Party Membership and Activism in a New Democracy: Evidence from the Portuguese Case*

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INTRODUCTION

The role of political parties in contemporary democracies is changing and significant transformations have occurred in terms of organisational characteristics. Parties are experiencing two common trends: an increasing personalisation (Poguntke and Webb 2005), on the one hand, and a crisis of membership organisations on the other (van Biezen et al. 2012). These trends have especially affected the characteristics and roles played by the 'party on the ground'. In particular, a number of studies have shown that parties are increasingly disconnected from society and that partisan forms of mobilisation have declined (Dalton *et al.* 2000; van Biezen *et al.* 2012). In addition, parties have faced growing difficulties in establishing organisational linkages with the electorate (Poguntke 2006; van Biezen and Poguntke 2014), while new tools of mass communication have reduced the importance of party structures for communicating with the electorate.

Although some scholars have even called into question the need for parties to recruit members to perform their basic functions (Katz 1990), the fact is that the crisis of party organisations has not led to the disappearance of their members. A number of studies have shown that

members still play a valuable role in parties, not only in terms of re-cruitment, but also in terms of legitimacy (Scarrow 1996; Heidar 2006; Gauja 2015; van Haute and Gauja 2015). Moreover, parties seem to have rediscovered party members as tools for achieving mobilisation, as shown by the emergence of 'citizen-initiated campaigns' (Gibson 2015). Therefore, members are still an important asset for party organi-sations in order to strengthen their electoral performance and competi-tive advantages.

In a recent contribution intended to assess the 'state of the art' on party membership, Heidar recognised that 'very little is known about diffe-rent types of activists' (Heidar 2006: 307). Traditionally distinct types of party members were associated with different party types, such as 'propagandists' in the case of communist parties, or cadre liberal party 'fans' (see Scarrow 2015). However, a more sophisticated understan-ding of the dynamics underlying different profiles of membership is in order. The purpose of this article is to contribute to a critical discussion of party membership in contemporary parties and provide new evi-dence by testing existing theories with a new case. Drawing on a set of original surveys conducted in Portuguese political parties, the article aims to examine four dimensions of party membership, namely 1) members' socio-demographic profile; 2) ideological orientations 3) members' reasons for joining and 4) members' degree of activism. This is the first systematic study of party membership in Portugal, which is an interesting case to explore not only because of its democratic trajec-tory, but also because it exhibits a stable party system despite the crisis that has been affecting the country since 2008. Therefore the analysis of party membership contributes to explaining political and electoral alignments in a new democracy, as well as the resilience of its party system. In addition, the Portuguese party system includes parties with distinct organisational features and ideological orientations (see below).

The article proceeds as follows. The next section provides a critical exa-mination of the literature on party membership and its change over time. The third section deals with data and methods, while the fourth presents members' socio-demographic profiles. The fifth and sixth sec-tions analyse members' political attitudes and their motivations for jo-ining the party, respectively. The subsequent section focuses on mem-bers' involvement in intra-party life. The final section summarises the

results and discusses some possible implications for the study of party organisations and party membership.

PARTY MEMBERSHIP AND ACTIVISM: THEORIES AND EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE

The analysis of party membership is an old topic in the literature[1]. Several attempts have been made to capture this multifaceted reality, although most works are mainly of a theoretical nature. The development of different typologies (Duverger 1951; Katz and Mair 1995; Krouwel 2012) has recently been complemented by empirical studies on party members, which have substantially improved our knowledge of this important aspect of party life. In particular, by using membership surveys, it has been possible to identify who party members are, what they think, who joins political parties and what they do (van Haute 2011; van Haute and Gauja 2015).

The first line of research on party membership has been concerned with the representativeness of political parties. Therefore, a number of comparative or national studies have examined the profile of party affiliates. The findings suggest that party membership tends to be disproportionately male and that affiliates are older than the general population (Scarrow and Gezcor 2010: 8-9; van Haute and Gauja 2015: 195). In terms of education, a consensus emerges with regard to the higher level of education of party members compared with the adult electorate (Widfeldt 1995; Scarrow and Gezcor 2010; van Haute and Gauja 2015: 195). In addition, union membership of party members differs widely across countries, but empirical findings report a general decline (Scarrow and Gezcor 2010). Finally, available surveys indicate that party members are generally more religious than the general population. It has been noted that the decline in the number of members displaying religious values has led to a convergence between party membership and the electorate (Scarrow and Gezcor 2010), thus increasing the representativeness of parties in this dimension.

The second strand of research has examined the ideological orientation of party members. We can find two opposite arguments regarding the ideological representativeness of political parties. One hypothesis is that there has been a policy convergence between parties, thus leading to a growing distance between parties and voters (Katz and Mair 1995; Klingemann and Volkens 2002). On the other, parties are suppo-

sed to still exhibit important differences (Krouwel 2012). The comparative study conducted by van Haute and Gauja (2015) substantially confirms the latter argument. In particular, party members hold distinct political and policy views, which reflect the traditional cleavages and the ideological legacy (i.e. origin) of political parties. Moreover, how members position themselves and their respective parties on a left-right scale is consistent with the electoral alignments and the structure of party system competition.

Following this line of research, empirical works have also investigated why members join party organisations. The General Incentives Model (GIM) developed by Whiteley and Seyd (2002) aims to include the most relevant/important (?) factors for explaining why members join a political party. This theory encompasses both ideological, pragmatic (rational) and social motivations (see more below). Empirical studies have found that ideological reasons are a key variable for explaining why people join political parties (Bruter and Harrison 2009). However, this is a multidimensional phenomenon and motivations vary across parties and countries. Overall, most studies confirm the superiority of the GIM vis-à-vis alternative theories (Gallagher et al. 2002; Hansen 2002). However, this theory has not yet been tested in new democracies, so the Portuguese case may provide further evidence regarding its validity.

Finally, a traditional dimension of party membership is related to party activism. It has been noted that members' activities vary across parties and countries (Heidar 2006). Conventional wisdom distinguished/A distinction is usually made (?) between outside/external (?) and inside/external (?) activities. On the one hand, members attend party meetings, engage in debates and perform bureaucratic or logistics functions. On the other, activists may mobilise during election campaigns or they may run for public office. Given the transformation of information technology and the changes experienced by party organisations, activities outside the party are expected to be more relevant/important (?) than inside/internal (?) ones. The way members combine distinct types of functions depends on party organisational cultures and individual resources. However, the empirical evidence based on member surveys is still incipient and mostly related to advanced Western democracies.

Party membership in Portugal has been under-explored, as most studies have dealt with its role in the Parliament (e.g. 'representation'

studies) or the electoral basis of support. The project coordinated by Stock (1985) pioneered the study of party delegates but it did not include grassroots members and it examined only a limited number of dimensions. More recently, several studies have analysed the democratisation of party organisations (Lisi 2010; Lisi and Freire 2014). On the other hand, other works have investigated members' attitudes towards the internal functioning of parties (?) and intra-party democracy (Coelho 2014; Lisi 2015b). Yet, to our knowledge, there is no systematic study presenting a characterisation of party members in terms of socio-demographic profile, political attitudes, motivations for joining and degree of activism.

Drawing on this literature we can formulate several hypotheses related to the characteristics of party members in Portugal. The first is about the socio-demographic profile. Given the growing professionalisation of party organisations and the interpenetration of political party and state, we expect members to display relatively homogeneous traits and to belong to a more active sector, to be middle-aged and to have a higher educational level (H1). These characteristics should be even more pronounced in the case of party delegates (H2).

Second, parties are likely to exhibit distinct ideological orientations regarding the main policy issues (H3). This is due not only to the inability of new parties to alter traditional political alignments – between 2007 and 2014 fourteen new parties were created without achieving parliamentary representation –, but also to the polarisation effects of the crisis, which has clarified and magnified the differences between left-wing and right-wing parties (Freire et al. 2015). Ultimately, this has facilitated the new governmental solution tried out by the socialist government led by António Costa (2015-), a minority government supported (for the first time in Portuguese democratic history) by the radical left (PCP and BE).

Third, we expect party members to show distinct types of motivations. Clark and Wilson's (1961) seminal study distinguished between three groups of motives for joining a party. Purpose motives are based on ideological stances and the importance of achieving specific policy goals. The second category is related to social motivation and focuses on the importance of social networks (family, friends, and neighbours) to exert social pressures on individuals to behave as members of a partisan community. Finally, there are material motivations centred on

specific benefits linked to professional life or private gains. Empirical findings show that ideological motivations are the most important reason for joining, but that there is also a significant variation both within and across parties (van Haute and Gauja 2015). Our fourth hypothesis is that material incentives or process incentives play a relatively marginal role in grassroots members' motivations compared to party delegates (H4).

Finally, we can also examine whether party members differ in terms of political activism. In other words, if the distinction between grassroots and delegates is robust and consequential, we should also find differences in what members actually do, especially in terms of the intensity of political engagement. The findings reported in the comparative work edited by van Haute and Gauja (2015) suggest that the majority of party members are, for the most part, inactive, but that there is also a small proportion of professional-minded members that are more likely to participate in party activities. Taking our cue from these works, delegates are expected to be more active than grassroots (H5).

METHODOLOGY

The survey applied was based on an on-line questionnaire conducted within the MAPP (Members and Activists of Political Parties) research network. We used the case of Portuguese parties to examine the different profile and attitudes between grass root members and professional affiliates. Portuguese parties are worthy of examination on several – theoretical and empirical – grounds. First, they show a significant variation in terms of organisational models, ranging from typical catch-all parties (moderate parties, PS – Socialist Party; PSD – Social Democratic Party) to elite-based types (the right-wing CDS-PP – Social Democratic Centre-Popular Party), as well as 'movement' party type (BE – Left Bloc; LIVRE). This allows us to investigate whether party member types are associated with specific parties – as conventional wisdom suggests –, or whether they may be found across distinct party types. Second, data on party members are very difficult to collect, and there have been few attempts to examine the profile of party members through surveys. This is particularly true for Portuguese parties, which have been largely neglected by both international and Portuguese scholars. Some studies have investigated the democratisation of party organisations and the growing powers granted to members, especially with regard to leadership selection (Lisi 2010; Lisi

and Freire 2014). Other works have examined members' attitudes towards internal functioning and intra-party democracy (Coelho 2014; Lisi 2015b). Yet, to our knowledge, there are no systematic studies that investigate types of members within and across parties.

Overall, Portuguese political parties have traditionally been characterised by a high level of centralisation, with leaders displaying significant powers. To a large extent, this is the consequence of being internally created parties with important organisational resources concentrated in the hands of the main leaders and party bodies. With the exception of the Portuguese Communist Party (PCP), which has remained an anti-government party since 1976, all main parties have occupied government positions immediately after the emergence of the democratic regime, benefiting from both public subsidies and media visibility. Consequently, party members have displayed a marginal role, especially since the full consolidation of the democratic regime, and this is reflected in the steady decrease in party membership registered since the mid-1980s (Lisi 2015a).

As for party characteristics, both the PS (Socialist Party) and PSD (Social Democratic Party)[2] are close to the catch-all party model, while the CDS-PP has been characterised as a 'party without a head/headless party (?)' given the lack of a strong structure on the ground, thus adopting some traits of the cadre parties (Lopes 2002). In addition, Portuguese parties differ in terms of organisational development. While the PS and CDS-PP followed a top-down process of penetration, local party structures were extremely important in the formation of the PSD, with notables playing a significant role in party mobilisation and member recruitment (Jalali 2007). Finally, we should mention the peculiarity of the BE, a radical left party that has adopted features conventionally associated with libertarian or movement parties (Kitschelt 2006). In particular, it has adopted a collegial leadership style, a very factionalised way of functioning, and an emphasis on participatory tools and bottom-up mobilisation. It also makes intensive use of new digital information technology and exhibits more open and close linkages to social movements and civic organisations. Finally, we also include in this study the case of the Livre, a recently created party that pioneered the introduction of party primaries (adopted for the 2014 European elections and the 2015 legislative elections).

The two catch-all parties (PS and PSD) have adopted moderate and centrist positions on socio-economic issues, and their voters share si-

milar orientations on the ideological left-right axis. On the other hand, the CDS-PP has emphasised conservative and liberal values, as well as 'law and order' issues. The BE, founded in 1999, was able to politicise post-materialist and libertarian values. While this new party shares with the PCP the same anti-capitalist attitudes and the emphasis on the welfare state, it diverges in terms of its soft Euroscepticism and stances towards democracy (Freire and Lisi 2016). Finally, LIVRE emerged around the strategic issue, namely its willingness to cooperate with the socialists and support a left-wing government, in contrast to the anti-government position of the two radical left parties.

It is worth noting that party membership in Portugal takes place through direct affiliation only, and party statutes generally recognise just one category of party member. While party organisations have increasingly differentiated party structures, for example through the creation of cyber or thematic sections, 'opinion clubs', etc. – only the PS and Livre currently recognise the figure of party sympathisers. In addition, it is important to emphasise that party organisations have generally adopted very loose rules for accessing their membership, especially in terms of fees, probationary period or adherence to principles.

Our analysis draws upon five surveys of members of Portuguese parties, based, as refereed in the on-line questionnaire conducted within the MAPP (Members and Activists of Political Parties) research network. The surveys were made available to the universe of party members or delegates via online platforms directed only to the universe of all parties with the exception of the PCP, which refused to collaborate. Party headquarters assisted us in distributing the survey to the universe of party affiliates. The survey was administered from January to February 2014 to the two main parties (PS and PSD). With regard to PSD the survey was applied to the middle-rank elite (delegates); in the case of the socialists, we surveyed party members. A survey of CDS-PP congress delegates was also administered during the same period. As for the two left-wing parties – BE and Livre – party members were surveyed between November 2014 and January 2015. Two reminders were sent out, one after a month, and the second after two weeks. After data collection, we created a dataset by merging the different surveys, including only questions applied to all parties. In all, we received 3,215 questionnaires, which were cleansed by excluding those whose respondents speeded or cheated as they were answering the questionnaire (by looking at the response time) and those in which information on

crucial variables (gender, age, etc.) was missing. In the end our dataset included 2,915 usable replies. By decreasing order of number of respondents the dataset included members of the PS (1,347), BE (669), CDS-PP (443), PSD (313) and Livre (143). The response rate was acceptable, ranging between 15% and 25%[3], a figure in line with similar studies in Southern Europe (i.e. Baras *et al.* 2012; Sandri et al. 2015), though lower than similar surveys in Northern countries (van Haute 2015; Kosiara-Pedersen 2015; Spier and Klein 2015; den Ridder et al. 2015; Heidar 2015).

Several research challenges and limitations appear when dealing with statistical data. First of all, in this type of universe of study, despite some exceptions, there is the added adifficulty of obtaining the parties' collaboration. Secondly, the data collected, for the selected time period included party members and party delegates as well. We considered using both of them, since party delegates are, first and foremost, party members, even though during the party congress these party members have a different temporary status. Indeed, any member may become a delegate in any party congress. The criteria used to select congress delegates are usually quite 'democratic' and any party member can potentially be a delegate to a party congress. Considering this, both party members and delegates were included in this study, albeit identified and analysed separately.

The questionnaires consisted of a general part, common to all the studies conducted within the MAPP (Members and Activists of Political Parties) research network and a specific part adapted to the characteristics of the national context, including questions on political culture, party strategies and intra-party functioning. One important concern of surveys of party members is the representativeness of our respondents. This problem is very difficult to address as our knowledge of the characteristics of the universe of party members – especially party delegates –, is incomplete and hence it is not possible to weigh data or make other adjustments for representativeness[4]. The challenge is amplified by the phenomenon of 'last-minute' enrolment just before the beginning of the congress (or the election of party leaders) and inaccurate management of membership files performed by party headquarters. Ultimately, it is likely that our dataset overestimates levels of activism, as it is plausible that those least committed to the party are also least likely to complete the questionnaire.

Table 1
General Data About the Parties and the Surveys Applied

Party*	Votes (%, 2011 general elections)	Type of members	Collection date	(N) (universe)	(n) (valid answers)	Response rate (%) (only valid answers)	Institutional position (at the Parliament and Government)
BE	5.2	Rank-and-file	November 2014	9,600	669	7.0	Opposition
Livre	2.2**	Rank-and-file	October 2014	2,000***	143	7.2	Without parliamentary representation
PS	28.1	Rank-and-file	January/February 2014	83,524	1,347	1.6	Opposition
PSD ****	38.5	delegates	February 2014	1,000***	313	31.3	Government
CDS-PP	11.7	delegates	January 2014	900***	443	49.2	Government

Notes:
* The criteria used to include the parties in the survey was to have parliamentary representation (though we accepted the participation of Livre, a newborn party, with an apparently strong public base). The Communist party (PCP), as well as the Green Party (PEV) did not answer several requests and invitations to participate in this survey.
** results for Livre are for the 2014 European elections.
*** Estimates.
**** XXV PSD congress, February 2014.
Source: Based on an on-line questionnaire conducted within the MAPP (Members and Activists of Political Parties) research network.

SOCIAL PROFILE OF PARTY MEMBERS AND DELEGATES

Previous research has shown that the typical profile of a party member is a middle-aged, well-educated, professionally active male (Scarrow 2007; Whiteley 2009; Scarrow and Gezcor 2010; van Haute 2011). To what extent do Portuguese party members fit this profile?

Gender equality is one of the central aspects of political activity, albeit not yet at a formal level. While our intention is not to expound on the reasons for greater participation by males in parties and politics or on the ways of narrowing this gap like the Parity Law[5], we will outline the

gender differences in terms of party membership. Although there are large differences in context, especially in the northern European democracies, the choice of key figures in the European Council continues to show a predominance of males in decision-making positions. We therefore agree with Margarida Fernandes and Maria Estrela Duarte (1985: 7) when they say that 'The gap between women's legal status and their absence from decision-making bodies shows discrimination. By discrimination we mean the exclusion of a social group, women in this case, from bodies and institutions, i.e. gender-based selection when accessing decision-making offices'.

In our samples, we found a significant gender imbalance in all parties, with an overwhelming prevalence of men (around 75%, see Table 2). Only BE members have a proportion of male members lower than 70%. This asymmetry is even stronger in the profile of PSD delegates, where more than 82% are men. These figures reflect the gender gap that has traditionally characterised the universe of Portuguese party members, with the partial exception of the left-libertarian BE (Lisi 2011: 95-104).

Table 2
Social Profile of Party Members (%) – Portugal

Party		PS	PSD	CDS-PP	BE	LIVRE
Gender	Male	75.4	82.7	72.6	69.0	79.7
	Female	24.6	17.3	27.4	31.0	20.3
	Total (N)	(1,347)	(313)	(441)	(696)	(143)
Age	<35	16.9	25.6	12.2	27.5	39.9
	36-64	66.2	67.0	81.3	62.7	53.85
	65>	16.9	7.4	6.5	9.8	6.3
	Mean	49.7	44.5	43	45.7	40.8
	Total (N)	(1,346)	(312)	(441)	(697)	(143)
Education	None/Elementary	9.4	0.3	2.8	10.2	1.4
	High school	26.0	19.6	20.1	23.8	14.0
	Higher education	64.6	80.1	77.0	66.0	84.6
	Total (N)	(1,347)	(312)	(441)	(686)	(143)

Table 2
Social Profile of Party Members (%) – Portugal
(continuation)

Party		PS	PSD	CDS-PP	BE	LIVRE
Professional Status	Active	64.3	81.2	82.9	57.3	77.6
	(Early) retired	21.3	8.0	5.6	16.6	5.6
	Student	3.2	2.9	3.1	5.9	7.0
	Unemployed	7.4	3.2	4.9	13.9	3.5
	Other	3.8	5.7	4.5	5.8	6.3
	Total (N)	(1,243)	(313)	(441)	(696)	(143)
Professional sector	Public sector	41.9	43.3	28.5	31.5	28.3
	Private sector	30.7	33.4	46.8	48.9	46.0
	Voluntary sector	27.4	23.3	3.8	19.6	25.7
	Total (N)	(1,243)	(305)	(425)	(691)	(113)
	Every week, or more	8.1	17.6	27.5	2.9	1.4
	A few times per month	8.2	27.3	21.4	2.0	0.7
Religious practice	A few times per year	35.0	46.0	35.9	10.0	16.2
	Hardly ever, or ever	48.8	19.2	13.1	85.1	81.7
	Total (N)	(1,347)	(313)	(441)	(690)	(142)
Religiosity	Not at all religious	24.4	7.3	n.a.	67.2	69.0
	Not religious	30.7	17.9	n.a.	18.5	18.3
	Fairly religious	40.9	65.8	n.a.	13.4	9.9
	Very religious	4.0	8.3	n.a.	0.9	2.8
	Total (N)	(1,347)	(311)		(686)	(142)
Trade Union Member	Member	25.6	22.0	8.5	46.9	16.1
	Total (N)	(1,337)	(313)	(425)	(542)	(124)

Source: Based on an on-line questionnaire conducted within the MAPP (Members and Activists of Political Parties) research network.

It is also worth noting that the prevalence of males within parties is

considerably stronger when we analyse the composition of national party bodies (Martins and Teixeira 2005)[6].

We found the following trends in the composition of the sample of the five parties under analysis. The different age groups[7] are represented in quite a proportional fashion in the universe, which showed not only a good revitalisation capacity but also an inter-generational group of members. Livre has the lowest mean age (40.8), while socialist members are older than PSD delegates (49.7 and 44.5, respectively). It is worth noting that the over-65 age groups were less represented in the CDS-PP and Livre (only 5.6% and 6.29%, respectively), but constitute a relatively large group in the PS (16.9%).

With regard to educational background, table 4 shows that the majority (more than 65%) of the members had university qualifications, i.e. a degree, master's or PhD, while only a small proportion had the lowest level of education (BE 10.2%, PS 9.4% and CDS-PP 6.5%). It should also be noted that, as expected, this percentage is even higher in the case of PSD delegates and Livre members with more than 80% and 84% having university qualifications, respectively. These findings can be explained by the profound changes in education in Portuguese society and the proliferation of degree courses after April 25, 1974. The generalisation of education brought Portugal closer to OECD standards and it now has over 1.2 million graduates, an increase of around 50% since the beginning of the 21st century[8].

An analysis of the respondents' professional activities showed that a great proportion of party members work in the public sector, and that the third sector is less important for recruiting party members. CDS-PP members exhibit a different composition in terms of professional activity, as the overwhelming majority work in the private sector, while only 3.3% belong to the third sector. However, it should be noted that while almost 32% of CDS-PP and BE members and almost 29% of Livre members are public employees, the proportion is significantly higher in the case of the two main parties (PSD 43.3% and PS 41.9%,). The latter figure is noteworthy as the proportion of civil servants in the total number of respondents was significant, given that there are around 583,000 civil servants in Portugal[9], i.e. about 6% of the population. This shows a direct link between party membership and the civil service, thus corresponding to the view that civil servants are more politically active[10].

This perspective of participation is at odds with trade union membership figures. Overall, less than one fourth of party members belong to a union. The only exception are BE members, with almost 47% belonging to a trade union. However, there is a significant difference between the CDS-PP, which displays the lowest figure (13%), Livre at 16.13% and the two centrist parties (PS and PSD) with percentages of 25.6% and 22%, respectively. This reflects the attempts of the two main parties to establish some links with trade unions (especially the UGT) and the right-wing CDS-PP's traditional neglect of this type of organisation. Many of the affirmative answers regarding union membership came from teachers and bank employees. By and large, these findings confirm previous studies which relate trade unionism to more radical left-wing parties (Jalali 2007; Lisi 2013)[11].

The question of religion and assertion of religious beliefs among the party members was an intriguing aspect of the analysis. Might people's religiousness influence their choice of party and ideological orientation? The majority of the respondents said that they rarely attend religious activities, regardless of the party. As expected, given the party's ideology and its Christian roots, CDS-PP members show the highest rates of religious practice, with almost one quarter attending church at least once a week week. On the other hand, only 8.1% of PS members, 2.9% of BE members and 1.4% Livre members stated that they participated in religious activities very often, compared with 17.6% of PSD members. In general, left party members display more secular attitudes, as shown by the large proportion of members who attend few or no religious services per year.

Professional status shows a trend towards highly qualified and employed party members, with a low level of religious interests. These findings substantially confirm previous empirical findings on party delegates (Stock et al., 1985), suggesting that joining and recruitement patterns have not significantly changed during the democratic period. These findings only partially confirmed our first hypothesis (H1: given the growing professionalisation of party organisations and the interpenetration of political parties and state, we expect members to display relatively homogeneous traits and to belong to a more active sector, to be middle-aged and to have higher levels in terms of education; H2: these characteristics should be even more pronounced in the case of party delegates). Party membership in Portugal diverges from more advanced democracies in terms of age, education and gender. It

is true that party members display a rather homogenous profile, but they differ with regard to religious beliefs and trade union membership. This leads us to enquire to what extent support for parties' is based on distinct political cleavages.

IDEOLOGY AND POLITICAL ATTITUDES

In terms of the traditional left-right dichotomy, the PS and PSD are two moderate parties with the former belonging to the centre-left and the latter to the centre-right, while the CDS-PP is the farthest to the right in the Portuguese parliament and the BE is the farthest to the left. This idea is confirmed by the ideological position of its members on a scale of 1 to 10, in which 1 is extreme left and 10 is extreme right. CDS-PP members position themselves on average at 7.7 on the left-right axis, while the average for social-democrats and the socialists is 6.7 and 3.7 respectively, and the average for BE members is 3.8 and Livre 3.3. Despite the huge gap between PS and PSD members, socialist affiliates place their party more in the centre (4.7), thus decreasing the distance between the two main parties. It is also worth noting that CDS-PP members place their party more in the centre (7.5), very close to the position occupied by the PSD. A different trend is observed in BE and Livre members' perceptions, who place their party more to the left side of this scale (2.8 and 3.0 respectively).

An understanding of the members' ideological and political thinking was obtained by asking them to express the extent of their agreement or disagreement with the list of statements related to the main dimensions of competition, especially in terms of socio-economic policies, moral issues and cultural values.

Although, according to voters' perceptions, there was only a small distance between the two main moderate parties on the left-right continuum (March and Freire, 2012: 217-233), we found that party members disagree significantly in several policy domains (Table 3). Firstly, with regard to the socio-economic dimension, socialist, BE and Livre members strongly support a democracy based on the state taking an active role in reducing social and economic differences, while PSD delegates and CDS-PP members take a more neutral position. Secondly, marked differences are also found in terms of the freedom of citizens and social organisations to compete without any state intervention. While left party members tend to mitigate economic freedom with the regulatory

role of the state, right-wing parties support a more liberal society; however, PSD delegates are more to the right on the political spectrum than CDS-PP members in this case.

This difference is particularly striking when we observe the members' positions with regard to the welfare state. According to the middle-level PSD elite, a strong welfare state tends to reduce citizens' entrepreneurship, while the socialists indicate no negative effect. It is interesting to note that both right-wing party members show similar attitudes, and their opinion does not diverge significantly as the position on the left-right axis may suggest. We also found differences between the parties in attitudes towards protectionism, but in this case CDS-PP members display more leftist orientations than PSD delegates. Although this may be related to the different types of members surveyed in the two parties, it should be emphasised that the CDS-PP has traditionally supported a social economy based on the protection of important domestic business sectors, but also of the most disadvantaged groups of Portuguese society (especially pensioners, farmers and small businesses). All members of left parties exhibit similar attitudes towards protectionism.

Moving on to the cultural dimension, it should be noted that the sharpest divide between the main governing parties is related to the adoption of children by same sex couples; this issue has attracted a lot of attention in the recent political debate, especially due to its politicisation and its defence by both radical left parties (in particular the BE) and the the PS's leftist faction. While the mean position (on a 5-point scale) is 2.5 for socialist members, the average position of PSD delegates is 3.9, whereas CDS-PP members are further to the right (4.1). The theme is almost a non-issue for BE and Livre members, with both in overall agreement on the adoption process (1.5 and 1.5 respectively). This finding reflects the cleavage between left and right on religious matters; it is more relevant/important (?) for party members than at the elite level as socialist leaders (especially Guterres, PS leader from 1992 to 2001) have traditionally avoided politicising this issue.

In terms of religious values, we asked whether religious symbols should be prohibited in public schools. The overwhelming majority of right-wing party members disagreed; however, the relatively high values of the standard deviation (1.5 and 1.3) reveal internal divisions within both parties. On the other hand, the majority of socialist, BE and

Livre members tend to agree that public schools should adopt secular principles and not be influenced by the Church; this confirms the importance of the religious cleavage in the distinction between left and right. As for the attitudes of party members towards euthanasia, a majority of socialist affiliates are in favour while PSD delegates are more neutral. However, the distribution of opinions towards this matter is quite dispersed, showing a lack of consensus within the main parties.

Table 3
Attitudes of Party Members – Portugal

Party	PS		PSD		CDS-PP		BE		LIVRE	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Left-Right (Self-Placement 1-10)	3.7	2.2	6.7	2.2	7.7	1.8	3.8	2.6	3.3	1.5
Left-Right party (1-10)	4.7	1.9	6.9	1.9	7.5	1.6	2.8	2.4	3.0	1.6
Economic Freedom (1-5)	2.8	1.3	3.7	1.2	3.5	1.2	1.2	0.6	1.5	0.8
Strong state (1-5)	1.5	0.8	2.8	1.3	2.6	1.3	1.4	0.8	1.6	0.9
Protectionism (1-5)	2.8	1.2	3.5	1.1	3.3	1.2	2.9	1.3	2.9	1.1
Welfare state (1-5)	2.0	1.2	3.1	1.3	3.2	1.2	1.6	0.8	1.7	1.0
Religion (1-5)	2.7	1.7	3.5	1.5	3.9	1.3	2.0	1.4	2.2	1.5
Moral values_a (1-5)	2.4	1.5	3.1	1.5	3.4	1.5	1.6	1.1	1.7	1.0
Moral values_b (1-5)	2.5	1.4	3.9	1.5	4.1	1.3	1.5	1.1	1.6	1.0
Law & Order (1-5)	1.4	0.9	1.6	1.1	1.7	1.2	1.2	0.7	1.4	0.8
Immigration (1-5)	2.6	1.4	2.8	1.4	3.0	1.4	1.8	1.2	1.8	1.1
Environment (1-5)	2.4	1.1	2.8	1.1	2.7	1.1	1.7	1.0	1.9	1.0

Note: M=mean; SD=standard deviation. Each issue is based on one item or proposition. For each item, the respondents had the opportunity to say whether they fully agree, agree, disagree, fully disagree or have no opinion. The responses were recoded so that lower scores correspond to left-wing positions, and higher figures to more right-wing orientations. DK and NA excluded from the analysis.
Economic freedom: item 'People do not have a job because they do not want to have one'; Strong state: item 'Democracy is better guaranteed with a strong, big and effective state, because this kind of state is more capable of reducing social and economic differences'; Protectionism: item 'Protectionism is sometimes necessary to support the economy', Weak state: item 'Democracy is better guaranteed if citizens and social organisations are free to compete and if the role of the state is limited'; Religion: item 'Religious symbols of any kind should be forbidden in public schools'; Moral values_a: 'Everybody who is mentally healthy should be able to decide when he wants to die'; Moral values_b: item 'Same sex couples should be granted the right to adopt children', Law & Order: item 'It is better to have one innocent person in prison than ten guilty people on the street'; Immigration: item 'Immigrants who have permission to stay must have the right to vote in all elections'; Environment: item 'Environmental protection must take priority over economic growth'; Welfare state: item 'The welfare state reduces the enterprising spirit of citizens and their self-sufficiency'.
Source: Based on an on-line questionnaire conducted within the MAPP (Members and Activists of Political Parties) research network.

Finally, there is a marked lack of differences between parties towards environmental protection and the right of immigrants to vote in national elections. Moreover, we find no significant differences in the 'law and order' item, as party members generally support preserving the individual's rights despite some concern about societal dangers. These findings are also telling because they emphasise the low politicisation of these 'new' cultural items, which have contributed to reshaping most party systems in Western Europe with the emergence of populist, extreme-right or left-libertarian parties (Kriesi et al. 2008; Krouwel 2012). The lack of significant disagreements on these dimensions in the main Portuguese parties not only suggests that parties do not compete on these issues, but also contributes to explaining the stability of the party system and why no new parties have emerged (with the partial exception of the BE). All in all, the empirical analysis of members' ideological orientations indicate that parties have adopted distinct positions regarding the main political cleavage, thus confirming our third hypothesis (H3: parties are likely to exhibit distinct ideological orientations regarding the main policy issues).

REASONS FOR JOINING

When analysing reasons for joining the party we can distinguish between material, ideological and procedural incentives (Whiteley and Seyd 2002; van Haute 2011; van Haute and Gauja 2015). We used a set of options to assess the importance the respondents gave to these different motivations for joining a party organisation. Overall, we found that the structure of members' opinions was similar for all parties; the strongest motivations were ideological, followed by procedural and lastly material ones (Table 4). As a consequence, these results lead us to reject our fourth hypothesis (H4: material incentives or process incentives play a relatively marginal role in grassroots members' motivations compared to party delegates).

A brief analysis shows that the respondents of the two main parties highlighted the importance of making their own political contribution by defending party ideals and the wish to be politically active, followed by the wish to play an active political role. Few focused on the hypothetical benefits of membership, the family context or financial contributions to the party[12]. However, it is important to notice that socialist members place a greater emphasis on procedural incentives than PSD delegates. This seems reasonable as the PSD survey was con-

ducted at the party conference where party delegates, being insiders, can influence internal party life.

It should also be noted that CDS-PP members place more importance on material benefits, e.g. obtaining professional advantages or pursuing a political career. They are also more motivated by procedural incentives to join the party than the members of the two main parties. This may be explained by the strong hierarchical links within the party and the low level of participation, which make the CDS-PP a party 'with a head but without a body' (Stock 1986; Lopes 2002). The figures show that large numbers of BE and Livre members denied having professional or career reasons for joining the party (lowest levels of this analysis), thus assuming a strong ideological vein.

Table 4
Party Members and Reasons for Joining (Mean) – Portugal

I became a member ...	**PS**	**PSD**	**CDS-PP**	**BE**	**LIVRE**
I wanted to meet politically like-minded people	3.1 (1.2)	3.0 (1.2)	3.4 (1.2)	3.2 (1.3)	2.8 (1.2)
I wanted to become politically active	3.9 (1.1)	3.9 (1.1)	3.7 (1.2)	4 (1.1)	3.9 (1.1)
I wanted to contribute to the realisation of the political aims I supported	4.4 (0.8)	4.4 (0.8)	4.5 (0.8)	4.6 (0.8)	4.6 (0.7)
I wanted to influence the selection of candidates for political office	3.2 (1.2)	2.9 (1.2)	3.5 (1.2)	3 (1.3)	3.7 (1.2)
I wanted to pursue a career in politics	2.1 (1.1)	2.2 (1.1)	2.3 (1.2)	1.5 (0.9)	1.7 (0.9)
I wanted to support the party financially	2.0 (1.0)	1.7 (0.9)	2.1 (1.0)	2.2 (1.1)	2.2 (0.9)
I expected that party membership would be advantageous for my career	1.5 (0.8)	1.4 (0.7)	1.7 (1.0)	1.2 (0.6)	1.1 (0.5)
I was influenced by relatives or friends	2.0 (1.2)	2.1 (1.2)	2.2 (1.2)	1.6 (0.4)	1.4 (0.9)

Note: Figures are mean and in standard deviation in brackets. Each issue is based on one item or proposition (multiple answer). For each item the respondents had the opportunity to say whether the reason was completely irrelevant (1), not very relevant (2), relevant (3), rather relevant (4) or very relevant (5). Don't know and no answers were excluded from the analysis.
Source: Based on an on-line questionnaire conducted within the MAPP (Members and Activists of Political Parties) research network.

PARTY ACTIVISM

A distinction must be made between the different concepts of party activism. Duverger (1951) advocated that different degrees of participation could be distinguished in the membership activity of supporters, adherents, militants and propagandists, i.e. their degree of commitment, the rights they acquire in the party structure and their intervention in it differ. This classification suggests three main circles of participation. The first and broadest is made up of voters, the second of sympathisers and the third of formal party members, i.e. activists.

Supporters have no formal ties to the party, in other words they are citizens who identify strongly with it and vote regularly for it but are not party members. This does not prevent them from participating in party activities such as rallies or information sessions and they show considerable loyalty to the party (Espírito Santo 2011). At the opposite end of the scale, we have the adherents; these are registered as party members, with all the rights and duties that this involves[13]. However, this is a very broad concept and is similar to that of affiliate, i.e. there is only a formal record of their enrolment but no indication of their degree of participation or involvement in party activities. In a curious articulation of concepts, Duverger (1951: 151) states, 'It would be no exaggeration to represent the party as follows: the activists manage the adherents, the adherents manage the supporters and the supporters manage the voters'.

The concept of activists complements the idea of adherents, i.e. it gives them an eminently operational imprint as they are 'permanent elements that are vital to its structure and subsistence as a dynamic, constant organisation (Espírito Santo 2011: 147). Activists perform essential functions in party operations. In this categorisation, we are focusing on the concept of unpaid activists, i.e. ones who do not hold paid political office/have a paid political position (?). Their action is more visible during electoral campaigns, though they also make an important contribution in paying dues. Although there has been an increase in state subsidies, members' dues and donations are an important source of revenue for parties.

While the previous section focused on the profile of party members in socio-demographic and attitudinal terms, we now examine the affiliates' participation in party life in order to assess whether they play an active part in accordance with the conceptual difference between

'member' and 'activist'. By considering the level of participation of parties with a distinct organisational culture, this study can shed more light on the different patterns of activism and their relationship with different party models.

Table 5 shows that there is a substantial variation between the parties and, as expected, delegates are much more involved in party life than party members. However, it is worth noting that the overwhelming majority of party members display a low degree of participation. In the case of the socialists, around 80% of members devoted less than 5 hours to the party on a monthly basis. On the other hand, the proportion of CDS-SP members with greater involvement (more than 10 hours a month) is higher (14.2%) than in the remaining parties. This means that there is a small proportion of activists in the CDS-PP who work very hard within the party and are strongly committed to participating in party activities. This may be explained by the high proportion of members with political functions, holding elective offices (at the local or national level) or as representatives of party branches (more than 57% of respondents attended the last party congress).

If we extend the scope of our analysis to attendance at party events, e.g. branch meetings, seminars, gatherings, parties, in the last 12 months (Table 5), we again find a very marked difference between party members and delegates. A larger proportion of PSD activists attend party events once a week or more, suggesting that they are professional politicians and not 'simple' party members. By and large, two thirds of PSD delegates said they participated in party events at the local level twice a week, compared to 36% of socialists. Although these figures are not directly comparable to the survey conducted of CDS-PP members because different questions were asked, the pattern is similar to that of PS adherents. Around 30% of respondents claimed they did not take part in any party event, and 36% had attended party events less than 5 times in the last 12 months. By contrast, only 11.4% said that they had taken part in more than 10 events during the last year.

To what extent do these data correspond to members' perceptions of their participation in party activities? Here again we find a great variation between parties. Unsurprisingly, party delegates confirm their greater involvement in party life, as only 2% of respondents are not active. Analysing party members in general, the most striking finding is the low degree of participation of Livre and BE's members, while the socialists occupy an intermediate position.

Table 5
Level and Type of Activism (%)

Party		PS Column %	PSD Column %	CDS-PP Column %	BE Column %	Livre Column %
Time devoted to party activities per month	0-5 hours	79.4	n.a.	71.3	76.8	78.0
	6-10 hours	13.2	n.a.	14.5	13.9	10.6
	More than 10	7.4	n.a.	14.2	9.2	11.4
	Total (N)	(1,216)	-	(394)	(595)	(123)
Participation in party events in the last 12 months	Once a week or more	16.8	35.5	n.a.	9.4	10.9
	Twice a month or more	19.2	33,3	n.a.	5.0	13.5
	Once a month	17.0	12.1	n.a.	15.2	19.3
	More than 6 times a year	17.2	9.9	n.a.	16.4	10.4
	0-6 times per year	24.1	9.2	n.a.	44.2	45.8
	Total (N)	(1,092)	(313)	n.a.	(669)	(143)
Perception of party involvement	Very active	19.4	41.2	33.0	18.7	21.6
	Fairly active	50.4	56.9	52.3	43.7	44.6
	Not very active	24.0	1.6	12.5	27.9	27.3
	Not at all active	6.2	0.3	2.3	9.7	6.5
	Total (N)	(1,346)	(313)	(352)	(638)	(139)

Note:
a. Percentages are based on valid responses.
b. Some members did not answer all the questions so the total may not be equal to the entire sampling dimension.
c. In the case of the CDS-PP and PSD the sampling was of the party delegates.
Source: Based on an on-line questionnaire conducted within the MAPP (Members and Activists of Political Parties) research network.

In sum, these data indicate that party members do not often take part in party activities, regardless of party ideological orientations. This may be due to the fact that most daily activities are performed by political professionals, i.e. employees of the party. These findings confirm the tendencies detected by van Haute and Gauja (2015). The majority of party members are, for the most part, inactive, although a small proportion of professionally-minded members tend to participate more in party activities. We confirmed the fifth hypothesis (H 5: delegates are expected to be more active than grassroots).

CONCLUSION

Political parties are facing new circumstances in that their armies of members are getting smaller, less representative and probably more critical and demanding than in the recent past; this causes or should cause them to respond more vigorously in order to survive. In western democracies political parties are witnessing the emergence of new forms of political participation, the use of modern social networks and changes in communication patterns, along with more bureaucratic parties with closer ties to the state apparatus. All this is accompanied by a gradual decrease in the number of political party activists and members.

Overall, this research/study(?) has shown that the majority of party members in Portugal were middle-aged, highly qualified and employed males, with a low level of religious interests. Though party members exhibit a rather homogenous profile, they differ in terms of religious beliefs and trade union membership. Our first hypothesis was partially confirmed (H1: given the growing professionalisation of party organisations and the interpenetration of political parties and state, we expect members to display relatively homogeneous traits and to belong to a more active sector, to be middle-aged and to have a higher educational level; H2: these characteristics should be even more pronounced in the case of party delegates).

As for ideology, significant differences can be seen in both the economic and cultural dimensions of the main governing parties. The third hypothesis was confirmed (H3: parties are likely to exhibit distinct ideological orientations with regard to the main policy issues). According to party members' attitudes, the main cleavages are related to the role played by the state and some moral issues such as euthanasia and

the adoption of children by same-sex couples. In general terms ideology is the most important motivation for joining party organisations, while material incentives seem to play a secondary role.

We found that party members state that 'wanting to become politically active' and helping 'to achieve the political aims' they support are important motives for becoming a member. The results provided evidence that leads us to reject our fourth hypothesis (H4: material incentives or process incentives play a relatively marginal role in grassroots members' motivations compared to party delegates). The analysis of the level of participation in activities indicates the party members who are still quite committed to the party and working actively for its growth are a minority group; this is normal given the general average level of party commitment by party members. We also noticed that party members differ significantly in terms of their involvement in party activities; this is clearly demonstrated by the different degree and patterns of participation between delegates and grassroots members. However, an analysis of the entire universe of party members reveals that the majority of affiliates do not participate regularly in party activities, thus confirming the low proportion of active members (H5 confirmed: delegates are expected to be more active than grassroots).

This study sets out some guidelines for research into party membership and is a reflection on parties' capacity for recruitment at a time when national indicators show a degree of public disillusionment with politicians. Clearly, the path that parties choose must involve giving the members a voice and making them central decoding elements of the political socialisation process. We conclude with some questions related to the present and future scenarios of profound civic, political and economic restructuring. Could the increase in initiatives by the public, independent groups or non-traditional forms of political participation be behind the decline in the number of party members in some western democracies? Are the parties unable to recruit and represent different social groups? Or does this process depend on election cycles?

NOTES

1. The definition of party members is relatively easy if we consider the voluntary nature for accessing party organisations. From this viewpoint, we rely on Heidar's contribution which identifies a party member through the 'organisational affiliation of an individual to a political party, assigning obligations and privileges to that individual' (Heidar 2006: 301). In the case of Portuguese parties, common rights include participation in party activities, the right to take part in party meeting, to vote for the selection of party bodies and to be elected, to propose and discuss specific policies and to have access to party information. As for duties, party members are generally obliged to pay a certain amount as fees, to participate in party activities and sometimes to work for the party.

2. Despite its name, which reflects the legacy of the 1974 Portuguese revolution, PSD is a right-wing party which adopts liberal positions on economic issues.

3. The response rate is calculated by considering the number of members that completed the questionnaire divided by the number of party members (and party delegates). The response rate should be considered a conservative estimate because membership files are usually inflated.

4. We believe this is not a major problem as our data do not present a significant bias with respect to 'hard data' available from party headquarters (see Lisi 2015a).

5. We are referring to Organic Law 3/2006 of 21 August, which stipulates that both men and women must represent at least 33% of the list for parliamentary elections, local elections and European Parliament elections. The legislative proceedings are available at: http://www.parlamento.pt/ActividadeParlamentar/Paginas/DetalheIniciativa.aspx?BID=21197 accessed January 2013.

6. For example, there has been just one female leader in the whole democratic period (Manuela Ferreira Leite, PSD leader between 2008 and 2010).

7. The age groups used in the sample are those used in the MAPP questionnaire.

8. This data is available in Anuário Estatístico de Portugal at: http://www.ine.pt/xportal/xmain?xpid=INE&xpgid=ine_destaques&DESTAQUESdest_boui=152793568&DESTAQUEStema=55445&DESTAQUESmodo=2

9. The data refer to the last quarter of 2012 and were taken from Síntese Estatística do Emprego Público, at: http://www.dgap.gov.pt/index.cfm?OBJID=da5b5dbb-6ace-4d45-9a10-315cedc919b8.

10. This divergence may be, at least partially, explained by the fact that this was the question with the smallest percentage of answers in the case of the CDS-PP (only 1,286 answers were validated), suggesting some reluctance by respondents to indicate their work sector.

11. The main trade union (CGTP) has been strongly associated with the politics of the communist party, while both PS and PSD have fostered participation of their members in the UGT. However, none of these organisations have a formal connection with party organisations.

12. This result is based on the respondents' assessment of these categories. They may not be fully confirmed by social praxis, i.e. the unimportance of the family context is belied by the relationship between parents' membership and that of the respondents.

13. Especially party obligations, such as paying dues and active participation in party activities.

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RESUMO

Filiação Partidária e Ativismo em uma Nova Democracia: Evidências do Caso Português

Embora a análise de modelos partidários e tipos de composição partidária tenham sido amplamente discutidas em nível teórico, a pesquisa empírica sobre o tema não atraiu atenção semelhante. Este estudo contribui para preencher esta lacuna examinando um caso pouco estudado, nomeadamente os membros dos partidos políticos portugueses. O objetivo central deste artigo é contribuir para o estudo do ativismo e engajamento partidário, em uma perspectiva comparativa, considerando diferentes tipos de partidos. A pesquisa foi baseada em um questionário on-line conduzido pela rede de pesquisa MAPP (Members and Activists of Political Parties). O conjunto de dados incluiu membros de várias legendas, desde dos tradicionais catch-all parties (PS - Partido Socialista; PSD - Partido Social Democrata) até partidos de elite (CDS-PP - Partido Social-Democrata Centro-Popular), bem como partidos de "movimento" (BE - Bloco Esquerdo; LIVRE). O estudo abrange quatro dimensões principais de filiação partidária: perfil sóciodemográfico dos membros do partido, atitudes ideológicas, razões para ingressar no partido e níveis e tipos de ativismo. Mostramos que a filiação partidária em Portugal segue tendências semelhantes a outras democracias europeias avançadas, embora com diferenças importantes entre os partidos. Estes resultados são um importante barômetro para medir a qualidade da democracia, especialmente em uma tão jovem quanto a de Portugal.

Palavras-chave: filiação partidária, ativismo, partidos políticos, representação política

ABSTRACT

Party Membership and Activism in a New Democracy: Evidence from the Portuguese Case

While the analysis of party models and types of party members has been widely discussed at the theoretical level, empirical research has not attracted similar attention. This study contributes to filling this gap by examining an understudied case, namely party members in Portuguese political parties. The key objective of this article is to make a contribution to the study of activism and dedication to the party, in a comparative perceptive, considering different types of parties. The survey applied was based on an on-line questionnaire conducted within the MAPP (Members and Activists of Political Parties)

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research network. The dataset included members of several parties ranging from typical catch-all parties (PS - Socialist Party; PSD - Social Democratic Party) to elite-based types (CDS-PP - Social Democratic Centre-Popular Party), as well as 'movement' party types (BE - Left Bloc; LIVRE). The study covers four main dimensions of party membership: party members' socio-demographic profile, ideological attitudes, reasons for joining the party, and activism levels and types. We show that party membership in Portugal follows similar trends to other advanced European democracies, albeit with important differences between parties. These results are an important barometer for measuring the quality of democracy, especially one as young as Portugal's.

Key words: party membership, activism, political parties, political representation

RÉSUMÉ

Appartenance Partidaire et Activisme dans une Nouvelle Democratie : le Cas Portugais

Bien que l'analyse des modèles de parti et des types de membres du parti ont été largement discutée au niveau théorique, la recherche empirique n'a pas attiré une attention similaire. Cette étude contribue à combler cette lacune en examinant une affaire peu étudiée, à savoir les membres de partis politiques portugais. L'objectif principal de cet article est de contribuer à l'étude de l'activisme et du dévouement envers le parti, de façon perceptive, en tenant compte des différents types de partis. L'enquête appliquée reposait sur un questionnaire en ligne mené au sein du réseau de recherche MAPP (Membres et Militants des Partis Politiques). Le jeu de données comprenait des membres de plusieurs partis allant des typiques catch-all parties (PS - Parti socialiste; PSD - Parti social démocrate) aux types à base d'élite (CDS-PP - Parti populaire social-démocrate), en passant par le type 'mouvement' (BE - Bloc de gauche; LIVRE). L'étude couvre quatre dimensions principales de l'appartenance à un parti : le profil sociodémographique des membres, les attitudes idéologiques, les raisons pour lesquelles ils adhèrent au parti et les niveaux et types d'activisme. Nous montrons que l'appartenance à un parti au Portugal suit des tendances similaires à celles d'autres démocraties européennes avancées, avec toutefois des différences importantes entre les partis. Ces résultats constituent un baromètre important pour mesurer la qualité de la démocratie, en particulier si jeune que celle du Portugal.

Mots-clés: appartenance à un parti, activisme, partis politiques, représentation politique

RESUMEN

Afiliación partidaria y activismo en jóvenes democracias: evidencias del caso portugués

Aunque el análisis de los modelos de partido, así como de los tipos de miembros, se ha discutido ampliamente a nivel teórico, la investigación empírica respecto al tema no ha atraído la misma atención. Este estudio contribuye a llenar este vacío al examinar un caso poco estudiado: los miembros de partido en partidos políticos portugueses. Nuestro objetivo es hacer una contribución al estudio del activismo y el involucramiento con el partido, en una clave comparativa, considerando distintos tipos de partidos. La encuesta aplicada se basó en un cuestionario en línea realizado dentro de la red de investigación MAPP (Miembros y Activistas de Partidos Políticos). El conjunto de datos incluyó miembros de varios partidos que van desde los típicos partidos catch-all (PS - Partido Socialista; PSD - Partido Socialdemócrata) hasta los tipos de base de élite (CDS-PP - Centro Demócrata-Popular-Partido Social), así como los partidos 'movimiento' (BE - Bloque izquierdo; LIVRE). El estudio cubre cuatro dimensiones principales de la pertenencia al partido: perfil sociodemográfico de los miembros del partido; actitudes ideológicas; razones para unirse al partido y; niveles y tipos de activismo. Demostramos que la pertenencia a partidos en Portugal sigue tendencias similares a otras democracias europeas avanzadas, aunque con diferencias importantes entre los partidos. Estos resultados son un importante 'barómetro' para medir la calidad de la democracia, especialmente en un caso tan joven como el de Portugal.

Palabras clave: pertenencia partidaria, activismo, partidos politicos, representación política

RESUMEN

Afiliación partidaria y activismo en jóvenes democracias: evidencias del caso portugués

Aunque el análisis de los modelos de partido, así como de los tipos de miembros, se ha discutido ampliamente a nivel teórico, la investigación empírica respecto al tema no ha atraído la misma atención. Este estudio contribuye a llenar este vacío al examinar un caso poco estudiado: los miembros de partido en partidos políticos portugueses. Nuestro objetivo es hacer una contribución al estudio del activismo y el involucramiento con el partido, en una clave comparativa, considerando distintos tipos de partidos. La encuesta aplicada se basó en un cuestionario en línea realizado dentro de la red de investigación MAPP (Miembros y Activistas de Partidos Políticos). El conjunto de datos incluyó miembros de varios partidos que van desde los típicos partidos catch-all (PS - Partido Socialista; PSD - Partido Socialdemócrata) hasta los tipos de base de élite (CDS-PP - Centro Demócrata-Popular-Partido Social), así como los partidos 'movimiento' (BE - Bloque izquierdo; LIVRE). El estudio cubre cuatro dimensiones principales de la pertenencia al partido: perfil sociodemográfico de los miembros del partido; actitudes ideológicas; razones para unirse al partido y; niveles y tipos de activismo. Demostramos que la pertenencia a partidos en Portugal sigue tendencias similares a otras democracias europeas avanzadas, aunque con diferencias importantes entre los partidos. Estos resultados son un importante 'barómetro' para medir la calidad de la democracia, especialmente en un caso tan joven como el de Portugal.

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