

IS VOTER TURNOUT STILL DECLINING?

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YES

31 EUROPEAN COUNTRIES (+ CANADA)

COMPULSORY VOTING COUNTRIES NOT INCLUDED

EU COUNTRIES PLUS OTHERS

- DECLINE OVER 20 YEARS**

26 OF 32 DECLINED, AVERAGE -9.9%

2 UNCHANGED

4 INCREASED, AVERAGE 3.6%

DECLINE OVER LAST 10 YEARS

- **18 OF 32 DECLINED, AVERAGE -7.13**
- **14 OF 32 INCREASED, AVERAGE 3.3**
- **SOME SMALL INCREASES IN HIGH TURNOUT COUNTRIES (SCANDINAVIA, TURKEY)**
- **SOME UPTURNS IN COUNTRIES WITH LONG TERM DECLINES (UK, SLOVAKIA, POLAND, CANADA)**

REASONS FOR TURNOUT DECLINE

- YOUTH DISENGAGEMENT
- CHANGING NATURE OF CIVIC DUTY
- PUBLIC CYNICISM
- PERCEIVED LACK OF MEANINGFUL CHOICE

- OTHER REASONS FOR NONVOTING, BUT UNCLEAR WHETHER THEY HAVE BEEN RISING OVER TIME (HEALTH; ABSENCE; VOTER SUPPRESSION)

TURNOUT RISES OF 5%

- HUNGARY 1998-2002 57.0-70.5
- SPAIN 2000-2004 68.7-75.7
- CZECH 2002-2006 58.0-64.5
- IRELAND 2002-2007 62.6-67.0
- RUSSIA 2003-2007 55.7-63.7
- TURKEY 2002-2007 79.1-84.3
- POLAND 2005-2007 40.6-53.9
- BULGARIA 2005-2009 55.8-60.6
- CANADA 2011-2015 61.1-69.1
- SPAIN 2011-2015 68.9-73.2

TURNOUT RISES OF 5%

	CHANGE OF GOVT?	ATMOSPHERE
• HUNGARY 1998-2002	YES	POLARIZATION; HEATED CAMPAIGN
• SPAIN 2000-2004	YES	MADRID BOMBINGS
• CZECH 2002-2006	YES	SCANDAL; DEADLOCK
• IRELAND 2002-2007	NO	UNCERTAINTY; OPPOSITION GAINS
• RUSSIA 2003-2007	PARTIAL	PUTIN AS PM (NOT PRES) ANTICIPATED
• TURKEY 2002-2007	NO	DEADLOCK AFTER EARLIER PRES ELECTION
• POLAND 2005-2007	YES	EARLY, CLOSE, POLARIZED; CORRUPTION;
• BULGARIA 2005-2009	YES	NEWLY FORMED PARTY WINS
• CANADA 2011-2015	YES	CLOSE; MOBILIZATION; STRATEGIC
• SPAIN 2011-2015	TBD	2 NEW PARTIES; FRAGMENTATION

TURNOUT RISES OF 5% SUBSEQUENT TURNOUT

- HUNGARY 2002 DECLINED SLOWLY TO 61.8
- SPAIN 2004 DECLINED TO 68.9
- CZECH 2006 DECLINED TO 59.5
- IRELAND 2007 ROSE TO 70.1
- RUSSIA 2007 DECLINED TO 60.1
- TURKEY 2007 ROSE TO 87.6, THEN 85.2
- POLAND 2007 DECLINED TO 48.9, 50.1
- BULGARIA 2009 DECLINED TO 51.0
- CANADA 2015
- SPAIN 2015

SMALLER TURNOUT RISES (2%)

- **AUSTRIA; LITHUANIA; FINLAND; SLOVENIA (2); UK; ITALY; DENMARK; LATVIA; SLOVAKIA; SWEDEN; SWITZERLAND**
- **IN 7 OF 12 INSTANCES, THERE WAS A CHANGE OF GOVERNMENT**
- **IN 4 INSTANCES, THERE WAS A FOCUS ON EXTREME RIGHT PARTIES**

CONCLUSIONS

- WIDESPREAD DESIRE FOR POLITICAL CHANGE IS COMMON FACTOR
- CREATES SHORT-TERM INTEREST, MOBILIZATION, UNCERTAINTY, NEED FOR STRATEGY
- ECONOMIC UNCERTAINTY NOT DIRECTLY RELATED TO TURNOUT (AT LEAST IN FORM OF 2008 FINANCIAL CRISIS, OR LATER)
- ECONOMIC CONDITIONS COULD HAVE SOME INDIRECT EFFECTS (EG GOVERNMENT UNPOPULARITY, RISE OF RIGHT WING PARTIES)
- OFTEN TURNOUT RISES NOT SUSTAINED

IMPLICATIONS FOR CAMPAIGNING

- TONE OF CAMPAIGN BECOMES ALL IMPORTANT
- ‘NEED FOR CHANGE’ BECOMES KEY THEME OF ALL OPPOSITION CAMPAIGNS
- NEGATIVE CAMPAIGNING INCREASES
- PROFESSIONALIZATION
- NEED FOR MOBILIZATION, VIA SOCIAL MEDIA
- INCUMBENTS AS CHANGE AGENTS

IMPLICATIONS FOR POLITICAL EDUCATION

- MESSAGES NEED TO EMPHASIZE INSTRUMENTAL NATURE OF THE VOTE
- CHALLENGE TO CONNECT EVENTS TO DOMESTIC (OR EU) POLITICAL REALITIES
- MORE DIFFICULT TO TEACH IN AN NONPARTISAN MANNER
- OPPORTUNITIES FOR GROUP AND INSTITUTIONAL EDUCATIONAL MESSAGES
- CONSTANT CHANGE THEME COULD ENCOURAGE CYNICISM

CONSTRAINTS ON POLITICIANS PART OF EDUCATION