

# Notas de investigación



# Scope, Range, and Extent of Manifesto Project Data Usage: a New Research Tool for Manifesto Project Database's Users

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**Abstract:** The objective of this research note is to introduce Scope, Range, and Extent of Manifesto Project Data Usage (SRE). This is a content analysis of publications that use the Manifesto Project's Database (MANIFESTO Database), its resulting dataset, and a handbook for users and forthcoming coders. Up to now, a total of 273 articles published between 2000 and the first semester of 2015 in eight high-impact journals (American Journal of Political Science, American Political Science Review, British Journal of Political Science, Comparative Political Studies, European Journal of Political Research, Electoral Studies, The Journal of Politics, and Party Politics) have been coded according to a 140-variables scheme. The SRE dataset, which includes literature reference files divided in methodological and substantial ones, offers a condensed but exhaustive overview over topics, policy dimensions, and extraction methods used in each article. Besides, the range of countries, party types and families, times, and actors are covered. Furthermore, the extent of critique, validation, and reliability testing related to the MANIFESTO Database is reviewed. Thus, the SRE dataset provides old and new users of the MANIFESTO Database with a quick and convenient summary of existing research and shows different ways in which these data can be used. Moreover, the SRE dataset could be useful to those looking for information on methodology or case studies on certain countries. Finally, the SRE handbook offers key information both users and coders of the SRE dataset.

**Keywords:** *content analysis, political parties, political preferences, Manifesto Project, MARPOR, SRE.*

## Introduction

Since its formation as the Manifesto Research Group/Comparative Manifestos Project (MRG 1979–1989/CMP 1989–2009), the Manifesto Project has dealt with different aspects of party performance as well as the structure and development of party systems. The project is based on quantitative content analyses of parties' election programmes from more than 50 countries covering all free, democratic elections since 1945. For the past thirty years, the general purpose of the Manifesto Project has been to measure political preferences of parties across time and space. In 2003, the project received the American Political Science Association's (APSA) award for the best data set in comparative politics.

Since October 2009, the Manifesto Project has been financed by a long-term funding grant from the German Science Foundation (DFG). This grant allows the Manifesto Research on Political Representation (MARPOR) project to update their data on countries from OECD, the European Union, Central and East Europe, extend the data collection to Latin America, and distribute manifesto texts and content-analytical data to the scientific community (<https://manifestoproject.wzb.eu>).

*Scope, Range, and Extent of Manifesto Project Data Usage* (SRE) comprises a content analysis of publications that use the Manifesto Project's Database (MANIFESTO Database), the resulting dataset, and a handbook for users and forthcoming coders (<https://manifesto-project.wzb.eu/datasets/mpduds>).

SRE has systematically reviewed the usage of the MANIFESTO. Since the beginning of the Manifesto Project some 40 years ago (Robertson 1976), substantive research based on the MANIFESTO Database as well as methodological research addressing its data collection has been growing explosively. Responding to this noticeable increase in usage, the SRE dataset and the accompanying data and literature reference files provide first and foremost a quick and convenient overview on existing research for new data users. Notwithstanding, this is not the sole purpose of SRE. We encourage users of the MANIFESTO Database to add their own Manifesto research outputs to the SRE database in order to allow for a better communication and exchange between users. Should our review data be in demand, we consider to update the current selection of publications and to extend it to other journals and books.

In this research note we will present the SRE dataset and handbook, and explain how to add new publications to the SRE dataset.

## SRE Dataset

The SRE dataset covers all publications between the beginning of 2000 and the first semester of 2015 issued in the following eight journals: 1) *American Journal of Political Science* (AJPS), 2) *American Political Science Review* (APSR), 3) *British Journal of*

*Political Science* (BJPS), 4) *Comparative Political Studies* (CPS), 5) *European Journal of Political Research* (EJPR), 6) *Electoral Studies* (ES), 7) *The Journal of Politics* (JP), and 8) *Party Politics* (PP). It is worth noting that all journals have high impact and focus on political parties and party systems.

We followed a two-step procedure for sampling the up-to-date coded articles. Firstly, we conducted a keyword search in the full text and the references from all articles published on the eight journals' websites. The keywords we were looking for were the three *Mapping Policy Preferences* books, which are the key references of the Manifesto Project, and citations of the current MANIFESTO Dataset.<sup>1</sup> In addition to that, we browsed all articles with keywords that are project related, such as "CMP" and "Manifesto Project." Those two search criteria ensure that we have captured everything related to the Manifesto Project issued in these eight journals from 2000 onwards.

Secondly, as not all of these articles actually make use of the data, we included a coding variable that further divides the dataset into articles that use MANIFESTO data, those that only refer to it, and those that do not use the data but focus on the Manifesto Project approach (mostly critical judgements of basic features of the project).<sup>2</sup>

Apart from the identification variables (V1 to V5) and the citation variables (V150 to V159) we distinguish three areas of usage: 1) scope of research topics, policy dimensions, and extraction methods (V6 to V17); 2) range of countries, party types and families, times, and actors (V18 to V28); 3) extent of critique, validation, and reliability testing (V29 to V140).

## **SRE handbook**

The SRE handbook contains basic information gathered to help users and coders of the SRE dataset. Basically, this includes the SRE 140-variables coding scheme, which you could find in the methodological appendix of this research note, and three general coding rules.

These general rules, which primary coders established and followed while coding the articles currently included in the SRE dataset, are the following:

1. We coded only information that is explicitly mentioned in the text. For instance, if a scholar said she or he had been focusing on party strategy but the coder was convinced that the research is more about party positioning,

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1. For more information see the bibliography and MARPOR's website (<https://manifestoproject.wzb.eu>).  
2. For more information see variable 5 "Usage of Dataset".

variable 8 “substantive topic of research” would still be coded as “2” (party strategies).

2. In case of doubt on which category of a variable applies, we coded what was stated in the paragraph where the dataset usage was described, in the keywords, the title, the abstract, hypotheses, graphs, or figures (in that order of decision making). This rule would for example be applied when the author uses both “party strategy” and “party positioning” (see V8).
3. If two codes applied according to rule number 2, we coded the dependent variable.

### **How to add your own publications to the SRE dataset**

We encourage authors to add their research using or referring to the Manifesto Project to the SRE dataset. That also includes papers published in journals not covered by SRE.

As research evolves, there may be new research fields and topics not yet included in the category scheme. Please feel free to add categories to the original SRE scheme if they are missing. In that case, we would ask you to contribute to updating the SRE handbook by sending us a copy of your extended version comprising the new categories, which will be published on MARPOR’s homepage.

For adding your own publications please follow these steps:

1. Get familiar with SRE’s coding variables and categories (see the methodological appendix).
2. Code your paper (Excel, Stata).
3. Add new categories to variables if necessary.
4. Update this handbook.
5. Send your coded file and – if it has been updated – the handbook to: manifesto-communication@wzb.eu.

The Manifesto Project team will add your coding and the updated handbook to SRE (<https://manifesto-project.wzb.eu/datasets/mpduds>).

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## Methodological Appendix

### SRE's Variables and Categories

Variable ID	Variable name	ID of variable categories	Category name	Variable and category description
<i>0. Article citation<sup>3</sup></i>				
V150	Publication Year			= V3
V151	Author			Surname, name.
V152	Title			Title of the article.
V153	Publication Title			Title of the journal.
V154	ISSN			
V155	DOI			
V156	Abstract Note			
V157	Pages			
V158	Issue			
V159	Volume			
<i>I. Identification variables</i>				
V1	Running ID of the publication			Key ID of the publication (Journal ID and two-digit running number for each article).
V2	Journal	1	AJPS	
		2	APSR	
		3	BJPS	
		4	CPS	
		5	EJPS	
		6	ES	
		7	JP	
		8	PP	
V3	Year of publication			
V4	Type of publication	1	Mainly substantive	Some of those articles may have methodological insights as well.
		2	Mainly methodological	Some of those articles may have substantive implications; if there is any specific area of research, code it!
V5	Dataset usage	1	Usage of data and aspects (see V21, V22, V29)	Aspects include party family codes, election dates, strength of parties (see V21), and modifications (V29 = 7, V71, V72) – to be coded, otherwise see V5 = 2.
		2	No usage of data but focus on MARPOR	If V5 = 2, code only V1–V5, V6 + V8 topic, V17 satisfaction, V29 if = 9.
		3	Referred to/used as background information	Rule for V5 = 2 applies.
<i>All the following variables include zero for 'not mentioned/unspecified/does not apply'</i>				
<i>II. Scope of approach</i>				

3. We included the citation variables at a late stage of the project. That is why they were included as V150–V159. Nevertheless, they go hand in hand with the identification variables (V1–V5) and are therefore the first to be listed in this overview and in the dataset. Beginning with V1, the variables are ordered by their variable ID.



Variable ID	Variable name	ID of variable categories	Category name	Variable and category description
V6	Major substantive goal			If applicable, also to be coded if V4 = 2; in case both 2 and 3 apply, 3 beats 2.
		1	Descriptive	
		2	Hypotheses testing	
		3	Theory development	Includes concept development.
V7	Type of preference	1	Party preferences	Do not forget the coding rules!
		2	Policy preference	
		3	(Issue, policy, party) positions	
		4	Saliencies/emphasis	
		5	Saliencies and positions	
		6	Ideologies	
		7	Valence issues	
		8	Topics	
		9	Programmatic heterogeneity/homogeneity	Includes programmatic cohesion.
		10	Policy domains and areas	
		11	Agendas	
		12	Pledges, promises	
V8	Substantive topic of research	1	Party competition	Do not forget the coding rules!
		2	Party strategies	
		3	Party positioning	Includes shifts (see V10).
		4	Policy alternatives	
		5	Policy agenda	
		6	Party politicization	
		10	Intra-party politics	
		11	Party/government durability	
		12	Party factions	
		13	Electoral performance	Includes electoral entry.
		20	Effects of election laws/of electoral reforms	
		21	Turnout	
		22	Economic voting	Includes social policy voting.
		23	Electoral cycles	
24	Class voting			
30	Voter-party relationships	Includes issue congruence.		

Variable ID	Variable name	ID of variable categories	Category name	Variable and category description
		31	Median voter-median party/government congruence	Includes median mandate; median voter's ideology.
		32	Cleavages/social divisions	Includes mass-level polarization.
		33	Gender politics and policies	Includes representation of women.
		40	Parties and civil society	
		41	Social movements/protest events	
		42	Partisan legitimacy	
		43	Political action	By parties and interest group/unions.
		50	Media analysis	
		60	Party-legislation relation	
		61	Legislators' voting behavior	
		70	Coalition politics	
		71	No-confidence movements	
		72	Party government positions	
		76	Fulfilment of pledges	
		77	Legislation	
		78	Treaty ratification (also with regard to the EU)	
		79	Issue evolution	
		80	EU affairs	EU politics, policy and polity, includes Europeanization.
		81	Globalization	
		82	Decentralization/regionalization/devolution	
		90	Agenda-setting	
		91	Policy making	For policy making/decision taking in general.
		92	Expenditures/budgets	For all expenditure/budget categories in comparison.
		93	Policy outputs	For policy outputs in comparison.
		94	Political economy	Includes economic performance; financial markets.
		95	Welfare-state policies	Includes redistribution.
		96	Pension policies	95 to 102: special policy areas receive a separate code.
		97	Childcare policies	
		98	Environmental policies	
		99	Immigration policies	

Variable ID	Variable name	ID of variable categories	Category name	Variable and category description
		100	Tax policies	
		101	Defense policies	Includes defense spending.
		102	Labor policies	
		103	Dissolution theories	
		104	Bureaucratic delegation	
		105	Gender and party leadership	
		106	Corruption	
		107	Climate	
		108	Styles of representation	
		110	Party system polarization	
		999	Several topics	
V9	Distances between parties' preferences measured?	1	Yes	Includes alternatives, variances, ranges, polarization of party systems, and diversity between parties and government parties.
V10	Change in preferences measured?	1	Shifts/movements	Only if actual measures are computed.
		2	Moving averages	Only if actual measures are computed.
V11	Multi-dimensionality		Number of dimensions	If more than three dimensions, note the first three mentioned!
		99	divers/many	Multi-dimensionality such as portfolios, policy areas, categories of legislation, etc.
V12	Policy dimension 1	1	Left-right	
		2	Economic	
		3	Environmental issues	
		4	Agriculture	
		5	Law and order	
		10	Socio-economic	
		11	Social justice	Social policies.
		12	Welfare	Includes redistribution, welfare, and education.
		13	Labor issues	
		14	Education	
		15	Spending and taxation	
		16	Civil rights	
		20	Progressive-conservative/ GAL-TAN, societal	
		21	Religious cleavage	
		30	Multiculturalism	
31	Immigration			

Variable ID	Variable name	ID of variable categories	Category name	Variable and category description
		32	Ethnic/ethnic minority issues	
		40	Center-periphery cleavage	Includes decentralization.
		41	European integration, Europeanization	
		42	Defense, external security	
		43	Foreign policy	
		44	Culture	
		45	Interior	
		50	Constitutionalism	
		51	Corruption	
		52	Extreme right issues	
		60	Inclusiveness of parliamentary representation	
		61	Corporatism	
		99	Diverse	More than one topic.
V13	Policy dimension 2			See V12!
V14	Policy dimension 3			See V12; if more than 3 dimensions are analyzed, take the order in which they are mentioned.
V15	Extraction method	1	RILE	Laver/Budge (1992); Powell (2009); rescaling 1–100.
		2	Deductive classification; fixed across cases	
		3	Logit scaling	Lowe et. al. (2011).
		4	Franzmann/Kaiser (2006)	
		5	Factor analysis: principal components	
		6	Factor analysis: vanilla	Gabel/Huber (2000).
		7	MDS – multidimensional scaling	
		8	RILE + deductive classification	
V16	Number of variables			Only variables taken from MARPOR (not authors' variables).
V17	Satisfaction with data	1	Does work for the topic	Only concerning MARPOR data usage.
		2	Does not work for the topic	Only concerning MARPOR data usage.

### III. Range of approach

#### A. Actors:

V18	Actor type	1	Parties	
		2	Party coalitions	

Variable ID	Variable name	ID of variable categories	Category name	Variable and category description		
		3	Party governments			
		4	Median party			
		5	Median voter			
		6	Median voters and median parties	Includes district medians and the MP's party (SMD).		
		7	Parliamentarians/legislators			
		8	Median legislator			
		9	Party systems	Electoral and parliamentary.		
		10	EP party groups			
		11	EU member states			
		12	EU commission			
		13	Parties and governments			
		14	Government and opposition			
		15	EU MEPs			
		16	Voters and governments			
		17	Executive and legislative			
		18	Parties and party systems			
		V19	Party type	1	Clientele parties	Includes the comparison to programmatic parties.
				2	Cartel parties	
		3	Catch-all parties			
		4	Populist parties			
		5	Niche parties			
		6	Mainstream parties			
		7	Luxury parties			
		8	Big parties			
		9	Redistributive parties			
		99	Diverse			
V20	Party family	1	Green-alternative parties			
		2	Communist parties			
		3	Social democratic parties			
		4	Liberal parties			
		5	Religious			
		6	Conservative			
		7	Radical right			
		8	Regional			

Variable ID	Variable name	ID of variable categories	Category name	Variable and category description
		9	Special issue	
		10	Anti-European	
		11	Ethnic minority	
		12	Radical left	
		99	Party families in comparison	

*B. Texts*

V21	Party program data	1	Party preference data used	
		2	Party family codes used, only	
		3	Election dates used, only	
		4	Strengths of parties used, only	
		5	Lengths of programs used, only	
V22	Government declaration data	1	Government declaration data used	

*C. Countries*

V23	Number of countries covered		1–58	Consider only countries that are included in the MARPOR dataset.
V24	Region covered			To be coded for cross- as well as for single-country analysis, the different regional categories include the respective main suspects (countries) of political science. Only rough coding necessary for researchers to find information on special regions, not single countries.
		1	Western Europe	
		2	Central and Eastern Europe	
		3	Western and Central and Eastern Europe	
		4	EU	Independent of the accession date.
		5	OECD members	Advanced industrialized democracies.
		6	All countries in the dataset	Almost all, more than OECD.
7	Latin America			

*D. Times*

V25	First year (election) covered			
V26	Last year (election) covered			
V27	Number of years			
V28	Number of elections			

*IV. Extent of approach*

Variable ID	Variable name	ID of variable categories	Category name	Variable and category description
V29	Major methodological goal	1	Reliability testing of MARPOR	1–9 specified in V29–V140.
		2	Validation of MARPOR	Includes descriptions of the methodological approach (visual validity).
		3	Cross-validation	
		4	Triangulation	Triangulation can be used also in cases where the term is not explicitly mentioned but more than one approach is used for estimating preferences.
		5	Introduction/use of an alternative method	
		6	Transfer of MARPOR to other text type	Means that the classification scheme is used for another text type without much difference in the categories.
		7	Modification of MARPOR	Means that the approach is taken, but the classification scheme may be quite different.
		8	Match/merging of MARPOR to other dataset	To be used if V4 = 1; when V4 = 2, other entries for V29 may also be important.
		9	Critique of MARPOR	

*Attention: the variables listed below under (1) to (9) are the ones occurring most often for (1) to (9). However, any combination is possible, for example: Cross-validation is mostly done across basic approaches, but can also be applied across estimates based on MARPOR. In addition, the variables listed under (1) to (9) are not exclusive. All items occurring in a publication are coded. Therefore, the lists (1) to (9) are rather a systematic overview.*

*If V29 = (1) type of reliability testing:*

V30	Intra-coder reliability			
V31	Inter-coder reliability			
V32	Hausman/Gulikson/McDonald measurement			
V33	Variance model			
V34	Regression model			
V35	Sensitivity analysis			

*If V29 = (2 or 3) type of Validation: see also V102 to V132*

V40	Visual inspection	1	Face validity	
		2	Fits historical record	
		3	Plausible results	
		4	Fits with other policy measures	
		5	Result as theoretically expected	
V41	Construct and conceptual validity			
V42	Convergent validity			
V43	Rank order Rho			

Variable ID	Variable name	ID of variable categories	Category name	Variable and category description
V44	CCA (canonical correlation coefficients)			
V45	MTMM (multitrait-multimethod)			Campbell/Fiske (1959).
V46	External validation			
<i>If V29 = (3, 4, or 5) cross-validation/triangulation/alternative method:</i>				
V50	Expert judgments			
V51	Wordscore		V51 + V52 = one variable = automated approaches	
V52	Wordfish			
V53	Crowd-coding			
V54	Public opinion surveys			
V55	MP-data			
V56	MEP-data			
V57	Content analysis other than MAR-POR			
V58	Media data			
V59	Elite data			
<i>If V29 = (6) text type</i>				
V60	European programs			
V61	Regional programs			
V62	Investiture debates			
V63	Speeches of the throne			
V64	Motions in party congresses			
V65	Budget speech			
<i>If V29 = (7) type of modification:</i>				
V70	Specifications for other levels of decision taking			
V71	Specifications of (different) specific policy issues			
<i>If V29 = (8) match/merging of MARPOR data with:</i>				For 80–89:0 – no merging 1 – national 2 – EU 3 – international 4 – local/regional 5 – national and regional 6 – national and EU
V80	Voter data			Individual level data, including citizens.
V81	Electoral data			Because data on votes and seats at the national level are included in the MARPOR dataset, this category applies to national data such as the disproportionality of the electoral system, to EU data such as membership in the EU.



Variable ID	Variable name	ID of variable categories	Category name	Variable and category description
V82	Media data			
V83	Coalition and government data			Includes portfolio distribution among the coalition parties, information on ministries, and elected offices.
V84	Socio-economic data			I.e. GDP.
V85	Public policies/outputs			
V86	Legislation			Includes proposals, ratifications.
V87	Expenditures			
V88	Party data			Includes leadership.
V89	Presidential data			Includes heads of state in parliamentary systems.
V90	Contextual data			Institutional variables such as bicameralism, decentralization.
V91	Tax data			
V92	Legislature			Data on parliamentarians.
V93	Market data			Stock markets.
V94	Experts' data			

*If V29 =(9) key aspects of critique on four levels of comparison:*

*1 = critique, 2 = validation (mostly by MARPOR members); including weaknesses of program-based approach.*

(1) Across estimates based on MARPOR data:

V101	RILE			
V102	Other left-right measures than RILE			
V103	Uncertainty measure	1	Missing	

*(1.a) Alternatives suggested:*

*Attention to change in logic for V104 - 107:*

*1 = alternative is criticized, 2 = alternative is suggested.*

V104	Bootstrapping			Benoit et al. (2009).
V105	Weight by length			Length of manifesto.
V106	Bayesian approach			
V107	Logit ratio			Lowe et. al (2011).

(1.b) MARPOR measures:

V108	Residuals			Of time-series models.
V109	4% shift			
V110	Category selection			That is, the difficulty to validly select categories for scaling.

(2) Across text-based approaches:

V111	Proxy documents			See suggested solutions: V107!
V112	Short documents			See suggested solutions: V107!
V113	Missing countries			Presidential systems; developing countries.
V114	Unitizing			
V115	Classification			That is, the coding scheme.

Variable ID	Variable name	ID of variable categories	Category name	Variable and category description
V116	Relative salience/saliency approach			
V117	Content of programs			Random/stochastic character.
V118	Centrism bias			
V119	One value per period			Ignores all changes during legislative periods.
(3) Across basic approaches: MARPOR compared to expert judgments, surveys				
V121	Volatile versus stable positions			Over-time comparison.
(4) Across estimates to model the representative process:				
V131	Measurement of median voters			Includes the median voter-median party relation.
V132	Measurement of government position			For example, partisan veto player distance.
V133	Measurement of median parties			
V134	Measurement of median faction's position			
V140	Summary of critique	0	None mentioned	
		1	Some drawbacks	
		2	Complaints/more critical than positive remarks	
V141	MARPOR membership	0	No membership of the working group	
		1	Membership of the working group	Includes the authors of MPP1 and MPP2.
V142	Noteworthy solutions			Includes central concepts of respective research that haven't been caught by the former variables.