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**Bachelor Thesis**

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**THE EFFECT OF PREDOMINANCE ON PARTY'S IDEOLOGICAL  
POSITIONING: THE EXAMPLE OF AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS**

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## **Introduction**

Whenever a political party seeks to achieve a significant political control and power in a country with democratic rules, it has to achieve three partly overlapping goals: acquire a majority of the votes during parliamentary elections, be able to transfer those votes into parliamentary seats and transform those into a government (Ziegfeld & Tudor 2013: 2). With enough seats, but members of parliament hesitant to be part of the government, several predominant parties have lost their dominant positions (Nyblade 2004: 11-13). However, the most important starting point for a party seeking or securing its continued hegemony is the goal of securing enough votes on national elections.

This thesis aims to contribute to the study field of pluralistic dominance—predominant party systems and its inner dynamics by looking at electoral strategies predominant parties take in order to maintain their position of power. This aspect is analysed using one of the newer cases of predominance—the African National Congress (hereafter the “ANC”) in South Africa since 1994.

When studying the workings of predominant party systems, most authors have focused on classifying such an anomaly, its supposed (negative) effects on pluralism and democracy or diminished opportunities for split and insignificant opposition parties in them. According to author’s knowledge, a few observations have been made about the ideological direction of predominant parties, with most of them focusing on conditions creating (pre-)dominance, not the strategies and dynamics of predominant parties themselves. Despite that, a theory of maintaining flexibility by (authoritarian leaning) dominant parties has been developed by David White, which can also be applied to the study of predominant party systems.

Also, while some attempts to describe few aspects of new predominant parties in Southern Africa have been made, systematic research about that part of the world is scarce. At the same time the examples of new predominant systems in Namibia, Botswana and South Africa add important dynamics to the old concept. In contrast many African parties lack several important characteristics and functions of an average party in Europe, aggravating the scarcity of research (Erdmann 2004: 64-65). This thesis

contributes to this research field, by building on the work of Elischner (2011) and Bogaards (2004) and looks into the dynamics of the party system in South Africa.

By concentrating on the theory of maintaining flexibility of dominant parties by David White, this thesis tests the hypothesis that the African National Congress as a predominant party will adopt a catch-all strategy to catch the maximum amount of votes in elections and this means positioning itself in the center of the left-right ideological continuum. To prove this hypothesis African National Congress' ideology will be studied by applying the content analysis method developed by the Manifesto Research Group/ Comparative Manifestos project (hereafter the "MRP") on ANC's four election manifestos from 1994 to 2009. The 1994 parliamentary elections were the first elections for the former liberation movement, 2014 will not be part of the analysis, as these elections took place too recently (on May 6th 2014). The results gained by applying the MRG method will be analysed and a modified ideological left-right scale will be created, allowing to make conclusions about the positioning of the ANC and also its ideology according to election manifestos.

This thesis is divided into three parts. The first chapter will focus on building the theoretical framework by establishing the connection between ideology and electoral strategies, the definition and understanding of predominance and analysing existing theories on electoral strategies and party (pre-) dominance. Lastly, a look at the African research context will be given. The second chapter focuses on building the research model and interpreting the hypothesis into measurable research questions. This chapter is extensive, as the interpretation of primary data by the author needs a proper set-up. In addition to that, research concepts from several fields will be used to set up the hypothesis in a measurable way. The third chapter focuses on empirical analysis, testing the hypothesis in two different ways—by looking at the ideological positioning of ANC on the left-right scale, its ideology and the coverage of the most important issues for South African voters. The full results of the MRP coding can be found in the Appendix 2.

## **Theoretical framework**

In this part relevant theories concerning predominant party systems, the framework of electoral strategies and an analytical overview of the existing research on ideological positioning and African political systems will be explored to study electoral behaviour of predominant party systems.

### ***Defining and understanding (pre)dominance***

The most used and analytically useful way to categorise dominance has been offered by Giovanni Sartori (1976: 192-201), who writes: “Whenever we find a polity, a party that outdistances all the others, this party is dominant in that it is significantly stronger than the others” (p. 193). Sartori notes the difference between a party having slight or some dominance (like the Christian Democrats of Italy, Sartori 1976: 195) and a predominant party system, where party displays significant majority in elections leaving other parties far behind. Sartori explains the difference as follows: a moderately dominant party may still qualify as a two-party system or polarised multiparty system, displaying different inner dynamics, but a dominant party system means significant electoral advantage and power (Sartori 1976: 195-200). In the same way Sartori notes the methodical confusion of using the word “dominant” and differentiates between authoritarian, non-democratic one party vs. hegemonic party system (depending on whether the authoritarian party allows the *de iure* existence of opposition parties), and predominant party system, with “predominance” standing for softer, democratic meaning (Sartori 1976: 195). For still developing, fluid political systems Sartori suggests the use of “dominant party system”, noting the danger of applying all the conclusions of consolidated countries in the context of developing nations (Sartori 1976: 260).

This thesis focuses on analysing predominant, not hegemonic, parties, however excerpts from the study of dominant parties are used due to lack of research in this field. In such instances, critical view must and will be taken whether the same conclusions are relevant in the context of pluralist democracies.

According to Sartori, predominant party system is a pluralist political system, where one party outdistances all the other parties by winning the absolute majority of seats in the

legislature for at least three consecutive elections. The system stops being predominant as soon as predominance is lost, most often becoming a polarised multiparty system. Sartori identifies the empirical cases of the Indian National Congress, the Liberal Democratic Party in Japan, the Colorado Party in Uruguay, the Norwegian Labour Party the Swedish Social Democratic Party (Sartori 1976: 200) and other predominant systems in Turkey and Ireland. In author's opinion, more recent cases of Namibia, Botswana and South Africa also qualify. While dominant parties are quite common in Africa (see Bogaards 2004), these three qualify in terms of Sartori's definition of electoral dominance, but also stand out as more or less consolidated democracies. Some authors have used the examples of Institutional Revolutionary Party in Mexico and Kuomintang in Taiwan, but due to their authoritarian practices (Gandhi & Lust-Okar 2009), they do not qualify as predominant, but rather as hegemonic party systems.

Other authors have used similar definitions, with some changes in the extent of dominance (from simple majority to 70% of the seats), duration (the results of one election vs. 20 years), recognition of dominance by the society or the dynamics of opposition parties (divided or not relevant) (see Bogaards 2004: 176 for a comprehensive comparison of different definitions).

In addition to definitions needed for classification, several authors have focused on relevant empirical cases to see what sets predominant parties apart. After a closer look at the empirical cases in industrialising countries, Giliomee's and Simkins (1999), contributing to the works of Pempel (1990) define the predominant party (as a unit) as the one which enjoys electoral dominance over a long period of time, has the control over forming governments and has the power to shape public opinion and pursue its historical mission (Pempel 1990: 6-7; Giliomee & Simkins 1999: 37). While these are interesting criteria, they are outside the analysis framework of this thesis. Future research could be conducted to study the validity of such definitions using the MRP method to map the advocacy of historical mission by the predominant party.

As Bogaards has concluded, Sartori's definition still holds the most ground (Bogaards 2004) and allows to divide empirical cases in the clearest way possible. Another reason

to focus on Sartori's classification is that it is particularly helpful in the African context (Bogaards 2004), on which this thesis also focuses.

### *Party competition and electoral strategy*

The most important test for political parties are elections, where voters with limited time, knowledge and focus make one political decision that will decide the fate of complex public policies (Dalton, Farrell & McAllister 2011: 82-83). It is mostly assumed, that parties seek to secure the maximum amount of votes during elections and do so by taking account two main factors: 1) the beliefs of their core members and their core ideological views (Vassallo & Wilcox 2006: 413-414) and 2) (ideological) preferences of voters (Downs 1957; Dalton, Farrell & McAllister 2011: 82-83).

While voters are of course affected by issues other than ideological preferences, ideology still plays a prominent role in the decision-making of voters and it is something parties actively use to shape the public policy space (Budge 2006: 422-426).

There is an interaction between these two factors—parties, especially popular ones have the power to influence the political agenda and what issues their voters find important and at the same time voters' preferences define which parts of ideologies parties stress. Very often a party has to find a balance between those two—there is no point in talking about issues no longer relevant to their voters, at the same time parties cannot completely abandon their votes—leapfrog other parties—as they would risk looking spineless (Downs 1957).

In addition to that, no party advocates in isolation. Depending on the context, parties form their strategies also in comparison to the position and politics of other parties—contrasting the negative qualities of their political opponents, stressing their strengths and summarising this in their speeches, articles and election manifestos (Budge 2006: 422-423).

## *Predominance and ideological positioning*

### **Maintaining dominance through flexibility: David White**

The most compelling and thorough analysis of the impact of dominant parties and their ideological positioning has been offered by David White (2011). While he applies his theoretical framework on a number of cases either short on electoral support to qualify as predominant party systems (Christian Democrats in Italy) or parties, which display signs of hegemonic parties (United Russia in Russia, Institutional Revolutionary Party in Mexico), his framework is still valid for analysing predominant party systems. As predominant party systems operate in democratic pluralism and their hands are tied from monopolising political power, they have to rely even more on securing the majority of votes. This allows the author to assume that this theory is also valid in pluralist settings. However, due to this, only those aspects of White's theory applicable to democratic countries will be described and analysed. For example he also talks about the monopolisation of state's power and resources, which is something democratic parties might want to undertake, but face limited options for achieving it.

White uses the examples of Mexico, Japan, Italy and Russia and builds on the work of Duverger (1954) and Arnes and Barnes (1974). He points out strategies of dominant parties in establishing their power and elaborates the dynamics of maintaining dominant party's political power.

White claims that in order to secure its rule, the dominant party has to be both rigid and flexible at the same time. He describes the rise of the dominant party very similarly to what has been defined as the model of a mass party (Krouwel 2006: 254-255): "In the period of mobilization the dominant party builds a cohesive support base and develops a committed body of activists around a set of common goals." (White 2011: 660).

He goes on to point out that having achieved dominance, the party faces tension—on the one hand it needs to maintain its core support, but at the same not only keep the door open for new voters, but to actively attract them to maintain dominance and maintain the position of a party representing the whole nation. This means that the party has to adapt its strategy and appeal to the widest voter group possible. This leads to adopting a

catch-all, non-ideological, centrist position and hijacking the most popular opposition policies (White 2011: 660). White goes on to describe the need for mobilisation of important voter groups, which means concentrating on key socio-economic groups and promising them the minimum programme guaranteeing maximum pay-off.

This goes hand in hand with his use of the term “catch-all party”, developed by Otto Kirchheimer (1966, via Krouwel 2006: 256). According to Kirchheimer catch-all parties are characterised by the decline of ideology and thus they become the vehicles of material claims and interests for the increasing middle class and other bigger groups in the society (Krouwel 2006: 256-258). With decreased ideological sentiments in the society, parties are left with making promises about who gets what according to their size.

White’s analysis is mostly coherent with the main conclusions of the basics of theories on electoral strategy, apart from one aspect. As noted earlier, even predominant parties cannot fully and dramatically abandon their former views, as voters would interpret this as being spineless. This means that the “flexibility” discussed is quite limited. This is also coherent with empirical findings of predominant parties losing their dominance by going ideologically too far (to the left) (Nyblade 2004: 19-20). However, as most parties appealing to masses have to stay away from ideological extremes, they can still move towards the centre.

### **Other approaches**

Other existing research directions known to the author on the issue of electoral dominance and ideological positioning have focused on observing the advantage of the centrist position of a large party in coalition formation.

When talking about about ruling parties in polarised multi-party systems (the closest system to predominant parties), Sartori notes that large centrally positioned parties with ideologically distant opposition parties often enjoy dominance in coalition building (Sartori 1976: 134-137) and in general. Basing his analysis on the case of Indian National Congress, Riker (1976; via Cox 1997: 236) suggests that the centrist position of the party helps to assure its dominance, as long as the opposition remains divided far

along the both sides of the ideological continuum. The same analysis, but from the aspect of coordination of coalition governments is offered by Cox (1997: 238-247).

All of these approaches suggest that the centrist position provides advantages for a large party operating with divided opposition, but gives little explanation why parties formed such an ideological position in the first place or what keeps them there. Thus White's theory complements such empirical findings with its causal framework and raises the importance of validating his theory, especially in the context of predominant party systems' behaviour.

### ***Predominant party systems research and Africa***

Traditionally, several important challenges complicate the study of parties and party systems in non-industrialised countries, which include most African countries.

A systematic overview has been given by Erdmann (2004), mapping differences between African and European political systems and parties. He points out the following challenges relevant for the study of party systems: weak formal structures and strong informal and personalised relations, barely distinguishable programmes, which in most cases bear no relation to their policies, predominantly regional and/or ethnic-based membership and electorate; clientist relations with party supporters (Erdman 2004: 65). Similar problems have been noted by other authors-- low levels of institutionalisation, lack of ideological differences (Van der Walle 2003) and ever present ethnic cleavages and politics based upon it (Horowitz 1985: 301) prevent the usage of conventional methods to study party politics.

When specifically discussing dominance and predominance, Matthijs Bogaards (2004) has developed a systematic overview about which methodical concepts of party systems are useful in the African context, pointing out the advantages of Sartori's framework (p 178), especially in the context, where lack of democracy and rise of authoritarianism are common.

In author's opinion majority of these issues are not applicable on South Africa, especially regards to the use of the MRP research method. Firstly, South Africa is

among the wealthiest of African nations and with a highly institutionalised party system (Randall 2006: 388). Secondly, recent work by Sebastian Elischner (2011) demonstrates the usability and utility of the MRP/CMP method in the African context and uses it to map the policy space of Namibia, a country with very similar circumstances to South Africa. Thirdly, even if the method is less useful than in the European context, it provides a systematic framework for analysis discouraging the subjectivity of interpreting election manifestos in other ways. Also, the results can be easily proven and disproven and compared with other relevant cases (such as the analysis of African parties by Elischner, 2011).

## **Model of research**

This chapter focuses on setting up a proper empirical framework to study the proposed hypothesis and provide an example for future research. Firstly, an overview of the MRP research method and its theoretical assumptions will be given, allowing the detailed study of ANC's ideological positioning.

After that, the model for measurement of the catch-all strategy and placement in the center of the political spectrum will be devised in two ways. The first features creating a model for measuring centrism on the MRP ideological left-right continuum. The second focuses on establishing the key promises relevant for the South African electorate and analysing how to map them using the MRP coding scheme.

The question on ANC's predominance will also be answered as part of empirical analysis, but no separate research model is needed beyond Sartori's definition in the first chapter.

### ***Manifesto Research Project/ Comparative Research Group's method***

The MRP research method is a quantitative content analysis method applied to party manifestos, conducted manually by researchers, allowing them to map and compare policy preferences of political parties in space and time, both ideological and non-ideological preferences. Party manifestos are used, as they are the most prominent documents in election campaigns (Budge 2011: 5-6). Also, most party manifestos are

public and published prior to each election, allowing comparison in time (Volgens 2002: 2).

In addition to the MRP/CMP research method, other ways to analyse policy preferences include expert surveys and opinion poll data. However, these methods have proven to allow less unified and less specific comparisons—expert surveys do not change in time and voter preferences identify opinions of voters, not real life preferences political parties hold (Budge 2001: 6-7). Although several alternatives have been devised, the MRP/CMP method is still seen among the most reliable ways of mapping policy preferences and the authors have responded to almost all the criticisms presented (see Klingemann *et. al.* 2006).

The MRP method is based on the salience theory. One of the pioneers of the MRP method, David Robertson discovered that while parties compete with each other and party positions might change in time, parties argue with each other by emphasising different salient policy priorities they are competent in, rather than by directly confronting each other on same issues (Budge et al 2001: 7). He also concluded that parties talk about both ideological and non-ideological issues, depending on which issues strike out as most valiant for voters (Budge 2006: 424). An example of this would be party positions on welfare issues. Although most voters benefit from some form of state welfare services, many voters also oppose tax increases guaranteeing those services. It is less useful for a party seeking to maximise its votes to directly oppose a rival advocating for severe tax cuts. Instead a more likely strategy would be to stress the need for public services, emphasising the salience of desired issues (Elischner 2011: 645).

The MRG/CMP method takes manifestos and divides them into coding units with one unit corresponding to a quasi-sentence. All the quasi-sentences get coded between 56 universal categories (see Appendix 1 for the full list of categories), which carry information about the content of the manifesto and create comparative data independent of the specific socio-economic or cultural settings (Volgens 2002) of a country. Uncodable units get coded as “000” and are counted separately. 56 categories are

divided into 7 domains allowing more specific content analysis, allowing to identify the most important issues for a party in question.

### **Referring back to ideology: the left-right scale**

While any data can hardly catch the richness of political ideologies, a spatial continuum of left and right ideologies is often used to map voters's and parties' policy preferences allowing to see the universal ideological disagreement between parties about the scope of government intervention in society (Budge 2001: 19; Budge 2006: 422). As White's theory also presumes such a continuum, this approach of ideological positioning has been chosen.

The MRP method also allows to map left and right statements and deduce an ideological positioning based on it. Out 56 categories, 26 make up the programmatic categories with 13 defined as left and 13 as right wing (see Table 1). In order to calculate party's left-right positions, one must add up percentage references to the categories grouped as left and right respectively and subtract the sum of the left percentages from the sum of right percentages (McDonald & Budge 2005: 36). The scale is 200-point scale from -100 to +100, the minus standing for the left side. With a position of -100 a party would be making only left statements and +100 with a manifesto focusing exclusively on right statements.

**Table 1. Creation of a left-right scale from coding of manifesto sentences** (McDonald & Budge 2005: 37).

<b>Right</b>	<b>Left</b>
Military: positive	Decolonisation
Freedom, human rights	Military: negative
Constitutionalism: positive	Peace
Effective authority	Internationalism: positive
Free enterprise	Democracy
Economic incentives	Regulate capitalism
Protectionism: negative	Economic planning

Economic orthodoxy	Protectionism: positive
Social services limitation	Controlled economy
National way of life: positive	Nationalisation
Traditional morality: positive	Social services: expansion
Law and order	Education: expansion
Social harmony	Labour groups: positive

It must be noted, that the MRP scale itself does not enable relating policy preferences back to ideologies and placement on the the extremes does not automatically qualify party as the most extreme. However, it is still highly probable that if a party manifesto has no mentions of either the left or the right side, it has a very strong ideology.

### **Measuring the catch-all strategy and centrism**

In order to prove the hypothesis that predominant parties take a catch-all strategy to maintain their dominance, a measurable meaning needs to be given to the idea of a catch-all strategy and centrist position as an electoral strategy. The catch-all strategy is a concept from the theory of party models (Krouwel 2006: 256), where parties have reduced their ideological baggage and accepted the welfare state and economic planning by the state from the right side and from the left side abandoned the ideas for revisions of capitalism (Krouwel 2006: 257). Instead, it places itself to moderate position, working on repelling as few voters as possible. This is very similar to White's analysis about bringing in key voter groups from all over the society and making process to key voter groups in order to keep their support.

In author's opinion there are two ways to prove the hypothesis of ANC adopting a catch-all strategy: 1) measure the ideological positioning of ANC and see if it is centrist; 2) identify key promises made to big key voter groups allowing material gains and see if these are also prominent in ANC's manifestos.

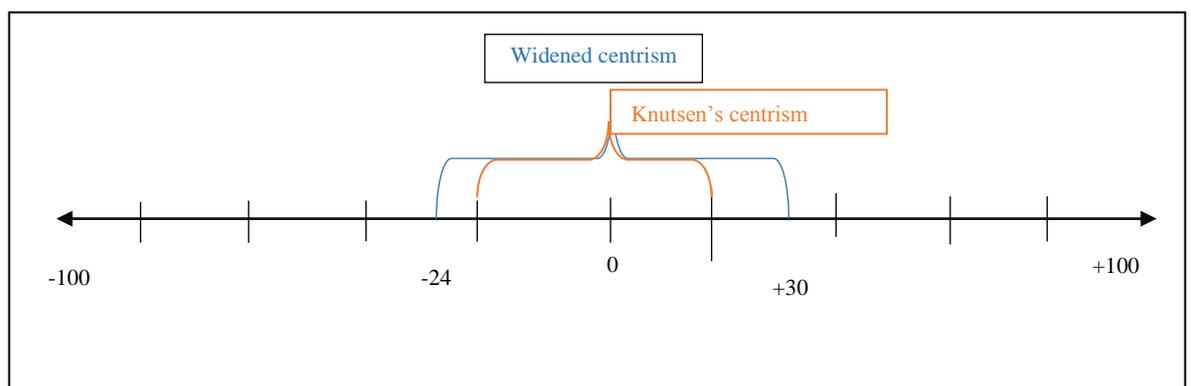
#### *Measuring centrism*

To locate centrism on the MRP left-right continuum, the author has created a combined scale (see Figure 1), based on the classification of the Comparative Study of Electoral

System's (hereafter CSES; Dalton, Farrell & McAllister 2011: 86) 10-point left-right scale and transferred it to the MRP 200- point scale. While the MRP and CSES scale are different in their methods, they imply the same numerical positioning of the Left and Right and such a mind model is helpful for less complicated analysis. Also, systematic empirical comparison of these scales conducted by Dalton, Farrell & McAllister has demonstrated unified applicability of both scales (2011: 117-118).

This thesis uses the categorisation of centrism by Oddbjørn Knutsen, who places centrism between 4-6 points on the CSES scale (Knutsen 1998: 292), corresponding to -20 and +20 on the MRP scale. This has been reviewed by the author by looking at the classification of empirical cases of nine party families on the left-right scale (Dalton, Farrell & McAllister 2011: 125-126) and evaluating the ideological content of them and their compatibility with the catch-all strategy. Such a review reveals the need to widen the centrist scale to fit the moderate parts of social democracy and right liberalism. Hence the modified scale places centrism between 3,8 and 6,5 corresponding to -24 and +30 on the MRP scale. This means that centrism comprises of such ideologies as moderate social democracy (WVS placement mean 3.66, MRP mean thus about -28), new left/labour (placement mean 3.87/-24) liberalism (placement mean 5.36/+6), Christian democracy (placement mean 6.22/+24) and very moderate right liberalism (placement mean 6.42/+28) (Dalton, Farrell & McAllister 2011: 125-126). Just in case, both the original framework by Knutsen and the revised framework by the author will be analysed.

**Figure 1. A combined model of mapping centrism on the MRP ideological continuum, author's and Knutsen's model.**



### *Measuring key promises*

The catch-all electoral strategy involves giving strategic promises about the most important issues to the most important and largest voter groups, often involving material gains. While this thesis is too short for a detailed analysis of the South African electorate, the most important issues can be easily measured by looking at which issues voters themselves identify.

According to author's knowledge such mapping about South Africa exists since from 1999 (Afrobarometer 2014), where voters are asked about the most important issues the government should address. Thus a summary of those issues from Afrobarometer studies is used from 1999-2009. Even though there is no data about 1994, there probably is not such a big leap in people's opinions and thus 1994 is also included as part of the analysis. These issues are: unemployment, crime, housing, corruption, poverty, AIDS (Afrobarometer 2012: 7-8). These correspond directly with the following MRP/CMP categories: labour groups: positive, law and order: positive, political corruption: negative, governmental and administrative efficiency: positive, welfare expansion, economic growth and equality (also refers to socio-economic equality and fair income distribution) (Volkens 2002). Seeing if these issues are important to ANC will help to determine whether ANC has adopted a catch-all strategy to attract large voter groups.

**Table 2. Overview of the most important problems SA voters think their government should address (Afrobarometer 2012: 7-8).**

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Average importance 1999-2008, % of voters</b>	<b>Corresponding MRP category</b>
Unemployment	71	Labour groups: positive, Welfare expansion
Crime and security	38,5	Law and order
Housing	25	Welfare expansion, equality
Poverty	22	Welfare expansion, equality
Corruption	14	Political corruption: negative

AIDS	16,4	Welfare expansion
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A more precise view presented in the Table 2 shows that if ANC is a catch-all party, its manifestos should specifically address the categories of welfare expansion, labour groups: positive and somewhat the category of law and order.

### **Empirical analysis**

This chapter concentrates on analysing the data created by applying the MRP research method on election manifestos of the African National Congress. Firstly, an overview of national election results in South Africa will be given, allowing to identify ANC's predominance. Secondly, few relevant challenges with the application of the coding will be identified. Thirdly and fourthly, the ideological positioning of ANC will be identified together with main categories mentioned. This is followed by the analysis of the strategic issues promised by the catch-all party.

#### ***ANC as a predominant party***

As seen from the Table 2, South Africa is clearly a predominant system according to Sartoris classification, exceeding Sartori's criteria by more than 10% of the votes. In years 1999 and 2004 ANC grew its dominance, but recent elections (2009, 2014) have led to a decline in hegemony. It will be interesting to see, whether such a decline continues, predicting the end of the predominance.

**Table 3. ANC's results on national elections**

<b>Year</b>	<b>% of votes</b>	<b>Seats in the parliament (out of 400)</b>	<b>Formed the government alone</b>
1994	62,65	252	No, a coalition with the National Party and Inkatha Freedom Party, born out of political compromise
1999	66,36	266	Yes

2004	69,69	279	Yes
2009	65,9	264	Yes
2014	62,2	249	Yes

Sources: Southall 2000: 12; Electoral Commission 2004; Election Resources 2014.

### ***Applying the MRP/CMP coding scheme***

There were few issues with the application of the coding scheme worth bringing up. Firstly, 2 categories were added to mark specific issues that seemed ungroupable, but important enough to be separately grouped. While coding scheme mentions agricultural issues (703, non-programmatic content), a bulk of quasi-sentences focused specifically on rural poverty and the development of rural areas. Thus a category 707 “Rural Life and Development: positive” was created. Also, bulk of quasi-sentences mentioned very general calls for the improvement of “quality of life”, with no specific policy mentioned together with it (whenever it contained more specific policy codable with the method, that option was used, mostly under categories in domain 5). Thus a separate category 508 “Quality of life” was created to accommodate this. Both of these codings do not affect the L-R scale, as they would have otherwise been coded under non-programmatic categories (economic goals, agriculture, and equality). However, they will be part of the content analysis, as both of these closely relate to valiant issues for voters, specifically the issue of reducing poverty and unemployment.

As the MRG/CMP coding scheme was created with Europe in mind, two categories focusing on European integration are inapplicable to South Africa. But South Africa belongs to two main regional inter-governmental organisations: the African Union and the Southern African Development Community. As the SADC involves economic co-operation in addition to political, categories were renamed to contain SADC integration respectively.

Units coded under 000 affect the scale and any calculations made, as they are added to the total sum of statements. Manifestos since 1999 and particularly the 1999 general election’s manifesto contained many statements not about forward-looking policy preferences of ANC, but statements (also ideological and otherwise codable) focusing

on past achievements—what has been achieved (by ANC). These were also coded as 000 “No meaningful category applies”, as they do not contain active policy preferences.

*ANC and centrism*

**Table 4. ANC’s ideological positioning**

	<b>1994</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>average</b>
N	236	237	240	347	
Number of Left values:	99	30	58	138	
% L	-41.95	-12.66	-24.17	-39.77	
Number of right values:	53	42	38	28	
% R	22.46	17.72	15.83	8.07	
<b>% ideological position</b>	-19.49	5.06	-8.33	-31.70	-13,62

**1994**

In 1994 when first entering electoral public space as a former liberation movement, ANC’s views had previously been described as strongly left (Peet 2002: 54). According to author’s analysis ANC advocated a left leaning programme in 1994 elections, qualifying as a typical labour party and also adhering to the hypothesis of a catch-all party. As Elischner notes (2011), some categories of the L-R scale have less ideological meaning, like democracy and human rights (placed on the opposing sides of the scale). These categories help to place anti-system parties, but make it more difficult to place mainstream parties, who are more moderate. In 1994, both of these categories are prominent (about 10% each), but cancel each other out from the final calculation. Also, civic mindedness (call for national unity and social harmony) makes up a large proportion of the right emphasis (10%), while economic policies very little. This is coherent with South African politics, as 1994 marked the first free and equal elections for all South Africans and issues of overcoming the apartheid legacy were important.

## **1999**

In 1999, ANC's ideology makes about 25-point move towards the right, classifying its policy preferences as liberalism. Left emphasis comprises of the expansion of the welfare state, positive mentions of labour groups and democracy, while most of the right emphasis is formed by stressing positive civic mindedness and governmental efficiency. As some of the past-looking statements coded as 000 contain ideological statements, the 1999 placement result is less reliable for analysis. However, ANC's ideological positioning is very close to the center of the scale, clearly qualifying as a catch-all party.

## **2004**

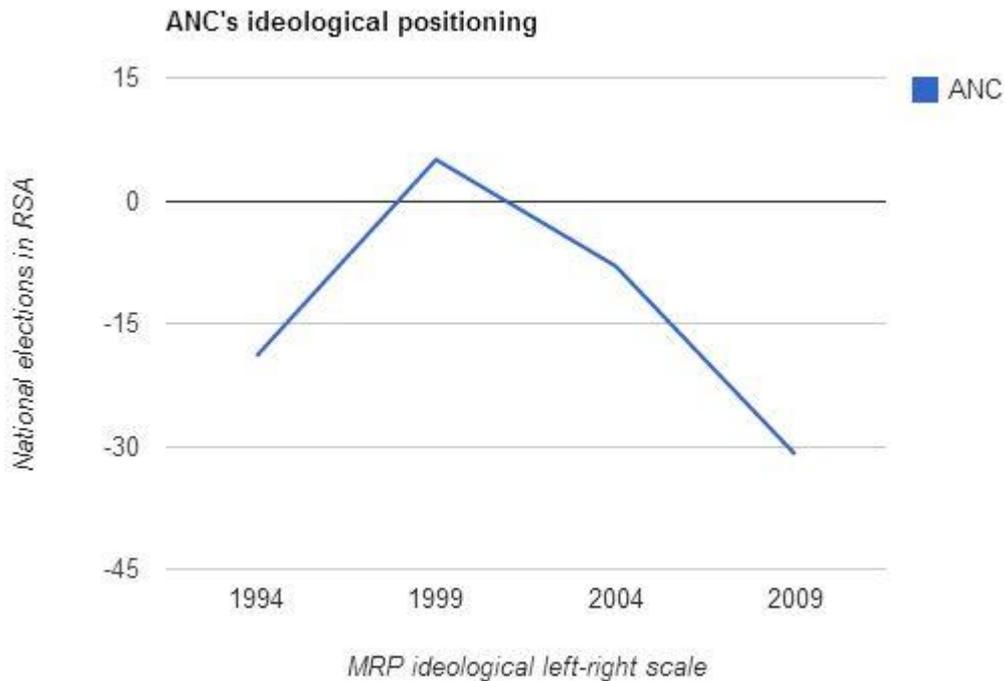
In 2004, there is about 13-point move towards the left, still close to the center. ANC's policy preferences resemble a typical labour party. Most popular ideological statements concern the expansion of the welfare state and positive mentions of labour groups and democracy. About 6% mentions of positive internationalism and peace stand out from other manifestos. Most of the right emphasis is made up by positive civic mindedness (6% decrease), positive law and order, with a first time addition of economic statements, like relying on economic orthodoxy or economic incentives.

## **2009**

In 2009, there is a strong movement towards the left, further than in 1994. This places the party narrowly outside the wider centrism framework and 10 points past the Knutsen's idea of centrism. The left emphasis consists of clearly ideological issues—the welfare state expansion (15%), education expansion (8%), and the support for labour groups (7%). Democracy makes up about 5% of the whole programme. There are very few mentions of Right categories with an emphasis on law and order (3%) and governmental efficiency (2%) and civic mindedness' importance is further decreased.

## Concluding remarks: ANC and centrism

**Graph 2. ANC's ideological positioning**



As demonstrated in Table 4 and Graph 2, on average ANC's policy preferences can be qualified as left leaning and clearly centrist according to both scales. However, *summa summarum* does not equal proving the hypothesis, needing closer inspection.

All in all, empirical analysis proves that on average the African National Congress does behave as a predominant party system according to White's theory by occupying the centrist position. The application of the MRP coding has allowed to validate the hypothesis that the African National Congress as a predominant party has opted for a centrist ideological position right after achieving predominance and maintained it throughout 15 years, until narrowly passing the mark of centrism for left in 2009 and according to the more strict classification on centrism by Knutsen, having moved clearly further from centrism.

ANC's clear movement to the left in 2009 has also been noted by others (van Wyk 2009). While this paper did not map the 2014. election manifesto, further research is needed to see if 2009 marks a temporary drift or a permanent tendency in ANC's ideological positioning. Interestingly, several predominant parties have lost their predominance at the time they moved further to the left (Nybled 2004). The popularity of ANC has also been in decline as it moved to the left. This can be explained with two conflicting explanations: either the South African voters are repelled by the leftist rhetorics and vote accordingly or other reasons are responsible for ANC's rising unpopularity. To compensate for those issues, a predominant party would have the incentive to promise more material gains like expanding welfare, education etc and thus move to the left on the MRP scale (as these issues qualify as leftist categories). For example, the end of the predominance of the Japanese Liberal Democratic Party in 1989 was partly due to corruption issues and voters failed to support the planned tax rise (Nyblade 2004: 19), the Swedish Social Democratic Party lost their predominance in 1976 by moving too far to the left (Nyblade 2004: 20). The full explanation to the 2009. shift can be given with analysing 2014. and subsequent election manifestos and ANC's dominance.

### *ANC's promises as a catch-all party*

**Table 5. Important categories for RSA voters put on the MRP coding scheme.**

*Listed in descending order.*

<b>Name of Category</b>	<b>L-R</b>	<b>1994%</b>	<b>1999%</b>	<b>2004%</b>	<b>2009%</b>
504 Welfare State Expansion	L	15.3	3.4	7.5	15.3
503 Equality: Positive		8.1	6.3	6.7	6.1
701 Labour Groups: Positive	L	3.8	4.2	5	8.4
605 Law and Order: Positive	R	2.1	1.7	4.6	3.5
303 Governmental and Administrative Efficiency: Positive	R	1.7	3	2.1	2.3
304 Political Corruption: Negative		0.8	0.8	1.7	0.3
410 Economic Growth		1.7	0.4	1.7	5.5

508 Quality of Life		0.4	2.5	0.8	0.6
707 Rural Life and Development: Positive		1.7	0.4	2.1	4.0
Altogether		35.6	22.8	32.1	45.8

As shown in the previous chapter, according to the Afrobarometer (2012: 7-9) RSA voters find the issues unemployment, crime and security, housing, poverty, corruption and AIDS as most important needing action from the government (the ANC). Table 5 presents these issues as part of the MRP coding scheme in the order of importance allocated by ANC in their manifesto. According to the theory, these categories should be among the most salient ones, as ANC as a catch-all party needs to address the most important issues relevant to large voter groups.

As shown on Table 5, some issues get less attention, but this is expected. The quality of life and rural life categories, added by the author to MRP-s coding scheme, correspond to quite specific statements and it is expected that not that much time should be spent on them. Welfare expansion—a category containing several issues flagged by the public opinion is the most popular category in the whole manifesto (with the exception of the 000, not applicable category) and labour groups and equality closely behind it. The proportion of the law and order category is surprisingly small, considering South Africa’s high crime rates and the fact that voters flagged this issue as the second one just behind unemployment (see Table 2). Governmental efficiency and removing political corruption are mentioned less than expected. This can be explained with the ANC wanting to avoid these issues, as predominant parties often face corruption and inefficiency charges, as the line between the state and the party begins to blur. For example in 2009, opposition parties used the anti-corruption label to differentiate themselves from ANC (Lemon 2009: 672).

Conclusively, this part of the empirical analysis demonstrates that the African National Congress definitely captures major issues South African voters worry about, spending a majority of its programme on such issues. The avoidance of corruption is logical, as a predominant party often faces such charges. All of this confirms the hypothesis that the African National Congress campaigns as a catch-all party.

## Summary

This thesis focused on the predominant party system and its inner dynamics by looking at electoral strategies a predominant party is forced to take to maintain its electoral dominance. By using David White's theory about the flexibility of dominant parties, a hypothesis was created, claiming that in order not to succumb electoral competition, predominant party opts for a catch-all electoral strategy, occupying the ideological center. Based on the concept of a catch-all party, it was elaborated that predominant party's campaign promises often focus on dividing economic welfare and promising material gain to the most important voter groups to yet again ensure its dominance.

To study this hypothesis, Sartori's classification and analysis on predominant parties was used to differentiate between democratic and non-democratic dominance. After reviewing and complementing David White's theory, a research model was created to prove the hypothesis. The research model consisted of applying the content analysis method developed by the Manifesto Research Group/ Comparative Manifestos project (hereafter the "MRP") on ANC's four election manifestos from 1994 to 2009. The results gained by applying the MRG method were analysed and a numerical scale based on CSES and MRP left-right ideological continuum was created, taking into account existing empirical divisions of political parties on this scale. This scale allowed to qualify parties as centrist between the values of -24 up to +30 on the MRP left-right scale and can also be used to conduct future research about predominance and ideological positioning in the centre.

After determining that the African National Congress easily qualifies as a predominant party, empirical analysis was conducted, allowing the validation of the hypothesis that the African National Congress as a predominant party indeed occupies the ideological center. This was confirmed by looking at party manifestos from 1994 to 2004. However, it turned out that in 2009 ANC's ideology took a strong direction towards the left side of the scale, moving away from the center. In author's opinion, this indicates a typical desperation of a predominant party losing its dominance and thus responding with a strong campaign promising material gains, which qualify the manifesto as leftist. The

content of ANC's 2009 manifesto shows a lot of emphasis put on promising increased welfare and job creation, confirming this explanation.

The developed scale also allowed to track the general ideological positioning of the African National Congress. While ANC has been classified as a social democratic party by voters and as a former leftist, but currently neoliberal party by some authors, the MRP coding demonstrated that the African National Congress' policy preferences indicate its ideology is rather centrist and fluid, ranging from New Labour to liberalism and in 2009 moving back to social democracy. This is the first time a systematic analysis of ANC's ideology has been conducted.

The second part of the empirical analysis demonstrated that the African National Congress also acts like a catch-all party by emphasising issues that have also been identified as very important by the majority of South Africans. A catch-all strategy involves identifying salient issues for big and important voter groups and stressing on those, rather than following a very strong socio-economic cleavage or one specific socio-economic group. Using Afrobarometer's data, it was concluded that ANC conforms to such behaviour by stressing the need for welfare expansion, job creation and guaranteeing law and order more than other categories in its manifestos. These issues are also important for RSA voters. Thus this thesis found confirmation for both hypotheses.

This thesis suggests several further research directions. Firstly, the application of the MRP research method by the author and formerly by Elischner demonstrates the usability of it on more developed and institutionalised African countries, allowing more systematic research of African parties and their policy preferences. Secondly, in author's opinion, Botswana, Namibia and South Africa allow a fascinating look into the workings of a predominant party, also displaying unique characteristics common only to African countries. Predominant parties are rare, but interesting cases of an awkward embrace by democratic rules and autocratic norms and still lack an analytical framework to map its inner dynamics.

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## Kokkuvõte

*Predominantsuse mõju erakonna valimisstrateegiale Aafrika Rahvusliku Kongressi näitel*

*Anna Karolin*

Käesolev bakalaureusetöö uuris, missugune on dominantsuse mõju erakonna valimisstrateegiale. Dominantsed erakonnad on demokraatlikes riikides süstemaatiliselt ja ülekaalukalt valimisi võitnud erakonnad, kelle jätkuvad võidud politoloogid sageli hämmastavad.

Kuna dominantsust on võrdlemisi vähe uuritud, võeti kasutusele Giovanni Sartori klassifikatsioon ning sealt edasi David White'i teooria dominantsetest (sh autoritaarsetest) erakondadest ja nende paindlikkusest enda valijate huvide järele kohandumisel. White'i teooria võimaldas püstitada hüpoteesi, et dominantne erakond on enda hegemoonia säilitamiseks sunnitud valima kõiki valijaid püüdes *catch-all* strateegia, mis tähendab, et erakond liigub ideoloogilises mõttes tsentrisse ning lubab välja lubadusi, millest hoolivad suured ja olulised valijagrupid.

Selleks, et seda hüpoteesi tõestada, analüüsiti Manifesto Research Groupi sisuanalüüsi meetodiga Aafrika Rahvusliku Kongressi 1994-1999 a valimiste programme ning saadud tulemused paigutati MRG vasak-parempoolsele skaalale. Kombineerides erinevaid skaalaid, loodi skaala, millele saab asetada MRG meetodiga saadud tulemused ideoloogia välja selgitamiseks. Kuna antud töö keskendus tsentrismile, määrati kindlaks tsentrismi vahemik, mis on MRG skaalal -24 ja +30 vahel. Konservatiivsemad autorid asetavad tsentrismi -20 ja +20 vahele.

Empiirilise analüüsi tulemusena kinnitati hüpoteesi, et Aafrika Rahvuslik Kongress kui dominantne erakond liikus alates 1994. aastast ideoloogiasse tsentrisse, liikudes erandina alles 2009. aastal tsentrist eemale ja vasakule. Kasutades Afrobaromeetri uuringuid, selgitati välja Lõuna-Aafrika valijate olulisemad teemad ning analüüsi tulemusena selgus, et Aafrika Rahvuslik Kongress käitub ka sisulises mõttes *catch-all* strateegia alusel, keskendudes just nendele teemadele, mis suurele hulgale valijatele olulised on, nagu heaoluriigi laiendamine, töökohtade loomine, ühiskondlik võrdsus ja turvalisus.

## Appendixes

### *Appendix 1: the MRP coding scheme*

<b>Domain 1: External Relations</b>
101 Foreign Special Relationships: Positive
102 Foreign Special Relationships: Negative
103 Anti-Imperialism: Positive
104 Military: Positive
105 Military: Negative
106 Peace: Positive
107 Internationalism: Positive
108 European Integration: Positive
109 Internationalism: Negative
110 European Integration: Negative
<b>Domain 2: Freedom and Democracy</b>
201 Freedom and Human Rights: Positive
202 Democracy: Positive
203 Constitutionalism: Positive
204 Constitutionalism: Negative
<b>Domain 3: Political System</b>
301 Decentralisation: Positive
302 Centralisation: Positive
303 Governmental and Administrative Efficiency: Positive
304 Political Corruption: Negative
305 Political Authority: Positive

<b>Domain 4: Economy</b>
401 Free Enterprise: 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 Economic Growth
411 Technology and Infrastructure: Positive
412 Controlled Economy: Positive
413 Nationalisation: Positive
414 Economic Orthodoxy: Positive
415 Marxist Analysis: Positive
416 Anti-Growth Economy: Positive
<b>Domain 5: Welfare and Quality of Life</b>
501 Environmental Protection: Positive
502 Culture: Positive
503 Equality: Positive
504 Welfare State Expansion
505 Welfare State Limitation
506 Education Expansion
507 Education Limitation
<b>Domain 6: Fabric of Society</b>
601 National Way of Life: Positive

602 National Way of Life: Negative
603 Traditional Morality: Positive
604 Traditional Morality: Negative
605 Law and Order: Positive
606 Civic Mindedness: Positive
607 Multiculturalism: Positive
608 Multiculturalism: Negative
<b>Domain 7: Social Groups</b>
701 Labour Groups: Positive
702 Labour Groups: Negative
703 Agriculture: Positive
704 Middle Class and Professional Groups: Positive
705 Minority Groups: Positive
706 Non-Economic Demographic Groups: Positive

*(Budge 2001)*

**Appendix 2: full results of the application of the MRP coding scheme on ANC's manifestos**

All codification was done electronically, files can be obtained from the author for other use.

Name of Category	L-R scale	Code	1994	1994 %	1999	1999 %	2004	2004 %	2009	2009 %
No meaningful category applies		999	10	4.24	113	47.68	84	35.00	70	20.17
<b>Domain 1: External Relations</b>										
101 Foreign Special Relationships: Positive		101	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	1	0.29
102 Foreign Special Relationships: Negative		102	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
103 Anti-Imperialism: Positive	L	103	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
104 Military: Positive	R	104	6	2.54	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
105 Military: Negative	L	105	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
106 Peace: Positive	L	106	3	1.27	0	0.00	3	1.25	4	1.15
107 Internationalism: Positive	L	107	5	2.12	5	2.11	11	4.58	6	1.73
108 SADC integration: Positive		108	3	1.27	0	0.00	1	0.42	3	0.86
109 Internationalism: Negative		109	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
110 SADC integration: Negative		110	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
<b>Domain 2: Freedom and Democracy</b>										
201 Freedom and Human Rights: Positive	R	201	7	2.97	2	0.84	4	1.67	3	0.86
202 Democracy: Positive	L	202	25	10.59	6	2.53	10	4.17	17	4.90
203 Constitutionalism: Positive	R	203	5	2.12	3	1.27	1	0.42	1	0.29
204 Constitutionalism: Negative		204	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
<b>Domain 3: Political System</b>										
301 Decentralisation: Positive		301	1	0.42	2	0.84	0	0.00	0	0.00

302 Centralisation: Positive		302	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
303 Governmental and Administrative Efficiency: Positive	R	303	4	1.69	7	2.95	5	2.08	8	2.31
304 Political Corruption: Negative		304	2	0.85	2	0.84	4	1.67	1	0.29
305 Political Authority: Positive		305	13	5.51	13	5.49	3	1.25	11	3.17
Domain 4: Economy								0.00		0.00
401 Free Enterprise: Positive	R	401	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
402 Incentives: Positive	R	402	3	1.27	1	0.42	6	2.50	2	0.58
403 Market Regulation: Positive	L	403	2	0.85	0	0.00	1	0.42	2	0.58
404 Economic Planning: Positive	L	404	2	0.85	0	0.00	1	0.42	1	0.29
405 Corporatism: Positive		405	0	0.00	4	1.69	3	1.25	4	1.15
406 Protectionism: Positive	L	406	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	1	0.29
407 Protectionism: Negative	R	407	0	0.00	0	0.00	1	0.42	0	0.00
408 Economic Goals		408	2	0.85	0	0.00	8	3.33	4	1.15
409 Keynesian Demand Management: Positive		409	4	1.69	0	0.00	6	2.50	4	1.15
410 Economic Growth		410	4	1.69	1	0.42	4	1.67	19	5.48
411 Technology and Infrastructure: Positive		411	0	0.00	0	0.00	4	1.67	2	0.58
412 Controlled Economy: Positive	L	412	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
413 Nationalisation: Positive	L	413	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
414 Economic Orthodoxy: Positive	R	414	0	0.00	0	0.00	1	0.42	0	0.00
415 Marxist Analysis: Positive		415	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
416 Anti-Growth Economy: Positive		416	4	1.69	1	0.42	0	0.00	5	1.44
Domain 5: Welfare and Quality of Life								0.00		0.00
501 Environmental Protection: Positive		501	1	0.42	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
502 Culture: Positive		502	0	0.00	1	0.42	0	0.00	5	1.44
503 Equality: Positive		503	19	8.05	15	6.33	16	6.67	21	6.05

504 Welfare State Expansion	L	504	36	15.25	8	3.38	18	7.50	53	15.27
505 Welfare State Limitation	R	505	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
506 Education Expansion	L	506	17	7.20	1	0.42	2	0.83	25	7.20
507 Education Limitation		507	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
508 Quality of Life		508	1	0.42	6	2.53	2	0.83	2	0.58
Domain 6: Fabric of Society								0.00		0.00
601 National Way of Life: Positive	R	601	1	0.42	3	1.27	0	0.00	0	0.00
602 National Way of Life: Negative		602	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
603 Traditional Morality: Positive	R	603	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
604 Traditional Morality: Negative		604	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
605 Law and Order: Positive	R	605	5	2.12	4	1.69	11	4.58	12	3.46
606 Civic Mindedness: Positive	R	606	22	9.32	22	9.28	9	3.75	2	0.58
607 Multiculturalism: Positive		607	6	2.54	1	0.42	0	0.00	1	0.29
608 Multiculturalism: Negative		608	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Domain 7: Social Groups								0.00		0.00
701 Labour Groups: Positive	L	701	9	3.81	10	4.22	12	5.00	29	8.36
702 Labour Groups: Negative		702	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
703 Agriculture: Positive		703	5	2.12	1	0.42	1	0.42	6	1.73
704 Middle Class and Professional Groups: Positive		704	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
705 Minority Groups: Positive		705	3	1.27	0	0.00	1	0.42	2	0.58
706 Non-Economic Demographic Groups: Positive		706	2	0.85	4	1.69	2	0.83	6	1.73
707 Rural Life and Development: Positive		707	4	1.69	1	0.42	5	2.08	14	4.03
<b>N</b>			<b>236</b>	<b>236.00</b>	<b>237</b>	<b>237.00</b>	<b>240</b>	<b>240.00</b>	<b>347</b>	<b>347.00</b>

Number of Left values:			99.00		30.00		58.00		138.00	
<b>% L</b>			<b>-41.95</b>	<b>41.95</b>	<b>12.66</b>	<b>12.66</b>	<b>24.17</b>	<b>24.17</b>	<b>-39.77</b>	<b>39.77</b>
Number of right values:			53.00		42.00		38.00		28.00	
<b>% R</b>			<b>22.46</b>	<b>22.46</b>	<b>17.72</b>	<b>17.72</b>	<b>15.83</b>	<b>15.83</b>	<b>8.07</b>	<b>8.07</b>
<b>% ideological position</b>			<b>-19.49</b>		<b>5.06</b>		<b>-8.33</b>		<b>-31.70</b>	
Programmatic content			152		72		96		166	
Non-programmatic content			84		165		144		181	
% of programmatic content			64		30		40		48	