

Management structure, milestones and procedures

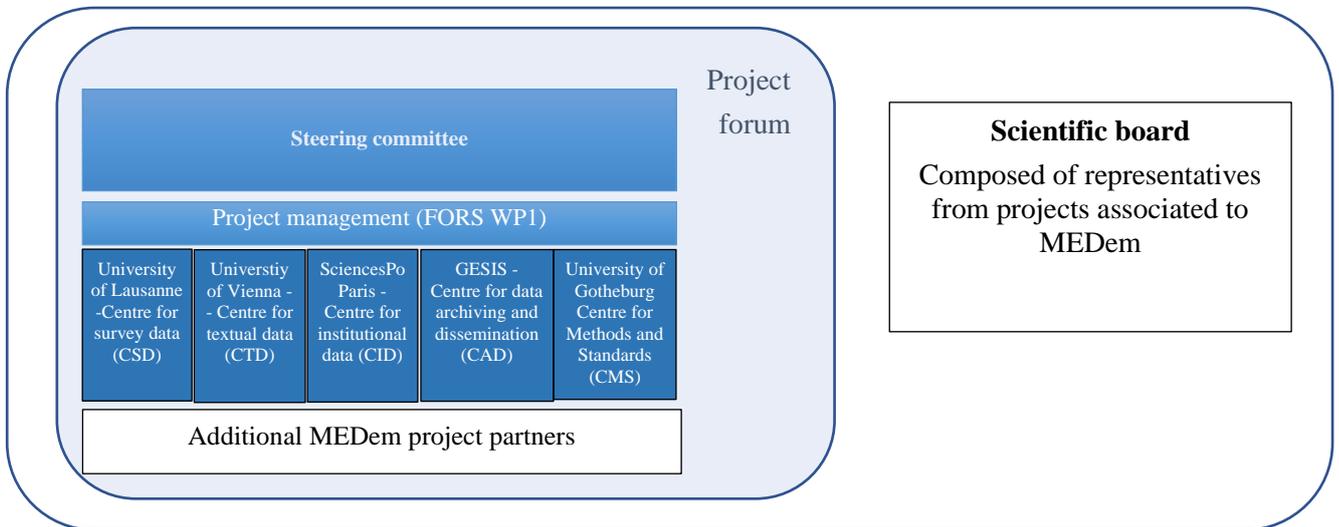
The success of the MEDem project depends not only on the commitment of the project partners but also on the motivated cooperation of a series of external partners such as the various national election studies and the set of associated comparative projects. In order to ensure this wider cooperation, the MEDem management structure will include two main levels:

- An *operational level*, consisting of project leaders at five institutions (Competence Centers), the project manager, and the project forum. The five individuals form the MEDem steering committee and are supported by the project manager. Their responsibilities include careful project management, coordination among internal and associated project partners, and day-to-day decision-making. The project forum offers the opportunity of feedback and regular reporting procedures.
- A *scientific level*, with a scientific board composed of representatives from projects attached to MEDem. This ensures the highest scientific excellence of MEDem and the widest acceptance of scientific decisions by the MEDem community.

The MEDem project governance has a triple goal:

- Offer centralized management to the project as a whole in a structured way, efficiently combining the work across work packages and internal and associated partners.
- Be a reference point for projects that wish to become associated to the work of MEDem at a later stage
- Ensure the long-lasting impact of MEDem's work in the wider democracy research community. It will achieve this through establishing governance components for a planned MEDem research infrastructure and evaluating the quality of cooperation achieved by these components among the research institutions and projects involved in MEDem, so as to be able to recommend desired improvements, if any.

MEDem Project structure



The operational level:

At the *operational level*, the following bodies have different roles:

- The MEDem *steering committee* consisting of members from five partner institutions.
- The *project management* will be located at the headquarter institution and responsible for running the project.
- The *project forum* for MEDem includes all project partners in addition to the steering committee.

The *steering committee*, will be formed with one representative from each of the competence centers: FORS, SciencePo Paris, GESIS and the Universities of Gothenburg and Vienna. Those institutions are among those that have been coordinating together since 2017 to advance the development of MEDem. Contributing to this development, MEDem will serve as an integrating project. The various MEDem competence centers designed during these years by the MEDem community under the guidance of this committee are intended to endure as components of MEDem.

The design for MEDem leverages the broadest range of knowledge, skills, infrastructures and networks to deliver maximum impact long-term for the democracy research community. The division of labour among the steering committee institutions results from reflection on how to adequately structure the future distributed infrastructure according to basic functions and tasks. This is either related to the



coordination and data integration of projects around specific data types (three centers: Survey data, Textual data, Institutional data) or around specific functions (a central data hub for data archiving and data dissemination, a standards and methods center).

In collaboration with the management team, the steering committee:

- Is in charge of the overall coordination and operation of the project;
- Ensures that deliverables are handed in on time by the different project components,
- Prepares and validates the scientific reports and the financial reports:
- Approves the agenda and relevant documentation of the Scientific Board;
- Coordinates, with the project partners and centres, the management of all work related to MEDem;
- Prepares the agenda for the forum meetings;

The steering committee will hold videoconference meetings monthly, as has already been the case since April 2017. The MEDem coordinating institution will support the Steering Committee with the management team (project manager and administrator).

The *project management* during the MEDem project phase will be ensured by the director of the coordinating institution who will also chair the steering committee. A full time project coordinator will be hired and will be supported by a part-time administrator. The FORS director is directly involved in MEDem and will ensure the smoothness of the transition to this new management structure.

The *project forum* for MEDem includes all project partners in addition to the steering committee. These meetings will be held twice a year through video conference. In those meetings the project partners report on progress with their workpackages and deliverables and adjustments will be made if needed.

The scientific level:

The *scientific board*, will be in charge of all major scientific decisions. Integration of associated projects is a key element. It is important that associated national and comparative projects retain ownership of MEDem and, to that end, they are represented on the scientific board. The scientific board will be composed of members delegated from the more established comparative projects involved in MEDem. At this stage these comprise the CSES, CCS, CAP, MAPOR, CHES, EES, EES, and EAP. Three representatives from national election studies will also become part of scientific board. The scientific board will be complemented by 3-4 leading academics of democracy research not directly involved in MEDem.

The scientific board meetings will be held twice a year. The meetings will be prepared by the Headquarters institution. The Scientific Board (SB) has the ultimate scientific responsibility and decides on all scientific issues related to MEDem. The Scientific Board will:

- Assess on a regular basis the services offered by MEDem and advise on the progress of the work;
- Ensure the overall scientific quality of all MEDem operations at large and decides on the future scientific direction of MEDem more generally;
- Take decisions regarding standards of data integration, data collection and data comparability (methodological standards, measurement and coding standards including translation of instruments);
- Guide the establishment of procedures for innovation and the inclusion of new instruments across different sub-fields of MEDem, which are to be included in one or several MEDem components;
- Establish committees that will provide direction to the competence centres regarding specific harmonization procedures.

In addition to the project structure above, *full consortium meetings* will be organized with all the projects and staff involved (including members of the scientific board). The goal of these meetings is to develop a shared vision of the project and discuss the direction being taken by the MEDem project with the MEDem community at large.

MEDem comparative projects

Existing comparative projects continue to be independent projects and they constitute the main building blocks of MEDem. Comparative projects may have national projects as members, that we refer to as "data collection nodes". All MEDem comparative projects have rights and obligations. They shall,

- Ensure the appropriate functioning and funding for their own endeavour;
- Contribute to the development of joint standards and (jointly with their data collection nodes, if any) supervise coordination of their existing data collections through MEDem, following jointly decided coding and methodological standards that ensure the harmonization that allows for comparative (cross-national and cross-project) research;
- Commit to making resulting data available free of charge and without any embargo,
- Nominate members to the Scientific Board;
- Commit to open and transparent procedures for the definition of future data collections and to ensure that the scientific community can fully profit from the data collections,
- Sign an agreement between MEDem and the project that defines rights and duties of both partners;



- May receive funding from MEDem for parts of their operations.

The following comparative projects have been involved in the discussion to establish MEDem and are expected to become part of MEDem and associated MEDem partners (non-exhaustive list):

- Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES)
- Comparative Agendas Project (CAP)
- Manifesto project (MARPOR)
- Comparative Candidate Surveys (CCS)
- VAA Research Network - Data on Party Positioning
- Chapel Hill Expert Surveys (CHES)
- European [Parliament] Election study (EES)
- Party Facts
- Parliaments and Governments Database (ParlGov)
- Constituency-Level Election Archive (CLEA)
- Executive Approval Project (EAP)
- National Election Study Network
- Media Research Network
- Parliamentary Research Network

The basis for inclusion into MEDem is an already comparative focus and a coverage of many countries. While some projects are well developed in this respect, others will need to integrate more in the future.

- *National Election Studies Network (NES)*. NES exist in many countries, some of them for a very long time, although with varying degrees of institutionalization. Because of their importance in their national academic environments and their long tradition, national election studies are a central pillar of the MEDem data collection. There is therefore also a special emphasis on bringing European election studies and election study data together in a more structured way.
- *The Media Research Network*. Different important national and comparative projects exist already around the study of media and social media based on the analysis of textual data, however these projects have a limited focus in time and the number of countries included. Also the analytical and methodological approaches how to collect and analyse textual data are expanding rapidly. MEDem will facilitate the integration of the research community focusing on media and textual data and the development of shared standards and approaches.



- *The Parliamentary Research Network.* As around media research, work on parliamentary research has very many research initiatives, but not yet developed into a stable longer-term comparative project with many countries included. The dialogue on how to build such a component in the future has already started and will continue in the framework of MEdem.