

## **Codebook: Reading the Dataset *'Party Spending Data Inferred from Declared Invoices at the 2019 UK General Election'***

### **What does the data represent?**

This dataset presents how political parties spent their money at the 2019 UK General Election. The dataset was constructed by manually coding invoices published by the Electoral Commission on their Political Finance Database, available at: <https://search.electoralcommission.org.uk/>.

We developed codes inductively, attempting to capture the different types of activities described within the data set. We identified nine 'macro' categories within which there are 41 subcategories, described below. The dataset is presented alongside data points provided by the Electoral Commission, including the political party name, supplier name, amount spent, and the Electoral Commission's own spending categories. Each of these are detailed below.

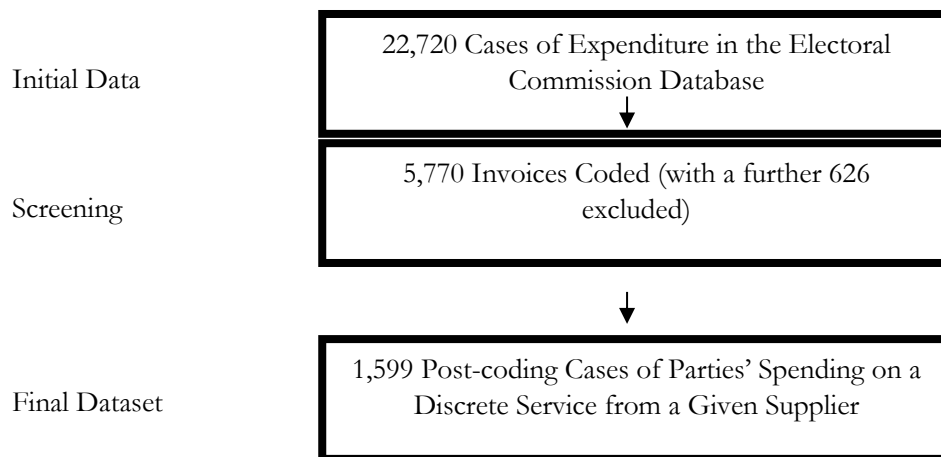
### **Methodology**

This coding exercise was carried out by Professor Kate Dommett, Dr Sam Power, Dr Amber Macintyre and Dr Andrew Barclay. The team coded the 22,720 separate items of expenditure found in the Electoral Commission Database, following an initial screening which excluded cases where parties spent under £1000 with a given supplier. The resulting dataset captures over 97% of the total spend and categorizes this spending into much more specific categories than were present in the Electoral Commission Political Finance Database.

The coding strategy involved inductively coding all published invoices which remained following this initial screening, 5,770 in total. Through a series of weekly meetings, coders would individually code and then compare and discuss allocated codes through an iterative process. Simple rules for coding were established including conducting exhaustive coding (i.e. coding each separate item mentioned in an invoice separately - meaning multiple codes could be assigned for one invoice), non-duplicative coding (i.e. not assigning the same activity within an invoice more than one code), and dealing with ambiguous invoices (i.e. creating a series of subcodes to differentiate invoices that could not be coded for different reasons, such as a lack of clarity about service and invoices that appeared blank). Following this process, the final dataset contains 1,599 cases of parties' expenditure on a particular service from a specific supplier. The screening and coding process is summarised in Figure 1.

Each invoice was opened and coded by two coders. To check inter-coder reliability, we allocated approximately 20% of each coder's invoices to another team member to measure consistency. The Cohen's Kappa score for each pair of coders was at no point below  $K = 0.709$ , indicating a high degree of internal reliability.

**Figure 1 – The Coding and Screening Process**



### Reading the Data

The dataset is provided as a .csv file with 1,599 rows and 55 separate variables in the columns.

#### The Rows

Each row represents one supplier and one service they provided for a given party i.e., where there is more than one service provided for a given party the same supplier will appear more than once, and where the provider provided the same service to a different party, they will also appear more than once.

#### The Variables

Column Letter(s)	A
Variable Name	ID
Variable Type	String
Description	Individual number per line for referencing and analysis: 1 - 1465
Source	Created by the coders

Column Letter(s)	B
Variable Name	supplier
Variable Type	String
Description	The name of the supplier
Source	The supplier names are extracted from the Electoral Commission database, but

	have been cleaned for spelling errors by the coders
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Column Letter(s)	C
Variable Name	party
Variable Type	String
Description	The name of the political party
Source	The political party names are drawn from the Electoral Commission database

Column Letter(s)	D
Variable Name	partyCode
Variable Type	Numeric
Description	<p>A number corresponding with the political party</p> <p>1 - The Conservative Party; 2 - The Labour Party; 3 - The Liberal Democrats; 4 - The Green Party; 5 - The Scottish National Party; 6 - The Brexit Party/Reform UK; 7 - Plaid Cymru; 8 - Sinn Féin; 9 - The Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP); 10 - The Democratic Unionist Party (DUP); 11 - The Ulster Unionist Party (UUP); 12 - The Alliance Party of Northern Ireland; 13 - Co-operative Party; 14 - UK Independence Party (UKIP); 15 - Women's Equality Party; 16 - The Independent Group for Change; 17 - The Socialist Party of Great Britain; 18 - Social Democratic Party; 19 - Scottish Family Party; 20 - English Democrats; 21 - The Cynon Valley Party; 22 - Advance Together; 23 - The Universal Good Party; 24 - Ashfield Independents; 25 - Christian Party "Proclaiming Christ's Lordship"; 26 - Proud of Oldham &amp; Saddleworth; 27 - Lincolnshire Independents Lincolnshire First</p>
Source	The political party names are drawn from the Electoral Commission database

Column Letter(s)	E
Variable Name	EC_Spend_Category
Variable Type	String
Description	<p>The description of the activity as reported by the political party according to the options available from the Electoral Commission:</p> <p>Advertising; Campaign broadcasts; Manifesto or Referendum material; Market research/canvassing; Media; Overheads and general administration; Rallies and other events; Unsolicited material to electors</p>

Source	The spending categories are drawn from the Electoral Commission database
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Column Letter(s)	F - BC
Variable Name	Spend by assigned coding category (Macro categories, and subcategories)
Variable Type	Numeric
Description	The description of the activity as determined by the coders from the invoices, with the amount of spending per code. More detail below.
Source	The coding exercise extracted information from declared invoices

### Coded Spending Categories

Macro Category	Advertising and Press
Description	In this category we coded all items relating to advertising, paid content of different forms, and paid press and public relations.
Subcategories	Merchandise; Newspaper or magazine advertising; Social media advertising; Online advertising; Other forms of advertising; PR
Description	<p>The subcategories specified the type of paid advertising based on specific channels specified and can be characterised by the following examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) Merchandise: branded products such as badges, rosettes, balloons as well as more niche objects such as boxing gloves, umbrellas, and wrapping paper such as: <a href="https://search.electoralcommission.org.uk//Api/Spending/Invoices/64458">https://search.electoralcommission.org.uk//Api/Spending/Invoices/64458</a></li> <li>ii) Newspaper and magazine advertising: straight forward 'page' paid for or ad placement in specific newspapers and magazines such as: <a href="https://search.electoralcommission.org.uk//Api/Spending/Invoices/62361">https://search.electoralcommission.org.uk//Api/Spending/Invoices/62361</a></li> <li>iii) Social Media Advertising: paid adverts clearly connected to social media platforms including Facebook, Instagram and, Snapchat such as <a href="https://search.electoralcommission.org.uk//Api/Spending/Invoices/64342">https://search.electoralcommission.org.uk//Api/Spending/Invoices/64342</a></li> <li>iv) Online Advertising paid ads that are found elsewhere online such as websites and Google advertising such as <a href="https://search.electoralcommission.org.uk//Api/Spending/Invoices/66982">https://search.electoralcommission.org.uk//Api/Spending/Invoices/66982</a></li> <li>v) Other forms of advertising are offline or outside such as ad vans and billboards such as <a href="https://search.electoralcommission.org.uk//Api/Spending/Invoices/67052">https://search.electoralcommission.org.uk//Api/Spending/Invoices/67052</a></li> <li>vi) PR: Any public relations which includes specific consultants supporting public relations narrowly (rather than overall consultancy detailed later) such as <a href="https://search.electoralcommission.org.uk//Api/Spending/Invoices/68168">https://search.electoralcommission.org.uk//Api/Spending/Invoices/68168</a></li> </ul>

Macro Category	Campaign Materials
Description	In this category we coded all items relating to printed and other physical campaign materials (excluding merchandise)
Subcategories	Design services; Campaign materials printing; Paid leaflet delivery/ postage; Event costs/Venue hire; Creative content owned by a third party; Translation services
Description	<p>The subcategories specified the type of materials or services related to materials and can be epitomised by the following examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) Design services: designing materials such as leaflets, for example <a href="https://search.electoralcommission.org.uk//Api/Spending/Invoices/66521">https://search.electoralcommission.org.uk//Api/Spending/Invoices/66521</a></li> <li>ii) Campaign materials printing: any printing costs and printing services including leaflets, poster boards, correx boards, and photocopies, such as <a href="https://search.electoralcommission.org.uk//Api/Spending/Invoices/64593">https://search.electoralcommission.org.uk//Api/Spending/Invoices/64593</a></li> <li>iii) Paid leaflet delivery/postage: this includes any mailing costs, specific service providers as well as stamps such as <a href="https://search.electoralcommission.org.uk//Api/Spending/Invoices/65932">https://search.electoralcommission.org.uk//Api/Spending/Invoices/65932</a></li> <li>iv) Events costs/Venue hire: any mention of events from event production to venue hire such as <a href="https://search.electoralcommission.org.uk//Api/Spending/Invoices/64508">https://search.electoralcommission.org.uk//Api/Spending/Invoices/64508</a></li> <li>v) Creative content owned by a third party: any rights paid for third-party content such as <a href="https://search.electoralcommission.org.uk//Api/Spending/Invoices/67285">https://search.electoralcommission.org.uk//Api/Spending/Invoices/67285</a></li> <li>vi) Translation services: for the most part Braille and Welsh such as <a href="https://search.electoralcommission.org.uk//Api/Spending/Invoices/67684">https://search.electoralcommission.org.uk//Api/Spending/Invoices/67684</a></li> </ul>

Macro Category	Campaign Activity
Description	In this category we coded the few invoices related to activities that are part of a campaign mobilisation or action
Subcategories	Fundraising; Phone-banking
Description	<p>The subcategories specified two types of campaign activity and can be exemplified by the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) Fundraising such as <a href="https://search.electoralcommission.org.uk//Api/Spending/Invoices/62387">https://search.electoralcommission.org.uk//Api/Spending/Invoices/62387</a></li> <li>ii) Phone-Banking such as <a href="https://search.electoralcommission.org.uk//Api/Spending/Invoices/71364">https://search.electoralcommission.org.uk//Api/Spending/Invoices/71364</a></li> </ul>

Macro Category	Data & Infrastructure
Description	In this category we coded invoices related to the infrastructure required to carry out technology-based campaigns
Subcategories	Campaign database; Data services & analysis; IT infrastructure and support; Telecommunications services; Mobile application services; Email services; Website services
Description	<p>The subcategories specified the type of paid advertising based on specific channels specified and can be epitomised by the following examples:</p> <p>i) Campaign database or CRM software such as Nationbuilder or contact creator including  <a href="https://search.electoralcommission.org.uk//Api/Spending/Invoices/66633">https://search.electoralcommission.org.uk//Api/Spending/Invoices/66633</a></p> <p>ii) Data services &amp; analysis including data management, list building, voter file matching, and SWL server work such as  <a href="https://search.electoralcommission.org.uk//Api/Spending/Invoices/65620">https://search.electoralcommission.org.uk//Api/Spending/Invoices/65620</a></p> <p>iii) IT infrastructure and support including software, servers, cloud computing, and staff to support these activities as well as some equipment:  <a href="https://search.electoralcommission.org.uk//Api/Spending/Invoices/65012">https://search.electoralcommission.org.uk//Api/Spending/Invoices/65012</a></p> <p>iv) Telecommunications services including VoIP services and phone-hardware such as  <a href="https://search.electoralcommission.org.uk//Api/Spending/Invoices/65394">https://search.electoralcommission.org.uk//Api/Spending/Invoices/65394</a></p> <p>v) Mobile application services such as  <a href="https://search.electoralcommission.org.uk//Api/Spending/Invoices/64920">https://search.electoralcommission.org.uk//Api/Spending/Invoices/64920</a></p> <p>vi) Email services such as  <a href="https://search.electoralcommission.org.uk//Api/Spending/Invoices/65359">https://search.electoralcommission.org.uk//Api/Spending/Invoices/65359</a></p> <p>vii) Website services such as  <a href="https://search.electoralcommission.org.uk//Api/Spending/Invoices/64943">https://search.electoralcommission.org.uk//Api/Spending/Invoices/64943</a></p>

Macro Category	Production Services
Description	In this category we coded invoices related different parts of production services
Subcategories	Video editing/ production, Audio editing/production, Photo editing/ production
Description	<p>The subcategories specified the type of production based on specific channels specified and can be represented by the following examples:</p> <p>i) Video editing / production such as  <a href="https://search.electoralcommission.org.uk//Api/Spending/Invoices/68345">https://search.electoralcommission.org.uk//Api/Spending/Invoices/68345</a></p> <p>ii) Audio editing / production such as  <a href="https://search.electoralcommission.org.uk//Api/Spending/Invoices/66499">https://search.electoralcommission.org.uk//Api/Spending/Invoices/66499</a></p>

	<p>iii) Photo editing / production including photography of events  <a href="https://search.electoralcommission.org.uk//Api/Spending/Invoices/65563">https://search.electoralcommission.org.uk//Api/Spending/Invoices/65563</a></p>
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Macro Category	Consultancy
Description	In this category we coded invoices related to strategic advice to political campaigns (rather than the delivery of content and services)
Subcategories	Communication consultants, Design consultants, Social media strategy and consultancy, Data consultancy
Description	<p>The subcategories specified the type of consultancy based on expertise:</p> <p>i) Communication consultants such as  <a href="https://search.electoralcommission.org.uk//Api/Spending/Invoices/67236">https://search.electoralcommission.org.uk//Api/Spending/Invoices/67236</a></p> <p>ii) Design consultants such as  <a href="https://search.electoralcommission.org.uk//Api/Spending/Invoices/67102">https://search.electoralcommission.org.uk//Api/Spending/Invoices/67102</a></p> <p>iii) Social media strategy consultancy such as  <a href="https://search.electoralcommission.org.uk//Api/Spending/Invoices/66108">https://search.electoralcommission.org.uk//Api/Spending/Invoices/66108</a></p> <p>iv) Data consultancy such as  <a href="https://search.electoralcommission.org.uk//Api/Spending/Invoices/67270">https://search.electoralcommission.org.uk//Api/Spending/Invoices/67270</a></p>

Macro Category	Research
Description	In this category we coded invoices related to different types of research and intelligence gathering conducted by parties
Subcategories	Polling, Focus Groups, Ordinance Survey Data, Message Testing, Archival Research, Other forms of Research
Description	<p>The subcategories specified the type of research, exemplified in the following invoices:</p> <p>i) Polling such as:  <a href="https://search.electoralcommission.org.uk//Api/Spending/Invoices/68867">https://search.electoralcommission.org.uk//Api/Spending/Invoices/68867</a></p> <p>ii) Focus Groups such as  <a href="https://search.electoralcommission.org.uk//Api/Spending/Invoices/67712">https://search.electoralcommission.org.uk//Api/Spending/Invoices/67712</a></p> <p>iii) Ordinance Survey Data such as  <a href="https://search.electoralcommission.org.uk//Api/Spending/Invoices/68753">https://search.electoralcommission.org.uk//Api/Spending/Invoices/68753</a></p> <p>iv) Message Testing such as  <a href="https://search.electoralcommission.org.uk//Api/Spending/Invoices/66634">https://search.electoralcommission.org.uk//Api/Spending/Invoices/66634</a></p> <p>v) Archival Research such as:  <a href="https://search.electoralcommission.org.uk//Api/Spending/Invoices/65009">https://search.electoralcommission.org.uk//Api/Spending/Invoices/65009</a></p>

	vi) Other forms of research such as landscape analysis: <a href="https://search.electoralcommission.org.uk//Api/Spending/Invoices/65657">https://search.electoralcommission.org.uk//Api/Spending/Invoices/65657</a>
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Macro Category	Miscellaneous
Description	In this category we coded invoices related to services and products which were less relevant to our research question, and were otherwise clear but not connected to a specific campaign activity or communication style
Subcategories	Catering, Accommodation, Expenses, Office supplies, Physical security, Recruitment/staffing, Transport
Description	<p>The subcategories specified the type of production based on specific channels specified and can be epitomised by the following examples:</p> <p>i) Catering including take away delivery companies such as: <a href="https://search.electoralcommission.org.uk//Api/Spending/Invoices/66640">https://search.electoralcommission.org.uk//Api/Spending/Invoices/66640</a></p> <p>ii) Accommodation such as <a href="https://search.electoralcommission.org.uk//Api/Spending/Invoices/66515">https://search.electoralcommission.org.uk//Api/Spending/Invoices/66515</a></p> <p>iii) Expenses such as <a href="https://search.electoralcommission.org.uk//Api/Spending/Invoices/66963">https://search.electoralcommission.org.uk//Api/Spending/Invoices/66963</a></p> <p>iv) Office supplies such as <a href="https://search.electoralcommission.org.uk//Api/Spending/Invoices/64910">https://search.electoralcommission.org.uk//Api/Spending/Invoices/64910</a></p> <p>v) Physical security such as <a href="https://search.electoralcommission.org.uk//Api/Spending/Invoices/65248">https://search.electoralcommission.org.uk//Api/Spending/Invoices/65248</a></p> <p>vi) Recruitment/staffing such as <a href="https://search.electoralcommission.org.uk//Api/Spending/Invoices/65673">https://search.electoralcommission.org.uk//Api/Spending/Invoices/65673</a></p> <p>vii) Transport such as <a href="https://search.electoralcommission.org.uk//Api/Spending/Invoices/68382">https://search.electoralcommission.org.uk//Api/Spending/Invoices/68382</a></p>

Macro Category	Unclear invoice
Description	<p>In this category we coded all unclear invoices under a single value 'unclear'. Since this research, further analysis has been carried out to analyse the different reasons for the lack of clarity in invoices and the findings can be found in a detailed report published by International IDEA :</p> <p><a href="https://www.idea.int/publications/catalogue/regulating-business-election-campaigns">https://www.idea.int/publications/catalogue/regulating-business-election-campaigns</a>.</p>