The Web and the 2004 EP election: Comparing political actor Web sites in 11 EU Member States

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Abstract. This study reports on incorporation of the Web during the 2004 European Parliament election as played out in 11 EU Member States. Based on an analysis of Web site features related to a conceptualization of political engagement, the study examines utilization of features reflecting information provision and opportunities for discussion and political action. The findings reflect the low level of importance historically ascribed to European Parliament elections. The study also illustrates the diversity in how the Web was incorporated into this election campaign across the 11 EU Member States, which may be a consequence of the broad range of political cultural and contextual aspects shaping this pan-European event.

Keywords: European Parliament election, Web sphere analysis, Web feature analysis, political communication, political engagement, information provision, political action, Internet and elections

1. Introduction

Many scholars have reflected on how information technologies are transforming political processes\textsuperscript{[1, 4,8,11]. Although the jury is still out as to whether the Internet is ‘democratizing’ politics, there is little doubt that this electronic network is an increasingly important resource for candidates, parties, political organizations and citizens who seek to provide or acquire political information and to engage in political action. A growing number of empirical studies (e.g. \textsuperscript{[2,3,10,16,26]})) have systematically explored the nature of the structure for political action produced on the Internet by different kinds of actors involved in election campaigns. Still, none compares incorporation of the Internet in election campaigns across countries. And, because of the cultural and political context in which much of the research has been framed, primarily in North America, analysis and policy issues arising from this work tend to overlook contextual factors prominent in many European countries that may mediate the role of the Web in political activity.

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This article draws on data from a research project designed to compare how Web sites are being used during election campaigns on an international scale. Called the Internet & Elections Project, researchers from 22 countries in Asia, Europe and North America took part in an investigation of elections during 2004–2005. In Europe, researchers focused on the election held in 11 countries for the European Parliament (EP) in June 2004, which serves as the centerpiece for this paper. The central research question of the project, tailored to this election, is: In what manner and to what extent do the structures of Web sites produced by political actors during the 2004 European Parliament election campaign facilitate political engagement of site visitors through provision of election-related information and opportunities for discussion and political action?

In the first section of the paper we introduce the main theoretical considerations that have informed this work. The second section provides an overview of the methods and procedures followed by the research teams situated in the 11 countries. Next, we present some of the material brought together in the reports prepared by these teams, focusing on the contextual and regulatory diversity at play in the EU election. Then, we illustrate the range of features found on the Web sites examined in the 11 EU Member States related to indicators of political engagement. The final section of this article sketches areas for additional theoretical development and empirical research.

2. The Internet and elections

Three interrelated theoretical considerations inform this exploratory study. The first concerns ways in which the Internet may contribute to increased political engagement and power for less prominent or significant political actors, particularly during periods of election campaigns. A second consideration is how features of political culture and context may mediate deployment of technologies like the Web during elections. The third involves examination of the structure of Web sites within which political engagement may emerge. With regard to this study, we are concerned with the presence of features found on the Web sites of political actors during the 2004 EP election corresponding to a conceptualization of political engagement consisting of two components: information provision and political action.

To begin, there is a long-standing claim that the Internet potentially provides space to a wide variety of the politically concerned – citizens, interest groups, social movements, parties, candidates, press, governments – for the purpose of sharing information, discussing issues, and engaging in political action. ‘Cyber-optimists’ stress that politics on the Web provides opportunities for deliberation and direct decision-making among a broad spectrum of the public (e.g. [24,25]). ‘Cyber-pessimists’ assert that the Web merely reflects political forces already dominant in society. Margolis and Resnick [17, p. 14] formulate this position succinctly: “political life on the Net is ... mostly an extension of political life off the Net.” Norris [20, pp. 233–239] suggests a middle-ground for ‘cyber-skeptics’. She notes that political institutions are relatively conservative in adopting new communication technologies and the Internet is better at supporting the already active than in mobilizing the disengaged. At the same time, the Internet provides less powerful players possibilities for political impact when “transnational advocacy networks and alternative social movements ... have adapted the resources of new technologies to communicate, organize, and mobilize global coalitions around issues” [20, pp. 238–239]. Ward, Gibson and Lusoli summarize these positions and suggest that “... the Internet will make a modest positive contribution to participation and mobilization” [31, p. 667].

Related to the above, differences in the utilization of the Web may be associated with different political cultures and contexts. Political culture may be described as the symbolic environment of political practice, shaped by political institutions, historical experiences, and philosophical and religious
traditions ([14,15]; see also [18]). This brushstroke description includes the assumptions, expectations, mythologies, and mechanisms of political practice within a country. Ultimately, it refers to the ways in which values and attitudes influence political behavior. For the purposes of this study, a number of indicators of political culture and context are considered: electronic infrastructure, geopolitical location, economic prosperity, EU membership, political participation, and an indicator of democratization.

Within this framework, a complementary consideration is the structure of election-related Web sites. The theoretical heritage of this notion is grounded in literature on social movements and, more specifically and recently, the potential of the Internet to contribute to political change. Schneider and Foot [26] elaborate on this heritage and on the distinction between structure and action, building on a range of theoretical contributions (e.g. [6,13,19,22,23]). Translating these formulations into an online environment, online structures may be seen as particular combinations of features, links, and texts, which provide site users opportunities to associate and to act [26]. On the Web, relations between Web producers, as well as between producers and users, are enacted and mediated through online structures. Furthermore, each online structure enables and constrains the potential for various kinds of political action, both online and offline.

In this study, we suggest that online structures may facilitate political engagement in the election process through three interrelated activities: provision of election-related information, opportunity for discussion and debate, and opportunity for undertaking election-related political actions. This formulation of political engagement is derived from a typology Tsagarousianou [30] suggests as the basis of digital democracy: obtaining information, engaging in deliberation, and participating in decision making. Although preliminary in nature and with some limitations (see [16]), it serves as the basis for a modified typology of components labelled political engagement. In the context of electoral campaigns, the typology is reduced to two elements: information provision and forms of political action related to an electoral event, including discussion of issues and candidates. These two elements, information provision and political action, are examined on the basis of features found on the Web sites of political actors engaged in the 2004 EP election, following the design and research procedures of the Internet & Elections Project as detailed in the next section.

3. Research design

As noted earlier, the Internet & Election Project involved the study of national elections during 2004–2005 held in 22 countries across Asia, Europe and North America. In and around Asia, research teams examined how the Internet was deployed in Australia, India, Indonesia, Korea, Japan, Philippines, Sri Lanka, and Thailand. In North America, a research team studied the 2004 US Presidential election. Although this article focuses on the 2004 EP election, the design and research procedures were identical for all of the elections investigated during the Internet & Election Project (see further [9]). Here we concentrate on data collected and analyzed with respect to the 2004 European Parliament (EP) election.

Although citizens from all 25 EU Member States took part in the EP election, operational restrictions – availability of qualified researchers and resources – limited this study to 11 EU Member States. Three of these countries – Czech Republic, Hungary, and Slovenia – became new EU Member States as of 2004. Six of the selected countries – France, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, and UK – have been represented in the European Parliament since its first election in 1979. Three of the 11 countries – France, Italy, UK – are considered relatively large in population size and four – Finland, Ireland, Luxembourg, Slovenia – are among the smaller Member States. Six are located in northern Europe, two in the south, and three are eastern European states.
3.1. Site identification & sampling

Identification of Web sites related to the EP election was performed by research teams in a manner that attempted to capture the electoral ‘Web sphere’ surrounding the campaign. In the form of a definition, a Web sphere consists of a “set of dynamically-defined digital resources that span multiple Web sites and are deemed relevant, or related, to a central theme or object” [28, p. 118]. An electoral Web sphere, then, is a dynamic array of Web materials created by political actors who participate in the electoral process. Sites were identified for inclusion in the study through guidelines developed by the project coordinators. These procedures, documented in a manual available to project participants and demonstrated in an intensive pre-project training workshop, involved consulting search engines, politically-oriented portals and other depositories of potential Web site addresses.

Based on earlier investigations ([26,27]), 12 site producer types were identified: candidates, political parties, press, political professionals, citizens, businesses, governments, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), labour unions, Web portals, educational, and religious organizations. Site identification began some seven weeks prior to the election. Researchers were requested to spend approximately 40 hours searching for sites. A site was included in the study if, in the assessment of the researcher, it was considered relevant to the 2004 EP election. This procedure meant that sites were included that did not contain electoral content at the time of identification, which allowed flexibility in searching for the sites of some producer types and for spreading the time devoted to searching across the overall period available for identification. Researchers were requested to identify as many sites as possible within the specified time period for each of the 12 producer types.

A sample of 100 sites per country was drawn for analysis purposes from among those sites identified by each country team (in cases in which fewer than 100 sites were identified, the entire population was used for analysis). The sample was stratified across site producer types to reflect the estimated weighting of each producer type in the population of Web sites related to the election, based on estimates provided by the research teams.

3.2. Coding & reporting site features

The sampled Web sites were coded for the presence or absence of 32 features, including: candidate endorsements, comparison of candidate platforms, speeches, images, audio and video files, contact information, recruitment, voter registration, online newsletters, discussion forums, distribution of election materials offline, and promotion of campaign via e-paraphernalia (e.g., banners, screensavers). The coding frame, reproduced in Appendix 1, was based on previously developed measures that had been tested for both conceptual and operational validity by Foot and Schneider [26] in their study of candidate sites in the 2002 US elections. It was adapted for use in the Internet & Election Project, making the frame applicable to sites produced by a broad range of political actors in different cultural contexts. Coders were instructed to examine the first and second levels of pages linked from the front page for evidence of an item, then to follow links to access the item. The coding took place during a period of two weeks, concluding three days before the election in each country. Data entry was facilitated by use of Web-based software for distributed coding developed and administered by WebArchivist.org.

Coders were trained during a project workshop and during subsequent face-to-face and Internet-based meetings. A help desk addressed questions per email and instant messaging during site identification and coding. Finally, research teams completed internal reports on the election campaigns and Web sites coded. Researchers attended to a set of eight questions, which requested elaboration on contextual factors impinging on the election, regulations affecting Web sites related to the election and interpretation of
tables prepared on Web features present on the samples of sites drawn from EU Member State election-related Web spheres. These unpublished reports serve as one of the sources of information for this article.

4. Findings

This article reflects the first phase of analyzing data from the 2004 EP election and, as such, is exploratory and preliminary. First, a few of the contextual aspects in this election, at play in the 11 countries included in the study, are presented: electoral disinterest, election and campaign regulations, and salient aspects related to the election in several of the countries. Second, interpretations by the research teams regarding the significance of some of the Web site features are presented. Finally, characteristics of the EU Member States included in the study – population, geopolitical location, economic wealth, indices of political participation and democracy, Internet penetration, and duration of EU membership – are examined in relation to site features reflecting the two components of political engagement previously mentioned: information provision and political action.

4.1. Contextual aspects of 2004 EU election

Electoral disinterest. The European Parliament enjoys a mixed status in the overall structure of the European Union. It is, in the first place, the only elected body within the EU that is accountable to citizens of the EU Member States during elections held every five years. The EP has limited power and shares co-decision status with the Council of Ministers. Although elected, the EP suffers from a long-standing lack of legitimacy, often described as a democratic deficit. This deficit is partially reflected by the generally low and declining voter turnout at EP elections.

EP elections have been under continual criticism for having little significance to voters. The European Parliament has no impact on the orientation of the executive body of EU government, the European Commission, and cannot influence the composition of the other main body of EU government, the Council of Ministers, which is appointed by the governments of EU member states. These structural features contribute to limited interest by voters in this election. Low voter turnout at the 2004 EP election did, though, come as a surprise to many observers. This feeling was reflected in newspapers headlines of stories published just after the election: “Apathy clouds EU voting”, “Eurosceptics storm the Citadel”.\footnote{“Apathy clouds EU voting”, Aljazeera.net, 13 June 2004, available at: http://english.aljazeera.net/NR/exeres/BF48424E-BFAB-4637-440526970394.htm; “Eurosceptics storm the Citadel”, BBC News, 14 June 2004, available at: http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/hi/world/europe/3806503.stm.}

Citizens in the new member states were the least involved in the 2004 election. The overall average of voter turnout fell below the 50% level for the first time in the history of EP elections. Less than 30% of the eligible voters in five of the new member states cast ballots. Although turnout among voters of the older EU member states was higher on average, several of these countries had turnouts of around 40%: the Netherlands, Portugal, Sweden, France, and the UK.

Three factors contributed to this limited engagement. First, EP election campaigns are generally not marked by intense campaigning, which is characteristic of many local and national elections. This is because, as mentioned above, the EP elections have no policy implications. As with previous EP elections, the 2004 event had no magnetic qualities with which to attract voters. Second, EP elections are ‘second order’ elections in that they are usually held during off years and tend to attract less attention.
by all political actors, especially parties, interest groups, candidates, and voters. Finally, these elections primarily cover domestic issues and sometimes serve as a referendum for the presiding government.

**Election & campaign regulations.** The EP election was organized differently across the European Union. In some countries – Finland, the Netherlands, Czech Republic – the election was held nationally with proportional representation. In other countries – France and the UK – the election was organized by electoral districts. In many countries such as the UK, Italy, Ireland, and Portugal, other elections were organized simultaneously, partly as a matter of expediency and also as a measure to increase turnout for all of the electoral events. Some countries stipulated by legal mandate that the official campaign could not begin before a specified date. In France this was less than two weeks before to the 2004 EP election. Elsewhere, like in Portugal, the unofficial campaign was initiated months before Election Day.

In several countries there is an official ban on campaigning activity on Election Day, such as in Italy, Hungary, Czech Republic, and the Netherlands. Enforcement of this ban varied from country to country. In Italy some candidates updated their Web sites on Election Day. In Hungary an association of Internet providers cooperated with the National Election Office, formulating of guidelines that prohibited Web site content on Election Day within the first two levels of a site that might influence voters.

In Ireland, the UK and France incumbent MEPs were not allowed to use their MEP titles or the Web sites associated with this function during the election campaign. Candidates developed different strategies to circumvent this restriction – from limiting access to the sites to construction of alternative sites with links from the MEP office sites. The Czech Republic prohibits involvement of educational institutions in election campaigns, which resulted in a minor scandal when a high school invited two candidates to speak at a school assembly. Other countries, like Slovenia and Finland, imposed no restrictions on the Web sites of candidates during the EP election.

**Salient aspects of EP election.** Domestic political issues, either at the national or local level, tended to dominate the EP election campaigns in at least six of the 11 countries included in this study: Italy, Portugal, Finland, Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovenia. Research teams from Hungary, Portugal and Italy reported that the EP election was seen as a referendum on the policies of the respective national governments.

In addition to issues prominent in the national or local elections, a few of the EP election campaigns were affected by external events such as the war in Iraq (Hungary, Italy) and the European Cup football competition (UK and Portugal). Voting and election campaign regulations were also topics of concern in the UK (postal voting), Hungary (provision for Hungarians to be able to vote from abroad), and Italy (Short Message Service [sms] messages sent to registered mobile telephone numbers with voting information and campaign regulation violations on Election Day). The EU Presidency was an important issue in Ireland, which had held the office during the six months prior to the EP election in June. This issue was similarly salient for the Netherlands, which took on the Presidency immediately following the election in July. Finally, the national preferences were accentuated in the campaigns for this European Parliament through so-called Euro-skeptical stances taken by political parties in several countries. Some of these parties were dominated by one-issue, like the UK Independence Party and *Europa Transparent* in the Netherlands. Some well established parties in other countries, like the Communist Party in Portugal and the Mouvement pour la France (MPF) concentrated their campaigns on criticism of European Union policies.

### 4.2. Features on Web sites of political actors

Looking overall at the EU countries included in this study of the 2004 EP election, candidates and parties were the most dominant political actors in the EP electoral Web spheres. In almost all of
the countries these actors far exceeded other actors in the construction of sites related to the election. There were some notable exceptions, however, such as Slovenia where a majority of the sites with election content were produced by government institutions. Large numbers of government sites were also identified in Hungary and Ireland. Other site producers were, at best, marginal players in the online arena of this election. Citizen sites related to the election usually came up last in terms of the number of sites identified and containing election-related content.

Some differentiations could be discerned in the characteristics of candidate and party sites. In Luxembourg, it was mainly younger candidates that constructed Web sites. In Finland, the candidates of major political parties were more likely to have Web sites than candidates of minor or fringe parties. Unlike the situation in Luxembourg, no difference in Finland could be discerned between the age and gender of candidates with or without Web sites. The political parties in some countries provided templates for use by their candidates, such as in the Czech Republic, the Netherlands and Finland. Such technical and organizational support probably contributed to the increased utilization of the Web by candidates in those countries, although at the same time the support may have led to party control and uniformity in the Web presence of these candidates.

The range of development and utilization of Web sites by actors in this election was very wide. In countries like Italy and Hungary, the sites of parties and, usually, also of other actors were sophisticated and professional. In other countries, such as Portugal, the Web played a very minor role in the campaign; here, political campaigns are still undertaken with the tried and true tools employed in media strategies [7]. The lines of division regarding incorporation of the Web into political campaigns seem oriented along the European north-south rather than the west-east axis.

Where the Web does play a role, that role is primarily related to provision of information related to aspects of the election and only in a minor manner do political actors of any ideological calling provide opportunities for political discussion and action. Those discussion and action features that could be discerned were found mainly on political party sites. This was the case even in those countries (e.g., Italy, UK, the Netherlands, Hungary) where it could be claimed that the Web was a prominent arena for the campaign. In rare, almost deviant instances, Web blogs were utilized by political actors (mainly candidates); somewhat more common were discussion forums allowing for contributions by site visitors; these could, for example, be found on press Web sites and a few party sites in the Netherlands. Other kinds of political action – offline distribution of campaign materials, downloading of election paraphernalia, emailing campaign materials to other persons – were infrequent.

Researchers varied in their assessments of this limited incorporation of the Web into the political campaign. Some, like the researchers in Slovenia [32] and Luxembourg [12], emphasized the negative aspects with respect to processes of democratization. The Slovenian team considered the Web sphere in that country reflective of a ‘top-down’ strategy by government and the political elites, which hampered utilization of the Internet by civil society. The researcher in Luxembourg stressed the ‘politics as usual’ character of the Web campaign and its unlikely contribution to increasing political engagement. For others, like the Finnish team, the situation indicated the minor importance of this election for most political actors – for parties, candidates and for voters. In their words, the 2004 EP election was a case of “using a second order medium in a second-order election” [5, p. 11].

4.3. Political engagement

For those sites with election related content, indices were constructed for each of the countries from features reflecting the two components of political engagement – provision of information related to the election, and opportunity for discussion and political action. Web site features corresponding to these components were:
Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indices of Political Engagement with EU Membership &amp; Geopolitical Location</th>
<th>Sum squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>INFO * RECENCY</td>
<td>0.026</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.026</td>
<td>0.116</td>
<td>0.741</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACTION * RECENCY</td>
<td>0.959</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.959</td>
<td>2.174</td>
<td>0.174</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INFO * GEOPOL</td>
<td>1.138</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.569</td>
<td>5.159</td>
<td>0.036</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACTION * GEOPOL</td>
<td>2.052</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.026</td>
<td>2.857</td>
<td>0.116</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Abbreviations: INFO: endorsement of candidate or party; ACTION: list of issue positions held by political actor; RECENCY: recency of EU membership; GEOPOL: geopolitical region of Europe.

- **Information provision**, 7 items: endorsement of candidates, presentation of issue positions, comparison of election-related issues, availability of speeches by candidates, provision of a calendar of events related to the election, information on the election campaign process, and information on the voting process in the country studied.

- **Political action**, 10 items: able to: join or become members of an organization involved in the election campaign, register to participate in the election, receive email from the site, donate to the campaign, contribute to discussions on the site, distribute campaign-related materials offline, send a link from the site to another person, make a public statement about a candidate or issue, engage in digital promotion about aspects of the election, and volunteer for campaign activities.

These two indices of political engagement were subsequently examined in relation to eight characteristics of the countries included in this study: recency of EU membership, geopolitical location, GDP, GDP per capita, population, percentage Internet users, and indices for political participation and democracy. An Anova analysis was performed for recency of EU membership and geopolitical location; see Table 1. No relation was found between the indices for information provision and political action and recency of EU membership. With regard to geopolitical location, this analysis suggests a significant relation between information provision and the geopolitical location of the EU Member States (ACTION, GEOPOL; $F = 5.2, p = 0.04$): political actors in southern European countries tend to provide more information on their campaign sites than do actors in northern and eastern European countries. No relation was found between political action and geopolitical location.

For the remainder of the characteristics of the EU Member States, bivariate correlations were computed; see Table 2. No relation was found between information provision and the EU Member State characteristics. The analysis does suggest, however, a relation between the index for political action and three measures of the EU Member States: GDP (trend, $p = 0.065$), population ($p = 0.015$), and political participation ($p = 0.036$). These relations suggest, in other words, that political actors in those countries with less GDP (e.g., Slovenia, Portugal) may provide more opportunities for political action on their sites than do actors in the wealthier countries included in this study. Further, political actors in the more populous countries (UK, Italy, France) and those with higher indices of political participation (Italy) tend to facilitate political action on their sites more so than actors in the less populated countries and those with lower degrees of political participation.

5. Discussion

This exploratory study commenced with a generally formulated research question concerned about identifying the features of Web sites of political actors during the 2004 European Parliament election campaign that may contribute to the two components of political engagement: information provision and
political action. The study was inspired by various observations on the potential impact of the Internet on the political process, possibly mediated by cultural and contextual considerations, and manifested through the features developed by political actors on election campaign Web sites. Norris [21], for example, suggests a balancing of resources among political actors thanks to the Internet. She speculates further that more egalitarian patterns of competition may emerge with more opportunities for citizen participation. This study does not test such transformation directly, but does suggest that political actors in some of the less economically and powerful EU Member States incorporated the Web into their strategies for promoting political action during the 2004 EP election.

It seems plausible that the limited utilization of the Web during this election may be related to the nature of the event studied. EP elections have a history of limited attraction to voters for almost all EU Member States. While there were good reasons to expect a high voter turnout, many factors at the national level played a role in this pan-European election that contributed to the second order character of the event. Although the evidence is not conclusive, political culture and contextual factors may have played a prominent role in the formation of this electoral Web sphere. In addition, issue saliency may be critical for both promoting and achieving high levels of political engagement. The EP election failed to capture the interest of voters, parties, candidates and other interested actors in large numbers. In an electoral campaign with more at stake and of interest to more political actors, results could be expected with greater presence of features on Web sites reflecting political engagement. For example, during the EU constitution referendum campaigns held in France and the Netherlands a year after the 2004 EP election, intense public debate took place, some of which seemed to be manifested on Web sites concerned with these referenda. And, during other non-electoral politically-related events, such as public opposition to issues with environmental or economic consequences, it is probable that other results would emerge than indicated in this study of the EP election campaign. This initial exploration on the possible
facilitation of political engagement via the structure of Web site features among a wide range of political actors merits, in other words, replication during other elections and other political events.

Further study, longitudinal in design, should extend beyond identification of Web site features and include substantive analysis of the content, particularly analysis of online discussions and avenues for political action. The nature of such discussion and action is at the heart of the concept political engagement and merits close examination. Such study should be supplemented by research that explores the intentions of Web site producers, along with the experiences of those that make use of the sites for gaining information and engaging in politics. Such a research design may provide a richer empirical basis for determining the emerging role of the Web in European political life.

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References

Appendix 1: Coding Template for Web Site Features

Note: instructions, definitions and answer categories are not indicated.

1. Is this site codeable?
2. Is the correct site producer type listed above?
3. Does this site provide election-related content?
4. Does this site provide a biography, history, or “About Us” section?
5. Does the site provide endorsements for a candidate or party in an upcoming election?
6. Does the site provide a list of issues positions held by a political actor?
7. Does the site provide speeches by a candidate or party representatives?
8. Does this site provide a calendar or list with prospective election-related events?
9. Does the site provide comparison of issue positions of parties or candidates?
10. Does the site provide information about the electoral campaign process in the country studied?
11. Does the site provide information about the voting process in the country studied?
12. Are there images on the site?
13. Does the site provide audio or video files?
14. Does the site provide a privacy policy?
15. Does the site provide a terms of use statement?
16. Does the site provide contact information for the site producer?
17. Does the site provide opportunities for visitors to join, or become members of the organization?
18. Does the site enable visitors to register to participate in the election?
19. Does the site provide an opportunity for a visitor to sign up to receive email from the site producer?
20. Are donations encouraged or enabled on or through this site?
21. Can visitors to the site participate in an online forum or other communication space?
22. Does the site encourage offline distribution of electoral campaign or election materials?
23. Is there a feature that specifically enables a site visitor to send a link from this site to a friend?
24. Is there a feature that encourages or enables a visitor to make a public statement supporting a political actor or issue?
25. Does the site enable the user to engage in digital promotion of the electoral campaign, party, organization or voting in general?
26. Does the site encourage visitors to volunteer for the electoral campaign? Does the site encourage visitors to become involved in the electoral campaign in any way other than the six previous questions have indicated?
27. Is there content on the front page of the site related to the EU and/or to the 2004 EP election?
28. Does the item contain announcement of EP election on front page?
29. Does the item reference candidates for EP elections on the front page
30. Does the item reference environmental policy on the front page
31. Is the content on the site related to EU / EP content located elsewhere on the site (within two links from front page)?
32. Are there EU/EP-related news items in the news section of this site?
33. Is there content on the front page of the site related to youth?