Supplemental online material for "Do Parties Matter for Policy Accumulation? An Analysis of Social Policy Portfolios in 22 Countries"

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Abstract

Technical documentation of the article "Do Parties Matter for Policy Accumulation? An Analysis of Social Policy Portfolios in 22 Countries" submited at *European Journal of Political Research*.

Contents

1   Coding manual (excerpt)

1.1   Basic Coding Procedure and Main Concepts

At the most basic level, the coders have to identify single events of policy change in the collected legal documents and, for each single event, assess the direction of change, i.e., whether the event of policy change represents the introduction or abolishment of a given target-instrument-combination.

To come into consideration, a policy change has to meet the following requirements in form and content. Formally, a relevant policy change is any measure or provision in the collected legislation (and where necessary respective administrative circulars specifying these rules) that

- was published during the observation period, which starts on **January 1, 1976**, and ends on **December 31, 2005**

- was adopted at the **national level**

The second point clearly excludes measures by sub-national jurisdictions such as regional or local bodies, even if the latter are state-like entities with far-reaching competencies as in federal states.

1.2   Coding Categories

The method used to assess and code policy change, is intended to be universally applicable, i.e. over a wide range of countries, irrespective of differing legal and administrative traditions. Thus, the coding rules comprise two invariant general categories. These are policy targets and policy instruments.

By means of these two categories, we seek to measure developments over time in a nuanced manner. Moreover, in order to assess whether a change represents the introduction or abolishment, we are interested in policy change relative to the previous state. Thus, as will be explained in more detail in this section, relative changes to the previous targets and instruments need to be coded. We are interested in the introduction and abolishment of (new) policy target (guiding question: *what is adressed?*), of policy instruments (*how is something addressed?*).

Recalling the observation period (January 1, 1976 to December 31, 2005), this stated focus on change has one important implication: Although the relevant information for deciding whether a legal act falls into the observation period is the date of publication, it might be the case that coders need to consult legislation originating from some year before 1980 in order to reconstruct the occurrence and the direction of change. For instance, if a law adopted in 2008 changes a law enacted in 1973, the latter legislation has to be considered in order to make a statement about the direction and nature of change taking place through the 2008 legislation.

1.3   Coding Category 1: Policy Targets

The first and most general coding category is policy targets. For analytical reasons, we use a very narrow conception of policy targets. By policy targets, we mean a very specific activity within a subarea of a policy field guided by the question: who or what is addressed? More specifically, a policy target is subject to state activities in order to achieve a political objective within a specific area. The tables below contain the policy targets this project is exclusively interested in. Thus, when screening the legislative acts, please identify the presence and/or abolishment of any policy targets from these lists and indicate these events of policy change as either introduction or termination.

One single target has to be coded only once per legislative act – it must not be coded multiple times. Any instrument concerning this specific target will be attributed to the one single target. If a policy target from the list is introduced for the first time, i.e. subject to governmental action for the first time, this particular event must be coded as policy introduction. If, by contrast, a policy target from the list is abolished, i.e.

is not subject to governmental action anymore, this particular event must be coded as policy termination. Please note that the termination of a target entails the termination of all attached instruments, which have to be coded separately. The same is true when a target is addressed for the first time.

Unemployment benefits

1. Basic Unemployment benefits
2. Special Unemployment benefits: bad weather; seasonal unemployment benefits
3. Special Unemployment benefits: emergency aid
4. Special Unemployment benefits: special holiday payments
5. Special Unemployment benefits: partial unemployment benefits
6. Special Unemployment benefits: other
7. Support for vocational education and training/ vocational reintegration expenses

Pensions

8. Basic People's Pension (standard-employee pension) for singles ("first layer pension" – basic minimum income for old-aged people, typically a pension of the same amount for all, regardless of contributions)
9. Basic People's Pension (standard-employee pension) for married couples
10. Basic People's Pension (standard-employee pension) for unmarried couples
11. Additional People's Pension for singles ("second layer pension" – pensions originating from another source than the basic people's pension, typically dependent on contributions/income)
12. Additional People's Pension for married couples
13. Additional People's Pension for unmarried couples
14. Special Pensions for singles (e.g., pensions paid to old-aged people who retire earlier than most of the working population)
15. Special Pensions for married couples
16. Special Pensions for unmarried couples

Child benefits

17. Basic child benefits (children)
18. Special child benefits, e.g., special subsidy for juveniles having not reached majority (often 16-18 years) / youth benefit or indirect child benefits like means-tested family assistance (juveniles)
19. Payments for giving birth to children (birth)

1.4 Coding Category 2: Policy instruments

We define a policy instrument as a tool or means adopted to achieve the underlying political objective of the selected policy target. A policy instrument thus describes the type of governmental action adopted

for a given policy target. A policy instrument is intended to have a regulating and/or guiding effect on people's actions. The tables below contain all potential policy instruments for social policy. For each policy targets, if addressed, there is at least one policy instrument defined as a tool to achieve the underlying political objective. Yet, any policy target may be addressed by means of various policy instruments. For each addressed policy target, the coders are asked to identify all instruments. Please note that a given policy instrument belongs to one type/group only. The following table is exhaustive, containing the most common social policy instruments.

Instrument	Description	Example
1. Contribution / fee	Payment made by citizens to a state agency to receive certain benefits	Fee for unemployment insurance
2. Tax exemption / subsidy	A reduction of tax payments to provide income tax savings	Child tax exemption
3. Bonus / grant	one-off grant / payment of money, irrespective of means	Bonus for giving birth to a child; reimbursement of expenses related to job search
4. Retention	Non-payment of a certain allowance	Retention period for unemployment benefit
5. Other	Any instrument that cannot be assigned to the given categories	(…)
6. Universal benefits / Allowance	A payment of a certain amount of money by the state, irrespective of means	Unemployment benefit, child benefit; orphan's benefit

2 Instrument-Target combinations