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# ICTs & democratic experimentation: The spread of Voter Advice Applications

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# ICTs and democratic innovation matrix

<b>Material dimension: e-techniques</b>	<b>Ideational dimension: Aspects of democracy promoted</b>			
	<i>Increasing Transparency</i>	<i>Increasing Participation</i>	<i>Increasing Deliberation</i>	<i>Increasing Contestation</i>
Government website	x			
Accessibility	x			
Webcasting	x			
RSS/Podcast	x			
Candidate's Blog	x			
e-Voting		x		
e-Consultation		x		
e-Budgeting		x		
e-Petition		x		
e-Initiatives		x		
Forum (unmonitored)			x	
Forum (monitored)			x	
Q&A interaction (audio/visual)			x	
Alternative media (Indymedia)				x
Online enabled boycott				x
Virtual demonstration				x
Social media (mobilisation)				x

# Where VAAs currently fit in the matrix

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## Importance

Highly popular tools (user numbers sometimes in millions, up to 40% electorate). Evidence that usage boosts political participation, particularly electoral turnout, especially among young people.

# Voter Advice Applications (VAAs) cont.

## Types of VAAs and promoters

Can be either (i) Candidate based (e.g Switzerland) or (ii) Party based (e.g. Germany)

Typically promoted by civil society and/or academic (but commercial examples too); requires media partners (although sometimes exclusively via social media)

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## Results

After responding to aprox 30 policy questions, users are rewarded with an output showing how close they are to various parties/candidates (bar charts, scatterplots, etc).



# Questionnaire pages

 EUvox

← ————— →

**FINANCES AND TAXES**

The EU should acquire its own tax-raising powers.

**Completely agree**   **Agree**   **Neither agree nor disagree**   **Disagree**   **Completely disagree**



**No opinion**

[More info](#)

arrow.

**QUESTION 1**

How competent to govern the country do you judge the following parties? Please specify your scale where 0 means 'not at all competent' and 10 means 'very competent'.

**QUESTION 2**

How probable is it that you will ever vote for the following parties? Please specify your views on the drop d where 0 means 'not at all probable' and 10 means 'very probable'.

[More info](#)

research by taking a moment to answer these questions. If you prefer not to answer simply "true" button.

qualification you have? — Please Select —

feel closest to? — Please Select —

election, which party did you vote for? — Please Select —

trious, which party do you intend to vote for? — Please Select —

ason for voting for your party of choice? — Please Select —

[More info](#)

**QUESTION 1**

In political matters people talk of "the left" and "the right" with regard to the economy. Being on the left indicates a preference for a greater role of the state in regulating the economy whereas being on the right indicates a belief in the free market with minimum state intervention. If the 0 in the scale below represents the mid-point, please indicate where you would place yourself.

economic left ————— economic right

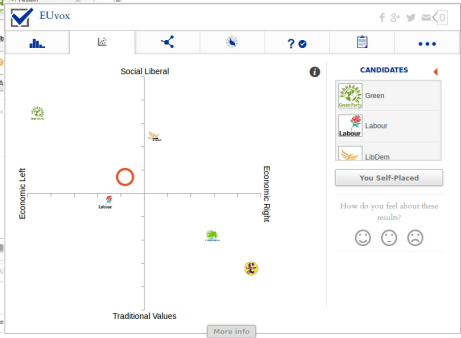
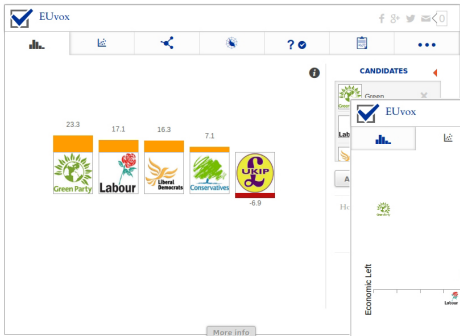
**QUESTION 2**

In political matters people talk of being "conservative" and "liberal" with regard to social values. Being socially conservative indicates a preference for traditional values (such as the family, patriotism, law and order) whereas as social liberals place less emphasis on tradition and order, are more tolerant of alternative lifestyles, and are more cosmopolitan in their attitudes. If the 0 in the scale below represents the mid-point, please indicate where you would place yourself.

social conservative ————— social liberal

[More info](#)

# Results pages



Party A

Green Party Labour Liberal Democrats Conservatives UKIP

Legend: Same side of argument (Green), At least one "neither agree nor disagree" (Orange), Wrong side (Red)

**Green**

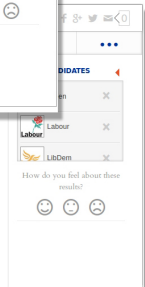
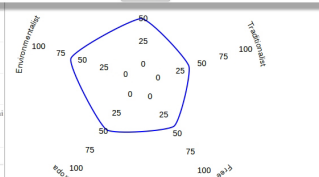
Social programmes should be maintained even at the cost of higher taxes.  
You: Agree | Party: Completely agree

Greater efforts should be made to privatise healthcare services in the UK.  
You: Disagree | Party: Completely disagree

State subsidies for crèches and child care should be increased substantially.  
You: Neither agree nor disagree | Party: Completely agree

Immigration policies oriented towards skilled workers should be encouraged as a means of fostering economic growth.  
You: Agree | Party: Completely agree

Immigration into the UK should be made more restrictive.



# Prospects & Perils

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- More monitoring and scrutiny required [public regulatory]
- Data protection and security issues

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(3) Future developments:

- From VAA 1.0 > VAA 2.0 [Dynamic, rather than Static]
- From VAA > CEP [Citizens' engagement platform, rather than an app during elections]