

The Effects of the Economic Crisis in the Political Culture of Elderly People: Spain as a Case Study

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Abstract:

This paper analyses the political culture of elderly people before and after the 2008-2009 financial crisis in Spain. Political behavior and political interest may be considered as a positive aspect in the development of active ageing. However, elderly people in Spain have not been very active in politics, despite the freedoms and political changes developed under the 1978 Constitution. Thus, older people appear to be relegated in the political arena. However there are symptoms of change in the elderly people's political culture, due to the consequences of the economic and financial crisis. Hence, the paper delves into the analysis of the political culture of the elderly people in Spain since 2008.

The Political Culture in Spain: Elderly People as a Subculture.

This paper tries to understand how the financial crisis and the economic changes have affected elderly people in terms of their political attitudes. In other words, how the financial crisis has changed their political behavior, their political understanding and their feelings about the inputs and outputs of the political system. That is to say, the paper will try to answer to the following questions: What do they think about politics now? How do they participate in politics? Which is their involvement and implication in the development of the societies they belong to? In fact, the key point is to determine if there are or not important changes in their political culture due to the crisis. In the

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research, it will be considered all people over 65 (normal retirement age in Spain), and it will refer to them generically as "elder" or "elderly". The premise is that their interest and participation in public life is a good example of active aging and therefore, could stimulate and improve the quality of the representation of people older than 65.

Age is one of the basic structural features of reference for the study of the changes in any society or group (Riley, 1987, 1-14). However, traditionally, studies focusing on the elderly in Spain, under the name of gerontology, depart from the scope of the Health Sciences, on one hand, and human geography on the other. There are very few studies that have examined these issues and generally, they are more wide-ranging in scope and examine the social not political participation of older people. Accordingly, this investigation is located within the few research projects of Social Sciences. This is the main reason why it is important to explore the issue of the political culture of elderly people in Spain. but there is also another reason for driving the research: the importance of the older people, as "grey power" in terms of the volume of the electorate they represent in our country, one of the most aged in Europe.

The political culture is a concept closely related to political interest and participation of citizens in it. Namely, as defined by Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba (1965, 15), political culture is a collective attribute of the societies, formed by three variables: 1) the cognitive dimension (what the citizens know about the political system); an affective dimension (how citizens feel about political objects); and 3) and evaluative dimension (how citizens value the political system as a whole).

In Spain, for instance, as Jorge Benedicto (1995, 2007) and M^a Luz Morán (1999) point, the most salient features of the political culture of the country are:

- 1) The adult political resocialization on democratic values. This socialization occurs on the basis of motivation, disinformation and political apathy of Francoism, although for several years before the transition it is already perceived a preponderance of favorable attitudes to democratic political transition.
- 2) The speed with which the Spaniards take democratic values, in line with its neighbors in the Western democracies.
- 3) Homogenization and patterns of moderation. This is, all Spaniards have very similar patterns of political culture, to which the tendency to moderate patterns of ideological self-identification and political behavior is added, though a majority inclination towards the center-left, with the less conservative electorate EU.
- 4) The Spanish political system has a high degree of legitimacy from the beginning of the transition, despite which there is a very negative assessment of governance, so that the authors speak of "rapid disenchantment" of Spaniards with the political reality.
- 5) Spaniard's limited knowledge in the political system, with a rather general attitude towards political passivity. In this sense, Benedicto and Morán highlight the existence of a very poor sense of political competition from Spanish citizens, the leading to a thesis on the "*political cynicism*" (Benedicto and Moran, 1995, 22-25) of Spaniards, given its very low adherence to political institutions in general, despite the high degree of legitimacy of democracy.

- 6) The variables that seem to make the biggest differences are gender and level of education first, followed by age. Hence they point out the existence of subcultures that meet these broad lines of division of the Spanish society.

Accordingly, this paper will delve into one of these subcultures: the elder people in Spain. That is, in view of the general features of the Spanish political culture, already described, the paper will focus on the characteristic attributes of the subgroup of the elderly, in order to verify if there is a subculture of the people over 65, if it has been maintained or strengthened in time, or whether, on the contrary, the general pattern of the rest of the Spanish breed is reproduced, not being the variable age decisive to talk about a subculture.

Quantitative data which are used are taken entirely from Databank of the Spanish Research Center of Sociology (*Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas*, CIS), and reference works published in the REIS Journal of Sociological Research. The analysis intended is primarily diachronic and it will address, as above-mentioned, the political culture of people over 65 years from the first studies to recent barometers 2013. Therefore, it is a study at the aggregate level, which integrates a path analysis by age cohorts, together with the measurement of change or continuity in the values related to interest and political participation.

Elderly People's Political Culture in the Eighties and Nineties.

Studies on the political culture of elderly people date mainly from the eighties and nineties. Prior to these decades it is hardly to find literature in Spanish. In this respect, one can cite the works by José M^a Maravall (1982, Juan J. Linz and José Ramón Montero (1986), Rafael López Pintor (1987), J.R. Montero and Mariano Torcal (1990), Manuel Justel (1992), or María Teresa Bazo (1992, 1996).

In the eighties, the dominant note of the Spanish society was the claim of profound changes in society. For example, in 1985, 49% of people between 46 and 65 years, and 39% of people over 65 years indicated that society needed deep reforms (see the study of the CIS number 1461). Equally an adult political resocialization occurs in a democratic political culture (Maravall, 1982), in all ages, as shown in the following table.

Table 1. Changing attitudes and political opinions. 1980-1989. Percentage (%)

Attitudes and political opinions (*)	Adult population (18-60)			Over 60 years		
	1980	1989	Diffe.	1980	1989	Diffe.
1. INFORMATION AND POLÍTICAL COMPETITION						
1.1. Political information	24	31	+7%	10	18	+8%
1.2. Political competition	22	36	+14%	11	22	+11%
2. WILLINGNESS TO PARTICIPATE IN POLITICS						
2.1. Sign a petition	69	75	+6%	46	60	+14%
2.2. Participate in a strike	48	65	+17%	21	45	+24%
2.3. Participate in a peaceful demonstration	58	65	+7%	31	45	+14%
2.4. Occupy buildings or factories	16	26	+10%	5	15	+10%
3. PERCEPTION OF VOTING AS A CIVIC DUTY						
3. PERCEPTION OF VOTING AS A CIVIC DUTY	58	61	+3%	55	55	+3%
4. OPINIONS ON POLITICAL PARTIES						
4.1. Channels for the advocacy						

of the group or class	54	67	+13%	35	53	+18%
4.2. Channels of political participation	52	62	+10%	33	51	+18%
5. VOTING INTENTION TO LEFT PARTIES	29	33	+4%	17	27	+10%
6. POSITION THEMSELVES ON THE LEFT (positions 1 to 4 on the scale of CIS)	33	34	+1%	16	23	+7%

Source: Compiled from the data of JUSTEL, Manuel (1992, 71). Data are taken from CIS studies (study 1.237 for 1980 and study 1.788 for 1989).

(*) Note:

- *Political information*: percentage of people very or fairly aware of what happens in politics.
- *Political competition*: percentage of people who disagree with the statement "sometimes politics is so complicated that people like me cannot understand what is happening".
- *Willingness to participate in politics*: Figures are percentages approving each of the described forms of political participation, defined as "actions that people performed to protest or make known their opinion on an issue".
- *Opinions on political parties*: percentage stating that this perception moves them to vote.
- *Diffe.* (Difference, percentage of change)

In general, although there is not much political information, with time, the volume of people who claim to be aware of what happens in politics increases. While elder people are the most uninformed (10% in 1980 and 18% in 1989 claimed to follow political news, compared with 24% and 31% of the adult population, respectively). In parallel, competition policy rates by age show that, in the eighties there were more people who did not understand politics than people who expressed to understand it, primarily as population age advances. Nevertheless, between 1980 and 1989, it can be identified an increase of 14% in the sense of political competition among the adult population and 11% among those over 60 years.

All in all, it should be added that, in time, decays interest in politics (in 1980, 25% of Spaniards was interested in the subject, compared to 19% in 1989) and increases boredom (rising from 12% to 28 % on the same dates). Thus, in general, it can be noted that there were very few citizens who expressed to be excited with politics (just 4% in

1989), being, however, boredom, indifference and distrust values that prevailed (Morán and Benedicto 1995, 50).

Moreover, from the perspective of political participation, in the eighties, the majority of respondents are inclined to carry on activities which imply a less personal involvement, as collecting signatures or peaceful demonstrations, followed by participation in strikes, and from much more distance, the occupation of factories or buildings. In all cases, those over 60 years are more reluctant than young people to participate in politics, the result, as it is obvious, from the experienced political passivity during Francoism.

From the point of view of the perception of voting as a civic duty, more than half of Spaniards understand and assume that duty. Small differences are appreciated in time and among groups of respondents, so cohort's age variables are not determinative in this case. Age differences occur, then in other fields, such as views on political parties, voting intention for leftist parties or ideological self-placement of respondents.

As referred to the intention to vote for leftist parties, people over 60 years are less likely (17% in 1980 and 27% in 1989) than the rest of the population (29% in 1980 and 33% in 1989) to vote for these parties, but here there is also a major transformation and evolution over time, probably due to the socialist victory of 1982, leading to experience in fact of the socialist management. The same applies to the ideological self-placement to the left. This is, elder people are more conservative, as stated in the topic, but in the Spanish case, democracy exerts major evolutionary changes in the features of its political culture, as a result of adult political resocialization on democratic values.

Not many Changes in the Nineties: A Passive Political Culture among the Elderly

Regarding the nineties, it is noted that the establishment of democracy in time has not generated patterns of political behavior and exciting attitudes towards the political phenomena, as in the nineties the political disinterest and apathy continues. However, it is a majority view that democracy is preferable to any form of government and also that democratic attitude consolidates over time - from 50% in 1980 to 80% in 1990- (CIS Databases: study 1.237 (1980) and study 1.908 (1990)). Nevertheless, it is also a majority view that our democracy has flaws, being young people slightly more critical (and people with less education), than the block of over 65 years (and the people with more education).

Also, as a general feature of the nineties, it may be also stated the existence of an electorate tending more to the center-left than to the center-right. So, in 1999, there are found similar values to those of 1995, 1990 or the eighties. By age, young people are more inclined to the left than those over 65, but no significant differences were observed. Specifically, in January 1999 Barometer, the average self-placement of respondents over 65 years was 5.23, this is, elder people were at the center (being the national average, 4.85 points).

Table 2. Political self-placement from the left wing (1-2 values) to the right wing (v9-10 values). Percentage (%). 1999.

	18- 24 years	25- 34 years	35- 44 years	45-54 years	55-64 years	65and above	N.A.	TOTAL	(N)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	
Left (1-2)	6.9	3.7	5.8	4.4	4.8	3.3	.	4.7	(118)

	18- 24 years	25- 34 years	35- 44 years	45-54 years	55-64 years	65and above	N.A.	TOTAL	(N)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	
(3-4)	27.1	28.8	33.2	29.6	21.5	21.4	.	27.0	(671)
(5-6)	29.0	31.4	31.1	34.3	29.6	27.2	50.0	30.3	(755)
(7-8)	10.1	10.8	8.4	10.2	12.1	15.8	.	11.3	(282)
Right (9-10)	1.1	1.0	0.9	1.7	5.1	1.9	.	1.8	(45)
DK.	20.2	14.2	11.4	9.4	14.8	20.3	50.0	15.2	(379)
N.C.	5.6	10.1	9.1	10.5	12.1	10.2	.	9.6	(238)
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	(2488)

NA: No answer

DK: Don't know

Source: *Barómetro* January 1999. CIS study number 2316

http://www.cis.es/cis/opencm/es/2_bancodatos/estudios/ver.jsp?estudio=1305

Overall, it can be stated, therefore, that an homogeneity in ideological self-placement of Spaniards is seen. This self-placement is reformist and aiming at progressivism, with light differentiated features in the group over 65 years, on which an openness trend, fruit of the adult political resocialization, would have also penetrated.

The Political Culture of Spanish Elderly People from year 2000

After the nineties, interest of elderly people in politics remains low. About 3% of those over 65 years would be very interested in political issues, in year 2000. While more than 70% have low or no interest, as seen in the following table. Notwithstanding which, in other group ages low political interest is remarkable, as it was already mentioned, it is a common feature to all Spaniards, regardless of age or sex. Only educational level accentuate this interest, although not significantly.

Table 3. Interest in politics. Percentages (%). 2000.

Interest	People over 65 years (Average value)	Other ages				+65 years	
		65-74 years	+75 years			Men	Women
Much	3.1	3.5	2.4	3.7	3.6	2.7	
Quite	15.4	16.6	13.0	21.1	19.7	12.4	
Little	27.5	28.4	25.7	40.1	31.8	24.5	
Nothing	53.9	51.5	58.9	34.9	44.9	60.4	
(N*)	(1129)	(752)	(377)	(4154)	(468)	(661)	

Source: Compiled from CIS studies number 2.382 and 2.384, February and March-April 2000, available at CIS Database website www.cis.es

(N*): Number of people interviewed

Table 4. Interest in politics for people over 65 years according to the educational level. Percentage (%). 2000.

Interest	Educational Level			
	Illiterate or lower primary studies	Primary Studies	Secondary Studies	University Studies
Much	3.1	3.0	7.2	13.8
Quite	15.4	16.4	27.5	39.7
Little	27.5	28.5	31.9	19.0
Nothing	53.9	52.0	33.3	27.6
(N)	(1129)	(663)	(69)	(58)

Source: Compiled from study number 2382, CIS, February 2000, available at CIS Database website www.cis.es

(N*): Number of people interviewed

Elder people with university education would be the most informed and interested in political issues (13'8% say they are very concerned and very interested 39.7%), which also fits with what happens in the case of other age subgroups. However there are few elder people with college or high school studies.

Therefore, the level of education variable is a key factor in the political understanding and interest in the political *input* and *output*. Along with this variable, socioeconomic status of elder people is also emerging as another key explanation that would determine the political culture of the elderly. Here an example: in the CIS study (number 2.382)

from year 2000, people over 65 who more motivated by political issues belonged to the upper middle class (15.2% is very interested and 33.3% are quite interested), although it should be noted that this is a very reduced class group.

Table 5. Interest in politics for people over 65 years according to the socio-economic level. Percentage (%). 2000.

Interest	High-medium class	Medium class	Low-medium class	Low class
Much	15.2	3.0	3.0	2.8
Quite	33.3	17.1	14.7	13.2
Little	15.2	29.0	27.2	28.5
Nothing	36.4	50.9	55.0	55.6
(N)	(33)	(503)	(367)	(144)

Source: Compiled from study number 2382, CIS, February 2000

(N*): Number of people interviewed

In any case, ignorance and lack of interest by major political issues is high, in consonance with what happens in other age cohorts, being, therefore, education, the variable marking, in first place the differences among Spaniards followed, secondly, by gender variable.

If we compare the data with the interest in politics of the elders in Europe, for instance, we can say that Spanish elders are less interested than elderly people from many other countries, such as Denmark, Germany, Switzerland, and the Netherlands, which are the countries with the highest rates of political interest among elderly people. On the contrary, the less interested are Spain, Portugal, Croatia and the Czech Republic (E.

Barrio and T. Sancho 2010, 265-325)

Table 6. Interest in politics for people over 65 years in Europe. Percentage (%). 2008.

	Much	Quite	Little	Nothing
Total	14,6	37,0	27,6	20,7
Belgium	11,3	36,2	28,6	24,0
Bulgaria	18,5	39,3	23,9	18,3
Switzerland	21,4	47,8	24,3	6,5

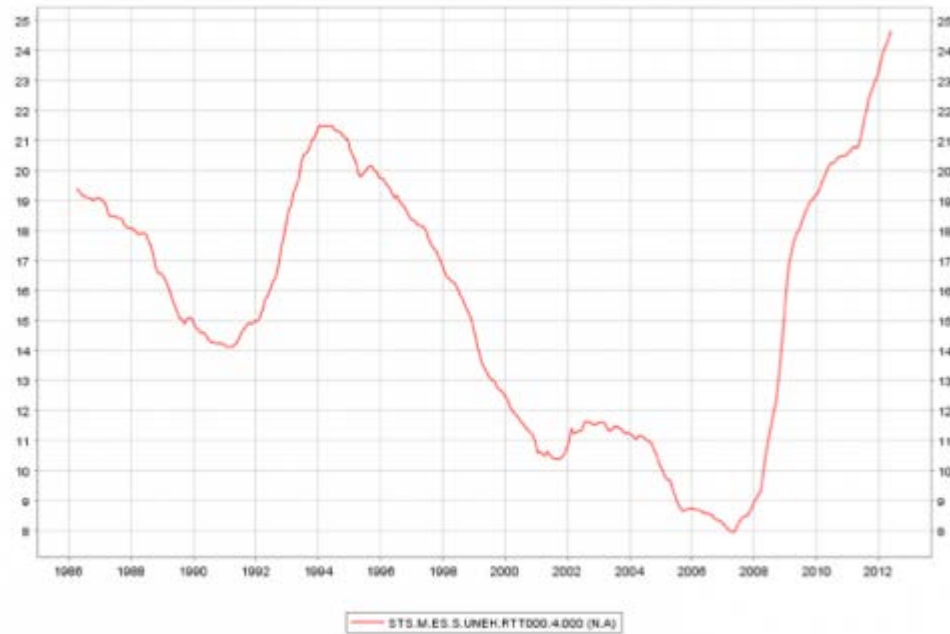
Ciprus	19,0	32,9	27,1	21,0
Czech Republic	4,2	29,2	43,7	22,8
Germany	27,7	43,7	22,6	6,0
Denmark	23,2	52,1	21,0	3,7
Estonia	12,0	42,7	29,9	15,5
Spain	3,1	14,0	33,1	49,8
Finland	11,2	39,4	34,8	14,7
France	16,5	35,6	31,0	16,9
United Kingdom	17,6	44,7	23,2	14,5
Greece	10,6	32,6	35,3	21,5
Croatia	9,6	23,1	27,1	40,2
Hungary	11,8	29,0	30,1	29,0
Israel	19,9	35,6	22,6	22,0
Latvia	8,3	43,1	38,8	9,9
Netherlands	13,8	53,8	22,5	9,9
Norway	12,3	46,2	36,8	4,7
Poland	10,1	35,0	30,4	24,5
Portugal	5,2	17,9	28,3	48,6
Rumania	8,4	35,1	29,1	27,4
Rusia	12,0	37,0	30,8	20,2
Sweden	17,0	45,0	29,4	8,5
Eslovenia	10,5	45,1	30,2	14,2
Eslovaquia	9,5	40,7	32,7	17,2
Turkey	4,6	30,4	12,9	52,2
Ucrania	17,4	44,8	26,7	11,1

Source: European Social Survey, 2008, in table 6.39 at BARRIO TRUCHADO, Elena and M^a Teresa, SANCHO CASTIELLOS, "Vida cotidiana, valores, actitudes y la experiencia de envejecer" en IMSERSO, *Informe 2010. Las personas mayores en España*, tomo I, Observatorio de Personas Mayores del Imsero, 2010, pp. 265-325, available at http://www.imsero.es/InterPresent1/groups/imsero/documents/binario/22023_inf2010pm_v1.pdf

The Impact of the Economic Crisis on the Political Culture of the Elderly

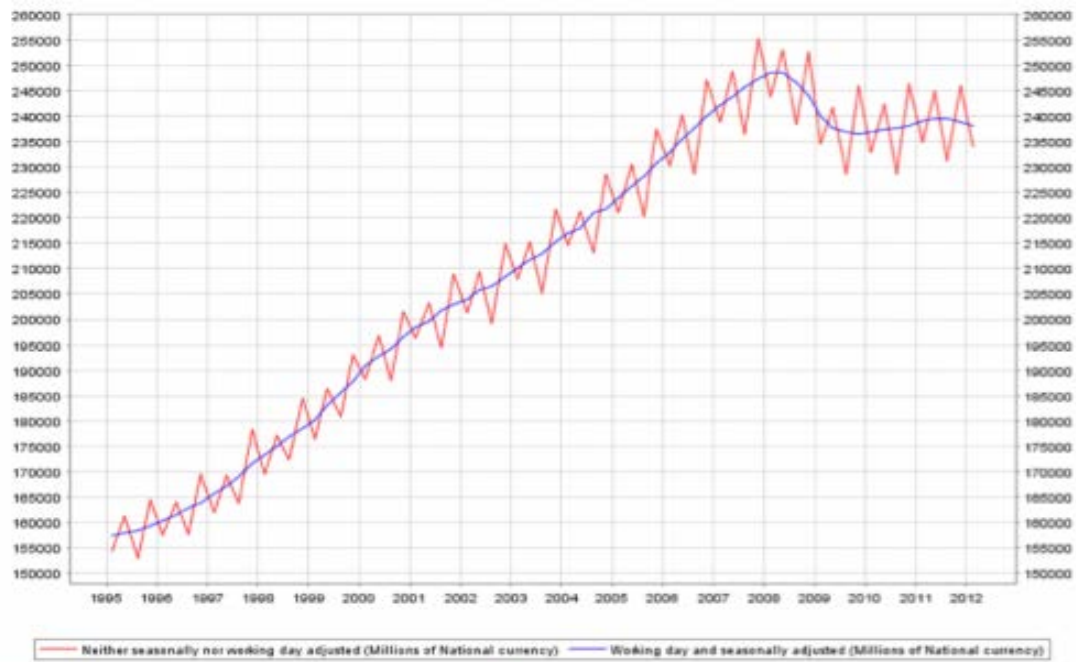
During the 1990s and early 2000s, Spain enjoyed rapid economic growth. However, in 2008, Spain was badly affected by the global credit crisis. The Spanish property market collapsed leading to a deep recession that we are still struggling to recover from (see figures 1, 2 and 3).

Figure 1. Unemployment in Spain



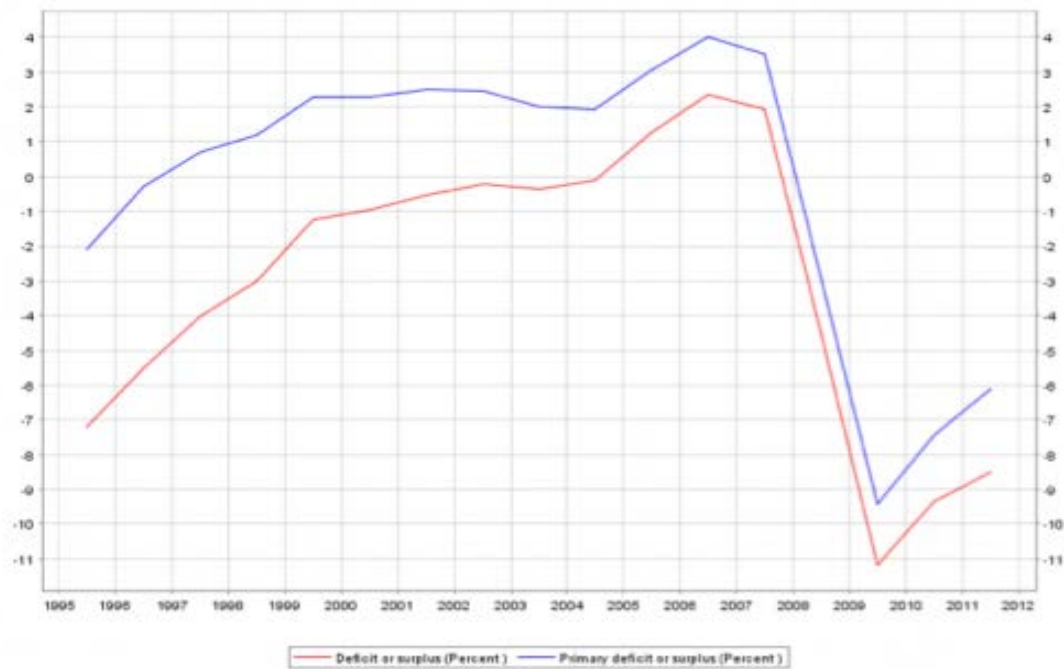
Source: Statistical Office of the European Commission (Eurostat), <http://sdw.ecb.europa.eu>

Figure 2. Spanish Nominal GDP



Source (all series) : European Commission (Eurostat) and European Central Bank calculations based on Eurostat data

Figure 3. Budget deficit in Spain



Source: Statistical Office of the European Commission (Eurostat), <http://sdw.ecb.europa.eu>

The Data of 2009: No changes in political culture

In barometer April 2009, there are not great changes in terms of political culture, because the Spaniards were not fully aware of the crisis, due to the fact that the President Mr. José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero denied it constantly during the 2008 electoral campaign (Rodríguez Herranz 2008) and after winning the elections (Paramio 2009, Buesa 2010). As a consequence, many people thought that it was not such a deep crisis and it was a temporary problem.

Hence, along with the traditional political apathy, behavior of Spanish citizens and elder people was not, in consequence, very active. There were not demonstrations against the government's economic management, as it happened in Greece or in Portugal, for

instance. Even the labor unions did not protest, despite the crisis. That is to say, patterns of political behavior of Spaniards usually remain in the conventional (voting) and it is unusual that people participate in other activities, such as collecting signatures, boycotts to certain products or strikes, as seen in CIS barometer of April 2009.

Table 7a. Level of participation in political activities. Percentage (%). 2009

Type of political activities		Did you take part last year in these activities?	Have you ever taken part in any of these activities?	I have never taken part in these activities	N.A.	TOTAL (N)
		%	%	%	%	
Signing a petition	18-24 years	27.7	22.3	50.0	.	(242)
	25-34 years	30.1	30.7	39.2	.	(518)
	35-44 years	29.3	31.2	39.1	0.4	(481)
	45-54 years	27.7	34.8	36.7	0.7	(411)
	55-64 years	19.0	33.9	46.8	0.3	(327)
	65 and over	10.4	24.2	65.0	0.4	(500)
	N.A.	.	.	100.0	.	(2)
	TOTAL	23.9	29.7	46.1	0.3	(2481)
Buying certain goods for political, ethical or environmental reasons	18-24 years	16.9	4.1	78.9	.	(242)
	25-34 years	26.8	10.6	62.4	0.2	(518)
	35-44 years	23.9	11.0	64.2	0.8	(481)
	45-54 years	21.9	10.9	66.7	0.5	(411)
	55-64 years	15.3	10.4	74.0	0.3	(327)
	65 and over	6.4	4.6	88.6	0.4	(500)
	N.A.	.	.	100.0	.	(2)
	TOTAL	18.8	8.9	71.9	0.4	(2481)
Boycotting	18-24 years	14.5	4.1	81.0	0.4	(242)

Type of political activities		Did you take part last year in these activities?	Have you ever taken part in any of these activities?	I have never taken part in these activities	N.A.	TOTAL (N)
		%	%	%	%	
certain goods for political, ethical or environmental reasons	25-34 years	22.6	8.9	68.1	0.4	(518)
	35-44 years	20.6	9.8	68.8	0.8	(481)
	45-54 years	17.5	10.0	70.3	2.2	(411)
	55-64 years	14.1	10.4	74.9	0.6	(327)
	65 and over	6.0	4.2	89.2	0.6	(500)
	N.A.	.	.	100.0	.	(2)
	TOTAL	16.1	8.0	75.1	0.8	(2481)
Participation in a strike	18-24 years	15.3	24.8	59.9	.	(242)
	25-34 years	9.7	32.8	56.6	1.0	(518)
	35-44 years	8.9	32.6	57.4	1.0	(481)
	45-54 years	7.5	37.5	54.5	0.5	(411)
	55-64 years	3.4	32.1	63.9	0.6	(327)
	65 and over	0.6	16.8	82.0	0.6	(500)
	N.A.	.	50.0	50.0	.	(2)
	TOTAL	7.1	29.5	62.8	0.7	(2481)
Participation in a peaceful demonstration	18-24 years	20.7	26.9	52.5	.	(242)
	25-34 years	14.3	39.0	46.7	.	(518)
	35-44 years	15.2	41.2	42.8	0.8	(481)
	45-54 years	15.3	42.3	41.8	0.5	(411)
	55-64 years	9.5	40.4	49.5	0.6	(327)
	65 and over	3.4	25.6	70.4	0.6	(500)
	N.A.	.	50.0	50.0	.	(2)
	TOTAL	12.4	36.3	50.9	0.4	(2481)

Type of political activities		Did you take part last year in these activities?	Have you ever taken part in any of these activities?	I have never taken part in these activities	N.A.	TOTAL (N)
		%	%	%	%	
Going to political meetings and/or following political campaigns	18-24 years	4.1	5.4	89.7	0.8	(242)
	25-34 years	5.2	13.7	80.7	0.4	(518)
	35-44 years	5.8	18.7	73.8	1.7	(481)
	45-54 years	7.8	24.8	65.9	1.5	(411)
	55-64 years	7.3	22.3	68.8	1.5	(327)
	65 and over	3.4	15.0	80.8	0.8	(500)
	N.A.	.	.	100.0	.	(2)
	TOTAL	5.6	17.1	76.3	1.1	(2481)
Making contact with politicians in order to explain them your political opinion	18-24 years	2.5	1.7	95.9	.	(242)
	25-34 years	4.4	4.2	91.1	0.2	(518)
	35-44 years	4.2	6.7	88.1	1.0	(481)
	45-54 years	7.3	7.5	84.4	0.7	(411)
	55-64 years	4.0	8.0	87.5	0.6	(327)
	65 and over	2.0	6.0	91.8	0.2	(500)
	N.A.	.	.	100.0	.	(2)
	TOTAL	4.1	5.8	89.6	0.5	(2481)
Donating or raising funds for social and political activities	18-24 years	3.3	6.6	90.1	.	(242)
	25-34 years	7.7	8.9	83.4	.	(518)
	35-44 years	7.9	11.4	79.8	0.8	(481)
	45-54 years	10.7	10.2	78.6	0.5	(411)
	55-64 years	9.8	8.3	81.3	0.6	(327)
	65 and over	4.6	7.4	87.6	0.4	(500)
	N.A.	.	50.0	50.0	.	(2)

Type of political activities		Did you take part last year in these activities?	Have you ever taken part in any of these activities?	I have never taken part in these activities	N.A.	TOTAL (N)
		%	%	%	%	
	TOTAL	7.5	9.0	83.1	0.4	(2481)
Making contact with the media to express your opinion	18-24 years	0.4	0.8	98.8	.	(242)
	25-34 years	1.4	3.3	95.0	0.4	(518)
	35-44 years	1.7	5.2	92.5	0.6	(481)
	45-54 years	3.4	4.6	91.2	0.7	(411)
	55-64 years	1.8	4.3	93.6	0.3	(327)
	65 and over	0.8	4.4	94.6	0.2	(500)
	N.A.	.	.	100.0	.	(2)
	TOTAL	1.6	4.0	94.0	0.4	(2481)
Participating in political blogs or chats on internet	18-24 years	3.7	1.7	94.2	0.4	(242)
	25-34 years	7.1	1.4	91.1	0.4	(518)
	35-44 years	3.7	2.9	92.3	1.0	(481)
	45-54 years	2.7	1.2	95.4	0.7	(411)
	55-64 years	2.1	1.2	96.3	0.3	(327)
	65 and over	0.6	1.4	97.8	0.2	(500)
	N.A.	.	.	100.0	.	(2)
	TOTAL	3.4	1.7	94.4	0.5	(2481)

NA: No answer

N: Number of people interviewed

Source: CIS, *Barómetro* April 2009. Study number 2798, available at

http://www.cis.es/cis/export/sites/default/-Archivos/Marginales/2780_2799/2798/Cru2798_enlace.html

Within this lack of activity and unconventional political participation, people over 65 are more conservative and less likely to participate in collecting signatures (65% have

never participated , compared to 50 % of young people aged 18 to 24 who has done it), the purchase of certain products for ethical or political reasons (88% of those over 65 do not have never done it), the boycott of certain products (almost 90 % of the elderly has not stopped buying products for ethical or political reasons), participation in strikes (82% of the elderly has not exercised the right to strike ever). Attendance to demonstrations, rallies and to other political meetings are not typical activities for elder people, neither the attempt to contact politicians, donate or raise funds for political reasons, etc. In all these activities the less frequented by all Spanish (regardless of age) is the interaction on the media or blogs, as well as the fundraising (CIS, 2009).

By gender, women are again less active than men in other different political behaviors in addition to voting, although the differences are minimal. For example, in 2009, 45'7% of men had never participated in a signature petition and 46'4% of women had neither done it (CIS, 2009). Hence gender is not a variable that significantly affects the existence of a distinct subgroup. Similarly, neither age results on a very different pattern of behavior in the above-mentioned activities, with two exceptions. Namely, age differences affects in relation to participation in strikes, attendance to demonstrations and, to a lesser extent, to the signatures petition (activities in which most of elder people have not participated, probably because they have had less opportunities to developed his working life under Franco, and thus were demobilized for many years). In other political actions (boycotts, rallies, etc) data both from young and elder people are similar, as what occurs between men and women. These data reveal a widespread apathy and a low level of personal political involvement.

Table 7b. Level of participation in political activities by sex (all ages). Percentage (%). 2009

Type of political activities		Did you take part last year in these activities?	Have you ever taken part in any of these activities?	I have never taken part in these activities	N.A.	TOTAL (N)
		%	%	%	%	
Signing a petition	Men	22.3	31.7	45.7	0.3	(1221)
	Women	25.4	27.9	46.4	0.3	(1260)
	TOTAL	23.9	29.7	46.1	0.3	(2481)
Buying certain goods for political, ethical or environmental reasons	Men	17.5	8.7	73.4	0.4	(1221)
	Women	20.1	9.0	70.5	0.4	(1260)
	TOTAL	18.8	8.9	71.9	0.4	(2481)
Boycotting certain goods for political, ethical or environmental reasons	Men	15.4	7.3	76.5	0.8	(1221)
	Women	16.7	8.7	73.7	0.9	(1260)
	TOTAL	16.1	8.0	75.1	0.8	(2481)
Participation in a strike	Men	7.7	35.1	56.6	0.7	(1221)
	Women	6.4	24.0	68.8	0.7	(1260)
	TOTAL	7.1	29.5	62.8	0.7	(2481)
Participation in a peaceful demonstration	Men	12.8	39.6	47.3	0.4	(1221)
	Women	12.1	33.1	54.4	0.5	(1260)
	TOTAL	12.4	36.3	50.9	0.4	(2481)
Going to political meetings and/or following political campaigns	Men	7.0	20.1	71.8	1.1	(1221)
	Women	4.1	14.2	80.6	1.1	(1260)
	TOTAL	5.6	17.1	76.3	1.1	(2481)
Making contact with politicians in order to explain them your political opinion	Men	4.9	7.3	87.6	0.2	(1221)
	Women	3.3	4.4	91.5	0.7	(1260)
	TOTAL	4.1	5.8	89.6	0.5	(2481)

Type of political activities		Did you take part last year in these activities?	Have you ever taken part in any of these activities?	I have never taken part in these activities	N.A.	TOTAL (N)
		%	%	%	%	
Donating or raising funds for social and political activities	Men	7.6	8.8	83.4	0.2	(1221)
	Women	7.3	9.3	82.9	0.6	(1260)
	TOTAL	7.5	9.0	83.1	0.4	(2481)
Making contact with the media to express your opinion	Men	2.0	5.1	92.7	0.2	(1221)
	Women	1.3	2.9	95.2	0.6	(1260)
	TOTAL	1.6	4.0	94.0	0.4	(2481)
Participating in political blogs or chats on internet	Men	4.3	2.0	93.3	0.4	(1221)
	Women	2.5	1.3	95.5	0.6	(1260)
	TOTAL	3.4	1.7	94.4	0.5	(2481)

NA: No answer

N: Number of people interviewed

Source: CIS, *Barómetro* April 2009. Study number 2798, available at

http://www.cis.es/cis/export/sites/default/-Archivos/Marginales/2780_2799/2798/Cru2798_enlace.html

As a consequence, the 2009 CIS Barometer also reflects the following, for instance: family, work, leisure and friends are the most valued/ emphasized issues for Spaniards, far away from politics, religion or associations. In the case of the elderly, the patterns are similar, this group ranks from 0 to 10 the following aspects of their life: family (9.69), friends (7.80), free time (7.53), work (7.46), religion (6.43) and associations (4.53), and politics (3.49). The differences therefore are that elder people would be more religious than the average of the Spaniards, value more the weight of the family and give a slightly less importance to friends and work (CIS, 2009).

Table 8a. Importance given to the following items (0 means “nothing” and 10 means “very important”). 2009.

		0-1	2-3	4-6	7-8	9-10	DK	NA	Total (N)
		%	%	%	%	%	%	%	
Family	18-24 years	0.4	.	3.3	15.3	81.0	.	.	(242)
	25-34 years	.	0.2	1.2	13.1	85.5	.	.	(518)
	35-44 years	0.2	0.2	0.8	10.0	88.8	.	.	(481)
	45-54 years	1.0	.	2.2	5.6	91.0	.	0.2	(411)
	55-64 years	.	.	1.5	4.9	93.0	0.6	.	(327)
	65 and over	0.2	.	2.0	5.2	92.4	.	0.2	(500)
	N.A.	.	.	.	.	100.0	.	.	(2)
	TOTAL	0.3	0.1	1.7	8.8	89.0	0.1	0.1	(2481)
Friends	18-24 years	0.4	0.4	9.9	33.9	55.4	.	.	(242)
	25-34 years	0.4	0.4	14.1	40.5	44.6	.	.	(518)
	35-44 years	1.0	1.7	17.3	33.5	45.9	0.2	0.4	(481)
	45-54 years	0.2	1.2	18.7	36.7	42.6	0.2	0.2	(411)
	55-64 years	1.5	1.2	19.3	35.8	40.4	0.9	0.9	(327)
	65 and over	1.4	1.4	21.2	33.8	40.0	0.4	1.8	(500)
	N.A.	50.0	.	.	50.0	.	.	.	(2)
	TOTAL	0.9	1.1	17.2	35.9	44.1	0.3	0.6	(2481)
Free time	18-24 years	.	2.5	17.4	40.5	37.6	1.7	0.4	(242)
	25-34 years	0.4	1.2	14.1	41.9	42.3	0.2	.	(518)
	35-44 years	0.6	0.8	18.3	41.8	37.8	0.2	0.4	(481)
	45-54 years	0.5	1.2	21.2	39.4	35.8	1.0	1.0	(411)
	55-64 years	1.5	0.6	24.8	42.8	28.4	1.5	0.3	(327)
	65 and over	2.4	1.4	30.0	36.2	23.4	4.4	2.2	(500)
	N.A.	50.0	.	.	50.0	.	.	.	(2)
	TOTAL	1.0	1.2	21.0	40.3	34.2	1.5	0.8	(2481)

		0-1	2-3	4-6	7-8	9-10	DK	NA	Total (N)
		%	%	%	%	%	%	%	
Politics	18-24 years	33.9	16.9	35.5	10.7	2.5	0.4	.	(242)
	25-34 years	23.6	18.3	40.3	13.5	4.1	0.2	.	(518)
	35-44 years	26.6	17.0	37.2	13.5	5.2	0.4	.	(481)
	45-54 years	24.8	14.4	39.7	16.1	4.1	0.2	0.7	(411)
	55-64 years	30.0	12.8	36.7	14.1	4.0	2.1	0.3	(327)
	65 and over	33.8	13.4	32.0	11.2	5.2	3.0	1.4	(500)
	N.A.	50.0	.	50.0	.	.	.	.	(2)
	TOTAL	28.3	15.6	37.0	13.3	4.4	1.1	0.4	(2481)
Work	18-24 years	3.3	1.2	10.7	31.4	53.3	.	.	(242)
	25-34 years	0.8	0.6	9.1	26.4	63.1	.	.	(518)
	35-44 years	0.2	0.2	6.7	30.4	62.4	.	0.2	(481)
	45-54 years	0.7	.	9.2	22.1	67.4	.	0.5	(411)
	55-64 years	3.4	2.4	8.9	22.6	61.2	0.9	0.6	(327)
	65 and over	11.0	2.0	13.0	17.4	51.0	2.8	2.8	(500)
	N.A.	50.0	.	.	.	50.0	.	.	(2)
	TOTAL	3.3	1.0	9.6	24.6	60.0	0.7	0.8	(2481)
Religion	18-24 years	44.2	14.5	25.2	8.3	6.6	0.8	0.4	(242)
	25-34 years	36.5	12.9	33.0	8.5	8.1	0.6	0.4	(518)
	35-44 years	29.7	16.2	34.7	9.8	8.1	0.6	0.8	(481)
	45-54 years	27.7	13.4	33.1	11.2	11.9	1.0	1.7	(411)
	55-64 years	16.2	11.6	29.4	23.5	16.2	1.5	1.5	(327)
	65 and over	11.4	3.8	29.2	22.6	29.4	2.2	1.4	(500)
	N.A.	50.0	50.0	.	.	.	.	.	(2)
	TOTAL	26.8	11.8	31.3	14.0	13.9	1.1	1.0	(2481)
	18-24 years	16.9	10.3	48.8	14.0	6.2	2.9	0.8	(242)

		0-1	2-3	4-6	7-8	9-10	DK	NA	Total (N)
		%	%	%	%	%	%	%	
Associations	25-34 years	14.5	11.2	48.5	17.2	6.8	1.5	0.4	(518)
	35-44 years	15.2	12.5	44.7	18.5	6.2	1.9	1.0	(481)
	45-54 years	13.6	10.5	45.7	18.2	6.6	3.4	1.9	(411)
	55-64 years	15.3	10.4	42.5	17.4	5.8	6.1	2.4	(327)
	65 and over	18.4	9.8	35.6	12.6	7.6	13.2	2.8	(500)
	N.A.	100.0	.	.	.	.	.	.	(2)
	TOTAL	15.7	10.8	43.9	16.4	6.6	5.0	1.6	(2481)

Source: CIS, *Barómetro*, April 2009. Study number 2798 http://www.cis.es/cis/export/sites/default/-Archivos/Marginales/2780_2799/2798/Cru2798_enlace.html

Table 8b. Average Mean values of the table 8 (2009)

		Mean	Standard Deviation (n)	(N)
Family	18-24 years	9.38	1.21	(242)
	25-34 years	9.54	0.95	(518)
	35-44 years	9.61	0.98	(481)
	45-54 years	9.57	1.30	(410)
	55-64 years	9.70	0.78	(325)
	65 and over	9.69	0.92	(499)
	N.A.	9.50	0.71	(2)
	TOTAL	9.59	1.03	(2477)
Friends	18-24 years	8.49	1.61	(242)
	25-34 years	8.22	1.66	(518)
	35-44 years	8.00	1.98	(478)
	45-54 years	8.00	1.84	(409)
	55-64 years	7.82	2.03	(321)
	65 and over	7.80	2.10	(489)

		Mean	Standard Deviation (<i>n</i>)	(N)
	N.A.	4.50	4.95	(2)
	TOTAL	8.03	1.91	(2459)
Free time	18-24 years	7.91	1.79	(237)
	25-34 years	8.09	1.74	(517)
	35-44 years	7.93	1.81	(478)
	45-54 years	7.78	1.90	(403)
	55-64 years	7.53	1.92	(321)
	65 and over	7.12	2.15	(467)
	N.A.	4.50	4.95	(2)
	TOTAL	7.73	1.93	(2425)
Politics	18-24 years	3.34	2.72	(241)
	25-34 years	3.96	2.71	(517)
	35-44 years	3.87	2.90	(479)
	45-54 years	4.02	2.82	(407)
	55-64 years	3.74	2.85	(319)
	65 and over	3.49	3.01	(478)
	N.A.	2.00	2.83	(2)
	TOTAL	3.77	2.85	(2443)
Work	18-24 years	8.17	2.23	(242)
	25-34 years	8.67	1.71	(518)
	35-44 years	8.77	1.51	(480)
	45-54 years	8.78	1.69	(409)
	55-64 years	8.40	2.36	(322)
	65 and over	7.46	3.23	(472)
	N.A.	5.00	5.66	(2)

		Mean	Standard Deviation (n)	(N)
	TOTAL	8.39	2.24	(2445)
Religion	18-24 years	2.98	3.12	(239)
	25-34 years	3.46	3.14	(513)
	35-44 years	3.77	3.07	(474)
	45-54 years	4.11	3.24	(400)
	55-64 years	5.38	3.16	(317)
	65 and over	6.43	3.13	(482)
	N.A.	2.00	1.41	(2)
	TOTAL	4.42	3.36	(2427)
Associations	18-24 years	4.64	2.74	(233)
	25-34 years	4.85	2.63	(508)
	35-44 years	4.72	2.67	(467)
	45-54 years	4.87	2.64	(389)
	55-64 years	4.75	2.71	(299)
	65 and over	4.53	2.98	(420)
	N.A.	1.00	0.00	(2)
	TOTAL	4.73	2.73	(2318)

(N): Total number of people that answered

Source: CIS, *Barómetro*, April 2009. Study number 2798 http://www.cis.es/cis/export/sites/default/-Archivos/Marginales/2780_2799/2798/Cru2798_enlace.html

This lack of political participation and interest in acting directly on political or social issues, must be related to the way the Spaniards define themselves. In this case, in the ideological self-placement scale, where zero means "left" and ten "right", in 2009, seniors are ranked an average of 4.9, being slightly more conservative than those of younger ages, but very next to them (CIS 2009). Similarly, the entire Spanish

population in 2009 was still standing, as years ago, in the left center, with an average value of 4.62 (4.7 in the case of men and 4.6 in the case of women).

Table 9a. Ideological self-placement scale. 2009. Percentages (%)

		Left (1-2)	(3-4)	(5-6)	(7-8)	Right (9-10)	D.K.	N.A.	TOTAL
18-24 years	%	8.3	27.7	34.7	6.2	0.8	16.9	5.4	100.0
	(N)	(20)	(67)	(84)	(15)	(2)	(41)	(13)	(242)
25-34 years	%	8.3	32.8	34.7	10.6	2.3	6.4	4.8	100.0
	(N)	(43)	(170)	(180)	(55)	(12)	(33)	(25)	(518)
35-44 years	%	6.2	31.6	37.4	7.1	1.9	7.7	8.1	100.0
	(N)	(30)	(152)	(180)	(34)	(9)	(37)	(39)	(481)
45-54 years	%	7.1	37.2	34.3	6.1	1.5	7.1	6.8	100.0
	(N)	(29)	(153)	(141)	(25)	(6)	(29)	(28)	(411)
55-64 years	%	6.1	32.7	35.8	9.5	3.1	7.0	5.8	100.0
	(N)	(20)	(107)	(117)	(31)	(10)	(23)	(19)	(327)
65 and over	%	6.8	26.2	27.0	17.6	2.0	13.0	7.4	100.0
	(N)	(34)	(131)	(135)	(88)	(10)	(65)	(37)	(500)
N.A.	%	.	50.0	50.0	.	.	.	.	100.0
	(N)	.	(1)	(1)	.	.	.	.	(2)
TOTAL	%	7.1	31.5	33.8	10.0	2.0	9.2	6.5	100.0
	(N)	(176)	(781)	(838)	(248)	(49)	(228)	(161)	(2481)

(N): Total number of people that answered

Source: CIS, *Barómetro*, April 2009. Study number 2798 http://www.cis.es/cis/export/sites/default-Archivos/Marginales/2780_2799/2798/Cru2798_enlace.html

Table 9b. Ideological self-placement scale. Average mean values. 2009.

		Mean	Standard Deviation	(N)		Men	Women	TOTAL
18-24 years		4.50	1.67	Mean	4.62	Mean 4.71	Mean 4.66	(188)
	25-34	4.63	1.77	Standard	1.80	Standard	Standard	(460)

	Mean	Standard Deviation	(N)		Men	Women	TOTAL
years			deviation		deviation 1.76	deviation 1.78	
35- 44 years	4.62	1.68	(N)	(1076)	(1016)	(2092)	(405)
45-54 years	4.41	1.65					(354)
55-64 years	4.78	1.80					(285)
65 and over	4.97	1.98					(398)
N.A.	4.00	1.41					(2)
TOTAL	4.66	1.78					(2092)

(N): Total number of people that answered

Source: CIS, *Barómetro*, April 2009. Study number 2798 http://www.cis.es/cis/export/sites/default/-Archivos/Marginales/2780_2799/2798/Cru2798_enlace.html

The Impact of the crisis from 2011

The socialist government tried to keep people calm about the economic crisis: “I believe that the debt crisis affecting Spain, and the euro zone in general, has passed”, moreover, “confidence has been restored”, President Mr. Zapatero said in an interview with The Wall Street Journal (22 September 2010). But it did not work and there was a change in the next general elections held in December 2011. As a result, the People’s Party (*Partido Popular*) won and Mr. Mariano Rajoy became the new President.

In terms of political culture, CIS’s data from 2011, 2012 and 2013 offer a similar panorama to what it has been mentioned already, to the extent that people are still interested in politics, but their opinions about political parties in general, and about politicians in particular are now cruder. There is a widespread feeling that politicians do not care about citizens, that they are not honest and that there is a lack of transparency in the country.

The result of this disappointment and general unrest consequence of the corruption cases, economic management, etc., and due to the economic instability of families, has grown in all ages interest in politics, conceived as an interest "output "of it. That is, Spaniards are more interested in political news than before to know when will the crisis finish, whether the unemployment rate is raising or lowering, if taxes are risen, or public spending cuts would be adopted, etc.

For instance, according to the CIS (2000, study num.2382): in 2000, 18% of those over 65 were very or quite interested in politics (24% in the case of all other ages). This interest has grown exponentially in all age cohorts, as the barometer of the CIS, March 2013 (study num. 2981) shows. 14% of those over 65 are very interested in politics and 35'8% are quite interested, this is, now about 50% of the elder people states to have interest in political issues. In other age groups, interest has also grown, around half of the population is very or quite interested in politics, and almost 40% of young people between 18 and 24 years which have traditionally been the less active from the point of view of political information monitoring, is interested in politics. This data is positive, though it may be temporary. It would denote a higher level of personal competence in political issues.

Table 10. Question: Are you interested in the following issues? Percentages (%). 2013

	Years	Much	Quite	Little	Nothing	D.K.	N.A	Total (N)
		%	%	%	%	%	%	
Politics	18-24	6.8	32.7	41.4	18.2	0.9	.	(220)
	25-34	15.1	36.6	29.8	18.3	.	0.2	(470)
	35-44	20.1	38.8	24.9	15.9	0.2	0.2	(503)

	Years	Much	Quite	Little	Nothing	D.K.	N.A	Total (N)
		%	%	%	%	%	%	
	45-54	20.9	39.1	23.4	15.7	.	0.9	(445)
	55-64	21.6	35.1	29.4	12.9	0.6	0.3	(333)
	+ 65	14.3	35.8	29.5	19.2	0.4	0.8	(505)
	N.A.	.	100.0	.	.	.	.	(1)
	Total	17.1	36.8	28.5	16.8	0.3	0.4	(2477)
Sports	18-24	10.9	35.0	33.6	19.5	0.9	.	(220)
	25-34	11.7	31.3	31.3	25.7	.	.	(470)
	35-44	8.7	27.4	33.2	30.4	.	0.2	(503)
	45-54	7.6	24.0	32.8	34.8	0.2	0.4	(445)
	55-64	6.3	23.7	33.0	36.3	0.3	0.3	(333)
	+ 65	5.9	20.6	33.9	39.0	0.2	0.4	(505)
	N.A.	.	.	100.0	.	.	.	(1)
	Total	8.4	26.3	32.9	31.9	0.2	0.2	(2477)
Economics	18-24	15.9	54.5	25.5	3.2	0.9	.	(220)
	25-34	20.6	55.3	17.7	6.4	.	.	(470)
	35-44	26.6	53.3	15.7	4.2	.	0.2	(503)
	45-54	24.9	51.7	16.9	5.8	.	0.7	(445)
	55-64	23.1	54.1	16.2	5.7	0.6	0.3	(333)
	+ 65	17.2	48.7	23.2	9.9	0.4	0.6	(505)
	N.A.	.	100.0	.	.	.	.	(1)
	Total	21.8	52.7	18.7	6.2	0.2	0.3	(2477)
Culture	18-24	14.1	54.5	27.3	3.2	0.9	.	(220)
	25-34	17.2	56.0	22.6	4.0	0.2	.	(470)
	35-44	19.1	56.9	20.7	3.0	0.2	0.2	(503)
	45-54	21.1	54.2	18.2	5.8	.	0.7	(445)

	Years	Much	Quite	Little	Nothing	D.K.	N.A	Total (N)
		%	%	%	%	%	%	
	55-64	18.9	52.9	21.6	5.7	0.9	.	(333)
	+ 65	16.4	47.1	25.0	10.1	0.6	0.8	(505)
	N.A.	.	100.0	.	.	.	.	(1)
	Total	18.1	53.5	22.2	5.5	0.4	0.3	(2477)
International affairs	18-24	10.0	45.0	33.6	10.5	0.9	.	(220)
	25-34	11.1	43.2	36.6	8.9	.	0.2	(470)
	35-44	14.3	47.3	30.4	7.4	0.2	0.4	(503)
	45-54	13.9	44.7	31.9	8.5	0.2	0.7	(445)
	55-64	13.8	44.1	30.0	10.5	1.5	.	(333)
	+ 65	9.3	36.8	35.8	16.8	0.6	0.6	(505)
	N.A.	.	100.0	.	.	.	.	(1)
	Total	12.2	43.3	33.2	10.5	0.5	0.4	(2477)

Source: CIS, Barometer. March o 2013. Study number 2981 http://www.cis.es/cis/export/sites/default/-Archivos/Marginales/2980_2999/2981/Cru2981_enlace.html

Is it the same with the ideological self-placement scale? Based on the data, all Spaniards continue to define themselves under the umbrella of the center-left, in 2013, with an average figure of 4.63 (on a scale of 1 to 10). This is reproduced in all age cohorts, where changes from the previous period to the crisis have not been noted. For example, elder people are still a bit more conservative than the young, with an average ideological self-placement of 5.17, very similar to 4.97 in 2009 and close to 5.23 in 1999.

Table 11. Ideological self-placement in a scale from 1 to10. Percentages (%). 2013

	Average	Standard deviation	(N)
18 to 24 years	4.58	1.76	(168)

	Average	Standard deviation	(N)
25 to 34 years	4.73	1.86	(365)
35 to 44 years	4.46	1.81	(382)
45 to 54 years	4.37	1.72	(357)
55 to 64 years	4.38	1.77	(251)
65 and over	5.17	2.01	(361)
D.A	3.00	.	(1)
TOTAL	4.63	1.85	(1885)

Source: CIS, barometer March 2013. Study 2981

However, when defined in terms of certain political labels, in January 2013, people who define themselves as socialists declined (the 13'7% of respondents, compared with 20.5% in 2009) or as Social democrats (5% in 2013 compared to 8% in 2009) and there were not remarkable changes in the percentage of people who defined themselves as conservative (12'8% in 2013 and 13.6% in 2009) and as liberal (13% in 2009 and 2013). The decline of the "socialist- social democrat" label in the Spaniards minds occurs in all age cohorts. For instance, in the case of people over 65 years, in January 2013, 20% still considered themselves as conservative (20% in 2009), 16% socialist (22% in 2009) and a growing number of elderly considered themselves as liberals (9%). Also, there is a decline on the volume of people who are unable or unwilling to answer the question (23% of those over 65 years). Compare the data of 2009 and 2013 in the following tables.

Table 12a. Question: How would you define yourself in political terms? Percentages (%). 2009.

Age	CON	CD.	LIB.	SD.	SOC	COM	NAT.	ECO.	Other	APO	DK. NA
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	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
18-24 years	4.1	3.7	21.1	6.6	14.9	1.2	3.3	5.4	3.3	6.2	30.1	
25-34 years	9.8	5.4	22.6	8.7	18.1	2.7	3.9	6.4	2.5	5.2	14.7	
35-44 years	12.1	4.8	15.2	10.2	18.5	1.5	2.9	8.9	2.7	6.2	17.0	
45-54 years	13.9	5.8	10.9	9.7	25.1	1.7	2.4	3.4	3.6	6.6	60.8	
55 - 64 years	17.7	6.7	7.3	8.9	23.5	1.5	2.8	4.0	2.1	5.5	93.9	
65 and over	20.6	7.6	5.4	4.0	22.0	1.4	3.2	1.4	1.6	3.4	29.4	
N.A.	.	.	50.0	.	.	.	.	.	.	50.0	.	
TOTAL	13.6	5.8	13.6	8.0	20.5	1.7	3.1	5.0	2.6	5.4	20.7	

CON: Conservative

CD: Christian-democrat

LIB: Liberal

SD: Socialdemocrat

SOC: Socialist

COM: Communist

NAT: Nationalist

ECO: Ecologist

APO: Apolitical

Source: CIS, *Barómetro*, April 2009. Study number 2798 http://www.cis.es/cis/export/sites/default/-Archivos/Marginales/2780_2799/2798/Cru2798_enlace.html

Table 12b. Question: How would you define yourself in political terms? Percentages (%). 2013.

Age	CON	CD.	LIB.	SD.	SOC	COM.	NAT.	ECO.	Other	APO	DK. NA	CON.	CD.
18-24	7.7	1.4	19.1	8.1	3.8	8.1	3.3	5.7	3.3	6.2	3.3	7.7	22
25-34	9.6	4.9	17.6	10.2	4.3	11.9	1.4	3.5	1.6	6.5	3.9	9.0	15.6
35-44	12.7	2.2	17.5	9.3	5.2	8.9	1.8	3.0	2.6	5.0	5.2	9.7	17.1
45-54	10.6	3.4	12.6	9.6	6.9	16.3	2.1	3.0	1.8	5.5	4.4	8.5	15.4
55-64	12.8	4.9	9.1	9.5	7.6	19.8	2.4	2.7	1.2	4.0	3.0	6.1	16.7
+65	20.1	9.1	4.6	5.4	4.1	16.2	1.5	3.3	0.2	1.4	3.9	6.6	23.6
Total	12.8	4.7	13.0	8.7	5.3	13.7	1.9	3.3	1.7	4.6	4.1	8.1	18.2

Source: CIS. Barometer. January 2013. http://www.cis.es/cis/export/sites/default/-Archivos/Marginales/2960_2979/2976/Cru297600EDAD.html

In view of the data, it can be inferred, first, that there is a distorted answer by respondents. This is, Spaniards (including people over 65) still think that they are people placed in the center-left, but do not want to be identified with socialism, not associated with the recent mismanagement of the Socialist Party (PSOE) and its former President, José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero, in its last term.

Secondly, the decline of people who do not know or do not answer to the question would be related to greater civic competence in politics, the result of the cyclical interest, following the economic crisis.

In view of this item, it should be concluded that the knowledge of Spaniards, as to who are the ministers, for instance, would have to be higher. According to the Barometer data from CIS January 2013, by age groups, the groups with less knowledge about who are the ministers are again the youngest (18.24 years) and the elderly. But in all cases the level of political information has increased, in times of economic crisis. Indeed, apart from the personal assessment about politicians (better or worse) there is no longer unknown ministers for 80% of the population, as it occurred before², being the most "anonymous" for the Spanish in general the following Ministers: Mr. José Manuel García Margallo (59% of Spaniards do not know him) and Mr. Jorge Fernandez Diaz (58'6%), followed by Ms. Fatima Banez (52'8%), Ms. José Manuel Soria (52'2%) and Mr. Miguel Arias Cañete (40.7%).

² Take for example the knowledge data about who were the Ministers during the President Aznar government (1996-2004). In this case, adding the answer "do not know" for over 65 years, in 1999, we get the following: about 80% of the elderly do not put face to Mr. Angel Acebes or Mr. Manuel Pimentel, and something similar happens with the other Ministers, as Mr. Rafael Arias Salgado (62%), Ms. Margarita Mariscal (59%), Mr. Abel Matutes (47%), Mr. Francisco Álvarez Cascos (35%), Ms. Loyola de Palacio (50%), Mr. Josep Piqué (64%), Mr. Mariano Rajoy (60%), Mr. Rodrigo Rato (41%), Mr. Jaime Mayor Oreja (38%), Mr. José Manuel Romay (67%), Mr. Eduardo Serra (35%) and Ms. Isabel Tocino (44%). Source: Barometer January 1999. Study 2316 http://www.cis.es/cis/openm/es/2_bancodatos/estudios/ver.jsp?estudio=1305

Consequently, it seems that the crisis has changed some patterns of the Spaniards political culture, among which elder people are included as a distinctive subculture: they are still from center-left, they still show disaffection towards politics, but now they are more informed.

Conclusions

In Spain the dominant perception about politics as something distant, bored, and complex which was perceived in the eighties, is complemented with critics to the system and politicians, which remain constant over time. This would lead us to talk about Spaniards "political cynicism" (Moran and Benedicto 1995, 24) or their "critical skepticism" (Montero and Torcal 1990, 39-74). This apathy is disappearing in a short-term as a result of the economic crisis, as it has been demonstrated with data from 2013 barometers. Interest in politics has grown exponentially in all age cohorts, including those over 65 years.

Studies from the nineties refer to the weight of Francoist antimobilization and nonpartisanship tradition as key explanations of Spaniards political culture, and most especially, referred to the collective of people over 65 years. However, we could also find a complementary explanation that goes beyond and soars the history of Spanish constitutionalism. That is, it could be stated that Spaniards political culture, which emerged in the nineteenth century, when Spain is integrated into the nineteenth century in the so-called "constitutional movement", accepting the influences of the U.S. Constitution of 1787 and the French Constitution of 1791, would have set negative feelings in Spaniards towards the political phenomena, the result of repeated non-compliance, and the distance from the rulers to the ruled.

Not surprisingly, as Torres del Moral highlights (2004, 15-32), Spanish historical constitutionalism is fundamentally characterized by instability and superficiality. The Constitutions are made and continuously rolled and constitutional and representative principles distorted under military uprisings, chieftainship and electoral manipulation. By contrast, there are countries like the UK (from the Glorious Revolution of 1688) or the United States (since its declaration of independence) where there has been a constitutional and political stability. While in countries like Spain, with great political instability, the Constitution served as a tool to achieve certain political objectives. Therefore, when the group in power changes, the principles which guide the nation change and, with them, the Constitution. All this eventually led to a contempt and a disappointment towards the constitutional regime and even a suspicion about its viability in Spain.

So, it looks like the current stability of the 1978 Constitution and our democracy should be changing values and political culture of the Spaniards (Peña González 1995). However, disaffection with politicians is still growing. Simultaneously, it is not perceived that rules are respected, feeling that grows more when corruption cases come to light in the media or when there are economic crises as the current one. Moreover, it should be noted that this mix of quick acceptance of democracy, combined with the political passivity is not a proper and specific characteristic of Spain; it would be one of the typical features of the "civic culture" which long time ago Almond and Verba defined, and which characterizes Western democratic societies. However, political passivity and pointed criticism of the system stand in the Spanish case, compared to

other neighboring countries. This characteristic could be due to our failed constitutional history.

In any case, it is true that elder people, as a subgroup, are more lenient in their ratings and critical attitudes towards the political system and political elites. In this sense, it could be talked about of the existence of distinct features in the Spaniards political culture attending to the age variable.

To sum up the economic crisis seems to be changing the interest in the present and political information in Spain, in all age cohorts, which is generating a higher level of personal autonomy in the field of political discussions, for instance. This phenomenon, eventually could lead to a greater level of involvement in political activities and to greater direct or indirect participation in the political system, which would be a positive factor in the context of active aging, which concerns us here. Time will tell if these changes settle or not in the Spanish political culture and in elder people.

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