Coding scheme:
The Policy Commitment Dataset (PolCommit)

[applies to the polcommit_v1.0 dataset]

General information

This PolCommit dataset identifies policy commitments (also called election promises or pledges) within political parties' election programs. Each election program has been split into quasi-sentences by the Comparative Manifesto Project (I have used corpus version 2020b, see Burst, T., Krause, W.. Lehmann, P.. Lewandowski, J., Matthieß, T., Merz, N., Regel, S., and Zehnter, L. (2020): Manifesto Corpus. Version: 2020-2. Berlin: WZB Berlin Social Science Center).

If you make use of the PolCommit dataset, please refer to "Vestergaard (2025): The Policy Commitment dataset (PolCommit). Version: [X.X]. Aarhus: Aarhus University." (2025-01-06)

Useful references:

Vestergaard, Mathias Bukh. (2023). *Competing on Credibility: How Political Parties Strategically Use Policy Commitments in Their Public Communication*. Politica.

Vestergaard, Mathias Bukh (2025). Why all these promises? How parties strategically use commitments to gain credibility in an increasingly competitive political landscape. *European Journal of Political Research.*

Variables

countryname: The name of the country (from the Comparative Manifesto Project)

party: The id of the party (from the Comparative Manifesto Project)

date: The date of the election (from the Comparative Manifesto Project)

pos: The id of the quasi-sentence (from the corpus version of the Comparative Manifesto Project)

text: The text of the quasi-sentence (from the corpus version of the Comparative Manifesto project)

textforeign: If the original language from the text variable is not in English, the text has been translated to English using Google Translate.

future_policy: Whether a future policy is mentioned in the quasi-sentence (1 if yes, 0 if no). See Vestergaard (2023) for details on this variable.

commitment: Whether a commitment is mentioned in the quasi-sentence (1 if yes, 0 if no). A commitment is included, if a party takes high or very high responsibility for a future policy (i.e., if a party does not mention a future policy [future_policy = 1] in a quasi-sentence, the quasi-sentence has not been coded on this variable). See Vestergaard (2023) for details on this variable and the categories “high” and “very high” responsibility.