

**S** *tudia*  
**H** *istorica*  
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***Studia Historica Slovenica***

*Časopis za humanistične in družboslovne študije*  
*Humanities and Social Studies Review*

letnik 19 (2019), št. 3



ZGODOVINSKO DRUŠTVO  
DR. FRANCA KOVAČIČA  
V MARIBORU

ZRI DR. FRANCA KOVAČIČA V MARIBORU

MARIBOR 2019

**Izdajatelja / Published by**

ZGODOVINSKO DRUŠTVO DR. FRANCA KOVAČIČA V MARIBORU/

*HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF DR. FRANCO KOVAČIČ IN MARIBOR*

<http://www.zgodovinsko-drustvo-kovacic.si>

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Žiro račun / *Bank Account:*

Nova KBM d.d.

SI 56041730001421147

Prevajanje / *Translation:*

David Hazemali, Uroš Turnšek

Lektoriranje / *Language-editing*

Ana Šela

Oblikovanje naslovnice / *Cover Design:*

Knjižni studio d.o.o.

Oblikovanje in računalniški prelom /

*Design and Computer Typesetting:*

Knjižni studio d.o.o.

Tisk / *Printed by:*

Itagraf d.o.o.

**<http://shs.zgodovinsko-drustvo-kovacic.si>**

Izvečke prispevkov v tem časopisu objavljata '**Historical – Abstracts**' in '**America: History and Life**'.

Časopis je uvrščen v '**Ulrich's Periodicals Directory**', evropsko humanistično bazo **ERIH** in mednarodno bibliografsko bazo **Scopus (h, d)**.

*Abstracts of this review are included in '**Historical – Abstracts**' and '**America: History and Life**'.*

*This review is included in '**Ulrich's Periodicals Directory**', european humanistic database **ERIH** and international database **Scopus (h, d)**.*

**Studia historica Slovenica**, Časopis za humanistične in družboslovne študije, je vpisan v razvid medijev, ki ga vodi Ministrstvo za kulturo RS, pod zaporedno številko **487**. Izdajo časopisa sta omogočili Agencija za raziskovalno dejavnost RS in Mestna občina Maribor.  
*Co-financed by the Slovenian Research Agency and City of Maribor.*

Studia  
Historica  
Slovenica

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**H** *istorica*  
**S** *lovenica*

*Studia  
Historica  
Slovenica*

UDC 316.346.32-053.6(497.4):613  
1.01 Original scientific paper

DOI 10.32874/SHS.2019-26

## ***The role of Gender in Participation and Health Among Slovenian Youth: A Regional Comparison***

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### *Abstract:*

The main purpose of our study was 1) to test for gender differences in subjective health and well-being, political and cultural participation; 2) to examine whether gender moderates the link between health and participation; and 3) to test for regional variation in this link. A representative survey sample of Slovenian Youth 2010 study was analysed. At the total sample levels, men reported better health, there were no gender differences in voter turnout, while cultural participation was higher among women. In addition, gender did not moderate cultural participation-health link (no significant link in either gender), but it did moderate voter turnout-health link, with turnout being significantly negatively related to health among men (but not among women). Regional variations were not detected, as associations within regions were largely insignificant.

### *Key words:*

cultural participation, political participation, health inequalities, regional differences, gender inequalities, democracy, youth

***Studia Historica Slovenica***

*Časopis za humanistične in družboslovne študije*

Maribor, 19 (2019), No. 3, pp. 847–874, 56 notes, 3 tables

Language: Original in English (Abstract in English and Slovene, Summary in Slovene)

## Citizen participation, health and gender relations as elements of human development<sup>1</sup>

Some of the basic hallmarks of social development and progress are health and wellbeing of citizens, including young people, citizens' active participation in societies they live in, and citizens being provided with equal rights within existing equal relations between groups, including between genders. Although traditionally economic development and economic growth (as measured by GDP) have been the leading objective indicators of national progress in many countries, since the 1970s and 1980s efforts have been devoted to using alternative measures of social progress, including the extent to which people have their basic needs met, whether they have a say in social and political environment they live in, and whether they are healthy and express personal wellbeing.<sup>2</sup>

Efforts of broadening the understanding of the idea of social development resulted in Human Development Index (HDI), which has been used in last several decades as a more comprehensive measure of social progress. Social progress has more recently also been termed *socioeconomic development*, which is measured, inter alia, with economic development of the country or region, with average levels of education of its members and their health outcomes, for example life expectancy.<sup>3</sup>

As HDI takes into account a broadened understanding of social progress, empirical data show that people living in societies that are socioeconomically and politically better off, are also healthier and have higher levels of wellbeing.<sup>4</sup> Specifically, social, economic and political resources tend to improve basic living conditions, including housing conditions and enable more effec-

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<sup>1</sup> This article was authored within the program group at the Department of History, Faculty of Arts, University of Maribor No. P6–0138 (A): *The history of North–East Slovenia between Central Europe and the European Southeast*, and within project No. V5–1726: *Cultural Participation of Young people in Slovenia and Europe: Analysis of Trends, Determinants, Consequences and a Proposal of Solutions* at the Department of Sociology, University of Maribor, financed by Slovenian Research Agency (ARRS) and Ministry of Culture of Republic of Slovenia.

<sup>2</sup> Amy Gaye, "Name of the indicator/method of the human development index (HDI): Contribution to beyond gross domestic product (GDP)" (2011), [http://ec.europa.eu/environment/beyond\\_gdp/download/factsheets/bgdp-ve-hdi.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/beyond_gdp/download/factsheets/bgdp-ve-hdi.pdf) accessed: 05.09.2018; United Nations Development Programme, "What Is Human Development?: Human Development Reports" (2018), <http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/what-human-development>, accessed: 05.09.2018; also see Ronald Inglehart and Christian Welzel, *Modernization, cultural change, and democracy: The human development sequence* (Cambridge, 2005) (hereinafter: Inglehart and Welzel, *Modernization, cultural change, and democracy*).

<sup>3</sup> United Nations Development Programme, "Human Development Report: Work for Human Development" (New York, 2016), [hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/2016\\_human\\_development\\_report.pdf](http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/2016_human_development_report.pdf), accessed: 05.09.2018 (hereinafter: UNDP 2016).

<sup>4</sup> Inglehart and Welzel, *Modernization, cultural change, and democracy*.



tive satisfaction of basic needs of survival. Some of the improved conditions include lower rates of extreme poverty and illiteracy, improved environmental conditions, sanitation conditions and facilities, better access to drinking water, food and nutrition, including healthier diets. Resources also tend to improve medical knowledge, technology, health prevention and health treatments programs, access to healthcare, including universal coverage. In addition, more effective policies are more likely to be put in place for tackling and decreasing prevalence of infectious diseases, for improving maternal, newborn, children and population health, lowering mortality and increasing life expectancy. Finally, welfare states tend to be stronger in those societies that have more available socioeconomic resources for financing public goods programs.<sup>5</sup>

Second, socioeconomic development drives not only health, quality of life and wellbeing, but also political-institutional changes. The general direction is toward democratic institution building and consolidation and citizens' democratic behaviour. The theory of *human development* states that structural socioeconomic improvements widen people's economic and cognitive resources, which then – primarily through the process of generational replacement – leads toward mass value and political cultural change. A process of human empowerment in this regard

means the development of *personal agency* – that is, a stage of maturation at which one is conscious about one's values and chooses actions accordingly. For societies, human empowerment denotes the development of *civic agency* – that is, a stage of maturation in which all people are free, and equally so, to choose their actions in accordance with their own and mutually shared values.<sup>6</sup>

In addition, with increasing socioeconomic development citizens increasingly value those institutional arrangements that enable expression and realization of their personal and civic agency. Democratic institutions are those that provide opportunities for expressing one's values to the largest degree, for example by protecting basic human rights, including freedom of speech, freedom of religion, the right to equal protection under the law and the right to organize and participate equally in the political, cultural and economic life of a society.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> UNDP 2016; World Health Organization, "World health statistics: Monitoring Health for the SDGs, Sustainable Development Goals" (Geneva, 2018), <http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/272596/9789241565585-eng.pdf?ua=1>, accessed: 05.09.2018.

<sup>6</sup> Christian Welzel, *Freedom rising* (Cambridge, 2013), 40 (hereinafter: Welzel, *Freedom rising*).

<sup>7</sup> Inglehart and Welzel, *Modernization, cultural change, and democracy*; Welzel, *Freedom rising*.

As stated, socioeconomic development also drives mass political behaviour. Previous empirical studies have indicated that citizens living in countries with higher levels of socioeconomic development are more likely to be publicly engaged in their societies, at community, regional and national level. Specifically, various forms of public participation, including conventional political participation,<sup>8</sup> protest (unconventional) participation,<sup>9</sup> social participation<sup>10</sup> and cultural participation<sup>11</sup> tend to be more frequent among citizens in socioeconomically more developed countries. In addition, citizens in these countries – also due to changes in value orientations – are more likely to express higher levels of participatory psychological engagement, such as political interest, and are more likely to rate politics as important.<sup>12</sup>

Third, societies where their citizens are socioeconomically better off, also tend to have more equal, i.e. egalitarian gender relations. Proponents of human development theory argue that lower socioeconomic development is linked to more traditional orientations, including more unequal gender roles. Specifically, in circumstances when basic physical or economic survival is uncertain,

people cling to traditional gender roles emphasizing absolute rules and old familiar norms, in an attempt to maximize predictability in an uncertain world /.../ when survival begins to be taken for granted /.../ changing gender roles and sexual norms no longer seem threatening.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Louise K. Davidson-Schmich, "Searching for the Origins of civic community in Central Europe: Evidence from Eastern and Western Germany", *Democratisation* 13, No. 1 (2006), 95–115; André Blais, "Turnout in elections", in: *Oxford Handbook of Political Behavior*, ed. Russell Dalton (New York, 2007), 621–635.

<sup>9</sup> Patrick Bernhagen and Michael Marsh, "Voting and protesting: Explaining citizen participation in old and new European democracies", *Democratisation* 14, No. 1 (2007), 44–72; Jan Germen Janmaat, "Civic culture in western and eastern Europe", *European Journal of Sociology/Archives Européennes de Sociologie* 47, No. 3 (2006), 363–393.

<sup>10</sup> Pippa Norris, *Democratic Phoenix: Reinventing Political Activism* (Cambridge, 2002); Kenneth Newton and José Ramón, "Patterns of political and social participation in Europe", in: *Measuring attitudes cross-nationally: Lessons from the European Social Survey*, ed. Roger Jowell (Los Angeles, 2007), 205–238; Edeltraud Roller and Tatjana Rudi, "Explaining level and equality of political participation. The role of social capital, socioeconomic modernity, and political institutions", in: *Social capital in Europe: Similarity of countries and diversity of people*, ed. Heiner Meulemann (Leiden, Boston, 2008), 251–284.

<sup>11</sup> Margriet van Hek and Gerbert Kraaykamp, "Cultural consumption across countries: A multi-level analysis of social inequality in highbrow culture in Europe", *Poetics* 41, No. 4 (2013), 323–341; compare to Natascha Notten, Bram Lance, Herman G. van de Werfhorst and Harry B. Ganzeboom, "Educational stratification in cultural participation: cognitive competence or status motivation?", *Journal of Cultural Economics* 39, No. 2 (2015), 177–203.

<sup>12</sup> Jan W. van Deth, "Political involvement and social capital", *Social capital in Europe: Similarity of countries and diversity of people* (2008), 191–218.

<sup>13</sup> Inglehart and Welzel, *Modernization, cultural change, and democracy*, 54.

Both socioeconomic development and gender roles attitudes impact objective outcomes in gender relations and gender inequalities.<sup>14</sup> For example, previous empirical investigations have detected a macro-level link between traditional gender role attitudes and percentage of women in parliaments.<sup>15</sup> Moreover, in their study, Jamal and Langohr found that countries that scored high on traditional gender role attitudes were also more likely to have "a lower number of women in government, and lower levels of female literacy, economic activity, and education rates".<sup>16</sup>

In sum, at the macro level social progress (or human development) is associated with higher levels of socioeconomic prosperity of a country, with citizens having a better access to economic, social, cultural and political resources, which improve the ability on meeting citizens' basic biological, but also psychological, social, cultural and political needs. Indeed, at the macro level, participation, health and gender egalitarianism are central elements of social development; the more socioeconomic developed the country is, the more likely its citizens publicly participate, the healthier they are and more likely there is greater gender equality. Our research, on the other hand, focused on the links between the three elements at the individual level, as this is much less examined issue in the literature, especially when examining all elements in combination.

### Individual-level links between gender, participation and health

Regarding links between gender, participation and health at the individual level, previous studies have indicated that women are more frequently culturally active than men,<sup>17</sup> but are less frequently conventionally politically active.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Ronald Inglehart and Pippa Norris, *Rising tide: Gender equality and cultural change around the world* (Cambridge, 2003).

<sup>15</sup> Inglehart and Welzel, *Modernization, cultural change, and democracy*, 276.

<sup>16</sup> Amaney Jamal and Vicky Langohr, "The Democratic Deficit and Gender Attitudes: Do Attitudes Towards Women's Roles Actually Affect Women's Rights and Levels of Democracy?", paper at Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association (APSA), 2007, [http://www.princeton.edu/~ajamal/MESA\\_Jamal\\_Langohr.Nov2007](http://www.princeton.edu/~ajamal/MESA_Jamal_Langohr.Nov2007), accessed: 31.03.2012.

<sup>17</sup> Angèle Christin, "Gender and highbrow cultural participation in the United States", *Poetics* 40, No. 5 (2012), 423–443 (hereinafter: Christin "Gender and highbrow cultural participation in the United States"); Susan Lagaert and Henk Roose, "Gender and highbrow cultural participation in Europe: The effect of societal gender equality and development", *International Journal of Comparative Sociology* 59, No. 5 (2018), 44–68 (hereinafter: Lagaert and Roose "Gender and highbrow cultural participation in Europe").

<sup>18</sup> Steven J. Rosenstone and John Hansen, *Mobilization, participation, and democracy in America* (New York, 1993); Sidney Verba, Kay Lehman Schlozman and Henry E. Brady, *Voice and equality: Civic voluntarism in American politics* (Cambridge, 1995); Francesca Vassallo, "Political participation and the gender gap in European Union member states", *Journal of Contemporary European Studies* 14, No. 3 (2006), 411–427.

In addition, despite higher life expectancy and lower mortality, women also have worse health<sup>19</sup>, including among youth.<sup>20</sup> Furthermore, numerous studies have also indicated that better health is positively associated with cultural and political participation.<sup>21</sup>

Yet most relevant findings for the main purpose of our study is increasing evidence indicating that gender may be a moderator of the participation-health relationship, especially cultural participation. For example, creative cultural activities were previously found to be more strongly associated with health among women, while among men the relationship between health and receptive cultural participation (e.g., visiting cultural events) was stronger.<sup>22</sup> Several other studies have also indicated gender-specific impact of cultural activities on health.<sup>23</sup> For example, the positive impact of cultural capital on health outcomes was gender dependent in one Slovenian study, with the impact being significant among women but non-significant among men.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Anne Case and Christina Paxson, "Sex differences in morbidity and mortality", *Demography* 42, No. 2 (2005), 189–214; Archana Singh-Manoux, Alice Guéguen, Jane Ferrie, Martin Shipley, Pekka Martikainen, Sébastien Bonenfant, Marcel Goldberg and Michael Marmot, "Gender differences in the association between morbidity and mortality among middle-aged men and women", *American Journal of Public Health* 98, No. 12 (2008), 2251–2257.

<sup>20</sup> Diane Marcotte, Michel Alain and Marie-Josée Gosselin, "Gender differences in adolescent depression: Gender-typed characteristics or problem-solving skills deficits?", *Sex Roles* 41, No. 1–2 (1999), 31–48; Wilson, Gregory S., Mary E. Pritchard and Brian Revalee, "Individual differences in adolescent health symptoms: The effects of gender and coping", *Journal of Adolescence* 28, No. 3 (2005), 369–379; Marina Tavčar Krajnc and Andrej Kirbiš, "Health of Slovenian Youth: a Comparative Analysis of 2010 and 2013 National Youth Studies", in: *Nursing in Public Health: second scientific conference with international participation: proceedings*, ed. Tamara Štemberger Kolnik (Koper, 2014), 29–41 (hereinafter: Tavčar Krajnc and Kirbiš "Health of Slovenian youth").

<sup>21</sup> Lars Olov Bygren, Boinkum Benson Konlaan and Sven-Erik Johansson, "Attendance at cultural events, reading books or periodicals, and making music or singing in a choir as determinants for survival: Swedish interview survey of living conditions", *BMJ: British Medical Journal* 313, No. 7072 (1996), 1577–1580; Markku T. Hyypä, Juhani Mäki, Olli Impivaara and Arpo Aromaa, "Leisure participation predicts survival: a population-based study in Finland", *Health Promotion International* 21, No. 1 (2005), 5–12 (hereinafter: Hyypä et al., "Leisure participation"); Reijo Sund, Hannu Lahtinen, Hanna Wass, Mikko Mattila and Pekka Martikainen, "How voter turnout varies between different chronic conditions? A population-based register study", *Journal of Epidemiology & Community Health* 71 (2016), 475–479 (hereinafter: Sund et al., "How voter turnout varies"); Ojeda, Christopher and Julianna Pacheco, "Health and voting in young adulthood", *British Journal of Political Science* 49, No. 3 (2017), 1–24 (hereinafter: Ojeda and Pacheco "Health and voting in young adulthood").

<sup>22</sup> Koenraad Cuyper, Steinar Krokstad, Turid Lingaas Holmen, Margunn Skjei Knudtsen, Lars Olov Bygren and Justein Holmen, "Patterns of receptive and creative cultural activities and their association with perceived health, anxiety, depression and satisfaction with life among adults: the HUNT study, Norway", *Journal of Epidemiology & Community Health* 66 (2011), 698–703.

<sup>23</sup> Hyypä et al., "Leisure participation"; Kamin, Tanja, Ana Kolar and Peter M. Steiner, "The role of cultural capital in producing good health: A propensity score study", *Slovenian Journal of Public Health* 52, No. 2 (2013), 108–118 (hereinafter: Kamin et al., "The role of cultural capital"); Elisabeth Hansen, Bodil J. Landstad, Raymond Brønn, Kjell Terje Gundersen and Sven Svebak, "Exercise-induced changes in body fat, upper leg skeletal muscle area, BMI and body weight in overweight people with risk of developing Type 2 diabetes", *Acta Kinesiologiae Universitatis Tartuensis* 17 (2011), 66–79.

<sup>24</sup> Kamin et al., "The role of cultural capital".

Furthermore, Grossi and colleagues found that high cultural participation was one of the most important determinants of women's subjective wellbeing, but not men's. In fact, highbrow cultural activities impacted women's subjective wellbeing more than any other type of leisure activity. Grossi and colleagues provide several explanations for gender specific impact, including that cultural participation tends to be embedded in heterogeneous social networks and provides social support (which was also found to beneficially impact health) and such networks are more characteristic of women.<sup>25</sup>

Interestingly, although cultural participation was previously found to be protective of being overweight among girls but not boys,<sup>26</sup> Oncini and Guetto found that women increasingly adopt unhealthy behaviours as their cultural capital (e.g. cultural participation) increases,<sup>27</sup> consistent with findings that at the macro level female emancipation and empowerment is associated with greater prevalence of smoking among females.<sup>28</sup>

Despite some research being accumulated in recent years, there has been much less studies on health outcomes and political participation, compared to cultural participation. In addition, authors of these studies have largely included gender only as a control variable,<sup>29</sup> which means that it has not yet been examined in-depth as a potential moderator of political participation and health link. Still, there is some evidence indicating that the link may be gender-dependent. For example, Lahtinen and colleagues found that frequently experienced health symptoms were related to lower turnout among women (but not among men), although the association was rendered non-significant after education was controlled for.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>25</sup> Enzo Grossi, Angelo Compare, Cristina Lonardi, Renata Cerutti, Edward Calus and Mauro Niero, "Gender-related effect of cultural participation in psychological well-being: Indications from the well-being project in the municipality of Milan", *Social indicators research* 114, No. 2 (2013), 255–271.

<sup>26</sup> Koenraad Cuypers, Karin De Ridder, Kirsti Kvaløy, Margunn Skjei Knudtsen, Steinar Krokstad, Jostein Holmen and Turid Lingaas Holmen, "Leisure time activities in adolescence in the presence of susceptibility genes for obesity: risk or resilience against overweight in adulthood? The HUNT study", *BMC public health* 12, No. 1 (2012), 820.

<sup>27</sup> Oncini, Filippo and Raffaele Guetto, "Cultural capital and gender differences in health behaviours: a study on eating, smoking and drinking patterns", *Health Sociology Review* 27, No. 1 (2018), 15–30.

<sup>28</sup> Hitchman, Sara C. and Geoffrey T. Fong, "Gender empowerment and female-to-male smoking prevalence ratios", *Bulletin of the World Health Organization* 89 (2011), 195–202.

<sup>29</sup> Mattila et al., "Healthy voting"; Mikko Mattila and Achillefs Papageorgiou, "Disability, perceived discrimination and political participation", *International Political Science Review* 38, No. 5 (2017), 505–519; Sund et al., "How voter turnout varies"; Jérôme Couture and Sandra Breux, "The differentiated effects of health on political participation", *The European Journal of Public Health* 27, No. 4 (2017), 599–604; Ojeda and Pacheco "Health and voting in young adulthood".

<sup>30</sup> Hannu Lahtinen, Hanna Wass and Reijo Sund, "The effect of health on electoral participation and welfare attitudes among young adults", in: *Ihmisarvoinen Nuoruus: Nuorisobarometri [The Finnish Youth Barometer]*, ed. Sami Myllyniemi (Helsinki, 2015), 171–182.

A potential explanation of gender differences in the impact of health on participation, or vice versa, includes the *differential vulnerability* perspective, which postulates that similar social circumstances, including stressors (e.g., health problems) might have a different impact on health of both genders.<sup>31</sup> Hahm and colleagues argue that disadvantaged social group's prior stressors and negative health outcomes may cause neurobiological alteration, thereby affecting the threshold at which stress is required to precipitate subsequent adverse health outcomes.<sup>32</sup> This means that those individuals with heightened biological sensitivity to environmental context may demonstrate a greater susceptibility to the effects of both positive but also adverse environments.<sup>33</sup> In this vein, it could be also argued that various buffers of stress, including cultural participation, may be more health protective for women than men, but also that health problems may be more detrimental to women's political participation than men's.

### **Purpose of the study**

Our study aimed to examine one key aspects of the interplay between participation, health and gender at the individual level, using survey data of Slovenian youth. We aimed to analyse whether gender differences in health and participation exist, we then examined the links between participation and health at the national and regional level, and finally, whether gender moderates these links at the national level. In present study we focus on Slovenian youth as a whole, but we also examine whether substantial regional differences exist with regard to gender differences in health and participation.

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<sup>31</sup> Susan Roxburgh, "Gender differences in work and well-being: Effects of exposure and vulnerability", *Journal of Health and Social Behavior* 37, No. 3 (1996), 265–277; Margaret Denton and Vivienne Walters, "Gender differences in structural and behavioral determinants of health: an analysis of the social production of health", *Social science & medicine* 48, No. 9 (1999), 1221–1235; Ellen Annandale and Kate Hunt, "Gender inequalities in health: research at the crossroads", in: *Gender Inequalities in Health*, eds. Ellen Annandale and Kate Hunt (Buckingham, 2000), 1–35.

<sup>32</sup> Hyeouk Chris Hahm, Al Ozonoff, Jilliam Gaumond and Stanley Sue, "Perceived discrimination and health outcomes: A gender comparison among Asian-Americans nationwide", *Women's Health Issues* 20, No. 5 (2010), 350–358.

<sup>33</sup> Thomas Boyce W. and Bruce J. Ellis, "Biological sensitivity to context: I. An evolutionary-developmental theory of the origins and functions of stress reactivity", *Development and psychopathology* 17, No. 2 (2005), 271–301; Andrew J. Lewis, Peter Kremer, Kim Douglas, John W. Toumborou, Mohajer A. Hameed, George C. Patton and Joanne Williams, "Gender differences in adolescent depression: Differential female susceptibility to stressors affecting family functioning", *Australian Journal of Psychology* 67, No. 3 (2015), 131–139.

## Method

### *Sample*

We analyzed a representative random sample of Slovenian Youth 2010 study. It's the target population (332,211 young people) were all residents of the Republic of Slovenia aged between 15 and 29 years old ( $N = 1,257$ ;  $M_{age} = 22.90$ ;  $SD = 4.25$ ; 48.3 % women). Face-to-face interviews were carried out. The target population of Slovenian youth was stratified into 6 types of settlements and 12 statistical regions. The survey questionnaire had a written and oral part. The latter was conducted in the form of face-to-face interviews whereby interviewers read the questions aloud to interviewees and then interviewers filled out acquired respondents' survey responses. After completing oral part of the questionnaire the interviewer handed the respondent the written questionnaire and asked him or her to fill it out. The written part of the questionnaire consisted of questions that were more personal and intimate in nature.<sup>34</sup>

### *Variables*

#### *Dependent variables: subjective health and wellbeing*

We included one *subjective health* and one wellbeing indicator. For the former, satisfaction with health was measured with a 5-point assessment scale (1 – very dissatisfied; 5 – very satisfied).<sup>35</sup> Satisfaction with health reflects one's current health status and has previously been used extensively in the literature as a proxy of health status,<sup>36</sup> as it is closely associated (correlations above 0.6) with the standard self-rated health measure.<sup>37</sup>

We also analyzed *subjective wellbeing* with the standard 10-point satisfaction with life item. The question was: "How satisfied would you say you are with your life as a whole?" (1 – entirely dissatisfied; 10 – entirely satisfied).

For regression analyses, we standardized both variables transforming them

<sup>34</sup> Miran Lavrič, Marko Divjak, Andrej Naterer and Petra Lešek, "Research Methods", in: *Youth 2010: The Social Profile of Young People in Slovenia*, ed. Miran Lavrič (Maribor, 2011), 45–64.

<sup>35</sup> Bojan Musil, "Health and Wellbeing", in: *Youth 2010: The social profile of young people in Slovenia*, ed. Miran Lavrič (Maribor, 2011), 321–347.

<sup>36</sup> Andrew M. Jones and Stefanie Schurer, "How does heterogeneity shape the socioeconomic gradient in health satisfaction?", *Journal of Applied Econometrics* 26, No. 4 (2011), 549–579.

<sup>37</sup> Michaela K. Knecht, Georg F. Bauer, Felix Gutzwiller and Oliver Hämmig, "Persistent work–life conflict and health satisfaction—a representative longitudinal study in Switzerland", *BMC Public Health* 11, No. 1 (2011), 271; Hendrik Schmitz, "Why are the unemployed in worse health? The causal effect of unemployment on health", *Labour Economics* 18, No. 1 (2011), 71–78.

in z score form, where the mean was equal to zero and the standard deviation was equal to one. We then created a summation variable from z scores on both variables).

*Independent variables: cultural participation and voter turnout*

*Cultural participation* was measured with several items. The first question referred to *creative* cultural participation: "Think of the time in a day after you have completed your school, household and tasks, that is, think of your free time. How often do you do the following activities in your free time?" (1 = never; 2 = less than 1 time per month; 3 = 1–3 times a month; 4 = 1–3 times per week; 5 = 4–6 times per week; 7 = every day). The two cultural items were: "I write (diary, poems, letters)" and "I read in my free time".

We also measured *receptive* cultural participation or cultural consumption (i.e. participation in cultural events), which was measured with the question: "Think of the time in a day after you have completed your school, household and tasks, that is, think of your free time. How often do you "go to the cinema, theatre, concerts?" in your free time?" (1 = never; 2 = less than 1 time per month; 3 = 1–3 times a month; 4 = 1–3 times per week; 5 = 4–6 times per week; 7 = every day).

We also included two additional measures of cultural capital. The first involved a cultural *disposition*, and the second involved cultural *competencies*. Although they are not cultural participation (i.e. behaviour), we decided to include these two measures since orientations (dispositions) are associated with cultural participation, which was confirmed with correlational analyses. The first, one's *interest in art and culture* was measured with the question: "Evaluate on a scale from 1 to 5 how interested you are in the field of art and culture. Are you very (5), quite (4), medium (3) or a bit interested (2), or not interested at all (1)? Similar to other studies<sup>38</sup>, *cultural competencies* were tapped with a self-reported knowledge of foreign language skills (English, French and Spanish) (on a scale from 1 ("I have no knowledge") to 5 ("I am fluent in it")). Summation scale was computed (Cronbach's alpha = 0.81).

Finally, we also included the frequency of extra school learning in our cultural participation scale, which was asked with the following question: "Please think of different training, workshops, lessons that are not part of the school education and may be named informal education. How many such trainings did you participate in in the last twelve months in the area of culture and art?" (1 – none, 2 – one, 3 – two or three; 4 – more than three).

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<sup>38</sup> e.g. Kamin et al., "The role of cultural capital".



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As with health items, for the purpose of regression analysis we standardized all six measures of cultural participation, transforming them in z score form. We then created a summation variable from these z scores (Cronbach's alpha = 0.63).

*Voter turnout* was measured with a question on past turnout: "Did you vote in the last parliamentary election in September 2008?". We analysed data only from those respondents that had the voting right in 2008 (aged 18 or older).

### *Control variables*

In our regression analyses we also controlled for the impact of several sociodemographic variables: age (measured as year of birth, recoded into age in years and into age groups: 1 = 15–18 years<sup>39</sup>; 2 = 19–24 years; 3 = 25–29 years), gender (female = 1, male = 2), size of current residential settlement (1 = countryside/village, 2 = small town [between 1,000 and 50,000 inhabitants], 3 = larger city [above 50,000 inhabitants]), and family structure (1 = presently living in a traditional family [with biological father and mother]; 2 = all other family forms).

For socioeconomic resources, we examined respondent's family and personal socioeconomic status by means of several commonly used indicators of SES. *Family SES* was measured with 1) parental educational level, which was formed as a composite index of maternal and paternal educational level; and (2) self-perceived family material status of respondents. We measured father's and mother's educations with two identical questions on a nine-point scale: "What is the highest achieved level of [your father's / your mother's] education?" (1 = uncompleted primary school; 9 = completed master or doctorate degree). For the purposes of statistical analyses, the values were recoded into a three-point scale: 1 = uncompleted secondary education (original values 1, 2, 3); 2 = completed secondary education (original values 4, 5, 6); 3 = completed tertiary education (original values 7, 8, 9). Respondents' family material (economic) status was self-assessed with the following question: "How do you rate the material situation of your family compared to the Slovenian average?" Family material status was coded on a five-point scale (1 = highly below average; 5 = highly above average). We recoded the five-point scale into a three-point scale of family's relative material status: 1 = (highly) below average, 2 = average; 3 = (highly) above average. The *family SES* was a composite score of all three indicators (Cronbach's alpha = 0.73).

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<sup>39</sup> Voter turnout was examined only for young people of legal age in September 2008 at the time of Slovenian parliamentary elections.

*Personal SES* was measured via indicator of a personal *income*. The question was: "Assess the size of your available overall monthly income (in Euros). Combine all incomes." We recoded the open-coded question into four groups (1 = lowest monthly income group; 4 = highest monthly income group).

Finally, we also examined the role of respondents' *regional affiliation*, which was also our point of interest, specifically, whether the link between health and participation differed among Slovenian regions.

## **Plan of analysis**

We first examined whether gender differences exist in subjective health and wellbeing, cultural participation and voter turnout (*Table 1*). Next, we analysed whether subjective health, cultural participation and voter turnout are associated at the total sample level and at the regional level (*Table 2* and *Table 3*), controlling for other sociodemographic and socioeconomic confounders. Finally, we examined whether gender moderates the impact of cultural and political participation on health at the total sample level.

## **Results**

### ***Gender differences in self-rated health, subjective well-being, voter turnout and cultural participation***

Results in *Table 1* indicate that statistically significant gender differences exist on self-rated health measure, with men scoring higher than women. Men also reported higher satisfaction with life, but differences did not reach the level of statistical significance.

Turning to public participation, self-reported voter turnout was practically identical among both genders, with 56 % stating they voted. Cultural participation, on the other hand, was significantly more frequent among women, whether measured with a composite cultural participation scale or with either of six individual cultural participation indicators. In sum, men report better health (but not subjective wellbeing), there are no gender differences in voter turnout, while cultural participation is strongly gender-skewed, with women being more culturally engaged.

*Table 1:* Gender differences in self-rated health, satisfaction with life, cultural participation and voter turnout among Slovenian youth

	Gender	N	Min	Max	Mean value	Std. deviation	Sig.
Self-rated health	Women	610	1	5	4.11	0.89	0.01
	Men	641	1	5	4.24	0.86	
Satisfaction with life	Women	457	1	10	7.18	1.84	NS
	Men	492	1	10	7.33	1.69	
Voter turnout (self-reported)	Women	457	0	1	56*	0.5	NS
	Men	492	0	1	56*	0.5	
Cultural participation	Women	613	0,5	4	1.89	0.63	0.001
	Men	644	0,5	4	1.61	0.55	
Informal education in art/ culture	Women	610	1	4	1.58	0.98	0.001
	Men	639	1	4	1.35	0.79	
Going to cinema, theatre, concerts	Women	609	0	5	1.55	0.87	0.01
	Men	638	0	5	1.41	0.85	
Writing (diary, poems, letters)	Women	611	0	5	0.60	1.11	0.001
	Men	640	0	5	0.35	0.93	
Reading	Women	611	0	5	2.39	1.49	0.001
	Men	637	0	5	1.83	1.57	
Interest in arts and culture	Women	608	1	5	2.92	1.08	0.001
	Men	641	1	5	2.60	1.03	
Knowledge of foreign languages	Women	612	1	5	2.29	0.65	0.001
	Men	643	1	5	2.09	0.58	

Source: Slovenian Youth.<sup>40</sup>

Note: \* = percentage voting.

<sup>40</sup> Slovenian Youth, *Mladina 2010: Družbeni profil mladib v Sloveniji* [data file] (Maribor: Univerza v Mariboru, Filozofska fakulteta [production], Ljubljana: Univerza v Ljubljani, Arhiv družboslovnih podatkov [distribution], 2011), ADP – IDNo: MLA10 (Maribor–Ljubljana, 2011) (hereinafter: Slovenian youth, *Mladina 2010*).

**Regional variation in the links between subjective health, cultural participation and voter turnout**

Table 2: Health and voter turnout among Slovenian youth

	Mura	Drava	Carinthia	Savinja	Central Sava	Lower Sava
Age	-0.46*	-0.17	-0.13	-0.40***	-0.19	-0.53
Gender (male)	0.00	0.02	0.00	-0.11	0.08	-0.05
Family structure	-0.17	0.08	-0.25	-0.13	0.17	-0.28
Size of residential settlement	0.10	-0.04	-0.16	-0.17*	-0.33	-0.32
Family SES	0.10	0.21**	-0.02	0.19*	0.14	-0.03
Income	0.26	0.22*	-0.07	0.13	0.10	0.22
Voter turnout	-0.10	0.04	-0.10	-0.10	-0.06	-0.36
F / Sig	1.31	2.43*	0.40	3.11**	0.55	1.69
Adjusted R Square	0.03	0.06	-0.11	0.10	-0.15	0.14
	Southeast	Central	Upper Carniola	Gorizia	Coastal-Karst	Littoral-Inner Carniola
Age	-0.01	-0.20*	-0.14	0.07	0.09	0.42
Gender (male)	0.14	0.09	0.12	-0.26	0.25	-0.09
Family structure	-0.07	-0.11	-0.14	-0.05	0.05	-0.19
Size of residential settlement	0.05	-0.01	0.07	-0.18	-0.16	-0.14
Family SES	0.11	-0.04	0.17	-0.02	0.22	0.27
Income	-0.03	0.05	0.14	0.04	-0.06	-0.22
Voter turnout	-0.02	-0.18*	0.07	0.29	0.12	0.32
F / Sig	0.34	1.58	1.19	0.49	1.40	1.54
Adjusted R Square	-0.08	0.02	0.01	-0.15	0.05	0.11

Sources: Slovenian Youth.<sup>41</sup>

<sup>41</sup> Slovenian youth, *Mladina* 2010.

Table 3: Health and cultural participation among Slovenian youth

	Mura	Drava	Carinthia	Savinja	Central Sava	Lower Sava
Age	-0.40*	-0.15	-0.16	-0.34***	-0.27	-0.46
Gender (male)	-0.01	0.06	0.04	-0.10	0.19	-0.01
Family structure	-0.15	0.09	-0.26	-0.13	0.04	-0.07
Size of residential settlement	0.14	-0.03	-0.18	-0.18	-0.43	-0.16
Family SES	0.10	0.20*	-0.07	0.19*	0.12	-0.24
Income	0.28	0.20*	-0.01	0.12	0.15	0.34
Cultural participation	-0.11	0.07	0.10	0.04	0.25	-0.35
F / Sig	1.38	2.39*	0.39	3.06**	0.65	1.38
Adjusted R Square	0.04	0.06	-0.11	0.09	-0.11	0.08
	Southeast	Central	Upper Carniola	Gorizia	Coastal-Karst	Littoral-Inner Carniola
Age	-0.00	-0.11	-0.17	-0.08	-0.03	0.28
Gender (male)	0.16	0.07	0.12	-0.30	0.20	0.07
Family structure	-0.06	-0.08	-0.15	0.08	0.14	-0.26
Size of residential settlement	0.05	-0.01	0.07	-0.22	-0.11	-0.32
Family SES	0.09	-0.04	0.14	0.09	0.28*	0.13
Income	-0.03	0.08	0.12	-0.17	-0.00	-0.32
Cultural participation	0.06	-0.00	-0.04	-0.28	-0.32*	0.47*
F / Sig	0.38	0.81	1.18	0.48	2.25*	2.16
Adjusted R Square	-0.07	-0.00	0.01	-0.15	0.13	0.21

Sources: Slovenian Youth.<sup>42</sup>

We turn next to whether participation is linked with health and wellbeing. We regressed health and wellbeing scale on sociodemographic and socio-economic variables and voter turnout (*Table 2*) and on cultural participation

<sup>42</sup> Slovenian youth, *Mladina* 2010.

(Table 3). Regression analysis at the national sample level (not shown) indicated that neither voter turnout nor total cultural participation were significant predictors of health. We then performed regression analysis separately for all Slovenian regions. Results in Table 2 show the impact of voter turnout on health in Slovenian regions, while Table 3 show the impact of cultural participation on health. In Table 2 we see that seven coefficients of turnout were negative and five were positive. Only one (in Central region) was significant (in fact, negative). Due to lack of significant coefficients (which may be due to a small number of respondents in many regions), we interpret the results with caution, yet we may conclude that the mixed direction of coefficients and a lack of positive significant coefficients in twelve Slovenian regions and at the national sample level indicate that voter turnout does not positively impact health.

We turn next to whether cultural participation is linked with health and wellbeing. Results in Table 3 indicate that six coefficients were negative and six were positive. The majority of them were insignificant, one was significant and negative (Coastal-Karst region) and one was significant and positive (Littoral-Inner Carniola region). Again, due to mixed direction of coefficients and lack of significant coefficients in twelve Slovenian regions and at the national sample level, we may conclude that overall cultural participation does not positively impact health.

### ***Health, cultural participation, voter turnout and gender***

Finally, we tested gender plays a moderating role in the impact of both types of participation on health outcomes at the national sample level. We found that cultural participation was not a significant predictor of health in either genders ( $p > 0.05$ ). On the other hand, voter turnout turned out to be a significant predictor of health among men ( $\beta = -0.13$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ), but not women ( $p > 0.05$ ), indicating that gender moderates the impact of political participation on health. Contrary to previous studies, voter turnout proved to be a negative predictor of health among men, with non-voters reporting significantly better health than voters.

### **Discussion and implications**

The main purpose of our study was to examine the links between political and cultural participation and health, and the role gender may play in these links.

Consistent with previous studies,<sup>43</sup> we found that young men reported significantly better self-rated health than young women. Satisfaction with life was also higher among men, though not significantly, which is consistent with some previous studies.<sup>44</sup> In addition, we found that voter turnout did not significantly differ between genders, while Slovenian young women were found significantly more frequently culturally engaged, as studies<sup>45</sup> in other countries have also indicated. We also examined whether two participation dimensions were linked with subjective health and wellbeing measure and found no significant association at the total sample level, when controlling for sociodemographic and socioeconomic confounders. We tested whether this holds true in both genders separately and found that cultural participation was not a significant health predictor in either genders, while voter turnout was a significant negative predictor of health only among men, indicating the moderating role gender plays in the link between political participation and health. Although in the present study we focused mainly on Slovenian youth at the national level, we also carried out an exploratory analysis of regional variation in the impact of participation in health. We found no substantial variation in the impact, as almost all coefficients were insignificant and in mixed direction, both positive and negative.

Contrary to our results, previous studies have found significant links between participation and health and several explanations have been proposed for explaining the association. Cultural participation, for example, may provide opportunities for socializing and social integration (thereby increasing social capital), which in turn improves health.<sup>46</sup> Cultural participation may

<sup>43</sup> Matthias Richter, Saoirse Nic Gabhainn, Alessio Zambon, William Boyce and Klaus Hurrelmann, "Welfare state regimes, health and health inequalities in adolescence: a multilevel study in 32 countries", *Sociology of health & illness* 34, No. 6 (2012), 858–879; Tavčar Krajnc and Kirbiš "Health of Slovenian youth"; Adriana Lúcia Meireles, César Coelho Xavier, Amanda Cristina de Souza Andrade, Fernando Augusto Proietti and Waleska Teixeira Caiáffa, "Self-rated health among urban adolescents: the roles of age, gender, and their associated factors." *PLoS One* 10, No. 7 (2015), e0132254.

<sup>44</sup> Wing Hong Chui and Mathew YH Wong, "Gender differences in happiness and life satisfaction among adolescents in Hong Kong: Relationships and self-concept", *Social Indicators Research* 125, No. 3 (2016), 1035–1051; Yuna L. Ferguson, Tim Kasser and Seungmin Jahng, "Differences in life satisfaction and school satisfaction among adolescents from three nations: The role of perceived autonomy support", *Journal of Research on Adolescence* 21, No. 3 (2011), 649–661.

<sup>45</sup> Christin, "Gender and highbrow cultural participation in the United States"; Lagaert and Roose, "Gender and highbrow cultural participation in Europe".

<sup>46</sup> Lisa F. Berkman, Thomas Glass, Ian Brissette, Teresa E. Seeman, "From social integration to health: Durkheim in the new millennium", *Social science & medicine* 51, No. 5 (2000), 843–857; Hyppä, Markku T. *Healthy ties: Social capital, population health and survival* (Heidelberg–London–New York, 2010) (hereinafter: Hyppä *Healthy Ties*); Eleonora P. Uphoff, Kate E. Pickett, Baltica Cabieses, Neil Small and John Wright, "A systematic review of the relationships between social capital and socioeconomic inequalities in health: a contribution to understanding the psychosocial pathway of health inequalities", *International journal for equity in health* 12, No. 1 (2013), 54; Ichirō Kawachi and Lisa F. Berkman, "Social capital, social cohesion, and health", in: *Social epidemiology*, eds. Lisa F. Berkman, Ichirō Kawachi, and Maria M. Glymour (Oxford, 2014), 290–319.

also increase self-esteem and self-efficacy, which may have a positive impact on health.<sup>47</sup> Furthermore, high quality social relations may improve motivation for health promoting behaviours<sup>48</sup> and health outcomes, resulting among other, with a lower likelihood of obesity.<sup>49</sup>

Of course, health may also have a direct and indirect impact on participation. With regard to political participation, for example, people who have worse health may have lower capacity and motivation to be engaged in politics, reducing the reducing their probability of turning out to vote. In addition, there may also be an indirect effect, with health problems potentially hindering acquisition of economic and other relevant resources, decreasing psychological political engagement and decreasing one's social connectedness and integration, which may lower his/her political recruitment within social networks.<sup>50</sup>

Contrary to previous studies, we did not find cultural participation to be associated with health outcomes among Slovenian youth, while voter turnout was found to be a negative predictor of health among young Slovenian men. We may speculate about possible reasons for such unexpected results. First, our study was of young people and it may be that their public participation and general lifestyle patterns have different predictors and consequences with youth being a specific stage in one's life. For example, Hansen and colleagues found that age-related differences in the impact of cultural participation on health among youth and adults may be the result of adults having more stable habits than adolescents. The latter are more likely to change their behaviours and less stable habits may have a less positive impact on health and wellbeing.<sup>51</sup> Similar findings have previously been reported on the link between voter turnout and health, as Mattila and colleagues found that health had a positive effect on turnout, but it was notably larger among older people.<sup>52</sup> Admittedly, the impact in Mattila's study was still positive, while in our study turnout had a negative impact on health. This could partly be explained in the context of the study results of Sund and colleagues, who found that although a majority of different chronic health conditions negatively impacted turnout, some had

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<sup>47</sup> Susan Galloway, "Cultural participation and individual quality of life: A review of research findings", *Applied Research in Quality of Life* 1, No. 3–4 (2006), 323–342 in Hyppa *Healthy Ties*.

<sup>48</sup> Annalijn I. Conklin, Nita G. Forouhi, Paul Surtees, Kay–Tee Khaw, Nicholas J. Wareham and Pablo Monsirais, "Social relationships and healthful dietary behaviour: evidence from over–50s in the EPIC cohort, UK", *Social science & medicine* 100 (2014), 167–175.

<sup>49</sup> Fred C. Pampel "Does reading keep you thin? Leisure activities, cultural tastes, and body weight in comparative perspective", *Sociology of health & illness* 34, No. 3 (2012), 396–411.

<sup>50</sup> Mattila et al., "Healthy voting".

<sup>51</sup> Elisabeth Hansen, Erik Sund, Margunn Skjei Knudtsen, Steinar Krokstad and Turid Lingaas Holmen "Cultural activity participation and associations with self–perceived health, life–satisfaction and mental health: the Young HUNT Study, Norway", *BMC public health* 15, No. 1 (2015), 544.

<sup>52</sup> Mattila et al., "Healthy voting".



a positive impact.<sup>53</sup> Future studies of Slovenian youth should further investigate how turnout impacts different aspects and dimensions of health.

A second reason for our unexpected findings – i.e. absence of significant association between cultural participation and health – may be due to a composite measure of cultural participation we used in our study. Future research should examine the impact of different forms of cultural participation on health separately, including highbrow cultural participation. Third, we included only one type of political participation, i.e. voter turnout, which is relatively low cost, infrequent and largely dependent on political context. It may be that other, non-institutional forms of political participation (protest participation, online participation, including on social media sites) or other participation forms, which to a larger degree depend on motivation and resources of an individual and less on institutional arrangements, may impact or may be impacted by health and wellbeing. Future studies need to further analyse these possibilities.

Regarding regional differences, previous studies have found cross-regional variation in numerous outcomes of Slovenian youth, including cultural participation, political participation and religiosity, both among youth and adults.<sup>54</sup> In this study we found almost no regional variation, as most coefficients were insignificant, yet there was variation in the direction of these coefficients. Due to the small number of respondents in individual regions, future studies should include data with larger number of respondents and further examine this issue.

Our study has several important limitations. First, only a few indicators of cultural and political participation were analysed. Second, our outcome variables were two indicators of subjective health and well-being. Objective and other potentially relevant subjective indicators of health were not examined. Third, while we controlled for sociodemographic variables, several confounders were not included in our analyses. Fourth, the study was cross-sectional in nature, thus precluding ascertaining causality. Future studies should aim to fill these gaps, especially in post-communist context and on young populations, as previous studies have not examined these geopolitical areas and age groups.

To conclude, our study indicated that Slovenian young men report bet-

<sup>53</sup> Sund et al., "How voter turnout varies".

<sup>54</sup> E.g. Andrej Kirbiš, "Levels and determinants of youth political participation: regional inequalities and northeastern Slovenia", *Studia Historica Slovenica* 18, No. 1 (2018), 61–82 (hereinafter: Kirbiš "Levels and determinants of youth political participation"); Andrej Kirbiš, "Regionalne razlike v kulturni participaciji mladih v Sloveniji: severovzhodna Slovenija v primerjalni perspektivi", *Studia Historica Slovenica* 18, No. 1 (2018), 23–40; Boštjan Rogelj and Jernej Tiran, "Geografska analiza volilne udeležbe v Sloveniji", *Geografski vestnik* 86 (2014), 25–43; Jernej Tiran and Boštjan Rogelj, "Geografski vidiki volitev v Podravju", *Geografije Podravja* 1 (2017), 189–205; Miran Lavrič and Darko Friš, "Institucionalna in zasebna religioznost v severovzhodni Sloveniji: primerjalna analiza slovenskih regij po letu 1969", *Studia Historica Slovenica* 18, No. 1 (2018), 41–60.

ter health than Slovenian women, that women are more frequently cultural engaged, and that there are no gender differences in voter turnout. We also found gender moderates the impact of political participation on health at the total sample level, with turnout having a negative impact on health among men. Finally, regional variation exists in the direction, but not in significance levels of the impact of participation on health. One of the main implications of our study is that policies and strategies for improving health of Slovenian youth, and policies for increasing engagement of youth in public life should take into account that genders may differ significantly in these aspects, likely due to differences in the types and amounts of resources they have available, differences in socialization experiences, different (gendered) roles both genders play in their social environments and differences in expectations society imprints on them. Future studies need to investigate which of these (or other) factors, including historical, institutional or political-cultural,<sup>55</sup> may be key mediating mechanisms explaining gender variation on various outcomes detected in our and in previous studies of Slovenian youth.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> Aleš Maver and Darko Friš, "Historical development of the party landscape in Slovenia and Croatia between 1990 and 2007", *Studia Historica Slovenica* 13, No. 1 (2013), 185–222; Andrej Kirbiš, Sergej Flere, Darko Friš, Marina Tavčar Krajnc and Tina Cupar, "Predictors of conventional, protest, and civic participation among Slovenian youth: a test of the civic voluntarism model", *International journal of sociology* 47, No. 3 (2017), 182–207.

<sup>56</sup> Tavčar Krajnc and Kirbiš "Health of Slovenian youth"; Kirbiš "Levels and determinants of youth political participation".

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**VLOGA SPOLA PRI PARTICIPACIJI IN ZDRAVJU MLADIH V SLOVENIJI:  
REGIONALNA PRIMERJAVA**

POVZETEK

Nekateri od glavnih elementov družbenega razvoja in napredka so zdravje in dobro počutje državljanov, aktivno sodelovanje državljanov v družbi, v kateri živijo, in enake državljanske pravice za pripadnike vseh družbenih skupin (ne glede na spol). Ob tem je aktivno vključevanje mladih v javno življenje ne glede na njihove osebne okoliščine pomemben kazalnik njihovega položaja in vloge v družbi. Podatki kažejo, da sta družbena udeležba in zdravje pozitivno povezana, prav tako je bilo v preteklih raziskavah ugotovljeno, da med spoloma obstajajo razlike v zdravju in aktivni družbeni udeležbi, pri čemer mlade ženske v primerjavi z moškimi praviloma poročajo o nižjih ravneh politične udeležbe in zdravja, a poročajo o višjih stopnjah kulturne udeležbe. V pričujoči raziskavi smo analizirali dve dimenziji udeležbe: kulturno udeležbo in konvencionalno politično (volilno) udeležbo ter njuno povezavo s subjektivnim zdravjem, merjenim preko samoocenjenega zadovoljstva z zdravjem in zadovoljstva z življenjem. Kulturna udeležba je bila merjena preko kazalnikov pogostosti obiskovanja kina, gledališča in koncertov ter preko pisanja dnevnika, pesmi in pisem. Preučili smo tudi kulturne orientacije (»dispozicije«), ki so bile merjene preko zanimanja za umetnost in kulturo. Prav tako smo v analizo vključili kazalnik pogostosti neformalnega izobraževanja (obiskovanje tečajev in delavnic) na področju kulture oz. umetnosti. Zadovoljstvo z zdravjem smo merili na 5-stopenjski lestvici (1 – zelo nezadovoljen; 5 – zelo zadovoljen). Za kazalnik zadovoljstva z zdravjem je bilo v preteklih raziskavah ugotovljeno, da odraža trenutno zdravstveno stanje in da je močno statistično značilno povezan s standardnim kazalcem samoocenjenega zdravstvenega stanja. Poleg analiziranja teh odnosov na reprezentativnem nacionalnem vzorcu študije *Mladina 2010*, je bil glavni namen pričujoče raziskave preučiti tudi manj raziskano vprašanje, ali spol pogojuje odnos med zdravjem in politično ter kulturno udeležbo. Npr. za t. i. »ustvarjalne« kulturne dejavnosti (npr. petje) je bilo v preteklih raziskavah ugotovljeno, da so med ženskami močnejše povezane z zdravjem kot med moškimi, medtem ko je bil med moškimi ugotovljen močnejši odnos med zdravstvenimi izidi in t. i. »receptivnimi« kulturnimi dejavnostmi (npr. obisk kulturnih prireditev). Tudi v eni izmed preteklih slovenskih raziskav se je izkazalo, da je pozitiven vpliv kulturnega kapitala na zdravstvene izide odvisen od spola:

njegov vpliv je bil statistično značilen in pozitiven med ženskami, ne pa med moškimi. Tudi ena izmed tujih raziskav je pokazala, da je visoka kulturna udeležba eden najpomembnejših dejavnikov boljšega subjektivnega počutja med ženskami, ne pa med moškimi. Še več, kulturne dejavnosti so vplivale na boljše subjektivno počutje žensk v večji meri kot katera koli druga oblika analiziranih prostočasnih dejavnosti. V pričujoči raziskavi smo na koncu preučili tudi morebitne regionalne razlike v navedenih povezavah. Rezultati so pokazali, da so na celotnem vzorcu moški poročali o statistično značilnem boljšem zdravju. Poročali so tudi o večjem zadovoljstvu z življenjem, vendar razlike niso dosegle ravni statistične značilnosti. Samoporočana volilna udeležba je bila med obema spoloma enaka: izmed tistih, ki so imeli v letu 2008 volilno pravico, jih je pri obeh spolih 56 % navedlo, da so glasovali na zadnjih volitvah poslancev v državni zbor v septembru 2008. Na drugi strani pa je bila kulturna udeležba – bodisi merjena s sestavljeno lestvico kulturne udeležbe bodisi s šestimi posameznimi kazalniki kulturne udeležbe – statistično značilno pogostejša med ženskami. Regresijska analiza na ravni celotnega vzorca je pokazala, da ob kontroli sociodemografskih spremenljivk niti volilna udeležba niti sestavljena lestvica kulturne udeležbe nista statistično značilna napovedovalca zdravja. Ugotovili smo tudi, da je spol pogojeval odnos med volilno udeležbo in zdravjem – v nasprotju s preteklimi raziskavami je bila volilna udeležba negativno povezana z zdravjem med moškimi, ne pa tudi med ženskami – ni pa pogojeval odnosa med kulturno udeležbo in zdravjem, kjer nismo zaznali statistično značilne povezave pri nobenem spolu. Regionalna variabilnost ni bila zaznana, saj so bili odnosi med spremenljivkami znotraj regij povečini statistično neznačilni. Sklenemo lahko, da v nasprotju s preteklimi raziskavami v pričujoči študiji med slovensko mladino kulturna udeležba ni povezana z zdravstvenimi izidi, medtem ko je volilna udeležba negativni napovedovalec zdravja med mladimi moškimi. Obstaja več možnih razlogov za tovrstne nepričakovane rezultate. Prvič, naša študija je bila izvedena med mladimi in mogoče je, da imata njihova udeležba in življenjski stili drugačne napovedovalce in posledice, saj je mladost specifična faza v življenju posameznika. Tudi nekateri drugi raziskovalci denimo izpostavljajo, da so razlike v vplivu kulturne udeležbe na zdravje med mladimi in odraslimi lahko posledica tega, da imajo odrasli bolj stabilne navade in življenjske vzorce kot mladostniki. Pri slednjih je npr. večja verjetnost, da bodo spreminjali svoja vedenja; manj stabilne navade in vedenja pa lahko manj pozitivno vplivajo na zdravje in počutje. V prispevku v sklepnem delu razpravljamo o implikacijah naših rezultatov in podamo predloge prihodnjih smeri raziskav.

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### **Studia Historica Slovenica**

Časopis za družboslovne in humanistične študije / *Humanities and Social Studies Review*

Maribor, letnik 19 (2019), št. 3, str. 847–874, 56 cit., 3 preglednice

*Kategorija:* 1.01 Izvirni znanstveni članek

*Jezik:* angleški (izvleček angleški in slovenski, povzetek slovenski)

*Ključne besede:* kulturna udeležba, politična udeležba, neenakosti v zdravju, regionalne razlike, spolne neenakosti, demokracija, mladina

*Izvleček:* Glavni namen naše raziskave je bil, 1) preučiti, ali obstajajo razlike med spoloma v subjektivnem zdravju, politični in kulturni udeležbi, 2) analizirati, ali spol pogojuje odnos med zdravjem in udeležbo ter 3) analizirati, ali obstaja regionalna variabilnost v tem odnosu. Analiziran je bil reprezentativen vzorec raziskave Mladina 2010. Na celotnem vzorcu so moški poročali o boljšem zdravju, v volilni udeležbi ni bilo razlik med spoloma, kulturna udeležba pa je bila višja pri ženskah. Spol je pogojeval odnos med volilno udeležbo in zdravjem – v nasprotju s preteklimi raziskavami je bila volilna udeležba negativno povezana z zdravjem med moškimi, ne pa tudi med ženskami – ni pa pogojeval odnosa med kulturno udeležbo in zdravjem, kjer odnos ni bil statistično značilen. Regionalna variabilnost ni bila zaznana, saj so bili odnosi znotraj regij povečini statistično neznačilni.