

Package: elections.dtree (via r-universe)

September 11, 2024

Title Ranked Voting Election Audits with Dirichlet-Trees

Description Perform ballot-polling Bayesian audits for ranked voting elections using Dirichlet-tree prior distributions. Everest et al. (2022) <[arXiv:2206.14605](https://arxiv.org/abs/2206.14605)>, <[arXiv:2209.03881](https://arxiv.org/abs/2209.03881)>.

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Depends R (>= 4.0.0)

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License GPL-3

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Imports Rcpp, methods, Rdpack, R6, parallel, prefio (>= 0.1.1)

RdMacros Rdpack

Suggests covr, testthat (>= 3.0.0), xml2

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URL <https://fleverest.github.io/elections.dtree/>,
<https://github.com/fleverest/elections.dtree/>

BugReports <https://github.com/fleverest/elections.dtree/issues/>

Repository <https://fleverest.r-universe.dev>

RemoteUrl <https://github.com/fleverest/elections.dtree>

RemoteRef HEAD

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dirichlet_tree	<i>Create a Dirichlet-tree for modelling ranked ballots</i>
----------------	---

Description

A `dirichlet_tree` object represents a Dirichlet-tree distribution on ballots. By specifying the tree structure for the ranked ballots, the Dirichlet-tree is initialized with the same prior structure described by Everest et al. (2022). There are methods provided for observing data (to obtain a posterior distribution) along with methods to sample election outcomes and sets of ballots from the posterior predictive distribution.

Format

An [R6Class](#) generator object.

Active bindings

`a0` Gets or sets the `a0` parameter for the Dirichlet-tree.
`min_depth` Gets or sets the `min_depth` parameter for the Dirichlet-tree.
`max_depth` Gets or sets the `max_depth` parameter for the Dirichlet-tree.
`vd` Gets or sets the `vd` parameter for the Dirichlet-tree.

Methods

Public methods:

- `dirichlet_tree$new()`
- `dirichlet_tree$print()`
- `dirichlet_tree$update()`
- `dirichlet_tree$reset()`
- `dirichlet_tree$sample_posterior()`

- `dirichlet_tree$sample_predictive()`

Method `new()`: Create a new `dirichlet_tree` prior distribution with the specified tree structure. See Everest et al. (2022) for further details.

Usage:

```
dirichlet_tree$new(
  candidates,
  min_depth = 0,
  max_depth = length(candidates) - 1,
  a0 = 1,
  vd = FALSE
)
```

Arguments:

`candidates` A character vector, with each element (must be unique) representing a single candidate.

`min_depth` The minimum number of candidates which must be specified for a valid ballot in the election.

`max_depth` The maximum number of candidates which can be specified for a valid ballot in the election.

`a0` The prior parameter for the distribution.

`vd` A flag which, when TRUE, employs a parameter structure which reduces to a regular Dirichlet distribution as described by Everest et al. (2022).

Returns: A new `dirichlet_tree` prior.

Examples:

```
dtree <- dirichlet_tree$new(candidates = LETTERS, a0 = 1., min_depth = 1)
```

Method `print()`: `print` shows some details of the distribution and its parameters.

Usage:

```
dirichlet_tree$print()
```

Returns: The `dirichlet_tree` object.

Method `update()`: Updates the `dirichlet_tree` object with observations of ballots. This updates the parameter structure of the tree to yield the posterior Dirichlet-tree, as described in Everest et al. (2022).

Usage:

```
dirichlet_tree$update(ballots)
```

Arguments:

`ballots` A set of ballots of class `'prefio::preferences'` or `'prefio::aggregated_preferences'` to observe. The ballots should not contain any ties, but they may be incomplete.

Returns: The `dirichlet_tree` object.

Examples:

```

ballots <- prefio::preferences(
  t(c(1, 2, 3)),
  format = "ranking",
  item_names = LETTERS[1:3]
)
dirichlet_tree$new(
  candidates = LETTERS[1:3]
)$update(ballots)

```

Method `reset()`: Resets the `dirichlet_tree` observations to revert the parameter structure back to the originally specified prior.

Usage:

```
dirichlet_tree$reset()
```

Returns: The `dirichlet_tree` object.

Examples:

```

ballots <- prefio::preferences(
  t(c(1, 2, 3)),
  format = "ranking",
  item_names = LETTERS[1:3]
)
dtree <- dirichlet_tree$new(
  candidates = LETTERS
)$update(ballots)
print(dtree)
dtree$reset()
print(dtree)

```

Method `sample_posterior()`: Draws sets of ballots from independent realizations of the Dirichlet-tree posterior, then determines the probability for each candidate being elected by aggregating the results of the social choice function. See Everest et al. (2022) for details.

Usage:

```

dirichlet_tree$sample_posterior(
  n_elections,
  n_ballots,
  n_winners = 1,
  replace = FALSE,
  n_threads = NULL
)

```

Arguments:

`n_elections` An integer representing the number of elections to generate. A higher number yields higher precision in the output probabilities.

`n_ballots` An integer representing the total number of ballots cast in the election.

`n_winners` The number of candidates elected in each election.

`replace` A boolean indicating whether or not we should replace our sample in the monte-carlo step, drawing the full set of election ballots from the posterior

`n_threads` The maximum number of threads for the process. The default value of `NULL` will default to 2 threads. `Inf` will default to the maximum available, and any value greater than or equal to the maximum available will result in the maximum available.

Returns: A numeric vector containing the probabilities for each candidate being elected.

Examples:

```
ballots <- prefio::preferences(
  t(c(1, 2, 3)),
  format = "ranking",
  item_names = LETTERS[1:3]
)
dirichlet_tree$new(
  candidates = LETTERS,
  a0 = 1.,
  min_depth = 3,
  max_depth = 6,
  vd = FALSE
)$update(
  ballots
)$sample_posterior(
  n_elections = 10,
  n_ballots = 10
)
```

Method `sample_predictive()`: `sample_predictive` draws ballots from a multinomial distribution with ballot probabilities obtained from a single realization of the Dirichlet-tree posterior on the ranked ballots. See Everest et al. (2022) for details.

Usage:

```
dirichlet_tree$sample_predictive(n_ballots)
```

Arguments:

`n_ballots` An integer representing the total number of ballots cast in the election.

Returns: A `prefio::preferences` object containing `n_ballots` ballots drawn from a single realisation of the posterior Dirichlet-tree.

Examples:

```
ballots <- prefio::preferences(
  t(c(1, 2, 3)),
  format = "ranking",
  item_names = LETTERS[1:3]
)
dirichlet_tree$new(
  candidates = LETTERS,
  a0 = 1.,
  min_depth = 3,
  max_depth = 6,
  vd = FALSE
)$update(
```

```

    ballots
  )$sample_predictive(
    n_ballots = 10
  )

```

References

Everest F, Blom M, Stark PB, Stuckey PJ, Teague V, Vukcevic D (2023). “Ballot-Polling Audits of Instant-Runoff Voting Elections with a Dirichlet-Tree Model.” In *Computer Security. ESORICS 2022 International Workshops*, 525–540. ISBN 978-3-031-25460-4..

Everest F, Blom M, Stark PB, Stuckey PJ, Teague V, Vukcevic D (2022). “Auditing Ranked Voting Elections with Dirichlet-Tree Models: First Steps.” doi:[10.15157/diss/021..](https://doi.org/10.15157/diss/021..)

Examples

```

## -----
## Method `dirichlet_tree$new`
## -----

dtree <- dirichlet_tree$new(candidates = LETTERS, a0 = 1., min_depth = 1)

## -----
## Method `dirichlet_tree$update`
## -----

ballots <- prefio::preferences(
  t(c(1, 2, 3)),
  format = "ranking",
  item_names = LETTERS[1:3]
)
dirichlet_tree$new(
  candidates = LETTERS[1:3]
)$update(ballots)

## -----
## Method `dirichlet_tree$reset`
## -----

ballots <- prefio::preferences(
  t(c(1, 2, 3)),
  format = "ranking",
  item_names = LETTERS[1:3]
)
dtree <- dirichlet_tree$new(
  candidates = LETTERS
)$update(ballots)
print(dtree)
dtree$reset()
print(dtree)

```

```
## -----  
## Method `dirichlet_tree$sample_posterior`  
## -----  
  
ballots <- prefio::preferences(  
  t(c(1, 2, 3)),  
  format = "ranking",  
  item_names = LETTERS[1:3]  
)  
dirichlet_tree$new(  
  candidates = LETTERS,  
  a0 = 1.,  
  min_depth = 3,  
  max_depth = 6,  
  vd = FALSE  
)$update(  
  ballots  
)$sample_posterior(  
  n_elections = 10,  
  n_ballots = 10  
)  
  
## -----  
## Method `dirichlet_tree$sample_predictive`  
## -----  
  
ballots <- prefio::preferences(  
  t(c(1, 2, 3)),  
  format = "ranking",  
  item_names = LETTERS[1:3]  
)  
dirichlet_tree$new(  
  candidates = LETTERS,  
  a0 = 1.,  
  min_depth = 3,  
  max_depth = 6,  
  vd = FALSE  
)$update(  
  ballots  
)$sample_predictive(  
  n_ballots = 10  
)
```

Description

`dirtree` is used to create a Dirichlet-tree for modelling ballots, as described by Everest et al. (2022).

Usage

```
dirtree(
  candidates,
  min_depth = 0,
  max_depth = length(candidates),
  a0 = 1,
  vd = FALSE
)
```

Arguments

<code>candidates</code>	A character vector, with each element (must be unique) representing a single candidate.
<code>min_depth</code>	The minimum number of candidates which must be specified for a valid ballot.
<code>max_depth</code>	The maximum number of candidates which can be specified for a valid ballot.
<code>a0</code>	The prior parameter for the distribution.
<code>vd</code>	A flag which, when TRUE, employs a parameter structure which reduces to a regular Dirichlet distribution as described by Everest et al. (2022).

Value

A Dirichlet-tree representing ranked ballots, as an object of class `dirichlet_tree`.

References

Everest F, Blom M, Stark PB, Stuckey PJ, Teague V, Vukcevic D (2023). “Ballot-Polling Audits of Instant-Runoff Voting Elections with a Dirichlet-Tree Model.” In *Computer Security. ESORICS 2022 International Workshops*, 525–540. ISBN 978-3-031-25460-4..

Everest F, Blom M, Stark PB, Stuckey PJ, Teague V, Vukcevic D (2022). “Auditing Ranked Voting Elections with Dirichlet-Tree Models: First Steps.” doi:[10.15157/diss/021..](https://doi.org/10.15157/diss/021..)

ranked_ballots

Construct a set of ranked ballots.

Description

Deprecated in favour of functionality from the ‘prefio’ package. `ranked_ballots` is used to easily construct a set of ranked ballots.

Usage

```
ranked_ballots(x, candidates = NULL, ...)
```

Arguments

`x` A character vector representing a single ballot, or a list of character vectors representing multiple ballots.

`candidates` A character vector of names corresponding to the candidates running in the election.

`...` Additional parameters to pass to `ranked_ballots`.

Value

A `ranked_ballots` object representing the ballot(s).

Examples

```
ranked_ballots(LETTERS[1:5])
ranked_ballots(list(LETTERS[1:5], LETTERS[6:1]))
```

read_ballots	<i>Read ranked_ballots from a file.</i>
--------------	---

Description

Deprecated in favour of ‘prefio’ plus PrefLib formats. Reads a set of partial IRV ballots from a file. The file is expected to follow the ballot:count standard, with a header describing all participating candidates.

Usage

```
read_ballots(file)
```

Arguments

`file` The name of the file to read from, or a character vector of file lines.

reset	<i>Clear the internal state of a dirichlet_tree object.</i>
-------	---

Description

Destroy the Tree's internal state and revert back to the prior.

Usage

```
reset(dtree)
```

Arguments

dtree A dirichlet_tree object.

Value

The dirichlet_tree object.

sample_posterior	<i>Draw election outcomes from the posterior distribution.</i>
------------------	--

Description

sample_posterior draws sets of ballots from independent realizations of the Dirichlet-tree posterior, then determines the probability for each candidate being elected by aggregating the results of the social choice function. See Everest et al. (2022) for details.

Usage

```
sample_posterior(  
  dtree,  
  n_elections,  
  n_ballots,  
  n_winners = 1,  
  replace = FALSE,  
  n_threads = NULL  
)
```

Arguments

dtree	A <code>dirichlet_tree</code> object.
n_elections	An integer representing the number of elections to generate. A higher number yields higher precision in the output probabilities.
n_ballots	An integer representing the total number of ballots cast in the election.
n_winners	The number of candidates elected in each election.
replace	A boolean indicating whether or not we should re-use the observed ballots in the monte-carlo integration step to determine the posterior probabilities.
n_threads	The maximum number of threads for the process. The default value of NULL will default to 2 threads. Inf will default to the maximum available, and any value greater than or equal to the maximum available will result in the maximum available.

Value

A numeric vector containing the probabilities for each candidate being elected.

References

Everest F, Blom M, Stark PB, Stuckey PJ, Teague V, Vukcevic D (2023). “Ballot-Polling Audits of Instant-Runoff Voting Elections with a Dirichlet-Tree Model.” In *Computer Security. ESORICS 2022 International Workshops*, 525–540. ISBN 978-3-031-25460-4..

Everest F, Blom M, Stark PB, Stuckey PJ, Teague V, Vukcevic D (2022). “Auditing Ranked Voting Elections with Dirichlet-Tree Models: First Steps.” doi:[10.15157/diss/021..](https://doi.org/10.15157/diss/021..)

sample_predictive	<i>Draw ballots from the posterior predictive distribution.</i>
-------------------	---

Description

`sample_predictive` draws ballots from a multinomial distribution with probabilities obtained from a single realization of the Dirichlet-tree posterior on the ranked ballots. See Everest et al. (2022) for details.

Usage

```
sample_predictive(dtree, n_ballots)
```

Arguments

dtree	A <code>dirichlet_tree</code> object.
n_ballots	An integer representing the number of ballots to draw.

Value

A `prefio::preferences` object containing `n_ballots` ballots drawn from a single realisation of the posterior Dirichlet-tree.

References

Everest F, Blom M, Stark PB, Stuckey PJ, Teague V, Vukcevic D (2023). “Ballot-Polling Audits of Instant-Runoff Voting Elections with a Dirichlet-Tree Model.” In *Computer Security. ESORICS 2022 International Workshops*, 525–540. ISBN 978-3-031-25460-4..

Everest F, Blom M, Stark PB, Stuckey PJ, Teague V, Vukcevic D (2022). “Auditing Ranked Voting Elections with Dirichlet-Tree Models: First Steps.” doi:[10.15157/diss/021..](https://doi.org/10.15157/diss/021..)

social_choice

Election Social Choice Functions

Description

Compute election outcomes on ranked ballots with a variety of social choice functions.

Usage

```
social_choice(
  ballots,
  sc_function = c("plurality", "irv", "stv"),
  n_winners = 1,
  ...
)
```

Arguments

<code>ballots</code>	A ‘ <code>prefio::preferences</code> ’ object containing the ballots cast in the election.
<code>sc_function</code>	One of "plurality", "irv" or "stv", corresponding to the social choice function you wish to evaluate.
<code>n_winners</code>	Refers to the number of seats available when ‘ <code>sc_function</code> ’ is "stv".
<code>...</code>	Unused.

Value

The output depends on the chosen ‘`sc_function`’:

"plurality" A character vector with the candidate(s) who received the most votes.

"irv" A named ‘list’ with two objects. First, "elimination_order" is a vector with each eliminated candidate in the order of elimination. Second, "winners" is the vector containing the winning candidate(s).

"stv" Not yet implemented.

update	<i>Update a dirichlet_tree model by observing some ranked ballots.</i>
--------	--

Description

update updates a Dirichlet-tree model with observations to obtain a posterior distribution on the ranked ballots. See Everest et al. (2022) for implementation details.

Usage

```
## S3 method for class 'dirichlet_tree'
update(object, ballots, ...)
```

Arguments

object	A dirichlet_tree object.
ballots	A set of ballots - must be of type <code>prefio::preferences</code> .
...	Unused.

Value

The dirichlet_tree object.

References

Everest F, Blom M, Stark PB, Stuckey PJ, Teague V, Vukcevic D (2023). “Ballot-Polling Audits of Instant-Runoff Voting Elections with a Dirichlet-Tree Model.” In *Computer Security. ESORICS 2022 International Workshops*, 525–540. ISBN 978-3-031-25460-4..

Everest F, Blom M, Stark PB, Stuckey PJ, Teague V, Vukcevic D (2022). “Auditing Ranked Voting Elections with Dirichlet-Tree Models: First Steps.” doi:[10.15157/diss/021..](https://doi.org/10.15157/diss/021..)

write_ballots	<i>Write ranked_ballots to a file.</i>
---------------	--

Description

Deprecated in favour of functionality from the ‘prefio’ package. Writes a set of ballots to a new file. This follows the ballot:count standard, with a header describing the candidates.

Usage

```
write_ballots(ballots, filename = "", return_lines = FALSE, suppress = FALSE)
```

Arguments

ballots	The ranked_ballots to write to a file.
filename	The name of the file to write to, or "" to write output to stdout.
return_lines	A flag which determines whether or not the output should be returned as a character vector
suppress	A flag which, when True, suppresses any output to stdout.

Examples

```
write_ballots(ranked_ballots(c(LETTERS)), tempfile("test.txt"))
write_ballots(ranked_ballots(c(LETTERS)))
```

`[.ranked_ballots` *Access Subsets of Ballots.*

Description

Extract subsets of ballots by index.

Usage

```
## S3 method for class 'ranked_ballots'
x[i = NULL]
```

Arguments

x	Some ranked_ballots.
i	The index, or vector of indices corresponding to each ballot to be extracted.

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