

## **The European Election Studies: Elite Study**

**The entity that has organized the survey and is responsible for data collection – as well as key data on the entity's membership, governance arrangements, source of funding etc.**

The EES Elite Study has been included in some of the ordinary European Election Studies. The EES is driven by a network of social scientists. Prior to 1999 the EES was embedded in the Eurobarometer study, while in later years it has become an independent study. An international research group was responsible for the election studies between 1979 and 2004, whereas after 2004 the national study directors have funded and conducted the study in 24 out of 25 EU countries.

Funding has been difficult and varied each time, since there is no stable financing source. The EES has been funded by as different sources as national research foundations, the PIs' home institutions, and Volkswagen (1979). In 2004, the funding model was more stable as the funding went national and the European Commission funded the coordination and communication.

All rounds except the 2009 round were organized by the University of Mannheim. The 2009 round was part of the [PIREDEU](#) infrastructure for electoral research and as such co-ordinated by the EUI in Florence.

### **A historical sketch of the initiation and origin of the survey**

The project was established in 1979 in connection with the first direct election to the European Parliament by an international group of electoral researchers. Later the studies also covered national parliaments.

### **Internet links to the website of the responsible organization**

<http://www.ees-homepage.net/>

### **The frequency or repetitions of the survey. Possible explanation of this.**

The EES Elite Study is included in the normal EES-rounds on an irregular basis:

[EES Elite Study I: 1979](#)

[EES Elite Study II: 1994](#)

[EES Elite Study III: 2009](#)

## **A description of the survey's content, i.e. both focused rotational and / or core modules of the survey**

The study's general focus is on the relationship between citizens and representatives addressing topics such as democracy and representation, campaigning and mobilization, issues and ideology. In addition there were some round-specific features:

In 1979, two studies were conducted. The first was the Candidates for European Parliament Study which surveyed the candidates in the EP-elections. The study focused on the reasons respondents had for choosing to become candidates, and their views on the goals, priorities, and powers of the EP. The study was also designed to permit comparison of opinions between the general public and candidates, and as such it includes many of the questions that were also administered to the general public in Eurobarometer 11. The second 1979 study was the European Political Parties' Middle-Level Elites Study which surveyed conference delegates of parties in the European Community. The focus was on the political careers of party delegates, the way they see themselves, their political orientation and attitudes to the European Community.

In relation to the 1994-round of the EES, three elite studies were conducted:

- 1) The European Candidates Study, which resembled the one in 1979
- 2) Study of Members of the European Parliament in 1996, which surveyed MEPs
- 3) European Members of National Parliaments Study in 1996, which surveyed members of the national parliaments

The 2009-round includes an elite Candidate Survey Study. The topics covered include attitudes towards political issues, value orientations, political background, experience of candidates for the EU-Parliament, political career, engagement and mobilization, usage of campaign instruments; importance of media for election, domestic and European issues, representation and attitudes towards European identity.

## **An outline of the type of sample and the main data collection methods used**

1979 Candidate Study: The number of interviews with candidates of different parties in each country was proportional to the number of seats each party was expected to win.

1979 European Political Parties' Middle-Level Elites Study: No details are given, but respondents were selected from the party conference delegates of all *consenting* parties in the European Community, opening for a self-selection bias. Unfortunately, no information is given on the number

of parties who refused to participate.

1994 Candidate Study: Great variations between countries. Some opted for a census, other for a sample, depending amongst other factors upon the number of candidates.

There is no information on the sampling procedures used for the MEP Study and the study of national parliaments' representatives in 1996, but some information on number of interviews and response rates for all three 1994-96 studies may be found in [this appendix](#) of Schmitt and Thomassen (1999).

2009 Candidate Study: The target population was all candidates. The sample selection method employed was as follows: All candidates of a party on a list position which does not exceed 125 percent of the country's seats in the European Parliament are defined as relevant. If the number of candidates exceeded the threshold, the inclusion of candidates is based on the respective party list position. Avoiding a too strict rule, all parties are included, which receive votes equal to half of the nation- wide electoral threshold. More than 260 parties have been identified to be relevant parties. In regard to relevant candidates, 6558 candidates for the 2009 European Parliament Election were identified as relevant ([GESIS](#): click the methodology tab).

Data collection methods:

1979: Personal interviews.

1994: Personal interviews carried out in respondents' homes

2009: Mail survey or online survey ([GESIS](#): Methodology tab)

### **An account of the availability of the data to researchers, restrictions on access, etc.**

All data are available at ICPSR or GESIS. At ICPSR, download is contingent upon being logged in as a user at an ICPSR member institution. At GESIS, download is contingent upon logging in, but this is free.

### **Questionnaires, English version**

[Candidates for the European Parliament Study 1979 Questionnaire](#)

[European Political Parties' Middle-Level Elites Study 1979 Questionnaire](#)

[European Candidates Study 1994 Questionnaire](#)

[Study of Members of the European Parliament 1996 Questionnaire](#)

[European Members of National Parliaments Study 1996 Questionnaire](#)

## [European Candidate Survey Study 2009 Questionnaire](#)

### **The countries included in the different rounds**

1979: Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Great Britain, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Northern Ireland, Portugal, Spain.

1994 Candidate Study: Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Great Britain, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, and Sweden.

1996 Elite Studies: Belgium, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden.

2009: All 27 member states of the EU.

### **Cumulative file of the various rounds**

There is no cumulative file.

### **Publications based on the data**

There is no particular bibliography for the Elite Studies, but there is a general bibliography for the EES: [The EES Bibliography](#)

### **Analytical summary...**

### **Sources**

Unless otherwise noted, all information is extracted from the website of the EES.

Schmitt, Hermann and J.J.A. Thomassen. (1999). *Political Representation and Legitimacy in the European Union*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.