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Political Particularism around the World

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Political Particularism around the World

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Abstract*

This paper presents a new dataset on electoral systems and outlines its potential uses in further research exploring the connections between electoral systems and economic outcomes. The dataset provides indicators of the degree to which individual politicians can further their careers by appealing to narrow geographic constituencies on the one hand, or party constituencies on the other.

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1. Introduction

The number of empirical papers linking political institutions to economic outcomes is growing rapidly. Theories about the connections between institutions and economic outcomes are becoming increasingly sophisticated and delivering ever more detailed and testable predictions. However, the study of electoral systems and economic policies is a relatively new area. The effects of electoral systems on the policymaking environment have been analyzed extensively in the large literature on how electoral systems shape political outcomes, such as the number of parties or the type of governments (majority, minority, coalition). Other studies suggest connections between government types and economic outcomes, especially in fiscal policy.[1] Few have drawn these two literatures together to analyze, empirically or theoretically, the possible connections between electoral systems and economic outcomes.[2]

This paper presents a new dataset on electoral systems and outlines its potential uses in further research exploring the connections between electoral systems and economic outcomes. The dataset, comprised of information on electoral systems past and present, provides indicators of the degree to which individual politicians can further their careers by appealing to narrow geographic constituencies on the one hand, or party constituencies on the other.

There are several areas of political economy for which this information is useful. The manner in which politicians further their careers is likely to influence how they manifest the "opportunism" that much of political economy assumes. Politicians who must please narrow geographical constituencies are likely to advocate narrower, more particularistic policies than those who further their career by following party dictates. Differences in the effective arbiters of policymakers' careers may influence the way that interest groups can affect policymaking. In systems where politicians' careers are determined by the will of their constituency, interest groups must channel their demands through the district-level politics. In systems where

[1] Grilli, Masciandaro, and Tabellini (1991) and Kontopoulos and Perotti (2000), for example, argue that coalition governments are more likely to suffer from common-pool problems that can lead to larger overall government spending. Roubini and Sachs (1989) suggest that the association between coalition governments and deficits is due to the fact that coalition governments contain more veto-players and are thus less able to respond to economic shocks. Alesina and Tabellini (1990) observe the frequency of government collapse under coalition governments and hypothesize that coalition governments are more myopic in policymaking, hence prone to larger deficits.

[2] Some recent exceptions include Milesi-Ferreti, Perotti, and Rostagno (2000) on electoral systems and composition of public expenditure, and Persson and Tabellini's (2000) wide-ranging empirical analysis of the effect of electoral rules on fiscal policy outcomes. Another empirical paper, Gaviria, Panizza, Seddon and Stein (1999) focuses on the links between electoral system and reform policies.

candidates' future is determined by party favor, interest groups may gain more influence by going to the party leaders who oversee politicians based in a number of districts.

Differences in politicians' incentives to appeal to narrow geographic constituencies versus party policies may explain cross-country differences in the division of public spending between broad and targeted programs, for example. Milesi-Ferreti, Perotti, and Rostagno (2000), find that more party-oriented governments tend to have higher transfers and lower shares of public goods in government expenditures. They interpret these findings as evidence for the idea that legislators with narrow constituencies will purchase goods and target public goods to enhance their electoral appeal, while parties (and the legislators who carry out their policies) will be more likely to use broader transfers to attract votes. Baqir (1999) finds that narrow constituencies (i.e., smaller districts) are associated with greater per capita city government spending. The use of other distortionary policies to redistribute income to narrow interest groups is also likely to be related to politicians' incentives. Seddon (2001) documents a positive relationship between particularism and trade protection.

The degree of particularism is also likely to affect a political system's ability to resolve conflicts in policymaking. Systems where each politician is attentive to narrow interests are likely to complicate agreement within the legislature. At the same time, party-centered systems may lack the institutional channels for competing views to be expressed and resolved in sustainable policies. Particularistic systems have a definite advantage in terms of representation and in terms of building incentives for legislators to gather information on the preferences of their constituencies. Particularistic systems can also generate mechanisms of yardstick competition among legislators and improve the efficiency of the political process.

Gaviria, Panizza, Seddon and Stein (2000) show that there is a correlation between the measures of particularism described in this paper and a country's ability to recover from crisis. In particular, they show that in countries where politicians balance the demands of parties and constituents (i.e., where the index of particularism assumes an intermediate value) are more likely to recover growth after crisis than countries where political careers are dominated by party dictates or voter wishes. Using the same dataset, Panizza (2000) finds that intermediate levels of particularism are associated with higher quality government institutions.

These results corroborate Shugart's (1999) argument that differences in the way that legislators further their careers affect the feasibility of collective action for reform policies. He

presents a series of case studies that suggest that electoral reform is a helpful pre-condition for extensive economic reforms in systems with extreme levels of particularism or party-centeredness.

Finally, the panel dataset is useful for analysts of electoral reform, comparative institutions, or institutional change. While much of the literature on the determinants of electoral change is drawn from individual country experiences, this dataset provides a dependent variable for testing some of these theories across countries.

The next section describes the details of the dataset. There are two parts: first, a group of variables based on electoral formulas; and second, a collection of other variables that provide some indicators of politicians' incentives to advocate particularistic policies. The subsequent section provides some summary statistics for the dataset and discusses differences across geographical and economic regions.

2. Electoral Formulas

The collection of the data on electoral formulas was guided by Carey and Shugart's (1995, hereafter CS95) theoretical work on the incentives that different electoral formulas create to cultivate a personal vote and Shugart's (1999) work on the connections between economic and electoral reform. The papers propose two versions of an index that measures the strength of incentives that electoral laws create for politicians to adhere to party platforms or to build personal support bases in particular geographical constituencies.

The index described in CS95 is designed to "propose a method to estimate the relative value to legislators (and legislative candidates) of personal reputations versus party reputations for advancing political careers." They consider party control over access to and rank on ballots, extent to which candidates rely on personal votes independent of their co-partisans, the number and specificity of citizens' votes, and district magnitude. Shugart (1999) further differentiates among the party-centered countries by considering the degree of centralization of leadership within parties as well. The Shugart (1999) framework focuses on the same set of electoral laws

as CS95, but creates a finer categorization of systems by introducing coding for the influence of "camarillas," or small party cliques.[3]

As in CS95 our electoral formula variables range from zero for the systems where politicians' careers depend most on party fortunes to two for systems where candidates focus most on narrow geographical constituencies. We were not able to collect the detailed information on legal party structure and informal norms that would be required to follow Shugart's more elaborate coding scheme for a large sample of countries over 20 years.

Our panel dataset, covering a maximum of 155 countries from 1978-1997, relies on the Inter-Parliamentary Union's (IPU) annual Chronicle of Parliamentary Elections and Developments and the online Parline database. We also consulted the International IDEA Handbook of Electoral System Design, and the Manual de los Partidos Políticos de América Latina in cases where the IPU information was not complete. Although many countries did not change their electoral systems over the sample period, the panel dataset can identify countries that went through an electoral reform in the period under consideration. One caveat regarding the panel dataset is that the information on electoral systems is less detailed in the earlier editions. Ambiguities in coding are noted in an accompanying spreadsheet.

Our dataset includes countries with varying degrees of democracy during the period under consideration. Some of the legislatures described in the IPU's annual summary are not the primary policymakers and thus their incentives to cater to parties or geographical constituencies are less relevant for policy outcomes. We leave it to the data user to define the level of democracy for which legislators' incentives are relevant for policy outcomes. In past work we have used the Polity III composite index for democracy to control for the effects of electoral systems in varying governance environments on economic policy outcomes. We have also used a dummy variable for democracy that takes a value of one for Polity III index scores above four out of a possible score of ten for the most democratic systems.[4]

Our index of political particularism has three components: (i) Ballot, (ii) Pool, and (iii) Vote.

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[3] The 1995 index runs from 0 being the most "party centered" to 2 being the most "candidate centered," while the 1998 index reverses this scale and adds a second dimension to produce an index that can range from 2 at the most camarilla-centered to –2 at the most candidate centered.

[4] The Polity III data and updated Polity IV dataset can be obtained online at http://www.bsos.umd.edu/cidcm/polity/#data. We use the variable "democ."

Ballot describes relative strength of parties and citizens in shaping candidates' access to the ballot and a plausible chance of being elected. Electoral systems with party control over access to the ballot and candidate order in the ballot give parties control over entry into politics. Systems with low independent candidacy requirements and plurality (as opposed to the stricter absolute majority requirement) races offer voters more influence over the electoral process from nomination to actual election.

CS95 describe ballot as a measure of the "degree of control party leaders exercise over access to their party's label." Their paper identifies two dimensions of party control over politicians' futures: control over party endorsements and control over ballot rank in electoral list systems. In their coding system, electoral systems are rated zero if parties present a fixed ballot and voters may not disturb the list, one if party endorsement is required, but voters can alter the order of the candidates, and two if parties do not control access to the ballot.[5]

The rationale behind our coding is similar. A code of zero means that voters can only choose a party and cannot demonstrate a preference for any individual. Closed-list electoral systems, where parties present a fixed slate of candidates that must be voted on as a whole, are the most common type in this category. Candidates have a strong incentive to cater to the party rather than constituents in order to be chosen and to be placed in a viable spot near the top of the list.[6] A code of one means that voters can choose among a limited set of candidates. Those limits are set *de jure* by party leaders and electoral laws or *de facto* by implausibility of successful independent candidacies. We code systems where there are high formal and informal barriers to independent candidates as one. Politicians in this group of electoral systems must balance efforts to please the party with efforts to attract constituent support. We code systems where voters choose from an essentially unrestricted set of representatives as two. These include systems where independents run and often win seats. Candidates in this group focus exclusively on gaining support within their constituency and there is little need to gain party favor.

Defining zero as closed list where parties had control over candidate identity and position was straightforward, but distinguishing between one (systems in which party nominations are

[5] A later version of the index, presented in Shugart (1999) differentiates among alternate ways that parties can designate candidates, in particular whether nominees are chosen by broad party agreement or an elite party leadership. We are unable to differentiate among various forms of intra-party selection of candidates and determine how much influence voters have on party choices in the broad sample of countries for which we collect information on electoral systems.

required, but voters influence the relative success of candidates from same party) and two (low party control where candidates can enter the ballot and plausibly win without party nomination or imposition of order) was harder. We use the procedures for independent candidates and the history of successful independent candidates to supplement scarce information on party nomination procedures when differentiating between scores of one and two. Some cases were clear: in Papua New Guinea, for example, 38 out of 109 seats were held by independents in 1996. We coded this country as a two for ballot, as party control over the voters' candidate options is only as strong as the party monopoly on successful political campaigns. Political entrepreneurs will have few incentives to adhere to party rules if they can easily bypass them.

We turned to the outcome measure of the number and size of represented parties in ambiguous cases where electoral and candidacy rules could be classified as one or two on the ballot scale. If there were more than 4 parties, at least one significantly smaller than the leading parties and without a significant history of representation in the legislature, then countries were given a 2 on the ballot variable.[7] Our reasoning is that these small, impermanent parties may serve as vehicles for political entrepreneurs and thus be equivalent to successful "independent" candidates.

We considered other features of the electoral systems in coding ballot for single-member districts. Single-member districts (SMD) can be seen as a closed party list of one for smaller districts. We code SMD as zero in countries where the majority of other districts are multi-member closed-list proportional or where there was a single-party system such as in Mali, Sierra Leone, or Bulgaria from 1981-1989. To universally code them as zero, however, might over-emphasize the role that the party, as opposed to voters in the district, has in selecting the candidate. Candidates' popularity with voters in that district is likely to be a more important factor in gaining access to a list of one than a list of several. The rest of the SMD cases were assigned a value of one, the category in which parties retain some control over the ballot but voters can influence party choices for countries in which closed lists did not predominate.

In practice, our classification system sorts electoral systems along lines similar to the "ballot" variable described in CS95. The most significant difference is in the treatment of SMDs, which they suggest coding as zero in all cases. Our attention to the procedures and

[6] Parties are allocated a block of seats proportional to the number of votes that their list received. These posts in the legislature are awarded to individuals in the order that they appear on the list.
[7] The group "others" is counted as 1 party.

success rates for independent candidates may also lead to some discrepancies between the way CS95 would code countries and the way that we have coded countries. Carey and Shugart, for example, write that two describes systems where "candidates might gain ballot access by paying a registration fee, by collecting signatures, through primaries, or through some combination of these methods…The key is that politicians themselves determine their ballot access by acting as individual political entrepreneurs." We make this slightly more stringent by only classifying as two those systems where independent candidacies are both feasible and successful in providing political entrepreneurs with an alternative to party leaders' dictates. Those systems where independent candidacies are possible and relatively common, but not often successful are classified as one: access to the ballot is open, but access to the ballot in a position that is likely to win is still controlled by party leaders and their willingness to endorse or nominate.

Pool, like the variable described in CS95, measures the extent to which a candidate can ride his party's reputation to electoral success. They designate the following categories: a score of zero if votes cast are pooled across the whole party to determine the allocation of seats, one if votes are pooled at the sub-party level, and two if votes cast for a candidate contribute only to that candidate's electoral success. The assumption is that candidates who receive no spillover votes from party colleagues will compete harder to create personal support bases. There will be less of a premium involved in belonging to a generally popular party or in working to make the party popular in systems where there is little room to transfer votes across candidates within a party. In standard economics language, a high value of pool means that the electoral success of a given candidate does not produce any positive externality for other candidates of the same party. At the same time, a low value of pool means that there are large externalities.

We diverge from CS95 in a subtle way in the coding of this variable. They define "pool" according to whether votes for a candidate can also contribute to the probability of others in his or her party winning seats in that electoral district. We focus on this variable from the candidate's perspective and ask whether a candidate for national office can expect to benefit from electoral support for other candidates in his party, possibly in other districts.

This difference in coding is most obvious in the case of SMD. While Carey and Shugart classify most SMDs as pool equal to zero because each candidate is presented as a "list" of one and votes for the candidate are thus pooled across the entire list, our definition leads us to classify candidates in single-member districts as two on the pool scale because they do not

receive additional electoral support if other candidates from their party are successful in other districts. We believe that, in general, the code of two more accurately reflects the incentives candidates face in single-member districts where candidates on the ballot gain votes purely by personal effort. Single-party states are again an exception to this rule and are coded as zero.

Vote measures limitations on the number of individuals that voters can support. Legislators will have a stronger incentive to please their voter constituencies where the number of votes is limited and they must convince voters to choose them only. They will have little incentive to cater to the home constituency if they cannot attract votes individually, but only as a party member. As in CS95, the values range from zero for a single vote for a party, one for multiple votes across candidates who may or may not have to be from the same party, and two for a single vote for a single candidate. Electoral systems where votes cast two votes, one for a local candidate and another for a national candidate, are coded as one. The multiple votes may also be spread across time, as in systems where there are multiple rounds of elections to narrow the field of candidates. Systems with open primary elections are counted as having multiple votes. We do not classify systems with rarely used tie-breaking runoffs, however, as allowing for multiple votes. Candidates in these systems do not regularly expect to have to expand their audiences after the first round.

Unlike CS95, however, SMDs are still coded as two except in single-party states, as people are voting for a candidate. We follow this coding to be consistent with our method of coding Ballot. Classifying SMDs as zero would create some illogical combinations of Ballot being equal to one or two, indicating that voters have some influence on who is in a viable place on the ballot and Vote equal to 0, or party vote only.

One problem in generating countries' values for Ballot, Pool and Vote is that some countries use more than one method to elect different groups of legislators. Several of the countries in our sample, such as Guatemala, have "mixed member proportional" electoral systems in which some legislators are elected using proportional representation and closed lists, while others are elected based on votes for individual candidates. To deal with this problem, we started by coding the electoral systems for each of these groups separately and computed weights using the number of legislators elected in each group.

Next, we computed ballot, pool, and vote, as the weighted averages of the coded values for each group of legislators that is elected under a different set of rules. "Parallel" electoral

systems where proportional representation seats are distributed after the national vote totals have been determined, for example, are coded as if there are two groups of legislatures. The "compensatory" seats are generally coded as zero for ballot, pool, and vote because parties usually draw up the lists and assign the extra seats, while voters simply cast one vote for a candidate.

We follow Shugart (1999) in averaging the scores of these three variables to create a summary index of particularism for each set of legislators who are elected via a certain electoral system. In some cases, this means a whole country or a whole house, while in mixed systems it means a subset of legislators. Each group of legislators is then given a weight according to its proportion of total legislators in the country. In bicameral systems, each house is given a weight of 0.5, regardless of the relative numbers of seats.[8]

One problem that we faced in aggregating ballot, vote, and pool and the summary index was that, in some countries, not all legislators were directly elected. We coded the indirectly elected legislators as zero on all variables in countries such as Austria where the parties choose a number of national legislators based on party shares in provincial legislators. In these cases it seems clear that parties control access to and position on the "ballot" and that candidates receive a positive externality from votes for others in their party. Citizens' votes for provincial legislators are effectively party votes for the national legislators. We do not, however, code legislators for whom the selection criteria were not based on citizen input or explicit party-based formulas.

The summary score for countries with unelected legislators does not take into account the incentives faced by all members of the legislature in these countries. We note these cases by creating a variable *cindex* that is equal to the proportion of all legislators included in the electoral variables ballot, pool, vote, as well as the composite index. We emphasize that a score of less than one on *cindex* does not mean that a country is "less representative" or less democratic. It simply means that we do not have adequate information to discern the degree of citizen or party control over politicians' access to political power.

The Argentine Senate, for example, is not included as senators are selected by elected provincial assemblies. The French Senate, elected by "electoral colleges" consisting of elected

[8] We thank Matthew Shugart for suggesting this method of taking the arithmetic means of the index averages for the different groups.

and unelected local officials, is also not coded. It would be reasonable to code these two institutions as 0-0-0, as party affiliation of the electors seems to roughly predict the party composition of the indirectly elected chamber. We leave it up to the data user, though, to adjust the data if desired.

As outlined above, our coding of single member districts is perhaps the most significant departure from the framework outlined in CS95 for the variables ballot, pool, and vote. Our method of coding significantly increases the average country score relative to the strict observance of the CS framework. We note single member districts in the background file so that users who prefer to interpret single-member districts as closed lists of one can easily change the coding accordingly. We also include an indicator variable of the proportion of single member districts (*smd*).

3. Other Variables

District magnitude may affect the manner in which legislators build their personal reputation. We have thus far assumed that an incentive to build a personal reputation was equivalent to an incentive to cater to a narrow geographic constituency. Larger geographical districts are likely to be less "narrow" and increase the need for legislators to internalize the consequences of redistributive policies. It is more difficult to find a policy that does not create losers along with winners in larger districts. Lancaster (1986) makes the point that pork-barrel policies, usually distributive policies targeted to a particular constituency, are less likely to be successful vote-attractors where geographical constituencies are larger. Persson and Tabellini (2000) suggest that electoral systems may affect the extent of targeted programs in a country: "larger districts diffuse electoral competition, inducing parties to seek support from broad coalitions in the population. Smaller districts steer competition toward narrow, geographical constituencies." They then connect the means of electoral competition to broad classes of political outcomes: broad programs are better for attracting broad support, while targeted (often called pork-barrel) programs are more effective for narrow support.

Larger district magnitude, however, also increases the intensity of competition between individual candidates and the need to differentiate oneself from others by some means. Large district magnitude in candidate-centered systems, then, is expected to motivate more particularistic behavior as candidates try to carve out individual niches. Cox (1990) argues that

more competition in a system will produce more centripetal forces. They, in turn, may lead to a situation where politicians will be less inclined to cater to the median voter and more inclined to carve out (particularistic) niches. Carey and Shugart (1995) note this differential effect. They hypothesize that the incentive to cultivate a personal reputation increases with district magnitude in candidate-centered systems but decreases with district magnitude in closed-list systems where parties determine who is on the ballot and what position they are in.

It is difficult, a priori, to determine which effect dominates or how politicians might go about "differentiating themselves" without resorting to targeted "pork barrel" policies. We include this variable without predictions as to its effect on policymaking or policy outcomes.

In keeping with our emphasis on the incentives that individual legislators face, we measure average district magnitude from the viewpoint of the individual legislator. The country average is then a weighted average of the various district magnitudes, with weights determined by how many legislators run in districts of each size. The variable "avdm" would be calculated as (200*200+100*1)/300 equal approximately 133 in a system with one 200-member national district and 100 single-member districts. Standard calculation of average district magnitude by dividing the number of seats by the number of districts would lead to a figure of 2.97 (=300/101), which obscures the fact that most legislators run in very large districts.

We rely on the district magnitude information in the Parline online database and the International Parliamentary Union's annual journal. Information from Table 3.2 in Cox (1997) is used to supplement district magnitude information in the cross-section sample of 1996 data.[9]

As an alternative to the index of particularism based on Carey and Shugart, we create an alternate summary variable, *propn*, or the proportion of legislators from a national constituency. As in the calculation of the index, pool, and vote, we weight each house as 0.5 in a bicameral system. Cases where candidates are indirectly elected by provincial legislators, or appointed by subnational councils are considered to have non-national constituencies. The control variable *cpropn* is in this case one minus the percentage of candidates that are appointed by the head of

[9] Discrepancies between the Cox information and IPU information are noted in comments on the master spreadsheet. In most cases these are slight: the district magnitudes reported in Cox sum to a few more or less seats than reported by IPU. In cases where the discrepancies are more serious, such as the information for Italy, the IPU information is given precedence, as it is more current and accounts for recent reforms. (In cases where a third source was available, the IPU information reflected current electoral laws, and most large discrepancies were in systems where there have recently been reforms.)

state, governor-general, or monarch. These politicians' loyalties to a geographically-defined support base are not clear.

Proportional and *majoritarian* systems have been shown to have different effects on the number of parties in government.[10] The distinction between the two broad categories of electoral systems has also been made in theoretical papers on the links between electoral institutions and economic policy. Proportional systems are said to give politicians an incentive to propose broader spending programs and internalize policy benefits for larger segments of the population than winner-take-all systems. The empirical paper of Persson and Tabellini (2000), for example, finds that majoritarian elections are associated with smaller broad spending programs and smaller deficits than proportional elections. Lizzeri and Persico (2000) present a model in which proportional elections give politicians a greater incentive to provide public goods, while majoritarian systems are associated with more emphasis on targeted expenditures.

We obtained the information for our dummy variable from the online database Parline, IPU's annual Chronicle of Parliamentary Elections and Developments, and the IDEA International Handbook of Electoral System Design. Mixed systems are classified as proportional representation if more than 50% of legislators are elected under a proportional formula. We do not code single-party systems as proportional, as the number of seats a party has is trivially equal to the proportion of votes its candidates received.

4. Summary Statistics

Table 1 reports regional average values for Ballot. Latin America and Central and East Europe are the regions where parties have stronger control over ballots and Asia and the Middle East are the regions in which political parties have the weakest control over electoral ballots.[11]

[10] See Rae (1971), Blais and Carty (1987), or Lijphart (1994), for example.

Table 1. Regional Values for Ballot (1997)

	All Countries			Countries with more than 90 percent of elected legislators		
	N. Obs.	**Mean**	**Std. Dev.**	**N. Obs.**	**Mean**	**Std. Dev.**
Africa	37	0.68	0.55	23	0.51	0.56
Asia	23	1.05	0.61	16	0.95	0.53
Caribbean	12	0.83	0.39	2	0.50	0.71
Central Asia	7	1.08	0.42	6	1.10	0.45
Central and East Europe	14	0.55	0.38	13	0.55	0.40
Latin America	20	0.46	0.46	18	0.45	0.45
Middle East and North Africa	14	1.07	0.73	11	1.09	0.70
Industrialized Countries	28	0.80	0.34	21	0.81	0.33
Total	**155**	**0.78**	**0.54**	**110**	**0.72**	**0.54**

Table 2 reports regional average values for Pool. As in the case of Ballot, Latin America and East Europe have the lowest average values, indicating large spillovers between candidates (in this table we also find low values for the group of industrialized countries). At the same time, Central Asia, Asia, and the Caribbean have high average values of Pool, indicating limited spillovers among candidates of the same party.

Table 2. Regional Values for Pool (1997)

	All Countries			Countries with more than 90 percent of elected legislators		
	N. Obs.	**Mean**	**Std. Dev.**	**N. Obs.**	**Mean**	**Std. Dev.**
Africa	37	0.95	0.97	23	0.71	0.93
Asia	23	1.51	0.78	16	1.42	0.80
Caribbean	12	1.67	0.78	2	1.00	1.41
Central Asia	7	1.80	0.38	6	1.93	0.17
Central and East Europe	14	0.64	0.60	13	0.54	0.63
Latin America	20	0.64	0.77	18	0.59	0.73
Middle East and North Africa	14	1.14	1.03	11	1.09	1.04
Industrialized Countries	28	0.65	0.75	21	0.44	0.63
Total	**155**	**1.02**	**0.90**	**110**	**0.83**	**0.87**

Table 3 reports regional average values for Vote. As in the case of Ballot and Pool, Latin America and East Europe have the lowest average, indicating in that in these countries electors tend to vote for a party rather than for a candidate. Central Asia, Asia, and the Caribbean have instead high values of Vote, indicating candidate-centered systems.

Table 3. Regional Values for Vote (1997)

	All Countries			Countries with more than 90 percent of elected legislators		
	N. Obs.	**Mean**	**Std. Dev.**	**N. Obs.**	**Mean**	**Std. Dev.**
Africa	37	1.09	0.86	23	0.84	0.89
Asia	23	1.34	0.69	16	1.31	0.67
Caribbean	12	1.58	0.79	2	0.50	0.71
Central Asia	7	1.44	0.57	6	1.43	0.63
Central and East Europe	14	0.99	0.76	13	0.95	0.78
Latin America	20	0.71	0.83	18	0.68	0.80
Middle East and North Africa	14	1.21	0.80	11	1.18	0.75
Industrialized Countries	28	1.18	0.62	21	1.19	0.62
Total	**155**	**1.15**	**0.78**	**110**	**1.02**	**0.77**

Table 4 reports average regional values for the aggregate index of particularism. The table indicates that Latin America and East Europe are the most party centered regions on the world (with the group of industrialized countries coming third) and that Asia is the most candidate-centered region in the world. The Caribbean is also highly-candidate centered, but many of the countries in this region have an appointed upper house that is not considered in the index and may allow parties more control over the political arena than our coding would suggest. As noted before, countries with unelected legislators can be identified by values of *cindex* less than one.

Table 4. Regional[12] Values for Index of Particularism (1997)

	All Countries			Countries with more than 90 percent of elected legislators		
	N. Obs.	**Mean**	**Std. Dev.**	**N. Obs.**	**Mean**	**Std. Dev.**
Africa	37	0.90	0.74	23	0.69	0.75
Asia	23	1.33	0.62	16	1.26	0.60
Caribbean	12	1.36	0.64	2	0.67	0.94
Central Asia	7	1.44	0.34	6	1.49	0.35
Central and East Europe	14	0.73	0.49	13	0.68	0.49
Latin America	20	0.60	0.63	18	0.57	0.60
Middle East and North Africa	14	1.14	0.77	11	1.12	0.73
Industrialized Countries	28	0.88	0.43	21	0.81	0.40
Total	**155**	**0.99**	**0.66**	**110**	**0.86**	**0.64**

Table 5 summarizes our historical panel and shows that the cross-country average level of particularism has been stable over the 20 years covered in our panel.

[12] See Appendix 1 for a list of countries in each region.

Table 5. Historic Data (all countries)

Year	Ballot			Pool			Vote			Index of Particularism		
	Mean	St. Dev.	N. Obs.	Mean	St. Dev.	N. Obs.	Mean	St. Dev.	N. Obs.	Mean	St. Dev.	N. Obs.
1978	0.81	0.51	61	0.97	0.90	59	1.19	0.78	60	1.01	0.62	59
1979	0.83	0.56	77	1.03	0.93	75	1.20	0.79	76	1.03	0.66	75
1980	0.80	0.57	92	1.06	0.94	88	1.16	0.81	88	1.02	0.68	88
1981	0.82	0.57	96	1.08	0.93	92	1.16	0.79	92	1.03	0.67	92
1982	0.82	0.57	95	1.06	0.93	91	1.15	0.79	91	1.02	0.67	91
1983	0.80	0.56	105	1.04	0.92	101	1.15	0.79	101	1.01	0.66	101
1984	0.79	0.55	116	1.05	0.91	112	1.17	0.80	112	1.02	0.66	112
1985	0.83	0.56	116	1.07	0.91	113	1.20	0.79	113	1.04	0.66	113
1986	0.83	0.56	116	1.07	0.91	113	1.19	0.79	113	1.04	0.66	113
1987	0.82	0.54	121	1.05	0.92	119	1.20	0.79	119	1.03	0.66	119
1988	0.81	0.54	117	1.03	0.92	114	1.20	0.79	114	1.02	0.65	114
1989	0.80	0.57	124	1.01	0.92	120	1.18	0.80	120	1.01	0.67	120
1990	0.81	0.56	122	1.03	0.92	118	1.21	0.78	118	1.03	0.65	118
1991	0.79	0.55	118	1.04	0.91	114	1.18	0.79	114	1.02	0.66	114
1992	0.80	0.54	130	1.02	0.91	127	1.19	0.78	127	1.02	0.65	127
1993	0.81	0.56	142	1.02	0.91	140	1.17	0.78	140	1.01	0.66	140
1994	0.80	0.54	145	1.01	0.90	144	1.15	0.77	144	0.99	0.65	144
1995	0.79	0.55	151	1.02	0.90	150	1.15	0.78	150	0.99	0.66	150
1996	0.78	0.54	154	1.02	0.90	152	1.16	0.78	152	0.99	0.66	152
1997	0.78	0.54	155	1.02	0.90	155	1.15	0.78	155	0.99	0.67	155

5. Conclusion

There is now a widespread consensus on the fact that institutions matter and that political institutions may play an important role in shaping a country's economic policies. However, empirical work on this subject has been hampered by the lack of detailed cross-country data on electoral system (exceptions are Persson and Tabellini, 2000, Milesi-Ferretti, Perotti and Rostagno, 2000, and Gaviria, Panizza, Seddon and Stein, 2000). This paper builds a large cross-country dataset that describes the electoral systems of 167 countries over the 1978-1997 period.

While the dataset described in this paper is far from being a complete inventory of the ways in which electoral systems can affect political incentives, it may be useful in providing the tools to test some of the theoretical relationships between politicians' incentives and economic outcomes that have been highlighted in the theoretical literature.

Appendix 1. Countries in the Regional Groups

Africa	Asia	Caribbean	Central Asia	Central and East Europe	Latin America	Middle East and North Africa	Industrialized Countries
Angola	Bangladesh	Antigua	Afghanistan	Albania	Argentina	Algeria	Andorra
Benin	Burma	Bahamas	Armenia	Bosnia	Bolivia	Cyprus	Australia
Botswana	Cambodia	Barbados	Azerbaijan	Bulgaria	Brazil	Egypt	Austria
Burundi	China	Belize	Kazakhstan	Croatia	Chile	Iran	Belgium
Cameroon	Fiji	Guyana	Kazakhstan	Hungary	Colombia	Iraq	Canada
Cape Verde	India	Haiti	Kyrgyzstan	Lithuania	Costa Rica	Israel	Denmark
Central Afr. Rep.	Indonesia	Jamaica	Tajikstan	Poland	Cuba	Jordan	Finland
Comoros	Kiribati		Turkmenistan	Romania	Dominican Republic	Kuwait	France
Congo	Korea, North	Saint Lucia	Uzbekistan	Russian Federation	Ecuador	Lebanon	Germany (West)
Cote d'Ivoire	Korea, South	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines		Slovenia	El Salvador	Morocco	Greece
Djibouti	Lao PDR	Suriname		The FYR of Macedonia	Grenada	Syrian Arab Republic	Iceland
Gabon	Malaysia	Trinidad and Tobago		Ukraine	Guatemala	Tunisia	Ireland
Gambia	Maldives			Yugoslavia	Honduras	Turkey	Italy
Ghana	Micronesia				Mexico	Yemen	Japan
Guinea	Mongolia				Nicaragua		Liechtenstein
Guinea-Bissau	Nauru				Panama		Luxembourg
Kenya	Nepal				Paraguay		Malta
Lesotho	Pakistan				Peru		Monaco
Liberia	Papua New Guinea				Uruguay		Netherlands
Madagascar	Philippines				Venezuela		New Zealand
Malawi	Singapore						Norway
Mali	Sri Lanka						Portugal
Mauritania	Thailand						San Marino
Mauritius	Tuvalu						Spain
Mozambique	Vietnam						Sweden
Namibia							Switzerland
Niger							United Kingdom
Nigeria							USA
Rwanda							
Sao Tome and Principe							
Senegal							
Seychelles							
Sierra Leone							
Somalia							
South Africa							
Sudan							
Swaziland							
Tanzania							
Togo							
Uganda							
Zaire							
Zambia							
Zimbabwe							

Appendix 2. List of Files and Spreadsheet Page Names

Public.dta	Stata dataset
Public.xls	Excel dataset
Histc	Spreadsheet of coded values
Record	Notes on coding

Appendix 3. Variable Names and Brief Description

Variable Name	Description
COUNTRY	Country Name
SHCODE	Summers and Heston code
BICAMERAL	Dummy variable, 1 if bicameral system
YEAR	Year
BALLOT	Party control over access to and position on ballot
POOL	Sharing of votes across candidates of the same party
VOTE	Candidate or party specific voting
INDEX	Summary index of particularism
CINDEX	Control variable, proportion of legislators considered in index
DM	District magnitude
SMD	Proportion of legislators from single-member districts
PROPN	Proportion of legislators from national districts
CPROPN	Control variable, proportion of legislators considered in cpropn
PR	Dummy variable, 1 if proportional representation.

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