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Interdisziplinäre
Sozialpolitikforschung
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InZentIM
Interdisziplinäres Zentrum für
Integrations- und Migrationsforschung

UNIVERSITÄT
**DUISBURG
ESSEN**

THE FALSE MYTHS OF POLITICS IN AGEING DEMOCRACIES

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OVERVIEW

False myth 1: growing political conservatism with age

False myth 2: only material self-interest motivates older voters

False myth 3: political conflict between young and old

Attention to

- Simplicist survey research
- Families as intergenerational forums of exchange
- Sub-optimal public policies due to path dependency
- Understanding what politicians think about population ageing

“If a man is not a socialist by the time he is 20, he has no heart. If he is not a conservative by the time he is 40, he has no brain.”

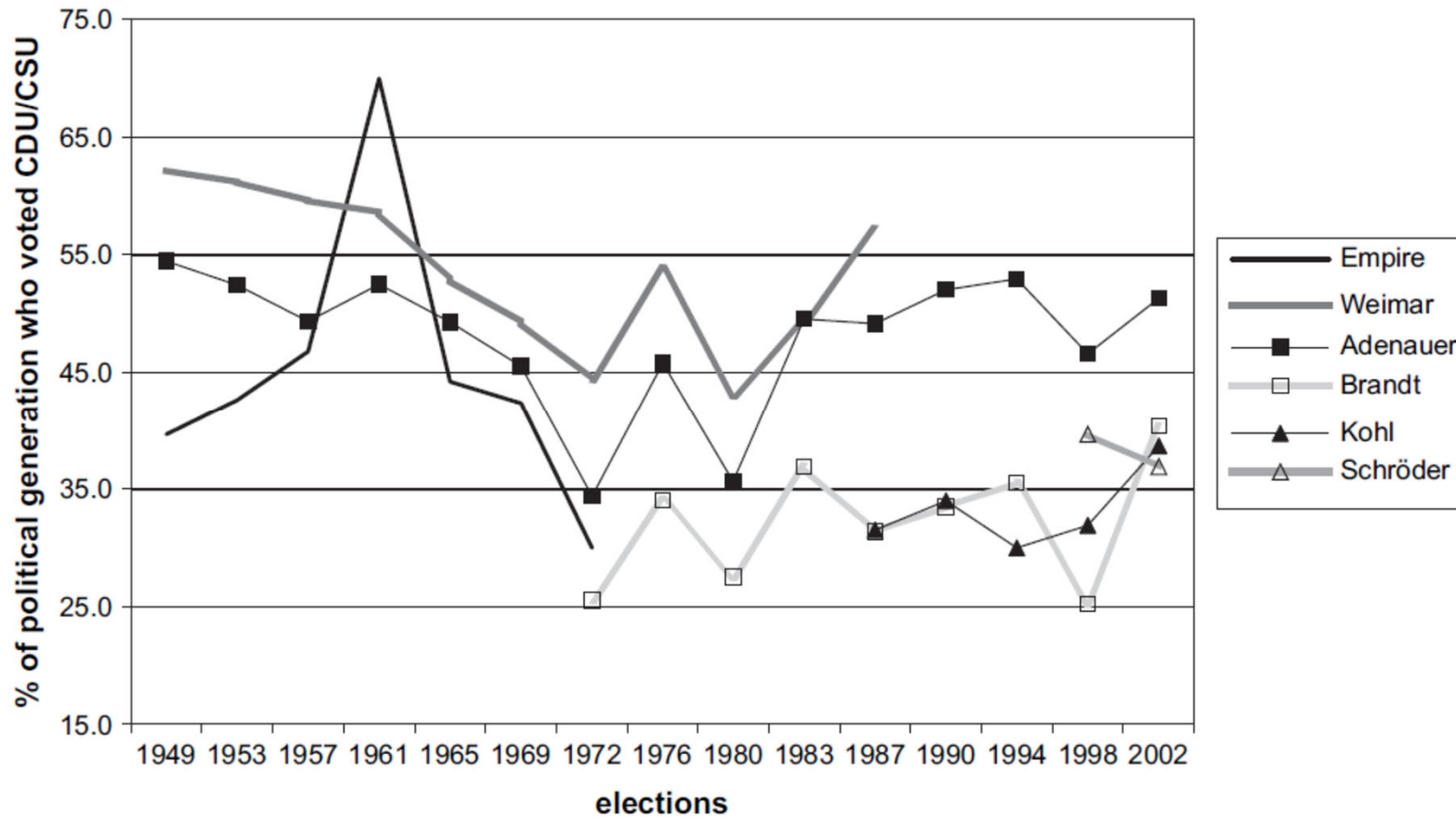
The origins of this quote are uncertain. It is often falsely attributed to Winston Churchill.



Year	Party-list vote			
Most conservative party in Bundestag				
2021				
AfD	10.3	6.4	6.3	0.98
1953				
CDU	43.3	45	47.1	1.05
	Overall	Young people (18-24, 21-29)	Older people (60+)	Ratio

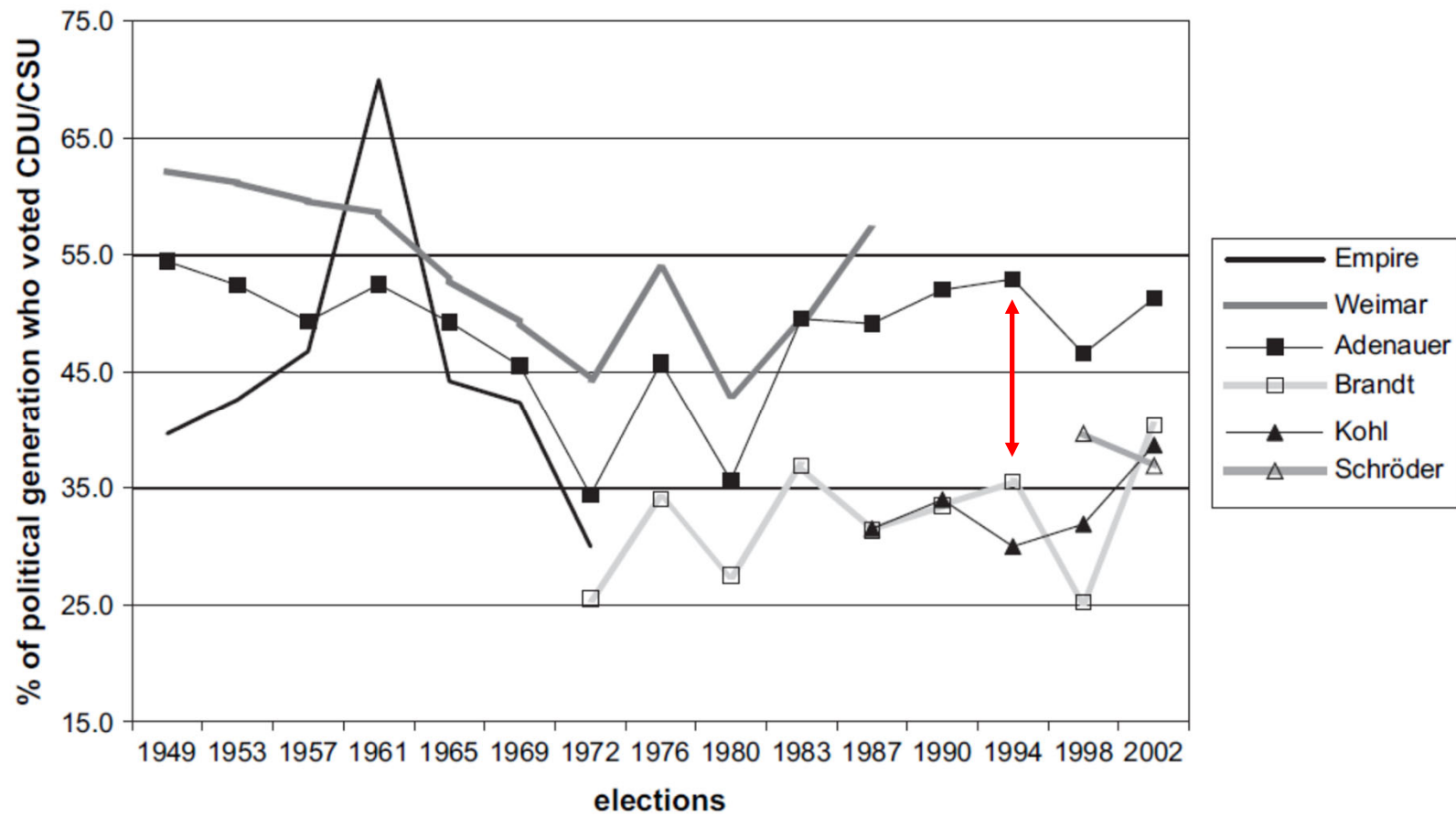
Representative marked ballots, 1953
(w/o BY, RP)

POLITICAL GENERATIONS AND THE CDU/CSU VOTE IN WEST GERMANY



Source: Goerres 2008

POLITICAL GENERATIONS AND THE CDU/CSU VOTE IN WEST GERMANY



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GERMANY'S TWO-DIMENSIONAL POLITICAL COMPETITION 2024



Source: Hagemann et al. 2024

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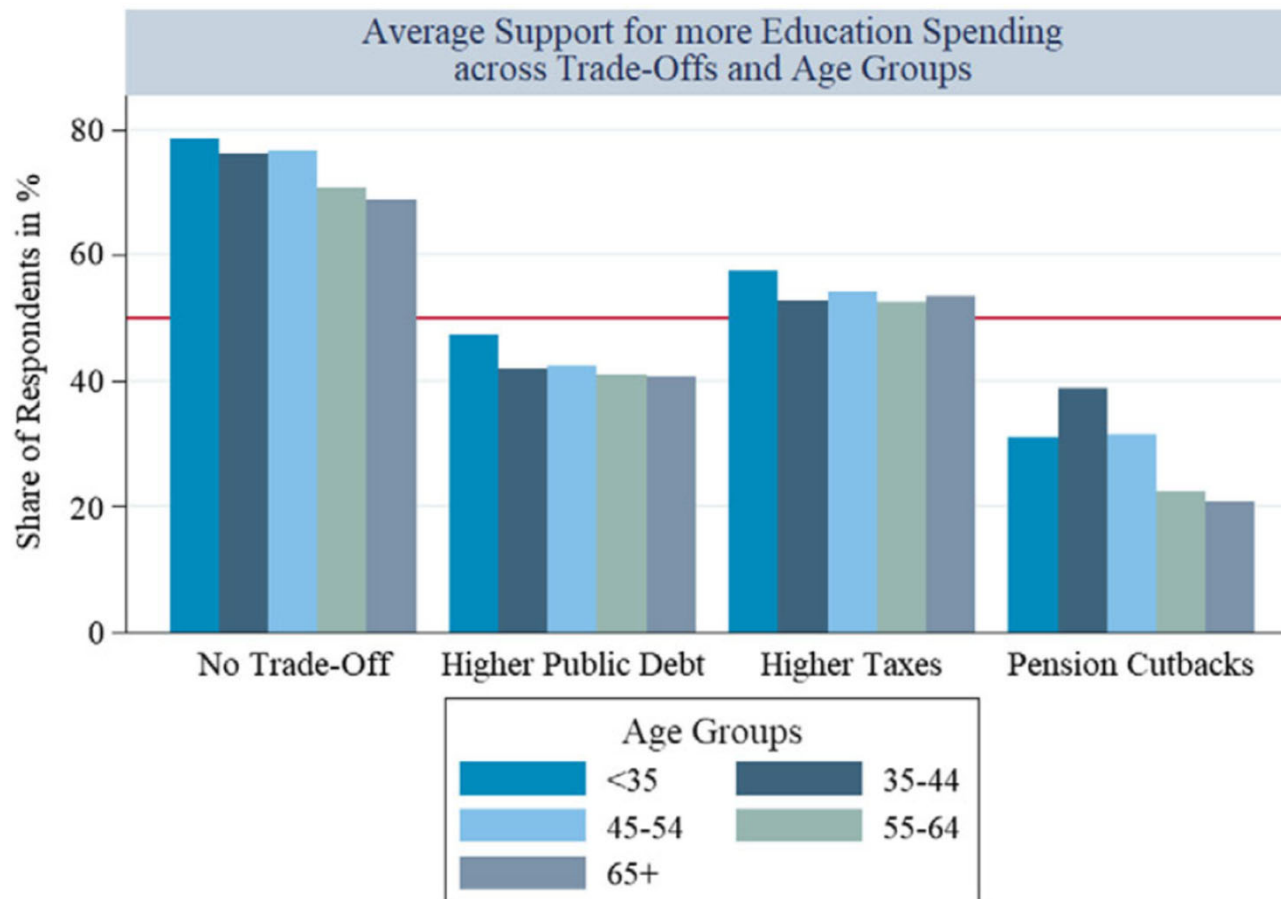
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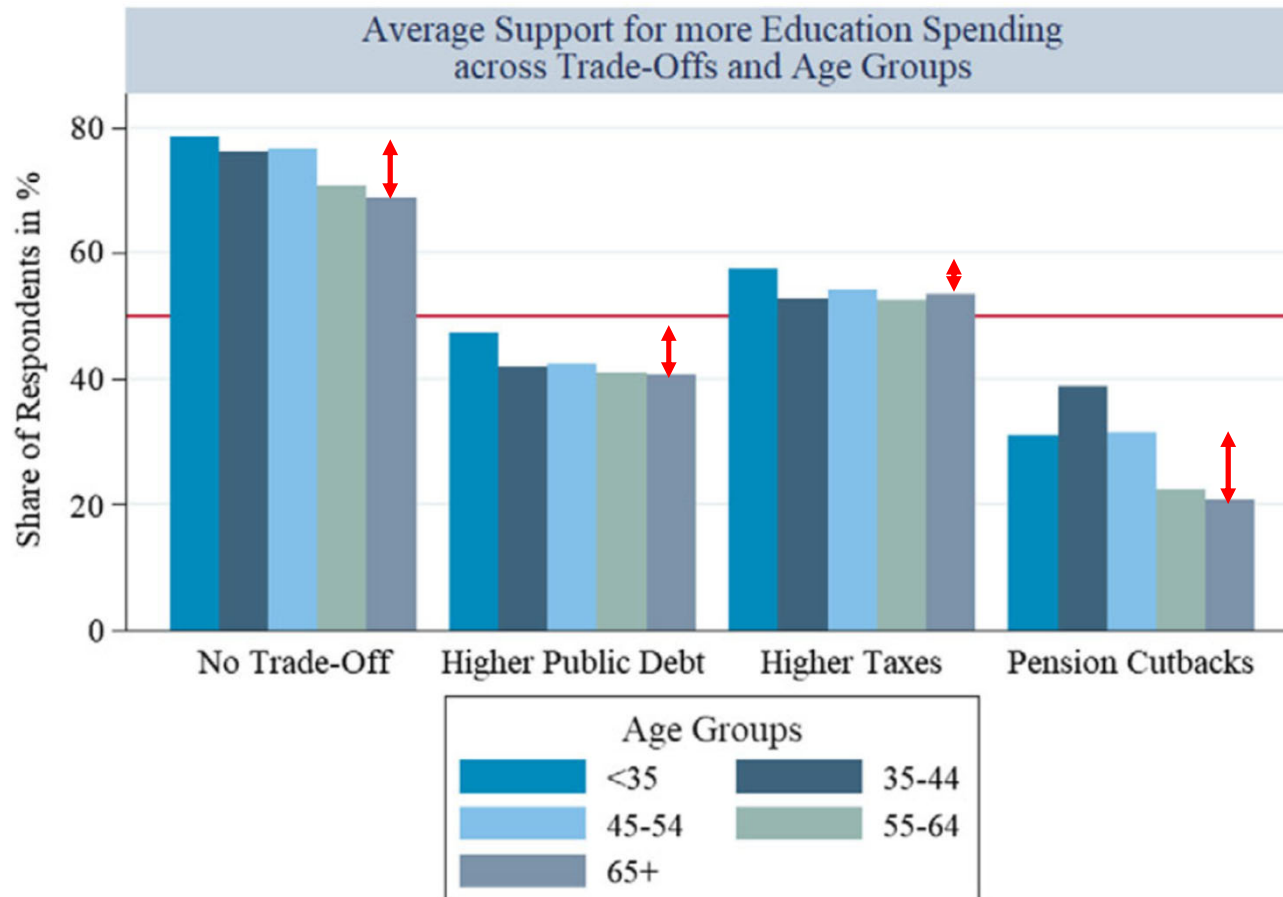
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SUPPORT FOR EDUCATIONAL SPENDING IN EUROPE



Source: Busemeyer/Lober 2020

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PUBLIC AND PRIVATE TRANSFERS ACROSS THE LIFE COURSE IN EUROPE

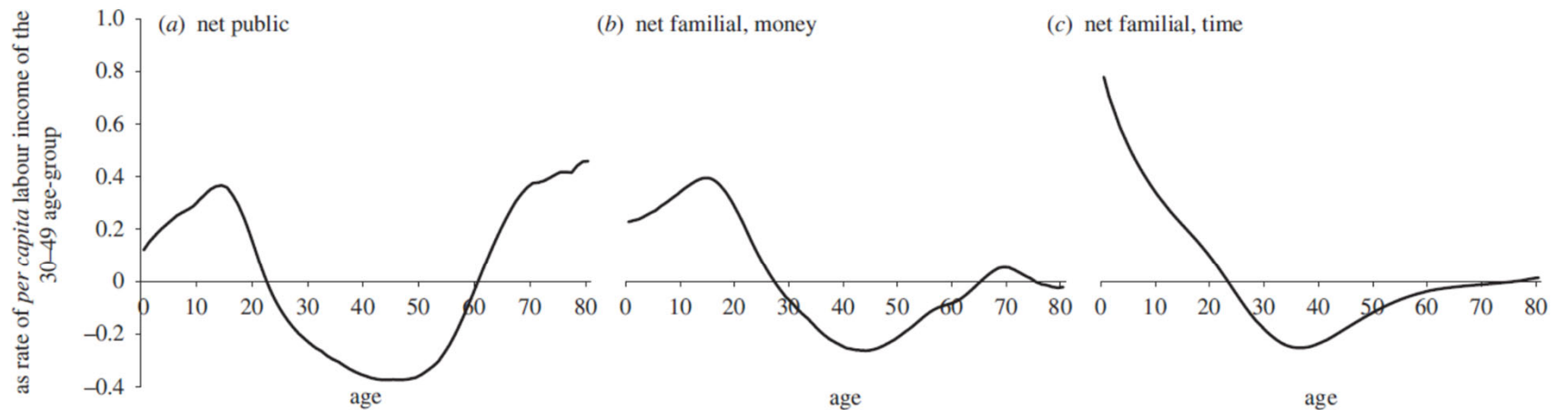


Figure 1. *Per capita* age profiles of net public, net familial money and net time transfers in 12 European countries, 2010. Source: authors' calculations. *Per capita* figures refer to entire year groups, not only those who provide or receive transfers. Values are normalized on the *per capita* market labour income of persons aged 30–49 of the respective country.

Source: Vanhuyse/Medgydesi/Gál 2023

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NECESSARY CONDITIONS FOR A POLITICAL CLEAVAGE

A political cleavage is a politicised line of conflict.

At least two delineated social groups.

Objective differences between groups in terms of material or normative interests

Members of groups must be aware of these differences

Members of political elites must activate group consciousness and mobilise group members into politics.

PERCEPTIONS OF AGE CONFLICT IN EAST AND WEST GERMANY

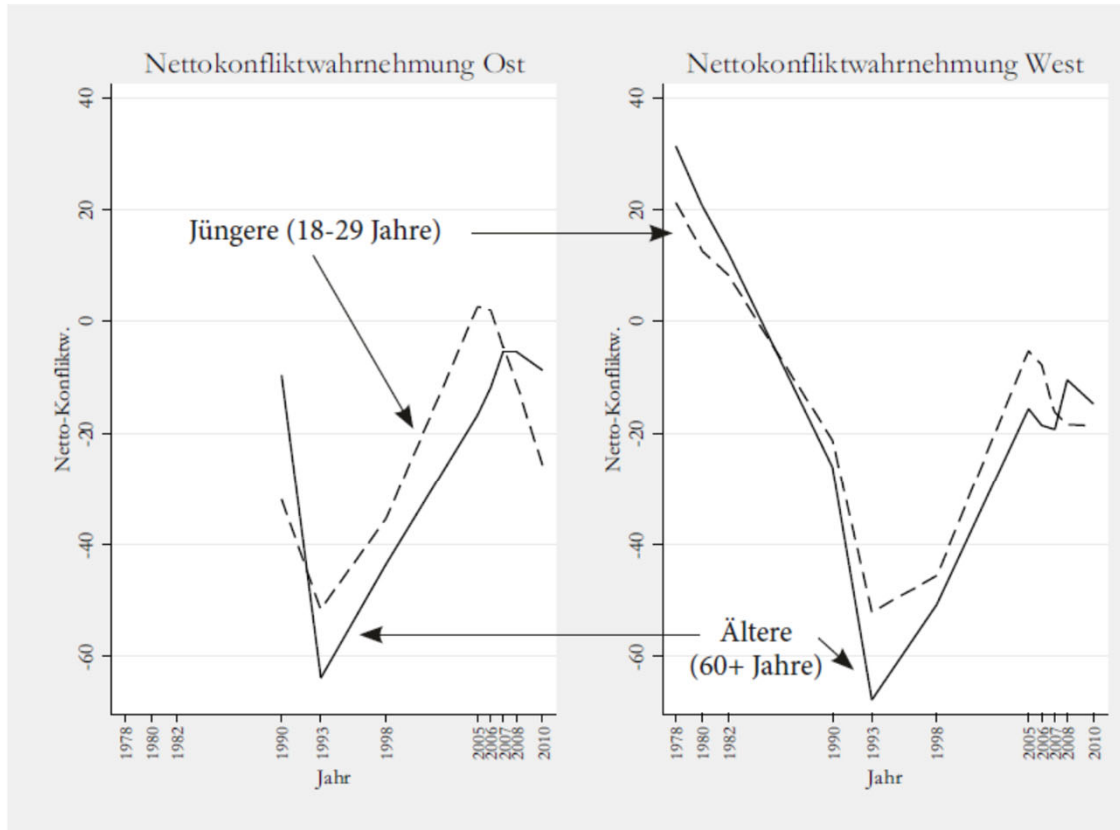


Abb. 2 Die Nettowahrnehmung der Stärke des Alterskonflikts für Jüngere und Ältere zwischen 1978 und 2010 nach Ost und West

Source: Goerres 2018

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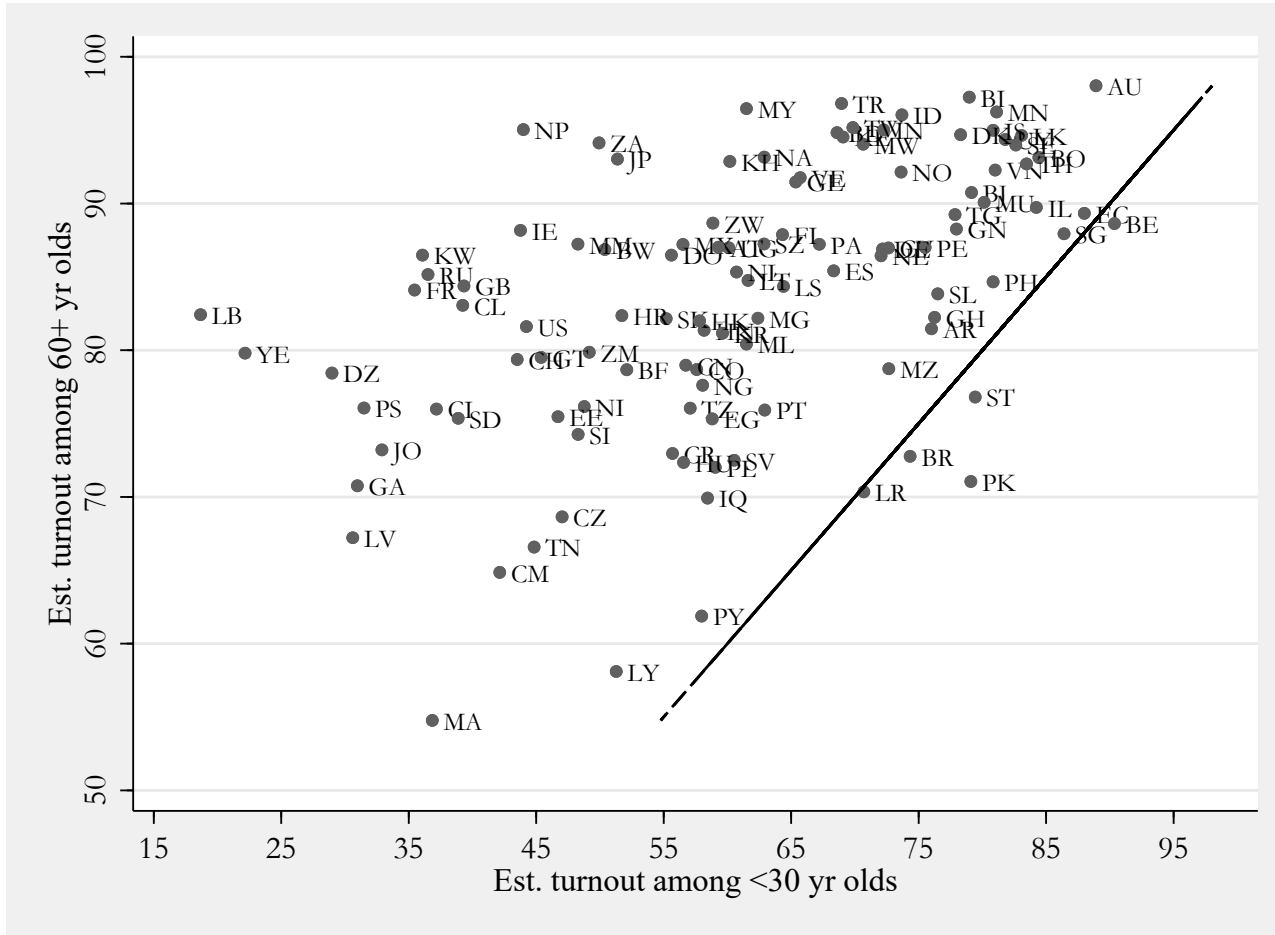
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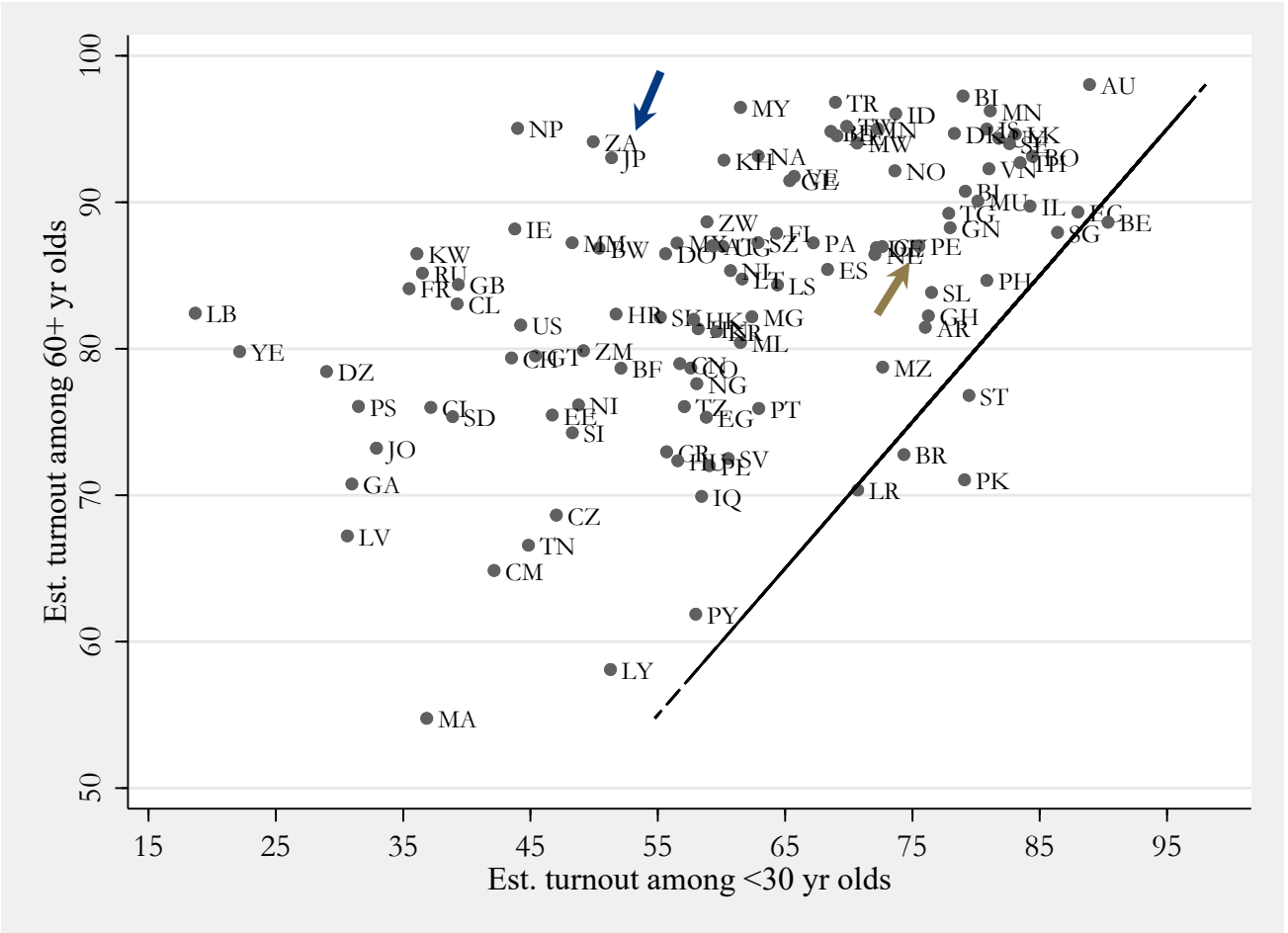


TURNOUT RATES 60+ AND <30 YEARS OLDS ACROSS THE GLOBE IN 2015



Source: Vanhuysse/Goerres 2021

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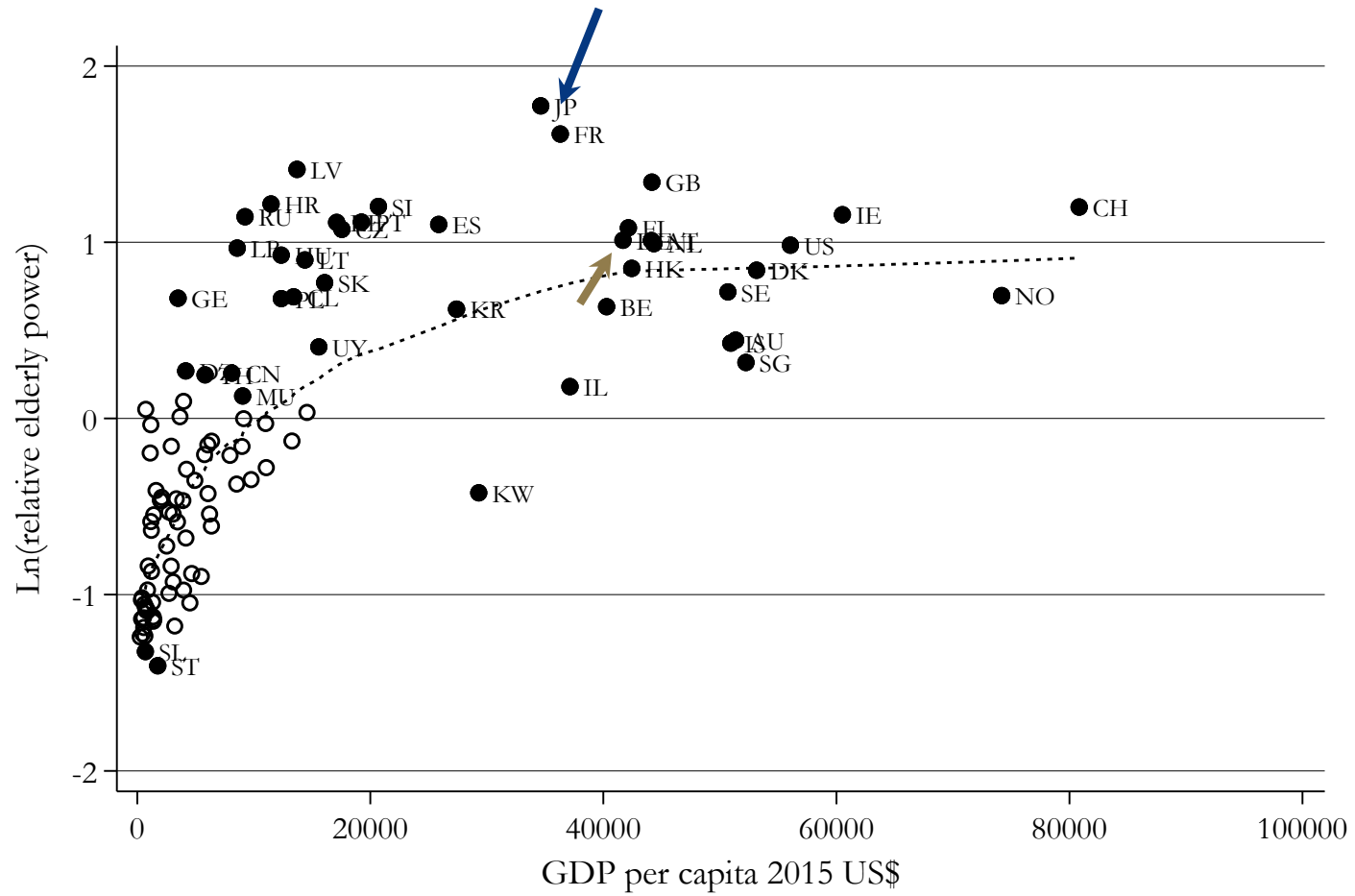


JAPAN AND GERMANY'S RELATIVE TURNOUT RATES AND AGE
POWER MEASURES

	Relative turnout (old/young)	Age power
Japan	1.8	5.9
Germany	1.2	2.8
Mean	1.5	1.3

Source: Goerres et al. 2020: Global Political Demography Database

JAPAN AND GERMANY'S LOGGED AGE POWER MEASURES IN COMPARISON





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