Why People Protest. Comparing Demonstrators' Motivations Across Issues and Nations

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Abstract – Drawing on both classic as modern work, we propose a typology of protest motives based on two dimensions: instrumental-expressive and individual-collective. Based on protest survey evidence collected at twelve different protest demonstrations we find that the different motivation types exist and capture a good deal of the variation in people's motivation to protest. Depending on the movement, the specific protest event, and the larger political context motivations vary systematically across events.

Political protest is on the rise. The number of people signing petitions, boycotting products, or participating in demonstrations has risen in almost all countries (Norris 2002). The protest surge raises questions about the motives of these ever more frequent protesters. Why do people protest? The motivation of protesters is one of the main strands in the literature on social movements (in sociology) and political participation (in political science). This paper contributes to this work in three ways.

First, we propose a typology of motivations to participate in protest. In the literature, the motivational aspects of participation are dealt with using different concepts such as framing, emotions, grievances, networks etc. We distinguish four straightforward motivation types structured along two dimensions: instrumental versus expressive and individual versus collective motives. We argue that the four basic types created by these two dimensions cover the most important theoretical distinctions being made in the literature and also capture the lion's share of the motives people have to participate in protest.

Second, the study compares the motivations of thousands of participants in protest demonstrations on different issues and in different nations. We rely on a series of twelve protest surveys fielded in four countries and related to eight different issues. This comparative design is original as the movement literature is mostly based on case-studies (but see: Klandermans 1993; Van Stekelenburg 2006; Van Stekelenburg, Klandermans, and van Dijck 2009). The prevailing case-study design limits the possibility of generalization and, more importantly, it makes it hard to test whether the motives of participants are contextually determined. We argue that protest motives partially depend on the individual features of a protester but also on the issue at stake, the type of movement involved, the specific protest event, and the political context (for a similar argument, see Van Stekelenburg, Klandermans, and van Dijck 2009).

Third, our measurement and operationalization of motives is systematic and standardized. Motives are explicit, conscious and verbalized reasons to participate. We asked participants across twelve demonstrations precisely the same open question: "*Why are you participating in this protest demonstration?*" We consider answers to this question as a useful indicator of people's motivation.

Protest Motivation

Starting in the mid 1980s, especially the work of Snow and colleagues on frame alignment has gradually drawn scholars' attention to the attitudes and opinions underlying protest participation and to the motivational aspect of protest participation (Snow et al. 1986). Since then, more work has focused on the cultural and motivational dimension of protest participation. People participate because they want to, because they can, and because they are being asked, so goes the classic account of Verba and

colleagues (1995). Wanting to participate is a precondition for participation. Participants are not merely the puppets of external circumstances or structural opportunities that inevitably push them to participate. Participating is a conscious action, it entails costs and implies deliberation and choice.

Some define a motivation generally as "*things inside a person that move or impel him or her into action*" (Barner-Barry and Rosenwein 1985: 12). A more specific conceptualization considers a motivation as the positive ratio of cost to benefits, leading to a specific action preparedness (Oegema and Klandermans 1994). People participate in protest in order to reap benefits and they weight those benefits against the costs of action. All motivations are to some extent based on a rational calculus. The fact that the benefits can be almost anything — from the chance that a valued policy change occurs to having a nice day out with friends — leaves ample room for at first sight 'irrational' or emotional motives. A useful and theoretically relevant way to think about protest motivation is distinguishing protest motives along two dimensions: instrumental vs. expressive and individual vs. collective.

The *instrumental-expressive* dimension draws on Max Weber's typology of 'social action' distinguishing 'instrumentally rational' (*zweckrational*) from 'value-rational' (*wertrational*) actions (Weber 1968). Both types of actions are rational, Weber argues, because both are goal-oriented and both are planned and deliberate. In the first case, the goal is external to the action, the motivation to act is extrinsic. For the latter action type, by performing the action the goal is reached: "… *the meaning of the action does not lie in the achievement of a result ulterior to it, but in carrying out the specific type of action for its own sake*" (Weber 1968: 25). Applied to protest, an instrumental motive draws upon the potential later effect of the protest. Rewards are postponed, returns of investments are delayed. Instrumental motivation implies that not the act itself is motivating but the

thing the act may bring about (for a systematic elaboration of the instrumental motivation type see: Klandermans 1984). Expressive motivation, in contrast, does not want to change the outside world; the act of protest is gratifying on its own. Participating may cause a thrill, people may have the opportunity to express their opinion, their anger or dissatisfaction, or they feel the duty to participate. People protesting against a war, for example, may want to show that they are angry, that they do not agree with the war even if they are aware of the fact that their protest will not stop the war. For expressively motivated protesters the reaction of the outside world is not important.

Weber (1968: 26) notes that "*It would be very unusual to find concrete cases of... social action which were oriented only in one or another of these ways*." This implies that most actions are at the same time instrumental and expressive. Applied to protest participation, most people's motivation is a mix of instrumental and expressive motives. It is difficult to imagine that many people would participate in a protest event purely because of the political goals and not caring at all about the event itself. It is as difficult to imagine that many people would participate solely because they want to express their discontent without caring at all about the possible outcomes of the protest. Both ideal-typical motivation types are not exclusive but complementary. That a person wants to change the world by participating does not exclude him from being thrilled by the protest experience or from being motivated by the occasion to express himself; in fact both motivation types may reinforce each other (see also: Armstrong and Bernstein 2008; Van Stekelenburg 2006; Van Zomeren et al. 2004). Intensely motivated people participate in protest with people with whom they share interests (instrumental) as well as feelings and values (expressive).

Distinguishing instrumental and expressive protest motives is not new or unique; the distinction has been used since years (see for example: Jenkins 1983). Many students of social movements have used similar but slightly different distinctions. Klandermans and Oegema (1987: 529), for example, find that many peace protesters in the 1980s in the Netherlands did not believe in the effects of the demonstrations. These protesters are 'ideologically' motivated: 'acting according to one's principles'. This equates with our expressive motives. Our expressive motives are a bit broader, though, as we contend that people not only act because they feel their ideology urges them to but also because they want to utter their emotions. More recently, Rucht and Verhulst (2009) distinguish between what they call 'rational' versus 'moral-affective' motives. Their typology implicitly draws upon the expressive-instrumental distinction. Similarly, Van Zomeren and colleagues distinguish between instrumental and 'group-based anger' as the two main motivational tracks to social movement participation (Van Zomeren et al. 2004). The second motivation track is narrower than what we propose here but very similar. Van Stekelenburg (2006), in her research on protest participation in the Netherlands, draws upon a similar but more elaborate distinction between instrumental, identity, group-based anger, and ideological motives — a distinction that has partially been adopted by van Stekelenburg and colleagues (2009) in a later study.

Apart from the instrumental-expressive dimension a secondary dimension distinguishes protest motivations. Protesters can be motivated because of *individual or collective motives*. People can make claims or express their emotions or ideology in their personal name or in the name of a group. Among the instrumentally motivated people, some people take to the streets to improve their own life, they want a job, better social security, a future for their kids. Other people take up arms for a group of people to whom they belong; they are motivated by a kind of 'we'-feeling and act on behalf of a

group, they want a job for their colleagues, for people like them, and they want a better future for the kids of people in the same situation. The same applies to the expressive motives: people come to express their personal grievances or to represent the public outrage of a collectivity. This second dimension can be traced back to another classic in the study of social action, Karl Marx, and his discussion of class consciousness. Again, the distinction between individual and collective motives is gradual and not absolute. Most protest participants probably both want to improve their own life or express their own discontent as well as they share the hope for a better life and their grievances with others. Whether motives are individual or collective is thus a matter of degree.

This individual-collective dimension relates to a modern tradition of research in social movements dealing with the 'collective identity' of protest participants and going back to the so-called new social movements approach that mainly thrived in Europe (see for example: Buechler 2000; Melucci 1989; Simon and Klandermans 2001). Probably the most compelling argument about collective identities has been made in the work on 'collective action frames'. Gamson (1992; 1995) distinguishes between injustice, agency, and identity frames. Identity frames refer to the fact that some people identify with a group of significant others that are in particular affected by an injustice or grievance. This leads to the development of a strong 'we'-feeling but also of a 'they' that is held responsible for the troublesome state of affairs. Similarly, Mansbridge (2001: 4-5) states that collective identity concerns both in-group solidarities as an oppositional consciousness towards opponents. Gamson and his fellow students consider the presence of collective action frames, and thus also a feeling of collective identity, as a precondition for people to participate. We argue and show below that the degree of collective identification may differ and that motives may be more or less collective.

The secondary individual-collective dimension cuts across the primary instrumental-expressive dimension resulting in four distinct motivation types: instrumental-collective (our interests), instrumental-individual (my interests), expressive-collective (our grievances/values), and expressive-individual (my grievances/values). Both dimensions are rooted in classic as well as modern accounts of social movements and protest participation. These types grasp the essence of previous categorizations of protest motivation and simplify them into a straightforward two-by-two typology. Note that the proposed motivation typology is versatile and does not imply a specific conception of social movements, their goals, and strategies. We will show below that the typology allows to empirically assess the motives of participants in different collective actions staged by very different movements. Also, we explicitly acknowledge that motivations, in practice, probably are a mix of different motivation types (Armstrong and Bernstein 2008).

Determinants of Motivation: Hypotheses

That the four protest motivation types make theoretical sense does not mean that all types are present among participants in all types of protest to the same extent. Some protests, for example, are more prone to lead to individual motives while others are more likely driven by collective motives. This work focuses on similarities between and differences across participants in a series of twelve different protest events. Our main contention is that there are systematic differences and similarities in the motivations of the participants in these different events. Our argument is situated on the protest event level (and the movement level). Naturally, we acknowledge that there are individual level differences too. People attending the same event can be very differently motivated;

we will actually show this is the case. But the claim we make is comparative as this lacks most in extant work. What differences do we expect between the different protest events?

Protest events are typically staged by social movements; this is the case too with the twelve events this study covers. Some scholars attempt to classify entire social movements as being 'instrumental' or rather 'expressive'. Duyvendak and Giugni, for example, (1995) distinguish 'instrumental' from what they call 'identity' and 'subcultural' movements. Instrumental movements are focused on reaching external goals — they give the example of the peace movement making external claims — while identity and subcultural movements are mainly focused on 'experiencing' a collective identity and celebrating group solidarity — they give the example of the women's or gay's movement. Earlier work has made similar distinctions on the movement-level. Jenkins (1983), for example, distinguishes movements of 'personal change' from movements of 'institutional change'. Turner and Killian (1987) distinguish (amongst others) between, what they call, 'power-oriented' vs. 'participation-oriented' social movements. Turner and Killian explicitly state that all motivation types play some role in every movement; there are differences within the same movement and some groups within the same movement are more power-oriented while others are more participation-oriented. Other authors too, have challenged the idea that entire social movements can be classified as being instrumental or rather expressive: "*We suggest that scholars abandon efforts to classify whole movements, or even particular movement goals, as 'expressive' or 'instrumental'*"(Armstrong and Bernstein 2008: 85).

However, we argue that, although a movement itself may not be classifiable, different types of social movements tend to foster systematically different types of motivations. Within those movements, we expect to find participants with a variety of

motives but we anticipate a specific motivation type to dominate. The reason is that social movements are creators of meaning and attempt to 'align' their message with the motivation of the people who are targeted for participation (Snow et al. 1986). In their protest platform, movements typically argue why protest is needed and what should be changed. If they are successful, participants in the events for which the movement mobilizes more or less resemble each other and share common views and motives. Conversely, events staged by different movements may be more or less attractive to different types of people because they concur with its aims (see also: Van Stekelenburg, Klandermans, and van Dijck 2009). For example, Klandermans in a rare comparative study in the Netherlands found that for actions staged by the labor movement participants were more power-oriented while for activities of the women's movement they were more participation-oriented (Klandermans 1993). Also, social movements stage different *events* and these events may all attract different people being driven by different types of motivations. Some social movements have broad action repertoires attracting a variety of participants with a variety of motives. Wrapping up, we argue that there is variation in the motives people have to participate in protest and this variation is a function of several factors: the individual level, the protest event level, the movement level, and, as will later elaborate, the political context level.

This study examines motives to participate in large protest demonstrations - typical *collective* action events. People show up in a demonstration in the company of others, demonstrating is not a lonesome activity, and the claims that are being made are mostly collective claims. This collective element is part of most definitions of what social movements are in the first place (see for example Tilly 2004). Yet, for the individual-collective dimension to make any sense even on collective action events as demonstrations a part of the participants should be motivated by individual motives.

For the primary instrumentality-expressivity dimension our argument is similar. If social movement scholars are right — the external claim aspect of social movements prevails in most definitions of movements most participants in large demonstrations should be motivated by instrumental motives: they want to change things or prevent things from changing. Yet, we expect that some specific participants would be relatively more motivated by expressive reasons. This leads us to a first hypothesis: *The instrumental-collective motivation type is the most frequent among participants in large protest demonstrations* (H1).

We expect there to be differences between motivations to participate in different events. The social movement literature since long distinguished different types of movements (and associated protest events). The most well-known is the distinction between so-called 'old' and 'new' social movements (Buechler 2000; Kriesi et al. 1995; Meyer and Tarrow 1998). New social movements thrive on a political cleavage that has received many names: postmaterialists versus materialists (Inglehart 1990), left-libertarians versus right-authoritarians (Kitschelt and Hellemans 1990), or the winners versus the losers of globalization (Kriesi et al. 2008). Uniting all those accounts is that new social movements are considered to be 'universalist' in their goals; the beneficiaries of their actions are not specific groups but very often society, or even humanity as a whole. This certainly applies to the two protest events in our sample staged by new social movement: a protest against climate change and against the war on Iraq (see below). We expect the motivations of the participants in these new social movement events to be mostly collective. On the second dimension, things are less clear. Scholars have heavily debated whether the new social movements embody foremost a cultural rather than a political challenge (Melucci 1989). Students have distinguished between more instrumental and more expressive variants among the news social movements

(Duyvendak and Giugni 1995). Yet, taking into account the two concrete new social movements under study here, the peace movement and the environmental movement, and considering the two covered events and their clear external goals, we expect the instrumental motives to outweigh the expressive ones. *The protest events staged by new social movements are relatively more attended by people motivated by instrumental-collective motives* (H2).

Old social movements, mainly the labor movement, are typically aiming for social (and political) change; they are the ideal-typical instrumental social movements. Yet, they differ from the new social movements regarding the scope of their actions' beneficiaries. Labor unions, in many West-European countries, have been co-responsible for the creation of the welfare state benefitting the better part of the population. But often unions defend the interests of very specific and targeted segments of the population. We expect this to be especially the case for the two demonstrations in our sample that are organized by the trade unions. Both demonstrations were triggered by massive lay-offs in multinational companies and targeted the companies' management and the government to protect the employment of a specific group of workers. Hence, our third hypothesis says: *The protest events staged by old social movements are relatively more attended by people motivated by instrumental-individual motives* (H3).

Scholars not only examined the more established old and new social movements but have distinguished a specific type of social movement that stages protest events as a reaction to sudden acts of random violence — Jennings (1999) calls these 'pain and loss events'. Typically, such movements deal with valence issues and protest against violence, drunk driving etc. and are triggered by spectacular focusing events. Walgrave and Verhulst (2006) have coined the concept 'new emotional movements'; we will use

the term 'valence movement' here. Comparing such movements in four countries, they claim that these movements do not have a clear, or at least a very narrow and thin, collective identity. The only thing that binds the participants is their outrage and grief. This suggests that the motivations of the participants would be relatively individual instead of collective. Protest by valence movements lacks a clear external goal. These movements are hardly organized, there hardly are movement organizations that can structure the protest and provide it with a clear external goal. This suggests that participants in reactive events would show up mainly for expressive reasons. Our fourth hypothesis states: *The protest events staged by valence movements are relatively more attended by people motivated by expressive-individual motives* (H4).

Our dataset not only includes eight demonstrations about different issues in Belgium. It also covers data on anti-war demonstrations held early 2003 against the upcoming war against Iraq. In terms of the motivational differences between the anti-war demonstrators in the US, UK, Belgium, and the Netherlands we expect the political context to play a role. More specifically we argue that the specific position of the national governments regarding the war on Iraq has had an effect on why people showed up (for a similar argument see Walgrave and Verhulst 2009). Protesting against war did not occur in a political vacuum but in interaction with national governments supporting or opposing war. The countries in our sample cover a broad spectrum of various government positions vis-à-vis the war. The US was the main war-initiating country with the Bush administration strongly in favor of ousting Saddam Hussein, the UK followed but the British government party was internally divided, the Dutch government supported the war in words but hardly in deeds, and the Belgian government, finally, was strongly opposed to war (Walgrave and Rucht 2010). These different positions, we believe, affected the motives of people showing up in the demonstrations in these

countries. To simplify things we only formulate an hypothesis as to how the US demonstrators differed from their UK, Dutch and Belgian counterparts. The only protesters that could really hope to affect the war decision were the US protesters. It was clear that Bush was planning to go to war with or without support from his allies. Although chances that the US peace movement could stop the war were exceedingly small, it was the only movement that may have hoped to have a possible effect. Therefore, we expect the US demonstrators to have been more instrumentally motivated than their colleagues in other countries. On the second dimension, we expect the US demonstrators to have distanced themselves as much as possible from the US state and the US population. US public opinion was divided at that time but large segments of the population supported the war and so were the US mass media (Verhulst and Walgrave 2010). Consequentially, we expect the US demonstrators to refer less to the collective but more to their individual beliefs. Our final hypothesis states: *US 2003 anti-war demonstrators are relatively more than UK, Dutch and Belgian anti-war demonstrators motivated by instrumental-individual motives* (H5).

We formulated hypotheses about how protest events are characterized by some motivation type rather than by others. But motivations are foremost features of *individuals* and not of protest events or social movements. Motives are also affected by individual characteristics. In order to be able to sort out the independent effect of protest event characteristics (movement type and nation) we simply *control* for a whole series of individual characteristics and do not formulate hypotheses regarding their impact on the motives of protesters. The socio-demographic, attitudinal and behavioral composition of protest events differs; we test whether movement and political context matters *on top of* the effect of these individual correlates of motivation.

Data and Methods

We rely on twelve protest surveys conducted between 2003 and 2007 in four different countries covering 4,411 individual respondents. For each of the demonstrations we followed a standardized sampling and interview procedure as introduced by Favre and colleagues (1997) and further refined by Walgrave and colleagues (Van Aelst and Walgrave 2001; Walgrave and Verhulst 2010 (forthcoming)): two supervisors count the rows of the walking demonstration and in every *n*th row they select a demonstrator to be interviewed by an interviewer. The amount of rows skipped is dependent on the supervisors' estimate of the size of the demonstration. Once an interviewer has finished his interview, he returns to the supervisor who points out a new interviewee. Using this method, all demonstrators have an equal chance of being approached by an interviewer. By separating selection and actual interviewing of demonstrators, interviewer selection bias is overcome. The interviewer asks the demonstrator to answer a few oral questions, fills out the answers, and then hands over a questionnaire to be filled out at home and sent back via mail, free of charge. The oral interview paper is torn off of the postal questionnaire, which both have identical numbers. This way, response bias can be tested for. Earlier tests have found that only age significantly distinguishes collaborative from no-collaborative participants; older people are somewhat more inclined to send back their questionnaire than younger people (Walgrave and Verhulst 2010 (forthcoming)).

The twelve covered demonstrations correspond to four different movement types. We covered eight demonstrations in Belgium, two demonstrations per type. Next, together with colleagues in the four countries, we covered four anti-war demonstrations all held on the same day, February 15, 2003, and all directed against the then imminent

war on Iraq. We covered the main demonstrations in the capitals of the Netherlands, the UK, the US and Belgium. The first set of eight demonstrations allows us to test whether our protest motivation typology grasps differences across issues. The second set of four demonstrations tests whether our typology holds across different political contexts. Table 1 presents the evidence.

<Table 1 about here>

For the four anti-war demonstrations, we do not need to argue that they are typical new social movement events. The Belgian Climate Change demonstration of December 2007 belongs to the same category. Climate change currently is the main issue of the environmental movement which is one of the emblematic new social movements. The two events we attributed to the old social movements type were both triggered by restructurings and layoffs in multinational companies in Belgium. The Inbev protest in March 2006 targeted the major brewing company Inbev and was organized by the trade unions. The same unions mobilized against the leadership of the German company VW that was planning to shut down it local production unit in Vorst near Brussels, in December 2006. We consider the March for Joe in April 2006 and the Silent March in May of that same year as an example of a typical valence movement's event. In both cases, brutal killings of innocent people in a public place lead to a massive outcry and protest against violence.

Finally, we also incorporate two events that belong to another movement type, at least in the Belgian context. Belgium is divided across language lines and these two events each represent one side of the conflict. The Flemish March of May 2007 demanded more competences for the Flemish region; the March for Unity in November

2007 did just the opposite and aimed at convincing political elites to stop quarrelling about language issues. We did not formulate any hypothesis regarding these two events as their genesis and type does not lead us to expect their participants to have a specific motivational profile. We include these cases as references cases.

The first question in the questionnaires was: "*Why do you participate in this demonstration today?*". Respondents had to write down their answer in an open space. A large majority of the respondents gave at least one reason for their participation (91.4%). On average over the twelve demonstrations, the respondents used 115 characters to convey their motivation. We only draw on the people who generated at least one motive. We consider people's answer to this straightforward question as their motivation (see also Schlozman, Verba, and Brady 1995 who also used open questions). The answers tap the explicit and conscious reasons people have to participate — the benefit-side of the cost and benefits equation. Probably, people partially rationalize their motivations when asked why they participated and some of their statements are doubtlessly affected by social desirability. For example, we expect that their explicit motivations are dominated by collective benefits and not by selective benefits — social desirability pushes people not to refer to selfish reasons: "*The dictates of social desirability give respondents an incentive to emphasize civic-minded motives at the expense of selfish ones when being interviewed*" (Schlozman et al. 1995: 10). In social psychology, there is an ongoing debate about the reliability and validity of introspection as a method to lay bare what goes on in the mind of an individual (Costall 2006; Danziger 1980). Following Schlozman and colleagues (1995), we argue that the answers to the why-question are a useful indicator of people's motives. In contrast to closed questions, open questions do not cue specific reasons respondents may have forgotten. We explained that motivation is the result of a calculus which implies that it is an explicit

and conscious process that people can recall and reproduce verbally. This applies all the more to a costly activity such as spending at least half a day to go demonstrating in the country's capital; such an activity requires more motivation and, thus, a more conscious process. The question, however, probably only elicits the most important reason for people to participate, the motive that is on top of their mind. As can be seen in Table 1, most people only produce one motive when asked the why-question with some small differences between protest events. People's underlying motivation is probably more complex — combining different types of motives — than what they write down. We acknowledge that our measure probably underestimates the mixed character of protest participants' motivation.

The open answers were manually recoded into the four motivation types. Only 19 respondents (0.5%) provided answers that could not be classified in the typology. This underlines that the typology grasps two key universal dimensions in people's motivation. Across issues and nations, peoples' motivations can be categorized in a simple two-by-two typology of instrumental-expressive and individual-collective motives. For the precise guidelines that were used when coding the open answers we refer to Appendix B.

Analyses draw on weighed data. As our goal is to compare across demonstrations, the fact that we have more respondents for some demonstrations than for others may complicate things. Therefore, the data are reweighed and all demonstrations get an equal weight.

Results

To what extent does our typology cover the motivation of the protesters? Table 2 contains the descriptive data for all protesters in the two datasets — the cross-issue and cross-national (anti-war) dataset.

<Table 2 about here>

The four motivation types exist in reality; none of the cells is empty and all contain a substantial amount of protesters. The two dimensions tap distinct elements of people's motivation to participate in protest demonstrations. Not all types are equally frequent. The most widespread motivation is instrumental-collective, both in the cross-national (82.5%) as in the cross-issue data (59.8%). People mostly (say that they) show up to change things in the world and they do so in the name of a group. The least common motivation is of the instrumental-individual type (15.8% and 16.1%). Both expressive types score in between. There are two main types: instrumental-collective and expressive-individual motivations. Most people belong to one of these types.

Figure 1 and Figure 2 plot the four motivation types for the twelve demonstrations. The figures show that movement type makes a difference. The motivational configuration *within* the types is very similar across events (Figure 1). The motivational signature of the two valence movement demonstrations — the March for Joe and the Silent March — is very similar with a relative small amount of instrumentally motivated protesters and a relative large amount of people with expressive motives. The two new social movement events and the two (anti)regional movement events display a very akin motivational configuration as well. The Belgian anti-war demonstration and

the Climate Change protest are almost identical with a very high amount of collective-instrumentally motivated participants. The only exception to the pattern of within movement homogeneity are both old social movement events. The differences between the Inbev and the VW Vorst demonstration strike the eye: instrumentality is much higher at the Inbev event while expressivity is much more present at the VW Vorst event. This testifies that, even within the same movement, separate demonstrations can be driven by different motivational configurations, there is motivational variation at the protest event level.

Also the motivational pattern of the four anti-war demonstrations is similar (Figure 2). Moreover, the anti-war demonstrations in Figure 2 show strong resemblances with both Belgian new social movement events in Figure 1. Notwithstanding the large similarities among the four anti-war demonstrations we notice subtle differences between demonstrators in the four countries.

<Figure 1 about here>

<Figure 2 about here>

Figure 1 and Figure 2 allow us to confirm *H1*. The instrumental-collective motivation type is the most frequent. When people are asked why they show up to protest, a large majority of them primarily refers to the realization of external and collective goals. This applies to all except for one demonstration (VW Vorst) in our sample. So, both comparing across issues as comparing within the anti-war protest across nations we see that instrumental-collective reasons prevail.

Figure 3 plots the twelve demonstrations in a two-dimensional space defined by the instrumental-expressive and collective-individual dimension. Note that the mid-

points of each dimension in the graph are not the mathematical centers of the scale but are based on the average of all aggregated protesters. The figure reveals that there is substantial variation across demonstrations. It proofs that the motivational typology grasps something of interest that differs systematically across demonstrations. The international anti-war demonstrations, apart from that in the US, more or less cluster together while the eight Belgian demonstrations dealing with different issues are all over the place. In our sample of protest events, both dimensions correlate on the aggregate level: the Pearson's correlation coefficient is .82 ($p<.001$). So, in protest where a lot of people are instrumentally motivated many people refer to collective motives; when demonstrations are populated with people who foremost want to express themselves chances are large that many protesters in these demonstrations refer to individual motives. That both dimensions are associated at the aggregate level does not imply that they are at the individual level. As we will show in the multivariate analyses below, at the individual level both dimensions are distinct.

<Figure 3 about here>

To test H2-H5 we run a number of multinomial logistic regressions comparing the features of the demonstrators with different motivations with each other. We skip the mixed motivated demonstrators (see Table 1) as we are interested in the differences between differently motivated protesters. We present separate analyses for the eight Belgian demonstrations in order to focus on differences between movements and protest events and for the four anti-war demonstrations in order to grasp differences between countries. Each time, the variables we are most interested in are the aggregate movement type and country variables. To make sure the movement and country effects

are robust and do not depend on the composition of the demonstrations, we control for individual characteristics. More information about these individual-level control variables is to be found in Appendix A.

Table 3 contains the analyses of the eight Belgian demonstrations. Each column in the table summarizes the results of three *separate* analyses with each time different motivation types as the reference category. So, each model is estimated three times with another movement type as the reference category. All other individual-level variables yield the same coefficients in each analysis and are reported only once per column. Coefficients are odd ratios with a figure above 1 indicating a positive and a figure below 1 a negative association. We focus on the shaded area of the table containing the movement type effects.

<Table 3 about here>

The second hypothesis stated that participants in the new social movement events in our sample would be more driven by instrumental-collective motives. We highlight the relevant coefficients related to this hypothesis in **bold**. The data seem to support the hypothesis to a large extent; most comparisons substantiate the expectation. The first model in Table 3 shows that new social movement participants give significantly less instrumental-individual (odd ratio .327), expressive-individual (.469), and expressive-collective (.131) reasons to participate, and thus refer more to instrumental-collective motives, than the old social movement participants. Compared to valence movement participants and regional movement supporters, new social movement supporters differ significantly in that they refer more to instrumental-collective than to expressive-individual (2.646 and 1.823) and to expressive collective

(3.965 and 1.845) reasons. Differences with instrumental-individual motives are not significant (.556 and .720). We can corroborate *H2*: New social movement supporters, or at least the participants in the events we labeled here as being new social movement events, tend to be more motivated by changing the world in the name of a group or collectivity than the supporters of the other three types of movement events.

The third hypothesis held that the participants in old social movement participants in our sample are relatively more motivated by instrumental-individual motives. Table 3 allows us to maintain this hypothesis by looking at the relevant figures marked in *italics*. The first model, first column, shows that new (.327), valence (.182) and regional (.235) movement supporters refer less than old social movement protesters to instrumental-individual motives compared to the main stream instrumental-collective motives. The second model, both columns, indicates that valence (6.823) and regional (3.630) movement participants refer, in contrast, more to expressive-individual than to instrumental-individual motives compared to old social movement participants. Differences with the expressive-collective category are not significant but go in the expected direction for the valence (2.864) and regional movements (1.029) participants. We conclude that *H3* is confirmed too: compared to other movement types and motivation types, old social movement event participants take more to the streets to change things on their individual behalf.

Hypothesis four contended that valence movement supporters are relatively more driven by expressive-individual motives. They want to show their discontent and display their emotions in their own name. We underlined the relevant figures in Table 3. The middle column of the first model shows that valence movement participants do give more expressive-individual reasons to participate than instrumental-collective reasons compared to old social movement supporters (1.240) but the difference is not

significant; the difference with the new social movement supporters is significant (2.646) but with the regional movement supporters it is not (.689). Compared to instrumental-individual motives, in the second model, the expressive-individual motive is significantly more mentioned by valence movement supporters than by old movement people (6.823) and than by new social movement people (4.756). Differences with the regionalists are not significant (.532). In the third model, the differences between the expressive-individual motivation and the expressive-collective motivation is tested. Valence movement supporters refer significantly more to the first motivation type than old social movement demonstrators (.420). We conclude that *H4* can be confirmed too: the valence movement events in our sample are relatively more populated by people who want to express their personal dissatisfaction and emotions.

The individual-level control variables in Table 3 do grasp a part of the variation in protest motives but that part is smaller than the effect of movement type. The pseudo R^2 of a model only containing the individual predictors is .090 while the pseudo R^2 of a model with only the movement type variables is .118.

Table 4 tests the fifth hypothesis that US anti-war protesters, more than anti-war protesters in other countries, took to the streets on February 15, 2003, because of instrumental-individual reasons. The hypothesis is refuted. The US anti-war protesters do *not* refer more to instrumental-individual reasons than to the other reasons. The opposite is even true. US anti-war protesters, rather, do refer *less* to instrumental-individual motives than their counterparts in the three countries (see all odd ratios larger than 1) and they refer more to the three other types of motives than their foreign colleagues, but only the differences with the instrumental collective type are significant. Other comparisons showed that, if anything, US protest against the war was characterized by expressive-individual motives. It was not so much driven by the idea

that the war could be stopped but rather by the wish to express disagreement with the war. The key anti-war slogan 'Not in My name' expresses this motive in a nice way. We suspect that US demonstrators, being more directly confronted with the Bush government's wish to go to war realized, more than protesters in other countries, that war was inevitable. The individual-level variables do yield some significant results but there is no clear pattern.

<Table 4 about here>

Wrapping up, the protest motivation typology manages to grasp a part of the variation in the reasons people mention to participate in protest. The variation in motives across protest events is not random but patterned. Four of the five hypotheses were confirmed by the evidence. The most frequent motive overall is instrumental-collective. People show up mostly because they want to change things on behalf of a group of like-minded. Especially the participants in the sampled new social movement events are driven by this kind of motives. Old social movement supporters are also instrumentally motivated, they too want to change things, but they do less so in the name of a group of peers but refer to their own values and interests. Valence movement demonstrators do refer to their own grievances too, but they consider the demonstration more as a goal in itself; the movement is the message. These motivational patterns are not only determined by the issue at stake, the movement staging the event and by the concrete aims of the protest event but also by the external political context and target of the protest. We found that anti-war protesters against the war in Iraq in the US, not having much hope that they could stop their government for going to war,

are less motivated by a desire to stop the war. They are content with expressing their dissatisfaction.

Conclusion and discussion

We started the paper by highlighting that protest is on the rise in most Western democracies. What messages are people conveying when they participate in protest events? The study suggests that people send out very different messages when protesting. Most protesters want to change the world in the name of a group of people. Yet, a considerable part of demonstrators do not want to change things; or better: they do not refer to change when asked about the reasons for their participation. And some protesters refer to their personal grievances, interests or values and they do not define themselves primarily as representing a group of people. This finding does not solve the question why protest is up. It could be that, previously, protesters demonstrated for the same reasons than is the case at present and that simply more protesters are now driven by all types of motives. Another intriguing possibility, however, is that the overall rise in protest participation is related to underlying changes in motivations. For example, it could be the case that more people resort to protest due to expressive-individual reasons than before. Indeed, the seemingly growing success of valence movements not making concrete political claims nor speaking on behalf of a specific aggrieved group seems to point in that direction (Walgrave and Verhulst 2006).

The typology and empirical evidence presented in this study contribute to an ongoing debate about why people protest. First, the literature on protest motivation can be integrated into a two-by-two typology grasping key differences in many previous categorizations. The two dimensions make theoretical sense, are transparent, easy to

measure, and are rooted in classic research on the drivers of human collective behavior. Second, in terms of empirical evidence, we applied an comparative design to a field that has most of the time been inspired by case-studies. We compared participants in twelve protest events dealing with different issues and occurring in different countries. The comparative approach is useful, we showed, as we found systematic and interpretable differences in motivational configuration between events. Third, in terms of measurement and operationalization, the study contributes by proposing a standardized way to tap and classify protest motives by drawing on an open 'why'-question that is asked to actual protest participants. Our standardized operationalization works in very different contexts; as good as all answers to the open question could be classified.

The study has a good many limitations. The fact that the explained variance of our models is modest calls for more refined theories and evidence to assess the determinants of people's motives. We suggest further research to focus specifically on the individual correlates of motivation. Only the movement and nation level was tackled here but it is obvious that people's motivation is affected by their individual features. Our analyses only controlled for these but did not really explore to what extent and how structural variables, attitudes, and behavior of individuals matter for their motivation to participate. We suspect that individual-level characteristics interact with meso- and macro-level features of movements and nations. For example, it may be the case that political interest is associated with one type of motivation in one movement and with another type of motivation in another movement.

Another avenue for further research is covering more protest events in order to generalize the findings. Per movement type we only covered two demonstrations; this implies that the movement type results are heavily dependent on the sample of protest events. Maybe evidence on other typical demonstrations of the old social movements,

new social movements, or valence movements would lead to different results. The substantial difference between the two old social movement events in our sample suggests that there may be large variation between protest events staged by the same movement.

The study only covers participants in one specific type of protest: (large) lawful demonstrations. Sure, demonstrations are a very popular means of protesting and demonstration participation goes up in most countries. But the motivational dynamics of demonstration participation may differ from the motivation to participate in other action repertoires. Demonstrations are typical collective events where people meet and protest shoulder to shoulder. This may affect the amount of people who refer to collective motives. Political consumerism, for example, is a more isolated and anonymous type of action. It would be interesting to see whether participants in such actions display the same motivational patterns than demonstration participants. The work by Schlozman and colleagues suggests that motivation differs across action type (Schlozman, Verba, and Brady 1995). Action form is thus another variable that may yield variation in protest motives.

Our study forms just a first step in systematically and comparatively assessing what motivates people to participate in protest. We hope its theoretical direction, comparative design, and standardized evidence make it a significant step.

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Tables and Figures

Table 1: Data per demonstration and movement type

Demonstration	Movement type	N (inclusive mixed)	Average # motives per respondent	N (exclusive mixed)
Cross-issue (Belgium)				
InBev	Old	98	1.3	72
VW Vorst	Old	272	1.3	180
Antiwar (2006)	New	316	1.3	227
Climate Change	New	189	1.2	151
March for Joe	Valence	437	1.5	246
Silent March	Valence	437	1.4	281
Flemish March	Regional	238	1.2	178
March for Unity	Regional	202	1.3	144
Subtotal		2,189		1,479
Cross-national (antiwar)				
Antiwar 2003 Belgium	New	487	1.2	408
Antiwar 2003 Netherlands	New	519	1.2	456
Antiwar 2003 US	New	687	1.2	573
Antiwar 2003 UK	New	529	1.2	445
Subtotal		2,222		1,882
Total		4,411		3,361

Table 2: Percentage of protesters in each motivation type in the cross-issue and cross-national (anti-war) datasets (inclusive mixed motive respondents)

	Instrumental	Expressive	Total
Cross-issue (N=1,989)			
Individual	15.8	32.3	36.2
Collective	59.8	46.6	81.7
Total	63.1	62.6	
Cross-national anti-war (N=2,222)			
Individual	16.1	22.6	28.4
Collective	78.4	21.1	85.2
Total	82.5	32.9	

Note: Figures in table are percentages of multi-response data; they do not add up to 100% as a single protester can refer to several motives to participate. For example: the 15.8 on the first line and column means that 15.8% of the demonstrators in the Belgian cross-issue dataset referred to an instrumental-individual reason to attend the demonstration; some of these demonstrators also referred to other reasons.

Table 3: Multinomial regression with motivation type as dependent variable (Belgian cross-issue dataset; exclusive mixed motive respondents)

	MODEL I			MODEL II		MODEL III
	Instrumental-collective (=refcat)			Instrumental-individual (=refcat)		Expressive-individual (=refcat)
	Instrumental-individual	Expressive-individual	Expressive-collective	Expressive-individual	Expressive-collective	Expressive-collective
Movement types (refcat.=old)						
New	***.327****	***.469****	***.131*****	*1.435*	*.402*	.280***
Valence	*.182***	1.240	.520*	*6.823****	*2.864*	.420**
Regional	*.235***	.854	.242***	*3.630****	*1.029*	.283***
(refcat.=new) Valence	**.556**	**2.646*****	**3.965*****	4.756**	7.128***	1.499
Regional	**.720**	**1.823****	**1.845***	2.531	2.561	1.012
(refcat.=valence) Regional	1.295	.689	.465***	.532	.359	.675
Socio-demos						
Sex (Female)	.759	1.396*	.933	1.838	1.229	.669*
Age	.980	.997	.993	1.017	1.013	.996
Education	.838*	.972	1.087	1.161	1.298**	1.118*
Political attitudes and behavior						
Interest in politics	.784	1.013	.956	1.291	1.218	.944
Active member past 12m (yes)	.814	.836	1.015	1.026	1.247	1.215
Protest frequency	.434***	.948	1.125	1.182***	2.591***	1.187*
Demonstration correlates						
Member organizational circle	1.188	1.134	.903	.945	.760	.796
Mobilization (closed)	.855	.974	.878*	1.139	1.027	.902
Company (formal)	.968	1.075	1.115	1.110	1.152	1.037
N	1,331			1,331		1,331
Pseudo R^2 (Nagelkerke)	.176			.176		.176

Note: * p < .05; ** p < .01; *** p < .001

Table 4: Multinomial regression with motivation type as dependent variable (international anti-war dataset; exclusive mixed motive respondents)

	Instrumental-individual (= refcat)		
	Instrumental-collective	Expressive-individual	Expressive-collective
Nation (refcat.=US)			
Antiwar BE	4.814***	2.365	3.790**
Antiwar NL	4.367***	1.697	2.256
Antiwar UK	3.155**	1.607	1.557
Socio-demos			
Sex (Female)	.782	.686	.557*
Age	1.032***	.686	.557*
Education	1.151	1.022*	1.022
Political attitudes and behavior			
Interest in politics	1.372*	1.194	1.272
Active member past 12m (yes)	.634	1.120	1.336
Protest frequency	.814*	1.026	.630
Demonstration correlates			
Member organizational circle	.926	.640	.878
Mobilization (closed)	1.139	.804	.410*
Company (formal)	1.160	1.112	1.274*
N		1,675	
Pseudo R2 (Nagelkerke)		.067	

Note: * p < .05; ** p < .01; *** p < .001

Figure 1: Percentage of motivational types per Belgian demonstration and across issue (inclusive mixed motive respondents)

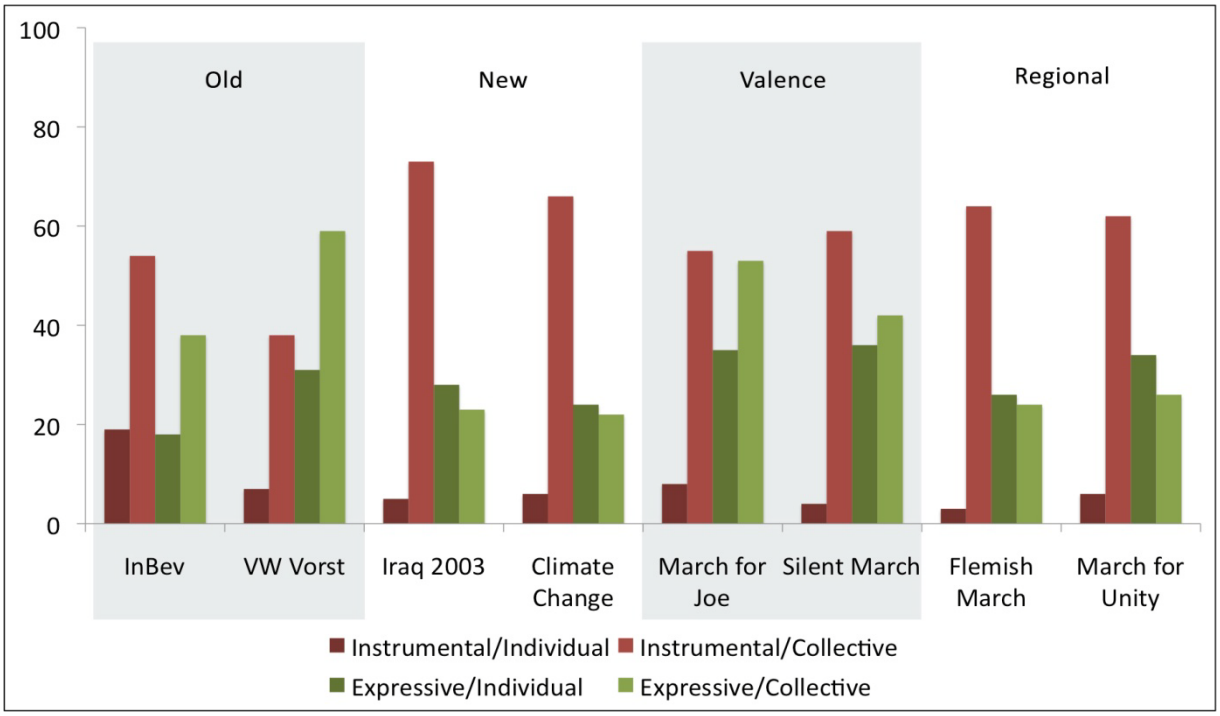


Figure 2: Percentage of motivational types per anti-war demonstration across nation (inclusive mixed motive respondents)

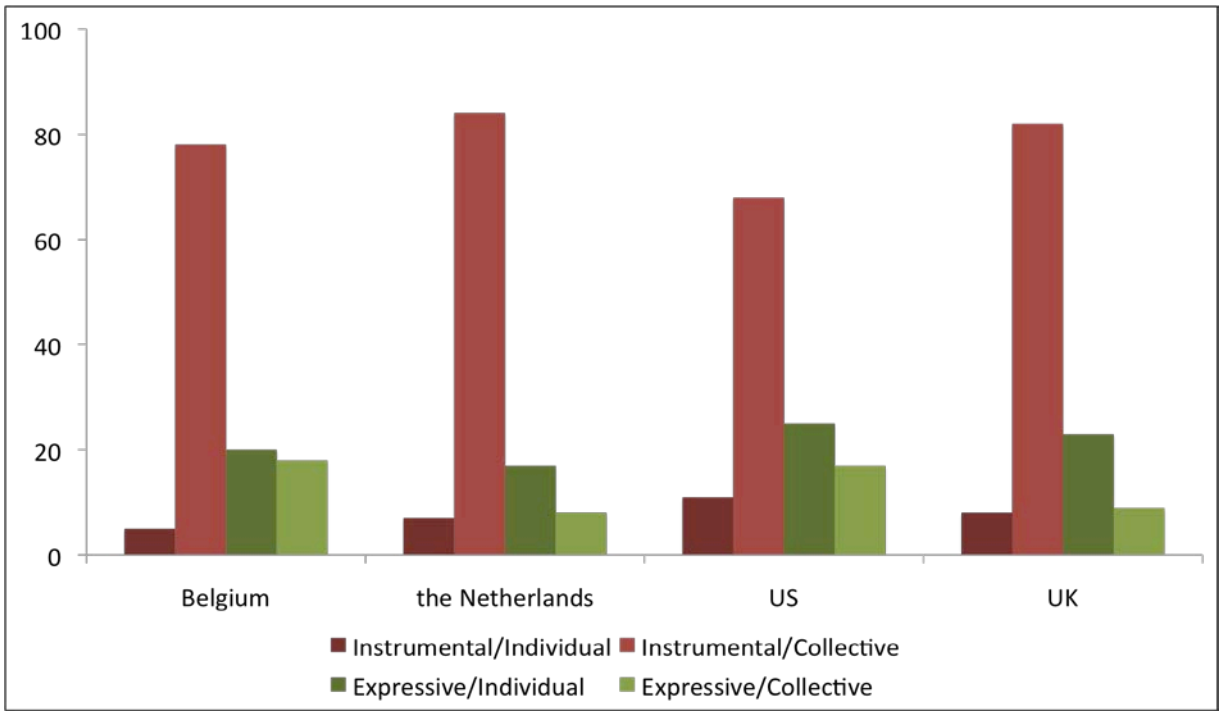
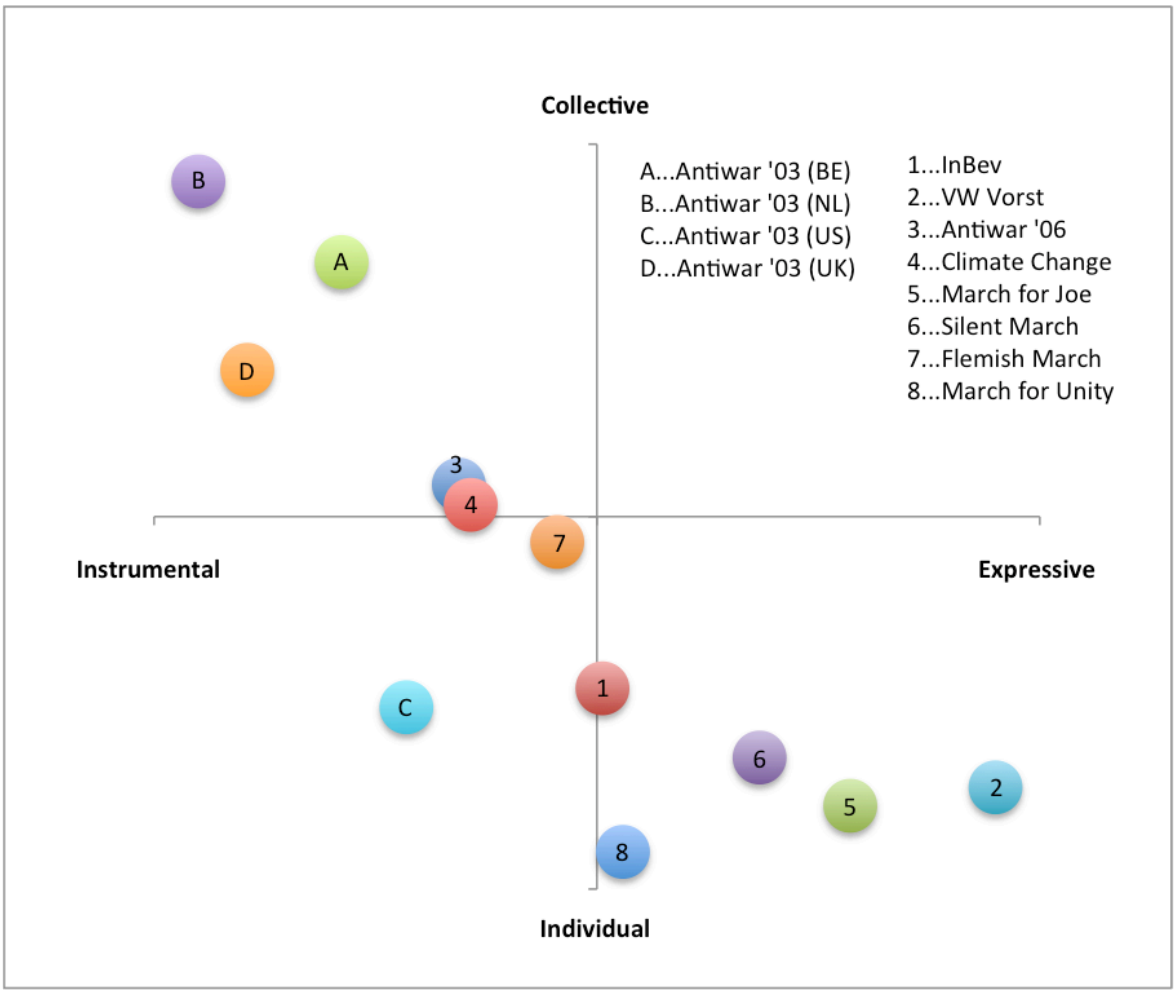


Figure 3: Aggregate position of twelve demonstrations on the two motivation dimensions (inclusive mixed motive respondents)



Appendix A: Operationalization individual-level independent variables

Variable	Question	Coding
Socio-demographics		
Sex		1 'male' – 2 'female'
Age		In years
Education		1 'no diploma' – 8 'university'
Political attitudes and behavior		
Political interest	How interested are you in politics?	1 'not at all' – 5 'very much'
Active member past 12 months	Are you an active member of an organization, that is, did you take part in any activities or meetings of a club, organization or society of any kind in the past twelve months?	1 'no' 2 'yes'
Protest frequency	Can you estimate how often in the past five years you took part in a local, national or international demonstration or public protest?	1 'first time', 2 '2-5 times', 3 '6-10 times', 4 '11-20 times', 5 '+20 times'
Demonstration correlates		
Member organizational circle	Are you, or do you know, a member of one of the organization(s) that organized or helped to organize this demonstration?	1 'no' 2 'yes'
Mobilization channel	How did you find out about the demonstration? (Multiple response list recoded as one variable. Only the most "formal" category is taken into account. E.g.: if a respondent checked both "via friends" and "via co-members", this person was classified under the latter category)	1 (mass media), 2 (family/friends), 3 (colleagues/fellow students), 4 (websites, mailing lists), 5 (posters, flyers), 6 (members organization)
Protest company	Are you at this manifestation…? (Multiple response list recoded as one variable. Only the most "formal" category is taken into account.	1 'alone', 2 'partner/family', 3 'friends', 4 'colleagues', 5 'co-members'

Appendix B: Guidelines for recoding of open answers into motivation typology

Instrumental-individual motivations represent answers referring to a demand for change with clear personal benefits (like 'my job', but also 'a safe future for my children'). Some examples are: 'Because I get fired', 'Because it could have happened to me', or 'Because I have a boy about the same age as the youngster that was killed'. Participants that stressed that their own contribution is important or that they wanted to be counted, where also considered instrumental-individual. Some examples for the latter kind of motives are: 'Because I want to make a contribution' or 'I wanted to increase the number of attendees'.

Second, people's responses proclaiming change about something that affects a wider population and that not only mention personal benefits (e.g. general job security or general policy changes) where coded as instrumental-collective. Examples are: 'We must fight for more justice in the world, where all people are equal and capitalism disappears', 'Flemish independency is necessary!' or 'Out of protest against senseless violence'. This category also contains those responses that referred to changing public opinion or increasing political or public awareness.

Third, the expressive-individual motivation type contains all references to expressing values, beliefs, feelings, emotions, a personal identity, showing solidarity or support, or concerning ideology or principles, and with an explicit reference to 'me', 'myself' or 'I'. Examples here are: 'Because I want to show that I am concerned about what happened', 'To support my former colleagues', or 'Because I am a Flemish nationalist'.

Finally, all motivations belonging to the previous type, but with an explicit reference to a 'we' or an 'us' where considered as expressive-collective. Important here

are also references towards a group or the demonstration as a collective activity. For example: 'To show with as much people as possible that we do not agree with the war in Iraq', or 'To show our political leaders that climate change is important'.