**Second-Order and First-Order Elections Database**

Codebook

This codebook provides details about the variables included in the second-order and first-order elections database. This dataset aims to provide information about how political parties fared at three types of elections: Regional elections, National elections, and European elections. If these three types of elections are all held in the same geographic unit for a long period of time, then it is possible to track whether a party that does well in one type of election is also likely to do well in the other two types of elections. Although this is not the only substantive question of interest that can be answered using these data, that was the question that motivated the data collection effort.

*How the data were collected*

The data were collected as follows:

1. First, countries were selected for analysis based on the availability of sub-national data. If the only vote summaries available were on the national level, the country was included. For countries with sub-national data, it was necessary to identify the lowest sub-national geographic level where information was available about the vote total per party in three types of elections – National, Regional, and European. Data were available at the sub-national level for seven countries: Austria, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, the Netherlands, and Spain. For example, in Spain, data are available at the level of autonomous communities.
2. Next, a time period was identified. For most countries this was dictated by the availability of data in the relevant archives. For some countries though, there were data available for all post-war elections. In these cases, the beginning of the time period was the first European election – for example, the 9th of June 1989 in Spain.
3. Once the geographic and temporal limits were established, all parties and their vote totals were recorded. The total electorate, turnout, ballots cast, and date (all at the level of the sub-national unit – these variables are constant for all parties in a given sub-national unit), were also recorded. For example, the first national election in Spain (after the 9th of June 1989) was on the 29th of October 1989. In a given autonomous community, then, all parties that competed in these October elections would have their party name and vote total recorded.
4. Finally, these included parties were identified again in the most recent preceding Regional and European elections. If they also competed in those elections, under the same name, then their vote totals in those elections were also recorded. For example, a party competed in the October national elections in Spain might also have competed in the June 1989 European elections prior to that. If so, their vote total in these elections would also be recorded as part of the same observation. If not, the vote total in those second-order elections was listed as missing. The same set of supplementary variables would also be collected for those second-order elections.
5. Next, the process begins again at Step 3, as the next national election in the time period was identified.
6. As this process continues, the result is a dataset where each observation is a political party through a cycle of elections. So, the ‘row’ in the dataset begins with the party name, and the date of the national election in question. Then the dates of the preceding European and Regional elections are recorded (If there were two national elections in relatively quick succession, then it is possible that the same second-order election would be matched up with multiple first-order elections, as it would be the most recent preceding second-order election in multiple cycles). The main variables are the vote totals for that party in the national election, the most recent preceding European election, and the most recent preceding European election.

For more details, see the manuscript associated with these data, as it contains details of the coverage of the dataset and various descriptive statistics. Below, I go through the variables included in this dataset.

*Variables*

**Variable Name:** country

**Description:** This variable gives the English sentence-case name of the country.

**Type:** String variable.

**Summary:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Value** | **Frequency** |
| Austria | 700 |
| Denmark | 100 |
| Finland | 490 |
| France | 5,692 |
| Germany | 1,647 |
| Netherlands | 1,008 |
| Spain | 2,163 |
| *Total* | *12,070* |

**Variable Name:** yeareuro

**Description:** This variable gives the date of the European Parliament election in that cycle, listed as an 8-digit numeral. The first four digits represent the year, the next two digits represent the month, and the final two digits represent the day.

**Type:** Numeric variable

**Summary:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Value** | **Frequency** |
| 19890615 | 564 |
| 19890618 | 225 |
| 19940609 | 59 |
| 19940612 | 901 |
| 19961020 | 126 |
| 19990610 | 172 |
| 19990613 | 3,280 |
| 20040610 | 486 |
| 20040613 | 5,024 |
| 20090604 | 735 |
| 20090607 | 231 |
| 20090609 | 112 |
| *Total* | *11,915* |

**Variable Name:** yearlocal

**Description:** This variable gives the date of the Regional election in that cycle, listed as an 8-digit numeral. The first four digits represent the year, the next two digits represent the month, and the final two digits represent the day.

**Type:** Numeric variable

**Summary:**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Min.** | **Max.** | **Mean** | **Observations** |
| 19851124 | 20110522 | 20000000 | 11,971 |

**Variable Name:** yearparl

**Description:** This variable gives the date of the National election in that cycle, listed as an 8-digit numeral. The first four digits represent the year, the next two digits represent the month, and the final two digits represent the day.

**Type:** Numeric variable

**Summary:**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Min.** | **Max.** | **Mean** | **Observations** |
| 19891029 | 20120913 | 20000000 | 12,070 |

**Variable Name:** partyname

**Description:** This variable gives the name of the political party.

**Type:** String variable

**Summary:** 12,070 observations

**Variable Name:** state

**Description:** This variable gives the name of the sub-national unit for which the data were collected.

**Type:** String variable

**Summary:** 11,580 observations

**Variable Name:** region

**Description:** This variable gives the region that a sub-national unit belongs too, if there are regions in-between the national level and the level used for the ‘state’ variable

**Type:** String variable

**Summary:** 5,398

**Variable Name:** parlround

**Description:** If the national election had more than one round, then this variable indicates the round for which data were collected.

**Type:** Numeric variable

**Summary:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Value** | **Frequency** | **(Country)** |
| 1 | 5,962 | (France) |
| 2 | 1,647 | (Germany) |

**Variable Name:** votesparl

**Description:** The number of votes that the party in question received at the National election, in that sub-national unit.

**Type:** Numeric variable

**Summary:**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Min.** | **Max.** | **Mean** | **Observations** |
| 0 | 5097425 | 63179.75 | 7,383 |

**Variable Name:** electorateparl

**Description:** The total size of the electorate in this sub-national unit for this National election.

**Type:** Numeric variable

**Summary:**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Min.** | **Max.** | **Mean** | **Observations** |
| 41353 | 13300000 | 1224349 | 12,000 |

**Variable Name:** votersparl

**Description:** The total numbers of voters who cast ballots for this National election in this sub-national unit.

**Type:** Numeric variable

**Summary:**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Min.** | **Max.** | **Mean** | **Observations** |
| 23131 | 11000000 | 906695 | 12,056 |

**Variable Name:** validvotesparl

**Description:** The total numbers of valid ballots for this National election in this sub-national unit.

**Type:** Numeric variable

**Summary:**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Min.** | **Max.** | **Mean** | **Observations** |
| 22919 | 10900000 | 895265.8 | 12,056 |

**Variable Name:** voteslocal

**Description:** The number of votes that the party in question received at the Regional election, in that sub-national unit.

**Type:** Numeric variable

**Summary:**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Min.** | **Max.** | **Mean** | **Observations** |
| 0 | 4644431 | 96529.5 | 4051 |

**Variable Name:** electoratelocal

**Description:** The total size of the electorate in this sub-national unit for this Regional election.

**Type:** Numeric variable

**Summary:**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Min.** | **Max.** | **Mean** | **Observations** |
| 42820 | 13200000 | 1201765 | 11,971 |

**Variable Name:** voterslocal

**Description:** The total numbers of voters who cast ballots for this Regional election in this sub-national unit.

**Type:** Numeric variable

**Summary:**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Min.** | **Max.** | **Mean** | **Observations** |
| 26432 | 9353712 | 897093 | 9,834 |

**Variable Name:** validvoteslocal

**Description:** The total numbers of valid ballots for this Regional election in this sub-national unit.

**Type:** Numeric variable

**Summary:**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Min.** | **Max.** | **Mean** | **Observations** |
| 26322 | 9291974 | 767929 | 11,971 |

**Variable Name:** voteseuro

**Description:** The number of votes that the party in question received at the European Parliament election, in that sub-national unit.

**Type:** Numeric variable

**Summary:**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Min.** | **Max.** | **Mean** | **Observations** |
| 0 | 3479586 | 34208.8 | 8,792 |

**Variable Name:** electorateeuro

**Description:** The total size of the electorate in this sub-national unit for this European Parliament election.

**Type:** Numeric variable

**Summary:**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Min.** | **Max.** | **Mean** | **Observations** |
| 41451 | 13200000 | 1208989 | 11,807 |

**Variable Name:** voterseuro

**Description:** The total numbers of voters who cast ballots for this European Parliament election in this sub-national unit.

**Type:** Numeric variable

**Summary:**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Min.** | **Max.** | **Mean** | **Observations** |
| 15347 | 8058446 | 704025 | 9,818 |

**Variable Name:** validvoteseuro

**Description:** The total numbers of valid ballots for this European election in this sub-national unit.

**Type:** Numeric variable

**Summary:**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Min.** | **Max.** | **Mean** | **Observations** |
| 15298 | 7988861 | 604303 | 11,863 |

*Sources*

The data were collected from a variety of sources. The European Elections Database (EED) was the source for most of the European elections data and most of the National elections data, and then Regional elections data were added from country-specific sources. However, when these country-specific sources also had National or European elections data, those sources replaced the EED results. Country-specific sources were the statistics department of the Landtag in Austria, the Danish statistical handbook, the Statistics Finland website (<http://www.stat.fi/tk/he/vaalit/index_en.html>), the French Interior Ministry, the Ergebnisse fürherer Landtagswahlen publication of the German Federal Returning Officer (<http://www.bundeswahlleiter.de/de/landtagswahlen/ergebnisse/downloads/ltw_erg_gesamt.pdf>), the <http://www.nlverkiezingen.com/index_en.html> website for the Netherlands, and the ARGOS electoral archive website for Spain (<http://www.argos.gva.es/ahe/>). I gratefully acknowledge Jens Olav Dahlgaard and Antti Pajala for helping locate sources, although any remaining errors are the responsibility of the author.