Consequences of Democratic Institutions
Majoritarian or consensus democracy?
Figure 11.10  Arrow’s Institutional Trilemma

Group transitivity (stable outcomes)

A

Nondictatorship B C

Universal admissibility
Every decision-making mechanism must grapple with the trade-offs posed by Arrow’s Theorem, and every system of government represents a collection of such decision-making mechanisms.
Constitution writers have responded to Arrow’s institutional ‘trilemma’ in one of two ways:

1. **Majoritarian vision**: Concentrate power in the hands of the majority.

2. **Consensus vision**: Disperse power to as many people as possible.
Majoritarian vision of democracy

- Two alternative teams of politicians compete for the support of voters.

- The team selected by a majority of the voters is given unfettered control over policy.

- It must implement the policies that it ran on during the election campaign.
In the delegate model of representation, representatives have little autonomy and are mandated to act as faithful agents of their particular constituents.

In the trustee model of representation, representatives are free to use their own judgement when making policy. They are supposed to promote the collective good and act in the national interest rather than in the interests of any particular constituency.
Majoritarian vision of democracy

- Citizens know which team is responsible for policy outcomes.
- They can use their evaluations of the policy record when deciding whether to reward or punish the incumbent in the following election.
- Citizens only get to exert influence at election time.
Majoritarian vision of democracy

- Policy should be determined only by the majority.

- The involvement of the minority in the policy-making process is considered illegitimate.

Power is to be concentrated in the hands of a single majority team of politicians.
Consensus vision of democracy

- During elections, citizens are to choose representatives from as wide a range of social groups as possible.

- These representatives are advocates who bargain on your behalf in the promotion of the common good.

- Trustee model of representation.
Consensus vision of democracy

- Elections should produce a legislature that is a miniature reflection of society as a whole.

- Elections are not designed to serve as some sort of referendum on the set of policies implemented by the government.

- Citizens exert influence over the policymaking process \textit{between} elections through the ongoing bargaining of their elected representatives.
Consensus vision of democracy

• Policy should be determined by as many citizens (and their representatives) as possible.

• Citizens with majority preferences do not have a privileged status.

• Restrictions placed on the ability of the majority to ride roughshod over the preferences of the minority.

Power is to be dispersed among as many people and groups as possible.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Majoritarian</th>
<th>Consensus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Electoral system</td>
<td>Majoritarian</td>
<td>Proportional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Party system</td>
<td>Two parties</td>
<td>Many parties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government type</td>
<td>Single-party majority</td>
<td>Coalition/minority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federalism</td>
<td>Unitary</td>
<td>Federal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bicameralism</td>
<td>Unicameral</td>
<td>Bicameral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constitutionalism</td>
<td>Legislative supremacy constitution</td>
<td>Higher law constitution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regime type</td>
<td>Parliamentary</td>
<td>Presidential</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What do these different visions of democracy mean for political representation?
Formalistic representation has to do with how representatives are authorized and held accountable.

Descriptive representation addresses the extent to which representatives resemble and ‘stand for’ their constituents.

Symbolic representation focuses on the symbolic ways that representatives ‘stand for’ the citizens.

Substantive representation emphasizes how representatives ‘act for’ the people and promote their interests.
Authorization and accountability are treated differently in the majoritarian and consensus visions of democracy.
Authorization

- In majoritarian systems, it is majority support that authorizes political actors to wield power.

- In consensus systems, power is to be distributed among political actors in direct proportion to their electoral size.

The two systems do not always live up to these ideals in practice.
Accountability refers to the extent to which it is possible for voters to sanction parties for the actions they take while in office.

Retrospective voting occurs when voters look at the past performance of incumbent parties to decide how to vote in the current election.

Accountability tends to be high in majoritarian systems and low in consensus systems.
Clarity of responsibility is the extent to which voters can identify exactly who it is that is responsible for the policies that are implemented.

Clarity of responsibility is a necessary condition for accountability.

Clarity of responsibility tends to be high in majoritarian systems and low in consensus systems.
Substantive representation occurs when representatives take actions in line with the substantive and ideological interests of those they represent.

Substantive representation can be evaluated in terms of ideological congruence or ideological responsiveness.
Ideological congruence has to do with the extent to which the actions of the representatives are in line with the interests of the people at a fixed point in time.

Ideological responsiveness has to do with how representatives change their behavior to become more congruent with the interests of the people over time.
Figure 16.1  Ideological Congruence and Responsiveness

(a)

(b)

(c)
Majoritarian and consensus systems differ in how they think about ideological congruence.

Majoritarian systems want congruence with the majority, usually represented by the preference of the median voter.

Proportional systems want congruence with the full distribution of voter preferences.
Empirically, the ideological congruence of governments with their citizens is very similar in majoritarian and consensus systems.
Theoretically, majoritarian systems should exhibit higher levels of ideological responsiveness.

The incentives and ability to be responsive should be higher in majoritarian systems.

However, few empirical studies have examined this issue.
Descriptive representation has to do with whether representatives resemble and therefore ‘stand for’ their constituents.

It calls for representatives who share the same characteristics, such as race, gender, religion, and class, as those they represent.

Descriptive representation is valued more highly in consensus democracies than in majoritarian democracies.
Two potential arguments for descriptive representation:

1. Descriptive representation is valuable in its own right – it signals a policy of recognition and acceptance, and it promotes a sense of fairness and legitimacy.

2. Descriptive representation can be a pathway to improved substantive representation.
Critics of descriptive representation argue that it can promote **group essentialism**, the idea that all members of a group share an essential identity that only they can have and understand.

Group essentialism can be divisive and causes people to ignore the heterogeneity that exists within groups.
Descriptive representation of women

• The average level of women’s legislative representation in the world in 2016 is 20.9%.

• In only two countries, Rwanda (63.8%) and Bolivia (53.1%), do women comprise a legislative majority.

• Democracies have a slightly higher percentage of women's representation (22.3%) than dictatorships (18.8%).

• Women’s representation in the U.S. in 2017 is 19.4%.
Gender distortions can arise in each stage of the political recruitment process.

1. Set of eligible candidates
2. Only some aspire to compete for office
3. Only some are nominated by a political party
4. Only some are elected
Most studies find that proportional electoral rules help the election of women candidates.

There is mixed evidence as to whether open list or closed list PR systems are best.
Over the last two decades, gender quotas have played a significant role in increasing the share of women legislators around the world.

- Reserved legislative seats
- Legislated candidate quotas
- Voluntary political party quotas
There is some evidence that the descriptive representation of women improves the substantive representation of women.

However, the strength of the empirical evidence is contested.
Symbolic representation focuses on the symbolic ways that representatives ‘stand for’ the citizens.
Symbolic representation constructs boundaries that allow us to see who and what is being represented.

Symbolic representation challenges the notion that there are constituencies out there waiting to be represented.

It suggests that representatives ‘create’ constituencies for themselves to represent through the symbolic claims they make about their constituents.
If constituencies are constructed, then symbolic representation is a process by which certain groups or identities are deemed worthy of representation and others are not.

In addition to identifying who is worthy of representation, the constitutive process of symbolic representation also identifies who can appropriately represent particular groups.
Political institutions and fiscal policy
Fiscal policy involves the manipulation of tax and spending decisions to accomplish governmental goals.
Political economy model.

- Economic policy is typically made by elected officials who may have goals other than stable growth.

- Economic policies tend to have distributional consequences.
Total public fiscal activity is often interpreted as the ‘size of government’ because it gives an indication of the ratio of total government economic activity to overall activity in the country.

Wagner’s Law states that the size of government grows as countries become more industrialized.
Figure 16.3: Total Public Fiscal Activity by Year in Twenty-One OECD Countries, 1947–1997

Central Government Revenues and Expenditures as a Percentage of GDP

Year:
- 1950
- 1953
- 1956
- 1959
- 1962
- 1965
- 1968
- 1971
- 1974
- 1977
- 1980
- 1983
- 1986
- 1989
- 1992
What explains this cross-national variation in fiscal activity?
One possibility is that citizens in different countries differ in their preferences for fiscal activity.

**Meltzer-Richard Model**

- Citizens should differ in their preferences for taxation.
The government taxes all individuals at the same rate, \( t \),

\[ T_i = y_i t, \]

and provides the same subsidy, \( s \) to everyone.
The net benefit, $B$, from the tax and transfer system is

$$B_i = y_i + s - y_i t.$$  

If an individual’s income is unrelated to the tax rate, then she will be concerned only with the net effect of the tax and transfer regime:

$$s - y_i t.$$
Those with above average income (the rich) are net contributors, and those with below average income (the poor) are net recipients.
All voters with below average income will like redistributive tax and transfer systems.

Thus, preferences over redistribution are a function of one’s income.
Income inequality produces systems where the median voter (median income earner) is poorer than the average income earner.

As a result, the median voter is always a net recipient of redistributive taxation.

The more income inequality in society, the more enthusiastic the median voter is for a large tax and redistribution system.
The Meltzer-Richard model provides an explanation – different levels of income inequality – for the observed variation in cross-national fiscal activity.

The problem is that income inequality is not strongly associated with fiscal activity in the real world.
One explanation has to do with the assumption that all income earners vote.

- Empirically, high income earners tend to vote more than low income earners.

- Some evidence that the link between inequality and fiscal activity is strongest when turnout is high.
This means that institutions that influence turnout will affect fiscal activity.

Empirically, we find that voter turnout and fiscal activity are both higher in PR countries.
The Meltzer-Richard model also assumes that preferences are automatically translated into fiscal policy.

But preferences are aggregated through institutions before determining policy.

So, we should probably look at institutions.
The partisan model of macroeconomic policy argues that left-wing parties represent the interests of low-income voters and that right-wing parties represent the interests of high-income voters.
The main prediction of the partisan model is that changes in the partisan control of the government will lead to predictable changes in fiscal policy.

Perhaps the preferences of the poor are translated into fiscal policy only where strong left parties exist to represent their interests.
The partisan model does not receive much support *within* countries, but it does *between* countries.

Perhaps the partisan composition of governments reflects cross-national differences in voter preferences.

- Perhaps some countries have more left-wing preferences and, as a result, have more left-wing governments and fiscal activity.
Figure 16.5: The Partisan Composition of Government and the Expansion of the Public Economy, 1960–1975 (Percentages)
But what evidence is there that voter preferences actually do vary across countries?

Let’s compare the U.S. and Europe in terms of their attitudes towards the poor.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>European Union</th>
<th>United States</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Believe poor are trapped in poverty</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Believe luck determines income</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Believe the poor are lazy</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify themselves as on the left of the</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>political spectrum</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The differing attitudes towards the poor are not just because there are more left-wing voters in Europe.

Right-wing voters in Europe also have more charitable attitudes towards the poor.

Why?
Possible explanations

1. Political debate about the poor may be framed differently in countries with a large number of left-wing voters.

2. Europe has Christian Democratic parties – socially conservative but interventionist on social welfare policy.
Figure 16.6: Relationship between Social Spending and the Belief That Luck Determines Income
How do political institutions – electoral laws – influence fiscal policy?
Proportional representation countries have higher fiscal activity.

- More public goods
- Larger and more redistributive welfare states
- Larger overall size of government

But why?
1. Proportional representation leads to redistribution by facilitating the election of left-wing governments.
Two potential stories

• Left-wing parties draw their support from a concentrated geographic base and are, therefore, hurt by the disproportionality of SMDP electoral laws.

• PR facilitates coalition bargaining between centrist and left-wing parties, whereas SMDP creates incentives for the middle class to ally with right-wing voters.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Electoral system</th>
<th>Left</th>
<th>Right</th>
<th>Proportion of left governments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Proportional</td>
<td>342</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>0.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Majoritarian</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>256</td>
<td>0.25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. Proportional representation leads to more redistribution through its effect on the size of electoral districts.
Legislators in SMDP systems vote for lavish levels of spending because the benefits can be concentrated in their districts while the costs are shared with the entire nation.

Legislators in (large magnitude) PR systems ‘internalize’ the cost of such spending and are, therefore, less likely to spend money on concentrated benefits.

To the extent that projects producing broader benefits are more redistributive than projects producing concentrated benefits, PR systems will be associated with higher levels of redistribution.
A common pool resource problem exists when actors can consume some commonly held resource and pay only a share of the costs.

- They consume more than they would if they had to pay the full social cost of the resource.

Fiscal policy is a common pool resource problem if each legislator has an incentive to maximize government spending in her own district, while the costs of paying for that spending are spread across society as a whole.
3. Proportional representation affects government spending and debt through its effect on the composition of governments.
A common pool resource problem exists *in the cabinet*, with each minister trying to maximize the size of his own ministry’s budget while shifting the costs onto the government as a whole.

This problem is less severe in single-party majority governments (common in SMDP systems) than in coalition governments (common in PR systems).

Countries with more parties in government will have higher spending and more debt.
Proportional representation increases the number of partisan veto players.

- The oil shocks of the 1970s caused all governments to increase spending and debt levels.

- Countries with lots of veto players (more parties in government) were unable to reduce their spending and debt levels after the oil shocks had dissipated.

- Countries with few veto players (fewer parties in government) were able to reduce their spending and debt levels.
Are there institutional choices that might encourage democratic consolidation in ethnically divided countries?
How common is ethnic conflict?
### Table 16.4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of communal violence</th>
<th>Number of incidents for all countries and years$^a$</th>
<th>Country mean of incidents per year$^b$</th>
<th>Number of potential incidents for all countries and years$^c$</th>
<th>Country mean of potential incidents per year$^d$</th>
<th>Ratio of all actual incidents to all potential incidents$^e$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic violence</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>38,383</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>0.0005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irredentism</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>18,757</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>0.0015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rebellion</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>18,757</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>0.0014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil war</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>18,757</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>0.0028</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ethnic conflict is rare, while ethnic cooperation is common.
Possible Causal Paths by Which Ethnic Heterogeneity Encourages Civil War

Civil war → Poverty

Ethnic heterogeneity → Poverty

Civil war → Ethnic heterogeneity
Ethnically heterogeneous African countries have lower economic growth than ethnically homogeneous African countries.

Governments may derive less satisfaction from providing public goods when there is ethnic heterogeneity.

Governments in ethnically diverse U.S. cities provide fewer public goods than those in ethnically homogeneous U.S. cities.
If ethnic identity is primordial, then the best one can do is guarantee the representation of minorities.

- Scholars in this tradition take ethnic divisions as given and want to establish power-sharing arrangements that guarantee minority participation (consociationalism).
Consociationalism is a form of government that emphasizes power sharing through guaranteed group representation.

- Proportional representation
- Federalism
- Other guarantees of group representation
Confessionalism is a form of government that emphasizes power sharing by different religious communities through guaranteed group representation.
If ethnic identity is malleable, then institutions will determine the extent to which politics is organized along ethnic lines.

- Scholars in this tradition think interethnic compromise can be encouraged through the adoption of the right institutions.
Some scholars argue that majoritarian institutions that create incentives for inter-ethnic cooperation, such as the alternative vote, can reduce ethnic conflict.

The alternative vote (AV) is an instant runoff system that requires a candidate to win a majority of all votes cast in a district.
The choice between PR and AV is the choice between replicating ethnic divisions in the legislature hoping that legislators will cooperate after the election (PR) and creating institutional incentives that seek to weaken or even transcend the political salience of ethnicity altogether (AV).
Traditionally, scholars have argued that incongruent and asymmetric federalism can reduce ethnic conflict and dampen secessionist demands by:

- Bringing the government closer to the people.
- Increasing opportunities to participate in government.
- Giving groups discretion over their political, social, and economic affairs.
Recent studies, though, suggest that federalism may actually intensify ethnic conflict.

- It reinforces regionally-based ethnic identities.
- It provides access to political and economic resources that ethnic leaders can use to bring pressure against the state.
- It makes it easier for ethnic groups at the sub-national level to produce legislation that discriminates against regional minorities.
Why does federalism seem to be helpful in some contexts but not in others?
One suggestion is that political decentralization reduces ethnic conflict when regional parties are weak but that it increases conflict when regional parties are strong.

Regional parties can be weakened by adopting institutions such as presidentialism and cross-regional voting laws.
Whether federalism increases or decreases ethnic conflict depends on which causal path is strongest.
How do political institutions influence democratic survival?
Strong empirical evidence that the expected survival time of democracy in presidential systems is considerably shorter than it is in parliamentary systems.
The perils of presidentialism

- Concentration of power over policy
- Inexperienced leaders
- Difficulty in making policy quickly
- Difficulty in locating responsibility for policy
- Difficulty in making comprehensive policy
But many of these outcomes are not unique to presidentialism.

Difficulty in making policy quickly, locating responsibility for policy, and making comprehensive policy are also true of highly fractionalized parliamentary systems.
**Immobilism** describes a situation in parliamentary democracies in which government coalitions are so weak and unstable that they are incapable of reaching an agreement on new policy.

Presidentialism is often seen as a solution to these problems in parliamentary systems.
The essence of parliamentarism is mutual dependence.

- The government needs the support of a legislative majority to stay in power.

The essence of presidentialism is mutual independence.

- The president and legislature have their own fixed electoral mandates and their own sources of legitimacy.

Parliamentarism encourages reconciliation, while presidentialism encourages antagonism.
Why are presidential democracies more unstable than parliamentary ones?
If there is deadlock in a parliamentary democracy, you can solve this through the vote of no confidence.

If there is deadlock in a presidential democracy, there is no vote of no confidence.

• Actors may look to extra-constitutional means to solve the problem.
### Table 16.5 Democratic Survival in Newly Independent States after World War II

#### a. Form of Democracy Adopted

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parliamentary</th>
<th>Presidential</th>
<th>Semi-Presidential</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parliamentary</td>
<td>Presidential</td>
<td>Semi-Presidential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$N = 41$</td>
<td>$N = 36$</td>
<td>$N = 3$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bahamas</td>
<td>Mauritius</td>
<td>Algeria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>Nauru</td>
<td>Angola</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barbados</td>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>Benin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Botswana</td>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>Burkina Faso</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burma</td>
<td>Papua New Guinea</td>
<td>Cameroon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chad</td>
<td>St. Lucia</td>
<td>Cape Verde</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominica</td>
<td>St. Vincent</td>
<td>Central African</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiji</td>
<td>Sierra Leone</td>
<td>Republic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Gambia</td>
<td>Singapore</td>
<td>Comoros</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghana</td>
<td>Solomon Islands</td>
<td>Congo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grenada</td>
<td>Somalia</td>
<td>Cyprus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guyana</td>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td>Djibouti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>Sudan</td>
<td>Equatorial Guinea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>Suriname</td>
<td>Gabon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Israel</td>
<td>Swaziland</td>
<td>Guinea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jamaica</td>
<td>Tanzania</td>
<td>Guinea Bissau</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kenya</td>
<td>Trinidad and Tobago</td>
<td>Ivory Coast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kiribati</td>
<td>Tuvalu</td>
<td>Korea (N)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laos</td>
<td>Uganda</td>
<td>Korea (S)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malaysia</td>
<td>Western Samoa</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malta</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How many were continuous democracies between 1980 and 1989?
How many were continuous democracies between 1980 and 1989?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parliamentary</th>
<th>Presidential</th>
<th>Semi-Presidential</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bahamas</td>
<td>Nauru</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barbados</td>
<td>Papua New Guinea</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Botswana</td>
<td>St. Lucia</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominica</td>
<td>St. Vincent</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>Solomon Islands</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Israel</td>
<td>Trinidad and Tobago</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jamaica</td>
<td>Tuvalu</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kiribati</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Parliamentary</td>
<td>Presidential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democratic for at least one year</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democratic for ten consecutive years</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democratic survival rate</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Parliamentary</td>
<td>Presidential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democratic for at least one year</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number that experienced a coup</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coup susceptibility rate</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Parliamentary</td>
<td>Presidential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overachievers</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Underachievers</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ratio of overachievers to underachievers</td>
<td>5.17</td>
<td>0.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent variables</td>
<td>Model 1</td>
<td>Model 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presidentialism</td>
<td>−0.58***</td>
<td>−0.32*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.14)</td>
<td>(0.16)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GDP per capita</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.0002***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(0.00005)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growth in GDP per capita</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.04***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(0.01)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oil producer</td>
<td></td>
<td>−0.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(0.28)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>2.22***</td>
<td>1.29***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.10)</td>
<td>(0.18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of observations</td>
<td>1,584</td>
<td>1,576</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Log-likelihood</td>
<td>−170.85</td>
<td>−142.15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < 0.10; **p < 0.05; ***p < 0.01

Dependent variable: Probability that a country will be a democracy this year if it was a democracy last year.
Empirical evidence that parliamentary democracies live longer than presidential ones.

But maybe presidential democracies fail at higher rates because they are chosen in difficult times.
Empirical evidence that parliamentary democracies live longer than presidential ones.

But maybe presidential democracies fail at higher rates because they are chosen in difficult times.

The problem is that there is strong evidence that presidentialism is bad for ailing polities.
Presidential regimes can be a liability for three reasons:

1. They find it difficult to resolve deadlock or crisis situations because they lack of a vote of no confidence.

2. There is a greater chance of gridlock in presidential regimes because divided government is possible.

3. Presidential elections tend to produce politically inexperienced candidates.
These problems are exacerbated when there is legislative fragmentation.

1. Legislative fragmentation increases the likelihood of deadlock.

2. Legislative fragmentation increases the likelihood of ideological polarization, which makes solving deadlock situations more difficult.

3. Legislative fragmentation creates a need for coalition building, something inexperienced presidents will find difficult to do.
Presidentialism and multipartism have been called the ‘difficult combination.’
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country (Year)</th>
<th>Effective number of legislative parties</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Colombia (1986)</td>
<td>2.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costa Rica (1986)</td>
<td>2.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States (1984)</td>
<td>1.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Venezuela (1983)</td>
<td>2.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regime type</td>
<td>Democratic success rate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiparty presidentialism</td>
<td>1/15, or 0.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two-party presidentialism</td>
<td>5/10, or 0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parliamentarism</td>
<td>25/44, or 0.57</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 16.11** Regime Type, Party System Size, and Democratic Consolidation, 1945–1992
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Constitution</th>
<th>Fewer than three</th>
<th>Three or more</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parliamentary</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semi-presidential</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presidential</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In recent years, a number of presidential democracies with multi-party systems have emerged in Eastern Europe and Latin America.

Many of these democracies appear quite resilient.

Could it be that the ‘difficult combination’ is no longer a problem?
Substantial evidence that it was difficult to consolidate multi-party presidential democracies in the past.

What is different now?

• Many of the countries that have become presidential recently are quite wealthy.

• Wealthy countries are more likely to survive as democracies.
This suggests that institutional choice is more important for poor countries than rich ones.