Lindqvist, Jennifer Oser, Ruth Dassonneville, Mikael Persson, and Anders Sundell

Builds on Persson & Sundell (2024) BJPS "The Rich Have a Slight Edge"

Participation & Representation in the Digital Age

In-class exercise!

(1) Who do you think is better represented - <u>voters</u> or <u>non-voters</u>?
    (a) <u>Voters</u> are better represented
    (b) <u>Non-voters</u> are better represented
    (c) <u>No difference</u> between voter & non-voters

(2) Who do you think is better represented - <u>protesters</u> or <u>non-protesters</u>?
    (a) <u>Protesters</u> are better represented
    (b) <u>Non-protesters</u> are better represented
    (c) <u>No difference</u> between protesters & non-protesters

Are the Politically Active Better Represented?

- Dilemma: A democratic principle that all interests ought to be considered equally (Dahl, 1989, 86)

- "Unequal participation: Democracy's unresolved dilemma" – Lijphart (1997)

- Verba and Nie (1972, 2): this question as "perhaps most important of all" - and also "the most difficult to answer."

- Competing arguments in the literature:

  - "Communication" argument: The politically active get more of the policies they want because of that they communicate their preferences to policy-makers

  - "Grievance" argument: Lack of responsiveness produces grievances, and results in political participation

What's missing?

Systematic, generalizable, cross-national evidence showing whether the politically active are better represented overall.

Research Questions

(1)   **Participation-Policy Connection:** Is opinion-policy congruence higher for the politically active?

(2)   **Alternate Causal Explanations:** Can alternative explanations account for a relationship between participation and opinion-policy congruence?

Scholarly ambition:
➢ **Answer the question, "Are the Politically Active Better Represented"**
   with the best available data and methods
➢ **Agenda-setting for future work on causal mechanisms**

Main Explanation

Figure 1: Electoral and nonelectoral channels of influence.

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                    ┌──────────┐              ┌──────────────┐
                    │  Voting  │─────────────▶│ Selection of │
                    │ behavior │              │ policymakers │
                    └──────────┘              └──────────────┘
                       ▲                                    │
                      /                                     ▼
   ┌──────────┐     /                              ┌──────────────┐
   │ Citizen  │────                                │ Decisions of │
   │preferences│───                                │ policymakers │
   └──────────┘     \                              └──────────────┘
                     \                               ▲
                      ▼                             /
                 ┌──────────────┐                 /
                 │ Nonelectoral │────────────────
                 │participation │
                 └──────────────┘
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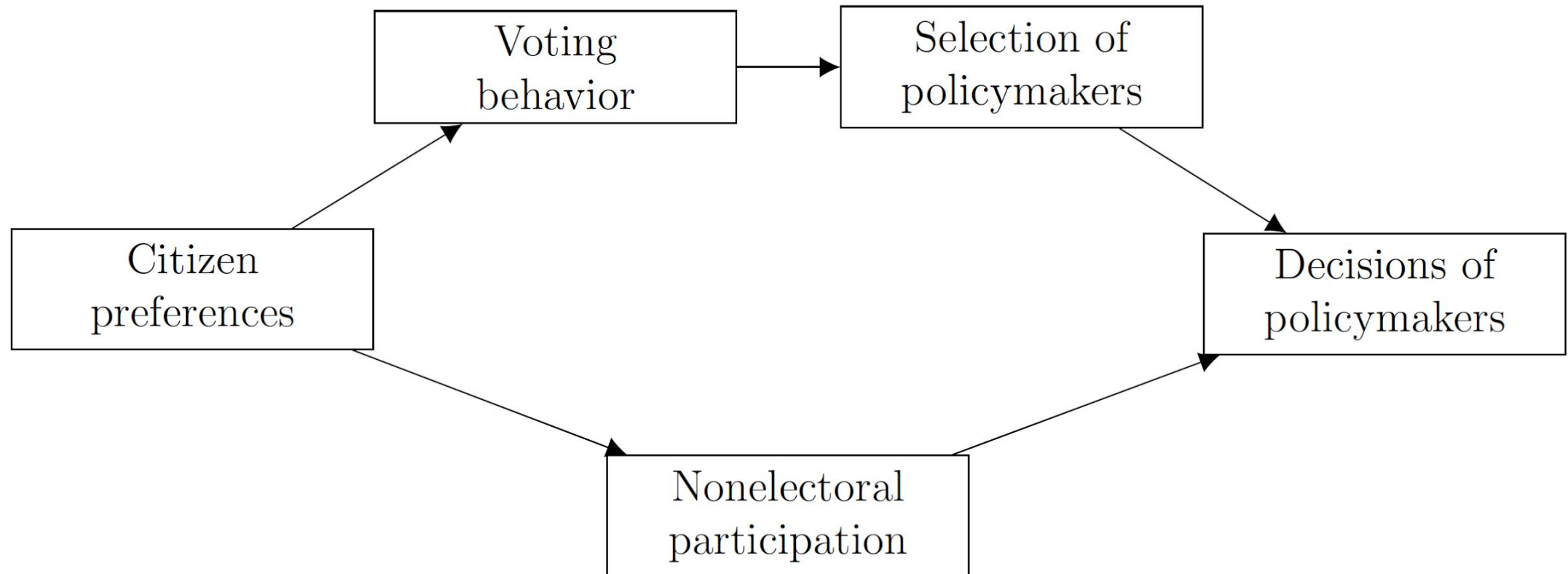
Data and Methods

- 40 countries, 20 years, 270,000 respondents
- Individual-level data: ESS (round 1-5, 7, 8), ISSP (1996, 2004, 2014)
- Country-level policy implementation data (Persson & Sundell 2024)
  - Policy topics: civil liberties, economic issues, and immigration/ethnic minority
- Independent variables
  - *Voted*: Voted in the last election
  - *Demonstrated*: Have demonstrated in the last year (or last five years)
  - Robustness test with additional nonelectoral participation indicators
- Dependent variable
  - *Opinion-Policy Congruence*: Congruence between policy support and policy implementation (proportion, 0-1)
- OLS regression with country-survey-year fixed effects

Data and Methods - Contribution

"This is, to our knowledge, the first study that analyzes cross-national

data connecting opinions to subsequent policy implementation on

multiple policy issues to assess whether those who are politically active

have better opinion-policy congruence compared to non-participators"

(p. 2)

Results: RQ1, are Participators Better Represented?

Table 2: The Positive Association Between Demonstrating and Opinion-Policy Congruence Remains When Controlling for Country-Survey-Year Fixed Effects.

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Voted	−0.015**	−0.005	−0.012**	0.002
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)
Demonstrated	0.031**	0.027**	0.013**	0.024**
	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.001)
Intercept	0.524**	0.615**	0.575**	0.674**
	(0.001)	(0.003)	(0.001)	(0.003)
Country FE		✓		
Year FE			✓	
Country-Survey-Year FE				✓
N	273,191	273,191	273,191	273,191
R^2	0.002	0.109	0.125	0.391

Note: *$p < .05$; **$p < .01$. Observations weighted by the number of policy questions answered by each respondent.

Results: Alternative Explanation 1, Socio-Economic Status

Table 3: Socio-Economic Characteristics Explain Part of the Difference Between Demonstrators and Non-Demonstrators, but Does Not Fully Account for the Better Representation of Demonstrators.

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Voted	0.002*	0.001	0.001	0.004*
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)
Demonstrated	0.024**	0.024**	0.015**	0.015**
	(0.001)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)
Income		0.034**		0.013**
		(0.002)		(0.002)
Tertiary education			0.032**	0.034**
			(0.001)	(0.001)
Woman				−0.005**
				(0.001)
Age < 30				0.005**
				(0.002)
Age >= 60				−0.012**
				(0.001)
Rural				−0.008**
				(0.001)
Country-Survey-Year FE	✓	✓	✓	✓
N	273,191	200,602	200,340	147,108
R^2	0.391	0.401	0.384	0.390

Note: *$p < .05$; **$p < .01$. Observations weighted by the number of policy questions answered by each respondent. When we re-estimate Model 1 with the same sample as in Model 4, the coefficient on Voted is 0.004** and on Demonstrated 0.022**, meaning that the control variables in Model 4 account for about a third of the coefficient for Demonstrated.

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Results: Alternative Explanation 2, Political Attitudes

Table 4: Political Attitudes Do Not Explain the Difference Between Demonstrators and Non-Demonstrators.

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Voted	0.001	0.003*	0.003*	-0.002	-0.002
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.003)
Demonstrated	0.013**	0.015**	0.015**	0.017**	0.015**
	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.003)	(0.003)
Political interest	0.014**				0.009**
	(0.001)				(0.002)
Political trust		0.007**			-0.004
		(0.001)			(0.002)
Satisfied with democracy			0.009**		0.001
			(0.001)		(0.002)
Political efficacy				0.007**	0.006**
				(0.002)	(0.003)
Country-Survey-Year FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Socio-economic control variables	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
N	146,351	144,412	136,379	50,524	45,642
R^2	0.391	0.389	0.392	0.451	0.447

Note: *$p < .05$; **$p < .01$. Observations weighted by the number of policy questions answered by each respondent. Socio-economic control variables include income, tertiary education, woman, age, and rural. When we re-estimate Model 1-4 with the same sample (number of observations) as in Model 5, the coefficients for Voted are (from Model 1 to Model 4) -0.002, -0.0004, -0.001, and -0.001. For Demonstrated, the coefficients are 0.015**, 0.016**, 0.016**, and 0.016**.

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Robustness Tests – Additional Nonelectoral Participation

Figure 6: Association Between Different Forms of Political Participation and Opinion-Policy Congruence.

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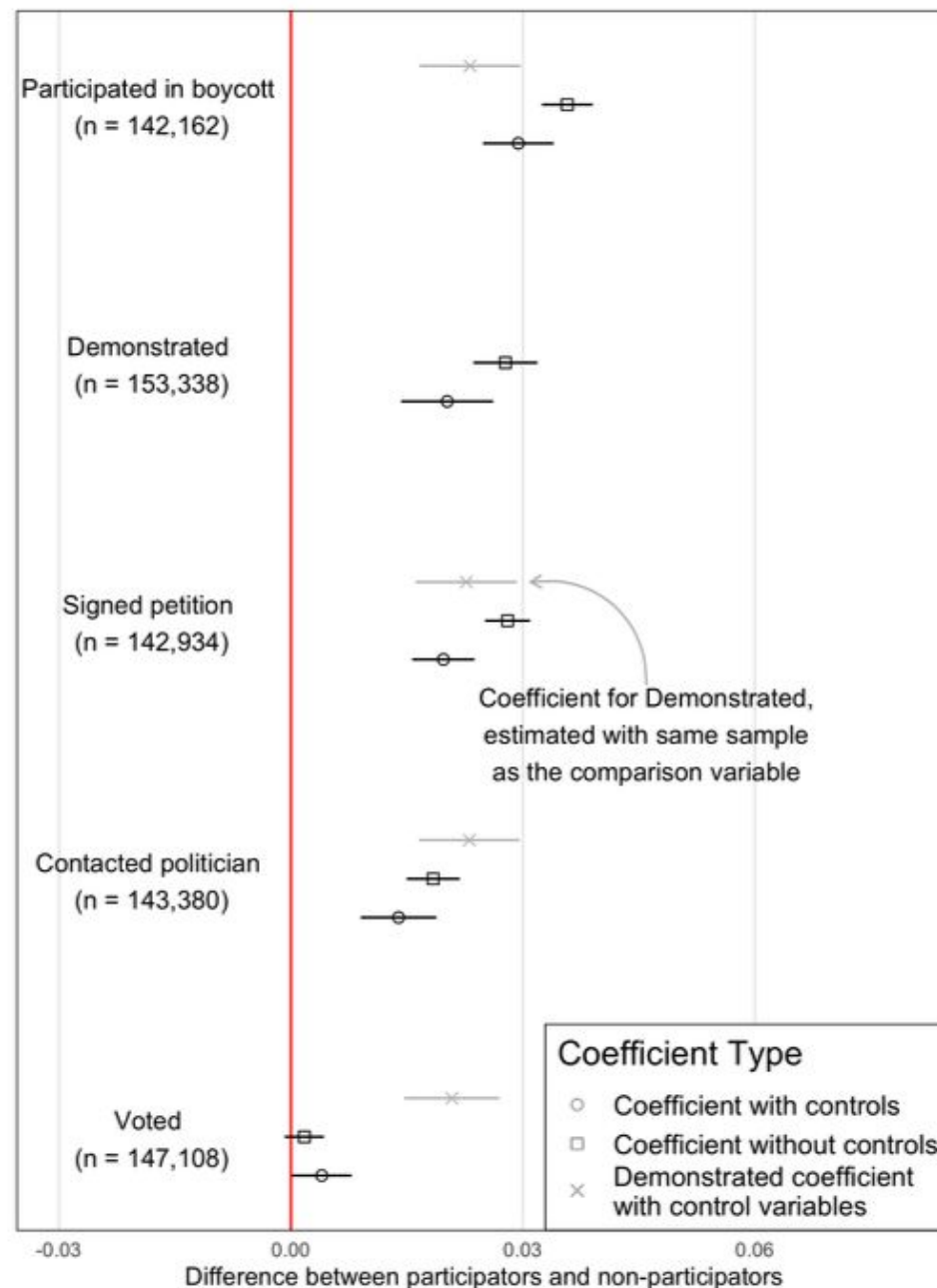
Research Questions & Answers

(1) **Participation-Policy Connection:** Is opinion-policy congruence higher for the politically active? **Yes for demonstrators, not for voters**

(2) **Alternate Causal Explanations:** Can alternative explanations account for a relationship between participation and opinion-policy congruence? **Partially**

Figure 1: Electoral and nonelectoral channels of influence.
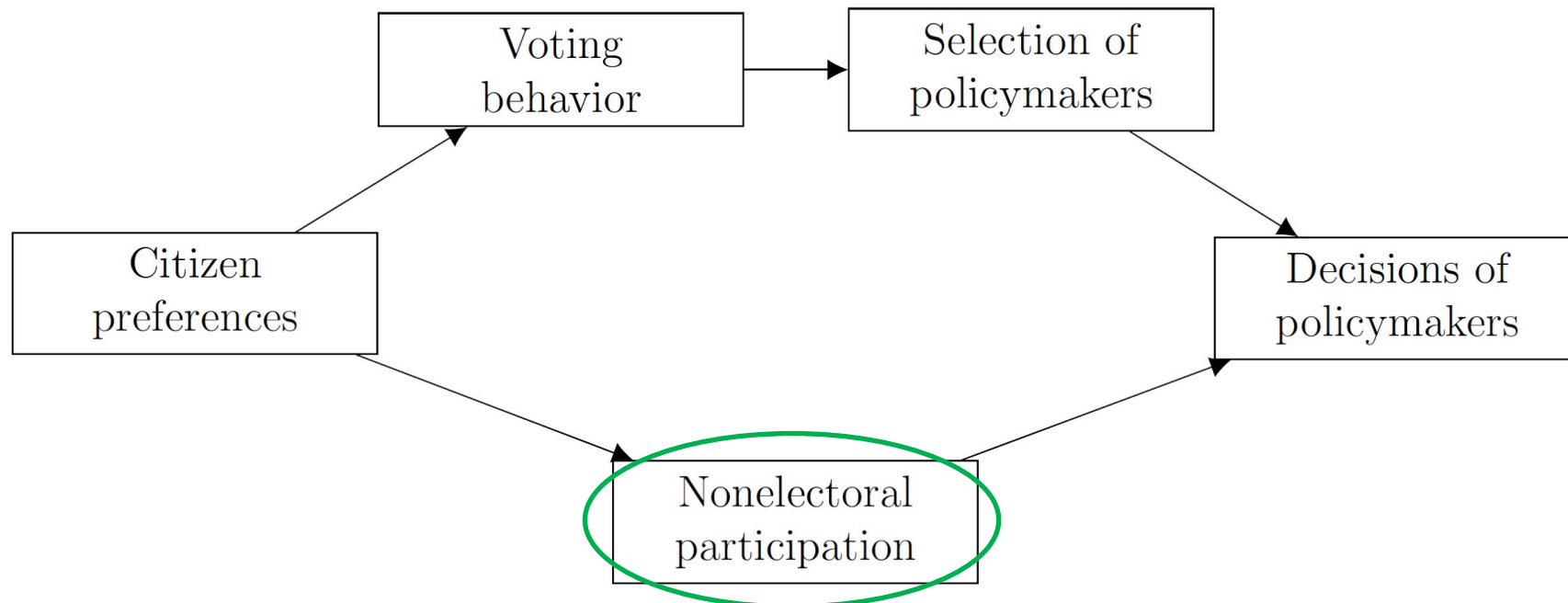
#3: Invitations!

Upcoming Events

1. ERC project research talks - "News"
-Tel Aviv University political science department seminar, December 2, 14:15-16:00,
    ERC project overview and experimental design discussion
-Hebrew University Eran Halperin's lab, Dec 10, 14:30-16:00, "Social Mobilization"

2. Israel Political Science Association Conference - February 12 at BGU, led by Prof. Gal Ariely

3. Young Academy support for ERC submissions and PI team leadership in humanities and social sciences

4. Webinar series

ERC Webinar Series Videos, 2023-2024

https://www.prd-erc.eu/events

January 17

Prof. Michael Delli Carpini | University of Pennsylvania
"Digital Media and Democratic Futures"

February 21

Prof. Noam Lupu | Vanderbilt University & the American Academy of Berlin
"Poll Workers and the Effects of Political Participation"

March 6

Prof. Theda Skocpol | Harvard University
"Citizen Organizing and Partisan Polarization"

22 May 2024

Prof. André Blais | University of Montreal &
Chair in Electoral Studies
"Participation and Representation"

19 June 2024

Prof. Rachel Gibson | University of Manchester &
PI of ERC Advanced Grant
"Online Political Influencers"

10 July 2024

Prof. Hahrie Han | Johns Hopkins University &
Director of the SNF Agora Institute
"Organizing and Democracy"

Invitation to Webinars 2024-2025, Semester A

https://www.prd-erc.eu/events

December 4, 2024

Prof. Anne Rasmussen | King's College London
"Costs of Running and Engaging in Politics"

January 8, 2025

Prof. Ruth Dassonneville | University of Montréal
"Gender Gap in Voter Turnout"

January 22, 2025

Prof. Yotam Margalit | Tel Aviv University
"Political Consequences of Green Policies"

Sneak Preview to Webinars 2024-2025, Semester B

https://www.prd-erc.eu/events

Carolina Plescia, University of Vienna

ERC PI Starting, DeVOTE
"The Meanings of Voting for Citizens" (OUP, in press)

Shiro Kiruwaki, Yale University
Stephen Ansolabehere, Harvard University
"Congressional Representation" (book project)

Christopher Wlezien, University of Texas
American Academy of Arts and Sciences Member
"Democratic Policy Representation is (Really) Hard"

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