

bps_readme.txt

Notes on Programs and Datasets for:

Besley, Persson and Sturm, "Political Competition, Policy and Growth: Theory and Evidence from the United States", Review of Economic Studies, October 2010.

The zip archive bps_final.zip contains all datasets and programs that were used for the results reported in this paper. Unpacking this archive and executing the file bps_master.do in STATA (Version 10.0) replicates all results in the paper.

The archive has the following structure. It contains two datasets:

uscomp.dta: This STATA dataset contains the data that is used for all regressions and Figure 1.

swingvoters.dta: This STATA dataset contains the data extracted from the NES that is used in the calibration displayed in Figure 2.

The dofile bps_master.do calls three dofiles:

bps_main_regressions_final.do: This do file uses uscomp.dta and estimates the results in Tables 1 to 7 and alternative specifications discussed in the main text. A log file of the results is saved in the subdirectory \logs and .out files of the results are saved in the subdirectory \results.

bps_figure1_final.do: This do file uses uscomp.dta and creates Figure 1 and saves an .eps copy of the Figure in the subdirectory \results.

bps_figure2_final.do: This do file uses swingvoters.dta and creates Figure 2 and saves an .eps copy of the Figure in the subdirectory \results.

The subdirectory \temp is used by bps_main_regressions_final.do to save temporary datasets.

Notes on the data:

(1) Note that the sum of non-farm income and farm income is not exactly equal to total state personal income for recent years. These variables come from different revisions of the state income data of the Bureau of Economic Analysis. The farm and non-farm income data were taken from the CD "State Personal Income 1929-2000" published in November 2001 by the Bureau of Economic Analysis. The state personal income data was made available by the Bureau of Economic Analysis in electronic form in February 2005.

(2) The variable "normdem" which we use to construct our main measure of political competition "compnorm" was originally collected by Jim Snyder to measure the incumbency advantage. The data exclude elections in which a third candidate obtained 10 percent of the vote and elections in which not both a Republican and Democratic candidate ran. These exclusions create a few gaps in the data for Georgia, Louisiana, South Carolina, Mississippi and Minnesota, which we filled in using the ICPSR election data (Study 7757), which is also the basic data source for "normdem". The raw data behind "normdem" will in future be available online through an elections data project of Jim Snyder.