

The CAP party manifesto dataset

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The purpose of this note is to outline the details of the comparative CAP manifesto dataset put together by Christoffer Green-Pedersen used for Green-Pedersen 2019 and Green-Pedersen & Jensen 2019.

The dataset contains party manifesto data for seven countries: Denmark, Sweden, UK, France, Germany, the Netherlands and Belgium, all coded according to the CAP – comparative agenda coding scheme (Bevan, 2019, see also <http://sbevan.com/cap-master-codebook.html>). The dataset covers the period from 1980 and onwards. For a few countries, the data exist further back in time (see below).

The purpose of this note is two-fold. First, we wish to explain how the coding of manifestos was set up since this was done individually for each country. The comparative dataset thus consists of seven independent datasets that have been merged. Second, we wish to discuss a number of issues concerning the comparability of the issue coding since this was done separately for each country based on national versions of the comparative policy agendas codebook (see Bevan 2019).

The end of the note contains an overview of all parties included in the dataset

Denmark

The dataset on Danish party manifestos has been compiled by Christoffer Green-Pedersen, Peter Bjerre Mortensen and Henrik Seeberg and covers the years 1953-2015.

Since Denmark does not have a well-established tradition for political parties publishing party manifestos, the choice of documents to code is a specific challenge in the Danish case. All parties have typically produced some form of written material that explains their issue priorities when elections are called. However, they may produce several documents that could potentially be coded. The choice of documents to code has also been heavily criticized in relation to the Comparative Manifestos Project (CMP) (Hansen, 2008).

The coding from 1953, when Denmark changed its constitution, until 2007 was based on the same documents that were used in the CMP despite criticism of the choice of documents. These documents were kindly provided by Robert Klemmensen. Given that there are no official documents published, searching for campaign material back in time proved highly difficult, and the documents that were found from initial searches were generally not found to be more appropriate than the ones used for the CMP coding. The most problematic documents are typically those from the 1950s and 1960s, which the CMP project had to collect many years after the relevant elections.

For the 2011 election, the most appropriate documents were found in collaboration with Robert Klemmensen. For the 2015 election, obtaining written documents with campaign issues from the parties was particularly difficult. The Danish parties increasingly rely on other communication forms like web-pages to present their campaign focus. For all elections, longer documents were

preferred to shorter ones to match the party manifestos found in other countries. However, the documents coded in Denmark are typically shorter than in other countries.

In terms of parties included, the original CMP collection contained all parties running for parliament, with a few documents missing. For the 2011 election, material from all parties running was collected. The 2015 election, suitable documents were in the end obtained from all parties but the Social Liberals. Appendix 1 includes a list of parties covered in the entire Danish dataset.

The coding of the Danish manifestos was carried out based on natural sentences, defined as going from one full stop to the next. Textboxes and other graphic elements were not coded.

The actual coding was done by student coders who received intensive training in the codebook, including a test of inter-coder reliability. For the data from 1953-2007, percentage agreement scores of 85 per cent at the subtopic level was reached. For the 2011 update, Krippendorph's Alpha values of 0.7 at the subtopics and 0.83 at the main-topic level were reached. For the 2015 coding, the figures are 0.81 at the main topic and 0.67 at the subtopic level. More details about the coding are provided in Green-Pedersen and Mortensen (2008), Green-Pedersen (2015), Green-Pedersen & Seeberg (2019a).

The issue coding was done based on the Danish version of CAP codebook, which was developed between 2002 and 2003 by Christoffer Green-Pedersen. It stays relatively close to the original US codebook, including specific categories for geographical areas under main topic 19 concerning foreign policy. However, some sub-categories were sub-divided and some new ones were introduced like fishing and cultural policy. In 2014, an updated version of the codebook was made which fitted the Comparative Agendas Codebook (Bevan, 2019). Manifestos for 2011

and 2015 were coded according to the new version and the data before 2011 has been coded so the entire manifesto dataset fits the new coding scheme,

To handle the issue of European Integration, a special subtopic, 1910, was defined to handle direct statements about the European Union, such as the role of the Commission, enlargement and so on. However, in the case of reference to the EU, for instance, a directive in relation to a policy issue such as the environment or education, these were coded in terms of the substantial policy areas, but at the same time, a dummy variable was used to indicate the connection to the European Union.

A special code was introduced for sentences with no policy content. For the manifestos after 1980, 9.08 per cent of the sentences were coded here

Data and documentation is available at the Danish part of comparativeagendas.net (see also www.agendasetting.dk).

Sweden

In Sweden, political parties publish official programs before each election. These programs were collected from the Swedish National data Archive and coded by Nina Liljeqvist and Christoffer Green-Pedersen (see Liljeqvist, 2014(2017)) for the period 1976-2014.

All parties who won representation in the Swedish Riksdag were coded. The reason for only including parties who won representation is that the Swedish electoral system makes it relatively easy for parties to run for election, and including all parties running would thus significantly increase the workload. The Green party won representation in 1998 but lost it again in 1991, but

the 1991 manifesto is also included. For the elections in 2006, 2010 and 2014, the Swedish right-wing bloc (Conservatives, Swedish People's Party, Centre Party and Christian Democrats) presented a common program under the name 'The Alliance'. The same did the left-wing bloc in 2010 (Social Democrats, Greens and the Left Party). These joint programs were coded because the parties involved campaigned for government power as one united group.

The Swedish manifestos from 1976 to 2010 were coded based on quasi-sentences by Nina Liljeqvist. The reliability of the coding was checked by Christoffer Green-Pedersen, who recoded parts of the material. Krippendorph's Alpha values of 0.66 at the subtopic and 0.84 at the main topic level were reached (for more details, see Liljeqvist, 2014(2017)). The coding of the 2014 election was done by Christoffer Green-Pedersen with reliability check by Nina Liljeqvist. Reliability scores were similar.

The Swedish version of the Comparative Agendas Codebook has been developed by Nina Liljeqvist and is quite similar to the Danish version, although the geographical codes under main topic 19 are not included. The Swedish data also contains the EU dummy code and specific EU subtopic, 1910.

A special code was introduced for quasi-sentences with no policy content. For the manifestos after 1980, 6.03 per cent of the quasi-sentences were coded here

The data and the codebooks are available at agendasetting.dk

Germany

The German dataset covers the period the period 1949-2013. The documents coded were the official party manifestos taken from the CMP project. The parties included were those who had been continuously represented in the German Bundestag: Social Democrats, Christian Democrats (joint manifestos of the CDU and CSU), Free Democrats, Greens and the Left.

The coding was organized by Isabelle Guinaudeau and carried out by herself and three student coders, who went through intensive training first. This included a reliability test based on German laws, where a percentage agreement of 88 per cent at the main-topic level and 84 per cent at the subtopic level was reached (See Guinaudeau, 2015). As for the Danish data, the coding was done based on natural sentences from full stop to full stop.

The German version of the codebook has been developed by Christian Breunig for the German Comparative Agendas Project (see <https://www.gpa.uni-konstanz.de/the-project/>). It is relatively close to the American version, including geographical codes under main topic 19. It also includes a special code for the German reunification and a subtopic 1910 for European Union matters. However, no EU dummy was included to capture the relationship with the EU on specific policy issues.

A special code was introduced for sentences with no policy content. For the manifestos after 1980, 8.86 per cent of the sentences were coded here

The data and codebooks are available at the German part of comparativeagendas.net

The Netherlands

The Dutch manifestos were assembled by Simon Otjes for the period 1982-2012. All parties that have won representation in the Dutch second chamber are included. The Netherlands has a tradition for all parties to publish official party manifestos, and these are available at the Documentation Centre Dutch Political Parties (<http://www.dnpp.nl/>).

The party manifestos were divided into paragraphs. A paragraph is a block of text delineated by a line break. The actual coding was carried out by nine trained student coders in two waves. Krippendorff's Alpha scores 0.8 were reached (see Otjes, 2015 for details).

The code used for the issue coding was the Dutch version of the policy agendas codebook developed by Simon Otjes, Gerard Breman and Arco Timmermans.

The Dutch version of the policy agendas codebook resembles the Danish version and thus includes geographical codes under main topic 19 and a special code 1910 for European integration. A dummy code to capture relationship to the European Union was also included.

A special code was introduced for paragraphs with no policy content. 1.80 per cent of the paragraphs were coded here.

The data and codebooks are available at the Dutch part of [comparativeagendas.net](http://www.comparativeagendas.net)

UK

The UK data was assembled and coded by Caterina Froio as part of the UK policy agendas project (<https://www.comparativeagendas.net/uk>). The UK has a well-established tradition for

political parties to publish party manifestos, which are available on their websites. The dataset covers the three major parties, Conservatives, Labour and Liberal Democrats (SDP-Liberal Alliance in 1983 and 1987), from 1983 to 2010 (see Froio et al., 2017).

The coding was done using quasi-sentences based on the British version of the policy agendas codebook. A reliability threshold of 0.8 for main topics is reported (Froio, 2012: 3).

An update for the British 2015 election was made by Henrik Seeberg and Christoffer Green-Pedersen. Here the UKIP manifesto was also coded. The coding was done by a trained student and reliability test was done by Henrik Seeberg. For splitting sentence into quasi-sentences, the Krippendorff Alpha value was 0.85, for coding the main topic 0.90, for the subtopic coding 0.70. and finally 0.93 for coding the EU dummy that was added to the 2015 update (See Green-Pedersen & Seeberg 2019b).

This codebook is very close to the original US codebook and thus includes geographical codes under the main topic 19 (see <http://www.policyagendas.org.uk>). In the original version, the subtopic 1910 included both European integration and West European politics in general. A recoding was then done by a student coder who separated the few quasi-sentences related to West European politics in general from the majority of quasi-sentences referring to European integration. The version of the codebook applied in 2015 included the separate EU code (1910)

A special code was introduced for quasi-sentences with no policy content. 9.45% of the quasi-sentences were coded here.

The British data is available at....

France

The French data were assembled by Isabelle Guinaudeau, Sylvain Brouard and Emiliano Grossmann as part of the French policy agendas project (see <https://www.comparativeagendas.net/france>). The data includes all parties who won more than five per cent of the vote at the National Assembly elections from 1981 to 2012. The party manifestos used were mostly the same as the ones used in the CMP dataset. In some cases, the French right-wing parties (RPR and UDF) issued both a common program and individual programs. In this case, the common program was used.

The coding was carried out by student coders based on a quasi-sentence approach (see Brouard *et al.*, 2012). The latest version of the dataset including the 2012 election was kindly supplied by Isabelle Guinaudeau.

The French codebook (see <https://www.comparativeagendas.net/france>) diverges somewhat from the US codebook. In particular, there are no geographical codes under main topic 19. A 1910 code for the European Union is included but there is no dummy variable for the relation to the European Union.

A special code was introduced for quasi-sentences with no policy content. 11.51 per cent of the quasi-sentences were coded here.

The data and the codebook are available at <https://www.comparativeagendas.net/france>

Belgium

The Belgian data were assembled by Jeroen Joly, Stefaan Walgrave and Brandon Zicha as part of the Belgian policy agendas project (see <http://www.comparativeagendas.net/belgium>). Belgium has a well-established tradition for all political parties to publish official and lengthy party manifestos, which are therefore easy to identify. The data covers all parties who won representation in the period 1977-2007. However, before 1981, only a few Flemish-speaking parties are coded. The coding was done by trained student coders based on a quasi-sentence approach. A reliability test is provided by a double coding of manifestos. A Pearson's r of 0.81 at the subtopic level and 0.95 at the main topic level is reported when comparing the two independent coders of the same manifesto (see Joly et al., n.d.).

The Belgian codebook is close to the French version and does not include geographical codes. A 1910 code for European integration is included but there is no dummy variable for the relationship to the European Union.

A special code was introduced for quasi-sentences with no policy content, but the extent of the use of the code is unknown.

The data and the codebook are available at <https://www.comparativeagendas.net/belgium>

Issues of comparability

When looking across the seven datasets, two issues of comparability can be identified. One is the fact that some projects (Denmark and Germany) use natural sentences (punctuation to

punctuation) and other projects use quasi sentences (UK, Sweden, France and Germany). The Dutch data are based on paragraphs. In terms of natural sentences vs. quasi sentences, Däubler et al. (2012) conclude that using natural sentences is preferable because of the reliability problems involved in identifying quasi-sentences; but there is very little difference in terms of measured policy content. Green-Pedersen (2019) further compares saliency of different issues in the CAP data to that identified in the CMP dataset, which uses quasi-sentences for all countries. In terms of comparability, there is no indication that the CAP coding for the three countries, Denmark, Germany and the Netherlands, not using quasi-sentences is less comparable to the CMP coding than the four countries also using quasi-sentences for the CAP coding.

As stated above, the party manifestos were coded based on the various national versions of the Comparative Agendas Codebook. This raises a number of questions about how to cross-walk the different subtopics in order to generate the 23 main issue categories used in this dataset. The comparative policy agendas codebook developed by Bevan (2019) has been the foundation for this work since it is based on a detailed mapping of the adjustment of the original US codebook made by the various national teams (see <https://www.comparativeagendas.net/pages/master-codebook>). Generally, cross-walking the different coding schemes was possible with one exception: the use of the original US geographical code. The geographical codes refer to areas such as Asia, Africa, Eastern Europe and so on and are meant to cover all mentions related to such foreign countries, regardless of their content. Thus, a sentence in a Danish party manifesto referring to the health care situation in Eastern Europe would be coded as 1909, where a similar sentence in the countries that do not have these codes (France, Belgium and Sweden) would be coded under main topic 3, health care. This difference in coding clearly limits comparability, but the extent of the problems is limited by the fact that party manifestos typically do not include

many references to foreign countries. Obviously, foreign policy and security policy often receive substantial attention, but all coding schemes have subtopics under main topic 19 that capture various aspects of foreign policy. In the Danish case, for instance, 289 out of 31,518 sentences were coded in these categories, equaling 1 per cent.

Table 1 presented an overview of which subtopics in different countries have been assigned to each of the 23 main topics. A x/y implies that all subtopics between x and y are included. In the German case, the codes 2500/2599 refer to reunification. It is difficult to compare this to any other country, but the codes have been related to the main subtopic 23, territories, which seems to be the main topic which is the least far away from reunification.

All sentences/quasi-sentences/paragraphs classified as un-codeable by the national projects were dropped.

	DK	UK	France	Belgium	Netherlands	Sweden	Germany
Economy	100/199 1008, 1806/1808	100/199 1806/1808	100/199 1806/1808	100/199 1806/1808	100/199 1008, 1806/1808	100/199 1008, 1806/1808	100/199 1806/1808
Personal rights	200 202/299 1208	200 202 204/209 299 1208	31 200 202/299 320	31 200 202/299 320	200 202/212 299 320 610 1208	200 202/299 1208	200 202/210 299 1208
Immigration	201 900	201 230 900/999	201 900/999	201 900/999	201 230	201 900/999	201 230
Health	300/399	300/399	300/302 321/399	300/302 321/399	300/302 321/399	300/399	300/399
Agriculture	400/406 408/499	400/499	400/406 408/499	400/406 408/499	400/406 408/499	400/499	400/406 408/499
Labor	500/599	500/506 529 599	500/599	500/599	500/599 1307 1510	500/599	500/506 529 599
Education	600/699	600/607 698 699	600/699	600/699	600/607 698/699	600/699	600/607 698/699
Culture	1526 1707 2300	1526 1707 609 2800 2900	29 2300/2399	29 2300/2399	608/609 1526 1707	1526 1707 2300/2399	609 1526 1707
Environment	700/799 407 1902 2100 2101 2103 2199	700/799 1902 2100 2101 2103 2199	700/799 407 1902 2100 2101 2103 2199	700/799 407 1902 2100 2101 2103 2199	700/799 407 1902 2100 2101 2103	700/799 1902 2100 2101 2103 2199	700/799 407 1902 2100 2101 2103 2199

	DK	UK	France	Belgium	Netherlands	Sweden	Germany
					2106/2107 2199		
Energy	800/899	800/899	800/899	800/899	800/899	800/899	800/899
Transportation	1000/1005 1010 1098 1099 2104	1000/1006 1010 1098 1099 2104	1000/1006 1010 1098 1099 2104	1000/1006 1010 1098 1099 2104	1000/1006 1098 1099 2108	1000/1005 1010 1098 1099 2104	1000/1006 1010 1098 1099 2104
Justice	1200/1207 1209/1211 1227 1299	1200/1207 1209/1299 1627	1200/1299	1200/1299	1200/1207 1209/1299	1200/1207 1209/1299	1200/1207 1209/1211 1227 1299
Social Affairs	1300/1399	1300/1399 508	1300/1399	1300/1399	1300/1306 1308/1399	1300/1399	508 1300/1399
Housing	1400 1401 1404 1406/1499	1400 1401 1404 1406/1499	1400 1401 1404 1406/1499	1400 1401 1404 1406/1499	1400 1401 1404 1406/1499	1400 1401 1404 1406/1499	1400 1401 1404 1406/1499
Business	1007 1500/1522 1524 1525 1599 1803 1804	1007 1500/1522 1524 1525 1599 1803 1804	1007 1500/1599 1803 1804	1007 1500/1599 1803 1804	1007 1500/1507 1518 1520/1525 1595/1599 1803 1804	1007 1500/1522 1524 1525 1599 1803 1804	1007 1500/1525 1599 1803 1804
Defense	1600/1699 1523	1523 1600/1620 1698 1699	1600/1699 2018 27 28	1600/1699 2018 27 28	1600/1699 2018	1600/1699 1523	1223 1600/1699

	DK	UK	France	Belgium	Netherlands	Sweden	Germany
Technology	1700/1706 1708/1799 2003	1700/1706 1708/1799 2003	1700/1799 2003	1700/1799 2003	1700/1706 1708/1799 2003	1700/1706 1708/1799 2003	1700/1706 1708/1799 2003
Foreign Affairs	1800 1802 1899 1900 1901 1905/1909 1911/1999	1800 1802 1899 1900 1901 1905/1909 1911/1999	1800 1802 1899 1900 1901 1905 1906 1925/1999	1800 1802 1899 1900 1901 1905 1906 1925/1999	1800 1802 1899 1900 1901 1905/1909 1911/1929 1999	1800 1802 1899 1900 1901 1905/1906 1913/1999	1800 1802 1899 1900 1901 1905/1909 1911/1999
European Integration	1910	1910	1910	1910	1910	1910	1910
Local	2001 2016 1403 1405	2001 24 1403 1405	2400 2001 1403 1405	2400 2001 1403 1405	2001 1403 1405 2016	2001 1403 1405 2016	2001 1403 1405 2300
Government	2000 2002 2004/2009 2015 2030 2099	2000 2002 2004/2009 2013 2015 2030 2031 2099	2000 2002 2004/2009 2013/2016 2030 2031 2099	2000 2002 2004/2009 2013/2016 2030 2031 2099	2000 2002 2004/2009 2015 2030 2031 2099 1519	2000 2002 2004/2009 2013/2015 2030 2099	2000 2002 2004/2009 2013/2015 2030 2099
Politics	2010/2012	2011 2012 2032	2010 2012 2032 2033	2010 2012 2032 2033	2010/2012 2017 2097	2010/2012	2010/2012
Territories	2105	2105	2017	2017	1930 1931	2102 2105	2500/2599

Parties and elections

Belgian parties included (x) means that the data exist but the party is not considered relevant

	1978	1981	1985	1987	1991	1995	1999	2003	2007
CVP/CD&V	X	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
PSC/CDH		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
ECOLO		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Agalev/Groen		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
MR (PRL, FDF MCC 1999)		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
PVV/VLD	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
SP/SPA	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
PS		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
FDF		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
RW		x							
SPIRIT								x	
VB		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Vivant								(x)	
FN								x	x
VU/NVA	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x

Danish parties included (x) means that the data exist but the party is not considered relevant

	1979	1981	1984	1987	1988	1990	1994	1998	2001	2005	2007	2011	2013
Social Democrats	X	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x
Social Liberals	X	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Conservatives	X	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Liberals	X	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Socialist People's Party	X	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x
Justice Party	X	x	(x)										
Centre Democrats	X	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	(x)			
Progress Party	X	x	x	x	x	x	x	x					
Christian Democrats	X	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	(x)		(x)
Communist	(X)	(x)	(x)										
Left-Socialist	X	x	x										
Common Course					x								
Liberal Alliance											x		x
Danish People's Party								x	x	x	x		x
Unity List							x	x	x	x	x		x
Minority party										(x)			

Dutch parties included

	1982	1986	1989	1994	1998	2002	2003	2006	2010	2012
50Plus	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X
AOV	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-
CD	-	-	X	X	-	-	-	-	-	-
CDA	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
CP	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
CPN	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
CU	-	-	-	-	-	X	X	X	X	X
D66	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
GL	-	-	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
GPV	X	X	X	X	X	-	-	-	-	-
LN	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-
LPF	-	-	-	-	-	X	X	-	-	-
PPR	X	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
PSP	X	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
PvdA	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
PvdD	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	X	X
PVV	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	X	X
RPF	X	X	X	X	X	-	-	-	-	-
SGP	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	X
SP	-	-	-	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
U55+	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-
VVD	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

German parties included

	1976	1980	1983	1987	1990	1994	1998	2002	2005	2009	2013
CDU/CSU	X	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
SPD	X	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
FDP	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Die Grüne			x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Die Linke					x	x	x	x	x	x	x

French parties included

	1981	1986	1988	1993	1997	2002	2007	2012
Communist	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Socialists	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Greens				x	x	x	x	x
Front National					x	x	x	x
Common Centre Right	x	x		x	x			x
RPR			x					
UPF			x			x	x	
UMP						x	x	

UK parties included

	1983	1987	1992	1997	2001	2005	2010	2015
Labour	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	X
Conservatives	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	X
Liberal Democrats	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	X
UKIP								X

Swedish Parties included

	1979	1982	1985	1988	1991	1995	1998	2002	2006	2010	2014
Left Party	X	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		X
Social Democrats	X	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		X
Greens				x	x	x	x	x	x		X
Common Left										x	
Liberals	X	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			
Centre party	X	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			
Christian Democrats					x	x	x	x			
Conservatives	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			
Common Right									x	x	X
Swedish Democrats										x	X
New Democracy					x						

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