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THE CONSOLIDATION OF DEMOCRACY IN THE EUROPEAN UNION MEMBER STATES

The quality of democracy and its influence on voter turnout

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Sant Cugat del Vallès (Barcelona), 10 de juny de 2019

The consolidation of democracy in the European Union Member States:

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Contents

1 Introduction

The intervention of the citizens in the decision making process of their private and public life is crucial in the essential meaning of democracy. The current paper is about the voter turnout in the European Union Member States. It aims to fill the gap in the literature which looks at voter turnout as the result of specific variables but it pays little attention to its relationship with the quality of democracy as a whole. For this reason, the current paper intends to answer the following research question:

> *How does the quality of democracy in the European Union Member States affect their voter turnout in the parliamentary elections of the last 10 years?*

The relevance of the this research is that observing the voter turnout as an aggregate phenomenon is unusual in the academia. Voter turnout it has been a research object many times but it is important to understand why increases or decreases not in an individual citizens view but as a part of a political system. Understanding democracy and its quality could have an influence on de political participation of its citizens that normally is not given much importance.

The main goal of the paper is to analyse if the more quality of democracy implies the more voter turnout. Therefore is very important to use accurate objective indicators of the two main variables —quality of democracy and voter turnout— and try to find out if there is any improvement in the democracy of the European Union Member States which causes any effect on the voter turnout. The case of the study are the Member States of the European because Europe has been the the cradle of democracy —with the United States— and the European Union has the due to spread democratic values and practices. The sample of the research doesn't include the European Union Member States with compulsory voting, it is necessary to consider voting as free. What's more, i it is necessary to expose that this research is framed in the last ten years, from the crisis of 2008 until the present but taking into account the story of democracy and its historical implementation in the cases of the sample.

In the first part of this paper you will find the theoretical framework which is focused on the keywords of the project. The concepts which need special attention are related to the variables used in the research: democracy, quality of democracy, voter turnout and European Union.

To go deeply in the objective of the project, statistical methodology is applied. In the first step, there comes an analysis of the relation between the two main variables of the research: the voter turnout in the parliamentary elections of the last 10 years of the European Union Member States and its quality of democracy.

The quality of democracy is considered the independent variable (X) and it is measured with the V-Dem index. This indicator is normalized in the interval [0,1], 0 is considered as a low liberal democracy and 1 is considered as a total liberal democracy. On the other hand, the voter turnout on the last 10 years parliamentary elections is considered as the dependent variable (Y). The voter turnout is measured by the percentage of people who vote over the total of citizens called to vote by age and decide to vote freely. The voter turnout indicator is Voting Age Population Turnout and it is extracted from the *Institute of Democracy and Electoral Assistance* (IDEA).

The intention of this first step is to quantitatively determine if there is a correlation between the voter turnout and the quality of democracy and, therefore, if the research makes sense to go deeply on it. After that, there comes the second step which consists in the creation of a statistical model and improve it while having explanatory results. On the other hand, this quantitative methodology is combined with an qualitative analysis to understand in depth the relation between the two variables.

Finally, it is exposed the analysis of the results and a reflection of them which drives the reader to the final conclusions of the project, its difficulties, its limits, its strengths and thoughts about the process of the paper building.

2 Theoretical framework

The word "democracy" refers to a highly universalized concept, used by politicians, scholars, citizens... to talk about a political system which seems clearly assumed but at the same time presents great differences around the world. In the next lines, we will try to limit the concept of democracy and give it an objective sense to be able to justify if a democracy is well performed or not. It would be too much work to review the definitions that have been made of the concept of "democracy" since its onset —Ancient Greece— to the present day. This is the reason why there will be a short tour of the most contemporary scholars who have tried to define democracy, especially as a result of its expansion after World War II.

After the definition of the democracy, we will focus on when a state is considered democracy or not. First of all, we introduce the classical indicators which classifies states as democracies or not, Freedom House and Polity IV, and why we don't use them as main variables in this study. Then, the paper exposes the quality of a democracy issue and how can be measured thanks to items and elements purposed by scholars — such as Robert Dahl and Stein Ringen— and organisations —such the Institute of Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA)— which let us make democracies measurable to analyse their quality.

Once democracy and its quality is treated, it is time to explain the definition of voter turnout, its characteristics in the European countries and how it can be measured aggregately and analysed independently from the perception of citizens at the time of voting.

Finally, the last section of the theoretical framework will be devoted to the relation of the concept of democracy with the European Union and its member states. In this part we talk about the process of europeization and how does European Union deal with the dissemination of democratic values in states where national polity is distracting.

2.1 Defining democracy

A first necessary step towards answering the research question is to define "democracy". Nevertheless, definition of democracy has lots of acceptations in the theories of democracy. As described by Amy C. Alexander and Christian Welzel, the definition of democracy varies greatly and can be placed between a minimalist Schumpeterian point or a more maximalist Barber end [1] . Schumpeter is based on the idea that democracy has the modus procendi in the election of representative as its center of gravity, that is, the main role of democracy is the choice of people to decide. Therefore, the influence of the electorate in deciding on political issues goes into the background. In addition, he concludes that "the democratic method is the institutional organization to produce political decisions, in which individuals acquire the power to decide through the competitive struggle to achieve the vote of the people " [2]. At the other end is Benjamin R. Barber, who talks about "Strong Democracy" as a way of life that affects cross-cutting in all areas of the life of mankind: "Strong democracy is a distinctively modern form of participatory democracy. It rests on the idea of self-governing community of citizens who are less united by homogeneous interests than by civic education and who are made capable of common purpose and mutual action by virtue of their civic attitudes and institutions participatory rather than their altruism or their good nature Strong democracy is constant —indeed it depends upon— the politics of conflict, the sociology of pluralism, and the separation of private and public realms of actions" [3] .

Between these two authors, there are others that are situated halfway between the minimalist and maximalist conception of democracy. One of them is Giovanni Sartori who considers that democracy is currently delimited in three terms: political democracy, social democracy and economic democracy that, as a whole, build democracy in itself. Political democracy is defined as a "political entity, a form of state and government". Social democracy consists in a "set of primary democracies —specific communities and voluntary associations— that strengthen and nourish democracy from the base, from civil society". Finally, the third meaning of economic democracy comes into play as "eliminating the extremes of poverty and wealth and, consequently, redistribution that pursues the generalized good [4]. Another notable author is Arend Lijphart, who in his book "Models of Democracy" takes Lincoln's definition of democracy as "government of the people and the people" but emphasizes that the organization of decision-

making power can be given from two models: the majority one —government of the majority— and the consensus one —government of as many people as possible— [5]. In the same line there is the Robert Dahl's theory of democracy, which uses the term of democracy to talk about those political systems that seek to satisfy the preferences of citizens. What is more, he creates the concept of "polyarchy" as the process of democratization that allows to develop two key dimensions : public debate and the right to participation. Dahl defines polyarchy as "relatively (but not completely) democratic regimes, [...] systems substantially liberalized and popularized, that is, very representative and at once frankly open to public debate" [6]. Depending on the meaning that is given to the concept of democracy in this project, the measure of the quality of democracy will be one way or another. Taking into account the variety of definitions of democracy that we have seen —added to those that exist, which are many and very different— authors who collect the most convincing and complete meaning and meaning of democracy are Amy C. Alexander and Christian Welzel who in his paper "Measuring Democracy: The Human Empowerment Approach" consider democracy to be the result of the combination of three factors. First of all, they talk about the personal rights which "give people the opportunity to govern their own lives and voice to vote and shape their public life". Second, the political rights, that is, "the freedom to make their political preference count in public rights". The sum of personal rights and political rights constitute the popular rights, which become "the first order tool of democracy". However, these popular rights may be written on the paper but, in order to be an effective tool, the third factor, the rule of law, is also necessary: "Rule of law can be defined as government bound to legal norms, [...] It separates rational from despotic government" [1]. The rule of law, according to The World of Justice Project, "embodies four universal principles": accountability, just laws, open government and accessible and impartial dispute resolution [7].

$$PersonalRights + PoliticalRights + RuleLaw = Democracy$$

The elements presented above that build this definition of democracy by Alexander and Welzel guarantee not only equality and freedom over the role but also effectively. Personal rights are the basis for exercising the political rights but none of them would make sense if they were not guaranteed by the rule of law that allows the rights to be respected and protected,

thus providing citizens with equality and freedom to empower themselves. On the other hand, this definition of democracy also coincides with the indicator of quality of democracy that will be used in this search: V-dem. This indicator defines "liberal democracy" as "The liberal principle of democracy emphasizes the importance of protecting individual and minority rights against the tyranny of the state and the tyranny of the majority. The liberal model takes a negative view of political power insofar as it judges the quality of democracy by the limits placed on government. This is achieved by constitutionally protected civil liberties, a strong rule of law, an independent judiciary, and effective checks and balances that, together, limit the exercise of executive power. To make this a measure of liberal democracy, the index also takes the level of electoral democracy into account. " As noted, this definition of the democratic quality indicator also speaks of personal rights, political rights and rule of law" [8] .

2.1.1 Democracy indicators

Before showing the state indicators of democracy quality, it is important to emphasize the indicators of democratic regime. Political science has two very complete databases which classify the governments of the states of the world according to whether they are democratic or not: Polity IV and Freedom House (Table 1).

Polity IV is a project that codifies the characteristics of the states in order to determine if their governments are autocracies (from -10 to -6), anocracies (from -5 to 5) or democracies (from 6 to 10). Autocracies are defined as absolute monarchies and dictatorships, the anocracies are at a midpoint between an authoritarian regime and a democratic one, finally, democracy is that regime that allows citizens to express their preferences and guarantee them citizens rights and freedoms [9].

Another well-known index is Freedom House —that was previously called— that rates the states from 0 to 100 —being 0 "least free" and 100 "most free"—. This index is the aggregate result of three variables that are taken into account, ranging from 1 to 7, —including 1 "most free" and 7 "least free"— and which, according to Freedom House, constitute a democracy: freedom rating, political rights and civil liberties.

Both indexes have scores on the regimes of the European states and, as can be seen in Table 1, they present some differences [10]. Freedom House and Polity V are not used as study variables in this project because we are not analysing if the voter turnout depending on if a state is a democracy or not. We are studying the quality of democracies in the Member States in the European Union and how the level of democracy affects in voter turnout.

There are other indicators that are also interesting but do not speak in terms of democracy. An example would be the Human Development Index (HDI), created by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), which measures the level of human development of states taking into account the educational level, health and life expectancy. Therefore, it is rather an indicator of quality of life and not quality of democracy, although it might be interesting to study whether the level of democracy affects the standard of living of people.

Table 1: Freedom House and Polity IV in the UE Member States (2017)

State Members of the European Union	Freedom House 2017 [0,100]	Polity IV 2017 [-10,10]
Austria	95 Free	10
Belgium	95 Free	8
Bulgaria	80 Free	9
Croatia	87 Free	9
Cyprus	94 Free	10
Czechia	94 Free	9
Denmark	97 Free	10
Estonia	94 Free	9
Finald	100 Free	10
France	90 Free	9
Germany	95 Free	10
Greece	84 Free	10
Hungary	76 Free	10
Ireland	96 Free	10
Italy	89 Free	10
Latvia	87 Free	8
Lithuania	91 Free	10
Luxembourg	98 Free	10
Malta	96 Free	-
Netherlands	99 Free	10
Poland	89 Free	10
Portugal	97 Free	10
Romania	84 Free	9
Slovakia	89 Free	10
Slovenia	92 Free	10
Spain	94 Free	10
Sweden	100 Free	10
United Kingdom	95 Free	10

SOURCE: Freedom House and Center for Systemic Peace

2.2 The quality of democracy

Now that this paper established what democracy means and determined how to quantify it, it is necessary to explain what does democracy means by its quality and how to measure it.

It is an evidence that the definition of democracy implies some basis of its laying a its performance but, nevertheless, they do not always fit together. Not all existing democracies

in the world are developed and performed in the same way. In this sense, there are degrees of democracy since there are ones that have more quality than others. In fact, there are states with characteristic features of a democracy —such as universal suffrage— but actually it is not one of it, as in the case of Turkey. In this line, Lijphart states that "Democracy is a matter of degree and that there is a continuous scale from the worst autocracy at one end to the best democracy at the other" [11]. For this reason, democratic quality is measurable by establishing objective elements that define it.

For Lijphart it is important to consider that when democracies are treated as an object of study they shouldn't be brief but consolidated and stable. In this sense, the author affirms that the democratic countries included in the sample should be an uninterrupted ones so they constitute and homogeneous group of countries in terms of developed economy, industrialization and urbanisation. [5]

2.2.1 Measuring the quality of democracy

As highlighted during the paper, the states that are consummated as democracies by the indicators of democracy —Polity IV and Freedom House— do not present the same features and characteristics. Some are more developed and some are beginning their process of democratization, which can take years to reach a democratic state of success. Therefore, there are democracies of more and less quality but specific criteria of measurement must be established. To measure the quality of a democracy, Lijhpart marks two essential criteria: (A) states must have at least universal suffrage and (B) democracy has not been interrupted in a considerable time —for him 19 years— [11].

Even so, a democracy is not only based on its durability and existence of universal suffrage. A full democracy goes further. If we recover the definition of Robert Dahl's polyarchy, we can see in Table 2 that he marks three "fundamental but not sufficient conditions" in order for there to be a democracy and, at the same time, sets out eight requirements which a democracy must guarantee .

Table 2: Some requirements for a democracy among a large number of people

For the opportunity to:	The following institutional guarantees are required:
I. Formulate preferences	a. Freedom to join and form organisations b. Freedom of expression c. Right to vote d. Right of political leaders to compete for support e. Alternative sources of information
II. Signify preferences	a. Freedom to join and form organisations b. Freedom of expression c. Right to vote d. Eligibility for public office e. Right of political leaders to compete for support f. Alternative sources of information g. Free and fair elections
III. Have preferences weighted equally in conduct of government	a. Freedom to join and form organisations b. Freedom of expressionRight to vote c. Eligibility for public office d. Right of political leaders to compete for support i. Right of political leaders to compete for vote e. Alternative sources of information f. Free and fair elections g. Institutions for making government policies depend on votes and other expressions or preferences

SOURCE: 'Polyarchy', Robert Dahl (1989)

The polyarchy of Robert Dahl is given by the existence of the previous points, that is to say, its definition of democracy already marks some requirements that must exist. Even so, other scholars have created indicators based on other definitions of democracy. For example, Stein Ringen considers democracy as a regime at the service of citizens and, therefore, believes that a democracy and its quality will depend on (A) institutional design and (B) the perception and attitude of the citizen: "Danger comes from defects in the machinery of democratic politics and from citizens themselves in how they practice and understand citizenship democratic" [12]. The indicators created by Stein Ringen that allow the measure of democracy are exposed in Table 3.

As did Ringen and Dahl, the Institute of Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA) has created an online tool called "Global State of Democracy Tool" that measures the quality of

Table 3: The four dimensions of quality and its indicators

I. Strengh	a. Consolidated as measured by the timing of the final introduction of universal suffrage b. Robustness of free press
II. Capacity	a. The ability of the government to get decisions made and implemented b. Protection against the political use of economic power
III. Security	a. Incidence of income poverty b. Security of health care
IV. Trust	a. Confidence in government b. Experienced freedom and trust

SOURCE: ' What democracy is for', Stein Ringen (2007)

democracies in the world. It is an interactive and very useful tool, built thanks to Variety of Democracies database (V-Dem Indexes) —it highlights the quality of V-dem databases, that are used in the present paper— which allows you to compare different aspects of democracies. As outlined by IDEA, its tool "provides evidence-based analysis and data on the global and regional state of democracy, to contribute to the public debate on democracy, inform policy interventions and identify approaches to solving trends that affect the quality of democracy". IDEA defines democracy as the popular control that is taken towards public decision-making and decision-makers, equality of respect and voice among citizens exercising this type of control and, to measure it, have built five main axes that must exist to vertebrate a democracy and each one moves in an interval of 0 to 1 —being 0 the minimum level and 1 the maximum one [13]. In addition, each axis is constructed based on the following sub-indicators of Table 4 and Figure 1.

Each author and institution will focus on some indicators or others depending on their definition of democracy. Bearing in mind that in our case we understand democracy as the sum of personal rights, public rights and rule of law, Dahl's criteria would be more complete. On the other hand, it is remarkable that Ringen adds the perspective of the citizen as an indicator. Democracy is built by people and it is interesting that Ringen takes into account the

Table 4: The Global State of Democracy Indices

I. Representative Government	a. Clean Elections b. Inclusive Suffrage c. Free Political Parties d. Elected Government
II. Fundamental Rights	a. Access to Justice b. Civil Liberties c. Social Rights and Equality
III. Checks on Government	a. Effective Parliament b. Judicial Independence c. Media Integrity
IV. Impartial Administration	a. Absence of corruption b. Predictable Enforcement
V. Participatory Engagement	a. Civil Society Participation b. Electoral Participation c. Direct Democracy d. Local Democracy

SOURCE: IDEA

Figure 1: Global State of Democracy Index average in the region of Europe

SOURCE: IDEA

confidence of the citizen since it is a very subjective indicator —each individual has a different perspective, conditioned by their primary and secondary socialization— and tends to change over time. In this sense, IDEA follows the line of Dahl, based on objective data that can be measured and it doesn't observe the citizen perception and satisfaction, since the latter depends a lot on the political, historical and social context of the individual and his surroundings.

In the current paper, the institution which made an indicator quality useful for our definition of democracy is the Varieties of Democracy Project (V-Dem). Their database is very completed and with information of many countries since 1900. What makes the difference with Freedom House and Polity IV is that the group of people who works on it is much bigger than the in the other cases and they come from various origins [14]. In the V-Dem index you can choose the indicators you want to focus on and in these research we will take the indicators which define our vision of democracy: "civil liberties index", "political liberties index", "rule of law index" and the sum of it in the "liberal democracy index".

2.3 Voter turnout

Electoral participation can be defined as the total number of people which exercise their right to vote in a election day —parliamentary or presidential— or as the share of the population that cast its vote [15]. However, at the time of studying the voter turnout we must go further. Benny Gays compiled a large number of scholar papers and analysed how they defined voter turnout. Most of them considered voter turnout as the percentage of people who voted in relation with the total of people that, by age, were called to vote —the 'age-eligible' population—. In our research, will be taken into account this definition of voter turnout although there are other ways of measure it [15]:

- Absolute number of votes cast
- Number voted/number of eligible voters
- Number voted/number registered
- Number voted/size of electorate

So, the voting age population (VAP) is the best way to analyse the voter turnout. As IDEA affirms, the voting age population is based on the population over 18 years old. At the same time, IDEA considers that voting age population "can complement voter registration figures for two reasons: registration figures can be inaccurate or unavailable —and sometimes voter registers are not used (as in South Africa in 1994)— and the voting age population figures can provide a clearer picture of participation as they signal a problem with the voters' register or registration system". Mark Franklin, in his book "Voter Turnout and The Dynamics of Electoral Competition in Established Democracies since 1945" explains that electoral participation in stable democracies, therefore, in European democracies, varies from one election to another, and, in addition, it also varies greatly between countries. Even so, the electoral participation tends to stay or to increase in stable democracies. In this same way, the author explains that, yes, there are cases where there is a decrease but this decrease is anecdotal, that is, very low [16].

As mentioned above, the vote is individual but the electoral participation is an aggregate-level phenomenon and, therefore, this study will not focus on the individual perception of the citizens but on the electoral participation as a whole. In this sense, the variables that are usually linked to the level of electoral participation are the level of education, age, health and the link with the civil society of the individual. Franklin argues that the younger population tends to participate less, those with higher education tend to vote more, and finally, individuals linked to some group and association are also more likely to vote. Analysing voter turnout is clue because the variables that affect it —age, education, health and civil society— are directly related to democracy because it is understood that a state which invest budget in resources to improve education, health and participation it is also investing to expand popular rights —personal and political—, equal opportunity and freedom.

André Blais is one of the authors that has analysed voter turnout. He affirms that voter turnout is lower in poor countries, such as Poland in the case of the European Union. Another of his ideas is that small countries tend to have a higher voter turnout, such as Malta. Finally, it is important to emphasize his conclusion about compulsory voting, which he considers that fosters voter turnout but it has not been studied as much as it should be. [17]

For the analysis of the voter turnout it is very important to establish what is the percentage in which we consider there is a low, middle or high voter turnout. IDEA considers that the states classified as "free" by Freedom House present an average turnout of 76% between 1945 and 2001. On the other hand, the "partly free" and "non free" states labelled by Freedom House have a turnout average under 70%. However, in this paper we are talking about the State Members of the European Union which have been 20 years or more with universal suffrage and consecutive elections.

So, we are talking about stable democracies that accomplish Lijphart requirements to consider them as such. In this sense, in this paper, high voter turnout will be over 73% and low under 70% [18].

2.3.1 Voter turnout in the European Union

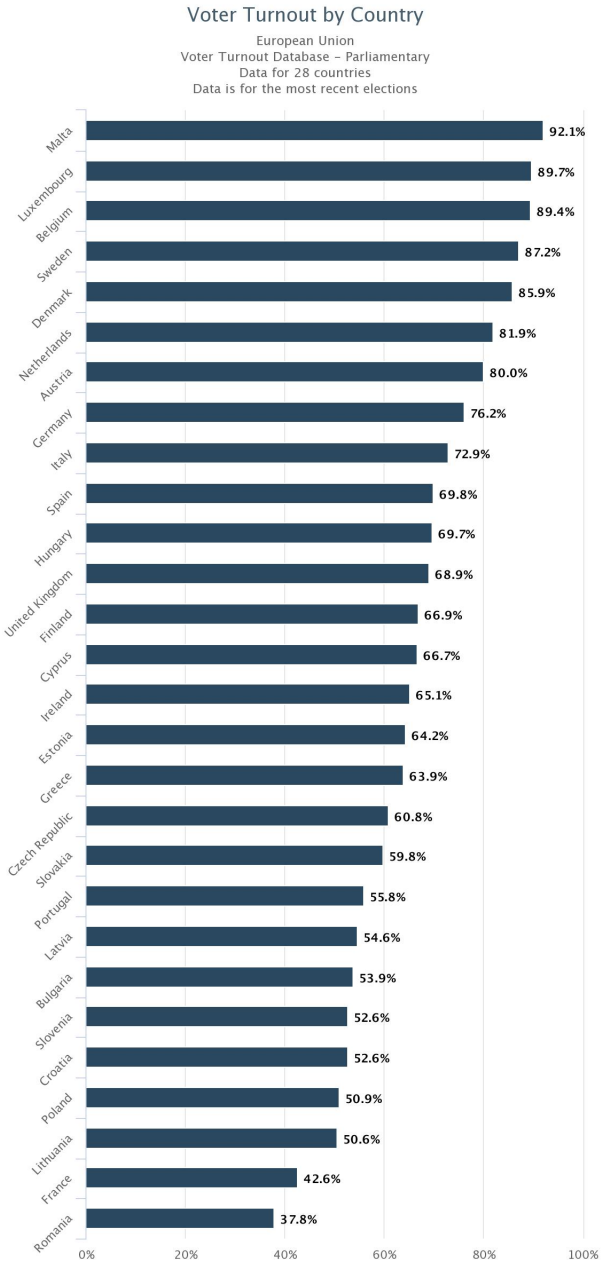
It is time to focus on voter turnout in Europe. The right to vote, in stable European democracies, is individual, free, universal, secret and equal. However, there are states within the European Union where voting is compulsory, that is, there is a possibility of sanctions in case of abstention. Taking into account that in these states the vote is not free, but forced, they will be left out of the study. These states are: Belgium, Cyprus, Greece, and Luxembourg [19].

In the other member states, the elections are free and people over 18 years old have the right to vote. Considering that not all european states are presidential, the elections that will be the subject of study are the parliamentary ones of the last 10 years. IDEA conducted a study of electoral participation in European states and its main conclusion is that those post-Soviet states that are undergoing democratization suffer a decline in electoral participation that is

worrying compared to the most stable European democracies: "Average turnout among these countries has declined by around 20 percent since the first free elections held at the end of the 1980s. However, it is important to note a consistent decline in turnout of about 10 percent in the established European democracies during the same period, albeit from a higher base" [20].

It is really interesting to observe that taking into account that, although "free states" of Freedom House and "stable democracies" show an average turnout over 76% and 73% respectively, the figure 2 shows that only 8 Member States of the European Union overcome those percentages. In this sense, the goal of this study is to know if this difference in voter turnout has some objective relation with the level of democracy of the European states or not.

Figure 2: Voter turnout European Union Member States in the last parliamentary elections



SOURCE: IDEA

2.4 The European Union Member States and its democracies

This research project analyses the democratic quality of the Member States of the European Union, states defined as consolidated and stable democracies. In this regard, to begin, the requirements Lijhpart considers essential to analyze the democratic quality of the states —universal suffrage and consecutive elections over a long period of time — are respected as it is shown in Table 5 [11].

Table 5: Consecutive elections in the European Union State Members

State Members of the European Union	Consecutive elections since
Austria	1945
Belgium	1831
Bulgaria	1991
Croatia	1990
Cyprus	1970
Czechia	1990
Denmark	1856
Estonia	1990
Finald	1906
France	1946
Germany	1949
Greece	1946
Hungary	1990
Ireland	1921
Italy	1946
Latvia	1990
Lithuania	1990
Luxembourg	1868
Malta	1947
Netherlands	1848
Poland	1952
Portugal	1974
Romania	1991
Slovakia	1993
Slovenia	1991
Spain	1978
Sweden	1848
United Kingdom	1832

SOURCE: 'Polyarchy', Robert Dahl / IDEA

As stated in its Freedom House (FH) portal, Europe is characterized by being an example of respect for democratic standards and rights throughout its history. Democracy was developed in Europe during the 17th and 18th centuries, and it was expanded during the 20th century after World War II and fascist regimes. Even so, Freedom House shows that some states have, in recent years, violated democratic rights with regard to the treatment of immigrants and minorities and the freedom of the press. In addition "several countries in the Balkans are still consolidating their democratic institutions and will need further monitoring to ensure continued progress"[10]. So, it is suggested that there are european democracies which are going backwards in terms of democratic values and practices and it will be checked in the present research.

2.4.1 Precedents: Europeization

Between 1939 and 1945 World War II shook Europe, about 40 million people were killed, cities were destroyed and economies and resources were reduced to ash. It seems that the consequences of the Great War (1914-1918) had not been learned enough, but World War II demonstrated to what level of extermination humanity was capable to reach. However, his end led to a small truce until the arrival of the Cold War and the hard competition of the two major hegemonic powers: the United States and the Soviet Union. Where was Europe? In the middle. Annihilated Nazism, the main goal of the European states was to avoid any yearning of totalitarianism that could exist and opened the door to democracy and peace.

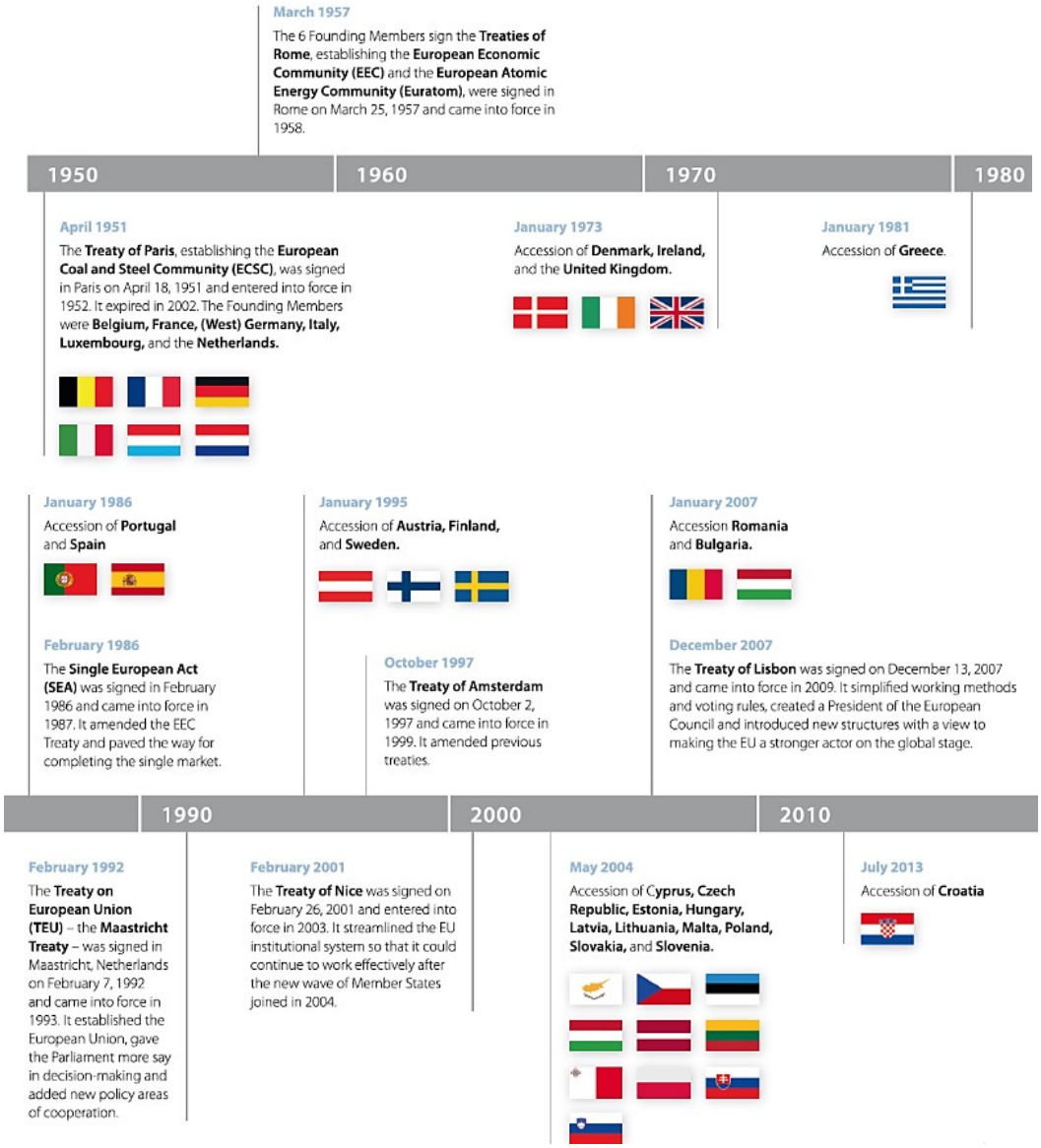
On March 25, 1957, this European commitment was materialized with the Treaties of Rome signed by France, Germany, Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg. With these treaties, the European Economic Community (EEC) and the European Atomic Energy Community (EURATOM) arose, which meant the creation of a single market and "a supranational institution, binding the sovereign rights of all participating countries over those sectors and functions of their Economies that were agreed upon by the Treaties of Rome and their subsequent elaboration". Next, it was the turn of the Treaty of Brussels (1965) which created the European Commission and the European Council. Next, the goal was to speed up the decision making and it was the turn of the Single European Act (1986) which consisted in "the extension

of qualified majority voting to the Council —to make the veto more difficult legislative proposals for a single country— and creation of procedures and cooperation, and accordingly, they gave more weight to the Parliament". Then, in 1992, the Maastricht Treaty was signed and it was the time for the creation of The European Union and the introduction of the decision-making system by codecision —"the directly elected European Parliament must approve EU legislation together with the Council, formed by the governments of the 28 member states"—.Amsterdam (1997) and Nice (2001) made institutional reforms to improve the functioning of the European Union and facilitate the entry of new members. Finally, the Lisbon Treaty (2007) had the objective "to make the EU More democratic, more efficient and better able to address global problems, such as climate change, with one voice" (Figure 3) [19].

2.4.2 Sanctions to Member States and national policy

The European Union, created to —among other things— expand democracy values, provides mechanisms to control and sanction those member states that violate personal and political rights. This is the case of Poland, Hungary and Romania in recent years, which have carried out reforms which stagger the pillars of democracy. The European Union collects some powers assigned by Member States and regulations that must be respected by the member states. However, much of the national policy of each state is directed by its own governments. If the European Union has devoted part of its existence to disseminating democratic values, why are Member States with antidemocratic values? Vivien A. Schmidt sets out the following theory that would answer the previous question:

Figure 3: European Union Treaties and new members timeline



SOURCE: European Parliament

"This disjunction between new practices and old ideas is the root of questions raised about the legitimacy of the new patterns of governance and confusion over who is responsible or responsible for policies related to the EU. The political fallout from such questions can be found in the razor-thin wins, and in the defeats, of Treaty referendums. This feeds the rise of the extreme right on the back of anti-immigrant sentiment. It fuels the concerns about the left about the impact of economic neoliberalism on social welfare. And it adds more generally to the political disaffection that comes from the loss of trust in government and of confidence in national political leaders".

Therefore, in the European Union we do not find an execution of homogeneous democracy, but each state exercises its own national sovereignty and, therefore, European democracies present differences and, at the same time, different levels of democratic quality, as we will see later.

3 Methodology

In the current paper, the main hypothesis is that the more quality of democracy —VDem liberal democracy index — the more voter turnout an state will have. Taking this hypothesis as a basis, it could be probably added that it is proner the feasibility of the hypothesis in the occidental European Union member states. The reason of this second hypothesis is that, due to the fact that the oriental European Union member states adopted the democratic regime in the nineties, they are younger democracies and should have lower voter turnout than the occidental states, as Lijphart the affirms in their writings [11] .

3.1 Defining variables

In the introduction of the current paper, it is exposed the main objective of its research: to go into depth in the relation between the voter turnout in the parliamentary elections of the last 10 years and the quality of democracies in the European Union Member States. So, here we find two main variables. The independent one is the quality of democracy and it is objectified with an indicator of Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem). The dependent one is the Voting Age Population Turnout extracted from the Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA).

3.1.1 Independent variable: quality of democracy

Let's start with our definition of democracy. Remember that democracy in this paper is defined as popular rights (political and public rights) guaranteed by a strong rule of law. Taking this

definition into account, the indicator of democracy which fits the most is the Liberal Democracy Index of Varieties of Democracy. Varieties of Democracy is a method of measuring democracy built by more than 50 scientists from all over the world which include five subcategories of democracy: electoral, liberal, participatory, deliberative and egalitarian.

The indicator that concerns us in this research, as mentioned above, is the Liberal Democracy Index. This index "emphasizes the importance of protecting individual and minority rights against the tyranny of the state and the tyranny of the majority. The liberal model takes a negative view of political power insofar as it judges the quality of democracy by the limits placed on government. This is achieved by constitutionally protected civil liberties, strong rule of law, an independent judiciary, and effective checks and balances that, together, limit the exercise of executive power. To make this a measure of liberal democracy, the index also takes the level of electoral democracy into account"[21]. Liberal Democracy Index [22] is an indicator expressed numerically with an interval that is between 0 and 1, being 0 a low index of liberal democracy and being 1 a high level of liberal democracy. Considering that this paper studies voter turnout in parliamentary elections since the beginning of crisis in 2008, the V-dem Index used in the methodology part of the current paper is built by the average of this index in the election years of the last three parliamentary elections. For example, in Austria there were elections in 2017, 2013 and 2008 so we looked for the V-Dem of these years and we built and average of the Index [Table 6].

Table 6: Liberal Democracy Index Average Variable (Austria)

Liberal Democracy Index last election year (v2x_libdem_1)	0,762974		
Liberal Democracy Index second las election year (v2x_libdem_2)	0,803262	Liberal Democracy Index Average(v2x_libdem_av)	0,793822
Liberal Democracy Index third last election year (v2x_libdem_3)	0,815231		

The other four indicators of the Varieties of Democracy are not included in the research because analyse particular parts of a democracy which not define a democracy as itself. Deliberative Democracy analyses decision-making process, Egalitarian Democracy the material and immaterial inequalities, Electoral Democracy is considered by the V-dem scientists "as an essential element of any other conception of representative democracy" and Participatory Democracy focuses on participation in electoral and non-electoral processes. So, in this paper is considered that civil liberties and rule of law grouped together by de Liberal Democracy Index include indirectly the other four approaches [21].

3.1.2 Dependent variable: Voting Age Population Turnout

From Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA) we find the Voter Age Populaton Turnout (VAP Turnout), the dependent variable of the current paper. The VAP Turnout consists in the percentage of people who reach the minimum age for voting in any country. Every Member State of the European Union establishes in the national law the minimum age for voting.

Most of the European countries stablish the 18 years old as the minimum age of voting but there is one exception:

- 16 years old: Austria
- 18 years old: Bulgaria, Czechia, Denmark, Germany, Estonia, Ireland, Spain, France, Croatia, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Slovakia, Finland, Sweden and United Kingdom

IDEA defines the VAP Turnout "as the percentage of the voting age population that actually voted" [23]. As it is explained in the theoretical framework chapter, it is considered high voter turnout over 73% turnout and is considered low under the 70%. As it happens whit V-Dem index, the voter turnout variable is built as the average of the voter turnout percentages of the last three parliamentary elections. For example, in Austria there were parliamentary elections

in 2017, 2013 and 2008. We took the voter turnout in each election day and created a new variable with its average [Table 7].

Table 7: Voter Turnout Variable (Austria)

Voter Turnout VAP last elections (vtvap_1)	68,79		
Voter Turnout VAP second last elections (vtvap_2)	65,87	Voter Turnout Average (vtvap_av)	70,09
Voter Turnout VAP third last elections (vtvap_3)	75,61		

3.1.3 Control variables

The voter turnout percentage not only depends on the quality of democracy in the European Member States. In the relation of both variables there could be many variables which could have also an impact.

In this research we tried to find a model which include variables given in the theoretical framework and show how do they affect in the voter turnout along with the quality of democracy indicator. The variables that have been applied to the methodological study are many but only two have been included and signicative in the statistical model:

Included

- Life Expectancy (at less than one year old): extracted from Eurostat Database and it is defined as " the mean additional number of years that a person of that age (less than one year) can expect to live. From this indicator we made an average life expectancy from 2008 to 2017 and created a life expectancy average [24].
- Years with consecutive elections: extracted from the Lijphart's writings "Demoratic quality in stable democracies" and Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance [11].

Not included

- Health care expenditure by financing scheme: extracted from Eurostat Database this indicator includes government schemes and compulsory contributory health care financing schemes by million Euro in each country of de European Union Member States from 2008 to 2017 [25].

- Education expenditure of national governments: extracted from Eurostat Database this indicator includes government expenditures on International Levels of Education (0-8) from 2012 to 2016. We built an average of the expenditure [26].

- Civil Society Participation: extracted from Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance Database and it "denotes the extent to which organized, voluntary, self-generating and autonomous social life is dense and vibrant". It is built thanks to Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem) Dataset. It is expressed with an interval from 0 to 1, being 0 low level of civil society and being 1 high level of civil society [27].

- Population by educational attainment level: extracted from Eurostat it shows the percentage of population with levels 5-8 in the International Levels of Education from 2008 to 2017 [28].

- Gini coefficient of equivalenced disposable income: extracted from Eurostat Database and "measures the extent to which the distribution of income within a country deviates from a perfectly equal distribution. A coefficient of 0 expresses perfect equality where everyone has the same income, while a coefficient of 100 expresses full inequality where only one person has all the income". An average is built from 2008 to 2017 [29].

- Clean Elections: extracted from Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance Database which explains that this "subattribute denotes the extent to which elections for national, representative political office are free from irregularities, such as flaws and biases in the voter registration and campaign processes, voter intimidation". An average is built with de Clean Elections attribute of every election year of each country of European Union. It is expressed with an interval from 0 to 1, being 0 low level of clean elections and being 1 high level of clean elections [27]

- Not at all satisfaction of national democracy: extracted from European Comission Database and expresses percentage of population not satisfied of national government of every Member State of the European Union. An average is built with the percentages of every election year of each country of European Union [30].

3.2 Methodology applied

3.2.1 The sample

The sample used in the current paper is integrated by the European Union Member States, although there are some exceptions. The European Union is composed by 28 countries: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom. However, in our research they are not all included.

Remember the objective of the research: analyse how the quality of the European Union Member States' democracy influences the voter turnout in the parliamentary elections since 2008. Taking this objective into account, member states with compulsory voting are not included in the quantitative methodology and the reason is in the fact that quality of democracy is not significant if citizens have the obligation to vote. European Union Member States are the five following ones: Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Greece and Luxembourg.

At this point, the sample would be of 23 cases, however another two cases are treated as "lost cases": Malta and France. Malta is not included in the sample because not all of indicators included have enough data of Malta. On the other hand, France has also been removed because it is a case that show particular treats which make it an object of research. France have consecutive elections since 1946 and the voter turnout of 2012 and 2017 parliamentary elections are of 55,4% and 42,6%, the voter turnout is very low taking into account its democratic tradition and it is an exception in the European Union Member States.

So, the definitive sample used in calculations and analysis are 21 cases: Austria, Croatia, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom.

3.2.2 Calculation and models

In this part of the methodology chapter are shown the calculations and steps done to reach an accurate and explanatory model of the relation between the voter turnout of parliamentary elections and the quality of democracy.

Correlation

To introduce us to the relationship between our study variables, let's start observing their correlation in the Figure 4. First, Pearson Correlation is 0,574 and is significant at the 0,01 level being p-value 0,008. The strength of the relation is medium-high positive. So, the main idea of the correlation is that: when Liberal Democracy Index increases, voter turnout increases too.

Figure 4: Correlation voter turnout and liberal democracy index

Correlations

		Voter Turnout Average	Liberal Democracy Index Average
Voter Turnout Average	Pearson Correlation	1	,574**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		,008
	N	21	20
Liberal Democracy Index Average	Pearson Correlation	,574**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,008	
	N	20	20

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Simple Regression

The second step to follow is checking if the relation of our variables is lineal and it is the moment to apply a lineal regression with the two variables of the research. As we can see in Figure 5, R *Square* of the model is about 32,9% which means that if we know the Liberal Democracy Index of a country, we can predict 32% the Voting Age Population Turnout if, instead of basing our predictions in other variables we base it in the Liberal Democracy Index. The regression line is shown in Figure 6.

After that, there comes the ANOVA table which show us if the relation is significant or not and, as we can see, the relation of our variables is significant because $p - value 0,008 < 0,05$. Finally, its time to check if the variation of B_1 is significant because $p - value 0,008 < 0,05$.

The problem of this model is that, although the relation and the coefficient B_1 are significant, de R *Square* is too low, it is not enough explanatory. We need a better model.

Figure 5: Simple regression voter turnout and liberal democracy index model

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	,574[a]	,329	,292	8,60071

a. Predictors: (Constant), Liberal Democracy Index Average

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	653,397	1	653,397	8,833	,008[b]
	Residual	1331,501	18	73,972		
	Total	1984,898	19			

a. Dependent Variable: Voter Turnout Average

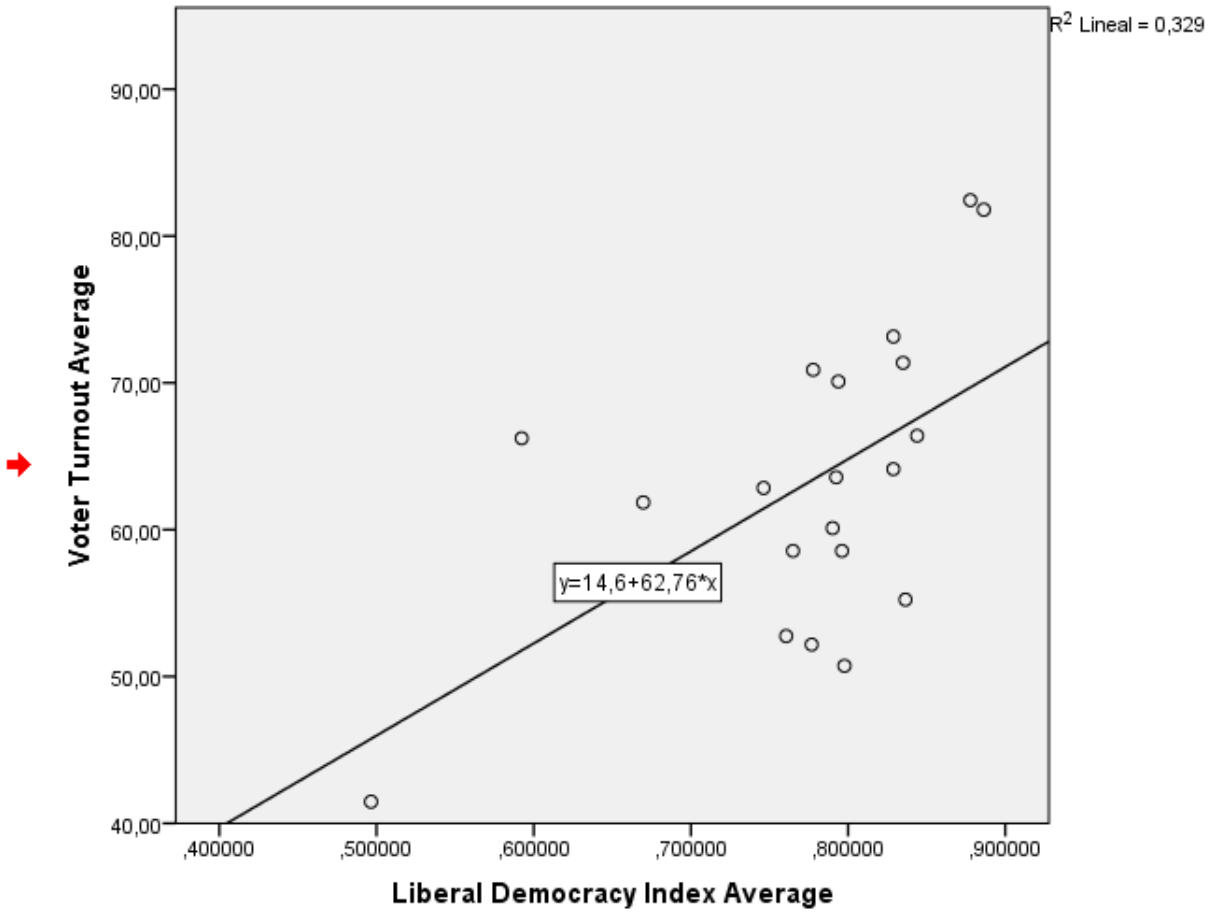
b. Predictors: (Constant), Liberal Democracy Index Average

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	14,600	16,470		,886	,387
	Liberal Democracy Index Average	62,761	21,117	,574	2,972	,008

a. Dependent Variable: Voter Turnout Average

Figure 6: Best regression line



Multiple Regression

In this part of the methodology section it is time to find the more explanatory model. Due to the low *R square* of the simple regression, now tehere is an application of a multiple regression with control variables explained above to find if the relation between Democracy Quality and

Voter Turnout is influenced by other variables. As it is exposed in Figure 7, the multiple regression model with the control variables has a *R Square* of 86%, it usuallly happens when lots of variables are included, the determination coefficient rises. However, this model isn't explanatory due to the significance of ANOVA table. The *p-value* is $0.154 > 0.05$.

Figure 7: Multiple regression model

Model Summary[b]

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.927[a]	.860	.525	6.73459

a. Predictors: (Constant), notsat_av, High level education, Education Expenditure over GDP, Clean Elections, Life Expectancy Av, Gini index, Years with consecutive elections, Civil Society IDEA average, Not Satisfied with national government, Liberal Democracy Index Average, Health care expenditure by financing scheme, cleanel_av

b. Dependent Variable: Voter Turnout Average

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1394.781	12	116.232	2.563	.154[b]
	Residual	226.774	5	45.355		
	Total	1621.555	17			

a. Dependent Variable: Voter Turnout Average

b. Predictors: (Constant), notsat_av, High level education, Education Expenditure over GDP, Clean Elections, Life Expectancy Av, Gini index, Years with consecutive elections, Civil Society IDEA average, Not Satisfied with national government, Liberal Democracy Index Average, Health care expenditure by financing scheme, cleanel_av

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	118.233	98.198		1.204	.282
	Liberal Democracy Index Average	89.056	97.835	.835	.910	.404
	Health care expenditure by financing scheme	.000	.000	-.701	-.476	.654
	Education Expenditure over GDP	.000	.000	.774	.545	.609
	Gini index	-.731	.566	-.304	-1.291	.253
	Life Expectancy Av	-1.105	.705	-.325	-1.566	.178
	High level education	.287	.410	.237	.699	.516
	Years with consecutive elections	.178	.076	.859	2.352	.065
	Clean Elections	-43.588	114.652	-.281	-.380	.719
	Not Satisfied with national government	.685	.911	.375	.753	.486
	cleanel_av	-19.403	253.150	-.118	-.077	.942
	Civil Society IDEA average	9.899	32.637	.110	.303	.774
	notsat_av	.429	.740	.339	.580	.587

a. Dependent Variable: Voter Turnout Average

Multiple Regression with stepwise method

The next step is to create a multiple regression step by step to find the variables which must be included in the explanatory model. Applying the stepwise model two control variables are should be taken into account to their significance. The variables entered by SPSS are *Years with consecutive elections* and *Life Expectancy Average* and two models are built. The Model 1 has an *R Square* of 55,1% it is significant (ANOVA) and the most relevant variable is Years with consecutive elections. The Model 2 adds the Life Expectancy variable and it has an *R Square* of 68%, the significance of the model is under 0.05 (ANOVA) and both variables are relevant.

The stepwise metodology let us know that both variables included have an influence to Voter Turnout variable.

Figure 8: Multiple regression model - stepwise

Variables Entered/Removed[a]

Model	Variables Entered	Variables Removed	Method
1	Years with consecutive elections	.	Stepwise (Criteria: Probability-of-F-to-enter <= .050, Probability-of-F-to-remove >= .100).
2	Life Expectancy Av	.	Stepwise (Criteria: Probability-of-F-to-enter <= .050, Probability-of-F-to-remove >= .100).

a. Dependent Variable: Voter Turnout Average

Model Summary[c]

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.742[a]	.551	.522	6.74918
2	.827[b]	.684	.642	5.84458

a. Predictors: (Constant), Years with consecutive elections

b. Predictors: (Constant), Years with consecutive elections, Life Expectancy Av

c. Dependent Variable: Voter Turnout Average

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	892.732	1	892.732	19.598	.000[b]
	Residual	728.823	16	45.551		
	Total	1621.555	17			
2	Regression	1109.167	2	554.584	16.235	.000[c]
	Residual	512.387	15	34.159		
	Total	1621.555	17			

a. Dependent Variable: Voter Turnout Average

b. Predictors: (Constant), Years with consecutive elections

c. Predictors: (Constant), Years with consecutive elections, Life Expectancy Av

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	52.431	2.731		19.199	.000
	Years with consecutive elections	.154	.035	.742	4.427	.000
2	(Constant)	150.969	39.218		3.849	.002
	Years with consecutive elections	.161	.030	.778	5.332	.000
	Life Expectancy Av	-1.249	.496	-.367	-2.517	.024

a. Dependent Variable: Voter Turnout Average

Excluded Variables[a]

Model		Beta In	t	Sig.	Partial Correlation	Collinearity Statistics
						Tolerance
1	Liberal Democracy Index Average	.244[b]	1.315	.208	.322	.779
	Health care expenditure by financing scheme	.170[b]	.990	.338	.248	.952
	Education Expenditure over GDP	.156[b]	.905	.380	.228	.962
	Life Expectancy Av	-.367[b]	-2.517	.024	-.545	.991
	High level education	-.033[b]	-.186	.855	-.048	.944
	Gini index	-.248[b]	-1.332	.203	-.325	.772
	cleanel_av	.131[b]	.711	.488	.181	.851
	Civil Society IDEA average	.077[b]	.349	.732	.090	.607
	notsat_av	-.077[b]	-.313	.759	-.080	.488
2	Liberal Democracy Index Average	.238[c]	1.509	.154	.374	.779
	Health care expenditure by financing scheme	.163[c]	1.102	.289	.283	.952
	Education Expenditure over GDP	.148[c]	.998	.335	.258	.962
	High level education	.113[c]	.696	.498	.183	.827
	Gini index	-.243[c]	-1.532	.148	-.379	.772
	cleanel_av	.141[c]	.891	.388	.232	.850
	Civil Society IDEA average	.172[c]	.898	.384	.233	.585
	notsat_av	-.320[c]	-1.481	.161	-.368	.418

a. Dependent Variable: Voter Turnout Average

b. Predictors in the Model: (Constant), Years with consecutive elections

Most Accurate Model

The last step of the methodology application consists in joining the study variables (Liberal Democracy Index and Voting Age Population Turnout) with the ones discovered as a relevant in the statistical models showed above (Life Expectancy and Years with Consecutive Elections). The last two variables mentioned are control variables of the statistical study.

As it is exposed in Figure 9 the determination coefficient ($R\ Square$ is 75,9 and the adjusted one is 71,4Ṡo, the model let us predict the 75,9% of Voting Age Population Turnout if we base our predictions in the Liberal Democracy Index, and we take into account the control variables of Life Expectancy and Years with Consecutive elections. The significance of the model in ANOVA table is about $0,000 p - value$. However, if we look at the coefficients all variables are significant excepting Liberal Democracy Index Average, this means that the control variables are relevant and the Liberal Democracy Index no. The independent variable is not significant meanwhile the control variables have the $p - valuelowerthan 0.05$.

Figure 9: Multiple regression final model

Variables Entered/Removed[a]

Model	Variables Entered	Variables Removed	Method
1	Years with consecutive elections, Life Expectancy Av, Liberal Democracy Index Average[b]	.	Enter

a. Dependent Variable: Voter Turnout Average

b. All requested variables entered.

Model Summary[b]

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.871[a]	.759	.714	5.46923

a. Predictors: (Constant), Years with consecutive elections, Life Expectancy Av, Liberal Democracy Index Average

b. Dependent Variable: Voter Turnout Average

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	135.843	37.702		3.603	.002		
	Liberal Democracy Index Average	23.383	16.051	.214	1.457	.165	.700	1.429
	Life Expectancy Av	-1.269	.459	-.344	-2.764	.014	.973	1.028
	Years with consecutive elections	.146	.030	.723	4.886	.000	.689	1.452

a. Dependent Variable: Voter Turnout Average

3.2.3 Analysing the results

The main objective of the research was to discover what kind of relation did Liberal Democracy Index and Voting Age Population Turnout have. After observing a potential positive correlation between the two variables more variables were introduced in order to analyse if there was any spurious association due to the fact that simple regression was significant but the *R Square* was too low (32%). As it was exposed in the introduction, many variables can affect the voter turnout and it is very important to take them as control variables.

After all variables introduced in a multiple regression —Life Expectancy , Years with consecutive elections, Health care expenditure by financing scheme, Education expenditure of national governments, Civil Society Participation, Population by educational attainment level,Not at all satisfaction of national democracy— only two were included by SPSS at the multiple regression model —Life Expectancy and Years with consecutive elections—. All the others, including Liberal Democracy Index, were excluded. So, as we can see in the statistics, democracy quality is not as important as other variables. It is not a relevant variable. Then, in the last model the predictions were confirmed: the quality of democracy might have some influence to the voter turnout but it is not as significant as other variables mentioned. Lijphart was right when he said that democratization travels in parallel to the number of years with consecutive elections, the more years with elections, the stronger democracy goes. In this sense, it is time to recover again the Lijphart theory about stable democracies. Thanks to it we can deduce that years with consecutive elections is clue to the voter turnout increase.

Another element to highlight is the variable Life Expectancy, it is quite curious how this variable influences the voter turnout and it could be really interesting to create a new research question after finishing this project. Maybe population with more life expectancy is expected to live better and have more time, motivation or interest to maintain their standard of living and be more participative in a political way.

4 Conclusions and final reflexions

Quality of democracy and voter turnout, these were the two elements presented in the introduction of this paper to study their relation and if there was any kind of influence. After the theoretical review and the SPSS calculation, now we can answer the question of the research and corroborate the hypothesis.

The first hypothesis was that the more quality of democracy —VDem liberal democracy index — the more voter turnout an state will have. The quality of democracy, expressed by the V-dem Index has not a direct influence to the voter turnout of the parliamentary elections of the last 10 years in the Member States of the European Union. However, other ideas can be extracted from the project. First of all, the research concludes that Lijphart was right when he exposed that the stability of democracy increases the more elections are made successively [11]. In this sense, the current research show that there is also a kind of relation between the voter turnout and the number of successive elections of the Member States of the European Union. It would be really interesting to go deeply to find out if there is any connection.

An evidence that can be also extracted of the study and the work with the database is that voter age population turnout has tended to decrease generally since the first elections of every member state (Appendix).

Furthermore, it was very interesting the incidence of the variable "Life Expectancy" in the voter turnout deduced from the results of the statistical work. It is important to remember that the variables that were important in voter turnout observed individually by Franklin were "age, education, health and civil society" [16]. However, when voter turnout is observed not as an individual decision but as an aggregate phenomenon, only the "health" expressed by "Life Expectancy" variable seems to have some effect in voter turnout. Another research can be purposed along these lines.

Now is time to remember the second hypothesis about the oriental European Union countries which affirmed that these countries would have lower voter turnout due to the fact that their

democracies are younger than the occidental ones. As we can see in the Appendix, these states —Croatia, Czechia, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia— have a lower voter turnout average from the instauration of democracy until the present than the other states. Bulgaria is not taken into account due to the fact that voting is compulsory. Besides, Slovakia is an exception of the oriental sample because it has an average of 70,59% voter turnout.

This project has tried to analyse voter turnout as an aggregate phenomenon but it has been demonstrated that it is necessary to connect it with individual variables. As André Blais said, the logic calls for a "multilevel analysis linking institutional variables with individual voter characteristics".

It has been very satisfying to connect the theory revised with the methodology applied and to find out some results. It is obvious that this paper has its limitations, it is not built with all the resources that would be accurate and the limited time to make all the research could be an obstacle. The first intention was to find out a strong relation between the two study variables and then show it with the explanation of two particular cases, two particular states. Due to to the limitations of the project —time and resources— and the results of the statistical part, it has not been possible to analyse two cases. However, it has been a useful work to reaffirm and confirm theories and thesis of other political scientists thanks to their books and the application of statistics.

Finally, it is very necessary to add a last reflection. This paper has been carried out during five months, combining literature and statistics. The 30 references added at the end are the ones used in this project. Let's headline there is only one woman author referenced individually and it is true that there are women in the database institutions but it is not sufficient. IDEA has a 50,35% of women in the team, it is quite good, but V-Dem, for example, has not any women as principle investigators. It is not credible that there are not more women political scientist with thesis and books to publish, let's give them the space they deserve.

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[30] European Comission. *PublicOpinion - European Commission*.

Appendix

	Austria		Belgium		Bulgaria		Croatia		Cyprus		Czechia		Denmark	
	68,79%	2017	87,21%	2014	62,79%	2017	55,52%	2016	39,13%	2016	58,06%	2017	80,34%	2015
	65,87%	2013	84,65%	2010	60,88%	2014	63,96%	2015	47,21%	2011	60,03%	2013	81,83%	2011
	75,61%	2008	86,00%	2007	59,69%	2013	66,09%	2011	60,35%	2006	62,22%	2010	83,20%	2007
	73,21%	2006	85,92%	2003	72,43%	2009	70,84%	2007	67,68%	2001	65,12%	2006	81,34%	2005
	77,45%	2002	83,14%	1999	62,41%	2005	71,96%	2003	75,90%	1996	59,03%	2002	84,34%	2001
	72,64%	1999	83,20%	1995	72,10%	2001	80,95%	2000	78,63%	1991	76,73%	1998	83,13%	1998
	78,64%	1995	85,10%	1991	66,90%	1997	72,17%	1995	77,95%	1985	77,57%	1996	81,73%	1994
	76,02%	1994	86,49%	1987	80,98%	1994	74,92%	1992	72,85%	1981	83,76%	1992	80,42%	1990
	80,47%	1990	86,32%	1985	84,54%	1991			62,25%	1976	93,06%	1990	82,73%	1988
	87,07%	1986	94,31%	1981					54,77%	1970			85,85%	1987
	86,91%	1983	87,78%	1978									86,04%	1984
	86,81%	1979	89,91%	1977									86,28%	1981
	86,65%	1975	85,71%	1974									83,23%	1979
	88,23%	1971	88,61%	1971									87,74%	1977
	89,52%	1970	86,18%	1968									86,63%	1975
	89,83%	1966	88,02%	1965									87,37%	1973
	90,28%	1962	87,96%	1961									87,31%	1971
	89,67%	1959	89,25%	1958									87,98%	1968
	89,31%	1956	88,50%	1954									88,46%	1966
	89,03%	1953	86,31%	1950									84,77%	1964
	86,24%	1949	88,23%	1949									85,91%	1960
	67,39%	1945	42,01%	1946									82,09%	1957
													78,91%	1953
													76,57%	1950
													79,98%	1947
													80,65%	1945
AVERAGE	81,62%		85,04%		69,19%		69,55%		63,67%		70,62%		83,65%	
MAX	90,28%		94,31%		84,54%		80,95%		78,63%		93,06%		88,46%	
MIN	65,87%		42,01%		59,69%		55,52%		39,13%		58,06%		76,57%	
Y. VOTING		74		73		28		27		49		29		74
VARAITION	1,40%		45,20%		-21,75%		-19,40%		-15,64%		-35,00%		-0,31%	
-	18													
+	4													

Estonia		Finland		France		Germany		Greece		Hungary		Ireland		Italy	
56,45%	2019	69,43%	2019	38,62%	2017	69,11%	2017	70,65%	2015	71,64%	2018	58,04%	2016	65,18%
56,82%	2015	73,14%	2015	46,08%	2012	66,07%	2013	69,36%	2012	63,36%	2014	63,78%	2011	68,33%
55,45%	2011	72,77%	2011	43,43%	2007	64,61%	2009	79,24%	2009	63,67%	2010	68,89%	2007	79,13%
53,44%	2007	68,18%	2007	47,25%	2002	71,99%	2005	79,59%	2007	68,84%	2006	66,98%	2002	82,13%
48,12%	2003	69,96%	2003	59,86%	1997	73,46%	2002	87,66%	2004	71,55%	2002	67,38%	1997	84,92%
45,95%	1999	65,21%	1999	61,29%	1993	75,32%	1998	89,02%	2000	59,03%	1998	73,65%	1992	87,35%
48,84%	1995	71,13%	1995	58,14%	1988	72,39%	1994	83,88%	1996	69,43%	1994	71,23%	1989	90,84%
40,93%	1992	71,93%	1991	69,91%	1986	73,10%	1990	85,61%	1993	65,52%	1990	77,87%	1987	92,34%
78,28%	1990	77,25%	1987	63,92%	1981	75,02%	1987	87,52%	1989			76,33%	1982	94,40%
		81,10%	1983	63,40%	1978	80,95%	1983	87,35%	1985			78,78%	1981	91,76%
		81,32%	1979	70,63%	1973	81,84%	1980	84,48%	1981			85,17%	1977	92,75%
		80,29%	1975	69,36%	1968	83,84%	1976	82,41%	1977			77,76%	1973	95,43%
		84,48%	1972	71,14%	1967	88,74%	1972	82,73%	1974			77,22%	1969	94,70%
		83,63%	1970	60,99%	1962	79,86%	1969	83,64%	1964			74,43%	1965	93,10%
		85,14%	1966	71,13%	1958	80,86%	1965	85,32%	1963			70,96%	1961	95,31%
		85,46%	1962	74,26%	1956	86,86%	1961	86,34%	1961			70,38%	1957	93,92%
		74,71%	1958	68,49%	1951	87,57%	1957	73,87%	1958			75,34%	1954	91,53%
		80,27%	1954	73,73%	1946	80,57%	1953	67,87%	1956			74,39%	1951	93,26%
		73,96%	1951	73,93%	1945	76,46%	1949	73,87%	1952			73,41%	1948	88,01%
		79,36%	1948					80,16%	1951					
		74,61%	1945					80,10%	1950					
								53,54%	1946					
53,81%		76,35%		62,40%		77,30%		79,74%		66,63%		72,74%		88,13%
78,28%		85,46%		74,26%		88,74%		89,02%		71,64%		85,17%		95,43%
40,93%		65,21%		38,62%		64,61%		53,54%		59,03%		58,04%		65,18%
	29		74		74		70		73		29		71	
-21,83%		-5,18%		-35,31%		-7,35%		17,11%		6,12%		-15,37%		-22,83%

Latvia		Lithuania		Luxembourg		Malta		Netherlands		Poland		Portugal	
2018	53,55%	2018	54,51%	2016	48,16%	2018	92,29%	2017	77,31%	2017	49,40%	2015	61,75%	2015
2013	51,69%	2014	55,86%	2012	55,12%	2013	91,72%	2013	71,02%	2012	48,54%	2011	64,49%	2011
2008	53,02%	2011	46,15%	2008	53,20%	2009	88,88%	2008	71,13%	2010	54,24%	2007	66,14%	2009
2006	52,46%	2010	43,33%	2004	56,50%	2004	95,35%	2003	77,48%	2006	40,87%	2005	69,23%	2005
2001	50,18%	2006	50,43%	2000	56,92%	1999	95,93%	1998	77,54%	2003	47,63%	2001	68,62%	2002
1996	55,08%	2002	49,96%	1996	60,52%	1994	98,02%	1996	76,82%	2002	48,80%	1997	69,27%	1999
1994	51,91%	1998	70,21%	1992	64,07%	1989	95,33%	1992	70,12%	1998	52,00%	1993	79,11%	1995
1992	50,64%	1995			66,83%	1984	95,57%	1987	75,20%	1994	44,40%	1991	77,71%	1991
1987	57,72%	1993			68,48%	1979	86,03%	1981	78,01%	1989	63,96%	1989	78,15%	1987
1983	80,95%	1990			73,74%	1974	89,81%	1976	84,22%	1986		1985	79,69%	1985
1979					67,79%	1968	77,55%	1971	80,30%	1982		1980	77,43%	1983
1976					72,55%	1964	76,73%	1966	85,19%	1981		1976	87,91%	1980
1972					74,29%	1959	79,41%	1962	86,27%	1977		1972	88,25%	1979
1968					73,14%	1954	67,74%	1955	80,24%	1972		1969	83,29%	1976
1963					37,29%	1951	66,04%	1953	77,83%	1971		1965	89,73%	1975
1958					74,95%	1945	60,37%	1951	92,07%	1967		1961		
1953							57,06%	1950	87,95%	1963		1957		
1948							58,97%	1947	88,76%	1959		1952		
1946									88,07%	1956				
									86,87%	1952				
									85,14%	1948				
									85,47%	1946				
	55,72%		52,92%		62,72%		81,82%		81,05%		49,98%		76,05%	
	80,95%		70,21%		74,95%		98,02%		92,07%		63,96%		89,73%	
	50,18%		43,33%		37,29%		57,06%		70,12%		40,87%		61,75%	
73		29		27		74		72		73		67		44
	-27,40%		-15,70%		-26,79%		33,32%		-8,16%		-14,56%		-27,98%	

Romania		Slovakia		Slovenia		Spain		Sweden		United Kingdom	
41,12%	2016	59,43%	2016	54,58%	2018	60,87%	2016	82,08%	2018	62,88%	2017
42,81%	2012	57,85%	2012	54,09%	2014	64,39%	2015	82,61%	2014	60,45%	2015
40,48%	2008	58,38%	2010	66,99%	2011	63,26%	2011	82,63%	2010	61,06%	2010
62,26%	2004	56,40%	2006	65,04%	2008	69,30%	2008	80,60%	2006	58,32%	2005
62,16%	2000	71,63%	2002	61,09%	2004	76,25%	2004	78,04%	2002	57,56%	2001
78,20%	1996	78,86%	1998	72,33%	2000	73,79%	2000	77,72%	1998	69,39%	1997
76,16%	1992	75,93%	1994	75,75%	1996	80,56%	1996	82,36%	1994	75,36%	1992
		83,76%	1992	85,52%	1992	77,43%	1993	82,77%	1991	75,17%	1987
		93,06%	1990			71,28%	1989	82,68%	1988	71,70%	1983
						73,72%	1986	86,22%	1985	75,06%	1979
						83,11%	1982	88,61%	1982	77,88%	1974
						72,32%	1979	86,94%	1979	71,15%	1970
						79,36%	1977	88,49%	1976	73,77%	1966
								85,81%	1973	75,13%	1964
								87,31%	1970	77,46%	1959
								86,57%	1968	75,75%	1955
								80,85%	1964	81,36%	1951
								82,76%	1960	81,59%	1950
								75,60%	1958	70,05%	1945
								77,31%	1956		
								77,32%	1952		
								82,02%	1948		
57,60%		70,59%		66,92%		72,74%		82,60%		71,11%	
78,20%		93,06%		85,52%		83,11%		88,61%		81,59%	
40,48%		56,40%		54,09%		60,87%		75,60%		57,56%	
	27		29		27		42		71		74
-35,04%		-33,63%		-30,94%		-18,49%		0,06%		-7,17%	