Campaigning in an unprecedented election: Issue competition in the French 2017 presidential election

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Online Appendix

Table A1. List of issue items

Positional issues	
Deregulate the job market	Keep current regulations in the job market
Lower pension age	Increase pension age
Reduce income differences	Don't reduce income differences
Limit economic globalisation	Encourage economic globalisation
Stay in the EU[†]	Leave the EU
Leave the Euro[†]	Stay in the Euro
Abandon nuclear energy	Keep using nuclear energy
Restrict access to abortion	Keep access to abortion
Legalise euthanasia	Keep euthanasia illegal
Repeal gay marriages	Keep gay marriages
Legalise soft drugs	Keep soft drugs illegal
Keep current immigration rules[‡]	Make immigration rules more restrictive
Restrict welfare for immigrants[‡]	Keep welfare for immigrants
Accept more refugees[‡]	Limit the number of refugees
Forbid Islamic veil in public spaces[‡]	Authorise Islamic veil in public spaces

Valence issues
  Make France count more in Europe
  Make EU more democratic
  Support economic growth
  Fight corruption
  Protect the environment
  Protect from the terrorist threat
  Make women's role more important
  Fight unemployment
  Improve education

† For the factor analysis, these two items are combined as an additive scale
‡ For the factor analysis, these four items are combined as an additive scale

Table A2. Candidate-specific effects of issue yield and issue salience on candidates' issue emphases (Tobit regression estimates).

	Model 4		Model 5	
	Coef.	Robust std. err.	Coef.	Robust std. err.
Issue yield	0.08***	0.00	0.07***	0.00
Systemic Issue Salience			0.38***	0.00
Candidates (reference: Macron)				
Arthaud	-0.02***	0.00	-0.12***	0.02
Dupont-Aignan	-0.00	0.00	-0.09***	0.01
Poutou	-0.01***	0.00	0.06***	0.00
Hamon	0.00***	0.00	0.09***	0.00
Fillon	-0.01***	0.00	-0.12***	0.01
Mélenchon	-0.03***	0.00	0.19***	0.00
Le Pen	-0.04***	0.00	0.02***	0.00
Interactions with issue yield				
Arthaud	0.36***	0.02	0.27***	0.01
Dupont-Aignan	-0.05***	0.01	-0.52***	0.01
Poutou	0.55***	0.03	0.46***	0.02
Hamon	0.03***	0.01	0.04***	0.00
Fillon	0.11***	0.01	0.08***	0.01
Mélenchon	0.21***	0.01	0.20***	0.01
Le Pen	0.15***	0.01	0.10***	0.01
Interactions with salience				
Arthaud			0.14***	0.02
Dupont-Aignan			0.16***	0.01
Poutou			-0.10***	0.00
Hamon			-0.13***	0.00
Fillon			0.15***	0.01
Mélenchon			-0.30***	0.01
Le Pen			-0.08***	0.01
Constant	0.02***	0.00	-0.25***	0.00
N	192		192	
AIC	-225.74		-277.95	
BIC	-222.48		-274.69	
Explained variance	0.10		0.33	

*p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001.
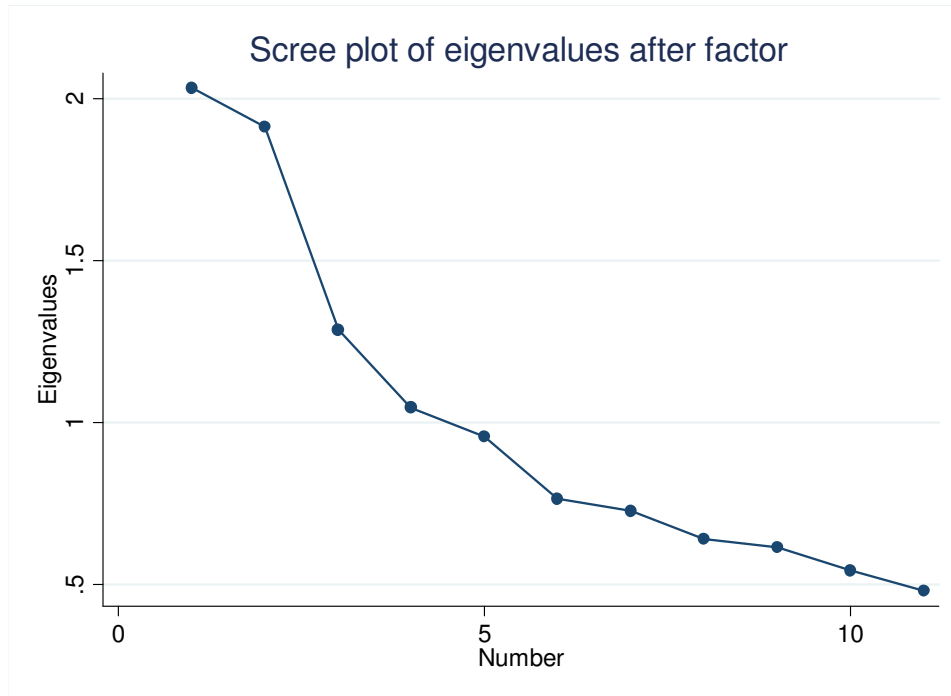*Note: Standard errors are clustered by party*

Figure A1. Screeplot for the factor analysis of respondents' issue positions

Comparison of Twitter data with alternative sources

This paper relies on Twitter data as a source of information about candidates' issue stances, based on the so-called 'press-release assumption' (De Sio *et al.* 2018). That is, we assume that candidates or parties will at least use Twitter as a way to communicate their stances and messages to the media. It does not mean that Twitter represents the main communication channel with voters, but that tweets should reflect the candidates' strategic decisions about which issues to emphasise. As further discussed by De Sio et al. (2018), this assumption appears validated by empirical research on parties' communication. Even though data is scarce, this appendix assesses the validity of our data, comparing Twitter data with alternative sources in the context of the 2017 French election. To the best of our knowledge, two other sources can be used to check the validity of our data: one from the Comparative Manifesto Project (CMP), the other from the POLCON project (www.eui.eu/Projects/POLCON), which is based on a content analysis of newspaper reports during the electoral campaign. While all of these data sources focus on the same period, there are important differences in timing, in the type of coded actors, and in the list of issues used to code actors' political statements. For the CMP dataset, the programmes of three presidential candidates have been coded, whereas we have to resort to their parties' programmes for the subsequent legislative elections in the case of the Parti Socialiste and Les Républicains. In the case of the POLCON project, the coding is at the level of parties or party groups (such as extreme-left or extreme-right parties).

While these are likely to be dominated by the corresponding presidential candidate (Mélenchon and Le Pen), it may also involve other party representatives. In addition, while the categories of issues used by these other two projects are relatively close to ours for some issues, the correspondence is far from being always perfect. Such a comparison should be taken cautiously, as the comparability of these various data sources to include them in the paper is imperfect. We provide here a comparison of the most salient issue categories by party. The following table shows that the most salient issues are generally the same for the major candidates in the manifestos, tweeter feeds, and newspaper articles dealing with the campaign. The table shows the correspondence of the top-5 salient issues in each data collection. Our Twitter data in the third column is marked in bold if it corresponds to a top-5 salient issue of the CMP, and in italics for correspondence with POLCON. Overall 20 of the 25 top salient candidates' issues on Twitter are found in one of the other database, and 10 out of 25 are found in both CMP and POLCON.

Table A3. Most salient issues in CMP, POLCON, and Twitter data, by party

Party	CMP	POLCON	Tweets
La France Insoumise	**Labor Group Positive** **Environmental Protection** **Equality Positive** **Market Regulation** **Education Expansion**	*Econ. liberalism* Democratic reform *Welfare* *Education* *Econ. Reform*	***Job market regulation*** ***Environment*** ***Income differences*** ***Education*** ***Nuclear***
Parti Socialiste	**Welfare State Expansion** Law and Order Positive **Equality Positive** **Labor Group Positive** Anti-Growth	*Econ. liberalism* Security Welfare *Europe* Democratic reform	***Income differences*** Education Environment *EU stay/leave* *EU democracy*
En Marche	Equality Positive Governmental and Administrative Efficiency **Education Expansion** **Labor Group Positive** **Welfare State Expansion**	*Welfare* *Econ. liberalism* Environment Democratic reform Cult. liberalism	**Education** Terrorism *Job market regulation* EU stay/leave ***Unemployment***
Républicains	**Law and Order Positive** **Labor Group Positive** Political Authority **Equality Positive** National way of Life positive	*Econ. liberalism* *Security* Democratic renewal Europe Environment	***Terrorism*** *Job market regulation* **Unemployment** Education EU stay/leave
Front National	**National way of Life positive** **Law and Order Positive** **Welfare State Expansion** **Labor Group Positive** **Protectionism Positive**	Econ. liberalism *Europe* ***Immigration*** Economic reform *Welfare*	**Terrorism** ***Immigration rules*** **Economic globalisation** *EU stay/leave* ***Welfare migrants***