AUTNES Content Analysis of Party Leader Statements 2002

Coding procedure & overview of variables

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Introduction

This document describes the coding of party leader statements in the news media by the Austrian National Election Study (AUTNES), a National Research Network funded by the Austrian Science Fund (FWF) (grant no. S10903-G11). The document contains an outline of the coding procedure and an overview of all variables. Inquiries on further details regarding the data and coding can be directed at Laurenz Ennser-Jedenastik (laurenz.ennser@univie.ac.at) at the University of Vienna’s Department of Government.

How to cite these data:

Data users are kindly asked to acknowledge the data and the accompanying release document. Please refer to the GESIS data catalogue (www.gesis.org) for a recommendation on how to cite the data and the documentation.

File name:

“ZA6883_v1.0.0”
Conditions of use

Restrictions

The data are available for non-profit use without restrictions.

Confidentiality

AUTNES, the Principal Investigators and the funding institution bear no responsibility for the use of the data, or for interpretations or inferences based on their use, neither do they accept liability for indirect, consequential or incidental damages or losses arising from use of the data.

Deposit requirement

In order to facilitate exchanges within the scientific community and to provide funding agencies with essential information about use of archival resources users of the AUTNES data are requested to notify the AUTNES team of all forms of publications making use of AUTNES data.
Coding procedure

The AUTNES coding of leader statements covers all public statements and actions of leaders of relevant parties in the six weeks before the election, as documented in Austria’s two leading quality newspapers (*Der Standard* and *Die Presse*). Leaders are defined as party leaders and lead candidates (i.e. those heading the party’s national election list). Most of the time, both roles are combined in one person. If this is not the case we record two leaders for the respective party. Jörg Haider represents a special case. Due to the dominant role he played in the Freedom Party (FPÖ) and the Alliance for the Future of Austria (BZÖ) he is recorded as a leader regardless of his formal position within these organizations.

Leader statements are coded based on all reports in *Die Presse* and *Der Standard*. Out of all articles published within the last six weeks before the election we pre-select those featuring the last name of at least one leader of a relevant party (those with parliamentary representation or with the potential to achieve it according to pre-election polls). This first step is conducted automatically through full-text search. In a second step we narrow down the initial selection by manually deselecting those articles that are not politically relevant. This is the case when the article mentions a person with the same last name as one of the relevant leaders (but not the actual leader), when the article is not a report (e.g. opinion pieces), when an article appears in multiple versions (we keep only the longest version), or when the article is about one of the leaders but does not contain a single statement or action by the leader. From the remaining articles we code those sentences where at least one leader appears as an ‘acting’ or ‘speaking’ actor.

In analogy to the AUTNES manifesto coding, coders deconstruct these natural sentences into standardized statements, which constitute the units of analysis (see documentation for the AUTNES Content Analysis of Party Manifestos). The last step is the coding of the standardized statements.

The coding procedure applies the AUTNES schema of subjects, predicates and objects (see documentation for the AUTNES Content Analysis of Party Press Releases). Here, subjects are always party leaders or top candidates. The only exceptions are constellations where leaders themselves quote other actors, e.g. when they elaborate on their party’s policy stance. In these cases the cited actor is coded as the subject, the quoting leader is recorded using the variable ‘quote’. The second possible application of the quote variable is when an actor other than the journalist quotes a leader (e.g. the party secretary reiterating a statement by the party leader). Here too, the respective party leader is coded as the subject. The actor that made reference to him or her is coded as the quoting actor.
We record the link between subjects and two kinds of objects, namely issues and object actors. Issues are coded using the comprehensive AUTNES list of issue categories. We also code whether a sentence refers to policy at the European Union level. Object actors are recorded with their name and organizational affiliation if they are individuals. Collective actors are recorded only by the name of the organization.

The predicate variable indicates whether the subject–object relation is positive, neutral or negative. When the object is an issue the predicate denotes support (+1), conditional support (+0.5), neutral/ambivalent stance (0), conditional rejection (-0.5) or rejection (-1) of the respective issue. Likewise, when the object is an actor the predicate indicates support (+1), conditional support (+0.5), neutral/ambivalent stance (0), conditional criticism/rejection (-0.5), criticism/rejection (-1) of the respective actor. In constellations where the subject actor is linked to an object actor as well as an issue within the same standardized statement (e.g. ‘Leader X praises party Y because of its European policy’), the predicate specifies the relation of the subject to the object actor (this is equivalent to actor-actor-issue statements in the AUTNES manifesto coding).

We record four supplementary variables: object actor attributes, leader records for subject and object actors, and justifications for issue statements.

Object actor attributes are coded for all object actors using the following categories: competence, leadership qualities, character, appearance and a residual category. Each attribute can be coded in a positive or a negative direction (+/-). A special case of object actor attributes is when leader refer to their own attributes, e.g. when they stress their long experience in government or their competence in economic policy. In such cases the leader is coded as both the subject and the object actor (this is an important difference to the AUTNES manifesto coding which records a separate variable for subject actor attributes). Thus in those cases, object actor attributes record the way the leader characterizes him- or herself.

The leader record contains all retrospective statements by leaders about their own behavior or the behavior of another political actor (typically in order to praise own achievements or criticize the failure of political opponents). We use three categories depending on the institutional level to which the statement refers: national, Land, and international (including Europe). In addition we use the category ‘historical’ (for records referring to actions further in the past, e.g. a social democratic leader in the 2000s elaborating on the achievements of his party during the 1970s) and a residual category.
Justifications are recorded for leaders’ issue statements if they give specific reasons for their issue positions (up to six are recorded). Justifications are coded into one of eleven categories: economy, welfare (expansion), welfare (retrenchment), protection of the environment, security, education, governance, ethnic-nationalist, religious, universalistic, and a residual category.

List of party leaders coded:

- FPÖ: Jörg Haider, Herbert Haupt, Mathias Reichhold (all 2002); Heinz-Christian Strache (2006, 2008)
- Liste Dr. Martin: Hans-Peter Martin (2006)
id
  - Description: ID number
  - Type: numeric

v01 year
  - Description: year of the election campaign
  - Type: numeric

v02 newspaper
  - Description: newspaper
  - Type: numeric
  - Values:
    o (1) Der Standard
    o (2) Die Presse

v03 date
  - Description: date of newspaper publication
  - Type: date

v04 page
  - Description: page of the newspaper
  - Type: numeric

v05 title
  - Description: title of the newspaper article
  - Type: string

v06 sentence
  - Description: sentence in the newspaper article.
  - Type: string

v07 relevance
  - Description: presence of relevant party leader statement according to definition
  - Type: numeric
  - Values:
    o (0) no
    o (1) yes
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Values</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>v08 statement</td>
<td>standardized statement extracted from sentence in newspaper article</td>
<td>string</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v09 quote_organization</td>
<td>organizational affiliation of the quoting actor</td>
<td>numeric</td>
<td>according to AUTNES list of organizations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v10 quote_name</td>
<td>name of the quoting actor (if individual)</td>
<td>numeric</td>
<td>according to the AUTNES list of individuals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v11 subjectactor_organization</td>
<td>organizational affiliation of the subject actor</td>
<td>numeric</td>
<td>according to AUTNES list of organizations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v12 subjectactor_name</td>
<td>name of the subject actor (if individual)</td>
<td>numeric</td>
<td>according to the AUTNES list of individuals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v13 predicate</td>
<td>predicate that records relation between subject actor and issue (or object actor if present)</td>
<td>numeric</td>
<td>(-1) reject/criticise, (0) neutral, (1) support, . no relevant observation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v14 issue</td>
<td>issue coded for the party leader statement.</td>
<td>numeric</td>
<td>according to AUTNES list of issues</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
v15 subtitle: reference to EU
   – Description: reference to regulation or policy at the European level
   – Type: numeric
   – Values:
     o (0) no reference to EU
     o (1) reference to EU
     o (. ) no relevant observation

v16_1 justification_1
   – Description: justification of issue statement
   – Type: numeric
   – Values:
     o (0) no justification
     o (1) economy
     o (2) welfare state: expansive
     o (3) welfare state: protective
     o (4) environment
     o (5) security
     o (6) education
     o (7) governance
     o (8) ethnic-national
     o (9) religious
     o (10) universalistic
     o (11) not discernible
     o (. ) no relevant observation

v16_2 justification_2 (see above)
v16_3 justification_3 (see above)
v16_4 justification_4 (see above)
v16_5 justification_5 (see above)
v16_6 justification_6 (see above)

v17 record
   – Description: reference to subject actor’s record (or object actor’s record if object actor present)
   – Type: numeric
   – Values:
     o (0) no record
     o (1) national level
     o (2) Land level
     o (3) international level
     o (4) historical
     o (. ) no relevant observation
v18 objectactor_organization
   – Description: organizational affiliation of the first object actor.
   – Type: numeric
   – Values: according to AUTNES list of organizations

v19 objectactor_name
   – Description: Name of first object actor.
   – Type: numeric
   – Values: according to AUTNES list of individuals

v20 objectactor_attribute
   – Description: character attribute coded for object actor
   – Type: numeric
   – Values:
     o (0) no attribute
     o (1) competence: +
     o (2) competence: –
     o (3) character: +
     o (4) character: –
     o (5) leadership: +
     o (6) leadership: –
     o (7) appearance: +
     o (8) appearance: –
     o (9) not discernible: +
     o (10) not discernible: –
     o (.) no relevant observation
     o (d) no object actor