Dataset Description — The Voter Autrement Survey Experiment during the 2022 French Presidential Election

Isabelle Lebon[a,*], Antoinette Baujard[b], Herrade Igersheim[c,d], Théo Delemazure[e]

[a]*CREM, Universités Caen-Normandie et Rennes 1*
[b]*GATE Lyon Saint-Étienne, Université Jean Monnet, Saint-Étienne*
[c]*BETA, Université de Strasbourg*
[d]*CNRS*
[e]*ILLC, University of Amsterdam*

Abstract

In April 2022, we conducted a voting experiment during the French presidential election. This experiment was conducted on a representative sample of the French population recruited through the online polling platform Dynata. In this experiment, participants were asked to test alternative voting methods to elect the French president, more precisely approval voting, evaluative voting and the majority judgement. A total of 1 972 participants took part in this experiment. This paper provides a description of the dataset. This experiment was made possible thanks to the support of the project ANR CITIZENS (ANR-22-CE26-0019-01, Implication des citoyens dans la décision publique locale), the research call from University Jean Monnet 2022 operated by GATE Lyon Saint-Etienne, fundings from LAMSADE University Paris Dauphine, and from CREM University of Caen.

Keywords: Dataset, Voting Theory, Experiments, Elections

1. Introduction

Between April 1st and April 10th 2022, before the first round of the presidential election, an experiment on alternative voting methods was carried out online, on a representative sample of the French population recruited through the online polling platform Dynata.[1] This experiment is part of the "Voter Autrement" project, which started with in situ (framed-fields) experiments during the 2002 presidential election in France.

The candidates are the same than in the official election. In total, 1 972 participants took part in this experiment. They all first voted with approval voting, then roughly half of them (1 002) voted with evaluative voting, and the other half (970) voted with the majority judgement. The participants were additionally asked their "sincere" opinion on the candidates on a scale from 0 to 20. Another aspect of this experiment, which data will be made available in another data set, concerned how participants understood the various voting rules. Finally, the participants also answered questions regarding socio-demographics and their view on the importance of understanding voting rules. Note that all participants which answered in less than 3 minutes were removed from the dataset. This document presents the dataset that was collected during these experiments. The results of the experiments as well as the protocol, and how the sample was recruited to be ex ante representative are discussed in detail in Baujard et al. [3].

The remainder of this document is organized as follows: Section 2 provides some definitions about the voting methods tested in this experiment, and Section 3 describes the dataset.

*Corresponding author
[1] https://www.dynata.com/

2. Voting Methods

In these experiments, three alternative voting methods were tested:

- **Approval Voting**, in which each voter indicates for each candidate whether she approves or not the election of this candidate. The candidate who gathers the largest number of approval is elected.
- **Evaluative Voting**, in which each voter grades each candidate on a predefined numerical scale. The candidate who gathers the largest total of points is elected. The scale used in these experiments is $(-1, 0, 1, 2, 3, 4)$.
- **Majority Judgement** [2], in which each voter grades each candidate on a predefined scale. The candidate with the highest median grade is elected (the case of a tie is more complex, so we will not enter into details here, but we refer to Balinski and Laraki [1, 2]). The scale used in these experiments is the following: *A rejeter* (to reject), *Insuffisant* (insufficient), *Assez Bien* (good enough), *Bien* (good), *Très Bien* (very good), and *Excellent* (excellent).

Note that we used the same number of grades for Evaluative Voting and Majority Judgement, but the semantics of the grades are different in the two methods. In Evaluative Voting, the grades are purely numerical and their meaning is not defined. In Majority Judgement, the grades have a precise meaning.

For all methods, voters had the possibility to only grade a subset of the candidates, and to leave the other candidates ungraded. The questions in the survey were mentioning that ungraded candidates would be considered as not approved for approval voting, and as graded with the lowest grade for evaluative voting and majority judgement.

3. The Dataset

The dataset contains the following files:

- `voters.csv` contains the following columns:
  - `id`: the identifier of the voter (anonymized).
  - `age`: the age range of the voter.
  - `gender`: the gender of the voter.
  - `work`: the working status of the voter:
    - "Employé": employee.
    - "Ouvrier": worker.
    - "Retraité": retired.
    - "Étudiant": student.
    - "Profession intermédiaire": intermediate profession.
    - "Agriculteur, artisan, profession libérale, chef d'entreprise": farmers, craftsmen, liberal professions, business owners.
    - "Cadre et profession intellectuelle supérieure": executive and intellectual professions.
    - "Inactif": without a professional activity.
  - `region`: the region of residence of the voter.
  - `agglomeration_size`: the size of the agglomeration of residence of the voter:
    - "Moins de 2 000 habitants": less than 2 000 inhabitants.
    - "2 000 à 19 999 habitants": between 2 000 and 19 999 inhabitants.
    - "20 000 à 99 999 habitants": between 20 000 and 99 999 inhabitants.
    - "Plus de 100 000 habitants": more than 100 000 inhabitants.

    * "Agglomération parisienne": Parisian agglomeration.
  - `will_vote`: Will you vote in the official election? "Oui" (yes), "Je ne sais pas encore" (I don't know yet), "Non" (no).
  - `vote_if_yes`: the candidate for which the voter said she will vote in the official election (if `will_vote` is "Oui").
  - `vote_if_perhaps`: the candidate for which the voter said she will vote in the official election (if `will_vote` is "Je ne sais pas encore").
  - `abstention_reason`: Why are you abstaining? (pre-encoded answers.)
  - `abstention_reason_free`: Why are you abstaining? (free-text answers.)
  - `rule_tested`: "scores" or "majority_judgement", depending on the voting method tested by the voter.
  - `counting_result`: What is your position on the following statement: *"Citizens must be able to easily understand/deduce the result of the election after the counting, once the content of the ballots is known."* (Pre-record responses: "Inutile" (useless), "Souhaitable" (desirable), "Important" (important), "Fondamental/indispensable" (fundamental/indispensable)).
  - `counting_result_free`: What is your position on the following statement: *"Citizens must be able to easily understand/deduce the result of the election after the counting, once the content of the ballots is known."* (free-text answers).
  - `date_submission`: the date of submission of the ballot.
  - `date_start`: the date of the start of the experiment for this voter.
  - `date_end`: the date of the end of the experiment for this voter.
  - `duration`: the duration of the experiment for this voter (in seconds).

- `opinions.csv` contains the opinions of the voters about the voting methods. The question was "You just tried three different voting methods to elect the president of the Republic. Which rule did you prefer among the three?". Voters could choose only one answer among the three methods they tested.

- `candidates.csv` contains relevant information about the candidates: name, party, appropriate color, score at the election.

- `approval.csv` contains the approval votes. The first row contains the names of the candidates. The value of the cell is 1 if the voter approved the candidate, 0 if the voter did not approve the candidate or did not grade the candidate.

- `scores.csv` contains the grades for Evaluative Voting. The first row contains the names of the candidates. The value of the cells are the grades given by the voters (on the scale $\{-1, 0, 1, 2, 3, 4\}$). If a voter did not grade a candidate, the cell is empty (it should be considered as graded with the lowest grade, i.e., -1).

- `majority_judgement.csv` contains the grades for Majority Judgement. The first row contains the names of the candidates. The value of the cells are the grades given by the voters (from "To reject" to "Excellent"). If a voter did not grade a candidate, the cell is empty (it should be considered as graded with the lowest grade, i.e., "To reject").

- `notes.csv` contains the "sincere" opinions of the voters about the candidates, on a scale from 0 to 20. The first row contains the names of the candidates. If the voter did not grade a candidate, the cell is empty. Not giving an opinion on a candidate should be considered as having no opinion, not as giving the lowest grade (0).

The dataset is freely available on Zenodo at 10.5281/zenodo.18848264. If you are using this dataset, please cite the dataset and/or the paper describing the results [3]. The bibtex entry for the dataset is the following:

```
@misc{lebon2026survey,
  author    = {Lebon, Isabelle and Baujard, Antoinette and Igersheim, Herrade
               and Delemazure, Theo},
  title     = {Voter Autrement 2022 - Dataset of the Survey Experiment on a
               Representative Sample},
  month     = {March},
  year      = 2026,
  publisher = {Zenodo},
  doi       = {10.5281/zenodo.18848264},
  url       = {https://zenodo.org/records/18848264},
}
```


Acknowledgements

This experiment was made possible thanks to the support of the project ANR CITIZENS (ANR-22-CE26-0019-01, Implication des citoyens dans la décision publique locale), the research call from University Jean Monnet 2022 operated by GATE Lyon Saint-Etienne, fundings from LAMSADE University Paris Dauphine, and from CREM University of Caen.

References

[1] Balinski, M., Laraki, R., 2007. A theory of measuring, electing, and ranking. Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences 104, 8720–8725.

[2] Balinski, M.L., Laraki, R., 2010. Majority Judgment: Measuring, Ranking, and Electing. MIT Press.

[3] Baujard, A., Igersheim, H., Lebon, I., 2025. Élection présidentielle 2022: Autres modes de scrutin, autres résultats? Revue d'économie politique 135, 271–298.