FORS

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Does Commitment Change People's Mind?

Biographical consequences, democratic cultures and political socialization

ECPR General Conference
Charles University in Prague
7 – 10 September 2016

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Questions

- How do people commit?
  - How many?
  - How long?
  - Cross- or Mono-commitment?

- Does commitment change their mind?
  - Members vs non-members
  - Members of different commitment communities
  - Before vs After

- A plurality of socialization patterns?
  - Are changes group specific?
    - E.g. passive vs active members? Low cognitive resources?

Why these questions?

- Socialization effect on committed individuals
  - Social movement literature (e.g. Guigni 2004,2008)
  - Literature on Volunteerism (e.g. Wilson 2012)

- A lack of research over time
  - Many study before commitment
  - Few studies after (durable vs during commitment)
  - Even less studies which look at before and after

- Spread of (un-)democratic cultures throughout society
  - Socialization effects society at large and the quality of democracy
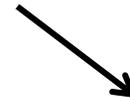
A cognitive-relational perspective

Integration into a commitment community

Conversational interaction

Socially shared cognitions

Sustaining participation

Commitment communities?

- A network of collective actors sharing
  - Relational structures
  - Interests
  - Cognitive world made of particular meanings, stories and identities (Diani 2015; Tilly 2005; White 1992)

- Three types of (left-wing) commitment communities
  - Unionists
  - Green contenders
  - Volunteers

(Un-)Democratic cultures?

➢ Shared meanings within a commitment community
▪ Common good
  ▪ Commonness: Beneficiaries of the common goods
  ▪ Goodness: Social justice vs care
  ▪ Concernedness: Range of concern

▪ Politics
  ▪ State actors: Accountability and legitimization
  ▪ Civil society actors: Role and legitimization
  ▪ Concernedness: Watchdog and participative

Measuring "Democratic Cultures"

- Commonness
    - General trust in people
    - Two items on gender equality

- Concernedness: Range of concern
    - Equal changes for foreigners
    - Environmental protection or economic growth
    - Opinion on nuclear energy
    - Opinion on taxes on high income

- Politics: State actors
    - Overall satisfaction with democracy
    - Trust in Federal Government
    - Opinion on social expenses

- Politics: Concernedness
    - Interest in politics
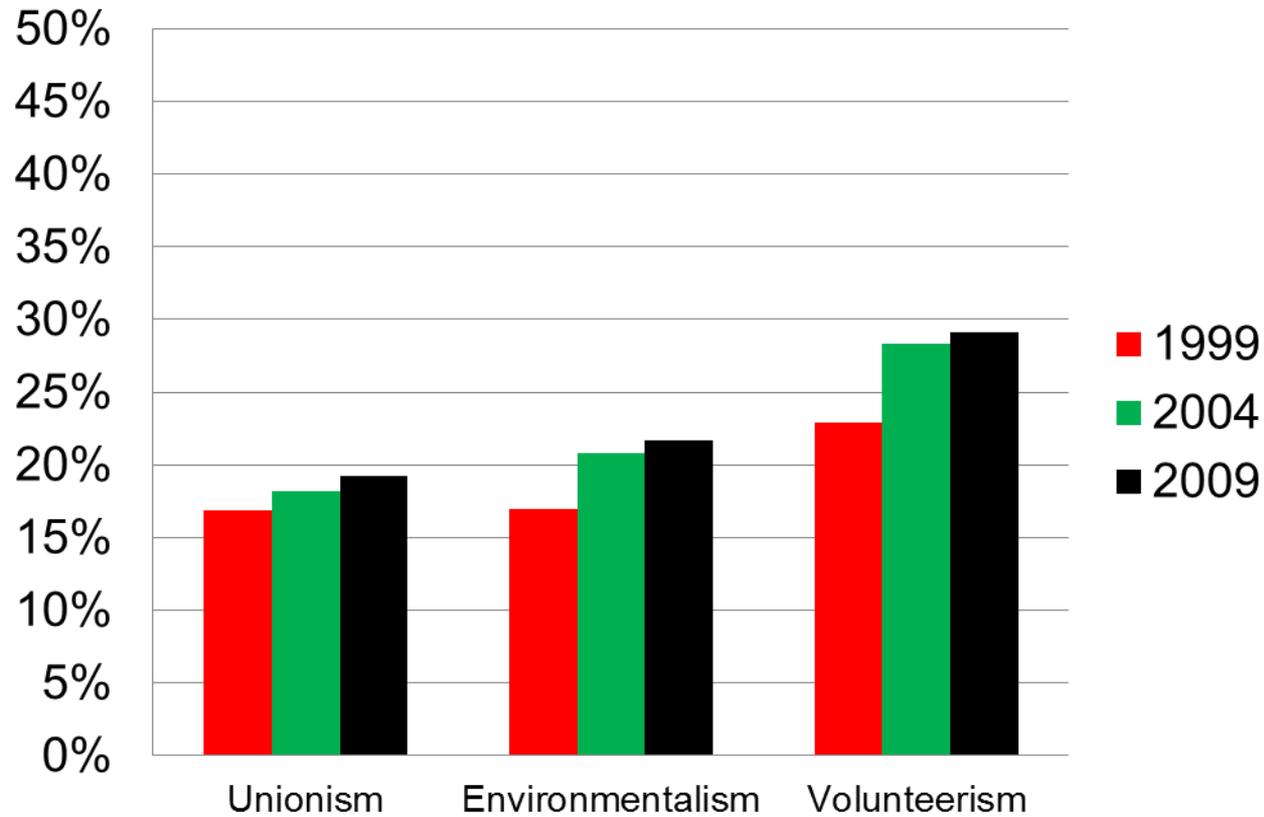   - Intention to boycott, strike and demonstration

Methods and Data

- **Swiss Household Panel**
  - Representative sample of people living in Switzerland
    - Same persons and households every year
    - Age between 18 and 83

  - Timeframe: 1999 to 2009
    - 1999: Starting date of the panel
    - 2009: Last year membership questions were asked annually

  - However, only starters in 2003, 2004 and 2005
    - To control the same group over time
    - Always 4 years before and after individuals became member

HOW DO PEOPLE COMMIT?

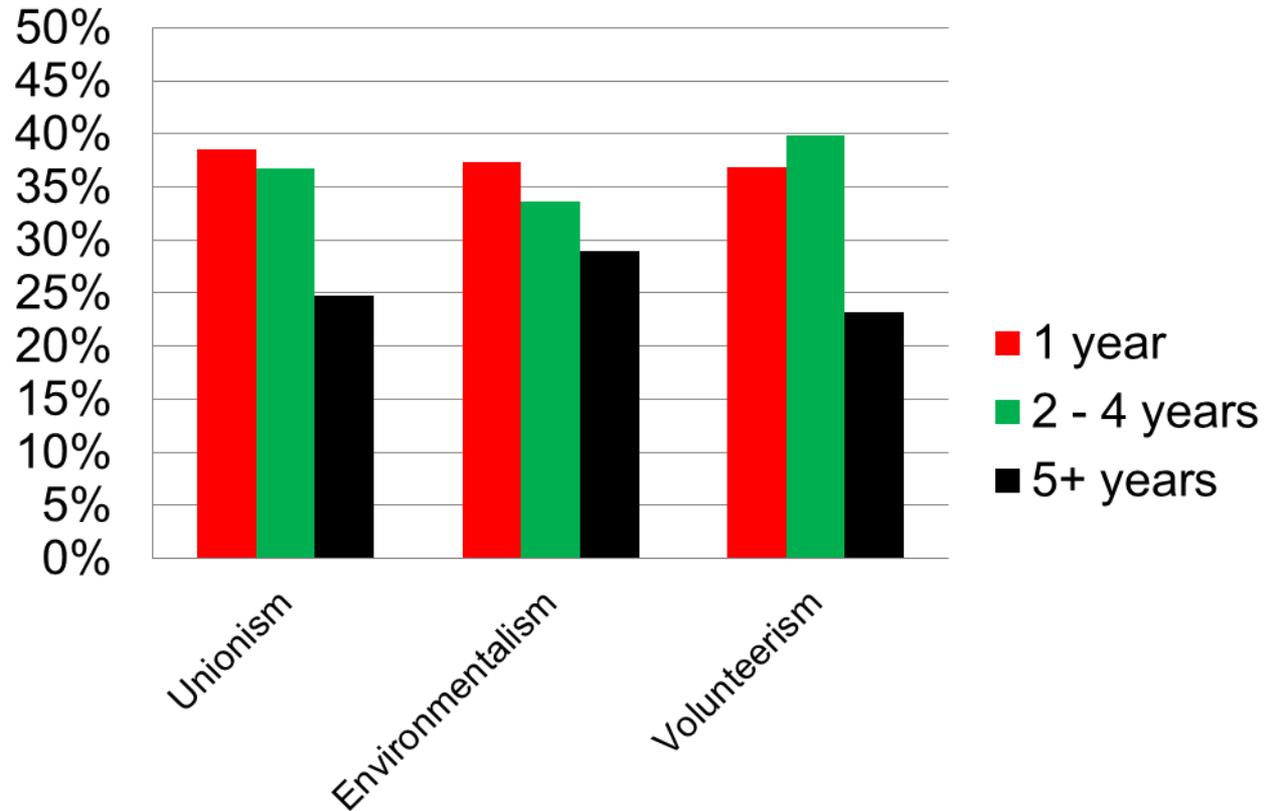# How many people do participate?

How long do they participate?

Cross- or Mono-commitment?

- 0 out of 3 communities: 34 %
- 1 out of 3 communities: 33 %
- 2 out of 3 communities: 24 %
  - Unionism and Environmentalism: 3%
  - Unionism and Volunteerism: 6%
  - Volunteerism and Environmentalism:15%
- 3 out of 3 communities: 9 %

n=2'531

DOES COMMITMENT CHANGE THEIR MIND?

Table2a: Membership in unions and Intention to strike

| TIME | Intention to strike (0=never, 10=certainly) | | | | | | | |
	t-4	t-3	t-2	t-1	t+1	t+2	t+3	t+4
	Mean (SD) n	Mean (SD) n	Mean (SD) n	Mean (SD) n	Mean (SD) n	Mean (SD) n	Mean (SD) n	Mean (SD) n
Membership in unions between 2003 and 2005								
Always				**5.44** (2.8) 366				
Start all	4.14 (3.7) 215	3.84 (3.5) 215	4.20 (3.7) 215	**4.39** (3.5) 215	**4.09** (3.6) 215	3.85 (3.5) 215	3.83 (3.3) 215	-
Start passive	3.86 (3.6) 140	3.74 (3.5) 140	4.03 (3.7) 140	**4.41** (3.6) 140	**3.91** (3.6) 140	3.61 (3.5) 140	3.60 (3.3) 140	-
Start active	4.68 (3.7) 75	4.03 (3.5) 75	4.51 (3.8) 75	**4.35** (3.4) 75	**4.44** (3.5) 75	4.28 (3.6) 75	4.27 (3.2) 75	-
Start with intention <4	0.42 (0.8) 53	0.38 (0.8) 53	0.36 (0.8) 53	**0.55** (0.9) 53	**0.70** (1.3) 53	0.81 (1.5) 53	1.09 (2.1) 53	-
Start, young	4.97 (3.6) 63	4.10 (3.4) 63	4.11 (3.6) 63	**4.71** (3.5) 63	**4.41** (3.6) 63	4.24 (3.6) 63	4.11 (3.0) 63	-
Never				**3.35** (2.8) 1922				

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Table Xa: Membership in environmental organizations and general trust in people

	General trust in people (0=never, 10=certainly)							
TIME	t-4	t-3	t-2	t-1	t+1	t+2	t+3	t+4
	Mean (SD) n	Mean (SD) n	Mean (SD) n	Mean (SD) n	Mean (SD) n	Mean (SD) n	Mean (SD) n	Mean (SD) n
Membership in environmental organizations between 2003 and 2005								
Always				**6.96** (1.4) 439				
Start all	-	-	-	**6.25** (2.2) 317	**6.61** (2.2) 317	6.79 (1.9) 317	6.82 (2.1) 317	6.74 (2.1) 317
Start passive	-	-	-	**6.27** (2.2) 275	**6.63** (2.2) 275	6.79 (1.9) 275	6.88 (2.1) 275	6.80 (2.0) 275
Start active	-	-	-	**6.10** (2.5) 42	**6.48** (2.4) 42	6.74 (2.4) 42	6.45 (2.2) 42	6.40 (2.3) 42
Start, with trust<5	-	-	-	**2.15** (1.5) 46	**4.63** (2.7) 46	4.98 (2.2) 46	4.70 (2.9) 46	4.78 (2.7) 46
Never				**6.09** (1.8) 1743				

Table Xa: Membership in environmental organizations and opinion on environmental protection

Opinion on environmental protection
(1=in favor of stronger protection of the environment, 2=neither, 3=in favor of stronger economic growth)

TIME	t-4			t-3			t-2			t-1			t+1			t+2			t+3			t+4		
	%			%			%			%			%			%			%			%		
Membership in environmental organizations between 2003 and 2005																								
	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3
Always										**73**	25	2												
											(428)													
Start all	53	26	11	55	34	12	54	38	9	**50**	40	10	**51**	39	10	51	38	11	54	36	9	53	35	12
(n)		(272)			(272)			(272)			(272)			(272)			(272)			(272)			(272)	
Start passive	53	35	11	54	35	11	54	37	9	**50**	39	10	**50**	39	10	52	37	12	55	36	8	53	34	13
		(240)			(240)			(240)			(240)			(240)			(240)			(240)			(240)	
Start active	53	38	9	59	25	16	53	41	6	**44**	47	9	**56**	34	9	47	44	9	47	38	16	50	41	9
		(32)			(32)			(32)			(32)			(32)			(32)			(32)			(32)	
Start, 2 or 3	0	80	20	0	78	22	0	78	22	0	80	20	15	65	20	20	59	20	22	65	13	13	67	20
		(54)			(54)			(54)			(54)			(54)			(54)			(54)			(54)	
Never										**46**	39	15												
(n)											(1636)													

Does Commitment Change Their Mind?

- Members vs. Non-members?
  - Yes: Sustainers very different from non-members

- Commitment communities
  - Unionists differ from Green contenders on common good dimension
  - Volunteers differ from Green contenders on politics dimension

- Before vs. After
  - No systematic differences for starters
  - Most new members join with cognitive resources

A Plurality of socialization processes?

- **Yes**
  - Strong changes for those with low cognitive resource

- **However, no differences**
  - Between passive and active members
  - For younger generations

- **Who are those with low cognitive resources?**
  - Network related?