README – MEDW 2014 Belgian Election Study

Fieldwork dates:

Pre-Election Wave 13/05-21/05/2014

Post-Election Wave 26/05-09/06/2014

Files included in the dataset folder:

Data: Wallonia_2014.dta, Flanders_2014.dta, Brussels_2014.dta, Belgium_2014.dta

Codebooks: Codebook_Wallonia_national_regional_european_2014.xls, Codebook_Flanders_national_regional_european_2014.xls, Codebook_Brussels_national_regional_european_2014.xls

Questionnaires: Questionnaire_Wallonia_2014_FR.docx, Questionnaire_Flanders_2014_NL.docx, Questionnaire_Brussels_2014_FR.docx, Questionnaire_Wallonia_2014_NL.docx

Technical report: Technical_Report_Wallonia_Flanders_Brussels_2014.pdf

How to cite this study:

Bol, Damien; Beyens, Stefanie; Deschouwer, Chris; Pilet, Jean-Benoit; Verthé, Tom; Stephenson, Laura; Blais, André, 2017, "MEDW 2014 Belgian National Election Study", doi:10.7910/DVN/7GA3IT.

Details about the datasets

1. Wallonia_2014.dta, Flanders_2014.dta, Brussels_2014.dta are the original region-based datasets. They include data regarding the voting behavior of the respondents gathered with the help of mock ballots reproduced on the respondent's screen.

PQ6A_... : These variables report how the respondents filled in the mock ballot. As to explain what they mean, let's take an example:

In the dataset Flanders_2014.dta, the first of these variables is:

PQ6A_A_GRM1

- The '_A_' means that it is for the district of Antwerp

- The 'GR' means that it is for Groen voters

- The 'M1' means that it is the first vote as reported in the mock ballot

This variable can take any number above 1, or being missing value. If *PQ6_A_GRM1*=1 it means that the respondent is from the district of Antwerp, voted for Groen, and that her first vote on the mock ballot is the first thing that appeared on her screen, that is the party-list vote. Imagine that is was PQ6_A_GRM1=21, this would have meant that the respondent from Antwerp who voted for Groen cast her first preference vote for the 21st thing that appeared on her screen, that is the 20th candidate on the list (because the first thing that appeared on her screen was the party-list vote).

For the district of Antwerp, there were 37 candidates. So, the variable goes up to:

PQ6A_A_GRM1

PQ6A_A_GRM2

…

PQ6A_A_GRM37

PQ6A_A_GRM38

(It's 38, and not 37, because the first thing that appeared on the screen was the party-list vote)

Imagine a respondent from Antwerp who voted for Groen, and who cast a preference vote for 3 candidates: the 1st, 3rd and 15th candidates. The variables would take the following values:

PQ6A_A_GRM1= 2 (her first vote was for the 1st candidate)

PQ6A_A_GRM2= 4 (her second vote was for the 3rd candidate)

PQ6A_A_GRM3= 16 (her first vote was for the 15th candidate)

PQ6A_A_GRM4= . (she only cast 3 votes)

PQ6A_A_GRM5= .

…

PQ6A_A_GRM37=.

PQ6A_A_GRM38=.

There are similar variables for all districts and for all parties

For examples:

PQ6A_OV_SPAM1: The first vote on the mock ballot of a respondent from Oost Vlaanderen who voted for the SPA.

PQ6A_H_MRM21: The 21st vote on the mock ballot of a respondent from Hainaut who voted for the MR

…

Note that mock ballots were used for the main 14 parties (N-VA, CD&V, SPA, VLD, Groen, VB, LDD, PS, MR, CDH, ECOLO, PTB, PP, and FDF).

2. Belgium_2014.dta is a dataset construct merging the 3 original region-based datasets. All the variables are included except the mock ballot variables described above. Also, English labels have been added.