

# Contents

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| <i>List of Figures</i>  | xi        |
| <i>List of Tables</i>   | xv        |
| <i>Acknowledgments</i>  | xix       |
| <i>List of Abbreviations</i>  | xxii      |
| <b>1 Introduction</b>   | <b>1</b>  |
| 1.1 Young people's political participation in Europe at the beginning of the 21st century – Research questions                | 3         |
| 1.2 Plan of the book  | 10        |
| <b>2 Exploration and Development of Equivalent Measures of Political Participation in Europe</b>                              | <b>13</b> |
| 2.1 Changes in political participation in Europe: the need for updated equivalent measures of political participation         | 14        |
| 2.1.1 Changes in political participation in recent decades  | 14        |
| 2.1.2 The need for equivalent instruments   | 16        |
| 2.1.3 An exploratory approach to the dimensionality of political participation  | 17        |
| 2.2 New instruments: the development of political participation scales  | 20        |
| 2.2.1 Analysis of secondary data  | 20        |
| 2.2.2 Examining the structure and dimensionality of the latent concept of political participation using Mokken Scale Analysis | 23        |
| 2.2.3 The search for identical measures of the latent concept political participation in Europe                               | 25        |
| 2.2.4 The search for equivalent measures of the latent concept of political participation across European countries           | 27        |
| 2.3 Institutional and non-institutional political participation in Europe   | 34        |
| 2.3.1 Political participation across countries  | 35        |

|          |   |           |
|----------|---|-----------|
| 2.3.2    | A note on the multidimensionality of political participation over time  | 38        |
| 2.4      | Political participation across age  | 39        |
| 2.5      | Conclusion  | 46        |
| <b>3</b> | <b>Political Participation and Age: Building an Exploratory Model of Political Participation Based on Life Cycle, Cohort and Period Effects</b> | <b>48</b> |
| 3.1      | Age and social change: life cycle, cohort and period explanations   | 50        |
| 3.2      | An explanatory model of changes in political participation based on age   | 57        |
| 3.2.1    | Civic voluntarism model   | 58        |
| 3.2.2    | Modernization theories  | 60        |
| 3.2.3    | On mobilization agencies  | 61        |
| 3.2.4    | Cognitive engagement theory   | 64        |
| 3.2.5    | Social capital theory   | 66        |
| 3.2.6    | General incentives theory   | 69        |
| 3.2.7    | Institutional accounts  | 70        |
| 3.3      | Summary of expectations   | 72        |
| <b>4</b> | <b>What Does ‘Being Young’ Mean? Young People’s Political Participation in Europe</b>   | <b>76</b> |
| 4.1      | Methodological aspects in the study of life cycle, cohort, generational and period effects  | 77        |
| 4.2      | What does ‘being young’ mean?   | 80        |
| 4.2.1    | Youth as a life stage at the beginning of the 21st century  | 82        |
| 4.2.2    | Evolution of youth as a life stage  | 85        |
| 4.3      | Young Europeans’ political participation  | 86        |
| 4.4      | Conclusion  | 97        |
| <b>5</b> | <b>Generational Change? Political Generations and Cohorts in Europe</b>   | <b>99</b> |
| 5.1      | Political generations in Europe   | 101       |
| 5.2      | Young Europeans: a differentiated political cohort?   | 108       |
| 5.2.1    | A cohort of sophisticated critical citizens? Or alienated from the political system?  | 111       |
| 5.2.2    | A cohort lacking mobilization networks?   | 132       |
| 5.2.3    | An individualistic cohort?  | 137       |
| 5.2.4    | A cohort of European citizens with common characteristics?  | 144       |

|          |   |            |
|----------|---|------------|
| 5.3      | Cohort characteristics and political participation: an explanatory model  | 148        |
| 5.3.1    | Effect of individual characteristics on political participation in 1974 and 2002  | 149        |
| 5.3.2    | Effect of new cohort's characteristics on political participation   | 158        |
| 5.4      | Conclusion  | 162        |
| <b>6</b> | <b>Too Young to Participate? The Effect of the Transition to Adulthood on Political Participation</b>   | <b>165</b> |
| 6.1      | Why does political participation change across the life cycle?  | 167        |
| 6.2      | Changes in political participation as young people complete the transition to adulthood   | 170        |
| 6.3      | Transition to adulthood and institutional participation: differentiated effects across countries, age, gender and time                              | 181        |
| 6.3.1    | The effect of specific events on institutional and non-institutional political participation  | 181        |
| 6.3.2    | An exploration of short-term effects  | 187        |
| 6.3.3    | The influence of the transition to adulthood on women's and men's institutional political participation   | 193        |
| 6.3.4    | The influence of the transition to adulthood on institutional political participation across countries: different patterns                          | 205        |
| 6.4      | Conclusion  | 208        |
| <b>7</b> | <b>Conclusions</b>  | <b>212</b> |
| 7.1      | Summary of results  | 214        |
| 7.1.1    | What is distinctive about young people's political participation at the beginning of the 21st century?  | 214        |
| 7.1.2    | Why do young people participate relatively less in politics than four decades ago?  | 221        |
| 7.2      | Discussion  | 229        |
| 7.2.1    | Do young people participate differently due to distinctive cohort characteristics or due to a delayed and more complicated transition to adulthood? | 229        |
| 7.2.2    | Continuity and generational change  | 231        |
| 7.2.3    | Period effects: 1974 versus 2002  | 233        |

|       |   |     |
|-------|---|-----|
| 7.2.4 | Future directions for young people's political participation research | 235 |
|-------|---|-----|

## Appendices

|   |   |            |
|---|---|------------|
| <b>Appendix A: Information Accompanying Chapter 2</b>                         |   | <b>243</b> |
| A.1   | Replication of institutional and non-institutional participation scales with items' difficulties weighted             | 243        |
| A.2   | Replication of institutional and non-institutional political participation scales with the PAS                        | 244        |
| A.3   | Relationship between institutional and non-institutional political participation in 17 European countries, 2002       | 245        |
| <b>Appendix B: Information Accompanying Chapter 4</b>                         |   | <b>246</b> |
| B.1   | Robustness tests of average levels of political participation: young people and adults                                | 247        |
| B.2   | Pearson correlations between institutional and non-institutional participation across countries and life stages, 2002 | 249        |
| <b>Appendix C: Information Accompanying Chapter 5</b>                         |   | <b>250</b> |
| C.1   | Young people's frequency of political discussions over time and across countries, 1973–2003                           | 250        |
| C.2   | Average levels of postmaterialist values of young people and adults over time   | 252        |
| C.3   | Young people's and adults' membership in at least one association in 2002   | 253        |
| C.4   | Young people's difference in confidence in political parties and politicians from adults                              | 254        |
| C.5   | Young people' and adults' norms of citizenship  | 256        |
| C.6   | Surveys used and their complete references  | 257        |
| C.7   | Surveys used and sample sizes   | 259        |
| <b>Appendix D: Information Accompanying Chapter 6</b>                         |   | <b>263</b> |
| D.1   | Transition to adulthood and political participation, OLS models   | 264        |
| <b>Appendix E: Marginal Effects of the Transition to Adulthood Across Age</b> |   | <b>282</b> |
| <i>Notes</i>  |   | 288        |
| <i>References</i>   |   | 306        |
| <i>Index</i>  |   | 323        |