

PIOTR PARADOWSKI

Luxembourg Income Study, Luxembourg

LINDSAY FLYNN

University of Virginia, USA

WEALTH DISTRIBUTION AND INDIVIDUAL VOTING PREFERENCES: A COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

Abstract:

The political science literature has neglected the role that economic wealth may play in shaping voting preferences during national elections, most likely because of a lack of data on wealth. This paper examines the influence of net worth as well as its subcomponents, such as debts (housing and non-housing) and assets (financial and non-financial) on individual voting preferences in the United States, with reference to Sweden and Germany. It is found that especially in the United States, and marginally in Sweden and Germany, one's net worth influences their vote. This paper utilizes individual-level data from the American National Election Studies (ANES), the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES), and the Luxembourg Wealth Study Database (LWS). Statistical matching methods are utilized to integrate the electoral and wealth surveys. The availability and our harmonization of household socio-economic characteristics as well as the individual socio-demographic and labor market characteristics in LWS, and CSES/ANES make this process possible. This procedure also involves the use of probit analysis and the calculation of predicted probabilities.

Keywords:

wealth, voting, statistical matching