Zurich University of Applied Sciences

School of Management and Law

EQUIS since 2023

AACSB since 2015

What explains parties' active participation in UN climate negotiations?

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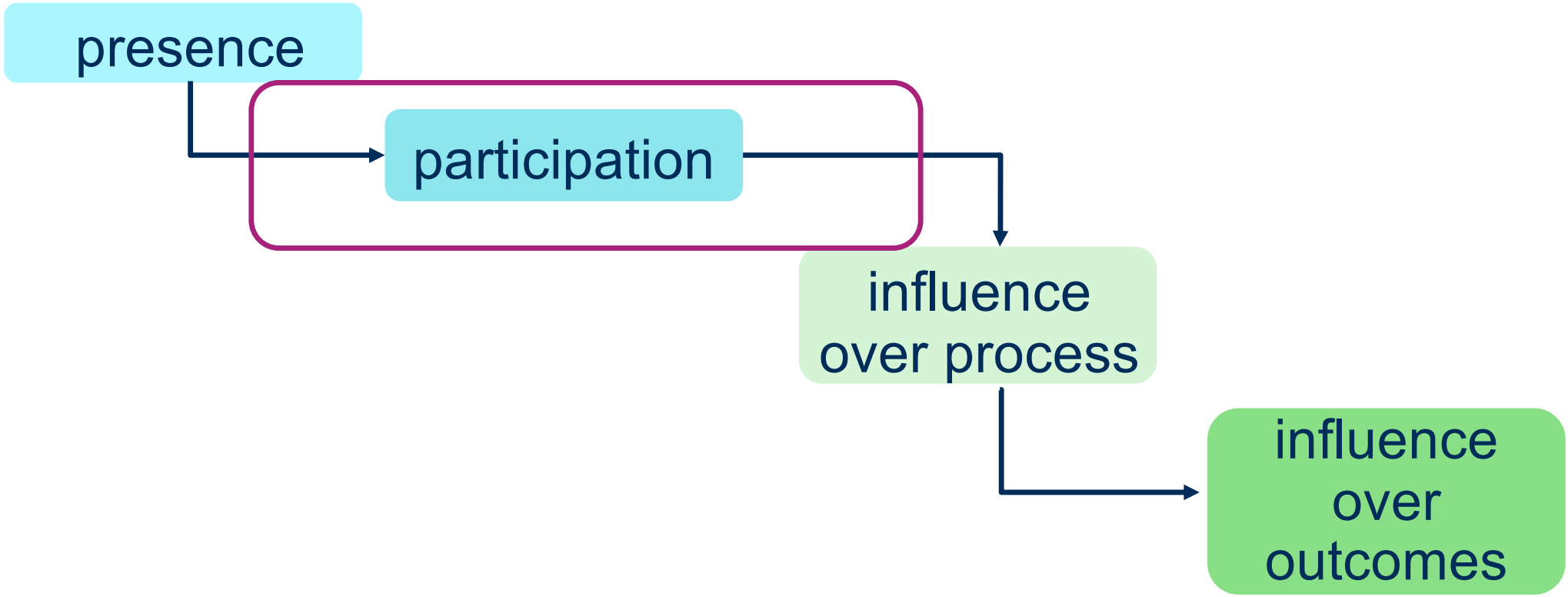
our starting point:

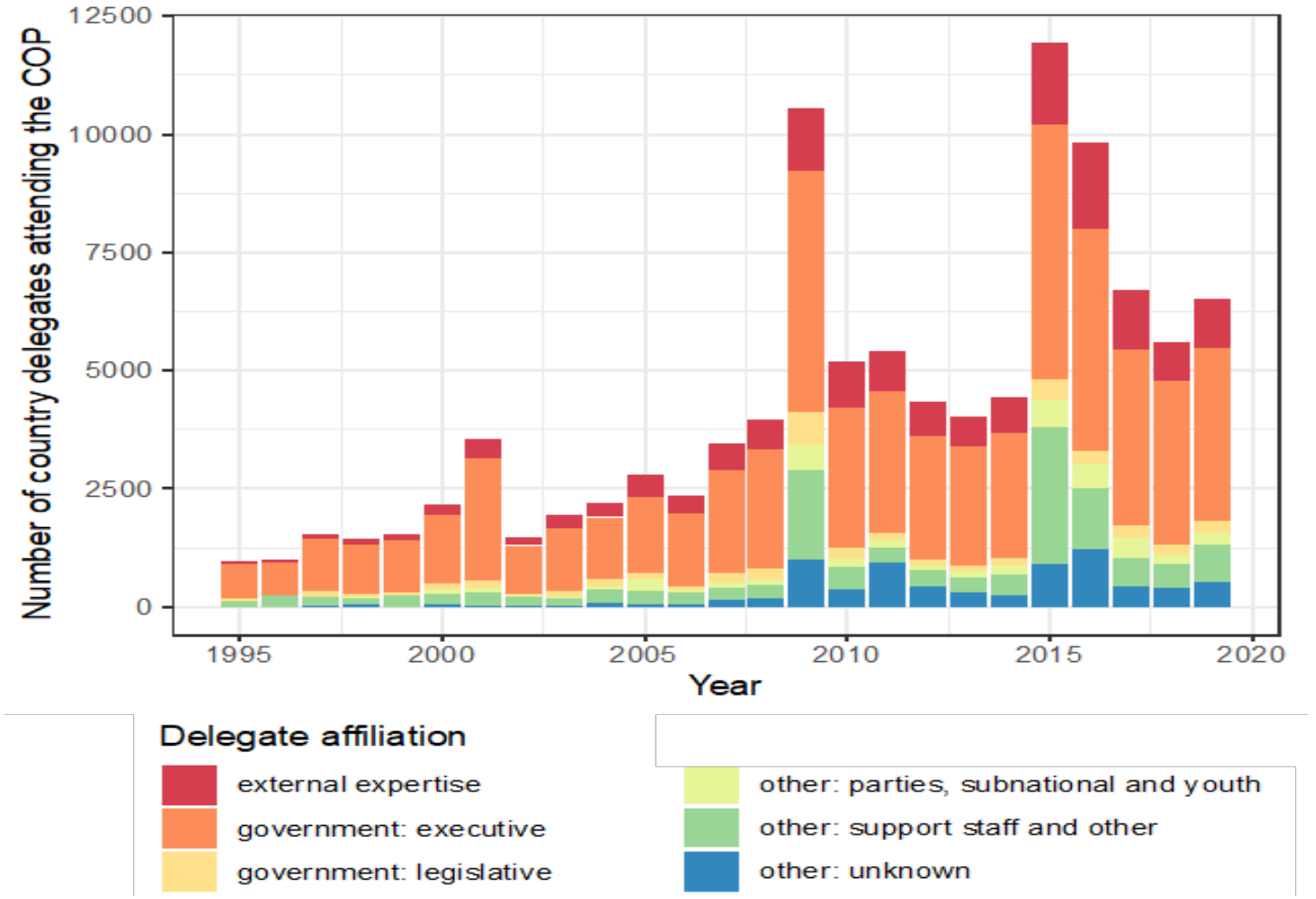


1. Dataset on Presence in UNFCCC negotiations

Which types of delegates attend the negotiations?

- Participant lists (170.000 observations)
- Coded all government delegations over time
  - initially by hand, then with an LLM
- Categorized into **type of delegate** (e.g. government, NGO, private sector, international organization, subnational government) using affiliation data

Presence at a glance



Research puzzle

- There is wide variation in participation.

- But little attention has been paid to participation
- i.e. how active countries are in negotiations

- **When does presence lead to participation?**

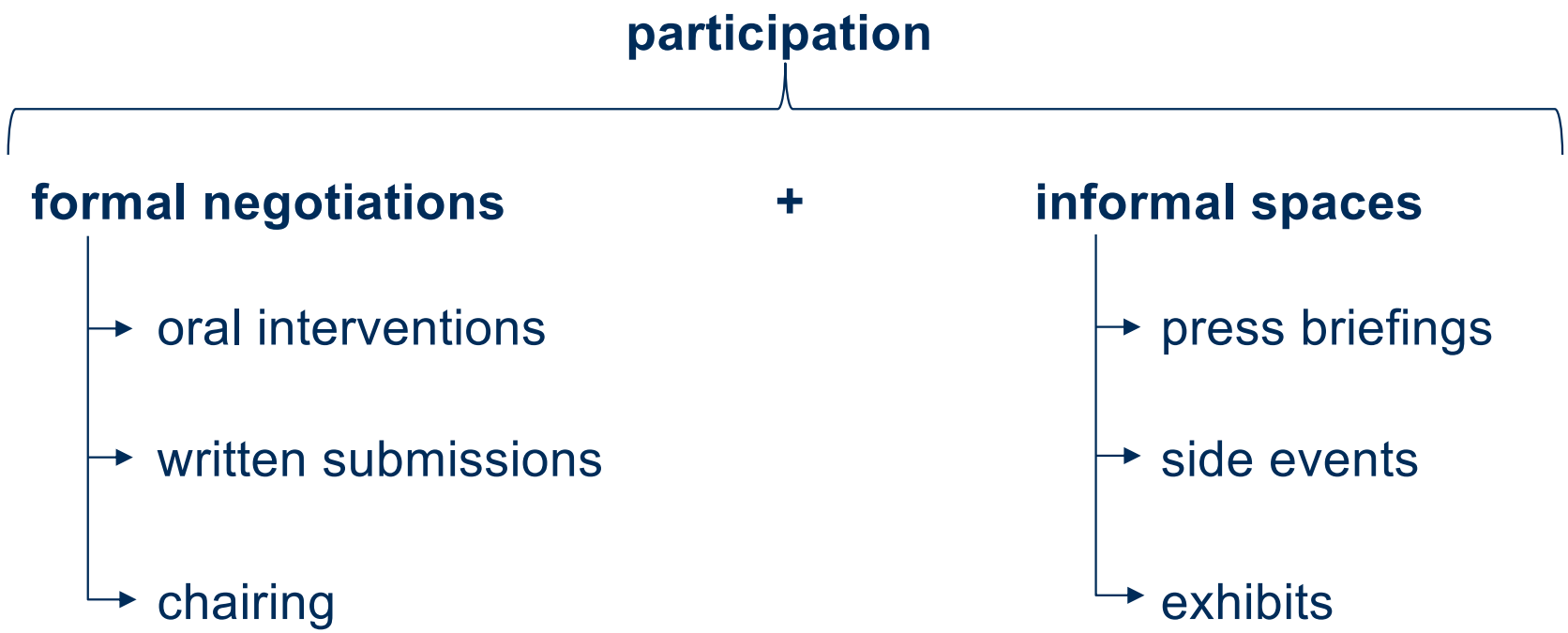
Motivation: Participation matters, but varies enormously

- Participation: backbone of multilateralism

- *A priori,* we should expect all countries to participate in pursuit of
  - **Negotiation (formal)** and
  - **Non-negotiation (informal)** objectives.

→Why would they otherwise invest in attending COPs, especially given high costs?

dependent variable: participation indicator

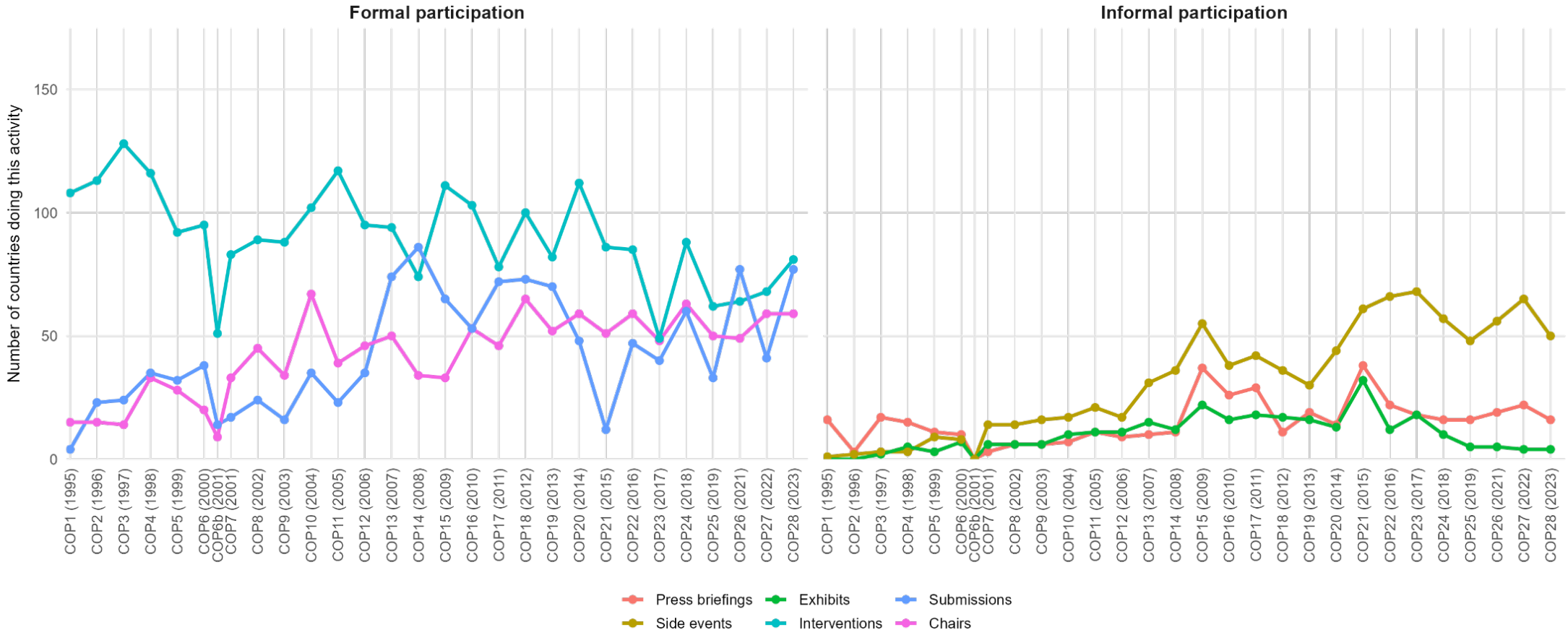


2. The participation dataset

DV: participation at party-COP level

- Indicator as dummy → ***diversity*** of participation (how many different types of activities)
- Indicator as count (and then normalized) → ***intensity*** of participation (how much)

Today: focus on diversity of participation



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Explanations of participation:

We argue that **participation** hinges on
→ ***whether*** and ***how*** countries are represented in international negotiations.

Beyond **delegation size** – how many diplomats and other delegates represent a country,

Delegation composition matters for participation →
A small delegation can engage meaningfully it has the right people.

Anecdote: Sir. Carlos Fuller, representing Belize at the COPs since 1995; chair of SBSTA 2017-2018, chief negotiator for AOSIS

Hypotheses

- *H1: The larger a* **delegation**, *the more active in* ***formal*** *and* ***informal*** *negotiations.*

- *H2: The more* ***negotiators*** *a country sends, the more active in* ***formal*** *negotiations.*
- *H3: The more* ***experienced*** *a country's negotiators, the more active in* ***formal*** *negotiations.*
- *H4: The higher a* ***delegation continuity****, the more active it is in the* ***formal*** *negotiations.*

- *H5: Countries with* ***high-level representatives*** *more active in* ***informal*** *negotiations.*
- *H6: The more* ***diverse*** *a delegation, the more active it is in* ***informal*** *climate negotiations.*

Operationalization of IVs

– From the dataset on **negotiation composition** with individual participants(170.000 observations)

→ Indicators at party-COP level:

H1: **delegation size**

H2: **government size** (negotiators)

H3: **Experience** of the delegation: average **top 5** most experienced delegates

H4: **Continuity**: share of delegates that were there at previous COP

H5: **High level representatives**: ministers and «his highness»

H6: **Diversity index** of the delegation (a Simpson diversity index)

Control variables

material resources		
	poverty	GDP/capita
	country size	population
ideational resources		
	vulnerability	ND-GAIN
	fossil fuel dependency	share of oil, gas, and coal in GDP
	language skills	English/French dummy

Some results

negative binomial regressions:

→experienced negotiators make a difference—even for small delegations

→delegation continuity as well

	Model1	Model2	Model3	Model4	Model5	Model6
Government Delegation Size	0.004***	0.004***	0.005***	0.003***	0.003***	0.003***
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)
Log GDP/Capita	0.184***	0.280***		0.212***	0.151***	0.134***
	(0.026)	(0.038)		(0.026)	(0.026)	(0.026)
Log Population	0.216***	0.233***	0.187***	0.214***	0.218***	0.207***
	(0.018)	(0.019)	(0.020)	(0.020)	(0.020)	(0.020)
Fossil Fuel Dependency	-0.009*	-0.009**	-0.008+	-0.008**	-0.007*	-0.007*
	(0.003)	(0.003)	(0.004)	(0.003)	(0.003)	(0.003)
Vulnerability		1.876**	-2.193***			
		(0.645)	(0.482)			
Top 5 Experience (anywhere)				0.049***		0.047***
				(0.012)		(0.012)
delegation continuity					0.258**	0.228*
					(0.091)	(0.091)
French Speaking				-0.153	-0.081	-0.104
				(0.094)	(0.094)	(0.094)
English Speaking				0.203	0.204	0.207
				(0.133)	(0.133)	(0.133)
Num.Obs.	4474	4451	4451	4305	4032	4032
Log.Lik.	-5705.540	-5672.379	-5792.489	-5426.208	-5113.565	-5091.767
Fixed Effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

+ $p < 0.1$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

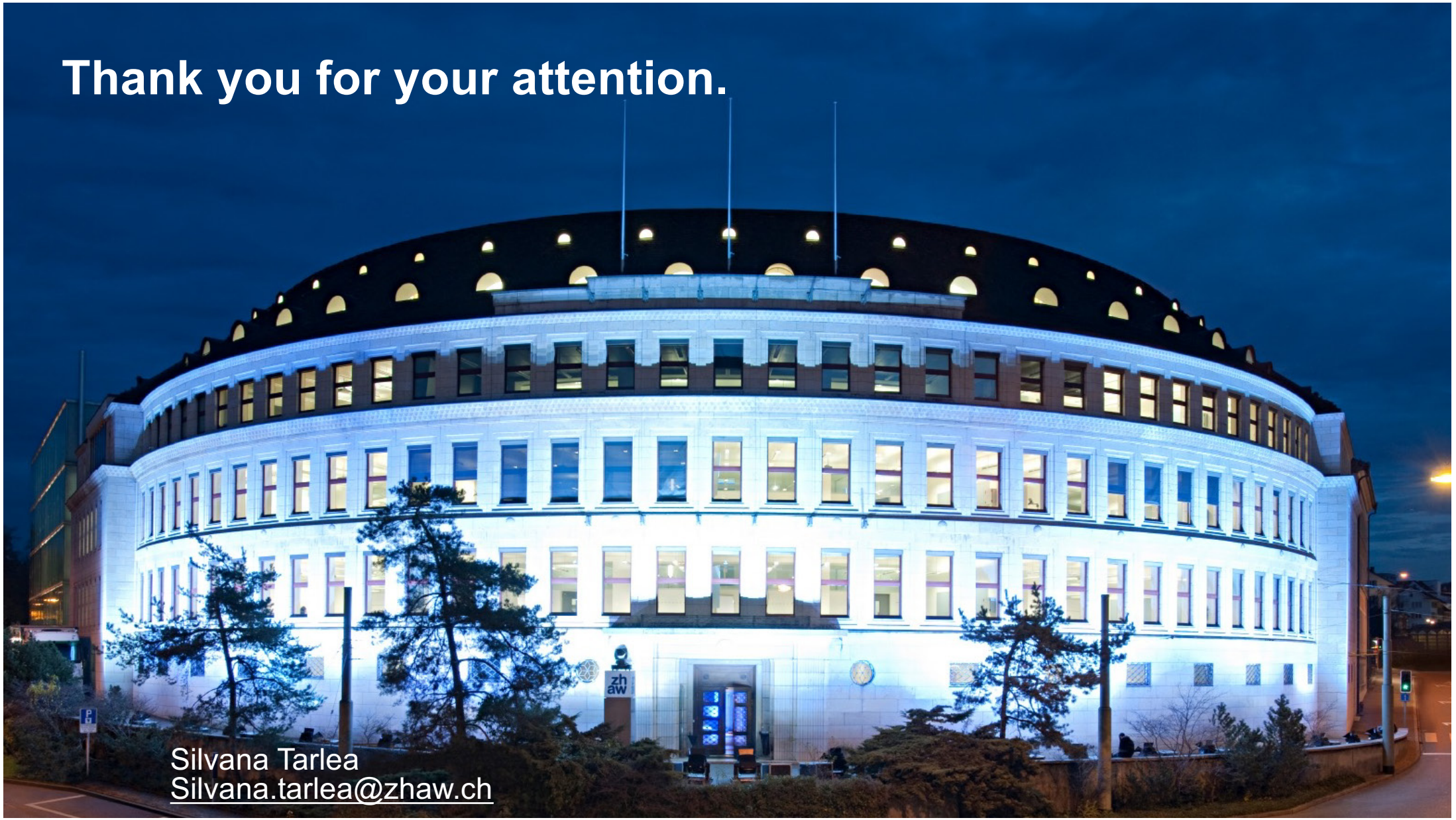
Negative binomial models with meeting dummies. Clustered standard errors by country.

Research implications

- **Delegation composition appears to matter**
- Countries can compensate for delegation size by sending the right people.
  - Experience
  - Delegation continuity

  - Next time: high-level representatives and diversity

Thank you for your attention.



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The evolution of participation over time