

B2.7 Personal Campaign Strategies and Political Representation



Directors/ Hermann Schmitt, Thomas Gschwend, Wolfgang Müller, Andreas Wüst, Thomas Zittel, Bernhard Wessels

Researchers/ International co-operation of some 50 scholars in Europe and beyond.

Funding/ Local funding for the various data collections; the Fritz Thyssen Foundation supported two international conferences at Mannheim.



The purpose of the CCS

The Comparative Candidate Survey (CCS) is the data-collection instrument of this project. It aims at surveying parliamentary candidates in as many countries as are interested in participating – with the hope that these countries maximize variation regarding the political regime, the electoral system applied, and the degree of consolidation of the democratic order.

The purpose of these surveys is twofold:

- To add empirical data to the study of party elites, political recruitment, ideological (de-) polarization, and political representation.

- To identify the political-structural correlates of individual attitudes and behaviours of party elites in order to add 'political' explanations to the ubiquitous 'sociological' (modernization-based) explanation of variation over time and across countries.

Research Goals

- 1) Provide a systematic and theory-based analysis of variation in contemporary election campaigning for a number of quite different electoral systems in Europe and beyond.
- 2) Advance the empirical study of the social and economic background, the recruitment, and the political attitudes of candidates standing for office in national legislative elections.

website

www.comparativecandidates.org

Research Questions

The alleged crisis of political parties highlights individual representatives as an alternative linkage mechanism between citizens and the state. This project studies the election campaigns of candidates regarding a number of problems that become relevant in this regard.

- How can we systematically describe individualized election campaigns?
- How frequent is individualized campaigning in legislative elections?
- How relevant/important is individualised campaigning for the voting decision?
- Which factors foster, which ones hinder the diffusion of individualized election campaigns?

Data Collection Documents

The Micro Questionnaire focuses on the candidates' relationship with the party and the voters. Campaigning is a major topic, but recruitment and carrier patterns, issues and ideology, and democracy and representation are also covered.

The Macro Questionnaire organises the collection properties of the national political system, like the electoral system applied, the degree of fractionalisation of the party system, the partisan polarisation at the time of an election, etc.

The District-Level Module organises the collection properties of the electoral district, like the district magnitude, the electoral history of the district, and its social and economic structure, etc.

These documents can be downloaded from the website of the project.

Participating Countries and Surveys

Australia (2007, 2010), Austria (2006, 2008), Belgium (2007, 2010), Canada (2008), Czech Republic (2006), Denmark (2011), Estonia (2011), Finland (2007, 2011), Germany (2005, 2009, 2013), Great Britain (2010), Greece (2007, 2009, 2012), Hungary (2010), Iceland (2009, 2013), Ireland (2007, 2011), Netherlands (2007, 2011), New Zealand (2008), Norway (2009), Portugal (2009), Sweden (2010), Switzerland (2007, 2011).

Between 2005 and 2012, the CCS has been administered in 20 countries at the occasion of 32 national legislative elections. A second micro-questionnaire has been developed and will be administered from 2013 onwards.

Selected Publications

Journal Articles

- Wüst, Andreas M., Hermann Schmitt, Thomas Gschwend and Thomas Zittel (2006): Candidates in the 2005 Bundestag Election: Mode of Candidacy, Campaigning and Issues. *German Politics*, 15, issue 4, p. 420-438

- Zittel, Thomas, and Thomas Gschwend (2007): Individualisierte Wahlkämpfe im Wahlkreis. Eine Analyse am Beispiel des Bundestagswahlkampfes von 2005. *Politische Vierteljahresschrift*, 48, issue 2, p. 293-321.

- Zittel, Thomas, and Thomas Gschwend (2008): Individualised Constituency Campaigns in Mixed-Member Electoral Systems: Candidates in the 2005 German Elections. *West European Politics*, 31, issue 5, p. 879-1003.

Book Chapters

- Zittel, Thomas (2006): Comparative Legislative Behavior. p. 455-473 in: Rod A.W. Rhodes, Sara Binder, Bert Rockman (Eds.) *Oxford Handbook of Political Institutions*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

- Gschwend, Thomas, and Thomas Zittel (2011): Machen Wahlkreis-kandidaten einen Unterschied? Die Persönlichkeitswahl als interaktiver Prozess. p. 371-392 in: *Wählen in Deutschland*. Baden-Baden: Nomos.

- Giebler, Heiko, and Andreas M. Wüst (2011): Individuelle Wahlkämpfe bei der Europawahl 2009: Länderübergreifende und ebenenspezifische Befunde. p. 121-152 in: Jens Tenschler (Ed.) *Superwahljahr 2009*. Wiesbaden: VS Verlag.

- Schmitt, Hermann (2013): "Nationale Parteien oder lokale Kandidaten? Eine Analyse ihrer elektoralen Orientierungsleistungen bei der Bundestagswahl 2009." pp 514-529 in: Bernhard Weßels, Harald Schön and Oscar Gabriel (eds.), *Wahlen und Wähler*. Wiesbaden: Springer.

Data

An integrated micro-level data set has been produced at the MZES and is now being verified and documented at the Swiss Data Archive in Lausanne. It will also be distributed by that archive.