

# Coding scheme for the topic of election advertising (ad-8, uploads)

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## General coding rules

1. Coding is based exclusively on visible text, symbols, or image motifs, without relying on contextual knowledge or assumed intentions.
2. Only the election advertisement(s) themselves are coded. Surroundings, captions, etc. that may also be visible in the image are not coded.
3. Up to 3 codes can be assigned (Code\_1, Code\_2, and Code\_3). If no clear weighting is possible, topics are coded in the order of their visual or textual prominence (e.g., size, placement, repetition).
4. An image is treated as one unit of analysis, i.e., if more than one election advertisement appears in an image (e.g., several posters), the coding refers to all visible election advertisements jointly. The other coding rules still apply. If multiple advertisements address the same topic, the topic code is assigned only once. If different advertisements address different topics, Rule 2 applies; overall, a maximum of three codes can still be assigned.

## Procedure

1. Check whether the image contains election advertising

No Code -99

Yes Continue to the next step

2. Is the election advertising legible?

No Code -92

Yes Continue to the next step

3. Does the election advertising contain at least one political issue?

No Code 20

Yes Continue with topic coding using the codes in Table 2

*Table 1: The coding scheme for non-thematic codes*

|                                      |   | Info: MIPCO codes                   |
|--------------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|
| <b>-92 Not discernible</b>           | This code is assigned when election advertising is recognizable in the image, but the substantive content of the advertisement cannot be reliably coded due to insufficient image quality. The code is not assigned if only individual details are unclear but the main thematic focus is clearly recognizable.<br><br>Rule: Use this code when the text, symbols, or image motifs of the election advertising are so small, blurred, obstructed, or distorted that no thematic classification is possible, even though it is clearly election advertising.<br><br>Examples: The election advertising is very small in the image; the image is heavily blurred or shaky; the text is not readable, etc. |                                     |
| <b>-99 No election advertising</b>   | This code is assigned when there is no election advertising in the image or it is not clearly recognizable that the content is election advertising.  |                                     |
| <b>20 Campaigning / call to vote</b> | Definition: This code captures election advertisements that do not contain a political issue.<br><br>Rule: Assign this code when it is clearly election advertising, but no political issue is discernible.<br><br>Example: Call to vote, first vote XY, second vote XY   | 2 (Wahlkampf und Regierungsbildung) |

Table 2: The coding scheme for topics in election advertising

|  | Info: MIPCO codes   |
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| <b>1 Other</b>   |   |
| Definition: Use this code when the topic(s) of the election advertising cannot be assigned to any of the codes below.  | 6 (Medien)<br>56 (Ostdeutschland)   |
| <b>2 Security and public order</b>   |   |
| Definition: Includes the protection of public security, the maintenance of order, and the defense against threats to society.<br><br>Rule: This includes internal security and public order, police, security authorities, security measures, crime, violence, violence prevention, terrorism, counterterrorism, extremism, radicalization, hate, or political violence.<br><br><i>Alternatively: Migration/asylum unrelated to security 3 Migration and integration; foreign policy or military security issues 12 Foreign policy, peace, and Europe.</i><br><br>Example: „Sicherheit“, „Kriminalität“ or „Schutz“.   | 16 (Innere Sicherheit), 17 (Kriminalität und Gewalt),<br>18 (Terrorismus), 19 (Radikalisierung und Extremismus)                 |
| <b>3 Migration and integration</b>   |   |
| Definition: Refugees and asylum, immigration and migration, integration and citizenship.<br><br>Rule: This also includes government benefits for foreigners and economic refugees.<br><br><i>Alternatively Crime, violence, and security issues without explicit reference to migration under 2 Security and order. Social policy measures without clear reference to migration under 6 Social affairs and social justice. References to religious/ethnic groups without reference to immigration/asylum/integration under 1 Miscellaneous.</i><br><br>Examples: „Migration steuern statt begrenzen“, „Integration fördern“, „Asylverfahren beschleunigen“, Images of borders, refugees, or intercultural coexistence. | 36 Migration und Integration  |
| <b>4 Economy and labour</b>  |   |
| Definition: Refers to economic development, economic policy measures, as well as work, employment, and working conditions.<br><br>Rule: This includes economic policy, prosperity, economic situation, growth, companies, industry, small and medium-sized enterprises, self-employment, jobs, the labor market, wages, and price trends.<br><br><i>Alternatively: Distribution and fairness issues without direct reference to work or the economy 6 Social affairs and social justice. Welfare state benefits, basic income support, pensions 6 Social affairs and social justice.</i><br><br>Example:   | 32 (Arbeitsmarktpolitik), 33 (Arbeitslosigkeit und Grundsicherung), 34 (Lohnpolitik), 48 (Wirtschaftspolitik), 49 (Preisniveau) |

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| <p><b>5 Public finances and taxes</b></p> <p>Definition: Includes descriptions and references to government budget, financial, and tax policy, as well as the handling of public revenue and expenditure.</p> <p>Rule: This includes taxes, levies, tax burdens and relief, government spending, government debt, budgetary policy, and the use of public funds. This code is assigned when fiscal issues or government financial management are visibly addressed as a political topic.</p> <p>Alternatively: Social distribution issues without a fiscal focus → 6 Social affairs and social justice;</p> <p>Economic policy aspects relating to growth or the labor market → 4 Economy and labor;</p> <p>Corruption or mismanagement without explicit financial reference → 13 Government action, transparency, and integrity.</p> <p>Example: „Steuergeld“, „solide Finanzen“.</p> | <p>54 (Finanzpolitik), 55 (Steuerpolitik)</p>  |
| <p><b>6 Social affairs and social justice</b></p> <p>Definition: Includes the welfare state, social security, and issues of social inequality, distributive justice, and equal opportunities in society.</p> <p>Rule: These include social security and government support services, poverty and poverty reduction, social inequality, income and wealth distribution, social participation, and social cohesion. Pensions and demographic change are also covered here.</p> <p>Alternatively: Labor market, employment, wages, or economic growth → 4 Economy and Work;</p> <p>Family, equality, or identity issues → 7 Family, Equality &amp; Society;</p> <p>Health or care policy → 8 Health &amp; Care.</p> <p>Example: „niemand darf zurückgelassen werden“, „starker Sozialstaat“.</p>  | <p>29 (Sozialpolitik), 30 (Soziale Gerechtigkeit), 31 (Armut), 35 (Rente und Demographischer Wandel)</p> |
| <p><b>7 Family and equality</b></p> <p>Definition: Includes representations and references to family, children and young people, equality, and inclusion.</p> <p>Rule: This includes family policy issues such as childcare, work-life balance, marriage and partnership, support for children and young people, and equality and equal rights for different genders and sexual orientations.</p> <p>Alternatively: Social security, poverty, or distribution issues → 6 Social Affairs and Social Justice;</p> <p>Education policy aspects (e.g., schools, universities) → 9 Education &amp; Research.</p> <p>Example: „starke Familien“</p>  | <p>40 (Familienpolitik), 41 (Gleichstellung)</p>   |

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| <p><b>8 Health and care</b></p> <p>Definition: Includes descriptions and references to healthcare provision for the population and to the care and support of people in need of care.</p> <p>Rule: This includes the healthcare system, medical care, hospitals, doctors, health insurance companies, and care in hospitals, care facilities, and at home. Care conditions, the nursing crisis, and long-term care insurance are also covered. Health-related crises or pandemics also fall under this code, provided they are presented as a health or care-related issue.</p> <p><i>Alternatively:</i><br/> <i>Working conditions in the health and care sector → 4 Economy and work;</i><br/> Example: „gute Gesundheitsversorgung für alle“.</p>  | 37 (Gesundheitspolitik), 38 (Pflege), 39 (Corona-Pandemie)                         |
| <p><b>9 Education and research</b></p> <p>Definition: Includes representations and references to education, training, and science, as well as research and knowledge production.</p> <p>Rule: This includes early childhood education, schools, vocational training, colleges and universities, lifelong learning, and research and scientific institutions. Statements on the quality of education, equal opportunities in the education system, and the promotion of science and innovation are also covered by this code.</p> <p><i>Alternatively: Family or care issues without explicit reference to education → 7 Family and equality;</i><br/> <i>Labor market or economic qualification issues → 4 Economy and work;</i><br/> Example: „Bildung für alle“, „in Forschung investieren“.</p>  | 42 (Bildungspolitik), 43 (Schulpolitik)  |
| <p><b>10 Climate, environment and energy</b></p> <p>Definition: Includes representations and references to climate change, environmental and nature protection, and energy supply and energy use.</p> <p>Rule: These include climate protection and climate adaptation, environmental protection and nature conservation, sustainability, biodiversity, energy policy, energy production, and energy prices. Measures to reduce emissions, the use of renewable or fossil fuels, and descriptions of the energy transition are also covered.</p> <p><i>Alternatively: Economic or labor market aspects of environmental or energy policy → Economy and labor;</i><br/> <i>Transportation or infrastructure measures without a primary environmental or energy focus → Housing, transportation, and infrastructure.</i><br/> Example: „Klimaziele erreichen“, „saubere Energie“.</p> | 44 (Energiepolitik), 45 (Umweltpolitik), 46 (Klimapolitik), 47 (Naturkatastrophen) |

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| <b>11 Housing, transport and infrastructure</b>         | Definition: Includes descriptions and references to the housing situation, mobility, and general technical and public infrastructure.  | 50 (Infrastruktur),<br>51 (Digitale Infrastruktur),<br>52 (Verkehrspolitik),<br>53 (Wohnungspolitik)  |
|   | Rule: This includes housing construction, rental prices, housing policy, transport policy and mobility (roads, railways, public transport), as well as infrastructure measures such as transport routes, public facilities, urban-rural differences, digitization, and analog basic services. Investments in the expansion or maintenance of infrastructure are also covered by this code. |   |
|   | <i>Alternatively:</i>  |   |
|   | Example: Hohe Mieten, ÖPNV, Straßenbau, Infrastrukturinvestitionen, Stadt-Land-Gefälle, „bezahlbares Wohnen“, „moderne Infrastruktur“.   |   |
| <b>12 Foreign policy, peace and Europe</b>              | Definition: Includes descriptions and references to Germany's international relations, European integration, and peace, security, and conflicts in an international context.   | 21 (Außenpolitik),<br>22 (Europa und Europäische Union),<br>23 (Beziehungen Deutschlands zu den USA),<br>24 (Beziehungen Deutschlands zu Russland),<br>25 (Beziehungen Deutschlands zur Türkei),<br>26 (Internationale Konflikte und Frieden),<br>27 (Krieg in der Ukraine),<br>28 (Verteidigung) |
|   | Rule: This includes foreign policy, international cooperation, development cooperation, relations with other countries, Europe and the European Union, as well as international conflicts, wars, peacekeeping, and defense. Descriptions of Germany's role in Europe or the world, as well as European institutions and policy areas, are also covered by this code.                       |   |
|   | <i>Alternatively: Internal security or crime in Germany → 2 Security and order;</i>  |   |
|   | Migration or flight without a focus on foreign or European policy → 3 Migration and integration;   |   |
|   | Economic or trade policy issues without a primary foreign policy reference → 4 Economy and labor.  |   |
|   | Example: Europäische Union, Europa, Frieden, Krieg, internationale Konflikte, Verteidigung, NATO, „starkes Europa“, „Frieden sichern“.   |   |
| <b>13 Government action, transparency and integrity</b> | Definition: Includes descriptions and references to the functioning of government action and to issues of transparency, influence, and integrity in politics and administration.   | 7 (Bürokratie),<br>8 (Lobbyismus),<br>9 (Korruption)  |
|   | Rule: This includes bureaucracy and government administration, bureaucracy reduction, lobbying and political influence, corruption, and criticism of inefficient, non-transparent, or unfair government action. This code is assigned when political institutions or elites are discussed in connection with abuse of power or lack of transparency.                                       |   |
|   | <i>Alternatively: General criticism of parties or politicians without reference to governance → 14 Political actors, criticism of parties, and disillusionment with politics</i>   |   |
|   | Examples: Bürokratieabbau, Lobbyismus, Korruption, „Filz“, „Vetternwirtschaft“, „transparenter Staat“, „Politik für Lobbyisten“.   |   |

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| <p><b>14 Political actors, party criticism and political disaffection</b></p> <p>Definition: Includes representations and references that critically evaluate political parties, politicians, or political personnel as a whole, or express a general distance, rejection, or skepticism toward established politics.</p> <p>Rule: This includes general or specific criticism of parties or politicians, portrayals of political elites as aloof or incompetent, and statements about political disenchantment or loss of trust in politics. Populist portrayals that construct a contrast between “the people” and ‘politics’ or “the elites” are also covered by this code.</p> <p>Alternatively: Criticism of political institutions or democratic processes → 15 Democracy, politics, and the political system;</p> <p>Criticism of government administration, lobbying, or corruption → 13 Government action, transparency, and integrity.</p> <p>Example: „Altparteien“, „die da oben“, „Politik gegen das Volk“</p> | 10 (Politikverdrossenheit),<br>11 (Parteien, allgemein), 12<br>(Parteien, spezifisch), 13<br>(Politiker:innenkritik,<br>allgemein), 14<br>(Politiker:innenkritik,<br>spezifisch), 15 (Populismus) |
| <p><b>15 Democracy, political system and political culture</b></p> <p>Definition: Includes representations and references to democracy, political institutions and processes, political culture, political values, and the relationship between politics, the state, and society.</p> <p>Rule: This includes statements on the functioning of political institutions, democratic procedures and opportunities for participation, the quality or future of democracy, political values, social cohesion, and general criticism of politics or the political system.</p> <p>Alternatively: Criticism of individual parties or politicians → 14 Political actors, criticism of parties, and disillusionment with politics</p> <p>Examples: „Demokratie stärken“, „Politik wieder glaubwürdig machen“, „Politikwechsel“, „Freiheit“, „Brandmauer“</p>   | 3 (politische Strukturen und Prozesse), 4 (Werte, politische Kultur und Gesellschaftskritik), 5 (Demokratie)  |
| <p><b>16 Law and justice</b></p> <p>Definition: Includes descriptions and references to legal norms, the rule of law, the judiciary, and the enforcement of law.</p> <p>Rule: These include fundamental rights, the constitution and the rule of law, freedom of expression and freedom of the press, data protection and state surveillance, jurisdiction, criminal law, and law enforcement.</p> <p>Alternatively: Police, crime, terrorism, or security measures without explicit legal reference → 2 Security and order;</p> <p>Democratic processes or political institutions without legal focus → 15 Democracy, political system, and political culture;</p> <p>Criticism of governance, bureaucracy, or corruption without explicit legal reference → 13 Government action, transparency, and integrity.</p> <p>Example: „Freiheit schützen“, „Recht durchsetzen“</p>   | 20 (Recht und Justiz)   |