European Representative Democracy (ERD)

Notes on coding principles – An Appendix to the Codebook for ERD-e

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In this appendix, we elaborate on the variables and their definition and we provide information on how they have been operationalized and calculated.

Cabinet identification (variables 001e-010e)
- Definition of new cabinet (v003e): any of the following (cf. Strøm, Müller and Bergman 2008: 139):
  - General election
  - Change in set of parties holding cabinet portfolios
  - Change of head of cabinet (PM)
  - Formation of new cabinet – "date in" (v004e):
    - Definition: the date that the PM/cabinet was inaugurated by the head of state alternatively the date of the investiture
      - Counting rule "Date in is the date that the PM/Cabinet was inaugurated by the Head of State (in Sweden the date of the investiture vote in the Riksdag) or, if that is not applicable, the date of the general election." (Strøm, Müller and Bergman 2008: 139):
    - Operationalization – data is used in the following rank order, using the source that is closest to our definition
      1. Data on the date of inauguration by the head of state
      2. Data on date of investiture vote
      3. Data on the date of general election
      4. Other technical criteria. Since national tradition might not acknowledge any change in government 1 and 2 might not take place although we have identified a new cabinet, e.g a change in party composition
      - Note on when method 1, 2 or 3 were used (v006e)
        - Concerning priority between methods used there is such a rank but this apply only between 1 and 2 (just above), and not 3 and 4, e.g. we might have a cabinet that simply continues after elections and in these cases we use the election date as the start of the cabinet although it might be officially inaugurated later.
      - Variables on date of general elections, if second ballot is employed, that it is the date we used (v008e-v009e)

  - Termination of cabinet, "date out" (v005e):
    - Definition – "date out": date of formal resignation or date of general election (or when applicable, the date of presidential if it is required or customary for governments to resign at the time of presidential elections), whichever comes first (cf. Strøm, Müller and Bergman 2008).
    - Operationalization: for resignation we use:

1. Acceptance of head of state of resignation
2. Vote of no confidence
3. Date on the date of general election
4. Other technical criteria. Date of resignation which includes change in party composition, death of PM etc. which might not have been officially recorded in the national tradition but ended the cabinet.
- o Note on whether method 1, 2, 3 or 4 were used (v007e)
  - ▪ Concerning priority between methods used there is a such but only between 1 and 2, and not 3 and 4, e.g. we might have a cabinet that ends because of changes in party composition where there are no formal resignation of the PM and therefore no acceptance of such resignation by the head of state (formal acceptance by the head of state might instead occur much later when the government is ended according to the country traditions).

Space-Time (variables 100e-147e)
See codebook for ERD-e

Parliamentary seat distribution (variables 200e-274e)
- − Party seats
  - o The general rule applied for a new party to be recorded is that it needs to gain 3 seats; otherwise groups with seats (1 or 2) are encoded as "other". When a party has been registered, seats in future elections will always be coded for that party even if it just gains 1 or 2 seats.
  - o Exceptions from this general rule:
    - ▪ Parties with cabinet posts are always coded.
    - ▪ In some cases when, according to country experts, a party had an important impact on the party system, whether this is due to its impact on the left-right placement of parties or institutionally related aspects such as acting in a small parliament, like in Luxembourg or Iceland, where few seats might corresponds to a substantial proportion of the vote.
  - o For UK, some of the parties are grouped (concerns Irish nationalist parties and Unionist parties in Northern Ireland). So concerning seat share these are just recorded with one figure together (and they are recorded with the same principle for Powerslave (see below) figures such as effective number of parties)

Structural Attributes (variables 300e-331e)
- Maximum possible cabinet duration (v304e)
  - o Number of days between the date in of the cabinet and the next estimated scheduled election date.
- Maximum possible cabinet duration (v305e)
  - o Same as above but new calculation applied to all cabinets.
- Effective Number of parliamentary parties, lower chamber (v309e)
  - o For the updates of the 17 Western European countries and the 10 central and Eastern European countries and Malta and Cyprus the Laakso index calculated by using Powerslave (mark 1) calculator (Pajala et al 2002) is used.
- Bargaining power fragmentation (v310e)
  - o Bargaining power fragmentation is calculated using the Powerslave calculator (Pajala et al 2002).
- Effective number of parliamentary parties, upper chamber (v311e)

- For the 10 Central and Eastern European countries and Malta and Cyprus the Laakso index calculated by using Powerslave (mark 1) calculator (Pajala et al 2002) is used
  - Bargaining Power of Largest Party (v313e)
    - For the updates of the 17 Western European countries and the 10 central and Eastern European countries and Malta and Cyprus the standardized Banzhaf index calculated by using Powerslave (mark 1) calculator (Pajala et al 2002) is used.
  - Non-partisan cabinet (v315e) = technocratic cabinet
  - Maximum bargaining power party in cabinet (v322e)
    - For the updates of the 17 Western European countries and the 10 central and Eastern European countries and Malta and Cyprus the standardized Banzhaf index calculated by using Powerslave (mark 1) calculator (Pajala et al 2002) is used
  - Minimal winning coalitions (v327e) = a cabinet that has a majority but that does not have a surplus majority
  - Minimal winning coalition (v327e)
    - Is turned into a losing coalition by the subtraction of any of the coalition parties, i.e., if it loses a coalition party it holds less than 50 % plus one seat.
  - Surplus majority cabinet (v328e)
    - Can lose a coalition party and still be winning, i.e. control 50 % plus one seat or more in the parliament.
  - Number of cabinet members (ministers) (v330e)
    - All cabinet members with voting right in the cabinet are counted (PM, Vice-PMs, cabinet ministers) but not junior ministers.

Preferences (variables 400e-416e)
  - Party of the median legislator, first dimension, lower chamber (v400e).
    - Left-Right Placement of political parties using "Taxes versus spending" based on Kenneth Benoit & Michael Laver's (2006) expert survey including results from 47 Countries, 2003-2004.
    - Salience of first dimension (v401e). Importance/ weight of first dimension to parties according to Benoit & Laver's survey
  - Party of the median legislator, second policy dimension, lower chamber (v402e).
    - Left-Right Placement of political parties according to the most salient (weighted) dimension not counting taxes versus spending, also from Benoit & Laver (see above).
    - Salience of second dimension (v403e). Importance/ weight of second dimension to parties according to Benoit & Laver's survey
  - Median party bargaining power (v408e)
    - For the updates of the 17 Western European countries and the 10 central and Eastern European countries and Malta and Cyprus the standardized Banzhaf index calculated by using Powerslave (mark 1) calculator (Pajala et al 2002) is used
  - Median Party (1st dimension) in Cabinet (v411e).
    - Median legislator party in cabinet, Left-Right dimension (taxes versus spending, see above). Note that when there are two median parties and one of them is in the cabinet this is coded as 1 (median party is part of cabinet).
  - Median Party (2nd dimension) in Cabinet v412e.
    - Median legislator party in cabinet, other dimension (the most salient among other dimensions as above). When there are two median parties and one of them are in the cabinet this is coded as 1 (median party is part of cabinet)
  - Connected cabinet (v413e)
  - Connected cabinet
    - Left-Right Placement of political parties using "Taxes versus spending" based on Kenneth Benoit & Michael Laver's (2006) expert survey. If a coalition has jumped a party it does not constitute a connected cabinet party is jumped the government is not connected (say a cabinet consisting of parties B, D, E and jumping party C in table 1 below).

- Minimal Winning Connected Coalition (v414e)
  - o Technically MWCC must be a subset of connected cabinets, but it need not be a subset of MWC. A cabinet is a MWCC if (i) it is connected, and (ii) it cannot remain winning AND connected by dropping a party. In other words, it can be a surplus majority coalition, as long as the surplus party is needed to make the coalition connected. This is the case as long as the cabinet parties at each 'end' of the connected coalition are necessary to make it winning. If they both are necessary to be winning, but there is a surplus party in the middle, a connected coalition can be MCWC and surplus rather than MWC.
    - ▪ Example

Table 1. A surplus majority cabinet that is a Minimal Winning Connected Coalition

	Left-right placement 1st dimension							
Party	A	**B**	**C**	**D**	**E**	F	G	Total
Seats	10	**24**	**5**	**6**	**15**	14	5	79

The sitting coalition cabinet in bold. Note that this cabinet is a surplus majority government, i.e. for a majority 40 seats are needed and this cabinet holds 50 seats and could drop either party C or D and still be winning. However if we apply the first test and check whether it is connected it clearly is (no party is jumped). Secondly if we drop a party at the ends it is no longer winning. Thus this is a Minimal winning connected coalition.

    - ▪ Single party cabinets are generally considered by definition to be connected. Technically, if they are single party majorities, they are also 'minimal connected winning'. But they are not a coalition, however. As such, they are coded 0 on the MWCC variable.
- Conservative cabinet (v415e)
  - o Coded 1 if cabinet majority, i.e. majority of cabinet's seats (see Narud and Valen 2008) is from conservative block, here implying conservative and liberal parties as so recorded according to party families in the party code book. This implies that many parties are neither coded as socialist nor conservative, e.g. Christian and Right Wing parties. Also, coding is based on parties' respective share of seats in parliament.
- Socialist cabinet (v416e).
  - o Coded 1 if cabinet majority is from socialist block, here implying communist, left socialist and social democratic parties as so recorded according to the party families in the party code book. This implies that many parties are neither coded as socialist nor conservative, e.g. Green parties. Also, coding is based on parties' respective share of seats in parliament

Institutions (variables 500e-520e)
- Supermajority for constitutional amendment (v501e)
  - o Include only rules that require more than absolute majority decisions.
- Strong second chamber (v502e)
  - o Whether cabinet is accountable to upper chamber. Acceptance/support is needed from the upper house.
- Weak second chamber (v503e)
  - o Whether cabinet is accountable to upper chamber. Acceptance/support is not needed from the upper house.
- Bicameralism (v504)
  - o The weaker chamber must at least have a temporary suspensive veto.
- Positive parliamentarism (v505e)
  - o A new PM/cabinet comes to power only if it wins a majority vote (positive investiture) in the parliament.
- Constructive No-Confidence (v508e)
  - o Parliament is only allowed to withdraw confidence from a PM/cabinet if there is an absolute majority for a chosen successor as PM
- Semi-Presidentialism (v518e)

- o The president is (i) popularly elected and (ii) can have direct influence on cabinet formation.

Bargaining environment (variables 600e-605e)
- Cabinet bargaining duration (v600e)
    - o Time between "Date-out" of previous cabinet (v005e) and the official "Date-in" of the new (actual) cabinet(v004e), i.e. the number of days required in government formation
- Relative cabinet duration (v602e)
    - o Absolute cabinet duration (v604e) in relation to maximum possible cabinet duration (v304e)
- Relative cabinet duration (v603e)
    - o New calculation applied to all cabinets of absolute cabinet duration (v605e) in relation to maximum possible cabinet duration (v305e)
- Absolute cabinet duration (604e)
    - o Cabinet date out minus cabinet date in, the number of days in office.
- Absolute cabinet duration (605e)
    - o Same as above but new calculation applied to all cabinets.

Critical Events (variables 700e-707e)
See codebook for ERD-e

References
Kenneth Benoit and Michael Laver (2006). *Party Policy in Modern Democracies, London: Routledge* (also available at http://www.tcd.ie/Political_Science/ppmd/PPMD_11apr2006.pdf).

Narud, Hanne Marthe and Henry Valen, 2008. "Coalition Membership and Electoral Performance", in Strøm, Kaare, Wolfgang C. Müller and Torbjörn Bergman (eds.). Cabinets and Coalition Bargaining: The Democratic Life Cycle in Western Europe, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Pajala, A., Meskanen, T. and T. Kause (2002): Powerslave Power Index Calculator: A Voting Body Analyser in the Voting Power and Power Index Website. [Online]. Published 22.4.2002. Updated 31.5.2007 and 7.4.2011. University of Turku. <http://powerslave.val.utu.fi/>