**The CAP party manifesto dataset**

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The purpose of this note is to outline the details of the comparative CAP manifesto dataset put together by Christoffer Green-Pedersen.

The dataset contains party manifesto data for seven countries: Denmark, Sweden, UK, France, Germany, the Netherlands and Belgium, all coded according to the CAP – comparative agenda coding scheme (Bevan, 2014, see also http://sbevan.com/cap-master-codebook.html). The dataset covers the period from 1980 and onwards. For a few countries, the data exist further back in time (see below).

The purpose of this note is two-fold. First, we wish to explain how the coding of manifestos was set up since this was done individually for each country. The comparative dataset thus consists of seven independent datasets that have been merged. Second, we wish to discuss a number of issues concerning the comparability of the issue coding since this was done separately for each country based on national versions of the comparative policy agendas codebook.

Some of the documentation (note and codebooks) and the data are available at http://www.comparativeagendas.net or at the website of the individual comparative agendas projects. All other material can be obtained by contacting cgp@ps.au.dk.

The end of the note contains an overview of all parties included in the dataset

*Denmark*

The dataset on Danish party manifestos was compiled by Christoffer Green-Pedersen and Peter Bjerre Mortensen and covers the years 1953-2011. Data and documentation is available through comparativeagendas.org (see also www.agendasetting.dk).

Since Denmark does not have a well-established tradition for political parties publishing party manifestos, the choice of documents to code is a specific challenge in the Danish case. All parties have typically produced some form of written material that explains their issue priorities when elections are called. However, they may produce several documents that could potentially be coded. The choice of documents to code has also been heavily criticized in relation to the Comparative Manifestos Project (CMP) (Hansen, 2008).

The coding from 1953, when Denmark changed its constitution, until 2007 was based on the same documents that were used in the CMP despite criticism of the choice of documents. These documents were kindly provided by Robert Klemmensen. Given that there are no official documents published, searching for campaign material back in time proved highly difficult, and the documents that were found from initial searches were generally not found to be more appropriate than the ones used for the CMP coding. The most problematic documents are typically those from the 1950s and 1960s, which the CMP had to collect many years after the relevant elections.

For the 2011 election, the most appropriate documents were found in collaboration with Robert Klemmensen. Generally, longer documents were preferred to shorter ones to match the party manifestos found in other countries. However, the documents coded in Demark are typically shorter than in other countries.

In terms of parties included, the original CMP collection contained all parties running for parliament, with a few documents missing. For the 2011 election, material from all parties running was also collected. Appendix 1 includes a list of parties covered in the entire Danish dataset.

The coding of the Danish manifestos was carried out based on natural sentences, defined as going from one full stop to the next. Textboxes and other graphic elements were not coded.

The actual coding was done by student coders who received intensive training in the codebook, including a test of inter-coder reliability. For the original data, percentage agreement scores of 85 per cent at the subtopic level was reached. For the 2011 update, Krippendorph’s Alpha values of 0.7 at the subtopics and 0.83 at the main-topic level were reached. More details about the coding are provided in Green-Pedersen and Mortensen (2008) and Green-Pedersen (2015).

The issue coding was done based on the Danish version of CAP codebook, which was developed between 2002 and 2003 by Christoffer Green-Pedersen. It stays relatively close to the original US codebook, including specific categories for geographical areas under main topic 19 concerning foreign policy. However, some sub-categories were sub-divided and some new ones were introduced like fishing and cultural policy. These topics were later incorporated in the Comparative Agendas Codebook (Bevan, 2014).

To handle the issue of European Integration, a special subtopic, 1910, was defined to handle direct statements about the European Union, such as the role of the Commission, enlargement and so on. However, in the case of reference to the EU, for instance, a directive in relation to a policy issue such as the environment or education, these were coded in terms of the substantial policy areas, but at the same time, a dummy variable was used to indicate the connection to the European Union.

A special code was introduced for sentences with no policy content. For the manifestos after 1980, 9.08 per cent of the sentences were coded here

*Sweden*

In Sweden, political parties publish official programs before each election. These programs were collected from the Swedish National data Archive and coded by Nina Liljeqvist (see Liljeqvist, 2014) for the period 1976-2010.

All parties who won representation in the Swedish Riksdag were coded. The reason for only including parties who won representation is that the Swedish electoral system makes it relatively easy for parties to run for election, and including all parties running would thus significantly increase the workload. For the elections in 2006 and 2010, the Swedish right-wing bloc (Conservatives, Swedish People’s Party, Centre Party and Christian Democrats) presented a common program under the name ‘The Alliance’. The same did the left-wing bloc in 2010 (Social Democrats, Greens and the Left Party). These joint programs were coded.

The Swedish manifestos were coded based on quasi-sentences by Nina Liljeqvist. The reliability of the coding was checked by Christoffer Green-Pedersen, who recoded parts of the material. Krippendorph’s Alpha values of 0.66 at the subtopic and 0.84 at the main topic level were reached (for more details, see Liljeqvist, 2014)

The Swedish version of the Comparative Agendas Codebook has been developed by Nina Liljeqvist and is quite similar to the Danish version, although the geographical codes under main topic 19 are not included. The Swedish data also contains the EU dummy code and specific EU subtopic, 1910.

A special code was introduced for quasi-sentences with no policy content. For the manifestos after 1980, 6.84 per cent of the quasi-sentences were coded here

*Germany*

The German dataset covers the period the period 1949-2013. The documents coded were the official party manifestos taken from the CMP project. The parties included were those who had been continuously represented in the German Bundestag: Social Democrats, Christian Democrats, Free Democrats, Greens and the Left.

The coding was organized by Isabelle Guinaudeau and carried out by herself and three student coders, who went through intensive training first. This included a reliability test based on German laws, where a percentage agreement of 88 per cent at the main-topic level and 84 per cent at the subtopic level was reached (See Guinaudeau, 2015). As for the Danish data, the coding was done based on natural sentences from full stop to full stop.

 The German version of the codebook has been developed by Christian Breunig for the German Comparative Agendas Project (see https://www.gpa.uni-konstanz.de/the-project/). It is relatively close to the American version, including geographical codes under main topic 19. It also includes a special code for the German reunification and a subtopic 1910 for European Union matters. However, no EU dummy was included to capture the relationship with the EU on specific policy issues.

A special code was introduced for sentences with no policy content. For the manifestos after 1980, 8.86 per cent of the sentences were coded here

*The Netherlands*

The Dutch manifestos were assembled by Simon Otjes for the period 1982-2012. All parties that have won representation in the Dutch second chamber are included. The Netherlands has a tradition for all parties to publish official party manifestos, and these are available at the Documentation Centre Dutch Political Parties (http://www.dnpp.nl/).

The party manifestos were divided into paragraphs. A paragraph is a block of text delineated by a line break. The actual coding was carried out by nine trained student coders in two waves. Krippendorf’s Alpha scores 0.8 were reached (see Otjes, 2015 for details).

The code used for the issue coding was the Dutch version of the policy agendas codebook developed by Simon Otjes, Gerard Breman and Arco Timmermans.

The Dutch version of the policy agendas codebook resembles the Danish version and thus includes geographical codes under main topic 19 and a special code 1910 for European integration. A dummy code to capture relationship to the European Union was also included.

A special code was introduced for paragraphs with no policy content. 1.80 per cent of the paragraphs were coded here.

*UK*

The UK data was assembled and coded by Caterina Froio as part of the UK policy agendas project (http://www.policyagendas.org.uk). The UK has a well-established tradition for political parties to publish party manifestos, which are available on their websites. The dataset covers the three major parties, Conservatives, Liberals and Liberal Democrats, from 1983 to 2010 (see Froio et al*.*, 2016).

The coding was done using quasi-sentences based on the British version of the policy agendas codebook. A reliability threshold of 0.8 for main topics is reported (Froio, 2012: 3).

This codebook is very close to the original US codebook and thus includes geographical codes under the main topic 19 (see http://www.policyagendas.org.uk). In the original version, the subtopic 1910 included both European integration and West European politics in general. A recoding was then done by a student coder who separated the few quasi-sentences related to West European politics in general from the majority of quasi-sentences referring to European integration.

A special code was introduced for quasi-sentences with no policy content. 11.34% of the quasi-sentences were coded here.

*France*

The French data were assembled by Isabelle Guinaudeau, Sylvain Brouard and Emiliano Grossmann as part of the French policy agendas project (see http://www.agendas-france.fr/). The data includes all parties who won more than five per cent of the vote at the National Assembly elections from 1981 to 2007. The party manifestos used were mostly the same as the ones used in the CMP dataset. In some cases, the French right-wing parties (RPR and UDF) issued a common program and individual programs. In this case, the common program was used.

The coding was carried out by student coders based on a quasi-sentence approach (see Brouard *et al.*, 2012). The latest version of the dataset including the 2012 election was kindly supplied by Isabelle Guinaudeau.

The French codebook (see http://www.agendas-france.fr/) diverges somewhat from the US codebook. In particular, there are no geographical codes under main topic 19. A 1910 code for the European Union is included but there is no dummy variable for the relation to the European Union.

A special code was introduced for quasi-sentences with no policy content. 13.29 per cent of the quasi-sentences were coded here.

*Belgium*

The Belgian data were assembled by Jeroen Joly, Stefaan Walgrave and Brandon Zicha as part of the Belgian policy agendas project (see http://www.comparativeagendas.net/belgium). Belgium has a well-established tradition for all political parties to publish official and lengthy party manifestos, which are therefore easy to identify. The data covers all parties who won representation in the period 1977-2007. However, before 1981, only a few Flemish-speaking parties are coded. The coding was done by trained student coders based on a quasi-sentence approach. A reliability test is provided by a double coding of manifestos. A Pearson’s r of 0.81 at the subtopic level and 0.95 at the main topic level is reported when comparing the two independent coders of the same manifesto (see Joly et al*.*, n.d.).

The Belgian codebook is close to the French version and does not include geographical codes. A 1910 code for European integration is included but there is no dummy variable for the relationship to the European Union.

A special code was introduced for quasi-sentences with no policy content, but the extent of the use of the code is unknown.

**Issues of comparability**

When looking across the seven datasets, two issues of comparability can be identified. One is the fact that some projects (Denmark and Germany) use natural sentences (punctuation to punctuation) and other projects use quasi sentences (UK, Sweden, France and Germany). The Dutch data are based on paragraphs. In terms of natural sentences vs. quasi sentences, Däubler et al. (2012) conclude that using natural sentences is preferable because of the reliability problems involved in identifying quasi-sentences; but there is very little difference in terms of measured policy content.

As stated above, the party manifestos were coded based on the various national versions of the Comparative Agendas Codebook. This raises a number of questions about how to cross-walk the different subtopics in order to generate the 23 main issue categories used in this dataset. The comparative policy agendas codebook developed by Bevan (2014) has been the foundation for this work since it is based on a detailed mapping of the adjustment of the original US codebook made by the various national teams (see http://sbevan.com/cap-master-codebook.html). Generally, cross-walking the different coding schemes was possible with one exception: the use of the original US geographical code. The geographical codes refer to areas such as Asia, Africa, Eastern Europe and so on and are meant to cover all mentions related to such foreign countries, regardless of their content. Thus, a sentence in a Danish party manifesto referring to the health care situation in Eastern Europe would be coded as 1909, where a similar sentence in the countries that do not have these codes (France, Belgium and Sweden) would be coded under main topic 3, health care. This difference in coding clearly limits comparability, but the extent of the problems is limited by the fact that party manifestos typically do not include many references to foreign countries. Obviously, foreign policy and security policy often receive substantial attention, but all coding schemes have subtopics under main topic 19 that capture various aspects of foreign policy. In the Danish case, for instance, 276 out of 30,166 sentences were coded in these categories, equaling 1 per cent.

Table 1 presented an overview of which subtopics in different countries have been assigned to each of the 23 main topics. A x/y implies that all subtopics between x and y are included. In the German case, the codes 2500/2599 refer to reunification. It is difficult to compare this to any other country, but the codes have been related to the main subtopic 23, territories, which seems to be the main topic which is the least far away from reunification.

All sentences/quasi-sentences/paragraphs classified as un-codeable by the national projects were dropped.

|  | DK | UK | France | Belgium  | Netherlands | Sweden | Germany |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Economy | 100/199 1008, 1806/1808 | 100/199 1806/1808 | 100/199 1806/1808 | 100/199 1806/1808 | 100/199 1008, 1806/1808 | 100/199 1008, 1806/1808 | 100/199 1806/1808 |
| Personal rights | 200 202/299 1208 | 200 202 204/209 299 1208 | 31 200 202/299 | 31 200 202/299 | 200 202/212 299 610 1208 | 200 202/299 1208 | 200 202/210 299 1208 |
| Immigration | 201 900 | 201 230 900/999 | 201 900/999 | 201 900/999 | 201 230 | 201 900/999 | 201 230 |
| Health  | 300/399 | 300/399 | 300/399 | 300/399 | 300/399 | 300/399 | 300/399 |
| Agriculture | 400/406 408/499 | 400/499 | 400/406 408/499 | 400/406 408/499 | 400/406 408/499 | 400/499 | 400/406 408/499 |
| Labor | 500/599 | 500/506 529 599 | 500/599 | 500/599 | 500/599 1307 1510 | 500/599 | 500/506 529 599 |
| Education | 600/699 | 600/607 698 699 | 600/699 | 600/699 | 600/607 698/699 | 600/699 | 600/607 698/699 |
| Culture | 1526 1707 2300 | 1526 1707 609 2800 2900 | 29 2300/2399 | 29 2300/2399 | 608/609 1526 1707 | 1526 1707 2300/2399 | 609 1526 1707 |
| Environment | 700/799 407 1902 2100 2101 2103 2199 | 700/799 1902 2100 2101 2103 2199 | 700/799 407 1902 2100 2101 2103 2199 | 700/799 407 1902 2100 2101 2103 2199 | 700/799 407 1902 2100 2101 2103 2106/2107 2199 | 700/799 1902 2100 2101 2103 2199 | 700/799 407 1902 2100 2101 2103 2199 |
| Energy | 800/899 | 800/899 | 800/899 | 800/899 | 800/899 | 800/899 | 800/899 |
| Transportation | 1000/1005 1010 1098 1099 2104 | 1000/1006 1010 1098 1099 2104 | 1000/1006 1010 1098 1099 2104 | 1000/1006 1010 1098 1099 2104 | 1000/1006 1098 1099 2108 | 1000/1005 1010 1098 1099 2104 | 1000/1006 1010 1098 1099 2104 |
| Justice | 1200/1207 1209/1211 1227 1299 | 1200/1207 1209/1299 1627 | 1200/1299 | 1200/1299 | 1200/1207 1209/1299 | 1200/1207 1209/1299 | 1200/1207 1209/1211 1227 1299 |
| Social Affairs | 1300/1399 | 1300/1399 508 | 1300/1399 | 1300/1399 | 1300/1306 1308/1399 | 1300/1399 | 508 1300/1399 |
| Housing | 1400 1401 1404 1406/1499 | 1400 1401 1404 1406/1499 | 1400 1401 1404 1406/1499 | 1400 1401 1404 1406/1499 | 1400 1401 1404 1406/1499 | 1400 1401 1404 1406/1499 | 1400 1401 1404 1406/1499 |
| Business | 1007 1500/1522 1524 1525 1599 1803 1804 | 1007 1500/1522 1524 1525 1599 1803 1804 | 1007 1500/1599 1803 1804 | 1007 1500/1599 1803 1804 | 1007 1500/1507 1518 1520/1525 1595/1599 1803 1804 | 1007 1500/1522 1524 1525 1599 1803 1804 | 1007 1500/1525 1599 1803 1804 |
| Defense | 1600/1699 1523 | 1523 1600/1620 1698 1699 | 1600/1699 2018 27 28 | 1600/1699 2018 27 28 | 1600/1699 2018 | 1600/1699 1523 | 1223 1600/1699 |
| Technology | 1700/1706 1708/1799 2003 | 1700/1706 1708/1799 2003 | 1700/1799 2003 | 1700/1799 2003 | 1700/1706 1708/1799 2003 | 1700/1706 1708/1799 2003 | 1700/1706 1708/1799 2003 |
| Foreign Affairs | 1800 1802 1899 1900 1901 1905/1909 1911/1999 | 1800 1802 1899 1900 1901 1905/1909 1911/1999 | 1800 1802 1899 1900 1901 1905 1906 1925/1999 | 1800 1802 1899 1900 1901 1905 1906 1925/1999 | 1800 1802 1899 1900 1901 1905/1909 1911/1929 1999 | 1800 1802 1899 1900 1901 1905/1906 1913/1999 | 1800 1802 1899 1900 1901 1905/1909 1911/1999 |
| European Integration | 1910 | 1910 | 1910 | 1910 | 1910 | 1910 | 1910 |
| Local | 2001 2016 1403 1405 | 2001 24 1403 1405 | 2400 2001 1403 1405 | 2400 2001 1403 1405 | 2001 1403 1405 2016 | 2001 1403 1405 2016 | 2001 1403 1405 2300 |
| Government | 2000 2002 2004/2009 2015 2030 2099 | 2000 2002 2004/2009 2013 2015 2030 2031 2099 | 2000 2002 2004/2009 2013/2016 2030 2031 2099 | 2000 2002 2004/2009 2013/2016 2030 2031 2099 | 2000 2002 2004/2009 2015 2030 2031 2099 1519 | 2000 2002 2004/2009 2013/2015 2030 2099 | 2000 2002 2004/2009 2013/2015 2030 2099 |
| Politics | 2010/2012 | 2011 2012 2032 | 2010 2012 2032 2033 | 2010 2012 2032 2033 | 2010/2012 2017 2097 | 2010/2012 | 2010/2012 |
| Territories | 2105 | 2105 | 2017 | 2017 | 1930 1931 | 2102 2105 | 2500/2599 |

**Parties and elections**

Belgian parties included

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **1981** | **1985** | **1987** | **1991** | **1995** | **1999** | **2003** | **2007** |
| CVP/CD&V  | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| PSC/CDH  | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| ECOLO | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| Agalev/Groen | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| MR (PRL, FDF MCC 1999) | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| PVV/VLD  | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| SP/SPA  | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| PS | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| FDF | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| RW | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| SPIRIT | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| VB | x | x | x | x |  x | x | x | x |
| Vivant | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| FN | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| VU/NVA  | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |

Danish parties included (x) means that the data exist but the party is not considered relevant

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **1981** | **1984** | **1987** | **1988** | **1990** | **1994** | **1998** | **2001** | **2005** | **2007** | **2011** |
| Social Democrats | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| Social Liberals | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| Conservatives | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| Liberals | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| Socialist People’s Party | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| Justice Party | x | (x) |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Centre Democrats | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | (x) |  |  |
| Progress Party | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |  |  |  |  |
| Christian Democrats | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | (x) |  (x) |
| Communist | (x) | (x) |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Left-Socialist | x | x |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Common Course |  |  |  | x |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Liberal Alliance |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | x | x |
| Danish People’s Party |  |  |  |  |  |  | x | x | x | x | x |
| Unity List |  |  |  |  |  | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| Minority party |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | (x) |  |  |

Dutch parties included

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **1982** | **1986** | **1989** | **1994** | **1998** | **2002** | **2003** | **2006** | **2010** | **2012** |
| 50Plus | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | x |
| AOV | - | - | - | x | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| CD | - | - | x | x | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| CDA | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| CP | x | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| CPN | x | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| CU | - | - | - | - | - | x | x | x | x | x |
| D66 | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| GL | - | - | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| GPV | x | x | x | x | x | - | - | - | - | - |
| LN | - | - | - | - | - | x | - | - | - | - |
| LPF | - | - | - | - | - | x | x | - | - | - |
| PPR | x | x | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| PSP | x | x | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| PvdA | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| PvdD | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | x | x | x |
| PVV | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | x | x | x |
| RPF | x | x | x | x | x | - | - | - | - | - |
| SGP | x | x | x | x | x | x | - | x | x | x |
| SP | - | - | - | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| U55+ | - | - | - | x | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| VVD | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |

German parties included

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **1980** | **1983** | **1987** | **1990** | **1994** | **1998** | **2002** | **2005** | **2009** | **2013** |
| CDU | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| SPD | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| FDP | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| Die Grüne |  | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| Die Linke |  |  |  | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |

French parties included

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **1981** | **1986** | **1988** | **1993** | **1997** | **2002** | **2007** | **2012** |
| Communist | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| Socialists | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| Greens |  |  |  | x | x | x | x | x |
| Front National |  |  |  |  | x | x | x | x |
| Common Centre Right | x | x |  | x | x |  |  | x |
| RPR |  |  | x |  |  |  |  |  |
| UPF |  |  | x |  |  | x | x |  |
| UMP |  |  |  |  |  | x | x |  |

UK parties included

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **1983** | **1987** | **1992** | **1997** | **2001** | **2005** | **2010** |
| Labour | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| Conservatives | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| Liberal Democrats | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |

Swedish Parties included

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **1982** | **1985** | **1988** | **1991** | **1995** | **1998** | **2002** | **2006** | **2010** |
| Left | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |  |
| Social Democrats | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |  |
| Greens |  |  | x | x | x | x | x | x |  |
| Common Left |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | x |
| Liberals  | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |  |  |
| Centre party | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |  |  |
| Christian Democrats |  |  |  | x | x | x | x |  |  |
| Conservatives | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |  |  |
| Common Right |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | x | x |
| Swedish Democrats |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | x |
| New Democracy |  |  |  | x |  |  |  |  |  |

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