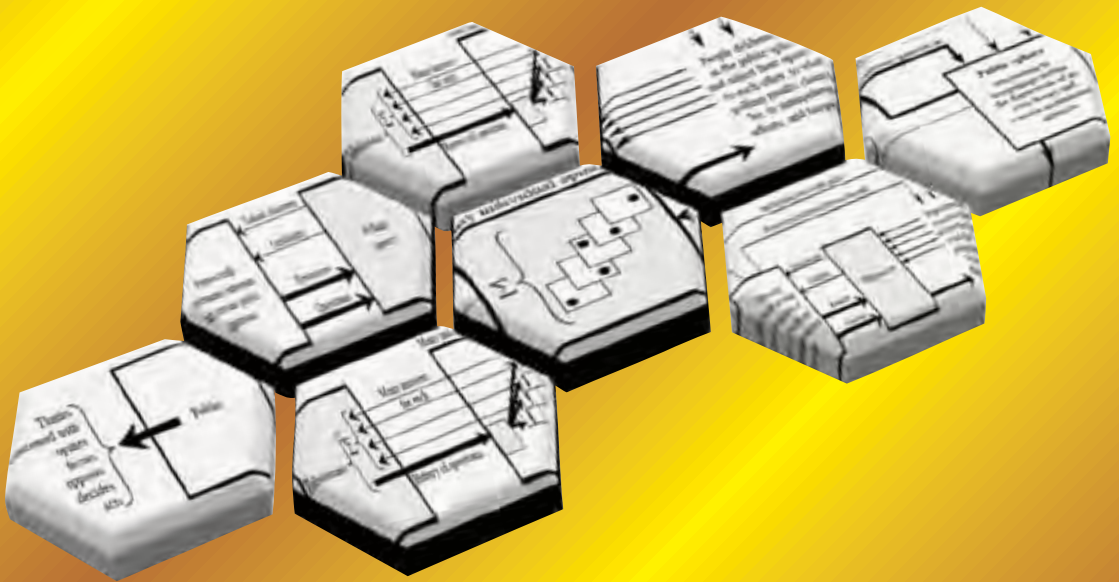


Theory, Data and Analysis



**Data Resources for the Study of
Politics in the Czech Republic**

Pat Lyons

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Abstract

This monograph is unique as it is the first comprehensive study of the corpus of political data available in the Czech Republic. Rather than being a descriptive inventory of *what* is available and *where* the data are archived; this study also explains *who* undertook the research that created the data, *how* the data were created and equally importantly *why* was the data research undertaken in the first place. It is widely accepted within the social sciences that the “data do not speak for themselves but must be interpreted.” For this important reason, any discussion of political data resources must be accompanied by an explanation of the context in which the data were created, operationalised, modelled and used to explain real world political phenomena.

Within this book the presentation of the data resources available to the community of political scientists interested in the Czech Republic is presented in a functional manner where the general purpose of the data is emphasised. Consequently, the overview of data is divided into five groups which form the basis of chapters in this study: (a) election survey data, (b) official election results, (c) comparative survey data, (d) elite survey data, (e) expert and manifesto survey data. In order to demonstrate the characteristics and importance of specific datasets a brief examination is made of the published research associated with the data. This is important because it provides the student and researcher with a starting point for beginning their own research work. The final chapter of this volume explores some of the key methodological features of survey data such as quality and sampling; and statistical methods used to examine the data.

Keywords

Survey data – Election data – data analysis – methods – Czech Republic

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The survey data used discussed in this monograph comes from a variety of sources. In this respect, I am indebted to those involved in the gathering of these datasets in providing documentation and lists of publications outlining how the data has been used. Survey data not currently available in ČSDA is kindly provided by UK Data Archive, University of Essex and the Social Data Archive, Cologne, Germany.

Any errors of fact or interpretation in the discussion of the survey data and academic works cited in this study lie with the author.

Pat Lyons
August 2012
Prague

Acronyms and key terms

AV ČR	Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic. (Akademie věd České republiky, 1993-)
ČSSD	Czech Social Democratic Party (Česká strana sociálně demokratická, 1993-)
ČSDA	Czech Social Science Data Archive
CMP	Comparative Manifesto Project
CSES	Comparative Study of Electoral Systems
CVVM	Centre for Public Opinion Research, Institute of Sociology, Czech Academy of Sciences (Centrum pro výzkum veřejného mínění, 2001-)
EB	Eurobarometer
EES	European Election Survey
EFA	Exploratory Factor Analysis. EFA is very similar to PCA except that the variability to be partitioned between the factors is what is held in common among the survey questions analysed. The unique variability of each of the survey questions is excluded from the analysis. Thus, it is the correlation between each variable and the latent factor which is examined. EFA derived factor loadings are generally lower than those extracted using PCA because EFA only examines the common correlation between the variables examined and the latent factors extracted
ESS	European Social Survey
EU	European Union
EVS	European Values Survey
FLEB	Flash Eurobarometer
ISSP	International Social Survey Programme
IVVM	Institute for Public Opinion Research (Institut pro výzkum veřejného mínění, 1990–2000)
KDU-ČSL	Christian Democratic Union-Czechoslovak People's Party (Křesťanská a demokratická unie – Československá strana lidová, 1992-)
KSČ	Communist Party of Czechoslovakia (Komunistická strana Československa, 1921–1990)
KSČM	Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia (Komunistická strana Čech a Moravy, 1989-)
MDS	Multi-Dimensional Scaling. This is a procedure for obtaining survey respondents judgements about the similarity of objects. These objects may be real or conceptual depending on the survey question. The key advantage of MDS is that the perceptual maps generated derive solely from the respondents' answers. MDS uses the similarity between responses to construct a simplified spatial representation of the underlying relationship between a set of variables, where items that are similar are represented as being closer together (typically) in a two dimensional map. MDS and MDU differ from EFA and PCA because it is the respondents rather than the researcher who identifies underlying dimensions in a dataset

ODS	Civic Democrat Party (Občanská demokratická strana, 1991-)
PCA	Principal Components Analysis. This is a statistical method for identifying a set of latent constructs such as political values measured by a set of survey questions. The goal is to provide the simplest representation of the association between the responses measured using a set of survey questions (typically Likert scales). The observed shared variance exhibited by all the survey items examined is assumed to arise from an underlying pattern in the data. Unlike EFA, PCA takes into account both the shared and unique variances of the variables examined
WVS	World Values Survey

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Introduction

Opinion of the public is clearly a modern phenomenon: its origin and development are connected with the spirit of the Enlightenment, which, in a reciprocal influence with the development of natural sciences but also historical political thought in parallel with the present state and civil society on which it is founded in a permanent struggle with once ruling but now weaker and weaker religious-theological mental world, up till now has never been fully materialized and, under the influence of deeply moving events, experiences ever new blows that hamper and sometimes destructively influence public opinion formation.

Ferdinand Tönnies (1922), quoted from Splichal (1999: 99)

Surveys hold, as it were, the mirror up to the nation.

Sidney Verba (1996: 3)

Overview

This book is about doing empirical research using political data and most especially mass survey results. Unpacking this objective into its component parts is predicated on the assumption that all scientific research involves integrating theory, data and analysis. This is the general approach adopted in this book and more will be said on this point in the penultimate section of this chapter. In the meantime, there are a number of key issues that need to be addressed when dealing with political data and more especially survey results. First, it is important to state that this book is primarily intended for anyone exploring politics in the Czech Republic using various types of quantitative data such as mass, elite and expert surveys and the content analysis of party manifestoes. Second, many of the themes addressed have application to the use of quantitative political data in other national contexts and across the social sciences more generally.

Research within the social sciences is fundamentally based on theory for the simple practical reason that social, political and economic behaviour cannot be productively studied using observation alone. The complexity of social reality requires simplifying assumptions and general explanations in order to be tractable. In the first section of this introductory chapter there will be a presentation of one of the most famous theories or ‘laws’ in political science: in order to demonstrate the power of integrating in a systematic manner theory, data and analysis – a central theme of this book.

In addition to substantive political theories of specific phenomena such as electoral participation or the impact of electoral laws on the party system; it is necessary with political survey data to have a theoretical understanding of public opinion, and more specifically the meaning of mass survey responses. The opening quotations to this chapter reveal how conceptions of citizen attitudes and their aggregated manifestation as public opinion evolved during the twentieth century. For Ferdinand Tönnies (1855–1936), the last significant classical theorist of public opinion, the formation and expression of citizen attitudes were treated in a theoretical and qualitative manner. In contrast, Sidney Verba (1932-) has adopted an empirical and positivist orientation where in essence citizens' attitudes are what are measured in surveys. Both of these perspectives reflect not only different views about citizens' expressions of opinions, but also about the desired role of public opinion within the political system.

The fundamental point here is that all political data is based on assumptions, and this is particularly true in the case of political survey data. A researcher's decision to use individual level survey data and test models of political attitudes or behaviour involves making an enormous number of theoretical and methodological assumptions. Consequently, the remaining part of this introduction and the first section of this book will be devoted to exploring the integration of theory, data and analysis.

1. Theory, data and analysis

Within political science any brief perusal of research on topics such as the “simple” act of casting a vote quickly reveals a behaviour that has proved very challenging to explain. On the one hand, there is surprise that citizens bother to vote at all because a single ballot is very likely to have a negligible effect on most election results. Nonetheless, election-after-election citizens vote in their thousands and millions and sometimes at great personal cost and risk. On the other hand, there is concern that the level of electoral participation has been declining for decades in most established liberal democracies with frequent and fair elections. Attempts to explain this secular decline reveal that this trend has no simple explanation, but appears to be the product of many factors with contextual interaction effects that are as yet poorly understood.

The situation becomes ever more complicated if comparisons are made across different types of elections, i.e. local, regional, national and international. The official election results reveal that voters appear to have a hierarchical view of elections where some contests are seen to be more important than others. As a result,

voter turnout and party choice are systematically different across election types. How is it possible to research turnout with such complexity within and across countries? Social scientists manage complexity through the creation of simplifying theories. The goal of all theorising is to focus on the general features of specific events or processes.

One excellent example of building a theory by concentrating on specific features of a political system is the influential work of the French political scientist, Maurice Duverger. In his book length study of political parties, Duverger (1951, 1959) explored in detail the organisational nature of parties in France and elsewhere and analysed in an empirical manner the extent to which the size of party systems are the product of institutions rather than ideological cleavages (Taagepera and Grofman 1985: 341–342). This work is substantively important because the number of parties competing in an election represents the menu of choice open to citizens: and has fundamentally important implications for evaluating elections as instruments of democracy and competing majoritarian and proportional visions of political representation (Bingham Powell jr. 2000).

1.1 Electoral rules determine the number of parties

Unlike the natural sciences, there are very few laws within the study of politics. One of the few exceptions to this generalisation is Duverger's law and hypothesis which relates the two main families of electoral rules to the number of parties (Duverger 1959: 217, 239). Duverger's work on political parties has been influential because it reveals that although national political context is important for understanding politics, there are nonetheless general features such as institutional arrangements that have fundamentally important effects.

- Duverger's law: The simple-majority single-ballot system favours the two-party system
- Duverger's hypothesis: Proportional Representation (PR) electoral systems favour multipartism, and this is also true for two round majority systems

The success of Duverger's law and hypothesis in predicting the number of parties in a country has generated hundreds of books and articles and effectively created one of the most productive and perhaps genuinely scientific subfields within all of political science (Taagepera and Shugart 1989; Cox 1997; Shugart 2005;

Grofman 2008; Grofman et al. 2009; Taagepera 2007, 2008).¹ Having outlined the impact of electoral rules on the number of parties, it is natural to ask: how do these electoral consequences occur? Duverger (1959) proposed two mechanisms or effects to explain the systematic impact of electoral rules on party systems.

- The mechanical effect is the institutional process under which votes are converted to seats under the electoral law. Plurality electoral rules yield disproportional votes to seats ratios (e.g. win 25% of all votes and get 5% of the total seats); but result in clear election results as the largest parties win more than their fair share of seats. However, voters directly select the government. In contrast, proportional electoral rules are fairer but often there is no clear winner; and this will result in post-election coalition government bargaining where voters have no direct influence.
- The psychological effect reflects voters' and parties' expectations as to the likely consequences of the mechanical effects just noted. This is the basis for strategic voting by voters so as not to 'waste' their vote; and strategic positioning by parties to maximise the benefits of the mechanical and psychological effects.

With a new electoral system it makes sense to think that the voters learn how mechanical effects operate over a series of elections. With an established electoral system the interconnectedness of the mechanical and psychological effects becomes firmly established. In methodological terms, the two effects are termed 'endogenous' because of reciprocal causation. This is an important point because many Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression models implicitly assume that Duverger's mechanical and psychological effects are causally independent, or exogenous.

According to Benoit (2006), this misspecification results in an overestimation of the mechanical effects between 45% and 100%. In order to deal with this endogeneity problem, some recent researchers have adopted an experimental methodology. One recent cross-national study took advantage of the analytical leverage offered by an electorate voting in pairs of elections with different electoral rules. Without getting into the details of how it is possible to estimate the mechanical and psychological effects, this quasi-experimental research found that mechanical effects tend to dominate in most party systems examined (see, Blais et

1 Duverger's law and hypothesis have attracted considerable criticism. Some critics argue that these laws had been published earlier by others going back to the late nineteenth century (Riker 1982). However, Duverger was the first to demonstrate with a large volume of comparative data the validity and reliability of the relationship between electoral system type and number of parties (Benoit 2006: 71–72).

al. 2011). Additional laboratory experimental research found that mechanical and psychological effects may offset each other in majority two round presidential-type elections (van der Straeten et al. 2010). This is a surprising finding because psychological effects are generally seen as having a multiplicative interaction impact with the mechanical effect. The key lesson here is that even with simple mechanisms shaping vote choice the dynamics of elections can be complex.²

The key goal of this introductory section has been to demonstrate how a parsimonious theory within political science may be tested using quantitative data to provide non-obvious; and often startling insights into how political systems operate. Within Duverger's (1959) work, it is the psychological effect that has proved more difficult to identify and measure using aggregate electoral data (Shively 1970; Blais and Carty 1991). Such difficulties have motivated the progressive use of individual level survey data since the 1950s, and the emergence of national election studies based on attitudinal data derived from national representative samples: a topic that will be examined in detail in Chapter 3. However, the use of citizen attitudes derived from mass surveys involves having a political theory about the role that public opinion plays within the political system: a theme developed in Chapters 1 and 2. Within this introductory chapter it is sensible to introduce a number of fundamental ideas underpinning the use of political survey data – a resource that forms a core element of the data discussed in this volume.

2. A fundamental idea: public opinion

A central feature of the political data discussed in Section 2 of this book is founded on measuring individual citizen's political attitudes and aggregating these measurements into 'public opinion.' Within political theory there has been much debate about the problematic nature of the term 'public opinion' (Splichal 1999: 1–52). It may be argued that public opinion represents one example of an important class of political ideas known as “essentially contested concepts” (Gallie 1956). In short, essentially contested concepts have no definitive meaning that is accepted by all scholars. There is agreement on key features of what constitutes public opinion, but not the relationship between these essential characteristics. First of all, in order to have public opinion by definition there must be a 'public' – but what or who constitutes the public? Not all aggregations of people are

2 It is important to note that Duverger's (1959) law and hypothesis are silent on the creation of electoral laws in the first place. Typically, this is undertaken by political parties; and it is sensible to think that parties have incentives to support electoral laws that will ensure their future success (note, Colomer 2005, 2007).

defined as being the 'public.' There are also related concepts such as 'mass' or 'crowd.' What are the differences between these three related concepts?

A crowd has been defined within social psychology as an aggregation of individuals who are defined by a shared emotional response to some event or object. Crowds are normally thought of in terms of a motivating factor where individuals engage in behaviour they would not normally undertake alone. Typical examples include, rioting, strikes and demonstrations. One of the most influential studies of crowd behaviour was published more than a century ago by Gustave Le Bon (1895), who typified crowd behaviour as being composed of anonymous individuals who are subject to the rapid spread of an idea or feeling while being in a relatively suggestible mental state.

Masses differ from crowds in that there is no shared experience, but are characterised by individual isolation. Blumer (1948) defined a mass as a collection of isolated individuals. The concept of mass derives from the process of modernisation where individuals moved away from closely knit rural communities to isolated urban settlements where there was little community life, i.e. the shift from *gemeinschaft* to *gesellschaft* according to Ferdinand Tönnies (1887) in a key sociological text. What gives a mass of people cohesion is the presence of a common focus of attention, for example a national news story such as a scandal. So while the individual members of a mass might not be aware of each other there are consequences of many such individuals behaving in the same way. A typical example would be buying patterns in a market.

A public is different to a crowd in that cohesion is derived from interest and reason rather than a feeling of empathy. A public is different from a mass in that it is self-aware. According to Blumer, a public engages in a critical discourse about an issue where the discussion is rational, but not necessarily intelligent due to limited information. Another key feature of opinion is the reciprocal flow of opinions between individuals where citizens are both transmitters and receivers of opinions (Wright Mills 1956). In summary, public opinion is seen to be the formation, communication and measurement of individual citizens' attitudes toward public affairs. This perspective raises the important question: what is the link between individual attitudes and aggregated public opinion?

2.1 Rival models of the linkage between individual and collective opinions

Within political science there is no definitive view on what the term 'public opinion' means, and this concept is used in systematically different ways by differ-

ent subfields within the discipline. The discussion above focussed mainly on the ‘public’ aspect of the public opinion concept. Here we will move the argument forward by considering the micro-macro link between individual citizen’s attitudes and overall public opinion. This theoretical discussion is fundamentally important because evaluation of the political data presented in Section 2 of this book demands that the researcher have a measurement model of the data in mind. Often, such measurement models are implicit and this approach runs the risk of conceptual confusion (see Box 1) when making causal inferences. In this subsection, we will explore five competing definitions of public opinion.

Public opinion is an aggregation of individual opinions. Public opinion is simply the sum of all individual opinions. Simple aggregation of one-person-one-vote data is often used as a justification of associating opinion polls results as being coterminous with public opinion. This conception of public opinion is popular as it is similar to how elections are run and it fits neatly with normative support for democratic government. The question of whether it is appropriate to treat all sampling units or respondents as being equally influential in shaping collective opinions is debatable. This is because a defining feature of most societies is material inequality and differences in social status and influence.

Public opinion is based on majority beliefs. Public opinion is based fundamentally on social norms and conventions adhered to by most people in society. The underlying idea here is that individuals conform to what their social group think. This is the conception used by Elizabeth Noelle-Neumann (1974) in her “spiral of silence” hypothesis where she argued that individuals find out what the majority think, form a private opinion, and if this matches with majority opinion they express this view publicly, otherwise they remain silent so as not to attract any sanctions from the majority. The consequence of this situation of conformity is that all minority opinions are censored both explicitly and implicitly. Such a conception of public opinion makes mass surveying problematic, but not impossible.

Public opinion results from the clash of group interests. Here public opinion is seen to be a product of interest group activity. The emphasis is on the relative power between competing interest groups who debate with one another in the public arena. While individual opinions do exist, what is seen to be most important is the articulation of such views by interest groups who lobby on such individuals’ behalf. According to Blumer (1948) and Bourdieu (1973), mass surveys’ treatment of individuals as all being equal is simply unrealistic and will not lead to a better understanding of society.

Public opinion is media and elite opinion. From this perspective public opinion is simply whatever most citizens have been told by elites in the media. Con-

sequently, public opinion is in reality simply a somewhat noisier version of elite opinion. In this vein, Walter Lippmann (1922) contended that it is largely impossible for most citizens to be informed about public policy; and as a result it is neither practical nor desirable for citizens to have an influence on public policy.

Public opinion does not exist. Some have argued that public opinion is just an empty phrase with no real meaning where those in the media and politics use the term as a rhetorical device to justify their arguments without any real evidence. Critics such as Pierre Bourdieu (1973) have argued that the language used in survey questions to ask for political opinions is often not that used by citizens. Consequently, when respondents answer survey items it may not be clear what is their interpretation of the questions. Bourdieu goes further and argues, as described in Box 1, that the political attitudes measured in typical mass surveys are not real; and hence aggregated measurements of public opinion are little more than the methodological artefacts of survey interviews.

In reality, each of the five models or definitions of public opinion noted above have both strengths and weaknesses. The definition adopted by a researcher often depends on three practical considerations. First, the type of research being conducted is an important concern. For example, the survey based approach is not useful with historical data such as the ethnic and economic voting patterns evident in the official election results for Czechoslovakia during the First Republic (1918–1938); a topic discussed briefly in Chapter 4. Second, historical circumstances often help to determine the prevailing conception of public opinion. So for example, public opinion in authoritarian states tends to have a rhetorical nature while in democratic states the conception of public attitudes has a more reflexive and critical nature. Third, the way in which public opinion is measured also helps to determine its conceptualisation. In an era where mass surveying is the norm, seeing public opinion as an aggregation of individuals fits with the statistical sampling methodology used to undertake such polls.

The central message to be taken from this section is that the study of individual political attitudes and collective public opinion cannot be defined concretely; but must take into account that different intellectual traditions, historical circumstances and assumptions about human nature influence what is meant by the term ‘public opinion’ and all other forms of political data. A more extended discussion of these theoretical questions is presented in Chapter 2. Having outlined some of the theoretical debates surrounding the interpretation and use of political attitude data, it makes sense at this juncture to make some remarks about the importance of this data resource within political science.

Box 1: Do political attitudes and public opinion exist?

The following text outlines in a verbatim manner Patrick Champagne's (2004) overview of Pierre Bourdieu's critique of mass survey research.

The growing importance of polls in political life and, especially in France, the omnipresence of political scientists who design them and comment on them in the press, led a number of political observers and actors to pose the prejudicial question of their scientific value. There would be, in the then-nascent practice of opinion polling in France, a "before" and an "after" Bourdieu, who formulated the essence of what was to be said on this question at a lecture given in 1971, published two years later in *Les Temps modernes*, and entitled, in deliberately provocative fashion, "Public Opinion Does Not Exist" (Bourdieu 1973). In the article Bourdieu demonstrated that this new public opinion was a pure artifact, manufactured by pollsters, and, as he explained in conclusion, that it therefore did not exist "in the sense implicitly assumed by those who make opinion polls or those who make use of the results." [...]

Drawing on the secondary analysis of opinion studies conducted by polling institutes over a ten-year period in the field of education, as well as a random sample survey which he had undertaken directly through the press on the crisis of the education system shortly after the events of May 68, Bourdieu explained that the simple fact of asking a representative sample of the voting-age population the same closed question, as in a political referendum, and adding up the answers in order to represent political opinion in the form of a percentage (in order to be able to say, for example, that 50% of French people support such and such a policy measure) rests on a set of presuppositions which are no doubt those of the democratic political ideology, but are not borne out by the facts and must therefore be grasped as such by scientific analysis. By thus vigorously opposing this wild importation of a political problematic into the terrain of the social sciences, and by refusing to confuse "purely formal democracy," which supposes all citizens to be politically competent, with "real democracy," with unequally competent social agents, Bourdieu elicited numerous reactions, especially from political scientists, that were closer to political inductive than to properly scientific debate. [...]

Bourdieu's demonstration was nevertheless irresistible, which no doubt explains why more than 30 years later the article remains a reference in this domain. In showing in effect that the simple fact of asking the same question of a sample of highly socially and culturally heterogeneous individuals – like those continuously asked, for political rather than scientific reasons, by polling institutes – then adding together the responses, consists in implicitly postulating three things.

- In the first place, such a mechanism of inquiry presupposes that all the individuals have personal opinions, which is refuted not only by random sample surveys but also by the distribution of "non-responses" in the inquiries conducted by the polling institutes themselves.
- In the second place, asking closed questions, which leads to collecting not opinions but preformed answers to opinion questions, implies the hypothesis that all those surveyed ask themselves the questions that are asked of them (or at least that they would be able to ask them), which is refuted, here again, by all the comprehension tests on the meaning of the questions made among those surveyed.
- Finally, in the third place, adding up the answers thus obtained presupposes that all the opinions are equivalent and have the same social weight, even though everything indicates that the capacity of individuals to impose their opinion on the political field is strongly connected to the power of the social groups that can be mobilized, as well as to social status, relational capital, and the positions individuals occupy in the class structure.

In short, Bourdieu recalled that opinions only count politically when they are carried by social forces [...]. He wanted to make it understood outside the scientific community that polling institutes not only do not measure true movements of opinion, but authorize all the misrepresentations of the responses to their questionnaires that arise because they were made in total ignorance of the facts by those surveyed – in short, that these institutes were engaged in a sort of illegitimate exercise of science. He finally recalled that the pollsters' "public opinion" obscures a much more real "public opinion" than the one they manufacture on their computer printouts, to wit, that which is constructed by the public action of the interest groups traditional political science knows very well and refers to under the notion of "lobbies" or "pressure groups," which cannot be reduced to a simple percentage in abstraction from the tensions that permeate the social structure.

Sources: Champagne (2004), Bourdieu (1973).

3. Why is political survey data important?

A central assumption within representative democracies is that the key link between governors and the governed is public opinion. In this system, elected representatives reflect the preferences of citizens in public policy making. Of course, real-world politics is much more complicated than this assumption because politicians actively seek to influence citizens' preferences and expressed public opinion. Consequently, representative democratic politics is composed of a complex system of dynamic reciprocal influence between voters and representatives (Alvarez and Brehm 2002). The importance of public opinion has been recognised for a long time; however, it is only in the twentieth century that attempts were made to use nationally representative sample surveys to measure public opinion. Not all scholars, as Boxes 1 and 2 demonstrate, have viewed the emergence of survey based measures of political attitudes as a positive development. The three arguments presented in Box 2 reveal fundamental differences over the relationship between mass surveys and democracy.

Such debates have spurred those involved in survey research to demonstrate that political attitudes research is a valid and reliable predictor of political behaviour. Consequently, elections have been used by pollsters and survey researchers as an objective means of cross-validating both their measuring instruments and sampling methodology. Spectacular failures such as the Readers Digest's large straw poll's incorrect prediction of the outcome of the US presidential election of 1936 (see chapter 7) provided the necessary impetus to place political surveying on more rigorous scientific foundations (Crossley 1937). Notwithstanding the great advances made in making the measurement of political attitudes more valid and reliable, it is important to keep in mind that scholarly understanding of public opinion is incomplete (note, Badaracco 1997). This is because the signals sent to government via opinion poll results are subject to a whole range of distortions where the process of attitude measurement affects the results obtained.

3.1 Concept of individual political attitudes and public opinion

The idea that the electoral preferences and political beliefs and values of a citizen can be measured by simply asking a person a series of questions with a set of response options that form part of a scale involves making a lot of assumptions. Does the respondent have opinions? Do they tell the truth? Are the questions asked meaningful to both the interviewee and the political analyst? Unsurprisingly, the early decades of public opinion and political attitude measurement

Box 2: The good, the bad and the ugly: political surveying and democratic politics

The question of the impact of political opinion polling on democracy has always been controversial. The central debates have focussed on three themes: the good, the bad and the ugly. First, surveys measure public preferences in an objective and neutral manner thereby are good as they provide an additional channel for democratic representation. Mass surveys are bad indicators of public preferences because they are susceptible to a whole range of methodological effects and it is impossible to say with certainty if survey results are valid and reliable. Third, surveys are strategic devices used to manufacture popular positions for partisan gains; and hence are ugly as they undermine the democratic process.

Surveys are good for democracy

Proponents of the merits of political opinion polling state that mass survey results promote democracy. Influential, pollsters such as George H. Gallup even argued that political surveys could one day become part of the technology of democratic decision making (Gallup and Rae 1940; Cantrill 1944; Crespi 1989). Within the social sciences, Sidney Verba in a Presidential Address to the American Political Science Association in late 1995 argued that elections and polls are both means of communicating the democratic will of the people. Elections were seen to be flawed in the sense that with high abstention rates (of around a third or more of the electorate) the results could be said to be a systematically biased measure of popular preferences that favoured the better educated and older segments of the electorate. In short, elections represent the wishes of voters but not all citizens. In contrast, surveys do not suffer from the same level of bias: as participation in a survey interview does not require going to a polling station and interviews typically take place in people's homes (Verba 1996).

Surveys are bad for democracy

Critics of political surveys point to cases where pre-election surveys sometimes gave completely contrasting predictions. There have been a number of examples of this effect. For example, during the US Presidential election campaign of 1992 differences in question wording had important effects. One poll indicated the 97% of the electorate wanted to see cuts in government spending, while another poll found that 61% opposed cuts to government spending in areas such as social security. Such examples, lead critics to argue that survey research is neither valid nor reliable as differences in sampling and question wording can yield completely different portraits of public preferences. It is often difficult, if not impossible, to evaluate polls in real-time and warn consumers of survey data that specific results are problematic. Polling practitioners such as Yankelovich (1991) have proposed alternative survey questions to capture the "quality" of survey responses.

Surveys are an ugly feature of democratic politics

Moreover, political polls have the potential to be used to manipulate public debate and election campaigns (Hitchens 2009). This may be achieved through such mechanisms as the "bandwagon" and "underdog" effects where survey results instead of only measuring public opinion actually influence it (Simon 1954; Bartels 1988). With the bandwagon effect voters come to believe that a particular party or candidate is certain to win; while with the under-dog effect current unpopularity motivates voters through sympathy to support a 'losing' candidate. In the Czech Republic, there has been debate about the "strategic" publication of pre-election surveys estimates that suggest that a small party may not exceed the electoral threshold (5%); thereby encouraging strategic voting. More generally, it seems that the bandwagon effect occurs more frequently than the underdog effect (Irwin and van Holsteyn 2000). Other research suggests that pre-election survey results do not have any measurable impact on voters' preferences (Fleitas 1971; Donsbach 2001a,b). Consequently, critics of political surveying contend that polls are often used to manufacture public opinion where polling firms act like "hired guns" or mercenaries during election campaigns. During inter-election periods politicians may use surveys to "pander" to public sentiment and guide public statements and decision making (note, Jacobs and Shapiro 1995–1996, 2000).

were characterised by heated debates over the merits of surveying. For example, Floyd H. Allport (1937) in a seminal article demonstrated the varied and often contradictory definitions of such apparently elementary things as the ‘public’ aspect of public opinion. In the social sciences, the term ‘public’ has no definitive meaning because it may refer to (a) an entire population, (b) citizens or (c) those engaged and knowledgeable about political affairs.

A much more strident critique of a survey based approach to the measuring of political attitudes was made by the influential symbolic interactionist sociologist, Herbert G. Blumer (1948: 189). In a wide ranging article, he made the persuasive argument that it makes no sense from a sociological perspective to define a social force such as ‘public opinion’ (as it is commonly perceived) as being the expressed attitudes of an unstructured group of isolated individuals.³ This is a powerful critique of mass surveying because most forms of survey sampling require for technical reasons that all respondents are isolated from each other. This critique received an additional powerful impetus from Jürgen Habermas’s ([1962] 1989) conception of rationality arising from public deliberation where it is social interaction, and not individualism, that defines public opinion. In sum, political attitudes and public opinion cannot be conceptualised in a theoretically defensible manner with the recorded ‘public’ declarations of socially isolated individuals.

Empirically oriented political scientists have been aware of these criticisms of survey based (or positivist) conceptualisations of political attitudes and public opinion. In short, the positivist view of political attitudes may be summarised as: public opinion is whatever is measured in mass surveys. In a series of articles and a book length study, John R. Zaller challenged the mainstream view within political science and the social sciences more generally that citizens’ attitudes are the product of rational deliberation and are thus fixed and stable (Zaller 1990, 1992; Zaller and Feldman 1992). In contrast, it was argued that the attitudes evident in survey data are better treated as “top-of-the-head” responses that are a “marriage of information and values.” Respondents when interviewed essentially make-up answers on the spot on the basis of selecting specific considerations from a whole distribution of potential answers in their head.

Evidence for this ‘Belief Sampling Model’ of survey response is consonant with a considerable body of evidence that demonstrates attitude responses are often unstable and may be strongly influenced by factors such as (1) the order of

3 The concept of ‘public’ and the ‘public sphere’ has a long history within political philosophy where these two terms referred typically referred to a structured social setting characterised by deliberation, e.g. the salon culture of early modern Europe (Habermas 1989: 244; cf. Farge 1995).

Box 3: The study of politics with survey data is inherently limited

One of the most influential American political scientists, V.O. Key, jr., criticised the Michigan model of voting because the latter contended that electoral choice was primarily psychological in nature. Key felt, as the following review of Campbell et al.'s (1960) book shows, that a purely psychological view of electoral behaviour ignored a central element of politics: interest group competition.

The invention of the sample survey gave the study of politics a powerful observational instrument. Yet it is a tool singularly difficult to bring to bear upon significant questions of politics. Over the past two decades surveys of national, state, and local populations have, to be sure, produced many findings about how individual voters or categories of voters of specified characteristics tend to behave under given circumstances. Most of these findings, though, have been primarily of sociological or psychological interest. They have been about behavior in political situations, but only infrequently have they contributed much to the explanation of the political import of the behavior observed. This probably amounts to an assertion that a considerable proportion of the literature commonly classified under the heading of "political behavior" has no real bearing on politics, or at least that its relevance has not been made apparent.

[...] But, and most important of all, one must specify why many of these studies of political behavior paradoxically have only the most limited utility in the explanation of political processes. [...] Ultimately the concern of the student of politics must center on the operation of the state apparatus in one way or another. Both the characteristics of the survey instrument and the curiosities of those with a mastery of survey technique have tended to encourage a focus of attention on microscopic political phenomena more or less in isolation from the total political process. The survey procedure turns up kinds of data about individual acts never before available in satisfactory form, and we proceed to identify many types of wondrous and odd behavior. We demonstrate that [...]

- The primary group mightily influences or at least re-enforces the individual voting decision
- Men tend to identify with the party of their fathers
- Women usually vote in the same way as their husbands
- Cross-pressured persons make up their minds, if they do, later in the campaign than do others
- Persons who identify with a reference group tend to vote as they perceive the group to be voting

And many other more subtle characteristics of behavior are spotted that would otherwise escape us save in a speculative way. Once we have discovered all these matters, where have we arrived in the explanation of the workings of political systems? The answer must be that neither the particular findings nor the generalizations about these microscopic situations tell us much about either the political order observed or political orders in general.

[...] If the specialist in electoral behavior is to be a student of politics, his major concern must be the population of elections, not the population of individual voters. One does not gain an understanding of elections by the simple cumulation of the typical findings from the microscopic analysis of the individuals in the system.

[...] Survey technique brings into systematic view the attitudes and outlooks of the mass of the people, but it is extraordinarily difficult to relate those findings to the workings of government, the pay-off of the political process [...] both the practitioner and the theorist of democratic politics assume that elections are not the whole of democracy and that a continuing interplay between elite and mass occurs. Our systematic knowledge of that interrelationship is most limited; no little mystery remains about the bearing of mass attitudes and preferences on the day-to-day workings of democratic regimes.

Source: V.O. Key, jr. (1960).

the questions, (2) the design of the question and response options, and (3) characteristics of the interview technique and the interviewer, i.e. mode, gender and race effects respectively. For these reasons, Zaller (1992) argued that the survey based study of political attitudes should be called “mass” rather than “public” opinion.

Within political science there has always been debate concerning the merits of using mass surveys to study elections. With foresight, V.O. Key felt that the analysis of nationally representative samples of citizen’s responses to electoral participation and vote choice might one day dominate political science. See Box 3 for details. The Michigan School’s (American) voter model developed by Campbell et al. (1960) from seminal analyses of pre- and post-election survey data in the late 1950s and early 1960s transformed not only the study of electoral behaviour, but the entire field of political science. Such was the dominance of individual level survey data research (in comparison to aggregate electoral results data work) by the late 1960s that many of the influential scholars who helped develop the Michigan school’s voter model attempted in vain to redress the balance (Campbell 1960; Converse 1966; Stokes 1967).

The concerns expressed in Box 3 regarding a political science dominated by citizen attitudes and behaviour research forms part of a long tradition that has been critical toward specific conceptualisations of public opinion. This is important in the context of this book because it forms an intricate part of the theoretical framework in which current political survey research is embedded. Before progressing it is important to deal briefly with the controversy surrounding the general study of public opinion, and by implication citizen attitudes, within the discipline of political science.

4. Solutions to definitional problems?

The previous sections have demonstrated that there are a plurality of conceptions of public opinion and the generic notion of political attitudes.⁴ In other words, there is no single definition of public opinion or political attitudes. Most commentators on public opinion have adopted the advice offered by the utilitarian philosopher Jeremy Bentham (1748–1832) almost two centuries ago in adopting this ambiguous term primarily because of its common usage (Cutler 1999: 325; Ben-Dor 2000: 191–236, 2007: 222–223).

4 A more detailed overview of the theories of citizen political attitudes and collective public opinion is presented in chapter 2.

Significantly, a century or so later in 1925, the first academic conference on “public opinion” held by the American Political Science Association was divided into three groups. The first group argued that public opinion did not really exist. The second group while believing that public opinion did exist did not feel they could define it properly; while the last group argued that not only did public opinion exist, but it could also be defined. The consensus at the time seemed to be that it was better to “avoid the use of the term public opinion if possible” (Binkley 1928: 389).

Contemporary criticisms of public opinion research, which will be looked at more closely in the next chapter tend to follow these three broad perspectives, but the current consensus adopts (a) the Benthamite view that ‘public opinion’ is a useful shorthand for referring to collective citizen preferences and (b) the measurement of citizen attitudes is fundamentally important in the understanding democratic politics.

One reason, why there have been such disparate views on the nature and importance of citizen attitudes and public opinion more generally stems from the variety of perspectives that have been used to study public opinion. For students of politics, this definitional question is important to the extent that citizen attitudes and public opinion is seen to influence public policy making. The implication sometimes taken is that there can be a single public opinion on important issues, and that this is the basis for something called the ‘national will.’ Sociologists and communications researchers focus on public opinion as being a product of information dissemination and social interaction. From this perspective, public opinion often does not have a political content and in many situations there is no single public opinion; but many opinions only some of which are heeded by government.

Consequentialist accounts of individual and collective opinion often make arguments using such terms as the “will of the people” and hence implicitly adhere to Machiavelli’s force conception or Rousseau’s communitarian view of public opinion. More recently, this macro conception of citizens’ attitudes, beliefs and values has eschewed an atomistic conception of society (a model that is, as noted earlier, a fundamental element in the assumptions of representative sampling where respondents are equal but independent or isolated from one another) and views public opinion as an emergent property of social interaction (Durkheim 1895/1982; Parsons 1937). A contemporary version of this macro perspective is to model collective opinions as a ‘complex adaptive system’ (van Ginneken 2003).⁵

5 The link between individual and collective opinions, beliefs and preferences is often implicitly assumed to be summative, i.e. group orientations (Footnote continued on the next page.)

Within the empirical social sciences, one early influential view of what public opinion is, and is not, pointed out that attempts to treat public opinion as “an entity [...] to be discovered and then studied [...] will meet with scant success” (Allport 1937: 23). In other words, macro-level models of individual and collective attitudes are flawed because they are based on assumptions that cannot be directly measured and tested. Consequently, it is only possible to scientifically study public opinion at the individual level using experiments or surveys. The key idea here is that collective opinion acts through the behaviour of individuals, which are observable and hence measurable; the same cannot be said for units defined in terms of “group mind” or “group property.” This means that public opinion is not an object but a “situation.” Floyd H. Allport (1937: 23) summarised this argument and defined public opinion as follows:

The term public opinion is given its meaning with reference to a multi-individual situation in which individuals are expressing themselves, or can be called upon to express themselves, as favouring or supporting (or else disfavouring or opposing) some definite condition, person, or proposal of widespread importance, in such a proportion of number, intensity and constancy, as to give rise to the probability of affecting action, directly or indirectly, toward the object concerned.

This perspective has become the mainstream one. One succinct contemporary definition is that “public opinion is what opinion polls try to measure or what they try to measure with modest error” (Converse 1987: S14). From this perspective the public’s opinion or mood is something that can be constructed from a large number of survey questions and polls (Stimson 1995). However, this is only part of the story. There is a science of opinion and attitudes; and it is fundamentally important in assessing the importance of survey data to understand the scientific basis for attitude measurement.

(Footnote continued...) are isomorphic with individual ones. However, this need not be the case and it may be more appropriate to adopt a non-summative account (Gilbert 1987; Cioffi-Revilla 1998). The key point here is that the aggregation of individual attitudes, beliefs and preferences to create collective or “public opinion” may occur through many different mechanisms and it is possible for individual and collective orientations to have zero or negative correlation. This may occur through preference falsification, spiral of silence mechanisms, or may be modelled more formally using a Bayesian belief aggregation (Kuran 1995; Noelle-Neumann 1974, 1995; Greene 2010).

5. Logic of this study

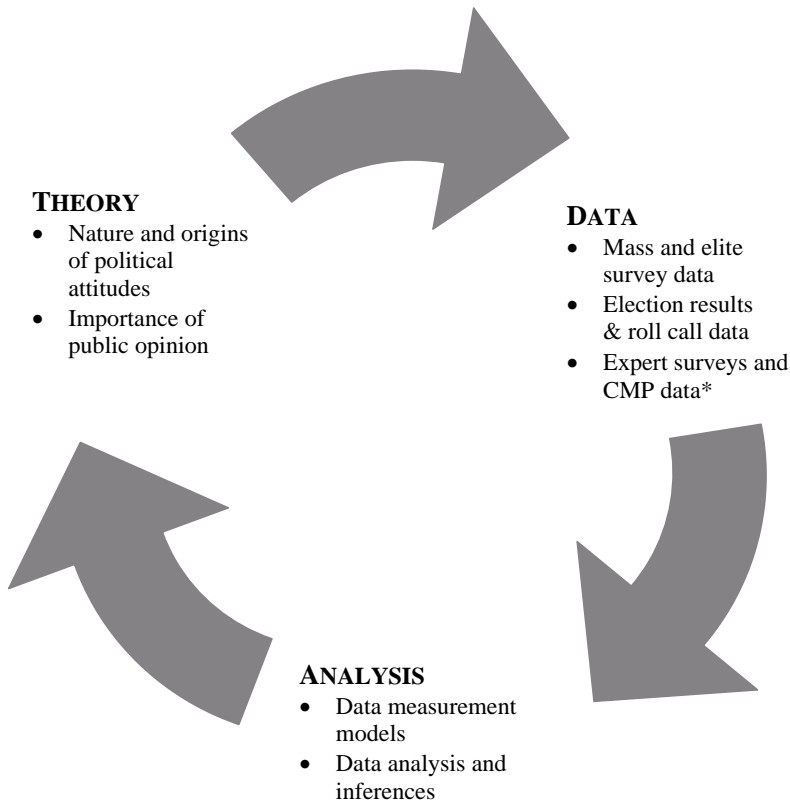
The central feature of this book is the overview of quantitative data available for the undertaking of political research in the Czech Republic. A simple presentation of all the data, its characteristics and where this data are archived is important. Such a factual mapping of Czech political science resources leaves open an important question: what is the research potential of such data? One simple means of answering this practical question is to demonstrate through brief literature reviews and example analyses how the data has been used in previous work. One of the chief merits of such an approach is that it reveals to the reader in a succinct manner what is the “state of the art”, but more importantly what research opportunities exist.

This is a fundamentally important exercise as many of the chapters in section 2 of this book demonstrate that published analyses have only “scratched the surface” and made limited use of the data available. In short, there is much work to be done and many new things to be discovered using current theories or the testing of new theoretical perspectives. Consequently, a key objective of this book is to act as an inspiration for future research by illustrating in a practical way a core feature of all scientific research: the integration of theory, data and analysis. The general approach and structure adopted in this book is presented in Figure 1.

This figure highlights in a generic way the interconnectedness of the theorising, data gathering and analysis components of all research. For the sake of brevity this figure focuses on political survey research questions. Consequently, section 1 of this book will present an overview of the theory underpinning political attitude research using mass surveys. Here it is important to outline competing interpretations of the concept of public opinion and hence individual political attitudes measurements. With regard to survey measurement, as the foregoing discussion highlights, there are some fundamental existential issues that users of political attitudes survey data need to be aware of.

On the right of Figure 1 is a thumbnail sketch of the data component of this book, and this reveals that five different types of data will be reviewed in Section 2 of this volume. The data sources may be broadly divided into three main types: (1) individual attitudinal data that have been gathered in mass and elite surveys, (2) aggregated electoral data and individual level legislative roll call data, and (3) content and expert evaluations of political actors and policy platforms where the goal is to estimate policy positions for the purposes of testing spatial models of party competition. At the bottom of Figure 1 is the analysis component, where the objective is to provide an overview of the key themes involved in making causal inferences from political data; and some key issues in the spatial rep-

Figure 1: Structure of the book – integration of theory, data and analysis



Note this figure provides a schematic overview of the structure of this book and highlights the interrelated nature of theory, data and analysis in all political science research work. The core part of this study is an inventory of the data available for the study of Czech politics. In order to demonstrate the nature and opportunities of this corpus of data, it is necessary to provide an overview of political survey data (i.e. public opinion) more generally and provide some information about how this political data is typically analysed.

* MRG denotes data available from the Comparative Manifesto Research Group (MRG), also known as the Comparative Manifestos Project (CMP). This cross-national project undertakes quantitative content analyses of parties' election programs in more than 50 countries covering elections since 1945. For more details see: <http://manifestoproject.wzb.eu/>

resentation of such data in the estimation of latent dimensions and scales. Having outlined the basic organising principles of this study, it is now appropriate to present an outline of the contents of this book.

6. Roadmap of the book

The remaining part of this introductory chapter will provide a roadmap to the contents of all eight chapters in this book and their division into three interrelated sections dealing with theory, data and analysis. In section 1 there are two chapters dealing with an overview of the theoretical aspects of political survey data, as this is the most important source of data dealt with in this book. The first chapter presents some of the main theories of political attitudes and public opinion. A historical overview of the evolving conception of citizen attitudes and public opinion more generally reveals that the desirability of citizens actively participating in the political sphere and government has, and remains, a point of controversy. The key implication here is that use of individual level survey data implies taking a normative position on the role of the citizen in society.

Within chapter 2 the origins and nature of political surveying are examined. Here the goal is more practical in that the focus is on exploring the survey based measurement of citizen attitudes. Within survey research there are many concepts such as opinions, attitudes, beliefs and values and it is not always clear how these terms are interrelated. At a more fundamental level there is the question if attitudes (treated as a generic term here for what surveys measure) are real or are best considered as a convenient theoretical concept like social class that help describe social reality. This chapter demonstrates that the conceptualisation of survey response processes is fundamentally important in the analysis of political attitudes data. Are survey data evidence of considered and hence stable personal preferences as espoused by the Classical Test Theory model? Perhaps survey responses are best thought of as one potential answer among many: a view adopted in the Belief Sampling Model?

Section 2 constitutes the main part of the book and contains five chapters. Each of these chapters examines different sources of political data. We start off in chapter 3 with electoral research. Here there is a presentation of the corpus of mass surveys available for studying political attitudes and behaviour in the Czech Republic's multilevel system of governance. In addition, there is some discussion of analyses based of aggregated electoral statistics using maps, regression models and ecological inference techniques. In this chapter, there is also discussion of data relating to local, regional and national (Chamber and Senate)

elections, along with some commentary on the insights to be gained from exit polls and panel survey data.

Chapter 4 switches attention away from the domestic sphere and presents an overview of cross-national political surveys in which the Czech Republic has participated. The key difference between this chapter and the previous one is that this data allows the researcher to explore the importance of national institutional context on expressed attitudes and behaviour. This sphere of research has been particularly important during the post-communist transition process. Concretely, this chapter presents profiles and examples of the use of the main international academic surveys with Czech waves such as CSES, EB, EVS/WVS, EES, ESS, ISSP, and NDB/NEB. These cross-national surveys are important because they facilitate exploration of a wide range of political topics.⁶

The Czech Republic is not a direct democracy and so the attitudes, beliefs, values and preferences of elites are fundamentally important for understanding the political process. Chapter 5 reveals that elite surveying has a long history in the Czech Republic and there are many opportunities for exploring the link between governors and the governed using insights from such theories as the Responsible Party Government model. This chapter also discusses candidate and party member surveys as these are invaluable sources of information about how the system of political representation operates.

The data sources examined in chapter 6 keeps the focus on political parties, but examines them as unitary actors and their role in party competition and government formation. The study of these two topics within political science has been strongly influenced by rational choice theories and positive political theory. In this respect, the extensive use of spatial models to explore office and policy seeking motivations has depended on measuring the policy position of parties. This has been undertaken in three main ways: human coding of party manifestos or election platforms, surveys of political experts (typically political scientists) who rate parties on a set of policy scales, and finally computer content analysis of political texts that range from party manifestos to speeches in parliament or at party congresses. This party or party faction based source of data has not been examined extensively in the Czech Republic over the last two decades, and represents a fertile avenue for future research.

6 Survey research often uses acronyms leading to an alphabet soup of references to data and questionnaires. Each of these survey programmes will be discussed in this chapter. For the record these acronyms are Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES); Eurobarometer (EB); European or World Values Survey (EVS, WVS); European Election Survey (EES); European Social Survey (ESS); the International Social Survey Programme (ISSP); and New Democracy or Europe Barometer (NDB / NEB).

The final section of this book explores two key aspects of data analysis. In chapter 7, interpretation of political survey data is examined in terms of sampling, the validity and reliability of surveys and questionnaire effects. One of the key reasons for undertaking pre-election surveys is prediction. Within this chapter there is a comparative overview of when polls predicted the wrong result and why. This part of the book also contains examples of questionnaire effects evident in Czech survey data. The focus shifts in chapter 8 to the international level where there is an examination of response option effects with a standard political attitudes measure: party attachment. This chapter shows how different institutional contexts are associated with changes in answers when the number of response options is changed. This research illustrates how the survey response process can reveal important things about the nature of political attitudes and the effects of institutions on the strength of citizens' partisan preferences.

In the conclusion, the theory, data and analysis themes explored in this book are treated in a more general manner in terms of simple graphical models using a question and answer format. Using insights from an influential data measurement model this chapter argues that the process of creating data and analysing it is based on making theoretical assumptions. This perspective highlights the key themes of this book, i.e. theory, data and analysis, and why it is necessary when undertaking political research to integrate these three components into all stages of the research work.

SECTION 1:

Theoretical Perspectives

Chapter 1

Theories of Political Attitudes and Public Opinion

One way of theory building is to collect empirical facts and assume that they will somehow speak for themselves, that an obvious classificationary scheme will emerge from their gross and conspicuous aspects. More often it turns out that either the facts by themselves do not suggest an obvious classificatory scheme, or if they do, that the obvious scheme is not very good. A better way is to develop on intellectual grounds what might be a good scheme, try it out and see what happens when empirical data are used.

Karl W. Deutsch (1964: 180)

We may define theory as an information code for the storage, retrieval, and processing of new items of information, and for the search for new items of information.

Karl W. Deutsch (1969: 22)

Introduction

The idea that there are individual political attitudes that may be aggregated to something called ‘public opinion’ has a long history. While the way in which political attitudes and public opinion are measured has changed through history, so also has the concept itself. For a long period from ancient Greece and Rome through the Middle Ages until the French Revolution ‘public opinion’ was equated with elite opinion. This conception of public opinion was based on the view that elites constituted the ‘public’ and it was only this group who were sufficiently well informed to express views or ‘opinions’ on matters of public importance. With the Enlightenment and the French Revolution the meaning of the term ‘public opinion’ changed dramatically. From the late eighteenth century onwards ‘public opinion’ became increasingly associated with the general population and not with small groups of wealthy, educated citizens as shown in Figure 1.1.

Figure 1.1: Expression of political attitudes and public opinion through history

Technique	Time of appearance	Structured / unstructured	Public or private	Theory / critique
<i>Oratory / rhetoric</i>	5th century B.C. onwards	Unstructured	Public	Socrates, Plato, Aristotle
<i>Printing</i>	16th century	Unstructured	Public and private	Machiavelli (1515, 1531)
<i>Crowds</i>	17th century	Unstructured	Public	Hobbes (1651); Pascal (1660)
<i>Petitions</i>	Late 17th century	Unstructured, structured	Public	Locke (1690)
<i>Salons</i>	Late 17th century	Unstructured	Public	Habermas (1962)
<i>Coffeehouses</i>	18th century	Unstructured	Public	Hume (1742)
<i>Revolutionary movements</i>	Late 18th century	Unstructured	Public	Rousseau (1762); Kant (1781)
<i>Strikes</i>	19th century	Unstructured	Public	Hegel (1821); Bentham (1823); de Tocqueville (1835, 1840)
<i>General elections</i>	19th century	Structured	Private	Mill (1859)
<i>Straw polls</i>	1820s	Structured	Private	Bryce (1888)
<i>Modern newspapers</i>	Mid-19th century	Structured	Public and private	Carlyle (1837); Park (1922, 1923)
<i>Letters to public officials and news editors</i>	Mid-19th century	Unstructured	Public and private	Lee (2002: 71–119)
<i>Mass media</i>	1920s - 1930s	Structured	Public and private	Lippmann (1922, 1925); Tonnies (1922); Dewey (1927)
<i>Sample survey</i>	1930s - present	Structured	Private	Blumer (1948); Lindsay (1949); Albig (1957); Bourdieu (1973); Foucault (1975); Ginsberg (1986)
<i>Internet survey</i>	1990s - present	Structured	Private	Couper (2000); Norris (2002); Kent et al. (2006)

Source: derived from Herbst (1993b: 48, 61).

Note the channels that have been used to express individual political attitudes and collective public opinion through history have varied in both form and content, as this table reveals. The expression of political attitudes and the conceptualisation of public opinion depends on three key factors: (1) the technology or technique used to articulate attitudes, (2) the degree to which expressed preferences were structured or used as the basis for a quantitative measurement of public sentiment, and (3) if the attitudes expressed formed part of a public discussion and hence had some impact on the formulation of public policy.

It is of course no coincidence that the emergence of the broad contemporary conceptualisation of public opinion arose with the development of liberal democratic political systems. Enlightenment ideas with their emphasis on the importance of the 'individual' who should have the freedom to pursue his or her own preferences and goals created the intellectual roots in which public opinion as a political force became recognised by a wide variety of political thinkers such as Jeremy Bentham, James (Lord) Bryce, Ferdinand Tönnies and James Madison to name but a few. In essence, with the growth of mass suffrage the opinions of *all* citizens began to have a more direct and salient impact on government.

Technology played a key role in the evolution of the concept of public opinion. With the development of newspapers and postal networks i.e. systems capable of dispersing large volumes of information widely and frequently, the basic foundations of a mass based system of public opinion were created. With the emergence of the Internet and World Wide Web there is considerable debate as to what impact this technology will have on public opinion and political behaviour. At present there is no clear consensus on this issue. Notwithstanding such contemporary developments, this chapter will focus (a) on the evolution of theories of public opinion and (b) the desirability and necessity of citizen influence on government.

The overview of theorising on citizen's political attitudes and their aggregation into public opinion presented in this chapter will adopt a broadly chronological approach. In the first three sections there are presentations of pre-twentieth century conceptualisations of public opinion dealing with early conceptions, British liberal utilitarian, French enlightenment and German legal-political ideas, and nineteenth century liberal critiques respectively. Section four outlines the final phase of classical theorising that is mainly associated with Ferdinand Tönnies; and this is followed by an exploration of the 'new departure' represented by the emergence of social psychological models of individual attitudes and public opinion. Section eight discusses three of the main early critiques of the mass survey conceptualisation of public opinion outlined by Herbert G. Blumer, William Albig and Lindsay Rodgers; and this is followed in the penultimate section by a brief review of contemporary critiques of mass surveying. Thereafter, there are some concluding comments highlighting how the theoretical critiques of political survey data inform their interpretation and analysis.

1.1 Early conceptions of public opinion

The concept of public opinion has a long history; however, it was not until the eighteenth century that it was first examined in any systematic manner. Prior to the Enlightenment public opinion was discussed but always with reference to more general theories of politics and the state. In addition, one can trace back to the earliest political theories positive and negative views of public opinion. For example, Plato in the *Phaedrus* and in *The Republic* (Book VII, ‘The Simile of the Cave’) while accepting that public opinion existed denied its value seeing it as inferior form of knowledge. In contrast, Aristotle in his *Politics* (Book III, part XI) argued that collective opinion is superior to individual opinion. Significantly, Thucydides in the *History of the Peloponnesian War* structured his analysis on the basis of the distribution, formation and impact of public opinion (Benson 1968: 532). Later Roman writers such as Marcus Tullius Cicero (106–43 BC) took a negative view of public opinion: and as a result did not discuss the concept.

Some mention was made of public opinion during the medieval era where the phrase *Vox populi, vox dei* arose and was repeated later by Machiavelli in the sixteenth century. In the seventeenth century, the French mathematician and philosopher, Blaise Pascal (1660) famously declared that public opinion was “queen of the world” and John Hobbes (1651) remarked that the “world is governed by opinion.” A generation later, John Locke (1690) also gave “the law of opinion or reputation” a key role in politics while Rousseau and some authors of the *Federalist Papers* assented to David Hume’s (1748) view that “on opinion only is government founded.”

It is labouring the obvious to argue that theories of public opinion presuppose the existence of individual political attitudes and collective public opinion. This truism does, however, have the advantage of providing a theoretical and empirical marker as to when public opinion is seen to have emerged. According to Jürgen Habermas ([1962] 1989) public opinion only existed for the middle classes as late as the eighteenth century. In contrast, Arlette Farge ([1992] 1995) has argued that within pre-revolutionary France a true mass public opinion existed from 1740; and this had fundamentally important consequences for both France and Europe after 1789 (note also, Walton 2009).¹ In this respect, it is not surpris-

1 The monitoring of public sentiment or opinion by regimes has a long and continuous history. For example, during the short-lived Xin dynasty (9–23 AD) the Emperor Guangwu had officials compile “rumour reports” (Lu 2011). A similar process was employed in pre-revolutionary France, as noted above, and later in Germany (1938–1945) Nazi party officials systematically compiled “morale reports” (see, Unger 1965).

ing that the effective start of theorising on public opinion came in the late eighteenth century during the Enlightenment.

1.2 British liberal utilitarian theories

Early conceptions of public opinion were made during the Enlightenment period primarily in England, France and Germany: and these will be the focus of the next three sections. Within Britain and the Anglophone world conceptions of citizen political attitudes and collective opinion were based on an adherence to a utilitarian theory of a free press: this perspective is evident in the works of James Mill and Jeremy Bentham. In simple terms, they argued that public opinion emerged from criticism by reasoned individuals of absolute monarchies. The individuals who expressed public opinion were those who were independent, competent and had a moral sense of responsibility for the common good. These of course were the very attributes that defined the emerging bourgeoisie or middle class in England at the end of the seventeenth century and France in the eighteenth century.

Taking Jeremy Bentham as the most important exponent of this liberal view of public opinion one may see some of the key features of this theory. Bentham was primarily concerned with what is known today as a principal-agent problem: how do you constrain legislators and bureaucrats from acting in a self-interested manner? In answering this question, Bentham seems to have had two mechanisms in mind. Firstly, there was the idea of surveillance. One has only to think here of Bentham's *Panopticon* proposal for penal reform in Britain where prisoners were confined to cells where it was possible for them to be continuously monitored (even though this was not necessarily the case). In sum, just as Panopticon allowed for efficient control over prisoners; public opinion makes it possible to have effective citizen control over political elites. This perspective was developed later by Michel Foucault (1975) in his work on institutions and social control. Surveillance does not require the heavy informational costs associated with constant monitoring by citizens, but does require vigilance as Samuel L. Popkin (1991) notes; or the capacity to sound "fire alarms" within the press (Cutler 1999: 330). Secondly, an idealist promotion of rational discourse: a view often associated with the contemporary writings of influential German sociologist and philosopher, Jürgen Habermas on communicative action and the discourse foundations of systems of law and democratic governance (Habermas 1981, 1984–1987; 1999).

Bentham's theory of public opinion was based on two assumptions. First, no person can know the interests of an individual better than the person themselves. Consequently, if public policy in the utilitarian vein is to ensure the greatest happiness of the greatest number, then all persons should be free to communicate their views to government (Bentham 1989: 68). Secondly, public opinion will change in light of retrospective assessments of public policy. This implies a dynamic view of public opinion where citizens collectively could deal with any issue of common concern.

Bentham being a constitutional theorist tried to devise a rigorous definition of what he meant by 'public opinion.' In this respect, he created the concept of *Public Opinion Tribunal* (POT) which is a counterfactual social grouping who passes judgement on public affairs. Membership of POT was universal and there would be in a sense a subdivision of labour on the basis that voluntary attention to different issues would create attentive 'issue publics' – something similar to Converse's (1964) idea.² The POT would gather information generally from the press; pass judgements, punish or reward political actors by enhancing or diminishing their reputation and make suggestions for future policy-making. In arguing that self-interest leads to the most socially desirable outcomes, Bentham did not propose an idealised vision of public opinion. He argued that the nature of public opinion should be decided by citizens in a bottom-up manner.

This was a controversial claim as the conservative landed elite of the early nineteenth century would have assumed, given experience of the French revolution, that if the propertyless masses were given a say in government they would abolish property rights. However, Bentham countered this by arguing that all citizens would realise that it is in their self-interest to abide by the 'rules of the game' and not pursue revolutionary policies that would result in collective losses.

However, this argument is not entirely convincing as it presumes that the aggregation of individual opinions inevitably results in optimal collective preferences (note, in this respect, Stimson 1999; Page and Shapiro 1992). In addition, there is the issue of what would motivate individuals to become informed: a key theme in contemporary political science (Downs 1957; Popkin 1991). Bentham placed his faith in the growth of education and a vigorous press. He essentially dismissed arguments that some sections of society would be more informed and influential leading to various forms of manipulation, or that populist's would mislead the public from following their true interests. As Habermas

2 The conventional view of the time was that only those capable of discussing issues of common concern constituted the 'public.' On this basis, if one uses the judgement of Bentham's contemporary, Edmund Burke about four hundred thousand out of Great Britain's population of eight million fell into this category, i.e. one person in every two thousand.

(1989) notes, for Bentham individual opinion with rational public debate would be transformed into unbiased public opinion. Part of the thinking here was that with large numbers of people the probability of bad or biased public opinion was diminished. This is a view that has persisted being used more recently by Page and Shapiro (1992). While many liberal political theorists promoted the concept of public opinion Bentham was unique in not delimiting the public in some manner to avoid criticisms that universal public opinion would lead to mob rule.

While Bentham gave a strong emphasis to public opinion in his political and legal writings, the first book to be devoted purely to the subject of public opinion was published in 1828. In this text, William A. MacKinnon a conservative, Member of Parliament using statistical criteria divided British society into upper, middle and lower classes. He argued that public opinion only emerged when certain minimal thresholds were crossed with regard to mechanisation, communication and transportation, religious feeling and informedness through education and the press. For MacKinnon, all of these essential socio-economic conditions for the emergence of public opinion came mainly with the growth of the middle classes. He did share Bentham's view that all members of society constituted the public. MacKinnon is significant in that he was the first writer to formulate hypotheses relating public opinion to sociological features of society. For him the key feature of public opinion was that it was both informed and intelligent (MacKinnon 1828 [1971]: 15). Significantly, he also argued that in the development of liberal government, it was public opinion that secured liberal government and not vice versa.

Early British liberal theories of public opinion espoused by Bentham and MacKinnon essentially argued that the basis of sovereignty was public opinion. The question of defining who constituted members of the 'public' was based on various criteria such as competence. The common theme among these theorists was confidence in the capacities of the public to understand government and public policy, and effectively decide what policies and reforms were required. As we will see, other nineteenth century theorists did not share such optimism.

1.3 French and German perspectives

Rousseau was the first influential political theorist to use the term public opinion ("l'opinion publique"). He argued that the foundation of all political states and laws, depended on public opinion in the sense that nothing could be achieved without the consensus of the governed. The central question examined in Rousseau's *Social Contract* (1762) is how is it possible to create a government where

there would be both justice and the rule of law? Rousseau's answer to this question was to propose that each individual's self interest while respected would be subordinated to the common good or *la volonté générale*, which is reflected in the law.

Rousseau did specify that there is an important difference between what is the common good and aggregated individual interests. Indeed, he felt that most often these common and aggregated goods would not be coterminous. In order to ensure that citizens complied with the common good, despite having different self-interests, Rousseau argued for the important role played by the rule of law. It was here that public opinion played a critical part. Public opinion was seen to support the operation of the laws. Furthermore, public opinion was described as a form of censorship, which could be used as a mechanism that guided public debate toward the common good.

From this perspective, public opinion and the common good had a strong moral dimension that was not based on rational public debate; but some form of affective consensus. Within the *Social Contract* almost everything of importance seems to be subsumed under *la volonté générale*. Reasoned debate leading to informed, and if necessary, critical public opinion is not seen to be important. Government itself is seen to be nothing more than some administrative agency. It is interesting to see that while aggregated individual interests and thus public opinion was the key thing for Bentham: Rousseau subsumed such a definition of public opinion to a transcendental force of 'moralised public opinion.'

This transcendental view of the public and public opinion is also evident in the work of Immanuel Kant. He believed that a political consensus arose when the basis for political action by government was in agreement with the moral principles of those governed. Unlike Bentham or Rousseau, Kant believed in a republican form of representative government where there is rule by law and all citizens are free and equal. In addition, for him individual opinion had a relatively low value in his theory of objectively valid knowledge; and it was this view developed in *Critique of Pure Reason* (1781) that led Kant to argue the driving force in politics comes from elite opinion influencing the masses rather than vice versa.

In other words, progress came from the elites who lead the masses through the propagation of their reasoned arguments toward what was the best course for political action and public policy. For Kant, defining the common good was not only a moral question but also a legal one: it was law which compelled compliance to authority. Enlightened public opinion was important in this endeavour in that it created the conditions for popular adherence to the law that promoted the common good (Kant [1795] 1983: 35).

An alternative law based view of public opinion was developed by Hegel (1821). He contended that individual freedom was fundamentally based on the existence of a political state, which had laws and institutions that operated according to a principle of rationality. In contrast, to Bentham's view that public opinion should play a monitoring role over parliament, Hegel argued that parliament played a purely positive role in keeping the public informed. Hegel went even further in promoting the role of parliament by arguing that government is not obliged to follow public opinion as liberal theorists argued. Instead, parliament was seen to be an important mediator between monarchs and special interests (Hegel [1821] 1971: 197). Hegel developed what could best be described as an ambivalent view of public opinion as the following quotation reveals.

The formal subjective freedom of individuals consists in their having and expressing their own private judgements, opinions, and recommendations on affairs of state. This freedom is collectively manifested as what is called "public opinion", in which what is absolutely universal, the substantive and true, is linked with its opposite, the purely particular and private means of the Many. Public opinion as it exists is thus a standing self-contradiction, knowledge as appearance, the essentially just as directly present as the inessential. (Hegel [1821] 1971: 204)

This comes close to the tentative normative model of public opinion outlined by John R. Zaller in the final chapter of *The Nature and Origins of Mass Opinion* (1992) who emphasised the role of experts in shaping citizens' opinion. Significant scientific developments and movements for social changes in society must often initially operate independently of public opinion. However, later acceptance of such achievements is often also an indication of some degree of prejudice (Hegel [1821] 1971: 204). Hegel's theory is important because it is the first discussion of the contradictory nature of individual political attitudes and collective public opinion. This is a theme which became more evident in the "tyranny of the majority arguments" made later by Alexis de Tocqueville, James Stuart Mill and James Bryce.

1.4 Nineteenth century liberal critiques

With the extension of the franchise in the nineteenth century in many states in Europe and beyond, liberal thinking on public opinion continued to emphasise the importance of rational debate. For James Mill this discussion took place predominantly among the middle classes in England and among the white popula-

tion in the United States. Liberal thinking after Jeremy Bentham, as expounded by Mill, had a rather negative view of public opinion. Bentham stressed that a free press and public opinion were necessary to ensure democracy and freedom where there was the ‘greatest happiness of the greatest number’ as individuals pursued their self-interest.

In contrast, Mill argued that freedom of the press was necessary to pursue the “Truth” – something that rarely coincided with prevailing public opinion. In fact, Mill summarised the public opinion of the masses as a “collective mediocrity” (Mill [1859] 1985: 131). From this perspective mass public opinion was equated with religion in that both were characterised by obedience: in the case of religion to the predominant Christian doctrine, and in the case of public opinion to the majority viewpoint.

Tocqueville in his discussion of American democracy in the early 1830s felt that adherence to a principle of following the wishes of majority opinion had the potential to undermine other important democratic principles such as freedom of opinion and self-expression (Tocqueville [1840] 2010, vol. 1, chapter 15). Tocqueville made a strong argument contending that majority public opinion had similar effects as rigid systems of social class because both stifle any movements for change. Unsurprisingly, Tocqueville gave public opinion a key role in the process of social change in society; however, this could only occur where social inequality was not associated with class conflict.

Every time that conditions are equal, general opinion presses with an immense weight on the mind of each individual; opinion envelops, directs and oppresses it; that is due to the very constitution of the society much more than to its political laws. As all men resemble each other more, each one feels more and more weak in the face of all. Not finding anything that raises him very far above them and that distinguishes him from them, he mistrusts himself as soon as they fight him; not only does he doubt his strength, but he also comes to doubt his right, and he is very close to acknowledging that he is wrong, when the greatest number assert it. The majority does not need to constrain him; it convinces him (de Tocqueville [1840] 2010: 1148).³

It was because of the power of majority public opinion that Tocqueville argued that a legislature while representing the majority had to also be independent of the majority’s opinions. For this reason, he strongly supported America’s political system with the separation of legislative, executive and judicial powers.

3 In the margin to this text de Tocqueville added “The majority does not need political power to make life unbearable to the one who contradicts it.”

More generally, liberal theories of public opinion tend to reflect the political climates in which they were created. The early liberal theories of individual political attitudes and public opinion were oriented toward giving more power to the rising middle classes against the traditional power of absolute monarchs. In contrast, the later liberal writings on public opinion focussed on ensuring that informed and rational middle class opinions were not swamped by the opinions of the working classes who through enfranchisement were an emerging political power.

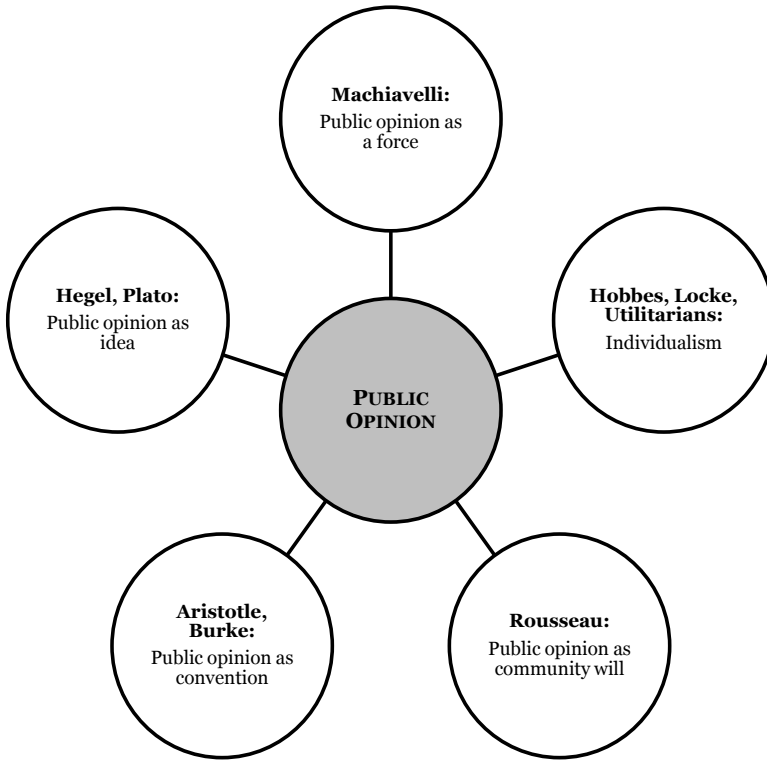
This liberal fear of the potential of majority public opinion carried on through the late nineteenth century in the writings of James Bryce. According to Bryce in his book *The American Commonwealth* (1888) public opinion is expressed through the press; public meetings, especially in election rallies; elections and citizen associations. None of these modes of expression of public opinion provided a constant and reliable measurement of such opinion. This question of how to reliably monitor public opinion became a fundamental issue in later theories, but for Bryce opinion measurement was less important than the dangers posed by majority opinions suppressing minority ones. Bryce fundamentally questioned the important role attributed to public opinion in stressing three negative features: the impact of the tyranny of the majority, passive silent majorities and the fatalism of the multitude (Bryce [1888] 1995: 913).

Theorising on public opinion and mass behaviour by the late nineteenth century moved away from emphasising how the public may effectively control the actions of government to how to instil in any majority tolerance for minority opinions. The masses were generally seen in the same vein as 'crowds' where Gustave Le Bon's (1895) emphasis on the destructive nature of mass behaviour became the prevailing academic view. As noted earlier, theories of public opinion tended to be constructed on the basis of contemporary political situations. With growing enfranchisement the definition of the public was expanded from the upper and middle classes to the entire population. However, in giving the public a more democratic character the view of 'opinion' changed from being a rational and critical conception to being something which was sometimes rational and sometimes not. Bryce noted in this respect that the uninformed masses were sometimes more correct in their opinions than their more educated and informed peers, indicating the inherent difficulties of objectively assessing citizens' political attitudes (Bryce [1888] 1995: 913).

Pre-twentieth century theorising on public opinion, as shown in Figure 1.2, was based on seeing citizens' political attitudes either as a political force, individualism, a community will, a convention or an idea. In this respect, conceptions of public opinion were rooted in contemporary political environments. Theories of

public opinion in the twentieth and early twenty first centuries are different in this respect. This is because the adoption of a more empirical approach to political attitudes and public opinion as a concept has not been (a) *explicitly* related to prevailing political structures and (b) viewed as a political force or a social category.

Figure 1.2: Conceptualisation of citizen attitudes within pre-twentieth century political theory



Source: derived from Minar (1960).

Note this figure highlights that questions about individual political attitudes and aggregated public opinion reflect fundamental questions within political theory. Moreover, there are some important questions within political science that are theoretical in nature and cannot be solved by assembling more data or employing new methodological approaches. The interpretation and analysis of political data is always based on some form of theory. Being explicit about the conceptual orientations adopted is an important guide to (a) the selection of data used and analysis methods employed, (b) the scope of the empirical research results, and (c) identifying future opportunities for research. The vertical axis of this figure reflect theoretical differences regarding an individual (top) versus collective (bottom) orientation. In contrast, the horizontal axis reflect differences between an ideal-rationalist vs. realist-empirical conceptions of citizens attitudes and public opinion.

From the turn of the century until after the First World War, the study of public opinion was strongly influenced by developments in sociology and social psychology. One may identify two themes in this literature. The first was an increased emphasis on the non-rational or emotional basis for public opinion formation and expression, and this is evident in the work of Graham Wallas (1908) and others. This viewpoint became even more salient after the experience of the First World War in the works of Walter Lippmann (1922, 1925), Ferdinand Tönnies (1922) and Wilhelm Bauer (1930, 1933). The second theme espoused most succinctly by A.F. Bentley in his book *The Process of Government* (1908) criticised previous conceptions of public opinion especially that evident in A.V. Dicey's (1914) study of the relationship between law and public opinion in England in the nineteenth century for lacking precision and clarity. Bentley argued for a more systematic approach to the measurement and analysis of public opinion at the group level. These became central concerns in the discussion of public during the interwar period.

1.5 Theoretical approaches in the early twentieth century

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the conceptualisation of public opinion began to change in the United States and Germany toward a more sociological perspective. With a positivist rather than historical-legalistic approach new research questions and methods were developed at places such as the University of Chicago. Here study of public opinion was grounded in social-psychological theories based on group interaction. One important result of this conceptual change was the progressive de-politicising of public opinion as a concept.

Within the United States sociological theories of public opinion were initially influenced by pragmatic philosophy (e.g. Charles S. Dewey) and symbolic interactionist social psychology (e.g. George Herbert Mead). While nineteenth century theorists had strongly emphasised the role of a free press, the new view was not that society depended on effective communications, rather that society was in fact a large communications network. With the growth of media institutions and emergence of new media types such as radio and film; this strand of public opinion theory came to see communications as having an inherent contradiction.

On the one hand, communications facilitated the development of a democracy based on justice and tolerance. On the other hand, the complexity of emerging systems of multimedia (print, radio and film) communications made society seem more complex and less transparent than before. Furthermore media institutions began to operate increasingly above and beyond any one state implying that

their motivation to act responsibly declined. For those in the broad pragmatist school of thought, this latter negative view of public opinion was matched with a strong focus on the future; and the production and dissemination of social scientific knowledge that would help society progress (Dewey [1927] 1991: 171). The pragmatists' conception of the individual was similar to that of Bentham in advocating that all individuals had the capacity, under a motivation of self interest to participate in public affairs – implying a basis for 'rational' public opinion (e.g. Dewey [1927] 1991: 157).

In the 1920s Walter Lippmann, a journalist and liberal philosopher, and Ferdinand Tönnies, a prominent German sociologist, represented the final phase of critical writing on public opinion before the dominance of the social-psychological approach based on empirical research (using experimental or survey data). Lippmann (1922, 1925) strongly criticised pragmatists such as Dewey, where he argued that the problems in the mass media were primarily rooted in the fact that most citizens simply did not have the required information to express sensible public opinions. Lippmann in this regard felt that political decision-making was best left to experts. Significantly, in this respect Daniel Yankelovich (1991), an American pollster and academic, has argued without reference to Lippmann that a "culture of technical control" had been created by the late twentieth century in the United States. However, instead of endorsing this development Yankelovich argues that this trend is systematically destroying self-governance and consensus building.

For Lippmann ([1922] 1960: 31) the central question was "that democracy in its original form never seriously faced the problem which arises because the picture inside people's heads [their public opinions] do not automatically correspond with the world outside." There were two reasons for this lack of congruence with reality. First, most ordinary citizens do not have the resources or interest to make public policy decisions. Second, even if citizens are involved in public affairs they are often misled by stereotypes. His solution to this fundamental informational problem was to argue that specialists should decide upon controversial public policy questions. He argued that a technocratic form of government would be legitimate if the democratic rules were legally sanctioned and specialists provided the public goods demanded by the public.

John Dewey in contrast saw the core question within democracy as being how to provide citizens with enough information or education so that they would be competent enough to participate in the formulation of policy. For Dewey the key concern was the creation of a genuine participatory democracy; in contrast for Lippmann, the key goal was efficient decision-making sanctioned in a representative manner by the public. In short, Dewey's and Lippmann's differing concep-

tions of public opinion fitted in respectively with either an epistemic deliberative view of democracy or a procedural representative democratic vision.

Within Germany at this time, a completely different and more systematic ‘humanistic’ theory was developed. Ferdinand Tönnies’ conceptualisation of public opinion in *Critique of Public Opinion* (1922) is probably the most important social theory of collective citizen attitudes.⁴ In many respects, comments made over a half century ago that there has been almost no theorising on public opinion since Tönnies remain valid (Lasswell 1957: 34–5; Hyman 1957: 54; note also Albig 1957: 21). Tönnies’ theory of public opinion is very different from the empirical approaches developed in the 1930s for a number of reasons. Firstly, public opinion was primarily seen in terms of its formation in culture and society rather than in its effects on representative political institutions. Secondly, the social-psychology view of public opinion was based on analysis of the individual, whereas for Tönnies public opinion arose from an abstract intellectual community. Thirdly, post-1930s views of public opinion rejected assertions that public opinion had a moral basis. Public opinion was conceptualised instead in terms of psychological mechanisms. Fourthly, for Tönnies the formation of public opinion was based solely on autonomous individual reasoning, a view rejected by most writers from Lippmann (1922) onwards.

In order to see why Tönnies had such a different conception of public opinion, it is necessary to explain some of his theory. Tönnies argued a central aspect of society was its ‘social will’ – which is a rational collective orientation as to how things should be within society, something similar to collective optimality from a social choice theory perspective. In addition, he argued that there were two forms of society a traditional community type (*gemeinschaft*) based on custom and religion and a modern type (*gesellschaft*) which was based on conventions, legislation and public opinion. For Tönnies, public opinion had three different meanings.

Firstly, there was “published opinion” which was an individual’s private opinion expressed for the benefits of all citizens in general. Note that this idea did not equate to participation in a mass survey. Secondly, there was “public opinion” which refers to a situation where published opinion becomes the opinion of many people in society. Thirdly, there is “opinion of the public” which is a theoretical construct where there is a universal ‘common way of thought’ where opinion formation and expression is built upon reasoning and knowledge, rather than unproven impressions, beliefs or authority (Tönnies 1922: 78). This is not an altogether unique idea. For example, within the framework of social choice

4 Only some of Tönnies work on public opinion have been translated into English. The discussion here is based on Splichal (1999: 99–132) and Hardt and Splichal (2000).

theory Tönnies' "opinion of the public" is similar to the single peakedness concept where members of society have a similar set of hierarchically ordered preferences or utilities.

For Tönnies "opinion of the public" was a scientific concept, which could be used like rationality as a basis for theoretical judgement of social action. It is different to rationality (as used in rational choice theory) in that "primitives" are very clearly involved in specifying the "opinion of the public", i.e. this is its moral basis. This means that "opinion of the public" is based on reasoning and knowledge and not on things like party attachment or group interest. Tönnies did not see political parties' debating of issues in the media as being part of the process of opinion formation, but as the basis for the construction of "public opinion." In this respect, according to Tönnies, one had to be careful not to equate publicity in the media with "public opinion."

Tönnies accepted that individual opinions are based on self or group interests and were thus often coterminous with social class. Diversity of interests was explained on the basis of material inequality. This theory of public opinion is a dynamic one in the sense that Tönnies focussed on the transition in Europe away from a society based on religion and social conservatism to one based on knowledge and reason. This dynamic nature is evident at the aggregate level, where Tönnies identified three forms of public opinion. Opinions based on common values and derived from reason and tolerance ("solid opinion"); opinions which change over controversial issues on the impartial basis of the common good ("fluid opinion") and opinions which change on issues because of the publics' superficial interest or understanding ("gaseous opinion"). The dynamics of public opinion revolved around the changing forms of public opinion where gaseous opinions became fluid and solid opinions.

Tönnies was the first scholar to argue that public opinion should be a central concern of empirical social science; however, his theory did not provide any methods as to how public opinion should be measured. However, his predictions that societal consensus based on religion would decline and the increasing role played by the lower social classes in public opinion formation with increases in mass education proved to be correct for much of the twentieth century.

With hindsight, Ferdinand Tönnies (1922) theoretical work on public opinion represents a turning point in the intellectual history of the study of mass political attitudes. By the 1920s, the conceptualisation and measurement of citizens' attitudes toward public affairs became increasingly psychological in nature. It is to this remarkable development that we now turn.

1.6 Social psychological models

From the 1920s onwards within the United States the focus in public opinion work changed considerably. Public opinion was no longer seen in a purely theoretical manner, and the emphasis on implementing a progressive social and political agenda subsided. The emphasis now moved toward using empirical and quantitative techniques to examine the use of propaganda and public relations. More fundamentally, the previous focus on the formation of public opinion rather than its measurement (e.g. Bryce 1888) was reversed. Most work now dealt primarily with measuring public opinion (Berelson and Janowitz 1950: 1).

It is important to realise, however, that the general practice of public opinion polling emerged before 1900 in the United States. The first major impetus for mass surveying came from the media, later the stimulus would come from business in the form of market research, and thereafter from the US government during the depression and Second World War. In many ways, social psychological models and survey methodology did not lead but followed 'research trends' employed outside academia. The key feature of this form of public opinion 'research' was its practicality. Much of the early opinion polling had little or no theoretical basis. Theory and a more consistent methodology came later.

Most of this early work was based on newspapers wanting to use a method beyond expert opinion to estimate the likely winners in various elections. These straw (or *vox pop*) polls involved asking a certain number of "people on the street" a short number of questions. The scale of these endeavours grew over time. Between 1912 and 1920 a consortium of newspapers in six cities conducted a straw poll in thirty-seven states (Stephan 1948: 19). This form of polling reached its peak with the Literary Digest series of polls (generally one every eighteen months) between 1916 and 1936. In 1928 alone, there were eighty-six straw polls undertaken for the Presidential Election, many of whom estimated the correct result (Robinson 1932).

Within academia the move toward using quantitative data to assess and possibly explain political behaviour was evident in the United States from at least 1916 when some of the first aggregate level voting data analyses were published in political science (Ogburn and Peterson 1916; Ogburn and Goltra 1919). Within a decade, a full research agenda for political science based on objective measurement was outlined by Charles E. Merriam in his book *New Aspects of Politics* (1925). Simultaneously, the methodology to undertake such work was outlined by Rice (1928) and Lundberg (1929).

By the late 1920s, some of the first studies of measured public opinion were being published. For example, Gordon W. Allport, a noted psychologist, under-

took perhaps one of the first academic pre-election polls for the US Presidential Election of 1928 using Dartmouth College students. A primary concern of such early work was to justify the validity and reliability of attitude measurement. Allport (1929: 225) argued, “In politics opinion is as close as one ever comes to actual opinions, and furthermore in the election it is *opinion* that count (italics in original)”.

In the early 1930s evaluations were made of early *vox pop* opinion surveys undertaken by newspapers and magazines (Robinson 1932). The popularity of measuring public opinion for both elections and controversial issues may be gauged from the fact that between 1920 and 1930 the Literary Digest undertook six national polls: three for presidential elections, two on the issue of prohibition and one on taxation, having samples of between one and a half and four million respondents. Despite the accuracy of the Literary Digest straw vote polls on issues such as state referendums on prohibition and the 1932 Presidential Election, there were methodological concerns relating to sampling (Willcox 1931). This magazine’s inaccurate predictions in the Presidential Election of 1936 because of sampling problems, low response rate and non-response bias confirmed this assessment (Squire 1988: 131). Thereafter, survey agencies began to develop and apply quota and probability sampling procedures to avoid potential problems of selection bias (Link 1947; Hogg 1930). Nonetheless, carefully selected cross-sectional (quota) samples of the population were used for market research for companies such as the American Telephone and Telegraph Company (ATT) from 1929.

As noted above, the second major impetus for using mass surveying techniques came from the United States government during the depression era; and later again during the Second World War. During the depression there were many studies on economic, social and ethnic issues. According to Gosnell and David (1949: 564–565)

Public opinion research in government reached its peak during the war when the urgent necessity for assessing changing political attitudes and activities fostered the growth of attitude research as a tool for federal administrators. This growth was made possible by the temporary abatement of congressional opposition to such programs.

Almost all war agencies, such as the U.S. Army and Navy had attitude research undertaken for them by the Office of the War Department or the Division of Program Surveys of the Department of Agriculture. Much of this work sought to examine the American public’s reaction to entry into the Second World War giving

some of the first consistent measures of public opinion on foreign policy (see, Cantril 1948). There was also work on the impact of domestic and foreign propaganda. One important aspect of this work was an empirical content analysis of the media. Here it was assumed that knowing what messages people were exposed to would be a good predictor of what they were thinking, i.e. public opinion (Lasswell 1927, 1928, 1941, 1942; Berelson 1952). Such work continued after the war, where research began to deal more systematically with elite opinion and maybe seen as one of the progenitors of the Comparative Manifestos Project (Lerner, Pool and Lasswell 1951; Lasswell 1951).⁵

The scale of the research undertaken is indicated by the work supervised by Samuel A. Stouffer. Within the United States Army alone, under his guidance, about 300 studies involving over 600,000 interviews were undertaken between 1941 and 1945. This opinion research involved three main streams: social psychological profile of soldiers dealing with combat, organisation, race relations and other issues; the impact of mass communications, e.g. propaganda; and methodology (measurement and prediction).⁶ In reviewing some of this work Lazarsfeld (1949: 404) ruefully asked “Why was a war necessary to give us the first systematic analysis of life as it really is experienced by a large section of the population?”

The war not only provided an impetus for the expansion of opinion research within the United States, but also acted as a catalyst for the emergence of international political attitudes research. For example, the US military undertook a considerable amount of opinion research after the war ended in Germany, Italy and Japan. For the first time, cross-national opinion research was undertaken on opinions relating to perceptions of differing nationalities.⁷ In the 1950s two books illustrate the development of international opinion research: Buchanan and Cantril’s (1953) *How Nations See Each Other: A Study of Public Opinion* and Parry and Crespi’s (1953) *A Survey of Public Opinion in Western Europe*. Gabriel Almond later drew on his military experience when implementing the survey research for the *Civic Culture* (Almond and Verba 1963). Because of the volume and variety of work undertaken enormous advances were made in formal

5 Lerner, Pool and Lasswell (1951: 717) point out that “the words people use, and the way they use these words reveal their social goals [...] The special vocabulary which a governing elite uses to reveal its social goals is called ideology” encapsulates the key assumption behind all Comparative Manifesto Project research derived research which also uses content analysis techniques. Further information about the CMP is available at <http://manifestoproject.wzb.eu/> (accessed 24/02/2012).

6 See, Stouffer et al. (1949). For a review of the impact of this research see Lazarsfeld (1949) and Williams (1989).

7 See U.S. Strategic Bombing Survey (1947) for fieldwork undertaken between March and July 1945. For an example of the survey work undertaken see, Ansbacher (1950).

organisation analysis, social psychology and mass surveying techniques. In addition, the number of survey organisations in the United States grew from a handful in 1940 to over two hundred after the war. Experience gained in the war led to the foundation of survey agencies in Norway, France, Japan, West Germany and for a short period before complete communist control in Czechoslovakia and Hungary (Wilson 1957; Smith 1956; Sudman and Bradburn 1987).

The post-war success of public opinion polling was upset by the failure of the pre-election surveys in the US Presidential Election of 1948 to predict the correct outcome (see, chapter 7, section 3 for more details). Despite considerable contemporary debate no definite conclusions were ever reached as to why the polls failed. The use of quota sampling where the interviewer selected the person to be interviewed on the basis of specified criteria was seen to be one of the major causes, i.e. selection bias, as was the inherent impossibility of controlling for all politically relevant factors (Scheaffer, Mendenhall and Ott 1990: 29–33). This led to the adoption by most polling companies of probability sampling (Frankel and Frankel 1987: S128–9). Part of the problem may also have been that those doing the interviews did not follow the correct procedures, and survey operation managers were not effective in ensuring survey data quality (Stephan 1957: 85–6; note, Groves 1987).

In theoretical terms, the prevailing view post Lippmann and Tönnies (after 1922) was that public opinion was no longer some form of collective ‘social agent’ it was seen to be an attribute of individuals. This change in the conceptualisation of public opinion was a very dramatic one: one commentator has argued that this new ‘behaviouralist’ approach stemmed from a belief that with the emergence of mass communications in the early twentieth century the concept of the public altered fundamentally – to a situation where it was perhaps more accurate to talk about ‘mass opinions’ (Wilson 1962: 86). In this respect, the concept of the public as theorised in the philosophical tradition essentially disappeared; there was a complete rejection of Cooley’s (1909: 121) assertion that public opinion is “no mere aggregate of individual opinions, but a genuine social product, a result of communication and reciprocal influence”.⁸ In a sense the

8 Cooley (1918: 378–381) later went on to define public opinion as an “organic process” based on social interaction. Cooley eschewed definitions of public opinion based on some form of agreement among citizens. In contrast, he emphasised the important role played by an individual dissident’s attitudes in leading public opinion at a later stage: “There is nothing more democratic than intelligent and devoted non-conformity, because it means that the individual is giving his freedom and courage to the service of the whole. Subservience, to majorities, as to any other authority, tends to make vigorous democracy impossible.” A similar sentiment is evident in Tocqueville’s ([1835, 1840] 2010: 410–414, 1133–1152) criticism of the power of social conformity over private opinion in early nineteenth century American society.

terms ‘public’ and ‘opinion’ had no reality, but were best seen as either abstract concepts or metaphors (Habermas [1962] 1995: 241; Allport 1937).

Allport argued that attempts to treat public opinion as “an entity ... to be discovered and then studied [...] will meet with scant success.” The emphasis here is on use of the scientific method. One can of course assert that there is something called the ‘will of the people’ which can be equated with public opinion, or that public opinion is some emergent property of social interaction; however, it is only possible to scientifically study public opinion at the individual level. In other words, public opinion acts through the behaviour of individuals, which are observable and hence measurable; the same cannot be said for units defined in terms of a “group mind”.

This means that public opinion is not an object but a “situation.” Floyd H. Allport (1937: 23) summarised this argument and defined public opinion as quoted earlier in the introductory chapter. This perspective has become the mainstream one with the development and widespread use of opinion polls by innovators such as George Gallup. Gallup’s view was that opinion polling was “a form of journalism, not to be burdened with commercial considerations” (Worcester 1987: S80).

1.7 Early post-war critiques of mass surveying

With the successful emergence of opinion polling for the measurement of citizens attitudes, two central questions were posed in a number of critiques after the Second World War. First, does public opinion polling measure or manufacture public opinion? Second, what is the relationship between public opinion polling and democracy? Critiques of contemporary opinion polling argued that such important questions were either being inadequately answered or simply being ignored. The three main critics in this respect were Herbert G. Blumer (1948), William Albright (1939, 1956) and Lindsay Rogers (1949). The influential ideas of Francis Graham Wilson (1933, 1962) who outlined an insightful historical and (conservative) philosophical account of the concept of public opinion are not addressed here because of space constraints.

1.7.1 Herbert G. Blumer – the validity of polls

The key assumption behind contemporary mass surveying may be summed up in the phrase “One person, one vote tally of opinions”. This is hardly surprising since many of the early innovators in survey research were strong advocates of democracy, e.g. George Gallup, Elmo Roper and Rensis Likert. The core idea

that all respondents are equal and each interviewee represents a certain number of their fellow citizens (typically one respondent represents about ten thousand fellow citizens in the Czech Republic) matched with their ideological predispositions. This also had the advantage of fitting in neatly with the statistical assumptions behind (random) survey sampling where all units are believed to be independent and equal. One of the most influential academic criticisms of survey-based estimations of public opinion was made by the American (symbolic interactionist) sociologist, Herbert Blumer.

Blumer (1948: 546) argued that the study of public opinion through mass surveys was not valid because of its sampling procedure. Moreover, he felt that public opinion was not what opinion polls measured: public opinion could not be reduced to response counting, moreover insufficient account was taken of the bias that could occur during interviewing and possible manipulation of questions. One of the key reasons for adopting this stance was that the 'public' is in reality not based on a random selection of individuals who are all equal. Society is inherently based on inequality and as a consequence public opinion emerges from a complex social network where some individuals have more knowledge, power and influence than others. Consequently, opinion polling does not guarantee that those who really shape public opinion are actually interviewed.

Therefore the uses of demographic variables in mass surveys which relate to position in society provide little information about how the person interviewed contributes to public opinion. Knowing demographic attributes does not reveal how influential the respondent really is in public opinion formation; and this is crucial in knowing the relevance of individual opinions. These concerns imply that aggregate polling results may not reflect public opinion if no account is made of the environment and framework under which public opinion formation takes place. Opinion polls by definition must deal with matters that affect the whole public; however, many respondents are either ignorant or indifferent toward many issues and thus have no opinion. This implies that within mass surveying there is an inherent contradiction as few issues are truly public issues for which there are opinions to measure; and most often what polls measure are a minority of true opinions diluted by a mass of "top of the head" responses or non-opinions.

As a result, Blumer (1948) asserted that the validity of public opinion polls cannot rest solely on the basis of their ability to predict election results. There are three reasons for this criticism. First, prediction is only one dimension of validity. Second, while polls may be perfectly able to predict elections they may have no power of explanation (see, Huckfeldt and Sprague 1995). Third, being able to predict election results does not necessarily imply that mass surveys can predict opinions in other areas. These considerations led Blumer to conclude that mass

surveys do not identify public opinion – they simply assume poll results constitute public opinion. In other words, the measurements constitute the phenomenon rather than giving valuable information about citizens' attitudes. Despite the existence of many thousands of mass surveys, Blumer felt the results of this extensive empirical work were not likely to generate a progressive or cumulative research programme (note, Lakatos 1970).

In sum, Blumer favoured study of the 'effective' opinion of elites and not the 'populist' opinion of the ineffective masses. In many ways, Blumer's conception of public opinion is similar to that of Tönnies. For example, public opinion was ultimately more strongly connected with groups rather than with individuals where the public consists of 'participants' who have and express opinions and 'spectators' who do not have opinions and are indifferent. Also, the formation of public opinion is based on discussion and rational consideration. For Blumer (1948: 48) public opinion was not "unanimous opinion with which everyone in the public agrees, nor is it necessarily the opinion of the majority [...] Public opinion is always moving toward a decision even though it is never unanimous." Therefore, public opinion was the "central tendency" among separate (group based) opinions. The idea here seems to be similar to spatial models of party competition where minority governments may form by virtue of being the median party though not having majority support in the parliament: the minority grouping predominates because of its median position, better organisation and higher motivation in comparison to all other groups (Strøm 1990; Schofield 2008: 101–105).

1.7.2 William Albig – the political status of polls

William Albig (1956) noted that all opinion polling was based on the assumption made by L.L. Thurstone (1928a, b) that opinions are expressions of attitudes. Consequently, opinion polling depended fundamentally on having realistic models of underlying attitudes. With respect to sampling, Albig favoured using the smallest representative sample of the public. Once polls are taken, Albig (1939) argued that there were a number of critical issues.

First, mass surveys often inquire about issues that are not really important to the public. As a result, many polls published in the media are of little interest to the public and cannot be considered a significant public service. Second, mass surveys give the most systematic portrayal of citizens' lack of knowledge and indifference across a whole range of policy domains. Third, public opinion polls have an important impact on public policy-making because political representatives need to assess if the public is satisfied with public policy outcomes. This type of research has proved to be difficult due to complex causal relationships (note, Stimson 1999, 2004; Erikson, MacKuen and Stimson 2002). Fourth, pub-

lic opinion polls by giving an assessment of what the whole public thinks provide an invaluable source of information for policy-makers in weighting the rival claims of small vocal special interest groups and the common good.

Fifth, the publication of public opinion polls may serve an agenda-setting function where the act of measuring and publishing of surveys affects the subsequent measurement of opinion. Those who did not have fixed opinions on an issue (which is most likely true on all ‘new’ issues) are initially primed perhaps by the question format. Following publication many respondents in a later poll adopt the majority view perpetuated through the media most likely through a bandwagon mechanism. For Albig, however, opinion polls are not responsible for the public having only simplified views on complex issues as such simplification would occur regardless among an uncritical public. Lastly, the system of ethics governing public opinion polling may not be sufficient. Voluntary codes of ethics or even legal provisions will not work in situations where polling companies feel compelled to produce results desired by clients. In addition, polling agencies have no control over what clients do with the polling results.

While Albig (1956: 175) was critical of how opinion polling was conducted; he did concede that the taking of opinion polls was indicative of the development of democracy within a society. In other words, surveying as an institution could only exist in a particular type of political system that valued citizen representation. While Gallup and Rae (1940) contended that opinion polls gave governments “mandates from the people” to undertake popular goals, others such as Lindsay Rogers saw this as evidence for a movement toward a tyranny of the majority.

1.7.3 Lindsay Rogers – validity and status of polls

While the straw poll of the Literary Digest predicted the wrong presidential election result in 1936; it was the turn of purposive sampling agencies such as Gallup to endure a similar setback in 1948.⁹ Within a few weeks of this polling setback, Lindsay Rogers published *The Pollsters*. This study is one of the first comprehensive critiques of mass surveying and many of its key points are still valid. The main elements in his critique regarding the validity and status of mass surveys may be synthesised as follows.

First, polling agencies rarely define what they mean by public opinion. Second, while mass survey results are considered to be important in giving people a voice; no rigorous justification of why public opinion should have a determining influence on public policy has ever been published. Third, the view espoused by Gallup and others that public opinion polls improved democracy is not at all ob-

9 See section 3 of chapter 7 for a more detailed discussion of this topic.

vious because most citizens are uninformed and quite often have no opinion on government activities (note, Rogers 1949: 222). In addition, mass surveying does not stimulate public debate on important issues and in fact may be seen as supplanting such debate. Fourth, given that many citizens are uninformed or indifferent; it would be better for a rational form of public decision-making if public leaders did not always follow public opinion. A similar view of public representatives had been put forward earlier by Edmund Burke (1774), Walter Bagehot ([1867, 1873] 2001: 139) and James (Lord) Bryce ([1888] 1995: 921).

Fifth, opinion polls have a limited role to play in any democracy because they do not stimulate public discussion; and only show that the claims of self-interested groups are not held by the majority (Rogers 1949: 188). Sixth, the format of questions used in public opinion polls gives no information about the intensity and stability of opinions held by respondents. The only information generated is agreement or disagreement (note also Yankelovich 1991). Lastly, while Roger's (1949: 54, 162) doubted the ability of mass surveys to "measure" public opinion; he also questioned their validity on the basis that they reliably predicted election results. He felt that one could not necessarily assume that the process underlying electoral choice was the same for all areas of public opinion study.

In a similar manner to Albig (1956), Rogers emphasised the practices used by polling companies such as Gallup which essentially did not report the limitations of opinion polls in terms of practical matters such as the number of "don't know" responses; and more complex matters such as the general level of ignorance on many public issues. Lindsay Rogers felt that public representatives and governments should in general lead rather than be blindly responsive to public opinion, as some pollsters seemed to naïvely suggest, e.g. Gallup and Rae (1940).

1.8 Contemporary critiques

Contemporary debate about the nature and measurement of public opinion using mass surveys represents a continuation in many key respects of the key themes addressed in the foregoing sections. At the risk of over simplification, contemporary critiques of the study of public opinion tend to be either (a) anti-positivist or (b) sceptical of the merits of the science of mass surveying. These two perspectives in turn may be sub-divided into four main types of criticism.

The first critique while believing that there is something called 'public opinion' contends that conventional mass survey research is naïve; and fails to capture the radical and transformative aspects of political life and fails to comprehend the political consequences of such research. This perspective would include crit-

icisms by Herbert Marcuse (1964), Hannah Arendt (1958) and Benjamin Ginsberg (1986) who all essentially argue that the study of public opinion should be improved. In contrast, other influential social theorists such as Pierre Bourdieu (1973), as discussed in the last chapter in Box 1, contend that “public opinion does not exist” or more precisely the positivistic conception of public opinion derived from mass survey results does not represent the attitudes or preferences of citizens.¹⁰

The second critique attacks the epistemological foundations of the study of public opinion using surveys by adopting an anti-positivist stance. This criticism argues that public opinion polls tell you nothing and reproduce the biases of the polling companies who produce them. Opinions are not independent of the institutions and ideology used to measure them. Such a perspective is associated with Max Weber’s rationalisation thesis, the power-knowledge philosophy of Michel Foucault (1979: 27) and the later work of Pierre Bourdieu (1984: 399) who stated that “the act of producing a response to a questionnaire on politics, like voting, [...] is a particular case of a supply meeting a demand” (see also, Herbst 1993b: 20–24).

The third criticism stems from public poll findings which indicate that quite often the public does not have ‘opinions’ and only reflect the views of elites (Lippmann 1922; Zaller 1992). Many mass surveys indicate that most of the public is uninformed about politics and does not even have a basic knowledge of political life (Delli Carpini and Keeter 1996). For example, the American public was found in the 1950s to have policy preferences, which were inconsistent and could not be related to any ideology. It seemed as if respondents were ‘guessing’ the answers to survey questions, leading one influential commentator to assert that many people had “nonattitudes” (Converse 1964, 1970).

The fourth criticism comes from postmodernists such as Marshall McLuhan (1964) and Jean Baudrillard (1994) who both argue that public opinion reflects the media’s representation of reality rather than social reality itself. As a result, the public cannot tell the difference between the real world and its representation in the media. Furthermore as public opinion is a prominent feature of the media, the public’s own opinions having been aggregated and sanitised are broadcast back to the public by the media. As a result, it has become impossible to say that public opinion is causally prior to the surveys used to measure it. The argument is that there is feedback between public opinion and mass surveys published in

10 There have been a number of attempts to incorporate Bourdieu’s influential ‘public opinion does not exist’ critique into proposals for more valid and reliable measures of citizens’ political and social attitudes (Beninger 1992; Herbst 1992, 1993a; Krippendorff 2005).

Box 1.1: Citizen engagement in the governing of a state

Is it *desirable* that public opinion should have an influence on government?

		Yes	No
Is it <i>necessary</i> that public opinion should have an influence on government?	Yes	<i>Idealists</i> Aristotle, Locke, Rousseau, Condorcet, Gallup	<i>Pragmatists</i> Machiavelli, Hume, Hegel, Ginsberg
	No	<i>Realists</i> Habermas, Zaller, Noelle-Neumann	<i>Pessimists</i> de Tocqueville, Pareto, Mosca, Schumpeter, Lippmann

Idealists

- The collective intelligence of the many is superior to that of the few (Aristotle 335–323 BCE, Condorcet 1785).
- While the preferences expressed through public opinion tend toward the collective good, public opinion can nonetheless be wrong if it is deceived (Rousseau 1762, Bentham 1823).
- When done correctly opinion polls can represent public preferences for policy. Opinion polls are like mini-elections on public issues. This is the dominant model in public opinion research.

Pragmatists

- A political leader can only remain in power if they manipulate public opinion or do what the public wants (Machiavelli 1515, Jacobs and Shapiro 2000).
- Public opinion is the basis of all types of government, democratic or otherwise (Hume 1742, Hegel 1821).
- Mass surveys cannot measure public opinion because both opinion polls and the public are manipulated by elites in their aspirations toward retaining power (Ginsberg 1986).
- The focus is not on the individual but on competing groups and power relations within society.

Realists

- Public opinion and its measurement through surveys is a means used by elites to control the masses and manage democratic mechanisms for their own purposes.
- Public opinion has no independent existence but is a by-product of social and political forces (Lippmann 1922, Habermas 1984).
- Citizens' opinions are not stable but emerge spontaneously from specific contexts such as debates with family or friends (Zaller 1992, Noelle-Neumann 1984).

Pessimists

- A system of politics based on public opinion or majority concerns will inevitably lead to undesirable consequences where there will be restrictions on the freedom and equality of citizens (de Tocqueville 1835–1840, Pareto 1901, Mosca 1896, Schumpeter 1943).
- As many citizens are incapable of understanding the business of government it makes more sense to delegate decision making to technically competent elites (Lippmann 1922, 1925).
- Opinion polling is nothing more than a ritual, which is a repetitive symbolic activity similar to consulting the oracle at Delphi in ancient Greece (Lipari 1999).
- Public opinion is not only an instrumental means to manipulate the public as pragmatists contend but is also a means of shaping citizens fundamental views about society and popular conceptions of the relations between governors and the governed (Bourdieu 1994).

the media. In short, the postmodernist argument is that there is no such thing as ‘real’ public opinion.

In summary, anti-positivist and postmodern commentators adhere to what may be called a ‘political criticism’ of mass survey research because surveys mask or hide fundamentally important dynamics within society; and distract attention away from key changes. In contrast, the scientific critiques accept that random sampling (or variants thereof) will yield a representative sample of a population but are sceptical of the validity of assumptions such as treating respondents as being independent and equal. In real world social settings this is rarely the case as social reality is most often defined by social interaction and stratification. Moreover, almost all theories of social and political behaviour do not make such strong assumptions.

The political and scientific criticisms converge on the view that mass survey results do not reflect the complex nature of social reality. However, Converse (1987) has argued that the “reductionist agenda” within mass survey research has worked surprisingly well. This is because many of the issues identified by Blumer and other critics have been investigated in empirical studies; and have yielded valuable insights into nature of citizens’ attitudes and behaviour, e.g. Zaller (1992).

Conclusion

The goal of this chapter has been to demonstrate that the empirical study of political attitudes using mass survey data has its foundations in centuries of theorising about the nature, origin and consequences of aggregate public opinion. One of the central questions at the core of this theoretical work is the extent to which individual citizens’ political attitudes should have an impact on government decision making. Box 1.1 presents in summary form the answers provided by many of theorists discussed in this chapter (and also in the previous introductory chapter) to this fundamental question.

At the risk of over simplification, the simple typology shown in Box 1.1 reveals the perennial nature of the most desired role for citizens to play in any system of governance. Much of the differences between the four cells of Box 1.1 relate to the general level of political knowledge among citizens, and how important this is for effective governance.

Another key theme addressed in this chapter has been the focus of contemporary criticisms of mass political surveying on the political consequences of polling rather than the validity of the surveying procedure. This recent criticism is

more fundamental in the sense that it is claimed questions asked to representative samples do not measure public opinion; and worse still actually prevent its formation and expression. Opinion polling facilitates the manipulation of public opinion where political elites tailor their messages to manipulate public support. As a result, issues on the public agenda do not match the public's real concerns. Public debate is typified by vague themes, where the public often has no opportunity to respond; and where the emphasis is on political figures saying the right thing on manufactured issues rather than dealing with real ones (Mayhew 1997: 236–243).

In this respect, one common theme in contemporary critiques of public opinion surveying is that the spread of polling is not an indicator of the growth of democracy as espoused by Gallup and Rae (1940) and Albig (1956). Polling critics such as Benjamin Ginsberg (1986) have argued in contrast that polling is in fact destroying true public opinion; and hence democracy. True public opinion is transformed from being a voluntary behaviour to being a subsidised passive attitude. Furthermore, true public opinion loses its group basis and becomes an individual characteristic. What is expressed in public is no longer what the individual wants to express, but rather what that individual is asked in an interview.

If one accepts the validity of these critiques of measuring citizen's political attitudes using representative sample surveys, this has fundamentally important consequences for the interpretation of the political data presented in section 2 of this book. It is of course not possible to resolve the many issues surrounding individual political attitudes and collective public opinion examined in this chapter; and also the key questions addressed in Box 1.1. The goal of this chapter and book is more modest: researchers who use political data should keep in mind the theoretical assumptions involved in examining specific types of data to address particular questions. The answers given to political questions are often a product of the data or evidence used during the analysis.

Chapter 2

Origins and Nature of Political Attitude Surveying

“Attitude” is a term which has recently come into very general use among sociologists, social psychologists, and writers on education. It is a good example of an ill-defined, or undefined, concept used in a loose, pseudo-scientific manner. The result is a confusion, many times confounded.

Read Bain (1927–1928: 942)

Surely the most familiar fact to arise from sample surveys in all countries is that popular levels of information about public affairs are, from the point of view of the informed observer, astonishingly low.

Philip E. Converse (1975: 79)

Introduction

In this chapter there will be an exploration of a foundational aspect of all empirical political science work. A fundamental assumption of survey research is that it is possible to measure citizens’ opinions, attitudes, beliefs and values. Consequently, it is important to define what is meant by each of these concepts as this has a critical impact on (a) their operationalisation in surveys and (b) subsequent analysis in statistical models of political attitudes and behaviour. Although it is rarely stated explicitly within political science research, use of opinions, attitudes, beliefs and values involves having a theory of the nature and origins of each of these concepts.

Within the extensive literature on attitude measurement there is currently no definitive agreement on what attitudes are, although they are frequently measured in surveys. Moreover, it is not entirely clear if ‘attitudes’ (or associated concepts such as opinions, beliefs, values, etc.) are real; or are merely useful theoretical constructs for explaining unobserved activity in the human brain. Consequently, this chapter will show (1) the neurocognitive foundations of political attitudes surveys and (2) survey responses are critically determined by level

of political knowledge and use of cognitive cues or heuristics in the absence of such knowledge.

The material examined in this chapter is presented as follows. Section one examines the concept of ‘attitude’ and this is followed by an exploration of the interconnections between opinions, attitudes, beliefs and values. The third section reveals how the emerging field of political neuroscience facilitates the visualisation of attitudes and the neurocognitive mechanisms underpinning their expression in surveys. The following section switches focus to the survey response mechanism and presents an overview of the link between level of political knowledge and survey responses. In the absence of information, or where there is a high level of uncertainty, political decision-making is often undertaken using cognitive shortcuts or heuristics; and this is the subject of section five. In this section, there is an overview of five heuristics that are of particular interest in the study of electoral behaviour: one of the key domains of political survey data. Thereafter, there are some concluding remarks before embarking on part two of this book where the focus shifts to mapping political data resources for the Czech Republic.

2.1 What is a political attitude?

Originally the term ‘attitude’ referred to a body posture that was taken to be an indication of a mental state; and hence the basis for some future action. The word ‘attitude’ comes from the Italian *attitudine* and the late-Latin word *aptitudo*. In modern Italian ‘attitudine’ refers to an aptitude for something rather than an orientation. Today, the most commonly used meaning of the term ‘attitude’ relates to a state of mind and predictable behaviour. Consequently in Italian, the term attitude is now translated as *atteggiamento* which refers to a point of view or type of thinking. In general, the term ‘attitude’ refers to an *evaluation*.

For example, within psychology an attitude is seen to be “a psychological tendency that is expressed by evaluating a particular entity with some degree of favour or disfavour” (Eagly and Chaiken 1993: 1). We saw earlier in the introductory chapter that Floyd H. Allport’s (1937: 23) definition of public opinion adopted a similar evaluative perspective where the focus was on the situation where political decisions and actions are observed rather than purely on some internal mental process.

The term attitude is also often used in a generic manner to refer to a ‘liking’ or ‘attraction’ between individuals; and may refer to judgements about groups in society in terms of criteria such as ‘prejudice’ and ‘tolerance.’ Within politi-

cal opinion polling it is common to see pollsters talk of the popularity of candidates and parties in terms of ‘preferences’; while issue positions and specific ideas about public affairs are denoted as ‘opinions.’ Changing the focus to those who hold attitudes, inferences individuals make about their own attitudes are typically called “self-perceptions”. In contrast, personal judgements about other people’s attitudes are referred to as “attributions”. Values, goals and motives may also be seen as types of attitudes that relate to future psychological states that are judged as favourable or unfavourable. In sum, the concept of attitude encapsulates a variety of meanings depending on the context in which it is used.

2.1.1 What are attitudes and are they real?

Most often the term ‘attitude’ refers to some level of psychological engagement and stable orientation toward an abstract object, person or group. Consequently, this is how survey response data are typically interpreted. For the sake of simplicity, if one were willing to label *all* responses to survey questions as ‘attitudes’ and argue that survey data are respondents’ self-reported attitudes this raises two fundamental questions: (1) What are attitudes? (2) Are attitudes real? A typical answer to the first question provided by scholars in social psychology and mass survey research is that ‘attitudes’ are conceptualised in logical positivist terms: they are entities that are measured in mass surveys. Attitudes are seen to be products of a mind that is essentially treated like a black box. Turning to the second ontological question, attitudes are typically treated in the social sciences (as noted in the last chapter) in a positivist manner: attitudes are what are measured in surveys (Converse 1987: S14).

Questions about the origins and hence the nature of attitudes usually lead to explanations labelled as “self-interest”, “values” or “socialisation” (Bonninger et al. 1995). Again, fundamental questions concerning the essential nature and reality of attitudes are answered in a consequentialist manner in terms of other attitudes, i.e. preferences, beliefs, values and norms, and the intergenerational transmission of attitudes within families and some secondary groups. In many respects, the fundamental building blocks of surveys, i.e. attitudes, have a similar status as atoms in the early 20th century when many influential scientists such as Ernst Mach and Wilhelm Ostwald did not believe that atoms really existed. Adopting an instrumentalist rather than a realist perspective, Ludwig Boltzmann and other scientists saw atomic theory and atoms as being a useful fiction rather than something real.¹ In contrast the influential French mathematician, theoret-

1 This ‘agnostic’ perspective was in part an attempt to reconcile atomists and anti-atomists and hence allow research to proceed. Boltzmann’s seminal work in statistical mechanics and thermodynamics reveals that he was in fact a realist and believed atoms were real.

ical physicist and philosopher of science, Henri Poincaré adopted a realist position and asserted atoms and molecules existed; but were difficult to “see” because of their small size (Heilbron 2003: 405–406).

The theoretical work of Albert Einstein (1905) combined with Jean Perrin’s (1908) experimental results (published in 1909) demonstrated that key implications of the molecular kinetic theory of heat were observed in Brownian motion; and this in turn provided the empirical foundations for showing that atoms were indeed real and also convenient theoretical abstractions.² The origins of attitude measurement in the social sciences may be traced to a seminal article of Leon L. Thurstone (1928a) ambitiously entitled *Attitudes can be measured*. In this article, the concepts of ‘attitude’ and ‘opinion’ were defined as follows.

The concept “attitude” will be used here to denote the sum total of a man’s inclinations and feelings, prejudice or bias, preconceived notions, ideas, fears, threats, and convictions about any specified topic. Thus a man’s attitude about pacifism means here all that he feels and thinks about peace and war. It is admittedly a subjective and personal affair. The concept “opinion” will here mean a verbal expression of attitude. If a man says that we made a mistake in entering the war against Germany, that statement will here be spoken of as an opinion. The term “opinion” will be restricted to verbal expression. But it is an expression of what? It expresses an attitude, supposedly. There should be no difficulty in understanding this use of the two terms. The verbal expression is the opinion. Our interpretation of the expressed opinion is that the man’s attitude is pro-German. An opinion symbolizes an attitude.

This definition emphasises that an ‘attitude’ is an aggregate concept that is analogous in natural science terms to a molecule rather than to an atom. Attitudes are observed through their effects, i.e. their verbalisation as an ‘opinion’ during a survey interview or experiment. Using a bi-polar scaling approach, Thurstone (1928a) argued that it is possible to measure attitudes in a population in terms of

2 Brownian motion is the random movement of small particles such as grains of pollen suspended in water. Critics had argued that Brownian motion could not be due to the impact of atoms as they were too small to cause the effects observed. Einstein’s (1905) key insight was that although atoms were indeed very much smaller than grain pollen they could nonetheless have an observable impact due to the much stronger influence of osmotic pressure. Brownian motion was theoretically important because it demonstrated in a concrete manner the inconsistency between Newtonian mechanics and the second law of thermodynamics. In Newtonian mechanics both motion and time are reversible suggesting that events could be run backwards and forwards. The second law of thermodynamics, in contrast, argued that many processes are irreversible. This ‘reversibility paradox’ was resolved by giving atoms a statistical interpretation where atomic behaviour at the individual and collective levels are different. By adopting this statistical perspective Einstein was able to model Brownian motion and predict the size and movement of atoms (see, Newburgh, Peidle and Rueckner 2000b).

(a) level of agreement or disagreement to a set of 25 statements, and (b) the relative popularity of these polar positions. The mean score on this attitudinal (unit length) scale allowed the social scientist to make inter-group comparisons.³

One of the main criticisms levelled against early attitude research related to the validity of the answers elicited from respondents. Bain (1930: 367) argued that attitude measurements were problematic because they were an endogenous product of an artificial experimental situation; and were susceptible to unknown exogenous effects related to the respondent's life that are not measured. Moreover, the only validation of attitudes was that verbal behaviour (expression of an attitude) is correlated with overt behaviour. In short, the logic was of using one form of behaviour to predict another form of behaviour.⁴

Until the emergence of cognitive neuroscience and use of functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging (fMRI) psychological concepts such as opinions, attitudes, beliefs and values were largely treated like the notions of atoms and molecules prior to Einstein's and Perrin's work on Brownian motion. Opinions, attitudes, beliefs and values could be considered instrumentally useful theoretical constructs that help to explain behaviour that appears to have its origins in an individual's head. In other words, political attitudes help explain voting behaviour in those situations where the behaviourist notion of a physical stimulus-response does not apply, i.e. behaviour has 'invisible' origins or motivations.

More detailed comments on the existence and nature of attitudes will be made in section 2.3. First, it is important to briefly map out how the social sciences view the data generated by mass and elite surveys. Within political science such data are often labelled as 'opinions', 'attitudes', 'beliefs' and 'values.' In the next section, we will attempt to define these concepts and describe their inter-relationships. Such a task is important for understanding how survey data is often analysed and interpreted.

2.2 Opinions, attitudes, beliefs and values

Survey data are generally described as providing information about the orientations and behavioural pre-dispositions of citizens. While many discussions of public opinion use these and a variety of other terms inter-changeably, these four terms are often employed implicitly to refer to qualitative features of survey data.

3 The reliability of Thurstones attitude scales may be evaluated by testing the same respondents with two versions of the same scale. The correlation between both versions of the same scale indicates reliability.

4 Within electoral studies the situation is more indirect where reported verbal behaviour is used to predict reported overt behaviour.

In this respect, discussion of these terms focuses on four key themes: (1) origins, (2) response stability, (3) inter-relationships, and (4) consequences.

Before exploring one conceptualisation of the inter-relationship between opinions, attitudes, beliefs and values; it is appropriate first to demonstrate that the classification of survey data is not self-evident. In Figure 2.1 there is a non-exhaustive list of 20 terms or concepts that may be measured in survey interviews. Consequently, the consumer of survey data must decide how to interpret the quantitative evidence being examined. It is immediately obvious that not all these terms have precise definitions: and more specifically not all the data types shown in Figure 2.1 are mutually exclusive, suggesting that there are conceptual overlaps in measurement.

It is undoubtedly useful to have a rich palette of categories to classify survey questions; however, such flexibility comes at a cost. With many different survey measurement concepts there is the difficulty of comparability, where researchers may assign different classifications to the same survey question on the basis of specialised criteria. This is likely to lead to confusion and undermine attempts to make the results of survey research cumulative.

One key reason for this difficulty is the fact that different disciplines in the social sciences have their own lexicon. Political scientists examine the origins and consequences of citizen's 'opinions', economists focus on individual 'preferences', psychologists are interested in 'attitudes' and 'beliefs', while sociologists are mainly interested in 'norms' and 'values.' Notwithstanding the contrasting interests of these different academic disciplines, one could argue that the proliferation of the terms shown in Figure 2.1 indicates some "re-inventing of the wheel." There is undoubtedly some duplication, but this should not distract from the larger point which is that the products of the human mind that are measured (however, imperfectly) in survey interviews are both subtle and vast in range. In order to reduce the complexity of the measurement models of survey data to manageable proportions, it makes sense to conceptualise survey data in terms of a handful of key concepts in order to facilitate inter-disciplinary communication and minimize duplication of research work.

2.2.1 Hierarchical conception of survey data

One frequent question that arises when using mass surveys is how to interpret the data. Often the answers to poll questions are described as being the opinions, attitudes, beliefs and values of citizens. This may be confusing because it is not clear if these terms are (a) all synonyms, or (b) refer to specific features of pub-

Figure 2.1: How to interpret survey data – what do mass surveys measure?



Source: author

Note this 'word cloud' figure illustrates the many different concepts coming from different disciplines in the social sciences, e.g. anthropology, economics, psychology, political science, and sociology that are typically measured in survey research. Although, there are contrasting labels for the same concept in different disciplines (i.e. concept overlap) there are also many differences. In this respect, an important question relates to the ability of researchers to classify in a definitive manner survey items. For example, when is a survey measure best considered a 'norm' rather a 'belief.' In practice, researchers are often unable to do this task and simply adopt a label such as 'attitude' or 'belief' that represents the conventional wisdom in their discipline.

lic opinion.⁵ If it is assumed that not all the information gathered in a survey is the same, and that the data refer to qualitatively different responses to a question: then how is it possible to validly and reliably categorise survey responses? One influential approach to political survey data contends that there is a hierarchy of answers to questions asked during interviews.

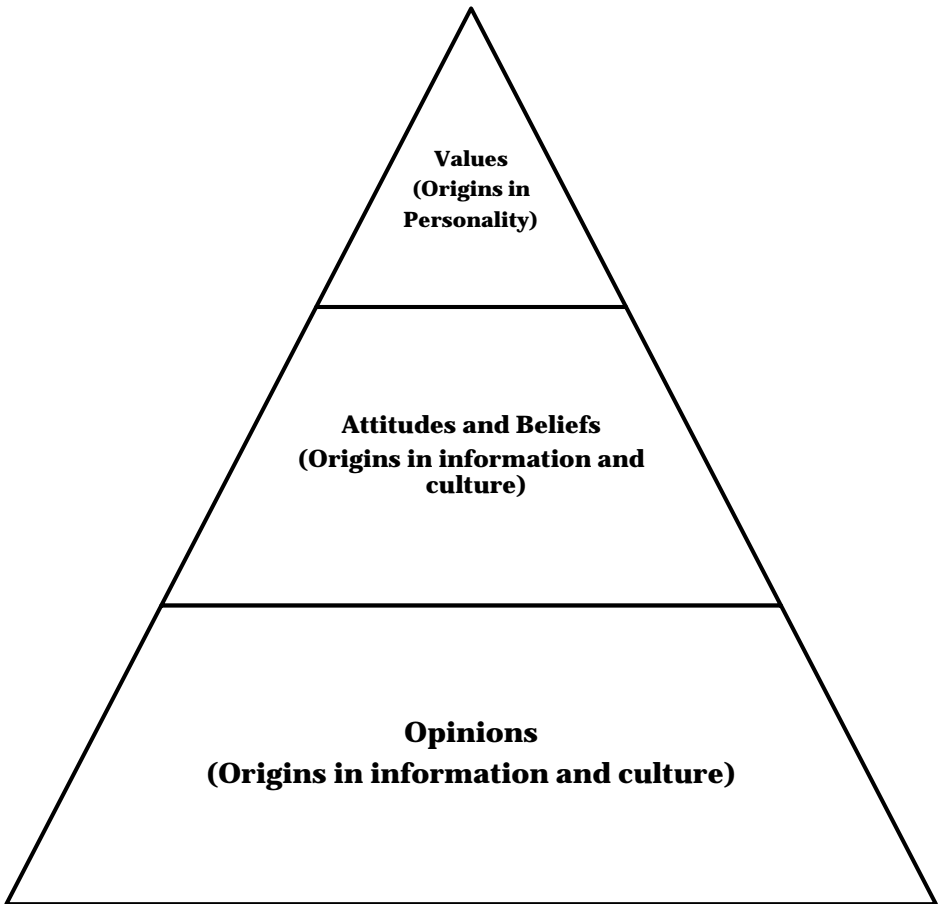
This hierarchical perspective may be represented as a pyramid as shown in Figure 2.2 where height (the vertical dimension) refers to the stability of the responses given. Consequently, opinions are defined to be the most unstable answers while attitude and belief are the terms given to survey responses that have greater durability; and values are the most stable responses of all being characterised by considerable stability over time. In this respect, Yankelovich (1991) suggests that the main difference between opinions versus attitudes or beliefs is that the former are “working ideas” that require further consideration in order to stabilise into an attitude.

Therefore, the vertical dimension in Figure 2.2 reflects both the stability of survey responses and the degree to which a person has thought about a specific topic; and formulated a considered position that is delivered during a survey interview. The hierarchical conceptualisation of survey data presented in Figure 2.2 suggests that opinions refer to more specific topics that attitudes or beliefs. And values are the most abstract or general of all forms of survey responses because they do not change on an hourly or daily basis like opinions; but can last years, decades or perhaps an entire lifetime. More generally, opinions and attitudes are similar in the sense that they are responses about the “current” world as it is perceived by the respondent. In contrast, values are qualitatively different from all other survey responses because they refer to a respondent’s views about an ideal world.

The relationship between the three levels shown in Figure 2.2 suggests some degree of reciprocal causation where initial opinions help determine how attitudes, beliefs and later values are formed. Conversely, opinion formation is shaped by values where there is a greater likelihood that certain types of opinions are expressed. An example would be a person with liberal values is more likely to express permissive opinions on legal provisions for abortion. Here values shape opinions, attitudes and beliefs because in human minds inconsistent forms of thinking are avoided because they cause psychological discomfort: a position that is in line with the main tenets of Cognitive Dissonance Theory (Festinger 1957).

5 An overview of published research on political attitudes and public opinion over a half century ago found that there were more than 50 definitions of public opinion (Childs 1965). Such conceptual plurality has been a feature of political attitude research from the outset.

Figure 2.2: A hierarchical model of survey response explaining the relationship between opinions, attitudes, beliefs and values



Source: Derived from Yankelovich (1991: 122).

Note this hierarchical conception of survey responses assumes that (1) there are many more opinions than attitudes and beliefs and there are relatively few values; (2) opinions are the least stable form of answer in a questionnaire interview and values are the most stable; (3) values are composed of attitudes and beliefs that are in turn made up of opinions; (4) opinions, attitudes and beliefs reflect social reality while values indicate ideals or aspirations; (5) the origins of opinions, attitudes and beliefs are information and culture, i.e. shared meanings, whereas values are constructed from personality traits, socialisation in early life and culture.

2.2.2 Critique of the hierarchical model

One interpretation of Figure 2.2 is that opinions are the foundations of attitudes and beliefs, and thereafter attitudes and beliefs are the bases for values. This hierarchical perspective suggests that values because of their abstract nature are general orientations shaping the expression of attitudes, beliefs and opinions. In sum, general principles guide specific positions. This makes some sense. However, there is a considerable amount of survey research which demonstrates that opinions, attitudes, beliefs and values often have independent origins. In other words, opinions and attitudes are often not based on values; and in many cases opinions, attitudes and values may be inconsistent.

One strategy for ‘saving’ the hierarchical model is to argue that the dispositionist (internal or individual psychological) logic inherent in Figure 2.2 is not realistic; and it is appropriate to adopt a more sociological or situationist perspective.⁶ This revised hierarchical schema has three main features: (a) values are seen to have their origins in personality and culture; (b) attitudes and beliefs emerge from culture; and (c) information and opinions are based purely on political communication and knowledge. It is quite obvious at this point that the definitions of opinions, attitudes, beliefs and values used to describe survey data variables has started to break down. This is because it is no longer possible to classify each survey question as being an opinion, attitude, belief or value within the framework shown in Figure 2.2.

Here we return to the central question of the last section: what is an attitude and do they exist? Answers to these two questions have only emerged with developments in cognitive neuroscience and the use of specialised medical imaging equipment; where it has become possible to visualise political attitudes for the first time. In a sense, a century after Einstein’s and Perrin’s work on demonstrating the existence of atoms we are only now at a similar stage of development in the field of attitude research.

2.3 Political neuroscience: visualising political attitudes

The central purpose in presenting the hierarchical model of survey data responses in the last section was to demonstrate to the reader the difficulty of defining survey answers. The mass surveying literature in the social sciences is full of concepts such as opinions, attitudes, beliefs and values that are both distinct and interconnected. This raises once again the question posed in an earlier section: are attitudes real or are they a convenient theoretical construct for interpreting

6 This argument refers to a form of bias known as Fundamental Attribution Error.

survey data? The hierarchical model of survey response is based on observational data derived from mass surveys. It makes no reference to the existential nature of political attitudes and hence cannot answer the question: are attitudes real?

One of the emerging subfields within the young discipline of political psychology involves the application of neuroscience techniques to the study of how political messages are processed by the human mind. Using medical equipment such as (functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging (fMRI) it is now possible to see the formation and expression of political attitudes within a small number of experimental subjects. This imaging approach to the measurement and visualisation of political attitudes is in its infancy, having only emerged within the last decade. Significantly, within political neuroscience imaging research the hierarchical distinction between opinions, attitudes, beliefs and values is not made suggesting that fMRI images do not support such a distinction. What is clear is that the emergence of political attitudes in the human mind is not concentrated in specific regions, but tends to be dispersed across the brain (Knutson et al. 2006; Rule et al. 2010).

For example, one can see in Box 2.1 that the parts of the human brain involved in attitude change associated with a state of cognitive dissonance are distributed among specific regions in the left and right hemispheres, and frontal and rear parts of the brain. With cognitive dissonance a person is compelled (according to consistency theory within psychology) to resolve two or more conflicting attitudes in a process that is typically described in terms of tension reduction. The key insight here is the fMRI images reveal how this dynamic attitudinal process occurs in real-time.

The study reported in Box 2.1 demonstrates that attitudes are complex entities because they typically involve neural activity in two or more parts of the brain. The central lesson here is that attitudes should not be conceptualised as a single thing, but should be viewed as specific combinations of underlying cognitive and neural processes that yield the attitudes measured in a sample survey. From this perspective, it is not surprising to find that the distinction between opinions, attitudes, beliefs and values as discussed in the hierarchical model of attitudes is fluid. In short, attitudes exist but their origins and nature are different to the traditional conceptions used within mass survey research and political science.

2.3.1 Static perspective: political attitudes and brain structure

Sometimes cutting edge political science is undertaken on public radio. Strange as this may seem, this is what happened on BBC Radio 4 in late December 2010. Colin Firth, the famous British actor, identified himself as a strong Liberal Democrat. However, the decision of this party to enter a coalition government in May

Box 2.1: Visualising attitude change using fMRI

According to Leon L. Festinger’s (1957) theory of cognitive dissonance, individuals tend to keep their actions and attitudes consistent, or consonant. This is because inconsistent or dissonant behaviour and attitudes result in a psychologically uncomfortable state: this motivates attempts to reduce dissonance. This is achieved by changing attitudes so that they are more consonant with behaviour. Although this theory has motivated much research over the last six decades, very little is known about how cognitive dissonance actually occurs in the brain; or what cognitive mechanisms might be associated with this process of attitude change. In sum, previous research has focussed on the origins of dissonance and not on how it actually occurs. The goal of an experiment undertaken by Veen et al. (2009) was to explore the “neural correlates of dissonance.” Using a standard ‘induced compliance’ test procedure subjects were asked to make arguments that being in an uncomfortable fMRI scanning machine was a “pleasant” experience, although this was not the case. This procedure facilitated the emergence of cognitive dissonance within a controlled environment where it is possible using fMRI to visualise the process of attitude change. The state of cognitive dissonance is a negative emotional state and appears to be processed in the brain in specific areas such as the dorsal Anterior Cingulate Cortex (dACC) and Anterior Insula (AI): zones that appear to manage incompatible information.

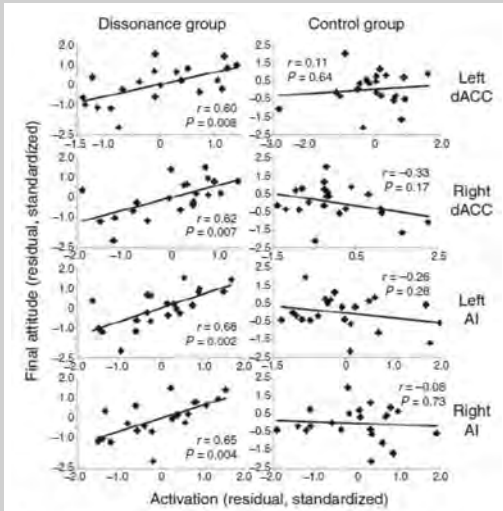


Figure 4 Partial correlation plots between activation and final attitude score, controlling for mean reaction time, pretest presence and pretest score. Left, dissonance group. Right, control group. Bilateral dACC and anterior insula activation predicted the final attitude score in the dissonance group, but not in the control group. Note that residual scores have been standardized within group.

In this experiment, 41 participants were asked to do a number of tasks. First, they performed a deliberately tedious lasting 45 minutes within an fMRI, which is rather uncomfortable. Second, they had to answer questions regarding (a) the fMRI scanner and the boring task, and (b) neutral questions using a Likert scale. During step two, test subjects were randomly allocated to either a dissonance or control group. Third, members of the control group were told to answer the questions as if they were enjoying the experiment regardless of how they really felt. Motivation to do this task was explicitly linked with extra payment for participation in the experiment. In contrast, the dissonance group were told that if they pretended to enjoy the experiment then a nervous patient that was observing would be put at ease when subjected to same treatment. Fourth, following fMRI scanning of the counter-attitudinal situation with both the control and dissonance groups, all participants were asked to complete a debriefing questionnaire about how they really felt about the tasks within the uncomfortable scanner.

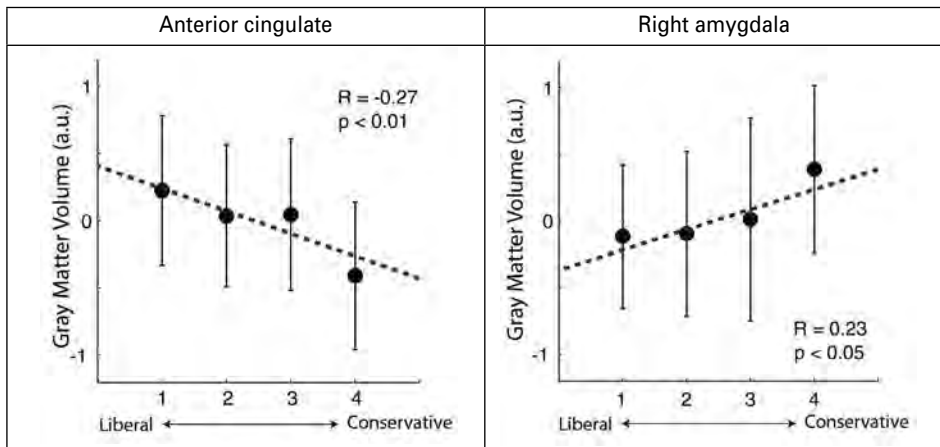
The experimental results shown above demonstrate activation of the dACC and AI predicts the final attitude of the dissonant, but not the control, group. These results are important for political science because they show that dACC activity occurs only “when counter-attitudinal behavior conflicts with other cognitions.” A similar dACC activation effect was observed during an earlier study that placed American partisan test subjects into a state of dissonance through a similar experimental technique (Westen et al. 2006). The ability to visualise attitude change reveals that cognitive dissonance is a better explanation of attitude change than Bem’s (1967) self-perception theory because neural activity occurs during the attitude-behaviour conflict (as cognitive dissonance predicts) and not when final attitudes are expressed (as self-perception theory asserts). Without imaging equipment such as fMRI, it would be impossible to demonstrate both the theoretical and neural mechanisms underpinning this type of attitude adjustment which constitutes an important determinant of political change.

2010 left him “extremely uneasy.” In fact, Firth felt that the ideological orientation of the three main British parties had changed in 2010; and he wanted to know why. More generally, Firth was curious in his own words “to find out what was biologically wrong with people who don’t agree with me and see what scientists had to say about it ...”

In his role as a guest editor of the influential *Today* programme, Colin Firth asked in an informal popular science exercise Professor Geraint Rees, Director of the Institute of Cognitive Neuroscience, University College London to explore in a set of small experiments if the structure of the brains of conservatives and liberals were different. The experiment consisted of subjecting 90 volunteers (students) to a small political survey followed by a structural MRI scan, and the results were replicated in a follow-up experiment with 28 test subjects. What started off as a piece of “frivolous” research was subsequently published in a scientific journal, *Current Biology* (Kanai et al. 2011)

Political orientation was measured using a standard five-point scale of very liberal (1), liberal (2), middle-of-the-road (3), conservative (4), and very conservative (5). None of the 90 experimental subjects selected point 5 on the scale indicating ‘very conservative’. Consequently, subsequent statistical analyses ex-

Figure 2.3: Individual differences in political attitudes and brain structure



Source: Kanai et al. (2011: 678)

Note these correlations show that the size or volume of specific parts of the anterior cingulate and right amygdala show a significant correlation with liberal-conservative political attitudes. A statistical threshold of $p < .05$, corrected for multiple comparisons was estimated. The correlation between political attitudes and grey matter volume (measured in Angstrom units, i. c. 10^{-10} M) averaged across the region of interest. Error bars represent 1 standard error from the mean.

plored the variance along a reduced four-point ideological orientation scale. As the results in Figure 2.3 demonstrate, this experiment revealed a strong correlation between the width of two particular areas of the brain and an individual's political orientation.

Specifically, self-proclaimed right-wingers had a larger amygdala: a small oval shaped region located deep in the brain's medial temporal lobe. The amygdala is the oldest (most primitive) part of the brain and is known to influence emotions. In contrast, self-identified left-wingers had thicker anterior cingulates. This is an area of the brain associated with anticipation and decision-making.

Using a special statistical inference technique called a multivariate classifier Kanai et al. (2011) used the correlation between political orientation and size of the anterior cingulate cortex and right amygdala to predict whether an individual was conservative or liberal.⁷ The results revealed that these two explanatory brain structure variables were correctly able to predict more than seven-in-ten of the experimental subjects (accuracy = $71.6\% \pm 4.8\%$ correct, $p=.011$). It seems from this experiment that it is possible to correctly predict liberal-conservative orientation, as typically measured in mass surveys, using structural MRI scans. It is important to emphasise that the brain structure differences identified between liberals and conservatives are not direct reflections of political thinking. The structural differences observed reflect underlying complex neural processes that result in the formation of political attitudes. Moreover, these neural processes involve many different regions of the brain known from other research to be involved with abstract reasoning.

If liberal and conservative political attitudes are reflected in systematic differences in brain structure, how does this occur? There are two possible answers to this question. First, liberal or conservative political experiences cause the observed brain structure differences. Second, variation in individual's brain structures predisposes them to be liberals or conservatives. As the relationships unearthed in this experimental research are based on correlations, it is currently not possible to determine the causal link between political attitudes and brain structure.

2.3.2 Dynamic perspective: differences between liberal and conservatives

One of the most influential themes in the early study of political attitudes was the link between ideological orientation and personality (Adorno and Frankel et al.

⁷ The multivariate classification estimator based on statistical learning theory (and more specifically on Support Vector Machines, SVM) used a 'leave-one-out' procedure with cross validation to predict individual test subject's political orientation. Individual model predictions were based on training the estimating algorithm with all the cases except the one being predicted (Hastie, Tibshirani and Friedman 2009: 417–459; Berk 2008: 301–328).

1950). Subsequent research has demonstrated that liberals and conservatives are not just different in terms of policy preferences, but also exhibit different motivations and styles of reasoning (Jost 2006; Jost et al. 2003, 2008, 2009; Mondak 2010). In general, the psychological literature on political ideology suggests that conservatives' style of thinking is based on order, closed-mindedness, structure and persistence; while liberals tend to be more tolerant of ambiguity and open to new ideas. These two ideological orientations appear to be in part inherited, i.e. they have a genetic component, and tend to be stable traits across a lifetime (Alford, Funk and Hibbing 2005). What has been missing in this research is confirmation of the conjecture that inter-individual differences in political ideology have neurocognitive foundations.

For these reasons, Amodio et al. (2007) hypothesised that differences in political ideological orientation between liberals and conservatives may be evident in neurocognitive activity. Previous research suggests that ideological differences may reflect individual differences in the "self-regulatory process of conflict monitoring" (Miller and Cohen 2001). This mechanism acts like a 'surveillance system' and determines if habitual behaviour is appropriate to current circumstances (see Marcus, Neuman and MacKuen 2000: 45–64). This surveillance activity is associated with the Anterior Cingulate Cortex (ACC). In Amodio et al.'s (2007) experimental study it was expected that liberals and conservatives responsiveness to conflicting information, processed by the ACC, would differ systematically. It was predicted that conservatives would exhibit less ACC activity during a complex and conflicting information task than liberals.

In the experiment, 43 test subjects were initially asked to complete a questionnaire with personality and political attitudes questions. One item in the survey inquired, using a version of the American National Election Study (ANES) question, about the participants' ideological orientation.

Here is an 11-point scale on which the political views that people might hold are arranged from extremely liberal to extremely conservative. Where would you place yourself on this scale, or haven't you thought much about this? Response options: (-5) extremely liberal, (0), moderate (+5) extremely conservative.

This measure of political ideology was found to be strongly correlated ($r=.79$, $p\leq.001$) with reported vote choice in the US Presidential Election of 2004 providing some measure of cross-validation of the ideology measure used in this experiment. Within the experiment proper the test subjects participated in a series of Electroencephalography (EEG) measurements that lasted about fifteen

minutes.⁸ To test the sensitivity of the participants' surveillance system located in their ACC, they were asked to undertake a Go/No-Go task: this is a standard method used by cognitive researchers to elicit fast decision-making responses (less than half a second) to a simple task of replying "Go" or "No" to a letter presented on a computer monitor. Each respondent was asked to complete 500 trials where four-in-five signals demanded a quick Go response.⁹ As the Go signal appears most often this creates a 'prepotent' response. In essence, the Go/No-Go task provides a means of testing the sensitivity of the ACC where it is expected that liberals will be more alert to change than conservatives.

In this experiment, a specific feature of the EEG called the Error Related Negativity (ERN) was of central concern. At its simplest, an ERN is an electrical signal in the brain indicating that an individual has consciously registered they have made a mistake or incorrect choice. The occurrence of an ERN about 50 milliseconds (ms) after a stimulus is known from previous research to be linked with ACC activity, and is thus associated with activation of the brain's surveillance system: suggesting that habitual behaviour is no longer appropriate. The results of the experiment shown in part (a) of Figure 2.4 shows that a liberal orientation is linked with greater ERN amplitudes in the Go/No-Go task revealing increased neural sensitivity to conflicting response states.

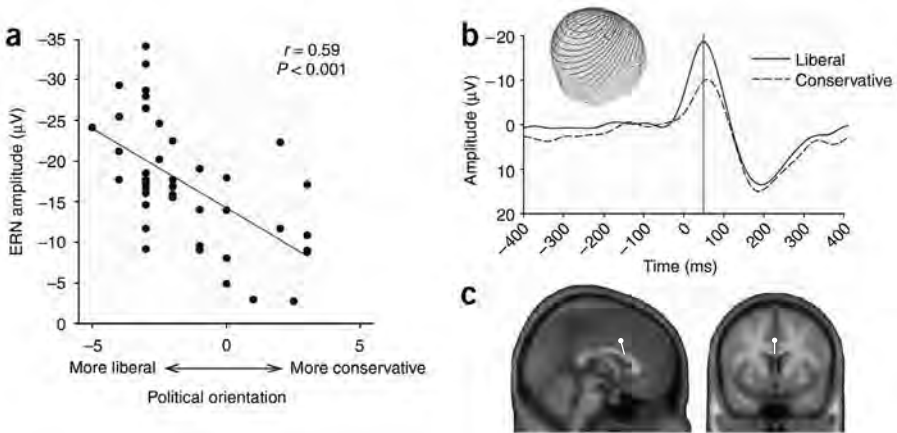
Part (b) of this figure presents the waveforms for liberals and conservatives for the Go/No errors representing those 20% of situations where there was conflicting information. The greater ERN amplitude (at +44ms after the stimulus was presented) for liberals again shows their greater sensitivity to information that conflicts with habitual responses. Beside this graph, there is a voltage map of a generic subject's scalp showing the distribution of the ERN across the brain. Further analysis shown in part (c) revealed that the source of the ERN signal was the ACC – which exhibited the peak amplitude shown as the vertical line in part (b).

Overall, Amodio et al. (2007) have demonstrated three important things. First, political orientation is strongly correlated ($r=.59$, $p\leq.001$) with neural activity that is linked to "cognitive control and self-regulation." Second, political liberals exhibit greater neurocognitive sensitivity than self-identified conservatives prov-

8 Electroencephalography (EEG) is a method for measuring of electrical activity in the brain that stems from electro-chemical changes within neurons. EEG is used to measure brain activity for periods of about 30 minutes and is used (unlike fMRI) when the timing of neural activity (typically in milliseconds) is important. Within cognitive research a variant of EEG called event-related potentials (ERPs) is used where EEG measurements are "synchronised" with some form of stimulus as is the case in this experiment.

9 Incorrect answers or slow responses were reported to the respondent as a means of increasing motivation.

Figure 2.4: Relationship between liberal-conservative orientation and neuro-cognitive activity



Source: Amodio et al (2007: 1246)

Note these results illustrate graphically the relationship between ideological orientation and activity in the ACC when participants in the experiment were subject to conflicting information. Part (a) shows the correlation between ideology and the level of ACC activity measured in terms of ERN amplitude. Part (b) shows the dynamics in neural activity for liberals and conservatives where the peaks 42ms after stimulation reveal differential sensitivity to conflicting information. The inset graphic is a voltage map of the scalp showing the main areas of neural activity. Part (c) reveals that the source of ERN neurocognitive activity is the ACC.

ing a neural basis for the liberals' greater openness to change.¹⁰ Third, conservatives are more likely to make decision errors because their brain's surveillance system is less responsive to changed circumstances than liberals. The implication here is that conservatives are likely to make more reliable decision-makers when the range of choices is limited and less subject to novel events.

In this section, the goal has been to demonstrate how cognitive neuroscience provides insights into the origins and nature of attitudes that are frequently measured in survey research. Within the last decade, it has becoming increasingly possible to visualise attitudes and attitude change. Such work is fundamentally important because long-standing problems in the conceptualisation of political attitudes and differences between opinions, attitudes, beliefs and values is likely to be reformulated into mechanisms associated with neurocognitive activity. This process will have fundamental consequences on how all survey data are an-

¹⁰ Amodio et al. (2007: 1247) report that a partial correlation analysis revealed that the association ($r=.53$, $p\leq.001$) between political attitudes and the ERN is strong holding test behaviour constant. This suggests that liberals have greater neurocognitive sensitivity to cognitive conflict that goes deeper than observed test behaviour.

alysed. At this point, it is appropriate to switch attention to another key form of activity for political decision-making and behaviour: knowledge.

2.4 Public knowledge and attitude measurement

The current popularity of democracy as a system of government is in historical terms a recent development. In the past, most political theorists were sceptical that the dangers inherent in democratic government could be compensated for by the merits of democratic practice. Plato in *The Republic* argued that democracy was dangerous because citizens did not have the experience or knowledge required for good judgement; and were likely to be manipulated by cynical leaders. Walter Lippmann in *The Phantom Public* (1925) argued in a famous passage that the wish of an ordinary person to be a good citizen was similar to the wish of a fat man wanting to be a ballerina. In a similar vein, Joseph A. Schumpeter in *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy* (1943) argued against democracy because of citizens' inability to follow and understand complex arguments or use rational decision making processes. Until the 1950s, there was not much empirical evidence to test the claim that citizens simply do not know enough to participate effectively in government decision-making. Public opinion research from the 1950s to the 1970s indicated one key overarching theme: minimalism. It was argued that public opinion was characterised by four key minimal characteristics: (a) minimal levels of public attention and information, (b) minimal use of abstract political concepts such as liberalism-conservatism, (c) Minimal stability of political preferences, and (d) Minimal levels of attitude constraint, that is consistency between key component ideas in an ideology.

2.4.1 Political sophistication

Can political elites and the public communicate with one another effectively? Do they speak the same political language? This was a fundamental question examined by Philip E. Converse (1964) in one of the most influential book chapters ever published within political science: "The stability of belief elements over time". Converse in an analysis of American national panel election studies undertaken in 1956, 1958 and 1960 attempted to see the extent to which American voters used standard political concepts such as liberalism and conservatism in expressing political attitudes. He found that the use of ideological reasoning was restricted to about 3% of the American population, with a further 9% using ideological reasoning some of the time. While 42% responded to parties and can-

didates in terms of group benefits, 24% mentioned the “goodness” or “badness” of the times, and the remaining 22% exhibited no ideological reasoning at all.

Converse also examined the possibility that citizens were not able to explain the ideological basis for their political attitudes in survey interviews. He compared two samples (a) a national cross-section of the American public, and (b) candidates who sought election to the House of Representatives. Candidate positions on (eight) domestic and foreign policy issues showed some consistency while those of the public showed no consistency at all. These results were the inspiration for Converse’s (1964) famous Black and White Model.

Converse found that aggregate opinion change between 1956 and 1960 was negligible. However, there was a great deal of change at the individual level. Less than two-thirds of the public came down on the same side of a policy issue, where half would be expected by chance alone. An examination of the reasons for these individual level changes illustrated that the American public were made up of two distinct groups. The first minority group had stable opinions and were called an ‘issue public.’ The second majority group were indifferent or ignorant of politics, and admitted to not knowing anything or invented an opinion that Converse labelled a ‘non-attitude.’ On the basis of this evidence, Philip E. Converse made the sobering point that non-attitudes were encountered more frequently than real attitudes in mass surveys.

2.4.2 Criticism of the non-attitudes thesis

Unsurprisingly, Converse’s (1964) conclusion that most citizens do not have political attitudes led to considerable debate in political science because if the implications of the non-attitude model were accepted; it implied that democratic systems of representation were fundamentally flawed. Almost all conceptions of effective democratic representation argue that citizens should be informed in order to articulate preferences that feed into the formulation of public policy making decisions. Otherwise, public policy will be based on (a) the irrational whims of an ignorant public, and therefore ineffective in the long term as politicians pander to the public for office seeking reasons; or (b) decision making is monopolised by elites because citizens fail to monitor their representatives effectively due to a lack of sufficient information and knowledge. Criticism of Converse’s non-attitudes view of public opinion came in three main flavours.

Political context critique: Initially, it was argued that the 1956–1960 period was a rather quiet era in American politics: and during such phases it was not surprising that the public exhibited little interest in politics. Later research showed this political context critique to be unconvincing as the general level of cognitive en-

agement did not increase appreciably during the more turbulent late 1960s and early 1970s. In short, the American public did not illustrate more sophisticated opinions or reasoning regarding politics and public policy making during times of greater political debate and conflict. Subsequent research in the United States (Converse and Markus 1979), Britain (Butler and Stokes 1974) and France (Converse and Pierce 1986) illustrated that non-attitudes were widespread across all demographic groups. Membership of issue publics was not based on level of education or degree of interest in politics.

Survey methodology critique: Christopher H. Achen (1975) and Robert S. Erikson (1979) argued that attitude instability might be a result of measurement error rather than a consequence of public ignorance and indifference toward politics. Converse (1970) argued instead that opinion instability could not be reduced solely to problems with survey questions. He contended that attitude stability should be strongly related to the level of citizens' knowledge; and this is indeed the case. However, when survey questions are made less ambiguous and presented in a better way, the level of attitude stability increases as Achen and Erikson predicted. In short, how political attitudes are measured matters.

Theory of survey response critique: Zaller and Feldman (1992) disagreed with both Philip E. Converse (1964) that citizens have no real views on politics and with Achen (1975) that attitude instability was due to measurement error. Zaller and Feldman argued that citizens are ambivalent about many political issues where they find it difficult to give precise answers to questions that are related in their minds to many different relevant considerations. In essence, the argument here is that citizens have too many ideas about public policy making; and this gives the appearance of opinion instability where the attitude measured depends on the context of the interview and the nature of the survey question asked. If issues are 'framed' (i.e. recommendations as to how issues should be understood) by elites; then public opinion tends to be structured and more stable on such issues. Regardless of elite messages some issues which relate to moral, ethnic or religious questions do elicit high levels of "true" opinions that are stable. Converse felt that elites and the public do not communicate effectively with one another, and this fact had some important implications for the functioning of democracy. However, most of his evidence related to citizens. Analysis of the strength and stability of elite attitudes in America, Italy and France has shown that there is considerable stability in elite attitudes, much more than is the case among the general public (see, Jennings 1992; Putnam, Leonardi and Nanetti 1979; Converse and Pierce 1986).

2.4.3 Political attitudes: to be or not to be?

Converse's (1964) argument that American citizens do not have a sophisticated view of politics based on ideological abstractions such as liberalism and conservatism still seems to be true. Citizens have lots of specific attitudes that are not connected by an underlying ideological structure. Issues are treated in isolation, perhaps this pattern is similar to the way in which issues are dealt with in the media. Ideological consistency is more strongly related to interest in politics rather than level of education. This implies that ideological sophistication has a strong social rather than psychological basis. Converse's (1964) thesis about the prevalence of non-attitudes is seen from subsequent research to be related to the quality of survey questions; and the degree to which elites take definitive positions in debates.

Attitude instability remains a fundamental problem for the functioning of democracy. The three key problems identified by Converse: (a) citizens' superficial thinking, (b) respondents providing opinions on the basis of little or no information, and (3) the enormous impact which survey question structure can have on respondent answers undermines the view that citizens are competent to be effective political decision makers (note, Mueller 1994). The attitudes stability or constraint debate within political science is important because it raises the fundamental question should citizen competence be solely equated with being able to think in an ideological manner? It could be argued from a psychological perspective that while ideologists might be informed and intelligent, they could also be described as single minded and doctrinaire: not the most desirable attributes of a democratic citizen.¹¹

2.5 Revisionist approaches to public opinion, heuristics and cues

In the last section, we examined Converse's (1964) non-attitudes thesis. In a subsequent publication Converse (1975: 79) continued on the same theme and made the point noted in the second epigraph at the start of this chapter that the variation in citizen knowledge is large and most people know little about politics. This was not the first time such a pessimistic view of the competences of citizens had been expressed.

11 Some care is required when evaluating such assertions because research within psychology reveals that 'cognitive closure' is not strongly associated with intelligence. Cognitive closure refers to individuals that are decisive. In contrast, closed mindedness is stronger in those who like order and predictability and dislike ambiguity (Webster and Kruglanski 1997).

For example, Walter Lippmann in *Public Opinion* (1922) argued that the public in general does not know what it wants and what would make good public policy. The main reason for this conclusion is that while the public is “concerned about public affairs” they are “immersed in [...] private ones.” Of course, Lippmann (1922, 1925) in the early twentieth century had no political attitudes survey data to support his view; and based his arguments on observational and anecdotal evidence stemming from his work as a journalist. Four decades later, Robert A. Dahl (1961: 305) in his influential study of *Who Governs? Democracy and Power in an American City* reached a similar conclusion, again without reference to individual level survey data. He asserted that for a great many citizens in immediate post-war America “politics is a sideshow in the great circus of life.”

The question of why citizens choose to be uninformed was first directly addressed in Anthony Downs influential *An Economic Theory of Democracy* (1957). Down’s made the contrary argument that it was surprising that citizens were in any way informed about politics. Downs pointed out that there are costs involved in the gathering and analysing of political information measured in time, energy and opportunity. Rational voters will pay such costs only so far as such information gives them some benefit. However, one vote among millions is likely to have minimal consequences or benefits. Consequently, there is a strong justification for “rational ignorance” where knowledge of politics and public policy is likely to be an accidental consequence of going about the daily business of living and working.

One of the most extensive studies of the nature of political knowledge in the United States using survey data was undertaken by Delli Carpini and Keeter (1996) who found that citizens while lacking knowledge on many political topics are not complete “know nothings” that previous research had suggested. Moreover, the level of political knowledge was seen to have remained constant between the 1950s and the 1990s suggesting that increasing general levels of education had little impact. This research confirmed that knowledge of politics depends on citizen’s personal resources where women, African Americans, the poor, and the young tend to be less politically knowledgeable than the rest of the population. In contrast, individuals with higher levels of motivation and skills tend to be better educated about politics.

What is equally important from a public opinion perspective is that the most rigorous surveys undertaken (e.g. American National Election Study, General Social Study) are typically only able to interview 75% of their target sample. Non-respondents who are not included in survey results are likely to be even less informed than those interviewed. Consequently, mass survey estimates of citizens’ political knowledge underestimate the level of knowledge by about 25%.

So the situation is worse than mass survey research indicates. In comparative perspective, it seems that there are important cross-national differences. American citizens know less than their fellow citizens in the UK, Canada, France, Germany, Italy and Spain (Dimock and Popkin 1995). Such cross-national differences highlight the important role played by institutional contexts such as electoral system in determining the impact of knowledge on electoral behaviour such as voter participation (note, Fisher et al. 2008).

2.5.1 Heuristics: shortcuts to knowledge?

It is possible to argue that citizens in a democracy do not need to know the exact details of public policy making proposals in order to make sensible choices. The contention here is that the public makes use of a variety of sensible and mostly adaptive shortcuts when making choices. For example, Schaffner and Streb (2002) illustrate that in low salience elections less educated survey respondents are much less likely to express vote preferences if the survey question does not include party labels. A key implication here is that if many respondents are guessing their vote intentions it becomes very difficult to predict low information election outcomes using mass surveys.

Informational shortcuts such as party labels are known in psychology as *cognitive heuristics*. Heuristics refer simply to problem solving strategies, often used unconsciously, which keep the information-gathering task within reasonable bounds. Individuals are seen to have limited information processing capacities, and are viewed as ‘cognitive misers’ who minimise thinking when making decisions because it is costly and time consuming. Examples of heuristics that have figured prominently in the psychological literature are presented in Table 2.1. For each type of heuristic there is an application to the domain of political decision-making. It is important to note that citizens may use more than one heuristic when expressing choices (Boudreau 2009b).

Arguments that heuristics may be the basis for making political choices make three key assumptions. First, decision-making takes place in an uncertain and complex world. Second, everyone makes use of cognitive shortcuts in thinking about politics. Third, the use of heuristics partially compensates for a lack of knowledge and attention to politics. The use of heuristics to explain citizen behaviour has been criticised primarily because it is easier to assume that citizens use heuristics than it is to demonstrate their use.

Ideas such as ‘low information rationality’ have become almost a conventional means of assuming away the problems associated with low levels of knowledge and efficient public policy making (see, Bartels 1996; Popkin 1991; Kuklinski and Quirk 2000). Moreover, cognitive heuristics may not be used effectively by

Table 2.1: Heuristics evident within political decision-making

Heuristic type	Description
Availability	The frequency or probability of an event is determined by the ease with which an example comes to mind (Tversky and Kahneman 1973). In election campaigns the information carried in media stories and poll results may be the basis of bandwagon or underdog effects
Representativeness	Propensity to make decisions on the basis of stereotypes or on the basis of a class of events (Tversky and Kahneman 1974; Shefrin and Thaler 1992; Thaler 2000)
Anchoring and adjusting	Decisions are based on an implicit or initial reference point (Tversky and Kahneman 1973, 1974)
Imitation	A ‘do-what-others-do’ mode of decision making where a person follows what the majority decide (Gigerenzer 2008). This may be the basis of partisanship and vote choice within families and other social groups; demonstrating that social context, conformity and identity have important effects
Naïve diversification	Individuals make a more diverse range of choices when making a decision at one single time point rather than making a set of choices in sequence (Read and Lowenstein 1995). This heuristic suggests that different ballot paper designs will lead to systematically different voting patterns especially in elections with low information
Escalation of commitment	Also known as the ‘sunk cost fallacy’. This is where justification of a choice is based on the amount of past investment rather than the current cost-benefit of the choice (Staw 1976). One could interpret this as the basis for continued party identification, although a party’s policy positions are no longer consonant with those of the voter
Affect	Making a choice on the basis of emotionally liking the option rather than on the basis of a cognitive evaluation (Finucane et al. 2000, Slovic et al. 2002a,b). An example of an “affect effect” is voting for a candidate on the basis of their appearance (note, Neuman et al. 2007)
Recognition	A strategy used when making judgements under uncertainty where the option that is better known is chosen. Unknown choices are never explored (Goldstein and Gigerenzer 1999, 2002). Name recognition is as good a predictor of election outcomes than standard vote intention survey questions Gaissmaier and Marewski (2011)
Fluency	If both choice options are recognized but one is recognized faster, then this alternative is assumed to be more important in making the decision (Gigerenzer and Gassmaier 2011: 462). This would include voting for well-known candidates or parties in the absence of other relevant information
Similarity	Making current choices on the basis of their similarity to past successful decision making (Read and Grushka-Cockayne 2011). For example, voting in the same manner in all elections providing evidence of a ‘standing decision’ or party identification

Source: author. Note that this overview of heuristics is not exhaustive. There is in principle no upper limit to the number of heuristics observable, although the occurrence of some heuristics is likely to be much more frequent than others. Nonetheless, the elaboration of heuristics may be criticised as being based on inductive rather than deductive criteria suggesting that there is no underlying principle regarding the emergence of heuristics. However, Kahneman (2011) indicates that the presence of heuristics and cognitive biases in human decision-making may be conceptualised within a dual system of information processing that has neurocognitive foundations.

all citizens; and may in fact hinder rather than help some individuals. Also, the use of heuristics may be restricted to situations where the cognitive burden of reasoned decision-making is prohibitive (van Straeten et al. 2010). Evidence of the use of heuristics in elections implies that the determinants of voting are composed of a set of mechanisms and a “one-size-fits-all” approach to modelling is inappropriate (Baldassarri and Schadee 2006). In the remaining part of this section, there will be a brief overview of half a dozen types of heuristics examined in political science often through the use of mass survey data.

2.5.1.1 Party identification heuristic

One simple means of making political choices is to make all decisions on the basis of psychological identification with a specific party (Campbell, Converse, Miller and Stokes 1960; Lodge and Hamill 1986; Rahn 1993).¹² According to the party identification model, vote choice does not depend on the candidates or their issue positions: what is most important is the party label of the candidate. In countries such as the United States and Britain, where many voters have some level of party identification voting for a specific party could be considered a standing decision or habit. With party identification there is no need to evaluate all the parties’ policy positions or the competence of the party leaders: a long-term decision has been made to support a preferred party. This standing decision or habit will only change if some extraordinary event occurs.

Party identification as a heuristic may play an equally important role in the intergenerational transmission of voting behaviour. From a Bayesian perspective, party identification may be conceptualised as an individual’s estimate of the average future benefits from candidates of that party. During a voter’s adult life these partisan expectations are updated on the basis of events since the last ‘realignment’ using Bayes rule. New voters cannot use such an updating mechanism as they have no experience. In such circumstances, it makes sense for young (or first time voters) to take cues from their parents and adopt a partisan position (and most likely vote choice) using current parental party identification (Bartels 2001; Achen 2002; note also Zuckerman and Brynin 2001).

2.5.1.2 Candidate ideology heuristic

If the salient characteristics of a specific politician are consistent with being a conservative, then voters may infer that this candidate favours a strong defence

¹² Exploration of the neurocognitive impact of party identification on reaction to a candidate reveals that brain activity when viewing a politician’s face is affected by the viewer’s partisan attachment; and that individuals control their emotional reactions to opposition candidates through the activation of cognitive control networks (Kaplan, Freedman and Iacoboni 2007).

policy, prefers low taxation and little government intervention into the economy, and is also against liberal abortion laws. Here candidates' issue positions are assumed rather than learned. Moreover, it seems that when voters have information about candidates and are able to evaluate which candidate is most preferred, voters still prefer to use heuristics as the basis for casting their vote. Rahn (1993: 492) found that voters "neglect policy information in reaching evaluations; they use the label rather than policy attributes in drawing inferences; and they are perceptually less responsive to inconsistent information." This research found that "not even extreme party-issue inconsistency prompted individuals entirely to forsake theory-driven processing." Such results fit neatly with a stream of cognitive psychology called Schema Theory which assumes that individuals are cognitive misers that do not evaluate each new piece of information separately, but assimilate new information into pre-existing 'schemas' or frameworks of knowledge (Fiske and Linville 1980; Kuklinski et al. 1991).¹³ This method of making a vote choice has the merit of being both cognitively efficient and simple to do. It can, however, lead to errors and biases in judgements (Kahneman 2011: 41–53).

2.5.1.3 Endorsement or likability heuristic

Citizens use the support given by interest groups to candidates or parties to decide whom to support in elections. Voters in this situation defer the cognitive costs of finding out which candidate is closest to their preferred position on an issue to a trusted source. In short, a hard question (what are all candidates or parties policy positions?) is converted into a much easier question (who do I most trust?). The only requirement in this situation is to find out ones' attitude toward the endorsing interest group, party leader, political commentator, or newspaper editor (Brady and Sniderman 1985; Sniderman, Brody and Tetlock 1991). Such a strategy makes sense if there are a large number of candidates in an election. Lupia (1994) showed that voters in California who knew little about proposals in a referendum ballot to reform the car insurance industry, nonetheless made sensible choices: indistinguishable from those who were well informed. The key factor in this referendum was the role played by interest groups. When Californians found out that the insurance industry itself or associations representing trial law-

13 A rival approach within cognitive psychology called Attribution Theory contends that humans are "naïve scientists" who are constantly attempting to formulate cause and effect explanations of their own and other peoples' behaviour (Jones et al. 1972; Nisbett and Ross 1980). Within attribution theory the availability and representativeness heuristics are often seen to be employed to determine causal relationships. However, use of such heuristics may be biased as they fail to take account of statistical information and base rates (Tversky and Kahneman 1973, 1974).

yers supported the referendum proposal, they knew enough, and voted against it. More generally, if an endorser has incentives to be truthful then the endorsement heuristic lessens the gap between more and less sophisticated voters; and hence acts to improve democratic decision making (Boudreau 2009a).

2.5.1.4 Viability heuristic

Opinion polls are often criticised as only providing ‘horse race’ information about an election. However, published opinion poll results that emanate from the whole electorate, rather than small sub-sections of it, helps reduce the cognitive effort of who to support in an electoral contest. Polls provide ‘viability’ information that indicates which candidates have little or no hope of success; thereby reducing the choice set to a more manageable level.¹⁴ Seeing a candidate ahead in the polls might provide ‘consensus information’ where a voter will reconsider a candidate that they once rejected – the basis for the so-called ‘bandwagon effect’ (Mutz 1992). Alternatively, a candidate ahead in the polls might garner support from voters who then cease to consider other candidates, thereby never identifying the ‘best’ candidate for them (Simon 1954). For example, at the start of the 1976 Presidential campaign just one-in-five of the American electorate claimed to know anything about the former Governor of Georgia, Jimmy Carter. Two months later, after a series of stunning primary election victories, 80% of the American public knew something about this Democratic Party candidate. A similar process occurred in 2004 with Massachusetts, Senator John Kerry after the Iowa and New Hampshire primaries.

2.5.1.5 Candidate appearance / representativeness heuristic

Visual images or signals are so pervasive in the social world that it is easy to overlook their importance in citizens’ political decision making; especially if there are relatively little other sources of information available. One important aspect of candidate appearance is ‘likability.’ Here voters are seen to use stereotypes in a similar manner to the way they make efficient judgements about people in everyday life (Rosenberg, Kahn and Tran 1991). For this reason it makes sense to think that most citizens have stereotypes for political leaders and parties (Miller, Wattenberg and Malanchuk 1986). Kahneman and Tversky’s (1972) “representativeness heuristic” shows how biased decision making can occur when individuals judge a situation in terms of the available evidence rather than a more

14 This mechanism is consonant with the psychological aspect of Duverger’s law discussed in the introductory chapter. In this respect, it is possible that voters use pre-election polls to determine which electoral options are likely to result in a wasted vote.

considered approach.¹⁵ The bias resulting from using the representative heuristic may be propagated by the media who assert that a candidate will win the election because they “look like a winner.” A less media friendly candidate might in fact better represent the voter in terms of policy, but this less salient rival candidate is not even considered because they do not fit the stereotype of being a winner (note, Kahnemann 2011: 151–153).

2.5.1.6 Impact of ballot photographs on voting

With declining electoral participation there have been a number of initiatives to making voting easier through a variety of institutional reforms. One facet of this system of reform has been to redesign ballot papers where voters are given more information about the candidates or parties seeking election. In some countries such as Ireland, voting ballots have contained the candidates name, occupation, party name, party logo and photograph of the candidate since 1999. The inclusion of visual cues such as party logo and candidate photos is meant to ensure that voters with limited literacy are able to accurately select their favoured candidate. Research results from social psychology suggest that literate voters with low levels of information are also likely to use the ballot photographs. The implication here is that some candidates in multi-member proportional electoral systems may be elected because of their appearance in a small ballot photograph.¹⁶ In the Irish context with Proportional Representation with Single Transferable Vote (PR STV), there have been three studies that have attempted to address this question.

The survey results presented in Table 2.2 refer to research undertaken when candidate photographs were placed on the ballot for the first time. These data reveal that the European Parliament elections of 1999 had a strong candidate centred nature.¹⁷ Seven-in-ten of the respondents reported candidacy had at least some influence, while the impact of parties (using similar criteria) was less important than domestic political issues (54%) and concerns about Ireland’s role

15 The impact of televised visual images on candidate support will not be examined here. According to Grabe and Bucy (2009: 263) the “visual bite” is replacing the “sound bite” as the main media effect in American Presidential campaigns. The systematic and comparative study of visual cues and biases in the study of elections is an emerging area of research.

16 A similar ballot design effect is evident in a phenomenon known as ‘alphabet voting’ where candidates listed close to the start of a ballot list, typically ordered alphabetically on the basis of surname, have a higher probability of being elected (Barker and Lijphart 1980; Kelley and McAllister 1984; Miller and Krosnick 1998; Darcy 1998; Brockington 2003; Koppell and Steen 2004; Ho and Imai 2008; and in Ireland, see Robson and Walsh 1974; Marsh 1987; Bowler and Farrell 1991).

17 This finding matches with the prevailing wisdom. Irish electoral behaviour has been defined as “candidate centred and party wrapped” (Marsh 2000). In order to counter candidate photo effects, the Irish Electoral Amendment Act (2000) included party logos (Buckley, Collins and Reidy 2007: 174, 180).

in the European Union (50%). Significantly, half of those interviewed indicated that the photographs on the ballot paper had some impact on their vote choice.

This suggests that in the absence of other information or knowledge about candidates, voters used the photographs on the ballot paper as a basis for deciding how to vote. In fact, if an examination is only made of those who claimed to have voted in the 1999 elections, the survey results indicate that over one third of all voters (35%) stated that the ballot photographs on their own had a “great deal of influence” (7%) or “some influence” (28%) on how they voted (Lansdowne Market Research 1999).

One limitation of this research was that it assumed that most if not all voters would recognise the candidates standing for election. This was not the case as about half of those interviewed admitted to knowing less than half the candi-

Table 2.2: Sources of influence on vote choice in the European Parliament elections in the Republic of Ireland, 1999 (per cent)

Source of influence	Degree of influence				Don't know	Mean score
	(1) A great deal	(2) Some influence	(3) Not very much	(4) No influence		
The individual candidates themselves	44	26	6	10	14	3.22
The parties of the candidates	23	25	15	23	14	2.55
Issues related to politics in Ireland	15	39	14	16	15	2.64
Issues related to Ireland's role in the EU	14	36	16	18	15	2.54
Issues related to politics in the EU as a whole	12	34	20	19	16	2.46
The photographs of the candidates	6	22	22	34	16	1.99

Source: Lansdowne Market Research (2000), European Elections Ballot Paper Development, Dublin: Lansdowne Market Research.

The survey dataset is Lansdowne UP/od 290-L9, Department of Environment and Local Government, June 16 – July 2, 1999 (post-election), question 5.

Base: All respondents (aged 15+). “How much influence did each of the following have on the way you voted / would have voted (as appropriate)?” (1) A great deal of influence; (2) Some influence; (3) Not very much influence; (4) No influence at all; (5) Don't know. Show Card D. A. The parties of the candidates; B. The individual candidates themselves; C. The photographs of the candidates; D. Issues related to politics in Ireland; E. Issues related to Ireland's role in the EU; F. Issues related to politics in the EU as a whole.

Note that 24% of those interviewed said the photographs had “not very much influence”, 36% said they had “no influence at all” and 4% replied “don't know”.

dates on the ballot paper, although many of the candidates had a national reputation. Subsequent research after the following European Parliament elections (2004) replicated this result (Lansdowne Market Research 2005). Additional, experimental research for these 2004 elections found that respondents were willing to vote for candidates purely on the basis of ballot paper photographs (Buckley, Collins and Reidy 2007).

This research from Ireland demonstrates that in low information elections the likeability heuristic may lead to unforeseen electoral outcomes where photographs are determining rather than facilitating candidate choice. More recent experimental work in Scotland's version of PR STV found that candidate photographs only had an impact on ballot papers; and not on campaign materials suggesting the visual cueing effect is important only at the moment of casting a ballot. Moreover, candidate appearance only had an impact in some types of electoral contests where gender played a role, i.e. the gender of the voter matched that of the candidate; and tended to favour younger looking candidates (Johns and Shephard 2011; see also Leigh and Susilo 2008).

To summarise, most citizens use heuristics when making political choices. Ironically, heuristics are most valuable to those who need them least. Voters who are relatively unaware of politics are not likely to make decisions as if they had full information, simply by employing cognitive shortcuts. This implies that cognitive heuristics do not help all citizens equally and are not a panacea for low levels of knowledge. In this respect, policies designed to facilitate voters' participation in elections through the provision of information such as candidate photographs on ballot papers may make matters worse rather than better. In short, heuristics do not solve the basic problem of lack of public engagement or interest in politics (Lau and Redlawsk 2001: 951–971).

Conclusion

The previous chapter mapped out the theoretical conception of political attitudes within the development of social and political theory, and this overview complements the theoretical approach adopted in this chapter where the focus has been on survey responses. Just as one might question the concept of public opinion, the term 'political attitude' is also mired in problems of definition, measurement and analysis. Section three of this chapter has shown that recent developments in cognitive neuroscience have begun to reveal the neural mechanisms underpinning political attitudes and the ability to visualise attitudes and attitudinal change dem-

onstrates that attitudes are real. However, the current classification of survey responses into opinions, attitudes, beliefs and values (as espoused in the hierarchical model of survey response in Section 2) may well change. In the future, it could be that it is a catalogue of neurocognitive mechanisms rather than the traditional typology of opinions, attitudes, beliefs and values that will form the theoretical basis for discriminating between different types of survey research instruments.

The key lesson here is that the results of political surveys held in the Czech Social Science Data Archive (ČSDA), and elsewhere, are not obvious: the archived survey data does not speak for itself. All use of political survey data involves the researcher deciding what the data means, or more formally constructing models of measurement and data analysis. In this respect, the influential mathematical psychologist Clyde H. Coombs (1976: 4) emphasised that “The term [data] is commonly used to refer both to the recorded observations and to that which is analysed. These are not necessarily the same thing, and a distinction is imperative.” Debates over the classification of survey questions as being ‘opinions’, ‘attitudes’, ‘beliefs’ or ‘values’ reinforces this point: defining survey responses depends critically on what is the measurement theory of the data adopted. More will be said on this important theme in Chapter 8.

Understanding the neurocognitive mechanisms underpinning specific types of questions such as liberal-conservative political ideology suggests that differences between individuals in political attitudes reflect the operation of two distinct (sub)systems of neurocognitive activity in the human brain. The first system deals with habitual behaviour and reflects learned strategies for dealing with recurring decisions. The second system identifies novel situations where a habitual response may be inappropriate; and this leads to greater cognitive engagement so as to make an appropriate response (Marcus, Neuman and MacKuen 2000; Kahneman 2011).

From this perspective, the interpretation of survey data is likely to change considerably from the traditional classification evident in the hierarchical model. The main take-away-point from this chapter is that the discussion of political data in the next four chapters constituting the data section of this book must be seen within a broader framework where interpretation of political data is not fixed. It is during the process of data analysis that a theory of data measurement must be explicitly stated. In this respect, developments in the emerging field of political neuroscience are likely to play an influential role in how survey data are interpreted in future research work.

In this opening section of the book, there has been an exploration of two central themes: (a) the political theory underpinning public opinion and citizens’ politi-

cal attitudes, and (b) the measurement of political attitudes and related concepts such as opinions, beliefs and values. All analyses of individual level attitudes data and aggregate level electoral results assume that what citizens think and do is important for understanding the nature and operation of a political system. Chapter 1 demonstrates the key point that the necessity and desirability of citizens playing an active role in political decision-making has been a controversial point within political theory.

In this respect, it is significant that one of the key results from political attitudes research reveals that citizens have little knowledge and unstable views regarding public affairs: a theme discussed here in Chapter 2, where we explored the conceptualisation and measurement of political attitudes. This general point underscores the view that public opinion and hence mass survey data must be treated with considerable caution: the empirical evidence contains not only citizens' attitudes but also various forms of methodological bias and random noise. These are topics that will be discussed more directly in Sections 2 and 3 of this book. For example, Chapter 7 will provide a number of examples of how apparently small changes in the response options for a survey question results in dramatically different estimates of public opinion. Later in Chapter 8, we will see how European citizens' psychological attachment to parties is influenced by national institutional context.

Before moving to discussing the analysis and interpretation of political data in Section 3 of this volume, a necessary first step is to map out the sources of political data available in the Czech Republic. Section 2 of this book contains four chapters that cover a wide spectrum of questions examined in political science ranging from citizens' to elites' attitudes and behaviour. In the next chapter, the mapping of Czech political data will commence with the largest and perhaps most important source of empirical work: electoral survey research. As we will see, the individual and aggregate level data related to Czech elections offers a wide range of opportunities for the study of electoral participation, party choice and the exploration of many other topics such as political culture.

SECTION 2

Mapping out Sources of Political Data

Chapter 3

Election Survey Research

The vote is only a very rough index of political attitudes, since the choices are highly limited. A finer scale is necessary if the nature of political attitudes is to be examined more closely. Since the vote is secret, it is impossible to identify ballots and to relate directly a given kind of vote to economic and social factors. In studying such a subject as popular interest in voting, it is soon apparent that there are no available data on the number of eligible voters and on the characteristics of voters and non-voters. Fieldwork by means of questionnaires and interviews is necessary to throw light on problems of this sort.

H.F. Gosnell (1933: 396)

Introduction¹

The primary goal of all election surveys is to provide systematic empirical evidence that will help to explain election results: who won the election and why? As Harold F. Gosnell noted in the epigraph above, official election statistics provide very limited information on (a) what motivates voters to turnout to vote, and (b) why the voter supported one party rather than another. Within political science, election surveys are perhaps the most important means used to test competing theories of voting behaviour (note, Evans 2004; Bartels 2010). This chapter will not discuss the merits of different models of vote choice in the Czech Republic; as this has been discussed in detail elsewhere (see, Lebeda et al. 2007; Linek 2010; Linek et al. 2012).

However, in order to provide the reader with some sense of why election surveys in all their manifestations are important let us consider for a moment a concrete voting decision: the Chamber Elections of May 28–29 2010. Rather than present the standard theories employed by political scientists of what is likely to have determined turnout and party choice on this occasion: we will use instead a vote choice decision-making tree constructed by concerned citizens who wished to increase electoral participation. This non-academic approach has the merit of demonstrating that the explanations of electoral behaviour tend often to focus on a

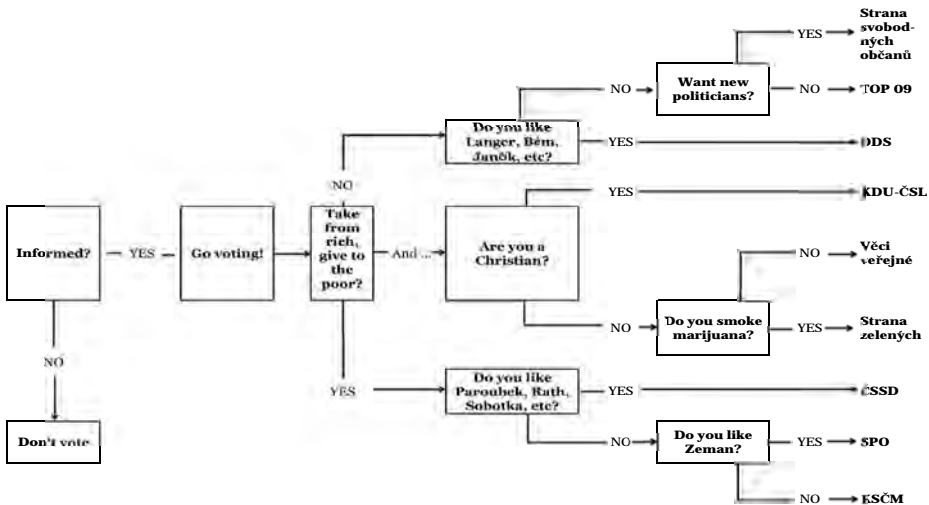
¹ A shorter version of this chapter published in Czech is available in Krejčí and Leontiyeva (2012: chapter 10).

handful of key factors. According to the voter’s decision-making tree shown in Figure 3.1, the main determinants of both participation and party choice in the Chamber Elections of 2010 could be summarised in terms of four decision nodes.

First, the decision to participate was evaluated on the basis of level of information and knowledge. Second, if a person understood Czech politics then the next decision centred on the voters’ left or right wing orientation; or more concretely supporting a party representing the ‘rich’ or the ‘poor.’ Third, once the voter had selected their ideological orientation the main criteria for supporting a specific left or right wing party depended on attitudes toward well-known politicians from the main left (ČSSD) or right wing (ODS) parties as appropriate. Such politicians were important because they were likely to hold high office in the next government; and facilitated making evaluations of the relative competence of the two coalition government alternatives.

Those who are Christians had the option of either supporting the centre-right Christian Democrats (KDU-ČSL); or alternatively on the basis of orientation toward smoking marijuana (a salient socially liberal issue) Czech voters could select the more liberal Greens (SZ), or the new law and order party called Public

Figure 3.1: The Czech voter’s decision-tree in the chamber elections of 2010



Source: <http://www.motorkari.cz/forum-detail/?ft=88060&fid=34> (accessed 15/02/2012)

Note that this decision-tree is based on some citizens’ perceptions of the party choices that were of offer during the election campaign of May 2010. This summary description of the electoral logic confronted by all Czech voters is interesting as it demonstrates which factors were considered by mobilised citizens most important in deciding if or how to cast a vote.

Affairs (VV). Fourth, if the voter was generally dissatisfied with the main left and right wing parties, those on the right could opt for the entry of new political faces on the national stage by voting for pro-European TOP 09 (an offshoot of KDU-ČSL); or the eurosceptic economically liberal, but socially conservative Free Citizens' Party (Strana svobodných občanů).²

The central lesson to be taken from the decision logic evident in Figure 3.1 is that electoral behaviour is seen by politically engaged citizens to be shaped by (1) information and knowledge, (2) left-right ideological orientation, (3) affective orientation toward party leaders or perceptions of their competence, and (4) specific issue based motivations relating to law and order, the EU, etc. The official election results of May 2010 provide little information on the relative importance of each of these four motivations in determining the dramatic election outcome observed (but see, Linek et al. 2012). Therefore, in order to understand how electoral democracy works in the Czech Republic election surveys are undertaken to measure voters' preferences and motivations.

The mapping out of Czech election surveys in this chapter is presented as follows. In the first section, a brief overview of the origins and development of mass surveying methods in Czechoslovakia (1967–1989) to examine political questions will be presented. The goal here is to show that the study of citizens' political attitudes in the Czech Republic has a long history notwithstanding the retarding effects of communism where surveying was denounced as an ideologically unsound form of empirical social research. Sections 2 and 3 outline the survey data for lower and upper chamber elections over the last two decades. This is followed by a discussion of the two European Election Studies undertaken in the Czech Republic since EU accession in 2004. Section 4 maps out the survey data associated with elections to the local and regional levels of governance; and this is followed by an overview of exit poll results. Thereafter, the focus moves in the following two sections away from the immediate context of elections to the evolution of vote intentions and partisanship during inter-election periods as measured in panel and repeated cross-sectional surveys. In the penultimate section, there is an overview of the analysis of Czech electoral data from 1920 to 2010. These aggregate data are invaluable for studying spatial and cross-time trends in electoral behaviour. Thereafter, there are some concluding comments.

Before embarking on the mapping out of election data and associated analyses, some words are in order regarding immediate post-election processes such as government formation and duration. This field of research while the subject of considerable commentary in media and academic publications has not been

2 Strana svobodných občanů has been linked in the Czech media with the neo-liberal policies preferred by President Václav Klaus (founder of ODS).

examined in the same detail using the standard formal and empirical models of political science. The data for such work is available in Müller, Fettelschoss and Harfst (2004) and Ryals Conrad and Golder (2010). For more details see internet resources in the appendix. Recent research on government coalition bargaining and government duration is given in Nikoleyni (2003), Druckman and Roberts (2005) and Somer-Topcu and Williams (2008).³

3.1 Chamber Elections (1990–2010)

The first election survey undertaken in Czechoslovakia following the Velvet Revolution was a pre-election poll fielded between April 28 and May 11 1990.⁴ This survey used face-to-face interviewing with a stratified representative sample of the adult population. The fieldwork was undertaken by AISA and STEM and it yielded 2,710 interviews and a very high response rate of 93%.⁵ This extensive political attitudes and behaviour survey explored four key themes: perceptions of political parties and vote intentions, electoral participation, attitudes towards democratic elections, and attitudes toward proposals for economic and social reform (Gabal, Bogusak and Rak 1990).

This pre-election survey was unique in that the poll results were designed to be used by all parties competing in the Federal Elections of June 1990 to mobilise electoral participation. Consequently, the results of the AISA survey of April-May 1990 were published in the national (independent) newspaper *Lidové noviny* in a series of articles during May and June. These data have been deposited in the German Social Data Archive (GESIS).⁶ One of the most comprehensive accounts of this election, which uses this survey, is given in Klingemann (1996). A follow up post-election survey was fielded during the first half of November 1990 and it explores a wide range of domestic and international political issues (Tóka 2000: 152). These data are also available from GESIS (Study ZA 2561).

3 Research on government formation during the First Republic is primarily historical in nature. The application of standard coalition formation models from political science to Czechoslovak, Czech and Slovak governments since 1920 is an area of research that holds considerable promise.

4 An inventory of all elections since 1990 is given in Appendix 3.1.

5 The National Democracy Institute (NDI) an influential American NGO provided AISA with expert consultation advice on the design of this survey in March 1990. For more details see, http://www.ndi.org/files/1379_sk_elec.pdf (accessed 15/02/2012).

6 For details of this survey which is catalogued as 'Study ZA 2562: Czechoslovakian 1990 Parliamentary Election' and further details are available at: <http://info1.gesis.org/dbksearch13/sdesc2.asp?no=2562&db=e&doi=10.4232/1.2562> (accessed 15/02/2012).

With the dissolution of the Czechoslovak Federal Republic in 1993, all subsequent pre- and post-election surveys dealt only with the Czech Republic. The Czech elections of 1996, 2002, 2006 and 2010 have a small common set of questions that facilitate exploring topics such as voter turnout, party choice, partisanship, left-right orientation, trust in institutions and political efficacy.⁷ Each of these four post-election studies have been undertaken by CVVM using a slight modification of the omnibus quota sampling methodology to interview voters aged 18 years or more (rather than the usual sample of respondents aged 15 years or more). While each of these surveys has been the subject of a number of publications exploring specific facets of individual elections, there have been relatively few publications examining trends across all elections (note, Linek et al. 2003; Lebeda et al. 2007).

A central argument in a recent book entitled *Zrazení snu?* [Betrayal of the Dream] uses this set of post-election surveys, in addition to other relevant survey datasets, to explain why Czech citizens' trust in politics declined and their sense of dissatisfaction with party politics increased between 1996 and 2006 (Linek 2010). This study argues that three key events: (a) the economic crisis of the late 1990s, (b) the party funding scandals of 1997-'98 and (c) the opposition agreement of 2002 underpin Czech voters' sharp and permanent decline in political satisfaction with political actors and institutions. An exploration of the observed changes in electoral participation between 1996 and 2010, again using post-election surveys, concludes that Czech voter turnout is best explained using Valence Theory where the expected benefits of voting determines level of turnout.

The key implication of this research is that it is the 'supply' of parties; and hence the nature and range of party choice available to Czech voters that determines variation in turnout. All of the post-election surveys undertaken since 1996 contain a sufficiently large common set of standard questions that it is possible to make both cross-time and cross-national comparisons. This data harmonisation work has been undertaken under the auspices of the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES) project; and has generated a considerable amount of research where Czech political attitudes and behaviour form part of larger cross-national analyses (Klingemann 2009, Dalton and Anderson 2011, Golder and Stramski 2010).⁸ More will be said about CSES in a later sub-section of this

7 Unfortunately, the unexpected nature of the Chamber Elections of 1998 mean that relatively few questions were asked in a post-election survey examining recalled electoral behaviour.

8 Details of this comparative research programme are available at <http://www.cses.org/>. A special edition of *Electoral Studies* journal (Special Symposium: Public Support for Democracy: Results from the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems Project, March 2008, 27(1), 581-776 edited by Ian McAllister) demonstrates the scope of research possible with this post-election survey data.

chapter. Another topic that has been of particular significance to those interested in the survey based analysis of Czech electoral behaviour is the importance of class voting where data from IVVM and CVVM have been used (Matějů 1996; Vlachová and Řeháková 2007; Smith and Matějů 2011).⁹

Political parties have commissioned their own private pre-election polls and used them for evaluating their election campaigns. For example, the Social Democrats (ČSSD) are known from media reports to have received the results of weekly polling undertaken by STEM prior to the 2006 general election; and received political marketing advice from the influential American polling firm, Penn, Schoen and Berland Associates that has strong experience in managing general election campaigns in the United States (Bill Clinton) and Britain (Tony Blair).

Another point that is important to keep in mind is that the legal constraints on pre-election surveys in the Czech Republic are relatively stringent in comparative terms, as the evidence presented in Table 3.1 reveals. The law imposing an embargo on the publishing of polls in the final week of a national election campaign is similar to the legislation that existed in France between 1977 and 2002. In the French case, the law was changed because newspapers began to publish poll results during the embargo period outside of France in Belgium or on the Internet. To date, nothing similar has occurred in the Czech Republic.¹⁰

Pre-election surveys estimating likely party choices have a strong strategic importance in the Czech Republic; and have generated considerable controversy. This is because the electoral system has a 5% threshold for representation in the Chamber of Deputies, and if surveys close to an election indicate a small party may fall below this threshold; then parties believe such estimates may lead to a bandwagon or snowball effect where support falls as voters decide not to ‘waste’ their vote on a party with no presence in parliament (Kreidl and Lebeda 2003; Lebeda, Krejčí and Leontiyeva 2004: 51–66; Lebeda and Krejčí 2007: 34–61).¹¹

The question of what constitutes accurate and reliable estimates of voter turnout and party support in pre-election (also known as ‘trial heat’) surveys is an important topic of ongoing research within the election surveying literature (note,

9 The Czech electoral system allows non-resident citizens to vote in person at the nearest Czech embassy or consulate. Using official election data that give details of migrants’ party choices, Fidrmuc and Doyle (2006) reveal that migrants’ preferences are different to their domestic counterparts and reflect the values norms of their host country.

10 The embargo on pre-election polls is known to have been used in a strategic manner in French presidential elections (Baines, Worcester and Mortimer 2007). One of France’s domestic intelligence services, Les Renseignements Généraux, is also known to have published misleading polls in an attempt to manipulate French public opinion (ESOMAR 1998: 2).

11 There have been anecdotal reports and accusations in the print media that survey based estimates of party support have been used in a strategic manner and without regard to the principles and ethics of scientific surveying espoused by professional market research organisations.

Table 3.1: International comparison of legal restrictions on election polling

<i>Country</i>	<i>Restriction on publishing Pre-election polls</i>	<i>Restriction on publishing Exit Polls</i>
Australia	None	None, except for Victoria
Austria	None	-
Belgium	None	-
Denmark	None	-
Estonia	None	-
Finland	None	-
Germany	None	Yes
India	None	None
Ireland	None	Yes
Latvia	None	-
Netherlands	None	-
New Zealand	None	-
South Africa	None	Yes
Sweden	None	None
United Kingdom	None	Yes
United States	None	None
France	1 day (24 hours)	Yes
Greece	1 day	-
Poland	1 day (24 hours)	-
Lithuania	1 ¼ days (30 hours)	-
Canada	2 days (48 hours)	Yes
Portugal	2 days	-
Romania	2 days	-
Albania	5 days	None
Russia	5 days	-
Spain	5 days	Yes
Bulgaria	7 days	None
Cyprus	7 days	-
Czech Republic	7 days	None
Montenegro	7 days	Yes
Slovakia	14 days	-
Italy	15 days (Paracondicio principle)	Yes
Peru	15 days	Yes
Luxembourg	28 days (1 month)	-
Singapore	None during campaign	Yes

Sources: Rohme (1997), Spangenberg (2003), Smith (2004), Oireachtas (2009), Article 19 (2003), Bale (2002), Baines, Worcester and Mortimore (2007). Note this table represents the situation in late 2011. There have been considerable changes in the law on opinion polls over time. The non-availability of information on restriction of exit polls suggests in most cases that there are no restrictions because the law makes no references to this form of polling.

Box 3.1: Estimating likely voters in a pre-election survey

Techniques for determining likely voters in an election have been developed by many political polling companies. The Gallup likely voter model is the most used method. The general approach adopted is:

- If voter is not registered or says they won't vote, exclude as likely voter (leaves about 80–90% of respondents)
- Seven questions are used to determine likely voter status among remaining respondents on the basis of (a) Past behaviour: How often has the respondent voted in the past? (b) Practical knowledge of voting process: Do you know where your polling place is?
- All respondents are given a score that ranges from zero to seven (0–7)

Assumptions

- Estimate the effective target voting population, i.e. proportion of eligible voters who will vote
- Select a realistic voting turnout threshold or set of thresholds that reflect perhaps electoral participation in recent similar elections
- Voters who are above the threshold are “likely voters”

Step 1:

1. How much have you thought about the upcoming elections for president, quite a lot or only a little? (Quite a lot, or some = 1 point)
2. Do you happen to know where people who live in your neighbourhood go to vote? (Yes = 1 point)
3. Have you ever voted in your precinct or election district? (Yes = 1 point)
4. How often would you say you vote, always, nearly always, part of the time or seldom (Always, or nearly always = 1 point)
5. Do you plan to vote in the Presidential Election this November? (Yes = 1 point)
6. In the last presidential election, did you vote for Al Gore or George Bush, or did things come up to keep you from voting? (Voted = 1 point)
7. If “1” represents someone who will definitely not vote and “10” represents someone who definitely will vote, where on this scale would you place yourself? (Score of 7–10 = 1 point)

Step 2: Adjust for not registered, say will not vote, and already voted

Step 3: Adjust for the young as they are systematically less likely to turnout

Step 4: Using demographic weights estimate profile of turnout on 0–7 scale

Step 5: Estimate likely voter turnout at different thresholds and associated vote intentions

Estimates of voter turnout using a Gallup poll, October 24 2004

Criteria for estimating turnout	George W. Bush (Republican) %	John Kerry (Democrat) %
Registered voters - Unweighted	49.7	45.6
Likely voters – Weighted	49.0	46.2
Likely voters – 50.0% turnout	52.5	43.3
Likely voters – 55.0% turnout	52.4	43.5
Likely voters – 60.0% turnout	51.9	44.1
Likely voters – 65.0% turnout	51.6	44.6
Actual results – 56.7% turnout*	50.7	48.3

* Voter turnout was unusually high on Nov. 2 2004, i.e. 6.4% higher than in 2000, and the highest since 1968. The unusual nature of this election made estimation of likely voters more difficult because the strength of the relationship between the determinants of participation was different to those in evident in most previous elections.

Disadvantages of likely voter models

- The likely voter model is primarily a motivation oriented explanation of turnout
- Vote motivation changes in ways that are not always directly related to voting behaviour

Buchanan 1986, Martin, Traugott and Kennedy 2005; Gelman and King 1993; Arceneaux 2006). Box 3.1 demonstrates one strategy used by a major political surveying company to obtain more reliable estimates of electoral participation, and hence party support. Such tasks are fundamentally important in successfully predicting election outcomes.

3.2 Senate Elections (1996–2010)

Unlike all other levels of governance that have elected representatives, elections to the Senate are unique in that there are never upper chamber contests across the entire country (this only happened for the inaugural elections). A third of seats are up for election every two years. This staggered election schedule combined with a majority run-off (two rounds) system, general lack of popularity and trust in this institution has had a strong impact on the academic study of this type of second-order elections (Lebeda, Malcová and Lacina 2009, Reif and Schmitt 1980). In the first Senate Elections of 1996, a three wave panel study was undertaken by SC&C. Czech senate elections have two rounds, so the first wave of the panel survey was fielded immediately prior to the first round (November 13–14); the second wave was undertaken immediately prior to the second round (November 20–21); and the final wave involved interviewing respondents immediately after the second round.¹²

This panel survey is invaluable because it is the only study in the Czech Republic that facilitates exploring the *dynamics* of electoral participation; however, this panel survey has been rarely examined taking advantage of this data structure (note, Kreidl and Lebeda 2003). Czech senate elections are characterised by personal voting suggesting that candidate characteristics influence vote choice. Kreidl (2009) demonstrates using this panel dataset the importance of candidate effects on voting behaviour; and in addition reveals that the profile of the ‘ideal candidate’ varies systematically across subgroups of voters.

There was also some senate election surveying undertaken on October 22–24 and November 3–4 1998 by Factum for TV NOVA; where questions focussed on predicting the results in each senate (single member) constituency by asking items on vote choice in the first round and vote intentions for the second round, and voters’ perceptions of the senate campaign. Some post-senate election surveying was undertaken by STEM in December 1996 and January 1997 using

12 This panel survey employed a probability stratified sample where 1,174 face-to-face interviews were undertaken with a representative sample of the electorate (18 years or more). For more details see, <http://sda.soc.cas.cz/data/0079/0079.htm> (accessed 15/02/2012).

many of this company's trend series of questions (Tóka 2000: 143). None of this data have been archived with ČSDA.

To sum up, there are few examples of survey based analyses of electoral behaviour in Czech senate elections. However, there have been some studies using electoral and candidate data to explore the effects of the majority runoff system on party representation (Lebeda 2011; Lebeda, Malcová and Lacina 2009; Lebeda, Vlachová and Řeháková 2009). Otherwise most of the survey data relating to the Czech Senate relate to (a) the public debate surrounding the establishment of an upper chamber which was explored in IVVM surveys from late 1993, and (b) public trust in the Senate and all other political institutions - questions that are asked frequently within the IVVM/CVVM monthly series of surveys (Herzmann and Rezková 1993).

3.3 European Elections (2004–2009)

Since Czech accession to the European Union in 2004, there have been two Czech waves in the European Election Study series of post-election surveys.¹³ In addition, to a standard questionnaire designed to explore the motivations underpinning electoral participation in 'second-order' elections this comparative research programme has also undertaken parallel studies of party manifestoes, the European Election campaign and surveys of candidates standing for election. This integrated approach to the study of supranational elections was especially evident in the EES (2009) study.¹⁴

To date there has been relatively little work published specifically on European electoral behaviour in the Czech Republic. Analyses undertaken for the first European elections in 2004 have focussed primarily on the actual election results and exploring the spatial pattern of turnout and party choice (Linek 2004, Linek and Lyons 2005, 2007ab). In general, much of the survey based literature on voting in European Parliament elections across the European Union since 1979 has focussed on testing the implications of the Second-Order-Election-Thesis of Schmitt and Reif (1980) who argued that the lower salience of all contests that

13 The central goal of the European Election Studies (EES) is the comparative study of electoral participation and voting behaviour in European Parliament elections. In addition, themes such as the evolution of an EU political community and a European public sphere, citizens' perceptions of and preferences about the EU political regime, and evaluations of EU political performance have also been examined. For more details see, <http://www.europeanelectionstudies.net/> (accessed 15/02/2012).

14 A recent special issue of the Electoral Studies journal (Special Symposium: Electoral Democracy in the European Union, 30(1): 1–246, March 2011, edited by Sara B. Hobolt and Mark N. Franklin) demonstrates some of the key topics examined in the 2009 European Election Study of 2009 that was funded and managed by the PIREDEU project funded by the EU. For details see, <http://www.piredeu.eu/> (accessed 15/02/2012).

are not general elections is typified by lower turnout and higher support for small non-incumbent parties. Survey data on European Elections in the Czech Republic may be accessed from the EES website.

3.4 Regional and Local Elections (2000–2010)

A regional tier of government was created in the Czech Republic in the late 1990s and the first regional elections were held in 2000. To date, there have been three rounds of regional elections in 2000, 2004 and 2008. Most of the research on these regional contests has not used survey data to construct for example individual level models of turnout or party choice; and this remains an area of opportunity for future research work (see, Vajdová 2001, Balík, Kylousek, Čaloud et al. 2005, Šaradín 2008, Eibl et al. 2009, Kostelecký 2007). A number of questions were included in a CVVM survey of November 2008 that focussed on exploring differences in individuals' attitudes toward electoral participation between different types of elections. One of the central motivations for this research is the Second-Order-Election-Thesis (noted earlier) which argues that voters (and parties) have a hierarchical view of elections.¹⁵

Here decisions relating to turnout and party choice are characterised by (1) turnout is lower than in national elections; and (2) voters are more likely to support small protest or peripheral parties rather than express a 'normal vote' for one of the mainstream parties, as would happen in a typical general election. Consequently, regional elections are used by politically engaged citizens to express preferences about the performance of the incumbent government, often by expressing dissatisfaction (Reif and Schmitt 1980; Reif, Schmitt and Norris 1997). Although these elections are 'non-salient', they are important in the signals they provide to incumbent governments. For example, the 2004 European elections in the Czech Republic resulted in the resignation of Prime Minister Vladimír Špidla and the temporary collapse of the Social Democrat led government due to a poor showing by the ČSSD in these 'mid-term' elections.

It is important at this point to note that political attitudes within the Czech Republic at the regional level have been examined using mass survey techniques. Here samples of about a thousand respondents have been used to explore distinct regional cultures (Vajdová and Kostelecký 1997; Kostelecký 2001; Koste-

15 First order elections are defined as general (lower chamber) elections that yield governments. In contrast, second-order elections relate to the election of sub-national assemblies, national offices such as the president who do not perform a strong executive role or national referendums on topics such as the European Union.

lecký and Čermák 2004). Such research stems from the apparent stability of party choice across all elections in the Czech Republic since 1920: a fact evident in electoral maps (Jehlička and Sýkora 1991; Kostecký 1993, 1994; Kostecký, Jehlička, Sýkora 1993; Voda 2011). Such examinations of the spatial basis for differences in political attitudes and electoral behaviour also includes related themes such as the Czech public's sense of local, regional and national identity (Nedomová and Kostecký 1997; Vlachová and Řeháková 2004, 2009).

The use of mass political surveys for the study of local elections in the Czech Republic is very limited for three main reasons. First, local contests relate to a level of governance that has limited powers; and are thus considered relatively unimportant. Second, local elections exhibit strong candidate effects implying that the results from these contests do not provide a strong indication of public satisfaction with government performance. Third, as local elections are dominated by a multitude of local issues and personalities these characteristics are not well suited to examination through nationally representative sample surveys. However, it is important to note that CVVM have asked questions about turnout and a small number of other topics in surveys fielded in 1990, 1998, 2002, 2006 and 2010.

To date, there have been no published survey based analyses of voting in local elections. Local election scholarship in the Czech Republic has tended to use official rather than sampling data. For example, Kostecký (1996) examined how local elections acted as the foundations for the establishment of local elites. Otherwise, local government has been examined from a historical or institutional perspective. The most notable exception to this evaluation is a large survey project undertaken for the local elections of November 1994 by STEM. With a relatively large sample (N=11,672) this pre-election survey, conducted in late May and early June, explored voting behaviour in terms of left-right orientation and local political issues; where the goal was to map out regional differences in political attitudes. This data has not been archived (Tóka 2000: 127).¹⁶

3.5 Exit Poll Survey Data (1990–2010)

One of the most important types of election based surveys are those undertaken directly outside polling stations on Election Day in all lower chamber elections since 1990. In addition, there have been exit polls for the EU accession referendum and the two European Parliament elections. Many of these exit polls

¹⁶ It seems this data was used by Jan Hartl, head of STEM, to write a series of newspaper articles that provided a profile of contemporary Czech political parties.

have been commissioned by Czech Television and TV NOVA for their immediate post-election coverage where the goals have been (a) to predict the outcome before all the counting of ballots has been completed, and (b) to provide some basic explanations of the election outcome.

Typically an exit poll questionnaire asks: party choice in the current and previous elections, timing of voting decision, party choice in the last general election, and perhaps some items on perceptions of parties, party leaders and priorities for the next government.¹⁷ All of these exit polls have large sample sizes where recent SC&C exit polls have about 15,000 respondents. Here is a brief overview of all exit polls undertaken in the Czech Republic.

- Federal Elections 1990: Gallup International, INFAS (Germany) and IVVM
- Federal Elections 1992: INFAS (Germany), IVVM and FACTUM-non Fabula
- Chamber Elections 1996: (i) IFES (Austria) and SC&C for Czech Television; (ii) INFAS (Germany), Sofres-Factum for TV NOVA¹⁸
- Chamber Elections 1998: (i) IFES (Austria) and SC&C for Czech Television; (ii) INFAS (Germany), Sofres-Factum for TV NOVA
- Chamber Elections 2002: SC&C for Czech Television
- European Parliament Elections 2004: SC&C for Czech Television
- Chamber Elections 2006: SC&C for Czech Television
- Chamber Elections 2010: SC&C and SPSS ČR for Czech Television¹⁹

On some occasions exit poll surveys have formed part of an election study series. This was the case in May-June 1996; when STEM undertook two large pre-election polls (N=6,205 and 5,455) and an exit poll (N=8,846). Many of the items in STEM's trend series of political questions were fielded in these surveys (Tóka 2000: 138). The Exit Polls for 1992 and 1996 are freely available from the Czech Social Science Data Archive (ČSDA). However, the results for more recent exit polls are not publicly available although it has been possible to purchase cross-tabulation tables of this data from SC&C.

17 An SC&C report on the exit poll of 2010 demonstrating the scope and use of such data is available at: img2.ct24.cz/multimedia/documents/17/1699/169810.doc (accessed 15/02/2012).

18 Tóka (2000: 138) indicates that STEM also undertook an exit poll for the Chamber Elections of 1996. However, it seems more likely that this was a standard post-election cross-sectional survey.

19 The costs associated with exit polling are relatively high and prohibitive for most media organisations. It was reported that SC&C were paid 2.4 million Kcs and SPSS ČR, 2.2 million Kcs approximately for the 2010 exit poll commissioned by Czech Television. See: <http://www.louc.cz/10/2210601.html> (accessed 15/02/2012).

Exit poll data are typically used by academics to build profiles of the voters for different parties. Linek and Lyons (2007a,b) have used exit poll data to make estimates of party switching behaviour across pairs of consecutive elections and compare the results with (a) other post-election surveys (e.g. the Czech wave of CSES) and (b) ecological inference statistical estimates using official election results. At this point, it makes sense to give some recent practical examples of the insights that may be gained from examining exit poll survey data.

3.5.1 Some insights from the SC&C Exit poll (2010)

There are a number of key questions that are particularly well suited for study with an exit poll with a large sample that records respondents reported vote choices within a few minutes of casting a ballot. Consequently, many of the methodological problems associated with eliciting recalled vote choices in post-election polls such as voter over-reporting (i.e. incorrectly claiming to have voted in an election) and providing inaccurate accounts of party choice because of social desirability and other survey response effects are minimised. One of the important questions that may be addressed in an exit poll with a very large sample ($N \geq 10,000$) are the structural bases of party choice.

The Chamber Elections of May 28–29 2010 were one of the most dramatic over the last two decades. There were four key trends. First, the two largest parties lost close to one and a half million votes when compared to their performance in 2006. Second, two parties lost all their representation in parliament (the Christian Democrats, KDU-ČSL and the Greens, SZ). Third, two parties lost their leaders on the basis of a poorer than expected electoral showing. Fourth, two new centre-right parties made a breakthrough with TOP 09 (Tradition, Responsibility, Prosperity 2009) and VV (Public Affairs) becoming the third and fifth largest parties in parliament respectively. In contrast to previous elections, the parties of the right won a convincing victory winning 118 out of 200 seats. In sum, the official election results suggested a significant change in the nature of party competition.

These data suggest that some of the larger and more established parties lost significant levels of support between 2006 and 2010. An examination of vote switching between these chamber elections using estimates from the SC&C Exit Poll (2010) shown in Table 3.2 reveals that KSČM has the most loyal voters (82%) and both the Social and Civic Democrats lost significant amounts of support (ČSSD: 35%, ODS: 49%). Although the Christian Democrats had a higher loyalty rate (60%) than ČSSD and ODS, their loss of support mainly to TOP 09, ODS and VV resulted in their failure to exceed the 5% threshold to enter parliament.

Table 3.2: Vote switching in the chamber elections between 2006 and 2010, percent

Party/year	Recalled party choice in 2006								Total	
	ČSSD	ODS	KSČM	KDU-ČSL	SZ	Other	Did not vote	No right to vote		
Reported party choice in 2010	ČSSD	65	3	6	4	5	5	14	8	22
	ODS	2	51	1	6	9	7	13	20	21
	KSČM	6	1	82	2	3	2	8	1	11
	KDU-ČSL	1	1		60	3	3	1	2	4
	SZ	1	1		1	19	3	3	3	2
	Other	2	3	2	2	6	18	10	12	5
	TOP 09	4	26	1	16	30	20	21	30	17
	VV	8	10	2	5	15	23	19	17	11
	SPOZ	6	2	1	2	5	7	7	5	4
	Suverenita	4	2	2	2	4	11	5	2	3
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	

Source: Exit Poll 2010, SC&C and SPSS Czech Republic for Czech Television. Surveying was undertaken on May 28–29 2010. Total sample size was 25,380 respondents interviewed in 370 districts.

Note that column totals, i.e. source of party support in 2010, sum to one hundred percent. The final column on the right indicates the total level of party support in 2010 excluding non-voters: who are by definition not interviewed in exit poll surveys. The bold numbers on the diagonal indicate levels of consistent or loyal voting in the 2006 and 2010 elections. This table should be interpreted as follows. Almost two-thirds (65%) of those who voted for ČSSD in 2006 also voted for this party in 2010. The remaining 35% switched their votes away from the Social Democrats and voted for rival parties such as KSČM (6%), TOP 09 (4%), VV (8%) and SPOZ (6%).

The Green Party's limited electoral appeal and difficulties in maintaining party unity while in coalition with ODS and KDU-ČSL meant it has had representation in the Lower Chamber for just one legislative term (2006–2010) since the party was founded in 1990. The estimates in Table 3.2 indicate that most green party support drifted to TOP 09 (30%), VV (15%) and ODS (6%). The voter transition estimates presented in Table 3.2 demonstrate that the success of new parties such as TOP 09 and VV was based on two key mechanisms: (a) vote switching by those who reported voting for ODS and ČSSD (but not KSČM) in 2006, and (b) attracting first time voters and abstainers in 2006.

One of the key themes in the post-election commentary was that the declining fortunes of the established parties and emergence of new parties had a strong age component. The exit poll profile of party support for all parties is shown in part (a) of Table 3.3 reveals that support for some established parties (ČSSD, KSČM and KDU-ČSL) was more concentrated among the older cohorts (40 years plus). In contrast, the new parties (TOP 09 and VV) attracted much higher than average levels of support among three youngest cohorts. Notwithstanding these age

Table 3.3: Exit poll estimates of age and party choice for the Chamber Elections of 2010

(a) Composition of specific party choice by age cohort

Party	Age cohorts						Total
	18–19 yrs	20–21 yrs	22–29 yrs	30–44 yrs	45–59 yrs	60 yrs+	
ČSSD	2	2	7	22	29	39	101
ODS	3	3	15	33	25	20	99
KSČM	1	2	6	18	35	39	101
TOP 09	5	6	20	37	21	11	100
VV	5	5	18	36	23	14	101
KDU-ČSL	2	2	12	27	28	29	100
SZ	5	5	26	38	17	9	100
SPOZ	3	5	19	36	24	13	100
Suverenita	1	3	10	27	32	27	100

(b) Vote choice by age cohort

Party	Age cohorts						Total
	18–19 yrs	20–21 yrs	22–29 yrs	30–44 yrs	45–59 yrs	60 yrs+	
ČSSD	13	10	11	16	25	37	37
ODS	19	19	23	23	20	17	17
KSČM	2	6	4	7	15	18	18
TOP 09	28	28	24	21	13	8	8
VV	15	14	14	13	10	6	6
KDU-ČSL	3	3	4	4	4	5	5
SZ	4	3	4	3	2	1	1
SPOZ	4	5	6	5	4	2	2
Suverenita	1	3	2	3	4	4	4
Other	11	9	8	5	4	2	2
Total	100	100	100	100	101	100	100

Source: Exit Poll 2010, SC&C and SPSS CR for Czech Television

Note that total percentages in both tables sum to one hundred subject to rounding error. The data in table (a) should be interpreted as follows. Popular support for ČSSD is mainly composed of older voters, i.e. 29% of 45–59 year olds and 39% of 60 years or more. In contrast, in table (b) a plurality of 18–19 year olds (28%) voted for TOP 09, while a further 19% voted for ODS, 15% supported VV and 13% ČSSD.

differences, the ‘middle-aged’ (30–44 years) constituted the most important demographic for many established (ODS, SZ) and new parties (TOP 09, VV and SPOZ). This constellation of parties suggests that this middle aged group constitutes a demographic heartland for right or centre-right wing parties.²⁰

²⁰ The age profile of voters for the centre-right TOP 09 and SZ are most similar being concentrated among those aged 18 to 29 years. In the cases of the leftist ČSSD and KSČM these two

The party support by age cohort estimates presented in part (b) of Table 3.3 facilitates viewing the most popular parties within each cohort. These data show that TOP 09 was generally the most popular among young voters. In contrast, older voters' preferred party in the Chamber Elections of 2010 was the Social Democrats (ČSSD). The general implication from Table 3.2 is that there is a broad partisan division within the Czech electorate based on age where (1) older citizens socialised under the communist regime are more social democratic than (2) the younger post-communist generation who are generally centre-right, and (3) a middle aged group who came of age around the fall of communist who exhibit a right wing (ODS) orientation.

Having examined “snapshot” (cross-sectional) surveys in the previous sections, it is now time to turn our attention to survey data that facilitate exploring the dynamics of attitude change at the individual level with a panel survey design.

3.6 Panel Survey Data on Political Topics

Most surveys are cross-sectional in that the respondents are interviewed on one occasion. These ‘one shot’ surveys provide a picture or snapshot of society at a specific point in time. However, such surveys do not facilitate studying directly the process of social or political change. In order, to examine change at the individual level using a representative sample of the adult population; it is necessary to interview the same respondents at two or more time points. This is the basic logic behind panel surveys. Use of repeated cross-sectional panel surveys (i.e. same questions but different respondents in each poll) may be used to indirectly infer attitudinal change, but they are less suited to this task than panel survey data (Vinopal 2009b). It should be noted that there are important panel surveys undertaken in the Czech Republic such as EU-SILC and SHARE that are useful for examining some political questions; however, the central focus of these research programmes is on social inequality and ageing respectively, and not politics.²¹

parties are most similar because most of their voters are aged 60 years or more. The implication here is that with demographic metabolism rightist parties will attract more support in future elections as left wing voters exit the electorate through mortality.

21 More details on these panel surveys may be consulted in other chapters of this book and at the following websites: European Union Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC) - http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/microdata/eu_silc
Survey on Health and Aging in Europe (SHARE) - <http://www.share-project.org/>

There have been less than a handful of panel surveys dealing explicitly with political themes in the Czech Republic. As noted earlier, there was a two-wave panel for the first senate elections in 1996 that allows one to study electoral participation and candidate choice where the attitudes before and after the election may be compared. Another panel survey with political questions was a four wave study undertaken in the town of Klatový (an urban administrative centre in the Plzeňský kraj / Pilsen region, which contains about 23,000 inhabitants) between September 1999 and November 2000.

This unique study taking inspiration from Lazarsfeld et al.'s (1944: 155) work on the link between interpersonal communication and formation of political attitudes via a two-step flow of information model was led by Prof. PhDr. Hynek Jeřábek CSc. This political attitudes survey had an initially large sample of over 2,000 respondents that eventually declined to a final panel size of about 500 respondents due to well-known panel attrition effects. This study explored the stability of local citizens' political attitudes and values and contains standard items for measuring left-right orientation, etc. (note, Jeřábek 1999; Schubert 2010). To date this panel survey has not been archived with ČSDA.

A more ambitious panel study project examining political attitudes and media agenda-setting was implemented by CVVM over a twelve week period from April to July 2008. A panel of about 650 respondents undertook on a weekly basis to send a self-completed questionnaire to CVVM. Using a postal mode of interviewing in a panel survey is unusual as much panel surveying is currently undertaken via the Internet. An examination of the dynamics of Czech citizens' attachment to parties (party identification) revealed that the social-psychological or social identity basis for stable party support, seen by many scholars as a key foundation for a stable democracy, is strong. However, the number of citizens with some sense of party attachment constitutes only a minority of the total electorate (Linek and Lyons 2009). This panel survey has not been archived with ČSDA.

3.7 Inter-election Political Opinion Polling

Political opinion polling is undertaken frequently during inter-election periods where media outlets, parties and interest groups of various types commission surveys to examine specific topics. Most of this commercial polling is undertaken by a handful of companies such as STEM, SC&C and Factum invenio.²²

²² According to Tóka (2000) a number of polling companies such as Factum and STEM included a standard set of political question in their omnibus monthly polls throughout the 1990s.

The aggregated results from such research are often published in the print media. It is possible with this data, for example, to compare different polling companies' estimates of likely party support in the next elections.²³ However, the individual level survey datasets are most often unavailable; and they are currently not archived in a systematic manner with the Czech Social Science Data Archive (ČSDA). In this respect, researchers need to make representations to a polling agency regarding specific survey datasets.

Fortunately, the situation is different with CVVM as this is not a commercial market research organisation. Its primary purpose is to undertake surveys of Czech citizens' attitudes as a public service, and many of its monthly surveys contain two sections: (1) a standard battery of items that are asked in all surveys or at least periodically [see below], and (2) special modules commissioned by academic researchers examining specific topics such as public attitudes towards women's participation in politics. All of these monthly surveys are archived with the Czech Social Science Data Archive and are freely available for analysis by researchers.²⁴

The range of political topics that have been the subject of CVVM surveys is large and almost all topics of public debate have been examined on at least one occasion. Unfortunately, there is as yet no searchable 'question bank' as provided by the websites of the German and Norwegian Social Data Archives that would allow a researcher to identify which surveys examined specific topics. Nonetheless, exploration of the archive of CVVM press releases and its bi-annual magazine *Naše společnost* is possible through a 'search' feature on the CVVM website, thereby identifying questions and surveys of interest.²⁵

It was noted above that CVVM asks a standard battery of questions each month and an additional set of questions periodically. The standard set of questions asked in all polls (beyond the socio-demographic items) is intention to participate in elections, vote intention, closeness to a political party, left-right orientation, satisfaction with the political situation and trust in political institutions such as the President, government and houses of parliament. Ideally, there would be a combined individual level data file containing all the standard questions with a harmonised set of socio-demographic variables. Unfortunately, such an individual level repeated cross-sectional dataset does not currently exist. This is

Very little of this data has been archived with ČSDA.

23 For example, at the STEM website (<http://www.stem.cz>) there are monthly estimates for vote intentions that go back a number of years. There appears to be no single web page that presents all this monthly vote intention data in a spreadsheet format allowing the plotting of trends or more detailed statistical analysis.

24 For an overview of the main political survey variables from 1990 to 1996, see Toká (2000: 112–116).

25 <http://www.cvvm.cas.cz/index.php?lang=2&disp=vyhledavani> (accessed 15/02/2012).

because there are considerable problems in harmonising questions and response options that have changed over the last two decades; and this is especially true for surveys from the early 1990s.

The opportunities offered by the construction of such datasets are evident in recent work by Lukáš Linek (2010), which employs cohort analysis to examine citizen support for the Czech Communist Party (KSČM); where it is argued using CVVM data that political socialisation is a key determinant of long-term support for this party. In this respect, some commentators' prediction that KSČM would disappear within a short period proved to be incorrect. According to Linek's (2008b) estimations this party will have sufficient popular support to remain in parliament until the early 2020s, and possibly beyond. In short, to paraphrase one of Oscar Wilde's more famous epigrams the imminent death of KSČM has been greatly exaggerated.

One of the most important political events since the Velvet Revolution was the dissolution of Czechoslovak Federal Republic in 1993. In comparative terms, this event is important because it represents one of the few examples of a peaceful dissolution of a federal state. Typically, federal states disintegrate with considerable violence as happened in Yugoslavia during the early 1990s. For this reason, survey data on Czech and Slovak political attitudes is very important because it provides invaluable information on the citizen or mass basis for the failure of the Czechoslovak state.²⁶ In this respect, an AISA survey of political attitudes in May-June 1991 with hour long face-to-face interviews with 1,260 respondents provides an important opportunity to explore attitudinal and value differences that might have underpinned dissolution (see, Rose 1992). Much of the literature on political attitudes in Czechoslovakia under communism stresses the importance of the 'national question' in key historical events such as the Prague Spring 1968 and the fall of communism in 1989 (note, Dean 1973; Steiner 1973; Kusý 1997; Hilde 1999; Brown 2008).

It is important to conclude this sub-section on inter-election survey data with an example of research on political attitudes where the goal has been to explore opinion change across time within the Czech Republic. One of the earliest political attitudes surveys for which there are individual level data is a study entitled *Postoj občanů k politice* (Attitudes of Citizens towards Politics) which was undertaken in May 1968. The fieldwork for this survey was fielded by ÚVVM (a predecessor to CVVM) and the goal of this research was to provide data for the

26 Contemporary IVVM surveys indicated that there was not majority public support for the dissolution of the Czechoslovak federal state suggesting that this was an elite led decision (Young 1994: 11–18; Kraus 2000; Deegan Kraus 2000: 254–256). A CVVM survey fielded in December 2007 revealed that a plurality of Czechs (47%) thought the breakup was unnecessary, 30% believed it was, and the remainder (23%) had no opinion.

Prague Spring political reform programme (see, Brokl et al. 1999; Lyons 2009). Most of the questions in the May 1968 survey were replicated forty years later in May 2008 where the goal was to see if Czech citizens' democratic attitudes and values were significantly different under communism (1968) and liberal democracy (2008).

The results of this research presented in Lyons (2009) reveal that there is a remarkable stability in attitudes across time where Czechs living under communism had very similar attitudes to their descendents living in a multiparty liberal democracy. This finding is important because it suggests that democratic values can exist independent of prevailing political institutions; and the idea that Czechs had to 'learn democracy' in tabula rasa manner in the 1990s is an over-simplification of a more complex political reality.²⁷

3.8 Examples of inter-election dynamics

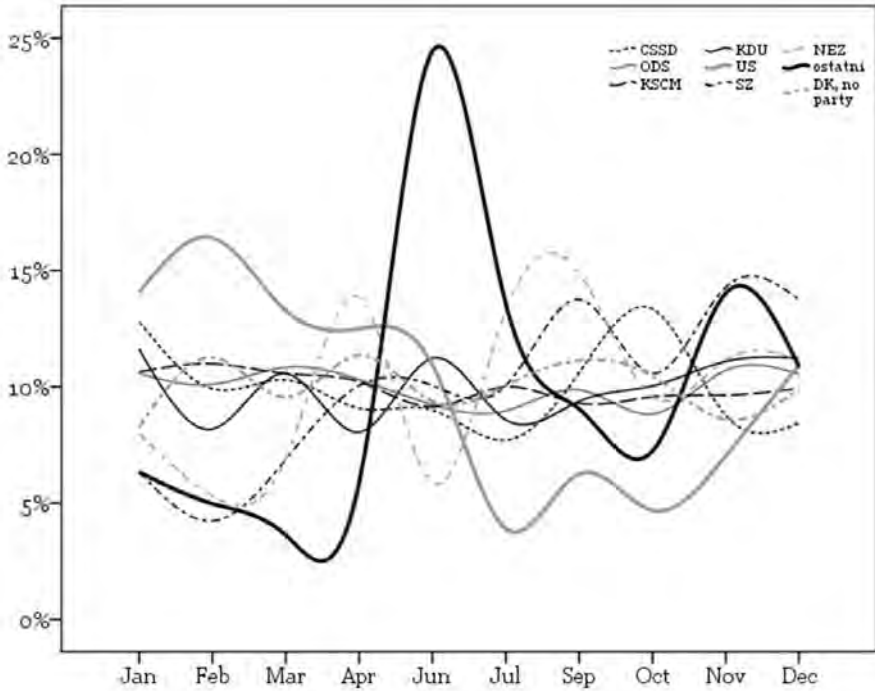
One of the most important features of inter-election periods is the evolution in support for political parties in regular opinion polls undertaken by CVVM, STEM and Factum Invenio that are regularly reported in the media. In addition, parties also pay great attention to their performance in local, regional, senate and European elections as these events are seen to provide important information about the popularity of a party in the next general election. Within European political science there has been considerable research on differences in voter participation and party choice across consecutive general and European elections.

3.8.1 Evolution of electoral preferences

To keep matters simple, the estimates of vote intentions presented in Figure 3.2 focus on a single year - 2004; and the first European Parliament elections held in the Czech Republic on June 11–12 2004. Competition for the 24 seats during the campaign was primarily candidate-centred. A rather lacklustre and lukewarm campaign was dominated by a curious mix of candidates: the first and only Czechoslovak cosmonaut, Vladimír Remek, who went into space on board Soyuz 28 in March 1978 (KSČM); German-based but Prague-born porn star Dolly Buster or Nora Baumbergerová nee Dvořáková (NEI, Independent Erotic In-

²⁷ An interesting comparative analysis of voters and politicians learning democratic politics in the decade after the fall of communism in the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland is given Tworzecki (2002). For a comparative analysis of economic voting in Central and Eastern Europe, see Pacek (1994), Fidrmuc (2000), Fidrmuc and Doyle (2003), Tucker (2006), Roberts (2008), Lewis-Beck and Stegmaier (2008) and Fauvelle-Aymar and Stegmaier (2008).

Figure 3.2: Monthly trends in vote intentions for elections to the Chamber of Deputies during 2004, per cent



Source: CVVM omnibus surveys, 2004

Note that the monthly estimates of party choice among those fairly or very likely to vote are based on samples of approximately one thousand respondents and the confidence intervals on the vote intention estimates are $\pm 3\%$. Ostatni refers to small other parties.

initiative); former general director of TV NOVA, Vladimír Železný (Independent Democrats); and Viktor Kožený (OFD, Citizens' Federal Democracy) an entrepreneur later charged with embezzlement on a massive scale during the voucher privatisation of the 1990s. Pre-election polls undertaken by CVVM indicated that ODS would secure 26% of the vote followed by KSCM (12%), ČSSD (10%), KDU-ČSL (8%) and US-DEU ($\leq 5\%$).

In this election there was a record low turnout of 28%, although CVVM's pre-election poll in May had predicted a participation rate of 63%.²⁸ As predict-

²⁸ This is a good example of the problems over- and miss-reporting encountered in using pre-electoral surveys to predict voter turnout and party support. See Box 3.1. More will be said on this topic in chapter 7.

ed, ODS did well winning 30% of the vote (9 seats) followed by KSČM (20%), SNK (11%), KDU-ČSL (10%), ČSSD (9%), Independent Democrats (8%) and Greens (3%). As the ruling Social Democrat vote collapsed to a third of what it had been in the previous general election in 2002, ČSSD leader Vladimír Špidla was forced to resign and there was a government reshuffle.

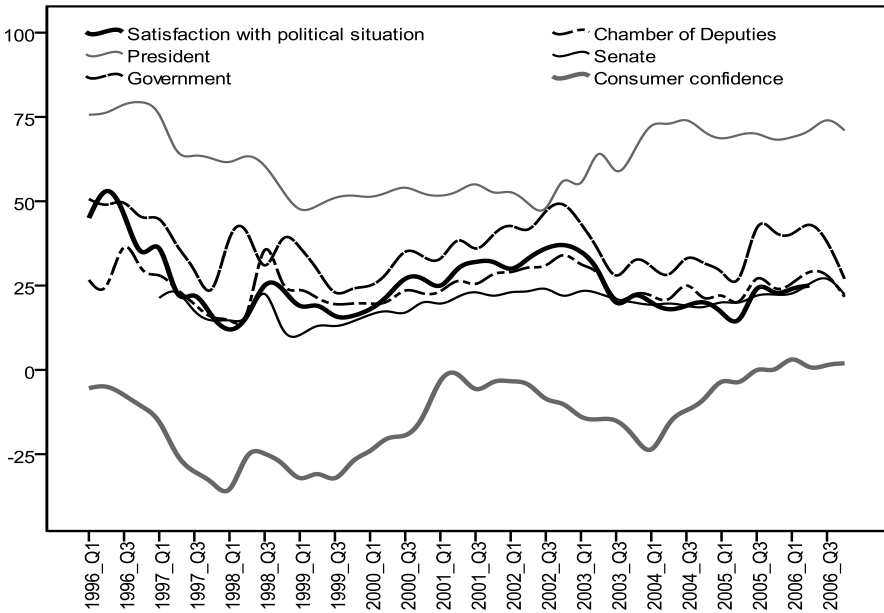
An examination of the vote intention data for 2004, shown in Figure 3.2 reveals four key patterns. First, there was a rapid growth from 5 to 25% in support for 'other' (ostatní) parties on the eve of the European elections. Popular support for these small other parties declined rapidly after the European Parliament elections, although it resurged somewhat later in the year. Second, there was a doubling in support for the Green Party (SZ) across 2004 from about 6 to 13% indicating some popular basis for its breakthrough in the subsequent 2006 Chamber Elections. Third, there was considerable volatility in support for small parties such as Union of Freedom (US) and to a lesser degree with the Independence party (NEZ). Lastly, all of the main parties retained largely constant levels of support across the entire year. Overall, the main message evident in the inter-election dynamics presented in Figure 3.2 is one of complex short-term changes that have their origins in real opinion changes and methodological features of surveying such as sampling error ($\pm 3\%$).

3.8.2 Public trust in politics and economic sentiment

Inter-election surveys also ask a variety of questions regarding citizens' attitudes toward the political regime and institutions of representation. Within political science many scholars argue that there is a qualitative difference between trust in institutions and attitudes toward office holders. There is reason to doubt that respondents participating in inter-election surveys do in fact separate the performance of institutions from office holders when making responses: as the logic of the trust item in political attitudes surveys assumes.

The CVVM time series data presented in Figure 3.3 is composed of three distinct series: (1) satisfaction with the regime; (2) satisfaction with national institutions of political representation; and (3) consumer confidence. The main pattern evident in Figure 3.3 is that all six series are correlated, where the rise and fall of the 'public mood' is evident across all survey indicators. It is not possible to definitively state without a more detailed time series analysis such as Vector Autoregression (VAR) the direction of causality. An example of such an analysis is given in the next sub-section. Another important feature of Figure 3.3 is that satisfaction with the regime (or political situation) appears to be a composite measure of trust in political institutions. These questions are reasonably strongly cor-

Figure 3.3: Trends in trust in government and parliament and consumer sentiment in the Czech Republic, 1996–2006 (quarterly)



<i>Pairwise correlations (Bonferoni significance)</i>	Satisfaction in politics	Trust in President	Trust in Government	Trust in Chamber	Trust in Senate	Consumer confidence
Satisfaction with the political situation	1.000					
Trust in the President	0.213	1.000				
Trust in the Government	.798	.280	1.000			
Trust in the Chamber of Deputies	<.001	1.000		1.000		
Trust in the Senate	.719	.091	0.670	1.000	1.000	
Net consumer confidence (Eurostat)	.642	.284	.528	.658	.768	1.000
	<.001	1.000	.010	<.001		
	.488	.294	.499	.498	.768	1.000
	.016	.878	.012	.012	<.001	

Sources: CVVM omnibus surveys, 1996–2006; Eurostat economic confidence surveys, 1996–2006

Note that the level of trust for the main political institutions and is taken from the responses of those aged 18 years or more between 1996 and 2006. This data has been aggregated to quarters and represents between 886 and 4,683 responses. The consumer sentiment time series is based on Eurostat’s consumer confidence survey undertaken monthly in all EU member states with national samples of one thousand respondents. The consumer sentiment estimates are seasonally adjusted and represent the balance between positive and negative responses, and for the most part during this time period were negative.

related (ranging from .64 to .80) suggesting that there is attitudinal linkage.²⁹ The consistently higher level of public support given to the President suggests that Czech citizens have greater trust in non-partisan institutions.³⁰

The period under consideration is important because it includes a phase of economic decline between 1997 and 1999, which had its origins in a currency and banking crisis accompanied by a number of political scandals. This led to an unscheduled general election in June 1998; and a series of austerity packages that rapidly cut public spending. The polling data on the left of Figure 3.3 shows that economic and political turmoil was accompanied by a decline in consumer sentiment, trust in political institutions, and satisfaction with the regime. In general, the correlation between consumer sentiment and the political indicators ranges between .34 and .49 suggesting a moderately strong relationship.

It is necessary at this point to stress that great care is required when interpreting correlations of time series data. Strong bivariate correlations may be spurious in capturing little more than common trends due to third factors such as partisanship in the political trust variables trends, or may be due to chance. Therefore, it is not valid to infer causality from the correlations reported here without undertaking appropriate time series econometric modelling – a topic for further research.

The strongest correlation observed is between consumer confidence and trust in the Senate ($r=.78$). This is a surprising and puzzling relationship. If this correlation is not spurious, one possibility is that trust in Senate is more strongly associated with citizens' personal resources, such as higher levels of education, political knowledge and income as is evident in other research. And it is this subset of citizens who are more sensitive to changing economic sentiment because many members of this group are key figures in business. For the moment such explanations must remain speculative and represent an important avenue for future research, as little has been written on how economic factors shape political satisfaction ratings in the Czech Republic.

The CVVM time series data presented in Figure 3.3 demonstrate a number of important lessons when working with inter-election survey results. First, the responses to sets of political attitudes questions may be correlated indicating the presence of a more general public mood. Second, the manner in which respondents answer questions may not always reflect the logic of the question design. Here we see that changing levels of trust in institutions appears to be driven by

29 An analogous pattern is evident in individual level analyses of ISSP data (see, Linek 2010: 58–59).

30 A similar phenomenon was evident in the higher levels of government satisfaction given to the technocratic government of Jan Fischer which was in office between May 8 2009 and June 25 2010.

the performance of office holders. Third, the economic climate is also important where changing levels of consumer sentiment is matched by variation in political attitudes. Fourth, establishing a causal relationship between time series variables requires careful modelling in order to avoid making invalid inferences because of failure to take into account factors such as spurious correlation, autocorrelation, trends and seasonal variation.

3.8.3 Causal links between public mood and trust in political institutions

One of the salient features of Figure 3.3 is the similarity in the trends observed between satisfaction in the political situation and trust in the Government, Chamber of Deputies, the Senate and to a lesser degree the President. Public satisfaction with the current political situation would seem from Figure 3.3 to be an indicator of the 'public mood' reflecting Czech citizens' general evaluation of all politics.³¹ One obvious question to ask of the trends observed in Figure 3.3 is: what is causing what? For example, does public trust in the various political institutions determine the overall public mood? Or perhaps, it is the public mood that is shaping the level of trust in the President, Government and the Houses of Parliament? Alternatively, the situation may be more complex where trust in one political institution determines trust in another resulting in a complex set of direct and indirect relationships.

Given the possibility of complex relations between the time series variables shown in Figure 3.4, it makes sense to construct causal models that allow all of the trends to be interrelated. One statistical method of simultaneously treating all variables as both causes and consequences of each other is to estimate a Vector Autoregression (VAR) model. In order to keep matters simple and to ensure that the model estimates are stable, the VAR model estimated will be a parsimonious one containing four political variables where trust in the Senate is not considered.³²

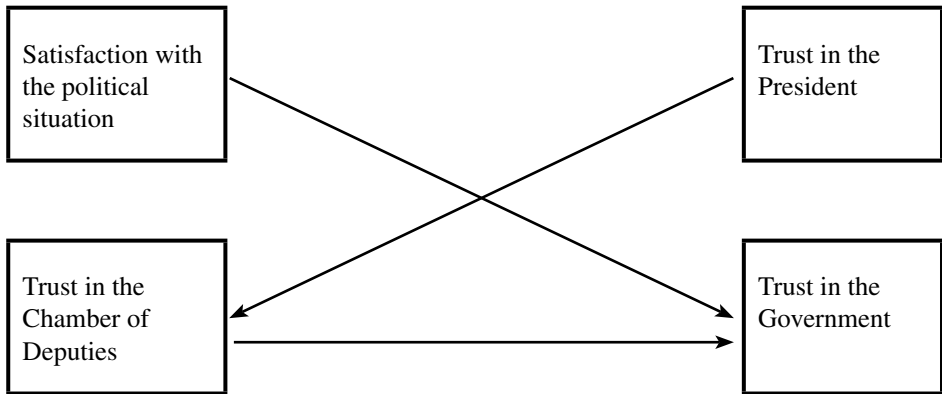
The essential logic of this model is best shown with an example. Trust in government at time 2 is said to be determined by trust in the Government at time 1 plus trust in the Lower Chamber at time 1 plus satisfaction in the political situation at time 1 plus trust in the President at time 1.³³ This same logic applies to the

31 This mood concept is similar to Stimson's (1999, 2004) 'public mood' or 'policy mood' in the sense that it refers to a general orientation toward politics that changes systematically over time. However, the public mood here is different in that it is based on a single item rather than a composite set of measures subject to a time series factor analysis.

32 This strategy is followed for two reasons. First, there is a shorter time series for the Senate as it did not come into existence until late 1997. Second, additional analysis reveals that trust in the Senate is independent of the other variables considered.

33 The model is a little more complex as it includes two lags. However, the modelling logic is the same regardless of the number of lags specified. A Wald (Footnote continued on page 134)

Figure 3.4: Granger causal model of the interrelationships between political mood and trust in key political institutions, 1996–2006 (quarterly)



Source: CVVM omnibus surveys, 1996–2006

Note arrows refer to causal relationships that are significant ($p \leq .05$). See table below for details. Vector autoregression analysis undertaken using quarterly data (q1 to q4), and refers to CVVM surveys undertaken between 1996 q1 and 2006 q2.

Wald tests for causal independence between satisfaction with the political situation, trust in the President, Government and Chamber of Deputies, 1996 q1 – 2006 q2

Independent variables	Dependent variables			
	Satisfaction with the political situation	Trust in the President	Trust in the Government	Trust in the Lower Chamber
Satisfaction with the political situation (d.f. 2)		1.98	7.21**	1.96
Trust in the President (d.f. 2)	3.17		3.00	.47
Trust in the Government (d.f. 2)	3.06	2.93		9.89**
Trust in the Lower Chamber (d.f. 2)	1.99	7.02**	2.56	
All variables (d.f. 6)	6.89	17.83**	12.12*	27.91***

* $p \leq .10$ ** $p \leq .05$ *** $p \leq .001$ (two tailed test)

Note in testing for Granger causality the null hypothesis is that the coefficients (plural because of lags) for a specific independent variable are jointly equal to zero. Consequently, a series of restricted and unrestricted models are tested. The Wald test assesses whether the unrestricted estimate of a coefficient is significantly different from a restricted estimate using a chi-square distribution with the degrees of freedom equal the number of model restrictions tested. Here the degrees of freedom correspond to the number of lags for which the Wald tests are calculated. For example, when explaining trust in government including past values of this variable, i.e. with a lag of two quarters or six months, this improves model fit significantly [chi-square (28,2) = 7.21, $p = .03$].

other three variables. The VAR model is estimated using Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression where the interrelated links between the variables are modelled with no a priori expectations.³⁴

Equally important, a VAR model facilitates using the statistical concept of Granger causality to investigate the relationships between the political mood and trust measures (Freeman 1983). In simple terms, Granger causality is inferred from the fact that past values of both the dependent and independent variables determine the current value of the dependent variable. The past can shape the future, but not vice versa. This temporal constraint facilitates making statistical (Wald) tests of causality, in terms of direction, reciprocity and independence.

The results of the VAR model presented in Figure 3.3 reveal that the political mood measure, i.e. satisfaction with the political situation, is Granger causally independent of all the trust indicators. Moreover, political mood only has a significant effect on trust in the Government. Thereafter, trust in government determines trust in parliament; and this in turn shapes trust in the President. The pattern evident at the top of Figure 3.4 reveals (1) no reciprocal causation, and (2) a hierarchical relationship between the trust questions examined.

Uni-directional causation and independence suggest that the set of four political measures do capture different facets of Czech citizens' perceptions of national politics where the different CVVM questions should not be considered as manifest indicators of an underlying latent political mood measure: one plausible interpretation of the pattern evident in the centre of Figure 3.3. The directions of the causal arrows at the top of this figure suggest that the political mood question (satisfaction with the political situation) is independent of attitudes of trust in political institutions. However, changes in political mood do shape citizens' sense of trust in a very specific hierarchical way. Changes in mood influence trust in government which in turn shapes trust in parliament that in turn has an impact on trust in the President.

These results imply that the pattern evident in Figure 3.3 has a very specific structure where the general public mood is channelled through attitudes of

(Footnote continued...) test of lag restrictions indicates that some variables (trust in the President and Government) require a lag(2) specification. More details of the model estimation and diagnostics are given in Appendix 3.2.

34 Using an OLS estimator with non-stationary data is problematic because of the danger of making invalid inferences. Time series variables should be stationary (i.e. mean, variance and covariance of each variable should not depend on time indicating the presence of an underlying (non)linear trend). A standard strategy to ensure stationarity is to first difference the data, i.e. to estimate change per unit time. Unfortunately, differencing destroys information such as long-run relationships (Beck 1991: 67–69). However, with VAR use of non-stationary variables where the goal is to identify relationships rather than accurately estimate coefficients is a valid exercise (Freeman, Williams and Lin 1989).

trust in the Government, Lower Chamber and President in sequence. One of the main implications to be taken from this time series (VAR) analysis here is that although there may be strong correlations between the public's political mood and trust variables; they refer to different political attitudes within the Czech electorate and should be seen as conceptually different measures. In this subsection, the focus has been on the large number of inter-electoral surveys and mapping the evolution of political attitudes. Politics of course is primarily driven by actions; and for this reason it is very important to consider in the penultimate section of this chapter data reflecting Czech's actual electoral behaviour. It is therefore appropriate at this juncture to turn our attention to election results.

3.9 Aggregate electoral data analysis research

Within political science there is a long tradition of using official or aggregated election results as these have been available since the progressive extension of the franchise in Europe and elsewhere since the late eighteenth century. These data are important because they are an accurate record of citizens' political behaviour; and it is possible to use them to make spatial (inter-constituency) and temporal (inter-election) comparisons, and thereby explore the patterning and dynamics of electoral behaviour within states. The construction of pan-European historical databases of constituency level election results have promoted this stream of research and key themes such as voter turnout, partisan support and the emergence of national political systems (Caramani 2000, 2004).

Here our focus is the organisation and use of Czech electoral statistics. It is important at the outset to provide some practical information regarding how official electoral data are archived and organised. Within the Czech Republic the organisation of elections is the responsibility of the Interior Ministry. The official results of all elections since 1990 are available from the Czech Statistical Office (ČSÚ). Its website (<http://www.volby.cz/>) has data for all national elections since 1990. At this website, the user may explore voter participation and party choice at the following levels in ascending order of size.

1. Okrsky or precincts (n≈15,000)
2. Obce or communities (n≈6,000)
3. Soudní okresy or judicial districts, sometimes also referred to as counties (n=76)

4. Kraje or region, typically also a constituency in lower chamber elections (n=14)
5. Národ or country (n=1)

This geographical system of administration has existed in this general form for close to a century and a half. In 1869, the regions of the Austro-Hungarian Empire forming part of the Austrian part of the Dual Monarchy (formed in 1861) were organised into a county system that was used for local administration and electoral purposes (Mills Kelly 2007). The nature and composition of this spatial hierarchy have modified over time because of demographic and political changes. Nonetheless, there is a reasonable level of continuity within this schema to explore social, political and economic change within the territory of the contemporary Czech Republic to allow some analysis of electoral stability and change over time. However, it is important to be aware that there is some debate regarding the classification of communities (*obcí*) in the study of local party systems (Hoskovec and Balík 2010).

3.9.1 Historical electoral data and analysis

Information and data on national elections (the Lower Chamber and Senate) during the First Republic (1918–1935) and immediately after the Second World War (1946) are given in a two volume study by the Czech Statistical Office (Kuklík et al. 2008).³⁵ Between 1920 and 1946 there were four lower and senate chamber elections held simultaneously in 1920, 1925, 1929 and 1935. A large number of parties (16 to 22 per election) competed for 300 seats in the Lower Chamber and 150 seats in the Senate; where throughout the fifteen year period more than 50 parties competed for seats. The large number of parties reflected the ethnic nature of the Czechoslovak state where there were in essence four party systems generally reflecting left-right policy orientations among Czechs, Germans, Slovaks and Hungarians. Minorities such as the Ruthenians in the sub-Carpathian and the Poles in the Slezsko regions were never large or organised enough to constitute pivotal segments of the electorate in coalition bargaining.

The fissiparous effects of using a party list proportional electoral system in an ethnically divided state were attenuated by informal mechanisms such as (a) consensus agreements among the five main party leaders known as ‘*pětka*’, and (b)

³⁵ Elections for the office of President were undertaken within the two chambers of parliament. The same selectorate has been used since 1990 in electing the head of state. For more details on the history of Czech presidential elections between 1918 and 2008 see, Tabery (2008). Slovakia changed its rules following the dissolution of the Czechoslovak Federation and it has a popularly elected president. Popular elections for the Czech presidency will take place for the first time in early 2013.

agreements brokered through President Masaryk's office in an informal system known as 'hrad' or the castle (Luebbert 1991: 291; Orzoff 2009).³⁶ However, use of these two mechanisms to justify more efficient government decision making during times of crisis is seen to have undermined popular support in party politics. There is some evidence of this feeling in the decision to limit the number of parties (6 and later 8) allowed to compete in the general election of 1946 under the framework of the National Front (see, Kaplan 1997).

In addition, there were municipal elections where the first was held in 1919 prior to the first national elections, which is a little unusual. During the First Republic and under communism electoral participation was mandatory; and consequently voter turnout rates were typically very high ($\geq 90\%$).³⁷ Bicameral systems are usually justified on the basis that each chamber has a different electorate with contrasting priorities and interests, and will thus generate different election outcomes. During the First Republic, the qualifications for voting and being a candidate in the upper and lower chambers were different; however, the election outcomes as Table 3.4 demonstrates were often close to being identical.

These similar election outcomes, as noted earlier, may have reflected the strong ethnic and left-right cleavages in Czechoslovak society, but they also ensured that the Senate never adopted a sufficiently independent position to endear itself to the Czechoslovak electorate. Notwithstanding these intrinsically important features of electoral behaviour during the First Republic such as the relative importance of ethnicity and class on vote choice, as explored by Kopstein and Wittenberg (2009); one of the main reasons for studying historical electoral data in the Czech Republic is to test the hypothesis that voting behaviour exhibits considerable stability.³⁸

An examination of the stability of voting patterns for four 'traditional parties': the People's Party (ČSL, later KDU-ČSL), the Socialist Party (ČSNS, ČSS), the Social Democrats (ČSSD) and the Communists (KSČ), in the first post-communist elections in June 1990 reveals considerable similarity with the past. The patterns of support evident in Figure 3.5 for the Czechoslovak People's Party (ČSL) suggest a strong regional basis of partisan support. Often this party's support for policies that match with Catholic social democracy led scholars to conclude the spatial patterning evident in Figure 3.5 reflected the Roman Catholic orienta-

36 Pětka and Hrad will be discussed later in the introduction to chapter 5.

37 The minimum age for voting age was initially 21 years, but this was later reduced to 18 years. There were also restrictions on the minimum age for candidates for various types of elections. For details, see Broklová (1992).

38 Some have argued that party competition in the First Republic did not take place in a single Czechoslovak party system (Kyloušek 2005). There were in fact distinct Czech, German and Slovak party spaces and voting patterns where ethnicity and left-right orientation determined party choice. An analogous pattern is evident in contemporary Belgium.

Table 3.4: Comparison of party support in the lower and upper chambers during the First Republic (1918–1938), per cent

Year / Chamber Party	1920		1925		1929		1935	
	Lower	Upper	Lower	Upper	Lower	Upper	Lower	Upper
ČSDSD	25.7	28.1	8.9	8.8	13.0	13.0	12.5	12.5
ČSL	11.3	11.9	9.7	10.1	8.4	8.7	7.5	7.7
DSDAP	11.1	11.4	5.8	6.0	6.9	6.9	3.6	3.7
RSZML	9.7	10.1	13.7	13.8	15.0	15.2	14.3	14.3
ČSNS	8.0	7.6	8.6	8.5	10.4	10.3	9.2	9.2
NSJ	6.3	6.8	4.0	4.2	4.9	5.0	5.6	5.6
MKSS	4.5	2.7	1.4	1.4	3.5	3.7	3.5	3.6
AB	3.9	3.5	7.9	7.9	5.8	5.9	6.9	6.8
ČZOSS	2.0	2.1	4.0	4.2	3.9	4.2	5.4	5.4
KSČ	NA	NA	13.1	12.7	10.2	10.0	10.3	10.2
SdP	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	15.2	15.0
Other parties	17.5	15.9	22.9	22.4	18.0	17.0	5.9	5.9

Source: Czech Statistical Office, Volby do Národního shromáždění 1920 až 1935, data available at http://www.czso.cz/csu/2006edicniplan.nsf/publ/4219-06-1920_az_1935

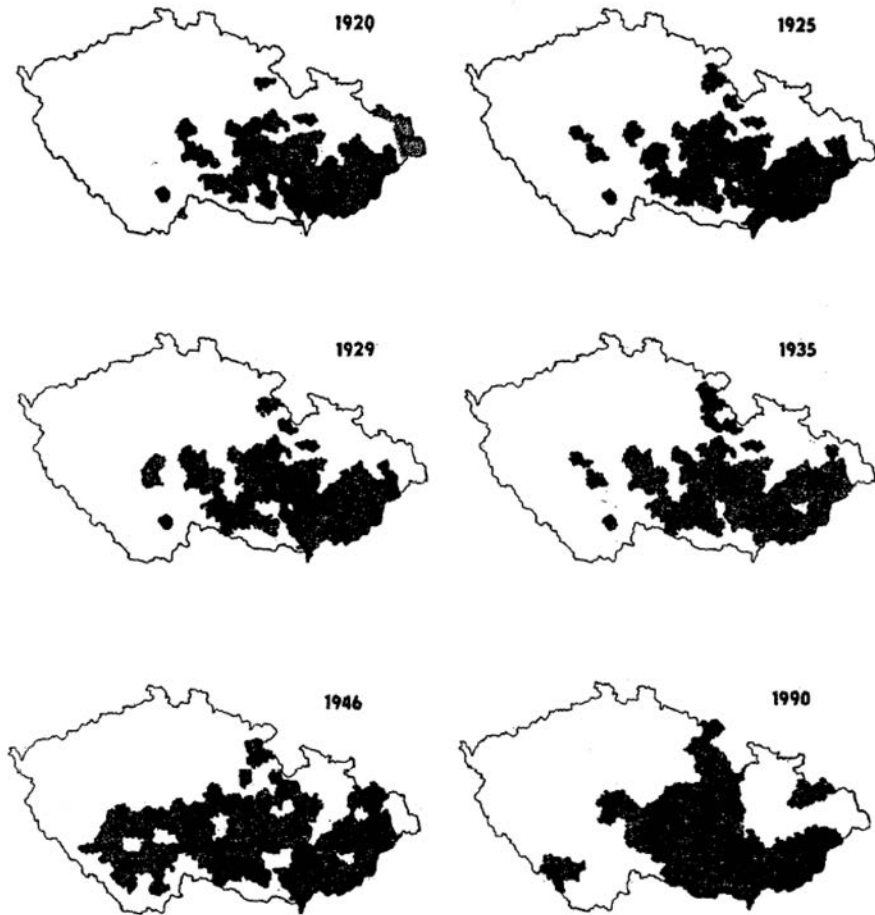
Note that the lower and upper chambers refer to the Poslanecká sněmovna and Senat respectively. The level of party support (%) refers to the parties that won most votes and seats in one or more elections. Consequently, the columns do not sum to one hundred per cent as the many smaller parties have been excluded in order to simplify the presentation.

Legend of parties: ČSDSD, Československá sociálně demokratická strana dělnická, Czechoslovak Social Democratic Worker's Party; ČSL, Československá strana lidová, Czechoslovak People's Party (Catholic); DSDAP, Německá sociálně demokratická strana dělnická, Deutsche sozialdemokratische Arbeiterpartei, German Social Democratic Workers' Party; RSZML, Republikánská strana zemědělského a malorolnického lidu, Republican Party of Agricultural and Smallholder People; ČSNS, Československá strana národně-socialistická, Czechoslovak National Socialist Party; NS, Národního sjednocení, National Unity; MNKSS, Maďarsko-německá křesťansko-sociální strana, Magyar és Német Keresztényszocialista Párt, Magyarisch-deutsche christlichsoziale Partei, Hungarian and German Christian Socialist Party; AB, Autonomistický blok; ČZOSS, Československá živnostensko-obchodnická strana středostavovská; KSČ, Komunistická strana Československá, Czechoslovak Communist Party; SdP, Sudetoněmecká strana, Sudetendeutsche Partei, Sudeten Germans Party.

tion of Moravian society. Spatial analyses for the 1920–2010 period show that the Christian Democratic vote continues to exhibit a high level of stability (Voda 2011).³⁹ These results presented in the form of maps and correlations at the dis-

³⁹ A similar type of cross-time spatial analysis has been undertaken for the Communist Party (KSČ, KSČM) in the Olomouc region, see Balík (2006).

Figure 3.5: Spatial pattern of electoral support for the Czechoslovak People's Party (ČSL), 1920–1990



Source: Jehlička and Sýkora (1991: 85). There were some areas on the north-eastern frontier (Slezsko or Silesia) in 1920 where there were no elections due to conflict and unresolved border disputes with Poland. Note that the black pattern refers to counties or 'judicial districts' (soudní okresy) where the ČSL secured more than half (50%) of the popular vote. These spatial comparisons suggest the presence of a local political culture or value system, most likely associated with Roman Catholicism, for much of the twentieth century. This local political culture appears not to have been affected by different regimes and systems of governance indicating a degree of autonomy between political values and institutions. It is important to note that this is an aggregate level of analysis that may not be reflected in individual level survey data due to the problems associated with making ecological inferences. An overview of the correlation of KDU-ČSL support for all elections between 1920 and 2010 at the okres level is given in Appendix 3.3.

trict level (soudní okresy) suggest the presence of a distinctive political culture that has survived through processes such as socialisation and inter-generational transmission.

Some analyses of the spatial patterning of party support during the First Republic and during the post-communist era find support for the thesis that there are localised stable party heartlands (Jehlička and Sýkora 1991: 85–86; Kostelecký, Jehlička and Sýkora 1993; Voda 2011). More recently, there have been examinations of the spatial stability of party support using municipal level data for the Vysočany and Liberec regions (Čiháková and Balík 2010; Maškarinec 2011).⁴⁰ These heartlands or regional political cultures most likely reflect common structural bases for party support. Such thinking fits neatly with Lipset and Rokkan's (1967) influential social cleavage theory of voting which emphasises the importance of history and structural stability in explaining party support. Subsequent analyses of the spatial pattern of voting from 1992 onwards reveal that this stability has weakened considerably over the last two decades (Kostelecký 2001; Kostelecký and Čermák 2004a).

A central methodological consideration in the analysis of historical electoral statistics at the constituency and sub-constituency levels is the stability of electoral units across time. Comparison of voting patterns across time requires having a set of constant units where the electoral geography remains constant or at least sufficiently consistent to construct (synthetic) electoral units.⁴¹ Fortunately, most okrsky (precincts), obci (communities) and many okresy (districts) have remained constant over time. As a result, it is possible for electoral studies scholars or psephologists to compare the same spatial units for which there are electoral and census data over many decades.

In this respect, reference volumes such as the Czech Statistical Office's historical lexicon of districts in the Czech Republic between 1869 and 2006 provide valuable information about the territorial composition of constituencies over an extended time (Růžková and Škrabal 2006a,b). More concretely, the same organisation has also produced a valuable overview of all elections during the First Republic (1918–1935); and immediately after the Second World War (1946). All

40 This party heartlands thesis has been subject of a number of unpublished regional or city studies typically undertaken within the framework of postgraduate level dissertations, e.g. Doležálek (2008). Such work suggests that the notion of stable party support is seen to be important in research on sub-national electoral research.

41 In some European countries such as the UK, and more specifically England, the boundaries of the smallest electoral units, District Electoral Divisions (DEDs) have changed substantially over time due to socio-demographic change and institutional reforms. As a result, using England's substantial body of historical electoral statistics is severely limited because constant units for comparison are not available for many places. Other West European countries such as France (commune) and Spain (comuna) are similar to the Czech Republic (obec) in have having small geographical units of representation with a long history.

of this data is given for the district (okres) level which refers to about 300 units. There were more administrative counties in the early twentieth century than is the case today because of factors such as removal of ethnic Germans in 1945–1946, creation of Cold War secure de-populated zones in border areas, migration and urbanisation.⁴²

3.9.2 Contemporary electoral data and analysis

As it is almost a generation since the first democratic elections in 1990, the accumulation of electoral results from local, regional and national elections has resulted in the emergence of a distinct sub-field focussed on electoral data and related census statistics. Much of this research has a strong geographic basis where scholars examine what are sometimes called ‘local party systems’ where the units of analysis are electoral results at the community or *obcí* level (Hudák, et al. 2003; Šaradín and Outlý 2004; Balík 2008, 2009). One of the themes in this research is the impact of non-partisan political actors (independents) on local political representation and Czech democracy more generally. In all communal elections (*komunální volby*) between 1994 and 2010, the number of independent candidates elected has been quite high ($\approx 80\%$) indicating that Czech parties do not have strong local roots.

An alternative approach to analysing electoral data is to (a) estimate statistical models such as spatial regression, (b) ecological inference estimation to explore the structural determinants of party choice at the national level. From this perspective, the variation in spatial units in terms of their electoral and census characteristics provides a means of formulating and testing causal models. For example, Kouba (2007) using various spatial modelling techniques examined the ‘institutionalisation’ of the Czech party system between 1990 and 2006. Here the goal was to see if there is evidence for a regional component to voting indicating the presence of a localised political culture. Although, two macro-regional units (Moravia and former-Sudeten German areas) were identified the impact of context was not seen to be important.

Later research by Lyons and Linek (2010) using an ecological inference estimator with vote switching data across a pair of elections (Chamber Elections 2002 and European Elections 2004) identified four political regions as shown in Box 3.2. It should be noted that ecological inference refers to statistical methods used to estimate likely individual level behaviour from aggregate level data. These methods, as will be discussed later in Section 4.1 of Chapter 8, depend critically on being able to make assumptions about how individual level votes are

42 Some of this data and related books are available at: <http://www.czso.cz/csu/edicniplan.nsf/aktual/ep-4#42> (accessed 22/02/2012).

Box 3.2: Evidence for local political cultures within the Czech Republic

A common theme in Czech electoral history is the importance of region. During the existence of Czechoslovakia it was common to refer to the distinctiveness of areas of ethnic majorities, e.g. Czech, German, Slovak, Hungarian, Polish, etc. Within the Czech Republic there is frequent reference to cultural differences between Bohemia and Moravia. Consequently, it is not surprising to find that research using official election statistics often emphasises the spatial distribution of party support as discussed in this chapter and shown in Figure 3.5. This empirical evidence suggests that there are distinct regional patterns in the Czech Republic and hence the basis for local political cultures. In contrast, comparative analyses of party system nationalisation reveal that the Czech Republic has relatively low levels of regional voting implying that local political cultures are not that important.



Source: Election Statistics, Czech Statistical Office (<http://www.volby.cz/>); Lyons and Linek (2010: 391) Note that the classification of counties and county towns is based on a hierarchical cluster analysis of the Lower Chamber election results of 2002 and European elections of 2004. The regions are labelled as follows (1) Bohemia and urban Moravia (dark grey); (2) Rural Moravia (white); (3) Prague (black); (4) Northwest Bohemian borderland (light grey). Districts with different coloured solid circles at their centre indicate areas where there were urban/rural differences.

Lyons and Linek (2010) examined this puzzle by employing an alternative approach to the statistical analysis of aggregate level election data. An ecological inference technique was used to make estimates of vote switching behaviour at the *individual level* across a pair of elections. One important step in this process is the identification of regions where voting patterns are similar. The results of this analysis presented in the map above reveal the existence of four distinct regions or political cultures in the Czech Republic.

One interesting feature of this analysis is that the broad division of the country into Bohemia and Moravia simplifies a more complicated situation where urban/rural divisions are also important. In addition, the impact of history is evident in the fourth region on the map. The Northwest Bohemian borderland covers much of the territory associated with the German speaking Sudetenland. This area was resettled after the Second World War following the forced removal of the local German population. The new settlers' community structures were not only different to the German communities; but have remained distinct when compared to the rest of the country. This is especially evident in the persistently low levels of electoral turnout.

The inductive approach to the identification and study of local political cultures using aggregated election statistics represents an interesting and important stream of research. Future work employing longer time periods and data from a broader range of election types will undoubtedly add greater detail to the map shown above; and may perhaps also provide insight into the dynamics of change in Czech political culture.

aggregated to form the patterns observed (Achen and Shively 1989; Wakefield 2004; Freedman et al. 2008: 83–104).

This ecological inference work is theoretically interesting because it shows that in a high nationalised party system such as the Czech Republic, where parties obtain approximately the same level of support in all constituencies as shown in Table 3.5. The presence of non-uniform electoral swings shows that voters do not view elections in the same manner as some advocates of the party system nationalisation thesis contend (Caramani 2004: 39–40).

Table 3.5: Party system nationalisation in the Czech Republic

<i>Election type and year</i>	<i>General Election (GE)</i>					<i>EP</i>	<i>GE</i>	<i>EP</i>
	<i>1990</i>	<i>1992</i>	<i>1996</i>	<i>1998</i>	<i>2002</i>	<i>2004</i>	<i>2006</i>	<i>2009</i>
OF	.91	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
ODS	–	.92	.91	.89	.90	.93	.91	.92
ČSSD	.76	.88	.91	.93	.95	.95	.92	.91
KSČM	.95	.95	.94	.92	.90	.91	.91	.91
KDU-ČSL	.81	.70	.77	.80	.87	.70	.76	.70
SZ	.81	–	–	–	.92	.90	.88	.79
HSD-SMS	.38	.40	–	–	–	–	–	–
SPR-RSC / RMS	–	.84	.86	.87	–	–	–	–
ODA	–	.73	.86	–	–	–	–	–
US / US-DEU	–	–	–	.89	–	–	–	–
Voter turnout	1.00	.98	.98	.98	.97	.94	.97	.94
<i>Mean total score</i>	<i>.80</i>	<i>.80</i>	<i>.89</i>	<i>.90</i>	<i>.92</i>	<i>.89</i>	<i>.89</i>	<i>.86</i>

Source: Linek and Lyons (2010: 380); Election Statistics, Czech Statistical Office (<http://www.volby.cz/>)

Note that the estimates are 'inverted' Gini coefficients of party support weighted according to the size of the unit of analysis for all Lower Chamber Elections (or General Elections, GE) and European Parliament elections (EP) since 1990 within the Czech Republic. The units of analysis are electoral constituencies (1990–1998, N=8; 2002–2009, N=14). These units are not constituencies for EP elections as the whole country is a single constituency. When smaller units are used instead of constituencies (76 counties + 15 Prague units, N=91; or counties divided into urban and rural areas + 15 Prague units, N=159), the results are on average lower by .02. KDU-ČSL and US-DEU ran in 2002 as electoral coalition under the name Koalice (these figures are in the KDU-ČSL row). The mean total score is the arithmetic mean for all parties and voter turnout and provides an overall measure of party system nationalisation.

Legend: OF: Civic Forum (umbrella movement); ODS: Civic Democrats (rightist); ČSSD: Social Democrats (leftist); KSČM: Communist Party (extreme left); KDU-ČSL: Christian Democrats (centre-right); SZ: Green Party (centre-right); HSD-SMS (a small regional party in Moravia) and SPR-RSC/RMS: Republican Parties (nationalist); ODA/US-DEU: Union of Freedom (rightist).

An alternative use of (Bayesian hierarchical) ecological inference with Czech electoral and census data for the 1929 and 1935 lower chamber elections has examined if increased inter-ethnic contact in local communities (obec) was associated with greater support for liberal parties. Kopstein and Wittenberg (2009) find that the link between the ethnic composition of communities and non-ethnic voting was weak as other intervening factors also played an important role. Later work by Gregor (2012) using the same ecological inference technique examined key implications of Gregory M. Luebbert's (1991) theory regarding the transition away from democracy during the inter-war period in Europe. This study shows that this theory helps explain using voter transition estimates why the Czechoslovak First Republic remained democratic when neighbouring countries did not.

The goal of this brief overview of aggregate electoral data analysis in the Czech Republic has been to highlight two central points. First, there is a wealth of data available for the analysis of electoral participation and party choice; and this resource is expanding as Czechs participate in an increasing number of types of elections. Second, there is already a well-developed literature on aggregate electoral data using a wide variety of techniques ranging from maps to regression models and ecological inference analyses of vote switching behaviour. Third, there are important opportunities for integrating electoral data with map based databases using Geographic Information Systems (GIS); and use of multilevel modelling techniques when combining aggregate election results with individual level survey data. In short, there is still much to be learned from aggregated electoral data.

Conclusion

The central goal of this chapter has been to provide an introduction to the different types of data associated with citizen elections in the Czech Republic since 1990. Consequently, the approach has been descriptive where the aim has been to identify and map out the most important sources of survey data based for the most part on representative national samples. All of these data are archived at ČSDA, GESIS or UKDA and are freely available for academic use.

In the Czech Republic there are broadly speaking seven types of election surveys that focus on voters (plus candidate and party member surveys) attitudes and behaviour. These citizen election studies differ on the basis of type of survey and when the interviewing has taken place during the election cycle. As inter-election periods constitute most of the time observed, there are most survey data

for recalled party choice and vote intentions in the next election. It should be noted that such inter-electoral estimates of electoral behaviour by CVVM, STEM, Factum Invenio, SC&C, etc. are likely to have relatively high levels of measurement error because most voters outside of election campaigns have limited information about, or indeed interest in, elections.

In this respect, one would expect that the stability and reliability of voting preferences recorded in inter-election surveys will vary systematically through the election cycle. More specifically, the correlation between vote intentions and future (and past) party choices will be greatest immediately before and after elections; and will be least at the mid-point between successive elections (Gelman and King 1993; Arceneaux 2006; Lyons 2008a: 82–87). Moreover, there are good reasons to think that other standard questions asked frequently in inter-election polls such as trust in political institutions are likely to exhibit systematic patterns that reflect such factors as (a) the partisanship of the respondent vis-à-vis the incumbent government, (b) the presence of scandals, (c) state of the economy, (d) methodological effects such as changed question ordering or revisions in the question or response format, and (e) idiosyncratic effects beyond sampling and measurement error that are difficult to identify in the absence of theoretical or a priori expectations. In sum, the variation present in inter-election surveys must be examined carefully as some of the observed variance has its roots in proximate real world events; and the rest is due to systematic variations in public interest in politics.

The final section of this chapter showed that the study of Czech citizen politics is not restricted to surveys. Aggregated electoral data have the distinct advantage of being an unbiased and accurate record of what citizens did on election day. Of course, these official election results are aggregated to ensure secrecy of the ballot; and so it is not possible to test individual level voting models. Ecological inference estimators may be used to overcome this problem, however, here much depends on the validity of the models' assumptions.

In this chapter, the focus has been on the Czech Republic and electoral behaviour. Fortunately, it is possible to adopt a much broader comparative perspective through the use of an ever growing set of international surveys dealing with political attitudes and behaviour. It is to this topic that we now turn to in chapter 4.

Chapter 4

Comparative Survey Research

Comparative sociology is not a particular branch of sociology, it is sociology itself, in so far as it ceases to be purely descriptive and aspires to account for facts.

Emile Durkheim (1895, 1982: 157).

Introduction¹

In the last chapter the central theme were data connected with the study of elections in the Czech Republic. The focus was primarily on electoral behaviour: voter turnout and party choice. In this chapter, the process of data mapping will be broadened to include political attitudes and survey datasets where cross-national comparison is possible. Access to cross-national survey data are important for making causal inferences because it allows the researcher to model how national institutions such as the electoral system shape individual level behaviour and attitudes. With survey data from a single country this is not possible because contextual characteristics often change slowly over time.

Fortunately, the Czech Republic has participated in a large number of international surveys where a common questionnaire has been implemented in many countries at the same time point. The primary purpose of this comparative research is exploration of the importance of national context and institutions on individual attitudes and preferences. Czech participation in international survey research has a long history despite opposition to this form of scholarly work under the communist regime (1948–1989).

The first comparative survey research for which individual level data still exists was fielded in Czechoslovakia in June 1967 and explored citizens' 'Images of the World in the Year 2000.' This unique research project implemented by ÚVVM (a pre-cursor to CVVM) within the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences examined the attitudes and expectations of the younger generation (18–40 years old) toward what the world would be like at the millennium (Ornauer, Wiberg,

¹ A shorter version of this chapter published in Czech is available in Krejčí and Leontiyeva (2012: chapter 11).

Sicinski and Galtung 1976).² These data were the subject of a number of articles published in *Sociologický časopis* during the 1970s (Bártová 1972; Kára and Řehák 1971, 1972). Later analysis of the Images of the World in the Year 2000 data by Lyons (2009: 111–144) reveals that Czech and Slovak political attitudes on a range of topics were broadly similar to those evident in Western Europe at the height of the Cold War.

The survey datasets examined in this chapter may be divided into two broad groupings: (1) those that deal with general topics examined in a standard cross-national format, e.g. CSES, ESS, EVS and ISSP; and (2) studies that focus on the post-communist transition process, e.g. NDB and NEB. The data analysis presented in Box 4.1 presents one of the few examples of regional (Asia and Europe) quantitative political research where the Czech Republic is used as a case study. This research by Duckett and Miller (2006) is also interesting because it employs a two-level (mass-elite) surveying methodology that has been supplemented with qualitative (focus group) data.

The general and post-communist comparative survey data reviewed in this chapter provide qualitatively different types of data for research into Czech political attitudes and values. The broad survey research programmes examined are designed to facilitate direct comparison across many countries regardless of political history. In contrast, the specialist post-communist surveys only examine differences among states and societies in Central and Eastern Europe where the goal is to evaluate economic and political development. Consequently, these two broad forms of comparative survey research provide both contrasting and complementary snapshots of Czech citizens' attitudes, beliefs and values over the last two decades.

The material presented in this chapter is structured as follows. In the first section, there will be a discussion of Eurobarometer and popular attitudes toward the European Union; and this is followed by an overview of the New Democracy Barometer (NDB) and New Europe Barometer (NEB). Section three will present the International Social Survey Project (ISSP); and more specifically political modules dealing with citizenship, the role of government and national identity. This is followed in section four by an overview of the political attitudes items

2 The individual level national datasets for this project are available from the UK Data Archive, UKDA (all countries except West Germany, FRG) and German Social Data Archive (for West Germany only). It should be noted that all of these data files are in an old data archiving format, i.e. they are not available as SPSS, STATA or SAS data files, and must be reconstructed from raw text files. No combined ten country data file exists. The countries that participated in this study were Britain, Czechoslovakia, Finland, India (Uttar Pradesh), Japan, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Spain, West Germany and Yugoslavia (Slovenia). For more details, see Ornauer et al. (1976), Lyons (2009) and the UKDA website: <http://www.esds.ac.uk/findingData/relatedStudyListForSN.asp?sn=69019> (accessed 15/02/2012).

Box 4.1: Globalisation in Eastern Europe and East Asia

Within the social sciences the impact of globalisation has been the subject of considerable research. Using both qualitative (focus groups) and quantitative (mass survey) methods Duckett and Miller (2006) explored mass and elite (officials) attitudes toward two key facets of globalisation: economic and cultural openness in four developing countries. Four cases studies were selected from two global regions, i.e. Eastern Europe (Czech Republic and Ukraine) and East Asia (South Korea and Vietnam). Representative samples of 1,500 citizens and 500 elected or appointed officials in local or regional government were interviewed in each country in the final quarter of 2003. These cases studies were chosen because East Asia was a 'winner' and Eastern Europe was a 'loser' in economic terms during the 1990s. Within each region two 'rich' (South Korea and Czech Republic) and two 'poor' (Vietnam and Ukraine) countries were chosen to provide variation on all variables of interest.

Duckett and Miller (2006) find that public opinion in the four case studies favour the greater economic openness aspect of globalisation, but expressed discontent with those features of globalisation associated with perceived exploitation and unfairness. In addition, there is some support for violent resistance to threatening aspects of globalisation. One of the questions explored in this study is the role of the state, and more specifically the state's role in managing economic development. The top part of the table below reveals that a majority of those interviewed believed that the domestic rather than foreign economic enterprises were primarily responsible for economic change. The bottom part of this table shows that within the domestic sphere a majority in all countries saw the government as having most influence.

Perceived responsibility for economic change, per cent

<i>Questions</i>	<i>Public within each country</i>					
	<i>Official</i>	<i>Public</i>	<i>Czech Republic</i>	<i>South Korea</i>	<i>Ukraine</i>	<i>Vietnam</i>
Economic trends due to:						
Government and people	72	70	61	71	72	77
Foreign businesses and international organisations	16	18	29	21	15	6
Economic trends due to:						
Government only	51	60	53	63	67	55
People, businessmen and workers	33	26	36	28	21	20

Source: Duckett and Miller (2006: 180). Don't know responses not reported.

The qualitative (focus group, n=130) research revealed that Czech participants differed in their opinions about the merits of government intervention into economy as the following quotes reveal.

'it should intervene more' (C12) ... '[but] without silliness' (C9) ... 'with certain limits set' (C11) ... '[and] not throw away money on useless things' (C14); 'Czech agriculture has ... been liquidated ... and it is our politicians who had it liquidated' (C25); 'the state should not intervene' (C24) ... 'not intervene too much' (C27).

Additional research reveals that public opinion in all four countries was critical of government performance in managing the economy (Duckett and Miller 2006: 182). One of most interesting findings from this comparative study of attitudes to having and open economy with globalisation is the similarity in responses across states with such different institutional and historical characteristics.

implemented in the most recent waves of the European and World Values survey (EVS, WVS). Thereafter, attention shifts to post-election studies where there is an overview of the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES) project and the European Election Study (EES): both of which include two or more surveys from the Czech Republic. Section seven outlines the opportunities offered by the European Social Survey (ESS) for studying Czech political attitudes and values in a comparative context. In the following section, the International Civic and Citizenship Education Study (ICCS) and Civic Education Study (CIVED) both of which are unique comparative surveys on political attitudes and knowledge among adolescents are discussed. In the penultimate section, there are synopses mapping out additional comparative political surveys that have more ad hoc in nature. The concluding section ends with a brief summary evaluation of comparative survey data sources available to students and scholars of Czech politics.

4.1 Public Support for the European Union

The European Commission has sponsored a standard series of bi-annual 'standard' Eurobarometer (EB) surveys of public attitudes toward European integration since 1973.³ Prior to Czech accession to the European Union (EU) on May 1 2004, public attitudes toward joining the EU were measured in (a) Central and Eastern Barometer (CEEB) surveys undertaken between 1990 and 1998, (b) the Candidate Country Eurobarometer (CCEB) set of surveys 2001–2004. All of this data and related documentation such as questionnaires are available through GESIS, the German Social Data Archive (<http://www.gesis.org/>). In addition, online access to the standard and special Eurobarometers and CCEB are provided via the GESIS ZACAT data portal. This portal facilitates question or variable retrieval, tabulations and the downloading of data sets used during online analysis following registration.

The potential list of research topics available through analysis of Eurobarometer survey datasets is enormous; and it is difficult to summarise the full range of issues examined. In general, Eurobarometer aims on behalf of the European Commission to map out member state citizens' knowledge, attitudes and preferences towards the process of European unification, EU institutions and policies

3 There have in addition been many other surveys such as 'special' and 'flash' barometers that have examined specific topics in greater depth. For more details, see the European Commission's Eurobarometer homepage at: http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/index_en.htm; and also, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eurobarometer> (accessed 15/02/2012)

(for an overview see, Schmitt 2003). As noted earlier, there are infrequent special studies of public policy preferences on a range of diverse topics such as agriculture, biotechnology, energy, environment, science and technology, information society, health related or family issues, gender roles, social or ethnic exclusion, national identity and working conditions, etc.

A combined file containing all questions asked on five or more occasions called The Mannheim Eurobarometer Trend File was created by the Mannheimer Zentrum für Europäische Sozialforschung (MZES) and the Zentrum für Umfragen, Methoden und Analysen (ZUMA). This combined survey dataset contains 105 trend questions asked to more than 1.1 million respondents in 15 countries between 1973 and 2002. This file is available from GESIS. This survey data is of limited use because the Czech Republic is not included. However, this file does provide information on the types of trend questions likely to be present in other Eurobarometer surveys containing Czech respondents. The central point here is that it is possible to use this ever growing resource on Czech attitudes toward the process of European integration; and a whole range of related political topics to trace the evolution of public sentiments and other topics over time.⁴

At the risk of over-simplification, standard Eurobarometer surveys contain data on public attitudes and knowledge about EU institutions, the process of integration and satisfaction with politics at the national and European levels. Respondents are also often asked about if they identify themselves more as a citizen of their home country or as a citizen of Europe. Eurobarometer also regularly asks questions regarding knowledge of and trust in EU institutions such as the European Parliament (EP), the European Commission, the European Court of Justice, and the European Central Bank, along with many other European and national institutions. Eurobarometer surveys frequently address many other issues of interest to political science such as:

- Public perceptions of the state of the economy in the EU and its individual member states
- Respondents' overall satisfaction with their lives
- Preferences for policy decisions to be made at the EU or national level

4 For example, Lyons (2008a: 204–231) used the combined Eurobarometer file with a time series factor analysis technique on 45 trend questions to map out Irish public sentiment toward the EU between 1973 and 2005. This work revealed that Irish attitudes toward the EU were more nuanced than the responses to single trend questions such as support for EU membership. This finding is consonant with the mixed fortunes of running EU referendums in Ireland. It is likely that Czech attitudes toward the EU exhibit a similar mix of positive and negative facets not captured in the single survey questions typically reported in the media.

- Importance of European Parliamentary elections, recent voting behaviour, vote intentions and party preferences
- Discussion of political matters, attempts to persuade other people's opinion of public affairs, and perceptions of the need for societal change
- Interest in politics and news consumption

All Eurobarometer surveys contain a standard set of socio-demographic variables such as age, gender, marital status, number of adults and children under 15 residing in the household, respondent's age at completion of education, occupation, religion, subjective social class, trade union membership, household income, region of residence, and subjective size of community. In addition, many Eurobarometer surveys contain socio-demographic variables that are of particular interest to students of politics such as left-right self-placement and party affiliation.

To date, there has been relatively little use of Eurobarometer survey data to study Czech public opinion directly (note Kunštát 2009). One good example is Večerník (2009: 234–237) who highlights some of the key features of Czech attitudes to the EU before and after accession. He notes that strong popular support for accession in a referendum in June 2003 (turnout of 55%, where 77% voted 'yes') coexisted with scepticism toward the likely impact of membership. In other words, Czechs voted 'yes' but were not strongly convinced of the merits of EU membership.⁵ Since accession, Eurobarometer data reveal that Czechs are in comparative terms positive toward some facets of European integration such as the benefits of membership, and trust in the Commission and European Parliament; and negative toward the EU for its failure to prioritise social welfare issues, although the EU is not directly responsible for public policy making in this domain.

Curiously, given the large amount of attention given to Czech accession to the EU in 2004; there have been very few systematic individual level analyses of popular support for accession. Lyons (2007) using CVVM, rather than EB data (because the latter did not field a post-accession referendum survey) tested a number of rival explanations of popular support for accession; and found that economic motivations were the most important factor. More specifically, support for Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) was the single most important motivation. In general, much of the extant research on attitudes toward the EU is com-

5 This apparent contradiction in public opinion may stem from (a) most Czech Eurosceptics did not vote in the accession referendum, i.e. most of the 45% non-voters were against accession; (b) Czech public opinion viewed the benefits of membership as being long-term in nature and negative responses to the immediate impact of accession did not reflect a complete picture of popular attitudes toward integration.

parative in nature where Czech opinions have been compared to other member states' citizens.⁶

4.2 New Democracy and New Europe Barometers (NDB/NEB)

For the first decade of the post-communist transition process a comparative surveying programme was implemented by The Centre for the Study of Public Policy (CSPP) in the UK and the Paul Lazarsfeld Society in Vienna, Austria. The central goal of the resulting New Democracies Barometer (NDB) was to map and track post-communist citizens' attitudes toward the processes of change during the 1990s. Consequently, five NDB surveys were conducted between 1991 and 1998. After 1995, this surveying programme was extended with the New Europe Barometer (NEB, undertaken in 2001 and 2004/5) by examining public opinion in Central and East European states that eventually joined the EU in 2004 and 2007.

The NDB/NEB sets of surveys are unique because they facilitate comparison of citizens' political attitudes, beliefs and values in more than a dozen countries who share a communist legacy: Bosnia, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia. In addition, there have been surveys in Belarus, Ukraine and Moldova.⁷ In general, the NDB/NEB questionnaires examine citizens' evaluations of their national political and societal institutions in terms of trust. There are also questions that explore public attitudes toward the current and past (communist) political and economic systems. Respondents are in addition asked about satisfaction with life and their expectations of democratic governance.

An example of this data is shown in Table 4.1, which reveals that the level of decline in satisfaction in government performance in the Czech Republic during the 1990s was higher than in most other post-communist states. The timing of this decline is also significant, as the largest fall (-21%) occurred between 1996 and 1998. The economic and political scandals surrounding the Klaus government have been interpreted as marking a 'breaking point' in Czech political attitudes (note, Linek 2010: 58–59).

6 It is difficult to explore using survey data the motivations of the 'yes' vote in the Czech accession referendum as there were no comprehensive pre- or post-election surveys undertaken. An exit poll for the 2003 referendum provides little information on attitudinal motivations. For these reasons, Lyons (2007) used a CVVM survey fielded in late 2001. The relative paucity of survey data indicates the relatively low salience of the European issue in Czech politics: a fact also evident in the low turnout (28%) in both the 2004 and 2009 European elections.

7 Many questions asked in NEB surveys have been asked in New Russia Barometer surveys.

Table 4.1: Satisfaction with government performance, 1991–1998 (per cent)

<i>Country</i>	<i>NDB 1</i> 1991	<i>NDB 2</i> 1992	<i>NDB 3</i> 1994	<i>NDB 4</i> 1996	<i>NDB 5</i> 1998	<i>Change</i> 1991–1998
Central Europe	56	59	61	66	55	-1
Poland	52	56	69	76	66	14
Czech Republic	71	71	78	77	56	-15
Hungary	57	43	51	50	53	-4
Slovenia	49	68	55	66	51	2
Slovakia	50	58	52	61	50	0
Southern Europe	67	56	57	57	46	-21
Romania	69	68	60	60	66	-3
Bulgaria	64	55	59	66	58	-6
FR of Yugoslavia	-	-	-	-	33	-
Croatia	-	44	51	44	27	-17
Northern Europe	-	-	48	45	-	-
Estonia	-	-	67	61	-	-6
Lithuania	-	-	35	39	-	4
Latvia	-	-	43	34	-	-9
Eastern Europe	14	32	39	31	35	21
Belarus	-	35	29	35	48	13
Russia	14	36	48	26	36	24
Ukraine	-	25	24	33	22	-3

Source: Haerpfer (2002: 22). Survey data from the New Democracy Barometer (1991–1998).

Q. Here is a scale for ranking how the government works. The top, +100, is the best; at the bottom, -100, is the worst. Where on this scale would you put the current regime?

Note this time series reveals that the decline in public satisfaction with government performance in the Czech Republic exhibited one of the sharpest declines in both Central Europe and across all post-communist states. The data reveal that this change in opinion occurred between 1996 and 1998 – a period of economic and political crisis discussed earlier in section 3 of chapter 3.

A central feature of the NDB/NEB set of surveys is that these data facilitate comparisons across space (cross-country) and time (same questions at different time points). These data allow researchers to study political trends within the Czech Republic since 1991, and some of the attitudinal dynamics behind the post-communist transition process. More specifically, comparisons may be made between new EU member states, post-Soviet states and political attitudes in the Balkans. In short, it is possible to explore citizen attitudes within a wide range of institutional and economic contexts. The interlinked structure of the NDB/NEB and related research on the Baltic States and Russia is a little confusing as both survey programmes overlap. The main features of this survey data source may be summarised as follows.

- New Democracies Barometer I-V, 1991–1998
- New Baltic Barometers, 1993–2004
- New Russia Barometers, 1992–
- New Europe Barometers I-XV, 1991–2007

All of the individual level survey NDB/NEB data are freely available from the UK Data Archive.⁸ There is a reasonably extensive literature based on the NDB/NEB survey datasets exploring a variety of important political science topics such as the post-communist transformation (Rose 2009), parties and elections (Rose and Munro 2003/2009), attitudes toward democracy and democratisation (Mischler and Rose 1991, 1996a,b; Mishler, Rose and Haerpfer 1998b, Mischler and Rose 2002; Haerpfer 2002), political and social trust (Rose 1997; Mischler and Rose 2001), party attachment (Mischler and Rose 1998a), voter mobilisation (Rose 1995), attitudes toward the communist regime (Rose and Carnaghan 1995) and attitudes toward the welfare state (Rose and Makkai 1995).

4.3 ISSP: Citizenship, Role of Government and National Identity Modules

The International Social Survey Programme (ISSP) has undertaken mass surveys in up to 48 countries on an annual basis on a wide variety of topics since 1985. The Czech Republic has participated in ISSP since 1990 with frequent surveys undertaken since 1992. From a political science perspective, three modules within the ISSP survey programme are of direct interest: Role of Government (1985, 1990, 1996, 2006 and is planned for 2016), National Identity (1995, 2003, forthcoming in 2013) and Citizenship (2004, forthcoming in 2014). Of course, the topics dealt with in other modules such as Social Inequality and Environment contain questions that impinge on the study of politics.

All of the ISSP survey data and related documentation such as questionnaires are available through ČSDA and GESIS and the NESSTAR system; and the individual level data files may be obtained through ČSDA or GESIS.⁹ Each ISSP module contains standard questions on the topic explored along with a standard battery of socio-demographic items that includes harmonised ISCO measures of occupation and education, etc. Often the socio-demographics in ISSP surveys contain key political variables such as voter turnout in previous national elections and party affiliation

8 See, <http://www.esds.ac.uk/findingData/relatedStudyListForSN.asp?sn=5243> (accessed 15/02/2012).

9 See, <http://nesstar.soc.cas.cz/webview> and <http://sda.soc.cas.cz/data/0017/0017a.htm>

making all ISSP surveys of potential interest to the political science community. In this chapter, the focus will be on the three main political topics as additional ISSP modules are examined in other publications (note, Krejčí and Leontiyeva 2012).¹⁰

4.3.1 Citizenship module

The central theme of the citizenship module is the relationship between the citizen and the state. The emphasis in this module is on mapping out the characteristics of democratic forms of citizen participation in public affairs. Consequently, ISSP questions explore a wide range of topics such as (1) general political attitudes related to themes including toleration and prejudices toward minorities, trust in social and political institutions, support for democracy and perceptions of corruption, attitudes toward national sovereignty and international organisations; (2) interest in politics, discussion of political matters with friends, opinion leadership and media use; (3) sense of political efficacy; (4) citizen participation in public affairs; (5) attitudes towards political parties and elections; and (6) electoral variables such as party attachment, turnout and party choice. As there has been only one wave of the ISSP citizenship module (2004) there is a limited literature using this particular dataset, e.g. studies of citizen participation in the Czech Republic (Rakušanová and Řeháková 2006; Vráblíková 2009).

Most often the same question asked in different modules (e.g. role of government, citizenship and environment) have been combined to explore trends within the Czech Republic on various topics such as trust, legitimacy and democracy (Sedláčková and Šafr 2008; Sedláčková 2011), political efficacy (Linek 2010) or evolution of political values and voting preferences (Matějů and Vlachová 1997, 1998a-c; Saxonberg 2003). Alternatively, research has compared political attitudes and behaviour in the Czech Republic with other countries yielding research on political values and party choice (Deegan-Krause 2000, 2006); non-electoral political participation (Vráblíková 2009, 2014); and perceptions of corruption (Smith 2010).¹¹

10 A cross-national bibliography of publications based on ISSP data is available at <http://www.issp.org/page.php?pageld=150> (accessed 15/02/2012).

11 Vrabliková's (2014) comparative research employs a multilevel modelling strategy with ISSP (2004) data and represents one of the few examples of this form of statistical analysis within Czech political science. This research shows that political systems with greater numbers of access points indicated by more representative institutions or political parties promotes greater levels of political participation.

4.3.2 Role of government modules

Exploration of the role of government in citizens' lives has been a central feature of the ISSP research programme, and this topic has been examined in four waves between 1985 and 2006. There are data for the Czech Republic for the two most recent waves in 1996 and 2006.¹² The ISSP role of government module has a standard set of questions that deal with (1) citizens' attitudes toward government and public policies such as level of spending in competing domains; (2) government intervention into the economy and attitudes toward social inequality and related policies; (3) security and civil liberties; (4) interpersonal trust and trust in social and political institutions; (5) sense of political efficacy; (6) evaluation of treatment by public officials and institutions, and corruption; and (7) social interconnectedness.

Some of the key themes in the research literature using the ISSP role of government modules are citizen attitudes toward the welfare state (Blekesaune and Quadagno 2003; Lipsmeyer 2003; Jæger 2009); the impact of corruption on public attitudes toward government (Anderson and Tverdova 2003); political efficacy (Hayes and Bean 1993; Linek 2010); and attitude constraint on the role of government in the economy (Linek 2008a). This very brief review of the published literature based on the ISSP role of government module reveals that scholars have tended to focus on those questions dealing with government public policy making and most especially variations in attitudes across different welfare regime types.

Quite often researchers use the role of government data, especially when it is aggregated to provide cross-national comparisons, with other surveys and other forms of data such as macro-economic statistics. In short, there is still considerable scope to use the cross-time and cross-national features of the ISSP role of government surveys to examine citizens' attitudes, rather than evaluations, of the state. This is likely to be a more salient research topic as the consequences of the global economic crisis (2008-) become more evident.

4.3.3 National identity modules

The key theme addressed in this component of ISSP is citizens' affective attitudes towards the state (national identity) and other levels of governance such as the locality, region or supranational region (e.g. the EU). Consequently, the two

12 Several items from the ISSP role of government module 1990 were asked in the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia in a study entitled 'Dismantling of the Social Safety Net' fielded in October 1991 by STEM (see, Toká 2000: 110–111 for details). In a later comparative study of ten countries in late 1993 and early 1994 organised by scholars from Oxford University, some items from ISSP's role of government and inequality modules were implemented in a project entitled 'Emerging Forms of Political Representation and Participation in Eastern Europe' as discussed later in section 4.9.7 (see, Tóka 2000: 126).

ISSP national identity modules undertaken in the Czech Republic and elsewhere in 1995 and 2003 have explored the following topics: (1) level of identity; (2) national pride and its sources; (3) support for free trade and economic protectionist policies; (4) national independence vis-à-vis international institutions; (5) attitudes toward limiting foreigners activities in a country; (6) treatment of minorities, immigrants and foreigners; and (7) ethnicity. Among EU member states such as the Czech Republic there are additional questions dealing with membership of the EU and popular attitudes toward the process of deeper integration.¹³

The concept of national identity within political science is unique in the sense that there is a consensus that citizens' sense of identity is of central importance in understanding such diverse phenomena as globalisation and ethnic conflict. For this reason, citizens' sense of identity have been measured for decades in a variety of cross-national surveying programmes such as ISSP, EVS/WVS, EB, EES, ESS and many national surveys. However, there has been relatively little published work on national identity that uses this large source of information because there is considerable scepticism within academia that the multidimensional nature of an individual's sense of identity may be validly and reliably measured using simple mass survey questions (Smith 1992). Using a mixed method approach, Latcheva (2011) concludes that respondents do not answer the ISSP national identity questions in the manner envisioned by the questionnaire designers: yielding data with large amounts of measurement error and weak predictive power.¹⁴

Sinnott (2006) in his earlier examination of this criticism suggests that there are three distinct survey based measures of identity: ranking respondents sense of identity (e.g. EVS/WVS, NDB/NEB, EB occasionally), rating sense of identity in terms of proximity (ISSP, EB occasionally), and rating identity on the basis of identification with specific levels of governance (EB). The first measure asks respondents to indicate their top two identities (local, regional, national and supranational) in order of importance. This question format has been widely used over the last thirty years, but its validity may be questioned because it exhibits low correlations with other questions such as sense of national pride. The second form of national identity question used in ISSP is different in that the respondent

13 Citizens' level of identity is also examined on a regular basis in the Eurobarometer series of surveys. The question format in ISSP, EB and EVS are not always the same yielding results. More generally, the position of identity questions in a survey, the question and response formats used and the order of the response options are known to have an impact on survey estimates of level of identity (Office for National Statistics 2011; Billet 2002: 404–405; Sinnott 2006; Haselden and Jenkins 2003).

14 In a similar vein, Bonikowski (2009) suggests that examination of the correlation between the national identity battery of questions in ISSP provides a more reliable and valid measure of public attitudes than examination of individuals' responses to single questions.

is asked to rate all levels of identity examined rather than select the top two; as is the case with the EVS format. The third version, used most often by Eurobarometer, asks respondents to rate their sense of European and national identities in the following way “Do you ever think of yourself not only as a Czech citizen but also as a citizen of Europe?”

Fortunately, these different national identity questions have been asked repeatedly across many European countries; and so it is possible to evaluate the three items. Sinnott (2006) concludes that the third question format (rating measure used by EB) is “vastly superior” to the (first) ranking question employed by EVS/WVS since 1980, and is “substantially better than” the proximity indicator used by ISSP. The nature of national identity in the Czech Republic has been explored in a handful of articles using ISSP data (Nedomová and Kostecký 1997; Weiss 2003; Vlachová and Řeháková 2004, 2009). One of the central findings of this research is that Czech citizens’ sense of national identity weakened between 1996 and 2003, as sense of local identity increased in importance.

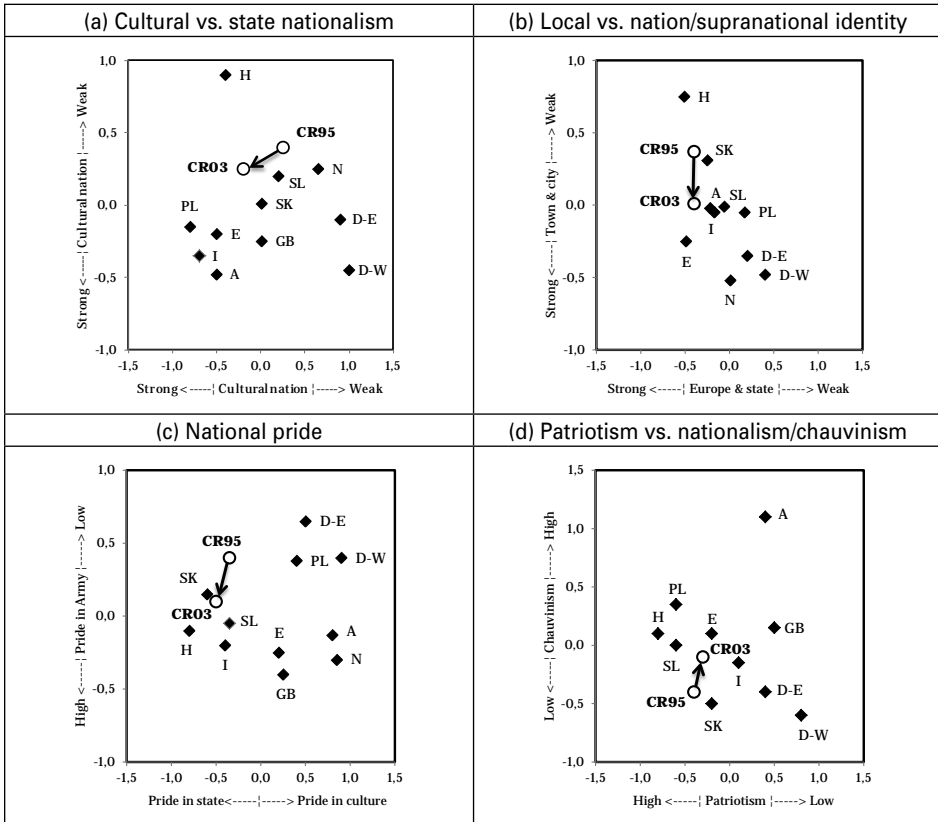
Moreover, the nature of national identity appeared to evolve around the millennium from being based on formal ‘constitutional’ principles to having a more “ethno-cultural” basis as shown in panel (a) of Figure 4.1. Overall, this figure reveals that in comparative terms many of the patterns of attitudes associated with national identity are broadly similar among countries in Eastern and Western Europe regardless of their different political histories during the twentieth century. With regard to accession to the EU, having a strong sense of Czech national identity is associated with an intergovernmental rather than federalist vision of Europe (Vlachová and Řeháková 2009: 275–276).

Unlike some other states in Central and Eastern Europe, Czech sense of national and ethnic identity is not linked with an anti-capitalist orientation (Weiss 2003). The impact of the economic crisis in Europe and growing scepticism toward the EU shows that future study of national identity represents an important and fascinating avenue of research, notwithstanding the methodological difficulties inherent in such work. At present much of the published work on European identity refers to the ‘old’ member states (e.g. Bruter 2005; McLarin 2006).

4.4 European and World Values Surveys (EVS/WVS)

One of the most influential programmes of social and political attitudes research is the European and World Values Surveys (EVS/WVS). Although there is considerable overlap between both of these survey programmes in terms of questions and data: the data are distributed from different sources. With WVS

Figure 4.1: Comparison of different facets of national identity between the Czech Republic and other countries in Europe using ISSP data



Source: Vlachová and Rehaková (2009: 262, 265, 269, 271); ISSP 1995, 2003

Legend: Austria (A), Britain (GB), Czech Republic in 1995 (CR 95), Czech Republic 2003 (CR 03), West Germany (D-W), East Germany (D-E), Hungary (H), Italy (I), Norway (N), Slovakia (SK), Slovenia (SL), Poland (P).

Note this figure provides a comparative overview of different features of national identity among selected countries in Europe that participated in ISSP in 1995 and 2003. The comparative data is for 2003. The cross-time comparisons for Czechia (the Czech Republic) reveal that key components of national identity changed over the decade examined. Overall, the pattern of national identity in the Czech Republic is broadly similar to that observed elsewhere in Central and Western Europe.

the five waves of survey data may be downloaded directly from the Internet.¹⁵ In contrast, EVS is available from the GESIS Data Archive, Cologne, Germany and

15 WVS data is available from <http://www.wvsevsdb.com/wvs/WVSDData.jsp> (accessed 24/02/2012).

cannot be downloaded directly from the official website.¹⁶ With the creation of combined EVS/WVS datafiles containing many countries across multiple waves, which may be downloaded from the WVS website, the distinction between EVS and WVS becomes blurred. For the record, WVS has been fielded in Czech Republic in 1990 and 1998; and EVS in 1991, 1999 and 2008 yielding five ‘values’ datasets.¹⁷ The EVS and WVS fieldwork in the Czech Republic have had difference principal investigators and survey companies and (mildly) different sampling procedures. The fifth wave of WVS has been fielded between 2010 and 2012; and the data are currently unavailable.

The three central points to keep in mind when using EVS and WVS data are (1) EVS and WVS are distinct research programmes that are typically fielded once a decade and the individual waves of data are archived separately, i.e. at GESIS, Cologne, Germany and ASEP/JDS in Madrid, Spain respectively; (2) EVS and WVS have similar content allowing them to be aggregated into combined files; and (3) the aggregated EVS and WVS datafiles come in three flavours (a) EVS 1981–2008 – 4 waves combined, (b) WVS 1981–2008 – 5 waves combined, and (c) Integrated Values Surveys 1981–2008 data file includes harmonised variables from both EVS and WVS that may be constructed by the researcher.¹⁸

One of the key finding from the EVS/WVS survey data is that all societies across the globe are experiencing fundamental change; however, the rate of change is uneven. Socio-cultural change appears to depend on current stage of economic development and prior path of historical change. These and many other results of interest to political scientists are presented in the many books and articles published by Ronald F. Inglehart (Inglehart 1977, 1990, 1997; Inglehart and Abramson 1995; Inglehart and Baker 2000; Inglehart and Norris 2004; Inglehart and Welzel 2005, Norris and Inglehart 2009).

One interesting example, of the potential of EVS or WVS values survey data to answer important substantive questions is Fuchs and Klingemann’s (2006) comparison of the democratic nature of countries. Using the WVS (1995–1999) data, these scholars compared all countries to ‘benchmark’ democracies on the basis of responses to a large set of democratic indicators. The results of this fascinating comparative analysis are presented in Table 4.2, which reveals that “the Slav successor countries to the Soviet Union, here termed ‘eastern European

16 The official EVS website is located at <http://www.europeanvaluesstudy.eu/evs/surveys/> (accessed 24/02/2012). The cross-national integrated files may be downloaded through CSDA and from GESIS: <http://zacat.gesis.org/webview/index.jsp?mode=documentation&submode=catalog&catalog=http://zacat.gesis.org:80/obj/fCatalog/Catalog16>. See also, <http://www.europeanvaluesstudy.eu/evs/surveys/longitudinal-file-1981-2008.html>

17 For an overview of EVS in the Czech Republic see Řehák (2001).

18 For more information, see <http://www.europeanvaluesstudy.eu/evs/surveys/longitudinal-file-1981-2008/integratedvaluessurveys/> (accessed 15/02/2012).

Table 4.2: Use of WVS data to compare democracies, 1995–1999

<i>Country</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Dev.</i>	<i>N</i>
Anglo-American countries	.55	.12	3,749
USA	.56	.12	1,235
Australia	.54	.12	1,726
New Zealand	.56	.11	788
Western Europe	.54	.12	4,494
Norway	.58	.11	1,077
Sweden	.53	.12	862
Finland	.49	.13	796
West Germany	.55	.11	896
Spain	.51	.12	863
Central Europe	.50	.14	4,480
East Germany	.54	.12	888
Czech Republic	.51	.13	935
Slovakia	.48	.13	868
Hungary	.51	.13	494
Slovenia	.49	.14	807
Croatia	.46	.14	988
Baltics	.44	.13	2,168
Estonia	.48	.13	782
Latvia	.42	.13	894
Lithuania	.40	.12	492
South-eastern Europe	.47	.14	2,168
Macedonia	.49	.13	782
Bosnia-Herzegovina	.45	.14	894
Albania	.44	.12	492
Eastern Europe	.37	.13	3,796
Russia	.36	.13	1,011
Ukraine	.38	.13	1,008
Belarus	.38	.12	1,054
Moldova	.37	.13	723
Total	.48	.12	23,660
Eta ²	.23		

Source: Fuchs and Klingemann (2006: 43)

Note that estimates are derived from a discriminant analysis of attitudes toward democracy items where comparison is made with “benchmark” democratic regimes, i.e. United States, Australia, Sweden and West Germany. Discriminant analysis is used here to estimate the probability that a country such as the Czech Republic belongs to the “benchmark” democratic group. The discriminant analysis was undertaken using five sets of variables that indicate support of democratic principles and regimes: (1) support of democratic rule, (2) support of autocratic rule, (3) support for the country’s political system, (4) attitudes opposing the use of violence, and (5) supporting the rule of law and abiding by such rules.

countries,' show by far the lowest mean score of all regional groups" (Fuchs and Klingemann 2006: 44).

The score for the Czech Republic in Table 4.2 reveals that attitudes toward democracy are slightly lower than the mean level observed in much of Western Europe and somewhat higher than the average in Central Europe; and very much greater than the mean for Eastern Europe. In short, such data suggest that Czech democracy is close to the norm for established democracies; but lacks the civic informal structures evident in Western Europe and North America (Mansfeldová 2006).

An example, of the use of EVS to examine "un-institutionalised political participation" across Europe is Bernhagen and Marsh's (2007) article which shows that there were important differences between Eastern and Western Europe in the 1990s with regard to formal and informal forms political participation. However, the profile of the Czech Republic was similar to that of East Germany, Ireland and Italy indicating that a communist legacy has limited power to explain contemporary Czech political attitudes and behaviour.

To summarise very briefly, EVS contains questions on a wide range of political topics such as liberal-conservative attitudes, left-right orientation, attitudes toward democracy, trust in social and political institutions, interpersonal trust, national identity, post materialism, freedom vs. equality trade-off, participation in political activities, membership of social and political organisations, and a variety of specific questions that have not been asked in all waves. The use of EVS for the study of political attitudes in the Czech Republic has been largely focussed on comparative analyses. Interesting examples of the use EVS for examining change in Czech society are studies of demographic and value changes in the 1991 and 1999 waves, and an exploration of xenophobia (see, Rabušic 2001; Burjanek 2001).

4.5 Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES)

As post-election surveys are a standard method of studying political attitudes and behaviour within political science, it makes sense if such surveys ask the same questions thereby facilitating the comparative study of elections. This has been the primary purpose of CSES since 1996. The CSES is composed of three parts. In the first part, there is a common module of mass survey questions that are included in all participant country's post-election survey. These 'micro' level data include vote choice, candidate and party evaluations, current and retrospective economic evaluations, evaluation of the electoral system itself, in addition to

standardised socio-demographic measures. In the second part, district level data are reported for each respondent. This data include electoral returns, turnout, and the number of candidates. In the final part, there are system or 'macro' level data that report aggregate electoral returns, electoral rules and formulas, and regime characteristics.

This multilevel research design allows political scientists to undertake cross-level, cross-national and cross-time analyses, exploring the effects of (a) electoral institutions on citizens' attitudes and voting behaviour, (b) mapping social and political cleavages, and (c) looking at citizens' evaluations of democratic institutions across different political regimes. Currently, there are 50 states represented within the CSES. All data and associated documentation may be freely downloaded from the CSES website: <http://www.cses.org/>. Comparative volumes such as Klingemann (2009) and Dalton and Anderson (2011) provide a comprehensive overview of the type and range of research that is possible with CSES survey data.¹⁹ Within the study of Czech politics, Lukáš Linek's (2010) book length study of the link between political attitudes and behaviour explaining the decline in voter turnout between 1996 and 2006 provides an excellent example of the use of CSES data.

4.6 European Election Study (EES)

With the advent of elections to the European Parliament in 1979 came the opportunity to study a new and unique type of voting behaviour where citizens selected representatives to a supranational assembly that has grown steadily more powerful in the following three decades. There have been post-election studies for almost all of the six European elections. Currently, the European Election Study consists of four interrelated components: (1) a mass survey exploring citizens' attitudes toward the EU and voting in European Parliament elections; (2) a standardised expert content analysis of all Euro-party manifestoes; (3) surveys of elites across all member states; and (4) a content analysis of the print and television media for the duration of the European Election campaign. Details of each of these components are available from the EES website: <http://www.ees-homepage.net/>. Moreover, the individual level survey datasets may also be freely downloaded.²⁰

19 A extensive bibliography associated with CSES data is available at: <http://www.cses.org/resources/results/results.htm> (accessed at 15/02/2012).

20 An extensive bibliography of publications based on EES survey data is available at: http://www.piredeu.eu/datalists/PIREDEU_BIBL2.asp?Authors=&Title=&Publication_year=&Find=Find+Records (accessed 15/02/2012).

4.7 European Social Survey (ESS)

This cross-national survey programming has been undertaken since 2001 and currently has 30 national members. To date, there have been 5 waves with a round of surveying occurring once every two years on average. ESS is a sophisticated surveying programme where a lot of work has been devoted to dealing with methodological issues such as ensuring that the sampling methodology employed in all countries is the same. Details concerning the methodology, questionnaires and data are available from the ESS website: <http://www.europeansocialsurvey.org>. This sub-section will provide a very brief overview of ESS as this surveying programme is discussed in other publications; and there is detailed information and bibliographies on the ESS website. ESS data may be downloaded freely following a simple online registration with the Norwegian Social Data Archive (NSD). The Czech Republic has participated in most rounds of ESS (except round 3 in 2006).

Each round of ESS contains a 'core module' that is asked in all surveys and 'rotating modules' that are asked on a single occasion that may be repeated in future waves. Within the core module the following political themes are explored in all ESS surveys: trust in institutions, political engagement, socio-political values, moral beliefs, social capital and national, ethnic and religious identity. Round 1 of ESS (2001) contained a rotating module on 'Citizenship, involvement and democracy' where the key research question was study of the determinants of civic engagement. Round 2 (2003) included questions examining 'Economic morality in Europe: market society and citizenship' which examined the normative and moral basis for markets and consumption.

As noted earlier, round 3 ('Timing of life' and 'Personal and social well-being') was skipped in the Czech Republic due to lack of funding. Round 4 (2008) examined 'Europeans' attitudes toward the welfare state' while round 5 (2010) has focused on themes 'Trust in criminal justice' and 'Work, family and well-being'. The next wave of ESS (round 6) will explore 'Personal and social well-being' and 'Europeans' understandings and evaluations of democracy' and is scheduled to be fielded between March 2012 and September 2013. Currently, a cumulative ESS datafile has been constructed for all questions in ESS rounds 1–4 that have been asked on two or more occasions, thereby allowing the researcher to explore variation across both space and time.²¹

Published research based on ESS data has been primarily comparative in nature, and there are few examples of use of this resource for the specific study of

21 For more information, see <http://ess.nsd.uib.no/downloadwizard/>

Czech citizens' political attitudes, beliefs and values. For example, recent articles using ESS data and more specifically the Czech waves have explored a diverse range of topics such as: female parliamentarians as political role models (Wolbrecht and Campbell 2007); the psychological bases for left-right orientation (Thorisdottir, Jost, Liviatan and Shrout 2007); the link between inequality, left-right ideology and legitimacy (Anderson and Singer 2008); the stability of political attitudes among adolescents; determinants of trust in political institutions; source of system variation in political interest during a generic election cycle (Solvak 2009); and the link between interpersonal trust and political support (Oscarsson 2010). These examples demonstrate the broad range of political research questions that may be addressed with ESS data.

4.8 International Civic and Citizenship Education Study (ICCS)

All of the political surveys discussed within this book so far have focussed on adults: typically citizens aged 18 years or more (or aged 15 years or more with CVVM data). This is because most political research is oriented toward the attitudes and behaviour of citizens who are eligible to vote. A central element in some explanations of citizens' political attitudes and behaviour is the impact of political socialisation: where adults' views on politics were formed and crystallised when they were adolescents. Consequently, information on the political knowledge, attitudes, beliefs and values of adolescents sheds light on both the formation of today's citizens; and the likely evolution of the electorate in the future.

The ICCS (2008–2009) study builds on the Civic Education Study (CIVED, 1971 and 1999–2000) undertaken under the auspices of the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA). When considered together ICCS and CIVED have undertaken three waves of cross-national survey research involving young (grade 8: 14 year olds) and older adolescents (grade 9: 17–19 years) in more than 30 countries. The CIVED study of 1971 was fielded in 9 countries and this expanded to 28 countries in 1999–2000; while the ICCS study of (2008–2009) involves 38 countries.²² Some core questions from CIVED were implemented in ICCS and this means that in a subset of 17 coun-

²² The IEA's International Civic and Citizenship Education Study (ICCS) is the most comprehensive study of civic education available. In 1999–2000, CIVED (a precursor to ICCS) surveyed nationally representative samples consisting of 90,000 14 year old students in 28 countries, and 50,000 17 to 19 year-old students in 16 countries. In addition, there are data on teachers and school principals thereby allowing research on the process of political socialisation within schools. For more details please consult the official IEA website at <http://www.iea.nl/cived.html> (accessed 24/02/2012).

tries, including the Czech Republic, it is possible to chart change in younger (14 year old) students' attitudes toward citizenship and democracy between 1999 and 2009.

In short, the CIVED study of 1999–2000, and (2) the ICCS study of 2008–2009 provide the most comprehensive set of data for examining young citizens' attitudes across both space and time. The CIVED (1999–2000) and ICCS (2008–2009) data are freely available for download from the IEA's Civic Education Study Database website.²³ It is critically important to note that those unfamiliar with the CIVED and ICCS survey research designs and data structures must expect to invest time learning important technical information. The CIVED and ICCS datasets are considerably different from typical cross-sectional surveys and require some expertise to be analysed correctly. More detailed information about these data may be obtained from the IEA's database website or from the national study directors. In the case of the Czech Republic, the ICCS principal investigator is PhDr. Ing. Petr Soukup, Ústav pro informace ve vzdělávání (Institute for Information on Education, ÚIV).²⁴

It is important to stress that use of CIVED and ICCS data for cross-tabulations or regression models must take account of the two-stage stratified clustered sampling design. Respondents are not independent of each other as is the case in typical cross-sectional surveys, but are in fact 'clustered' into classes and schools. This dependence across groups of student respondents must be taken into account when estimating summary statistics and standard errors through use of special weighting variables and statistical techniques such as 'jack-knife' estimators. A number of customised SPSS syntax (or SAS) files available from the IEA's Civic Education Study Database should be used when analysing this survey data. Moreover, there are sets of additional variables within the CIVED and ICCS datasets such as students' level of political knowledge (38 items) that have been combined into 'standardised' knowledge variables using estimators derived from Item Response Theory (IRT) facilitating cross-national comparative work (Schulz and Sibberns 2004; Schultz 2008).

In general terms, the ICCS (2008–2009) study explores five key themes among students: knowledge of democratic principles; skill at correctly interpreting political messages; conceptualisation of citizenship and democracy; attitudes toward the nation, trust in public institutions and policy preferences in the domains of immigration and women's rights; propensity toward civic engagement and active citizenship. In short, there is considerable scope with the ICCS survey data to map out the contours of civic attitudes among young Czech citizens: but also

23 <http://rms.iea-dpc.org/#>

24 See, <http://www.uiv.cz/> and email: petr.soukup@uiv.cz

to explore changes in patterns of socialisation across time and in states with different political histories (older vs. younger democracies) and institutions (centralised vs. federal states, majoritarian vs. proportional electoral systems).

Cross-nationally there have been a considerable number of publications using the ICCS data to explore the link between civic education in school and political attitudes and knowledge among adolescents (see, Torney et al. 1975; Niemi and Junn 1998; Torney-Purta et al. 1999, 2001, 2005; Amadeo et al. 2002; Steiner-Khamsi, Torney-Purta, and Schwille 2002; Schulz et al. 2008; Schulz 2005, 2010). Among Czech scholars and political scientists in particular this invaluable source of survey data on political socialisation has rarely been used in published research (note, Basl, Straková and Veselý 2010; Schulz 2010; Soukup 2010).

4.9 Other Comparative Political Surveys

During the initial phases of the post-communist transition process during the 1990s where the study of democratisation and emergence of capitalist free-market economies were ‘hot topics’ within political science: a large number of specific comparative surveys were undertaken. Unfortunately, many of these projects have been neglected and forgotten in the last decade; despite the fact that they offer invaluable insights into the emergence of contemporary political systems. An overview of this data for the Czech Republic and many other countries in Central and Eastern Europe is given in Tóka’s (2000) inventory of political surveys. Zdenka Mansfeldova’s (2003) paper provides a neat summary of (a) key strands of political attitudes in the Czech Republic between 1991 and 2001; (b) popular understanding and experience of ‘democracy’; and (c) the nature of political support. In the following paragraphs, a brief synopsis of some of the more interesting datasets for students of Czech politics will be given. This overview is not exhaustive and should be viewed as an indicator of the types of datasets available; and potential avenues for future research.

4.9.1 Consolidation of democracy in Central and Eastern Europe (1991, 2001)

This two wave cross-national project aimed to evaluate the democratic attitudes of citizens in 20 post-communist states in wave 1 (1990–1992) and a subset of 15 countries in wave 2 (1998–2001).²⁵ In the Czech Republic some of this sur-

25 The two waves of this project while having a common questionnaire were in some respects separate enterprises as the project leaders were different. Coordination of wave 1 came from Budapest while wave 2 was funded and managed mainly by scholars from the Wissenschafts

vey's items were fielded by CVVM in 2011. The project leader in the Czech Republic was PhDr. Zdenka Mansfeldová CSc. and the survey fieldwork for waves 1 and 2 were undertaken by AISA and T.N. Sofres-Factum respectively. Wave 1 formed part of a project entitled "Post-communist publics" and resulted in a book length study of citizen values and expectations (Barnes and Simon 1998; not also Dalton, Shin and Jou 2007). This political attitudes survey examined four main themes: (a) popular evaluations of economic and political development, (b) impact of socialisation under communism on attitudes toward liberal democracy and the free market economy, (c) differences in political culture between Eastern and Western Europe, and (d) evolution of political culture following the transition process. An integrated dataset for waves 1 and 2 with data for 15 countries is available from the German Social Data Archive (GESIS, ZA 4054).²⁶ These integrated datasets have been used in a variety of studies examining topics such as political participation and national identity vis-à-vis democratic consolidation (Barnes 2006; Gaber 2006). Many of the topics in the consolidation of democracy surveys are complemented by the data and research associated with the World Values Survey for Eastern Europe and Germany (1995–1997).²⁷

4.9.2 Economic expectations and attitudes (1990–1997)

This series of ten surveys undertaken between 1990 and 1997 examined economic expectations during the transition process.²⁸ In each wave there are some key political variables: vote intention and left-right self-placement (5 point scale). In a number of surveys additional items dealing with trust in public institutions, satisfaction with the political regime, attitudes toward the government and the Communist Party were also asked (Tóka 2000: 106). Most of the publications derived from this set of surveys on economic attitudes that are of direct interest to political scientists might be described as dealing with topics from political economy. One excellent example of this stream of research is evident in the work of doc. Ing. Jiří Večerník CSc. which deals with the social, economic and political consequences of increasing levels of income inequality and labour income (e.g. Večerník 1995a, b). Factors directly related to social stratification are known to

Zentrum Berlin für Sozialforschung (WZB). For more information see: <http://www.wzb.eu/en/research/civil-society-conflicts-and-democracy/democracy/projects/the-consolidation-of-democracy-in-central-an> (accessed 29/02/2012).

²⁶ The earlier 'The Post-communist citizen 1990–1992' dataset is also available at GESIS (ZA 3218).

²⁷ For more details of the 11 country comparative study see the documentation for ZA 3062 on the GESIS website. Some features of this research were reported earlier in section 4.4.

²⁸ Surveying occurred twice yearly between 1990 and 1992 and annually thereafter until 1997. Between 1990 and 1994 the surveys examined all of Czechoslovakia. From 1996, data is only for the Czech Republic. The survey work was undertaken by STEM and the principal investigator was doc. Ing. Jiří Večerník CSc., SOU AV ČR.

have an impact on electoral behaviour and this is evident in such phenomena as class voting. All of these economic expectations data are available from ČSDA where questionnaires exist in both Czech and English.

4.9.3 Democracy local governance and innovation (1991–1995)

An international project directed by Prof. Henry Teune, University of Pennsylvania examined the beliefs and values of political elites (mayors, councilors and party activists) in medium sized political communities (i.e. localities with 25,000 to 250,000 inhabitants). This research has been conducted in many countries across the globe since the 1960s (note, Jacob et al. 1971).²⁹ In 1991 and 1995, it was undertaken in the Czech Republic with samples of 311 and 254 respectively with ten to fifteen respondents per sampled locality. This survey of local political elites is unique in that it fielded a large number of standard political attitude scales such as left-right orientation, support for democracy, local vs. national orientation, tolerance of minorities along with a set of items dealing with the operation of local government, thereby facilitating cross-national comparisons (Tóka 2000: 107). The data and all documentation such as questionnaires may be freely downloaded from the Democracy and Local Government (DLG) website.³⁰

A similar type of local elite survey examining ‘Democracy and Local Innovation’ was undertaken in the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia during 1991 and 1992. In this research, there were also simultaneous studies of citizens facilitating a mass-elite comparison of political attitudes and citizens attitudes to the performance of local government (note, Baldersheim et al. 1996; Illner et al. Wollman 2003). The survey data from this research is available upon request from the principal investigators: Professors Harald Baldersheim and Lawrence E. Rose, both are lecturers at the Department of Political Science, Oslo University, Norway.

4.9.4 Party systems and electoral alignments in Eastern Europe (1992–1996)

The purpose of this international and longitudinal research project was to examine party images, defined as perceived issue competence, within the Czech Re-

29 The empirical work on democracy, communities and local leadership was impetus for one of the most influential books on the appropriate use of comparative methods in the social sciences and politics in particular (Przeworski and Teune 1970). Note also, Teune (2010) on the use of DLG data to explore the link between globalisation and comparative political research.

30 Available at <http://www.ssc.upenn.edu/dlg/data.html>. Unfortunately, as of August 20 2011 the web links to the zipped data files are no longer operational; and the data does not appear to be available from any source on the Internet. The website for this dataset is old (last updated on Nov. 28 2000) and has lost some of its functionality.

public, Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia between 1992 and 1996. There were seven (cross-sectional) waves of surveying between September 1992 and January 1996; where one or two surveys were fielded annually during this five year period. All fieldwork in the Czech Republic was undertaken by STEM. There was a core module of questions asked in each wave in all countries along with additional occasional and country specific items.

In the core module, this survey research project examined reported vote choice in the last general election, likelihood of turnout and vote choice in next elections, image and evaluation of parties, perceptions of parties relative competence to deal with specific issues, level of political knowledge, degree of political participation; and a range of political attitude scales such as left-right and religious vs. secular orientations, sense of political efficacy and trust, satisfaction with government and democracy, egocentric and sociotropic economic attitudes (see, Tóka 2000: 117).

This survey data was one of the principal sources of information on political attitudes examined in Kitschelt, Mansfeldova, Markowski and Toka's (1999) influential study of post-communist party systems where it is argued that contrasting patterns of party competition in post-communist states during the 1990s were critically determined by three factors: (1) different experiences of communist rule, (2) pre-communist social and political structures, and (3) the impact of post-communist institutions whose effects it is argued would strengthen over time.³¹

4.9.5 International Social Justice Project (ISJP 1991, 1995 and 2006)

This is a comparative study of popular perceptions of economic and social justice in thirteen countries (Bulgaria, East Germany, Estonia, Great Britain, Hungary, Japan, the Netherlands, Poland, Russia, Slovenia, the United States, and the Czech Republic and Slovakia). It was implemented in three waves, i.e. 1991, 1995/6 and 2006 and examined citizens' attitudes toward facets of social justice concepts such as entitlement, equality of economic opportunity, and the distribution of rewards in society. Consequently, there are questions on factors that determine pay and income and perceptions of fairness. One important theoretical feature of the questions asked was measurement of individuals' sense of social justice at the micro (rewards for individuals and groups) and macro (fairness of wealth distribution in society) levels. In addition, there are questions dealing with satisfaction with politics and evaluations of the role of government (note Aalberg 2003).

31 An overview of the survey research methodology and variables is given in Kitschelt et al. (1999: 133–156, 412–424). Information on obtaining this survey data is available from the following website: http://www.personal.ceu.hu/departs/personal/Gabor_Toka/MoreOnCEUData.htm (accessed 15/02/2012).

The second wave fielded in Central and Eastern Europe includes a set of questions examining citizens' evaluations of the post-communist transition process. These data have been archived with the ICPSR (Tóka 2000: 136, 153).³²

The third Czech wave of ISJP was fielded in early 2006 and contained a new "module" examining the theme of "international justice". This survey was also fielded in Chile, Germany, Hungary, Israel and Spain. The principal investigator for the Czech Republic was PhDr. Hynek Jeřábek, CSc. An overview of some research from this ISJP survey is given in Matuška and Jeřábek (2007). These data were not been archived. From a political science perspective, ISJP does not appear to have been the basis for any publications in the Czech Republic (note, Šafr and Bayer 2007; Veisová 2009). However, there have been a number of cross-national analyses.

One of the central messages of this stream of research has been that the initial enthusiasm for market capitalism in post-communist states declined rapidly during the 1990s because of perceived unfairness. Here egalitarian attitudes with their origins in communism demonstrate the durability of political values across regime change; and the interconnectedness of political and economic attitudes and values (see, Kluegel et al. 1996; Mason and Kluegel 2000).

4.9.6 Actors and Strategies of Social Transformation and Modernization (1995)

The main goal of this three country comparative study in the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Poland was to explore the process of system change and modernisation during the early part of the post-communist transition process. The fieldwork was undertaken in June 1995 (by STEM in the Czech Republic) with a representative quota sample of citizens aged between 20 and 59 years interviewed face-to-face. The Czech wave of this survey has 1,233 cases, Slovakia 956 and Poland 2,000. For more details see Tóka (2000: 134).

All three waves of this survey have been archived with ČSDA. The survey questionnaire was designed to do six main tasks: (a) identify the key social and institutional actors in this process of change, (b) describe the strategies used by these key actors, and (c) map out citizens' perceptions of public institutions and different public policy options, (d) measure civic and political engagement and a variety of key political attitudes such as left-right orientation, (e) electoral participation and party choice in the next election in 1996, (f) provide a detailed job history for each respondent.

32 Information available at: <http://www.icpsr.umich.edu/icpsrweb/ICPSR/studies/06705> (accessed on 15/02/2012).

The social stratification and transformation components of these surveys formed the basis of a number of publications (Machonin and Tucek 1996; Machonin 1997). An example of the use of this comparative survey data for political research is Roško's (1997) article comparing democratic attitudes between Slovaks, Czechs and Poles. Using a battery of five items this article concludes in conjunction with additional survey evidence from 1992 (Občianska spoločnosť 1992) that the Slovak electorate is dominated by 'direct democrats' or "priamáci" who view elections as referendums on a regime unlike 'delegators' or "zmocňovači" who see elections as being based on a choice between competing policy platforms.³³

4.9.7 Values and political change in post-communist Europe (1993–1994)

This comparative mass and elite survey project was fielded in the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Russia and Ukraine. The principal investigators were William L. Miller, Stephen White and Paul Heywood all of the Department of Politics, Glasgow University. The primary goal of this study was to examine the prevalence and nature of four types of political attitudes, i.e. socialist, nationalist, liberal and democratic values. This mass and elite survey project fielded eleven surveys involving extended interviews with 7,350 members of the public and 504 legislators and provides a valuable insight into the political values of masses and elites during the post-communist transition process where a rejection of communist ideals resulted in an embrace of nationalist and/or liberal democratic values (note, Wyman et al. 1995; Miller, White and Heywood 1998). All of this data are reported to have been archived at UKDA (see also, Tóka 2000: 124).³⁴

4.9.8 Emerging forms of political participation and representation (1993–1994)

This was a mass survey programme that fielded a standard questionnaire to representative samples of the adult population in Bulgaria, Estonia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Russia and Ukraine in the middle of 1993; and in the Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia in early 1994. A national probability sampling procedure was implemented in the Czech Republic by STEM who completed

³³ This work is interesting because it represents an interesting move away from the trustee vs. delegate debate on indirect political representation associated with the ideas of Edmund Burke (1774). Here the focus is on rivalry between direct and indirect conceptions of democratic representation. An argument echoed in the public debates between Havel and Klaus in the Czech Republic (note, Potůček 2000; Myant 2005).

³⁴ For details of this set of surveys see: <http://www.esds.ac.uk/findingData/snDescription.asp?sn=4129> (accessed 24/02/2012).

1,409 interviews with a 61% response rate. The principal investigators came from the Oxford University: Geoffrey Evans, Anthony Heath, Clive Payne (Nuffield College) and Stephen Whitefield (Pembroke College).

The questionnaire implemented some of the standard questions used in the ISSP role of government and inequality modules. There are many items dealing with themes typical to studies of post-communist transition such as attitudes toward democracy, liberal markets, toleration of minorities, civic participation, trust, and government intervention into the economy. In addition, there are a battery of electoral specific questions measuring party identification, vote intentions and left-right self-placement (see Tóka 2000: 126; Letki 2004: 676–677). Some outputs from this and related research are evident in Evans and Whitefield (1995, 1998), Whitefield and Evans (1999) and an overview of this general field of research is given in Whitefield (2002). According to the available documentation this survey data are reported to have been archived with UKDA.

4.9.9 Civic Culture in the Czech Republic (1969–2009)

One of the most influential political attitudes surveys within political science is Almond and Verba's (1963) civic culture study.³⁵ Plans to implement a Czechoslovak wave of the original study in the late 1960s through cooperation between doc. PhDr. Lubomír Brokl CSc. and the University California, Berkeley were unsuccessful (note Brown 1969: 189 fn. 21). There were concrete plans to undertake comparative survey research using the civic culture questions in Poland, Czechoslovakia, Romania, Yugoslavia and East Germany. Such research had the potential to examine such key theoretical questions as to why there were such great differences within the communist bloc of countries in Central and Eastern Europe.

Theoretically, this comparative research work would have involved exploring if the 'political culture' concept espoused by Verba (1965) rather than the modernisation theory of David E. Apter (1965) was a better explanation of observed differences in political attitudes across orthodox Soviet systems of governance, and elsewhere. The differential reformist tendencies in Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Yugoslavia and Poland vis-à-vis the Soviet Union represented a key theoretical and practical question during the Cold War era. The groundwork for such comparative political culture survey work had been laid with a large amount of political attitude research undertaken by ÚVVM during 1968 (see, Lyons 2009:

35 Surveying for this five country project took place in 1959–1960 in Germany, Italy, Mexico, the United Kingdom, and the United States. This data is available from a variety of sources such as the ICPSR (<http://www.icpsr.umich.edu/icpsrweb/ICPSR/studies/7201>); and the German Social Data Archive, GESIS (<http://www.gesis.org/das-institut/european-data-laboratory/data-resources/data-for-comparative-research/>).

31–35). Although the Central and Eastern European wave of the civic culture research agenda was never implemented: this general approach to the comparative study of communist states is evident in later works such as Brown and Gray (1977), White (1979) and Almond (1983) where political change within the Soviet sphere of influence during the Cold-war era was explained in terms of citizens' attitudes, beliefs and values.

For the fiftieth anniversary of the original civic culture study (undertaken in 1959–1960) a replication survey was fielded in the Czech Republic by CVVM in 2009. An overview of this research and the evolution of civic culture since 1989 are given in Červenka (2009). The concept of Czech political culture has been explored in a handful of papers that have employed survey data (Vajdová 1996, Vajdová and Stachová 2005). In this respect, there has been some important survey based research exploring evidence regarding the presence of regional political cultures within the Czech Republic as noted earlier in this chapter. Such work compliments the ecological inference modelling by Lyons and Linek (2010) who used vote switching at the county/okres (and county town) level between the Chamber Elections (2002) and European Elections (2004) to identify four regional political cultures evident in electoral behaviour. See Box 4.1 for a summary of this research.

In sum, the empirical study of civic and political culture in the Czech Republic in comparative perspective offers important opportunities for future research, as this sub-field is currently under-developed. Future work might combine both attitudes and behaviour by adopting an integrated approach to examining both aggregated electoral and survey based data.

Conclusion

In a recent special issue on comparative survey research in the *International Journal of Public Opinion Quarterly*, Tom W. Smith (2009: 1) in an editorial reiterated the quote from Emile Durkheim presented at the start of this chapter. All of the social sciences today recognise the importance of cross-national survey research, and actively strive to implement and analyse comparative survey datasets. In sum, there are many questions within the social sciences such as the determinants of political and electoral participation that can only be evaluated in a systematic manner using cross-national data. With such data it is possible to explore the impact of differences in social and institutional contexts within which individual behaviour occurs.

This key methodological point identified by Durkheim (1895) is a key theme in this book, as it is argued that political attitudes data are not ‘objective facts’ but require interpretation because the data do not speak for themselves. Comparative survey data are invaluable in this respect because they facilitate exploring political attitudes and behaviour within a wide set of institutional settings. It is only with comparative research that it is possible to make valid and reliable causal inferences about the contextual determinants of attitudes and behaviour. Therefore, the central goal of this chapter has been to map out some of the main sources of comparative political data where the Czech Republic may be studied in an international perspective. Due to the large number of comparative datasets, this chapter has focussed on description and pointed to published research; and has thus provided little in the way of example analyses in a similar manner to other chapters.

In the final part of this chapter some comments will be made linking comparative political attitudes surveys with the domestic Czech surveys that focus on estimating vote intentions. In this respect, it is important to (labour the obvious and) stress that comparative political surveys such as EVS or specific ISSP modules are undertaken much less frequently than either inter-election or election surveys. Consequently, such data are less useful for exploring the dynamics of short-term opinion change; but are more suited to determining the structure and stability of political attitudes, beliefs and values. This difference reflects the contrasting purposes of inter-election polls that are often the basis of media news; and academic based comparative surveys whose purpose is to operationalise and test competing models (or theories) typically derived from political science, sociology, economics or psychology. Here the goal has been to map out citizens’ political attitudes and explore how these attitudes change over months, years or even decades: a form of study that is possible with EB, EVS, EES, ESS, ISSP and WVS, etc. An equally important consideration with comparative data is the opportunity to explore institutional or contextual forms of explanation using multi-level regression models.

For example, is voter turnout *ceteris paribus* (i.e. for respondents with the same levels of partisanship, sense of civic duty, level of education and interest in politics, etc.) higher in states with majoritarian or proportional electoral systems? What is the impact of closeness of competition within constituencies and at the national level on electoral participation? In addressing these types of questions, comparative datasets allow a researcher to test in a systematic manner what makes Czech politics different; and more importantly to replace proper nouns such as being Czech with variables reflecting local institutions and contexts (note, Teune and Przeworski. 1970).

An important feature of many of the cross-national political attitudes surveys that include the Czech Republic is that most were fielded during the 1990s. This characteristic is important because it was the post-communist transition process that provided the primary motivation for many of the comparative surveys described in this chapter. This emphasis on the theme of transition is reflected in the type of questions fielded during interviews with respondents. Consequently, research on post-communist regimes such as the Czech Republic focussed on mapping out popular support for (a) democratic values and institutions, and (b) capitalism and an open economy.

Many of the publications stemming from these data tend to emphasise the discontinuity between post-communist societies and their communist past, and stress the importance of “learning” democracy and capitalism in 1990s. There has been much less work exploring the degree of continuity in political attitudes and values evident in both communist and liberal democratic regimes. As it is almost a generation since the fall of communism, there is now the opportunity to examine the degree to which the evolution of political attitudes and values in the Czech Republic and elsewhere is best characterised in terms of continuity or change. In the next chapter, elites rather than citizens take centre stage as we map out surveys that have explored the structure and attitudes of decision-makers.

Chapter 5

Elite Survey Research

When governing or nongoverning elites attempt to close themselves to the influx of newer and more capable elements from the underlying population, when the circulation of elites is impeded, social equilibrium is upset and the social order will decay. Pareto argued that if the governing elite does not “find ways to assimilate the exceptional individuals who come to the front in the subject classes,” an imbalance is created in the body politic and the body social until this condition is rectified, either through a new opening of channels of mobility or through violent overthrow of an old ineffectual governing elite by a new one that is capable of governing.

Lewis A. Coser (1977: 400)

Introduction

Within the study of politics consideration of the role, structure and stability of political elites has been a fundamental theme since Plato’s (c.380 BC) seminal dialogue: *The Republic*. In the past, examinations of governing elites tended to be qualitative in nature where most studies were either philosophical or historical, e.g. note the ‘classical’ elite works of Vilfredo Pareto (1901/1968), Gaetano Mosca (1896/1939) and Roberto Michels (1911/1930). During the twentieth century the study of elites developed a more empirical orientation where attempts were made to (a) determine elite membership, (b) map out the overall structure of elites in terms of functional domains such as politics, business, the media, academia, and culture, (c) chart the social networks inhabited by individual members of the elite, and (d) estimate the level of integration of elites using sociometric (statistical) techniques; and hence explore the stability of political regimes.

The political history of Czechoslovakia during the First Republic (1918–1938) with such influential elite networks as ‘Pětka’ and the ‘Hrad’ (Orzoff 2009); and thereafter under communism through position with the KSC made the study of elites an important topic in the early 1990s.¹ Elite recruitment

¹ The term ‘pětka’ (the five) refers to an informal committee of the five main party leaders who met to deal with crises during the First Republic. The extra-legislative means of solving national problems was criticised for being undemocratic and unconstitutional as key decisions lacked transparency, and were not subject to public scrutiny. (Footnote continued on the next page)

and membership was considered important in post-communist states because of concerns that middle and higher level communist apparatchiks might monopolise economic and political influence in the new regimes if left unchecked. In research on the post-communist elite undertaken in the Czech Republic in the 1990s, some scholars have argued that the Velvet Revolution was a political rather than a social revolution: where many members of the higher echelons of the communist regime remained in power during the transition process (Eyal 2003). According to this explanation of contemporary Czechoslovak history, the weakness of citizen based politics and civil organisations provided elites with greater scope to shape developments than would have been possible in established democracies (Howard 2003).

There has been considerable research on political elites in post-communist states such as the Czech Republic (note, Brokl et al. 1993; Baylis 1994, 1998; Matějů and Lim 1995; Hanley et al. 1996; Matějů 1997; Machonin and Tuček 2000; Tucker 2000; Eyal 2003). This literature most often attempted to discover if the key decision makers of the 1990s arose from the reproduction or circulation of communist elites (Szelényi and Szelényi 1995). According to some studies based on an *elite theory perspective* communist era elites reproduced their dominance by converting their political power into economic influence through privatisation processes (Hankiss 1990, 1991; Staniszkis 1991). An alternative *new class perspective* contends that there was competition in the early 1990s between old political cadres and an emerging technocratic class over control of the economic transformation process. This competition led to a circulation of elites (Szalai 1995).

Empirical studies undertaken during the mid and late 1990s demonstrated that both theories were correct because patterns of elite reproduction and circulation were evident in the data: most often in different spheres where reproduction characterised economic power and circulation defined political change. On the basis of such results, later work on political elites in Central and Eastern Europe endeavoured to combine the reproduction and circulation facets into a more general theoretical framework called the theory of *post-communist managerialism* (Eyal, Szelényi and Townsley 1997, 1998). This perspective adopted Pierre Bourdieu's (1983) conceptualisation of power and different forms of capital (cultural and political) which are associated with rival elite groups such as humanist intellectuals, technocrats, managers, and bureaucrats to show how elite reproduction and circulation may occur simultaneously (Eyal 2003).

(footnote continued...) 'Hrad' (the castle) is another historical term used to denote a small influential group who acted as a high level team of like-minded advisors to President Masaryk (in Prague Castle) about public policy. Again this use of a powerful clique as the basis for decision making was criticised for undermining democratic institutions (for details see, Klímek 1996).

The primary goal of this brief review of elite surveying is to demonstrate to the reader the scope and potential for research on governance, representation, mass-elite linkage and elite-public gaps in attitudes in the Czech Republic. In the following chapter length review of Czech elite data the discussion will be structured as follows. Section 1 will examine the first elite survey undertaken in the Czech Republic more than four decades ago; and this is followed by a summary of the surveys of citizens and elites that focussed on social stratification during the early 1990s. In the third section, attention shifts to the most recent comprehensive study of Czech elites where the key themes have been cohesion and stability: topics highlighted in the foregoing paragraphs. Section 4 switches attention to comparative elite survey research and also the opportunities for examining elite-public gaps in attitudes and values across the contemporary European Union. Sections five and six focus on political parties where there is an examination of candidate and party member surveys. These data facilitate exploring the 'supply-side' of elections; and the congruity of aspiring (and sitting) politicians and voters' policy positions: a key facet of political representation. Party member surveys allow unique insight into intra-party processes: an area of research that is in its infancy in the Czech Republic. Thereafter, there are some concluding comments about the importance of mass-elite research.

5.1 Czechoslovak Opinion Makers Survey (1969)

The first elite survey fielded in the Czech Republic for which individual level data still exists was undertaken more than forty years ago. This innovative research was part of an international project called 'The International Study of Opinion Makers' and was coordinated in part by scholars from Paul F. Lazarsfeld's Bureau of Applied Social Research at Columbia University, New York. This cross-national study attempted to redress the limitations in previous research on national elites by undertaking comparative analyses of both the structure and opinions of elites across Europe and elsewhere in the late 1960s. The goal of this ambitious research programme was to implement a common elite survey methodology in many countries where there would be a mapping of the network of contacts among legislators, mass organisation leaders, key figures in the economy and media, and intellectuals (Denitch 1972; Barton, Denitch and Kadushin 1973). Fortunately during the final months of the Prague Spring era before the repressive normalisation process had begun in earnest, the Czechoslovak wave of the opinion maker's study was implemented.

This research undertaken by a team in ÚVVM resulted in a total of 193 interviews with legislators from the national and federal assemblies (n=51), senior media figures working in print, radio and television (n=75), and intellectuals composed of scientists, artists and writers (n=89). It is important to stress that this elite survey was not a representative sample (see fn. 3), although a systematic effort was made to randomly select those interviewed (Illner 1970: 9).² Interviews lasted on average ninety minutes and established not only the background and social network of the interviewees, but also respondents' views of contemporary political affairs. An overview of the methodology and some analyses of the data are reported in Lyons (2009: 171–228). It is appropriate at this point to demonstrate with an example the utility of this unique elite survey dataset for researchers interested in mass-elite linkage; and the system of representation under communism.

5.1.1 Perceptions of elite influence on the public in 1969

One of the central themes in published accounts of the Prague Spring era is the fundamental change in the nature of mass-elite linkage (Lyons 2009). Prior to 1968 the scholarly consensus is that the communist regime was not responsive to public opinion, and the system of governance was essentially top-down in nature. With the stagnation of the economy and growing apathy and disillusionment with the communist regime, many historical accounts suggest that a faction within the higher strata of the Czechoslovak Communist Party (KSČ) came to believe economic and political reform was necessary for regime survival (Mlynář 1979). With the removal of press censorship in early 1968 the factors shaping citizens attitudes toward politics changed as public opinion was subject to a wider range of influences than hitherto fore. The Czechoslovak Opinion Makers Survey (1969) facilitates answering the key question: who did elite's themselves think had most influence over public opinion and citizens?³

The 'most influential group' in society question was composed of three parts as the following question text reveals. The focus here is on parts (a) and (c): elite perceptions of who had the greatest influence on public opinion and highest prestige with the public.

2 This unique elite survey data survived the Cold War thanks to efforts of Michal Illner JUDr. (SOÚ AV ČR) and Professor Charles Kaduschin (Brandeis University, MA, USA). From the original SPSS punch cards and original documentation your author was able to transfer the data (using a specialised data service company based in Hollywood, Los Angeles) to a raw text file and thereafter reconstruct the file in a modern SPSS format (see, Lyons 2009: 171–228; 343–345).

3 Within this elite survey there were about three Czech respondents (73%) for each Slovak (27%). For this reason, one could argue that the data primarily reflect Czech elite attitudes. The analysis reported in this section is taken from Lyons (2009: 185–187).

Q.44a-c /v253–261: Here is a list of some important groups in our society. Please, tell me which of these groups in your opinion have: (a) the greatest influence on public opinion – please select THREE groups and rank them, (b) the most independent in their work, (c) the greatest prestige with the public. The response options were: 1 Directors of enterprises; 2 Intellectuals (scientists and artists); 3 Top politicians and representatives of state; 4 Functionaries of the Communist Party; 5 Members of the Federal Assembly; 6 Higher administrators in the federal government; 7 Prominent journalists, commentators, editors; 8 Top trade union officials; 9 Prominent economists.

On examining this question, there is immediate concern that “greatest influence on public opinion” and “greatest prestige with the public” might be interpreted in a very similar manner by the elite respondents. One might expect that a high score on both criteria would be associated with the same groups. A statistical test of association of the responses reveals that responses to both questions have a significant positive association ($\text{Lambda } (\lambda) = .25, p \leq .001$). However, this strength of association is not sufficiently large to think that ‘great influence’ on public opinion and ‘high prestige’ among the public were exactly the same thing.

Looking first at elite influence over public opinion, the evidence presented on the left side of Table 5.1 reveals that a bare majority of Federal Assembly respondents (51%) and four-in-ten from the mass media believed that top political figures exercised most influence; with national journalists coming next. This pattern was reversed for the intellectuals who felt that journalists and media commentators (38%) were more important than politicians (30%). This survey evidence indicates that public opinion (at least in the eyes of elites) was mainly influenced by political and media elites, where intellectuals had much less influence. It seems that legislators in the Federal Assembly were not considered by Czechoslovak communist elites to be influential: implying that they were not even members of the elite (note, Illner 1970: 23).

Economic decision-makers, Czechoslovak communist party officials, and trade union leaders were also seen to have little real impact on influencing citizens’ attitudes. One explanation of this negative evaluation is that these groups most often worked behind the scenes and their work was most often not publicised. The estimates for influence over citizens demonstrate a broadly similar pattern where legislator and mass media respondents assigned senior politicians most influence; while intellectuals gave themselves equal sway with those in government.

One the key aspect on the right part of Table 5.1 is that the sharp fall in perceptual agreement (-38%) among legislators’ regarding their own ability to have

Table 5.1: Elite perceptions of who had influence over public opinion and citizens in Czechoslovakia, 1969 (per cent)

Elite groups in society	Greatest influence over public opinion*				Greatest prestige with public [#]				N1	N2
	1	2	3	Total	1	2	3	Total		
Directors of enterprises	0	0	5	2	2	0	1	1	4	2
Intellectuals (scientists and artists)	9	19	23	18	24	28	32	29	35	55
Top politicians and representatives of state	51	40	30	39	33	36	31	34	73	64
Functionaries of the Communist Party	7	5	1	4	5	4	0	3	8	5
Members of the Federal Assembly	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	1	0	1
Prominent journalists, commentators, editors	28	35	38	34	26	26	31	28	65	52
Top trade union officials	2	0	0	1	2	0	0	1	1	1
Prominent economists	2	1	3	2	5	5	5	5	4	10
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	-	-
Perceptual agreement (A)	.44	.33	.29	.28	.27	.33	.24	.28	-	-
N	43	75	74	192	42	74	75	191	190	190

* Chi-square for influence over public opinion = 19.56, df(12), p=.076

Chi-square for influence over citizens = 13.34, df(14), p=.500

Source: Lyons (2009: 186)

Note that the elites are divided into three sub-groups where '1' refers to members of Czechoslovak Federal Assembly, '2' respondents employed in the mass media, and '3' denoted intellectuals (i.e. artists, writers and scientists). '%' indicates the overall profile of the sample in per cent while 'N1' reports the number of cases for the influence over public opinion item and 'N2' the influence over citizens one. The 'total' columns indicate the response profile of all elite respondents. All percentages are column estimates and sum to one hundred and indicate the pattern of responses for each elite sub-group and the entire sample. Perceptual Agreement (A) indicates the degree to which there is public consensus on the opinions expressed, i.e. optimism or pessimism estimated using method described in van der Eijk (2001). The scale ranges from +1 to -1 where +1 indicates complete public consensus, -1 denotes complete disagreement, and zero indicates a uniform distribution where all points on the scale were chosen by equal numbers of respondents. The table should be interpreted as follows. Among legislators in the Federal Assembly 51% stated that 'top politicians' had most influence over public opinion while 30% of intellectuals had the same perception.

(a) greatest influence within public opinion and (b) popular prestige.⁴ This large decline seems to be linked to more prestige being attributed to intellectuals by

4 See note beneath Table 5.1 for a definition of perceptual agreement. Basically, perceptual agreement statistics reveals the degree to which there was consensus on the answer given.

citizens (24%) rather than influencing public opinion (9%). Overall, a large majority of the Czechoslovak elite interviewed believed senior government figures, the mass media and intellectuals were the locus of most influence and prestige within the communist regime during the Prague Spring era.

What makes the survey data presented in Table 5.1 interesting to contemporary scholars of the Czechoslovak communist regime is that apart from the mass media there was little consensus among Prague spring era elites on who most influenced public opinion, or had most prestige among citizens. The survey results reveal that there was considerable variation in intra- and inter-elite sector perceptions of who had mass political support. This finding is important because it demonstrates that the mass-elite linkage during the Prague Spring era may not have been as simple as some analyses of the reform process imply. In effect, no section of the communist elite was able to monopolise Czechoslovak public opinion during the period of reform.

In this section, there has been an overview of elite survey data gathered under the communist regime. The following section will move forward in history by more than two decades to explore mass-elite differences vis-à-vis social stratification immediately following the fall of communism. As noted earlier in the introduction, this research forms a core component of the nature of the political transformation process of the 1990s in the Czech Republic and other post-communist states.

5.2 Social Stratification in Eastern Europe after 1989 (1994)

One of the key issues during the early phases of the post-communist transition process was the composition of the new elites. In one of the largest studies of social stratification and social mobility in the early 1990s; face-to-face interviewing was conducted with representative samples of both citizens and elites. In the elite survey component there are data from the Czechoslovak Communist Party elites (nomenklatura); this represents the results of interviews with 1,552 respondents out of a total sample of 5,984 elite members.⁵ Interviews in the Czech Republic were undertaken between March and April 1993 for citizens (N=5,621) and January 1994 for elites. Similar questions were asked during a similar time period in Bulgaria, Hungary, Poland, Russia and Slovakia. Although a majority of the survey work involved constructing a complete work history of the respondent and their parents, there are five detailed questions on party and trade union membership during a respondent's lifetime, parents' party membership, recalled

5 The elite sampling frame had 1998 nomenklatura, 1993 from the cultural sphere and a further 1993 from business yielding a total of 5,984 potential elite respondents.

electoral behaviour of the respondent and vote intentions in the next election, and use of pre-1989 social networks to obtain employment during the early 1990s. Of particular interest to political scientists are the publications examining the structure and recruitment of (post-) communist elites and evidence of a circulation of elites in the Czech Republic from the First Republic (Szelényi, Wnuk-Lipinski and Treiman 1995; Eyal, Szelényi and Townsley 1998; Szelényi and Glass 2003; Hanley and Treiman 2004, 2005). This survey data may be obtained from ČSDA.

5.3 Cohesion and Stability of Czech Elites (2007)

One of the most recent survey based studies of Czech elites has adopted a similar theoretical and methodological approach to the earlier Czechoslovak Opinion Makers' Survey of 1969. This study fielded a standard questionnaire to more than a thousand Czech elites (N=1,035) across seven domains (i.e. political n=111, administrative n=138, economic n=260, media n=97, security n=77, culture, arts, education and religion n=158, and civil society sphere n=204). The Czech elite survey questionnaire fielded in late 2007 explored four main themes: network density among different types of elites, mutual trust among elites, patterns of influence among elites due to hierarchy, and degree and type of intra-elite dependence where key decision-makers may act autonomously. One of the central research topics addressed in this research was an exploration of elite cohesion and its impact on the stability of Czech democracy. The results of this research present a somewhat pessimistic picture of democratic governance in the Czech Republic (Frič et al. 2008; Frič 2010).

In order to gain an appreciation for this type of elite survey research, it is essential to know that this empirical work is based on a very specific type of political theory (Higley, Deacon and Smart et al. 1979; Field and Higley 1980; Higley and Burton 1989, 2006). Neo-elite theory is critical of the seminal studies of American elites undertaken by C. Wright Mills (1956) and Robert A. Dahl (1961). Such classic studies yielded contradictory results because they adhered to contrasting theoretical and methodological perspectives. As a result, elite survey research results were not cumulative.⁶ The central question addressed by

6 In order to develop a research agenda that would yield cumulative results advancing the study of elites Charles Kadushin (1968) proposed (a) defining power in terms of its effects (but note Lukes 1971); and (b) defining elite membership in a manner that was valid, reliable and replicable cross-nationally. In this respect, Kadushin proposed using snowball sampling with open sociometric items – a research methodology first suggested by Georg Simmel (1908) – to determine how integrated decision-making elites were and thus the relative stability of differing political systems.

neo-elite theory, and more specifically John Higley's consensus-disunity model of elites and regime stability, is the link between different types of elite structures and the stability of the prevailing system of governance.⁷

More specifically, neo-elite theory argues that a stable democracy is more likely when (1) no elite group monopolises decision-making and (2) there are high levels of interaction among different elite groups. Frič (2010) concludes from the elite survey evidence, that the contemporary Czech elite is characterised by an "oligarchic" structure where a political and administrative group dominates. This decision-making core has a high level of internal integration but is relatively independent of all other elites. As a result, civic elites who act as 'guardians of democracy' lack effective power to compete with members of the state elite. Consequently, the Czech elite research work yields a pessimistic conclusion regarding the elite foundations of the Czech system of representative democracy.

Such a negative conclusion derived from various analyses of the elite survey data may be questioned on two points. First, Higley's model does not specify the threshold of elite integration needed to ensure regime stability. Second, the original socio-metric approach developed by Kadushin (1968) and others emphasised the importance of comparative analysis in determining such a threshold. Consequently, in the absence of specific theoretical predictions and the lack of comparative data the pessimistic conclusions derived from analyses of the Czech elites' survey (2007) may be questioned.⁸ The primary purpose of this short discussion has not been to criticise Doc. Pavol Frič's (2008, 2010) important and innovative research; but to demonstrate to readers the merits of re-examining survey data sets and published results with different theoretical orientations and research questions. Secondary analysis of existing survey data has always been a crucial feature of research in the social sciences.

7 It must be noted that Higley's model of elites is not based on a formal deductive theory of individual or group action. It is in fact an inductive classification of elite and regime types derived from a long range study of (largely) European history. This long-range historical analysis of the degree and type of elite unity, i.e. disunited elites, consensually unified, imperfectly unified, and ideologically unified, and its causal relationship with regime stability is something that did not form part of the original elite surveying methodology developed at Columbia University and tested in Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia in the late 1960s (Barton, Denitch and Kadushin 1973).

8 Moreover, the limits of consensus-disunity model of elites are evident in the fact that immediately prior to the collapse of communist regimes in 1989; Higley and Burton's (1989) extension of this model to cover transition to democratic ignored the possibility of regime change where ideologically unified (i.e. communist) elites were in power. In short, the Higley model is primarily an explanatory rather than predictive theory of regime stability.

5.4 Citizens and Elites in Europe, IntUne (2007–2010)

The IntUne (Integrated and United? A Quest for Citizenship in an ‘Ever Closer Europe’) project is a good example of EU Commission funded projects that often involve gathering survey data across many states within the EU. Oftentimes, the survey work undertaken remains unknown to the larger research community not directly involved in the research. IntUne like many other Sixth Framework (FP6) funded projects examined the nature of citizenship, legitimacy and democracy within Europe. Here the focus has been to evaluate the impact of integration and decentralization processes operating at both the national and European levels on three facets of contemporary citizenship: identity, representation, and systems of governance. As political institutions and more specifically different systems of governance are known to mediate these relations, the IntUne project employed a common survey questionnaire for both elites and citizens. Two waves of elite and mass interviewing were undertaken across 19 member states between 2007 and 2010.⁹

PhDr. Zdenka Mansfeldová CSc. of the Institute of Sociology, Czech Academy of Sciences directed the Czech node of this research. Although two rounds of elite surveying were undertaken with political (MPs), economic (senior managers of large enterprises) and media (national press) elites; there was no mass surveying.¹⁰ While this limits the scope of potential research, it is possible to compare the results of some of the elite survey questions on topics such as sense of identity with mass survey work using similar questions undertaken by Eurobarometer or ISSP. One of the outputs from this project was a special issue of the *Europe-Asia Studies* journal (August 2009, volume 61: 6) which examined ‘European elites on integration’.¹¹

The IntUne elite questionnaire implemented in early 2007 and again in late 2009 have samples of almost two thousand respondents (N=1,933 and 1,972 respectively with approximately 70 elite interviews per country). The questionnaire is divided into five parts examining the following themes: (1) level of con-

9 An overview of the theory and methodology for this survey research is available at: <http://www.intune.it/> (accessed 15/02/2012).

10 In the Czech Republic, political elites are mainly (70%) members of the lower chamber of parliament with quotas of 10–12 interviews for each of the following legislators: cabinet members, women, experienced representatives having participated in at least two legislatures, young representatives under 50 years, and representatives from the Czech Republic’s fourteen regions. The sample for the media elite survey includes respondents from the top 35 Czech publishing companies, and senior executives and editors from television, radio, print and online newspapers. Trade union leaders were selected on the basis of sector and number of members in the union.

11 A list of current and forthcoming publications for this project is available at: <http://www.intune.it/research-materials> (accessed 15/02/2012).

tacts with other Europeans, (2) sense of identity – local, regional, national and European and sources of such identity, (3) attitudes and perceptions toward political representation and trust in institutions, (4) attitudes toward the scope of regional, national and European governance, and (5) basic socio-demographic details. The scope for using this elite survey data to address questions related to elites, identity and political representation within the European Union is evident from the fact that IntUne has contracts to produce seven books with Oxford University Press. These forthcoming volumes will examine citizenship, elites and integration, Europeanisation of national politics, European identity, mass-elite congruence in political attitudes and scope of governance. The survey data and associated documentation are currently embargoed; however, it is likely that this data will be archived in future in one of Europe’s main social data archives such as GESIS, NSD or UKDA.

5.4.1 Mass and elite identity in Europe

A central question within the study of European integration is citizen’s sense of identification within the European Union (Flockhart 2005). One of the earliest studies of citizens’ attitudes toward European integration argued that the integration project was fundamentally an elite-driven process where mass attitudes were best described as exhibiting “permissive consensus” (Lindberg and Scheingold 1970: 274–277). Support for the European project was wide but shallow where citizens adopted a position of benevolent disinterest. In short, member state citizens had a much weaker sense of European identity than elites, or at least those elites directly involved in the integration process.

5.4.2 The elite-public gap in the European Union

Within this sub-section these two themes, i.e. sense of identity and mass-elite differences, will be used to demonstrate the potential of combining elite (IntUne, 2007) and mass (Eurobarometer 69.2, spring 2008) data to explore the elite-public gap in the contemporary EU. Such research is often impossible because mass and elite surveys are rarely undertaken together.¹² If one compares data from an extensive elite (top decision-makers) study undertaken in 1996 with a Eurobarometer mass survey fielded during the same period, one finds a considerable elite-public gap regarding the merits and perceived benefits of EU membership

12 IntUne did undertake both mass and elite surveys. However, this joint research exercise was not undertaken in all countries. For example, as noted earlier, there are no comparable mass and elite data for the Czech Republic. Fortunately, there are some common questions in both IntUne elite and Eurobarometer 69.2 mass survey datasets for the same time periods: thereby, facilitating study of topics such as the elite-public gap in Europe.

(see, Spence 1997: 1–4, A1–4; European Commission, EB 45.1 Report, 1996: 1–2, 13–14; Hooghe 2003; Hooghe and Marks 2008: 9–14).¹³

The same strategy is adopted here to explore the elite-public gap regarding the perceived benefits of EU membership and feelings of national and European identity a generation later in 2007. Before presenting the results of these analyses, it is important to make some comments about questions dealing with mass and elite attitudes toward European integration. Eurobarometer (EB) fielded four standard questions in most of its surveys between 1973 and the late 1990s. These ‘standard’ questions provide what have been termed ‘utilitarian’ and ‘affective’ measures of support for the process of European integration. These four items were labelled: unification (affective), membership and benefits (utilitarian) and dissolution (also utilitarian in some analyses).

This broad affective/utilitarian conceptualisation of public opinion toward integration was originally developed by Lindberg and Scheingold (1970: 38–63) in their seminal study of *Europe’s Would-Be Polity*. Responses to questions that relate to ‘membership’ of the EU and ‘benefits from membership’ are typically seen to be utilitarian; while support for ‘unification’ is judged to be affective. The ‘dissolution’ item has no clear interpretation; although in the case of Ireland it appears to be a utilitarian measure (Lyons 2008a: 213–216).¹⁴

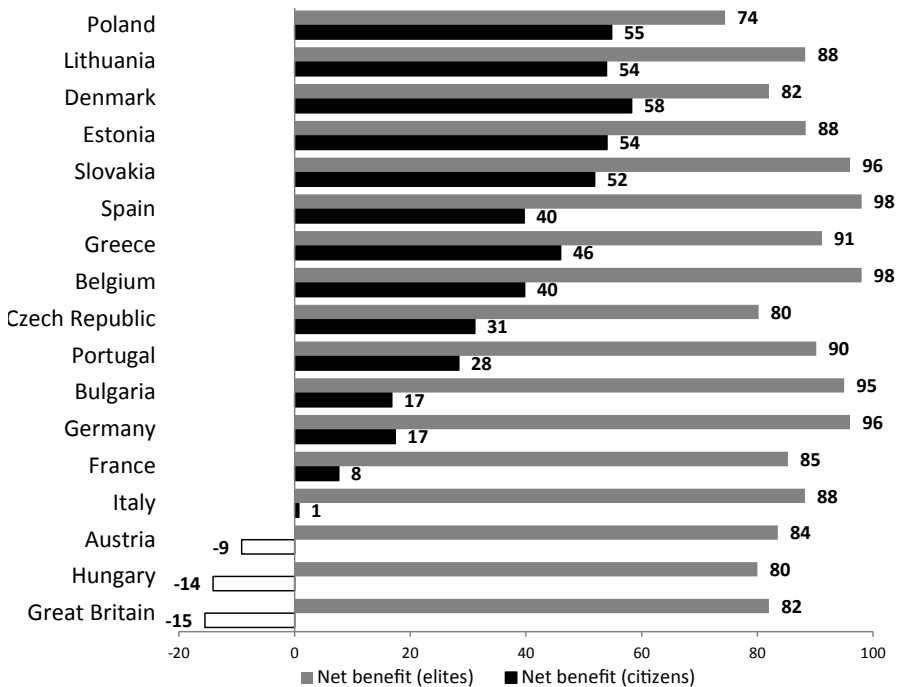
In this sub-section, we will explore citizen and elite evaluations of the ‘benefits from membership’ using IntUne and EB survey data from late 2007 and early 2008 respectively. The pattern evident in Figure 5.1 reveals (a) large cross-national differences among elites ranging from a low of 74% in Poland to a high of 98% in Spain and Belgium; (b) a greater level of variation is evident among citizens where 58% of respondents in Denmark felt that they benefitted from EU membership in contrast to about 15% in Hungary and Britain who stated they did not benefit; (c) very large variations in elite-public gaps within the EU ranging from 20% in Poland to 97% in Britain.

A closer examination of differences across EU member states in Figure 5.1 reveals that there is no clustering of countries on the basis of ‘old’ and ‘new’ members. This pattern suggests that length of EU membership is not a key deter-

13 In this study, there were interviews with political, administrative, socio-economic, media and cultural elites (N=3,700) in the then-fifteen member states of the EU (Spence 1997).

14 There is an extensive literature on the interpretation of these Eurobarometer trend items and more generally how to operationalise popular support for European integration. See, Eichenberg and Dalton 1993; Gabel and Palmer 1995; Niedermayer 1995; Anderson and Reichert 1996; Deflem and Pampel 1996; Anderson 1998; Gabel 1998a,b; Carey 2002; McLaren 2002; Rohrschneider 2002; Steenbergen and Jones 2002; Marks and Hooghe 2003; Brinegar, Jolly and Kitschelt 2004. Much of this debate tends to take an economic versus non-economic perspective. The dissolution measure does not follow this ordinal interaction pattern and this is not surprising, as this indicator has not been judged within the literature to be clearly utilitarian or affective in nature.

Figure 5.1: The elite-public gap within the European Union regarding the perceived benefits of EU membership



Sources: IntUne elite survey data (2007); Eurobarometer 69.2 (Spring 2008)

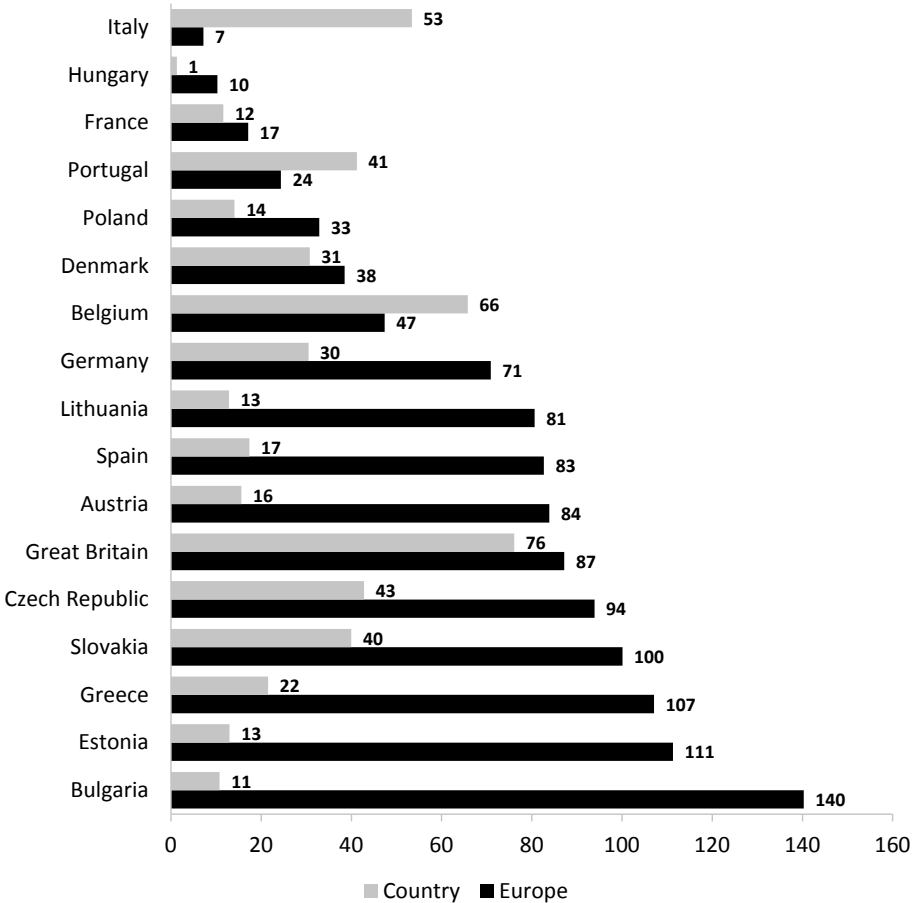
IntUne Qev2: Taking everything into consideration, would you say that [YOUR COUNTRY] has on balance benefited or not from being a member of the European Union? Response options: (1) Has benefited, (2) Has not benefited, (3) Don't know (volunteered), (4) Refused (volunteered).

EB 69.2, QA8a: Taking everything into consideration, would you say that [YOUR COUNTRY] has on balance benefited or not from being a member of the European Union? Response options: (1) Benefitted, (2) Not benefitted, (3) Don't know, (4) No answer, refused. The question text was the same in both the IntUne elite and Eurobarometer surveys.

Note the data are sorted in descending order of citizens' perceptions of the net benefits of membership of the European Union. The data refers to the net or balance of answers given. This was calculated as follows: $[(Benefit - No\ benefit) * (1 - (Don't\ know + No\ answer / 100))]$. This procedure ensures that the net benefit estimates receives a lower weight if the share of respondents who replied "don't know" or "refused, no answer" was large; as was the case in many countries for this question in EB 69.2. The white bars at the bottom for Great Britain, Hungary and Austria indicate that the net benefit is negative for citizens (all positive net benefit scores are indicated by solid black bars). This scale has a range of -100 to +100.

minant of the variation observed. In comparative terms, the Czech Republic occupies an intermediate position (rank 9 out 17) in the ordering of countries on the

Figure 5.2: The elite-public gap within the European Union regarding feelings of national and European identity



Sources: IntUne elite survey data (2007); Eurobarometer 69.2 (Spring 2008)

Elite level (IntUne, Qeid.1): People feel different degrees of attachment to their region, to their country, and to Europe. What about you? Are you very attached, somewhat attached, not very attached, or not at all attached to the following: (a) Town/village, (b) Region, (c) Country, (d) Europe?

Mass level (Eurobarometer, QA57): I would like you to think about the idea of geographical identity. Different people think of this in different ways. Some people might think of themselves as being European, a national of a country, or from a specific region. Other people might say that with globalization, we are all growing closer to each other and becoming 'citizens of the world. To what extent do you feel that you are (a) European, (b) Nationality, (c) Inhabitant of your region, (d) A citizen of the world? Response options for each level of identity were (1) To a great extent, (2) Somewhat, (3) Not really, (4) Not at all.

Note the main objective of this figure is to demonstrate absolute differences between elites and citizens senses of national and European identity. The data indicate the difference between elites and citizens, i.e. elite% minus citizen%. Consequently, larger numbers imply greater differences between elites and citizens' sense of national or European identity. The data are sorted in ascending order of differences in net attachment to Europe. The data refers to the net or balance of answers given. This was calculated as follows: $[(\text{very attached} - \text{all other responses options}) * (1 - (\text{Don't know} + \text{No answer} / 100))]$. This procedure ensures that the net benefit estimates receives a lower weight if the share of respondents who replied "don't know" or "refused, no answer" was large; this was not the case in most countries. Citizens' net scores (in per cent) were subtracted from elite net scores and have a theoretical range of 0–200.

basis of net citizen perceptions of the benefits of EU membership. The relative ranking of elites is rather different as Polish (74%), Czech (80%) and Hungarian (80%) respondent's exhibit the three lowest national scores indicating higher levels of dissatisfaction with EU membership.

Exploring in detail the determinants of the patterns evident in Figure 5.1 is an important question, but is beyond the scope of this chapter. Current scholarship on public attitudes toward the EU suggests that variation in perceptions of the economic benefits of membership, as shown in Figure 5.1, is influenced by two key factors: economic considerations and sense of national and European identity. Here we will briefly examine citizens' and elites' feelings of identity as this facilitates showing the opportunities for combining mass and elite survey data. The IntUne (2007) and EB 69.2 (2008) survey estimates presented in Figure 5.2 shows net differences in feelings of national and European identity between citizens and elites. It is obvious from the estimates in Figure 5.2 that there are on average greater differences between citizens and elites regarding European identity. In this respect, the estimates shown in Figure 5.2 show no strong 'old' versus 'new' (or east-west) divide.

The Czech Republic forms part of a cluster of countries where there are relatively large differences between citizens and elites for both national and European identity, and is most similar to Slovakia: indicating that their shared history may be important in explaining current attitudes. Overall, the pattern evident in Figure 5.2 indicates important differences between citizens' and elites' feelings of identity within the EU. This finding is important because support for integration is seen to be mainly the product of two factors: economic considerations and sense of identity (McLaren 2006).¹⁵

Within the EU-27 the link between these two factors and support for the integration is stronger among citizens in the older member states (Tucker, Pacek and

15 For additional analyses on the identity in the Czech Republic using the same data, see Laciņa (2011) and Mansfeldová and Špicarová Stašková (2009).

Berinski 2002; Lyons 2007). Previous research suggests that sense of identity should have a greater impact on attitudes toward European integration among the public rather than elites (Hooghe and Marks 2008: 12). A key implication here in terms of the public-elite gaps shown in Figures 5.1 and 5.2 is that larger gaps will undermine popular support for European integration. Evidence of this process was evident in the Dutch, French and Irish referendums on the Constitutional and Lisbon Treaties (Hooghe and Marks 2006; Quinlan 2009).

A correlational analysis of the public-elite gaps examined in this sub-section reveals no significant relationships. This may be due to clustering of countries on the basis of some specific institutional characteristic other than 'old' versus 'new' member states, and requires more detailed analysis. The key point here has been to demonstrate how the IntUne elite survey data may be used in conjunction with mass survey data to explore key features of governance and representation in Europe. It is appropriate at this point to turn our attention more directly to the theme of political representation; and surveys undertaken to measure the attitudes of Czech parliamentarians over the last two decades.

5.5 Parliamentary Surveys in the Czech Republic, 1993–2010

There have been at least nine surveys of Czech parliamentarians fielded over the last two decades. This surveying work was primarily oriented toward legislators in the Lower Chamber (Poslanecká sněmovna) and to a lesser degree Senators and MEPs. Most of this parliamentary survey work has been undertaken by (or in cooperation with) the Department of Political Sociology, Institute of Sociology, AV ČR and more specifically by research teams headed by doc. PhDr. Lubomír Brokl CSc. and PhDr. Zdenka Mansfeldová CSc. To date, there appears to be little survey work on members of regional assemblies. Czech parliamentary surveys have been undertaken in many cases by different researchers, and consequently it is not always possible to track trends in Czech legislators' attitudes across time. An overview of this stream of political surveying in the Czech Republic between 1993 and 2005 is available in Linek (2005).¹⁶ A useful inventory of the common questions asked in six surveys of MPs, Senators and MEPs is given in Lacina (2008).¹⁷ These parliamentary survey data have not been deposited in ČSDA.

16 This article may be downloaded from the following website: http://sreview.soc.cas.cz/uploads/f50189c36dea55f636ea22f5dc4e6cf53a44dba4_3linek14.pdf (accessed 15/02/2012).

17 Please see article: http://www.socioweb.cz/upl/editorial/download/156_socioweb_10_08.pdf (accessed 15/02/2012).

5.5.1 Surveys of Chamber of Deputies in 1993

This study was organised by Lubomír Brokl and Kees Niemöller (University of Amsterdam). Surveying was undertaken by Factum between March and May 1993 when 136 (of the 200) deputies were interviewed. The structure of the questionnaire was influenced by previous legislator studies in the Netherlands and Germany. For additional details, see Tóka (2000: 119). A second parliamentary survey was undertaken in the final quarter of 1993. This study was organised by members of the Department of Political Science, University of Leiden; and the fieldwork was undertaken by Factum where 168 deputies were interviewed (Tóka 2000: 122). This comparative research focussed on the impact of parliamentary and institutional procedures on Czech legislative behaviour (Kopecký, Hubáček and Plecítý 1996; Kopecký (2001).

5.5.2 Values and Political Change in Post-Communist Europe, 1994

This comparative research fielded in October–November 1994 was organised by scholars from the University of Glasgow and explored mass and elite attitudes in five post-communist states: Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Ukraine and Russia (see, Tóka 2000: 124–125). The fieldwork was undertaken by Opinion Window (a Prague based market research company) and yielded 134 interviews. This research focussed on political attitudes and values; and formed the empirical basis for Miller, White and Heywood's (1998) book length study, which reported that in Central and Eastern Europe legislators were in general more rightist than voters. This data has been deposited at the UK Data Archive.

5.5.3 Opinions of citizens, administrators and political representatives, 1996

This combined study of citizens and elites was primarily interested in examining differences in policy positions. This parliamentary survey was directed by Lubomír Brokl and fielded between February and April 1996, interviewing was undertaken by Factum and resulted in 146 cases (Tóka 2000: 135–136). This survey was designed to have some comparable questions to those asked in March–May 1993, although the 1996 survey was revised significantly.¹⁸ The results of the legislative part of this research were published in Brokl, Mansfeldová and Kroupa (1998). A comparison of the results of the 1993 and 1996 surveys was presented in Simon, Deegan-Krause and Mansfeldová (1999).¹⁹ One of the key

18 Linek (2005: 493) notes that the questions asked to deputies have remained broadly consistent since 1996.

19 Kevin Deegan-Krause (Wayne State University, Michigan) interviewed 75 members of the Lower Chamber of Deputies in October–November 1996 using many items that replicated previous surveys. The primary goal of this research was to examine party development (see, Tóka 2000: 142).

findings of this survey was that Czech legislators in 1996 saw themselves as representing their voters rather than their party per se. The larger research programme included a mass survey with 1,007 respondents and 222 local government representatives and officials, and was used to examine public policy making in the Czech Republic (see, Purkrábek et al. 1996).

5.5.4 Survey of Members of the Chamber of Deputies in 1998 and 2002

The next wave of parliamentary surveying was fielded prior to the ‘snap’ general election of June 1998. Fortunately, this research facilitated maintaining the series of parliamentary surveys where there were interviews with Czech legislators in all legislative terms until 2008. All 161 interviews were undertaken by Sofres-Factum and details of this research work are given in Seidlová (2001). In a subsequent round of parliamentary surveying in June and July 2000, the research was extended to include members of the new upper chamber or Senate first elected in 1996. A total of 73 interviews (out of a total of 81) in the Senate were completed between October 19 and 26. With surveys of both houses it was possible for the first time to explore the relationship between both chambers (Brokl, Mansfeldová and Seidlová 2001; Mansfeldová 2001), and other topics such as legislators’ attitudes toward EU accession (Brokl 2001), intra-party cohesion (Linek and Rakušanová 2005); and operation of the legislative committee system (Mansfeldová et al. 2003).

5.5.5 Survey of Members of the Chamber of Deputies in 2003 and 2007/8

This survey project was again directed by Lubomír Brokl and interviewing was undertaken by a team recruited specifically for this task. The structure of the questionnaire while retaining many questions from previous waves was revised on the basis of experience. More specifically, a new set of fifteen public policy position scales were introduced for the first time. A total of 169 interviews were completed. The most recent wave of the Institute of Sociology’s parliamentary surveying programme was directed by Zdenka Mansfeldová. Again, a special team of interviewers were used to secure 136 interviews. The questionnaire contained many standard questions from previous waves, but also contained items that allowed direct comparison of the policy positions of legislators and citizens as measured in the Czech National Election Study (2006). The results of this latest round of surveying were reported in Mansfeldová and Linek (2008); and a book length study using all of the parliamentary studies will be published (Mansfeldová and Linek 2014). This legislative survey dataset has been used to explore new topics such as the cognitive style of reasoning using by Czech legislators

Box 5.1: What influences the unity of roll-call voting in legislative parties?

A central feature of legislative systems of government is party unity. If legislators vote loyally and consistently along party lines then there is political stability. Using roll call and parliamentary survey data, Linek and Lacina (2011) tested a number of explanations of legislative party unity for the Czech Lower Chamber (Poslaneká smenovna). The research literature on party unity suggests that legislator's loyalty to their party will be determined by five main factors: government status, party size, party system fragmentation, differences in parties' ideological platforms, political socialization and incumbency. The regression model results shown in the following table examined party unity in the Lower Chamber over a fifteen year period (1993–2008). The data have been aggregated to parties (n=6) by legislative terms (n=5) yielding 30 cases.

Models of intra-party unity in roll call voting, 1993–2008

Explanatory variables	Predicted effect	Model 1	Model 2
Government status	+	8.05**	-5.88
Opposition fragmentation	-	-.30	-1.93**
Size of government majority	-	-.48	2.66
Party size	-	-.10	-.17*
Inter-party programmatic differences	+	-1.44	-.28
Extreme party programme	+	1.73	.32
Popularity of party	+	-.09	-.18
Number of incumbent legislators	+	-.04	-.05
Number of legislators with a leadership position	+	-.19*	-.25**
Government status*Size of government majority interaction	-	-	-5.36*
Government status*Opposition fragmentation interaction	-	-	2.50*
Intercept		89.96***	104.86***
R ²		.40	.55

Source: Linek and Lacina (2011: 104)

*** p≤.01, ** p≤.05, * p≤.10. Note that the dependent variable is party unity measured using the Rice Index. Positive parameters indicate factors that promote intra-party unity. The Rice Index is estimated as the absolute difference between the proportion of party legislators voting in favour of a bill and the fraction of party members voting against the bill, multiplied by 100 to obtain a number ranging from 0 to 100.¹

The Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression model results presented in the table above reveal that if a party is in government this is associated with increased loyalty among legislators from incumbent parties. However, party unity is weaker when government majorities are larger. This evidence suggests that party unity has a strong office seeking component where legislators' motivation to vote the party line is greater when it is likely that a specific roll call will lead to government termination. In such situations, party discipline ensures greater intra-party loyalty in roll calls. This evidence suggests that legislative party behaviour in the Lower Chamber over the last two decades has been primarily driven by government vs. opposition motivations. Hix and Noury (2011) report a similar finding with comparative data.

¹ Note models 2 and 4 in table 3 of Linek and Lacina (2011: 104) are not reported. These models contain party dummy variables that capture specific party effects. Exclusion of such dummy variables may result in incorrect standard errors and hence estimated significant levels. This is a general problem with models with small numbers of cases (n=30) and a large number of explanatory variables (n=11). It is also likely that the party dummy models suffer from collinearity resulting in high R² values (R²>.90) where no variable is significant, as is the case here. One option to deal with such OLS estimation problems is to estimate a model with Panel Corrected Standard Errors (PCSE).

(Lyons 2008c); and determining the extent to which the observed roll call behaviour of deputies may be explained in terms of factors associated with intra-party cohesion and discipline (Lyons and Lacina 2009).²⁰

5.5.6 Survey of Czech political, economic and media elites - IntUne (2007–2010)²¹

IntUne, as noted earlier, was a cross-national sixth framework (FP6) project funded by the European Commission and as part of its research work undertook mass and elite survey across most EU member states. Within the Czech Republic there were two rounds of elite interviews, but no mass surveying. Consequently, about 80 members of the Lower Chamber (Poslanecká sněmovna) were interviewed on two occasions. One of the outputs from this research was a comparative study of identity formation among political, economic and media elites in 19 member states with a special focus on the situation in the Czech Republic (Mansfeldová and Špicarová Stašková 2009). The data from this project is currently under embargo due to on-going publication work.

This overview of parliamentary surveying in the Czech Republic, between 1993 and 2010, reveals that structured interviews of legislators have generated a considerable amount of data and publications. There have also been some comparative legislative analyses (Mansfeldová et al. 2004). Nonetheless, there are still important opportunities to use the corpus of parliamentary surveys and roll call data to explore in greater detail such topics as (a) the emergence of Czech legislative parties, (b) the evolution of legislative behaviour since 1990, (c) the dynamics of intra-party cohesion and discipline vis-à-vis institutional variables using both survey and roll call data, (d) compare Czech and Slovak legislative behaviour following the dissolution of the Czechoslovak Federal Republic in 1993 in terms of their shared institutional history, and (e) undertake comparative legislative behaviour studies using both survey and roll call data to explore the impact of parliamentary rules on facets of party unity such as legislative speech making (note, Slapin and Proksch 2008, Proksch and Slapin 2012).

Legislative roll call data are available from the Chamber of Deputies and Senate official website.²² Here the legislative voting results are available separately for each roll call. If a researcher wishes to examine many bills this level of ac-

20 The analysis of roll call voting in the Czech Republic is limited to less than a handful of papers, note Noury and Mielcová (2005) and Hix and Noury (2011).

21 For more information about the intune project see: <http://www.intune.it> (accessed 15/02/2012).

22 Official roll call voting results for the Czechoslovak Federal Assembly (1990–1992) and Czech Lower Chamber (Poslanecká sněmovna, 1993-): <http://www.psp.cz/sqw/hlasovani.sqw?zvo=1&o=6>; Official roll call voting results for the Senate: http://www.senat.cz/xqw/xervlet/pssenat/hlas?ke_dni=21.03.2012&O=8 (Footnote continued on the next page)

cess to the roll call data is of limited practical use. One option here is to request roll call data from the Department of Informatics, Office of the Chamber of Deputies. The provision of this data is not the primary role of this department and so requesting the data depends on the goodwill of these busy officials. Alternatively, Mgr. Michal Škop Ph.D. (KohoVolit.eu and Univerzita Hradec králové) has used a small customised program (a webpage ‘scraper’ script written in PHP, a web programming language) to extract the data from the official webpages.²³ Škop’s scraperwiki webpage (<https://scraperwiki.com/profiles/michal/>) contains all roll data for both Czech legislative chambers (Škop 2011a, b, 2012).²⁴ All websites noted here are also listed in the appendix for ‘selected internet resources.’

5.6 Case study: Determinants of Czech legislator’s Policy Preferences

Extending Philip E. Tetlock’s (2005) influential exploration of American expert decision makers in terms of Isaiah Berlin’s (1953) ‘hedgehog and fox’ distinction of styles of thinking, Lyons (2008c) explored the interrelationship between Czech legislators’ worldviews and style of thinking. Simple correlations suggest that there is little systematic relationship between *what* these legislators think and *how* they think. However, structural equation modelling does reveal important linkages. The evidence presented in Lyons (2008c) reveals that what legislators think has a greater impact on policy preferences than how they think. Unsurprisingly, there is a strong link between partisanship and legislator’s worldviews or ideology; however, there is little association between styles of thinking and partisanship. The key implication here is that inter-party differences in the Czech legislature are primarily ideological but such differences may be overcome if a flexible approach to problem solving is adhered to by ‘foxes’ from rival parties. In short, this evidence suggests that differentiating between legislators’ style of thinking and decision making may be crucial in understanding (a) inter-party political activities such as coalition formation, and (b) intra-party processes related to party cohesion and discipline. Exami-

(footnote continued...) Official roll call voting results for the Czechoslovak Federal Assembly (1990–1992) and Czech Lower Chamber (Poslanecká sněmovna, 1993–): <http://www.psp.cz/sqw/hlasovani.sqw?zvo=1&o=6>

²³ <https://scraperwiki.com/tags/voting%20records> (accessed 24/02/2012).

²⁴ In addition, there are roll call data for other countries in South America, election results data for all chamber elections for the Czech Republic at the obec (community) level and a variety of other datasets.

Table 5.2: Determinants of Czech legislators' policy preferences in terms of their worldview and style of thinking

<i>Models and explanatory variables</i>	<i>State healthcare</i>	<i>Flat taxes</i>	<i>Too much EU integration</i>	<i>Protect civil liberties</i>	<i>No state intervention</i>
<i>Worldview</i>					
Left-Right	1.19 *** (.25)	-2.07 *** (.30)	-.71 ** (.31)	-.35 (.34)	-1.62 *** (.21)
Optimistic-Pessimistic	-.81 ** (.30)	1.73 *** (.36)	.94 ** (.36)	.77 * (.41)	.98 *** (.25)
Realist-Institutionalist	-.63 ** (.32)	.69 * (.38)	1.24 ** (.39)	-.57 (.44)	.55 ** (.27)
<i>Style of thinking</i>					
Hedgehog-Fox	-.34 (.31)	-.78 ** (.38)	-.03 (.38)	-.72 * (.43)	.05 (.26)
Open-Close minded	.46 (.28)	.55 (.34)	.69 ** (.35)	.13 (.39)	.07 (.24)
Pragmatic-Dogmatic	.41 (.29)	.35 (.35)	-.03 (.36)	-.51 (.40)	.04 (.25)
<i>Socio-demographics</i>					
Age in years	.01 (.02)	-.02 (.03)	-.01 (.03)	-.01 (.03)	-.01 (.02)
Sex (female)	-.15 (.56)	-.23 (.67)	.26 (.70)	1.23 (.79)	.28 (.48)
Level of education	-.09 (.46)	-.28 (.56)	.25 (.57)	-.82 (.64)	.82 ** (.39)
Intercept	6.35 (2.29)	7.09 (2.77)	4.45 (2.84)	7.83 (3.17)	2.91 (1.95)
N	114	114	113	113	113
Root MSE	2.20	2.66	2.70	3.03	1.86
Adj. R-squared	.40	.59	.32	.06	.57

Source: Lyons (2008: 13). Estimates based on Survey of Czech Members of the Chamber of Deputies (2007). N=125. Note estimates are based on an ordinary least squares regression (OLS) model. The dependent variables are all eleven point scales (0–11), see appendix for details. Standard errors are in parentheses. Level of education is a four point scale denoting incomplete secondary or less, vocational school with diploma, secondary school with diploma, and university level of education.

nation of these issues in terms of legislator's style of decision making represents an important line for future research.

Overall the results presented in Table 5.2 demonstrate that style of thinking has a limited influence on explaining the policy preferences of Czech legislators. For policies related to government spending and level activity, i.e. healthcare provision and intervention into the economy, legislators' style of thinking has no significant effects. However, the top row shows that being leftist is, as expected, strongly associated with being in favour of state funding of healthcare, being opposed to a 'flat tax', being supportive of further European integration, and supportive of state intervention into the economy. The second row of Table 5.2 shows that having pessimist and institutionalist views of the world yield policy preferences that are the same as a rightist orientation, i.e. opposite to the pattern in the first row.

Although more could be said about the nature of the link between legislators' worldviews and policy preferences, much of the pattern observed in top part of Table 5.2 appears to underscore the central importance of left-right. In fact, the optimistic-pessimistic and realist-institutionalist perspectives could be interpreted as sub-components of a more general left-right dimension. Such a conception of the hierarchy of issue dimensions or worldviews has been pointed out in previous research (Sani and Sartori 1983; Dalton 2002).

The evidence presented in the middle of Table 5.2 shows that Berlin's hedgehog-fox distinction only has a discernible direct impact on Czech legislators where foxes favour a progressive tax regime and increased security even if this means some limitation on civil liberties, i.e. essentially right-wing stances. Curiously, having an open minded style of thinking implies being rather critical of the European integration process. Moreover, having a pragmatic or dogmatic cognitive approach to decision making has no direct impact on expressed policy preferences. With regard to the impact of legislator's social background, only higher level of education seems to be associated with preferring government intervention into the economy.

Overall, the pattern evident in Table 5.2 suggests that Czech legislator's style of thinking plays a rather modest role in directly influencing their policy preferences across a range of issue domains. As was noted earlier with regard to the weak correlation between worldview and styles of thinking, this may reflect the fact that policy preferences and world views are long-term stable orientations: where worldviews are likely to be causally prior to policy preferences. For example, a general leftist orientation underpins specific policy preferences such as supporting progressive taxation and government intervention into the economy.

5.7 Candidate Surveys

The study of elections within political science using surveys is not limited to the demand-side of party competition: where there is an exploration of voters' attitudes and preferences. There are also surveys of the supply-side of elections where the focus is on the socio-demographic profile, attitudes and policy positions of candidates standing for election. This component of political survey research is important because it allows scholars to (a) determine the range of choice open to voters on polling day and (b) examine the nature of political representation in terms of the congruence between the policy preferences of voters and their (potential) public representatives. Within the Comparative Candidate Survey research group there are about thirty countries who have undertaken this form of surveying within the last decade.²⁵

In the Czech Republic there have been a number of candidate surveys. The first one was undertaken in May 1990 immediately prior to the first democratic elections. This research was fielded by the Institute of Sociology, Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences where the 3,612 candidates standing for election were sent a postal survey with 27 questions inquiring about aspiring politicians' policy positions and preferences toward political and economic reform. Moreover, some of the items were replicated in the AISA pre-election survey of May 1990 facilitating comparison between candidates (and future legislators) and voters. This unique survey had a reasonable response rate for this type of survey (55% yielding 1,969 completed questionnaires).

This research revealed that 90% of the candidates for the first democratic elections in 1990 were professionals with higher levels of education and occupational status, were middle aged (the mean age was 46 years) and were male (only 10% of those surveyed were women). It is interesting to see from this survey that candidates had more accurate evaluations of their personal rather than their party's chances of success in polls of June 1990. Moreover, candidates were more optimistic about the political reform process than voters suggesting that willingness to enter politics involved having an optimistic outlook. The three main priorities for candidates in the first democratic elections were economic reform, dealing with environmental pollution and ratification of a new constitution. Divisions among candidates and parties evident in this survey formed an important feature of the difficult negotiations on reform witnessed in the Federal Assembly between 1990 and 1992. More details about this survey and the main results are given in Rak (1992, 1996). This data has not been archived with ČSDA.

²⁵ More information is available at: <http://www.comparativecandidates.org/> (accessed 15/02/2012).

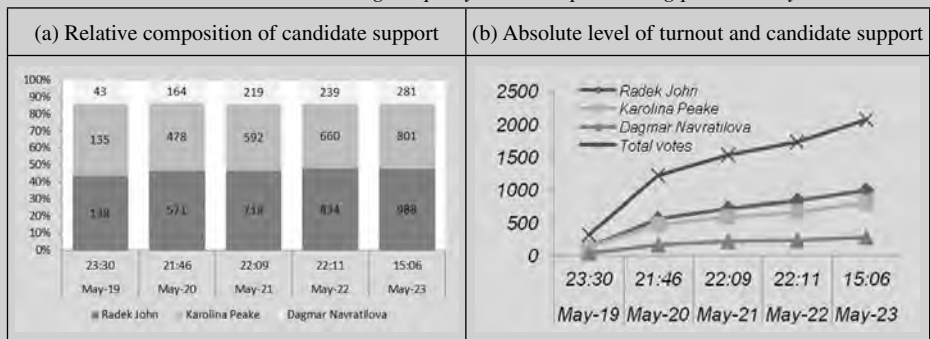
Box 5.2: Conducting a party leadership election on the Internet: the case of Věci veřejné (VV) in May 2011

Public Affairs (Věci veřejné, VV) is a small liberal-conservative political party founded and led by a former investigative journalist Radek John. It has campaigned in national elections primarily on a platform of fighting corruption and promoting transparency in politics. Following the general election of May 2010 it was very successful in winning 24 seats in the Chamber of Deputies. Previously it had no representation in the national parliament. The party emerged from local politics and currently has 313 councillors mainly in Prague. The size of the VV parliamentary party grouping declined in size due to a series of scandals where a number of VV deputies left the party. Specifically, in April 2011 three VV members of parliament (Jaroslav Škárka, Stanislav Huml, and Kristýna Kočí) accused Vít Bárta, then the Minister of Transport in the Czech coalition government, of giving substantial amounts of money covertly to fellow VV members in parliament. The three accusers were expelled from VV and Bárta resigned from the government to face a criminal investigation in April 2012, when Bárta was convicted of bribery. Vít Bárta's position in VV, was in comparative terms somewhat unusual, in that although he was not president of the party; he was widely (even in the media) seen to be the effective party leader.

One of the defining characteristics of VV's policy platform is an ardent anti-corruption stance. VV has a right wing economic orientation favouring such things as fiscal prudence and balanced budgets. However, the party has a number of specific populist policies that indicate a centre-left position on some specific issues such as facilitating employers giving their employees subsidised "lunch coupons" (stravenky).

Among Czech political parties, VV is one of the strongest advocates of direct democracy. Under the party rules party policy may be changed through use of a internet referendum mechanism. In addition, VV have used the internet to conduct a party leadership election in May 2011 where each member could cast a vote (one-member-one-vote, OMOV) in a simple plurality contest. Both party members and registered supporters (known collectively as Věčkaři) are allowed to vote on the party's website (www.veciverejne.cz) in simple plurality referendums to decide the party's policy position.*

Trends in turnout and candidate during VV party leadership balloting period, May 19–22 2011



Source: www.veciverejne.cz

Note the horizontal axis in both panels indicates the time and date when the election poll results were obtained. The capacity to construct such time and day measures of participation and vote choice demonstrates the potential of electronic voting procedures for studying the dynamics of voting during polling periods. The data labels in panel (a) refer to the actual number of votes for each candidate recorded once per day during the four day balloting period (15:00 May 19 to 15:00 May 23).

As this was an internet election, a record was kept of the voting patterns over the four days of polling. Panel (a) of the figure shown above reveals that John and Peake were fairly evenly matched on the first day (44 vs. 42%), but the trend in voting swung increasingly in favour

of John as the voter turnout rate increased. This positive relationship between turnout and support for John is more evident in panel (b). The final turnout rate was 35% (N=6,140). The official daily tally of voting reveals that the total selectorate increased during the election by about 3% (n=180). Generally, with internal party elections the selectorate is fixed prior to elections to minimise the incentives by candidates and their core supporters to determine the outcome of a very competitive race through the “last minute” addition of new voters to the selectorate. In May 2011, the evidence suggests this was not a key issue. A special VV party member conference held later in Hradec kralové on May 29 confirmed Radek John as party leader where his candidacy was supported by 169 of the 192 delegates. The key point here is that the results from intra-party elections offer invaluable opportunities for exploring (a) the dynamics of how parties work internally, and (b) the consequences of conducting party business on the internet.

* The results of VV referendums are available at <https://www.veciverejne.cz/domaci-politika/clanky/vysledky-referend.html> (accessed 15/02/2012). It should be noted that VV held another leadership election in late June 2012.

The next candidate surveys appear to have been undertaken for the European Parliament elections of 2004 and the Chamber Elections of 2006. The candidate survey of 2004 (May 15 – July 17) was used primarily to examine candidate selection with Czech parties (see Linek and Outlý 2005, 2006). Both postal surveys were organised by PhDr. Lukáš Linek PhD., Institute of Sociology, AV ČR. The 2006 candidate survey adopted the standard approach promoted by the Comparative Candidate Study (CCS) Group where respondents are asked to provide a profile of their political background experience, current campaign activities, issue and policy positions, attitudes toward democracy and representation, and answer a handful of socio-demographic items. The comparative component of this research includes district and macro (national) datasets describing the institutional context in which candidates participated in an election; and also the outcomes of these elections. This data is not currently available but will be deposited in major social science data archives (e.g. GESIS and ICPSR) in 2015.

A similar candidate survey was undertaken for the European Parliament elections of 2009 in all member states including the Czech Republic. This data may be accessed through the European Election Study website.²⁶ It should be noted that this particular survey had a relatively low response rate in the Czech Republic (15%). In total, 135 candidates were initially contacted from five parties (ČSSD [n=6/29], KDU-ČSL [7/29], KSCM [2/22], ODS [n=3/30], SZ [n=3/25]); and of these, 21 candidates completed a questionnaire either by mail or via the Internet. As there is such a small Czech sample, this data may only be used with the larger comparative dataset which has 1,576 cases from 27 member states yielding an average of 58 respondents per country. In sum, this candidate survey is best used for comparative research (see, Giebler, Haus and Wessels 2010: 230).

26 The European Election Study website for 2009 may be consulted at: <http://www.piredeu.eu/> Note, also <http://www.ees-homepage.net/> For more details about the European election candidate survey see <http://www.piredeu.eu/public/Candidates.asp> (accessed 15/02/2012).

Table 5.3: Rival models of party members economic values in terms of party position and ideological orientation

Independent Variables	<i>Party Strata Model</i>			<i>Ideological Model</i>		
	B	SE	Sig.	B	SE	Sig.
<i>Strata</i>						
Party member	1.22	.92	.183			
Sub-leader low	2.09	.88	.017			
Leader	-2.80	1.12	.013			
Ideological orientation						
Strong pragmatist				2.29	.86	.008
Mild ideologue				-.30	.66	.646
Strong ideologue				1.63	1.52	.283
<i>Socio-demographics</i>						
Age (x10 years)	.52	.22	.020	.60	.22	.007
Education	-1.57	.32	<.001	-1.97	.30	<.001
Czech vs. Moravia	1.00	.59	.090	1.22	.59	.040
Old/new member	-.10	.63	.877	.03	.64	.964
Family member	.50	.60	.409	.36	.61	.552
Intercept	32.34	2.26	<.001	33.08	2.23	<.001
R	.45			.42		
R Square	.20			.18		
Adj. R square	.19			.17		
Standard error of estimate	6.40			6.47		
N	500			500		

Source: Linek and Lyons (2011). Models estimated from KDU-ČSL Membership Survey 2005.

Note that OLS regression model estimates where the dependent variable is a summated rating scale entitled 'Economic Redistribution' constructed from the following issue scales – provision of public goods to citizens, state regulation of the economy, tax, size of the public sector and state aid to farmers. This scale has a reasonable level of internal consistency, Cronbach alpha=.63 and it has a range of 39 points, making it appropriate for OLS analysis.

5.8 Surveys of Party Members

Political parties are generally seen within political science to play a central role in the functioning of representative democracies. For this reason, the effective functioning of parties is acknowledged to be an important determinant of electoral participation, party competition and the operation of representative democracy. One of the methods for exploring the internal workings of parties is to interview a representative sample of party members typically using a postal survey. Such surveys have been mainly undertaken in Scandinavia, Britain, Ireland and the USA (Narud and Skare 1999; Norris 1995; Kennedy et al. 2006; Herrera and Taylor 1994). Within the Czech Republic there have been very few surveys of party members. This is because such work involves obtaining the cooperation of party leaders who are often worried that such survey results will undermine the reputation of the party; and adversely affect them in future elections.

The most extensive survey of party members undertaken to date has been a study of the Christian Democrats (KDU-ČSL) fielded between May and August 2005. A postal survey sent to over two thousand KDU-ČSL members yielded 776 completed questionnaire and hence a 37% response rate. This survey contains seventy-seven questions dealing with (1) reasons for joining the party, (2) contact with the local party organisation, (3) activity within the party, (4) political attitudes, (5) attitudes toward the party, (6) attitudes toward politicians and (7) political sympathies. Many of the issue scales were similar to those used in the Czech National Election Study of 2006, thereby facilitating comparison between the policy positions of different strata within the party (low, middle and high defined on the basis of activeness and formal position), voters for the party and the electorate more generally. This research was directed by PhDr. Lukáš Linek PhD., Institute of Sociology, AV ČR. More details about this survey may be obtained in Linek and Pecháček (2006). This data has not been archived with ČSDA.

5.8.1 Testing some facets of May's law in the Czech Republic

One of the most famous propositions within political science, beyond Duverger's law and hypothesis (discussed in the introductory chapter), is John D. May's special law of curvilinear disparity which asserts that the ideological orientations of party members will differ systematically on the basis of position within a party (May 1973). More specifically, middle ranking members of a party are predicted to have the most extreme ideological positions.²⁷ This law has been tested in

27 Kitschelt (1989) reformulated this idea arguing that it was level of activeness rather than formal position within a political party that is systematically related to intra-party attitudinal differences.

many different parties and countries. In general, the survey evidence provides only limited support for May's law of curvilinear disparity. A test of the applicability of May's Law and Kitschelt's (1989) extension of it to KDU-ČSL found very little evidence supporting May's law when tested across almost a dozen issue domains. The only exception to this general finding was Christian Democrat's attitudes toward abortion (Linek and Lyons 2011).

Following a similar strategy to that adopted by Norris (1995: 40–41), the answers of KDU-ČSL members across all 11 issue domains was subject to a Principal Component Analysis (PCA, varimax rotation) in order to see if the "attitudes were structured in a consistent fashion." In short, PCA facilitates exploring systematic differences in the structure of attitudes among (a) different party strata as emphasised by May (1973), and (b) contrasting ideological or pragmatic elements within a party stressed by Kitschelt (1989). The final PCA model estimated had two factors. The first was interpreted as 'economic redistribution' as it contains strong loadings from almost all of the economic items, i.e. provision of public services, state regulation of the economy, tax, size of the public sector, and state aid to farmers. This factor explains 26% of the total variance. The second factor was interpreted as being a 'post-materialism' dimension. It contained the following three issue scales: economy vs. environment, the security vs. civil liberties of the crime issue, and attitudes toward European integration. This second weaker dimension explains 17% of the total variance.

The first (and strongest) factor was thereafter the dependent variable in a regression model where the goal was to statistically compare May's (1973) strata or Kitschelt's (1989) pragmatist-ideologue explanations of the underlying attitudinal differences observed. The results of this modelling exercise are presented in Table 5.3. The most striking aspect of the two models estimated is that in all cases at least one of the party stratification measures, i.e. position, or ideology are statistically significant even when our standard set of socio-demographic items are also included.

These results are important for two reasons. First, the relationship between the structure of political parties and attitudinal patterns is more strongly apparent when general opinion structures are examined. Second, other features of voters and party members such as those captured by their socio-demographic characteristics are more consistently important in explaining specific issue positions and general orientation. In general, the results shown in Table 5.3 demonstrate the importance of age, level of education and place of residence as determinants of substantive opinion structures within parties. Although May (1973) stressed the importance of such sociological variables, he did not give them an independent weight beyond the processes associated with selection and socialisation due

to the endogenous nature of his causal explanation. The evidence presented in Table 5.3 shows that social position is a more important determinant of intra-party attitudinal differences than either May's strata or Kitschelt's ideological explanations.

The key message from this research is that the study of the internal workings of Czech political parties is in its infancy. With cooperation from party leaders and members it should be possible to replicate this research with a broader range of parties; and hence explore how different partisan ideologies (left vs. right) and institutional differences determine intra-party attitudinal differences.

Conclusion

Lewis A. Coser's (1977) opening reference at the start of this chapter very neatly captures the central political questions faced by reformers in 1968 and 1990. It is no accident that some of the key studies of Czech elites examined in this chapter explored elite structures and attitudes in 1969 and the early 1990s. Both the communist and post-communist regimes have had to deal with a key question of political stability: the circulation of elites. Low levels of circulation lead to stagnation, apathy and eventual regime decay and death: as happened under communism. High levels of circulation result in permanent instability with resulting general welfare losses. Frič's (2010) study of contemporary Czech elites suggests that power is concentrated among a small number of "insiders" and creates the conditions for future regime instability.

The review of the data relating to Czech political elites since 1969 reveals a rich source of empirical evidence for testing a wide range of theories and models relating to the origins, structure and dynamics of elites across two regime types. In addition, this chapter has demonstrated how mass and elite surveys may be productively combined to explore the nature of the relationship between the governors and the governed. Such combined datasets and analyses provided invaluable information about regime stability and the nature of political representation, and provide evidence for proposals regarding the reform of political institutions.

As a final point, it is important to be aware that unlike mass surveying where there is a fairly standard set of methodological techniques; elite surveys in contrast tend to have customised procedures that are specific to a research project. There are two main reasons for this difference. First, there is no definitive theory of elites and rival perspectives stress different structures and variables resulting in specific research designs. Second, identification of the sub-population of elites and sampling from this set of individuals is not as simple as taking samples

from an entire population of citizens. As a result, almost all studies have different elite samples making comparison of survey data and results much more difficult than is the case with mass surveys.

In this respect, the efforts of international research groups such as IntUne represent one of the most recent attempts to standardise the study of elites (and elite-public gaps); and ensure that this stream of research in political science yields a research agenda where results are cumulative. In the past, such laudable endeavours have had limited success because ‘follow-up’ research never emerged or new research agenda’s employed alternative methodologies. It is curious that the survey based study of top decision makers remains so much less developed than research on citizens and their political attitudes. Undoubtedly, ease of access to citizens in contrast to elites and the democratic view that citizens should be interviewed or polled about issues helps to explain this difference.

In the last two chapters, the focus has been on elites’ attitudes and behaviours and linkage to citizens. In the next chapter, we will extend this discussion to examine an alternative form of surveying that has been developed to measure the policy positions of political parties. This line of research is important because data from this work is often used to estimate and test spatial models of party competition: spatial models are one of the most influential approaches within contemporary political science. Consequently, the topic examined in the next chapter is expert surveys and the Comparative Manifesto Project’s content analysis of party electoral platforms.

Chapter 6

Expert and Manifesto Data Research

Content analysis has no magical qualities — you rarely get out of it more than you put in, and sometimes you get less. In the last analysis, there is no substitute for a good idea.

Bernard Berelson (1948: 518)

If someone devises a way to measure party policy positions – whether this is based on content analysis, roll call voting patterns, opinion surveys or anything else – the first question that arises has to do with the substantive validity of the measurements being generated [...] There is an obvious danger that proponents of some particular measure will deploy expert opinion selectively and rhetorically, citing experts whose views are sympathetic and ignoring others. The great virtue of an expert survey is that it sets out to summarize the judgments of the consensus of experts on the matters at issue, and moreover to do so in a systematic way.

K. Benoit and M. Laver (2006: 9)

Introduction

Within political science the estimation of policy positions of political actors is an important and growing area of research. Many of the theoretical explanations of such diverse phenomena as party competition, coalition and government formation, intra-party politics and election campaigning are based on both the absolute and relative policy positions of candidates, parties and voters. Such theoretical explanations often associated with the rational choice approach to politics argue that political actors are not only motivated by securing positions of power and the benefits victory bestows (office seeking motivations); but politicians and parties also have ideals about how society should be organised and run (policy seeking motivations).

In general, citizens assume that all candidates seeking election have an office seeking motivation. Consequently, one key criterion in choosing how to cast a vote involves deciding which candidate or party has the best plans or policies for achieving public goals. A central feature of election campaigns are the policy platforms that parties offer to voters. Here it is generally thought that voters

select the party whose policy position is closest to them. This spatial (or Downsian) explanation of party competition and vote choice depends on being able to measure the policy positions of both voters and parties (Downs 1957).

Previous chapters in this volume have focussed on the measurement of *citizens'* political attitudes such as left-right orientation. In the following pages, attention will concentrate on alternative methods of estimating the policy positions of *political parties* rather than voters. Having independent measures of political actors' policy positions and general ideological orientations is important for methodological reasons. Within mass surveys there is a tendency for respondents to place themselves and their preferred parties improbably close to each other on a policy space (an assimilation effect) and disliked parties far away (a contrast effect). With these assimilation and contrast effects there is a systematic bias in survey based measures of parties ideological and policy positions (Sherif and Hovland 1961; Granberg 1977; Merrill, Grofman and Adams 2001). This bias may result from question ordering where a respondent is first asked to place themselves on a left-right scale; and thereafter requested to do the same for a set of parties. Such a procedure may result in a psychological process called 'priming' leading to the assimilation and contrast effects noted above.

Consequently, it is important to have independent measures of parties' and voters' ideological and policy positions when exploring spatial models of party competition, coalition and government formation. Moreover, research on legislative and intra-party behaviour is better suited to policy measures that directly reflect the questions of interest. In the last chapter, there was a discussion of how elite surveys of members of legislative parties contribute to this stream of research. An alternative and popular approach is to utilise other observational methods that indirectly estimate the policy positions of parties.

This chapter will show that within political science there are rich sources of data available to explore the policy positions of Czech political parties both comparatively and across time. Each approach has certain strengths and weaknesses, and sometimes there is the possibility of combining different data sources to obtain contrasting, but complimentary perspectives. In the first section of this chapter, there is an overview of the Comparative Manifesto Project (CMP): an important source of data on parties that is comparative both spatially and temporally. This is followed in section two by an examination of expert surveys; and their use both in the Czech Republic and cross-nationally. Section three presents comparisons between expert surveys and content analysis of texts and discusses some advanced techniques in the analysis of political documents. Thereafter, in the conclusion there is a critical overview of the merits and limits of using expert survey and CMP data in making valid and reliable inferences.

6.1 Comparative Manifesto Project (CMP) Data

One of the largest sources of data generated by the political system is text deriving from speeches, policy documents, election campaign material, political declarations and interviews. Within political science the most common method for estimating party policy positions has been to employ content analysis techniques on party platforms issued during election campaigns.¹ These documents, often substantial in size, reflect the party's principles and policy goals should they enter government.

In the past, the most common method of analysing such textual data was to manually code segments of the text (typically quasi-sentences) on the basis of an a priori coding scheme. This work was often undertaken by a team of coders where the reliability of the coding was established by statistically comparing the results with a correctly coded text. Such an approach helps ensure the inter-coder reliability facet of data quality (Krippendorf 2004b; von Eye and Mun 2005; Hayes and Krippendorf 2007; Baumgartner et al. 2008).

The Manifesto Research Group or Comparative Manifesto Project (MRG or CMP) represents the most developed and extensive research programme undertaken in the manual coding of election platforms across fifty countries since 1945. The hand coding of party manifestos started in 1979 under the direction of Ian Budge (Essex University, UK) and transferred to the WZB in Berlin in 1989. At present, CMP has generated content analysis data on more than three thousand eight hundred party programmes issued at 593 elections from more than 850 parties in Europe, North America, Oceania and Asia (Volkens et al. 2011).²

The CMP dataset is based on a specific model of party competition called Saliency Theory which argues that political parties produce election platforms that are broadly similar to each other in discussing a common set of public policy issues. The reason that parties converge in this manner is their desire to maximise votes by appealing to the broadest range of citizens' preferences. See Box 6.1

1 The classic texts in the use of content analysis in the social sciences are Berelson (1952) and Holsti (1969). These books still provide a clear introduction to this field of research. For an overview of content analysis see Krippendorf (2004a) where the focus is on historical, theoretical and methodological issues. Unfortunately, this text has little information on content analysis software. In this respect, see an unpublished paper by Lowe (2007) which reviews 21 content analysis programs; and is a useful starting point for the novice.

2 All data and documentation such as the codebook, list of countries, parties and elections explored in the CMP may be downloaded from the following internet site: <http://manifestoproject.wzb.eu/>. Currently, there are data for all elections in the Czech Republic since 1990 except for the most recent one in 2010. The CMP dataset has been used extensively; Benoit, Laver and Mikheylov (2009) report more than a hundred academic articles are based on analysis of this data source.

Box 6.1: Procedure used by CMP in the manual content analysis of party's election platforms or manifestos

The construction and use of the CMP dataset is based on a specific conception of party competition called *saliency theory*. This theory assumes that all parties produce similar election platforms in order to be close to the median voter, and hence win as many votes as possible. There will always of course be extremist parties who have no realistic aspirations of attracting strong popular support. Consequently, the main difference between parties is how much they emphasise specific themes within their election manifestos. Differences in emphasis reflect the reputation specific parties have with the voters with some parties effectively 'owning' some issues. For example, Green parties' reputation is based on protection of the environment and hence its election platform contains lots of discussion of this topic (note, Budge 1994; Budge et al. 2001).

1. A coder, typically a country expert, is allocated a specific party's election manifesto. This text document is subsequently divided into discrete, non-overlapping text units known as 'quasi-sentences.' Quasi-sentences are defined as blocks of text that provide information about a single policy. Quasi-sentences may be either partial or complete natural sentences.
2. The quasi-sentences are first assigned to one of seven broad policy domains, and thereafter subsequently further classified into 54 mutually exclusive policy categories. The seven broad policy domains are external relations, freedom and democracy, political system, economy, welfare and quality of life, fabric of society and social groups.
3. Category counts are estimated and from this information percentages are then calculated by dividing by the number of quasi-sentences in each of the 54 policy categories by the total number of sentences in the entire manifesto document. See appendix 6.1 for details.
4. The CMP category percentages are then interpreted as (a) providing data about the policy preferences of the party examined, or (b) the categories may be aggregated to create a simple additive scale that is seen to reflect more general orientations such as left-right (e.g. CMP's rile scale, see appendix 6.2 for details).

One key disadvantage of the CMP approach to estimating party's ideological orientation such as left-right (rile) is that it leads to a conflation of the importance that a party attaches to a policy and the party's policy position. This is because within the CMP's saliency theory of party competition frequent mentioning of a specific position is used to estimate policy position. In effect, the CMP schema assumes implicitly that all policy dimensions are equally important.

In order to overcome these and other problems Laver, Benoit and Mikhaylov (2011) have proposed revising the CMP expert coding and methodology by adopting a new 'hierarchical' classification system based on 'natural sentences' (rather than 'quasi-sentences' as currently used in CMP) and use of multiple rather than single coders to improve reliability. With this new expert coding of political text system, party policy positions (rather than emphases) and uncertainty estimates are generated.

for more details on how saliency theory is linked to the construction of the CMP dataset. The CMP dataset, as Box 6.1 demonstrates, is based on the coding of a party manifesto into a set of quasi-sentences that are classified into 54 exclusive categories and 7 broad thematic domains. This general system of classification aims to map the entire range of policy positions in the fifty or more countries that have participated in the CMP to date.³ Obviously, not all text in a party's policy platform can be coded. On average about 7% of a typical manifesto cannot be

³ The formulation of a classification scheme is one of the most important steps in any content analysis (Berelson 1952: 147; Holsti 1969: 95). The validity of the research depends fundamentally on developing an appropriate coding frame; and this may be more important than (inter-coder) reliability (note, Rourke and Anderson 2004).

classified within the scheme outlined in Appendix 6.1 because the document addresses extraneous topics that are either of a non-policy or idiosyncratic nature.⁴

In the Czech case, the mean unclassifiable rate for the period examined is 3% and thus lower than the cross-national average. However, there is considerable variation among the 39 Czech parties coded between 1990 and 2006. The right wing Civic Democrats (ODS) party had the highest unclassifiable rate at 25% in 1996, followed by 19% for the small Pensioners Party (DZJ) again in 1996; and 11% for the extreme right wing Republican Party (SPR-RSČ) in 1998. For a third of parties examined, all quasi-sentences were coded within the CMP classification system.

More than half ($n=28$) of the 54 discrete categories within the CMP system of content analysis of party platforms are bipolar, e.g. per 406 protection positive (left) and per 407 protection negative (right). There are a further 17 CMP categories that are unipolar because they refer to single facets of public policy choices, e.g. per 103 anti-imperialism or colonialism, per 106 peace positive, per 202 democracy positive, per 304 political corruption negative. The unipolar categories are important because they reflect the consensus view of a large majority of citizens and parties in advanced democracies. Such consensus views may not apply in other countries or at future time points suggesting that the coding scheme may require revision.

Within this unipolar and bipolar classification scheme, it is assumed that a quasi-sentence may only refer to a single policy position. However, there are situations where a single quasi-sentence should be given a 'double' coding because the party message is logically supportive of one policy stance and against another. One pertinent example is the trade-off between economic growth and protection of the environment. A manifesto statement arguing that environmental policy should not constrain economic growth within the CMP classification system could only be coded as 'Free enterprise: positive' (per401) because there is no 'Environment: negative' (i.e. the opposite of per501) coding.

More generally, Lowe et al. (2011: 135–138) argue that the utility of the CMP classification system could be extended if the categories in the current coding scheme could be combined additively to generate more valid and reliable left-right scales. For example, the economy vs. environment trade-off could be operationalised as 'Anti-growth economy: positive' (per416) plus 'Environmental protection: positive' (per501) minus 'Productivity: positive' (per410). Another key theoretical and modelling issue relates to the data generating process un-

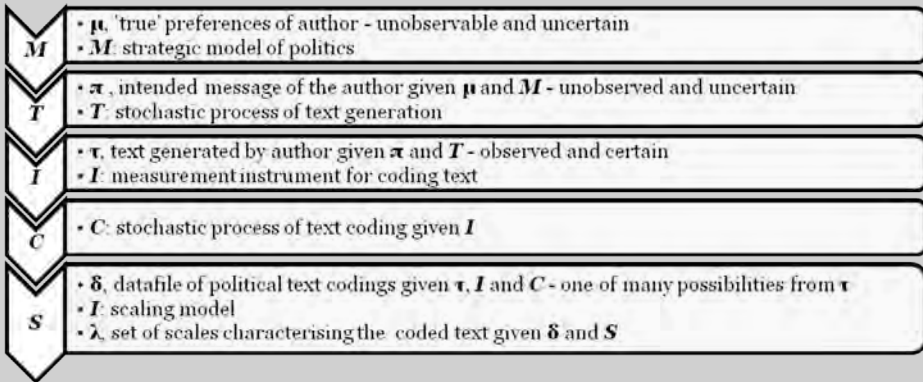
4 This unclassifiable category while of little substantive interest may be important because CMP estimates of the left-right (rile) policy position of parties across countries and time is based on net scores. See a later sub-section for details. The key point is that changes in the unclassifiable rate can result in changes in left-right score leading to the theoretical possibility that changes in a party's net left-right score may result from variation in the unclassifiable rate across elections rather than actual changes in emphasis in the party's manifesto.

Box 6.2: A model of the data generating process for expert content analysis

A central assumption in the analysis of all political text is that the author(s) are expressing a true policy position μ (mu). Since political situations are often strategic (M) in nature it is often impossible to directly observe μ either in its sincere or strategic formulations. The text or signal that is communicated may be called the 'intended message' π (pi): this is also unobserved because this is only known to the author(s). The text that is communicated, τ (tau), and is the authors' representation of π . Each time the author expresses π a slightly different τ will be generated.

The political text, τ , is the basis for expert content analysis where sentences (or some other text unit such as 'quasi' or 'natural' sentences are coded using a system I ; that is typically composed of a set of categories. The process of expert coding is subjective in that the coder decides what the text unit means and stochastic in the sense that the same will not always be coded in exactly the same way by either the same expert (across time) or different experts (at the same time point). Consequently, the coding process C that uses I to map τ into dataset of text codes, δ (delta), are measured with uncertainty. This process has been evident in studies of CMP data (Klingemann et al. 2006: 112; Mikhaylov, Laver and Benoit 2008).

Schematic overview of the data generating process for political text



Source: derived from Benoit, Laver and Mikhaylov (2009: 497). Note the arrows (M , T , I , C and S) refer to modelling steps and the parameters (μ , π , τ , δ and λ) to be estimated. The set of scales, λ , facilitate making inferences about μ , π and τ .

Political researchers use the coded dataset, δ , to make estimates about the original author(s) policy position(s). Expert coded datasets are subject to a scaling analysis using one model S from a multitude of possible scaling models that could be used. The application of scaling model S to δ will result in a set of scales λ (lambda), e.g. the CMP's left-right (rile) scale [see Appendix 6.2]. Again, λ represents only one subset of the total number of scales that could be estimated by using the scaling model S on the coded dataset δ . Once λ has been estimated, the political researcher uses these results to make inferences about the original author(s)'s true policy preferences μ or intended policy message τ . Making valid and reliable inferences with expert coded datasets, δ , depends critically on theoretical models linking τ , π and μ . Benoit, Laver and Mikhaylov's (2009) used this model to measure the level of uncertainty in CMP estimates of party policy positions make 5 assumptions that are likely to be relaxed in future research: (1) $\pi = \tau$, (2) the stochastic nature of the expert coding process C is unbiased, (3) the impact of alternative coding schemes to S are ignored, (4) difference in emphases are used to estimate policy in according with the salience theory used in CMP, (5) the CMP expert data are assumed to have a multinomial distribution.

This research shows that including measurement error with CMP explanatory variables changes the substantive interpretation of models tested. In short, measurement error in variables should not be ignored as this form of error can lead to biased estimates and invalid inferences. The more general lesson here is that all political data analysis should take account of the fact that most often explanatory (and outcome) variables are measured with error. For more details see Benoit, Laver and Mikhaylov (2009); Lowe et al. (2011) and Mikhaylov, Laver and Benoit (2008).

derpinning CMP data and measurement error. Box 6.2 outlines a model of how CMP data is generated and questions the assumption that CMP party estimates are measured without error, a position adopted in most published research.

6.1.1 Deductive and inductive uses of CMP data

Notwithstanding these important methodological issues regarding validity and reliability, there are two broad ways in which the current CMP (and expert survey) dataset may be analysed. The first method adopts a deductive approach where specific sub-categories are judged a priori on the basis of theory and previous experience to be indicators of a left or right wing orientation. The most important example of this deductive approach is the CMP's own left-right (rile) scale, which is constructed additively by estimating a left wing score using data from 13 left categories and a similar right wing score is calculated from 13 right wing ones. Thereafter, the aggregated left-wing score is subtracted from the right wing one to yield a *net* left-right score.⁵ The results of this procedure for the Czech Republic are shown in Figure 6.1 where party positions for all elections between 1990 and 2006 are displayed.

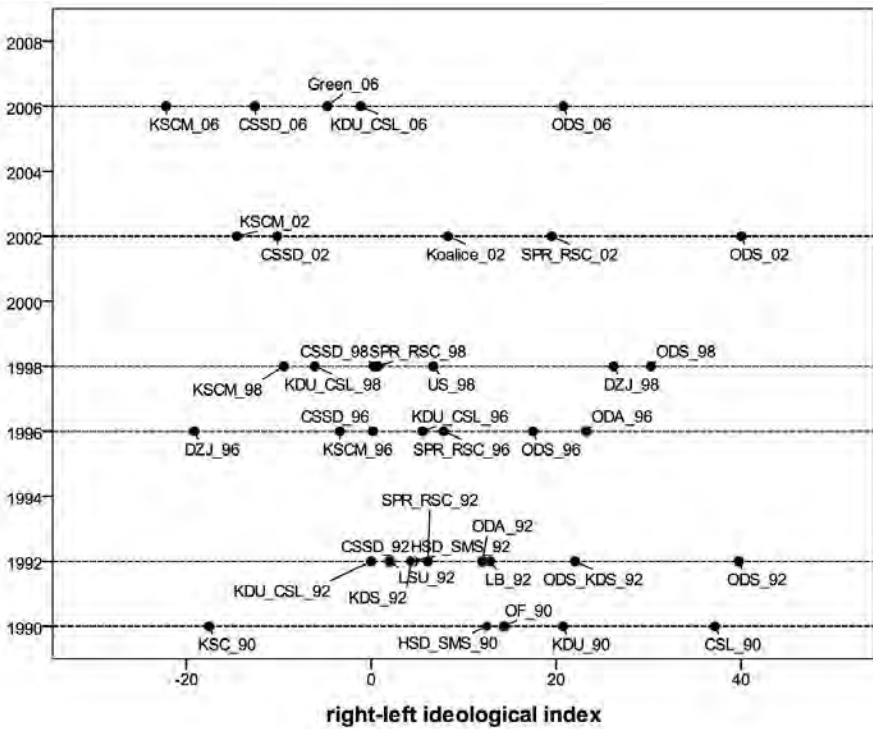
The results of this deductive approach appear to have face validity as the relative positioning of Czech parties matches with the ordering made by expert political commentators and scholars.⁶ The movement of specific party's left-right position across the six elections shown in Figure 6.1 suggests a drift toward the centre in the 1992 general election. On this occasion, the newly formed and successful right-wing Civic Democrats (ODS) led by Václav Klaus adopted a stridently right wing stance. In the following election in 1996, ODS appears to have moderated its right wing position. However, this proved to be a temporary strategy because in all following elections ODS remained consistently the most right wing party. The pattern of left-right party policy positions adopted in the general elections of 2002 and 2006 reveal a system of party competition strongly polarised between the large parties on the left (KSČM and ČSSD) and right (ODS).

An alternative (inductive) approach is to use all the CMP data, which contains counts or percentages of the number of quasi-sentences classified into the 54 exclusive categories, and subject it to a data reduction analysis. The goal here is to inductively estimate the positions of parties in a low dimensional policy space

5 It is important to stress that the CMP dataset contains counts or percentages of the number of quasi-sentences classified into the 54 exclusive categories. As noted in the text, it is often not possible to classify about 7% of the text in a manifesto. Scholars have often used the CMP's own composite left-right scale (Rile) composed of the net difference of a total of 26 left and right coding categories.

6 For a useful overview and comparison of the ideological orientations of Czech political parties (past and present) in comparative perspective, see Hloušek and Kopeček (2010).

Figure 6.1: Estimates of left-right position of Czech parties between 1990 and 2006 from CMP data using a deductive 'a priori' approach



Source: estimates derived from Volkens et al. (2011)

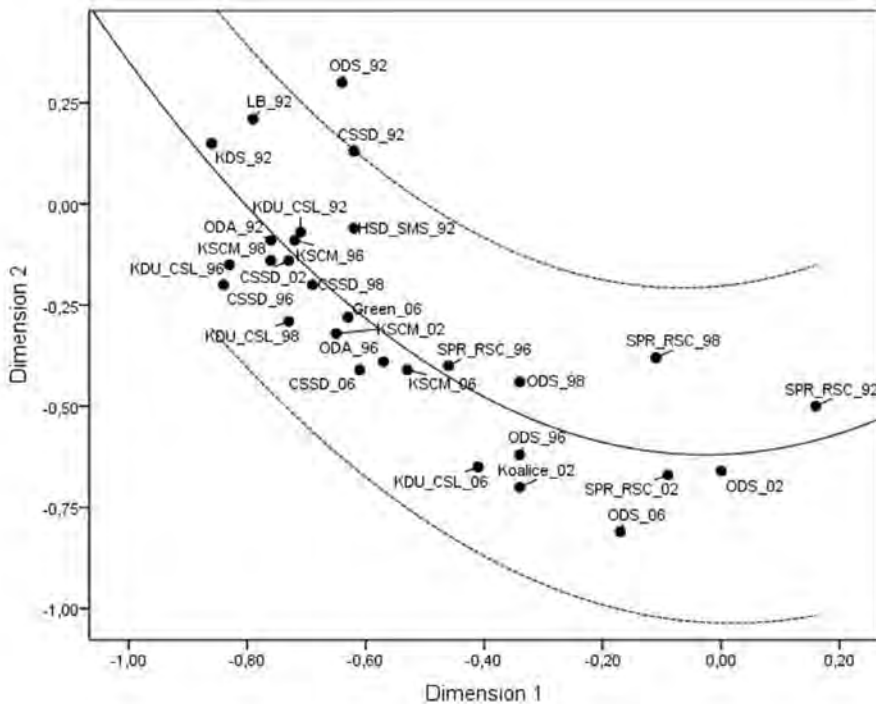
The right-left ideological (rile) index is estimated as the net score from 26 (i.e. 13 right and 13 left wing) categories that generate a broad socio-economic left-right placement scale. The CMP's right-left (rile) estimator of party policy position as outlined originally in Laver and Budge (1992) is shown in detail in Appendix 6.2.

using techniques such as Principal Components Analysis (PCA), Explanatory Factor Analysis (EFA) or Multi-Dimensional Scaling (MDS, proxscal). The inductive approach to analysing CMP data makes three main assumptions.

First, party competition and hence the party system itself may be validly and reliably represented in a low dimensional policy space. Comparative research using a variety of data sources demonstrates that almost all party systems may be represented by a two dimensional space: often a single dimension explains most of the variance observed. Second, the CMP (or any other source such as expert surveys or content analysis of media reports) dataset provides sufficient information to capture all relevant features of party competition. Some of the critiques

noted earlier question this assumption. Third, if data are examined for more than one election, such an exercise is only valid; if one is willing to accept that the nature of party competition has remained constant during the period under review. Here the PCA or MDS models essentially ‘freeze’ time, and assume that the underlying factors shaping party competition such as economic left-right or social liberal-conservative are stable.

Figure 6.2: A spatial map of Czech political parties in a two dimensional policy space using CMP data and an inductive ‘a posteriori’ approach, 1992–2006



Source: estimates derived from Volkens et al. (2011)

This two dimensional spatial map of the policy positions of Czech political parties was estimated using principal components analysis with direct oblimin rotation of all CMP categories. The first democratic elections of 1990 have been excluded from analysis as the party manifestos for this election are unique. A number of small parties have also been excluded (e.g. DZJ) because of estimation problems (i.e. positive definite matrices). The solid line is a regression fit line ($R^2 = .61$) that is quadratic or u-shaped indicating a floor effect on the bottom right of this figure. The dotted lines represent 95% (individual) confidence intervals. These confidence intervals reveal that the ODS and CSSD positions for 1992 are somewhat unique.

An example of this inductive form of analysis for the Czech Republic between 1992 and 2006 is shown in Figure 6.2 where there appears to be a broadly negative relationship between parties' positions on both dimensions. Using the relative positioning of parties; one might interpret the first dimension as being left-right ranging from Left-Bloc (LB, a splinter from the Czechoslovak Communist Party) in 1992 to the extreme right wing Republic Party (SPR-RSČ) in 1992, and ODS in 2002. However, such an interpretation must somehow explain why ODS is on the "left" in 1992; and has a similar position to the Social Democrats (ČSSD). The second dimension is equally difficult to interpret as ODS in 1992 and 2006 is located at opposite poles of this dimension.

These results demonstrate that some of the assumptions underpinning the PCA estimates shown in Figure 6.2 are not valid. A more detailed PCA model is presented in Table 6.1 where a four factor solution has been reported. This table shows that in the Czech Republic there are important election specific effects where the positions of parties cluster on the basis of specific contests. This is particularly evident in the case of the first democratic elections of 1990: almost all of the parties that competed in this election are located on the second dimension.

Otherwise, the party positions shown in Table 6.1 tend to load on specific dimensions on the basis of a very similar or common ideology. The first dimension which explains most variance (48%) is composed of Social or Christian Democratic parties who competed in elections mainly between 1998 and 2006. The third dimension is composed solely of right-wing parties (ODS and SPR-RSČ) for the 2002 and 2006 elections, while the fourth dimension is composed of the same right-wing parties for the earlier elections of 1996 and 1998.

These results confirm the intuition developed from our examination of Figure 6.1 that an inductive dimensional analysis of Czech CMP data will exhibit both ideological and specific election effects. As a result, two dimensional maps of Czech parties' positions as shown in Figure 6.1 yield complex results as temporal and ideological effects are intermixed. In other words, the PCA estimates shown in Table 6.1 reveal that Czech party competition exhibits some strong election specific features. This pattern suggests that both office and policy seeking motivations are driving the movement of parties in our policy space.

This fact is important because it provides indirect evidence (via what could be easily dismissed as a methodological artefact) of a learning process; where Czech parties are not above copying and adopting each other's policy platforms in the hope that such mimicry would yield better electoral outcomes. Use of an imitation ("do-what-others-do") heuristic is a common strategy of social learning in situations of decision-making under uncertainty (note, Gigerenzer and En-

Table 6.1: Inductive analysis of CMP data for Czech parties, 1990–2006

<i>Parties and election year</i>	<i>Dimensions extracted</i>			
	<i>Dim 1</i>	<i>Dim 2</i>	<i>Dim 3</i>	<i>Dim 4</i>
Czech Social Democrats: ČSSD_06	1.00			
Czech Communist Party: KSČM_06	.91			
Czech Social Democrats: ČSSD_02	.84			
Czech Christian Democrats: KDU_ČSL_06	.84			
Czech Christian Democrats: KDU_ČSL_98	.81			
Green Party: Green_06	.79			
Czech Communist Party: KSČM_02	.76			
KDU-CSL, US-DEU: Koalice_02	.74		.44	
Czech Social Democrats: ČSSD_98	.69			
Czech Social Democrats: ČSSD_96	.67			
Czech Christian Democrats: KDU_ČSL_96	.66			
Czech Christian Democrats: KDU_ČSL_92	.61	.43		
Czech Communist Party: KSČM_98	.56			.50
Czechoslovak Communist Party: KSČ_90	≤.40			
Czech Christian Democrats: ČSL_90		.91		
Civic Democrat Party: ODS_92		.85		
Czech Christian Democrats: KDU_90		.85		
Civic Forum: OF_90		.68		
Czech Social Democrats: ČSSD_92		≤.40		
Civic Democrat Party: ODS_02			.70	
Civic Democrat Party: ODS_06	.55		.59	
Republican Party: SPR_RSC_92			.56	
Republican Party: SPR_RSC_02			.55	
Civic Democrat Party: ODS_96	.46		.48	
Republican Party: SPR_RSC_98				.71
Czech Communist Party: KSČM_96				.71
Republican Party: SPR_RSC_96				.70
Civic Democrat Party: ODS_98				.65
Eigenvalue	13.54	2.83	1.81	1.51
Eigenvalue (% of total variance)	48.37	10.10	6.48	5.41
Cumulative eigenvalue	48.37	58.47	64.95	70.35
Correlation between dimensions	Dim 1	Dim 2	Dim 3	Dim 4
Dim 1 (Social and Christian democracy)	1.00			
Dim 2 (First elections in 1990)	.34	1.00		
Dim 3 (Right-wing parties)	.24	.04	1.00	
Dim 4 (Extreme parties in 1996 and 1998 elections)	.49	.20	.17	1.00

Source: analysis of Volkens et al. (2011) dataset

Note this table presents the results of an exploratory principal components analysis using a direct oblimin rotation as there is likely to be correlations between the extracted latent factors. A number of smaller parties such as ODA, US, DZJ were excluded from the analysis because inclusion of all parties resulted in estimation problems due to positive definite matrices. This table is the pattern matrix and represents the beta weights that reproduce the variable scores from the factor scores. Factor loadings less than .4 have been excluded in order to improve the clarity of the presentation. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) Measure of Sampling Adequacy = .83 Bartlett's Test of Sphericity = 2960.88, $df(378)$, $p \leq .001$

gel 2006).⁷ It is important to note here that if Czech parties do indeed chase after new voters in each election (one reason for the election specific effects noted above): this may have some undesirable consequences for democratic representation. Vote seeking parties will adopt policy positions that reflect the preferences of their *future* (potential) supporters, thereby making all *current* party voters dislike what parties have to offer. As a result, there is general disenchantment with all parties (see Laver 2011).

One curious feature of Table 6.1 is the manner in which the Communist Party exhibits progressively stronger loadings on the first dimension over time (where the 1996 election is an exception). Again, one might explain this pattern as evidence of social learning where the KSČM has increasingly adopted a profile similar to its most likely coalition party, the ČSSD.

The goal of this section has been to demonstrate, through a review of the literature and empirical examples, the potential of CMP datasets for examining important features of the Czech political system such as party competition. In the next section, our attention will shift to another key source of data that facilitates estimating party policy positions: expert surveys. As will be shown later, the scope for research with expert surveys of Czech parties' policy positions is more restricted because there are considerably less data. Nonetheless, there have been important studies that provide insight into such things as parties' attitudes toward the European Union and process of integration.

As a final point, it is important to note that comparison of CMP and expert survey data (such as the Benoit and Laver 2006 expert survey dataset) reveals that with regard to left-right; the latter may be more accurate because "they contain less measurement error" (Benoit and Laver 2007: 103). The implication here is that for some research tasks use of expert survey data may be more appropriate. However as we shall see a little later, the choice of data for estimating party policy positions and the dimensionality of a party system is complicated.

6.2 Expert surveys

An expert survey is a study of the policy positions of parties using country specialists or experts, typically political scientists. A similar methodology to that

7 The use of strategies such as imitation in multiparty competition is difficult to model because of its complex dynamic and strategic nature. There is often insufficient data to model party behaviour in a way that reflects its dynamism. Recently, agent based models have been used to explore in a computational manner the dynamics of multiparty competition in order to generate useful "intuitions" that will inform future empirical work (note, Laver 2005; Fowler and Laver 2008; Laver, Sargent and Schilperoord 2011; Laver and Sargent 2012).

employed in mass surveys is used to construct a sampling frame: political experts from academia and the media are typically identified as potential respondents. Thereafter, the entire population of experts are sent a mail, email or web-based survey to complete. Often surveying occurs after a general election where there is a process of mapping out the policy profiles of parties currently in parliament and government. The response rate for expert surveys is typically around 25%.

There are three main advantages to using expert surveys. First, they can provide valid and reliable standardised data on the policy position of parties cross-nationally in a cost effective manner without the need for expensive mass surveys. Second, the estimates of party policy positions based on expert evaluations is of high quality as the respondents are all independent experts. In mass surveys many respondents are uninformed, and consequently estimates often have non-negligible levels of non-response and measurement error. Third, expert surveys are relatively convenient to undertake in comparison to the manual content analysis of party's election manifestos or exploring thousands of roll call votes in legislatures (Mair 2001; Curini 2010).

Recent research by Curini (2010) dealing with the use of expert survey data in Italy revealed that the Benoit and Laver (2006) data may suffer from measurement error due to 'expert bias.' Here expert bias refers to respondents with a self-identified left wing orientation assigning right wing parties more extreme positions than all other experts. Evidence of this form of response bias (or contrast effect) undermines the validity of expert judgments. In a study of two expert surveys fielded in Italy in 2003 and 2006, Curini (2010) found using a multi-dimensional unfolding analysis technique that the level of expert bias observed was more strongly associated with the policy preferences of experts than the left-right position of the parties examined. Expert bias is mainly evident for a small number of parties ($\approx 10\%$) on the right; and relates primarily to the left-right dimension; and was seen to be "less pronounced" for the other dimensions examined. Such results suggest that experts exhibit similar cognitive biases (i.e. contrast effects), although to an attenuated degree, as voters in estimating party's policy positions (note, Merrill, Grofman and Adams 2001).

6.2.1 Early expert surveys, 1984–2002

The undertaking of expert surveys within political science may be traced to Castles and Mair's (1984) exploration of the policy positions of parties across Europe and elsewhere using the concept of left-right.⁸ In this seminal study, a postal questionnaire was sent to experts in 16 countries where respondents were asked

⁸ According to Gabel and Huber (2000: 94 fn.1) the first known use of an expert survey within political science is a doctoral dissertation exploring government formation (Morgan 1976).

to locate their national parties on a 10-point left-right scale. Potential methodological problems such as systematic bias in the estimates provided by individual respondents were dealt with by using the mean scores for all country experts. This approach was innovative for the 1980s because it gave scholars an accessible and standardised basis for comparing the ideological orientation of parties both within and across countries for this period (Mair and Castles 1997).

This work was later expanded by Huber and Inglehart (1995) who implemented an expert survey in 40 countries: including many states in Central and Eastern Europe for the first time. While the Mair and Castles expert survey from the 1980s implicitly took left-right positioning of parties at face value, Huber and Inglehart's expert survey in the early 1990s explicitly examined how country specialists conceptualised left-right when evaluating party's policy positions. Experts' conceptualisation of left-right was mapped out in terms of ten categories.⁹ One key implication from this research is that the concept of left-right orientation of parties across Europe and elsewhere is not the same. In essence, this research revealed that not only had each country its own version of left-right, but experts within a specific country used different criteria to locate parties on a left-right dimension. This study indicated that validity problems in expert surveys were likely to undermine use of this type of data.

The Laver and Hunt (1992: 45–46) expert survey also explicitly explored the multi-dimensional nature of the left-right scale by asking experts to (a) evaluate parties across 8 dimensions and (b) rate the salience of each dimension. This expert survey implemented in most countries in 1987 was replicated in a smaller subset of countries a decade later. Analysis of all scales revealed that there was a single underlying left-right dimension in all countries examined (Laver 1998). In this survey, country specialists were also asked to locate party leaders and voters on the same scale because the policy positions of these two groups are often not the same.¹⁰

6.2.2 Party policy in modern democracies, 2002 - 2008

In one of the largest expert survey programmes undertaken to date, experts were asked to (1) place all major parties in their country on a set of 15 dimensions relating to the economy, social policy, the EU and other region and country specif-

9 These categories are economic or class conflict, centralisation of power, authoritarianism versus democracy, isolation versus internationalism, traditional versus new culture, xenophobia, conservatism versus change, property rights, constitutional reform and national defence.

10 One interpretation of May's law of curvilinear disparity argues that party leaders and voters will have closer policy positions than middle party members (May 1973). This model of intra-party attitudes only refers to specific policy positions and is not applicable to left-right orientation. Moreover, there is little empirical evidence supportive of May's law (see Section 5.8.1 in Chapter 5).

ic issue areas, (2) rate the salience or importance of each policy domain for each party, and (3) provide a self-report of the expert's sympathy toward each party (Benoit and Laver 2006). This analysis was initially undertaken between 2002 and 2004 in 47 countries across practically all democracies in Europe (n=42), North America (Canada and USA), Oceania (Australia and New Zealand) and Asia (Japan).¹¹ This research has been extended in the intervening period with successive waves of surveying in places such as the Czech Republic in 2006, and Italy in 2006 and 2008.

The sampling frame of experts is taken from the membership of the national political studies association. The definition of parties to be included in the evaluation process is that each party had to have secured at least 1% of the popular vote in the most recent general election. Cross-national comparability is ensured through the use of four core policy dimension scales: (1) economic policy, which is operationalised as the trade-off between lower taxes and higher public spending; (2) social policy, which is measured in terms of policies dealing with abortion, gay rights, and euthanasia; (3) decentralization of decision making and environmental policy, which is constructed as the trade-off between environmental protection and economic growth.

6.2.3 Expert surveys, European integration and CEE states

The European Parliament (EP) is a unique institution because it is (a) the only example of a cross-national representative assembly elected by citizens in frequently elections held every five years since 1979, and (b) this parliament does not elect a government but forms part of a complex process of international law making. The EP like all democratic assemblies is composed of members organised into legislative parties or parliamentary groups. For this reason, the EP has been of particular interest to legislative scholars because it provides a unique forum to explore the contrasting ideological (left-right) and national (member state) motivations for roll-call behaviour.

An expert survey undertaken by Gail McElroy and Kenneth Benoit in May and June 2004 is an interesting example of how this form of data may be used to test rival theories of legislative behaviour. In this study, the specific research question was to test if national parties' membership of European Party Groupings in the EP could be explained in terms of policy congruence. This survey had a relative small sample where 24 out of 36 EU experts contacted agreed to be interviewed. However, this small initial sample was later 'boosted' with data from the larger Benoit and Laver (2006) expert survey, which contained a similar set

11 The manuscript for Benoit and Laver (2006) book and all data are available at: http://www.tcd.ie/Political_Science/ppmd/ (accessed 20/02/2012).

of party policy issue scales (McElroy and Benoit 2007). An examination of this combined expert survey dataset shows that the congruence model of European Party Group membership and switching is based on the logic of minimising policy heterogeneity (McElroy and Benoit 2010).

The first systematic study of European parties' orientation toward the process of European integration using an expert survey was undertaken in late 1990s. In this research using a small set of questions, there was an attempt to plot the position of national parties toward the EU between 1984 and 1996 (Ray 1999). Later, the Chapel Hill Expert Surveys (CHES, 1999–2006) estimated party policy positions in most member states on a set of policy scales that included the EU and left-right. There have been three waves of CHES surveying: 1999, 2002 and 2006 where the number of countries examined has increased from 14 to 24, and the number of parties studied has expanded from 143 to 227. Common to all surveys are questions on parties' general position toward European integration, several EU policies, general left/right, economic left/right and GALTAN.¹² Later surveys also contain questions on non-EU policy issues.¹³

Expert survey research that has focussed primarily on Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) has only been undertaken in the last decade. The most extensive study undertaken by Robert Rohrschneider and Stephen Whitefield between November 2003 and March 2004, explored the orientation of 87 political parties in many post-communist states toward domestic politics and the process of European integration.¹⁴ (See, Rohrschneider and Whitefield 2007, 2009a-c, 2010). As the CHES was undertaken during a similar time period (September 2002 to May 2003) it is possible to compare and cross-validate the results of these two expert surveys for 57 parties in nine CEE states. For the Czech Republic, this allows five parties to be examined. Whitefield et al. (2007) found considerable consistency in the results in both expert surveys.

One substantive implication of this research is that the party systems in post-communist states have stabilised or consolidated; and this is evident in the fact that parties are effective in communicating their policy platforms to both voters and experts. Having briefly looked at research in the CEE region, it makes sense at this point to switch our attention to expert surveys conducted in the Czech Republic.

12 In the study of party support for European integration it was found that attitudes toward the EU along the left-right axis can be seen as an inverted U-curve with low support being concentrated at both ends of the dimension. Hooghe et al. (2002, 2004) put forward an alternative ideological axis that exhibits a linear relationship with support for European integration, that they labelled the GAL-TAN axis. According to their research, support for the EU tends to be high among parties that can be characterised as Green /Alternative /Libertarian (GAL) and low among parties that rather qualify as Traditional /Authoritarian /Nationalist (TAN).

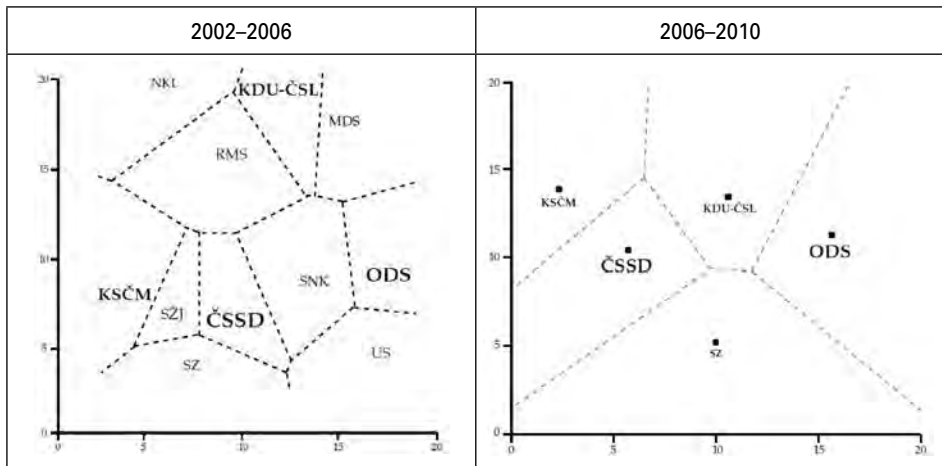
13 The Chapel Hill expert survey dataset is available from http://www.unc.edu/~hooghe/data_pp.php

14 Information available at <http://web.ku.edu/~kurep/research.shtml> (accessed 15/02/2010).

6.2.4 Expert surveying in the Czech Republic

Within the Czech Republic there have been a number of expert surveys exploring general questions such as the nature of the political space and more specific policy questions such as political elite attitudes toward European integration.¹⁵ The Benoit and Laver expert survey has been fielded in the Czech Republic on two occasions: 2003–2004 and 2006. On the latter occasion, some assistance was provided by the Department of Political Sociology, Institute of Sociology v.v.i., AV ČR. Unfortunately, this internet based survey had a very low response rate (n=13) when compared to the previous wave in 2002–2004 (n=107). However, Chytilék and Eibl (2011) replicated the Benoit and Laver expert survey in 2008 and obtained a large sample (n=64).

Figure 6.3: Two dimensional maps of the Czech political space using expert surveys based on a deductive 'a priori' approach



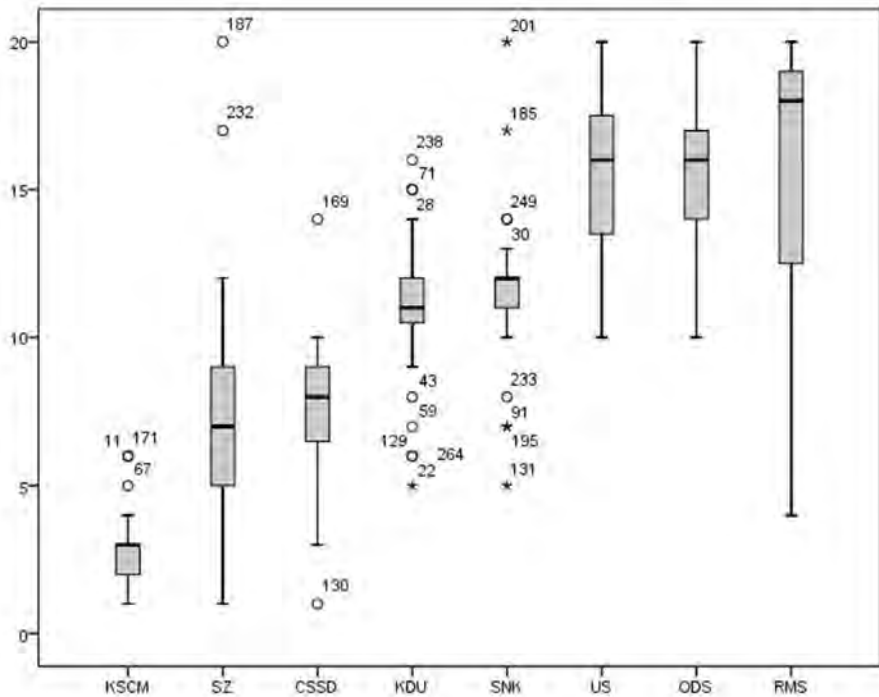
Sources: Benoit and Laver (2006: 200–201); Chytilék and Eibl (2011: 78)

Note for the 2002–2006 spatial map the horizontal (x) axis is privatisation (public vs. private ownership of enterprises, 0–20 scale) and vertical (y) axis is social-liberal conservatism (support vs. oppose liberal policies on abortion, homosexuality, etc. 0–20 scale) In the 2006–2010 figure, the horizontal (x) axis is economic left-right (tax vs. spend, 0–20 scale) and vertical (y) axis is social liberal-conservatism. The dotted lines indicate Voronoi tessellations, or areas on the policy space that are closer to a specific party (at the centre of the tessellation) than all others. This mathematical subdivision of the policy space provides an indication of 'issue ownership.' The relative size of the font for the party acronyms indicates differences in party strength in the lower chamber.

¹⁵ There have undoubtedly been a number of expert political surveys undertaken in the Czech Republic since 1990 that remain unknown to the wider political science community. Reference to some of these surveys has been made in previous chapters. In this chapter, the focus is on research that measures party policy positions and this reduces the set of studies of interest.

The two-dimensional plots of Czech parties policy positions from these two expert surveys across two elections and legislatures reveals some stability and change in the zones of issue ownership attributed to each of the parties. There is an important difference between the left and right panes of Figure 6.3 regarding the number of parties examined: the earlier period has a more ‘fractured’ political space due to the larger number of parties present. In addition, the Benoit and Laver (2006) model on the left of Figure 6.3 and Chytilek and Eibl’s (2011)

Figure 6.4: Estimates of left-right position of Czech parties using expert survey data based on a deductive ‘a priori’ approach



Source: Estimates derived from the Laver and Benoit (2006) expert survey dataset
 Note that the boxes indicate interquartile ranges around the mean score shown as a dark black horizontal in the box. The extended lines (or whiskers) indicate the range of the 95% confidence interval. The circles and stars indicate outliers and the numbers refer to the case numbers in the expert survey dataset. Parties are ranked left to right where low scores close to zero indicate a leftist orientation and high values approaching 20 indicate a right wing position. The estimates refer to party positions following the Chamber Elections of 2002. Labels for party acronyms are given in Table 6.2.

on the right are based on different policy scales reflecting contrasting substantive interests.

Earlier it was shown that use of CMP data to derive party's policy positions may follow either an 'a priori' deductive or 'a posteriori' inductive strategy. Both kinds of analysis are based on rival measurement models (a theme discussed at the end of chapter 2) and yield complementary results. It was noted earlier that the most comprehensive expert survey fielded in the Czech Republic to date stems Laver and Benoit's (2006) research programme.

An estimation of the relative left-right position of parties is presented in Figure 6.4 and this matches with pattern shown earlier for CMP data in Figure 6.1. This simple cross-validation exercise shows that both forms of data modelling

Table 6.2: Inductive analysis of expert survey data for Czech parties, 2003

Parties	Dimensions extracted			
	Dim 1	Dim 2	Dim 3	Dim 4
National Conservative League (Illegal, NKL)	-.82			
Republicans of Miroslav Sladek (RMS)	-.80			
Green Party (SZ)	.80			
Freedom Union-Democratic Union (US)	.76			
Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia (KSČM)		.91		
Czech Social Democratic Party (ČSSD)		.79		
Civic Democratic Party (ODS)			.84	
Christian Democratic Party (KDU-ČSL)			-.83	
Party for Security in Life (SZJ)			.68	
Moravian Democratic Party (MDS)				.96
Association of Independents (SNK)				.78
Eigenvalue	3.45	2.98	1.65	1.19
Eigenvalue (% of total variance)	31.36	27.05	15.00	10.82
Cumulative eigenvalue	84.23			
Correlation between dimensions	Dim 1	Dim 2	Dim 3	Dim 4
Dim 1 (Small and extreme rightist parties)	1.00			
Dim 2 (Left-wing parties)	.10	1.00		
Dim 3 (Right-wing parties)	-.07	.11	1.00	
Dim 4 (Small independent parties)	.25	-.14	-.05	1.00

Source: analysis based on Laver and Benoit (2006) expert dataset

Note this table presents the results of an exploratory principal components analysis using a direct oblimin rotation as it was expected 'a priori' that the extracted latent factors would be correlated. This table is the pattern matrix and represents the beta weights that reproduce the variable scores from the factor scores. Factor loadings less than .5 have been excluded in order to improve the clarity of the presentation. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) Measure of Sampling Adequacy = .29; Bartlett's Test of Sphericity = 96.85, df(55), $p < .001$

sources yield reasonable results. The box plots in Figure 6.4 reveal as expected that left-right estimates for the smaller parties (RMS, US-DEU and SZ) are considerably larger than for the top three parties (ČSSD, ODS and KSČM).

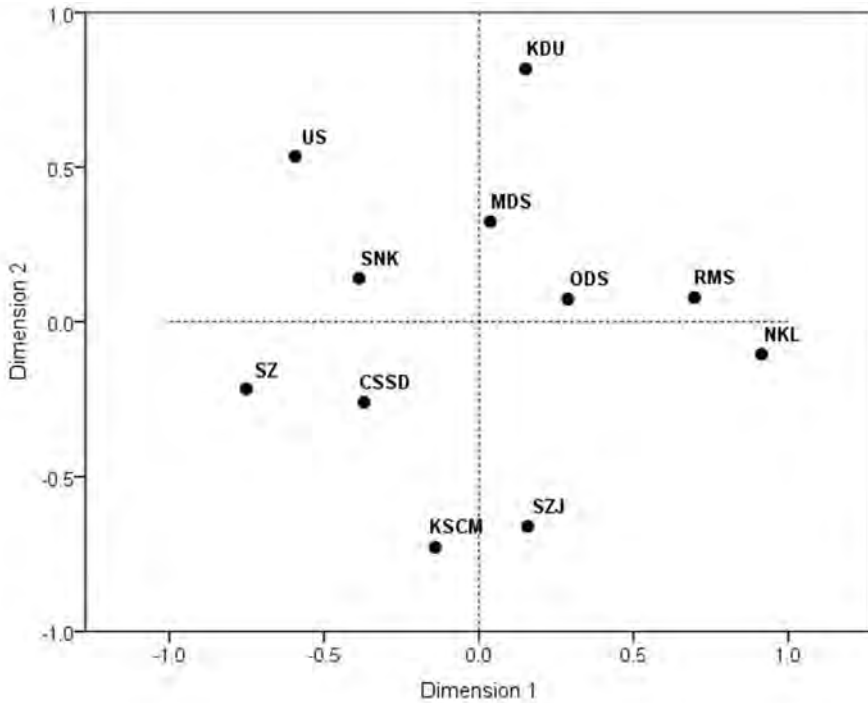
An inductive analysis of the positions of all Czech parties who competed in the Chamber Elections of 2002 using PCA (following the same procedure as with a similar analysis of CMP data shown in Table 6.1) yields a four factor solution. The results shown in Table 6.4 reveal that the latent political space estimated reflects two main criteria: left-right orientation and party size. It seems reasonable in this context to think that party size may be capturing 'knowledge effects' where the positions of some small parties such as MDS, SNK, NKL and RMS are difficult to determine for both voters and political experts.

The bottom part of Table 6.4 reports the correlations between the four factors extracted; and we can see that the strongest association exists between the two small party factors, i.e. dimensions 1 and 4 ($r=.25$). Moreover, the small and extreme right wing parties dimension is negatively correlated with two other dimensions (2 and 3) containing more centrist positions regardless of size. Caution is in order when interpreting these PCA results, as the KMO statistic reveals that the data are not ideally suited for this type of analysis. The Czech party experts' dataset is small and many of the policy scales are for obvious reasons not normally distributed.

An alternative 'a posteriori' inductive approach involves considering the expert survey data as *dominance* data where each of the parties is considered to possess more of an attribute on the policy scales than its rivals (see, Coombs 1964: 18–20). With this measurement theory of the expert survey data, it is possible to construct a perceptual map using the expert's policy positions by undertaking a Multi-Dimensional Scaling (MDS) analysis. MDS is different from PCA because it is the expert respondents rather than the researcher who identifies the underlying dimensions. The results of such an analysis are shown in Figure 6.5. Here we can see that the parties are spread across the four quadrants of a two dimensional space.

It is immediately apparent from this figure that neither of the two dimensions is left-right as one might expect from the literature on party competition in the Czech Republic (Lebeda et al. 2007). In fact, left-right appears to be a cross-cutting cleavage that straddles both dimensions where a hypothetical oblique line from KSČM to ODS, RMS, NKL best reflects this aspect of the Czech party system in the Chamber Elections of 2002. The main logic of the expert's perceptual map shown in Figure 6.5 is that parties closer to each other were considered by the experts to be most alike. Thus, the parties in each quadrant would seem to be most similar.

Figure 6.5: A spatial map of Czech political parties in a two dimensional policy space using expert survey data and an inductive 'a posteriori' approach, 2003



Source: analysis based on Laver and Benoit (2006) expert dataset

Note this spatial map is based on a Multi-Dimensional Scaling (MSD, proxscal) analysis of all expert survey policy scales. Labels for party acronyms are given in Table 6.4. The division of the two dimension space into four quadrants indicates that parties closer together have similar underlying policy or ideological similarities. The top right quadrant appears to refer to right-wing parties, while the bottom right refers to small extreme right parties. Bottom left contains two left-wing parties plus the Greens and the top left has two small right wing parties.

Goodness of fit statistics

Stress and Fit Measures

Normalized Raw Stress	.029
Stress-I	.169 a
Stress-II	.466 a
S-Stress	.066 b
Dispersion Accounted For (D.A.F.)	.971
Tucker's Coefficient of Congruence	.986

PROXSCAL minimizes Normalized Raw Stress

a. Optimal scaling factor	1.029
b. Optimal scaling factor	.941

Going clockwise around Figure 6.5 starting at the top right, there would appear to be clusters of (1) right-wing, (2) extreme right-wing, (3) left-wing and (4) small (centre)rightist parties. The location of the Greens (SZ) is ambiguous, as it is not a leftist party and may be better associated with SNK and US. Overall, the deductive and inductive analyses of Czech expert survey data presented in this sub-section demonstrate the opportunities this resource offers for exploring spatial models of party competition and government formation. Fortunately, there has been additional expert survey research on Czech parties' orientation toward the European Union (EU); and these additional data provides an important basis for evaluating Czech accession to the EU in May 2004.

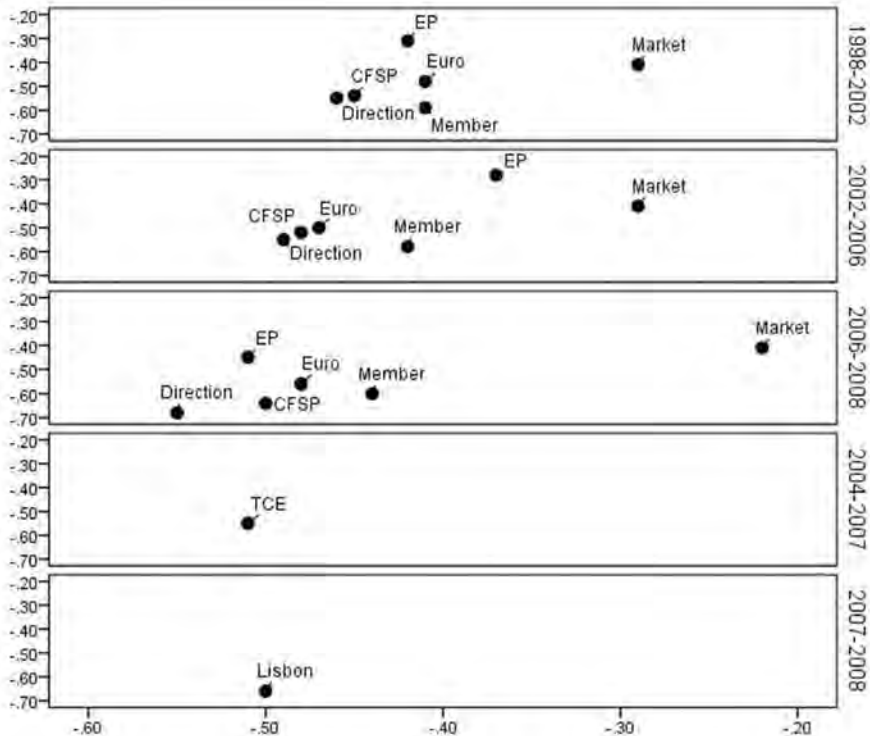
6.2.5 Expert survey of Czech parties positions toward European integration

One of the most comprehensive analyses of party policy positions derived from an expert survey was undertaken by Havlík (2009, 2010). Here the goal was to examine Czech parties evolving attitudes toward European integration between 1998 and 2006. The expert survey consisted of 48 respondents, i.e. lecturers in political science in the Czech Republic or external experts with publications, who completed the questionnaire in late 2008. The expert survey consisted of four parts: general attitudes toward the EU, supplemental aspects of European integration, intra-party consensus on European issues; and ideological orientation of Czech parties toward Europe. All questions had seven point scales allowing experts to declare "don't know" or there was insufficient evidence about a party to answer the question.

Havlík's (2010: 134) mapping of Czech parties' general support for integration generated three clusters: (1) Euro-supporter parties – ČSSD, KDU-ČSL, US-DEU and SZ, (2) a Euro-critical party that exhibited scepticism toward some aspects of the integration project – ODS, and (3) a Euro-negative party – KSČM. This partisan classification matches with the general consensus among Czech political commentators. In terms, of the dynamics of Czech parties' stances toward Europe over a decade (that included EU accession in 2004); Havlík (2010: 137) reports that small centre right parties, i.e. KDU-ČSL and US-DEU adopted stable positive positions. In contrast, the three largest parties (ČSSD, ODS and KSČM) altered their position toward Europe between 1996 and 2008. In the case of ODS, participation in government seems to have systematically affected its position on Europe. ODS was more positive toward integration when in office. The same pattern does not apply to ČSSD: its social democratic principles make it pro-EU regardless of government status. It is interesting to see that KSČM's negative attitudes toward Europe mellowed with EU accession and entrance to the European Parliament in 2004.

The estimates presented in Figure 6.6 represent the correlations between all Czech parties' policy positions toward eight features of the European integration process and (a) left-right and (b) materialist vs. post-materialist positions. The left-right and materialist vs. post-materialist scales may be interpreted as indicat-

Figure 6.6: Evolution of Czech parties positions on EU issues across a two dimensional space using an expert survey,1998–2008



Source: analysis based on Havlík (2010: 139–140). Total sample size, n=29.

Note the horizontal (x) axis denotes correlation between Czech parties European issue positions and left-right orientation. Decreasing negative values (as shown above) indicate a positive correlation between a pro-Europe stance and being right-wing. The vertical (y) axis indicates the correlations between parties European issue positions and post-materialism. Decreasing negative values denote a materialist orientation. Legend: Direction: Direction of European integration; EP: Powers of the European Parliament; Euro: The single currency (Euro); Market: Internal Market; CFSP: Common Foreign and Security Policy; Member: EU membership; TCE: Constitutional Treaty (Treaty establishing a Constitution for European); Lisbon: Lisbon Treaty. Please note that the dates associated with TCE and Lisbon refer to the dates of their ratification prior to interviewing.

ing two key dimensions of the Czech political space; and so the change in correlations between these two dimensions and specific European issues provides a means of plotting total party position change in spatial terms.

In short, the estimates shown in Figure 6.6 may be interpreted very loosely as something akin to graphical representations of factor loadings represented in a low dimensional space. A key pattern evident in Figure 6.6 is the polarization of Czech political party's positions toward Europe. The relative movement in parties' positions reflects a broad division of issues into (1) economic, i.e. internal market and to lesser degree the Euro; and (2) political, i.e. powers of the European Parliament, Common Foreign and Security Policy [CFSP], and support for the direction of integration (note, Havlík 2010: 137).

For example, Czech party positions toward the economic aspects of European integration such as the internal market shifted to the right between 1998 and 2008, but did not become appreciably more materialist. There was little change regarding support for the single currency (euro). In contrast, overall party positions on political issues such as the direction of integration, CFSP and EU membership moved progressively to the left. Czech parties' attitudes toward the power of the European Parliament followed a unique trajectory during the immediate accession period (2002–2006) by moving first to the right and then left, when compared to the 'baseline' position of 1998–2002.

Czech parties overall positions in the two dimensional space shown in Figure 6.6 toward the two key constitutional initiatives during the period under study are essentially the same on the left-right dimension, although the Constitutional Treaty (TCE) was associated with a marginally more materialist position. In general, it seems prudent to conclude (in light of the sample size) that Czech parties' ideological positioning toward the two treaties, despite their significant differences, was the same.

Overall, the expert data on Czech parties' positions presented by Havlík (2009, 2010, 2011) provides a unique and invaluable picture of the evolution of attitudes toward the EU before and after accession. The general trend appears to be the emergence of a polarization on economic and political facets of integration that follows a left-right logic. Materialism vs. post-materialism seems to have played little role in this process. More specifically, Havlík (2010: 136–137) notes that ČSSD, KDU-ČSL, SZ, US-DEU adopted positive positions on both economic and political issues; while the ODS was positive on economics, but negative on politics. The KSČM adopted negative positions for both economic and political issues.

Having outlined some of the key features of expert survey research and recent work in the Czech Republic, it is important at this point to make some remarks

regarding the opportunities and limits of this source of political data. As with all data sources in the social sciences understanding the data generating process is critically important in making causal inferences about substantive topics such as the policy positions of parties.

6.2.6 Merits of expert surveys

Expert surveys have a number of important advantages where they facilitate the measurement of party's policy positions in a convenient and authoritative manner because the evaluations involve relatively inexpensive surveys of small numbers of experts who may be reasonably expected to provide high quality information. Having access to numerical estimates of party policy positions facilitates the testing and development of theories of party competition, government formation, coalition bargaining, and theories of political representation referring to democratic mandates and the Responsible Party Government Model.¹⁶

However, Budge (2000) questioned an uncritical acceptance of the use of expert survey data estimates of party positions by highlighting four key definitional considerations, while Curini (2010) as noted earlier casts doubt on the objectivity of political experts. These concerns may be summarised in the following five points.

1. Definition of party: voters, party members or party leaders?
2. Definition of left-right: economic, social or general?
3. Definition of the nature of evaluation: intentions vs. actions?
4. Definition of time period of evaluation: past, present or future?
5. Objectivity of estimates: left-right bias of experts?

The first concern refers to the fact that policy estimates are generally single summary statistics for a 'party.' The key assumption here is that parties are unitary actors. There is much empirical evidence which demonstrates that intra-party differences reflected in factional behaviour are important features of party life (Giannetti and Benoit 2008). Consequently, it is important to clearly define what is meant by the term 'party' when measuring party policy positions (Budge 2000: 105–107).

The second point highlights the conceptual heterogeneity of the left-right concept among experts – a fact evident in the Huber and Inglehart (1995) expert survey. If there is no consistent definition of left-right this undermines the validi-

¹⁶ In this model of political representation, advocated by the American Political Science Association in 1950, voters hold parties electorally accountable for actions when participating in government. Thus parties are rewarded for success and punished for failure: voters are assumed here to have a retrospective sociotropic orientation (note, Jones and McDermott 2004).

ty and reliability of this form policy position estimation: as there is no common basis for comparison. Even if one is willing to assume that left-right is a general latent ideological dimension with no specific policy content, any argument that suggests left-right orientation is not consistently related to specific policy positions leads to the conclusion that left-right is devoid of concrete meaning. If this is the case, then use of the left-right concept has little analytical value in empirically examining real world politics (Budge 2000: 107–108; see, Gabel and Huber 2000: 97). One solution to this conceptual problem adopted by Benoit and Laver (2006: 132, 129–148) is to ask experts to rate parties across both specific policy domains, and a general left-right dimension. Thereafter, an inductive analysis of the specific policy dimensions may be used to explore the determinants of the general left-right dimension.

The third point of criticism refers to the basis for making left-right evaluations. Are expert judgments based on the internal preferences or external behaviour of a party? The key problem here is that there is often a difference between what parties say in their manifestos (and in the media more generally); and what they actually do in office.¹⁷ This disconnection between preferences and behaviour may be a practical consequence of having to compromise while participating in a coalition government rather than evidence of mendacity. In any case, the implication here is that the left-right wing preferences of a party evident in its election platform could in theory be completely independent of the same party's left-right expert score derived from a judgement of its behaviour in the legislature (Budge 2000: 109).

The fourth definitional criticism draws attention to the context of the expert's evaluations where the timing of the survey is important. It seems reasonable to expect that the policy position of parties will change over time for both endogenous (where preference change within a party due to change of leadership, etc.) and exogenous (the nature of party competition or the regime changes, e.g. fall of communism) reasons. In some surveys, experts have been asked to provide estimations of party policy positions for (a) the present, (b) the most recent general election or (c) different time periods in the past (Huber and Inglehart 1995; Ray 1999; Benoit and Laver 2006).

The final criticism has been discussed earlier in this chapter in section 6.1. To briefly recap, there is evidence indicating that in the case of expert surveying in Italy there is a systematic partisan bias, i.e. contrast effect, in the placement of

17 There is a sub-field of party manifesto research that explores empirically if parties keep their pre-election policy pledges when in government – a mechanism that represents a central plank of effective political representation (see, Thomson 2001; Mansergh and Thomson 2007; Louwse 2011). To date there has been almost no work on this topic in the Czech Republic (note, Roberts 2009).

right-wing parties on the left-right scale by left-wing respondents. Here it seems that the ideological sympathies of respondents (and also the variation in their responses) lead Italian experts to give disliked parties more extreme positions than their colleagues. Significantly, this contrast effect or response bias was limited to the left-right dimension.

Conclusion

In the final part of the theoretical section of this book at the end of chapter 2, it was argued that a central consideration in the analysis of political data is interpretation: what do survey questions measure? The opening quotations for this chapter taken from Berelson (1948) and Laver and Benoit (2006) reinforce this point: they argue that expert surveys have the potential to provide valid and reliable measurements of party's policy positions, if implemented in a manner that minimises bias. Within this chapter, there has been an overview of research in the Czech Republic and elsewhere to see if the touted potential of CMP data and expert surveys has been evident in published research.

A central advantage of expert surveys is that they are a convenient means of securing estimates of party's policy positions, and hence make it possible to test spatial models of voting and government formation behaviour. Given the complex nature of the task of constructing comparative estimates of party's policy positions both nationally and cross-nationally, it makes sense to use experts for this task. This line of reasoning has been the subject of considerable debate primarily because there are two key concerns.

First, there has been debate about the realism of being able to construct survey instruments that validly and reliably capture all parties' policy positions. Should a researcher adopt an a priori deductive approach or is it better to adhere to a posteriori inductive methodology (Benoit and Laver 2006: 130). Second, there have been questions raised about the wisdom of assuming that experts have the cognitive capacity to provide unbiased valid and reliable answers to complex questions. Worries here focus on the ability of expert respondents to adopt a standard approach when evaluating parties. Experts may differ on 'who is the party,' i.e. leaders, activists, rank-and-file members, or voters; or what do the ideological dimensions mean, e.g. does left-right have an economic or social interpretation? For these reasons, Budge (2000) and Curini (2010) suggest that the validity and reliability of expert survey data should not be taken at face value; and should be treated critically.

In contrast, Steenbergen and Marks (2007) have argued using an analysis of their own European integration expert survey data that this type of data is trustworthy. Comparison of experts' estimations of party's policy positions with data from alternative approaches indicate that expert surveys can yield valid and reliable estimates. Similar evaluations of other expert survey datasets using a similar cross-validation methodology have concluded that this source of political data is useful when used with appropriate caution (note, Benoit and Laver 2007; Whitefield et al. 2007; Hooghe et al. 2007, 2010).

On balance, CMP data should be treated with care for two reasons: (1) the estimates refer to saliency based policy emphases rather than policy positions and (2) estimates of the uncertainty of party's policy positions are generally not reported. With regard to the first problem, Laver, Benoit and Mikhaylov (2011) have proposed a new 'hierarchical' coding scheme for CMP that measures policy position using a revised text classification framework and multiple coders. For the second limitation of CMP data, Lowe et al. (2011) have shown through use of a logit scale (rather than the conventional 'saliency' or 'relative proportions' estimators) that it is possible to generate both point and uncertainty estimates. Here the CMP data generation process, i.e. writing, coding and scale estimation are modelled statistically within a signal-to-noise ratio framework developed from the computer content analysis of political texts (Benoit, Laver and Mikhaylov 2009). This new methodology also suggests that estimates of party positions should use confrontational items (pro- versus anti-) rather than a mix of bipolar and saliency coding categories. In contrast, the use of expert surveys is constrained by the fact that there are no time series (expert survey) datasets for most countries such as the Czech Republic: and in this respect, the CMP dataset has a distinct advantage. Moreover, the use of expert surveys involves dealing with thorny theoretical and methodological issues concerning the meaning of ideologies such as left-right when measured using standard scales.

The fact there has been such debate over the relative merits of expert surveys and CMP data demonstrates the potential contribution these resources are likely to have in research dealing with comparative party policy position research in the future. For these reasons, both the scope and methodological sophistication of this field is likely to grow most especially with the increased opportunities offered by the Internet to extend these types of fieldwork beyond established democracies. In the case of the Czech Republic, there is considerable scope for the undertaking and analysis of CMP and expert survey data as this type of line research has resulted in few publications.

In the last four chapters, we have mapped out four of the main sources of political data in the Czech Republic. Having outlined the many different datasets available for studying political attitudes and behaviour in the Czech Republic and elsewhere, it is useful now to switch focus and deal with issues associated with the analysis of such data. In the third section of this book, which is composed of a pair of chapters, our attention will centre on data analysis. Here the emphasis will be on mass survey data because this constitutes the bulk of the data currently available to students of Czech politics.

SECTION 3

Analysis of Data

Chapter 7

Interpretation of Political Survey Data

We must recall here that a pre-election poll is not a survey strictly speaking. It is only a technical mechanism that consists, in the same forms as political consultation, and toward purely practical ends, in producing the vote some days or weeks before an election in order to anticipate its probable result. Comparison of the pre-electoral poll with the results of voting allows the quality of the mechanism and the pertinence of the methods by which it is adjusted to be verified, with a view to correcting the bias in the distribution of questionnaires (notably, a biased sample and insincere responses). We will note that such verification is strictly speaking only possible to the extent that there is, in this case, no consultation with the whole of the population.¹

Patrick Champagne (2004: 96 fn.4)

Introduction

The first two sections of this book have dealt with the theory of public opinion and the measurement of political attitudes, and the political data available for analysis in the Czech Republic from 1967 to 2010. The theoretical issues examined in Section 1 of this book dealt highlighted the fundamental theoretical assumptions inherent in data measurement. In Chapter 1 we saw that the study of political attitudes involves making a large number of assumptions about the nature and origins of public opinion. This argument was extended in Chapter 2 where the question of what mass and elite surveys measure was examined. This measurement question is important because concepts such as opinions, attitudes, beliefs and values used in the study of citizens' political statements made during survey interviews do not have definitive meanings. In this respect, insights from cognitive neuroscience demonstrate that attitudes are real and have measurable effects.

1 As a practical example of this point Champagne continues by arguing that "To give an idea of the gaps that can separate a mere poll based on a sample of the population from a national election with the political mobilization that it necessarily involves, we need only cite the example of the approval of the Maastricht Treaty, which in 1993, after having been submitted to a referendum, apparently won more than 70% for as against at most 51% some months later."

The four chapters (4 to 6) contained in Section 2 of this book mapped out the main sources of political data in the Czech Republic. Chapters 4 to 6 provide an inventory and commentary on three forms of surveying: mass, elite and expert. In addition, the use of official elections results, legislative roll calls and the content analysis of political texts represent important resources for the study of Czech politics. The chapters contained in Section 2 of this volume also contain pertinent examples of data analysis. This style of presentation has been adopted in order to demonstrate to the reader in a practical way the kinds of insights about Czech politics that may be derived from data analysis.

In this third and final section of the book, attention now switches to data analysis. Data analysis in this context does not refer to a primer on how to use statistical methods as this topic is dealt with extensively in many other books (e.g. Freedman et al. 2007, 2009; Pollock 2011). In this chapter, data analysis refers to the process of *interpreting* political survey data. With behavioural data such as official election results the mechanism underlying the data generating process is reasonably clear. With mass survey data this is rarely the case. Consequently, the second half of this chapter will concentrate on the interpretation of survey questions through use of a number of examples. In order to keep the discussion within the limits of a single chapter, evaluation of issues associated with surveying such as sampling and non-response will not be addressed (see Brehm 1993; de Vaus 2002; Weisberg 2005; Saris and Gallhofer 2007). However, the first part of this chapter will provide an overview of the key surveying problems in a discussion of the failures of pre-election surveys to correctly predict election outcomes in six case studies from across Europe and the United States.

The reader will undoubtedly have observed that the data analysis examples presented in Section 2 of this book have in a sense pre-empted some of the issues and discussion planned for this chapter and the following one. For this reason, there is some merit in introducing the methodological issues associated with data analysis earlier in this volume. One disadvantage of this approach is that the key methodological and analysis issues are spread throughout this book; and not conveniently available to the reader in a single chapter. For this reason, some of key issues associated with the interpretation of survey data are presented in this chapter.

This chapter is composed of four parts. In the first section, the validity and reliability of making causal inferences with survey data are examined. Here a measurement model of survey data is used to explore causal inference. Section 2 presents six case studies where pre-election predictions of party choice were incorrect. The goal here is to highlight the sources of error. In the following two sections, the focus moves away from surveys toward an examination of questionnaire and response option effects. Here examples of methodological effects

are presented using recent Czech data. In the final section, there are some general observations regarding insights that methodological effects give regarding the data generating process associated with mass surveying.

7.1 Validity and reliability of survey methods

A central concern with all survey research is that the questions asked are (a) valid and provide measures of what the researchers want to investigate and (b) are reliable in the sense that the survey instrument measures a concept consistently during repeated implementations.² Within political science the validity and reliability of survey data has often been tested using the actual behaviour of citizens recorded in official election results. If survey estimates and election results do not tally, this is a useful indicator that there are problems with the research design. Problems with immediate pre-election surveys incorrectly predicting the election result has provided the impetus for improving the validity and reliability of political attitudes surveys.

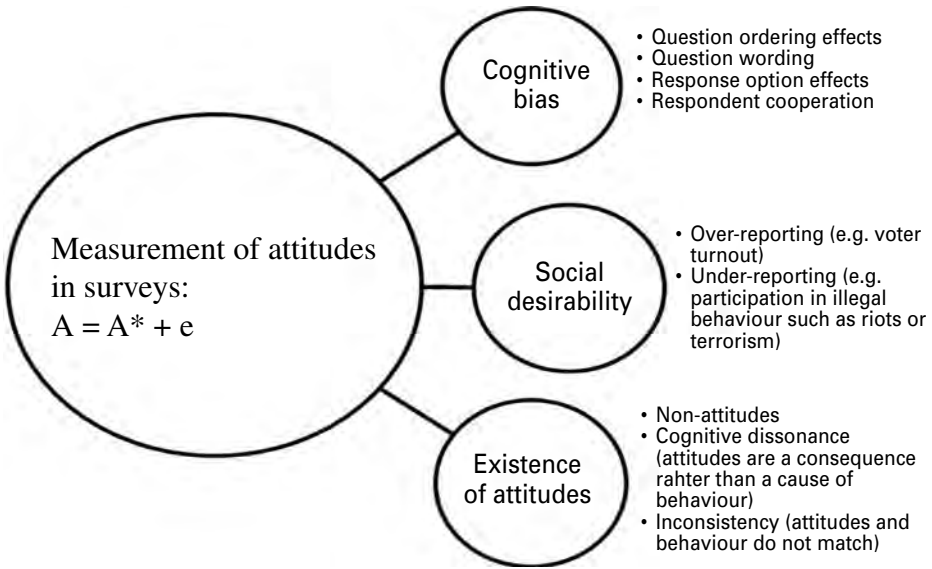
7.1.1 Measurement error and causal inference

Economists are often sceptical toward the use of survey data to explain either preferences or behaviour. Such scepticism is based on the view that what individuals say and do are often not strongly related. Consequently, it is better to construct causal explanations of preferences and behaviour using actual behaviour (revealed preferences) rather than verbal statements (expressed preferences). Is this a reasonable evaluation of the quality of survey data? The following Figure (7.1) illustrates three well known sources of bias in survey data. A central concern when using survey data is measurement error: this is the difference (e) between what is measured (A) and the true value (A^*).

If measurement error is always present in survey data and leads to biased causal inferences, it is perhaps best to adopt the economists' position and avoid using survey data. Research should focus instead on behavioural (i.e. official election statistics) rather than attitudinal data. Bertrand and Mullainathan (2001), two economists, have argued that such a position is perhaps too dogmatic. Let us consider two common research situations in terms of the link between a measurement model and the true relationship being investigated.

2 The methodological issues associated with validity and reliability within the social sciences and of survey measurements in particular are complex questions only touched on here for reasons of brevity. For an introduction see, de Vaus (2002); and for a more detailed statistical treatment, see de Gruijter and van der Kamp (2007).

Figure 7.1: Measurement error conception of survey data analysis



<i>Model type</i>	<i>Measurement model</i>	<i>True model</i>	<i>Bias type</i>
Attitudes predict behaviour	$Y_{it} = a + bX_{it} + cA_{it}$	$Y_{it} = \alpha + \beta X_{it} + \gamma A^*_{it} + \delta Z_{it}$	Omitted variable
Attitudes predict attitudes	$A_{it} = a + bX_{it} + e$	$A^*_{it} = \alpha + \beta X_{it} + \gamma Z_{it}$	Multicollinearity

Source: derived from Bertrand and Mullainathan (2001)

Note that in this figure survey measurement error is considered to be unbiased or random in nature. However, the three forms of bias shown on the right indicate that the measurement error (e) will have both random and non-random components. This situation will result in bias problems when estimating model parameters as described in the text. In the model types, Y refers to behavioural outcomes, X are explanatory variables included in the model and Z are unobserved variables (not included in the model) that determine Y . The subscripts i and t represent an individual and time respectively. All model parameters are in italics. There is no error term for the behavioural measurement model (Y_{it}) because it is assumed there is no measurement error.

(1) Using attitudes to predict behaviour

An influential explanation of party choice is that the voter’s policy position helps to predict voting behaviour; or in other words, knowledge of a person’s attitudes helps to predict their actual vote choice on polling day. The key consideration

here is the comparison between the parameters \hat{c} (an estimate of c) and γ shown at the bottom of Figure 7.1. Random error in the measurement of a real attitude (A) will lead to a bias that tends toward zero. Cognitive effects will not result in bias, if controls for (fixed) survey effects are included in the model. Social desirability effects lead to correlations between the observed (X) and unobserved (Z) explanatory variables; and these in turn lead to biased estimates where \hat{c} will include the true impact of attitudes plus measurement error. The error in A will be correlated with the error in the omitted explanatory variables (Z) resulting in omitted variable bias.

(2) Using attitudes to predict other attitudes

An example of this type of modelling with survey data would be use of ideological orientation to explain trust in government. In this model, random error in A does not lead to bias. However, other sources of bias have a greater impact. The correlation between measurement error (e) and X strongly biases estimates of b given by β . Although the explanatory variables (X) helps to predict A* this predictive power does not facilitate making causal inferences. This is because the explanatory variables mainly explain measurement error in the attitude (A); and not any true effect (b). In other words, there is a great difference between the estimated (β) and true (b) parameter values because of bias stemming from measurement error.

This brief examination of the impact of measurement error in surveys leads to two main lessons. First, if measurement error is relatively small then attitudes can help to predict behaviour. The estimated coefficients include both the real effect of the attitude plus the impact of other explanatory variables that influence how the attitude is reported in a survey interview. Second, when attitudes are used to predict other attitudes in mass surveys the measurement error for both the dependent and independent variables are likely to be correlated in a causal way yielding very biased parameter estimates and invalid inferences. Therefore, survey data may be used to predict behaviour but is much less useful for predicting other attitudes due to the role measurement error plays in yielding biased model estimates. This has important implications for the type of explanations that may be legitimately undertaken with survey data.

7.1.2 Problems with pre-election polls

As noted earlier in Section 1 of Chapter 3, one of the main difficulties in generating good survey estimates of voter turnout are social desirability effects. Here respondents incorrectly claim that they will vote (or have voted) because they feel pressured in the context of an interview to conform to the expectation that good

citizens participate in elections. Box 3.1 presented earlier in chapter 3 revealed how some survey research companies use answers to other questions to make an estimate of this probability. For example, is the person registered to vote? Did the respondent vote in the last election? Is the voter interested in the campaign? Unfortunately, the ‘likely voters’ identified by this surveying approach tend to be more affluent and well educated than the general population leading to a partisan (i.e. typically an educated right-wing) bias in the survey results.

Another problem with pre-election surveys is estimating correctly the volatility in the electorate, where the strategically important “floating voter” segment of the electorate is difficult to track. Often these voters are either unsure or are unwilling to reveal their true preferences under conditions of uncertainty regarding the final result. This difficulty is often connected with how to effectively deal with the preferences of those who reply that they are “undecided.” Should these responses be included in the estimate of voting intentions or excluded on the assumption that they are randomly distributed across all partisan groups; and hence will not systematically bias the election prediction.

One final consideration worth noting is that the act of voting may be changing. For example, in the United States and Britain institutional efforts to boost electoral participation has created more flexible procedures for casting a vote such as postal and electronic voting. Here the voter makes their electoral decision prior to polling day on the basis of convenience. The impact of these initiatives to boost turnout appear to be context specific. For example, voting facilitation measures led to a doubling in electoral participation in local elections in Britain in 2003, but in the United States such initiatives had little measurable effects (Herrnson et al. 2008; Hanmer 2009). With regard to electoral survey research such developments complicate interpretation of the survey results because the campaign and context of casting a vote may not be the same for all respondents.

7.1.3 Impact of the publication of poll results

A fundamental assumption within all survey research is that the act of measuring attitudes in an interview is exogenous, or independent, of the behaviour itself. If this is not the case, then the survey data are contaminated with factors that are not normally present in the social context being examined. The reporting of election polls in a ‘horserace’ journalistic style that is typical in many democracies creates the conditions under which surveys not only measure, but can also influence the way in which respondents answer survey questions. In other words, the act of surveying is influencing what it is attempting to measure.³ One way in which

³ This phenomenon is similar to the well-known Hawthorne effect where the act of measuring social behaviour influences that behaviour. (Footnote continued on the next page)

this 'measurement effect' can occur is when published survey results start to determine public opinion.

The phenomenon where previous opinion poll results have an impact on the responses recorded in subsequent surveys is often described in terms of two contrasting effects. In the *Bandwagon effect*, survey respondents regardless of their true voting preferences tend to support a candidate they believe is going to win, which is possibly a product of a social conformity mechanism (spiral of silence) identified by Noelle-Neumann (1984). Conversely, with the *Underdog effect* survey interviewees tend to support the candidate or party that is losing in media reports of election polls out of a sense of sympathy. Research on these endogenous surveying effects has produced mixed results suggesting that the emergence of these measurement artefacts are triggered in specific contexts that are currently poorly understood. Previous work suggests that (a) both bandwagon and underdog effects tend to be present in different groups within an electorate; (b) both processes offset one another, and (c) these effects are strongest among those voters with relatively weaker preferences for a candidate or weaker affiliations to a political party.

In this section concerns about the validity and reliability of survey results has focussed on general problems such as measurement error, social desirability, bandwagon and underdog effects. These methodological considerations provided an apposite introduction to the next section where there is an examination of salient survey based election prediction failures over the last century.

7.2 Pre-election surveys that went wrong and why?

Irving R. Crespi (1988: 5) an influential American pollster once asked: "If polls cannot achieve such accurate predictability, why should we accept any poll results as having meaning relevant to real life?" The key point here is that elections are one of the very few means of cross-validating the results of mass surveys. Official election statistics in established democracies are characterised by their accurate and unbiased nature. Consequently, there is a ready and effective 'gold standard' to check survey results. If pre-election polls have problems in predicting vote choice then this suggests that there are fundamental validity and reliability problems in all political and social survey data.

(Footnote continued...) This endogeneity undermines the research undertaken (footnote continued) because the normal relationships between variables have been disturbed. This is not a problem unique to the social sciences. Within quantum mechanics, measurement effects are evident in Heisenberg's uncertainty principle. The key point here is that this loss of information property is a fundamental property of survey responses and quantum systems, and is not an evaluation of the failure to make accurate observations because of technical constraints.

For this reason, there is merit at this point in examining in a forensic manner through a handful of case studies how pre-election surveys predicted the wrong outcome. Therefore, in this section there will be a set of six post-mortems of pre-election surveys that made incorrect predictions in the United States, Britain, Germany and Italy. These more well-known case studies are important in the evaluation of political data because they demonstrate some of the factors leading to incorrect predictions. As we will see, inaccurate survey predictions are seen to be the product of general problems associated for example with unrepresentative samples or unique difficulties that relate to specific elections such as late campaign swings.

(1) *1936 US Presidential election*: The first major example of a pre-election survey predicting a completely wrong result was the Literary Digest Survey of 1936. The Literary Digest sent 10 million postcards to names and addresses taken from every phone book in the United States and a wide variety of local mailing lists. About one-in-five responded, yielding a final sample of 2.2 million. A majority (57%) stated that they would for the Republican candidate, Alf Landon as President; and a minority (43%) said they would vote for Franklin Delano Roosevelt (Democrat). On Election Day, Roosevelt received 62.5% of the popular vote. Consequently, the Literary Digest's survey prediction was incorrect by more than 19%, despite having predicted the correct winner in all presidential elections between 1920 and 1932. Four reasons have been proposed to explain this famously incorrect election prediction. First, the Literary Digest did not use a random selection of potential voters and its sample had more well-to-do Republican voters than present in the general electorate. Second, the survey was sent to potential respondents two months prior to polling day; and hence missed any late swing in support between the candidates. Third, the political climate of the 1936 election was different to previous contests because voting appears to have proceeded along class lines with the New Deal Coalition. Unsurprisingly, class voting combined with the Literary Digest's use of a sampling methodology that attracted a disproportionate number of affluent Republican supporters made matters worse. Finally, there was the problem of self-selection because respondents chose to participate in the survey. It is likely that those with higher levels of education; and income and who were most engaged in the election campaign completed and returned the Literary Digest's questionnaire. Such citizens in 1936 were disproportionately Republican in orientation (Bryson 1976; Squire 1988).

(2) *1948 US Presidential election*: In the first-post war presidential election in 1948, Gallup who had correctly predicted the election outcome in 1936 with a small representative sample of 5,000 respondents (in contrast to the Literary Digest's 2.2 million) predicted the wrong result. Gallup's incorrect prediction that Thomas E. Dewey (Republican) would beat the incumbent Harry S. Truman (Democrat) appears to have stemmed from two sources. First, Gallup's quota sampling had too many middle and high income voters; and this appears to have been the result of interviewers being free to select people for interview. This specific weakness was seen to be so severe that quota sampling was judged by many thereafter to be inappropriate for all survey research (Scheaffer et al. 1990: 31). Second, there was a late swing in the campaign toward Truman and this was not captured in the Gallup surveys: as the final pre-election surveys were completed two weeks before the election (note, Mosteller et al. 1949). After the 1948 debacle, Gallup ceased using quota sampling for estimating voting choices in pre-election surveys. More generally, this systematic prediction failure led to the development of the most commonly used accuracy measure for polling data: mean absolute error, which is both intuitive and easy to use in multiparty systems in estimating the level of imprecision in pre-election surveys.

(3) *British general election of 1970*: In the British general election of June 1970 all of the surveying companies incorrectly predicted a victory for the Labour Party under Harold Wilson. A narrow Conservative Party victory under Edward Heath was not predicted in any of the main pre-election surveys undertaken by Marplan, Gallup, NOP (National Opinion Polls), ORC (Opinion Research Centre) and Harris. In fact, all of the surveys indicated that the Labour Party was more than 10% ahead of Conservatives.⁴ It seems that in the final few days before polling there was a late swing to the Conservatives. This fact was not captured in any of the pre-election surveys as fieldwork had been undertaken earlier. In the end, the Conservatives won with a margin of 3.4% suggesting a 10 to 15% late swing. As there are limited survey data for this critical swing period, it is not entirely clear what motivated voters to change their preferences: if that is indeed what happened (Market Research Society 1970). This was a snap election and the key campaign issue was adoption of the decimal coinage system that was thought by the Labour leadership to be a popular initiative. In the final week of campaigning, there were worse than expected economic news (an

4 The 'failure of the polls' was surprising for British pollsters and election commentators as pre-election surveys had performed reasonably well over the previous decades. For example, in the general election of 1950 pre-election surveys were successful in correctly predicting a very tight race (Elderveld 1951).

increased trade deficit). Neither sample type, i.e. quota vs. probability nor sample size (1,562 to 4,841) was systematically associated with incorrect predictions. Abrams (1970: 319–321) listed five specific electoral context factors such as a surge in young voters (the minimum age for voting was reduced from 21 to 18 years thereby increasing the electorate by 6.5%) that might have made election prediction more difficult for pollsters.

(4) *British general election of 1992*: During the campaign for the election of April 1992 all the pre-election surveys indicated that it would be a close race with the Labour Party likely to win. The actual election outcome saw the Conservatives with their new leader, John Major (who succeeded Margaret Thatcher in late 1990) defeat the Labour Party under Neil Kinnock by 7.6 per cent. For the second time within a generation, all of the British pre-election surveys made systematically incorrect predictions. Following the election there was considerable media criticism of pre-election surveying; and this spurred a number of investigations that attempted to diagnose why the “polls had failed” (Market Research Society 1992; Jowell et al. 1993; Worcester 1995). Although many different problems were identified, there was no definitive view as to why the predictions were incorrect. Six themes were highlighted. The first theme was timing: polling ended two days before the election – there was a swing on the final day of the campaign to the Conservative party that was not captured by the polls. A second theme was the impact of differential turnout where Conservative voters were more likely to turnout to vote than Labour party supporters. The third theme was a “shame factor”, or perhaps evidence for a spiral of silence mechanism, where respondents deliberately misreported their voting preferences because of social desirability effects (Crewe 1992). Fourthly, the theme of non-response bias was also seen to be important because there was no standard method for dealing with the non-negligible block of respondents who refused to indicate how they might vote. The last two themes dealt with (a) problems associated with using quota sampling as opposed to probability sampling and (b) differential registration patterns among voters arising from strong public opposition to plans to impose a poll tax. The main conclusion from this research was that accurate and reliable estimates of vote intentions in contemporary Britain required a more sophisticated (and expensive) approach to surveying in order to account for various sources of bias.

(5) *German Federal Elections, 1998 and 2002*: In these two general elections there were significant discrepancies between the results of the main polling agencies. In 1998, only the (Institut für Demoskopie) Allensbach Institute predicted

correctly a clear victory for the Social Democratic Party (SDP) led by Gerhard Schröder. This party had been in opposition since 1982. The reasons for the survey differences observed remain obscure. The variation in survey estimates appears to have had two methodological origins: (a) question model and (b) interviewing mode. With regard to question model, the Allensbach Institute did not ask in the elections of 1998 and 2002 a simple ‘how would you vote if the federal election were held tomorrow?’ question. Allensbach used the fact that Germany’s mixed electoral system gives each voter two ballots.⁵ Voters who declared that they would plump for the same party in both tiers of the election and had a high probability of voting were used to predict the election outcome. Turning now to the issue of mode of interviewing, the Allensbach Institute were the only major polling agency during this period to use face-to-face rather than telephone interviewing: this may have influenced the quality of the survey data gathered because respondent cooperation is known to be greater in personal interviews (Petersen 2003). An issue that was specific to the 2002 election campaign was the socio-political impact of the extensive summer floods across the Czech Republic, Austria, Germany, Slovakia, Poland, Hungary, Romania and Croatia. The surveying data reveal that adverse weather conditions were associated with increased volatility in political attitudes and preferences; and this effect was most pronounced in Eastern Germany where preferences changed almost daily. This made election prediction very difficult as the difference between incumbent and opposition was less than the sampling error.

(6) *Italian Chamber of Deputies Election, 2006*: In the Italian general election of April 2006, the incumbent centre-right wing government of Silvio Berlusconi was narrowly defeated by a centre-left coalition led by Romano Prodi. The context surrounding the election was unique because a new electoral law had been enacted in December 2005 (Statute No. 270) making the electoral system less proportional. In addition, party competition was intense as the popularity of the centre-left parties declined following a strong showing in the regional elections of 2005. An index of the increased level of electoral competitiveness is that the number of pre-election surveys in the 2006 contest was almost double that of 2001 (95 vs. 52). All pre-election polls published in the Italian media predicted that Berlusconi’s incumbent government would lose the election by a margin of 3 to 4 percentage points. According to a recent study of published and private surveys conducted during the 2006 election campaign, the failure of Italian poll-

5 In Germany’s mixed member electoral system the electorate have two votes, one for the constituency and one for a party; and it is the party vote which determines who will assume office in the Bundestag.

sters stemmed from four key factors (Callegaro and Gasperoni 2008). First, sampling problems resulted in incorrect estimates of sampling error. Second, the timing of the pre-election surveys was important because the 15 day (Paracondicio principle, note Table 3.1) embargo on surveying meant that the late swing to the right could not be measured. Third, there was a high level of survey coverage error as almost all pre-election surveying was based on a fixed-line telephone sampling frame. As a result, households only having mobile phones or no phone at all were not interviewed. The implication here is that right-wing voters were under-sampled (Fumigali and Sala 2010). Fourth, there may have been social desirability (underdog) effects where some voters may have been reluctant to declare their sincere voting preferences for the centre-right; or may have made a final decision close to polling day. Once again, the sources of incorrect poll predictions in Italy were a mix of systematic problems related to sampling; and specific contextual factors.

7.2.1 Lessons learned from failure?

Within the Czech Republic the failure of pre-election surveys to predict the actual outcome of the Chamber Elections of May 2010 reveals that the problems described earlier in this section are undoubtedly evident in Czech surveys. The over-estimation of support for the main parties, ČSSD and ODS; and simultaneous under-reporting of support for new parties such as TOP 09 and VV most likely reflects methodological issues such as sampling and treatment of respondents who refuse to indicate a voting preference; and also the unique political context surrounding this election (note, Chytilík 2010).

There are few meta-analyses of the literature on problems in pre-election surveys. In a presentation made at the 65th American Association of Public Opinion Research (AAPOR) Conference, Durand et al. (2010b) presented the results of an informal examination of published articles dealing election survey failures from 1994 to 2008 in a variety of journals, databases and publications. The results based on the surveying experiences of 15 countries and 150 polls are presented in Table 7.1. This evidence reveals that the sources underpinning pre-election surveys failure to correctly predict election outcomes may be reduced to three general explanations: methodological, political and sociological (see also Durand 2010a).

It is not possible from Durand et al.'s (2010b) literature review to evaluate the relative importance of each explanation. However, the effects outlined in Table 7.1 tally with the factors highlighted in the six case studies presented in this section. More generally, the evidence regarding the failure of pre-election surveys has three main implications. First, mass surveys have limitations and cannot be

Table 7.1: Sources of error in pre-election survey estimates of vote choice

<i>Survey effect explanation</i>	<i>No. of articles</i>	<i>Type of error</i>	<i>No. of countries</i>
Methodological	20	Non-response bias	7
	17	Quota related problems, outdated quotas, difficult to control or apply*	4
	16	Coverage or selection problems	9
	3	Small sample size	≥1
	9	Adjustment or weighting issues: inaccurate or carried out using subjective criteria	5
	7	Non-disclosure	4
	3	Inaccurate likely voter model or lack thereof	≥1
Political	28	Late decision, late swing, switchers, volatility, ambivalence	9
	20	Spiral of silence, shame factor, lies	10
	5	Differential turnout	≥1
	4	Type of election	≥1
	3	Strategic voting, underdog or bandwagon effects	≥1
	3	Political influence on pollsters	≥1
Sociological	≥1	Sociological causes rarely mentioned: relationship between variables used for quotas and voting behaviour, attitudes towards polls, impact of media, etc.	≥1
Other	3	Time between last poll and vote, this may be due to polling ban rules)	≥1
	4	Mode of surveying (face-to-face or internet)	≥1
	4	Questionnaire related problems	≥1

Source: Durand et al. (2010b)

Note that methodological explanations deal with coverage, sampling, weighting, adjustment, treatment of non-disclosers, etc. Political explanations stress characteristics of the campaign, parties, electoral system, etc. And sociological accounts focus on the relationship between socio-demographic characteristics and voting intention. Other explanations refer to causes of error that seldom occur and do not appear to be general sources of survey error. For some types of errors no indication is given of the number of countries in which this explanation was applied. * Most of the articles refer to Britain (n=14).

blindly used to make predictions or provide explanations. Second, account must also be taken of such political factors as: (a) differential turnout rates, (b) impact of electoral systems, (c) presence of a multiparty system, and (d) the fact that in some electoral systems political behaviour and attitudes expressed in polls are driven by local or constituency level considerations. Third, the ‘errors’ evident in national opinion poll results are not always methodological artefacts. Survey errors may be interpreted as pointing to important political processes that require other kinds of information, such as contextual aggregate level data, in order to be properly understood and modelled.

7.2.2 An end to pre-election surveying?

If ‘intention-based-election-forecasts’ derived from interviewing large representative samples of citizens are problematic for the reasons noted in Table 7.1; then perhaps there is merit in the idea of using an alternative approach. Using insights from research in cognitive psychology on the use of the ‘recognition heuristic’ in elections, Gaissmaier and Marewski (2011) show that *recognition based election forecasts* in four major German elections performed just as well as traditional polling techniques. In addition, using small non-representative samples had greater predictive success than larger representative samples when dealing with estimating popular support for new and small political parties: parties that have always been problematic for pollsters. The key insight from this innovative research is that the ability of voters to recognise a specific party’s name (the recognition heuristic) is a good basis for predicting the success of that party in an upcoming election.

The success of *recognition based election forecasts* may be better suited to an electorate that exhibits (a) low and declining levels of interest in politics and (b) low long-term psychological attachment to a specific party, i.e. attenuated party identification. Moreover, the proliferation of parties in multiparty systems especially during low salience elections suggests that voting itself may be strongly motivated by recognition. This is a contentious argument and undoubtedly requires much more research. However, if it is true that contemporary elections are primarily ‘recognition based’ it may make sense to abandon ‘intention-based-election-forecasts’ in favour of their less costly and equally accurate small non-representative sampling methods.

Thus far within this chapter, the focus has been on analysing or interpreting surveys *in toto*. Consequently, in the following two sections we shall redress this imbalance by examining various forms of questionnaire and response option effects using Czech data. These two themes are important in the exploration of political survey data because they are issues that the researcher will encounter fre-

quently. For this reason, it is prudent to be aware of questionnaire and response option effects and how to productively interpret the ‘inconsistencies’ observed.

7.3 Questionnaire effects

One of the most important sources of questionnaire effects is question wording. It is a trite, but nonetheless valid, truism that the answers given in a survey interview depend on the questions asked. More concretely, respondents are sensitive to how questions are posed or phrased. The distribution of responses may thus be a result of question wording rather than respondent’s own opinions, or some unknown mix of both influences (note, Saris and Gallhofer 2007). An important mechanism through which question wording effects can occur is through multiple stimuli.

One of the best known examples relates to public attitudes toward free speech in the United States measured by Gallup. Version 1 of the question asked in 1978 was worded as follows “I believe in free speech for all, no matter what their views might be?” where 89% agreed with this statement. Over a decade later in 1991, the same principle was examined with the following statement “Supposed an admitted Communist wanted to make a speech in your community. Should he be allowed to speak or not?” and 68% concurred. The problem here in comparing these two free speech questions is that version 2 involves respondents considering two stimuli: free speech and communism. As a result, it is not clear if American’s support for free speech really declined during the 1980s; or the 21 percentage point difference is due to public antipathy toward communism. Here it is important to note that the Soviet Union was formally dissolved on December 25 1991; and therefore no longer posed any threat to the USA.

7.3.1 Framing effects

It is important to keep in mind that question wording effects are often observationally equivalent in their consequences to framing effects. Consider the following two questions asked sixty years ago to the American public regarding military intervention under a United Nations mandate for sending US soldiers to Korea between 1950 and 1953 (note, Casey 2008).⁶ In the first version, Gallup (AIPO) asked: “Do you think the United States made a mistake in deciding to defend Korea or not?” In contrast, NORC posed the following question: “Do you think the United States was right or wrong in sending American troops to

⁶ See Casey (2008) for an overview of how attempts were made by the American government to shape public opinion toward this war.

stop the Communist invasion of South Korea?” The NORC question consistently drew more support for the war. In general, public support for American intervention in the wars in Korea and Vietnam depended on whether the survey question mentioned the threat of communism. Adding the framing element “to stop a communist takeover” increased support for military intervention by 15% (Muel-ler 1971: 358–360).⁷

7.3.2 Question ordering effects

One of the best known methodological effects in surveys stems from the sequence in which questions are asked. Research has shown that some questions are answered differently depending on what questions have been asked previously. Survey companies generally try to eliminate these effects by pretesting their questionnaires to see if changes in question ordering yields systematic effects. Alternatively, the question sequence can be randomised and different orders can be taken into account during data analysis (Schuman and Presser 1981; Tourangeau, Rips and Rasinki 2000). The key point here is that the responses to some questions are influenced by the answers to previous items resulting in methodologically biased survey estimates. For example, it is well known in political surveys that asking general government approval after a series of specific government performance questions in different policy areas reduces the overall level of reported satisfaction with government (Lyons 2008a: 57–58). Question ordering effects can also occur within batteries of items that have the same set of response options.⁸

7.3.3 Acquiescence response set bias

Some respondents will always agree to a proposition or statement regardless of content. This may also occur if people being interviewed get bored with the interview and just give the same response to a whole series of questions in order to politely end the interview as quickly as possible.⁹ Acquiescence response set bias is difficult to detect unless the survey questionnaire has been designed to identify logically inconsistent responses stemming from the fact that the respondent is uncooperative. One example of the presence of this effect is evident in a set of political knowledge questions asked in a Eurobarometer survey fielded in the au-

7 Similar effects were also observed regarding US aid to the Nicaraguan ‘contras’ (1982–1987).

8 There has been little research in the Czech Republic on question ordering effects. Typically, the effect is noted in passing when addressing substantive research questions (e.g. Lyons 2007: 543).

9 Acquiescence response set bias is the propensity for respondents to answer a set of questions with the same response, where the answers given do not represent the authentic preferences of an individual, but a strategy of dealing with a survey interview.

tumn of 2004 just after Czech accession to the European Union. Here it was hypothesised that the responses to the simple quiz would act as manifest indicators to an underlying dimension of political sophistication. Consequently, the expectation was that the five questions would load on one of the extracted dimensions on the basis of their relative difficulty; and thereby revealing which items were better at discriminating between respondents with low and high levels of knowledge.¹⁰ The results of a Principal Components Analysis (PCA) of the responses of Czech respondents to the six knowledge questions are shown in Table 7.2; and reveal an unexpected result. Instead of providing an indication of question difficulty, the analysis discriminated on the basis of answer type.

Table 7.2: Evidence of acquiescence response set bias in the responses to questions exploring public knowledge of the European Union

Variables	Component	
	1	2
QA5 (3): The President of the European Council is directly elected by European citizens [False]	.78	
QA5 (4): A direct European tax will be created [False]	.75	
QA5 (5): National citizenship will disappear [False]	.70	
QA5 (2): At least one million citizens of the European Union can request the adoption of a European law [True]		.77
QA5 (1): The position of a Foreign Affairs Minister of the European Union will be created [True]		.71
QA5 (6): A member state can leave the European Union if it wishes to do so [True]		.61
Eigenvalues	2.00	1.24
Percent of total variance explained	33.42	20.72
Total variance explained	54.14	
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy	.67	
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity: Approx. Chi-Square (df=15, p<.001)	627.96	

Source: Eurobarometer 62.1, September 2004, question A5 (Czech wave only). See Lyons (2008b: 33–34). Note the battery of political knowledge items were introduced as follows: Q.A5: For each of the following, tell me if, in your opinion it is true or false it is planned in the draft European Constitution that ... Response options were: (1) True, (2) False, (3) Don't know. The correct answer is in square parentheses. The Principal Component Analysis (PCA) estimates are based on a direct oblimin rotated principal component analysis. This form of rotated solution facilitates examination of the correlation of the two extracted factors, as this is a plausible expectation for this analysis. The correlation between the factors extracted is .20

10 There are at least two other approaches, i.e. 'differences' and 'regression' modelling for detecting and estimating acquiescence response set bias, see Risbjerg Thomsen (2006: 97–104).

The PCA factor loading pattern clearly shows that all the correct items with a ‘true’ answer loaded on the first factor, while all correct items with a ‘false’ answer loaded onto the second one. This particular pattern in Eurobarometer 62.1 is likely to be the product of an acquiescence response set bias because the three ‘false’ questions occur in sequence where a substantial proportion of respondents may have simply made a standard response to all items regardless of their content. This latter finding is not totally surprising as there is evidence for a similar (acquiescence) response set bias in previous research on Irish public attitudes toward globalisation using Eurobarometer 61.0 (Kennedy and Sinnott 2007: 78).

7.4 Response option effects

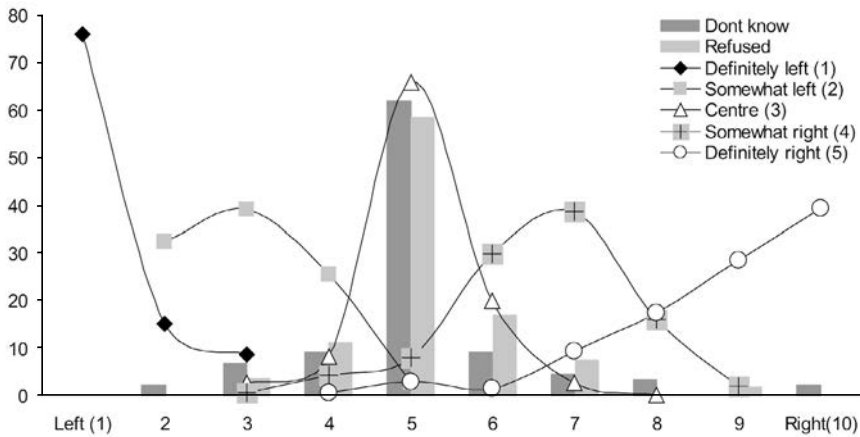
In the previous section, we saw how differences in questionnaire construction led to systematic biases in how some respondents answered the questions asked. In the remaining part of this chapter, our attention will sharpen even further as the response options offered to respondents are examined. It will be shown that minor changes in the scales offered to interviewees can have a dramatic impact on how respondents decide to answer the survey question. The key implication here is that observed differences in attitude measurement across (and even within) surveys may have methodological rather than substantive origins. In this section, three examples of response option effects evident in Czech survey data will be presented. The first example will look at *intra-survey* response option effects while the other two will deal with *inter-survey* effects.

7.4.1 Impact of different operationalisations of a scale in the same survey

In the Czech wave of the ISSP Citizenship module (2004) there were two left-right self-placement scales asked in direct sequence towards the end of the survey.¹¹ As the items were asked to the same respondents within a very short time span of about one minute, one would expect a high level of consistency in responses. The main difference between both items was (a) the number of response options where the first scale had 5 options and the second had a 10-point scale, (b) in the first 5-point scale respondents were presented with a show card and asked to give a verbal response while in the 10-point scale respondents were asked to mark on the questionnaire their position on the left-right scale, (c) the

¹¹ For similar research on the meaning of left-right as measured in surveys in the Czech Republic, see Vinopal (2006).

Figure 7.2: Comparison of consistency of responses in a pair of left-right scales with a different number of response options, per cent



<i>Left-right scale</i>	<i>10-point scale (n)</i>	<i>10-point scale aggregated (n)</i>	<i>5 point scale (n)</i>	<i>5 minus 10 point scale</i>	<i>Percent difference in terms of 5-point scale</i>
<i>Left</i>	35	104	46	-58	-126
	69				
<i>Centre-left</i>	97	206	187	-19	-10
	109				
<i>Centre</i>	388	577	418	-159	-38
	189				
<i>Centre-right</i>	146	222	302	80	+26
	76				
<i>Right</i>	47	103	137	34	+25
	56				
<i>DK/NA</i>	109	109	232	123	+53
TOTAL	1321		1322		

Source: ISSP Citizenship (2004), Czech wave, questions B6 and B7.

Question B6: In politics, often use the terms 'left' and 'right.' Where would you place yourself? SHOW CARD. Response options were (1) Definitely left, (2) Somewhat left, (3) Centre, (4) Somewhat right, (5) Definitely right.

Question B7: And now try to include your mark with a cross on the following scale. Note to interviewer. Give the respondent the questionnaire and a pen or pencil and ask him/her to place a cross in a square that represents their political beliefs. The X is to be placed in the squares and not on the dividing line. Note that row percentages sum to one hundred. Data weighted to reflect probability of being interviewed in the household and socio-demographic quotas to ensure a representative national sample.

5-point scale contained numerical and text labels while in contrast the 10-point scale had only numerical labels and boxes for placing an X. The logic of the scales suggests that the 10-point scale could be transposed onto the 5-point scale where each two points on the larger scale were summed, e.g. 1 plus 2 on the 10 point scale is equivalent to point 1 on the 5-point scale. By using this logic and comparing the distribution of respondents across the left-right scale one finds systematic differences.

Overall, the non-response rate (“don’t know” plus “no answer”) for the 5-point left-right self placement scale (n=232) was more than twice the level recorded for the 10-point scale (n=109). It appears from Figure 7.2 that the methodological differences between the two scales had a strong impact on the level of opinionation where getting respondents to mark their left-right position with an X increased the response rate. It should be noted that a large majority of these non-respondents (refused = 59%, don’t know = 62%) on the 5-point scale selected a middle response option (i.e. point 5 on the 10 point scale). In substantive terms, the 5-point scale has a more rightist distribution than the 10-point one.

The strength of the estimates of correlation and association between both left-right scale measures varies on the basis of how the data are conceptualised. If both scales are assumed to be interval level where there is a fixed origin (left=1) and the intervals between all points on each scale is equal, the correlation is moderate in strength ($r=.40$). However, if the scales are seen to be ordinal where the distance between each point on the scale may be different, the level of association appears to be considerably larger ($\tau\text{-}b=.58$).

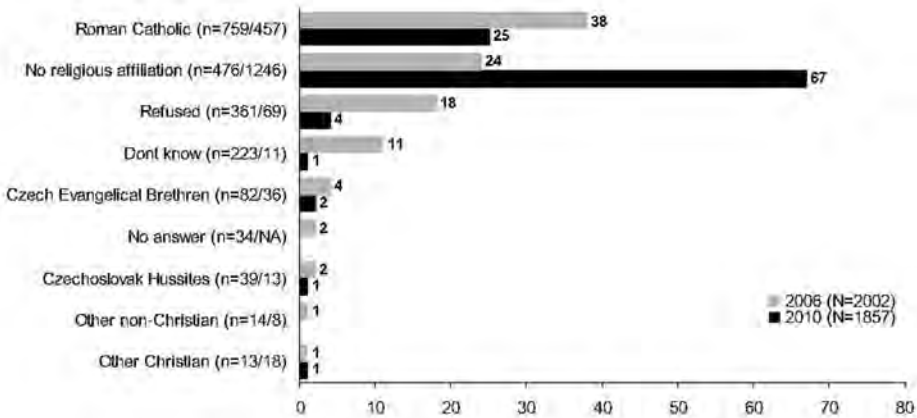
Finally, if the two self-placement scales are considered to be measured at the nominal level where each point on the scale refers to qualitatively different or independent choices; then the level of measured association is greatest ($\rho=.65$).

These differences in measured association between the two scales suggest that Czech respondents may not be interpreting the left-right self-placement scale as a unidimensional continuum as the questionnaire designers intended. If the left-right scale is best viewed as being a nominal level measurement, this has important implications for how this variable should be used in statistical analyses.

7.4.2 Impact of changing the number of options across different surveys

A standard question asked in many cross-sectional surveys is religious affiliation. Since religious beliefs are viewed as being long-term orientations that are generally fixed and stable in nature, survey researchers typically assume that the overall distribution of responses across surveys is not likely to change very much over a period of years. The survey estimates of religious affiliation shown in Fig-

Figure 7.3: Impact of including one additional response option on estimation of religious affiliation in the Czech Republic in 2006 and 2010, per cent



Denomination	ISSP 1998	Census 2001	ISSP 2008	EVS 2008
Roman Catholic	46	27	30	25
No religion	44	59	63	71
Protestant	5	2	4	2
Other Christian	3	1	1	<1
Other non-Christian	1	3	<1	2
No answer	2	9	2	0
TOTAL	100	100	100	100

Source: Czech National Election Studies, 2006 and 2010; Nešpor (2010: 171, 174)

S.25 (2006): What is your religious affiliation? Respondents were read out the following response options. (1) Roman Catholic, (2) Czech Evangelical Brethren, (3) Czechoslovak Hussites, (4) Other Christian - named, (5) Other non-Christian - named, (6) Refused to answer, (7) Don't know.

S.25 (2010): What is your religious affiliation? Respondents were read out the following response options. (1) Roman Catholic, (2) Czech Evangelical Brethren, (3) Czechoslovak Hussites, (4) Other Christian - named, (5) Other non-Christian - named, (6) None, no religious affiliation, (7) Refused to answer, (8) Don't know.

Note that the number of cases (n) for each religious denomination for both survey years is given in chronological order. The main difference between the questions asked in 2006 and 2010 is that the latter included a specific "none, no religious affiliation" response option.

Figure 7.3 shows the results from two consecutive post-election surveys undertaken within a four year period; where there were no major religious controversies or other sources of major social change.

The distribution of religious affiliation responses for 2006 and 2010 in the Czech Republic is quite different. The number of Roman Catholics according to these data declined by about a third (i.e. $38 - 25 = 13\%$) during this four year period, while the number of citizens with no religious affiliation more than doubled (i.e. 24 to 67% or +279%). In addition, the number who refused to answer or replied “don’t know” declined between 2006 and 2010 from 18% to 4% respectively. As it seems very unlikely that the Czech Catholic Church experienced a rapid decline in membership combined with a rapid increase in secularism during this four year period; it seems reasonable to think that the difference in response distributions may have a methodological origin.

A closer examination of the two questions reveals that the religious affiliation question asked in 2010 had one ‘extra’ response option: “none” (or no religious affiliation) that was not offered to respondents in 2006. It appears from the evidence presented in Figure 7.3 that the presence of this additional response option had a number of distinct effects: (a) it reduced the number of Roman Catholics but had no effect on other religious denominations, (b) increased the estimated number of non-religious affiliates and (c) decreased the propensity of respondents to give non-committal answers, i.e. refused or don’t know.¹²

This response option effect is substantively interesting because it demonstrates that the categorical concept of religious affiliation indicating a fixed or ‘standing decision’ may be unrealistic, especially with regard to Roman Catholics. It seems that for some Czechs membership of the Roman Catholic Church is weak and context dependent. Consequently, in some situations these ‘weak’ or ‘soft’ Catholics may express a religious denomination; and in other situations they will state that they are non-denominational. This is a fascinating finding because the transition from a religious to a non-religious response can depend on whether the ‘none’ option is verbally mentioned. While this may seem like a trivial difference between two religious orientation questions, it appears that in Czech society this is a sensitive issue that is susceptible to methodological effects.

The data presented in Figure 7.3 raise the question: which of the two estimates is more valid and reliable? Additional survey evidence from ISSP and EVS for the same time period, shown at the bottom of Figure 7.3, indicates that the 2010 figures are likely to be the more valid and reliable estimates. Nonetheless, the differences observed in the top of Figure 7.3 demonstrate that in an ostensibly highly secular society religious affiliation is still important for a large segment of the population; who still feel some traditional ties to the Catholic Church, although they may only attend religious services infrequently or rare-

12 This discovery stems from the research of PhDr. Lukáš Linek Ph.D. into electoral behaviour for the Chamber Elections of 2010 (Linek et al. 2012).

ly. More generally, this survey evidence reveals that religious beliefs and affiliation are perhaps best conceptualised as a continuum rather than a category.

7.4.3 Impact of changing response option labels in different surveys

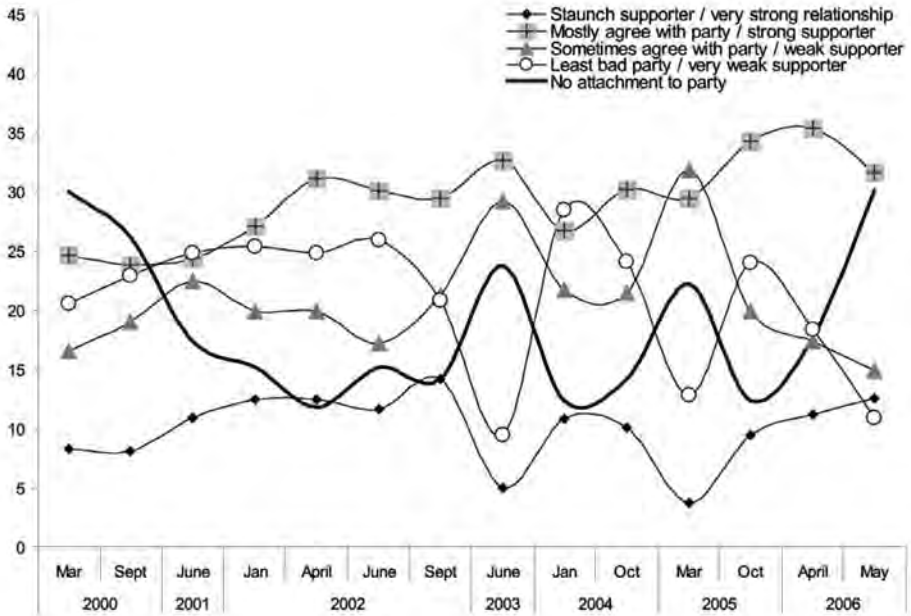
In omnibus surveys such as those undertaken every month or so by polling agencies such as CVVM there are typically questions on topics such as the respondent's vote intentions if there were a general election tomorrow. In addition, there are questions exploring the strength of the relationship between the voter and their preferred party. This is similar to the party identification concept developed within the Michigan Voter Model (Campbell et al. 1960). There is a crucial difference. Within the Michigan Voter Model, party identification and vote preference for a party are defined to be separate concepts. Party identification is generally a good but not a perfect predictor of vote choice. This is because a voter may for short term or strategic reasons vote for a party that they do not feel psychologically closest too.

For this reason, the CVVM item should not be considered a party identification question because it conflates vote choice and strength of identification with a party. In academic post-election surveys, measurements of these two concepts are deliberately kept away from each other in the questionnaire so as to reduce the propensity of respondents to give 'consistent' answers to vote choice and party identification items. In any case, the trend in the CVVM 'strength of party support' question is shown in Figure 7.4

With changing perceptions of the performances of parties in government and opposition, it is reasonable to think that this time series of questions will show change across election cycles. In general, changes in the four facets of partisan strength trend smoothly over months and years. For example, strong support for a party varies within a fairly narrow range, i.e. 8 to 14% over the six year period examined in Figure 7.4. In contrast, the proportion of the electorate with no party identification ranges from 12 to 30%: with the two year period between 2002 and 2004 exhibiting the highest levels of identification during the decade long period examined. Overall, attitudes toward parties either remain largely stable or change smoothly over time.

There are two exceptions to this generalisation in Figure 7.4 and they occur in June 2003 and March 2005. The results from these two months appear to be outliers in terms of the estimates before and after these time points. During these two months there were no major political scandals; and this suggests that perhaps the source of these rapid changes in opinion may have other origins. An examination of the questions asked in this time series reveals that in these two 'unusu-

Figure 7.4: Impact of changing response option labels on estimates of strength of party support, per cent



Source: CVVM omnibus surveys 2000–2006

Q.5 (June 2001): Even if you do not know yet, which party would you vote for, or is there a party that you are more sympathetic towards than the others? If yes, which one?

Q.6 (June 2001): What is your relationship to this party? Response options: (1) I am a strong supporter, (2) I agree mostly with party, but sometimes have a different opinion, (3) The party’s opinions are close to me, but I often have different views, (4) I do not like the party, but it bothers me least, (5) Don’t know.

PV.5 (June 2003): Even if you do not know yet, which party would you vote for, or is there a party that you are more sympathetic towards than the others? If yes, which one?

PV.6 (June 2003): What is your relationship to this party? Response options: (1) Very strong, (2) Strong, (3) Weak, (4) Very weak, (5) Don’t know.

Note that for both sets of questions were preceded by identical survey items inquiring about the likelihood of voting and party choice if there was a general election next week.

al’ months the labels for the response options for the strength of party identification measure were changed as outlined beneath Figure 7.4.¹³

Presenting respondents with a four point ‘very strong’ to ‘very weak’ Likert type scale changed the distribution of responses in a systematic manner. The two

13 The author is thankful to PhDr. Lukáš Linek Ph.D. for pointing out this feature of CVVM’s strength of party support time series.

anchor points on the scale (i.e. very strong and very weak) lost respondents while the middle options (weak and strong supporter) attracted more support. This pattern suggests that the new labels led many respondents to move toward the centre of the scale. However, this is not the full story. Figure 7.4 also reveals that this change in response option labels increased the number of non-partisans by approximately 10 points: suggesting an additional attenuating mechanism that reduced the total party identification rate.

It is important to note that the positions of the revised ‘strength of party support’ questions were not constant. In June 2003, the party sympathy item occurred later than normal in the questionnaire creating the possibility that some question order or priming effect may also be present. In contrast, the May 2005 party sympathy question was placed close to the start of the survey interview as per normal. The fact that both of the anomalous items have different positions in the questionnaire, and yet yield similar responses patterns although they are two years apart (admittedly within the same inter-election cycle) leads credence to view that the effects observed in Figure 7.4 are methodological in nature.

Conclusion

One of the themes of this chapter highlighted in the opening quotation is that pre-election surveys are not so much surveys, but a form of political consultancy. Although, this is not the mainstream view within political science, there is some truth to this conception because the primary objective of pre-election surveys is prediction. The linking of survey predictive accuracy with the quality of survey data has been one of the most influential ideas among pollsters and political scientists. In essence, political surveys should ideally mimic elections. This approach to interpreting political survey data is both intuitive and appealing because it makes surveying part of the framework of democratic institutions.

The methodological and substantive evidence presented in this chapter and elsewhere demonstrates that this conception of political survey data is too simplistic. The realities of voting and the undertaking of mass political surveys point to a model of citizens, respondents and survey response processes that are much more complex than many of the standard models of voting and political attitudes. In the first section of this chapter, there was an explanation of why some social scientists are sceptical of the merits of survey data for making causal inferences because of the impact of measurement error. Section 2 demonstrated the difficulties faced by those undertaking pre-election surveys in correctly predicting election outcomes. A key lesson here is that survey responses and voting are not

examples of the same social choice mechanism. To underscore this point, recent research using small unrepresentative samples examining respondents' abilities to recognise parties seems to be equally good, if not better, at predicting election outcomes with small (unknown) parties than standard large representative samples.

The last two sections of this chapter mapped out the problems that often occur with questionnaire design: demonstrating that even with a representative sample, this is no guarantee that the final dataset will be of sufficient 'quality' to make valid causal inferences regarding reported electoral behaviour; and the motivations behind vote choices. All of these considerations show that the interpretation of political survey data is a complex matter; and much is still unknown about how respondents formulate and report answers to survey questions in differing contexts.

A key feature of the final half of this chapter has been discussion of the importance of varying types of response option effects, where a number of pertinent examples from the Czech Republic have been reported. In the next chapter, this theme will be developed in greater detail and used to explore cross-national differences in a key political science concept, i.e. party attachment, where the response options have been modified. Such work will demonstrate, with a practical example, some of the important theoretical and methodological issues associated with the ever growing number of comparative political datasets discussed earlier in chapter four.

Conceptualising Survey Data and Interpretation of Questionnaire Responses

If explicit alternative response categories are offered (with whatever meaning) they will be chosen by respondents who would have opted for other response categories without them. At this level the interpretation of the finding is close to a tautology [...]

Robert Groves (1989: 465)

Introduction

The last chapter outlined many of the key issues that need to be addressed when using survey data for the analysis of political attitudes and behaviour. Chapter 7 adopted a two-step approach by discussing (a) overall features of surveys such as sampling methodology and (b) specific effects related to items within a questionnaire such as response option bias. Awareness of these technical features of the survey data are crucially important for the researcher whose goal in all empirical work is to make valid and reliable inferences. The topics explored in Chapter 7 also demonstrate that archived survey data should not be taken at face value: the data and the data generating process should be examined and interpreted critically. Consequently, the first step in any statistical analysis is a detailed study of the survey questionnaire and survey sampling documentation in order to determine survey data quality and potential sources of bias.

Therefore, the objective of this chapter is to build on some of the insights outlined in Chapter 7; and show using two comparative post-election surveys how response option effects may have institutional origins.¹ The survey response model formulated and tested in this chapter will demonstrate in a practical way how the analysis of survey data requires careful consideration of both measurement and structural models – a theme discussed earlier in Section 1 of Chapter 7.

¹ An earlier version of this chapter was presented at the ECPR Joint Sessions of Workshops in Nicosia, Cyprus in April 2006. This paper was later published in the online journal *European Electoral Studies* or *Evropská volební studia* available at <http://ispo.fss.muni.cz/evs> (see, Linek and Lyons 2007b). In this chapter, this research has been revised in order to provide an example of mass survey analysis where both measurement and structural models of the data are considered.

This topic will be expanded and dealt with in a more general manner in Section 8.5 of the concluding chapter. This chapter will show that ‘problems’ evident in survey data have the potential to show how respondents really answer questions; and how the survey response process plays a fundamental role in data analysis. In order to show the merits of this line of thinking, it is necessary at the outset to consider how survey data are conceptualised within the social sciences.

8.1 Rival conceptions of survey response

A fundamental consideration in the use of survey data are interpretation of the answers made by respondents. One perspective based on insights from *Classical Test Theory* contends that the responses recorded are what citizens really believe, think and feel (Lord and Novick 1968; Wilson and Hodges 1992). In other words, survey data represents individual’s fixed or true attitudes. An alternative view of the data generated from mass survey questionnaires contends that the answers provided by respondents are created during the interview; and were constructed on the basis of readily accessible information. Such ‘top-of-the-head’ responses are not likely to represent a person’s ‘true’ opinions; and are in fact likely to change in a systematic manner across interviews. This perspective is known as the *Belief Sampling Model* (Tourangeau, Rips and Rasinski 2000: 178–196; Zaller 1992; Lyons 2008a: 40–44).

The key difference between Classical Test Theory and Belief Sampling Model conceptions of mass survey data relate to how to how survey responses are generated. For the former, answers to questionnaire items reflect a respondent’s real opinions, attitudes, beliefs and values. In the case of the latter, the survey data generating mechanism is inherently probabilistic in nature where the answers given are only one possible response from a distribution of potential answers. As a result, the Belief Sampling Model argues that it is better to interpret questionnaire responses and survey data as evidence of ‘considerations’ or ‘opinion statements’ rather than as true or fixed attitudes (Zaller and Feldman 1992; Zaller 1992: 35).² An overview of the key features of both the Classical Test Theory and Belief Sampling Model is given in Box 8.1 where the key difference rests on contrasting conceptions of the data generating mechanism during the survey interview.

2 The Belief Sampling Model fits into the more general study of the psychology of survey response explored by Tourangeau, Rips and Rasinski (2000); and the Cognitive Aspects of Survey Methodology (CASM) developed since the 1980s (Sudman, Bradburn and Schwarz 1996; Tourangeau 2003). A recent overview of the field of CASM research is given by Schwarz (2007). An overview in Czech on this approach to survey response data is given in Vinopal (2009a).

Box 8.1: Two rival conceptions of survey response and political attitude data

Democratic systems of governance require that citizens are informed and take an active interest in public affairs. Survey research demonstrates that the average level of citizens' knowledge about politics is low, but there are great differences between citizens. Survey based measures of political attitudes reveal three key characteristics: (1) attitude instability over time is common, (2) attitude instability is often associated with systematic differences across questionnaire designs, and (3) respondents often express attitudes that have little or no meaning as is evident in responses to non-existent persons and issues. Within survey research there are two main conceptions of how respondents answer questions yielding two rival views of the nature of political attitudes data.

Classical Test Theory Model

- Mass surveys act as 'mirrors' of political attitudes and public opinion
- Respondent answers to survey questions are based on 'ready-made' answers suggesting that respondents have answers to any question that a researcher and interviewer might wish to ask
- Survey data represent true measurements because they refer to topics on which respondents have attitudes
- Consequently, survey based measures of political attitudes only works for the subset of citizens with 'real opinion' (Non-attitude model revision)
- *Political attitudes = Survey question measurements*
- Political surveys have imperfect questions due to faulty design and there is always measurement error (Measurement error model revision)
- *Political attitudes = Survey question measurements + error*

Belief Sampling Model

- Attitudes are often constructed during survey interviews and hence have no long-term existence
- Attitudes measured during a survey interview are created from the most salient pieces of information, or considerations, and form the basis of a spontaneous answer
- Citizens typically have more than one attitude about the same issue or topic and these different 'considerations' tend to be inconsistent
- The central components of the Belief Sampling Model are (1) ambivalence, (2) response and (3) uncertainty
- Demonstration of the validity of the Belief Sampling Model of survey response involve showing that (1) interviewees exhibit ambivalence among competing considerations on an issue, (2) there is an association or correlation between the considerations examined and the response choice selected by the respondent, and (3) individuals with higher levels of political interest and engagement in public affairs will find it easier to answer questions because considerations pertinent towards constructing an instantaneous survey response are more accessible
- Implications of this model: Citizens often do not have real attitudes. Consequently, attitude change is the product of a changing constellation of considerations used to construct an answer to a survey question rather than evidence of a change of mind; and political persuasion is not about responding to rational argumentation, but is about trying to manipulate the considerations citizens use to formulate answers to political questions
- Different interviewing situations will bias the type and content of information used by a respondent to answer a survey question
- *Political attitudes = Survey measurements + bias + error*
- Surveys cannot mirror public opinion

Which perspective on the survey data generating mechanism is correct? The methodological problems associated with mass surveys such as question order effects, response option effects, framing, priming, social desirability effects combined with instability in responses to standard questions among the same respondents in panel surveys suggest that the Classical Test Theory conception is unrealistic (Schuman and Presser 1996; Converse 1964, 1970). The fact that characteristics of the questionnaire may, and often do, influence the survey data measured demonstrates that many citizens do not have strong and durable attitudes about many of the topics addressed in commercial and academic surveys. In many situations, especially those related to politics, citizens often do not have attitudes or preferences prior to the survey interview. This is because for a majority in society political affairs are not of central concern beyond specific periods such as general election campaigns.

Unfortunately, the social and psychological nature of survey interviews motivates respondents who do not have strong attitudes to provide answers to the 'kindly middle-aged lady' doing the interview. As a result, survey data are often very (statistically) 'noisy' because estimates of interviewees' answers contain a considerable amount of measurement error; and possibly additional sources of systematic error stemming from methodological features of the survey interview. The implication here is that survey data are not likely to provide valid measures of concepts of interest, and may in fact be unreliable and misleading.

The fact that features of a questionnaire and the interview process are known to generate survey methodological effects represents an opportunity. This is because evidence of such effects provides valuable information into how citizens think and construct answers to political questions during interviews and election campaigns. In order to demonstrate how a survey measuring instrument may influence the attitudes recorded, it makes sense to take a practical example. Consequently, within this chapter there will be an exploration of one of the central questions implemented in political science surveys: measurement of party identification, and more specifically respondents' feelings of long-term psychological closeness to a political party.

The empirical evidence and analyses presented in this chapter will demonstrate that changing the number of response options in a standard party closeness question influences estimates of overall party identification. Using a pair of cross-national surveys undertaken simultaneously across 25 member states of the European Union immediately after the European Parliament elections of 2004, this chapter will also show that systematic differences in observed response option effects are influenced by the national institutional context. This is not to suggest that individual level characteristics such as level of knowledge of

politics have a negligible impact. The individual level foundations of survey response bias have been demonstrated in the previous research (e.g. Tourangeau, Rips and Rasinski 2000). Rather the goal of this chapter is show that contextual factors such as national political institutions, often not considered to have an effect on survey response, may in fact have systematic impact on how respondents interpret questions; and thereafter formulate answers.

More concretely, this chapter will show that how citizens evaluate their level of psychological closeness to any political party is influenced by the prevailing institutional context: and evidence of this substantively important relationship emerges from the study of methodological ‘nuisance’ response options effects. This chapter is structured as follows. In the first section, there is an examination of the measurement of party closeness in Europe; and this is followed by the presentation of a simple model of how respondents select response options when answering survey questions. Section three outlines some expectations regarding how national context might influence answers to party closeness items. The penultimate section reports the results of the models estimated, and this is followed by some final remarks and proposals for future research.

8.2 Measurement of party closeness in Europe

Following the elections to the European Parliament in early June 2004, two post-election surveys were undertaken in almost all EU member states: Flash Eurobarometer 162 (FLEB 162) and the European Election Study (EES 04). While the main focus of these two cross-national surveys were attitudes toward the integration project, electoral participation and vote choice: both surveys also inquired about citizens’ perceived closeness to political parties. The coincidence of a pair of pan-European post-election surveys asking similar questions is a rare occurrence and presents a unique opportunity for using such data as a natural (unplanned) experiment.

Despite the differences in the methodology and questions asked in these two large post-election surveys; it is fortunate that both implemented very similar party closeness questions. In fact, the key difference between both surveys was the number of response options implemented. EES 04 offered four choices (very close, fairly close, sympathiser, not close) while FLEB 162 presented three (very close, somewhat close, not close). It is important to stress from the outset that both EES 04 and FLEB 162 were identical in undertaking representative national samples; and doing their research during the same time period (the last two weeks of June 2004).

Comparing these two surveys' measurements of the level of party closeness across all of the states surveyed; one finds substantially different estimates. In general, FLEB 162 gives a more polarised view of party attachment in Europe, where there are higher estimates of closeness and detachment from parties than that represented in EES 04. Consequently, within EES 04 there are more respondents who adopt middle (fairly close or sympathiser) positions than those who state in FLEB 162 that they feel 'somewhat close' to a party. Such differences it will be argued give students of political attitudes and electoral behaviour a unique insight into the impact of (a) changes in the number of response options and (b) context on the measurement of party closeness in Europe.

Within the study of party attachment at a cross-national level it is closeness to any party that is of central concern. The party attachment question used in comparative projects such as Eurobarometer and European Elections Studies should be the same in all countries. While the basic format of asking (1) "Do you consider yourself to be close to any particular party? If so, which party do you feel close to?" and (2) "Do you feel yourself to be very close to this party, fairly close, or merely a sympathiser?" is standard: the exact wording of the party attachment question has varied for linguistic reasons.

These concerns are fundamentally important because even small wording changes have the potential to change response patterns dramatically (note, Kaase 1975: 85; Norpoth 1978; Converse and Pierce 1985; Bartle 1999; Burden and Klofstad 2005). Within the Eurobarometer time series of party attachment measures there have been changes in the question format over time warranting caution (Katz 1985: 108; Schmitt 1989: 122–39; Schmitt and Holmberg 1995: 25). In fact, within Eurobarometer between 1978 and 1994 there have been at least three different types of party attachment questions, along with country specific variations (Sinnott 1998: 630ff.). These may be summarised as follows. The *absolute version* inquires if the respondent is close to any single party. In contrast, in the *relative version* the respondent is asked if they feel closer to one party from among all parties. Lastly, in the *ordinal version* the goal is to elicit from a respondent the degree of closeness toward a specific party. Here closeness is graded within the main question text rather than within the response options.

Within the European Elections Study of 2004 a majority of countries implemented an absolute version of the party attachment question. Only in Portugal and Poland was a relative version of the party identification question asked. In other countries, there were minor linguistic deviations (e.g. Ireland), a modified question structure (e.g. Northern Ireland) and different response options (e.g. Estonia and Hungary).

8.2.1 Party closeness response options

The European Election Study was not the only surveying project that implemented a post-election poll in late June 2004. The European Commission had EOS Gallup Europe undertake a special Eurobarometer survey (FLEB 162) on its behalf in the two weeks following the 2004 elections to the European Parliament. Both EES 04 and FLEB 162 asked a party attachment question, with the latter seeking information only on level of closeness to a political party.

EES 04, q.30–3a: Do you consider yourself to be close to any particular party? If so, which party do you feel close to? (A negative response is coded as ‘not close to any party’) Do you feel yourself to be very close to this party, fairly close, or merely a sympathiser? (1) Very close; (2) Fairly close; (3) Merely a sympathiser; (4) Don’t know / No answer.

FLEB 162 q.10: Do you feel close to any one of the political parties? (1) Yes, very close to one of the political parties; (2) Yes, somewhat close to one of the political parties; (3) No, not at all close to any of the political parties; (4) Don’t know / No answer.

At first glance, this difference in question format might not seem all that important as both questions are functionally equivalent in estimating the number of partisans across the EU. This first impression is problematic because previous research undertaken by Barnes et al. (1992) has shown that the ‘intensity’ (party closeness) question tends to yield higher levels of self-reported partisanship than the ‘direction’ (party identification) question. A comparison of the FLEB 162 intensity item and the EES 04 direction question confirms this relationship. However, this question format difference does not explain the variation in partisan response patterns observed for three reasons.

First, the inflation in ‘intensity’ estimates in FLEB 162 above that recorded in EES 04 is not uniform but exhibits significant variation (+3 to +15 per cent). This effect is much more pronounced in some countries (i.e. Estonia, Germany, Hungary, Netherlands, Slovakia and Spain) than others. Second, the party closeness item in FLEB 162 is the final question in the survey; and comes directly after an item inquiring about recalled participation in the last general election. The concern here is that this question ordering may have resulted in at least some priming. However, the party attachment (direction) question implemented in EES 04 is also likely to have been susceptible to similar questionnaire effects. Third, Barnes et al. (1992: 227) also noted that there is a high level of correlation between both party identification and closeness scales at the individual

level: and concluded that the party closeness question is a good comparative research measure. While cognisant of the question formatting differences identified by Barnes et al. (1992), it seems on balance reasonable to think that the EES 04 and FLEB 162 party closeness results do in fact give us directly comparable independent measures of party closeness across twenty-five member states of the European Union.

However, the decision of EOS Gallup to ask a single ‘intensity’ or generic party closeness question resulted in FLEB 162 using a different number of response options to that employed in the European Election Study item. In both surveys there are comparable ‘very close’ and ‘not at all close’ options; however, the mid-dling categories are different. In the European Election Study there are two intermediate positions, i.e. ‘fairly close’ and ‘merely a sympathiser,’ while in Flash Eurobarometer 162 there is a single middle category ‘somewhat close to one of the political parties.’ This situation implies that we have the opportunity to gauge the impact of changing the response options on the answers given to a party closeness question across twenty-two European states at a single point in time. If closeness to party is a stable attitude one would expect to see very similar response profiles to the same question asked to representative samples contemporaneously. However, as the number of response options implemented in EES 04 and FLEB 162 is different there is the expectation that this variation in the surveys led respondents to assess their level of party closeness differently.

In this respect, the argument presented in this chapter will contend that this relatively minor response option difference between absolute measures of party closeness is not simply a methodological nuisance, but has the potential to tell us important things about party identification in Europe. It is appropriate at this point to consider more carefully what effect changing the number of response options has on aggregate level estimates of party closeness. To undertake this task it is necessary to outline a simple model of response option effects.

8.3 Belief sampling model and response option effects

The Belief-Sampling Model of survey response predicts that in different interview contexts respondents will interpret the questions asked by an interviewer differently (Zaller 1992). Reversing this logic, Kinder and Sanders (1990) have argued that different types of questions on the same issue can have similar effects to a change in context on observed survey responses. This is because by asking a specific type of question respondents are primed, in line with the logic of the Belief-Sampling Model, to use particular considerations in providing an answer.

However, by changing the wording, or format, of a survey question on the same issue very different considerations may be used in formulating an answer. Consequently, we can say that different survey questions relating to a single topic illuminate different facets of the subject being examined.

If we assume that party closeness survey questions refer to a single underlying attitude; then each survey scale used to measure strength of party attachment is unidimensional in nature. Moreover, it is assumed that respondents, for the most part, answer party closeness questions sincerely. In concrete terms, this means that those interviewed select the response option closest to their own preferred position along the attitude dimension that represents their closeness (or lack of closeness) to any political party. Therefore, if two nationally representative samples of respondents are presented with the same party closeness question, i.e. an absolute version, at the same point in time we would expect within the limits of sampling error to obtain the same results. However, if we modify this scenario and collapse two middle response options into a single choice this raises the important question of what effect will this have on the estimates of closeness to political parties?

8.3.1. What happens when the number of response options is changed?

With regard to the question just posed there would logically seem to be three possibilities: (1) No effect: the survey frequencies for both questions are statistically the same and are within sampling error; (2) Random effects: change in response format leads to different estimates where respondents drift in a haphazard manner away from the middle categories toward the polar options; and (3) Systematic effects: here the reduction in the number of middle categories will lead to stronger differences emerging among certain subgroups and/or countries than others. At this point, it seems appropriate to consider what insights might be gleaned from previous research on response option effects in mass surveys.

Most of the previous work on changes in response options deals with two main questions. The first stream may be termed the “omitted and offered response option effects literature” which investigates the impact of including or excluding “don’t know” or middle category alternatives (Schuman and Presser 1981). The second stream is the “optimal number of response categories literature” which examines what are the most appropriate response option formats for specific types of survey questions (Preston and Coleman 2000). Discussion of these two topics forms the basis of the remaining part of this section. Unfortunately, there seems to be little direct research on changing the number of response options in survey questions.

Schuman and Presser (1981: 171) state on the basis of their experimental research in the 1970s that differences in the number of response options offered to respondents do not lead to systematically different response patterns on the basis of level of education. However, it seems that the effect of omitting or offering a middle category “is larger among less intense [i.e. less opinionated] respondents than among more intense individuals.” Our expectations deriving from this research is that those who feel closer to a political party, or are firmly non-partisans, are less likely to be influenced by replacing the ‘fairly close’ and ‘sympathiser’ options than all others.

Within the second stream of research examining the optimal use of response categories the current wisdom seems to be that data quality are likely to improve as the number of response options increases (Andrews 1984; Krosnick and Fabrigar, 1997). Research based on “real life experiences” (i.e. consumer satisfaction ratings) has found on the basis of reliability scores, indices of validity and discriminating power, and convergent validity scores that seven to ten point scales perform better than scales with two to four response options. Where respondents have been allowed to rate scales, those scales with two to four response choices are judged favourably in terms of convenience (i.e. facilitate a quick response); but unfavourably in terms of being allowed to adequately express opinions (Preston and Coleman 2000).

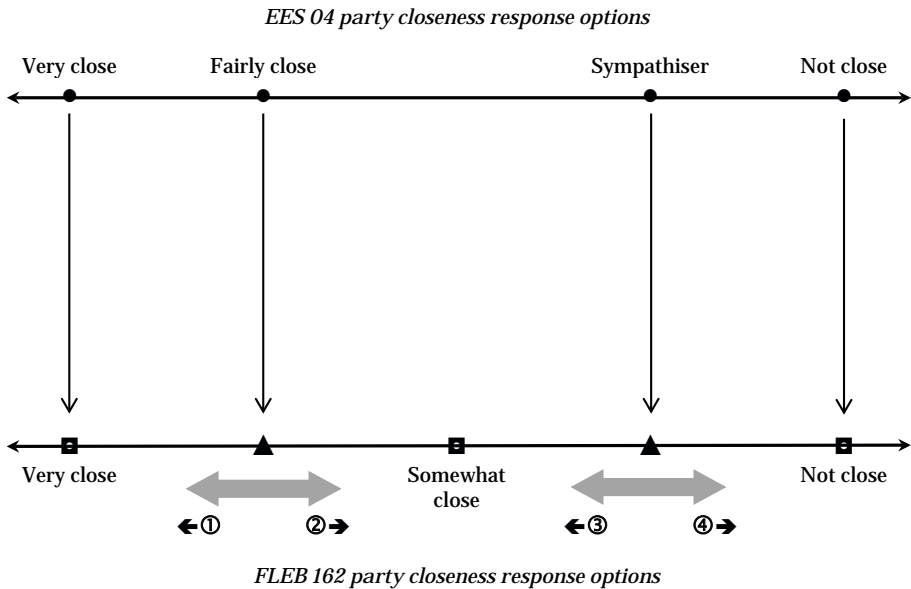
In summary, the party closeness scales used in EES 04 and FLEB 162 are likely to have similar levels of reliability and validity – a level that is likely to be relatively lower had a seven point scale been used instead. From this optimal use of response categories perspective, there should be little difference between the results derived from EES 04 and FLEB 162.

8.4 A spatial representation of response option change effects

In order to gain a better understanding of the puzzle being examined let us represent the situation in a simple graphical manner. We will consider a hypothetical respondent who had the opportunity to answer both the EES 04 and FLEB 162 party closeness questions. In Figure 8.1 there is a simplified graphical representation of the sources of differences between the party closeness question asked in EES 04 and FLEB 162. At the anchor points of both party closeness scales we assume that those with strong fixed attitudes toward parties will select the same response option in both interview situations.

The argument proposed here is that in spatial terms attitudes such as party closeness may be seen as zones of acceptance or rejection. From this perspec-

Figure 8.1: A simple spatial model examining differences in responses when the number of response options changes



Note the large grey bi-directional arrows at the bottom of this figure relate to hypothesised flows of responses where respondents who give specific responses to EES 04 would then place themselves on the FLEB 162 scale. For the anchor points of each scale (i.e. 'very close' and 'not close') it is assumed that responses preferences are invariant and there would be a direct translation from the EES 04 to the FLEB 162 scale. The circled numbers one through four refer to directions of flows of respondents from the middle response categories of EES 04 when 'transposed' onto the FLEB 162 scale. These numbers are convenient for identifying the direction of hypothesised net flows of responses when moving from the EES 04 party closeness scale to the FLEB 162 one. Four main effects may be used to provide a generalised description about the net differences observed between FLEB 162 and EES 04. These may be summarised as follows.

1. Weak fortifying effect: Differences ensue from flows along directions indicated by arrows 1 and 2 and 3.
2. Strong fortifying effect: Differences between FLEB 162 and EES 04 ensue from respondents shifting preferences in the directions indicated by arrows 1 and 3.
3. Strong attenuating effect: Net differences between FLEB 162 and EES 04 are explained by flows in directions indicated by arrows 2 and 4.
4. Polarising (net positive or negative) effect: Response patterns in FLEB 162 reveal attenuated middle category strength when compared to EES 04 and thus shifts in opinion in the direction indicated by arrows 1 and 4.

tive, those who feel ‘very close’ or ‘not at all close’ to a party find smaller regions along the party closeness dimension acceptable. They are therefore constrained to give polar answers regardless of how the middle options are reformulated. In contrast, those with less intense attitudes will have more space on the party closeness dimension; and hence are more likely to be affected by the omission or inclusion of response options. This expectation forms the basis for our first hypothesis, which may be expressed as follows.

H.1 There will be a non-significant difference in the responses to same party closeness for those at the anchor points, i.e. ‘very close’ and ‘not at all close’ regardless of changes in the middle categories of the party closeness item.

In this respect, our expectation is that almost all of the response differences will be observed in the middle options of both scales. However, there are three possibilities for the ‘fairly close’ and ‘sympathiser’ categories (from the EES 04 question) to choose (1) ‘very close,’ (2) ‘somewhat close’ or (3) ‘not at all close’ responses for the FLEB 162 item (i.e. a total of six possibilities).

The simple spatial representation, shown in Figure 8.1, presents an idealised situation where the “fairly close” and “sympathiser” response options implemented in EES 04 are equidistant from the three possible answers offered to respondents in FLEB 162. There is no compelling reason to think that this representation, although fitting in with the ordinal logic of both sets of response options will match closely with reality. The key merit of the simple spatial model presented in Figure 8.1 is to posit an important counterfactual. What would those respondents who chose the ‘fairly close’ and ‘sympathiser’ options in the EES 04 survey do if they were faced with the FLEB 162 questionnaire? The simple answer using a spatial proximity rule is that they would have chosen the FLEB 162 response that was closest to the more differentiated response options available in EES 04.

An important theoretical question here is the degree to which the points on both scales match up. For example, is the ‘fairly close’ option in EES 04 closer to ‘very close’ or ‘somewhat close’ within FLEB 162? Such considerations also reflect a more general curiosity about the relative distances of response options from each other across both scales. If it was possible to calculate these values at the individual level we would be in a position to predict using the standard proximity criteria used within spatial models where the differences between EES 04 and FLEB 162 would occur.

The key point here is that if the EES 04 and FLEB 162 party closeness scales are ordinal with dissimilar distances between response options then this has important implications for changing the scale from a four (EES 04) to a three point one (FLEB 162). For example, if the ‘fairly close’ option in EES 04 were much closer to the ‘very close’ choice than the ‘sympathiser’ option in FLEB 162 this would imply that most ‘fairly close’ respondents in EES 04 should select the ‘very close’ option in FLEB 162. This has the effect of boosting estimates of party closeness.

Such speculations highlight that some process of *sorting* must have taken place during the survey interviews; where respondents who would choose ‘fairly close’ and ‘sympathiser’ options in an EES 04 survey were compelled to choose something else when an FLEB 162 type of party closeness question was used. At an aggregate level, it should be possible to observe a number of response option effects through examining the differences between EES 04 and FLEB 162 survey estimates of party closeness. It is expected that two general effects will be observed: a positive and negative impact on measured levels of party closeness. Within these two broad effects there are likely to be more specific patterns.

Figure 8.1 highlights a number of possibilities that are defined primarily in terms of strong partisanship. First, we may see a growth in both strong and weak partisanship at the expense of the non-partisan category. In short, a *weak fortifying* process leads respondents to positions that reject the non-partisan label. Second, implementation of the FLEB 162 rather than EES 04 party closeness question may have a *strong fortifying effect* on strength of party closeness where the ‘very close’ category gains at the expense of all others. Third, use of less response options for measuring party closeness may induce a *strong attenuating effect* where respondents opt for the non-partisan category. Lastly, change in response option format may have a polarising effect where respondents who would choose middle categories in the EES 04 question no longer take an intermediate position on the partisanship scale. Here we may expect some respondents to adopt a *strong partisan stance* (i.e. positive swing) and others to espouse *non-partisanship* (i.e. a negative shift).

These dynamics are perhaps easier to visualize in Figure 8.1. The solid black triangle symbols at the bottom of this figure on the FLEB 162 dimension represent the direct translation of the ‘fairly close’ and ‘sympathiser’ options from the EES 04 scale. As one can see the spatial proximity logic of this simple model suggests flows of responses in different directions as indicated by the large grey bi-directional arrows. The small dark arrows identified by circled numerals indicate specific differences between FLEB 162 and EES 04. On the basis of these simple theoretical expectations we may formulate a second hypothesis.

H.2 Response option effects will be observable in two broad patterns of difference between the EES 04 and FLEB 162 party closeness estimates. Moreover, the presence of distinct response effects patterns implies that the null hypothesis of no effects should be rejected.

It was mentioned earlier, in terms of the Belief-Sampling Model of survey response that we expect different contexts to influence the process of survey response. Consequently with a sample of twenty-two countries with different histories, institutions, party systems and socio-political patterns there is strong reason to think that country level factors would have been important. In the next section, we will endeavour to build on the insights from the simple model of response effects; and outline some theoretical expectations as to what national and individual level factors might help explain cross-national variation in the response option effects observed.

8.5 National context and measurement of party closeness

It is important to keep in mind that the main question in this chapter is to study the institutional determinants of response option effects in the measurement of party closeness. For this reason, the unit of analysis is the country and not the individual. This is admittedly a simplification of the individual level onstrate in an exploratory manner that the survey response data generating process is influenced by political context. In this chapter, two dependent variables are examined: change in the estimates of those feeling (1) ‘very close’ and (2) those who were ‘not at all close’ to a party.

These response variables are distinct, as noted earlier, because they refer in the former case to respondents with fixed and stable attitudes; or in the latter case to those whose opinions are changeable. Consequently, while it is expected that factors associated with strong levels of party identification will help explain the difference in estimates of party closeness between EES 04 and FLEB 162. However, this should not be true for those with no party identification. The change in response options between EES 04 question on party closeness and that implemented in FLEB 162 involves comparison between two different types of absolute measure of closeness to a single party. In effect, the FLEB 162 question would seem to be a more absolute or “harder” measure of party attachment than that implemented in EES 04. In this respect, this research will attempt to specify more clearly why the aggregate level response patterns observed in EES 04 and FLEB 162 differ systematically across countries.

8.5.1 National context and differential party closeness responses

The central argument tested here is that differences in responses to the EES 04 and FLEB 162 questions may have been influenced by the institutional context prevailing in each EU member state. In this chapter, there will be tests of two dependent variables that operationalise the polar ends of the party closeness scales used in EES 04 and FLEB 162, i.e. (1) differences in ‘close to no party’ measures, and (2) differences in ‘close to party.’ This strategy reflects directly on the goal to discover what contextual factors might be associated with the different estimates made by EES 04 and FLEB 162 on ‘very close’ or ‘not close at all’ to a party.

A key assumption here is that contextual factors identified in previous research as shaping level of party identification will also be important in helping to explain the differences observed between FLEB 162 and EES 04. In this respect, the research in this chapter will build on the institutional logic outlined in Huber et al. (2005). On the basis of this work, six national context hypotheses are examined; and these are presented in Figure 8.2. A more detailed discussion of the logic inherent in each of these hypotheses and associated explanatory variables is given in Huber et al. (2005); and is not repeated here. This is because the central focus of this chapter is to demonstrate that response option effects have systematically different institutional origins. Figure 8.2 shows that there are at least five different channels through which national context might be expected to influence the measurement of party closeness; and more specifically variation accruing from response option differences across contemporary surveys.

Firstly, account must be taken of methodological variation where some countries adopted absolute and others relative party closeness measures; as differences in question format are very likely to influence the impact of a change in the number of response options and measurement of party closeness. Second, different features of the electoral system are important as they mediate the link between citizens and parties: and hence individuals’ feelings of closeness to political parties. Third, the representative role played by political parties is very likely to have some influence on citizens’ perceptions of closeness to parties; and if they feel represented in the political system. Lastly, general support for the democratic system of governance is also likely to shape citizens’ attitudes and feelings toward parties. In sum, the hypotheses presented in Figure 8.2 map out many of the contextual effects that may be reasonably assumed to have an important impact on the measurement of party closeness.

Figure 8.2: Measurement of party closeness and impact of response options effects and context

<i>Source of effect</i>	<i>Hypotheses</i>	<i>Implications</i>
Methodological	H.3 Survey methodology effects will have an important impact on the difference in estimates of party closeness measured because relative questions yield higher levels of identification	Countries that use a relative item will have lower measures of 'close to no party' (Sinnott 1998). The use of relative questions will not have a significant impact on estimates of those feel 'close to a party'
Electoral system	H.4 In electoral systems where there is a categorical ballot this compels voters to give their vote either to a candidate or party	As most EU member states' electoral systems are based on parties we expect that the institutional rules promotes loyalty to a party; and there will be a significant relationship between this variable and the difference in estimates in both surveys
	H.5 The experience of direct presidential elections will promote candidate-centred politics. In presidential systems voters are exposed to election campaigns that are not always strongly centred on parties	There should be a significant relationship between this variable and differences in survey estimates made by FLEB 162 and EES 04
	H.6 Electoral systems that use Single Member Districts (SMDs) also promote candidate rather than party based politics	In SMDs, citizens' primary identification is with a single political representative of their constituency rather than a national party. For this reason, one would expect there should be a significant relationship between this variable and the survey estimates observed
System of representation	H.7 In political systems where there is a higher effective number of legislative parties, one would expect there to be a significant difference between the EES 04 and FLEB 162 estimates	Representative governments with a higher number of parties reflect a wider range of opinions. In surveying terms this implies that respondents are likely to be exposed to a broader range of considerations when answering party closeness questions, and vice versa
Support for democracy	H.8 Differences in support for the political system, as measured by level of satisfaction with democracy, will also accentuate the differences recorded in the EES 04 and FLEB 162 estimates of party closeness	Respondents align their attitudes toward parties with their general orientation toward the entire political system. Consequently, in those states with higher levels of satisfaction with democracy there will be more respondents willing to state that they are partisan and vice versa

Source: author. Note that the five hypotheses listed above refer to five mechanisms that could in theory explain the systematic differences in responses observed for level of party attachment measured immediately after the European Parliament Elections of 2004. Apart from the methodological effect (H.3), the main expectation is that national institutional context will have an impact on how respondents' answer party identification questions. The first two hypotheses (H.1 and H.2) described in the text refer directly to the survey response process and are not listed here for reasons of brevity. The response option format differences between EES 04 and FLEB 162 represent an opportunity (or unplanned natural experiment) where the variation in responses for a country is expected to vary systematically on the basis of the hypotheses outlined in this figure.

8.6 Response option effects and institutional context

Using the simple model of response effects shown in Figure 8.1 involves making an important assumption made explicit in H.1 in our model: respondents with strong, or perhaps fixed, attitudes toward party attachment would respond consistently to the party closeness question, regardless of changes in the number of response options. It is important at this juncture to reiterate a point made earlier: the analyses undertaken in this chapter are at the national level and do not refer to individual respondents. In order to test our first hypothesis, a difference of proportions test was undertaken comparing responses from FLEB 162 and EES 04. The results of these tests are given in the final three columns of Table 8.1.

Here we can see that this hypothesis (H.1) must be partly rejected at a country level. There are statistically significant differences in estimates in a majority of countries (18 out of 22 for both polar response options). However, as Table 8.1 reveals the core proportion of ‘very close’ party identifiers never declines below the estimates provided in EES 04. In contrast, the proportion espousing non-partisanship varies by a considerable margin (-26 to +25 per cent).

This result is important for three reasons. First, a combined analysis of EES 04 and FLEB 162 datasets suggests that the attitudes of those stating that they are ‘close’ to a party in Europe are intensely held positions. This is because omitting and re-labelling a middle category (as occurred in FLEB 162) does not diminish the level of party closeness. Secondly, in terms of the spatial logic outlined in Figure 8.1 the idea that the anchor points on the closeness scale are defined by restricted regions of acceptance is only true for ‘very close’ attitudes. This implies that non-partisans are a heterogeneous group composed of weak and completely de-aligned citizens. Lastly, EES 04 provides a lower bound estimate of the level of party attachment within the EU. However, it is not possible to provide a similar estimate for non-partisans for the reasons just noted.

The evidence presented in Table 8.2 confirms the second hypothesis. H.2 predicts the presence of significant differences in the response patterns to party closeness implemented in EES 04 and FLEB 162. Moreover, these differences will be of two main types as outlined in our simple spatial model. In one block of fourteen countries the net effect of the FLEB 162 party closeness item was to increase the level of partisanship, while in the remaining group of eight EU member states the effect was negative.

Table 8.1: Comparison of estimates for the party closeness item implemented in two post-election surveys (per cent)

Country	ESS 2004 estimates				Flash FLEB 162 estimates				Difference EB162 – ESS04		
	Very close	Fairly close & sympathiser	Close to no party	N	Very close	Somewhat close	Close to no party	N	Close to party	Middle categories	Not close at all
Austria	17	36	47	1,000	25	36	38	986	8	1	-9
Britain	6	31	63	1,499	11	27	62	1,002	4	-3	-1
Cyprus	30	41	29	500	25	36	38	966	-4	-5	9
Czech Republic	11	51	38	889	14	23	63	950	3	-28	25
Denmark	6	46	48	1,317	9	27	63	970	3	-19	15
Estonia	2	38	61	1,588	17	31	52	949	15	-7	-9
Finland	8	46	46	900	16	41	44	951	7	-5	-2
France	6	43	51	1,394	8	47	45	958	1	4	-5
Germany	7	41	52	629	18	44	38	965	12	2	-14
Greece	23	40	36	500	32	39	29	1,001	9	-2	-7
Hungary	7	29	64	1,200	18	43	39	950	12	14	-26
Ireland	7	53	41	1,154	10	25	65	968	3	-27	24
Italy	12	57	32	1,553	17	45	38	897	5	-12	6
Latvia	2	37	62	1,000	3	11	86	958	1	-25	24
Luxembourg	14	54	32	1,336	16	35	49	980	2	-19	17
Netherlands	5	76	19	1,586	17	55	28	1,000	13	-21	8
Poland	4	44	52	1,540	13	19	68	919	9	-25	16
Portugal	6	60	35	959	19	35	46	1,000	13	-24	11
Slovakia	5	44	50	1,000	20	31	49	987	14	-13	-1
Slovenia	5	29	66	1,064	10	22	68	963	5	-7	2
Spain	5	58	37	1,001	19	39	42	949	15	-19	4
Sweden	15	67	19	1,202	11	56	34	942	-4	-11	15

Note the percentage data contained within this figure is derived from a subtracting the EES 04 estimate from the EB 162 one. The middle categories for the EES04 party closeness question contain the sum of two response options (i.e. 'fairly close' and 'merely a sympathiser'). The 'not close to any party' also includes non-committal responses. Some EES and FLEB 162 estimates are subject to rounding error and some totals may be slightly inaccurate. Differences that are in bold are not significant at $p \leq .05$ level using a difference of proportions test.

Table 8.2: Comparison of response results for the party closeness item implemented in two post-election surveys (per cent)

<i>Differences in wording impact</i>	<i>Country</i>	<i>Net differences (%)</i>			<i>Categories of effects (+/-)</i>		
		<i>Close to a party</i>	<i>Middle categories</i>	<i>Not close to a party</i>	<i>Close to a party</i>	<i>Middle categories</i>	<i>Not close to a party</i>
Positive partisan impact							
<i>1c. Weak fortifying effect</i>							
	Hungary	12	14	-26	Plus	Plus	Negative
	Germany	12	2	-14	Plus	Plus	Negative
	Austria	8	1	-9	Plus	Plus	Negative
	France	1	4	-5	Plus	Plus	Negative
<i>1a. Strong fortifying effect</i>							
	Estonia	15	-7	-9	Plus	Negative	Negative
	Slovakia	14	-13	-1	Plus	Negative	Negative
	Greece	9	-2	-7	Plus	Negative	Negative
	Finland	7	-5	-2	Plus	Negative	Negative
	Britain	4	-3	-1	Plus	Negative	Negative
<i>1b. Polarising effect (net positive)</i>							
	Spain	15	-19	4	Plus	Negative	Plus
	Netherlands	13	-21	8	Plus	Negative	Plus
	Portugal	13	-24	11	Plus	Negative	Plus
	Slovenia	5	-7	2	Plus	Negative	Plus
Negative partisan impact							
<i>2a. Strong attenuating effect</i>							
	Sweden	-4	-11	15	Negative	Negative	Plus
	Cyprus	-4	-5	9	Negative	Negative	Plus
<i>2b. Polarising effect (net negative)</i>							
	Czech Republic	3	-28	25	Plus	Negative	Plus
	Denmark	3	-19	15	Plus	Negative	Plus
	Ireland	3	-27	24	Plus	Negative	Plus
	Latvia	1	-25	24	Plus	Negative	Plus
	Luxembourg	2	-19	17	Plus	Negative	Plus
	Italy	5	-12	6	Plus	Negative	Plus
	Poland	9	-25	16	Plus	Negative	Plus

Note the percentage data contained within the net difference columns is derived from subtracting the EES 04 estimate from the FLEB 162 one. The middle categories for the EES 04 party closeness question contain the sum of two response options (i.e. 'fairly close' and 'merely a sympathiser'). The 'not close to any party' also includes non-committal responses. Grey subsections of the table indicate theoretically expected effects (i.e. largest percentages). Bold data not in grey zones refer to subsidiary effects. Differences that are in bold in the 'categories of effects' section of this table (i.e. final three columns) are not significant at $p \leq .05$ level using a difference of proportions test.

8.6.1 Aggregate level regression analyses

In essence, the four models reported in Table 8.3 are best thought of as modelling bias in responses between FLEB 162 and EES 04. As noted earlier, the primary goal of this chapter is to explain the differences in estimates between these surveys on the basis of national institutional or contextual factors. Thus far, it has been shown that the differences in responses observed across the twenty-two EU member states for which there are data are not random; and that much of this variation can be explained in terms of the variables outlined in the methodological, electoral, representative, mobilising and systemic hypotheses outlined earlier in Figure 8.2.

The methodological variable in the model estimated is important because as predicted it explains change in responses for the ‘not close’ to a party, but has no significant impact on the difference in answers across the two post-European Election surveys to the ‘very close’ option. This fits in with the logic of the simple model of survey response shown in Figure 8.1, where those who feel close to a party have some of the highest levels of attitude stability.

Another important finding from our regression results is the powerful role which electoral factors play on explaining differences in survey response. More specifically, the categorical ballot paper variable seems to have an impact on difference in responses in EES 04 and FLEB 162 at both ends of the party closeness scale. Obviously, the mechanisms operating at the ‘very close’ and ‘not close’ poles are different; however, the key point here is that this electoral factor has an across the board influence in the survey response patterns observed. The regression models presented in Table 8.3 also show that the extent to which national political systems are candidate or party centred is important. However, in this case different facets of this characteristic operate on either end of the party closeness scale. In model 1, we see that countries that have direct presidential elections helps explain differences in the EES 04 and FLEB 162 survey estimates of ‘close to no party.’ In contrast, models 2 and 4 demonstrate that the presence of Single Member Districts is associated with changes in estimates of ‘very close’ responses.

With regard to political representation we observe from models 1 and 3 that effective number of legislative parties influences the differences in responses for ‘close to no party’ respondents. The implication here is that the number of parties involved in legislative politics does not influence those with strong partisan opinions. Therefore, it would seem that considerations on the current structure of the legislature (and perhaps government) are most influential in motivating heterogeneous responses from those who are by their own admission non-partisan.

Table 8.3: OLS regression models of differences in estimates for level of party closeness

	<i>Model 1</i>	<i>Model 2</i>	<i>Model 3</i>	<i>Model 4</i>
(Constant)	.38 (8.86)	7.20 ** (3.08)	.69 (1.09)	12.00 * (5.91)
Absolute – relative party closeness question together	22.73 *** (5.14)	2.48 (1.93)	23.68 *** (5.01)	3.06 (2.94)
Categorical ballot for EP04: Ballot allows a single vote for a party/candidate	1.25 ** (4.39)	9.72 *** (2.44)	13.96 *** (4.55)	9.42 ** (2.67)
Direct presidential elections	16.43 * (9.37)		16.64 * (8.46)	1.94 (4.96)
Effective number of legislative parties (2003)	3.38 * (1.83)		3.50 * (1.72)	.92 (1.01)
Concurrent elections		7.94 ** (3.42)	1.52 (6.09)	8.25 ** (3.57)
Single Member Districts		7.41 ** (3.09)	2.86 (5.65)	8.11 ** (3.31)
Level of satisfaction with democracy in country		.14 *** (.04)	.11 (.08)	.16 *** (.05)
R	.85	.80	.90	.81
R Square	.72	.64	.81	.66
Adjusted R Square	.65	.52	.72	.50
Std. Error of the Estimate	7.88	4.02	7.04	4.12
N	22	22	22	22

Note in models 1 and 3 the dependent variable is the difference in the ‘not close’ to any party estimates (i.e. FLEB 162 minus EES 04), while in models 2 and 4 the dependent variable is the difference in the ‘very close’ to a party estimates. Details of the independent variables are given in Appendix 8.1. Standard errors are in parentheses. All coefficients are positive as they refer to differences in responses between FLEB 162 and EES 04.

The impact of concurrent elections on competing EES 04 and FLEB 162 survey estimates of strong (‘very close’) partisanship is to increase the level of deviation between survey estimates. It would seem that in comparison with member states that only had European Elections the impact of additional electoral mobilising campaigns led to some fluidity in citizens’ estimations of their degree

of partisanship. In a similar manner, variance in the satisfaction with democracy variable is also associated with greater volatility in responses to the ‘very close’ response option. These two findings taken together are substantively important because they show that response instability in party closeness questions are driven by both short (concurrent elections and campaigns), and long-term factors (level of systemic support as measured by satisfaction with democracy).

Conclusion

Why should two large pan European surveys ostensibly measuring the same concept – closeness to political parties – provide very different estimates of party attachment across most EU member states? Simple statistical tests undertaken at the national level indicate that differences in the number of response options offered to respondents may have important consequences. One might argue in a similar manner to the survey methodologist Robert Groves (1989: 465), as quoted at the beginning of this chapter, that evidence of response option effects undermines the use of survey data to make valid and reliable inferences.

One of the goals of this chapter has been to move beyond this ‘tautology’ by using insights derived from the Belief-Sampling Model of survey response. It has been argued that the difference in response options offered in EES 04 and FLEB 162 resulted in systematic cross-national differences in measured levels of party closeness. Moreover, it has been demonstrated that it is possible to explain a large portion of the variance in the responses given in the two post-European Election studies in terms of institutional factors operating at the national level.

The fact that it is possible to explain deviation in the responses to two party closeness questions in terms of institutional factors tells us two important things. First, many respondents do not have fixed ready-made answers to party closeness questions. There is the suggestion here that many citizens do not think of political parties in this manner. Second, with relatively small changes in question format (where the number of middle response options was altered) respondents in different national contexts behave in systematically different ways.

The logical next step in future research is to explore the individual level foundations behind this specific survey measurement effect. Unfortunately, EES 04 and FLEB 162 offer limited opportunities in this respect because there are only a small number of common survey items: mainly socio-demographic measures. Notwithstanding these data constraints, there are at least two possibilities for further research. First, a multilevel modelling approach could be implemented where both the individual and contextual determinants of party closeness in both

the EES 04 and FLEB 162 datasets are examined separately. Differences in the pairs of coefficients for each country would provide evidence about how individual and contextual effects operate differently for the two versions of the party closeness measure.

Second, the quasi natural experimental nature of the EES 04 and FLEB 162 could be modelled more explicitly as an experiment using insights from the Rubin Causality Model (Rosenbaum and Rubin 1984; Holland 1986; Rubin 1977; Rubin and Waterman 2006; Morgan and Winship 2007; note also Achen 1986 and Arceneaux, Gerber and Green 2010). At its simplest, respondents with the same socio-demographic profile in both surveys would be statistically matched using ‘propensity scores’. In this modelling exercise, the ‘experimental’ treatment would be assignment to the EES 04 or FLEB 162 survey; and the goal would be see how identical respondents would answer the two different survey questions. Here the explanatory variables would include both individual and contextual factors.

The careful reader at this point will realise that these two approaches are subject to assumptions regarding measurement error (as discussed earlier in Section 1 of Chapter 1 and Section 7.1.9) where the mapping of partisanship onto party closeness scales does not vary with respondent characteristics. This form of measurement error is well-known in applied survey research in domains such as subjective assessments of health; and has been labelled “state-dependent reporting bias”, “scale of reference bias” and “response category cut-point shift” (Kerkhofs and Lindeboom 1995; Groot 2000; Murray et al. 2001; Hernández-Quevedo, Jones and Rice 2005). If the scale in party closeness questions used in EES 04 and FLEB 162 vary across individuals, this suggests that a heteroscedastic specification of the latent variable, i.e. partisanship, is required. The reason is that the location and scale cannot be identified separately in binary or ordered choice models of party closeness; and consequently it is impossible to distinguish measurement error from heterogeneity.

The only fix to this problem would be to (a) locate ‘objective’ indicators of partisanship or (b) find an independent method of determining the cut-points in the party closeness scale independently of the questions asked in EES 04 and FLEB 162. Neither of these options suggests a practical solution in this particular situation because such additional evidence is simply unavailable. A key lesson from such methodological complications is that the estimation of simple aggregate level models serves as a productive first step and thereafter more detailed estimators may be attempted: this is the strategy adopted in this chapter.

In the final (data analysis) section of this book, chapters 7 and 8 have endeavoured to demonstrate in a general manner some of the key themes involved in

the analysis of political data. The focus has been on survey data for three reasons: (1) these data constitute the largest repository of empirical evidence on politics in the Czech Republic, (2) these data constitute perhaps the main source of data used to make inferences in published research, and (3) survey data contain many more methodological considerations than analysis of official election results. For these reasons, the final two chapters have shown through practical examples some of the issues that the consumer of Czech political data should be aware of when undertaking analysis work of their own. These two chapters have deliberately avoided presenting “how to” cookbook type of advice with regard to statistical modelling because this topic is dealt with extensively in many other texts (e.g. Pollock 2011; Freedman, Pisani and Purvis 2007; Freedman 2009; Agresti 2002, 2009; Agresti and Findlay 2009).

In the final and concluding chapter, the perspective will become more general in nature as the goal is to integrate the three sections of this book: theory, data and analysis. It is tempting in this final chapter to simply highlight the key points in the preceding eight chapters and make references to themes and issues that have occurred in a number of places. Although there will be a certain element of highlighting and connecting; it is more important to reinforce a central message of this book that theory, data and analysis form an intricate part of all research work within political science. For this reason, the final chapter will present in a thematic manner key issues in the integration of theory, data and analysis of Czech political data; and attempt to pull all of these issues together within a coherent framework.

Conclusion

About thirty years ago there was much talk that geologists ought to observe and not theorize, and I will remember someone saying that at this rate a man might as well go into a gravel-pit and count the pebbles and describe the colours. How odd it is that anyone should not see that all observation must be for or against some view if it is to be of any service.

Charles Darwin (Letter to Henry Fawcett, September 18: 1861)

The human mind cannot go on for ever accumulating facts which remain unconnected and without any mutual bearing and bound together by no law.

Alfred Russel Wallace (1823–1913)¹

Overview

There is a danger in mapping out the political data resources of the Czech Republic to adopt the archetypal “eminently practical” position attributed by Charles Dickens to Mr. Thomas Gradgrind one of the main characters in *Hard Times* (1854) who demanded “In this life, we want nothing but Facts, sir; nothing but Facts!” (Dickens 1854; book 1, chapter 1). Such a pragmatic (utilitarian) Victorian perspective is pervasive in the use of political data; and most especially in the use of survey data. Unfortunately, this viewpoint ignores the fundamentally important relationship that exists between (a) the implicit/explicit theory used to select facts or data, (b) the creation of the data through classification or coding schemes, and (c) the subsequent analysis of the data based on specific measurement models and statistical estimation techniques.

The ‘fact based’ approach to political data is often apparent in media discussions of opinion poll and election results where the data are presented as objective facts. In these situations, there is frequent reference to the ‘public mood’, ‘climate of opinion’ or the ‘pulse of the public’ when discussing survey results; or the ‘will of the people’ when dealing with aggregated election data. In both

¹ The original sources of quotes are Darwin (1887, II: 121) and Marchant (1916: 63). Both quotations are taken from Schermer (2002: 4). Schermer (2001) using this “colored pebbles” quote highlighted Darwin’s commitment to scientific research that integrates theory, data and analysis: the perspective adopted in this study.

cases, there is a tendency for political commentators and analysts to give public opinion and the electorate a personality; or more formally anthropomorphise collective human behaviour with such claims as the ‘people have spoken.’

The opening quotes from Charles Darwin and Alfred Russel Wallace, two of the most influential late-Victorian scientists (and contemporaries of Mr. Gradgrind), who independently formulated the hugely influential theory of evolution both advocated a philosophy of science adopted in this book. At the risk of repetition, political data never speak for themselves; they are always either implicitly or explicitly interpreted in terms of some theory. Within political science, in contrast media reports of poll results, data are explicitly tested against hypotheses, models and theories. The key point here is that systematically recorded observations from the political realm only make sense because specific ideas, assumptions have been formalised into concepts.

The scientific study of political phenomena represents a blend of data, theory and analysis: the three central themes of this book. It is important to stress at this point that political science is not a static orthodoxy written indelibly into text books by old venerable authorities whose expertise cannot be questioned. Political science is in contrast, a dynamic interactive process of continuous exploration, extension and refinement of theories, data and analysis. Nonetheless, a word of caution is in order at this point. All consumers of political data exhibit the biases and cognitive limitations evident in all areas of human knowledge (Kahneman and Tversky 1972; Gilovich, Griffin and Kahneman 2002).

For this very practical reason, all political data analysis must have an explicit theoretical rationalisation. Otherwise the presentation of the ‘facts’ result in a *confirmation bias* or the ‘illusion of validity’: a process representing little more than post-hoc rationalising of favoured ‘pet’ theories regardless of whether such theories provide valid and reliable explanations of social reality (note, Klayman and Ha 1987; MacCoun 1998; Tetlock 2005: 125–128; Hergovich, Schott and Burger 2010; Kahnemann 2011: 204–215).

This is the key reason why the four central data chapters contained in section 2 of this book had (a) overviews of the published literature, (b) some practical empirical demonstrations of how Czech political data cannot be simply taken at face value but must be cross-validated with independent measures, and (c) discussions that contended methodological problems provide valuable insights into how political attitudes and behaviour are expressed. In short, the idea that mass, expert and elite surveys (or any other source of political data such as CMP or even official election results) provide objective factual measurements is not realistic; and very likely to lead to biased inferences.

In this concluding chapter, the goal is to interconnect the main theoretical and substantive themes discussed earlier in various chapters of this book and place them in a broader and more general framework. This task will be undertaken using a question and answer format where the following eight questions will be used to explore the relationship between data, theory and analysis: the central components (or sections) of this book.

Theory component

1. What are political attitudes and why are they important?
2. Can political attitudes be measured?

Data component

3. How do political scientists conceptualise survey data?

Analysis component

4. Testing theories of data generating mechanisms or political reality?

Integration of theory, data and analysis

5. What is the relationship between theory, data and analysis?

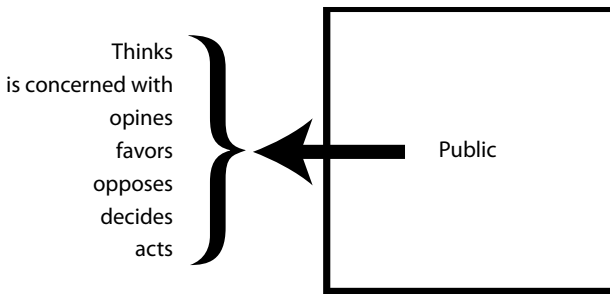
The first two questions above highlight the main *theoretical* themes addressed in this book relating to the existential nature of individual political attitudes and aggregated public opinion. The third question deals with the *data* component of this study and focuses on how political scientists select data; and what is their purpose in doing so. Question 4 looks at the *analysis* of political data and explores how the testing of political theories and models help explain the events observed. This theme is important because the motivation to gather political data is often based on the identification of a problem or puzzle. Finally, question 5 addresses the core issue of integrating theory, data and analysis within a coherent framework. Here use will be made of Clyde H. Coombs (1964) theory of measurement. Thereafter, there will be some final observations.

Before commencing two key points are in order. First, this integrating chapter will for the sake of brevity take survey data as the primary example of all political data. There is no suggestion here that other data such as electoral results or content analysis of political text are less important. Survey data serve the useful purpose of highlighting theoretical and methodological issues that have application to all forms of political evidence. Second, in this chapter the term ‘attitude’ will be used to refer generically to all survey data excluding socio-demographics.

Hence, public opinion is seen to be the aggregation of individual attitudes into a summary statistical measure.

This strategy has been adopted for two reasons. (1) This approach simplifies references to opinions, attitudes, beliefs, values, etc. into a single term. This is in light of the discussions in Chapters 1 and 2 admittedly a bold move as there has been strong debate distinguishing terms such as ‘opinion’ and ‘attitude’ (Thurstone 1928a,b; 1929, 1931; Allport 1937; Riesman and Glazer 1948; Wiebe 1953). (2) The discussion in Chapter 2 showed that the differences between all of these terms may confuse as much as enlighten as the differences between these related concepts may have common neurocognitive mechanisms underpinning all processes of decision-making and evaluation. It is appropriate now to begin and to formulate and discuss the first question.

8.1 What are political attitudes and why are they important?²



One of the most intuitive and powerful models of political data is that citizens express their views and these outlooks may be measured using declarations documented in a survey interview, or choices recorded by the state in elections. This model of the nature and power of political attitudes and behaviour may be represented as above. In this model, the ‘public’ is treated in a behaviourist manner as a black box. This view of political attitudes data runs the danger of anthropomorphising the responses of a representative national sample of citizens. It ignores the fact that there is always considerable variation within a population in the views expressed in sample surveys. Often there is no single public opinion, but a plurality of opinions.

² All figures presented at the beginning of the following five sections are taken from Krippendorff’s (2005) account of the social construction of public opinion. However, the associated text while reflecting some of this author’s key themes is primarily based on a synthesis of the theories and evidence presented in this book.

The first section of this book examined the concept of political data in terms of the evolution of the concept public opinion within political philosophy. The review of contrasting perspectives of ‘public opinion’ presented in Chapter 1 highlighted that terms such as ‘public opinion’ have little real meaning because its two components ‘public’ and ‘opinion’ do not have definitive meanings. This implies that the measurement of citizens’ political attitudes; and hence public opinion is mired in centuries of political debates that have never been resolved. One may of course adopt the positivist stance of Converse (1987: S14) and simply argue that political attitudes are what nationally representative sample surveys measure; and this is what is presented in the respondent-by-variable (row by column) data matrices or datasets deposited within social data archives.³

Although there is a general acceptance that there is no single entity called the ‘public’: it is nonetheless a convenient but misleading fiction for a number of reasons. First, the theorising presented in Chapter 1 demonstrated that the concept of ‘public’ has multiple meanings ranging from all citizens, to a subset that has the power to influence public policy making. Second, the aggregation of individual attitudes to create an overall public opinion where all individual opinions are given equal weight ignores stratification in society; and assumes that the democratic principle of one-person-one-vote is a valid and reliable procedure.⁴ Well known differences in citizens’ interest in politics and knowledge as outlined in Chapter 2 undermine such assumptions.

Moving down to the individual level, Chapter 2 examined the concept of ‘attitude’ from its emergence a century ago with the growth of psychology as a discipline. This chapter revealed that interpretation of the general concepts measured in typical political surveys such as opinions, attitudes, beliefs and values are concepts that have no definitive meaning. Attitudinal concepts used in political science, sociology and economics use different terms; or employ concepts that have a specific meaning. As the basic concept of attitude was developed when knowledge of neuroscience was rudimentary; one could argue that since the human brain was for all intents and purposes a black box, concepts such as attitude may have been convenient instrumental fictions and not realistic models of cognition. In short, this line of argument suggests that attitudes may not be real.

With the use of medical imaging equipment such as electroencephalographs (EEGs) and functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) it is now possible to literally see ‘attitudes’ being formed and changed. The key insight here is that the

3 Bishop (2005) in contrast argues that opinions polls only give the illusion of public opinion for three main reasons: (a) public ignorance of politics, (b) ‘question ambiguity’ and (c) the ‘question form, wording, and context.’

4 Discussion of the ecological inference problem and aggregation bias in Chapter 7 casts doubt on the merits of accepting this assumption uncritically.

differentiation of a panoply of survey based concepts such as opinions, attitudes, beliefs and values, etc. may have few bases in observed neurocognitive mechanisms. In other words, labelling a survey measure as being a ‘temporary’ opinion rather than a more stable ‘attitude’ or ‘value’ may have little basis in how the human brain actually processes information and expresses attitudes (in a generic sense) about the world.

8.1.1 Importance of political attitudes and public opinion

Of course the central point of undertaking political surveys is to measure attitudes, which in turn provide a sound basis for predicting political behaviour: typically the focus is on two interrelated decisions – electoral participation and vote choice in an election. Political attitudes are important because they help to both predict and explain behaviour. In this respect, some of the most influential theories of attitudes reflect this point such as the Theory of Reasoned Action and its extension into the Theory of Planned Action specify under what conditions attitudes are linked to behaviour (Fishbein and Ajzen 1975, 1981; Ajzen and Fishbein 1980; Ajzen 1985, 1991; Armitage and Connor 2001). In sum, political attitudes do exist and can be visualised and measured; and they are important because they are a strong, though imperfect, predictor of behaviour.

Moving beyond predicting individual behaviour from attitudes, aggregated political attitudes (or public opinion) are important in democratic states because they are supposed to influence government decision making. Consequently, individual political attitudes are important because they act through collective public opinion to influence public policy. This raises a key question: how does this process of political representation occur within contemporary democratic states? One overview of the link between public opinion and public policy suggested five different channels (Luttbeg 1968).⁵

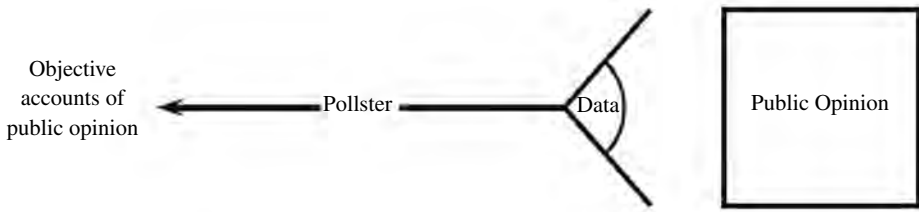
- *Rational-Activist Model*: Citizens exert pressure through elections where political representatives either enact the public’s policy preferences or face the prospect of being voted out of office at the next election
- *Political Parties Model*: Political parties mediate between the electorate and elected legislators. Voters hold the party responsible for public policy making. In turn, parties impose discipline on legislators to tow the party line or face expulsion and deselection at the next election

5 Alternative and complementary models of the link between public opinion and public policy are available in Glynn et al. (1999: 299–340) and Sharp (1999). Evaluations of some of these rival models is given in Monroe (1979, 1998), Manza and Cook (2002) and Manza, Cook and Page (2002).

- *Pressure Group Model*: Influence over public policy is exerted through collective action via interest groups. Influence over legislators and parties are exerted through electoral or financial incentives
- *Belief-Sharing Model*: Political representatives are not coerced because they share the same attitudes as their electorate and therefore voluntarily pursue the voters' preferences
- *Role-Playing Model*: Political representatives act as a delegate for their constituents. Legislators represent constituency opinion for electoral reasons

There have been a large number of studies demonstrating the importance of citizens' attitudes on public policy using one or more of these five models.⁶ Notwithstanding the details of this literature, the key point here is that the interconnection between citizen and elite attitudes and legislators roll call behaviour is an important domain of political research that is still in its infancy in the Czech Republic. The discussion of electoral data in Chapter 2, elite survey research in Chapter 3 and expert and manifesto data in Chapter 4 reveals how the mass-elite link (thereby demonstrating the importance of citizens' political attitudes) may be modelled and explored. Having dealt with the nature and importance of political attitudes: it is now appropriate to deal with the issue of measurement: the subject of our second question.

8.2 Can political attitudes be measured?



Within the field of political opinion polling one of the central models of attitude measurement has been that it is possible to quantify public opinion using (a) some form of representative sampling (quota or probabilistic), and (b) survey questionnaires. The generation of data from interviews is used by pollsters

6 Out of this large literature note, Zaller (1992); Page and Shapiro (1992); Stimson (1999, 2004); Jacobs and Shapiro (2000); Erikson, Stimson and MacKuen (2002); Stimson, MacKuen and Erikson (1995); Soroka and Wlezién (2010); and Holmberg (2011).

thereafter to provide ‘objective’ portraits of public opinion. This model presented in the figure above assumes that it is possible to measure what citizens think and feel about political matters. Within Chapter 2 of this book, the question of the reality of attitudes was juxtaposed with a similar essentialist debate regarding the reality of atoms and Einstein’s and Perrin’s theoretical and empirical work on this fundamental topic a century ago.

Most social science researchers assume and accept that opinions, attitudes, beliefs and values measured in mass and elite surveys exist are not only real, but can be measured using respondents’ self-reports. And moreover, the process under which the data are generated may be represented by the simple figure shown above. The public through their sincere responses to survey questionnaires, fielded by pollsters, generate the data recorded in survey data files that are later placed in data repositories such as the Czech Social Science Data Archive (ČSDA); and these provide an ‘objective’ measure of public opinion.

There has always been heated debate within social sciences regarding the merits of sample surveys. On the one hand, there are scholars who contend that surveys do not measure public opinion; and survey based measures of public opinion are not what they claim to be (Blumer 1948; Bishop 2005; Bourdieu 1973, 1990; note Herbst 1992). This strand of criticism contends that survey sampling and the format of survey interviews and questionnaires are replete with methodological effects; and it is impossible using standard procedures to measure citizens’ attitudes in a meaningful way. On the other hand, there are others such as Osborne and Rose (1999) make the point that the social sciences have been successful in creating a conception of individual political attitudes and public opinion that has become so widely accepted; that it is now considered to be ‘public opinion.’ If survey data are socially constructed, this implies that questionnaire responses are not neutral measures of citizens’ attitudes: surveys create the data they report and are not scientific because they influence what they purport to measure.

Beyond the scientific arguments regarding the validity and reliability of sample surveys, there is the question if citizens’ verbally expressed attitudes are all that important (note Bagehot 1867: 119). This is because in many states legitimate collective action is limited to elections and poll responses.⁷ In this respect, Susan Herbst in a series of studies has argued that how political attitudes are measured determines how they are interpreted by politicians and the media. Table 1.1, presented earlier in Chapter 1, shows how the channels of expressing po-

7 For example, collective action cover a broad range of activities or “repertoires” ranging from town hall meetings, making petitions, lobbying, forming interest groups, and participating in marches, demonstrations, strikes and riots. Each of these activities may be seen as the expression of political attitudes; however, such activities do not form part of the survey based measure of political attitudes or public opinion (note, Tilly 1983).

litical attitudes have evolved through history. Policy makers (politicians and bureaucrats) often strongly discount or even ignore public opinion as measured in surveys. This is because such data are not seen to represent a politically effective force: as such responses lack knowledge or conviction. However, the process of “numbering” political attitudes does have the distinct advantage of creating a clear policy signal, but there is also a dark side where surveying effectively constricts citizens’ views within the narrow bounds of questionnaire design (Herbst 1993a,b, 1994, 1998).

The model of survey data generation presented in the figure above oversimplifies the methodological complexities of mass, elite and expert surveying. For example, Chapter 2 demonstrated that the mechanisms used by respondents to answer political attitude questions vary systematically on the basis of level of knowledge. Citizens with lower levels of information often use a variety of cognitive shortcuts, or heuristics, to make political decisions such as vote choice: and hence also to formulated answers during survey interviews. Within Chapter 7 there were a series of demonstrations using left-right self-placement scales, religious affiliation, and strength of party support which show that changes in question format are often sufficient to yield systematic non-trivial levels of ‘attitudinal change.’

Later in Chapter 8, an exploration of a change in the number of response options for party attachment questions in a pair of surveys conducted simultaneously across Europe exhibited important cross-national differences. This systematic variation was shown to be associated with national institutional contexts. The implication here is that expressed political attitudes are not purely the product of individual citizens’ preferences, or social position. Institutional context matters because it cues individuals about how to construct a response to a survey question. The Belief Sampling Model of survey response (discussed in Box 8.1) emphasises this idea that attitudes expressed in a survey interview often reflect “top-of-the-head” answers originating in contextual cues rather than well thought out personal preferences (Tourangeau and Rasinski 1988; Tourangeau, Rips and Rasinski 2000: 178–196; Zaller 1992: 42–96; Feldman and Zaller 1992).⁸

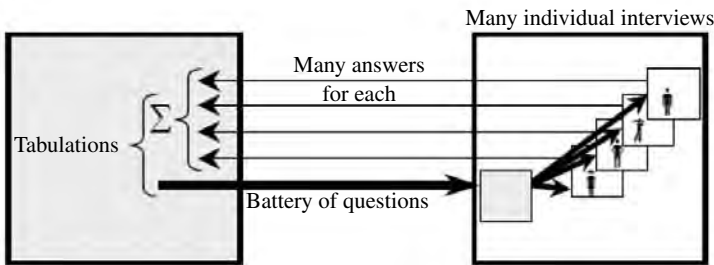
From this perspective what is often measured in political surveys are an individual’s ‘consideration’ or ‘preference statement’ that is plucked instantaneously from a distribution of related considerations: the response given is often based on some feature of the interview or other context based effect such as the media

8 The Belief Sampling Model originating in Tourangeau and Rasinski (1988) and Zaller’s (1992) Receive-Accept-Sample (RAS) model are similar because both models of survey response emphasise the retrieval from associative memory of information that is perceived (correctly or not) to provide the basis for an answer. In short, both models contend that belief sampling lies at the heart of the data generating process present during survey interviews.

or national institutions. This process is similar to how the availability heuristic operates: a topic discussed briefly in the latter part of Chapter 2 (note, Tversky and Kahneman 1973; Kahneman 2011). If survey response processes are considered to more about ‘making up answers’ rather than ‘expressing a preference’, this makes it easier to account for response instability in panel surveys; and the presence of methodological artefacts such as question ordering or response option effects. More generally, the aggregation of individual considerations in sample surveys yields ‘mass’ rather than ‘public’ opinion.

At this point, we have almost come full circle where survey data are not seen to be public opinion: but a product of a survey interview and sampling process. Within this more limited conception of political attitudes data, many of the claims of pollsters and survey researchers regarding the democratic credentials of surveying have to be abandoned. Instead, one is left with a data generating process that reflects how respondents answer questions. The resulting data reflects one facet of ‘public opinion’ that is amenable to statistical analysis and reporting in both the media and in scholarly publications. This brings us neatly to the first of our key questions regarding the conceptualisation of political data.

8.3 How do political scientists conceptualise survey data?



If one was to undertake the ‘babička (grannie or grandma) test’ and explain to someone who knows little about political attitudes research, such as our eponymous grandmother, how might this task be undertaken? One option is to show the simple diagram above to babička / grandmother and explain to her patiently that the answers of a representative sample of about one thousand people to a set (or battery) questions are used to create tables. These tables reflect overall public opinion and differences across sub-groups; and are published in media and academic articles as the basis for describing public opinion. Within this simple model of the survey data generation process there are a number of assumptions that need to be unbundled in order to see how political scientists conceptualise survey data.

Looking first at the box on the right of the figure above, one can see that a standard questionnaire is asked to a quota or probability sample of respondents who are interviewed individually. It has been argued that the survey interview is an artificial social situation where the interviewer dominates the interaction and compels the respondent to answer a pre-determined set of questions that often appear rather strange and unusual (note, Bourdieu 1973, 1990). In this context, the expression of a political attitude is a solitary affair as there is no rational discussion (Habermas 1970: 75–76).

The central issue here is that with isolated or autonomous respondents there must be no interaction between the respondent and interviewer or any other people during the question response process. The responses of all cases in a survey dataset must be statistically independent (Scheaffer, Mendenhall and Ott, 1990). If the assumption of independence of sampling units is not met, as is the case with all surveys that are not simple random samples (which is practically the case with all surveys), then a number of corrections must be made. This ‘design effect’ problem known as ‘intracluster correlation’ (ρ) refers to the likelihood that two respondents in the sample cluster have the same value for a given variable, relative to two respondents chosen completely at random from the entire population (see, Groves 1989; Groves et al. 2004; Fuller 2009).⁹ With geographically determined sampling points (or clusters) intraclass correlation tends to be low with demographic variables but is higher for socioeconomic and attitudinal indicators (Kalton 1977).¹⁰

From a sociological perspective, this approach to measuring individual political attitudes and public opinion is deeply controversial because it involves accepting an atomised and purely individualistic conception of the individual in society (Blumer 1948). Although, this research strategy could be considered a necessary statistical constraint in order to be able to make inferences about an entire population: the survey interview procedure does involve deliberately removing the social network component of public opinion from consideration.

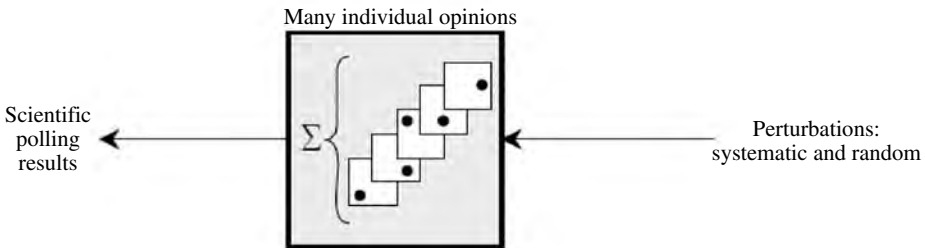
9 In most national face-to-face academic surveys a clustered or multi-stage sampling procedure is used for cost reasons. Simple random samples are prohibitively expensive. With cost constraints geographically clustered samples yield population estimates that are more precise than a simple random sample. The disadvantage of clustered samples is that clustered samples vis-à-vis simple random samples have larger standard errors because there are greater similarities between respondents in a cluster sample than between independently selected members of the target population.

10 An example illustrates the importance of design effect. With a national three strata cluster sample of 5,546 households with 20 sampling points, poll estimates have a confidence interval (CI) of $\pm 13.2\%$. For 60 sampling points the CI falls to $\pm 7.2\%$ while with a simple random sample the CI is $\pm 4.2\%$. See http://www.cpc.unc.edu/projects/rllms-hse/project/eval_sample (accessed 24/02/2012).

The larger issue here is how survey data or tabulations on the left of the figure shown above are interpreted. If one accepts that the data generating mechanism is purely individualistic and non-sociological in nature; this suggests that the attitudinal data measured and recorded represents a very specific and narrow form of public opinion. On this basis, some scholars such as Habermas (1970) and Bourdieu (1973) have argued that mass surveys create ‘public opinion’ because the data are a product of the unique context and methodological features of the surveying process.

The key lesson to be drawn from a *social construction* conception of survey based estimates of public opinion is that this form of data are not ‘objective’ and only have meaning through interpretation (Krippendorff 2005). In practical terms, this means that a researcher must either (a) take great care in interpreting survey data or (b) must accept that political attitude data only provides an illusory account of citizens’ orientation toward politics (note, Bishop 2005). The first position has been adopted in this book for three reasons. First, survey data provide a unique and powerful means of making inferences about socio-political processes. Second, the methodological problems associated with survey responses provide invaluable insights into how citizens think and make decisions. Third, this latter orientation highlights the fundamental importance of political scientists adopting a critical stance to all data generation processes such as the aggregated electoral data examined at the end of Chapter 4, or the expert and Comparative Manifesto Programme (CMP) datasets discussed in Chapter 6. Having dealt with how the data are conceptualised, the next logical step is to tackle the question of how political data are analysed.

8.4 Testing theories of data generation mechanisms or political reality?



Once upon a time there was no ‘public opinion.’ According to the social constructivist account noted above, the measurement of political attitudes and pub-

lic opinion using sample surveys only emerged after 1935 (Osborne and Rose 1999: 381). This suggests that prior to this date the current (mainstream) concept of public opinion did not exist. One implication of this line of thinking is that statistical analysis of survey data are primarily associated with the data generating process associated with how questionnaire responses were created; rather than with citizens' attitudes toward real-world political questions. This constructivist perspective contrasts markedly with the model represented in the figure shown above. Here exogenous shocks from the domains of politics and economics, etc. have a discernible impact on the current attitudes of citizens; and these changes are reflected in the mass survey results of organisations such as CVVM and Gallup.

These competing perspectives of political attitudes data lead to an important question: are the political data analyses presented throughout this book, and in the professional literature more generally, models of data or reality? According to Krippendorff (2005), it is possible that models of survey data and social reality coincide when the behaviour examined involves individuals making choices in an independent (or atomised) manner. Within political science the use of pre-election surveys and exit polls to predict election outcomes makes sense because voters cast their secret ballots in a deliberately isolated institutional framework. From this perspective, it is not surprising that the validity and reliability of surveys are often evaluated on the basis of accurate electoral predictions (Crespi 1989: 5).

At the end of Section 7.3 in Chapter 7, it was noted that successful election prediction may be undertaken using (a) small non-representative samples and (b) asking respondents whether they recognise a party and making no mention of vote choice (Gaissmaier and Marewski 2011). If this recognition based election forecast methodology proves to be a robust and reliable predictor of election outcomes, it suggests that even the minimal validity of surveys to represent citizens' political attitudes and preferences in the eyes of social constructivists may disappear. If one is willing to accept that survey interviews by their ubiquity in market research are sufficiently 'normal' to allow sincere attitudes to be measured (notwithstanding the inevitable presence of methodological artefacts and biases noted in Chapters 7 and 8); then the link between individual survey responses and social reality depends critically on data aggregation and hypothesis testing.

8.4.1 Data aggregation

It is common within survey data analysis to aggregate the data in two distinct ways (1) summing an individual's scores across a subset of questions to create a scale representing an underlying value orientation such as economic left-right or social liberal-conservatism, and (2) summing the scores of individual respond-

ents to single questions to provide estimates of public opinion on specific topics. In the first type of aggregation, the combination of survey indicators using various statistical approaches such as summated rating scales (e.g. the F-scale of authoritarianism or political knowledge), Principal Component Analysis, Item Response Theory, Mokken Scales, etc. This process is typically informed by psychological or psychometric theory.

The second type of survey data aggregation is based on the ‘democratic principle’ of treating all respondents equally and simply summing the data. Evidence regarding stratification in society and the presence of distinct social and political groups with differential levels of knowledge, motivation and power are ignored. It is simply assumed that a simple aggregation procedure matches with social reality. Within the social sciences the difficulty of making valid and reliable inferences about data from different levels of analysis has a long history; and is known by a variety of name such as *aggregation bias* or the *ecological inference problem* (Robinson 1950; King 1997; King et al. 2004; Wakefield 2004).

Adopting the simple and convenient strategy of scaling up individual level models to higher levels often does not work (Cioffi-Revilla 1998: 277–282). Achen and Shively (1995: 23–24) demonstrate that the standard model of hostility between individual states cannot be simply aggregated to match an influential global model of conflict. In general, scaled up versions of lower unit models or scaled down versions of systemic models are often incompatible with the dominant models used at specific levels of analysis. This problem is evident in ecological inference estimators of individual level voting patterns from official aggregated electoral statistics: it is often difficult to identify the correct (dis)aggregation rule. Mass surveys make inferences in the opposite direction by assuming that total public opinion is a simple sum of all individual opinions. There is no reason to believe this is always the case; and the ecological inference literature casts strong doubts on the merits of making such an assumption in the absence of some cross-validating evidence.

8.4.2. Null hypothesis significance testing

If the statistical inferences associated with aggregating individual level survey data to create summary measures of public attitudes are problematic, this is matched with concerns about how individual level models are often tested in political science. It is common within articles and books to see observable implications of a model being formulated in terms of a null hypothesis (H_0) and an alternative hypothesis (H_1). H_0 refers to no discernible (or hypothesised) relationship between two variables while H_1 postulates a specific predicted or a priori relationship. A test statistic is estimated from the survey data and is compared with

a known statistical distribution to see if H_0 is true, if not then H_1 is accepted and the expected effect is said to be ‘significant’ by not being attributable to sampling error. This statistical distribution is assumed to match the data generating mechanism for the variable or survey question being examined. Often this is a normal, Gaussian or single peaked distribution.

The use of test statistics ranges from sample means to chi-squares for pairs of variables and t-statistics to regression models. The point at which an effect is significant where H_0 is rejected and H_1 accepted is typically known as the ‘p-value’ or associated probability; and is the point on the (assumed) statistical distribution where the ‘border’ between rejecting the null hypothesis (H_0) and the alternative hypothesis (H_1) is located. Normally, the p-value for accepting or rejecting the null hypothesis is set a $p \leq .05$. One is immediately compelled to ask why this p-value and not some other?

This approach to making inferences from survey data is derived from a synthesis of two incompatible approaches within statistics: (1) the Fisher test of significance and (2) the Neyman-Pearson hypothesis test. Without getting into the technical details, the Fisher test produces significance levels inductively from a dataset while the Neyman-Pearson test is specified using deductive a priori criteria. Currently within the social sciences both approaches are blended where an a priori test level is specified, but is actually based on an inductive estimation from the data, i.e. p-value. This allows the strength of a relationship between variables to be evaluated in terms of the null and alternative hypotheses based around the convention of $p \leq .05$.

The central problem with this form of hypothesis testing with survey data is that statistical significance ($p \leq .05$) may be easily confused with theoretical or substantive importance through a mechanical use of a statistical rule that has no solid logical foundation. The null hypothesis is ‘asymmetric’ in the sense that failure to reject H_0 provides no information on other competing hypotheses or relationships – other than the ‘favoured’ alternative (H_1) posed by the researcher (Gill 1999: 660).¹¹

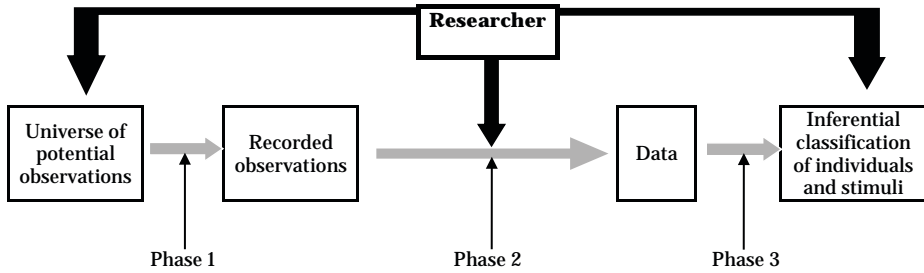
In other words, frequent use of the standard form of statistical hypothesis testing employed across the social sciences is more oriented toward testing models of data than theories of social reality. This approach is motivated by the misperception that this form of statistical testing is objective and scientific; and is likely to secure publication in professional journals where model coefficients having lots of ‘stars’ (e.g. *** $p \leq .001$) demonstrate hypothesised effects. One simple means of avoiding the pitfalls of using fixed probability levels to test hypotheses

11 For a discussion in Czech on this topic, see Soukup and Rabušic (2007).

is to report confidence intervals, or use a Bayesian estimator and highest posterior density regions (Gill 2008: 48–51).

In answering the question of how political scientists analyse survey data, it has been shown that it is important to understand that (a) the creation of attitudinal scales, summing of responses to estimate overall public opinion, and (b) the use of null hypothesis significance testing should not be done mechanically. All data analysis should be informed by an explicit theory. The bottom line is that neither data nor methods of analysis are objective facts: they are interpretations. The next and final question shifts consideration of how to integrate the theory, data and analysis components of empirical research.

8.5 What is the relationship between theory, data and analysis?



Source: derived from Coombs (1964: 4)

One of the central messages of this volume has been that the survey data available in archives such as the ČSDA or the expert survey and CMP data available elsewhere represent sources of information whose interpretation depends on the research question addressed. Clyde H. Coombs (1964: 4) makes the crucial point that the term “data” is often used to refer to (1) “recorded observations” and (2) “that which is analysed.” It is more sensible to treat observations and matrices subject to statistical analysis as being different because the former may often be interpreted in more than one way. A fundamental part of the research process, as shown in the centre of the figure above, is deciding how to conceptualise recorded observations as data. Coombs advised that this should be done explicitly on the basis of theory.

More generally, the figure above represents the process where measurements from political reality are selected or sampled in phase 1. In phase 2, the research-

er takes the recorded observations and converts them using some theory of measurement into data. Within this phase, the data are classified on the basis of observations (individual respondents) and variables (e.g. left-placement of parties) and the relationship between these components of the data, i.e. 'dominance' data where a person sees one party as being more left-wing than the others. Finally in phase 3, the researcher using a theoretically informed system of reasoning begins the process of testing relationships between individuals and variables (or some other combination thereof). The central feature of Coombs' (1964) *Theory of Data* is that the researcher makes important decisions in each of the three phases. The data are never treated as objective "facts" that are then subject to hypothesis testing. A theory of data precedes the formulation and statistical testing of causal models.

Much more could be said about how to interpret the data; however, the central concern is that at the level of measurement and scaling the researcher is already using an implicit or explicit theory of the data generating mechanism. In this respect, Coombs (1964: 5) makes a fundamentally important point.

A measurement or scaling model is actually a theory about behaviour, admittedly on a miniature level, but nevertheless a theory; so while building theory about more complex behaviour it behoves us not to neglect the foundations on which the more complex theory rests. This illustrates the general principle that all knowledge is the result of theory – we buy information with assumptions – "facts" are inferences, and so also are data and measurement and scales.

Once observations have been mapped into a particular kind of data (single stimulus, preferential choice, similarities and stimulus comparison), this compels the researcher to make a choice as to how the data should be modelled: MDS, unfolding, PCA or correspondence analysis.¹² For example, if one assumed that the values of the observed variables are linearly related to the latent variables then PCA is appropriate; however, if the data are viewed as being preference data and hence are related to the latent variable in a quadratic (single peaked) manner making unfolding the more appropriate modelling strategy.

As this example indicates, within the Coombs' (1964) theory, data is given a spatial conceptualisation and viewed as points in a low dimensional space. With-

12 Details of this measurement theory's classification of data into 8 types and their associated scaling models is not presented here, but may be consulted in Coombs (1964: 3–31). This approach has been very influential and presents important advice about the appropriate use of PCA, MDS and unfolding models that is often overlooked in statistics books.

in Chapter 6 in discussing expert and manifesto (CMP) data, there were a number of examples of how different measurement models such as PCA and MDS could be used on the basis of inductive or a priori approaches. Here again, researchers face important decisions about how best to conceptualise the observations in the expert and CMP datasets in their work. In summary, the relationship between theory, data and analysis as shown in the figure above highlights the importance of interpretation during data gathering, model estimation and inference making. There are no 'objectives facts' in the study of politics that stand independent of interpretation and the testing of theory.

Final comments

The quantitative political data resources available for the study of Czech politics may be divided into three main types of data: behavioural data archived in official election statistics that only exist in aggregated form (with the exception of legislative roll call data); individual level survey data for citizens, elites and experts; and products of the political process such as texts that are either interpreted in qualitative (or exegetical) way, or are subject to a systematic empirical procedure such as content analysis.

The central point to keep in mind when considering any type of political data is that the different sources of data allow the researcher to examine a wide range of substantive questions such as testing rival explanations of voting behaviour or the structure of Czech elites. With regard to systemic questions such as the 'health of Czech democracy' the data archived in ČSDA allow a researcher to explore the congruence between the political attitudes and policy preferences among citizens and legislators: a theme that is a core part of such influential theories as the Responsible Party Model.

Here political representation is based on voters holding parties accountable for their policies while in office (Schattschneider 1942, 1960; APSA 1950; note, Converse and Pierce 1986; Esaiasson and Holmberg 1996; Schmitt and Thomassen 1999; Kitschelt et al. 1999: 80–87). This is one of the most influential conceptions of democratic governance in multiparty systems such as the Czech Republic. More generally, one of the main messages of this book is that each type of political data has different strengths and weaknesses. A key research skill is learning how to combine different survey and non-survey data sources to address substantively interesting research questions. Here the role of theory is critical in providing guidance.

It is imperative in this final part of the conclusion to stress that the inventory of political data presented discussed in this book is by no means exhaustive. There are undoubtedly many datasets that have not yet been archived; and with the passage of time are only known to those directly involved in the original research. In addition, this volume has offered a limited discussion, because of space constraints, of non-survey data such as official election results, comparative manifesto and expert survey data. Moreover, the quantity and type of data dealing with political topics is constantly increasing; and so the opportunities for empirical political science research are becoming ever more extensive.

This is especially the case as internet and web based sources of data such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter and Google+ become increasingly common (Russell 2011). It is at this point that the importance of political theory becomes clear because the potential of (a) an increasing range of political data types extending from election results and surveys to dynamic social network data and (b) more sophisticated forms of statistical analysis and techniques such as data mining and Agent Based Modelling depends critically on the ability of a researcher to ask prudent, sensible and substantively interesting questions through the integration of theory, data and analysis. It is hoped this book might contribute to this important endeavour.

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Appendices

Selected Internet Resources

- 1. Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES):** <http://www.umich.edu/~cses/>
The Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES), situated at the University of Michigan, is a collaborative program of research among election study teams from around the world.
- 2. Comparative Candidates Survey (CCS):** <http://www.comparativecandidates.org/>
The Comparative Candidate Survey (CCS) is a response to the growing number of candidate surveys. The rationale of the CCS is to harmonise this form of political surveying and establish a system for undertaking cross-national research.
- 3. Constituency-Level Elections Archive (CLEA):** <http://www.electiondataarchive.org/>
The central aim of the Constituency-Level Elections Archive (CLEA) project is to produce a repository of detailed results - including votes received by each candidate/party, total votes cast, number of eligible voters, and seat figures where available - at a constituency level for the lower house legislative elections that have been conducted around the world.
- 4. Constituency-Level Elections Dataset (CLE):** <http://cle.wustl.edu/>
The CLE dataset is the single largest dataset of constituency-level elections results around the world.
- 5. Eurobarometer:** http://europa.eu.int/comm/public_opinion/index_en.htm
Since 1973, the European Commission has been monitoring the evolution of public opinion in the Member States, thus helping the preparation of texts, decision-making and the evaluation of its work. Surveys and studies address major topics concerning European citizenship: enlargement, social situation, health, culture, information technology, environment, the Euro, defence, etc.
- 6. European Election Studies:** <http://www.europeanelectionstudies.net/>
The European Election Studies (EES) are about electoral participation and voting behaviour in European Parliament elections, and include topics such as the evolution of an EU political community and a European public sphere, citizens' perceptions of and preferences about the EU political regime, and evaluations of EU political performance.
- 7. European Social Survey (ESS):** <http://www.europeansocialsurvey.org/>
The European Social Survey (the ESS) is an academically-driven social survey designed to chart and explain the interaction between Europe's changing institutions and the attitudes, beliefs and behaviour patterns of its diverse populations.
- 8. European Values Study (EVS):** <http://www.europeanvalues.nl/>
The European Values Study is a large-scale, cross-national, and longitudinal survey research program on basic human values, initiated by the European Value Systems

Study Group (EVSSG). Now, it is carried on in the setting of a foundation, using the name of the group: European Values Study (EVS).

9. European Voter Database: <http://true-european-voter.eu>

The purpose of the European Voter project is to systematically describe and explain the electoral changes that have occurred in a number of West-European countries in the second half of the twentieth century.

10. New Europe Barometer: <http://www.abdn.ac.uk/cspp/nebo.shtml>

The Centre for the Study of Public Policy and the Paul Lazarsfeld Society, Vienna, cooperated in launching a major multi-national survey, the New Democracies Barometer (NDB), to monitor the response of people caught up in the transformation of their polity, economy, society and often state boundaries too.

11. World Values Survey (WVS): <http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/>

12. International Social Survey Programme (ISSP): <http://www.issp.org/>

13. Election Results in Czech Republic

The European Election and Referendum Database (EED) created and maintained by the Norwegian Social Data (NSD) archive provide comparative information on all national elections, i.e. general, European and EU-related national referendum elections. This downloadable database facilitates comparison across 35 countries between 1990 and 2011 at the NUTS 1, 2 and 3 levels.

http://www.nsd.uib.no/european_election_database/country/czech_republic/

Official results from all Czech elections is available from the Czech Statistical Office's website which has data for all national elections since 1990 where the user may explore voter participation and party choice at the okrsky (n≈15,000), obce (n≈6,000), okresy (n=76), kraje (n=14) and national levels. Such information is useful for exploring the spatial distribution of political behaviour at a much greater level of details than that available in mass surveys.

<http://www.volby.cz/>

The Czech Statistical Office has some useful electronic publications, reports and online datasets outlining some of the key patterns in recent local, regional and national elections.

<http://www.czso.cz/csu/edicniplan.nsf/aktual/ep-4#42>

Note also the 'Political Transformation and the Electoral Process in Post-Communist Europe' election database maintained by the Department of Government, University of Essex and is available at: <http://www2.essex.ac.uk/elect/database/database.asp>

The results of elections during the First Republic and later until 2006 are available from the Czech Statistical Office's (ČSU) website in the form of an electronic book. This volume contains information on the administration of elections, i.e. electoral laws, design of ballot papers, electoral results at the county level for the Czech Republic (i.e. not all of Czechoslovakia) and maps illustrating the geographical patterns of party support for specific elections. This online publication may be downloaded from:

<http://www.czso.cz/csu/2008edicniplan.nsf/p/4220-08>

14. Main Czech political opinion polling companies

CVVM: <http://www.cvvm.cas.cz/index.php?lang=0&disp=kdojsme>

STEM: <http://www.stem.cz/staticpages/mapa>

Factum invenio: <http://www.factum.cz/o-nas.html>

SC&C: <http://www.scac.cz/>

15. Other Comparative Survey Projects Websites

Comparative research is an important and growing domain of research within political science there are lots of opportunities for new research. Here is a list of websites that might be a useful starting point.

ACE Electoral Knowledge Network: <http://aceproject.org/>

Comparative Candidates Survey (CCS): <http://www.comparativecandidates.org/>

Constituency-Level Elections Archive (CLEA): <http://www.electiondataarchive.org/>

Constituency-Level Elections Dataset (CLE): <http://cle.wustl.edu/>

European Election Studies: <http://www.europeanelectionstudies.net/>

European Social Survey: <http://www.europeansocialsurvey.org/>

European Voter Database: <http://www.gesis.org/en/research/EUROLAB/evoter/>

Global Barometer Surveys: <http://www.globalbarometer.net>

Making Electoral Democracy Work: <http://electoraldemocracy.com/>

Research on Electoral Democracy in the European Union (PIREDEU): <http://www.piredeu.eu/>

Transparency International Global Corruption Barometer: <http://www.transparency.org/>

Handbook on political change in Eastern Europe (Third edition) London:Edward Elgar Publishers (Edited by Sten Berglund, Kevin Deegan-Krause and Joakin Ekman) 2012 / 2013. Online database of country data under preparation see <http://www.la.wayne.edu/polisci/kdk/>

16. Government duration and stability in Central and Eastern Europe

Information about the start and end of governments and related data such as duration, potential duration (in terms of a maximum legislative term), government type, government termination type, presence of caretaker administrations, parties in government and prime minister are available from a number of sources. Data for the 1990 to 2003 period are given in Müller-Rommel, Fettelschoss and Harfst (2004). The methodology used to construct this dataset on eleven governments in Central and Eastern Europe has been criticised. Ryals Conrad and Golder (2010) argue that it is important to take into account delays in the government formation process. Often it is assumed that the preceding governments continue in office as caretaker administrations until the government formation process has been completed. These caretaker administrations are in reality not a homogeneous group because they differ on the basis of stability where some outgoing governments have lost their mandate in parliament and are not de facto governments, although they are defined de jure as being in office. This observational equivalence between real and apparent in-

terim governments may undermine attempts to correctly model government duration and stability. The revised and updated government duration datasets for Central and Eastern Europe are available at the authors' respective websites:

http://myweb.fsu.edu/cnr05e/Courtenay_Ryals/Home.html

<http://polisci.fsu.edu/people/faculty/sgolder.htm>

Müller-Rommel, F., K. Fettelschoss and P. Harfst. 2004. 'Party government in Central European democracies: a data collection (1990-2003).' *European Journal of Political Research* 43: 869-893.

Conrad Ryals, C. and S.N. Golder. 2010. 'Measuring government duration and stability in Central and Eastern Europe.' *European Journal of Political Research* 49: 119-150.

Note that further details about election results, government composition and important political events are available in the annual country reports published by journals such as the *European Journal of Political Research* and *Electoral Studies*. Additional information is available from Keesings World News Archive.

17. Comparative institutional and governance indicators

There are a considerable number of governance and democracy indicators that facilitate examining the Czech Republic in a comparative context. Here is a non-exhaustive list.

Bertelsmann Transformation Index: <http://www.bertelsmann-transformation-index.de/en/bti/>

Comparative Political Data Set II (28 Post Communist Countries): http://www.ipw.unibe.ch/content/team/klaus_armingeon/comparative_political_data_sets/index_ger.html

Freedom House: <http://www.freedomhouse.org/>

Polity IV Project: Political Regime Characteristics and Transitions, 1800-2010: <http://www.systemicpeace.org/polity/polity4.htm>

The Political Constraint Index (POLCON) Dataset: <http://www-management.wharton.upenn.edu/henisz/>

The World Bank's Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI): <http://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/index.asp>

Transparency International: <http://www.transparency.org/>

Vanhanen's Democratization and Power Resources 1850-2000: <http://www.fsd.uta.fi/english/data/catalogue/FSD1216/>

Vanhanen's Measures of Democracy 1810-2010: <http://www.fsd.uta.fi/english/data/catalogue/FSD1289/index.html>

18. Legislative roll call data for the Czech Republic

Official roll call voting results for the Czechoslovak Federal Assembly (1990-1992) and Czech Lower Chamber (Poslanecká sněmovna, 1993-):

<http://www.psp.cz/sqw/hlasovani.sqw?zvo=1&o=6>

Official roll call voting results for the Senate (Senát, 1996-):

http://www.senat.cz/xqw/xervlet/pssenat/hlas?ke_dni=21.03.2012&O=8

Roll call data for the Czechoslovak Federal Assembly (1990-1992), Lower Chamber of Deputies (1993-) and Senate (1998-) derived from Michal Škop's databases created using by running a scraping script on the official parliamentary website data. These data give the researcher access to all data in a single text file that may be imported to any statistical software for further analysis.

<https://scraperwiki.com/profiles/michal/>

References:

Škop, Michal: Voting records from Senate of the Parliament of the Czech Republic since 1998. KohoVolit.eu 2012. <https://scraperwiki.com/profiles/michal/?page=3>

Škop, Michal: Voting records from Federal Assembly of Czechoslovakia 1991-1992. KohoVolit.eu 2011. <https://scraperwiki.com/profiles/michal/?page=2>

Škop, Michal: Voting records from Chamber of Deputies of the Parliament of the Czech Republic since 1993. KohoVolit.eu 2011. <https://scraperwiki.com/profiles/michal/?page=2>

Additional information about roll call voting in the Czech Republic, Slovakia and the European Parliament is available at <http://cs.kohovolit.eu/about>

This website also has interactive dynamic figures illustrating the positions of legislators in a two dimensional space estimated from roll call data using a multidimensional scaling estimator.

Roll call data for the European Parliament are available at: <http://itsyourparliament.eu/>

Appendix 3.1

Schedule of elections in the Czech Republic, 1990–2014

No.	<i>Election type</i>						
	Lower Chamber	Senate	European Parliament	Regional Assembly	Community Council	National Referendum	President
1	1992*						
2					1994		
3	1996	1996				2003	
4	1998	1998			1998		
5		2000		2000			
6	2002	2002			2002		
7		2004	2004	2004			
8	2006	2006			2006		
9		2008		2008			
10			2009				
11	2010	2010			2010		
12		2012		2012			
13**							2013
14**	2014		2014		2014		

Source: <http://www.volby.cz/>

* Chambers within the Czechoslovak Federal Assembly (1990–1992).

** Scheduled elections as of 2012

Note that this inventory refers to all national elections since 1990 (N=34). Elections for the office of President are undertaken within the two houses of parliament. There have also been many local referendums (note, Špok 2006; Smith 2007). There have been numerous senate elections because a third of this chamber is elected every two years. By-elections have been held in 2003, 2007 and 2011.

Appendix 3.2

Vector Autoregression Results of Political Satisfaction and Political Trust Models

Vector autoregression model

Sample: 199603 - 200504, but with gaps No. of obs = 20
 Log likelihood = -163.2248 AIC = 19.92248
 FPE = 6964.416 HQIC = 20.27235
 Det(Sigma_ml) = 144.1662 SBIC = 21.71479

Equation	Parms	RMSE	R-sq	chi2	P>chi2
sat_per	9	4.30338	0.8366	102.4243	0.0000
pres_mean	9	3.04867	0.9412	320.4177	0.0000
govt_mean	9	6.05222	0.6846	43.40588	0.0000
parl_mean	9	4.58778	0.6232	33.08024	0.0001

	Coef.	Std. Err.	z	P> z	[95% Conf. Interval]

sat_per					
sat_per					
L1.	.8712557	.2030999	4.29	0.000	.4731872 1.269324
L2.	-.166671	.2131669	-0.78	0.434	-.5844704 .2511284
pres_mean					
L1.	-.4503295	.267988	-1.68	0.093	-.9755763 .0749173
L2.	.3478424	.2536837	1.37	0.170	-.1493686 .8450534
govt_mean					
L1.	.299049	.1799481	1.66	0.097	-.0536429 .6517409
L2.	-.1647307	.1786235	-0.92	0.356	-.5148264 .185365
parl_mean					
L1.	-.2493606	.1806096	-1.38	0.167	-.6033489 .1046278
L2.	-.0843283	.2896748	-0.29	0.771	-.6520805 .4834239
_cons	17.26818	10.38676	1.66	0.096	-3.089494 37.62585

pres_mean					
sat_per					
L1.	.0266292	.1438835	0.19	0.853	-.2553773 .3086356
L2.	.1461334	.1510153	0.97	0.333	-.1498512 .442118
pres_mean					
L1.	.9200076	.1898526	4.85	0.000	.5479033 1.292112
L2.	-.0059816	.179719	-0.03	0.973	-.3582243 .3462612
govt_mean					
L1.	.1163171	.1274819	0.91	0.362	-.133543 .3661771
L2.	-.2052793	.1265436	-1.62	0.105	-.4533001 .0427415
parl_mean					
L1.	-.2862892	.1279506	-2.24	0.025	-.5370677 -.0355107
L2.	.2905492	.2052164	1.42	0.157	-.1116675 .692766
_cons	4.402356	7.358366	0.60	0.550	-10.01978 18.82449

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govt_mean							
sat_per							
L1.	.7655929	.2856372	2.68	0.007	.2057544	1.325431	
L2.	-.4665569	.2997953	-1.56	0.120	-1.054145	.121031	
pres_mean							
L1.	-.3263583	.376895	-0.87	0.387	-1.065059	.4123423	
L2.	.4754003	.3567777	1.33	0.183	-.2238711	1.174672	
govt_mean							
L1.	.3053107	.2530768	1.21	0.228	-.1907108	.8013322	
L2.	-.3452638	.2512139	-1.37	0.169	-.8376341	.1471065	
parl_mean							
L1.	.3113868	.2540071	1.23	0.220	-.1864581	.8092316	
L2.	.4185592	.4073951	1.03	0.304	-.3799206	1.217039	
_cons	2.558299	14.60781	0.18	0.861	-26.07248	31.18908	

parl_mean							
sat_per							
L1.	.2548398	.2165225	1.18	0.239	-.1695365	.679216	
L2.	-.3023287	.2272548	-1.33	0.183	-.7477398	.1430825	
pres_mean							
L1.	.1697657	.2856989	0.59	0.552	-.3901939	.7297253	
L2.	-.1824204	.2704493	-0.67	0.500	-.7124914	.3476506	
govt_mean							
L1.	.4548196	.1918407	2.37	0.018	.0788188	.8308204	
L2.	.2757785	.1904285	1.45	0.148	-.0974546	.6490115	
parl_mean							
L1.	-.1942151	.1925459	-1.01	0.313	-.5715981	.1831679	
L2.	-.1427439	.308819	-0.46	0.644	-.7480181	.4625303	
_cons	9.200807	11.07321	0.83	0.406	-12.50228	30.90389	

Check of the stability of VAR estimates

Eigenvalue stability condition

```

+-----+
Eigenvalue                Modulus
-----+-----
-.3009966 + .7650646i    .822145
-.3009966 - .7650646i    .822145
.80727    + .06883301i   .810199
.80727    - .06883301i   .810199
.6006449  + .4090462i    .7267
.6006449  - .4090462i    .7267
-.3704418                .370442
.05896392                .058964
+-----+

```

All the eigenvalues lie inside the unit circle.
VAR satisfies stability condition.

Wald exclusion of lags statistics

Equation: sat_per

```
+-----+
lag      chi2      df  Prob > chi2
-----+-----
1      48.22094      4    0.000
2      5.531258      4    0.237
+-----+
```

Equation: pres_mean

```
+-----+
lag      chi2      df  Prob > chi2
-----+-----
1      32.36163      4    0.000
2      9.344184      4    0.053
+-----+
```

Equation: govt_mean

```
+-----+
lag      chi2      df  Prob > chi2
-----+-----
1      30.13976      4    0.000
2      8.161303      4    0.086
+-----+
```

Equation: parl_mean

```
+-----+
lag      chi2      df  Prob > chi2
-----+-----
1      17.73964      4    0.001
2      6.207471      4    0.184
+-----+
```

Equation: All

```
+-----+
lag      chi2      df  Prob > chi2
-----+-----
1      236.133      16    0.000
2      170.8176     16    0.000
+-----+
```

Granger causality

Granger causality Wald tests

Equation	Excluded	chi2	df	Prob > chi2
sat_per	pres_mean	3.1729	2	0.205
sat_per	govt_mean	3.0592	2	0.217
sat_per	parl_mean	1.9905	2	0.370
sat_per	ALL	6.8941	6	0.331
pres_mean	sat_per	1.9767	2	0.372
pres_mean	govt_mean	2.9285	2	0.231
pres_mean	parl_mean	7.015	2	0.030
pres_mean	ALL	17.827	6	0.007
govt_mean	sat_per	7.2113	2	0.027
govt_mean	pres_mean	3.0003	2	0.223
govt_mean	parl_mean	2.5568	2	0.278
govt_mean	ALL	12.176	6	0.058
parl_mean	sat_per	1.9618	2	0.375
parl_mean	pres_mean	.46723	2	0.792
parl_mean	govt_mean	9.8899	2	0.007
parl_mean	ALL	27.908	6	0.000

Tests for normality

Jarque-Bera test

```

+-----+
Equation                chi2  df  Prob > chi2
-----+-----
sat_per                 0.019  2   0.99045
pres_mean              0.111  2   0.94595
govt_mean              6.148  2   0.04623
parl_mean              2.375  2   0.30491
ALL                    8.654  8   0.37231
+-----+

```

Skewness test

```

+-----+
Equation  Skewness    chi2  df  Prob > chi2
-----+-----
sat_per   -0.02934    0.003  1   0.95728
pres_mean  .10594      0.037  1   0.84663
govt_mean -1.1546     4.444  1   0.03503
parl_mean  .53432      0.952  1   0.32930
ALL       5.436      5.436  4   0.24544
+-----+

```

Kurtosis test

```

+-----+
Equation  Kurtosis    chi2  df  Prob > chi2
-----+-----
sat_per   3.1399     0.016  1   0.89836
pres_mean 2.7026     0.074  1   0.78601
govt_mean 4.4302     1.705  1   0.19169
parl_mean 4.3071     1.424  1   0.23278
ALL       3.218      3.218  4   0.52197
+-----+

```

Lag order selection statistics

Selection-order criteria

Sample: 199603 - 200504, but with gaps Number of obs = 20

```

+-----+
| lag |   LL   LR   df   p   FPE   AIC   HQIC   SBIC   |
+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+
|  0  | -247.728                1.0e+06   25.1728  25.2117  25.372  |
|  1  | -192.902 109.65  16  0.000 21632.6  21.2902  21.4845  22.2859 |
|  2  | -163.225 59.354* 16  0.000 6964.42* 19.9225* 20.2724* 21.7148* |
+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+

```

Endogenous: sat_per pres_mean govt_mean parl_mean

Exogenous: _cons

Appendix 3.3

*Correlation in electoral support for the KDU-ČSL
in Lower Chamber Elections, 1920–2010*

Year	1920	1925	1929	1935	1990	1992	1996	1998	2002	2006	2010
1920	1.00										
1925	.97	1.00									
1929	.97	.99	1.00								
1935	.97	.99	.99	1.00							
1990	.78	.80	.82	.80	1.00						
1992	.84	.84	.86	.84	.95	1.00					
1996	.82	.84	.86	.84	.93	.95	1.00				
1998	.80	.82	.84	.82	.93	.94	.99	1.00			
2002	.78	.81	.82	.81	.85	.86	.91	.90	1.00		
2006	.82	.84	.85	.83	.94	.95	.95	.96	.89	1.00	
2010	.82	.83	.83	.83	.90	.95	.93	.92	.86	.95	1.00

Source: Voda (2011: 121)

Note the estimates are Pearson correlations for okres (district or county) level results. These correlations suggest that the (aggregated) structure of Christian Democrat support over the last century exhibits considerable stability. Unsurprisingly, consecutive elections exhibit the highest correlations.

Appendix 6.1

CMP content analysis of party manifestos coding scheme

<i>Standard Classification Scheme</i>	<i>Subcategories</i>
<i>Domain 1: External Relations</i>	
101 Foreign Special Relationships: Positive	1011 Russia/USSR/CIS: Positive 1012 Western States: Positive 1013 Eastern European Countries: Positive 1014 Baltic States: Positive 1015 Nordic Council: Positive 1016 SFR Yugoslavia: Positive 1017 Islamic Countries: Positive 1018 ASEAN Countries: Positive
102 Foreign Special Relationships: Negative	1021 Russia/USSR/CIS: Negative 1022 Western States: Negative 1023 East European Countries: Negative 1024 Baltic States: Negative 1025 Nordic Council: Negative 1026 SFR Yugoslavia: Negative
103 Anti-Imperialism: Positive	1031 Russian Army: Negative 1032 Independence: Positive 1033 Rights of Nations: Positive
104 Military: Positive	
105 Military: Negative	
106 Peace: Positive	
107 Internationalism: Positive	
108 European Integration: Positive	
109 Internationalism: Negative	
110 European Integration: Negative	
<i>Domain 2: Freedom and Democracy</i>	
201 Freedom and Human Rights: Positive	
202 Democracy: Positive	2021 Transition to Democracy 2022 Restrictive Citizenship: Positive 2023 Lax Citizenship: Positive
203 Constitutionalism: Positive	2031 Presidential Regime: Positive 2032 Republic: Positive 2033 Checks and Balances 2034 Secularism: Positive
204 Constitutionalism: Negative	2041 Monarchy: Positive
<i>Domain 3: Political System</i>	
301 Decentralisation: Positive	3011 Republican Powers: Positive
302 Centralisation: Positive	
303 Governmental and Administrative Efficiency: Positive	
304 Political Corruption: Negative	
305 Political Authority: Positive	3051 Public Situation: Negative 3052 Communist: Positive 3053 Communist: Negative 3054 Rehabilitation and Compensation: Positive 3055 Political Coalitions: Positive

Continued ...

<i>Standard Classification Scheme</i>	<i>Subcategories</i>
<i>Domain 4: Economy</i>	
401 Free Enterprise: Positive	4011 Privatisation: Positive 4012 Control of Economy: Negative 4013 Property-Restitution: Positive 4014 Privatisation Vouchers: Positive
402 Incentives: Positive	
403 Market Regulation: Positive	
404 Economic Planning: Positive	
405 Corporatism: Positive	
406 Protectionism: Positive	
407 Protectionism: Negative	
408 Economic Goals	
409 Keynesian Demand Management: Positive	
410 Productivity: Positive	
411 Technology and Infrastructure: Positive	
412 Controlled Economy: Positive	4121 Social Ownership: Positive 4122 Mixed Economy: Positive 4123 Publicly-Owned Industry: Positive 4124 Socialist Property: Positive
413 Nationalisation: Positive	4131 Property-Restitution: Negative 4132 Privatisation: Negative
414 Economic Orthodoxy: Positive	
415 Marxist Analysis: Positive	
416 Anti-Growth Economy: Positive	
<i>Domain 5: Welfare and Quality of Life</i>	
501 Environmental Protection: Positive	
502 Culture: Positive	5021 Private-Public Mix in Culture: Positive
503 Social Justice: Positive	5031 Private-Public Mix in Social Justice: Positive 5032 Race-blind Equality: Positive 5033 Group Proportionality: Positive
504 Welfare State Expansion: Positive	5041 Private-Public Mix in Welfare: Positive
505 Welfare State Limitation: Positive	
506 Education Expansion: Positive	5061 Private-Public Mix in Education: Positive
507 Education Limitation: Positive	
<i>Domain 6: Fabric of Society</i>	
601 National Way of Life: Positive	6011 The Karabakh Issue 6012 Rebuilding the USSR: Positive 6013 National Security 6014 Cyprus Issue
602 National Way of Life: Negative	
603 Traditional Morality: Positive	6031 Islamisation: Positive
604 Traditional Morality: Negative	
605 Law and Order: Positive	
606 Social Harmony: Positive	6061 General Crisis 6062 Interethnic Harmony: Positive
607 Multiculturalism: Positive	6071 Cultural Autonomy: Positive 6072 Multiculturalism pro Roma
608 Multiculturalism: Negative	6081 Multiculturalism against Roma

Continued ...

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<i>Standard Classification Scheme</i>	<i>Subcategories</i>
<i>Domain 7: Social Groups</i>	
701	Labour Groups: Positive
702	Labour Groups: Negative
703	Farmers: Positive
704	Middle Class and Professional Groups: Positive
705	Underprivileged Minority Groups: Positive
	7051 Minorities Inland: Positive
	7052 Minorities Abroad: Positive
706	Non-Economic Demographic Groups: Positive
	7061 War Participants: Positive
	7062 Refugees: Positive

Source: Budge et al. (2001)

Appendix 6.2

Estimation of left-right policy position of parties using the CMP dataset

The right-left ideological (rile) index is estimated as the net score from 26 (i.e. 13 left and right) categories that generate a broad socio-economic left-right placement scale. The data for each category used are the percentage of quasi-sentences as a proportion of the entire party manifesto for a specific election. The right-left (rile) position of party as given in Laver and Budge (1992) is estimated as follows:

$$\text{Right} = (\text{per104} + \text{per201} + \text{per203} + \text{per305} + \text{per401} + \text{per402} + \text{per407} + \text{per414} + \text{per505} + \text{per601} + \text{per603} + \text{per605} + \text{per606})$$

$$\text{Left} = (\text{per103} + \text{per105} + \text{per106} + \text{per107} + \text{per403} + \text{per404} + \text{per406} + \text{per412} + \text{per413} + \text{per504} + \text{per506} + \text{per701} + \text{per202})$$

$$\text{Rile} = \text{Right} - \text{Left}$$

Right wing categories (rile)

per104 Military: Positive

Need to maintain or increase military expenditure; modernising armed forces and improvement in military strength; rearmament and self-defence; need to keep military treaty obligations; need to secure adequate manpower in the military.

per201 Freedom and Human Rights: Positive

Favourable mention of importance of personal freedom and civil rights; freedom from bureaucratic control; freedom of speech; freedom from coercion in the political and economic spheres; individualism in the manifesto country and in other countries.

per203 Constitutionalism: Positive

Support for specific aspects of the constitution; use of constitutionalism as an argument for policy as well as general approval of the constitutional way of doing things.

per305 Political Authority: Positive

Favourable mention of strong government, including government stability; manifesto party's competence to govern and/or other party's lack of such competence.

per401 Free Enterprise: Positive

Favourable mention of free enterprise capitalism; superiority of individual enterprise over state and control systems; favourable mention of private property rights, personal enterprise and initiative; need for unhampered individual enterprises.

per402 Incentives: Positive

Need for wage and tax policies to induce enterprise; encouragement to start enterprises; need for financial and other incentives such as subsidies.

per407 Protectionism: Negative

Support for the concept of free trade; otherwise as 406, but negative.

per414 Economic Orthodoxy: Positive

Need for traditional economic orthodoxy, e.g. reduction of budget deficits, retrenchment in crisis, thrift and savings; support for traditional economic institutions such as stock market and banking system; support for strong currency.

per505 Welfare State Limitation: Positive

Limiting expenditure on social services or social security; otherwise as 504, but negative.

per601 National Way of Life: Positive

Appeals to patriotism and/or nationalism; suspension of some freedoms in order to protect the state against subversion; support for established national ideas.

per603 Traditional Morality: Positive

Favourable mention of traditional moral values; prohibition, censorship and suppression of immorality and unseemly behaviour; maintenance and stability of family; religion.

per605 Law and Order: Positive

Enforcement of all laws; actions against crime; support for enhancing resources for police etc.; tougher attitudes in courts.

per606 Social Harmony: Positive

Appeal for national effort and solidarity; need for society to see itself as united; appeal for public spiritedness; decrying antisocial attitudes in times of crisis; support for the public interest.

Left wing categories (rile)

per103 Anti-Imperialism: Anti-Colonialism

Negative reference to exerting strong influence (political, military or commercial) over other states; negative reference to controlling other countries as if they were part of an empire; favourable mention of decolonisation; favourable reference to greater self-government and independence for colonies; negative reference to the imperial behaviour of the manifesto and/or other countries.

per106 Peace: Positive

Peace as a general goal; declarations of belief in peace and peaceful means of solving crises; desirability of countries joining in negotiations with hostile countries.

per107 Internationalism: Positive

Need for international cooperation; cooperation with specific countries other than those coded in 101; need for aid to developing countries; need for world planning of resources; need for international courts; support for any international goal or world state; support for UN.

per403 Market Regulation: Positive

Need for regulations designed to make private enterprises work better; actions against monopolies and trusts, and in defence of consumer and small business; encouraging economic competition; social market economy.

per404 Economic Planning: Positive

Favourable mention of long-standing economic planning of a consultative or indicative nature, need for government to create such a plan.

per406 Protectionism: Positive

Favourable mention of extension or maintenance of tariffs to protect internal markets; other domestic economic protectionism such as quota restrictions.

per412 Controlled Economy: Positive

General need for direct government control of economy; control over prices, wages, rents, etc; state intervention into the economic system.

per413 Nationalisation: Positive

Favourable mention of government ownership, partial or complete, including government ownership of land.

per504 Welfare State Expansion: Positive

Favourable mention of need to introduce, maintain or expand any social service or social security scheme; support for social services such as health service or social housing. This category excludes education.

per506 Education Expansion: Positive

Need to expand and/or improve educational provision at all levels. This excludes technical training which is coded under 411.

per701 Labour Groups: Positive

Favourable reference to labour groups, working class, unemployed; support for trade unions; good treatment of employees.

per202 Democracy: Positive

Favourable mention of democracy as a method or goal in national and other organisations; involvement of all citizens in decision-making, as well as generalised support for the manifesto country's democracy.

Alternative estimator: Laver estimate of left-right position of each party

In essence, the Laver left-right score is primarily 'economic' and is a short version of the larger CMP formula (which is a more general left-right scale including both social and economic criteria). The Laver left-right score is also 'smoothed' by estimating standard scores. The CMP left-right score does not have a scale of say -100 to +100. It has no scale as it is simply the difference between right and left variables. Each of these variables is a percentage of the total for each party's manifesto. For this reason the CMP left-right scores has no 'natural' scale: the estimates could be any positive or negative number. In reality, the emphasis on specific topics results in a restricted range of scores. For many countries the CMP left-right score for parties ranges from +50 to -50. In contrast, the standardised Laver left-right party placement score ranges from +2 to -2.

Left: (per403 + per404 + per406 + per412 + per413)

Right: (per401 + per402 + per407 + per414 + per505)

Laver left-right position (Laver_LR) = Right - Left / Right + Left

Standardised Laver_LR score = Laver_LR - Mean / Standard deviation

Left wing categories (Laver method)

per403 Market Regulation: Positive

Need for regulations designed to make private enterprises work better; actions against monopolies and trusts, and in defence of consumer and small business; encouraging economic competition; social market economy.

per404 Economic Planning: Positive

Favourable mention of long-standing economic planning of a consultative or indicative nature, need for government to create such a plan.

per406 Protectionism: Positive

Favourable mention of extension or maintenance of tariffs to protect internal markets; other domestic economic protectionism such as quota restrictions.

per412 Controlled Economy: Positive

General need for direct government control of economy; control over prices, wages, rents, etc; state intervention into the economic system.

per413 Nationalisation: Positive

Favourable mention of government ownership, partial or complete, including government ownership of land.

Right wing categories (Laver method)

Free Enterprise: Positive

Favourable mention of free enterprise capitalism; superiority of individual enterprise over state and control systems; favourable mention of private property rights, personal enterprise and initiative; need for unhampered individual enterprises.

per402 Incentives: Positive

Need for wage and tax policies to induce enterprise; encouragement to start enterprises; need for financial and other incentives such as subsidies.

per407 Protectionism: Negative

Support for the concept of free trade; otherwise as 406, but negative.

per414 Economic Orthodoxy: Positive

Need for traditional economic orthodoxy, e.g. reduction of budget deficits, retrenchment in crisis, thrift and savings; support for traditional economic institutions such as stock market and banking system; support for strong currency.

per505 Welfare State Limitation: Positive

Limiting expenditure on social services or social security; otherwise as 504, but negative.

Appendix 8.1

Types of party attachment question asked in the European Parliament Election Study of 2004 (EES 04)

<i>Country</i>	<i>Type of question</i>	<i>Notes</i>
Austria	Absolute	
Britain	Absolute	
Cyprus	Absolute	The term "feel close to a party" doesn't make much sense in Greek although the term was used.
Czech Republic	Absolute	
Denmark	Absolute	
Estonia *	Absolute	The response option "sympathizer" was implemented as "supporter". This is likely to reduce the number of respondents stating closeness to a party.
Finland	Absolute	
France	Absolute(?)	
Germany	Absolute	
Greece	Absolute	The term "feel close to a party" doesn't make much sense in Greek although the term was used.
Hungary *	Absolute	Sympathizer option translated as the respondent finds a party "sympathetic". This is likely to reduce the number of respondents stating closeness to a party.
Ireland	Absolute	Use of the additional word "usually" in the main question text (similar to the ANES item).
Italy	Absolute	
Latvia	Absolute	
Luxembourg	Absolute	
Netherlands	Absolute(?)	
Northern Ireland	Absolute	Use of the word "feel" instead of "consider" and question structure has three rather than two parts. This question may have an affective rather than cognitive interpretation resulting in attenuated closeness estimates (see, Burden and Klostad 2005).
Poland	Relative	Question assumes that there is one party among all the Polish parties that the respondent feels closer to. For this reason this item is not an absolute question. However, it is not clearly a relative item either.
Portugal	Relative	Respondents were asked if they felt closer to one party from among all the parties present in Portugal.
Slovakia	Absolute	
Slovenia	Absolute	
Spain	Absolute	
Sweden	Absolute	

Source: author

Note the party attachment was not asked in all countries participating in EES 04 project. The mode of interviewing varied where face-to-face interviewing was used in Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Northern Ireland, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia and Spain. A postal survey (as part of post-general 2002 election panel study) was implemented in Ireland. Elsewhere, telephone interviewing was used. * In two countries the "sympathiser" response option caused problems due to linguistic difficulties, where the term "supporter" or finding the party "sympathetic" was used. Such strategies could be interpreted as changing the logic or meaning of the party closeness question.

Appendix 8.2

Details of the independent variables used in the OLS regression models reported in Table 8.3

<i>Variable description</i>	<i>Source</i>
Absolute – relative party closeness question together, (absolute questions coded zero, relative items plus one, and specific items asked in Hungary and Cyprus plus one)	Derived from an analysis of EES 04 questionnaires (see Figure A8.1)
Categorical ballot for EP04: Ballot allows a single vote for a party/candidate (contrasts with ordinal ballot that allows voters to determine who is elected)	Farrell and Scully (2005)
Direct presidential elections are held	Golder (2005); Other sources
Effective number of legislative parties, adjustment for small parties (2003)	Royce, Cox and Pachón (2004)
Concurrent elections of all types (local, regional and national) with the June 10–13 2004 elections to the European Parliament	Rose (2004), IDEA
Single Member District electoral system used in a country	Seddon et al. (2003) Farrell and Scully (2005)
Level of satisfaction with democracy in country	EB 61, Autumn 2004

Source: author

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This book deals with empirical research using political survey data and is primarily intended for anyone exploring politics in the Czech Republic using quantitative data. Many of the themes addressed in this study have application to the use of quantitative political data in other national contexts and across the social sciences more generally. This book is divided into three parts: theory, data and analysis. In the first part there is an examination of the theories underpinning the most important source of political data: survey research. Here there is an overview of the role of political attitudes and public opinion within political theory from Plato to Habermas. In addition there is an overview of the nature of political attitudes and recent insights from neurocognitive research. Part two maps out the main sources of political survey data available in the Czech Republic; and also deals with elite, expert survey and Comparative Manifesto Project data. The third part deals with the analysis of these datasets with a specific emphasis on the Czech Republic. This study argues that political data do not speak for themselves and require interpretation: and hence the need to integrate the theory, data and analysis components of research.

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