Welcome to C.N.E.P.

The Comparative National Elections Project (CNEP) currently includes 24 national election surveys conducted in 19 countries since 1990. It has evolved in three distinct phases: CNEP I, CNEP II, and CNEP III. All of these studies share a concern with the processes of intermediation through which citizens receive information about policies, parties, candidates, and politics in general during the course of election campaigns, thus reviving the long neglected research perspective of the "Columbia School" established by Paul Lazarsfeld and his colleagues in the 1940s and 1950s. Accordingly, survey questionnaires include batteries of questions dealing with flows of information through primary social networks (among family members, friends, neighbors, and co-workers), and secondary associations (especially trade unions, religious organizations, and political parties), as well as flows of information from the communications media.

CNEP I focused exclusively on these intermediation processes, and included surveys in Germany (1990), Britain (1992), the United States (1992), and Japan (1993). CNEP II began with the incorporation of Spain into the project in 1993, and included the subsequent addition of two countries from each of the following regions: South America, Southern Europe, Eastern Europe, and East Asia. In addition to the aforementioned "intermediation core", these new surveys included several items specially suited for the measurement of mass-level attitudes underpinning regime consolidation and the nature and quality of democratic participation in new democracies, as well as the structure of basic values (concerning traditional religious beliefs, individual political and civil liberties, and preferences regarding the nature of the economy and public policies) that have often given rise to partisan political conflict in established democracies. This questionnaire content is ideally suited for detailed studies of the structuring of partisan politics in new or transformed democracies (Spain, Chile, Uruguay, Greece, Bulgaria, and Hungary), in countries that have been taking halting steps in that direction (Hong Kong), and in a country that has undergone a profound transformation of its party system (Italy). In addition, CNEP II scholars have undertaken analyses of related datasets that include a significant number of CNEP core items (Spain 1979, 1982, and 1988; Indonesia 1999; Chile 2000; Hong Kong 2000; and Portugal 2002).

A current wave of expansion is in progress, and will culminate in CNEP III. This has included geographical broadening of the project by adding new countries in East Asia (Indonesia 2004, Taiwan 2005, People's Republic of China 2006), Europe (Portugal 2005), Africa (South Africa 2004, Mozambique 2005), and Latin America (Mexico 2005). It also includes second-wave surveys in Greece (2004), Spain (2004), Uruguay (2004), United States (2004), and Italy (2006). This phase of the project also represents a thematic enrichment vis-à-vis CNEP II design, by increasing the batteries of questions dealing with socio-political values that may be of great relevance to electoral politics in non-Western regions, as well as with the integrity of electoral administration and the quality of democracy. We are currently standardizing all of these datasets and moving towards the creation of a merged data file. Datasets resulting from CNEP III are accessible only to members of the CNEP network, but all files from CNEP I and II are available to the public in general.
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