

Chapter 2

Deduction of the Coding Scheme

Obviously, any deductive content analysis needs to begin with the theoretical deduction of the coding scheme. In this chapter we describe the theoretical considerations which lead us to the different main categories and sub-categories in the scheme. Based on this theoretical reasoning we specify the actual coding scheme in a second step (see [Chap. 3](#)).

As already outlined above, we conceptualize IPD on the basis of the two criteria of inclusiveness and decentralization. According to Scarrow (2005), who provides a comprehensive study of the concept of IPD, *inclusiveness* refers to the scope of the circle of party decision-makers. It can be observed on a continuum, where ‘[u]nder the most exclusive rules, key decisions are controlled by a single leader or a small group of leaders, and others have no binding role in the process. In the most inclusive parties, all party members, or even all party supporters, are given the opportunity to decide on important issues, such as the choice of party leader or the selection of party candidates [or on important policy issues]’ (Scarrow 2005, p. 6).

With regard to *decentralization*, it can be best defined by considering what centralization means. According to Scarrow, it ‘describes the extent to which decisions are made by a single group or decision body. In a highly centralized party, a national executive meets frequently and has the authority to make decisions that are accepted at all levels of the party. In especially decentralized parties, the national party committee probably meets much less often and tends to be focused more on coordination and communication than on providing definitive guidance to the party’ (Scarrow 2005, p. 6). In our context, decentralization refers mainly to the role and autonomy of subnational units within a party.

It should be stated that we ascribe greater importance to inclusiveness than to decentralization because ‘[d]ecentralization could mean only that control over candidate selection has passed from the national oligarchy to a local oligarchy. For example, if the selectorate is decentralized from a national party conference of several thousand participants to ten local committees each consisting of a few dozen activists and leaders, the overall selectorate has been decentralized, but has not become more inclusive—and has actually become more exclusive’ (Hazan and Rahat 2006, p. 112). In our coding scheme this is taken into account by including more items measuring inclusiveness than decentralization.

On the basis of these broad analytical criteria, we further ask what dimensions are best suited in order to study IPD. Scarrow (2005, pp. 7–20) identifies candidate selection, party membership and models of party organization as central dimensions for the study of IPD. More broadly, Mimpfen (2007) observes, that while there is no universal definition of IPD, two groups of instruments of internal democratization can be identified. The first involves the ‘organization of free, fair and regular elections.’ The second ‘involves a different group of instruments that entail the equal and open participation of all members and member groups in such a way that interests are more or less equally represented’ (Mimpfen 2007, p. 2). Also, the German Party Law from 1967 proposes a detailed interpretation of IPD, by setting up four basic intra-party requirements: (1) The political will of the party to be formed by the party members or delegates through free elections; (2) freedom of expression; (3) protection of minorities; (4) abiding by the rule of law (Zeuner 2003, p. 254; Niedermayer and Stöss 1993). These basic principles are taken into account in the theoretical deduction of the coding scheme.

Furthermore, there is an academic consensus about a set of minimum requirements, such as basic members’ rights and the existence of certain party organs fulfilling different functions, which must be met in order to realize IPD (Cular 2004; Goati 2005; Kajsiu 2005; Karasimeonov 2005; Rudzio 2006, pp. 138–144; Siljanovska-Davkova 2005; Vuletic 2005). Also, regarding the decision-making processes, democratic procedures need to be met in the areas of recruitment and programmatic decisions (Becker 1999, p. 19; Emminghaus 2003, pp. 91–92; Geser 1994, pp. 194–195; Mimpfen 2007, p. 2; Niedermayer 1989, p. 17; Scarrow 2005, pp. 7–11). Drawing on the theoretical debate outlined above, three dimensions of the concept of IPD can be brought together: members’ rights, organizational structures and decision-making.

At this point, in a brief anticipation of the actual coding scheme, we need to mention that these three conceptual dimensions of IPD (members’ rights, organizational structures and decision-making) constitute the three main categories of our coding scheme. These main categories are further divided up into sub-categories at different levels (see Fig. 2.1), which are comprised themselves of individual items (in our case, the individual items are designed as questions which are applied by the coders on the party statutes). Figure 2.1 also shows the principal logic of assigning codes in the coding scheme which will be explained in more detail in Chap. 3.

In accordance with the established procedure in deductive content analysis (for an overview see Neuendorf 2002, pp. 99–102), the following subchapters are dedicated to the deduction of the coding scheme. Therefore, what follows now are the respective theoretical considerations associated with each of the main categories and sub-categories in the coding scheme (for illustration see Fig. 2.1). This includes justifications for the specific items (questions) and their sequence within the different sub-categories.

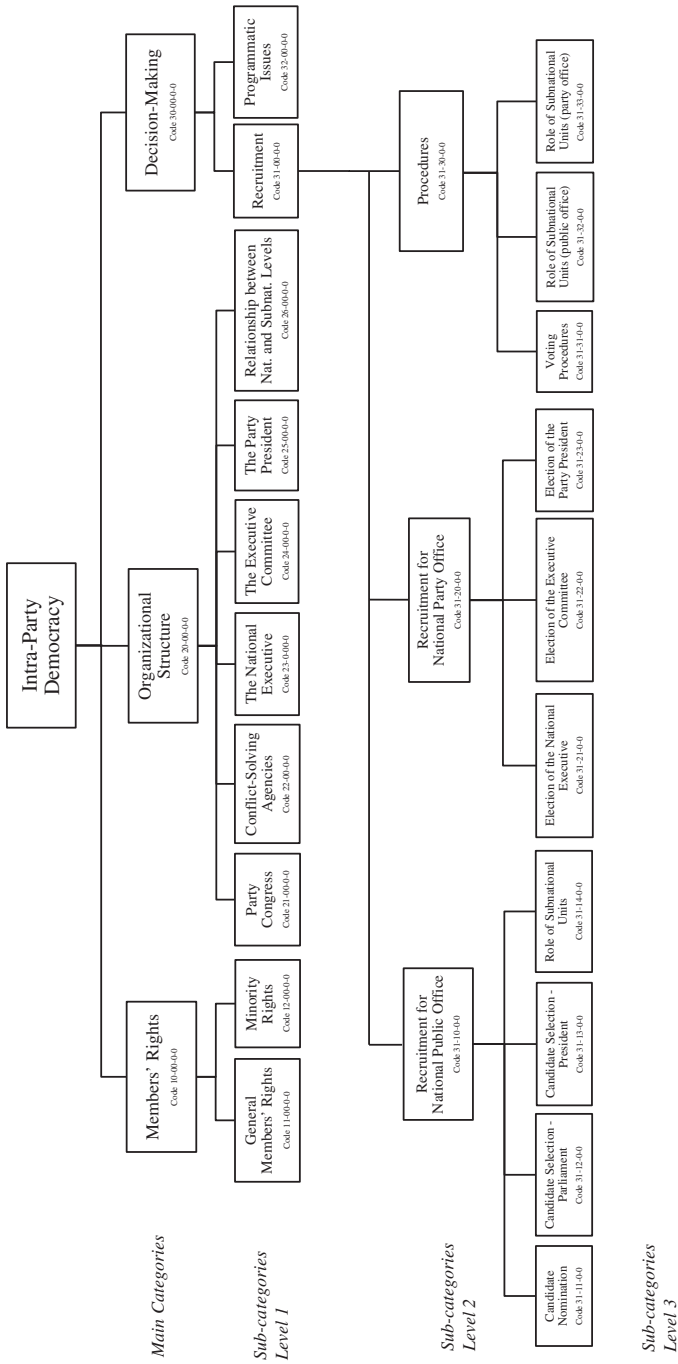


Fig. 2.1 Categories of intra-party democracy

2.1 Members' Rights

2.1.1 General Members' Rights

General members' rights are the rights of all party members notwithstanding their position or function within the party. Scherff (1993, p. 24) defines the equality of all party members in forming the party's political will and decisions as a basic requirement of IPD. The general rights assessed in the first question battery correspond to individual democratic principles such as freedom of opinion and freedom of speech and are to a large extent self-explanatory in terms of substantive meaning. For a high degree of IPD, members with opinions diverging from the majority opinion should have good opportunities to present and discuss their positions within the party and thus attempt to form alternative majorities (Scherff 1993, p. 25). This aspect has been operationalized in the coding scheme through questions regarding the rights of members to be informed about party activities, the rights to express opinions within and outside of the party, the rights to participate in intra-party decision-making as well as the right to form factions supporting diverse positions within the party. The sub-category of general members' rights refers to the *inclusiveness* of a party.

2.1.2 Minority Rights

The importance of safeguarding minority rights in party decision-making is emphasized by various authors (e.g. Mimpen 2007, pp. 3–4; Norris 2004, pp. 29–38; Prasai 2007, pp. 3–4). Whereas women and youth are generally given the greatest importance in this context (Vuletic 2005, pp. 135–136; Norris 2004, pp. 29–38), the inclusion of ethnic minorities may also play a crucial role in ethnically diverse societies. The importance of minority rights within the party is assessed through questions regarding the existence and compulsory nature of minority quotas for intra-party and public office. Additionally, inclusiveness is also measured by the ex-officio membership of minority-group leaders in party leadership organs (executive). Party members who represent opinions that diverge from the official party line are treated in the general-members' rights section, as a diverging opinion does not equal minority rights as defined in this question battery (women, youth, ethnic). Similar to the general members' rights, this sub-category also refers predominantly to the *inclusiveness* of individual members and to the extent to which they are involved in party activities.

2.2 Organizational Structure

Party organs have to fulfill a basic list of criteria in order for a party to be considered democratic (e.g. Scarrow 2005, pp. 15–21). Therefore, this main category deals with formal structures within a party and their interaction. One central criterion of how to study these structures is the distribution of power and

competencies between the different party organs, especially the separation of the judiciary function from other functions within the party (Poguntke 1998; Rudzio 2006, p. 142). Characteristic for democratic parties are regulations that ensure that the competencies of all party organs (except the party judiciary) are derived from the members' will (inclusiveness). A high level of inclusiveness expresses itself through the right of members' assemblies and the party congress (inclusive or decentralized organs) to override the decisions of other (less inclusive, more centralized) organs.

2.2.1 Party Congress

The party congress is an assembly constituted by party members and delegates. Ideally, a subnational congress is the highest organ of any given subnational party level. From an IPD-perspective, the congress should decide about statutory issues, the party programme and the party line, it should elect the members for party organs of the organizational level it represents and it should elect delegates for the congress of the next organizational level (Rudzio 2006, p. 138; Scherff 1993, p. 24). Additionally to the fundamental question whether a party congress exists, it is important for the *inclusiveness* aspect to know how often it convenes (Rudzio 2006, p. 148). If the competencies of the party congress are extensive enough, the frequency of its sessions should indicate a high level of inclusion of the members in the opinion formation and decision-making processes. The question battery in the coding scheme measures the competencies of the national party congress, the frequency of its meetings and its official status as the highest authority within the party.

2.2.2 Conflict Solving Agencies

In the Federal Republic of Germany, party courts (so called "Schiedsgerichte") decide upon statutory and electoral disputes. They impose regulatory measures (reprimands, temporary activity bans, party exclusions) upon the members who act against party regulation (Rudzio 2006, p. 140). According to the principle of equality, the conflict solving agencies should have the right to rule upon request over all members including the party leadership whenever their behavior damages the party (Poguntke 2005, p. 643). For a high degree of IPD, it should further protect individual party members from arbitrary disciplinary measures by the party leadership. The question battery regarding conflict solving agencies within the party begins with a filter question about the existence of such agencies or mechanisms within the party and continues with qualifying questions meant to determine the nature and competencies of the conflict solving agencies. This sub-category refers to the *inclusiveness* of a party because it describes the ability of individual party members or party organs to exercise leverage (effective or potential) with respect to other party organs and members and therefore upholds an institutional balance in a party.

2.2.3 The National Executive

The party leadership is usually composed of the national executive and the executive committee (see Sect. 2.2.4) as decision-making organs (Poguntke 1998). In terms of IPD, the division of competencies plays a decisive role, as competencies should be distributed in such a way as to prevent autocratic leadership. Ideally, the executive level should be accountable to and controlled by more inclusive party organs, such as the party congress or a special control agency that is legitimized by the party congress. It is important that an intra-party board of inquiry can be invoked by the party members, the congress or a special control agency in order to investigate acts of misconduct by the party leadership. Since the division of power might take place between the different levels of the executive, this issue of control over the party executive is divided into two question batteries: one for the national executive and one for the executive committee. The question battery regarding the national executive starts with a filter question meant to establish whether the obligations of the organ are mentioned in the statute. It continues with questions about accountability and control mechanisms which are formulated in such a way as to determine the level of *inclusiveness* of a party.

2.2.4 The Executive Committee

The division between national executive and executive committee enables us to determine how power is distributed within the party and to discover differences between varying organizational layers of a party. The question battery concerned with the executive committee is structurally equivalent to the questions of the former question battery concerned with the national executive, starting with a filter question intended to establish whether the obligations of the executive committee are mentioned in the statute and continuing with questions about accountability and control mechanisms and therefore also aims at determining the level of *inclusiveness* of a given party.

2.2.5 The Party President

Because of his great importance, the party president is treated in a separate sub-category. When it comes to the party president we consider especially the extent to which he has prerogatives with respect to other party organs. From an IPD-perspective, the rights of the party president have to be limited lest he becomes a sole ruler of the party. This threat is particularly prevalent within Central and Eastern-European Parties: 'A specific phenomenon for post-communist parties is that through their emergence and role during the transition period, they are leader-centered parties. They are formed by the leader and his close friends and allies, who acquire great

power resources' (Karasimeonov 2005, pp. 104–105). The question battery regarding the prerogatives of the party president determines the degree of the president's power by assessing his statutory rights and the possibility to challenge the president in his position. Generally, it can be stated that the more prerogatives the party president has, the lower is the level of *inclusiveness* and *decentralization*.

2.2.6 Relationship Between the National Level and Subnational Levels

In the final sub-category of organizational structure, we need to consider how the relations between different levels of a party are designed. Decentralization in the relationship between the national and the subnational levels plays an important role in assessing the level of IPD (Bille 2001, pp. 103–104; Karasimeonov 2005): 'This aspect of IPD gives an idea of the level of centralization and concentration of power in the leadership and higher party institutions' (Karasimeonov 2005, p. 103). In this context the ability of subnational party units to make themselves heard on the national level plays an important role for IPD. In Germany, the existence of a party territorial council that is active on the national level proves the ability of the subnational organs to make themselves heard on the national level (regarding the party territorial councils of German parties see Poguntke 2005, p. 642; Rudzio 2006, p. 140). Since parties in some countries lack territorial councils, the level of *decentralization* can be determined by the mentioning of subnational units in the statute and by the kind of rights which subnational units enjoy on different organizational levels within the party.

2.3 Decision-Making

The levels of inclusiveness and decentralization are, as for the categories above, the two central criteria for IPD in the decision-making process. The more inclusive and decentralized the decision-making process in a political party is, the more democratic is the party (for inclusiveness see Hazan and Rahat 2010, 2006; Rahat and Hazan 2001; for decentralization see Bille 2001). For both public office and intra-party positions, the question batteries are focused on the national level unless otherwise specified. The reason for choosing this approach is that statutes might contain contradicting information about the different organizational levels of the parties. Furthermore, we focus on the national level because it is assumed that intra-party and public offices on the national level are of greater importance for the party and thus more indicative of the overall level of IPD. In addition, this approach reduces the level of complexity for coders. Finally, party statutes also tend to include more information about the decision-making processes on the national level which is useful for comparative purposes.

2.3.1 Recruitment

2.3.1.1 Recruitment to National Public Office

Candidate Nomination

Here it is relevant to find out whether candidates can nominate themselves (very inclusive), whether they have to be supported by party members or the congress (inclusive and/or decentralized) or if they have to be nominated by the party leadership (exclusive and centralized). Candidate nomination measures which party units or types of party members have the right to first suggest a candidate for a position. After starting with a filter question meant to assess whether the statute contains any information about candidate nomination, the question battery continues with questions reflecting inclusion, ranging from the most exclusive (leadership nominates) to the most inclusive (all members can nominate themselves) pole. Here the two criteria of *inclusiveness* and *decentralization* are intertwined.

Candidate Selection for Parliamentary Office

The selection process plays a central role regarding the inclusion of party members. As Schattschneider points out: ‘The [...] [selection] process has become the crucial process of the party. He who can make the [...] [selections] is the owner of the party’ (Schattschneider 1942, p. 101; Norris 2004, p. 26). In presidential systems the term, “selection” generally refers to the choosing of the presidential candidate (see next section). In parliamentary systems it is the assignment of positions on the party lists upon which the electorate votes. The questions in this battery range from questions indicating the very inclusive end of the continuum (closed primary) to the very exclusive end (selection process controlled by party leadership). Therefore, this sub-category focuses on the *inclusiveness* of a party.

Candidate Selection for Presidential Elections

In presidential or semi-presidential political systems, the president fulfills crucial executive and representative functions. Since the country’s president is popularly elected, presidential candidates are the central electoral face of the party. Within the party, presidential candidates play an important role because of their public exposure and, once they have won the election, because of their paramount position which flows from their directly earned legitimacy. Because of the importance of presidential candidates, the question of how they are selected is a good measurement of the division of power within the party and hence a good indicator of IPD. The question battery regarding the selection of the presidential candidates follows the same logic as the question batteries before, starting with two general filter questions, one establishing whether the statute provides any information about those responsible for selecting the presidential candidate and another one determining whether the party president is automatically the party’s candidate. The question battery continues with questions meant to capture the different selection possibilities

ranging from the most inclusive (closed primary) to the most exclusive (the executive). Similarly to the previous sub-category, the inquiry into the selection of candidates for presidential elections aims at capturing the *inclusiveness* of a party.

Relationship between the National Level and Subnational Levels with regard to Candidate Selection

This question battery focuses on whether subnational units play a role in the nomination of at least some candidates for national public office. The main goal is to indicate the degree of *decentralization* in the selection process. Research in this area usually relies on the typology of Bille (2001). Based on the data collected by Katz and Mair (1992), Bille (2001) designed six party categories from ‘the most centralized (national organs have complete control over the selection)’ to the ‘most localized (subnational organs have complete control over the selection)’ and used them to compare the recruiting rules of Western European political parties.¹ We follow this approach in our coding scheme. Similar to Bille’s categories, the question battery starts with questions indicating a high degree of *centralization* (all candidates for public office are selected by national party units), continues through questions indicating decreasing levels of centralization and ends with a question that indicates the highest possible level of decentralization (all candidates for national public office are selected by subnational party units).

2.3.1.2 Recruitment to National Intra-Party Office

Election of the National Executive

The central point of the two question batteries dealing with the party executive (the national executive and the executive committee) is to find out who determines the composition of the party leadership. As in the previous sub-categories, the question battery about the national executive starts with a filter question meant to determine whether the statute holds any information about the subject. The following questions stretch from the most *inclusive* (individual party members elect the national executive) to the most exclusive (the party president elects the national executive) rules for intra-party office recruitment.

Election of the Executive Committee

Treating the national executive and the executive committee separately allows a more precise insight into the power distribution of the party. Therefore, the former question battery concerned with the election of the national executive is repeated to assess the specific level of *inclusiveness* for the executive committee.

¹ For a similar categorization (albeit with more extreme poles) see Hazan and Rahat (2006, pp. 110–111).

Election of the Party President

Because of the high importance of this question, the election of the party president is treated in a separate sub-category. The question battery follows the same logic as those regarding the election of the national executive and the executive committee. The first question determines whether the statute contains any information about the election of the party president. The question battery continues with questions starting with the most inclusive (all members elect the party president) and ending with the most exclusive (the executive committee elects the party president) possibility to elect the party president. Therefore, this sub-category aims at studying the degree of *inclusiveness* of a party.

2.3.1.3 Procedures

Voting Procedures

After starting with a filter question aimed to determine whether the statute contains any information regarding voting procedures, this question battery continues with questions that determine whether the parties follow the generally accepted democratic standards such as having secret voting procedures when electing their leadership or public office candidates and making the election results available to party members. From a theoretical point of view, secret voting is considered as being more democratic because the possibility of influencing the voters to comply through intimidation or bribery is smaller than by open voting procedures, where dissenters might be encouraged to conform to the official party line. This sub-category refers to the *inclusiveness* criteria, because we are interested in the formal rules, which structure the participation in voting on an intra-party level.

Relationship between the National Level and Subnational Levels with regard to Candidate Selection for Subnational Public Office

This question battery aims to indicate the level of decentralization within the party by assessing the degree of autonomy of subnational party units when electing their candidates for public office. The questions in this battery are inspired by the typology of Bille (2001), starting with a filter question to identify whether the statute contains any information about how subnational units elect their public office candidates and continuing with questions that reflect a high degree of *decentralization* (regional autonomy when electing all candidates for public office) to a high degree of centralization (national units completely control the election of candidates for subnational public office).

Relationship between the National Level and Subnational Levels with regard to Candidate Selection for Subnational Intra-party Office

Similar to the former sub-category, this question battery also aims to indicate the level of decentralization within the party, this time by assessing the degree of

autonomy of subnational party units when electing their intra-party candidates. Also inspired by the typology of Bille (2001), the question battery starts with a filter question in order to establish whether the statutes contain any information about how subnational units elect their leadership. The question battery continues with questions ranging from a highly *decentralized* structure (subnational autonomy when electing subnational leadership) to a highly centralized structure (national units completely controlling the election of subnational party leadership).

2.3.2 Programmatic Issues

The party manifesto is central to the visibility of each political party and at the same time it is the official self-positioning of the party (Budge et al. 2001; Klingemann et al. 2006). Therefore, it is important to know who has the right to decide upon the party manifesto (Scarrow 2005, p. 11). As in many other sub-categories, the question battery starts with a filter question in order to determine whether the statute contains any information about who is responsible for the party manifesto. The subsequent questions are classified from the most *inclusive* (all party members can vote upon the manifesto) to the most *exclusive* (the party president decides upon the manifesto). Additionally, the last question in the battery is about the role of subnational party units in voting on the manifesto and is meant to offer insights upon the degree of *decentralization* of the party.



<http://www.springer.com/978-3-642-36032-9>

Measuring Intra-Party Democracy

A Guide for the Content Analysis of Party Statutes with
Examples from Hungary, Slovakia and Romania

von dem Berge, B.; Poguntke, Th.; Obert, P.; Tipei, D.

2013, IX, 65 p. 5 illus., Softcover

ISBN: 978-3-642-36032-9