

Contents

Tables from British Social Attitudes (Various Years)

Tables from Democratic Audit of Political Engagement 2003/4 and 2011/12

Power and Protest: A note on the statistical tables for workshop on age and political participation

About this resource

'Power and Protest: Are the young politically disengaged?' was developed by the ESSTED team in collaboration with Dr Gemma Edwards the convenor of Power and Protest at The University of Manchester.

Authors: Gemma Edwards, Mark Brown, Susan O'Shea and Jen Buckley

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<http://www.socialsciences.manchester.ac.uk/essted/>

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Tables from British Social Attitudes (Various Years)

(Population:Adults aged 18 years and over resident in Great Britain)

1. Question: About a government action which you thought was unjust and harmful.

Have you ever ... Gone on a protest or demonstration?

- (0) Never Done
- (1) Ever done

Percent answering 'Ever done'

Age group	1983	n	2000	n	2011	n
<25	4.5	222	1.7	241	7.4	241
25-44	2.2	640	11.7	879	7.1	879
45-64	1.6	514	12.6	728	9.6	728
65+	0.6	338	3.6	439	6.1	439

2. Question: About a government action which you thought was unjust and harmful.

Have you ever ... Contacted my MP or MSP.

- (0) Never Done
- (1) Ever done

Percent answering 'Ever done'

Age group	1983	n	2000	n	2011	n
<25	0.5	222	4.2	241	3.9	241
25-44	3.3	640	14.1	879	13.3	879
45-64	3.3	514	23.8	728	20.9	728
65+	3.6	338	15.4	439	18.3	439

3. Question: In the last five years have you ... signed a petition about an environmental issue?

- (1) Yes
- (2) No

Percent answering 'Yes'

Age group	1993	n	2000	n	2010	n
<25	52.1	142	31.9	94	25.2	107
25-44	41.1	506	32.2	394	26.0	327
45-64	38.5	322	34.4	291	24.8	302
65+	20.3	217	20.6	170	12.0	166

4. Question: In the last five years have you ... given money to an environmental group?

- (1) Yes
- (2) No

Percent answering 'Yes'

Age group	1993	n	2000	n	2010	n
<25	46.7	137	29.7	91	19.0	105
25-44	35.0	492	24.6	394	15.4	324
45-64	31.0	313	24.5	290	20.7	300
65+	15.8	202	18.3	164	11.1	162

5. Question: How much do you trust British governments of any party to place the needs of the nation above the interests of their own political party?

- (1) Almost always
- (2) Most of the time
- (3) Only some of the time
- (4) Almost never

Percent answering 'always always / most of the time'

Age group	1986	n	1998	n	2011	n
<25	29.4	255	30.4	204	28.4	257
25-44	38.1	590	28.4	803	25.0	736
45-64	44.1	442	24.8	656	19.1	712
65+	36.8	258	33.9	401	18.0	489

6. Question: How much do you agree or disagree that ...

Parties are only interested in people's votes, not in their opinions.

- (1) Agree strongly
- (2) Agree
- (3) Neither
- (4) Disagree
- (5) Disagree Strongly

Percent answering 'Agree/agree strongly'

Age group	1986	n	1998	n	2011	n
<25	59.8	256	67.6	204	65.0	257
25-44	63.9	590	67.6	802	72.6	737
45-64	71.0	442	69.4	656	78.1	711
65+	69.0	258	71.5	400	78.8	490

7. Question: How much do you agree or disagree that ...

People like me have no say in what the government does.

- (1) Agree strongly
- (2) Agree
- (3) Neither
- (4) Disagree
- (5) Disagree Strongly

Percent answering 'Agree/agree strongly'

Age group	1986	n	1998	n	2011	n
<25	77.7	256	66.2	204	65.8	257
25-44	72.0	590	54.7	802	60.1	737
45-64	69.1	443	57.1	656	65.1	711
65+	65.9	258	67.3	400	71.8	490

8. Question: About general elections. Which of comes closest to your view ... In a general election it's not really worth voting OR people should vote only if they care who wins OR it's everyone's duty to vote?

- (1) It's not really worth voting
- (2) People should vote only if they care who wins
- (3) Duty to vote

Percent answering 'It's not really worth voting'

Age group	1991	<i>n</i>	1998	<i>n</i>	2011	<i>n</i>
<25	14.4	174	13.3	150	23.0	204
25-44	7.8	472	8.6	664	16.8	642
45-64	7.1	364	7.7	543	17.8	630
65+	4.2	191	4.0	298	9.9	414

9. Question: How much do you agree or disagree that ...

Voting is the only way people like me can have any say about how the government runs things.

- (1) Agree strongly
- (2) Agree
- (3) Neither
- (4) Disagree
- (5) Disagree Strongly

Percent answering 'Agree/agree strongly'

Age group	1991	<i>n</i>	1998	<i>n</i>	2011	<i>n</i>
<25	58.2	201	69.6	204	58.8	257
25-44	62.7	542	60.2	802	57.7	737
45-64	74.8	417	68.4	656	62.6	712
65+	74.6	252	75.3	400	68.0	490

10. Question: How much do you agree or disagree that ...

It doesn't really matter which party is in power, in the end things go on much the same.

- (1) Agree strongly
- (2) Agree
- (3) Neither
- (4) Disagree
- (5) Disagree Strongly

Percent answering 'Agree/agree strongly'

Age group	2001	<i>n</i>	2011	<i>n</i>
<25	63.2	117	65.0	257
25-44	60.6	434	70.9	736
45-64	63.8	348	71.0	711
65+	66.5	209	74.3	490

Power and Protest: Are young people politically diengaged?

Source: British Social Attitudes

Tables prepared by Susan O'Shea and Mark Brown using the BSAs on-line data tabulation software at <http://www.britsocat.com/Home>

Power and Protest: Are young people politically diengaged?

Tables from Democratic Audit of Political Engagement 2003/4 and 2011/12

(Population:Adults aged 18 years and over resident in Great Britain)

1. How likely would you be to vote in an immediate general election?

	2003/4					2011/12				
	18 - 24	25 - 44	45 - 64	65+-	Total	18 - 24	25 - 44	45 - 64	65+-	Total
yes	27.9	39.3	61.8	69.1	50.7	yes	21.6	33.9	59.2	47.5
no	72.1	60.7	38.2	30.9	49.3	no	78.4	66.1	40.8	52.5
Tot	100	100	100	100	100	Tot	100	100	100	100
<i>(sample size)</i>	219	761	584	395	1959	<i>(sample size)</i>	162	413	321	1169

2. Which, if any, of the things on this list have you done in the last two or three years - Presented my views to a local councillor or MP

	2003/4					2011/12				
	18 - 24	25 - 44	45 - 64	65+-	Total	18 - 24	25 - 44	45 - 64	65+-	Total
yes	4.6	9.7	17.3	19.3	13.3	yes	5.2	8.8	14.1	12.7
no	95.4	90.3	82.7	80.7	86.7	no	94.8	91.3	85.9	87.3
Tot	100	100	100	100	100	Tot	100	100	100	100
<i>(sample size)</i>	219	760	585	394	1958	<i>(sample size)</i>	134	400	403	1238

3. Which, if any, of the things on this list have you done in the last two or three years - Signed a Petition/e-petition

	2003/4					2011/12				
	18 - 24	25 - 44	45 - 64	65+-	Total	18 - 24	25 - 44	45 - 64	65+-	Total
yes	30.6	39.9	47.6	29.2	39.0	yes	23.0	28.5	30.0	26.6
no	69.4	60.1	52.4	70.8	61.0	no	77.0	71.5	70.0	73.4
Tot	100	100	100	100	100	Tot	100	100	100	100
<i>(sample size)</i>	219	760	584	394	1957	<i>(sample size)</i>	135	400	403	1239

4. Which, if any, of the things on this list have you done in the last two or three years - Discussed politics or political news with someone else

	2003/4					2011/12				
	18 - 24	25 - 44	45 - 64	65+-	Total	18 - 24	25 - 44	45 - 64	65+-	Total
yes	24.1	36.2	47.4	33.8	37.7	yes	27.6	29.4	43.2	35.4
no	75.9	63.8	52.6	66.2	62.3	no	72.4	70.6	56.8	64.6
Tot	100	100	100	100	100	Tot	100	100	100	100
<i>(sample size)</i>	220	760	584	394	1958	<i>(sample size)</i>	134	401	403	1239

Power and Protest: Are young people politically diengaged?

5. Which, if any, of the things on this list have you done in the last two or three years - Taken part in a demonstration, picket or march

	2003/4					2011/12					
	18 - 24	25 - 44	45 - 64	65+-	Total	18 - 24	25 - 44	45 - 64	65+-	Total	
yes	8.7	5.3	5.6	2.5	5.2	yes	6.7	2.5	4.5	2.3	3.6
no	91.3	94.7	94.4	97.5	94.8	no	93.3	97.5	95.5	97.7	96.4
Tot	100	100	100	100	100	Tot	100	100	100	100	100
<i>(sample size)</i>	219	760	585	395	1959	<i>(sample size)</i>	135	400	403	301	1239

6. Which, if any, of the things on this list have you done in the last two or three years - Boycotted certain products for political, ethical or environmental reasons

	2003/4					2011/12					
	18 - 24	25 - 44	45 - 64	65+-	Total	18 - 24	25 - 44	45 - 64	65+-	Total	
yes	13.2	17.9	22.4	15.9	18.3	yes	5.2	8.0	14.2	9.3	10.0
no	86.8	82.1	77.6	84.1	81.7	no	94.8	92.0	85.8	90.7	90.0
Tot	100	100	100	100	100	Tot	100	100	100	100	100
<i>(sample size)</i>	219	760	584	395	1958	<i>(sample size)</i>	134	399	402	301	1236

7. How interested would you say you are in politics?

	2003/4					2011/12					
	18 - 24	25 - 44	45 - 64	65+-	Total	18 - 24	25 - 44	45 - 64	65+-	Total	
fairly or very	35.0	44.6	58.5	56.5	50.1	fairly or very	36.3	39.1	49.2	43.6	42.5
not much / not at all	65.0	55.4	41.5	43.5	49.9	not much / not at all	63.8	60.9	50.8	56.4	57.5
Tot	100	100	100	100	100	Tot	100	100	100	100	100
<i>(sample size)</i>	220	760	585	395	1960	<i>(sample size)</i>	160	412	321	273	1166

8. How much, if anything, do you feel you know about politics?

	2003/4					2011/12					
	18 - 24	25 - 44	45 - 64	65+-	Total	18 - 24	25 - 44	45 - 64	65+-	Total	
fair amount or great deal	27.7	38.0	48.8	50.0	42.5	fair amount or great deal	33.8	39.8	53.7	42.5	43.4
not much / nothing at all	72.3	62.0	51.2	50.0	57.5	not much / nothing at all	66.3	60.2	46.3	57.5	56.6
Tot	100	100	100	100	100	Tot	100	100	100	100	100
<i>(sample size)</i>	220	758	586	394	1958	<i>(sample size)</i>	160	410	322	273	1165

Power and Protest: Are young people politically diengaged?

9. Agree or disagree - When people like me get involved in politics, they can really change the way that the UK is run

	2003/4					2011/12					
	18 - 24	25 - 44	45 - 64	65+-	Total	18 - 24	25 - 44	45 - 64	65+-	Total	
agree	35.2	35.7	36.6	35.9	35.9	agree	33.8	31.2	32.8	30.9	31.9
disagree/don't know	64.8	64.3	63.4	64.1	64.1	disagree/don't know	66.3	68.8	67.2	69.1	68.1
Tot	100	100	100	100	100	Tot	100	100	100	100	100
(sample size)	219	759	585	393	1956	(sample size)	160	413	320	272	1165

10. Which of these statements best describes your opinion on the present system of governing Britain?

	2003/4					2011/12					
	18 - 24	25 - 44	45 - 64	65+-	Total	18 - 24	25 - 44	45 - 64	65+-	Total	
works mainly / extremely well	34.2	37.1	32.1	41.0	36.1	works mainly /extremely well	24.8	19.9	23.4	29.7	23.8
Needs improvement	65.8	62.9	67.9	59.0	63.9	Needs improvement	75.2	80.1	76.6	70.3	76.2
Tot	100	100	100	100	100	Tot	100	100	100	100	100
(sample size)	219	758	585	395	1957	(sample size)	161	412	321	273	1167

Source: Democratic Audit of Political Engagement (Hansard Society)

Audit 1 (2003/4): Electoral Commission. Policy Directorate and Hansard Society, *Audit of Political Engagement 1, 2003* [computer file].

Colchester, Essex: UK Data Archive [distributor], June 2003/4. SN: 4968, <http://dx.doi.org/10.5255/UKDA-SN-4968-1>

Audit 9 (2011/12): Hansard Society. Parliament and Government Programme, *Audit of Political Engagement 9, 2011* [computer file].

Colchester, Essex: UK Data Archive [distributor], September 2011/12. SN: 7098, <http://dx.doi.org/10.5255/UKDA-SN-7098-1>

Tables prepared by Mark Brown from Audit microdata

Enriching Social Science Teaching with Empirical Data:

<http://www.socialsciences.manchester.ac.uk/essted/index.html>

Power and Protest: A note on the statistical tables for workshop on age and political participation

The tables in this handout are drawn from

1. British Social Attitudes

The British Social Attitudes (BSA) survey series began in 1983 and is conducted annually by the National Centre for Social Research, with funding from a range of organisations. The BSA series is based on a nationally representative sample designed to produce annual measures of attitudinal movements. One of the main purposes of the BSA is to allow the monitoring of patterns of continuity and change and the examination of the relative rates at which attitudes with respect to social issues change over time.

The tables presented here were generated using the BSAs on-line data tabulation software

(<http://www.britisocat.com/Home>) - this requires registration but is free of charge and very user friendly (no need to download any of the datasets)

2. Audit of Political Engagement (Hansard Society)

Conducted annually since 2003/4 by Ipsos Mori, the Audit of Political Engagement survey is designed specifically to measure attitudes and experience related to political engagement, providing the evidence base for an Annual Hansard Society report http://hansardsociety.org.uk/blogs/parliament_and_government/pages/audit-of-political-engagement.aspx. The survey is based on a nationally representative sample and seeks to audit the nature and extent of the UK public's political engagement, and to provide a platform for further debate about what might be done to enhance engagement in politics and with the political process. Each survey looks at six core indicators, which have been chosen as key measures of political engagement. These repeated indicators enable responses to be tracked year on year and the direction and magnitude of change to be analysed.

NOTE: both the BSA and the Audit of political Engagement have a relatively small sample size (typically just over 3000 in total). This may sound a lot but once we have broken this down by age (as in the tables presented here), the number of cases for some groups is quite small – most notably for the young age <25 group, in whom we are particularly interested.

Percentages based on small numbers are likely to include wide margins of error, so great caution needs to be taken when interpreting the results and seeking to generalise from the sample to the British population. For this reason if we were going to use this data as evidence in an academic publication, it would be important to calculate confidence intervals and/or carry out a Chi square test of statistical significance for each table.

Mark Brown 06/11/12

Enriching Social Science Teaching with Empirical Data:

<http://www.socialsciences.manchester.ac.uk/essted/index.html>