

Political Parties Research Via the Internet

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This paper announces a new research project that has two objectives: (1) to collect data via the internet on all significant political parties in fifty countries operating during the period 1995-2000, and (2) to build a database for cross-national comparisons with existing data on parties operating in the same countries during the period 1950-1962. If successful, this project will produce the only set of data that can support cross-national research on political parties over a fifty-year time span--from the middle to the end of the 20th century.

We chose the site of the World Congress of the International Political Science Association for this announcement to invite scholars across the globe to participate in the project. Like any announcement, the paper describes what is to come more than what has been achieved. It has four sections:

1. History: The International Comparative Political Parties Project
2. Moving History to the Internet
3. The Idea of Updating the ICPP Data
4. Devising an Approach to Updating the ICPP Data Via the Internet

1. History: The International Comparative Political Parties Project

The proposed internet project has its origin in the International Comparative Political Parties (ICPP) Project, which was founded at Northwestern University in 1966 by Kenneth Janda grant from the U.S. National Science Foundation. From 1966 to 1971, the ICPP Project employed scores of students in traditional (and painstaking) methods of library research to study all political parties that won at least 5% of the legislative seats over two elections during the time period 1950 to 1962 in a sample of 53 countries. A total of 158 parties were identified for study and included in the project.

The 53 countries were chosen from a universe of 93 major nations in the 1950s with some form of party system. These systems were not necessarily democratic or competitive--for example, communist nations were included. Fifty party systems were literally picked out of hats--five countries being drawn from ten hats representing ten "cultural-geographical" areas of the world. Three countries that failed to be drawn (United States, United Kingdom, and Canada) were added for substantive interest. In effect, the set of countries is a stratified random sample of the world's party systems from 1950 to 1962.

Although our overall time period lasted 13 years (1950-1962), we coded parties on most of some 100 variables separately for the first "half" of the period (1950-56) and for the second "half" (1957-62). This provided some opportunity to capture party movement on the coded traits. All variables were organized into an explicit conceptual framework. As stated in Janda (1980):

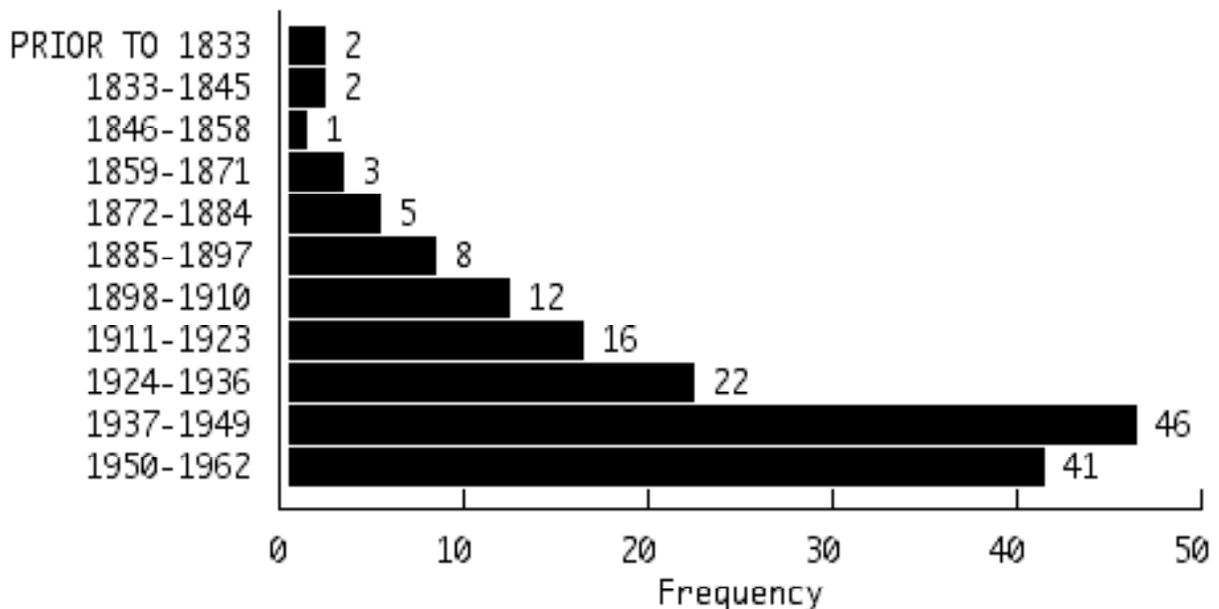
The major concepts in the ICPP conceptual framework can be separated into those that pertain to a party's **external relations** and those that relate to its **internal organization**. The analysis of a

party's external relations is judged according to eight concepts: *institutionalization, governmental status, social attraction, social concentration, social reflection, issue orientation, goal orientation, and autonomy*. Its internal organization can be analyzed according to the remaining four concepts: *degree of organization, centralization of power, coherence of behavior, and involvement of its members*.

The conceptual framework of the ICPP project consists of these major concepts plus approximately 100 "basic variables" grouped into twelve corresponding "clusters" of variables. Each basic variable within a cluster constitutes a specific indicator of the more abstract concept which subsumes it. In most instances, the basic variables in these variable clusters are proposed as alternative indicators of the concept represented by the cluster. Under the assumption that these indicators are all adequately intercorrelated, they can be combined in an "additive" approach to concept measurement. (p. 7)

The task of coding these parties using library resources was far more difficult than envisioned. Eventually, the student researchers indexed 62,163 pages of material from 3,319 documents on party politics in the 53 countries. Unfortunately, the NSF grant money (and student employment) ran out almost ten years before the coding was done. The data set was not completed until 1979, when it was released to the Interuniversity Consortium for Political and Social Research as Study 7534. Appendix A lists some of the articles, books, and dissertations that have used ICPP data.

To visualize the nature of the data in ICPSR Study 7534, see Figure 1. It graphs the distribution of all 158 parties for Variable 1.01, "Year of Origin," which is one of four indicators of the concept of Institutionalization (older parties being more institutionalized). The two parties in the graph that were scored as originating before 1833 were the U.S. Democrats (1828) and the British Conservatives (1832).



Variable	Mean	Std Dev	N
V101	29.93	28.97	158

YEAR OF ORIGIN

Figure 1: Parties Grouped in Thirteen-Year Periods for Year of Birth

2. Moving History to the Internet

Among the works listed in Appendix A, the major publication of the ICPP Project was Kenneth Janda, *Political Parties: A Cross-National Survey* (New York: The Free Press, 1980). That 1,000+ page book was divided into two Parts. Part I (the first 175 pages), was titled "Variables, Codes, and Summary Statistics." It set forth the conceptual framework of the project, described the method for scoring parties on each of the 100+ variables, explained how these variables were combined into reliable scales to measure the major dimensions of variation in party organization and activities, and summarized the basic data for all 158 parties.

Part II (the remaining 900 pages), titled "Information on Political Parties by Country," consisted of 53 chapters, one per country, organized into ten world regions. Each chapter began with a brief essay that described the country's party politics during 1950-1962 and traced the parties' histories to 1978. The bulk of Part II, however, consisted of computer printout of the coding values for each variable on every party, reporting how the variable was scored and explaining (in words) *why* it was coded so.

Although too expensive for individual purchase (\$100 in 1980), *Political Parties: A Cross-National Survey* was widely acquired by libraries as a reference work and even reprinted once before it went out of print in the late 1980s. Unfortunately, few copies now remain, and using the ICPP data in research is difficult without access to that source.

In the 1990s, the Free Press assigned the book's copyright to Janda, who began plans to scan the text and put the book on his web site. Part I of *Political Parties* now exists in its entirety on the internet at <http://janda.org/icpp/ICPP1980/index.htm>, and portions of Part II are also available there. All pagination in the original text was preserved in posting the text on the web site. For example, page 109 in *Political Parties* is a single page on the web site--numbered as page 109--that contains exactly the same information as the same page in the book. The only difference is that the text on the web page is presented in a single column, whereas the book is printed in a double-column format. Also, the data tables in the book have been converted to graphs on the web site, and the web site is helpfully augmented with navigational aids. Nevertheless, a scholar can cite the published book directly by citing any page on its web site.

3. The Idea of Updating the ICPP Data

Moving the parent text to the internet should facilitate use of the existing ICPP data for 1950-1962. It also creates the potential for collecting new data on parties in the same countries at the end of the 20th century to compare with the data at mid-century. Instead of employing research assistants to conduct library research to code the parties (an expensive, painstaking, and time-consuming method), expert judges across the world could use the same basic coding rules to code the parties for the six years from 1995 through 2000. Those six years at the end of the 20th century would match the six years from 1957-62 and nearly match the seven years from 1950-56--the two halves of the original 1950-62 period.

Remember that the original ICPP Project studied national party systems roughly a half century ago. Not all the parties that existed then lasted throughout the 1970s, and fewer of the original parties exist today. Indeed, not all the *countries* that existed then exist now. Here are the ten cultural-geographical areas and the original ICPP countries represented within each:

ANGLO-AMERICAN CULTURE AREA

United States of America, United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Ireland, India, and Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland (dissolved in 1963)

WEST CENTRAL EUROPE

Austria, France, Federal Republic of Germany (now includes the former West and East Germanies), Greece, Portugal

SCANDINAVIA AND BENELUX

Denmark, Iceland, Sweden, The Netherlands, Luxembourg

SOUTH AMERICA

Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, Venezuela

CENTRAL AMERICA

Cuba, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Nicaragua

ASIA AND THE FAR EAST (*note that India is included in the Anglo-American Culture Area*)

Burma (now Myanmar), Cambodia (Kampuchea), Indonesia, Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea), Malaya (now Malaysia)

EASTERN EUROPE

Albania, Bulgaria, Hungary, Russia (formerly Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), and German Democratic Republic (formerly East Germany, dissolved in 1990)

MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

Sudan, Tunisia, Lebanon, Iran, Turkey

WEST AFRICA

Dahomey (now Benin), Ghana, Guinea, Upper Volta (now Burkina Faso), Togo

CENTRAL AND EAST AFRICA

Central African Republic, Chad, Congo-Brazzaville (now People's Republic of the Congo), Kenya, Uganda

Of the original 53 countries, two are no longer recognized as nations. The Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland dissolved in 1963, reemerging as three separate nations Zimbabwe, Zambia, and Malawi; and the former German Democratic Republic was united with the Federal Republic of Germany in 1990. While party politics in Zimbabwe, Zambia, and Malawi cannot be meaningfully compared with party politics in the former Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland, it seems reasonable to compare party politics in the Federal Republic of Germany before and after the merger.

Although the former USSR was succeeded by Russia, a much smaller country, it also seems reasonable to compare party politics in Russia with party politics in the former USSR. Conversely, the Federation of Malaya was succeeded by an enlarged country, Malaysia, that now includes the former British colonies of Sarawak and Sabah. Here too, comparisons seem appropriate to party politics over time. A few other countries changed names over the years without fundamentally altering their boundaries. Of course, the political systems in many countries changed radically, but that simply complicates--rather than invalidates--comparison of parties over time.

Assuming that we can compare parties over time for 51 of the original countries, two questions arise: (1) How many of the original parties remain for comparison in 1995-2000? (2) How many new parties in 1995-2000 meet the original criterion for study, winning 5% of seats over two or more successive elections? It's easier to answer the first question than the second.

Even answering how many of the original 158 parties still exist in 1995-2000 is problematic. First, note that only 124 parties functioned *throughout* 1950-1962. Some (135) operated only during the first half of the period (1950-56), and others (147) operated only in the second half (1957-62). So there was substantial change then even over only thirteen years.

If we ask which of the 147 parties that closed out the first period continued into 1995-2000, the best estimate now (without detailed research on each country) is 82 parties, or 56%. Of course, the attrition was greater in some regions (e.g., Africa) than in others (e.g., Anglo-America).

If we ask how many new parties in 1995-2000 were created since 1962, the estimate in the absence of detailed research is even rougher, but it appears that there were approximately 70. Adding 70 new parties to the estimate of 82 continuing parties produces a total of 152 parties operating in 1995-2000. Given that 147 parties in 53 met our criterion of holding 5% of the seats over two or more elections in 1957-62, one may not be surprised that, fifty years later, some 152 parties met the same criterion in 51 countries. It would have been more surprising if the numbers were vastly different.

Although research on party politics comes in different forms and serves different purposes, much scholarly effort can be divided into two types: studies that treat individual parties as units of analysis and those that focus on party systems. Scholars primarily interested in how parties change over time may wish to compare the approximately 82 parties in 1995-2000 with the same parties in the earlier period. Scholars who are more interested in how party systems change over time will care less whether the *same* parties were active at the end of the century than in mid-century. For either set of scholars, updating the ICPP data from 1950-1962 to 1995-2000 seems to be worthwhile.

4. Devising an Approach to Updating the ICPP Data Via the Internet

For some years, researchers have conducted opinion surveys over the internet. People fill out structured questionnaires at their computers and send their demographics and opinions off to be tallied by researchers. No special knowledge is needed to fill out these straightforward and relatively simple forms. The commercial computer technologies designed for that task are not suited to this one. More relevant to this project is the "expert survey" of parties' ideological positions being undertaken by Michael Laver and Kenneth Benoit at Trinity University in Dublin. Although their effort pertains directly to parties research, it too is more focused in its scope. (Unfortunately, we know little about this effort apart from e-mail messages from Laver and Benoit.)

The procedure devised to update the ICPP data was constructed from scratch, without suitable research models or prior experience with data collection over the internet. Although the basic procedure has been devised, it will not be implemented until after the IPSA World Congress to benefit from comments and criticism by participants in the panel. At present, the procedure involves two separate stages with several steps within each stage:

- Stage 1. Announcement of the research with an invitation to participate
 This is located at <http://janda.org/icpp/online/announcement.htm>

- Stage 2. Access to participation and gateway to the data collection stage
 This is located at <http://janda.org/icpp/online/forms/form00.htm>

Perhaps the best way to explain the procedure is to illustrate it by reproducing the key web pages posted on each of the sites above. At the URL for Stage 1, users encounter the page in Figure 2. This page briefly explains the purpose of the project and invites those who might be interested in serving as expert judges to proceed through three separate steps:

Figure 2: Web page at janda.org/icpp/online/forms/form00.htm

Navigation path: [Announcement](#) (home page)

International Comparative Political Parties Project -- 21st Century Initiative

The International Comparative Political Parties (ICPP) Project was founded at Northwestern University in 1966 by Kenneth Janda under a grant from the U.S. National Science Foundation. In a paper delivered at the 2003 World Congress of the International Political Science Association in Durban, South Africa (June 29-July 4), Janda, Jeffrey Cousens, and Michael J. Faber propose a *21st Century Initiative* building on last century's ICPP Project.

In addition to [numerous scholarly works](#) using ICPP data, the major publication of the ICPP Project was Kenneth Janda, *Political Parties: A Cross-National Survey* (New York: The Free Press, 1980). That 1,000+ page book provided information on 158 political parties operating from 1950 to 1962 in 53 countries representing all world regions, political cultures, and types of party systems. The book also traced the parties' histories through 1978. Long out of print, *Political Parties* exists in its entirety on the Internet at [A Cross-National Survey](#).

ICPP's 21st Century Initiative seeks help from party experts across the world in updating and extending the data on these party systems to the year 2000. Those who participate can obtain immediate access to the original quantitative data in SPSS format and will receive preferential access to the updated data as soon as the new database is prepared.

Whereas the 1980 publication relied on scores of graduate students in painstaking library research, the *21st Century Initiative* exploits the power of the Internet to collect structured data on theoretically important variables on political parties from scholars across the world.

"Expert judges" will fill out web-based forms, customized for each variable, rating specific parties for which they have knowledge. Their ratings will be electronically entered into a complex database. I count on having multiple judges for each party to increase data quality. This new database, when joined with the old, will support comparative analysis of party organization and issue positions across half a century.

If you are interested in serving as an expert judge, please proceed through these steps:

1. Go to the [list of countries and parties](#) to see whether any match your expertise.
2. If satisfied, then go to the [list of variables](#) to learn which party traits are under study.
3. If you are able and willing to contribute to this project, [please reply](#)--stating your research interest and ability.

I will attempt to answer all who reply to this announcement--screening out any frivolous responses and providing passwords to serious contributors for access to participation. If you have questions, please write me at k-janda@northwestern.edu.

Those who click on the link for Step 1 then go to the page reproduced as Figure 3. That page describes what countries are available to research, and it states--to the best of our current knowledge--which of our original parties still operate and what new parties are on the scene. Michael Faber is improving our inventory of parties that meet our criterion for inclusion in 1995-2000.

Figure 3: List of Countries and Parties

Path: [ICPP announcement](#) > [List of countries](#)

International Comparative Political Parties Project -- 21st Century Initiative

53 Countries in the ICPP Project

The 53 countries were chosen from a universe of 93 major nations with some form of party system (not necessarily democratic or competitive) in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Fifty party systems were literally picked out of hats in 1966--five countries being drawn from ten hats representing ten "cultural-geographical" areas of the world. Three countries not drawn by chance (United States, United Kingdom, and Canada) were added for substantive interest. In effect, the set of countries is a stratified random sample of the world's party systems from 1950 to 1962.

Note that the original ICPP Project studied the party systems in these countries roughly a half century ago. Not all the parties that existed then lasted throughout the 1970s (See [Chapter 15, "Continuity and Change, 1950-1978"](#)), and fewer exist today. Indeed, not all the *countries* that existed then exist now. Here are the ten cultural-geographical areas and the original ICPP countries represented within each:

ANGLO-AMERICAN CULTURE AREA
[United States of America](#), [United Kingdom](#), [Australia](#), [New Zealand](#), [Canada](#), [Ireland](#), [India](#), and Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland (dissolved in 1963)

WEST CENTRAL EUROPE
[Austria](#), [France](#), [Federal Republic of Germany \(includes the former West and East Germanies\)](#), [Greece](#), [Portugal](#)

SCANDINAVIA AND BENELUX
[Denmark](#), [Iceland](#), [Sweden](#), [The Netherlands](#), [Luxembourg](#)

SOUTH AMERICA
[Ecuador](#), [Paraguay](#), [Peru](#), [Uruguay](#), [Venezuela](#)

CENTRAL AMERICA
[Cuba](#), [Dominican Republic](#), [El Salvador](#), [Guatemala](#), [Nicaragua](#)

ASIA AND THE FAR EAST (note that India is included in the Anglo-American Culture Area)
[Burma \(now Myanmar\)](#), [Cambodia \(Kampuchea\)](#), [Indonesia](#), [Democratic People's Republic of Korea \(North Korea\)](#), [Malaya \(now Malaysia\)](#)

EASTERN EUROPE
[Albania](#), [Bulgaria](#), [Hungary](#), [Russia \(formerly Union of Soviet Socialist Republics\)](#), and German Democratic Republic (formerly East Germany, dissolved in 1990)

MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA
[Sudan](#), [Tunisia](#), [Lebanon](#), [Iran](#), [Turkey](#)

WEST AFRICA
[Dahomey \(now Benin\)](#), [Ghana](#), [Guinea](#), [Upper Volta \(now Burkina Faso\)](#), [Togo](#)

CENTRAL AND EAST AFRICA
[Central African Republic](#), [Chad](#), [Congo-Brazzaville \(now People's Republic of the Congo\)](#), [Kenya](#), [Uganda](#)

Clicking on a country name takes you to lists of the original parties in our study and to other parties that originated after our time period and that existed in 2000.

If you can identify any contemporary party listed under any of these countries about which you have some knowledge, please return to the announcement and precede to step #2.

[return to ICPP announcement](#)

Those who click on the link for Step 2 are taken to the page in Figure 4, which outlines the conceptual framework of the ICPP Project and provides links to pages in *Political Parties* that explain how each variable was originally coded. (Those pages are not shown here.)

Figure 4: List of Variables

Path: [ICPP announcement](#) > [List of variables](#)

International Comparative Political Parties Project -- 21st Century Initiative	
List of Variables	
<p>The ICPP Project scored party traits on approximately 100 variables organized into an explicit conceptual framework. As stated in <i>Political Parties: A Cross-National Survey</i> (p. 7):</p> <p>The major concepts in the ICPP conceptual framework can be separated into those that pertain to a party's external relations and those that relate to its internal organization. The analysis of a party's external relations is judged according to eight concepts: <i>institutionalization</i>, <i>governmental status</i>, <i>social attraction</i>, <i>social concentration</i>, <i>social reflection</i>, <i>issue orientation</i>, <i>goal orientation</i>, and <i>autonomy</i>. Its internal organization can be analyzed according to the remaining four concepts: <i>degree of organization</i>, <i>centralization of power</i>, <i>coherence of behavior</i>, and <i>involvement</i> of its members.</p> <p>The conceptual framework of the ICPP project consists of these major concepts plus approximately 100 "basic variables" grouped into twelve corresponding "clusters" of variables. Each basic variable within a cluster constitutes a specific indicator of the more abstract concept which subsumes it. In most instances, the basic variables in these variable clusters are proposed as alternative indicators of the concept represented by the cluster. Under the assumption that these indicators are all adequately intercorrelated, they can be combined in an "additive" approach to concept measurement.</p> <p>A schematic diagram of the ICPP conceptual framework is presented in Table 1.4 [below], which reveals the number of basic variables subsumed under each major concept.</p> <p>Clicking on the major concept takes you to the list of variables. Then clicking on the variable will take you to the page in <i>Political Parties: A Cross-National Survey</i> that describes its conceptual and operational definitions. You need not know about <i>all</i> the variables to contribute information. Knowledge about even one variable is welcomed.</p>	
TABLE 1.4 The ICPP Conceptual Framework	
Concepts	No. of Basic Variables
EXTERNAL RELATIONS	
Institutionalization	7
Governmental Status	8
Social Support --measured by	
Social Attraction	6
Social Concentration	6
Social Reflection	6
Issue Orientation	13
Goal Orientation	33
Autonomy	5
INTERNAL ORGANIZATION	
Degree of Organization	7
Centralization of Power	8
Coherence	6
Involvement	6
No. of Basic Variables	111
<p>See Chapter 14: "Validating the Conceptual Framework," for empirical assessments of reliability and validity.</p>	
<p>Return to ICPP announcement</p>	

Those who proceed to Step 3 encounter a registration form, reproduced as Figure 5. We need to screen those who offer expert knowledge about political parties to ensure data quality control, but all serious registrants will be provided access codes that admit them to Stage 2: Access to participation in the updating project and to the gateway to the data collection stage.

Figure 5: Registration Form for Access to Updating

Path: [Announcement](#) > [Registration form](#) (NOTE: As of June 25, 2003, this form has NOT been activated)

ICPP 21st Century Initiative

Thank you for replying to the announcement of my project to update data on the world's political parties.
Kenneth Janda

Each registered participant in the initiative will obtain these benefits:

- immediate access to a portable SPSS file with the data for 158 parties in the 53 countries contained in the original study covering the 1950s and early 1960s
- preferential access to the quantitative data file prepared for all parties updated as of the first decade of the 21st century--being notified as soon as the data collection is completed and the data become available for analysis.
- registration as a *participating scholar* in the 21st Century Initiative--becoming able to identify and contact others with similar interests in party politics who also register as participating scholars.

To insure the quality of data collected over the internet, I must insure that prospective participants are serious. Therefore, I ask each person who offers to be an Expert Judge on party traits to register as a participant by filling out the form below:

Registration form

Family name:

Given name:

Institutional or organizational affiliation:

Department or subdivision:

Status:

City:

Country:

e-mail address:

repeat e-mail address:

Briefly state the parties and topics on which you can contribute information:

When finished, please press:

If everything is in order, I'll send a confirmation that contains information granting you access to the coding forms. I'll also supply instructions on how to download the SPSS dataset.

Thank you for participating

Registered participants will obtain the access codes that allow them to enter the "gateway" page to 53 coding forms--one for each of the ICPP variables selected for updating in 1995-2000. This page has not yet been password-protected, so anyone can access it at the URL given under Stage 2 above.

Figure 6: Gateway to Coding Forms Home Page

NOTE: This site is under construction and non-operative (June 23, 2003)
Path: [Gateway to forms home page](#)

International Comparative Political Parties Project -- 21st Century Initiative

Gateway to forms for submitting information on variables

Below is the list of variables for which we need information about parties in ICPP countries in the year 2000. Please click on the name of any variable or variables for which you can provide information on any party in the original set of parties or new parties in existence in 2000. That action will take you to a form for submitting information about the variable.

<p>Institutionalization variables</p> <p>Year of origin (needed only if origin is disputed) Name changes (needed only if name was changed) Organizational discontinuity Leadership competition</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Electoral and legislative instability will be computed from electoral data for countries</p> <p>Governmental Status variables</p> <p>Government discrimination Governmental leadership Cabinet participation National participation</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Electoral and legislative strength will be computed from electoral data for countries</p> <p>Social Attraction variables</p> <p style="text-align: right;">These scores will be created from national surveys</p> <p>Issue Orientation variables</p> <p>Government ownership of means of production Government role in economic planning Redistribution of wealth Social welfare Secularization of society Support of the military National integration Electoral participation Electoral participation Interference with civil liberties Industrial relations Industrial relations Immigration Rights of women</p> <p>Goal Orientation variables</p> <p>Competitive strategy</p>	<p>Autonomy variables</p> <p>Source of funds Source of members Source of leaders Relations with domestic parties Relations with foreign organizations</p> <p>Degree of Organization variables</p> <p>Structural articulation Intensiveness of organization Extensiveness of organization Frequency of local meetings Frequency of national meetings Maintaining records Pervasiveness of organization</p> <p>Centralization of Power variables</p> <p>Nationalization of structure Selecting the national leader Selecting parliamentary candidates Allocating funds Formulating policy Controlling communications Administering discipline Leadership concentration</p> <p>Coherence variables</p> <p>Legislative cohesion Ideological factionalism Issue factionalism Strategic or tactical factionalism</p> <p>Involvement variables</p> <p>Membership requirements Membership participation Material incentives Purposive incentives Doctrinism Personalism</p>
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I will attempt to answer all who reply to this announcement--screening out any frivolous responses and providing passwords to serious contributors for access to participation. If you have questions, please write me at k-janda@northwestern.edu.

Note also that are not yet active links to all 53 forms, for not all have been completed. Users who click on an active link will be taken to the coding form for that link. Consider the form for the first variable, "Year of Origin," which is reproduced below in Figure 7.

Figure 7: Coding Form for Variable 1.01, "Year of Origin"

Path: [Gateway to forms](#) > [Year of origin](#)

International Comparative Political Parties (ICPP) Project	Expert Ratings of Political Parties
<i>Thank you for participating as a "Expert Judge."</i>	
Please read about how to code the variable named below by clicking on its link . That will open the coding instructions in a new window to facilitate side-by-side comparison. Complete the form, and submit it.	
Coding form for variable 1.01 -- Year of Origin	
Please enter your name: <input style="width: 80%;" type="text"/> Name of the party being rated: <input style="width: 80%;" type="text"/> Name of country in which the party exists: <input style="width: 80%;" type="text"/>	
<p>The "year of origin" refers to the year in which the activists organized for the purpose of pursuing their goal rather than the year in which the party first presented candidates for an election—although the two may often be the same. Year of origin is coded by entering all four digits of the year. (The original study used only the last two digits, causing a Y2K problem.) The larger the value, the younger the party and the lower its score on this indicator of institutionalization.</p> <p>All 158 original parties in the ICPP study were scored for "year of origin," so there is no need to rescore this variable for <i>those</i> parties unless you disagree with the year that we assigned. Of course, we do need the year of origin for new parties. Please enter in the field ONLY the year in which the party was formed:</p> <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>	
Explanation of coding choice (a brief explanation must be provided): <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 80px; width: 100%;"></div>	
List any sources cited in the box above. If no sources were cited, type "none". (If left blank, an error occurs.) <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 80px; width: 100%;"></div>	
Please check your coding choice and explanation for accuracy and consistency. When you are finished, press <input type="button" value="Submit"/> to transmit your coding decision.	
Thank you for your help. You'll soon receive confirmation of your submission. If you have questions or comments, please send them to kjanda@northwestern.edu	

This form allows the "free" entry of a value for year of origin. The next example (Figure 8) requires the coder to pick one code from a set of codes. Regardless of whether the code is entered freely or picked from a set of options, users cannot simply state a code; they must write a brief explanation of the coding choice. The form will not be accepted upon submission without text entered in the box for "explanation."

Following the practice in original ICPP Project, we think it critically important to data quality control for experts to explain their choices. This will help us interpret why two or more experts assigned different scores for the same variable to the same party. Naturally, we welcome multiple experts to code the same variables for the same party, for similarity of coding by independent judges improves

reliability. When confronted with strikingly different codes, however, we need some means to resolve the difference, and the coding explanations will help.

Figure 8: Coding Form for Variable 5.01: Government Ownership of Production

Path: [Gateway to forms](#) > 5.01 Government Ownership

International Comparative Political Parties (ICPP) Project	Expert Ratings of Political Parties
<i>Thank you for participating as a "Expert Judge."</i>	
<p>Please read about how to code the variable named below by clicking on its link. That will open the coding instructions in a new window to facilitate side-by-side comparison. Complete the form, and submit it.</p>	
Coding form for variable 5.01 -- Government Ownership of Means of Production	
<p>Please enter your name: <input style="width: 400px;" type="text"/></p> <p>Name of the party being rated: <input style="width: 350px;" type="text"/></p> <p>Name of country in which the party exists: <input style="width: 250px;" type="text"/></p>	
<p>Please check the box next to one value in the set below that--on the basis of your knowledge--most closely matches the party's position on this issue during the period from 1995 through 2000. If the party's position changed during the period or since then, please briefly note that also when explaining your coding choice below.</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> +5 PRO-strong: Strongly favors government ownership; advocates government ownership of all basic industries; advocates government ownership of means of production generally. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> +4 Intermediate value between +5 and +3 <input type="radio"/> +3 PRO-moderate: Favors government ownership; advocates government ownership of some basic industries but not all; advocates acquiring some industry not currently under government ownership. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> +2 Intermediate value between +3 and +1 <input type="radio"/> +1 PRO-weak: Accepts some government ownership but mainly favors more government regulation; advocates active regulation of production and marketing activities of basic industries; advocates stronger regulation. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> 0 NEUTRAL: Includes ambiguous or contradictory positions <input type="radio"/> -1 CON-weak: Accepts some government ownership; opposes ownership spreading to all basic industries; opposes government acquisition of a given industry not under government ownership; accepts current government regulations. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> -2 Intermediate value between -1 and -3 <input type="radio"/> -3 CON-moderate: Opposes government ownership; opposes ownership in principle for any basic industry; advocates returning a given government-owned industry to private ownership; advocates weaker regulations. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> -4 Intermediate value between -3 and -5 <input type="radio"/> -5 CON-strong: Strongly opposes government ownership; opposes even government regulation of production and marketing activities of industries other than minimal requirements for health, safety, and honesty; urges repeal of current regulations. 	
<p>Explanation of coding choice (a brief explanation must be provided):</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 80px; width: 100%;"></div>	
<p>List any sources cited in the box above. If no sources were cited, type "none". (If left blank, an error occurs.)</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 80px; width: 100%;"></div>	
<p>Please check your coding choice and explanation for accuracy and consistency.</p> <p>When you are finished, press <input type="button" value="Submit"/> to transmit your coding decision.</p>	
<p>Thank you for your help. You'll soon receive confirmation of your submission. If you have questions or comments, please send them to k.janda@northwestern.edu</p>	

As most amateur web designers realize, it is relatively easy to design forms to collect information, but it is another matter to capture the information in a data base. That requires more than knowing how to use a web-creation program. One must know how to write or use computer scripts that interface between the web browser running on a computer somewhere on the internet and the specific computer that you designate to collect and process the data. Typically, such scripts are called "cgi" scripts (for "common gateway interface"), and they are written in computer languages such as Perl, Java, or C++.

Jeffrey Cousens wrote a general cgi script in Perl to handle all 53 forms. The data for all variables are recorded in six tab-delimited fields--name, party, country, value, explanation, and sources--plus a seven "hidden" field that reveals which variable is being coded. The data from this flatfile can then be imported into a data base management program, such as FileMaker Pro, that facilitates searching and sorting of the internet input for the purposes of data checking and cleaning. Ultimately, the data will be exported into a cleaned file for subsequent analysis. The data will be released first to those who helped code the parties on the variables, and then to the general scholarly community.

For each completed form successfully submitted and accepted, the user receives confirmation of the submission and a notice of thanks. The user can then return to the gateway and code a different variable using a different form, or code the same variable for a different party—using a duplicate form.

Note that this internet project is likely to generate a considerable amount of information from participants across the world. One cannot determine now the amount of information to be generated, but we can make an estimate from some reasonable assumptions. Let's assume that 150 parties will be identified for coding during 1995-2000. Let's also assume that, on the average, three participants will send in codes for each party on each of the 53 variables. Multiplying $150 \times 3 \times 53 = 23,850$ entries into our flatfile data base. This raw information will need to be sorted by parties and by variables, and then evaluated before assigning any specific codes to parties in a clean data base. So some time will pass before the research is complete and the data made available.

Our plan is to notify users periodically of the coding progress. Assuming that enough experts volunteer to code these variables and that the technology works as planned, we hope to have a cross-national data set to release to the participants at the end of two years. In any event, this project should help party scholars everywhere understand whether this is a viable method for collecting cross-national data on political parties over the internet.

Appendix A

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