

Data Release Note: A Qualitative Approach to Affective Polarization, Coded Open-Ended Survey Question Responses

Ambroos Verwee^{1,2} (corresponding author)

Henry Maes^{2,1}

Lien Smets^{1,2}

¹Vrije Universiteit Brussel

Pleinlaan 2, 1050 Elsene, Belgium

²Université Catholique de Louvain

Place de l'Université 1 1348 Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium

Structure

- 1. Original Survey Data: NotLikeUs*
- 2. Open-ended Survey Question*
- 3. Developing the Codebook*
 - 3.1 Interpreting open-ended survey questions*
 - 3.2 Dealing with trait-related groups*
- 4. Coding Process*
- 5. Intercoder Reliability*
- 6. Data Structure & Variables*
- 7. Data Availability Statement*
- 8. Funding Information*
- 9. References*

1. *Original Survey Data: NotLikeUs*

This research note introduces a manually coded extension to the original Belgian panel survey data (N = 9407) collected in 2024 by the NotLikeUs consortium (Eck et al., 2025). The original data collection was centered around the 2024 Belgian elections and collected in four waves. The first wave (W1) took place in January 2024 before the start of the campaign, the second (W2) was held in May 2024 during the campaign. The third wave (W3) was held in June, right after the Federal, Regional and European elections that took place on June 9th. Later that year, on October 13th, the Belgian provincial, municipal and district elections were organized, after which the final wave (W4) of the panel survey was conducted in November 2024. The survey was conducted in all three Belgian regions – Brussels, Flanders and Wallonia – although Brussels was only included in the design from the second wave onwards. For more detailed information, see the original dataset:

Eck, B., Michel, E., Lefevere, J., Pilet, J.-B., Celis, K., Claes, E., Rihoux, B., Van Haute, E., Walgrave, S., Close, C., Baudewyns, P., Van Ingelgom, V., Severs, E., Kern, A., Wauters, B., & Dodeigne, J. (2025). NotLikeUs Panel Survey Dataset Belgian 2024 Elections [Data set]. Social Sciences and Digital Humanities Archive – SODHA.

<https://doi.org/10.34934/DVN/KYWPSO>

Besides conducting an electoral panel survey focused on a range of classic political attitudes and behaviors, the objective of the NotLikeUs project was to research affective polarization, citizens' perceptions of differentness and similarity (PoDS) towards one another, and their dissatisfaction with politicians. As a case, Belgium provides fertile ground to get a deeper understanding of the study of inter-group conflict. Its political history and transformation make it more than suitable to test the prevalence (or absence) of different lines of conflict, since it is characterized by many salient divides, such as a linguistic divide between Flanders (Dutch-speaking) and Wallonia (French-speaking) (Deschouwer, 2009), partisan divides (van Erkel & Turkenburg, 2022; Westwood et al., 2018), universalism-particularism divide (Delespaul & Swyngedouw, 2023), and so on.... To that end, the panel survey contained an open-ended question asking respondents about the groups they like and dislike. The purpose of this question was to innovative and expand the field of affective polarization using a more inductive methodology. In this data release note, we will extensively discuss the open-ended question, the context around it, the coding process and the intercoder reliability.

2. Open-ended Survey Question

This dataset is based on the coding of responses to an open-ended survey question administered in Wave 1 (January 2024, approximately five months before the elections) and Wave 3 (June 2024, immediately after the federal and regional elections). The design of the open-ended survey question builds on a growing interest in such items to study affective polarization, in particular to capture a more inductive description of party supporters by respondents (e.g. Rothschild et al., 2019; Zollinger, 2024). We contribute to this methodological effort by asking respondents, purposefully without referring to partisans, to tell us about the groups in society they like and dislike.

In this section, we invite you to reflect on recent events that have evoked negative and/or positive feelings about certain groups of people in society. We acknowledge that everyone's experiences are unique, and sometimes events we witness or hear about can shape our perceptions.

Can you indicate in your own words which groups in society you...

Like

Dislike

Figure 1. English translation of the open-ended question

The question was administered in French or Dutch, depending on respondents' language preference (see Table 1 for the original wordings). Both the "like" and "dislike" prompts were presented on the same page, allowing respondents to provide answers simultaneously (see Figure 1 for an English translation and the survey layout).

Although this open-ended question was not the very first item in either wave, it was positioned as early as possible in the survey to attenuate priming effects. In Wave 1, it followed a limited set of general questions (socio-demographics, vote choice, media use, policy satisfaction, and perceptions of several social groups and party electorates), while in Wave 3 it was preceded by core political attitudes and behaviors (e.g., turnout, political trust, issue salience, and reactions to electoral outcomes). Furthermore, we ensured that this item would initiate the battery of questions related to affective polarization to limit priming effects specifically related to the phenomenon. As such, we consider that the open-ended question still captures relatively spontaneous considerations, while allowing for a degree of ecological validity in how respondents articulate their views within a realistic survey context. For full

transparency, the dataset preserves the exact order of questions in each wave, enabling a precise assessment of potential priming effects.

Table 1. *Open-ended question in French and in Dutch*

French version	Dutch version
<p>Dans cette section, nous vous invitons à réfléchir à des situations récentes qui ont pu susciter des sentiments négatifs et/ou positifs à l'égard de certains groupes de personnes dans la société. Nous reconnaissons ici que les expériences de chacun et chacune sont uniques et que parfois certains événements dont nous sommes témoins ou entendons parler peuvent façonner nos perceptions.</p> <p>Pouvez-vous indiquer, avec vos propres mots, les groupes de la société que vous...</p> <p>1. Aimez bien : ____</p> <p>2. N'aimez pas : ____</p>	<p>In dit gedeelte nodigen we je uit om na te denken over recente gebeurtenissen die negatieve en/of positieve gevoelens hebben opgeroepen over bepaalde groepen mensen in de samenleving. We erkennen hier dat ieders ervaringen uniek zijn, en soms kunnen gebeurtenissen waarvan we getuige zijn of waarover we horen onze percepties vormen.</p> <p>Kunt u in uw eigen woorden aangeven welke groepen in de samenleving u...</p> <p>1. graag hebt: ____</p> <p>2. niet graag hebt: ____</p>

3. *Developing the Codebook*

We built on the codebook developed in a previous collective publication (Maes et al., 2025), which distinguishes between vertical resentment (along an elite vs. people axis) and horizontal polarization across a broad range of groups (e.g., partisan supporters, social groups, and opinion-based groups). This codebook was developed through the re-analysis of focus groups conducted in Belgium between 2019 and 2021, with the goal of expanding the conceptualization of affective polarization beyond partisan divides to include social and non-partisan political groups, while remaining attentive to the constructed and fuzzy nature of group boundaries. Our exhaustive approach to the socio-political groups mobilized by participants provided a rich and context-sensitive starting point. Building on this, we restructured this initial codebook to ensure better coherence, notably by reducing the number of levels and codes under broader labels. We retained the distinction between vertical and horizontal polarization and drew on Röllicke's (2023) distinction between partisan, ideological, and politicized social groups. Using this original codebook, the three first authors

conducted three rounds of coding on a subset of 250 liked and 250 disliked groups, during which the codebook was inductively expanded to incorporate groups mentioned by respondents. This constituted the first step of an iterative process, in which we had to address two main challenges: (1) the extent to which respondents' answers could be interpreted beyond their literal wording; and (2) the unexpected salience of answers relating to trait-based groups. Once we adapted the codebook to these challenges, as is explained below (3.1 & 3.2), the codebook was finalized through three successive rounds of refinement. During every round, the three author-coders each coded the same set of responses with the goal of clarifying codes progressively through explicit definitions and illustrative examples, allowing ambiguities to be resolved and interpretations to be aligned among coders. For the coding of the actual dataset, student coders were trained and hired. We reflect on the finalization of the codebook and final coding more in section '5. Intercoder Reliability'.

3.1. Interpreting open-ended survey questions

The development of a clear-cut codebook was an iterative process, structured around three decision rules aimed at dealing with interpretation: empirical salience, contextual knowledge, and analytical relevance. First, coding decisions were grounded in the recurrence of references in the data. Categories were created when a given group appeared sufficiently often or when several closely related groups could be aggregated under a meaningful umbrella term. Conversely, low-frequency references were either subsumed under broader categories or not retained as standalone codes. Second, we relied on contextual knowledge to solve ambiguities. The research team, composed of Dutch- and French-speaking Belgian researchers and building on prior work on focus group material, relied on its familiarity with the Belgian socio-political context and with respondents' use of group labels. Third, we incorporated analytical considerations linked to our research interests, while cross-checking these against empirical salience. This allowed us, in some cases, to interpret responses beyond their face value, particularly when dealing with implicit references (e.g., race). In practice, coding decisions often result from the combination of some of these three principles (see Table 2. for concrete applications).

Table 2. *Interpretation guiding principles and illustrations*

Coding case	Coding decision	Principles	Rationale
Respondents rejecting the question (“like all groups”, “none”)	Creation of a “pushing back on the question” code	Saliency	Recurring pattern justified a dedicated category
Party vs supporters	Single “party group” category (no distinction)	Saliency	Mentions of supporters alone too infrequent to justify separation
“People who blame young people”	No age-based category created	Saliency	Insufficient frequency; alternative coding strategy used
Sportive people	No sportive category created	Saliency	Insufficient frequency
Named politicians	Coded as “politicians” rather than linked to party	Context	Based on how respondents refer to individuals vs parties
Overlap between party labels and ideological terms (e.g. <i>Ecolo</i> / <i>écologistes</i> , <i>Groen</i> / <i>groenen</i> , “liberals”)	Distinction between party and ideological group depending on wording	Context	Decisions based on common usage in the Belgian context
“People who are integrated”	Coded as “white/autochthonous” (with limits)	Context + Analytical	Interpreted as implicit reference to majority norms and whiteness; caution to avoid overcoding (e.g. language learning not included)
“Racists” / “people who hate migrants” and similar items.	Grouped into a single category	Context + Analytical	Captures a broader exclusionary orientation beyond literal wording
Gender & sexuality groups	Included as categories	Analytical	Reflects researcher’s interest.
Specific area-based groups	Included as categories	Analytical	Reflects researcher’s interest.

3.2. *Dealing with trait-related groups*

Perhaps our most fundamental addition to the codebook was that of trait-related groups. Upon investigation of the data, we quickly noticed the prominence of groups defined by personality traits, which accounted for roughly 30% of the sample. The concept of personality traits proved particularly useful in making sense of responses that initially seemed elusive, such as “people who lie,” “considerate people,” or “lazy people.” Understanding these answers in terms of traits allows us to capture dispositions that are perceived as broad, stable, and enduring characteristics of personality. Additionally, we build on contributions in political psychology that suggest implementing the study of personality traits in the political arena given their capacity to account for political behavior (Dinesen et al., 2014; Gerber et al., 2011;

Mondak & Halperin, 2008). The use of personality traits in the study of affective polarization is not new, with early contributions relying on a diverse set of trait ratings, such as patriotism, intelligence, honesty, open-mindedness, and generosity, or conversely hypocrisy, selfishness, and meanness, as indicators of partisan bias (Iyengar et al., 2012). Over time, however, this approach has been refined through the adoption of more systematic frameworks, most notably the Big Five model of personality. The Big Five captures five broad dimensions, openness to experience, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism, that have become a standard in personality psychology for structuring individual differences (Widiger, 2015). Recent contributions building on a more systematic approach of personality highlight that these traits can meaningfully predict affective polarization (Luttig, 2018; Webster, 2018), further motivating our integration of trait-based categories into our codebook.

In our first iteration of our codebook, we relied on the HEXACO personality model, an alternative personality model to the Big Five. The HEXACO model extends the Big Five by introducing a sixth dimension, Honesty-Humility, alongside Emotionality, Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, and Openness to Experience. Besides the empirical relevance of such a model, in particular because of the importance of responses pertaining to the idea of Honesty, HEXACO is more suitable for cross-linguistic and cross-cultural contexts (Ashton & Lee, 2007), as is the case in Belgium. Relying on lexicometric accounts¹ of such models, we coded respondents' answers using the adjective lists associated with each personality trait (Ashton, Lee, & Goldberg, 2004; Ashton, Lee, Perugini, et al., 2004), distinguishing between high and low perception of each trait. However, this proved limited. Some categories were empty, thus analytically insignificant (e.g., emotionality), while others collapsed substantively distinct attributes into a single category. For instance, Openness to Experience grouped traits such as being 'critical', 'intelligent', and 'tolerant'; which were sufficiently salient in our codebook to warrant separate distinctions.

We therefore adopted an abductive approach to the analysis of personality traits. On the deductive side, the initial coding was informed by the HEXACO model, which inevitably shaped our analytical framework. At the same time, however, the coding process was primarily inductive. The first two author-coders independently worked on the same subsample of trait-related responses ($n \approx 200$) and grouped them inductively. In a first step, we attended

¹ Personality trait models (e.g., the Big Five or HEXACO) typically rely on two complementary approaches: (1) lexicometric methods, in which respondents categorize large sets of trait adjectives to derive a typology, and (2) psychometric methods, in which respondents assess individuals' personality traits by rating a series of closely related items.

to the salience of items: highly salient traits were coded as standalone categories (e.g., lazy/profiteur), as were closely related expressions such as open-minded and tolerant. In a second step, less salient items were clustered into broader, conceptually coherent categories. For example, the category critical/autonomous/reflective thinking integrates one dimension of Openness to Experience, namely the association between rational reflection and personality. This section of the codebook was developed jointly by two coders (two first authors) and subsequently refined through several rounds of intercoder reliability testing, completing our whole codebook. The full overview of trait-related codes can be found in Table 3.

Table 3. *Overview of trait-related codes*

Code	Description
Engaged	Active involvement in society; willingness to contribute to social or political change
Positive / Optimistic	Positive outlook, optimism about the future, long-term vision
Extraversion	Sociable, warm, humorous, pleasant to interact with
Solidarity / Empathy	Empathy, altruism, concern for others, collective solidarity
Agreeableness	Kind, calm, easy-going, discreet, satisfied with little
Humility	Modesty, lack of self-promotion, sobriety
Honesty	Sincerity, integrity, truthfulness, keeping one's word
Respect	Respect for others, social norms, rules, and shared values
Responsible	Autonomous, active, solution-oriented, contributing member of society
Open-minded / Tolerant	Tolerance, openness to others and ideas, creativity, willingness to dialogue
Critical / Autonomous / Reflective thinking	Independent, rational, nuanced, critical thinking
Egoistic	Self-centeredness, lack of concern for others, greed
Dishonest / Hypocritical	Dishonesty, hypocrisy, opportunism
Arrogant	Boastful, condescending, lack of humility

Negative / Pessimistic	Pessimism, complaining, negativity, resistance to change
Lazy / Profiteer	Laziness, free-riding, lack of contribution
Closed-minded / Intolerant	Narrow-mindedness, intolerance, rigidity, hostility
Disrespectful	Disrespect for norms, rules, others, or the social order
Disengaged / Followers	Lack of interest, disengagement, uncritical conformity

4. Coding Procedure

The coding procedure followed an iterative and cumulative design aimed at maximizing conceptual clarity and intercoder reliability (ICR). Several coding decisions structured the coding process at different levels. First, decisions regarding the (1) **unit of analysis** and inclusion criteria defined what constituted a codable element. The unit of analysis is the response by a respondent in either the like or dislike. Some responses were short, requiring only the coding of a single group, whereas other respondents mentioned multiple groups, requiring multiple codes. When a group was mentioned multiple times within a single response, it was coded only once, as the analytical focus lies on whether a group is mentioned rather than on the repetition of that mention. Otherwise, all unique target groups expressed by respondents were coded, without imposing an arbitrary numerical threshold on the number of groups per response. This choice was motivated by the fact that the order in which groups are listed does not imply semantic importance for respondents, meaning that later mentions are not inherently less meaningful than earlier ones. Applying such a threshold would therefore generate interpretative distortion. Additionally, there were also linguistic and interpretative considerations. French and Dutch differ in syntactic structure, such that a fixed threshold could truncate a nominal group in one language but not in the other, introducing systematic linguistic bias. This is particularly true in the placement of adjectives (e.g., *luie werklozen* vs. *chômeurs paresseux*), in which case the group could not be placed into one code, hence we double coded (e.g. unemployed and lazy/profiteur).

Second, the semantic treatment of target groups was guided by a principle of (2) **face-value coding**. “Liked” and “disliked” groups were coded separately rather than interpreted jointly at the respondent level. While combining both responses could appear to facilitate target identification, treating them independently allows for a direct test of the “two sides of the same coin” hypothesis (Röllicke, 2023) and preserves potential mismatches in terminology,

even when respondents themselves may perceive groups as corresponding. This approach also reflects a commitment to remaining close to the raw data. Referring positively to “Belgians,” for instance, may carry an implicit racial dimension that differs from inclusive uses of the same label by other respondents. However, preserving original group labels during coding enables such distinctions to be examined analytically rather than resolved during the coding process.

Third, the codebook was structured to (3) **capture both specific references and broader analytical dimensions**. Each overarching category includes a corresponding “other” subcode (e.g., “political party” and “other political party”), allowing responses to be coded at a higher level of abstraction even when respondents referred to specific or less common instances. For example, expressing a preference for an animalist party was coded as a positive reference to a political party rather than being excluded. The same principle applies to responses that explicitly span multiple dimensions, such as liking “young people regardless of their socioeconomic status,” which were coded both under “youth” and under “socioeconomic status (other).”

The coding of the responses was done in an Excel file, one for each language (French and Dutch). Next to each column containing the respondents’ answers (e.g. ‘open_like_w1’), there were 10 columns where coders could code the groups that were mentioned in the respondents’ answers. If more groups were mentioned, coders were instructed to insert a new column. Each cell in these columns was formatted with a drop-down menu containing all the possible codes. This provided coders with the opportunity to simply start typing a code and pressing enter, instead of having to type the full code/number, making the process more straightforward and quicker.

5. *Intercoder Reliability*

The intercoder reliability was assessed in three distinct waves involving the three author-coders, who also designed the codebook. In the first wave, all three author-coders independently coded the same set of 200 items. Disagreements were discussed in detail, leading to further refinement of code definitions and decision rules. A second wave replicated this procedure on a new set of 200 shared items, at which point intercoder reliability reached a satisfactory level (Krippendorff's $\alpha > 0.80$). A third and final wave was conducted on a larger shared sample of 600 items, yielding an average Krippendorff's Alpha of 0.88 for the dislike variables and 0.85 for the like variables. We also calculated the Krippendorff's Alpha for every code separately (Table 5). Importantly, the set-up of our dataset, i.e. binary variables indicating whether a respondent liked or disliked a certain group (97 like variables, 97 dislike variables) yields many 0's. Calculating a Krippendorff's Alpha for some variables, especially those that are not or rarely coded, could perhaps lead to an inflated alpha value. In the spirit of full transparency, we therefore also indicate in Table 5 how many times each author-coder coded a certain variable. Important to add here is that the intercoder reliability was calculated using only W1 data.

As a second test of intercoder reliability, we calculated the rate of agreement between the three author-coders. As shown in Table 4, the rate of perfect agreement – meaning that all coders agreed perfectly – is 0.66% for liked groups and 0.67% for disliked groups. Given that coders often coded multiple groups, sometimes up to 6 groups per respondent, this rate of agreement is rather high. Furthermore, even in the event that not all coders agreed perfectly, we observe a high proportion of partial agreement: in 92% of cases at least two coders agreed completely, and all three coders mostly converged (85%) on at least one relevant category. This latter pattern indicates strong alignment in the identification of salient dimensions. Finally, we observe that on at least 98% of cases, at least two coders agree on one central dimension. Calculating partial agreement between coders provides a deeper insight into the reliability of the coding than over-focusing on seemingly arbitrary statistical benchmarks (Rondiat et al., in press). After this third round of coding, given the strong Krippendorff's Alpha and high overall (partial) agreement, the codebook was considered sufficiently stable to proceed with the coding of the full dataset.

Table 4. Rate of Agreement

Rate of Agreement	Like	Dislike	Description
agree_perfect	0.66	0.67	Complete Agreement between all 3 coders
agree_coder12	0.74	0.76	Complete Agreement Author-coder 1 & 2
agree_coder13	0.76	0.76	Complete Agreement Author-coder 1 & 3
agree_coder23	0.75	0.74	Complete Agreement Author-coder 2 & 3
agree_2of3	0.93	0.91	Complete Agreement between at least 2 coders
agree_lenient	0.84	0.86	Agreement on at least 1 code between all 3 coders
agree_lenient_coder12	0.91	0.91	Agreement on at least 1 code between Author-coder 1 & 2
agree_lenient_coder13	0.89	0.91	Agreement on at least 1 code between Author-coder 1 & 3
agree_lenient_coder23	0.89	0.89	Agreement on at least 1 code between Author-coder 2 & 3
long_agree_lenient_2of3	0.99	0.98	Agreement on at least 1 code between at least 2 coders

Table 5. Krippendorff's Alpha per Code, Like & Dislike

Group (variable names)	LIKE				DISLIKE			
	Kripp Alpha	Count Coder 1	Count Coder 2	Count Coder 3	Kripp Alpha	Count Coder 1	Count Coder 2	Count Coder 3
activists	0.80	10	13	14	0.50	2	1	3
agreeable	0.79	8	7	9	1.00	0	0	0
anarchists	1.00	0	0	0	1.00	1	1	1
antiwokeists	1.00	1	1	1	1.00	0	0	0
arrogant	1.00	0	0	0	0.54	9	11	7
atheist	1.00	0	0	0	1.00	0	0	0
belgians	0.33	1	1	1	1.00	0	0	0
bruxellois	1.00	0	0	0	1.00	0	0	0
cdv	1.00	0	0	0	1.00	0	0	0
civilsocietyorg	0.66	3	4	2	0.72	3	4	4
communists	1.00	0	0	0	1.00	2	2	2
conservatives	1.00	0	0	0	0.90	3	3	4
criticalthinking	0.77	19	25	21	1.00	0	0	0
defi	1.00	1	1	1	1.00	0	0	0
democrats	0.91	8	8	8	1.00	0	0	0
disengaged	1.00	0	0	0	0.37	2	11	8
dishonest	1.00	0	0	0	0.64	11	10	14
disrespectful	1.00	0	0	0	0.72	13	13	15
dutchspeaking	1.00	1	1	1	1.00	0	0	0

ecolo	1.00	2	2	2	1.00	3	3	3
ecologists	0.90	10	10	10	0.50	3	4	1
econorg	0.33	2	1	0	0.78	4	3	2
egoist	1.00	0	0	0	0.70	19	15	22
engaged	0.64	8	13	8	1.00	0	0	0
experts	0.75	3	2	3	0.50	0	1	1
extraverted	0.76	6	7	4	0.00	0	2	0
extremeleft	1.00	0	0	0	0.86	4	6	5
extremeright	1.00	0	0	0	0.88	7	10	8
extremists	1.00	0	0	0	0.97	25	26	27
familyfriends	0.83	5	8	5	1.00	0	0	0
fascists	1.00	0	0	0	0.95	7	8	7
flamingant	1.00	0	0	0	0.50	1	0	1
flemings	0.98	16	15	16	1.00	2	2	2
frenchspeaking	1.00	0	0	0	1.00	0	0	0
gendersexuality	1.00	3	3	3	0.90	4	3	3
groen	1.00	3	3	3	0.80	4	2	4
honest	0.89	13	12	12	1.00	0	0	0
humanists	0.00	1	0	0	1.00	0	0	0
humble	0.82	4	4	3	1.00	0	0	0
intolerant	1.00	0	0	0	0.74	23	17	21
lazyprofiteur	1.00	0	0	0	0.89	46	40	43
leftwing	0.90	4	3	3	1.00	2	2	2
lesengages	1.00	1	1	1	1.00	0	0	0
liberals	1.00	0	0	0	1.00	0	0	0
likeminded	0.75	1	1	2	1.00	0	0	0
medias	1.00	0	0	0	1.00	0	0	0
migrants	0.53	10	12	4	0.99	28	27	27
missingvalue	0.76	10	10	14	0.77	8	11	8
mr	1.00	0	0	0	1.00	4	4	4
muslims	1.00	1	1	1	1.00	6	6	6
nationalists	1.00	1	1	1	0.90	3	3	4
negative	1.00	0	0	0	0.80	13	11	13
neoliberals	1.00	0	0	0	0.75	2	1	1
nva	1.00	3	3	3	1.00	3	3	3
old	0.94	5	5	6	1.00	0	0	0
openvld	1.00	0	0	0	1.00	0	0	0
other_age	1.00	1	1	1	1.00	0	0	0
other_ideological	0.29	4	3	3	0.53	9	10	5
other_migration	0.81	5	4	7	0.60	1	2	2
other_partisan	1.00	0	0	0	0.00	2	0	0
other_place	0.50	0	1	1	0.00	1	0	0
other_religion	0.87	3	2	3	0.66	4	2	6
othersocioeconomic	1.00	1	1	1	0.33	2	0	1
politicians	0.00	0	1	0	0.87	12	15	13
polorg	0.50	1	0	1	0.40	2	0	3
poor	0.75	1	1	2	0.20	3	1	1
populists	1.00	0	0	0	1.00	4	4	4

positive	0.93	16	15	15	0.50	1	0	1
progressives	1.00	2	2	2	1.00	0	0	0
ps	1.00	1	1	1	1.00	0	0	0
pushingback	0.84	24	28	23	0.90	19	18	19
pvda	1.00	3	3	3	1.00	2	2	2
racists	1.00	0	0	0	0.91	27	25	24
respectful	0.92	19	18	19	1.00	0	0	0
responsible	0.70	29	24	26	1.00	0	0	0
restdiscard	0.76	13	14	17	0.47	8	11	8
rich	0.81	5	6	5	0.82	17	16	14
rightwing	1.00	0	0	0	0.91	9	7	8
rural	1.00	3	3	3	1.00	0	0	0
selfemployed	0.91	4	3	4	1.00	0	0	0
socialists	1.00	0	0	0	1.00	1	1	1
solidary	0.86	26	25	26	1.00	0	0	0
specificarea	0.50	2	0	2	1.00	1	1	1
specifprof	0.90	15	13	13	0.87	3	2	3
thepeople	0.86	15	16	14	1.00	0	0	0
thugs	1.00	0	0	0	0.87	8	7	8
tolerant	0.87	30	31	27	1.00	0	0	0
unemployed	1.00	1	1	1	0.94	17	17	15
urban	1.00	1	1	1	1.00	0	0	0
vlaamsbelang	1.00	1	1	1	1.00	9	9	9
vooruit	1.00	2	2	2	1.00	1	1	1
walloons	0.80	2	2	1	1.00	1	1	1
white	0.59	9	6	13	1.00	0	0	0
wokeists	1.00	0	0	0	1.00	1	1	1
workingpeople	0.99	38	38	37	1.00	0	0	0
young	0.94	6	5	5	1.00	0	0	0

After satisfactory intercoder reliability had been achieved among the author-coders, the coding of the full dataset was delegated to six trained student coders and one author-coder. Two teams of three student coders were recruited, one per language (Dutch & French). Training consisted of two intensive coding seminars per language group, each lasting approximately 4 hours. During the first seminar, the author-coders presented the objectives of the study and discussed the codebook item by item. Student coders then independently coded approximately 200 shared items, including deliberately selected difficult cases. Intercoder reliability between student coders and author-coders was assessed, followed by collective discussion, corrections, and detailed feedback. After the first seminar, the students were asked to familiarize themselves with the codebook in detail. A few days later, a second seminar was organized. At the beginning of the seminar, students were provided the opportunity to ask

clarification questions, after which each student coded 500 responses autonomously. At this stage, several student coders reached satisfactory reliability levels, as compared to the author-coders (Table 6). Only student coders with Krippendorff’s α above 0.80 were retained. The full dataset was subsequently split into separate random parts, and the trained student coders together with the first author coded the full corpus using the finalized codebook.

Table 6. *Krippendorff’s Alpha for Student Coders, as Compared to Author-Coder*

	Wave 1		Wave 3	
	Like	Dislike	Like	Dislike
NL				
Student coder 1	0.91	0.92	0.89	0.85
Student coder 2	0.81	0.84	0.88	0.82
Student coder 3	0.89	0.89	0.93	0.86
FR				
Student coder 4	0.81	0.86	0.84	0.84
Student coder 5	0.80	0.82	0.84	0.84
Student coder 6	0.79	0.84	0.79	0.81

6. Data Structure & Variables

The dataset contains all the different steps conducted by the researchers. First, it contains the original responses to the open survey question (‘open_like_w1’ – ‘open_dislike_w3’) and original codes that were ascribed to each of the responses by the coders. These variables are structured as follows: wave (w1/w3), sentiment (like/dislike) and number of group being coded (g1-g10): e.g. ‘w1_like_g3’. Based on these variables, we also created the numerical equivalent: e.g. ‘w1_like_g3_num’. For an overview of the corresponding numbers and codes, see Table 7. Finally, we created separate binary like and dislike variables for each of the codes: indicating whether a respondent did (1) or did not (0) mention that group in their like (e.g. ‘like_w1_migrants’) or dislike answers (e.g. ‘dislike_w1_migrants’) in that specific wave (w1/w3). These variables provide a good starting point for further grouping codes into overarching categories. Also included in this dataset is the variable ‘ID’, which contains the respondent ID’s necessary for merging the dataset with the original NotLikeUs survey data (Eck et al., 2025).

Table 7. *Numerical Values of Codes*

Number	Codes	Variable Names
1	Missing value	missingvalue
2	Pushing back	pushingback
3	Rest/Discard	restdiscard
4	Economic organizations	econorg
5	Medias	medias
6	Political organizations	polorg
7	Civil society organizations	civilsocietyorg
8	The People	thepeople
9	Politicians	politicians
10	Experts/thinkers	experts
11	PVDA/PTB	pvda
12	Groen	groen
13	OpenVLD	openvld
14	Vooruit	vooruit
15	CD&V	cdv
16	N-VA	nva
17	Vlaams Belang	vlaamsbelang
18	Ecolo	ecolo
19	PS	ps
20	Les Engagés	lesengages
21	Défi	defi
22	MR	mr
23	Other (Partisan)	other_partisan
24	Extremists	extremists
25	Racists	racists
26	Flemish-nationalists	flamingant
27	Ecologists	ecologists
28	Socialists	socialists
29	Left-wing	leftwing
30	Right-wing	rightwing
31	Democrats/centrists	democrats
32	Nationalists	nationalists
33	Wokeists	wokeists
34	Anti-wokeists	antiwokeists
35	Neoliberals	neoliberals
36	Extreme left	extremeleft
37	Extreme right	extremeright
38	Fascists	fascists
39	Anarchists	anarchists
40	Communists	communists
41	Like-minded people	likeminded
42	Humanists	humanists
43	Progressives	progressives
44	Conservatives	conservatives
45	Liberals	liberals

46	Populists	populists
47	Other (Ideology)	other_ideology
48	Young/students	young
49	Old/retired	old
50	Other (Age)	other_age
51	Gender/sexuality	gendersexuality
52	Migrant/background	migrants
53	White/autochtone/assimilation	white
54	Other (Migration/race)	other_migration
55	Belgians	belgians
56	Flemings	flemings
57	Walloon	walloons
58	Bruxellois	bruxellois
59	Dutch-speaking	dutchspeaking
60	French-speaking	frenchspeaking
61	Rural	rural
62	Urban	urban
63	Specific Area/Neighbourhood	specificarea
64	Other (Place)	other_place
65	Civil society members/activists	activists
66	High social class/rich	rich
67	Low social class/poor	poor
68	Unemployed	unemployed
69	Self-employed/entrepreneurs	selfemployed
70	Working people	workingpeople
71	Specific profession	specificprof
72	Other (Socio-econ)	other_socioeconomic
73	Atheist/lay	atheist
74	Muslims	muslims
75	Other (religion)	other_religion
76	My family	familyfriends
77	Thugs	thugs
78	Engaged	engaged
79	Positive/optimist	positive
80	Extraverted	extraverted
81	Solidary	solidary
82	Agreeable	agreeable
83	Honest	honest
84	Humble	humble
85	Respectful	respectful
86	Responsible	responsible
87	Open-minded/tolerant	tolerant
88	Critical/reflexive thinking	criticalthinking
89	Egoist	egoist
90	Dishonest/hypocrite	dishonest
91	Arrogant	arrogant
92	Negative/pessimist	negative
93	Lazy/profiteur	lazyprofiteur

94	Closed-minded/intolerant	intolerant
95	Disrespectful	disrespectful
96	Dumb/Disengaged	disengaged

7. Data Availability Statement

The dataset and codebook are only accessible for scientific purpose and upon request. If you wish to use this data, please contact the corresponding author with an explanation of your research objective.

8. Funding Information:

This study was supported by the Belgian FNRS-FWO EOS project NotLikeUs (EOS project no. 40007494; FWO no. G0H0322N; FNRS no. RG3139).

9. References:

- Ashton, M. C., & Lee, K. (2007). Empirical, Theoretical, and Practical Advantages of the HEXACO Model of Personality Structure. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, *11*(2), 150–166. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1088868306294907>
- Ashton, M. C., Lee, K., & Goldberg, L. R. (2004). A Hierarchical Analysis of 1,710 English Personality-Descriptive Adjectives. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *87*(5), 707–721. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.87.5.707>
- Ashton, M. C., Lee, K., Perugini, M., Szarota, P., De Vries, R. E., Di Blas, L., Boies, K., & De Raad, B. (2004). A Six-Factor Structure of Personality-Descriptive Adjectives: Solutions From Psycholexical Studies in Seven Languages. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *86*(2), 356–366. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.86.2.356>
- Delespaul, D., & Swyngedouw, M. (2023). De transformatie van de Belgische politieke ruimte (1991-2014). In K. Abts, C. Meeusen, B. Meuleman, & M. Swyngedouw, *De breuklijnen voorbij? Politieke, culturele en economische scheidslijnen in de publieke opinie* (pp. 91–110). Skribis.
- Deschouwer, K. (2009). *The politics of Belgium: Governing a divided society*. Palgrave Macmillan.

- Dinesen, P. T., Nørgaard, A. S., & Klemmensen, R. (2014). The Civic Personality: Personality and Democratic Citizenship. *Political Studies*, 62(1_suppl), 134–152. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9248.12094>
- Eck, B., Michel, E., Lefevere, J., Pilet, J.-B., Celis, K., Claes, E., Rihoux, B., Van Haute, E., Walgrave, S., Close, C., Baudewyns, P., Van Ingelgom, V., Severs, E., Kern, A., Wauters, B., & Dodeigne, J. (2025). *NotLikeUs Panel Survey Dataset Belgian 2024 Elections* [Data set]. Social Sciences and Digital Humanities Archive – SODHA. <https://doi.org/10.34934/DVN/KYWPSO>
- Gerber, A. S., Huber, G. A., Doherty, D., & Dowling, C. M. (2011). The Big Five Personality Traits in the Political Arena. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 14(1), 265–287. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-polisci-051010-111659>
- Iyengar, S., Sood, G., & Lelkes, Y. (2012). Affect, Not Ideology. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 76(3), 405–431. <https://doi.org/10.1093/poq/nfs038>
- Luttig, M. D. (2018). The “Prejudiced Personality” and the Origins of Partisan Strength, Affective Polarization, and Partisan Sorting. *Political Psychology*, 39(S1), 239–256. <https://doi.org/10.1111/pops.12484>
- Maes, H., Verwee, A., Smets, L., Van Ingelgom, V., & Knops, L. (2025). Affective Polarisation in Citizens’ Own Words: Understanding Group Construction Beyond Party Lines. *Politics of the Low Countries*, 6(3), 166–193. <https://doi.org/10.5553/PLC/.000083>
- Mondak, J. J., & Halperin, K. D. (2008). A Framework for the Study of Personality and Political Behaviour. *British Journal of Political Science*, 38(2), 335–362. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0007123408000173>
- Röllicke, L. (2023). Polarisation, identity and affect—Conceptualising affective polarisation in multi-party systems. *Electoral Studies*, 85, 102655. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.electstud.2023.102655>
- Rondiat, C., Niessen, C., De Cock, B., & Hambeye, P. (in press). Intercoder reliability in qualitative discourse analysis. In L. Aulit, A. Augé, B. De Cock, M. Reuchamps, S. Roginsky, & C. Rondiat (Eds), *An Interdisciplinary Approach to Discourse on Populism* (1st Edition). (Original work published Routledge)
- Rothschild, J. E., Howat, A. J., Shafranek, R. M., & Busby, E. C. (2019). Pigeonholing Partisans: Stereotypes of Party Supporters and Partisan Polarization. *Political Behavior*, 41(2), 423–443. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11109-018-9457-5>

- van Erkel, P. F. A., & Turkenburg, E. (2022). Delving into the divide: How ideological differences fuel out-party hostility in a multi-party context. *European Political Science Review*, 14(3), 386–402. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1755773922000121>
- Webster, S. W. (2018). It's Personal: The Big Five Personality Traits and Negative Partisan Affect in Polarized U.S. Politics. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 62(1), 127–145. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0002764218756925>
- Westwood, S. J., Iyengar, S., Walgrave, S., Leonisio, R., Miller, L., & Strijbis, O. (2018). The tie that divides: Cross-national evidence of the primacy of partyism. *European Journal of Political Research*, 57(2), 333–354. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1475-6765.12228>
- Widiger, T. A. (Ed.). (2015). *The Oxford Handbook of the Five Factor Model* (Vol. 1). Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199352487.001.0001>
- Zollinger, D. (2024). Cleavage Identities in Voters' Own Words: Harnessing Open-Ended Survey Responses. *American Journal of Political Science*, 68(1), 139–159. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ajps.12743>