# Referendum Campaign Finance &amp; Political Parties in Europe

*A Data Management Plan created using DMPonline.be*

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**Project abstract:**
The referendum proliferation visible in Europe since the start of the 1990's has often been linked to a civil dissatisfaction with representative democracy, but another strand of literature has instead pointed to political agency (i.e. referendums are triggered mainly by political actors and parties with the goal to strengthen their own position) to explain this phenomenon. As this intentional behavior extends to referendum campaigns through which these actors look to influence voter behavior in their favor, a preliminary question yet to be addressed in the literature rises to the fore: to what extent do political parties actively engage in referendum campaigns? A precise quantitative indicator for this can be attained by looking at the referendum campaign finance of the parties, which forms a solid basis for explaining the level of this engagement. By collecting and analyzing data for 213 nation-wide or regional referendums in 26 European countries since 1990, this project aims to explore the concrete financial investment of parties in referendum campaigns in Europe. Additionally, it will look to single out factors that might explain variation, such as political finance regulations (public funding, spending restrictions), the context of the referendum (topic, legal nature, contestation, presence and expenditure of other campaigning actors) and characteristics of the parties themselves (income, issue ownership).

**Last modified:** 18-04-2023

## 1. Research Data Summary

**List and describe all datasets or research materials that you plan to generate/collect or reuse during your research project. For each dataset or data type (observational, experimental etc.), provide a short name & description (sufficient for yourself to know what data it is about), indicate whether the data are newly generated/collected or reused, digital or physical, also indicate the type of the data (the kind of content), its technical format (file extension), and an estimate of the upper limit of the volume of the data.**

| Dataset Name | Description | New or reused | Digital or Physical | Only for digital data — Digital Data Type | Only for digital data — Digital Data format | Only for digital data — Digital data volume (MB/GB/TB) | Only for physical data — Physical volume |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | *Please choose from the following options:*<br>• Generate new data<br>• Reuse existing data | *Please choose from the following options:*<br>• Digital<br>• Physical | *Please choose from the following options:*<br>• Observational<br>• Experimental<br>• Compiled/aggregated data<br>• Simulation data<br>• Software<br>• Other<br>• NA | *Please choose from the following options:*<br>• .por, .xml, .tab, .cvs,.pdf, .txt, .rtf, .dwg, .gml, …<br>• NA | *Please choose from the following options:*<br>• <100MB<br>• <1GB<br>• <100GB<br>• <1TB<br>• <5TB<br>• <10TB<br>• <50TB<br>• >50TB<br>• NA | |
| Databases of national auditors/electoral commissions | These databases are used to collect the spending of political parties in referendum campaigns. For all the countries in my case selection, this data is available online. | Reuse existing data | Digital | Other (government websites) | Usually textual data, so in the form of PDFs, but sometimes tabular in the form of XML | In total: <1GB | |
| National legislation databases | For all relevant cases, I use the national legislation databases to collect relevant pieces of legislation on referendum campaign finance. | Reuse existing data | Digital | Other (government websites) | Textual (.txt or .pdf) | In total: <1GB | |
| Political Finance Database | The Database provides answers to fundamental questions on political finance within four broad categories: a) Bans and Limits on Private Income, b) Public Funding, c) Regulations on Spending d) Reporting, Oversight and Sanctions. The Database provides country-specific data, which can be viewed for a single country or comparatively. | Reuse Existing Data | Digital | Observational | Documentation (website) | <100MB | |
| European Referendum Political Finance Dataset | This dataset does the same as the Political Finance Database, but instead brings together the regulations concerning referendum campaign finance for 31 European countries that have organized a national referendum since 1990. The information is collected by examining the legislation in the respective countries. | Generate New Data | Digital | Compiled/Aggregated Data | .xml | <100MB | |
| Political Party Spending in European Referendums | Dataset that shows the amounts spent by political parties in European referendum campaigns since 1990. These amounts are included in their original currency, but also converted into International Dollars to take into account inflation and diverging electorates. This makes the amounts more readily comparable. | Generate New Data | Digital | Compiled/Aggregated Data | .xml | <100MB | |
| | | | | | | | |

**If you reuse existing data, please specify the source, preferably by using a persistent identifier (e.g. DOI, Handle, URL etc.) per dataset or data type:**

Political Finance Database: https://www.idea.int/data-tools/data/political-finance-database

**Are there any ethical issues concerning the creation and/or use of the data (e.g. experiments on humans or animals, dual use)? Describe these issues in the comment section. Please refer to specific datasets or data types when appropriate.**

• No

**Will you process personal data? If so, briefly describe the kind of personal data you will use in the comment section. Please refer to specific datasets or data types when appropriate.**

• No

**Does your work have potential for commercial valorization (e.g. tech transfer, for example spin-offs, commercial exploitation, …)? If so, please comment per dataset or data type where appropriate.**

- No

**Do existing 3rd party agreements restrict exploitation or dissemination of the data you (re)use (e.g. Material/Data transfer agreements/ research collaboration agreements)? If so, please explain in the comment section to what data they relate and what restrictions are in place.**

- No

**Are there any other legal issues, such as intellectual property rights and ownership, to be managed related to the data you (re)use? If so, please explain in the comment section to what data they relate and which restrictions will be asserted.**

- No

## 2. Documentation and Metadata

**Clearly describe what approach will be followed to capture the accompanying information necessary to keep data understandable and usable, for yourself and others, now and in the future (e.g., in terms of documentation levels and types required, procedures used, Electronic Lab Notebooks, README.txt files, Codebook.tsv etc. where this information is recorded).**

For both datasets, codebooks will be created detailing names variable names, as well as info on the values it takes (max & min on quantitative variables, specific values for categorical/ordinal variables and info on how to interpret text variables) and how missing values are coded. This will also include how the material is collected. This information will also be made a available in repositories.
Furthermore, for the dataset on party spending, the codebook will also have detailed information on how the conversion to International Dollars is exactly performed.

**Will a metadata standard be used to make it easier to find and reuse the data? If so, please specify (where appropriate per dataset or data type) which metadata standard will be used. If not, please specify (where appropriate per dataset or data type) which metadata will be created to make the data easier to find and reuse.**

- Yes

For all data, the DDI Lifecycle Metadata standard is used since it allows me to document and manage data throughout the length of the project.

## 3. Data storage & back-up during the research project

**Where will the data be stored?**

The data is stored on the highly protected shared network drive of the KU Leuven Public Governance Institute.

**How will the data be backed up?**

Beyond the standard backup system used in the shared network drive, which uses snapshot technology to store incremental data changes online, I will also use the Onedrive for Business Cloud Storage provided by the KU Leuven.

**Is there currently sufficient storage & backup capacity during the project? If yes, specify concisely.**
**If no or insufficient storage or backup capacities are available, then explain how this will be taken care of.**

- Yes

Currently, the estimated amount of storage needed will lay somewhere in the 2.2 GB range. Since the Onedrive solution provides up to 2TB of data, and the storage size on the shared network drive has no hard limit, this should be sufficient for storage and backup during the duration of the project.

**How will you ensure that the data are securely stored and not accessed or modified by unauthorized persons?**

The Onedrive for Business Cloud Storage provided by the KU Leuven is suitable even for very confidential data since I use it in combination with the KU Leuven Authenticator App. In the case that I will need to collect personal data down the road, I will apply the necessary extra measures as set out by the KU Leuven. Furthermore, the shared network drive is strongly secured.

**What are the expected costs for data storage and backup during the research project? How will these costs be covered?**

The data storage and backup should bring with it no additional costs.

## 4. Data preservation after the end of the research project

**Which data will be retained for at least five years (or longer, in agreement with other retention policies that are applicable) after the end of the project? In case some data cannot be preserved, clearly state the reasons for this (e.g. legal or contractual restrictions, storage/budget issues, institutional policies...).**

In line with the KU Leuven RDM policy, any data that is relevant to publications (the aforementioned generated datasets) will be retained for at least 10 years.

**Where will these data be archived (stored and curated for the long-term)?**

In the shared network drive, as well as in a trusted data repository or archive, being the KU Leuven RDR.

**What are the expected costs for data preservation during the expected retention period? How will these costs be covered?**

No costs are expected for the preservation of the data.

## 5. Data sharing and reuse

**Will the data (or part of the data) be made available for reuse after/during the project?  In the comment section please explain per dataset or data type which data will be made available.**

- Yes, in an Open Access repository

All of the data that is relevant to publications are made available through the KU Leuven RDR, which is open access.

**If access is restricted, please specify who will be able to access the data and under what conditions.**

NA

**Are there any factors that restrict or prevent the sharing of (some of) the data (e.g. as defined in an agreement with a 3rd party, legal restrictions)? Please explain in the comment section per dataset or data type where appropriate.**

- No

**Where will the data be made available? If already known, please provide a repository per dataset or data type.**

All datasets relevant for publication will be made available through the KU Leuven RDR.

**When will the data be made available?**

Upon publication of research results

**Which data usage licenses are you going to provide? If none, please explain why.**

Attribution CC BY

**Do you intend to add a PID/DOI/accession number to your dataset(s)? If already available, you have the option to provide it in the comment section.**

- Yes

Yes, but none are available at this point.

**What are the expected costs for data sharing? How will these costs be covered?**

As the KU Leuven RDR allows every researcher to store up to 50GB per year for free, and considering the low size of datasets that will be generated, no additional costs are expected.

## 6. Responsibilities

**Who will manage data documentation and metadata during the research project?**

Toine Paulissen (Research Fellow)

**Who will manage data storage and backup during the research project?**

Toine Paulissen (Research Fellow)

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**Who will manage data preservation and sharing?**

Toine Paulissen (Research Fellow)

**Who will update and implement this DMP?**

Toine Paulissen (Research Fellow)

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