

# DIGItalisation in Parties dataset (DIGIPART)

## Mapping on the digitalisation of political parties

Codebook

Version 2.4

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## I. INTRODUCTION

**Digitalisation in Parties (DIGIPART)** is project initiated in 2021 by a team of European scholars with the aim of mapping party digitalisation. An increasing number of studies explore the impact of digital technologies on political parties, but there is still a lack of a comparative account on how parties are changing due to digitalisation. The purpose of this Codebook is to support the mapping and analysis of parties' digitalisation in Europe and beyond. This initial mapping has been designed to be agile and effective.

**DIGIPART dataset (v1.1)** currently contains information on party digitalisation features from 76 parties from five major European countries: Germany, Italy, France, Spain and the United Kingdom.

By following this codebook, you can collaborate in expanding and improving DIGIPART to provide data that facilitates a deeper understanding of how parties are digitalising their procedures and structures.

## II. STRUCTURE

The DIGIPART mapping is divided into four main sections:

- 1. Structural factors:** This section comprises relatively easy-to-find data regarding the country, party name, year of party foundation, ideology, percentage of votes in the last general election, percentage of MPs in the lower chamber, and the year of the last general election results.
- 2. Coding section:** This section contains information related to the coding process: the name of the coder, year of data collection, and source(s) used.
- 3. Digital Initiatives:** This section is divided into seven dimensions (comprising five pillars and two additional dimensions), focusing on mapping the development of digital initiatives in different areas. Each dimension encompasses different types of digital procedures. The pillars include the Electoral Pillar, Deliberative Pillar, Participatory Pillar, Resources Pillar, and Communication Pillar. Additionally, this codebook includes two experimental dimensions: Internal Organization and Accessibility, which may necessitate additional research to collect the required data.
- 4. Other initiatives and qualitative comments:** This section includes a space for notes on party regulation concerning digital aspects, including related links. It also provides a box to mention other types of digital tools/initiatives that were not considered in the previous sections. Additionally, there is a space for providing an assessment of the relevance, importance, visibility, and/or role of these digital procedures for the party (such as the key role that digital platforms play for "digital parties").

In the provided Excel format for the mapping, the four sections are divided into three worksheets: Codesheet, Sources Sheet, and Qualitative Comments Sheet.

### III. CODING

#### CODESHEET

##### SECTION 1. STRUCTURAL FACTORS

**1.1 Country ID:** A unique numerical identifier is assigned to each country. We recommend adopting the **style of the Chapel Hill Expert Survey (CHES)** by assigning a Country ID (starting from 1) to each country (arranged in alphabetical order). Please refer to section 1.2 for the specific order.

Country ID	Country Abbreviation	Country	Country ID	Country Abbreviation	Country
1	<b>BE</b>	Belgium	20	<b>BUL</b>	Bulgaria
2	<b>DK</b>	Denmark	21	<b>CZ</b>	Czech Republic
3	<b>GE</b>	Germany	22	<b>EST</b>	Estonia
4	<b>GR</b>	Greece	23	<b>HUN</b>	Hungary
5	<b>ESP</b>	Spain	24	<b>LAT</b>	Latvia
6	<b>FR</b>	France	25	<b>LITH</b>	Lithuania
7	<b>IRL</b>	Ireland	26	<b>POL</b>	Poland
8	<b>IT</b>	Italy	27	<b>ROM</b>	Romania
10	<b>NL</b>	Netherlands	28	<b>SLO</b>	Slovakia
11	<b>UK</b>	United Kingdom	29	<b>SLE</b>	Slovenia
12	<b>POR</b>	Portugal	31	<b>CRO</b>	Croatia
13	<b>AUS</b>	Austria	37	<b>MAL</b>	Malta
14	<b>FIN</b>	Finland	38	<b>LUX</b>	Luxembourg
16	<b>SV</b>	Sweden	40	<b>CYP</b>	Cyprus

Source:

[https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5975c9bfdb29d6a05c65209b/t/5fa04d53f935bc122f6bb578/1604341076212/1999-2019\\_CHES\\_codebook.pdf](https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5975c9bfdb29d6a05c65209b/t/5fa04d53f935bc122f6bb578/1604341076212/1999-2019_CHES_codebook.pdf)

**1.2 Country abbreviation:** The countries should be listed in alphabetical order (contrary to CHES style), using the **Eurostats' Country Codes** (abbreviations).

European Union (EU)							
Belgium	(BE)	Greece	(EL)	Lithuania	(LT)	Portugal	(PT)
Bulgaria	(BG)	Spain	(ES)	Luxembourg	(LU)	Romania	(RO)
Czechia	(CZ)	France	(FR)	Hungary	(HU)	Slovenia	(SI)
Denmark	(DK)	Croatia	(HR)	Malta	(MT)	Slovakia	(SK)
Germany	(DE)	Italy	(IT)	Netherlands	(NL)	Finland	(FI)
Estonia	(EE)	Cyprus	(CY)	Austria	(AT)	Sweden	(SE)
Ireland	(IE)	Latvia	(LV)	Poland	(PL)		
European Free Trade Association (EFTA)							
Iceland	(IS)	Norway	(NO)				
Liechtenstein	(LI)	Switzerland	(CH)				
United Kingdom							
United Kingdom	(UK)						
EU candidate countries							
Montenegro	(ME)						
North Macedonia	(MK)						
Albania	(AL)						
Serbia	(RS)						
Turkey	(TR)						
Potential candidates (all other Western Balkan countries)							
Bosnia and Herzegovina	(BA)						
Kosovo*	(XK <sup>1</sup> )						
European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP)-East countries:							
Armenia	(AM)	Belarus	(BY)	Georgia	(GE)		
Azerbaijan	(AZ)	Moldova	(MD)	Ukraine	(UA)		

Source: [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Glossary:Country\\_codes](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Glossary:Country_codes)

**1.3 Party name abbreviation:** Using the CHES Party list (pp. 3-17).

**1.4 Party name (in English):** As in 1.3

**1.5 Year of party foundation:** To determine the year of party foundation, you can refer to the Party Facts database, which covers a wide range of parties and includes information on their year of foundation. The database can be accessed at <https://partyfacts.herokuapp.com/data/partycodes/>.

**1.6 Ideology:** The ideology should be coded using a simplified system:

0. Not aligned: This category is applicable to parties that are challenging to determine their specific ideology or if the party does not align with any specific ideology (please provide evidence or references to support this classification if possible).

1. Left: This category includes social democratic, socialist, communist, green, left ethno-regionalist parties, and all other left-leaning parties.

2. Centre: This category includes liberal parties.

3. Right: This category includes Christian democratic, conservative, far-right parties, right ethno-regionalist parties, and all other right-leaning parties.

**1.7 Year of the last general election:** Year of the most recent general election that is considered for providing the mapping data.

**1.8 Share (%) of votes:** The percentage of votes obtained by the party in the last general election, specifically for the lower chamber. The data can be sourced from the ParlGov database (<http://www.parlgov.org/explore/>) or, if not available, from an official source. In the case of a coalition, if possible, please provide the data for individual parties within the coalition.

**1.9 Share (%) of MPs:** The percentage of MPs in the lower chamber in the last general election. The data can be obtained from the ParlGov database (<http://www.parlgov.org/explore/>) or, if not available, from an official source. In the case of a coalition, if possible, please provide the data for individual parties within the coalition.

## SECTION 2. CODER INFORMATION

**2.1 Name of the Coder:** The name of the person who is responsible for filling the data/information.

**2.2 End date of data collection:** The date when the data/information was gathered and uploaded. Please use the format Month/Year (e.g., 06/2023-end date for June 2023) to indicate the end date.

## SECTION 3. DIGITAL INITIATIVES

In the DIGIPART mapping of parties' digitalisation, we request coders to focus solely on existing processes and tools that are currently in use at the time of analysis. Therefore, if a party acknowledges the potential for a digital process (e.g., online voting) but has not yet implemented it, it should not be considered as an existing digital process for the purpose of our analysis.

Coding:

- 0. If the processes and tools do not exist at the digital level.
  - 1. If the processes and tools exist at the digital level (including processes that are simultaneously online **and** offline).
999. Do not know.

## A. ELECTORAL PILLAR

This pillar aims to analyse the extent of online voting in the selection of main bodies/roles within the party, including party leadership, electoral candidates, or internal functional bodies. In all cases, please consider a procedure as digitalised if it involves either **online electoral processes or mixed voting**, which refers to the coexistence of offline and online voting. To classify a mixed voting procedure as digitised (coding it with 1), it is important that both types of votes are equally recognised for all members and **not limited to specific cases or groups**.

**3.1 Online voting for selecting the latest party leadership:** Does the political party select the main party leader/leadership through online voting? This specifically refers to the selection of party leaders at the central level, such as online primary elections.

- 0. No: The leader(s) is/are selected through non-digital means – in-person voting –, regardless of the type or format of the selection process.
- 1. Yes: This includes both online voting and mixed voting, where both offline and online votes are equally recognised for all members and are not limited to specific cases or groups.

**3.2 Online voting for candidates' selection for the last national election:** Does the political party select, at least, the main candidates running for election by online voting? This includes the selection of candidates for single-member districts, the first position for the electoral ballot in multimember districts, or the entire candidate list. In any case, it involves voting to choose some/all of the candidates running in the general election. An example is the *Parlamentarie* in the Five Star Movement (Italy).

- 0. No
- 1. Yes

**3.3 Online voting for party bodies:** Does the political party select the members of the **highest representative body/national executive body** through online voting? This refers to a specific procedure for selecting other party bodies, apart from the party leadership, by conducting online voting among party members. They can include main committees, the Executive Commission, or certain independent bodies within the party that define the functional structure of the party.

- 0. No
- 1. Yes

## B. DELIBERATIVE PILLAR

**3.4 Deliberative online platform:** Has the political party developed a deliberative online platform (currently in use)? By deliberative online platform we refer to a specific digital tool that enables internal debates within the party membership, allowing for bottom-up discussions on various issues,

policy proposals, and more. Unlike other tools, the primary focus of this platform is the exchange of ideas and proposals, open to all party members, with the intention of fostering deliberation rather than serving as a participatory or decision-making mechanism (either consultative or binding). Examples of such platforms include *Liquid Feedback* in the Pirate Party (Germany and beyond) or *Rousseau* in M5S (Italy).

0. No

1. Yes

**3.5 Other deliberative initiatives:** Has the political party carried out other digital deliberative initiatives? This refers to specific, one-time, non-recurrent deliberation initiatives. Unlike the previous question, it does not involve a regular and stable deliberative platform. An example would be the *Labour Policy Forum* by the Labour Party (UK) for the 2019 European elections.

0. No

1. Yes

**3.6 Party Congress digitalisation:** Has the political party digitalised (partially or fully) its **most recent party** congress(es)? By a digitised party congress, we mean a congress where deliberation and decision-making take place online (with the majority of delegates or active participants participating digitally). This does **not include just the streaming of the Party Congress** if the deliberation and decision-making process occurs offline (for such cases, refer to 3.19). This digitalisation may be particularly relevant due to COVID. In different instances, party congresses have been partially or completely digitalised, such as the 33rd Christian Democratic Union (Germany) Congress held on 15-16 January 2021, among many others.

0. No

1. Yes

## C. PARTICIPATORY PILAR

The participatory pillar involves members/sympathisers participating in online decisions through online voting or responding to certain questions posed by the party leadership.

**3.7 Online consultations/ referenda:** Does the political party conduct online consultations/referenda where members are called to vote (both consultative and binding)? These consultations/referenda may involve online (or mixed) voting on coalition agreements, positions on certain issues (such as voting on specific bills in Parliament), strategic decisions, joining the government, ratification of party decisions, voting on the party's program for the next elections, or other questions posed to members. Typically, they are organised within the party's technological platform. Examples include the Five Star Movement in *Rousseau* and the vote for supporting the new Draghi's government in Italy in 2021 or Podemos (Spain) Citizens' Consultations, with different votes on diverse issues.

0. No

1. Yes

**3.8 Online full membership:** Does the political party allow full membership subscription to be completed entirely online (with or without differences compared to other channels)? It implies that



individuals become party members entirely or mostly through digital means, typically through the party's website. Membership renewal can also be done online. For the purposes of this analysis, we do not consider a digitalised procedure if the party's website only provides the option to download an application form that requires manual completion and submission (via mail, email, or physical means) to the party branch. An example is the UK's Labour Party (see [https://join.labour.org.uk/?utm\\_source=website&utm\\_medium=actionmenu](https://join.labour.org.uk/?utm_source=website&utm_medium=actionmenu)).

0. No

1. Yes

**3.9 Digital activities for electoral campaigning:** Does the political party engage in digital activities for electoral campaigning? This may include online canvassing, virtual meetings, and message targeting (such as the UK Conservative Party's activities during the 2015 campaign). It encompasses both activities to coordinate party members and to connect with voters.

0. No

1. Yes

**3.10 Other digital activities within the party:** Does the political party promote digital activities within the party? This can include webinars, online training, informative meetings with MPs, party officials, and so forth.

0. No

1. Yes

**3.11 Other digital activities beyond the party:** Does the political party promote digital activities beyond the party? This can include **digital initiatives promoting civic engagement**, such as **online petitions and protests**, as well as digital ways to show support for the party or campaigns endorsed by the party.

0. No

1. Yes

## D. RESOURCES PILLAR

**3.12 Online party fee payment:** Does the political party allow the online payment of the party fee (with or without differences compared to other channels)? That is, payment of party fee can be done entirely through the party's website (e.g. using a payment gateway).

0. No

1. Yes

**3.13 Online crowdfunding/donations/microcredits:** Does the political party promote online crowdfunding, donations, or microcredits? This can include specific campaigns during certain periods (such as electoral campaigns or party congresses) or open-ended donations with no specific timeframe or purpose. An example is the Podemos microcredits (<http://microcreditos.podemos.info>). If applicable, please provide the name and link of the platform used in the Qualitative Comments, specifying whether it is an internal platform where money is

directly given to the party or an external platform where donors are directed to an external donation platform.

- 0. No
- 1. Yes

**3.14 Official online store of the party:** Does the political party have an official online store? If the party sell online party/leaders merchandising, campaign material and so on. For example: the CDU (Germany) online store ([www.shop.cdu.de](http://www.shop.cdu.de)), or the Labour Party (UK) one ([www.shop.labour.org.uk](http://www.shop.labour.org.uk)).

- 0. No
- 1. Yes

## E. COMMUNICATION PILLAR

**3.15 Party website:** Does the political party have a website?

- 0. No
- 1. Yes

**3.16 Social media:** Does the political party have any official account(s) on social media(s) (currently in use)?

- 0. No
- 1. Yes

**3.17 Social Networking Sites (SNS):** Does the political party have official account(s) on the main Social Networking Sites (SNS) (such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, TikTok, etc.)?

- 0. No
- 1. Yes

**3.18 Mobile Instant Messaging Services (MIMS):** Does the political party have official account(s) on the main Mobile Instant Messaging Services (MIMS) (such as WhatsApp, Telegram, Signal, etc.)?

- 0. No
- 1. Yes

**3.19 Other forms of online communication:** Does the political party use other forms of online communication? This includes newsletters, online party newspapers, official party blogs, internet channels (such as YouTube, Twitch or similar).

- 0. No
- 1. Yes

**3.20 Streaming of the party congress:** Did the political party broadcast its **most recent party congress(es)** online? This specifically refers to the video streaming of the congress, not the format of debate or decision making (unlike 3.6). This digitalisation may be especially relevant due to

COVID. For example, an in-person congress that is publicly available through streaming would be coded as 0 in variable 3.6 and 1 in this variable.

- 0. No
- 1. Yes

**3.21 Contacting the party:** Does the political party offer a 'Contact us' section/form through which citizens can directly send a message to the party?

- 0. No
- 1. Yes

**3.22 Contacting the leader or candidate:** Does the political party offer the possibility to contact and send a message directly to the party leader or candidate?

- 0. No
- 1. Yes

**3.23 Information about party's activities:** Does the party display information regarding its activity, such as the latest news, basic agenda, or future events, on its website?

- 0. No
- 1. Yes

## **SECTION 3B. ADDITIONAL DIMENSIONS (temporarily not included in the analysis)**

### **C. PARTICIPATORY PILAR**

**3.24 Platform for other digital activities:** Does the political party promote digital activities beyond the party through external platform (that were not developed by the party itself)? If applicable, please provide the name and link in the Qualitative comments.

- 0. No
- 1. Yes

### **F. INTERNAL ORGANISATION**

**3.25 Digital tool(s) for coordination:** Does the political party use digital tool(s) for coordination? These tools may include tools like Telegram groups, Slack, Appgree, etc., which are exclusive to party members and not accessible to sympathisers or the general electorate.

- 0. No
- 1. Yes
- 999. Do not know

**3.26 Internal organization platforms (Online Political Platforms):** Has the party developed an internal organisation platform(s) for internal coordination that are limited to party members? An example is *Achieve* in Labour UK.

0. No

1. Yes

999. Do not know

**3.27 Party's digitalisation initiative(s):** Has the party approved or is implementing an internal process/plan of digitalisation of the party, its structures, decision-making, etc.? This indicator aims to assess whether digitalisation is a priority for the party. For instance, the Spanish Socialist Party (PSOE) has presented a plan for the party's "*Ecological transition and digitalization*," with the goal of creating a more sustainable and digitalised party.

0. No

1. Yes

999. Do not know

## **G. ACCESSIBILITY**

**3.28 Accessibility (sum):** The purpose of this variable is to assess the level of accessibility of digital procedures to non-members, beyond party members and representatives. The degree of accessibility is measured by summing up the previous 27 variables coded in Section 3 (and eventually 3B), assigning 1 point for each digital procedure that is available to all interested citizens and 0 points if it is limited to party members. For example, if the party live streams its party congress to non-members 1 point is assigned; if the party restricts access to its internal platform to registered members only, 0 points are assigned. The coder should add up these variables and enter the total number. For a party that has digitalised and made all processes and tools analysed open to all, the number entered in this column should be 27 (or 23 excluding Section 3B).

From 0 to 27.

## **SOURCES SHEET**

**2.1 Name of the Coder:** Name of the person who is filling the data/information.

**2.2 End date of data collection:** The date when the data/information was gathered and uploaded. Please use the format Month/Year (e.g., 06/2023-end date for June 2023) to indicate the end date.

**2.3 Source(s):** The sources used for the data collection. If there are different sources for Section III or its subsections, please provide them separately. Include links to the sources if possible. If the same source is used for multiple subsections, please provide it for each subsection.

**2.3a Source(s): A. ELECTORAL PILLAR**

**2.3b Source(s): B. DELIBERATIVE PILLAR**

**2.3c Source(s): C. PARTICIPATORY PILLAR**

**2.3d Source(s): D. RESOURCES PILLAR**

**2.3e Source(s): E. COMMUNICATION PILLAR**

**2.3f Source(s): F. INTERNAL ORGANISATION**

**2.3g Source(s): SECTION IV. QUALITATIVE COMMENTS**

## ***QUALITATIVE COMMENTS SHEET***

**4.1 Party regulation on digital (notes and links):** This section is intended for providing notes on party regulation related to digital aspects, along with relevant links. It serves the purpose of providing context and background information for the mapping. Please feel free to provide any relevant information and include links to relevant sources.

Open ended.

**4.2 Other interesting digital initiatives/tools not included in previous sections:** This section is meant for mentioning any other types of digital tools or initiatives employed by the political party that were not covered in Section III. The purpose is to identify additional initiatives for potential inclusion in the consolidated codebook. Please provide details of these initiatives or tools.

Open ended.

**4.3 Relevance of the digital initiatives/tools; level of platform use; innovation degree; role of digital in the party identity and visibility:** This section requires a qualitative assessment of the relevance, importance, visibility, and role of the digital procedures used by the political party. It aims to capture the significance of these digital initiatives in shaping the party's identity, visibility, and level of innovation. Please provide your assessment based on the available information.

Open ended.