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Codebook **Codebook for the analysis of political communication on the Internet.**
Part 2: Link structure among political actors in Europe

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In the conception of our Internet analysis we distinguish two forms of selection that influence the structure of political communication on the Internet as a platform of online public spheres. Since public spheres are understood as spheres that are in principle accessible for everybody, only the World Wide Web fulfils this basic requirements among the numerous Internet features available. Thus, our analysis focuses on communicative spheres opened up by the World Wide Web. The two forms of selection within this spheres are related to the most commonly ways in which the Internet is searched for information by the users:

- ***Vertical, hierarchical selection***: search engines guide the user through the Internet by presenting a hierarchical sample of relevant websites in regard to a certain search issue defined by the Internet user. In this way search engines act as gatekeepers to the web space and disclose a certain part of “online-reality” according to particular criteria.
- ***Horizontal, network selection***: the second important way how Internet users find websites online is to follow the links that are offered on websites. Here, the collective actors themselves act as gatekeepers that strongly influence the structure of the online sphere by way of their selection of actors they offer links to and actors to which they do not.

In the first part of our Internet analysis we have analysed the communicative sphere opened up by search engines in regard to hierarchical structures and different forms of transnational and especially European communication.

The second part of the analysis is focused on the exploration of the link structure that connects political actors among themselves. The link structures among the websites of actors can be understood as social networks of a new kind of connectivity. According to this view, our data will be collected in a way that allows us to analyse these networks with different methods of social network analysis. The questions we are mostly interested in are: How hierarchical are these networks in regard to the positioning of lower institutionalised actors? How different are the link structures within different policy fields? Are there transnational networks? Are there European networks either on a horizontal level by linking national actors from European countries or in hierarchical way by linkages between national actors and European actors? Are there differences in the degree of using the Internet for opening up an transnational sphere of communication among the different types of actors and among different countries? Are there compartmentalisations among types of actors and/or political-ideological camps/families, etc..? In general, the data to be generated will allow us to analyse the structural features of the networks opened up by links – or not opened up – on several levels: the national level, the multilateral level among the countries of our analysis, the European level and other transnational levels.

Our sample will include collective actors involved in three policy fields (agriculture, immigration and European Integration) in our seven countries (France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain, Switzerland and the United Kingdom) and on the European and on other supranational levels. For each country we analyse the link structures among the websites of 150 collective actors that are prominent in the three issue fields. These actors will be selected from five different types of actors: state actors, political parties, interest groups, NGOs and media actors. In regard to the transnational level we analyse 75 websites from European actors and 75 website of other supranational actors. Altogether we will have a sample of 1200 websites.

The data collection will take place in three steps:

1. **Compilation of actor lists:** Each team compiles a list of 150 national (own country) collective actors that are important in the fields of agriculture politics, immigration politics and European Integration including all interview partners from wp5.
2. **Coding of actors:** Each team codes information on the selected national actors (actor type, name, scope, issue field, etc.) that is relevant for interpreting our findings later on.
3. **Data collection on link structure:** The WZB centrally collects the data on the links offered on the websites of the collective actors selected by each team. Within each link list we will look for links that lead to other actors that were included in the analysis.

Compilation of actor lists

Within the actor list for each country the actors should generally be more or less equally distributed over five different actor types: state actors (30), political parties (35), interest groups and NGOs take together (60) and media actors (25). Table 1 gives detailed information on how many actors of which category and of what kind should be selected. Within all described kinds of actors in Table 1 you should search for the most important ones, e.g. in terms of influence (especially state actors), number of members, coverage (media actors), etc. After compiling the list in accordance with table 1 you should check if all your interview partners from wp5 (respectively the institutions they stand for) are included in the list and add the ones that are still missing.

One important precondition for the selection of the actors is an own website. The address (URL) normally consists of <http://www.adress.countrycode/> (e.g.: <http://www.ukonline.gov.uk/>). After this link is entered into the browser it will not only show the URL but: <http://www.ukonline.gov.uk/Home/Homepage/fs/en> This additional address-information is irrelevant for our purpose, as we will only use the address-information up to the 3rd slash. This also means that the selected actors have to be differentiated in the first part of their Web-addresses. E.g. a foreign ministry that has the URL <http://www.government.xy/foreignministry/> is not considered as an actor, as its website is part of the government's website.

Table 2: Actor selection

State actors: national (20)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• the head of state• the head of the national government• national government• the chambers of parliament• the highest court• the national central bank• the security agency responsible for border protection• national ministry of the Interior• national ministry of Justice• national ministry of Foreign affairs, Europe• national ministry of Finance• national ministry of Economics• national ministry of Agriculture• national ministry of Health• national ministry of the Environment• national Ombudsman or equivalent institution• the main national agency dealing with issues of food safety• the main national agency dealing with asylum seekers• the main national agency for public/political education• other national executive agencies that are influential in the field of immigration, agriculture or European Integration (this category should only be used if any really important actors have been missed by the prescribed categories)

State actors: regional and local (10)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• government of the region with the strongest regional identity in your country• parliament of the region with the second strongest regional identity in your country• regional ministry concerned with immigration politics of the region with the highest number of foreigners• government of the two regions that are at the border to other EU member countries (if there are more than two, pick those which share borders with more than one other country; if your country borders on a candidate member country, one of the two regions should be on such a border)• government of one region that has no external frontiers (if there is more than one, choose the one that is furthest away from external frontiers)• regional ministry of agriculture of the region with the highest number of people working in the agricultural sector• government of the region that receives the highest support from the EU structural funds• government of a region that receives no support from the EU structural funds• local government of capital city

Political parties: 35

- the 5 most important political parties at the national level
- the most important regional party
- the most important extreme right party
- include for each of these 7 parties the website of:
 - the party as a whole
 - the fraction in the main chamber of the national parliament
 - the scientific foundation
 - the youth organisation
 - the regional party chapter in the region with the strongest regional identity

Interest groups & NGOs : 60

- unions and employees organisations (5):
 - the most important union representing agricultural workers
 - the most important labour union representing industrial workers
 - the most important labour union representing workers in the state sector
 - the most important labour union representing workers in the service sector
 - the most important trade union federation
- employers organisations (5):
 - the most important general trade organisation
 - the most important federation of employers organisations
 - the most important industrial employers' association
 - the most important service sector employers' association
 - the most important trade association for beef
- churches and religious organisations (4):
 - most important Catholic organisation
 - most important Protestant organisation
 - most important Jewish organisation
 - most important Islamic organisation
- farmer and agricultural organisations: the 5 most important
- scientific and research organisations and institutions (6):
 - the 2 most important in the issue field of agriculture
 - the 2 most important in the issue field of immigration
 - the 2 most important in the field of European Integration
- consumer organisations and groups: the 4 most important
- pro- and anti-European campaign organizations and groups: the 4 most important

- migrant organisations and groups (6):
 - the main organisation of the largest group of EU migrants
 - most important Turkish organisation
 - most important organisation of the most important non-EU nationality
 - 3 most important other migrant organisations
- welfare organisations: the 2 most important
- solidarity and human rights organisations (6)
 - Attac
 - Amnesty International
 - most important organisation in support of asylum seekers
 - most important anti-racist organization
 - most important third world solidarity organisation
 - most important organisation in support of illegal immigrants
- racist and extreme right organisations and groups: the 2 most important (not political parties)
- peace movement organisation and groups: the 2 most important
- women's organisations and groups: the 2 most important
- environmental organisations and groups (6):
 - Greenpeace
 - most important traditional animal protection organisation
 - most important 'animal liberation' organisations
 - most important traditional nature conservation
 - the 2 most important other modern ecological organisations

Media actors: 25

Newspapers:

- 4 newspapers used in wp2 (1 left, 1 right, 1 regional, 1 tabloid)
- the 2 most important other national newspapers
- the most important business paper
- the 4 most important news magazines
- the most important regional newspaper in the region with the strongest regional identity
- the most important regional newspaper in an EU border region
- the most important regional newspaper in a region without external borders

TV channels:

- the 4 most important national TV channels
- the most important regional TV channel in the region that receives the largest share of EU structural funds
- the most important regional TV channel in a region that receives no EU structural funds

Radio channels:

- most important public broadcasting organisation catering to an international audience (e.g. Deutsche Welle, BBC World)
- the 2 most important national radio stations
- most important local commercial radio station in the capital city
- most important news radio station in the capital city

Link analysis

Our aim is to find out if the selected actors are linked among themselves, all other links will be disregarded in the first steps of analysis. We will use the link check programme Xenu's Link Sleuth (TM) which can be downloaded for free online (<http://home.snafu.de/tilman/xenulink.html>). This programme is designed to check websites for broken links. Although the actual purpose of the programme is not a scientific one we can use it for our data collection. In order to find links that were broken down, the programme searches the whole homepage and compiles a list of all links that are available. On this lists we will look for all links that led to the other actors we have selected. Thus, each of the 1200 actors on the link lists, will be checked for links to the remaining 1199 actors. We will presumably do this in Excel, unless we find a better solution. The data will be organised in matrices to allow us to analyse the data with the methods of social network analysis. In addition we will keep a list of all links that lead to other actors than our 8 x 150 actors to see if there are other important actors that are often referred to but who were not included in our selection.

Technical information: Every link will only be checked once, even if the website of our selected actor links to a certain address several times on different pages of the website. Subordinate pages of a website will be checked as well but for the analysis we'll have to shorten the addresses to the basic URL.

E.g.:

The XENU-list for actor1 (checked URL: <http://www.actor1.de/>) shows:

- 1 <http://www.actor1.de>
- 2 http://www.actor1.de/subordinatepage_a.htm
- 3 http://www.actor1.de/subordinatepage_b.htm

- 4 <http://www.actor2.de>
- 5 http://www.actor2.de/subordinatepage_a.htm
- 6 http://www.actor2.de/subordinatepage_b.htm
- 7 http://www.actor2.de/subordinatepage_c.htm

The XENU-list for actor2 (checked URL: <http://www.actor2.de/>) shows:

- 1 <http://www.actor2.de>
- 2 http://www.actor2.de/subordinatepage_a.htm
- 3 <http://www.actor1.de>
- 4 http://www.actor1.de/subordinatepage_a.htm
- 5 http://www.actor1.de/subordinatepage_b.htm

These two lists would result in the following matrix:

	Actor1	Actor2	Additional variables...
Actor1	3	4	...
Actor2	3	2	...

This matrix can be read as: The website of Actor1 links to 3 different pages within its own and to 4 different pages within Actor2's website; the website of Actor2 links to 2 different pages within its own and to 3 different pages within Actor1's website.

The expected matrix of all 1200 analysed websites will contain the coded information about the actors as well as the number of different links to any of the other actors.

Time schedule

- The list of actors/websites plus the file with the variables coded for each actor should be sent to the WZB team until **mid-July 2003**
- The data collection of the link structure (WZB team) should be finished by the **end of September 2003**.

CODING

Variable **ID** (numeric)

'actor identification number'

To avoid using the same numbers several times among our countries each team should start with a certain number:

Germany: 1-150

Spain: 201-350

France: 401-550

Italy: 601-750

Netherlands: 801-950

United Kingdom: 1001-1150

Switzerland: 1201-1350

European: 1401-1475

Other Supranational: 1501-1575

Variable **NAMECOD**

'name of coder'

(same as in wp2)

Variable **COUNTRY**

'coding country / level'

- 1 'Germany'
- 2 'United Kingdom'
- 3 'France'
- 4 'Italy'
- 5 'Spain'
- 6 'Netherlands'
- 7 'Switzerland'
- 8 'European'
- 9 'Supranational'

Variable INSTSUM

'summary institution/organisation'.

40	'government/executive' ¹
50	'legislative' ²
60	'judiciary' ³
70	'police and internal security agencies' ⁴
80	'military' ⁵
90	'central banks'
100	'social security executive organizations' (incl. state pension funds)
110	'other state executive agencies' ⁶
120	'political parties'
130	'unions and employees organisations'
140	'employers organizations'
150	'churches and religious organizations and groups'
160	'media'
170	'farmers and agricultural organizations'
180	'educational professionals and organizations' (incl. schools, universities in their educational capacity)
190	'economists and financial experts'
200	'other scientific and research professionals and institutions' (e.g., experts, research institutes, universities in their research capacity)
210	'organisations of students, pupils, and their parents'
220	'other professional organizations and groups' ⁷
230	'consumer organizations and groups'
240	'migrant organizations and groups' ⁸
250	'pro- and anti-European campaign organizations and groups'
260	'solidarity and human rights organizations' ⁹
270	'welfare organizations' ¹⁰

¹ Governments and government representatives (spokespersons, ministers, royalty etc.) irrespective of territorial scope. The EU-Commission and Council of Ministers, the UN General Secretary and Security Council are coded as governments. Other examples: mayor, Landesregierung, ministry of education.

² Legislatives and parliaments (all chambers), including individual members thereof, Examples: Bundestag, House of Lords, local councils- Intergovernmental organizations which draw up international treaties on the basis of unanimous consent of the signatories are coded among executive/government The European Parliament and the General Assembly of the UN are, however, coded as legislatives, because they have (limited, but still) the power to make binding decisions on the basis of majority decisions.

³ E.g., European Court of Justice, openbaar ministerie (public prosecutor), individual judges, juries.

⁴ E.g., police, marechaussee, Bundesgrenzschutz, secret service, Verfassungsschutz, Europol. Note: the Police Union is coded as a union.

⁵ E.g., Bundeswehr, NATO.

⁶ E.g., ILO, WHO, Einwohnermeldeamt, Schulaufsichtsbehörde.

⁷ E.g., Deutscher Ärztekammer, Berufsverband Deutscher Psychologen, Deutscher Sportbund, doctors, football players, writers, solicitors, musicians. Note: unions are always coded as unions, non-union organizations of police and judges are coded under their respective institution.

⁸ Organizations or groups of immigrants, asylum seekers, ethnic minorities of migrant origin. Includes migrant organizations that would also fit another category. E.g., Islamic or Jewish organizations in Europe are coded as migrant organizations, not as religious groups, the European Association of Turkish academics is coded as a migrant organization, not as a professional organization, etc.

⁹ This includes only private organizations such as Pro Asyl, Anti-Racist Alliance, Arbeiterwohlfahrt, Amnesty International, Terre des Hommes, medecins sans frontières etc.

- 280 'racist and extreme right organizations and groups'¹¹
- 290 'peace movement organizations and groups'
- 300 'organizations and groups of the elderly'
- 310 'women's organizations and groups'
- 320 'environmental organizations and groups'
- 330 'terrorist groups'
- 340 'rebel forces/guerrilla' (e.g., UCK, Northern Alliance)
- 350 'other civil society organizations and groups'¹²
- 380 'ISP, portal, search engines'

Variable INST

'institution/organisation'.

(codes in brackets should not be used for this variable; they are only for orientation purposes)

- (40) 'governments/executive'
 - 401 'national government'
 - 402 'head of national government'
 - 403 'head of state'
 - (404) 'national ministries'
 - 404.1 'national ministry of the Interior'
 - 404.2 'national ministry of Justice'
 - 404.3 'national ministry of Foreign affairs, Europe'
 - 404.4 'national ministry of Finance'
 - 404.5 'national ministry of Economics'
 - 404.6 'national ministry of Agriculture'
 - 404.7 'national ministry of Health'
 - 404.8 'national ministry of the Environment'
 - (405) 'regional & local governments'
 - 405.1 'government of the region with the strongest regional identity in your country'
 - 405.2 'government of two regions that are at the border to other EU member countries'
 - 405.3 'government of one region that has no external frontiers'
 - 405.4 'regional ministry of agriculture of the region with the highest number of people working in the agricultural sector'
 - 405.5 'government of the region that receives the highest support from the EU structural funds'
 - 405.6 'government of a region that receives no support from the EU structural funds'
 - 405.7 'regional ministry concerned with immigration politics of the region with the highest number of foreigners'

¹⁰ E.g. Red Cross, Arbeiterwohlfahrt, not state welfare agencies (these are coded as state executive agencies).

¹¹ Includes vague descriptions such as “skinheads” or “right-wing extremists”. Radical right parties should be coded as political party, unless the party label is merely window dressing and does not indicate significant involvement in the electoral process (e.g. the Freiheitliche Arbeiterpartei in Germany).

¹² Including not already mentioned social categories such as 'youth', 'the unemployed', 'children', etc.

405.8 'local government of capital city'

- (50) 'legislative'
 - 501 'the chambers of parliament'
 - 502 'parliament of the region with the second strongest regional identity in your country'
 - 503 'regional ministry concerned with immigration politics of the region with the highest number of foreigners'

- (60) 'judiciary'
 - 601 'the highest court'

- (70) 'police and internal security agencies'
 - 701 'the security agency responsible for border protection'

- (90) 'central banks'
 - 901 'the national central bank'

- (110) 'other state executive agencies'
 - 111 'main national agency dealing with issues of food safety'
 - 112 'main national agency dealing with asylum seekers'
 - 113 'main national agency for public/political education'
 - 114 'national Ombudsman or equivalent institution'
 - 115 'other national executive agencies that that are influential in the field of agriculture'
 - 116 'other national executive agencies that that are influential in the field of immigration'
 - 117 'other national executive agencies that that are influential in the field European Integration'

- (120) 'Political Parties'
 - (121) 'five most important political parties at the national level'
 - 121.1 'party as a whole'
 - 121.2 'fraction in the main chamber of the national parliament'
 - 121.3 'scientific foundation'
 - 121.4 'youth organisation'
 - 121.5 'regional party chapter in the region with the strongest regional identity'
 - (122) 'most important regional party'
 - 122.1 'party as a whole'
 - 122.2 'fraction in the main chamber of the national parliament'
 - 122.3 'scientific foundation'
 - 122.4 'youth organisation'
 - 122.5 'regional party chapter in the region with the strongest regional identity'
 - (123) 'most important extreme right party'
 - 123.1 'party as a whole'
 - 123.2 'fraction in the main chamber of the national parliament'
 - 123.3 'scientific foundation'
 - 123.4 'youth organisation'
 - 123.5 'regional party chapter in the region with the strongest regional identity'

- (130) 'unions and employees organisations'

- 131 'most important union representing agricultural workers'
- 132 'most important labour union representing industrial workers'
- 133 'most important labour union representing workers in the state sector'
- 134 'most important labour union representing workers in the service sector'
- 135 'most important trade union federation'
- 136 'other unions and employees organisations'

- (140) 'employers organisations'
- 141 'most important general trade organisation'
- 142 'most important federation of employers organisations'
- 143 'most important industrial employers' association'
- 144 'most important service sector employers' association'
- 145 'most important trade association for beef'
- 146 'other employers organisations'

- (150) 'churches and religious organisations'
- 151 'most important Catholic organisation'
- 152 'most important Protestant organisation'
- 153 'most important Jewish organisation'
- 154 'most important Islamic organisation'
- 155 'other churches and religious organisations'

- (170) 'farmer and agricultural organisations'
- 171 'five most important farmer and agricultural organisations'

- (200) 'scientific and research organisations and institutions'
- 201 'two most important scientific and research organisations/institutions in the issue field of agriculture'
- 202 'two most important scientific and research organisations/institutions in the issue field of immigration'
- 203 'two most important scientific and research organisations/institutions in the issue field of European Integration'

- (230) 'consumer organisations and groups'
- 231 'four most important consumer organisations and groups'

- (240) 'migrant organisations and groups'
- 241 'main organisation of the largest groups of EU migrants'
- 242 'most important Turkish organisation'
- 243 'most important organisation of the most important non-EU nationality'
- 244 'three most important other migrant organisations'
- 245 'other migrant organisations and groups'

- (250) 'pro- and anti-European campaign organizations and groups'
- 251 'four most important pro- and anti-European campaign organizations and groups'

- (260) 'solidarity and human rights organisations'
 - 261 'Attac'
 - 262 'Amnesty International'
 - 263 'most important organisation in support of asylum seekers'
 - 264 'most important anti-racist organization'
 - 265 'most important third world solidarity organisation'
 - 266 'most important organisation in support of illegal immigrants'
 - 267 'other solidarity and human rights organisations'

- (270) 'welfare organisations '
 - 271 'the two most important welfare organisations'

- (280) 'racist and extreme right organisations and groups'
 - 281 'two most important racist and extreme right organisations and groups (not political parties)'

- (290) 'peace movement organisation and groups '
 - 291 'two most important peace movement organisation and groups'

- (310) 'women's organisations and groups'
 - 311 'two most important women's organisations and groups'

- (320) 'environmental organisations and groups'
 - 321 'Greenpeace'
 - 322 'most important traditional animal protection organisation'
 - 323 'most important 'animal liberation' organisations'
 - 324 'most important traditional nature conservation'
 - 325 'two most important other modern ecological organisations'
 - 326 'other environmental organisations and groups'

- (160) 'media'
 - (161) 'newspapers'
 - 161.1 'the four newspapers used in wp2'
 - 161.2 'two most important other national newspapers'
 - 161.3 'most important business paper'
 - 161.4 'four most important news magazines'
 - 161.5 'most important regional newspaper in the region with the strongest regional identity'
 - 161.6 'most important regional newspaper in an EU border region'
 - 161.7 'most important regional newspaper in a region without external borders'
 - (162) 'TV channels'
 - 162.1 'four most important national TV channels'
 - 162.2 'most important regional TV channel in the region that receives the largest share of EU structural funds'
 - 162.3 'most important regional TV channel in a region that receives no EU structural funds'

- (163) 'radio channels'
- 163.1 'most important public broadcasting organisation catering to an international audience'
 - 163.2 'two most important national radio stations'
 - 163.3 'most important local commercial radio station in the capital city'
 - 163.4 'most important news radio station in the capital city'

Variable INSTPAR

'Party affiliation of institution/organisation'

Categories, see data entry file

Variable ISSUSPEC

'Is the institution/organisation issue-specific?'

- 0 'not issue specific'
- 1 'issue specific: agriculture'
- 2 'issue specific: immigration'
- 3 'issue specific: EU Integration'

Variable INTVIEW

'is the institution/organisation one of your wp5 interview partners?'

- 0 'yes'
- 1 'no'

Variable INSTNAME

'name of institution/organisation'

Variable NAMETRANS

'English translation of name of institution/organisation'

Note: please enter here the English translation of the organisation/institution's name. If the name does not indicate clearly what kind of institutions/organisation it is please give a short description (E.g.: INSTNAME: Verdi → NAMETRANS: German trade union federation for the service industry)

Variable: **ORGSCOP**

'Scope of the coded institution/organisation'

- 1 'supranational: United Nations'
- 2 'other supranational'
- 3 'European Union'
- 4 'other European supranational'
- 5 'multilateral'
- 6 'bilateral'
- 7 'national'
- 8 'regional'
- 9 'local'

Variable: **WIDESCOP**

'Widest scope of the larger organisation the coded organisation belongs to as a geographical subunit'

- 0 'organisation is not a subunit of an organisation with a wider geographical scope'
- 1 'supranational: United Nations'
- 2 'other supranational'
- 3 'European Union'
- 4 'other European supranational'
- 5 'multilateral'
- 6 'bilateral'
- 7 'national'
- 8 'regional'
- 9 'local'

Note: If the organisation is a subunit of a larger organisation code here the scope of the whole organisation, e.g. Greenpeace Germany: Orgscop = 7 and Widescop = 2. This does not include organisations that belong to an umbrella organisations that associates functionally differentiated organisations on the same geographical level, e.g. the DGB that includes as a German trade union umbrella organisation different unions like IG Metall and IG Bauen-Agrar-Umwelt.

Variable **URL**

'URL/Web-address of homepage'

Variable **COMMENT**

'comments on actor or website'

Note: please use this string field to specify your actor selection if you have selected an actor that does not correspond with the prescribed categories or if the website of the selected actor is included in the website of another actor (e.g. the ministry X does not have an own homepage but its homepage is include in the homepage of the government)