# Wikidata for data journalism (with R and 'tidywikidatar')

Dataharvest 2022

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## Two big questions

1. how to you get Wikidata to throw at you the data you need

2. how to retrieve Wikidata's data in a way that won't give you headaches

#### **Access Wikidata**

Web front-end, nice to read: https://www.wikidata.org/wiki/Q162022

SPARQL:

https://www.wikidata.org/wiki/Wikidata:SPARQL\_query\_service/queries/examples

API version https://www.wikidata.org/w/api.php?action=wbgetentities&ids=Q162022

- machine readable
- nested lists, structure changes depending on values

## What's the matter (for R users)?

- R users mostly hate nested lists
- some probably also hate SPARQL, but even more simply don't know much about SPARQL
- if you don't know what to expect, it's a pain to process data
- existing tools are not fit for the iterative data analysis process that is at the core of data journalism
- re-running an analysis with minor changes is a very common part of the workflow... without built-in caching, this can be painfully slow

### tidywikidatar

Check out website with documentation and examples: https://edjnet.github.io/tidywikidatar/

CRAN 0.5.2 downloads 406/month downloads 5783

- everything in tabular format
- one row, one piece of information
- easy local caching
- easy integration with dplyr piped routines
- get image credits from WikiMedia commons
- include Wikipedia in the exploration, or use it as a starting point



## tidywikidatar

The basics

### Enable local caching

## Or e.g. MySQL

#### Get an item

tw\_search("Mechelen") Show 5 Search: entries id label description Mechelen Q162022 city in the province of Antwerp, Belgium Mechelen Q100020 town in Gulpen-Wittem, Netherlands Mechelen Q21765751 town in Mechelen municipality, Belgium Wikimedia disambiguation page Q406287 Mechelen Q3597347 13293 Mechelen asteroid

Showing 1 to 5 of 10 entries

Previous

2

Next

### Get an item

```
tw_search("Mechelen") %>%
  slice(1) %>%
  tw_get()
```

Sho	ow [5 vent	tries	S	Search:		
	id 🛊	property	value	\$	rank	\$
1	Q162022	alias_en	Mechlin			
2	Q162022	alias_en	Malines			
3	Q162022	description_en	city in the province of Antwerp, Belgium			
4	Q162022	label_en	Mechelen			
5	Q162022	P1036	249322		deprecate	d 1

```
tw_search("Mechelen") %>%
  slice(1) %>%
  tw_get() %>%
  tw_label()
```

Sh	ow 5 🗸 entr	ies		Search:				
	id 🛊	property	Å ♥	value	\$	rank 🛊		
1	Mechelen		Мес	hlin				
2	Mechelen		Mali	nes				
3	Mechelen			in the province of werp, Belgium				
4	Mechelen		Мес	helen				
5	Mechelen	Dewey Decimal Classification	24	9322	(	deprecated		

Showing 1 to 5 of 110 entries

## Get a specific property

Show 5 ventries

```
tw_search("European Union") %>%
  slice(1) %>%
  tw_get_property(p = "P31") # instance of
```

Search:

31100	V 5 <b>V</b> CITCHE	3			Search.				
	id		property	val	ue • rank	<b>*</b>			
1	Q458	P31		Q4120211	normal				
2	Q458	P31	Q3623811		normal				
3	Q458	P31		Q1335818	normal				
4	Q458	P31		Q7210356	normal				
5	Q458	P31		Q1048835	normal				

## Get a specific property

```
tw_search("European Union") %>%
  slice(1) %>%
  tw_get_property(p = "P150") %>% # contains administrative territorial entity
  tw_label()
```

Sh	ow 5 ventries		Search:			
	id	property	value	• rank •		
1	European Union	contains administrative territorial entity	Belgium	preferred		
2	European Union	contains administrative territorial entity	Germany	preferred		
3	European Union	contains administrative territorial entity	France	preferred		

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## What about qualifiers?

e.g. when did member states join the EU?

https://www.wikidata.org/wiki/Q458#P150

```
tw_get_qualifiers(id = "Q458", # European Union
                   p = "P150") # contains administrative territorial entity
## # A tibble: 37 × 8
            property qualifier_id qualifier_prope... qualifier_value qualifier_value...
      <chr> <chr>
                      <chr>
                                   <chr>
                                                     <chr>
##
                                                                      <chr>
    1 Q458
            P150
                     Q31
                                   P580
                                                     +1958-01-01T00... time
    2 Q458
            P150
                     Q183
                                   P580
                                                     +1958-01-01T00... time
    3 Q458
            P150
                     Q142
                                   P580
                                                     +1958-01-01T00... time
                                                                      wikibase-entity...
    4 Q458
            P150
                     Q142
                                   P1012
                                                     Q3769
    5 Q458
            P150
                     Q142
                                                     Q17012
                                                                      wikibase-entity...
                                   P1012
    6 Q458
            P150
                     Q142
                                                     Q17054
                                                                      wikibase-entity...
                                   P1012
                                                                      wikibase-entity...
   7 Q458
            P150
                     Q142
                                   P1012
                                                     Q17063
    8 Q458
            P150
                     Q142
                                   P1012
                                                     Q17070
                                                                     wikibase-entity...
    9 Q458
            P150
                     Q142
                                   P1012
                                                     Q126125
                                                                      wikibase-entity...
## 10 Q458
                     038
                                   P580
                                                     +1958-01-01T00... time
            P150
## # ... with 27 more rows, and 2 more variables: rank <chr>, set <dbl>
```

## What about qualifiers?

```
tw get qualifiers(id = "0458", # European Union
                   p = "P150") %>% # contains administrative territorial entity
   filter(qualifier property == "P580") %>% # keep only "start time"
   transmute(country = tw get label(gualifier id),
            start_time = qualifier_value)
## # A tibble: 28 × 2
                                 start time
      country
      <chr>
                                 <chr>
    1 Belgium
                                 +1958-01-01T00:00:00Z
    2 Germany
                                 +1958-01-01T00:00:00Z
   3 France
                                 +1958-01-01T00:00:00Z
    4 Italy
                                 +1958-01-01T00:00:00Z
    5 Luxembourg
                                 +1958-01-01T00:00:00Z
    6 Kingdom of the Netherlands +1958-01-01T00:00:00Z
   7 Denmark
                                 +1973-01-01T00:00:00Z
    8 Republic of Ireland
                                 +1973-01-01T00:00:00Z
   9 Greece
                                 +1981-01-01T00:00:00Z
## 10 Portugal
                                 +1986-01-01T00:00:00Z
## # ... with 18 more rows
```

for more, check tw\_get\_property\_with\_details()

#### Dealing with multiple results when only one is needed

Easy questions can be difficult: in which country is London?

```
## # A tibble: 8 × 4
     city_qid city_label country_qid country
     <chr>
             <chr>
##
                        <chr>
                                    <chr>
             London
                        Q2277
                                    Roman Empire
## 1 Q84
## 2 Q84
             London
                        Q110888
                                    Kingdom of Essex
                                    Kingdom of Mercia
## 3 Q84
             London
                        0105092
                        0105313
                                    Kingdom of Wessex
## 4 Q84
             London
                        Q179876
                                    Kingdom of England
## 5 Q84
             London
## 6 Q84
             London
                        Q161885
                                    Great Britain
                                    United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland
## 7 Q84
             London
                        0174193
                                    United Kingdom
## 8 Q84
             London
                        0145
```

#### Dealing with multiple results when only one is needed

- keeping first result is tricky
- keeping only preferred may still give more than one result
- people who love tabular data often want just one result, that needs to be "good enough"

## Less typing

```
## # A tibble: 6 × 5
                                 dog
                                         pob_label
                                                                      pob_coordinates
           name
     <chr> <chr>
                                 <chr>
                                         <chr>
                                                                      <chr>
## 1 Q157 François Hollande
                                 Q30974 Rouen
                                                                      49.44305555555...
## 2 Q329 Nicolas Sarkozy
                                 090
                                         Paris
                                                                     48.85694444444...
## 3 Q1220 Giorgio Napolitano
                                         Naples
                                                                     40.833333333333...
                                02634
## 4 Q1275 Gladwyn Jebb
                                 0163
                                         Yorkshire
                                                                      53.958333333333...
                                 Q238723 5th arrondissement of Paris 48.84722222222...
## 5 Q2105 Jacques Chirac
## 6 Q2512 Kurt Georg Kiesinger Q7019
                                         Albstadt
                                                                      48.21194444444...
```

## More properties, all at once

## Different entry points

#### Search

• tw\_search() - search strings

#### Query

- tw\_query() simple queries based on property/value couples
- tw\_get\_all\_with\_p() get all items that have a given property, irrespective of their value

#### Based on Wikipedia

• tw\_get\_wikipedia\_page\_links() - Get all Wikidata Q identifiers of all Wikipedia pages linked to input

## An example starting from Wikipedia

## Election of the President of the Republic in Italy

- Election of the President of the Republic in Italy
- the electoral college can vote literally for whoever they like
- the list ends up including very different candidates, from respected intellectuals to football players and porn actors
- almost all of them with one thing in common: they are on Wikidata, but Wikidata does not know they have something in common.

IV scrutinio [ modifica | modifica wikitesto ]

La seduta è convocata per le ore 11. Per l'elezione è richiesta la maggioranza assoluta dei 1009 membri dell'Assemblea.

Dati votazione			Nome		
Presenti 981 Votanti 540			Sergio Mattarella	166	
			Nino Di Matteo	56	
Astenuti	441		Luigi Manconi	8	
Maggioranza	505		Marta Cartabia	6	
			Mario Draghi	5	
			Giuliano Amato	4	
			Pier Ferdinando Casini	3	
			Maria Teresa Baldini	2	
			Elisabetta Belloni	2	
			Pier Luigi Bersani	2	
		1	Voti dispersi	20	
			Schede bianche		
			Schede nulle		

Poiché nessun candidato ha raggiunto il quorum richiesto, si procede ad un quinto scrutinio.

Tra i voti dispersi: Alberto Airola, Alessandro Altobelli, Silvio Baldini, Alessandro Barbero, Silvio Berlusconi, Sabino Cassese, Pierluigi Castagnetti, Giuseppe Conte, Giuseppe Cruciani, Umberto Del Basso De Caro, Domenico De Masi, Aldo Giannuli, Giancarlo Giorgetti, Franco Grillini, Roberto Mancini, Luciano Manni, Riccardo Muti, Carlo Nordio, Mario Segni, Paola Taverna, Walter Veltroni, Luigi Vicinanza, Dino Zoff.[71][72]

#### Wikidata identifiers

#### Take a single section:

```
df <- tw_get_wikipedia_page_section_links(
   title = "Elezione del Presidente della Repubblica Ital
   section_title = "IV scrutinio",
   language = "it")

df %>% select(wikipedia_title, qid)
```

wikipedia_title	qid
Adnkronos	Q359875
Alberto Airola	Q14636378
Aldo Giannuli	Q3609233
Alessandro Altobelli	Q346945
Alessandro Barbero	Q960451
Carlo Nordio	Q19357364
Dino Zoff	Q180661
Domenico De Masi	Q3713005

#### Find out more

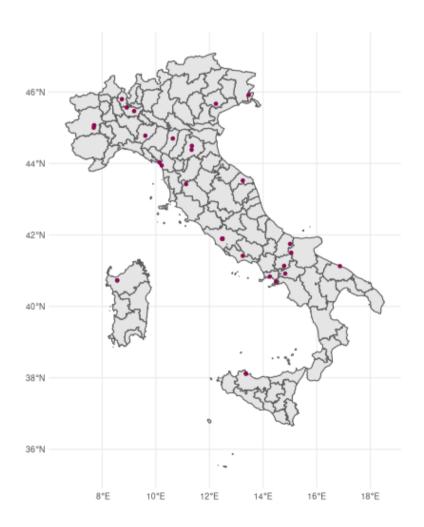
```
## # A tibble: 36 × 5
                                    place_of_birth_... place_of_birth place_of_birth_...
      aid
##
                 name
      <chr>
                <chr>
                                     <chr>
                                                      <chr>
                                                                      <chr>
##
    1 0359875
                Adnkronos
                                     <NA>
                                                      <NA>
                                                                      <NA>
    2 Q14636378 Alberto Airola
                                    Q9474
                                                      Moncalieri
                                                                      45,7.683333
    3 Q3609233 Aldo Giannuli
                                    Q3519
                                                      Bari
                                                                      41.125277777778...
                Alessandro Altobe... Q128211
    4 Q346945
                                                      Sonnino
                                                                      41.4144583333333...
                Alessandro Barbero Q495
    5 Q960451
                                                      Turin
                                                                      45.066666666667...
    6 Q19357364 Carlo Nordio
                                    Q5475
                                                      Treviso
                                                                      45.672219444444...
                                                      Mariano del F... 45.916666666667...
    7 Q180661
                Dino Zoff
                                    053131
    8 03713005
               Domenico de Masi
                                    0277969
                                                      Rotello
                                                                      41.7475, 15.0041...
    9 03723207
                Elisabetta Belloni Q220
                                                                      41.89305555556...
                                                      Rome
```

#### Here they are on a map

```
pob_sf <- pob_df %>%
  tidyr::separate(
    col = place_of_birth_coordinates,
    into = c("pob_latitude", "pob_longitude"),
    sep = ",",
    remove = TRUE,
    convert = TRUE) %>%
  filter(is.na(pob_latitude)==FALSE) %>%
  sf::st_as_sf(coords = c("pob_longitude", "pob_latitude)

library("ggplot2")
pop_gg <- ggplot() +
    geom_sf(data = ll_get_nuts_it(level = 3, no_check_cert geom_sf(data = pob_sf, colour = "deeppink4") +
    theme_minimal()</pre>
```

```
## i Source: https://www.istat.it/it/archivio/222527
## i Istat (CC-BY)
```



#### All the usual things we expect from Wikidata

```
occupation_df <- df %>%
  pull(qid) %>%
  tw_get_property(p = "P31") %>% # get "instance of"
  filter(value == "Q5") %>% # keep only humans
  tw_get_property(p = "P106") %>% # get occupation
# filter(value!="Q82955") %>% # exclude politicians
  group_by(value) %>%
  count(sort = TRUE) %>%
  ungroup() %>%
  transmute(occupation = tw_get_label(value), n)
```

occupation	n
politician	71
university teacher	19
judge	16
lawyer	14
jurist	10
deputy chairperson	9
basketball player	9
physician	9
clerk	9
journalist	7

## And other things useful for data visualisation and interactive interfaces, e.g. quick access to images...

```
president_df <- tw_search("Sergio Mattarella") %>%
   tw filter first(p = "P31", q = "05")
president_df %>% tw_get_image()
## # A tibble: 3 × 2
     id
              image
              <chr>
     <chr>
## 1 Q3956186 Sergio Mattarella Presidente della Repubblica Italiana.jpg
## 2 Q3956186 Sergio Mattarella Presidente della Repubblica Italiana.jpg
## 3 Q3956186 Sergio Mattarella Presidente della Repubblica Italiana.jpg
president_df %>% tw_get_image(format = "embed", width = 300) %>% pull(image)
## [1] "https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?title=Special:Redirect/file/Sergio Mattarella Presidente della Repubblica Italiana
## [2] "https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?title=Special:Redirect/file/Sergio Mattarella Presidente della Repubblica Italiana
## [3] "https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?title=Special:Redirect/file/Sergio Mattarella Presidente della Repubblica Italiana
```

#### ...with metadata and credits line

```
president_df %>% tw_get_image_metadata() %>%
   tidyr::pivot longer(cols = -1, names to = "property", values transform = as.character)
## # A tibble: 18 × 3
      id
                                           value
               property
##
##
      <chr>
               <chr>
                                           <chr>
    1 Q3956186 image_filename
                                           "Sergio Mattarella Presidente della Repu...
    2 Q3956186 object_name
                                           "Sergio Mattarella Presidente della Repu...
    3 Q3956186 image_description
                                           "Official picture of the <a href=\"https...
    4 Q3956186 categories
                                           "Attribution only license|Images from th...
    5 Q3956186 assessments
    6 Q3956186 credit
                                           "<a rel=\"nofollow\" class=\"external te...
   7 03956186 artist
                                           "Unknown author<span style=\"display: no...
    8 Q3956186 permission
                                            <NA>
    9 Q3956186 license_short_name
                                           "Attribution"
## 10 Q3956186 license_url
                                            <NA>
## 11 Q3956186 license
                                            <NA>
## 12 Q3956186 usage_terms
                                            <NA>
## 13 Q3956186 attribution_required
                                            <NA>
## 14 Q3956186 copyrighted
                                            <NA>
## 15 Q3956186 restrictions
                                           "personality"
## 16 Q3956186 date_time
                                           "2022-05-14 10:47:24"
## 17 Q3956186 date_time_original
                                           "2022-01-29"
## 18 Q3956186 commons_metadata_extension "1.2"
```

#### Back and forth between Wikidata and Wikipedia

This gets the Q identifier of all pages linked from a the Wikipedia page of a given Q identifier. Easy peasy :-)

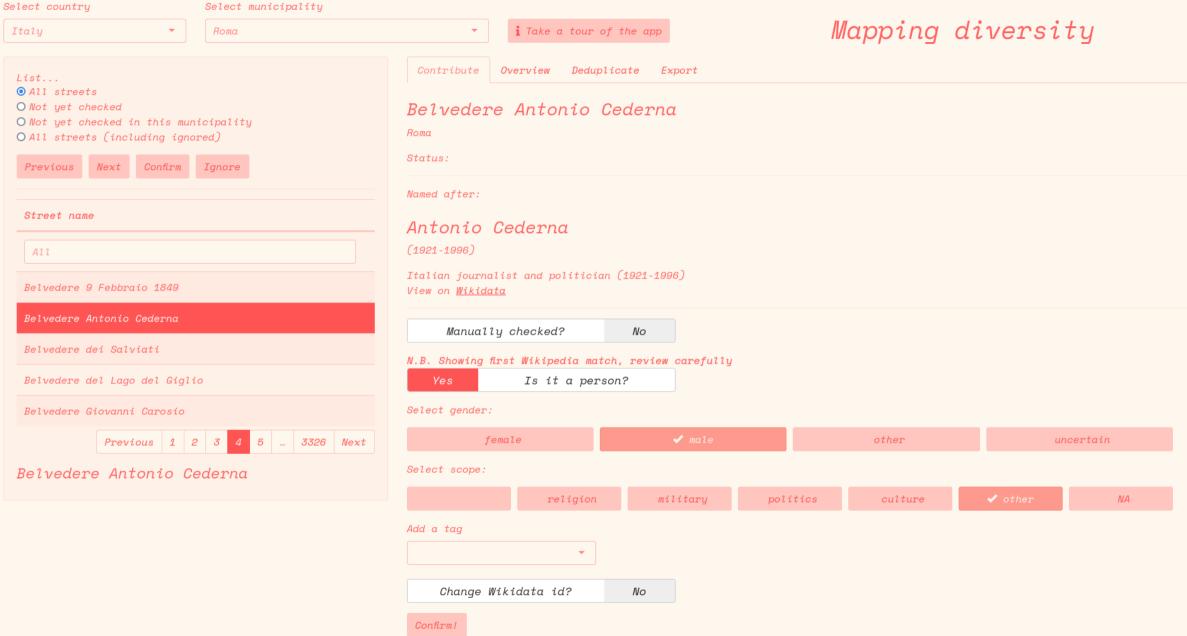
```
president df %>%
   tw_get_wikipedia(language = "it") %>% # gets url of Wikipedia page from QID
   tw_get_wikipedia_page_links(language = "it") %>%
   select(wikipedia_title, gid)
## # A tibble: 491 × 2
      wikipedia_title
                                                   qid
##
      <chr>
##
                                                   <chr>
   1 Fabio Vander
                                                   <NA>
    2 Ordine per Meriti Eccezionali
                                                   <NA>
    3 Discussioni template:Capi di Stato d'Europa <NA>
    4 1941
                                                   Q5231
    5 1987
                                                   Q2429
    6 1989
                                                   Q2425
   7 1990
                                                   Q2064
   8 1998
                                                   Q2089
   9 1999
                                                   Q2091
## 10 2001
                                                   Q1988
```

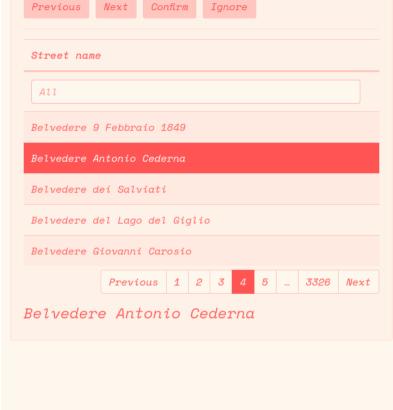
## # ... with 481 more rows

## Starting from strings

16 Adickesstraße	Adickes	Q1358139	Ernst Friedrich Adicke	German politician (1811-1878	TRUE	male	politician	+1811-03-07T	Cappel
17 Admiralstraße	Admiral	Q347939	Prince Adalbert of Pru	Prussian admiral; fifth child	TRUE	male	explorer; naval officer	+1811-10-29T	▶Berlin
18 Adolf-Heyden-Straße	Adolf Heyden	Q362126	Adolf Heyden	German architect	FALSE	male	architect	+1838-07-15T	Krefeld
19 Adolf-Martens-Straße	Adolf Martens	Q66166	Adolf Martens	German metallurgist	FALSE	male	engineer; inventor; university teacher;	+1850-03-06T	Gammelin
20 Adolf-Menzel-Straße	Adolf Menzel	Q164961	Adolph von Menzel	German artist (1815-1905)	FALSE	male	painter; illustrator; printmaker; lithograp	+1815-12-08T	Wrocław
21 Adolf-Scheidt-Platz	Adolf Scheidt	Q364082	Adolf Scheidt	German politician (1870-1947	TRUE	male	politician	+1870-05-18T	Hanover
22 Adolfstraße	Adolf	Q51007	Prince Adolf of Schau	regent of the Principality of Li	TRUE	male	regent	+1859-07-20T	▶Bückeburg
23 Agathenweg	Agathen	Q200895	Agatha of Sicily	Christian saint and martyress	FALSE	female	virgin	+0235-09-08T	San Giovanni (
24 Agnes-Hacker-Straße	Agnes Hacker	Q15432306	Agnes Hacker	German physician	FALSE	female	physician	+1860-01-01T	Chernyakhovs
25 Agnes-Kraus-Weg	Agnes Kraus	Q394571	Agnes Kraus	German actress (1911-1995)	FALSE	female	stage actor; film actor	+1911-02-16T	▶Berlin
26 Agnes-Straub-Weg	Agnes Straub	Q87560	Agnes Straub	German actress (1890-1941)	FALSE	female	stage actor; film actor	+1890-04-02T	Munich
27 Agnes-Wabnitz-Straß	Agnes Wabnitz	Q394660	Agnes Wabnitz	German tailor and governess	TRUE	female	tailor; governess	+1841-12-10T	Gliwice
28 Agnes-Zahn-Harnac⊁	Agnes Zahn Harnaci	Q108443	Agnes von Zahn-Harr	German teacher and writer (1	TRUE	female	teacher; writer; women's rights activist	+1884-06-19T	Giessen
29 Agricolastraße	Agricola	Q76579	Georgius Agricola	German mineralogist	TRUE	male	physician; mineralogist; historian; engi	+1494-03-24T	Glauchau
30 Aiblinger Weg	Aiblinger	Q69691	Johann Caspar Aiblin	German composer (1779-180	FALSE	male	composer; conductor	+1779-02-23T	▶Wasserburg ar
31 Alarichstraße	Alarich	Q102371	Alaric I	King of the Visigoths	TRUE	male	sovereign; Warrior king	+0376-00-00T	Dacia; Tulcea (
32 Albert-Brodersen-Alle	Albert Brodersen	Q1747455	Albert Brodersen	German architect	FALSE	male	architect	+1857-11-16T	Ascheberg
33 Albert-Einstein-Straß	Albert Einstein	Q937	Albert Einstein	German-born theoretical phys	TRUE	male	theoretical physicist; philosopher of sc	+1879-03-14T	<b>▶</b> Ulm
34 Albert-Hößler-Straße	Albert Hößler	Q110292	Albert Hössler	German agent (1910-1942)	FALSE	male	intelligence agent	+1910-10-11T	Mühlau
35 Albert-Kuntz-Straße	Albert Kuntz	Q2638318	Albert Kuntz	German politician	FALSE	male	politician	+1896-12-04T	Bennewitz
36 Albert-Schweitzer-Pl∂	Albert Schweitzer	Q49325	Albert Schweitzer	French-German physician, the	FALSE	male	theologian; philosopher; physician; or@	+1875-01-14T	Kaysersberg
37 Albert-Schweitzer-Str	Albert Schweitzer	Q49325	Albert Schweitzer	French-German physician, the	TRUE	male	theologian; philosopher; physician; or@	+1875-01-14T	Kaysersberg
38 Albertinenstraße	Albertinen	Q33083462	Albertine Amalie Loui	NA	TRUE	female	large estate owner	+1833-00-00T	Saint Thomas
39 Albertstraße	Albert	Q168657	Albert I of Saxony	King of Saxony	TRUE	male	politician	+1828-04-23T	Dresden
40 Albiger Weg	Albiger	Q29396144	Albigerius	Carthaginian soothsayer	FALSE	male	NA	NA	Carthage
41 Alboinplatz	Alboin	Q152877	Alboin	King of the Lombards	TRUE	male	sovereign	+0530-01-01T	▶NA
42 Alboinstraße	Alboin	Q152877	Alboin	King of the Lombards	TRUE	male	sovereign	+0530-01-01T	▶NA
43 Albrecht-Achilles-Str	Albrecht Achilles	Q453771	Albrecht III Achilles,	Elector of Brandenburg	TRUE	male	ruler	+1414-11-09T	Tangermünde

## Integration with interactive interfaces







## A couple of examples of practical use cases

#### Olympics 2020 medalists by place of birth

https://github.com/EDJNet/olympics2020nuts



#### Main air routes that could be travelled by train

Wikidata used for: defining city hubs for airports, getting coordinates of airports (for excluding those on islands), use unique identifiers for merging with train dataset https://edjnet.github.io/european\_routes/



#### Mapping diversity

https://medium.com/european-data-journalism-network/finding-gendered-street-names-a-step-by-step-walkthrough-with-r-7608c2d36a77



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#### General issues

- if you are processing many thousands of items, the current approach can be very slow when run for the first time (near instant thanks to caching later)
  - o no obvious long term solution, but a future version will allow for an easier way to share the cache to make sure others can also run the script instantly
- no easy way to "give back" to Wikidata

## tidywikidatar

Check out website with documentation and examples: https://edjnet.github.io/tidywikidatar/

CRAN 0.5.2 downloads 406/month downloads 5783

- everything in tabular format
- one row, one piece of information
- easy local caching
- easy integration with dplyr piped routines
- get image credits from WikiMedia commons
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