
Non-technical Summary

As we already mentioned in the first section of this report, in accordance with the research proposal, the project “*Testing economic theories of electoral behavior in the Romanian context*” aimed to test the *Calculus of voting*, *Expressive voting*, *Pure altruistic voting* and *Worm-glow altruistic voting* using a lab – experimental design. This quantitative approach was not the only method. The project is characterized by a mixed-method approach because of the connection between the experimental design and focus – groups. Regarding the latter, the qualitative part’s outcomes are represented by a total of four focus groups.

- The first one is the Focus Group for the Pilot Experiment held in 22.06.2015 at the National University of Political and Administrative Studies (SNSPA). This focus group reunited six participants (students) at the Pilot Experiment for an in – depth review over the experimental design. The importance of this Focus Group resides in the possibility of improving the experimental design by understanding the problems that appeared in the Pilot. As an immediate result of this Focus – Group the Principle Investigators and the Research Assistants proposed a new experimental design which has been used in further sessions (Exp_02 – Exp_19). Finally, the 1st Focus Group had a length of 95 minutes and had been moderated by the research assistants who had previous experience in Focus-Group moderation, supervised by the main researchers.
- The second Focus Group was held in 23.07.2015 at the National University of Political and Administrative Studies (SNSPA) which reunited seven participants. Those were not students they were professionals (legal adviser, assistant manager, call-center operator, IT&C operator, educator, etc.). The participants were chosen using on-line announcements offline flyers distribution. The importance of this Focus Group is represented by the in – depth focus on the participants’ (voters’) previous real – life experience, enquiring about having chosen to go and vote or to refrain from voting in different electoral context from past elections – under different types of elections, with different stakes and different degrees of competitiveness. The 2nd Focus Group had a length of 125 minutes and had been moderated by the research assistants who had previous experience, supervised by the main researchers.
- The third and fourth Focus-Groups reunited 6 (for the 3rd FG) and 14 (for the 4th FG – 21.11.2015) students who participated at the experiment. Those Focus – Groups had been held after the 4th and 8th Experimental sessions and their purpose was to test the participants’ interest and involvement in the experimental design. Moreover, we have tested their involvement through the post-experimental questionnaire. Both Focus-Groups had a length of 25-30 minutes.

Regarding the quantitative part of the project's methodology, the project aimed to develop an experimental design that will distinguish from the previous designs in the literature, trying to present clear differences between theories (by varying costs, participant's position, etc.). Before starting to popularize the experiment's call for participants, the project presupposed a Pilot experimental session. After a pilot session with students, the experimental design was redefined.

The other part of the quantitative approach consisted in 18 experimental sessions that had been used for the written papers (which will be presented in the 3rd section of this Report). These sessions were organized into one of the University's IT lab using Z-Tree software. The total number of participants at the experimental sessions is 153. All the participants are students in social sciences from the Faculty of Political Sciences, Faculty of Public Administration, Faculty of Communication and Public Relations, Faculty of Management (National University of Political and Administrative Studies) and Faculty of Business Administration (University of Bucharest). They were selected using a pre-experimental questionnaire which asked for their position on some policies in order to determine their ideological position on a 100 points scale. The electoral setting designed offered a choice between two parties, A and B, positioned at $A=\{25\}$ and $B=\{75\}$. The positions of the parties were fixed throughout the electoral rounds. Each participant played 48 rounds, receiving a payment at the end of the experimental session on a single round which was selected randomly. The minimum payment (the show-up fee) was 10 RON (approx. 2,5\$), and the maximum was 50 RON (approx. 12\$), depending on the points that each participant won in the selected round. Each participant faced a voting decision every round in which some variables were manipulated: the participant's position on the scale, the cost of voting and the distribution of votes. Each participant knew that she was part of an electorate amounting to 1001 fictional voters in total. At the beginning of each electoral round, she was informed that 900 other people have already voted and that she will vote or abstain simultaneously with the other 100 people remaining. She also knew the actual distribution of the 900 votes, which could take 2 different forms: (1) 399 for A and 501 for B or (2) 425 for A and 475 for B). Moreover, another distribution was used: the participant knew all the other 1000 people already voted in the following manner: (3) 500 voted for A and 500 voted for B.

Regarding the research results and implications, after conducting and analyzing all the data, the three most important factors driving the vote choice are cost, the assigned position and the distribution. In addition, an increase in costs increases the probability of abstention and decreases the probability of voting for A or B, regardless of the distribution. Although slim, there is also some support for the altruist alternative. Furthermore, since the probability of voting A are lower for the first two distributions, when the participants are not decisive, the support for altruist is slim, since according to both altruism models, participants with leftist positions should always vote A regardless of the distribution. Choosing to abstain when not being decisive is more consistent with the calculus of voting than with the rest of the models.

In conclusion of this section, the project outcomes are presented in the table below.

Outcome	Number
Focus Group	4
Participants at Focus Groups	33
Focus Group's transcript	2
Pilot Experiment	1
Experimental design	1
Experimental sessions	18
Participants at experimental sessions	153
Pre-experimental questionnaire	1
Post-experimental questionnaire	1
Results database	1
Database codebook	1
Research papers	2
Papers submitted to international Conferences (proofs are offered in the next pages)	2
Papers accepted to international Conferences	2
Workshops organized	1
Papers which will be presented at a Conference (ECPR) – details attached	1

2. Paper(s) written

- a. Public Choice Models of Electoral Turnout: An Experimental Study
- b. Expressive Voting and Fake Charity: Testing Two Models of Non-Instrumental Voting