

Appendix: Additional Notes on Data Collection

INTERVIEW SITES

I conducted interviews in fifteen cities in five provinces (including Beijing) from February 2015 to August 2019. Interview sites cover four geographic areas: the capital city, the East, the South, and the Southwest. The selection of interview cities follows the principle of stratified sampling, with the cities varying along the dimensions of population size, economic development level, and industry composition. The East and the South are the two most developed regions in China, with the highest gross domestic product (GDP) level and the highest GDP per capita level, but different industrial organizations. The East has a larger service sector and the South has a larger manufacturing sector. Both have similarly high level of population density. The Southwest is among the poorer regions in China, relying more on agriculture and having a lower population density.

Interviews are organized into multiple waves. The first wave included thirty-four loosely structured interviews to generate hypotheses and develop a question bank, while the follow-up waves consisted of semi-structured interviews across all fifteen cities to test the hypotheses.



INTERVIEWEES

Of the 256 interviewees, 41 percent are city government officials in charge of a public service sector, 46 percent are business executives and managers of companies providing these public services, and 13 percent are academics, nongovernmental organization managers, and journalists specializing in public services sectors.

QUANTITATIVE DATA COLLECTION FOR KEY VARIABLES

Firm Ownership

Ownership of individual firms is identified through a firm's website, a firm's annual report (if the firm is listed), or the State Administration for Industry and Commerce's firm search engine (gsxt.saic.gov.cn/). A firm is coded as private if the majority shareholder is a private party or a foreign company. A firm is coded as state-owned if the majority shareholder is the city government or the State-owned Assets Supervision and

Administration Commission at any government level. If the firm cannot be identified through all three channels, I categorize them by what news reports identify them as.

Deprivatization

Defined as a state-initiated process to procure the private bus firms in the urban bus sector. Only ownership change that targets all the private firms in a city, rather than selectively, is coded as deprivatization. Data are collected from local news reports, government-issued notifications, and media interviews with government officials. Chinese keywords used include: 国有化, 收归国有, 回归国有, 取消民营, 取缔民营, 民营退出, 公交整合。

Incineration Plants

I identify a total of 351 incineration plants in all Chinese cities, including those already built and those under construction by the end of 2017. This number is higher than the reported 287 incineration plants in the China Construction Yearbooks, because yearbooks only include plants already built by 2016. Incineration plants are identified through Chinese keyword searches by city name and year on Google, Baidu, city government websites, and environmental company websites.

Protest

Protest data are collected from two main sources. The first is the author's Chinese keyword search on Google and Baidu by city, year, and sector (solid waste treatment and public transportation). Keywords indicating protests include 抗议, 抗争, 集会, 聚集. The second source is Wickedonna, a news blog¹ that kept track of mass demonstrations in China via social media, including Twitter, Weibo, Blogspot, and YouTube, until it was censored in 2016.

I also referred to the Global Database of Events, Language, and Tone and the Social Unrest Database of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences to check for possibly omitted protests. These two databases report fewer protests than my keyword searches in the solid waste sector and the public transportation sector.

¹ This blog is now moved to: <https://newsworthknowingcn.blogspot.com/>.

Environmental Violations

Data are collected through keyword searches by city name and year on Google, Baidu, and Soubao. Keywords are combined with city, year, and sector in the searches. Chinese keywords indicating “inspection” and “violation” include 检查, 检验, 视察, 违规, 违法, 不达标, 未达标, 不合格, 未合格。

GOVERNMENT YEARBOOKS

Control variables such as GDP, population size, and fiscal data are collected from government yearbooks, including the China Urban–Rural Construction Statistical Yearbooks, China Construction Yearbooks, China City Yearbooks, China Communications and Traffic Yearbooks, and Yearbooks of Public Transportation.