

What Types of Participants?: Patterns of Political Participation in Lithuania

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ABSTRACT. *The quantity and quality of political participation is extremely important for the consolidation of democracy. There is no comprehensive analysis of the conventional modes of political participation and their distribution among population in Lithuania. This study focuses on the differences between different types of participants in political acts in post-communist Lithuania. Based on the survey conducted in Lithuania in 2006, the article concludes that the lack of civic resources, the development of individualization and rapid social differentiation that caused different perceptions of economic inequality and insecurity among different groups of the population have influenced political participation patterns in Lithuania.*

KEYWORDS: *political participation, conventional political participation, unconventional political participation, economic inequality.*

RAKTAŽODŽIAI: *politinis dalyvavimas, konvencinis politinis dalyvavimas, nekonvencinis politinis dalyvavimas, ekonominė nelygybė.*

Citizen participation is a key indicator of the performance of democracy (Conway 1991; Kaase and Marsh 1979; Parry, Moyser and Day 1992; Rosenstone and Hansen 1993; Verba, Schlozman and Brady 1995). The quality and quantity of political participation has an important role in the representation of citizen needs and preferences. Pateman argues that “. . . we do learn to participate by participating and feelings of political efficiency are more likely to be developed in a participatory environment” (Pateman 1970; 105). Participation in political life develops civic competence and responsibility. The experience of political activities are important and valuable itself.

The legitimization of democratic institutions and the institutionalization of conventional modes of participation are extremely essential during the period of consolidation of democracy (Valionis 2000, 2001). Conventional modes of political participation constitute a precondition for a stable democratic system (Kaase and Marsh 1979; Valionis 2000; 2001). However, voting at elections

is only one form of numerous forms of political participation. If citizens have the possibility to exercise control over political leaders only through elections, their role in the political process is that of a “controller” but not that of a “participant” (Parry, Moyser and Day 1992). Conventional political actions of individuals such as contacting politicians, government or municipality officials and organizations, letter writing, involvement in election campaigns through wearing and distributing badges and posters and financial contributions inform political elite about citizens interests, preferences and needs. Unconventional political actions may be dysfunctional with respect to the performance of democratic institutions during the period of consolidation of democracy (Valionis 2000; 2001).

A comprehensive analysis of conventional modes of political participation such as voting, contacting and involvement in electoral campaigns and of unconventional modes of political participation such as protesting is still underdeveloped in Lithuania. Civil society studies focus mostly on the development of nongovernmental organizations (Beresnevičiūtė 2006; Žiliukaitė 2006), social capital resources (Žiliukaitė 2006), electoral behavior (Žėruolis 1998; Degutis 2002; 2004; Žiliukaitė and Ramonaitė 2006) and selected protest actions (Riekašius 2001; 2004; Valionis 2000; 2001).

This article focuses on the differences between types of participants in political acts in Lithuania. The study addresses the following questions: what groups of citizens in Lithuania may be distinguished in accordance with their level of interest in politics and participation in political acts? What factors determine differences among participant types? What are causes and explanations of different patterns of political participation among different groups?

Theoretical Perspectives on Political Participation

The concept of political participation refers to normative and operational difficulties of conceptualizing political participation and it varies from the wide to the narrow sense of a notion of political participation (Conway 1991; Kaase and March 1979; Marsh and Kaase 1979; Milbrath and Goel 1977; Rosenstone and Hansen, 1993; Verba and Nie 1972; Parry, Moyser and Day 1992; Verba, Schlozman and Brady 1995). Political participation in this study refers to “activities of citizens that attempt to influence the structure of government, the selection of government authorities, or the policies of government” (Conway 1991, 4).

Political participation modes can include conventional and unconventional actions. Conventional political participation refers to those modes that a dominant political culture recognizes as acceptable and that are related to institutionalized actions (Conway 1991, 20). Unconventional political participation

refers to those modes that fail short of laws and customary norms of a specific society and relate to non-institutionalized actions frequently directed against the system itself that at least aim at transforming its sociopolitical structure (Kaase and March 1979, 41).

Socioeconomic status perspective refers to explanatory capacities of individual factors such as education, profession, income, age, gender and religion and concludes that socioeconomic factors have an impact on political participation (Milbrath and Goel 1977; Conway 1991; Parry, Moyser and Day 1992; Rosenstone and Hansen 1993; Verba, Schlozman and Brady 1995; Verba, Schlozman and Brady 2000). Education “promotes political participation in two ways: by giving people the knowledge and skills that facilitate participation and by placing people in social networks that inform them about politics and reward political action” (Rosenstone and Hansen 1993). An important indicator of skills and social contacts is profession (Rosenstone and Hansen 1993, 77). Individuals may acquire civic skills at the institutions, which they encounter during their life time (Verba, Schlozman and Brady 1995). The longer people live, the more knowledge, skills and social contacts they acquire (Rosenstone and Hansen 1993).

Individual resources model starts with the idea that individual resources such as money, skills, knowledge, time and self-confidence have an impact on political participation, because they allow people to meet the economic and psychological costs of political participation (Rosenstone and Hansen 1993; Verba, Schlozman and Brady 1995).

Social capital perspective refers to the explanatory capacities of social capital. Putnam argues that social capital is “features of social organization, such as trust, norms, and social networks that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated actions” (Putnam 1993, 167). Voluntary organizations generate social capital by encouraging interpersonal trust, supporting norms of reciprocity and providing networks of social relations. Putnam (1993) indicates that associations foster the general reciprocity, which helps to overcome the problems of free-riders in democracy. Participating in associations, individuals develop cognitive and deliberative skills, civic virtues, and a sense of efficacy (Badescu 2003). Verba, Schlozman and Brady (1995) argue that associations teach their members organizational skills. Associations provide the social infrastructure for public deliberation and setting of an agenda. Associations with private or nonpolitical purposes (self-help groups, sports clubs, and choral societies) contribute to the public sphere less in comparison with political organizations (Fung 2003).

An important attribute of civil society is the existence of informal social networks that must be composed of “weak ties”. “Weak ties” are more likely to link members of different groups than “strong” ties that concentrate on a particular group (Granovetter 1973, 1376). At the level of the individual citizen, civil society requires a specific set of attitudes and behavioral orientations

towards politics, including a certain style of interpersonal interaction and collaboration (Brehm and Rahn 1997; Lake and Huckfeldt 1998).

Political participation in a *cultural perspective* addresses the impact of values and attitudes on political participation (Inglehart 1979, 1997). The shift from materialist to postmaterialist values includes cognitive mobilization and increase in efficacy (Inglehart 1979; Kaase and Marsh 1979).

Uslaner and Brown indicate that “. . . greater equality and higher levels of trust are two pathways to participation” (Uslaner and Brown 2005, 869). Inequality may depress participation, either directly or indirectly, through its effects on trust. Where inequality is higher, the poor may feel powerless and they will think that their views are not represented in the political system and therefore they will opt out of civic engagement (Uslaner and Brown 2005). Trust in others rests on a foundation of economic equality: “When resources are distributed inequitably, people at the top and the bottom will not see each other as facing a shared fate” (Uslaner and Brown 2005, 869). Trust rests on a psychological foundation of optimism and control over one’s environment: “Where inequality is high, people will be less likely to believe that the future looks bright, and they will have even fewer reasons to believe that they are the masters of their own fate” (Uslaner and Brown 2005, 869).

Rapid economic restructuring caused new patterns of social stratification and inequality in post-communist countries. The transition from the state to market economy has created different economic opportunities and the need for different individual resources in comparison with the socialist economy. It caused rapid social differentiation and a rapid increase in economic inequality in the society. Related to the transition from totalitarianism to the institutions of democracy, it also increased a gap between the government officials and ordinary citizens (Thomassen and van Deth 1998, 119).

There exists a relationship between the perceptions of the economy and democracy in post-communist countries (Pacek 1994; Paczynska 2005). Furthermore, the transition from socialism to the market economy is related to the transition from the collective to individualistic culture (Triandis 1993).

Research Methodology

The measurement of political participation in the questionnaires used in my research corresponds to questions used in classical studies of political participation (Rosenstone and Hansen 1993; Verba, Nie and Kim 1978; Verba, Schlozman and Brady 1995). Political participation is measured by questions on conventional modes of political participation such as voting, contacting, and working in a political party or/and an election campaign and on unconventional modes of political participation such as protest acts.

The hypothetical model of factors determining political participation

includes: 1) socio-demographic characteristics, 2) civic skills, 3) social capital dimensions, 4) individual and collective values, 5) perceptions of a good citizen and an effect of a particular political act in decision-making, 6) evaluations of the political system, economy of the country and economic situation of respondent's own family at present and in the future (Conway 1991; Inglehart 1979; 1997; Putnam 1993; Rosenstone and Hansen 1993; Verba and Nie 1972; Verba, Nie and Kim 1978; Verba, Schlozman and Brady 1995).

The instrument of the survey was a questionnaire, which includes closed questions concerning political participation modes, membership in organizations, and characteristics of networks of discussion about politics, individual and collective values and attitudes.

The empirical analysis of the types of participants is based on quantitative data. The method of the study is survey sample data. The survey was conducted by the Market and Opinion Research Center "Vilmorus" in June, 2006. The sample of the survey was a stratified multi-stage sample that represented the total number of the 18-74 year-old inhabitants of Lithuania and included 1050 respondents.

Differences between the Types of Participants in Lithuania: Empirical Results

The TwoStep cluster analysis was used to group Lithuanian citizens in accordance with differences in their interest in politics and participation. The cluster analysis discovered differences between the types of participants in relation to three dimensions: 1) interest in politics, 2) voting and 3) participation in other modes of political acts (contacting a politician, a government or local official and an organization, working in a party or a local initiative group, wearing or displayed badge or sticker of any campaign, signing a petition, contacting media, donating money or raising funds, participating in a demonstration or a strike, boycotting products and performing an act of civil disobedience). The results of the cluster analysis are presented in Table 1.

Respondents were grouped into three types of participants: the passive (26.8% of the population, the active (26.3% of the population) and the voters (47.6% of the population). 25% of the passive respondents were interested in politics, 17.9% of the passive voted in elections, and 43.7% of the passive participated in other political acts. Donating money or raising funds was the most popular political act within the category of other political acts among the passive respondents. 20% of the respondents who donated money or raised funds were the passive ones.

69.2% of the active were interested in politics, 98.3% of the active voted in elections, and 100% of the active participated in other political acts. 53.6%

TABLE 1. DIFFERENCES BETWEEN TYPES OF PARTICIPANTS BY INTEREST IN POLITICS AND LEVELS OF PARTICIPATION

Type of participants	Interested in politics, %	Not interested in politics, %	Voted, %	Did not vote, %	Participated in other political acts, %	Did not participate in other political acts, %	Size of a group, % (N)
Passive	25.0	75.0	17.9	82.1	43.7	56.3	26.6 (240)
Active	69.2	30.8	98.3	1.7	100	0	26.6 (240)
Voters	53.6	46.4	100	0	32.3	67.7	46.8 (418)

TwoStep cluster analysis, N=898.

of the voters were interested in politics, 100% of the voters voted in elections, and 32.3% of the voters participated in other political acts.

The multinomial logistic regression was used to identify predictors of socio-demographic characteristics, civic skills, social capital dimensions, values and attitudes that attributed citizens to a particular type of participants (the active, the passive and the voters). The model of multinomial logistic regression was composed of 3 socio-demographic predictors (age, education and profession), the predictor of civic resources (self-assessment of his/her own capability to write a letter against the decision of a government institution), 3 predictors of social capital (index of membership in organizations,¹ socializing with people whom a respondent does not know and a trust in people), 2 predictors of external efficacy (evaluation of politicians' attentiveness to ordinary people's opinion and the ordinary people's opportunities to understand what happens in politics), 2 dimensions of internal efficacy (his/her own opportunities to present their own requirements to politicians and his/her own capabilities to find out the truth in politics), self-realization, 2 predictors of the assessment of effectiveness of a particular political act (voting and signing a petition), 4 understandings of a good citizen (a good citizen has to be informed about events in a society, to influence political and societal decisions, to vote and to serve in a military), 2 evaluations of the political system (evaluation of the present political system and of the political system in five years) and 4 economic evaluations (evaluation of the present economic situation and the economic situation of the country in five years, self-assessment of the present economic situation of his/her own household and the economic situation of the household in five years).

¹ The index of membership in organizations was created by computing membership in a sport club, a cultural club, an environmental organization, a women's organization, a temperance organization, a farmers' organization, a local action group, a political party, a trade union and other organizations.

Two regression patterns were identified – one was for the active respondents versus the passive, the second was for the voters versus the passive. The pseudo-r square was 0.56 indicating a good fit between the total model and the data although the fit was less than perfect.

A comparison between the active and passive respondents suggests

TABLE 2. MULTINOMIAL LOGISTIC REGRESSION RESULTS

Variable	B	Exp (B)	95% Confidence Interval
Active			
Intercept	-7.96***		
Primary school	-3.13*	0.04	0.01-0.62
Secondary incomplete school	-3.81***	0.02	0.01-0.17
Secondary school	-1.42*	0.24	0.01-0.77
Secondary professional school	0.39	0.68	0.20-2.31
High education			
Age (coded in years)	0.10***	1.10	1.06-1.14
Membership in two or more organizations	3.15*	23.35	1.12-486.78
Membership in an organization	0.87	2.39	0.86-6.69
Non-member			
Able to write a letter against the decision of a government institution	1.69***	5.42	2.22-13.24
Not able			
Socializing with people that he/she does not know	2.01**	7.44	1.87-29.61
Often	0.78	2.19	0.69-6.95
Seldom			
Never			
Evaluation of an economic situation of the household in five years	-2.18*	0.11	0.01-0.90
Much better	-0.64	0.53	0.10-2.87
A little better	-0.31	0.73	0.13-4.19
About the same	0		
A little worse	0.21*	1.23	1.05-1.46
Effectiveness of voting	-0.02	0.99	0.85-1.14
Effectiveness of signing petition	-0.15	0.86	0.70-1.07
Evaluation of the political system in five years	-0.30**	0.74	0.60-0.92
0.02	1.03	0.83-1.27	
Politicians are attentive to ordinary people's opinions	0.02	1.03	0.83-1.27
Opportunities to present personal requirements to politicians	-0.04	0.96	0.81-1.14
Trust in people	0.27**	1.31	1.07-1.60
A good citizen has to vote	0.08	1.08	0.94-1.24
A good citizen has to serve in a military			

Variable	B	Exp (B)	95% Confidence Interval
Voters			
Intercept	-6.54***		
Primary school	-3.24**	0.04	0.01-0.43
Secondary incomplete school	-2.30**	0.10	0.02-0.45
Secondary school	-1.09	0.34	0.11-1.05
Secondary professional school	-0.74	0.48	0.14-1.62
High education			
Age	0.12***	1.13	1.09-1.17
Membership in two or more organizations	0.58	1.79	0.05-64.99
Membership in an organization	-0.52	0.60	0.21-1.69
Non-member			
Able to write a letter against the decision of a government institution	1.13**	3.10	1.33-7.22
Not able			
Socializing with people that he/she does not know	2.16**	8.70	2.32-32.59
Often	1.23*	3.42	1.16-10.08
Seldom			
Never			
Evaluation of an economic situation of the household in five years	0.08	1.08	0.16-7.39
Much better	0.48	1.62	0.32-8.08
A little better	0.49	1.63	0.31-8.51
About the same	0.21**	1.23	1.06-1.44
A little worse	-0.16*	0.86	0.74-0.99
Effectiveness of voting	0.04	1.04	0.85-1.27
Effectiveness of signing petition	-0.33**	0.72	0.59-0.89
Evaluation of the political system in five years	-0.30**	0.74	0.59-0.93
Politicians are attentive to ordinary people's opinions	-0.17*	0.84	0.72-0.99
Opportunities to present personal requirements to politicians	0.20*	1.22	1.03-1.45
Trust in people	0.16*	1.17	1.03-1.34
A good citizen has to vote			
A good citizen has to serve in a military			

Stepwise method: Backward stepwise; N=430; df=1; *** p=0.000; **p<0.01; *p<0.05;
 Log likelihood = 550.05; LRT Chi2 (52)=372.36
 Pearson Chi-Square =807.69; df=806; p=0.477;
 Nagelkerke=0.56.

9 variables, namely education, age, index of membership in organizations, self-assessment of civic skills, social networks of leisure, evaluation of the economic situation of the household in five years, understanding that voting is

effective, a good citizen's responsibility to vote and politicians' attentiveness to ordinary people's opinions that were statistically significant. It was less likely that the respondents with primary education (odds ratio [OR] = 0.04, confidence interval [CI] 95 percent: 0.01-0.62), secondary incomplete education (OR=0.02, CI 95 percent: 0.01-0.17) and secondary education (OR= 0.24, CI 95 percent: 0.08-0.77) would become active than the respondents with high education. It was more likely that older respondents (OR=1.10, CI 95 percent: 1.06-1.14) would become active than younger respondents. The respondents with two or more memberships in organizations were more likely to be active than non-members (OR=23.35, CI 95 percent: 1.12- 486.78). It was more likely that the respondents who were able to write a letter against the decision of a governmental institution (OR=1.10, CI 95 percent: 2.22-13.24) would be active than the respondents who were not able to write such letter.

The respondents who often socialized with people that they did not know were more likely (OR=23.35, CI 95 percent: 1.87-29.61) to be active than respondents who never socialized with people that they did not know. The respondents who evaluated the economic situation of their household in five years as being much better (OR=0.11, CI 95 percent: 0.01-0.90) were less likely to be active than respondents who evaluated the economic situation of their household in five years as being a little worse.

The respondents who thought that voting was a more effective way to influence a particular decision-making process (OR=1.23, CI 95 percent: 1.05-1.46) were more likely to be active than the respondents who thought that voting was less effective. The respondents who were more inclined to think that a good citizen had to vote in elections were more likely (OR=1.31, CI 95 percent: 1.07-1.60) to be active than the respondents who were less inclined to think that a good citizen had to vote in elections.

The respondents who thought that politicians were less attentive to ordinary people's opinion were more likely (OR=0.74, CI 95 percent: 0.60-0.92) to be active than the respondents who thought that politicians were more attentive to ordinary people's opinion.² The respondents who thought that they had more opportunities to find out the truth about politicians were more likely (OR=1.31, CI 95 percent: 1.02- 1.67) to be active than the respondents who thought that they had fewer opportunities to find out the truth about politicians. The respondents showed no differences in the other variables.

A comparison between the voters and passive respondents suggests twelve variables, namely education, age, self-assessment of civic skills, social networks of leisure, understanding that voting is effective, understanding that signing a

² The independent variables: the age is coded in years; the attitudes (understanding that voting is effective, understanding that signing a petition is effective, the evaluation of the political system in five years, politicians' attentiveness to ordinary people's opinions, opportunities to present personal requirements to politicians, trust in people, a good citizen's responsibility to vote and a good citizen's responsibility to serve in a military service) are coded in scale from min=1 to max=10.

petition is effective, understanding that a good citizen has to vote, understanding a good citizen has to serve in a military, politicians' attentiveness to ordinary people's opinions, personal opportunities to present his/her own requirements to politicians and trust in people that were statistically significant.

It was less likely that the respondents with primary education (OR=0.04, confidence interval [CI] 95 percent: 0.01-0.43) and secondary incomplete education (OR=0.10, CI 95 percent: 0.02-0.45) would become the voters than the respondents with high education. It was more likely that older respondents (OR=1.13, CI 95 percent: 1.09-1.17) would become the voters than younger respondents.

The respondents who often (OR=8.70, CI 95 percent: 2.32- 32.59) and seldom (OR=3.42, CI 95 percent: 1.16-10.08) socialized with people that they did not know were more likely to become the voters than the respondents who never socialized with people that they did not know.

The respondents who thought that voting was more effective way to influence a particular decision-making process (OR=1.23, CI 95 percent: 1.06-1.44) were more likely to be the voters than the respondents who thought that voting was less effective. The respondents who thought that signing a petition was a less effective way to influence a particular decision-making process (OR=0.86, CI 95 percent: 0.74-0.99) were more likely to be the voters than the respondents who thought that signing a petition was more effective.

The respondents who were more inclined to think that a good citizen had to vote in elections were more likely (OR=1.22, CI 95 percent: 1.03-1.45) to be the voters than the respondents who were less inclined to think that a good citizen had to vote in elections.

The respondents who were more inclined to think that a good citizen had to serve in a military were more likely (OR=1.17, CI 95 percent: 1.03-1.34) to be the voters than the respondents who were less inclined to think that a good citizen had to serve in a military.

The respondents who thought that politicians were less attentive to ordinary people's opinion were more likely (OR=0.72, CI 95 percent: 0.59-0.89) to be the voters than the respondents who thought that politicians were more attentive to ordinary people's opinion. The respondents who thought that they had fewer opportunities to present their requirements to politicians were more likely (OR=0.74, CI 95 percent: 0.59-0.93) to be the voters than the respondents who thought they had more opportunities to present their requirements to politicians. The respondents who thought that they had more opportunities to find out the truth about politicians were more likely (OR=1.40, CI 95 percent: 1.09-1.79) to be the voters than the respondents who thought that they had fewer opportunities to find out the truth about politicians. The respondents showed no differences in other variables.

To sum up, nine variables, namely education, age, the index of membership in organizations, self-assessment of civic skills, social networks of leisure,

evaluation of the economic situation of the household in five years, understanding that voting is effective, understanding that a good citizen has vote and politicians' attentiveness to ordinary people's opinions (external efficacy) are statistically significant when we compare between the active and passive respondents. Twelve variables, namely education, age, self-assessment of civic skills, social networks of leisure, understanding that voting is effective, understanding that signing a petition is effective, understanding that a good citizen has to vote, understanding that a good citizen has to serve in a military, politicians' attentiveness to ordinary people's opinions (external efficacy), personal opportunities to present his/her own requirements to politicians (internal efficacy) and trust in people are statistically significant when we compare between the voters and passive respondents.

There are statistically significant relations between means of the evaluations of the political system in the future and the types of participants ($F=3.69$, $p<0.05$). There are statistically significant relations between means of the economic evaluations and the types of participants ($F=5.63$, $p<0.01$; $F=3.35$, $p<0.05$; $F=5.58$; $p<0.01$; $F=4.53$, $p<0.05$). The differences in means of the evaluations of political and economic systems between the types of participants are presented in Table 3.

TABLE 3. MEANS OF THE EVALUATIONS OF THE ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL SYSTEM IN LITHUANIA

	Passive	Active	Voters	Mean, N	F
Present political system	4.02	4.17	4.08	4.09 (877)	0.28
Political system in five years	5.29	5.85	5.44	5.51 (757)	3.69*
Present economy	4.87	5.07	4.55	4.77 (862)	5.63**
Economy in five years	6.10	6.38	5.89	6.08 (769)	3.35*
Present economic situation of the household	2.31	2.29	2.44	2.37 (876)	5.58**
Economic situation of the household in five years	2.38	2.47	2.59	2.50 (809)	4.53*

df=2; *** $p=0.000$; ** $p<0.01$; * $p<0.05$.

Discussion

The types of participants (active, passive and the voters) are characterized by different patterns of interest in politics, voting and participation. The passive participants contribute to voting the least, but they contribute more to participation in other political acts in comparison with the voters. The active participants contribute to participation most, but they contribute less to voting

in comparison with the voters. Because of a number of respondents who participate in other political acts is modest in absolute numbers and percentage, it makes no sense to investigate the participation of the passive and active participants with respect to the conventional versus unconventional modes of participation.

The results of the multinomial logistic regression reveal that age is a significant predictor that distinguishes between the types of participants. Age is a little stronger predictor of the voters than of the active participants; it is also a stronger predictor of the active participants than of the passive participants. It means that the voters are the oldest group and the passive participants are the youngest one. The impact of age on political participation in this study corresponds to the impact of age on political participation in the classical studies – younger individuals participate in political acts less than the older ones (Milbrath and Goel 1977; Conway 1991; Parry, Moyser and Day 1992; Rosenstone and Hansen 1993; Verba, Schlozman and Brady 1995; Verba, Schlozman and Brady 2000).

Another significant predictor that distinguishes between the types of participants is education. The more educated respondents, the more likely they will be in the group of the active participants or the voters. Primary, secondary incomplete and secondary education in relation to high education distinguishes between the active and passive participants, and primary and secondary incomplete education in relation to high education distinguishes between the voters and the passive participants. Secondary incomplete education is a stronger predictor in relation to high education in the group of voters than in the group of the active participants. From the theoretical perspective of socioeconomic status, education gives people the knowledge and skills that facilitate participation and places people in social networks that inform them about politics and reward political action (Conway 1991; Parry, Moyser and Day 1992; Rosenstone and Hansen 1993; Verba, Schlozman and Brady 1995). Because of education, the active participants have more knowledge, skills and social contacts and they are able to participate in more diverse political acts³ (contacting, participation in a campaign, work in an organization and protest actions) in comparison to the voters and to the passive participants. The voters have less knowledge, skills and social contacts in comparison to the active participants and as a result they choose only to cast a vote in elections, because voting requires very little skills and initiative.

³ The participation of the group of the active participants in political acts: 4.6% contacted a politician, 7% contacted an organization, 15.3% contacted an official of the national or local government, 3.3% worked in a political party; 3.3% worked in a local group, 6.9% worked in an another organization, 4.2% wore a campaign badge, 7.6% signed a petition, 2.6% participated in demonstration, 0.9% participated in a strike, 2.4% boycotted products, 39% donated money or raised funds, 8.1% contacted mass media or appeared in mass media, 1.6% participated in the acts of civil disobedience and 7.1% participated in other acts.

The group of passive participants is characterized by low levels of education (mostly secondary incomplete and secondary education) that are considered as an obstacle to participation in political acts. Therefore, the passive participants have abilities and opportunities to increase their level of education because of their young age.

Membership in two or more organizations is a significant predictor, which differentiates between the group of the active and passive participants. Members of the organizations may develop cognitive, deliberative and organizational skills, civic virtues and a sense of efficacy by working in organizations. But organizations are not equally involved in political activities. The organizations with private or non-political purposes (sports clubs, choral societies and self-help groups) contribute to democracy less and their members participate in political acts less (Foley and Edwards 1998). It may be the reason for the fact that only membership in two or more organizations is a statistically significant predictor. Because membership in a particular type of organization was modest in absolute numbers and percentage, it was impossible to investigate the impact of membership in particular types of organizations on political participation.

Self-assessment of civic skills (self-assessment of ability to write a letter against the decision of a government institution) is a significant predictor, which differentiates between the types of participants. Self-assessment of civic skills (self-assessment of ability to write a letter against decision of a government institution) is a stronger predictor of the active participants and a weaker predictor of the voters in relation to the passive participants. The active participants participated in diverse political acts that required the maximum of civic skills. Self-assessment of civic skills is not so strong a predictor of the voters, because they are mostly involved in participation in elections and in donating money. Such acts are related to the minimum of civic skills in comparison with other forms of political participation (contacting, participation in a campaign, work in an organization and protest actions). It is assumed that self-assessment of civic skills (self-assessment of ability to write a letter against the decision of a government institution) may be an aspect of education, because education provides the knowledge and skills that facilitate participation in politics.

There are statistically significant differences between the types of participants in relation to socializing with unknown people. Respondents who often or seldom socialize with unknown people during their leisure are exposed to the exchange of more diverse information in their social networks in comparison with those who never socialize with unknown people (Lake and Huckfeldt 1998). It is assumed that the active participants and the voters have more developed social networks that help them to get more diverse information about social and political matters and that are characterized by weak ties in comparison with the passive (Lake and Huckfeldt 1998). Therefore, it is possible to assume that socializing with unknown people during leisure activities may be related to the membership in an organization, because organizations

provide the social infrastructure for socializing with unknown people. On the other side, it may be an indicator of any informal social life outside the home.

The evaluation of the economic situation of the household in five years is a significant predictor that differentiates between the active and passive respondents. The active participants are less likely to evaluate it as much better in comparison with the passive participants. This supports Uslaner and Brown's (2005) argument that the experience of the rapid increase of economic inequality leads to lower levels of optimism about the future. It means that the passive participants are more optimistic about the future of their household than the active participants. Nevertheless, it may be explained as a result of the lifecycle effect. The passive participants are the youngest group; they are more optimistic about their future in the market economy, because they have no experience of rapid social differentiation and the rapid increase of economic inequality in society. It may be assumed that the passive respondents accept economic inequality as an inevitable fact.

The understanding that voting is effective and that a good citizen has to vote are significant predictors of the types of participants. The higher the respondents evaluate the statement "voting is an effective means to influence a decision-making process," the more likely they belong to the group of active participants or the group of voters. The higher the respondents evaluate the statement "a good citizen has to vote in an election," the more likely they belong to the groups of active participants and voters. The higher the respondents evaluate the statement "a good citizen has to do military service," the more likely they belong to the group of voters.

The active participants and the voters differ from the passive participants, because they evaluate the statement "voting is an effective mean to influence a decision-making process" and the statement "a good citizen has to vote in an election" higher. The most active respondents and most voters vote in elections, because they tend to think that voting is an effective mean of influencing public decisions and that it is a good citizen's duty. After 1990, most citizens considered participation in elections as support to democracy in post-communist countries (Thomassen and van Deth 1998). The passive participants accept democracy as a natural fact.

The external efficacy (the understanding that politicians are attentive to ordinary people's opinion) is a significant predictor of the types of participants. The higher the respondents evaluate the statement "politicians are attentive to ordinary people's opinions," the less likely they belong to the group of active participants or voters. Another dimension of the internal efficacy such as self-assessment of his/her opportunities to present his/her own requirements to politicians is differentiated between the voters and the passive participants. The lower the respondents evaluate their own opportunities to present their requirements to politicians, the more likely they belong to the group of voters.

The trust in people is not a statistically significant predictor of the active

participants, but it is statistically significant predictor of the voters. The voters are differentiated from the passive participants by the low interpersonal trust. The voters may have low trust in people because of the Soviet legacy or the rapid increase of inequality during the transitional period. Since the voters have experienced the rapid increase of inequality during the transitional period, they evaluate the present and future economic system of the country worst. They also evaluate the present and future economic situation of their household worst. Most voters are retired people or workers⁴ and they have little opportunities to adapt and benefit from the market economy. On the other side, the voters are more optimistic about the future of democracy in Lithuania than the passive participants.

Conclusions

Three types of participants (active, passive and voters) are characterized by the different patterns of interest in politics, voting and participation. The active participants are most interested in politics; they mostly vote in elections and participate in a wide range of other political acts. The voters are quite interested in politics; they always participate in elections and do not participate in other political acts with the exception of donating money. The passive participants are not interested in politics; they contribute to voting least, but they contribute more to the participation in other political acts in comparison with the voters.

The results of the multinomial logistic regression reveal that predictors of the resources (education, age and self-assessment of civic skills), social networks (index of membership in organizations and socializing with people that he/she does not know during leisure activities) and attitudes (evaluations of the economic situation of his/her own household in the future, understandings that voting is effective, that signing a petition is effective, that a good citizen has to vote and that a good citizen has to serve in a military, interpersonal trust and external efficacy) are statistically significant and differentiate between the types of participants.

The active respondents have the highest levels of resources, mostly developed networks of leisure and are the highest supporters of the political system, but they support the market economy less than the passive respondents, because of their experience of the rapid increase of inequality during the transitional period.

The passive participants are the youngest group; they have the higher levels of resources and more developed networks of leisure in comparison to

⁴ The percentage of retired people among the passive is 15.2%, among the active – 32.4%, and among the voters – 46.2%. The percentage of workers among the passive is 22.8%, among the active – 14.9%, and among the voters – 25.8%.

the voters. They mostly support the market economy, but they are the least optimistic about the future of democracy in comparison with other groups, because they accept democracy as a natural fact. It is assumed that a part of the passive respondents are focused on improving their position in the market economy and are not interested in politics very much. However, they sometimes participate in other acts.

The voters are the oldest group; they have the lowest levels of resources and the least opportunities to adapt to the market economy. They are the biggest pessimists about the future economic situation of their family, the least supporters of the market economy, but they support democracy more in comparison with the passive respondents. It is assumed that the voters support democracy, because of their experience of the Soviet system. Because of their age, the voters are respondents who, because of the lack of resources, cannot participate in the market economy and democracy effectively.

The rapid growth of economic inequality during the transition to the market economy has influenced the differences between the types of participants. Both groups, the active participants and voters, differ from the passive participants by their attitude towards the effectiveness of voting. The active participants and voters think that voting is an effective means of influencing political decisions and a good citizen's duty, whereas the passive participants do not think that voting is an effective means of influencing political decisions and give priority to signing a petition. It is possible to assume that a slight shift from bureaucratized and elite directed forms of participation such as voting and membership in political parties and trade unions to more spontaneous, issue-specific and elite-challenging actions are taking place within the group of passive participants.

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Kokie yra dalyvio tipai? Politinio dalyvavimo modeliai Lietuvoje

Santrauka

Piliečių dalyvavimas valstybės valdymo procese yra esminė demokratijos funkcionavimo ir stabilumo užtikrinimo sąlyga. Politinis dalyvavimas paprastai vyksta per tam tikrus demokratinio valdymo procesui būdingus mechanizmus, kurių pagalba piliečiai gali informuoti apie savo interesus, preferencijas ir poreikius bei gali daryti spaudimą valdžios atstovams, kad pastarieji atsižvelgtų į jų nuomonę. Pilietinės visuomenės tyrimai Lietuvoje daugiausia orientuojasi į nevyriausybių organizacijų plėtros, socialinio kapitalo arba rinkiminio elgesio ir atskiras protesto veiksmų studijas. Pasigendama detalesnės politinio dalyvavimo ypatumų bei atskirų politinio dalyvavimo formų (balsoavimo, kontaktavimo, dalyvavimo rinkimų kampanijoje, protestavimo) Lietuvoje analizės.

Šio straipsnio tikslas sugrupuoti Lietuvos piliečius pagal dalyvavimo politiniuose veiksmuose ir domėjimosi politika panašumus ir skirtumus. Remiantis 2006 metais Lietuvoje atliktos apklausos duomenimis, straipsnyje daromos išvados, kad pilietinių resursų trūkumas, individualizacijos plėtra ir greita socialinė diferenciacija sąlygojo skirtingus socialinės nelygybės supratimus tarp skirtingų gyventojų grupių, kurie įtakojo skirtingą dalyvio tipų elgesį Lietuvoje.