Documentation and Codebook

Mayoral candidate characteristics in the state of Baden-Wuerttemberg

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1 Introduction

This database was created in the framework of the project *"Ämterwettbewerb, Qualität von Politikern und fiskalische Performance – Eine empirische Analyse deutscher Kommunen"*, running from September 2012 until February 2015. The project members gratefully acknowledge the financial support from the Fritz Thyssen foundation (project number 10.12.1.094). The database comprises detailed information on the personal characteristics of candidates at mayoral elections in the German state of Baden-Wuerttemberg for the period 1973–2010. In total, 2,442 mayoral candidates from 1,184 mayoral elections are included.

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The structure of the documentation is as follows: In the next chapter, we explain the construction of the database including the search strategy and the file structure. Chapter 3 comprises the codebook with detailed information on all variables included and their coding.

When using these data, please cite:
Feld, Lars P., Marc-Daniel Moessinger, and Mustafa Yeter (2015): The impact of remuneration on candidate self-selection: Evidence of a free market for executive political candidates, mimeo.

2 Construction of the Database

2.1 Search strategy

The data has been collected using local and regional newspapers. In each case, it was first necessary to match a suitable local newspaper to the respective municipality where the election took place. Second, the availability of the respective newspaper editions in one of the two main statewide libraries (*Württembergische Landesbibliothek Stuttgart* and *Badische Landesbibliothek Karlsruhe*) was checked. Our search strategy involved articles up to three months prior to the election and the first two weeks after the election. While the former was selected due to the statewide deadline for candidacy, the latter was chosen to ensure that the election results were confirmed and not disputed.[1] In the vast majority of cases, no digital newspaper articles were available, i.e., there was no option for electronic article searches and off-site research. In contrast, we searched information by hand and on-site in one of the two main state libraries. Information on the personal characteristics and election outcomes were documented in an online database. All its content is summarised in four different files (see below). Every newspaper article used for the coding of relevant characteristics was scanned and stored separately.[2]

2.2 Structure

The content of the database is summarised in four files. This subdivision reflects its unique structure and is due to the fact that we investigate candidates at elections where the same person can run for election at different points in time and in various municipalities. The following section shortly explains how the database has been constructed. We then describe how the separate files can be merged (see Figure 2.1).

File A: Wahl

File A: Wahl provides the basic information on the mayoral election such as election date, location of the municipality and reason for the election. Elections are uniquely identified by the variable "wahl_id". Note that an election may consist of several ballots. For that reason, details on election outcomes are not presented here.

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[1] The time available to place an appeal against the election results involves the first seven days after an election(§31(1) KomWG).

[2] A detailed description of the database in German as well as the German newspaper articles are available upon request.

File B: Wahlgang

File B: Wahlgang provides information about general election statistics like voter turnout or the number of valid votes by ballot. It accounts for the fact that several ballots might be necessary to elect a candidate as mayor. The ballot is denoted by "wahlgang_nr".

File C: Person

File C: Person summarises the candidates' time–invariant characteristics. It covers naturally fixed personal information such as a person's name, date of birth and sex. A person is uniquely identified by the variable "person_id". Note that a person might run as a candidate in several mayoral elections.

File D: Wahlkandidat

File D: Wahlkandidat outlines the mayoral candidates' personal background. In contrast to the information in file C, the characteristics stored here might change from one election to another, e.g., a person's family status or current occupation. A candidate ("Wahlkandidat") is defined as a person who (1) applied for candidacy. Moreover, she is (2) officially nominated for candidacy and (3) her name is listed on the ballot sheet. If the candidate withdraws her candidacy prior to the application deadline, she is only recorded as a person ("Person", file C) but not aknowledged as an election candidate.[3] If the candidate fails to withdraw her candidacy prior to the application deadline but only does so afterwards, she is automatically listed on the ballot sheet. Consequently, she is included in file D: Wahlkandidat even if she has not received a vote in the election.

The unique identifyer variables are "person_id" and "wahl_id". Figure 2.1 illustrates how the files can be merged: The lines joining the boxes are labelled with the respective identifying variable. Additionally, grey shaded areas indicate that the files can be combined via "wahl_id", white coloured boxes are merged via "person_id".

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[3] We include a comment with further information on the candidate's withdrawal in the respective ballot (file B: Wahlgang).
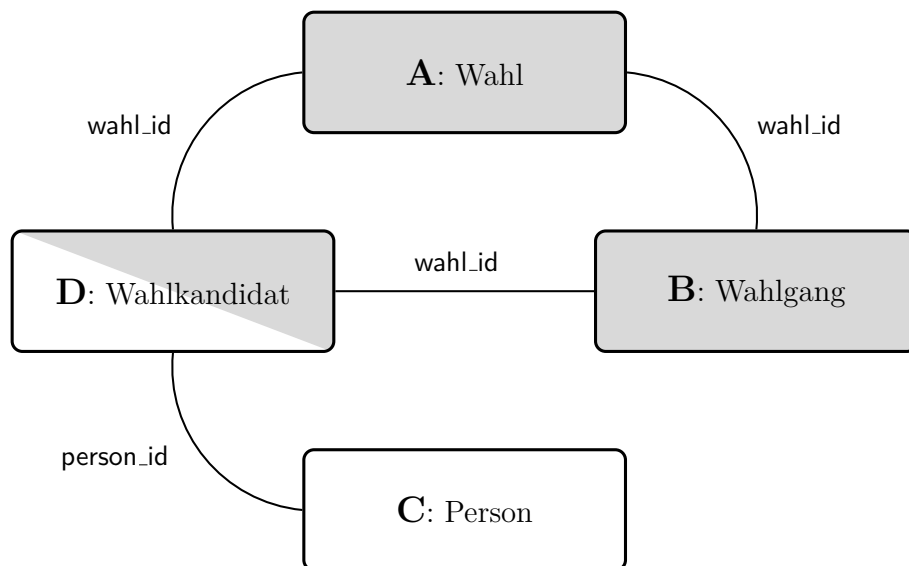
Figure 2.1: Options of merging the files A to D

3 Codebook

Variable Name	File	Variable Description	Coding
amtsantritt_bgm	A	Date when newly elected mayor takes office	DD.MM.YYYY
amtsinhaber	D	Candidate is the incumbent in the specific municipality[a]	1 = yes 2 = no 3 = unknown
anteil_stimmen_wahlgang_b[b]	D	Relative share of valid votes received by the candidate in the first (second, or third) ballot (alternative denoted by b, respectively) in %	[0.00, 100.00]
anzahl_stimmen_wahlgang_b[b]	D	Number of valid votes received by the candidate	Integer
antritt_amtsinhaber	B	Incumbent re–runs for election[c]	1 = yes 2 = no 3 = unknown

[a] The candidate's incumbency refers exclusively to the observed municipality. Logically, "amtsinhaber" says no if he or she is the head of a different municipality. Note that the mayor is legitimately responsible for chairing the district council even if he or she is not an *elected* district councillor (§25 GemO, §42 GemO).

[b] Election results are recorded only if they are explicitly published. Missing values are not calculated by hand. Instead, other variables might be used to fill any gaps.

[c] Note that "antritt_amtsinhaber" = yes implies that the incumbent stands as a candidate in a particular ballot (indicated by "wahlgang_nr").

Variable Name	File	Variable Description	Coding
anzahl_abgegeben	B	Number of votes	Integer
anzahl_gueltig[a]	B	Number of valid votes	Integer
anzahl_ungueltig	B	Number of invalid votes	Integer
anzahl_kandidaten	B	Number of candidates	Integer
anzahl_kinder	D	Number of candidate's children (if "kinder" = yes)	Integer
anzahl_sonstige	B	Number of votes received by other candidates, i.e., all valid votes received by not officially nominated candidates	Integer
anzahl_stimmberechtigt	A	Size of the electorate	Integer
ausbildung_1[b]	D	Candidate's highest educational attainment	Text, by convention: ▷ Promotion {Fach} = Doctorate {Field of study}, ▷ Studium {Fach} = Diploma {Field of study}, ▷ Ausbildung {Beruf} = Vocational training {profession}.

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[a] Election results are recorded only if they are explicitly published. Missing values are not calculated by hand. Instead, other variables (e.g., "anteil_stimmen_wahlgang_b"') might be used to fill any gaps.

[b] Here, the candidate's unique (highest) educational attainment is given. In contrast, "ausbildung_2" etc. allows for multi-referencing. The same applies to "beruf_1".

Variable Name	File	Variable Description	Coding
ausbildung_2	D	Additional educational attainment	See ausbildung_1
beruf_1[a]	D	Candidate's current occupation	Text[b]
beruf_2	D	Candidate's work experience previous to current occupation	See beruf_1
beruf_3	D	See beruf_3	See beruf_1
beruf_mutter	D	Occupation of candidate's mother	See beruf_1
beruf_vater	D	Occupation of candidate's father	See beruf_1
bgm_vize	D	Candidate serves as a deputy mayor[c]	1 = yes 2 = no
bgm_vize_seit	D	Number of years the candidate serves as a deputy mayor (if "bgm_vize" = yes)	Integer
bundestag	D	Candidate is a member of the federal parliament (Bundestag)	1 = yes 2 = no
bundestag_seit	D	Number of years the candidate has been a member of the federal parliament (if "bundestag" = yes)	Integer

continued on the next page...

[a] A unique occupation is given. In contrast, "beruf_2" etc. allows for multi-referencing. The same applies to "ausbildung_1".

[b] Job designations are predominantly related to the "KldB 2010"-classification provided by the *Bundesagentur für Arbeit*. "arbeitslos" indicates that the candidate is unemployed.

[c] The deputy mayor of a municipality with less than 10,000 inhabitants works on a voluntary basis. Councillors ("Beigeordnete") can be found in municipalities with at least 10,000 inhabitants (§49 (1) GemO).

Variable Name	File	Variable Description	Coding
eingabe	D	Miscellaneous personal memberships and honorary posts[a]	Text (e.g., member of the parents' council)
eingabe_seit	D	Number of years the candidate has made an effort on a voluntary basis (if "eingabe" is given)	Integer
familienstand_id	D	Candidate's marital status	1 = single
			2 = in a steady relationship
			3 = married
			4 = divorced
			5 = divorced and in a steady relationship
			6 = divorced and remarried
			7 = living apart
			8 = same–sex partnership
			9 = widowed

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[a] This includes all voluntary activities within the church which are not directly related to the parochial church council (i.e., "kirchengemeinderat" = no) (e.g., lay preacher), for example.

Variable Name	File	Variable Description	Coding
gemeindeschluessel	A	Official municipality identifier	Integer (six-figure identification number, e.g., 111000 = Stuttgart)
geschlecht	D	Candidate's sex	1 = female 2 = male 3 = unknown
geburtsdatum	C	Person's date of birth	DD.MM.YYYY
geburtsname	C	Person's birth name/maiden name if surname has changed	Text
geburtsort	C	Person's place of birth	Text
gemeinderat	D	Candidate is a district councillor[a][b]	1 = yes 2 = no
gemeinderat_seit	D	Number of years the candidate has been a district councillor (if "gemeinderat" = yes)	Integer
hilfe_bgmmacher	D	Candidate consulted a campaign adviser	1 = yes 2 = no
kinder	D	Candidate has children	1 = yes 2 = no 3 = unknown

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[a] A membership in the city council is equivalent. Note that the mayor is legitimately responsible for chairing the district council even if she is not an *elected* district councillor (§25 GemO, §42 GemO). Therefore, the mayor is a member of the district council by default.

[b] Pursuant to §48 GemO, the deputy mayor of a municipality without councillors (e.g., a vice mayor) is elected from among the representatives of the district council. Consequently, he or she is a district councillor.

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Variable Name	File	Variable Description	Coding
kirchengemeinderat	D	Candidate is a member of the parochial church council[a]	1 = yes 2 = no
kirchengemeinderat_seit	D	Number of years the candidate has been in charge as a member of the parochial church council	Integer
kommentar	D	Further comments on the candidate[a]	Text
kreistag	D	Candidate is a member of the district assembly	1 = yes 2 = no
kreistag_seit	D	Number of years the candidate has been a member of the district assembly (if "kreistag" = yes)	Integer
landrat	D	Candidate is a district administrator	1 = yes 2 = no
landrat_seit	D	Number of years the candidate has been a district administrator (if "landrat" = yes)	Integer
landtag	D	Candidate is a member of the state parliament (Landtag)	1 = yes 2 = no
landtag_seit	D	Number of years the candidate has been a member of the Landtag (if "landtag" = yes)	Integer
minister	D	Candidate is a minister at the federal or state level	1 = yes 2 = no

[a] For instance, information in this variable explain why a candidate is classified as a "spasskandidat", "weitere_quelle" covers the corresponding sources.

Variable Name	File	Variable Description	Coding
minister_seit	D	Number of years the candidate has been minister in the cabinet (if "minister" = yes)	Integer
mitarbeiter_rathaus	D	Candidate is employed in the municipal government[a]	1 = yes, in the respective municipality 2 = yes, but elsewhere 3 = no 4 = unknown
mitarbeiter_rathaus_amt	D	Position the candidate performs as an employee in the town hall (if "mitarbeiter_rathaus" = yes)	Text
mitarbeiter_rathaus_seit	D	Number of years the candidate has been employed in the municipal government	Integer
nachname	C	Person's surname	Text
partei	D	Candidate's party membership	Text[b] (e.g., CDU)
partei_amt	D	Candidate's function in a political party	Text (e.g., treasurer ("Schatzmeister"), parliamentary chairman/chairwoman ("Fraktionsvorsitzender"))

[a] Note that mayors are not counted as employees in the municipal government. A mayor in a municipality with an elected Lord Mayor ("Oberbürgermeister"), however, is regarded as an employee in the town hall ("mitarbeiter_rathaus" = yes). In such a case, "mitarbeiter_rathaus_amt" says "Bürgermeister in OB Gemeinde". A Lord Mayor holds office in town districts ("Stadtkreis") or major district towns ("Kreisstadt", §42 (4) GemO). Pursuant to the municipal law, municipalities with more than 20,000 inhabitants are eligible to be designated as major district towns at the state government's request (§3 (2) GemO). The first councillor ("erster Beigeordneter", i.e., vice mayor) is the appointed deputy of the Lord Mayor. He or she bears the title "Bürgermeister" (mayor; see §49 (3) GemO).

[b] Familiar abbreviations are used. If a party is relatively unknown, the entry covers the party's real name; an abbreviation is given in parentheses. "parteilos" indicates that the candidate is not a member of a political party. Note that this is different from the situation where candidates depict themselves to be independent. The candidate, however, might be affiliated to a party in one way or another. A candidate who belongs to a political group within the municipal authority is not necessarily a party member. "kommentar" refers to such conforming political convictions.

Variable Name	File	Variable Description	Coding
partei_amt_seit	D	Number of years the candidate holds this position (if "partei_amt" is known)	Integer
partei_seit	D	Number of years the candidate has been a member of the party (if "partei" is known)	Integer
person_id	C, D	Unique identification number of a person	Integer
probleme_kandidatenfindung	A	The municipality had difficulties to find people who are willing to run for election	1 = yes 2 = no
religion_id	D	Candidate's denomination	1 = Catholic 2 = Protestant 3 = other Christian church 4 = Muslim 5 = Jew 6 = Hindu 7 = Buddhist 8 = atheist 9 = other

Variable Name	File	Variable Description	Coding
sonstiges	D	Additional political memberships[a] (e.g., membership in a trade union[b])	Text
sonstiges_indi	D	As a member of a political interest group, the candidate executes a political post (e.g., trade union official)	Text
sonstiges_indi_seit	D	Number of years the candidate has executed his or her function in the political interest group (if "sonstiges_indi" is given)	Integer
sonstiges_seit	D	Number of years the candidate has been a member of the particular political interest group (if "sonstiges" is given)	Integer
spasskandidat	D	Non-serious candidate: Person stands as a candidate even if he or she does not intend to win the election (e.g., application because of a lost bet[c])	1 = yes 2 = no

[a] Deputy mayors of municipalities with less than 10,000 inhabitants work on a voluntary basis; they are compensated for their effort with expense allowances (§48 (1) GemO). Consequently, they need to practise another chief occupation as indicated by "beruf_1". Their honorary position is saved here.

[b] All memberships in interest groups which intend to participate in the formation of political objectives are counted here.

[c] A non–serious candidate is someone who has little political motivation. A case in point: He or she intends to establish the world record of the most frequent applications. Note that certain party affiliations (e.g., NPD) have never been interpreted as non-serious applications. The characterization "spasskandidat" is assigned only if unambiguous statements on the candidate's non–serious motivation are found. These are documented in "kommentar".

Variable Name	File	Variable Description	Coding
termin_erster_wahlgang	A	Date of the first ballot	DD.MM.YYYY
termin_wahlgang	B	Date when the respective ballot is held	DD.MM.YYYY
titel_id	D	Candidate's academic title	1 = Dr. / PhD 2 = Dr. h.c. 3 = PD (Lecturer) 4 = Prof. Dr.
unterstuetzung_durch[a]	D	Name of interest groups or associations which support the candidate in his or her application in the first ballot	Text (e.g., CDU)
unterstuetzung_durch_2	D	Name of interest groups or associations which support the candidate in his or her application in the second ballot	Text (e.g., SPD)
verein	D	Candidate is a club member	Text[b]
verein_amt	D	Candidate holds an honorary office in this club	Text (e.g., executive ("Vorstand"), treasurer ("Kassenwart"))
verein_amt_seit	D	Number of years the candidate has held that honorary office in the club	Integer
verein_seit	D	Number of years the candidate has been a club member	Integer

[a] This includes individuals such as former governors of the state or mayors who advocate a candidate's application. Individuals are mentioned by name.

[b] Rough classification of the club's background (e.g. sports club = "Sportverein") and its name of location (free field, e.g., "Sportverein Karlsruhe"). "Viele Vereine" indicates that the candidate is active in several clubs.

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Variable Name	File	Variable Description	Coding
vorname	C	Person's first name	Text
wahl_id	A, B, D	Unique identification number of a particular election	Integer
wahlbeteiligung	B	Voter turnout in the respective ballot (in %)	[0.00, 100.00]
wahlgang_nr	B	Indication of the ballot of an election	Integer
wahlgrund_id	A	Reason why an election is held	1 = term of office runs out[a]
			2 = incumbent died
			3 = age–related replacement[b]
			4 = resignation for health reasons
			5 = political demission
			6 = amalgamation of communities
			7 = change of job by the incumbent[c]
			8 = other reasons

[a] Note that the term length varies over time: From 1955 to 1974 the term length was extended by four years (from eight to twelve years) in case of the incumbent's re–election. Elections after these prolonged terms are held for standard reasons (=1). By 1975 the term length has been restricted to eight years.

[b] The retirement age is reached on completion of the age of 68. If the retirement of the mayor and the end of his or her term of office concur, the standard case is recorded (=1). An age-related replacement (=3) occurs if and only if the election is brought forward to an earlier date of the (standard) election year.

[c] The mayor goes to a different municipality. Hence, the post becomes vacant and a successor needs to be elected.

Variable Name	File	Variable Description	Coding
wahlsieger	D	Candidate who won the election	1 = yes 2 = no 3 = unknown
wohnhaft_in	D	Candidate's place of residence	Text
wohnhaft_in_wahlgemeinde	D	Candidate is a resident where he or she runs	1 = yes 2 = no
*varname*_quelle (e.g., antritt_amtsinhaber_quelle, ausbildung_1_quelle, beruf_2_quelle, etc.)	A, B, C, D	Exact data source (newspaper or internet article)	Name_YYYYMMDD_page (e.g., SWABZ_19740930_11 means "Schwäbische Zeitung" issued on September, 30 1974 on page 11)