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# Implementing "Monitoring Electoral Democracy (MEDem)"

*MEDem Business meeting*

*ECPR GC Hamburg*

*24.8.2018*

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# Goals of MEDem

- Bring together well functioning national and comparative data collection projects related to electoral democracy;
- Allow for more, better and new comparative research linking a variety of information on electoral democracies in a comprehensive way;
- Increase accessibility by providing a single data linkage and access point in collaboration with existing data archives;
- Through a position on the ESFRI roadmap, gain recognition as being of strategic importance for the research communities in Europe;
- Strengthen and stabilise existing national election studies and allied projects by connecting them to a stable European network of projects;

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# The road to MEDem

- PIREDEU Design study -> CERES
- MEDem steps
  - Vienna Meeting April 2017 (setting the stage)
  - Unsucessful automn ESFRI 2017 application: not enough political/financial support including from headquarter country
  - Mannheim meeting November 2017 -> Using momentum, implementation study
  - Gothenburg meeting June 2018: adoption of interim Working Principles

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# The ESFRI Roadmap

- ESFRI = European Strategy Forum on Research Infrastructures = EU Planning instrument ≠ Funding instrument
- Current Social Science Roadmap Projects: CESSDA, ESS, SHARE (until 2024)
- New applications every two year (next round 2019), evaluation by «Strategic Working Group» and «Implementation group».
- Important aspects in the ESFRI evaluation:
  - A convincing scientific case
  - Clarity about partners and their roles, services provided and added value, governance
  - Political support by at least three countries, financial support by one country; institutional commitment by many academic institutions

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CSES

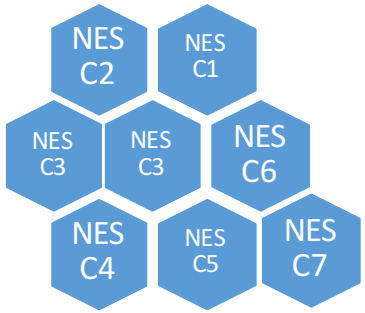
European Parliament Election Study

VAA

Comparative Agenda Project

National election studies

Comparative Candidate Survey (CCS)




COST Action *True European Voter*

Manifesto Project MAPOR

Chapel Hill Expert Survey (CHES)

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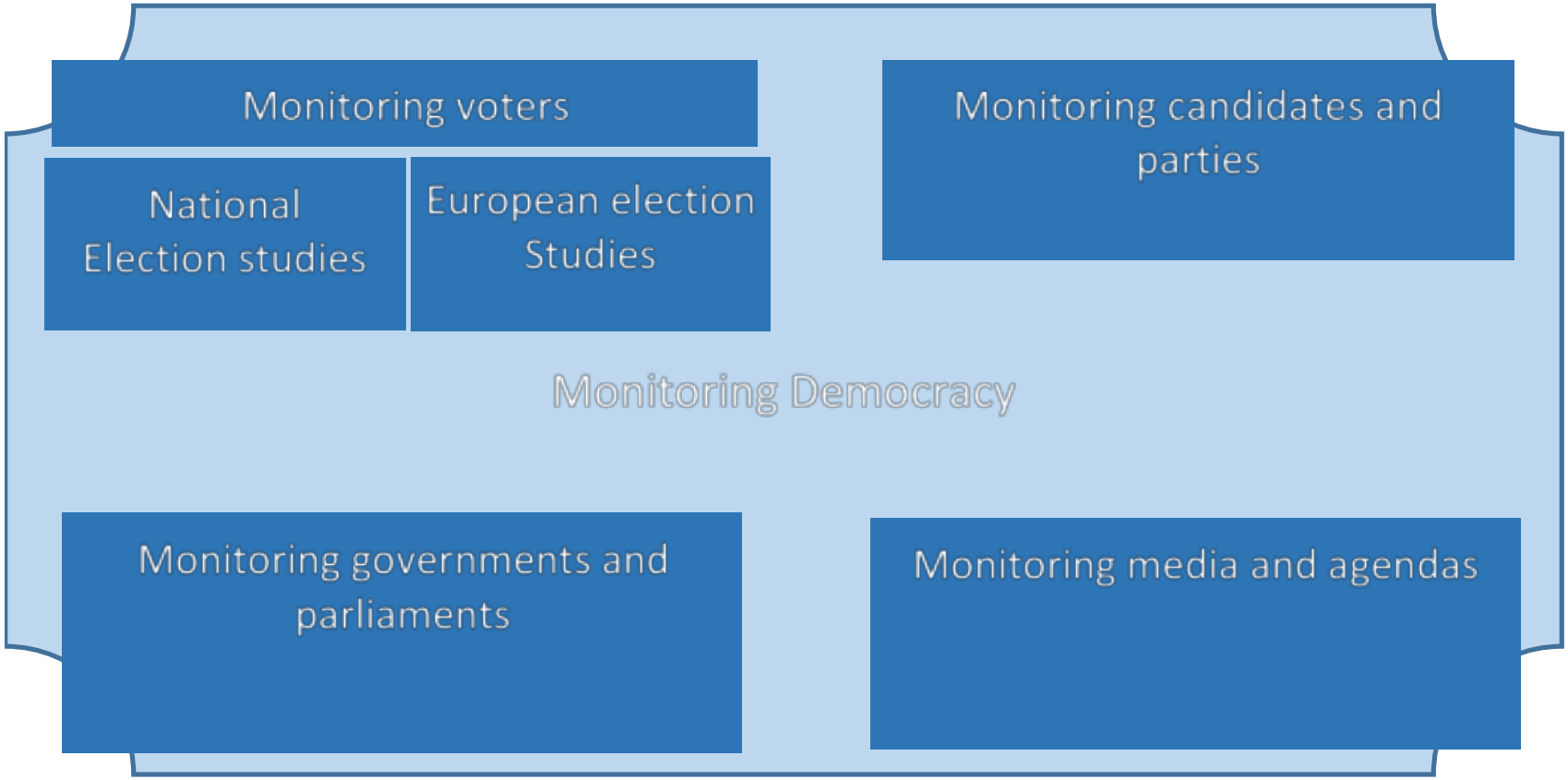
# MEDem components



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# MEDem services I

- ***Harmonization and integration:*** Integration of different data sets by making them comparable within fields where this has not already been done, and also across fields.
- ***Access:*** Providing a single entry point for data users. The data may be stored at different places, mainly in national data archives, but MEDem will provide a single access point and assure that existing data follows a common documentation standard.
- ***Standardization:*** Development of instruments to facilitate comparative research in two main domains:
  - Coding schemes on parties, constituencies, candidates etc. that allow comparability and matching of existing data within the MEDem framework.
  - Standards on data collection for different parts of MEDem.

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# MEDem services II

- ***Community integration and development:*** the MEDem framework will bring together scholars from the different subfields in a comprehensive and permanent fashion that ensures inclusivity.
- ***Innovation:*** provide for joint collaborative research projects a platform to organize comparative data collections in one or several sub-fields associated within MEDem.
- ***Competence building:*** providing training and guidance for using the MEDem data.
- ***Knowledge dissemination:*** communicating results to a scientific and non-scientific audience.

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# Overview of existing national projects

- Mapping efforts on national projects possibly integrated into MEDem
- Between February and May 2018 information was gathered on 29 countries in total
- A questionnaire was sent out to PI:s of relevant projects, asking for information on former and the future studies, in particular:

1) Cooperation between projects (harmonization, data linking, coding etc.)
2) Funding
3) If projects are part of a research infrastructure

# Overview of existing national projects

- Answers were compiled into a synthetic report and presented at the Gothenburg meeting in June 2018
- Response rate: about 58 %
- 4 projects on average per country
- For the non-responses,information was gathered from websites (source indicated in the report)
- 9 areas of projects: Post-Election Study (voters), CSES, Candidate study (CCS), CAP, Elite study, Manifesto, Media, Parliamentarians, VAA, Other study

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# Countries with 5+ projects

| | Voters | CSES | CCS | CAP | Media | Elite | Manifesto | VAA | Other | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Austria | x | x | x | | x | | x | | | 5 |
| Italy | x | x | x | x | | | | x | | 5 |
| Portugal | x | x | x | x | | | | x | | 5 |
| Spain | x | x | x | x | | | | | x | 5 |
| Sweden | x | x | x | | x | x | x | x | x | 9 |
| Switzerland | x | x | x | x | x | | x | x | | 7 |
| Belgium | x | x | x | x | x | | | x | | 6 |
| Croatia | x | x | | x | | x | x | x | | 6 |
| Denmark | x | x | x | x | | | | x | | 5 |
| France | x | x | | x | | | | x | x | 5 |
| Germany | x | x | x | x | x | | x | x | | 7 |

Note: Shaded areas indicate that project is part of an infrastucture.
Please note that Manifesto projects are centrally coordinated at the WZB Berlin.

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# Countries with 3-4 projects

| | Voters | CSES | CCS | CAP | Media | Elite | Manifesto | VAA | Other | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Czech Republic | x | x | x | | | | | x | | 4 |
| Estonia | x | x | x | | | | | | | 3 |
| Finland | x | x | x | | | | | | | 3 |
| Greece | x | x | x | | | | | x | | 4 |
| Hungary | | | x | x | | | | x | | 3 |
| Iceland | x | x | x | | | | | | | 3 |
| Lithuania | x | x | | | | | | x | | 3 |
| Montenegro | x | x | x | | | | | | | 3 |
| Netherlands | x | x | | x | | | | x | | 4 |
| Norway | x | x | x | | | | | | | 3 |
| Poland | x | x | | | | | | x | | 3 |
| Romania | x | x | x | | | | | x | | 4 |
| Slovakia | x | x | | | | | | x | | 3 |
| United Kingdom | x | x | x | x | | | | | | 4 |

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# Countries with 1-2 projects

| | Voters | CSES | CCS | CAP | Media | Elite | Manifesto | VAA | Other | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Bulgaria | | x | | | | | | | | 1 |
| Ireland | | x | x | | | | | | | 2 |
| Latvia | | x | | | | | | | | 1 |
| Luxembourg | x | | x | | | | | | | 2 |

Note: Shaded areas indicate that project is part of an infrastucture.
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# Observations

1) Range of projects

- National election(voter) studies and CSES are conducted in most countries
- Also CCS, CAP and VAA are well represented
- Studies on media, elite and parliamentarians remain less widespread

2) Cooperation across studies

- The extent of cooperation between studies (formal and informal) varies a lot, and it is often linked to whether studies are part of same (infrastructure) programme or not
- When there is cooperation in place, it most often concerns question wording or coding schemes, and less often data linking

3) Project stability

- Large differences concerning the stability of projects in terms of funding

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# MEDem Governance: Key units

**Existing project and their national nodes:**

- Organize and fund data collection.
- Contribute to the development of joint standards and jointly supervised coordination of their existing data collections
- Make data available
- Nominate members to the Scientific Board

**General Assembly:** Appoints director, headquarter, competence centers, approves budget and audits etc.

**Scientific Board:**

- ensures the overall scientific quality of all MEDem operations at large and decides on the future scientific direction of MEDem,
- decides on standards of data collection and data comparability (methodological standards, measurement and coding standards),
- ensures that procedures for innovation and inclusion of new instruments across different sub-fields of MEDem.

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# MEDem Governance: Central services

**Headquarter**: Overall coordination of MEDem

**Data center:** data documentation, data linking etc.

**Competence centers:**

- The CCs ensure coordination of the national and comparative projects. Their exact role will still need to be defined, in cooperation with existing projects
- Option 1: Following either a thematic/project logic: Voters, Elites, Media and Agendas, Governments and Parliaments.
- Option 2: Or following a functional logic: Methods and Standards, Membership development, Data etc.

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# MEDem Data services

MEDem is to be…

- An enduring research effort to monitor modern democracies;
- The organisational structure required to do that systematically; and
- **The logistical and technical infrastructure required to have sustainable processes and to provide services to the wider research community**

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# Next steps

- Define governance structure and the exact role of the actors involved in close cooperation with existing projects
- Getting concrete on the tasks of different actors and their mutual cooperation
- Successful application to Swedish inventory of Research Infrastructures – necessary and promising first step to Swedish support
- Seeking national political support, organizing national stakeholder conferences
- Meeting with core group in autumn 2018

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# MEDem Steering Group

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# Questions & Discussion

*Website to be launched soon:*
*www.monitoringdemocracy.eu*