**B2.5 Representation in Europe: Policy Congruence between Citizens and Elites (REPCONG)**

**Director:** Thomas Bräuninger  
**Researcher:** Nathalie Giger  
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### Research Questions

Within this collaborative research project, we have asked the following three main questions:

- What is the quality of policy congruence between citizens and political parties at the national level?
- How do political institutions (e.g., electoral rules, party organizations) shape policy congruence between voters and parties?
- What are the consequences of policy congruence on the perception of democratic representation?

### Data & Methods

- Comparative electoral surveys (CSES, ESS) combined with institutional variables (e.g., electoral rules)  
- (Bayesian) multilevel regression techniques to capture hierarchical structure of data  
- Individual measure of congruence:  
  \[ C_p = \text{min} | P_i - P_j | \]  
  \( (P_i \text{ indiv. Citizen}; P_j \text{ Party closest to } P_i) \)  

### Collaborations

- University of Vienna, Department of Methods in the Social Sciences: Sylvia Kritzinger, Zoe Lefkofridi and Juan Casado Asensio  
- Trinity College Dublin, School of Social Sciences and Philosophy: Gail McElroy and Caroline McEvoy  
- University of Lausanne, Swiss Centre of Expertise in the Social Sciences FORS: Georg Lutz, Kathrin Kissau and Jan Rosset

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### Selected Research Findings

- Political parties are important actors in the process of representation and fulfill their representational role to very different extents:  
  ➔ 12% of the total variance of (individual) congruence is at the party level (only 2% at country level).

- Individual congruence measures allow studying subgroup representation, for instance, how well the poor are represented by European parties:

- Our findings demonstrate that representation in European democracies suffers from inequality (similar effects are known for the US).

### Selected Output

**Online archive of electoral manifestos:**  
**Journal Articles:**  

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**Research Questions**

**Data & Methods**

**Selected Research Findings**

**Selected Output**