Codebook European Commissioners*

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This documentation provides a codebook for a dataset of all Commissioners of the European Union. The dataset includes biographical information of the Commissioners of the European Economic Community, the European Communities and the European Union. It is mostly based on the *Munzinger* archive. If the *Munzinger* archive could not provide information other sources were used. All variables and decisions for coding the variables of the dataset are documented in this codebook.

Two information are most relevant for the dataset. First, the party affiliation of a Commissioner before entering the Commission and if party was part of the governing coalition at the time of the appointment. Second, I am interested in the former political importance of every Commissioner. For this information, I use a publicly available dataset to give scores to the highest former positions of Commission members.

If you have any comments on the methods used here or the information provided in this codebook please contact me. In addition, please let me know about any mistakes you encounter in the dataset or the documentation.

*This dataset was initially prepared for a research article (Döring 2007). Lars Brückner has helped to revise and update the data in 2011 and Lina Schwarz updated the data in 2014. Fabio Franchino provided additional information about some Commissioners. I would like to thank them for their support.

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1 Data Sources

To collect the biographical information of all European Commissioners, I used several data sources. Most of the information used to create the dataset are based on the *Munzinger* archive. If *Munzinger* provided no information, other sources were used. For Commissions after 1995 the Internet presentation of the European Commission provided biographical information of the Commissioners.

The *Munzinger* archive is a German news source. It contains the *Internationale Biographische Archiv* with biographical information of important personalities from politics, business, science and arts. Especially for the early Commissions it turned out to be the most complete source. To guarantee a certain coherence of the sources used in the dataset, I relied on the *Munzinger* data for all Commissions until 1995. For Commissions after 1995 I used the Internet presentation of the European Commission (`europa.eu.int/comm`).

If the *Munzinger* archive provided no information about a Commissioner, I used *LexisNexis* to find additional information. Since *LexisNexis* provides several news sources, I relied mostly on the *Financial Times* and *The Economist* for information to keep the sources coherent. Section 2.3 provides detailed information about the alternative sources and when they where used.

I used the ParlGov data infrastructure (`www.parlgov.org`) to find the parties in government at the time a College took office. To compare the political importance of Commissioners former positions, I used a datasets published by Druckman and Warwick (2005) and Druckman and Roberts (2008). These data sets provide a scale of the importance of ministry portfolios in European countries. It is based on an expert survey among country experts – see Chapter 4.1 for a discussion of the advantages and disadvantages of using this dataset.

Getting coherent information on the portfolios assigned among the Commissioners turned out to be very difficult for Commissions before 1973. *Munzinger* provides only incomplete information on the division of responsibilities within the Commission. A more detailed analysis and dataset is provided by Franchino (2009).

2 Variables

2.1 List of all Variables

All variables shown in Table 1 are included in the dataset. Most of the relevant variables are described in more detail in later parts of this codebook.

2.2 Coding of Variables

2.2.1 Categorical Variables

The Commissions (*commission_id*) are coded by year. Starting from the *Hallstein Commission* in 1958, Table 2 lists the assigned year of every Commission. Each observation

Table 1: Used Variables

Variable	**Type**	**Description**	**Coding**
country_id	string	ParlGov country id	
commission_year	ordinal	Commission year	*see Table 2*
commission_name	string	Commission name	*see Table 2*
person_id	integer	ParlGov politician id	
person_id_source	string	Commissioner's name	
start_date	date	Commissioner entered Commission	
end_date	date	Commissioner left Commission	
incumbent	binary	incumbent Commissioner	
one_seat	binary	one seat in Commission	
party_id	ordinal	ParlGov party id	
party_id_source	string	name of party membership	*see Section 3*
government	ordinal	governing coalition member	
president	binary	president of Commission	
portfolio	string	Commission portfolio	
elected	binary	career with political position	
position_score	number	score for highest position	*see Section 4*
position_highest	string	highest former position	*see Section 4*
description	string	additional information	
comment	string	additional comments	
data_json	string	information needed	
previous_cabinet_id	integer	ParlGov cabinet id	

Table 2: Commission Codes (*commission*)

Code	Period	Commission President
1958	1958-01-10 – 1962-01-09	Walter Hallstein (D)
1962	1962-01-10 – 1967-07-05	Walter Hallstein (D)
1967	1967-07-06 – 1970-06-30	Jean Rey (B)
1970	1970-07-01 – 1973-01-05	Malfatti (I) / Mansholt (NL)
1973	1973-01-06 – 1977-01-06	Francis-Xavier Ortoli (F)
1977	1977-01-06 – 1981-01-06	Roy Jenkins (UK)
1981	1981-01-06 – 1985-01-05	Gaston Thorn (L)
1985	1985-01-06 – 1989-01-05	Jacques Delors (F)
1989	1989-01-06 – 1993-01-06	Jacques Delors (F)
1993	1993-01-06 – 1995-01-06	Jacques Delors (F)
1995	1995-01-06 – 1999-03-15	Jacques Santer (L)
2000	2000-01-23 – 2004-10-31	Romani Prodi (I)
2004	2004-11-22 – 2010-02-09	Jose Manuel Barroso (P)
2010	2010-02-09 – today	Jose Manuel Barroso (P)

contains the information of one Commissioner for every Commission. Therefore, if Commissioners served for more than one period, several observations are included into the dataset.

2.2.2 Dummy Variables

Several variables indicate whether an observation fulfills the criteria described by this variable. These variables are coded either *1* or *0*. If the the observation has the criteria indicated through the variable, the value is *1*, otherwise *0*. For example, the variable *incumbent* shows if a Commissioner has been part of a former Commission.

To indicate positions within the Commission, dummy variables for the president (*president*) based on Donnelly et al. (1994) and `europa.eu.int/comm` are included. Portfolios assigned in the Commission are only included as incomplete textual information. A more detailed dataset with information on the portfolio allocation within the Commission is provided by Franchino (2009).

2.3 Comments on Coding

2.3.1 Missing Observations

For some Commissioners, the *Munzinger* archive provided no information. In this case, I tried to use other sources to include the necessary biographical information of a Commissioner. For some Commissioners, no information at all could be found. Table 3 states all

Table 3: Missing Observations for Commissioners

Name	**Country**	**Year**	**Missing Observations**
Robert Lemaignen	France	1958	*party, position*

Table 4: Alternative Sources

Name	**Year**	**Alternative Source**
Robert Lemaignen	1958	Internet source
Michael O'Kennedy	1981	LexisNexis – The Economist & FT
Stanley Clinton Davis	1985	LexisNexis – Financial Times
Nicolas Moser	1985	LexisNexis – Financial Times
Grigorios Varfis	1985	LexisNexis – BBC
Ray McShary	1989	LexisNexis – Financial Times
Bruce Millan	1989	LexisNexis – Financial Times
Santer Commission	1995	`europa.eu.int/comm/archives`
Prodi Commission	1999	`europa.eu.int/comm/archives`
Barroso Commission	2005	`europa.eu.int/comm`

observations where no data could be found. If possible, I will try to add the information later.[1]

2.3.2 Alternative Sources

Some Commissioners could not be found in the *Munzinger* archive. In this case, I first tried to get information about the Commissioner at *LexisNexis*. If several sources were available, I used the *Financial Times*. *LexisNexis* includes the relevant newspapers from the beginning of the 1980s. If *LexisNexis* provided no information, I used the internet to find information about the relevant Commissioner. The alternative sources used for coding some Commissioners are listed in Table 4.

The web site of the European Commission presents information beginning in 1995 (see `europa.eu.int/comm/archives`). The web site provides most of the information needed for this dataset. Therefore, coding of Commissioners after 1995 was no longer based on the Munzinger archive, but on the information of the Commissioners web sites.

[1] Three Commissioners from Central/Eastern Europe are also coded as missing observations. See Section 2.3.3 for further information.

2.3.3 Eastern Enlargement

With the Eastern Enlargement, ten new member states from Central/Eastern Europe joined the EU. Due to this enlargement round, ten new Commissioners became members of the *Prodi Commission* in 2004. "Although they will have voting rights, the 10 joining on May 1 will shadow the work of existing Commissioners rather than receive their own portfolios, leading one official to describe them as 'interns with BMW's'" (Financial Times, 29.04.2004, 9).

Since these Commissioners had no independent portfolio and most of them stayed in the *Barroso Commission*, I did not include them as observations for the *Prodi Commission*. Therefore, the information for Péter Balázs (Hungary), Sandra Kalniete (Latvian) and Pavel Telička (Czech Republic) are not coded in the data set. These three Commissioners were replaced by other candidates from their home countries when the *Barroso Commission* took office.

3 Data Used for Party Positions

3.1 Party Affiliations of Commissioners

With regard to a Commissioner's former party membership, two variables are of interest. First, the name of the party the Commissioner was a member of. Second, whether this party was in government at the time the Commission took office. The party name is saved in the variable *party_id_source* and a government participation of the party at the time, in the variable *government_party*.

Some Commissioners were no formal party members, though they had a strong party affiliation. Table 5 shows the way I determined the party positions. If they had been assigned to the Commission without a former administrative career, I gave these Commissioners a party score as stated in the table.

To indicate whether a new Commissioner was sent or reappointed by a governing or an opposition party, I included the variable *government_party*. If the Commissioner's party was in government at the time the Commission came into office, it is coded as *10*. If the Commissioner was member of an opposition party it is coded *11* and if the biographical information indicates explicitly no party affiliation, *government_party* (party in power) is coded *12*. To determine the parties in government, information from the ParlGov data infrastructure was used.

4 Data Used for Portfolio Salience

4.1 Measuring Portfolio Salience

To compare different former positions across countries and time, I used datasets provided by Druckman and Warwick (2005) and Druckman and Roberts (2008). To transfer the positions to the scale, I took the highest position that a person had reached in his career before he entered the Commission and used the score for that position on the

Table 5: Comments on specific Commissioners

Name	**Year**	**Affiliation**	**Party Score**
Robert Marjolin	1958	close to trade unions and positions in socialist governments	French Socialists
Altiero Spinelli	1967	an adviser of Nenni (socialist foreign affairs minister) without a former administrative career	Italian Socialists
Henri Rochereau	1962	no party information in *Munzinger* – government member	government
Jean-François Deniau	1967	later positions in Gaullist governments	government
Francois-Xavier Ortoli	1973	no party information in *Munzinger* – government member	government
Claude Cheysson	1973	adviser of Savary cabinet – later Socialist party member (*Munzinger*: 'Socialist')	French Socialists
Pedro Solbes	1999	member of Socialist government (*Munzinger*: "Social Democrat without membership-book")	Spanish Socialists
Dalia Grybauskaitė	2004	no party membership – member of government	government
Danuta Hübner	2004	*as above*	
Janez Potočnik	2004	*as above*	
Kristalina Georgieva	2010	government supporter (*Munzinger*: GERB election campaign supporter)	GERB

Table 6: Defined Scores for Positions *(score_position)*

Position	***Score***	**Comment**
junior minister	*0.5*	junior minister or secretary of state
parliamentarian	*0.33*	for average member of parliaments
other positions	*0.2*	all other positions (e. g. bureaucrats, diplomats, ambassadors, professors)

Druckman/Warwick/Roberts scale. Unfortunately, the datasets give neither information for all member states, nor for all positions, Commissioners previously held. Because the Druckman/Warwick/Roberts datasets include information for most of the positions Commissioners previously held, it is still the best data source available. I assigned values to positions, where no data was available, based on the average value of a position in other countries or the logic of the scale (see next section).

The logic of the scale is described by Druckman and Warwick:

> In order to obtain interval-level ratings of these posts, we provided our respondents with an anchor by asking them to apply a score of 1 to all posts whose importance they believed equaled the 'average' or 'normal' portfolio. They were then instructed that any post that is above average should receive a score above 1 that would reflect just how much more important it is than an average portfolio (e.g. a score of 1.5 would indicate that the post is 50 per cent above average). Likewise, any below-average post would receive a proportional score of less than 1. (Druckman and Warwick 2005, 23)

4.2 Data Used for Portfolio Salience

The Druckman/Warwick/Roberts scale measures only the importance of ministry positions. Therefore, all earlier occupations, different to ministers and junior ministers, require a score that fits into the Druckman/Warwick/Roberts scale.

For political positions not included into the original scale, I have decided to use the scores as stated in Table 6. According to this scale, sending an average minister to the Commission is three times as important as sending a parliamentarian. All non-political figures send to the Commission are assigned only a fifth of the importance of an average minister, respectively one and a half times the importance of a parliamentarian. This coding decision is due to the focus of the study on the political importance of former positions before being assigned to the Commission.

Some of the positions Commissioners had before they entered the Commission do not fit the given categories. If non of them could be used, I gave certain Commissioners a score as stated in Table 7. I based my decision on a comparison to a similar position.

Table 7: Defined Scores for certain Commissioners *(position_score)*

Name	**Year**	***Score***	**Former position**
Robert Lemaignen	1958	*0.2*	vice-president of French employers federation
Ivor Richard	1981	*0.5*	under secretary of state for defense
Nicolas Moster	1985	*0.5*	secretary general party
Karl van Miert	1989	*1.0*	leader of opposition party
Bruce Millan	1989	*0.8*	Scottish secretary
Neil Kinnock	1995	*1.0*	leader of opposition party
Frederik Bolkestein	1999	*1.0*	leader of opposition party
Danuta Hübner	2004	*1.0*	minister for European affairs
Štefan Füle	2010	*1.0*	minister for European affairs
Cecilia Malmström	2010	*1.0*	minister for European affairs
Günter Öttinger	2010	*1.0*	minister-president of a Federal German state

For Greece, Spain, United Kingdom, Malta, the datasets by Druckman/Warwick/Roberts provides no data. I calculated the scores for the different departments, by averaging the scores of the Western countries. The calculation provided the results as shown in Table 8.

5 Future Extensions

Several people have commented on my Commission paper (Döring 2007) and suggested future extensions of the data. If I ever find the time, I would like to add the date of birth and the position after the time in the College. For data on the portfolio assignment within the Commission, I refer to Franchino (2009) and I plan to provide a link to this dataset. I include the most recent version of the dataset on my website. Please contact me if you are interested in helping me to extend the data.

Table 8: Calculated Scores for Ministers *(position_score)*

Ministry	***Mean***	**SE**	**N**	**Name**	**Country**	**Year**
Agriculture	*0.92*	0.16	14	Lord Soames	GBR	1973
				Loyola de Palacio	ESP	1999
Finance	*1.64*	0.23	13	Roy Jenkins	GBR	1977
				Ioannis L. Paleokrassas	GRC	1993
				Dalia Grybauskaitė	LTU	2004
				Markos Kyprianou	CYP	2004
				Andris Piebalgs	LVA	2004
				Pedro Solbes	ESP	1999
				John Dalli	MLT	2010
				Tonio Borg	MLT	2012
Defence	*0.91*	0.25	13	Dimitris Avramopoulos	GRC	2014
Foreign Affairs	*1.43*	0.17	14	Marcelino Oreja Aguirre	ESP	1993
				Joe Borg	MLT	2004
				László Kovács	HUN	2004
Industry	*0.99*	0.12	7	Stavros Dimas	GRC	2004
Interior	*1.32*	0.30	7	Leon Brittan	GBR	1989
Labour	*1.03*	0.14	10	Joaquín Almunia	ESP	1999
Prime Minister	*2.14*	0.11	7	Siim Kallas	EST	2004
				Vladimir Šplida	CZE	2004
				Valdis Dombrovskis	LVA	2014
Tourism	*0.68*	0.07	4	Siim Kallas	EST	2004
Trade	*0.99*	0.15	4	Lord Cockfield	GBR	1985
Secretary of State	*0.59*	0.18	7	Lord M. Thomson	GBR	1973
				Stanley Clinton Davis	GBR	1985
				Grigorios Varfis	GRC	1985
				Manuel Marin	ESP	1985
				Cristiane Scrivener	FRA	1989
				Vasso Papandreou	GRC	1989
				Chris Patten	GBR	1999
				Anna Diamantopoulou	GRC	1999
				Ján Figel	SVK	2004
				Peter Mandelson	GBR	2004

6 Versions

Datasets

- 2014-10-27
  - added 2014 Commission
  - recoded 'government_party' from 0, 1, 2 to 10, 11, 12 und updated some 'no party affiliation' values
- 2012-12-12 – added Tonio Borg to Table 8
- 2011-04-28
  - revised and updated data set
  - renaming of all variables
  - full integration with ParlGov project (`www.parlgov.org`)
  - junior ministers with unknown position scores are recoded to 0.5
- 2007 – Döring (2007)
  - original data set for intitial publication

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