Documentation CNPJ

The Brazilian *Receita Federal* collects information on all companies in the national territory, which includes religious organizations such as churches. These companies have a name and CNPJ (National Registration of Legal Person) that uniquely identifies them. Note that while no companies may share the same CNPJ, they may share the same CNPJ *raiz* (root), which denotes that they are off-shoots of the original company. The *Receita Federal* makes this data publicly available on a rolling basis, with new records being appended to a registry of all companies, and their status updated if there are changes such as foreclosures.[[1]](#footnote-1)

This rich dataset includes information on location, the economic sector (CNAE), as well as the name, registration status and date of creation. We identify churches through a unique CNAE code that is shared among all religious institutions.[[2]](#footnote-2) In total, we are able to extract 260 thousand churches in the Brazilian territory, covering over 5,400 municipalities. Using the company name we classify churches according to their denomination, using a set of classification rules such as the inclusion of key words. Additionally, we create a secondary denomination to account for the fact that some churches may belong to multiple ones. In total, we identify 40 denominations in our data, such as Baptist, Anglican or Catholic.

1. We extract the data from the following source: <https://github.com/georgevbsantiago/qsacnpj>, which directly loads the data from the *Receita Federal* into a user-friendly SQL database. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Detailed description of the extraction process can be found in the code. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)