

Codebook of web-sites, version 2 nov. 2015

We are coding MPs' personal websites for MPs represented in Folketinget and House of Commons in 2015-16. The purpose is to code how MPs use their websites to promote themselves in relation to the voters. The website is therefore used as an indicator of the communicative style of the MPs rather than a site for information. Therefore we do not search through all website pages to find the "correct" answer to the codes. Rather, we focus on the front page and on-click-behind pages and especially concentrate on the main text written by the MP or his/her assistant where she/he presents him/herself to the website visitor. We use this strategy to gather measures on what the MP finds most important when it comes to communicating with the citizens

For a website to be counted as a personal website it has to meet two criteria

- 1) Personalized URL
- 2) The content of the website has to concern the individual MP

The two criteria are further described below:

Personalized URL:

Personal websites are sites with personalized URLs – with personal domains. For instance in the case of the Danish MP Lotte Rod the website lotterod.dk will be counted as a personal website whereas www.radikale.dk/profil/lotte-rod would not. These websites may be coordinated by the party by following a given format but they may also be set up by the MPs individually. Our defining characteristic of a personal website is that it has a personalized URL. Web sites with a party URL providing information about the MPs are not counted as personal websites.

The content of the website has to be about the individual MP:

Personal websites are also sites concerning the specific and individual MP. A website may have a personalized URL while the content of the website is not specific about the individual MP. An example is in the case of the British MP Sheryll Murry www.sheryllmurry.com. The website does have a personalized URL but the websites subject matter is The South East Cornwall Conservatives as a whole and not about Sheryll Murry individually. In this case the website should not be coded as a personal website.

To access MP web sites in UK you need to:

- 1) Open the parliamentary web site to identify the MPs <http://www.parliament.uk/mps-lords-and-offices/mps/>. Here you find an alphabetically ordered list of MP-links that will lead you to their personal websites if they have one.

- 2) In those cases where there are no links to personal websites you should google the name of the MP to see if this is just missing information at the parliamentary website or if there is indeed no personal website.

To access MP web sites in DK you need to

- 1) Open the parliamentary web site <http://www.ft.dk/Folketinget/findMedlem.aspx>
- 2) Choose a party list of MPs
- 3) Open each parliamentary site of the MP which will guide you to their personal web sites
- 4) If no personal web site is provided on the parliamentary site you need to google the name of the MP and see if this is due to the parliamentary web site not being updated or the MP indeed not having any website.

The codebook is developed to measure the content of the website in terms of how MPs present themselves to the citizens.

First we code a set of background variables:

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

V0: Country

- 1: UK
- 0: DK

V1: Name of MP (string)

V2: Party of MP

- 1: Conservative (UK)
- 2: Labour (UK)
- 3: Liberal Democrats (UK)
- 4: Scottish National Party (UK)
- 5: Democratic Unionist Party (UK)
- 6: Sinn Fein (UK)
- 7: Plaid Cymru (UK)
- 8: SDLP (UK)
- 9: Ulster Unionist Party (UK)
- 10: Green Party (UK)
- 11: UK Independence Party (UKIP) (UK)
- 12: Enhedslisten (DK)
- 13: SF (DK)
- 14: Socialdemokraterne (DK)
- 15: Alternativet (DK)
- 16: Radikale (DK)
- 17: Liberal Alliance (DK)
- 18: Konservativt Folkeparti (DK)

- 19: Venstre (DK)
- 20: Dansk Folkeparti (DK)
- 21: Uafhængig/Independent (DK/UK)

V3: Does the MP have a personal website?

Remember the definition of a personal website is that the URL is personal and that the content of the website is the individual MP.

- 1: Yes
- 0: No (The codebook ends)

V3a: Insert URL for website

V5: Does the website provide link to other social network sites (twitter, facebook, etc.)?

- 1: Yes
- 0: No (go to V6)

V5_1: Where are these links available?

- 1: Front page
- 2: Back pages

Second we code variables related to how much private information MPs provide on their website (privatization)

PRIVATIZATION

V6: Is there a picture of the MP on the front page of the website?

- 1: Yes
- 0: No

V7: Does the website provide information on marital status?

- 1: Yes
- 0: No (go to V8)

V7_1: Where is this information provided?

- 1: Front page
- 0: Back pages

V7_2: Does the website provide a picture of the partner?

- 1: Yes
- 0: No

V8: Does the website provide information regarding the MP's children?

- 1: Yes

0: No (go to V9)

V8_1: Where is this information provided?

1: Front page

0: Back pages

V8_2: Does the website provide a picture of the child(ren)?

1: Yes

0: No

V9: Does the website provide information about preferences for leisure time (hobbies, sports, etc.)?

1: Yes

0: No (go to V10)

V9_1: Where is this information provided?

1: Front page

0: Back pages

V10: Does the website provide information on family background and upbringing (e.g. parents, siblings, childhood)?

1: Yes

0: No (go to V11)

V10_1: Where is this information provided?

1: Front page

0: Back pages

V11: Does the website provide information on personal traits (warm, engaged, dedicated etc.)? (This variable also includes references to the MP from other actors cited on the website and it includes descriptions of the MP's profile as a MP such as dedicated, not career oriented MP)

1: Yes

0: No (go to V12)

V11_1: Where is this information provided?

1: Front page

0: Back pages

V11_2: Text documentation

Copy-paste the text bit that supports your coding of V11

Examples:

"In 2012, MPs voted Richard as the 'Commons Select Committee Member of the Year', for which the citation read: "Forensic, energetic, and committed, Richard Bacon has carved a political niche as the Public Accounts Committee's most effective performer".

"I am not a career politician looking for a promotion, nor a long serving MP who has become stale. I am a dad, a lawyer and a businessman and now MP for Dumfries & Galloway who wants to dedicate my life and skills to Scotland's interests and to the people of Dumfries and Galloway."

“But Steve has managed it – and his achievement this weekend is a demonstration of his energy, gifts and enthusiasm, which I saw at first hand when I met him for the first time last week.”

Third we code variables related to how much information is provided on individual competences (individualization)

INDIVIDUALIZATION

V12: Does the website provide information on educational background?

1: Yes

0: No (go to V13)

V12_1: Where is this information provided?

1: Front page

0: Back pages

V13: Does the website provide information on occupational experience?

1: Yes

0: No (go to V14)

V13_1: Where is this information provided?

1: Front page

0: Back pages

V14: Does the website provide information on political career?

1: Yes

0: No (go to V15)

V14_1: Where is this information provided?

1: Front page

0: Back pages

V15: Does the website provide information about political successes earned personally by the MP (for instance promoting a successful bill, organizing a successful campaign, or creating awareness of specific problems)?

1: Yes

0: No (go to V16)

V15_1: Where is this information provided?

1: Front page

0: Back pages

V15_2: Text documentation

Copy-paste text that document your coding of V15

Examples:

"I co-wrote a discussion paper for Conservative Party members called "A Magna Carta for 2015" in which members were asked whether they supported the introduction of a British Bill of Rights. I am delighted that the Prime Minister has announced that the Conservative Party manifesto will include a commitment to scrap the Human Rights Act and replace it with a UK Bill of Rights."

"Last week, after a three year Parliamentary campaign and an eight year campaign by Nikki's family, I was able to celebrate the news with my constituent Mike Sams, Nicki's father, that we had successfully changed the law to better protect the victims of negligent doctors. The General Medical Council (GMC) has been given the power to challenge decisions of tribunals that hear cases against doctors who are alleged to have breached GMC standards. The change to the Medical Act means"

Fourthly, we code variables related to how much information is provided regarding the relationship to the constituency (localization)

LOCALIZATION

V16: Does the website provide information of which constituency the MP is elected for?

1: Yes

0: No (go to V17)

V16_1: Where is this information provided?

1: Front page

0: Back pages

V16_2: Name of the constituency

V17: Does the website provide information on whether or not the MP lives in the constituency?

1: Yes – the MP lives in the constituency

2: No – the MP does not live in the constituency

0: No – no information provided (go to V18)

V17_1: Where is this information provided?

1: Front page

0: Back pages

V18: Does the website provide information on the MP's feeling of belonging to the constituency (Identification with the local area and its history)?

1: Yes

0: No (go to V19)

V18_1: Where is this information provided?

1: Front page

0: Back pages

V18_2: text Documentation

Copy-paste text documenting your coding of V18

Examples:

“Both my parents were born and raised in D&G so I am firmly rooted in this Region.”

“I was brought up here, I went to St Edmund's, Russells Hall and the Dudley School. My first job was at McDonalds on the High Street and like everyone else I remember our town's past. We live in the borough, shop on the market and queue up at Russells Hall when we're ill like any other local family.”

V19: Does the website provide information on political success won for the constituency ?

1: Yes

0: No (go to V20)

V19_1: Where is this information provided?

1: Front page

0: Back pages

V20: Does the website provide information on specific causes, issues or interests the MP seeks to promote on behalf of the constituency ?

(This variable is different from V18 as a cause or issue is something the MPs explicitly states he/she works to promote, but not necessarily something she/he has achieved already. For instance the MP could state, that she/he is striving to decrease unemployment in the area)

1: Yes

0: No (go to V21)

V20_1: Where is this information provided?

1: Front page

0: Back pages

V21: Does the website provide information on the MP's activities in the constituency (scheduled meetings, events, etc.)?

1: Yes

0: No (go to V22)

V21_1: Where is this information provided?

1: Front page

0: Back pages

Fifth, we code variables related to the parliamentary behavior of the MP

PARLIAMENTARY BEHAVIOUR

V22: Does the website provide information on the parliamentary speeches of the MP?

1: Yes

0: No (go to V23)

V22_1: Where is this information provided?

1: Front page

0: Back pages

V23: Does the website provide information of parliamentary questions asked by the MP?

1: Yes

0: No (go to V24)

V23_1: Where is this information provided?

1: Front page

0: Back pages

V24: Does the website provide information on bills sponsored by the MP?

1: Yes

0: No (go to V25)

V24_1: Where is this information provided?

1: Front page

0: Back pages

V25: Does the website provide information on the parliamentary committee membership of the MP (e.g. agriculture, housing, EU etc.)?

1: Yes

0: No (go to V26)

V25_1: Where is this information provided?

1: Front page

0: Back pages

V26: Does the website provide information on the voting of the MP?

1: Yes

0: No (go to V27)

V26_1: Where is this information provided?

1: Front page

0: Back pages

Sixth, we code variables related to policy preferences of the MP

POLICY PREFERENCES

V27: Does the website provide information on issues especially important to the MP?

1: Yes

0: No (go to V28)

V27_1: Where is this information provided?

1: Front page

0: Back pages

V27_text: Text documentation

Copy-paste text documenting your coding of V27

Examples:

“I work hard for you all year round because I want to improve things in Dudley. We need to make education our number one priority to help local businesses grow, give youngsters a first class start and help adults get new jobs too.”

“In Parliament he focused on achieving better value for money in public spending, promoting patient safety in the NHS and fairness in the tax system.”

V27_2-5: Which issues are these (up till four most important issues)? *For clarification of the content of the codes please consult: <http://www.agendasetting.dk/files/uploaded/61201510833PM1.pdf>*

1. Macroeconomics
2. Civil Rights, Minority Issues, Immigration and Civil Liberties
3. Health
4. Agriculture
5. Labour and Employment
6. Education
7. Environment
8. Energy
10. Transportation
11. Immigration
12. Law, Crime, and Family Issues
13. Social Welfare
14. Community Development, Planning and Housing Issuee
15. Banking, Finance, and Domestic Commerce
16. Defence
17. Research, Space, Science, Technology and Communication
18. Foreign Trade
19. International Affairs and Foreign Aid
20. Government Operations
21. Public Lands and Water Management (Territorial Issues)
23. Culture

Seventh, we code variables related to the party representation

PARTISAN

V28: Does the website provide information on which party the MP represents in parliament?

1: Yes

0: No (go to V29)

V28_1: Where is this information provided?

1: Front page

0: Back pages

V29: Is the national party logo provided on the front page of the website?

1: Yes

0: No

V30: Does the website provide a direct link to the national party website?

1: Yes

0: No (go to V31)

V30_1: Where is this information provided?

1: Front page

0: Back pages

V31: Does the website provide a direct link to the local party website?

1: Yes

0: No (go to V32)

V31_1: Where is this information provided?

1: Front page

0: Back pages

V32: Does the website provide information of the MPs position within the party?

1: Yes

0: No (go to V33)

V32_1: Where is this information provided?

1: Front page

0: Back pages

V32_2: Which position does the MP hold? Party Leader

1: Yes

0: No

V32_3: Which position does the MP hold? Party Spokesperson

1: Yes

0: No

V32_4: Which position does the MP hold? Party Whip

1: Yes

0: No

V32_5: Which position does the MP hold? Group Leader

1: Yes

0: No

V32_6: Which position does the MP hold? Vice Group Leader

1: Yes

0: No

V32_7: Which position does the MP hold? Vice Party Leader

1: Yes

0: No

V32_8: Which position does the MP hold? Minister

1: Yes

0: No

V32_9: Which position does the MP hold? Spokesperson/Shadow minister

1: Yes

0: No

V32_10-13: For which issues is the MP spokesperson/shadow minister?

Use the agenda codes to classify spokesperson/shadow minister issues. For clarification of the content of the codes please consult: <http://www.agendasetting.dk/files/uploaded/61201510833PM1.pdf>

1. Macroeconomics
2. Civil Rights, Minority Issues, Immigration and Civil Liberties
3. Health
4. Agriculture
5. Labour and Employment
6. Education
7. Environment
8. Energy
10. Transportation
12. Law, Crime, and Family Issues
13. Social Welfare
14. Community Development, Planning and Housing Issues
15. Banking, Finance, and Domestic Commerce
16. Defence
17. Research, Space, Science, Technology and Communications
18. Foreign Trade
19. International Affairs and Foreign Aid
20. Government Operations
21. Public Lands and Water Management (Territorial Issues)
23. Culture

V33: Does the website provide information about the MP's party membership history?

The relevant information is for instance when he/she became a member of the party, whether he/she has be involved in the youth organization of the party, or party offices the MP has served.

1: Yes

0: No (go to V34)

V33_1: Where is this information provided?

1: Front page

0: Back pages

V34: Does the website provide information regarding the MP's feeling of belonging to the party?

The relevant information is expressions of emotional or deep held relations to the party that are not only organizationally based, for instance expressions like "I am a Social Democrat at heart", "I have always been conservative", or "his connections to the Labour Party and the principles of cooperation run deep in his veins".

1: Yes

0: No (go to V35)

V34_1: Where is this information provided?

1: Front page

0: Back pages