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euandi

- Methodological Report -

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Methodological Note

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Field work agents: The project involved 121 highly trained and knowledgeable social scientists at the doctoral or post-doctoral level researching and coding the political parties featured in the tool. The majority of country teams' members was affiliated with the European University Institute (EUI), but several collaborators were based in other parts of Europe. For a list of the collaborators visit the webpage: <http://www.eui.eu/Projects/EUDO/EUandi/CountryTeams/Index.aspx>

Universe: A selection of political parties competing for the 2014 EP elections. The euandi team tried to be as inclusive as possible and the exclusion of a party was only considered if a range of opinion polls strongly suggested that the party would not win a single seat in the election. For detailed inclusion/exclusion criteria visit the webpage: <http://euandi.eu/abouteuandi.html>

Respondents: Over 55 percent of all the parties contacted by the euandi team (242) took part in the self-placement. In addition, country teams took care of positioning the parties based on the available documentation.

Countries involved: 28 Member States of the European Union

Fieldwork period: February-April 2014

Study theme: large-scale coding of party positions' on 30 issue dimensions during the EP2014 election campaign.

Questions asked: Political parties were asked to position themselves with regard to 30 statements on:

- (a) Welfare, family and health: welfare programmes maintained even if taxes increase, social assistance for EU immigrants, reduction of pension benefits;
- (b) Migration and immigration: fight against illegal immigration, immigration restriction, acceptance of European values by immigrants;
- (c) Society, religion and culture: legalisation of same sex marriages, support for stem cell research, legalisation of soft drugs, legalisation of euthanasia;
- (d) Finances and taxes: reduction of government spending, tax-raising powers for EU, tax increase on stock market gains;
- (e) Economy and work: reduction of workers' protection regulation, stronger support for unemployed, relaxation of austerity measures;
- (f) Environment, transport and energy: support for renewable sources of energy, promotion of public transport;
- (g) Law and order: restrictions of civil liberties, more severe punishment for criminals; access to abortion
- (h) Foreign policy: EU should strengthen security and defence policy, EU should speak with one voice;
- (i) European integration; judgement about EU integration, issuance of Eurobonds, judgement about single European currency, less veto power for individual member states, referendum on EU-treaty;
- (j) Country specific items.

Data collection mode: Political parties running in the 2014 EP elections and selected by the euandi team for inclusion in the tool were given the opportunity to react to the euandi 30 statements and provide their self-placement. The euandi team identified and contacted the parties inviting them to fill in an online questionnaire and motivating their choices by supplying supporting material. In parallel, country teams proceeded to code parties' positions. Country experts were asked to specify what documentation they had used in order to place parties. They were invited to use eight types of sources hierarchically ordered – the top being the party's own EP election manifesto. In instances where the party has not printed any opinion, the researchers referred to other party manifestos, party websites, statements in the media and other secondary sources. In order to ensure the highest possible level of reliability among coders, crosschecks were organised within each team, while country team-leaders ran additional checks before finalising the process of party placement. When the party self-placement and the expert coding were completed, the two results were compared. Where there were discrepancies, the party was asked to provide more support for its declared position, and a final answer was identified. Note that while parties were consulted throughout, the final decision remained with the country teams to guarantee total impartiality.