

## PART A: GENERAL INFORMATION

### NAME

Provide the name of your RI:

- FULL NAME (maximum 200 characters with spacing) **Monitoring Electoral Democracy**
- ACRONYM (maximum 20 characters with spacing) **MEDem**

### TYPE

Identify the type of your RI: (dropdown)

- SINGLE-SITE
- DISTRIBUTED **Distributed**

### CLASS

Indicate the class of your RI: (dropdown)

- MAJOR UPGRADE OF EXISTING RI **Major upgrade**
- NEW RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURE
- GLOBAL RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURE

### TIMELINE

Indicate the timeline of the lifecycle of your RI:

- DESIGN: FROM <YYYY> TO <YYYY> FROM 2007 TO 2011
- PREPARATION: FROM <YYYY> TO <YYYY> FROM 2011 TO 2018
- IMPLEMENTATION (CONSTRUCTION): FROM <YYYY> TO <YYYY> FROM 2018 TO 2021
- OPERATION: FROM <YYYY> TO <YYYY> FROM 2021 TO 2035

### ESTIMATED COSTS

Summarise the real or estimated costs for your RI:

- CAPITAL VALUE: € <INSERT> **Nil**
- DESIGN: € <INSERT> **€2.3M (FP7 Infrastructure design funding)**
- PREPARATION: € <INSERT> **€1M (institutional expenditure – salaries etc)**
- IMPLEMENTATION (CONSTRUCTION): € <INSERT> **€1M (institutional expenditure – salaries etc.)**
- AVERAGE ANNUAL OPERATION COSTS: € <INSERT> **€3M per year**

### HEADQUARTERS

If available, indicate hosting institution and location of the Headquarters:

- FULL NAME (maximum 200 characters with spacing) **University of Gothenburg, Gothenburg, Sweden**

## WEBSITE

If available, provide the Internet address:

- URL: (maximum 200 characters with spacing) <http://valforskning.pol.gu.se/english/medem>

## IMAGE

Upload an image which represents your RI: (upload with limit 1 MB; length =12cm x height = 10cm; 300 dpi resolution)  
**(To be constructed/chosen)**

## BACKGROUND

Summarise the science background of your RI, the reference scientific community (-ies) and the current landscape: (maximum 1000 characters with spacing)

This RI will serve important subfields in political science, economics and sociology that study elections, parties, voters, the media, and the way in which these interact at election time to yield election outcomes. For 50 years, following the lead of Swedish research, scholars in increasingly more European countries have established National Election Studies (NESs) focused on large-scale random samples of voters. Currently some 27 European countries house such studies, six of them having studied all national elections conducted in their countries since the 1960s. Europe also houses a European Parliament election study that has studied these elections since 1979, and continuously since 1989. Recent election studies have broadened to cover candidates, manifestos and media. On these foundations a three-year Infrastructure Design Study, PIREDEU (Providing an Infrastructure for Research on Electoral Democracy in the European Union), was funded in 2007 by the EU's FP7 programme.

## DESCRIPTION

Summarise the general characteristics and aim of your RI, including the impact on the quality and quantity of European research in the main field of action and the interdisciplinary aspects: (maximum 2000 characters with spacing)

The main purpose of the proposed RI is to facilitate research that goes beyond voters to include details of the contexts within which those voters find themselves. This will make it possible for scholars to estimate the effects on election outcomes of the behavior of political actors such as political parties and media outlets whose numbers are too few within any given country to permit reliable assessments of their effects. Making data available that extends across much of Europe for as long a time span as possible promises an incomparable harvest of research findings illuminating fundamental questions that have come to the fore with the unpredictability of recent election outcomes and their increasing impact on trans-European policy – including even the future existence of the European Union itself. Answering such questions calls for the study of the claims and pronouncements of parties and their leaders (and would-be leaders) as well as of the media outlets and other sources that provide voters and potential voters with the frames within which their political views are developed and changed. Such research calls for harmonizing the data available to researchers, which is currently incomparable across countries due to different research traditions. Though the recent Europeanization of political science research has been remarkable, still many

of these election studies were established before any question of harmonization arose. The proposed RI will focus both on the post-harmonization of data already collected by national studies and also on the far more effective pre-harmonization of data to be collected by future studies. It will also build on the work of the PIREDEU design study to harmonize voter data with elite and contextual data across countries and over time to create a readily accessible database for future research on electoral topics. The impact of a database extending so broadly over space and time on future electoral research cannot be overstated.

## IMPLEMENTATION

Summarise the actions that led to the presentation to ESFRI, your plans for preparation and implementation in terms of schedules and milestones, including Preparatory Phase or other pre- implementation actions, acquisition of legal status: (maximum 1000 characters with spacing)

The PIREDEU Infrastructure Design Study (see Background), completed in 2011, would have led to an application to ESFRI for Roadmap Status had the roadmap not been temporarily closed. PIREDEU was instead followed by a variety of separate initiatives implementing aspects of the PIREDEU design (the True European Voter post-harmonization COST action, the ELECDEM FP7 training initiative, the founding of the Comparative Candidate Study, the Dutch NWO-funded POLICYVOTES post-harmonization action) that between them went far towards preparing the ground for an implementation phase for MEDem. The next major milestones are:

2017: Finalize preparatory phase: implement management structure (Annex B), acquire legal status

2019: Complete conceptual map for pre-harmonization

2020: Complete Competence Centre preparations and start post-harmonization efforts

2022: First national elections data within the MEDEM framework

2024: First European Parliament elections data within the MEDEM framework

## POLITICAL SUPPORT

### A) LEAD COUNTRY/ENTITY

Identify the Member State (MS), Associated Country (AC) or the EIROforum member, which leads the preparation of your RI:

- COUNTRY NAME FOR MS OR AC (limited dropdown list): Sweden
- Upload the Expression of political Support (EoS) of the lead country: (To be acquired)

### B) PROSPECTIVE MEMBER COUNTRIES/ENTITIES

Identify at least two MS and AC, which have submitted Expressions of political Support (EoS) signed by the national ministries responsible for RI. You may also identify any additional third country that has signed an EoS:

- COUNTRY NAMES (expected): Denmark, France, Germany, Netherlands, Portugal (expected)

FULL NAMES OF OTHER ENTITIES:

### C) INCLUSION IN NATIONAL RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURE ROADMAP (-S):

- COUNTRY NAMES (extensive dropdown list allowing for multiple entries) Switzerland, Portugal, . . .

Please specify, per country, the amount of funds earmarked for or already allocated to your RI in the framework of this (their) national RI roadmap (-s): (maximum 500 characters with spacing).

Unknown as yet

[We may need to make a qualified entry regarding countries that have supported NESs that are not yet recognized as national infrastructures.]

### FINANCIAL COMMITMENT

#### A) LEAD COUNTRY/ENTITY

Identify the authority from the lead country that has signed Expression of Commitment (EoC) or provided a Council resolution to financially contribute to the preparation and implementation:

- NAME (maximum 200 characters with spacing) Swedish Ministry of Education and Research . . . (expected)
- CONTACT PERSON (maximum 200 characters with spacing) (To be supplied)
- EMAIL & TELEPHONE (email & telephone fields) (To be supplied)

#### B) PROSPECTIVE MEMBER COUNTRIES/ENTITIES

Identify the authorities from prospective member countries that have signed an Expression of Commitment (EoC) and other entities that have provided a Council resolution to financially contribute to the preparation and implementation:

- NAME (maximum 200 characters with spacing) (To be supplied)
- CONTACT PERSON (maximum 200 characters with spacing) (To be supplied)
- EMAIL & TELEPHONE (email & telephone fields) (To be supplied)

#### C) COVERAGE OF REAL AND ESTIMATED COSTS

Specify the amounts that have already been financed or are fully agreed to be financed and specify the share of costs covered by the commitment (-s) for the real or estimated costs:

- CAPITAL VALUE: Nil (no capital value)
- DESIGN: €3.2M (already complete)
- PREPARATION: Nominal (largely complete)
- IMPLEMENTATION (CONSTRUCTION): €1M (expected)
- AVERAGE ANNUAL OPERATION COSTS: €3M (expected)

## PART B: SCIENTIFIC CASE

### SECTION 1: SCIENTIFIC EXCELLENCE

1.1 Identify the scientific field (-s) and - if applicable - the inter- or multidisciplinary scope of your RI:  
(maximum 500 characters with spacing)

Political Science, political behaviour, election studies; a sub-subfield that lies at the foundation of the scientific study of liberal democratic governance worldwide. It has inter-disciplinary scope, being of central interest also to subfields of economics, sociology and communications studies.

1.2 Outline the scientific vision and mission, its short and long term impact on the main research field (-s) and its potential impact on other fields - if any - as well as on innovation: (maximum 5000 characters with spacing)

#### **Mission**

Understanding voters, parties, and elites (and how they influence policy-making) is crucial to monitoring the functioning of electoral democracy in modern societies. The proposed research infrastructure for Monitoring Electoral Democracy (MEDem) in Europe (see Annexes A and B) aims to:

- **bring together** existing national and comparative data collection infrastructures/projects so as to link and coordinate existing and future data collections so as to support innovation in research on electoral democracies;
- **set standards** and develop instruments for future data collection to allow for comparative research,
- **increase accessibility** by a single data entry and access point in collaboration with a data archive;
- help **stabilize existing national election studies and allied projects** by connecting them to a stable European network of projects and scholars working collaboratively as well as to provide training and build capacity;
- provide **reports and information** to benefit stakeholders and the general public, based on research conducted in the wider academic community using MEDem data, on the functioning of electoral democracy in Europe.

#### **Concept, scientific vision, and potential impact**

Well-functioning elections lie at the foundation of modern liberal democracies as they provide for citizen representation in the executive and legislative branches of power. To understand in depth how citizens, elites, parliaments, governments and media interact and relate to each other in contemporary electoral competition is therefore central for the understanding of modern societies. Democracies face a number of very evident challenges. The future of the EU itself is put into question by popular sentiment as manifested in referendum and election outcomes. Fifty years of studying voting behavior has taught us much about voters' party choices, but recent electoral surprises seem to have been associated especially with new departures in media usage and with unconventional candidacies that affect the context within which elections take place. Such matters cannot be studied from within the confines of individual countries — confines that limit the extent to which context can vary. The proposed infrastructure will provide the means to address such questions, three examples of which are: (a) when do citizens believe "fake news" and when not? (b) When do changing economic conditions affect electoral support for political parties? (c) When can party leaders hope to influence voters and when do they rather need to bow to voter demands? To answer these questions and others like them takes sufficient examples of different media outlets, different economic conditions and different party leaders (see Annex B). A single country does not supply this need. Also, European democracies today are inter-related and inter-dependent and must be researched accordingly. To provide adequate variance in

the character of parties and candidates, and in how the media covers their activities and pronouncements, data is needed that spans multiple elections covering as many countries as possible over as long a time-span as possible.

Potentially suitable data already exist, not only regarding voters but also regarding parties, their candidates and manifestos, and (even if more sporadically) the media that reports on them. The proposed research infrastructure for Monitoring Electoral Democracy (MEDem) would release these studies' potential, currently made inaccessible by the idiosyncrasies of country- and topic-specific data collection and coding conventions.

MEDem will bring together scattered infrastructures, research initiatives, centres, and projects across Europe under one umbrella to facilitate and stimulate innovation in the study of electoral democracy. It will situate existing and future voting data within broader social and dynamic contexts of elite, party, and government activities as well as those of the media in its broadest sense, over the passage of time. In this way it will enhance research capacity for monitoring the legitimacy and well-functioning of dynamic electoral processes – topics of interest to scholars well beyond political science, including many in economics, sociology and media studies. Such topics have recently come to the fore because of the strong performance of populist parties representing illiberal political ideas. Because not all countries have seen similar developments, MEDem data might even permit scholars to devise political and institutional correctives for poor democratic performance.

The importance of these questions is widely understood, as is the need for appropriate data in order to address them. Given this context, the impact of the proposed infrastructure will be profound. See the Preface to the eBook at [http://www.piredeu.eu/Database/DOCS/PIREDEU\\_Audit\\_of\\_Democracy\\_2012.pdf](http://www.piredeu.eu/Database/DOCS/PIREDEU_Audit_of_Democracy_2012.pdf) and see the contents of that book for examples of the sort of research that can be conducted with a database such as the one proposed.

1.3 Describe if and how your RI corresponds to a long term science programme by a well-established science community and if and how your RI addresses a (inter- or multidisciplinary) scientific frontier opening novel possibilities in (several) research (fields): (maximum 2000 characters with spacing)

This is an application for ESFRI roadmap status by 25 national projects/infrastructures (hereafter “we”), many with longstanding funding arrangements and some with national roadmap status, that monitor electoral democracy in 24 European countries. We wish to build on our average 20 years experience of national-level data collection by harmonizing those data across our countries, releasing added value currently locked away beyond reach due to nation-specific measurement instruments. In seeking to transform ourselves into a European infrastructure we collaborate with a number of existing cross-national infrastructures, some well-established some nascent, that collect complementary comparative data. None of these as yet has ESFRI roadmap status.

National Election Studies (NESs) in many European countries have fielded mass surveys following elections conducted over the past half-century. These NESs, though each of them national in orientation, nevertheless have contributed to a growing body of literature regarding elections in general whose findings have been the subject of literally hundreds of books and thousands of articles in major international scholarly journals and presses. In recent decades this work has been extended to embrace elections to the European Parliament (EES) and to a worldwide consortium of election studies, the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES) upon which our proposed infrastructure will build. Many NESs have been post-harmonized through the True European Voter COST Action, which will feed into the implementation stage of the proposed infrastructure. Additional projects such as the Comparative Candidate Study (CCS), the ParlGov database of elections and government formations, the Chapel Hill Expert Survey, and Voting Advice Application usage data, are also central. A primary contribution of MEDem will be to consolidate, extend and release untapped value in these disparate efforts.

1.4 Identify the scientific leadership that was recruited to lead the preparation of your RI and elaborate how you will recruit and consolidate the scientific leadership and overall competences for the implementation and operation of the proposed RI: (maximum 500 characters with spacing)

A Special Meeting of the Consortium for European Research with Election Studies (CERES), attended by delegates from 28 European election studies, the CSES, CCS and EES, was held in Vienna in April 2017 to elect a Task Force overseeing the establishment of MEDem. That TF selected NES PIs that were willing to submit applications to their ESFRI delegations. Those leading scholars constitute the Management Board of MEDem and will recruit additional leadership, as needed, in the same manner.

1.5 Describe how the scientific concept of your RI was tested and found feasible and summarise the main findings concerning the scientific case from the design (and feasibility) study report and the feedback from the relevant scientific community (-ies): (maximum 5000 characters with spacing)

The PIREDEU Infrastructure Design Study conducted a Pilot Study of that design in order to test the scientific and technical feasibility of an infrastructure for collecting integrated and linked quality data needed to address fundamental questions about the representative, accountability and legitimacy functions of electoral processes. The pilot study tested the administration and coordination required for a centrally conducted research project that covered 27 EU member-countries at the time of the 2009 European Parliament (EP) Elections. Data were gathered on the attitudes and behaviour of some 27,000 EU citizens, on campaign strategies and issues agendas for 1,350 European Parliamentary candidates, on issue priorities and positions in 200 party manifestos, on campaign news coverage in 140 media outlets and contextual indicators for political and economic systems of all of the (then) 27 EU member countries.

These data were designed to form part of an integrated database encompassing all components of the study. For members of the academic community, the resulting prototype database has created unprecedented opportunities for cross-national research on electoral representation and behaviour, the role of the media, the emergence and transformation of party systems, and democratization. It has enhanced the attractiveness of Europe as an object of study and as a venue for comparative social science research. It also holds the potential, for other stakeholders, of opening a window onto processes of electoral democracy that have hitherto remained academic and obscure.

The 2009 EP elections provided the best venue available for testing aspects of the design that are completely new: above all the requirement that data be collected in comparable form across diverse topics (especially candidates, parties, and media) that could not be properly studied from within the confines of individual nation states.

In practice, as a trial research venue, an election to the European Parliament provided a particularly hard test for the infrastructure design. Such elections take place virtually simultaneously across the EU's member states, whereas national elections (the real focus of the proposed infrastructure) are staggered over time, occurring every few months in one EU country or another. Of course, PIREDEU proposed an infrastructure that would study not only national elections but EP elections as well, so this test was not unnecessarily hard. Still, the pilot study only partially tested cooperation from independent data providers, since (even if those providers were independent and located in different nodes across multiple countries) central funding for data collection was probably facilitative.

The major findings of the feasibility study (including the pilot data collection) can be grouped into technical, scientific and financial aspects. Additionally, we comment on the need for a permanent infrastructure:

**a. Scientific Feasibility** – The study demonstrated its scientific added value by bringing together scholars, practitioners and other professionals from across the world to exchange ideas and work with the integrated datasets to promote their research objectives, simultaneously sharing their concerns and visions about the future of this project. At the final user conference in Brussels (November 18-19, 2010), more than one in two (58%) of the papers explicitly linked two or more datasets from the pilot study. Moreover, about one in four attempted a link three, four or five datasets, whereas a further one out of four papers experimented with linking PIREDEU to external or private data collections. Many resulting papers have been published in professional journals and some of them were collected into an eBook ([www.piredeu.eu/Database/DOCS/PIREDEU\\_Audit\\_of\\_Democracy\\_2012.pdf](http://www.piredeu.eu/Database/DOCS/PIREDEU_Audit_of_Democracy_2012.pdf) )

**b. Technical Feasibility** – The scientific quality was supported through technical design aspects that allowed the technical and conceptual linking of concepts such as issue saliency and issue preferences. In order to achieve this, the main objectives of the infrastructure were to establish common coding categories for the separate study components in order to facilitate the creation of a cubed data relational database (detailed in the design study) that in the future could link these components together, through the use of several different levels of linking variables,

**c. Permanent Infrastructure** – There is an urgent need for the establishment of an infrastructure for European electoral research endowed with stable funding and capable of compiling, linking, disseminating, and presenting data in a co-ordinated and professional fashion. It is necessary that the permanent infrastructure include both national and European elections. The Consortium for European Electoral Studies (CERES) was established at the 2010 PIREDEU final conference in order to promote and facilitate the establishment of such an infrastructure.

1.6 Upload the design (and feasibility) study final report, if available: (upload with limit 1 MB)

Available on the MEDem website under the link to PIREDEU Final Report. See also Annex B for the proposed final MEDem Organization Chart; Annex C for the Work Plan; Annex D for the Financial Plan; Annex E for details of the institutions applying for political support in housing MEDem competence centres; Annex F for details of MEDem’s proposed interim and implementation phases.

## SECTION 2: PAN-EUROPEAN RELEVANCE

2.1. Describe if and how your RI addresses a gap in the current RI landscape in Europe (and beyond) and thus responds to unaddressed needs of user communities, i.e. describe the `uniqueness` of the RI. If not, describe which value your RI adds to the existing European research capacity in one or more fields of research and innovation: (maximum 2000 characters with spacing)

Fifty years of studying electoral voting behavior has yielded a firm grasp on the voting decisions of individual voters, but scholars need to be provided with a similar grasp on the activities of parties, candidates and media coverage: critical elements of the context within which elections take place. Recent electoral surprises seem to have been associated especially with new departures in media usage and with unconventional candidacies. Political life has until now generally been studied from within the confines of individual countries — confines that limit the extent to which context can vary. To provide adequate variance in

the character of parties and candidates, and in how the media covers their activities and pronouncements, data must be collected on multiple elections covering as many countries as possible over as long a time-span as possible. MEDem will bring together scattered infrastructures, research initiatives, centres, and projects across Europe under one umbrella so as to facilitate and stimulate innovation in the study of electoral democracy. It will enable researchers to study elections and representation within their broader social and dynamic context of party and government activities as well as those of the media in its broadest sense, monitored over the passage of time. It will enhance research capacity for monitoring the legitimacy and well-functioning of dynamic electoral processes – topics of interest to scholars well beyond political science, including economists, sociologists, those engaged in media studies, and others. Such processes have come to the fore in recent elections because of the strong performance of populist parties promoting illiberal political ideas. Because not all countries have seen similar developments, such an infrastructure might even provide the means whereby scholars could devise political and institutional correctives for poor democratic performance.

2.2 Indicate current infrastructures or services that are operational and accessible for the relevant science communities, if any, and explain why they are not adequate: (maximum 3000 characters with spacing)

An existing informal infrastructure, the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES) already coordinates data collection and harmonization by post-election mass surveys in Europe and elsewhere. Yet its limitations also highlight the added value of the proposed MEDem infrastructure. First, as an informal grouping of individual election studies, its permanence is not guaranteed. More importantly, the data it produces is harmonized only between the components of a specific study, not for successive studies over time and especially not across different sorts of data collections (candidate studies and media studies are not included). The European [parliament] Election Studies (EES) already collect centrally coordinated data on voter characteristics and behaviour across all EU member countries at the time of European Parliament (EP) elections. Except in the single case of the PIREDEU Infrastructure Design Study this effort has never had the funds to simultaneously collect data on manifestos, candidates and media needed for the research that MEDem will facilitate. The Comparative Candidate Study (CCP) already collects data on candidates standing for election, but its data collection instruments do not currently envisage the linkages that MEDem will facilitate. Various other international data collection projects probably would require little if any change to their coding practices in order to be incorporated within the MEDem data structure: the venerable Comparative Manifesto Project has coded European party manifestos for the past fifty years, the same is true of the somewhat younger Chapel Hill Expert Survey and the PARLDEM databases, but these too will gain enormously in the benefits they offer through being included in a database that links them to data of other kinds. The POLICYVOTES database constitutes a demonstration project for the linking of much of what MEDem will link (the most important omissions are NES, CCS and CMP data) and MEDem will build on that database, providing it with linkages to mass survey and other data collected in the context of ongoing election studies. The CESSDA-ERIC of European data archives will be central to MEDem's dissemination efforts. Deposit of MEDem data at GESIS is intended to make it seamlessly available throughout Europe. However, the benefits of CESSDA will only be felt once data has been collected and harmonized. In itself it will facilitate MEDem's work but not achieve it.

2.3 Explain why your RI is the most appropriate solution to address this need and what the added value is of performing the research activities within a RI instead of a research programme: (maximum 3000 characters)

The proposed research infrastructure will integrate and extend existing data resources, making them more encompassing of the phenomena under study and more accessible to researchers and others as part of a single data structure that can be accessed in terms of different *views* (projections into two-dimensions of what are

intrinsically a set of multi-dimensional phenomena). The RI will provide a data resource that facilitates research (including research programmes) but is not itself a research programme. It will

- **bring together** well functioning national and comparative data sources such as the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES), the Comparative Candidate Study (CCS), the Comparative Manifestos Project (CMP) and the PARLDEM database and provide means both to link their existing data resources and encourage the coordination of their future endeavors so as to stimulate innovation in research on electoral democracies;
- **set standards** and develop instruments for data collection to facilitate comparative research that employs data sources in conjunction with one-another to answer research questions that cannot currently be addressed. As importantly it will ensure the high-quality cleaning and documentation of data using common standards that simplify scholarly searches for data appropriate to answering such questions. It will also
- **increase accessibility** by providing a single data entry and access point in collaboration with the GESIS data archive. Building on the PIREDEU design study, this archive will work to create a cubed data structure for the harmonized MEDem data, a structure that facilitates access to and useability of the data. MEDem will also
- help **stabilizing existing national election studies and allied projects** by connecting them to a stable European network of projects and scholars working collaboratively in this field. It will encourage the foundation of new centres of excellence in EU member countries and Associated States so that these can contribute election studies for countries not currently covered by existing data collection programmes, as well as providing training for young researchers everywhere and (in these and other ways) build capacity for enhanced research into fundamental issues related to the good functioning of democratic governance in Europe. It will also
- provide **reports and information** on the functioning of electoral democracy in Europe to the wider community and public, repackaging for wider consumption academic studies conducted outside MEDem but based on MEDem data. Such reports may be especially valuable to governments and party leaders concerned about the way in which media (including new media) are being used by candidates and others for illiberal ends and about finding ways to address these and other threats to the well-functioning of the liberal democratic order. Only with data organized in the manner proposed for the MEDem database can these questions be readily addressed.

2.4 Describe how your RI contributes to the enhancement and realisation of the European Research Area (maximum 3000 characters with spacing)

MEDem would capitalize on the fact that the countries of Europe constitute a veritable “research laboratory” for addressing the research questions that currently are at the forefront of public and academic interest. We face a rare conjunction of circumstances in which the political problems faced by the EU both echo (or are echoed by) research questions high on the agenda of scholars who study elections and voters and also delineate the geographic boundaries within which that research will most appropriately be conducted, at least in the near term. We envision later expansion of the research area to global proportions, but the EU and associated states provide an excellent microcosm with which to start. In addition to harmonizing data to facilitate research (MEDem’s primary role), MEDem will also coordinate the training of young researchers, picking up the role previously played by the True European Voter COST action and, prior to that, the ELECDem Marie Curie Initial Training Network. MEDem will organize short courses to train researchers in cutting edge research methods that are needed in the use of hierarchical network data of the kind the MEDem will produce. It will provide training for advanced doctoral students and early career training for postdoctoral researchers. Further, it will itself conduct research directed at

improving the accessibility of the complex data structure that will house the data collections that it harmonizes and at designing and validating enhanced statistical methods for the analysis of those data. The coding and analysis of harmonized data presents many research problems in urgent need of study from a methodological perspective. MEDem's Head Office in Gottenburg, Sweden, with its historic links to Statistics Sweden, is well situated to direct and coordinate such research. In its early years, MEDem will implement a variety of harmonization methods and the data that MEDem generates will provide the means for statistical and substantive evaluation of these different methodological approaches with real-world data.

2.5 Describe how your RI will contribute to aligning national investments in your field (-s) at the European level: (maximum 3000 characters with spacing)

**[This question needs to be answered in respect of the specific country whose ESFRI delegation is being approached for support. Its contents should address existing election studies, candidate studies, media studies, manifesto studies and aggregate data studies that already receive, have received or could be expected to receive financial support from government and other sources, should suitable proposals for support be submitted. For a country that already supports a voter study and candidate study, MEDem will align these, providing added value from both investments as past studies are harmonized and future studies are brought into conformity through pre-harmonization under MEDem auspices. The same would be true for any past or future media studies, manifesto studies and aggregate data studies.] PLEASE TRY TO EXTEND THIS PASSAGE IN REGARD TO ELECTION-RELATED RESEARCH BEING CONDUCTED OR THAT YOU HOPE MAY ONE DAY BE CONDUCTED IN YOUR OWN COUNTRY.**

2.6 Describe how your RI will effectively (re-) orient resources from the relevant science communities and stimulate `joint programming`, e.g. contributing complementary instrumentation, activating partnerships, training of young researchers in the relevant field (-s) of science: (maximum 2000 characters with spacing)

Our proposed RI will bring together scholars who currently work in different subfields of political science, along with some economists sociologists and media studies scholars, studying each of parties voters and the media largely in isolation from scholars in the other subfields, though increasingly in collaboration with scholars who work in the same subfields elsewhere in Europe and the wider world. It will do so by focusing on existing trans-European and international collaborations, bringing them together under one umbrella infrastructure for data creation and coordination, which is MEDem. The feasibility study conducted under the aegis of PIREDEU already demonstrated the practicality of such collaboration and the willingness of scholars to invest in such capacity-building. Partnerships created at the time of that study endure and will be foundational in MEDem's implementational phase. The result will necessarily be a re-orientation of research efforts towards collaborative and cooperative data collection (and training in the usage of such data) as it becomes possible to answer fundamental research questions that currently are seldom even posed because of the perceived impossibility of addressing them.

2.7 Describe the (potential) linkages between your RI and existing (European) platforms, networks and other (ESFRI) RI, e.g. [European Technology Platforms \(ETP\)](#), [Joint Programming Initiatives \(JPI\)](#), [ERA-nets](#), [Public-Private Partnerships \(PPP\)](#) and projects under [FP7](#) or [Horizon 2020](#): (maximum 3000 characters with spacing)

MEDem is conceived as an infrastructure that releases added value precisely by linking existing platforms, networks, projects and national infrastructures. So its prime function is to harmonize and, where necessary, to create the linkages referred to in this question. We build our efforts on three major longstanding cross-national data-collection projects, the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES) along with the European [parliament] Election Studies (EES) and some 28 existing National Election Studies (NESs) several of which have been in existence for 50 years. To these we add recently- (within the past ten years) founded data collection efforts by the

Chapel Hill Expert Survey CHES), the Comparative Candidate Study (CCS) and a nascent consortium for coordinating the collection of media content cross-nationally. The methodologies we will employ to create these linkages have been pioneered by the FP7-funded PIREDEU Infrastructure Design Study referred to earlier along with the True European Voter (TEV) COST action. The training programme we envision for MEDem was pioneered by the Marie Curie Initial Training Network ELECDem that provided training for researching electoral democracy as an immediate outgrowth of the PIREDEU design study.

2.8 Describe how your RI will leverage European competitiveness in research and innovation, e.g. uniqueness of technical offer, advancement of technical standards, innovation in research process, effective impact on innovation of research products and setting reference standards in data management: (max 3000 characters)

European competitiveness in research on electoral democracy will be immensely strengthened by the provision of data that will for the first time enable scholars to study the decisions of voters within the context of the party and media systems that frame the choices that citizens make. The European Research Area is perfectly suited as a laboratory for such studies. All that it lacks are data collected across the full breadth of the ERA and coded in conformity with standards established in common with data that relates to within-country decision-making processes. The required standards will themselves be transformative, freeing data collection processes from national particularities based on historic distinctions in academic research traditions. The result will be tantamount to a Joint Programming Initiative where European countries fund the collection of national data that is then harmonized so as to permit trans-European research on the functioning of electoral democracy and challenges to its liberal foundations, whether from developments in media systems (focused information content in print, broadcast and internet media that reduces and may ultimately eliminate the common basis in shared facts that used to underpin democratic decision-making) and party systems (the development of anti-EU sentiment that forces some party systems to reorient themselves from the left-right alternatives that were historically dominant to new pro-anti EU alternatives that push traditional political divisions aside). These and other challenges to the liberal democratic order cannot be evaluated or countered from within the context of individual countries partly because the forces that introduce change are global in scope and partly because there is insufficient variation in party and media systems within any particular country for scholars to tease out the processes involved, distinguishing cause from effect. The research findings that flow from transformed data availability will be highly innovative and will stimulate similar innovations in other social investigations.

2.9 By testing your RI against the [ESFRI pan-European ex ante indicators](#), identify which indicators your RI meets and describe how: (maximum 3000 characters with spacing)

#### A. Indicators for ex-post evaluation

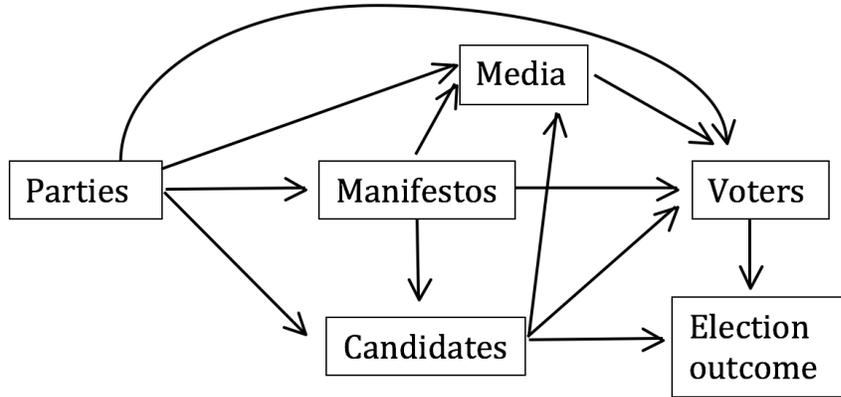
<b>0. Background Indicators</b>	<b>Value</b>
International agreement type: ERIC or other, or explicit international mission if funded by one country	Other
Geographic distribution of service points or nodes	Service points focused on GESIS; nodes in Denmark, France, Germany, Portugal, Sweden
Upgrade/reuse of national pre-existing resources	The largest cost will be to fund national election studies that, in the above countries and others, already have national funding.
Place in the landscape of RIs in Europe	Complementary and supplementary
<b>1. Membership Indicator</b>	<b>Value</b>
1.1 No. of MS/AC and global partners contributing to (a) construction, (b) operation and c) to equipment	(a) 0; (b) 5; (c) 0.
1.2 Structure of commitments to (a) construction and (b) operation/GBAORD	(a) none such; (b) added effort approximately 5%
1.3 Estimated value of national nodes contributing to a distributed RI to (b) operation/ GBAORD	Average of 500KEUR each.
<b>2. Usage Indicator</b>	<b>Value</b>
2.1 No. of users of the RI per country/ total no. of scientists per country (in the given field)	Approximately 10%
2.2. No. of user accesses	Approximately 800 per year
2.3. No. of users-partnerships (when relevant for the kind of RI)	Approximately 600 (most research in the field is collaborative).
<b>3. Network Indicator</b>	<b>Value</b>
3.1 No. of joint proposals/total users	Approximately 50% increase
3.2.1 Co-publication analysis: international	Approximately 10% increase in an already high level
3.2.2 Co-publication analysis: interdisciplinary	Approximately 50% increase
3.3 Fraction of non-European users (with non-EU affiliation)	Approximately 40% (most research on European electoral democracy originates in the USA).
<b>4. Excellence Indicator</b>	<b>Value</b>
4.1 Share publication in top 10 journals in each field of reference of respective facilities	Approximately 70%
4.2 Field normalised citation rate	1.3 (guestimate)
<b>5. Knowledge transfer Indicator</b>	<b>Value</b>
5.1. No. of PhD theses and post doctoral programmes/ citations (absolute and relative to total in each field) Normalised to total number of PhD theses in the given field based on Eurostat categorisation as an experimental indicator	10 per year; 5% of field
5.2 No. of patents and licenses based on the work of the RI, normalised to no. of patents and licenses in the field	0
5.3 No. of industrial users and projects with industrial cooperation	The election monitoring industry provides hundreds of users and tens of cooperation projects

## B. Indicators for ex-ante evaluation

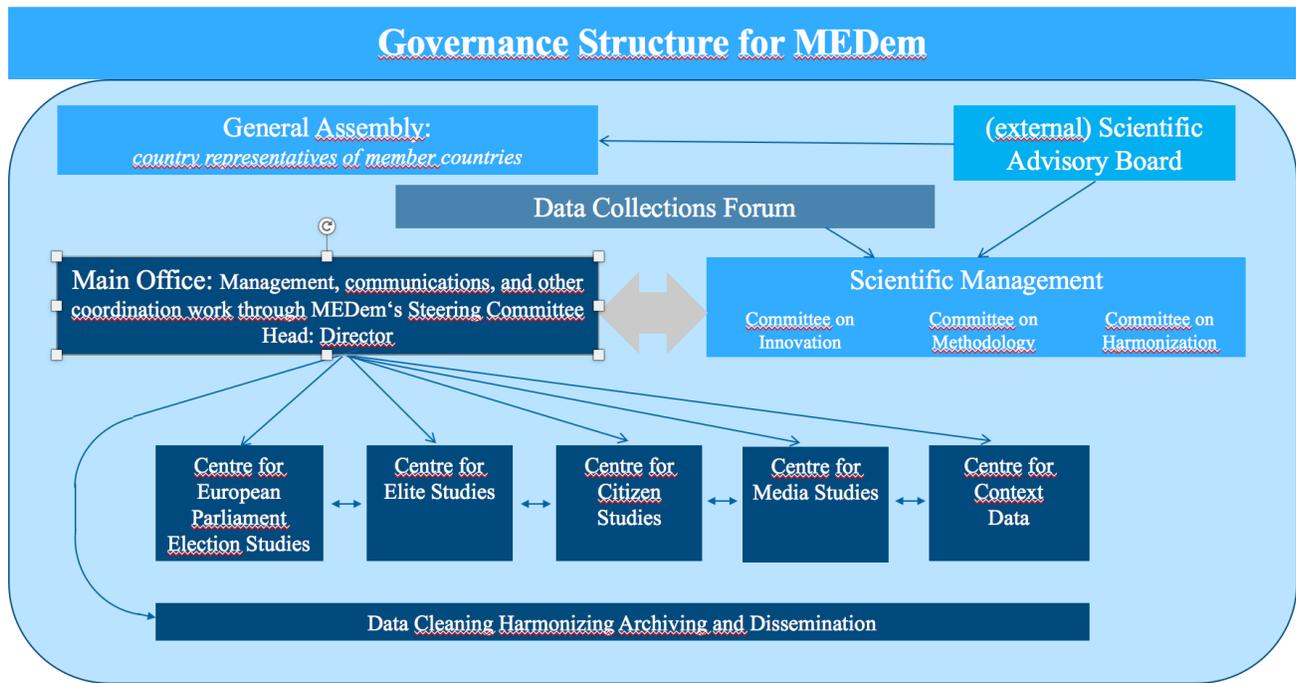
<b>0. Background Indicator</b>	<b>Value</b>
EC	
Previous design study project	Successfully completed
Previous preparatory phase	Successfully completed
Well established I3 or equivalent networking in the science community that needs the RI	High
Other	
Addressing new scientific challenges with unique / innovative approach strengthening European leadership	Yes
Upgrade of an existing operational RI to pan-European or Global RI	No
Re-orientation of existing science sites to host new RI	Yes
Landscape analysis of RI in the field and the territorial distribution of service points in Europe	Unavailable as yet

<b>1. Membership Indicator</b>	<b>Value</b>
1.1 No. of MS/AC and global partners engaged with determined share to (a) construction and (b) operation. Mission statement from ownership	(a) 0; (b) 5
1.2. Maturity of international organisation	CERES, the founding organization, has existed since 2011.
1.3. No. of nodes of Distributed RI, partner facilities	5
1.4. Structure of commitments to (a) construction and (b) operation/GBAORD	(a) NA; (b) To be determined
1.5. Estimated value of national nodes contributing to a distributed RI to (a) construction and (b) operation	(a) NA; (b) 500KEUR annually
<b>2. User strategy indicator</b>	<b>Value</b>
2.1 Fraction of possible users of the RI per country/ total no. of scientists per country (in the given field)	1/20
2.2 Scale of service (expected number & time of access per year w.r. size of reference community)	24-hr internet access for 10% of 2,000+ member research community
2.3 Data management and access structure	90% of investment
<b>3. Networking indicator</b>	<b>Value</b>
3.1 Number/size of users consortia willing / planning to contribute own resources to use the RI on contractual basis	200+ academic departments/institutes have members who will use departmental resources to access the RI on an open-access basis
3.2 Expected % of non-European users	Approximately 40%
3.3 Expressions of interest by diverse scientific communities	20 research institutions are expected to sign MoUs
<b>4. Excellence indicator</b>	<b>Value</b>
4.1 Attractiveness at international level of staff	High
<b>5. Knowledge transfer indicator</b>	<b>Value</b>
5.1 PhD programme agreements with universities	20 thesis and doctorate research projects associated with project staff; 200+ associated with users
5.2 Industrial involvement in pre-procurement studies and in the construction phase, including IPR	1 electoral monitoring industry member is participating in the implementation phase

**ANNEX A Major components included in the current MEDem design**



**ANNEX B Proposed organization chart for MEDem**



Each MEDem Competence Centre (Elite studies, citizen studies, media studies, contextual data)



Nodes for different competencies may be located at the same or different institutions