STUDY DESCRIPTION

Data content

Positioning on 30 statements of nine different categories (policy areas)

a. Welfare, family and health (3 items)
b. Migration and immigration (3 items)
c. Society, religion and culture (4 items)
d. Finances and taxes (3 items)
e. Economy and work (2 items)
f. Environment, transport and energy (3 items)
g. Law and order (2 items)
h. Foreign policy (2 items)
i. European integration (6 items)
j. Country specific items: 2 additional items specific to each country (on a particular topic of relevance in the country).

Data coding procedures

The positioning of the parties on the 30 statements was coded by experts. Calibration was done by means of the self-positioning of the parties and/or multiple expert coding.

- Number of experts involved in the coding: 100. For each country, a Team was created (30 teams).

- Coding sources and hierarchy:

1. EU Election Manifesto 2009 of national party
2. Party Election Platform
3. Current/latest national election manifesto
4. EU Election Manifesto of Europarties
5. Other programmatic and official party documentation
6. Actions/statements of party representatives in government and parliament
7. Interviews and other coverage in media outlets
8. Older Election Manifestos, party documentation, actions/statements and interviews
9. Other

- All coding is exhaustively documented (all the information – extract of the manifest, link to a Web, etc. – is saved).
- The coding is based on a 5-point Likert scale (party completely agrees, somewhat agrees, is neutral, somewhat disagrees, completely disagrees with the statement)
    1. An issue not mentioned in any document or in the self-placement was coded as **no opinion**
    2. The neutral position (**neither agree nor disagree**) is an argued position, which is vaguely addressed by the party, or addressed both in a positive and negative way
    3. A positive/ negative position with restrictions was coded as **tend to (dis)agree**
    4. A clear positive/ negative position was coded as **completely (dis)agree**
- Self-placement of the parties is not higher in the hierarchy than the other documents, but functions as a check for the positioning of the coder. If the party and the coder position the party in the same point of the scale, the calibration is seen as final. If there is discrepancy between the self-placement and the coder opinion, the party was contacted again to clarify this inconsistency. Final decisions, still, are left to country teams.

Sample

- Countries included in the survey: 30 countries. Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, United Kingdom. This corresponds to the EU27 (where EP elections took place), Switzerland, Croatia and Turkey (where the EU Profiler gave users the possibility to evaluate their vote choice had their respective country been a member of the EU at the time of the EP elections of June 2009).
- Number of parties included in the survey: 274 parties.

Data Collection methods

- Coding by country experts for all countries
- Self-placement of the parties by means of off- and online questionnaire (letter, email and SurveyMonkey-powered online survey). Period: January-April 2009.