

CALL FOR BIDS

Making Electoral Democracy Work: Voters, Parties, and the Rules of the Game

Objective

The objective of the study is to examine the determinants of vote choice (including the decision to vote or not to vote) in different election contexts.

The Project

The research design for the full project involves internet surveys in five countries: Canada, France, Germany, Switzerland and Spain. In each of the countries, two regions will be studied over the course of two or more elections. In each of the two French, two German and two Spanish regions, voters will be surveyed over three elections –one national, one supranational, and one regional. In one of the Swiss regions, the election surveys will also cover three elections - one federal, one regional (cantonal), and one local. In the two Canadian regions and the other Swiss region, the surveys will cover two elections: one federal and one regional (provincial/cantonal). In total, there will be surveys of 27 elections, expected to occur between 2011 and 2015. See the Appendix for more detailed information.

Each election survey will consist of a pre- and post-election component. The pre-election component will be conducted during the last week of the election campaign and should have a minimum of 1000 respondents. The pre-election survey will be approximately 100 questions in length. The post-election survey will take place immediately after the election and will be 40 questions in length. All pre-election respondents should be contacted to respond to the post-election survey. There should be a minimum of 750 respondents in the post-election survey (no replacement).

An additional component of the project is a panel study of the German region of Hesse over 3 elections. As these elections take place within the span of a single year, we would like to integrate a panel component into the election studies. That is, we would like 800 of the respondents interviewed in the first pre-election study to also be interviewed in the 2nd and 3rd election studies as well. To maintain a panel of this size, we anticipate requiring an initial N of at least 2000, with refreshment of the sample at the pre-election stage of the 2nd and 3rd elections, and request that subjects who decline to complete a particular wave of the survey be recontacted at every available opportunity to rejoin the study. Details of the procedure for sample refreshment should be provided by the survey firm. In the end, we expect to have separate panel and cross-sectional samples for the 2nd and 3rd election, each with at least 800 respondents.

We are calling for bids on one, some or all of the election studies that are included in this project. The survey firm should provide an estimate for conducting both the pre-election *and* post-election surveys in one, some or all of the country regions. The firm should specify the anticipated retention rate for subjects between the pre- and post-election survey components, and, if bidding on the Hesse study, also across the different elections.

The survey firm should describe the sampling frame in whichever country regions are being proposed for study and its development, including recruitment procedures. Particular attention should be given

to how the representativeness of the sample (in terms of the specific region being surveyed) is assured. Any matching or weighting procedures utilized must be detailed for each region.

We are also particularly concerned that people with no or little interest in politics and who do not vote are adequately represented in the surveys. The survey firm should describe the steps to be taken to maximize representativeness in terms of political interest and propensity to vote.

As maintaining the integrity of the Hesse panel is so important to the project, we ask that the firm go into detail in the proposal about the various techniques that may be employed to increase participation across elections, and across pre- and post-election survey components. The firm should specify the expected (AAPOR RR3) response rates in several potential scenarios:

- No specific techniques employed to increase collaboration (subject retention)
- Pre-notification used
- Recall notification used
- Financial incentives used

With respect to financial incentives, we are interested in utilizing draws for cash prizes, although we are open to considering a variety of techniques. We would like the survey firm to indicate the types of financial incentives, number of draws, or alternatives that are considered to be feasible, and indicate which method is recommended.

Whenever possible, we ask that the firm provide specific information about previous research it has undertaken as evidence of its ability to deliver on its proposal. This is particularly important with respect to anticipated response rates and recommendations of means to increase collaboration across the waves of the survey.

The Survey

The pre-election survey will be approximately 100 questions long, in part depending on the demographic information already available on panel respondents. We require demographic information on the following variables: sex, year of birth, education level, household income, marital status, number of children under 18 years of age living at home, employment status, union membership, public sector employment, country of birth, religion, frequency of attendance at place of worship, ethno-racial background and location. The survey firm should indicate what demographic information it can provide (if any), and how/when it will be gathered. Any variables not provided by the firm will be included in the survey; therefore, the survey may be reduced in size according to what demographic information is already available. There will be no open-ended questions. There will be some experiments included in the survey, which will require randomization of specific questions or response categories. Evidence of the firm's ability to conduct such experiments should be provided. The survey may also include some visual components for certain questions (i.e., pictures).

The post-election survey will be approximately 40 questions long. Again, all questions will be closed-ended and the survey may require some randomization of specific questions.

We will be responsible for the construction of the English questionnaire and the translation of the English questionnaire into French, German, Spanish and Catalan versions.

Implementation

It is very important that there be consistency in the sample construction methodologies used in each country and region. The survey firm should specify how the subjects will be recruited in each country and region, and any differences between countries or regions should be justified. If the survey firm intends to subcontract any of the surveys to related firms, complete information about that firm, including sample construction and evidence of its ability to conduct such research within our desired parameters, must be provided.

Prior to each wave of the survey, the firm is required to provide a copy of the code used to implement the survey.

Datasets

The survey firm is expected to provide an updated dataset every six months, including all surveys completed at that time. The firm should include in the dataset information about non-respondents (that is, demographic information about those contacted who refused to take part in any component of the study) and the contact and participant history of each subject (disposition reports or equivalent).

Technical reports are also required every six months. As part of the technical report, the firm must provide a copy of the code used to implement the survey in each location at each wave and .pdf files of all screens seen by the respondents.

Analysis of the data is not required.

The Proposal

The proposal for this project should contain the following elements, detailed separately for each country region study:

- Cost estimates for the pre-election and post-election surveys, in Canadian dollars, including explicit CPI
- The sampling frame and any relevant details about its construction, including
 - o Size
 - o Recruitment techniques
 - o Representativeness (with respect to region)
 - o Matching or weighting procedures used
 - o Steps taken to ensure representativeness with respect to political information and voting
- An estimate of the retention rate for subjects across the pre-election and the post-election waves
- The anticipated AAPOR RR3 response rates across each survey wave
- If bidding on the study in Hesse, information about expected retention rates over the full panel
- If bidding on the Hesse study, information about the anticipated AAPOR RR3 response rates across each wave of the panel in at least four different scenarios, in addition to any specific methodology recommended by the firm to maximize collaboration (subject retention) across surveys:
 - o No specific techniques employed to increase collaboration (subject retention)
 - o Pre-notification used

- Recall notification used
 - Financial incentives used
- A list of socio-demographic variables that the firm can provide about the sample (outside of the pre-election survey), and how/when it will be collected
- A list of paradata (such as response latencies, time stamps, key-stroke files) that can be made available and attached to the dataset
- Full information about any firms that will be used as subcontractors, as required
 - Sample frame details and construction, including recruitment techniques
 - Evidence of ability to perform within parameters of this study
- Information about previous studies that indicate the likelihood of achieving the expected response rates in each scenario
- Evidence of ability to deliver all elements of the proposal

The total cost of the study should not exceed \$1,000,000 (Canadian).

The bid should be submitted by March 15, 2010.

For further information, please contact Laura Stephenson (lstephe8@uwo.ca).

Appendix: Regions and Elections

Below we provide details of the elections for which surveys are to be conducted in each region in each country. Please note that the timing of each election is not definite; the probability of the election occurring at the stated time is provided in brackets.

1. France

Region 1: IDF (Ile de France)

Election surveys of the following three elections:

National legislative election: May 2012 (date very likely)

Municipal election: March 2014 (date very likely)

European election: June 2014 (date very likely)

Region 2: PACA (Provence/Alpes/Cote d'Azur) regions.

Election surveys of the following three elections:

National legislative election: May 2012 (date very likely)

Municipal election: March 2014 (date very likely)

European election: June 2014 (date very likely)

2. Germany

Region 1 : Hamburg

Election surveys of the following three elections:

Hamburg state election : February 2012 (date very likely)

National legislative election : September 2013 (date very likely)

European election : June 2014 (date very likely)

Region 2 : Hesse.

Election surveys of the following three elections:

National legislative election: September 2013 (date very likely)

Hesse state election: January 2014 (date very likely)

European election: June 2014 (date very likely)

3. Switzerland

Region 1 : Zurich

Election surveys of the following two elections:

Zurich cantonal election: April 2011 (date very likely)

National legislative election: October 2011 (date very likely)

Region 2: Lucerne

Election surveys of the following three elections:

- Lucerne cantonal election: April 2011 (date very likely)
- National legislative election: October 2011 (date very likely)
- Local election: April 2012 (date very likely)

4. Spain

Region 1: Madrid

Election surveys of the following three elections:

- National legislative election: March 2012 (date very likely)
- European election: June 2014 (date very likely)
- Madrid regional election: May 2015 (date very likely)

Region 2: Catalonia

Election surveys of the following three elections:

- National legislative election: March 2012 (date very likely)
- European election: June 2014 (date very likely)
- Catalonia regional election: November 2014 (date very likely)

5. Canada*

Region 1: British Columbia

Election surveys of the following two elections:

- British Columbia provincial election: May 2013 (date very likely)
- National legislative election: April 2014 (date highly uncertain)

Region 2: Quebec

Election surveys of the following two elections:

- Quebec provincial election: October 2012 (date somewhat likely; majority government elected in fall 2008)
- National legislative election: April 2014 (date highly uncertain)

*NB: This selection of regions will have to be revisited if and when we have a better understanding of political dynamics at the federal level. The expectation of an April 2014 national legislative election in Canada presupposes an election in April 2010 with a majority government outcome. We may have to substitute Ontario (provincial elections in October 2011 and October 2015) for Quebec.

Summary Calendar of Election Surveys (Tentative):

Year	Month	Election
2011	April	Swiss cantonal elections in Lucerne and Zurich
	October	Swiss national legislative election
2012	February	German state election in Hamburg
	March	Spanish national legislative election
	April	Swiss local election in Lucerne
	May	French national legislative election
	October	Canadian provincial election in Quebec
2013	May	Canadian provincial election in British Columbia
	September	German national legislative election
2014	January	German state election in Hesse
	March	French municipal election
	April	Canadian national legislative election
	June	European election in France, Germany and Spain
	November	Spanish regional election in Catalonia
2015	May	Spanish regional election in Madrid