

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; MOBILIATION; 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