Party Facts codebook

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Overview

Party Facts Website – https://partyfacts.herokuapp.com

Reference

Döring, Holger, and Sven Regel. 2019. “Party Facts: A Database of Political Parties Worldwide:” Party Politics. Advance online publication. doi: 10.1177/1354068818820671.

Credits

see full credits at Party Facts “about section”

Project leaders

- Holger Döring (University of Bremen)
- Sven Regel (WZB Berlin Social Science Center)

Initial version of the codebook was created by Phillip Hocks and Jan Schwalbach (University of Bremen) in 2015. This work was funded by a small research grant of the University of Bremen (M8 Plus).

Summary

The Party Facts project aims to offer a gateway to empirical data about political parties and provides a modern online platform about parties and their history as recorded in social science datasets. With Party Facts we want to establish an infrastructure that supports and encourages political scientists in linking parties across datasets. We link core datasets of political science and provide a platform for other political scientists to add party IDs from other datasets.The project uses modern online technologies to offer an opportunity for collaborative data collection. Scientists can add missing links between parties, can discuss and validate existing links and are given the opportunity to provide additional information about parties and their history.

Working platform

The main output and workflow of the project takes place on the **Party Facts Website**.

Dataset imports and exports are provided in a public **Party Facts Data** Github repository. Github is a provider for software and project development which allows us to coordinate, administrate and adapt the project and datasets perfectly as a team.

Long term archiving is provided at the **Party Facts Archive** Dataverse.

Parties

Included parties

The Party Facts project aims to gather information on **all parties** in the world which won at least **5.0%** of the votes in at least one national election.

The project may include parties from external datasets that won at least 1.0% of the vote or parties included in multiple external datasets (preferably at least three datasets).

The respective threshold for including and linking parties from external datasets depends on the quality of the party level information (names, first/last year, election results) in the external source. We aim to avoid including small and short lived parties. If feasible, we remove these smaller parties during the import.

Core vs. external parties

Core parties are observations that have been gathered by the Party Facts project. They can be added and edited on the Party Facts webpage.

External parties are observations with party information extracted from other datasets – see Party Facts Data.

Countries

The Party Facts project may cover every country in the world depending on the provided data by external datasets. Currently, it includes about 200 countries. The main focus of the project is on the national level but parties from relevant sub-national units may be included as well, if they are covered by several datasets.

Country definitions follow **V-Dem Country Coding Units**. V-Dem does not cover several smaller countries where we use ISO 3166-1 country code definitions.

Coppedge, Michael, John Gerring, Staffan I. Lindberg, Svend-Erik Skaaning, Jan Teorell, and Vlad Ciobanu. 2016. “V-Dem Country Coding Units v6.” Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem) Project.

ISO 3166-1 Codes for the Representation of Names of Countries and their Subdivisions – Part 1: Country Codes

Linking

Party links

The aim of the project is to combine and harmonize party information in different datasets of political science. Parties from external datasets have to be linked to the corresponding core parties within the Party Facts project. We distinguish between core parties and external parties. **Core parties** are the party units created in Party Facts. Information about **external parties** is extracted from the respective datasets. A direct linking between parties of different external datasets is not implemented but can be achieved through the core party detour.

While linking a dataset to the project, please keep the following issues in mind:

- If possible link the party to an existing corresponding core party.
- If the respective core party does not exist yet, please add it (see chapter Adding Parties).

Technical links

There are a number of other technical options:

- **technical** - eg. invalid votes, blank votes, no vote, mixed vote etc.
- **alliance** - electoral alliance which took part in only one election (see section on Electoral Alliances)
- **unknown** -- parties that could not be identified (should include a short discussion comment)
- **independent** - non-partisan, independent
- **other** -- category other in external dataset
- **1perc** -- a party winning less than 1.0% vote share in national elections
    - Please add a short comment to the external party with the respective max. vote share (< 1.0%) and year of election

Multiple links

Most external parties are linked to exactly one core party. A few external parties may be linked to multiple core parties. The German Greens provide an example, in Party Facts a new party is recorded after the Greens from the West and East merged in 1993. The ParlGov project does only record one party. Hence, this observation (external party) needs to be linked to the two Green parties in Party Facts (core parties).

If an external party is linked to multiple core parties we distinguish between one primary link and secondary links. The *primary link* serves as the main link whereas all other links are *secondary links*.It should be linked to the core party with the longest time overlap. We distinguish between the two types to make merging datasets easier and to avoid merge ambiguities (many-to-many relationships, m:n). Initially, the first link of an external party is

set as the primary link. The primary link for an external party with multiple links to core parties can also be reset on the page of the respective external party. A user comment for this party is created for any change in the primary link.

Adding parties

If a party of an external dataset has no corresponding match among the core parties, please add a new core party. Again, we included all parties that won **at least one percent in a national election** (see above for our definition). This can be either achieved through the core parties list of the respective country or through the linking section.

New core parties should include a **vote share** or seats share with its year to identify the party. A short **description** should be included if no share information is available (e.g. party in government only).

Party names

- Names should be *capitalized* and cleaned with respect to spelling, form etc.
- Alternative party names are divided by a slash (eg. All-German Bloc / League of Expellees and Deprived of Rights).
- Identical names used by different parties include the first year in the English name (Civic Union (1912))
- Optional or temporal parts of a party name are put in brackets (eg. [United] Democratic Party)

Variables

- **Name short** -- Common abbreviation of the party name in the language of origin. If no common abbreviation is identifiable, a new short version is added.
- **Name** -- Name in language of origin.
- **Name english** -- Translation of the party name into English.
- **Name other** -- Party name in languages with non-latin letters. Required: Indicate the name of the language followed by a colon. Several names are divided by a semicolon (eg. Malayalam: ഇന്ത്യൻ യൂണിയൻ മുസ്ലിം ലീഗ്; Urdu: انڈین یونین مسلم لیگ).
- **Wikipedia** -- A link to the party website on the English Wikipedia. We use this link to download the Wikipedia data (Infobox and Wikidata).
- **Year first** -- Foundation of the party (usually automatically filled out based on source). If no information is available, the first election occurrence may be entered or the first year the party appears on an external dataset.
- **Year last** -- Dissolution of the party. If no information is available, the last election occurrence may be entered. Leave empty if the party exists as of today.
- **Share** -- Vote (or seats) share won in a national general election used to identify the party. Use maximum vote share if information is available.
- **Share year** -- Year of vote (or seats) share included in “share”.

- **New** -- Genuinely new party, not formed through party change.
- **Description** -- Further information about the party (eg. evolution, name changes etc.).
- **Comment** -- Comments about the coding to the party. May also include party relations such as predecessor, successor, name changes, mergers and alliances. Please see Chapter Party relations for further information.

Deleting parties

Observations may be removed by any user due to double appearances or mistakes. It is important to **give a short reason for deleting** observations so that other users can follow the idea behind and if necessary start a discussion about it.

Exceptions and special cases

Parties

Other **relevant parties** (e.g. important role between two elections etc.) may be included even if they do not pass the one percent criteria. The comment section should provide some additional information why they are included.

Parties, which only exist as **proxies** for other parties are not separately included but may be linked to the respective “background” party. The name should be included into the name of the “background” party, divided by a slash (eg. http://partyfacts.herokuapp.com/data/partyall/11639/)

If a party fails to fulfill the one percent criteria mentioned above, but has been included in **three other datasets**, it can be included in the project as well.

Electoral alliances

We record only *electoral alliances* that take part in **at least two elections**. All other (one shot) electoral alliances are linked to the “technical” category.

An electoral alliance included in at least **three other datasets** can be added as well.

Core parties that form a recorded electoral alliance can be included through the following format:

In addition the added core alliance (as a party) is includes the following comment:

consists of <PartyFactsID1> <PartyFactsID2>
(eg. http://partyfacts.herokuapp.com/data/partycodes/4473/)

Corresponding member (core) parties of the alliance include a comment as well:

member of <PartyFactsID>
(eg. http://partyfacts.herokuapp.com/data/partycodes/1286/)

Note: This applies only to alliances (that took part in at least two elections) and parties (> 1% share) which are relevant.

Party changes

Experimental -- initial implementation December 2015

Relations between parties are shown on the core party's page, containing **successor and predecessor** parties. Despite simple successor or predecessor relationships, there is a variety of special relations, which are recorded in the project.

First of all, the emergence of a party from a different party is noted by adding a successor or predecessor relationship on the core party's page. The plus-button allows you to add a party relation and its year. It does not matter from which side of the relationship you start. If a successor relationship has been implemented, the predecessor information will be filled out automatically.

If a party solely renames itself without any other changes, then please mark down the following in the comment section:

renamed into <name> in <year>
For example: http://partyfacts.herokuapp.com/data/partycodes/894/
Additionally the new (or respective old) name of the party may be added to the party name by using a slash to divide the names. Please see chapter Adding parties for further instructions.

Validation

As a measure to review existing party links, users are able and encouraged to validate links of other users. An active validation of information is an important part of the project. Based on the party names and (roughly) matching dates, a quick validation is often possible. Otherwise the information given about election results may provide additional help.

While reviewing established party linkings there are several options applicable:

- **'positive link'** -- I validate the already made link.
- **'negative link'** -- I doubt link is valid but am not sure and others shall make the verdict.
- **'comment (+ negative link)'** -- here are my reasons -- not daring to remove it right away.
- **'remove link'** -- I know what I am doing

You can remove your validation by clicking the highlighted validate-button again. Negative validations are summarized and reviewed on the recent linking page.

Datasets

In Party Facts we collect party level information from external datasets. We do not include these external datasets but **extract party information only**. Therefore different datasets from the social sciences are linked but are not combined.

Categories

Datasets are grouped into different categories depending on their connection to the Party Facts project as well as their contribution to the database.
Core members are datasets, which formed the foundation of the project. *Partner projects* include those datasets with whom the project has cooperated. *Main datasets* contain datasets with a wide scientific reach. Datasets which were recently included or with remaining technical problems are grouped under *experimental*. Any user can import a (scientific) dataset as a *user dataset*.

Currently we include the following categories for datasets:

- **Core member:** ParlGov, MARPOR
- **Partner project:** CLEA, CHES, EJPR-PDY
- **Main dataset**
- **All dataset**
- **Article dataset**
- **Experimental dataset:** initial import of datasets
- **User dataset**
- **Test mapping:** explore interface

Included Datasets

Please note that party information from the respective datasets are only included into Party Facts and may not yet be completely linked to core parties.

For each dataset we document in the Party Facts database the following variables to extract the desired information:

- **key** -- A *unique key* (letters and numbers only) identifying the dataset. This key is the same as the folder name of the dataset in the Github repository.
- **type** -- The type of the dataset and its connection to the Party Facts project -- see above.
- **name** -- Name of the dataset as it appears on the website.
- **reference** -- A reference for the dataset to be used for citing the source.
- **url** -- Dataset webpage (if available).
- **description** -- A short summary of the party level information included in the dataset.
- **comment** -- Additional information about the dataset (not required).

- **Year first** -- First observation year of the dataset.
- **Year last** -- Last observation year of the dataset.
- **Var country** -- Country ISO-code.
- **Var code** -- Unique identifier of party in the dataset.
- **Var name short** -- Common abbreviation of the party name.
- **Var name** -- Name of the party in language of origin.
- **Var name english** -- Name of the party in English.
- **Var year first** -- Year of first observation of a party.
- **Var year last** -- Year of last observation of a party.
- **Var share** -- Share of a party in an election.
- **Var share year** -- Year of the respective share in “Var share”.
- **Var description** -- Further remarks.
- **Var comment** -- Further comments.

Information on Datasets

For further information regarding the content of the different datasets (eg. number of parties, countries, time span etc.) and and the corresponding projects, please take a look at the dataset overview.

Available Downloads

Party Facts offers two different datasets, which are directly available here.
The dataset “Datasets parties” contains all linked parties of the project at the moment. The information covers:

- **country** -- ISO-code of the country.
- **dataset_key** -- Abbreviation of the dataset name.
- **dataset_party_id** -- unique key of party in external dataset.
- **name_short** -- Common abbreviation of party.
- **name** -- Name of party in language of origin.
- **name_english** -- Name of party in English.
- **year_first** -- First observation of the party.
- **year_last** -- Last observation of the party.
- **share** -- Result in a parliamentary election.
- **share_year** -- Year of the election result.
- **description** -- For further description.
- **comment** -- Section for comments.
- **created** -- Date of creation in Party Facts.
- **modified** -- Date of last modification.
- **external_id** -- Unique numeric id of external party in Party Facts.
- **partyfacts_id** -- Party Facts identification number.

The dataset “Core Parties” contains all Party Facts’ core parties with the following information:

- **country** -- ISO-code of the country.
- **partyfacts_id** -- Party Facts identification number.
- **technical** -- Technical identification number the party has been linked to.
- **name_short** -- Common abbreviation of party.
- **name** -- Name of party in language of origin.
- **name_english** -- Name of party in English.
- **name_other** -- Party name in languages with non-latin letters.
- **year_first** -- Foundation of the party.
- **year_last** -- Dissolvement of the party (blank if still existing).
- **share** -- Result in a parliamentary election.
- **share_year** -- Year of the election result.
- **new** -- Genuinely new party.
- **wikipedia** -- Link to the respective Wikipedia homepage.
- **description** -- For further description.
- **comment** -- Section for comments.
- **created** -- Date of creation in Party Facts.
- **modified** -- Date of last modification.

If you struggle with the export or the work with the datasets, the download section provides merging examples in R and Stata as well.

Importing data

In general everyone can add a dataset to the project. But please make sure that the dataset fits the following criteria:

- Only datasets with a scientific background are added to Party Facts
- The dataset should contain the following information as variables. (For detailed information please see Chapter Adding parties / Datasets)
    - English name
    - Name short
    - Original name
    - First year
    - Last year
    - Max share
    - Share year
    - Country name short
- We import the dataset in csv format.
  If your dataset has a different format, you may convert it into csv. Hence the import is done via an R scripts and the final data must be in csv format.

Ideally, a dataset is prepared by a user for an import into Party Facts. A step-by-step guide on how to import a dataset into the Party Facts project can be found in the public Github repo of Party Facts. It allows you to prepare your dataset for an import into the Party Facts project and to link your dataset to other well-known scientific datasets.

An import of a prepared dataset into the database at partyfacts.org is done by the project maintainers. External parties with a unique match of a party name (name short, original name or english name) are automatically linked during the import into the database.

If you have further questions, please contact one of the project maintainers – Holger Döring or Sven Regel.

Comments and user interaction

We use comments for party specific coding information, user interaction, issue tracking, to highlight potential mistakes and to discuss coding issues.

To address open issues and questions with respect to the linking of parties or information about parties, please use the discussion section below each party -- core and external. To address single users (e.g. concerns regarding a particular linking), @<Partyfactsusername> can be used.

In the *activity section* an overview of the comments is displayed. Please mark a comment as solved if it does not need a review by another user.

Use comments if you can't solve an issue yourself or are not sure about the application of the coding rules (e.g. re-linking a party, updating core parties information).

We review all comments and mark them as solved once the issue has been addressed.

Changes

Data (robot)

Documentation of automatic data changes since November 2018 (user robot).

2018-11-17
- removed (some) redundant share information in description or comment

2018-11-11
- removed parties not meeting inclusion criteria (about 170)

2018-11-03
- update PPLA default dates to 2006 / 2007

Codebook

2019-01-11
- add Party Politics project reference

2018-10-09
- highlight key concepts in bold

- revision dataset categories section

2018-09-24

- minor revisions and specifications for Comments/Interaction section

2018-08-22

- add definition core/external parties
- update information about Wikipedia link
- update Github url to repo name "partyfactsdata"
- minor revisions

2018-06-18

- inclusion of electoral alliance members optional

2017-04-04

- more specific information about inclusion threshold external parties

2017-06-18

- added information on linking of unique names during import

2017-03-16

- added documentation of country definition

2016-09-19

- more specific and unified information about party naming

2016-05-01

- updated country list: added countries from V-Dem, some name clean-up

2016-02-02

- added dataset type “article”

2016-01-04

- documentation of party change implementation
- update order of columns in data to download

2015-11-18

- initial version by Phillip Hocks and Jan Schwalbach