

Week 7
Economic Voting

Thiago Nascimento da Silva

*School of Politics and International Relations
The Australian National University*

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General Economic Voting (Duch and Stevenson 2008, p. 41)

Any change in a voter's support for parties that is caused by a change in economic perceptions.

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Examples:

GDP Growth → Vote choice

Inflation → Vote choice

Unemployment → Vote choice

$$V_{nj} = g(x_{nj}, s_n) + e_{nj} \quad \forall j \quad (1)$$

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Where:

n = voters;

x_{nj} = characteristics of alternatives;

s_n = characteristics of the voter that are constant over alternatives;

e_{nj} = random term;

g = probability of voting for each alternative.

Incumbent vote: "Whether or not the respondent cast a ballot for the incumbent."

0 = Did not vote for the incumbent.

1 = Vote for the incumbent.

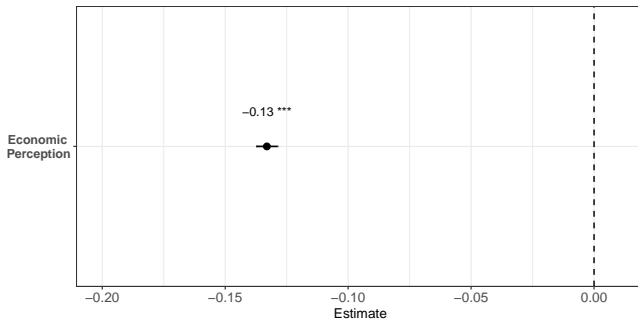
Economic perception: "Would you say that over the past twelve months, the state of the economy in your country has gotten better, stayed about the same, or gotten worse?"

1 = Gotten better.

2 = Stayed the same.

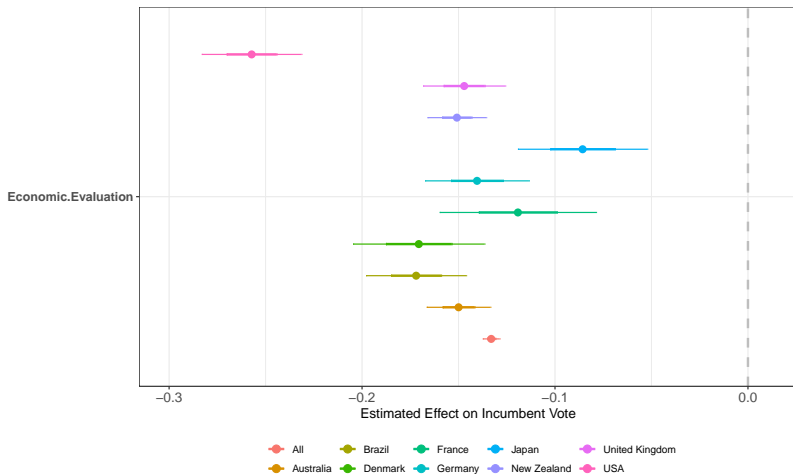
3 = Gotten worse.

Economic Vote of the Incumbent Party



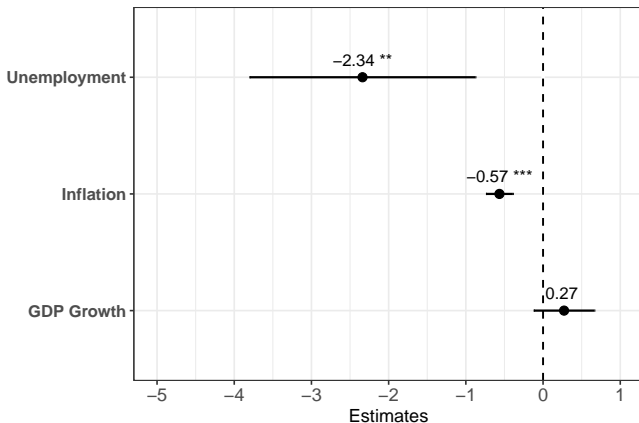
Data: Comparative Studies of Electoral Systems (CSES), including over 281,000 individual-level observations across 174 elections in 55 countries from 1996 to 2016.

Economic Vote of the Incumbent Party by Country



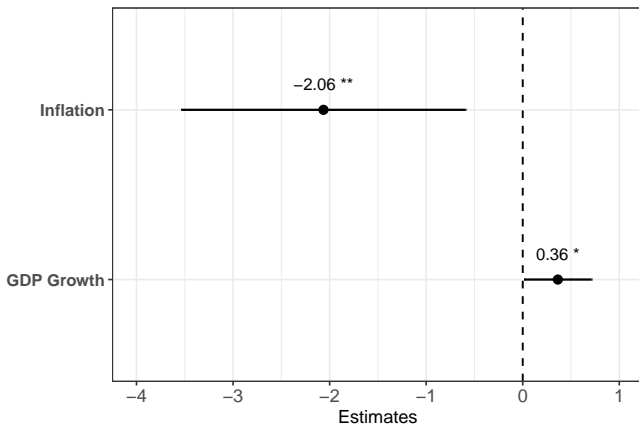
Data: Comparative Studies of Electoral Systems (CSES), including over 281,000 individual-level observations across 174 elections in 55 countries from 1996 to 2016.

Economic Vote of the Chief Executive (All Economic Indicators)



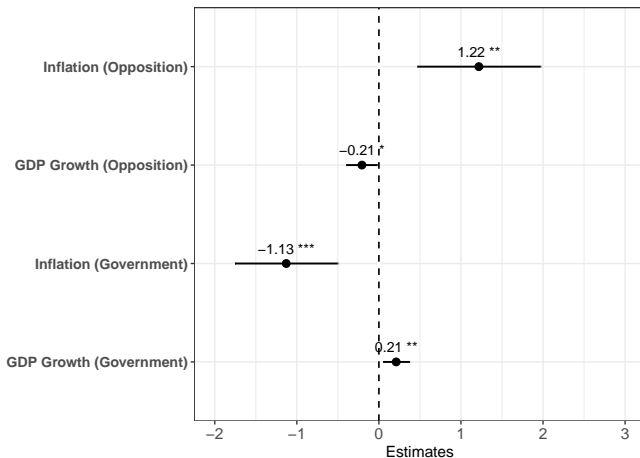
Data: Junqueira, Silva, and Whitten (2022). Including 393 aggregate-level observations from 36 countries from 1940 to 2018.

Economic Vote of the Chief Executive (GDP Growth and Inflation)



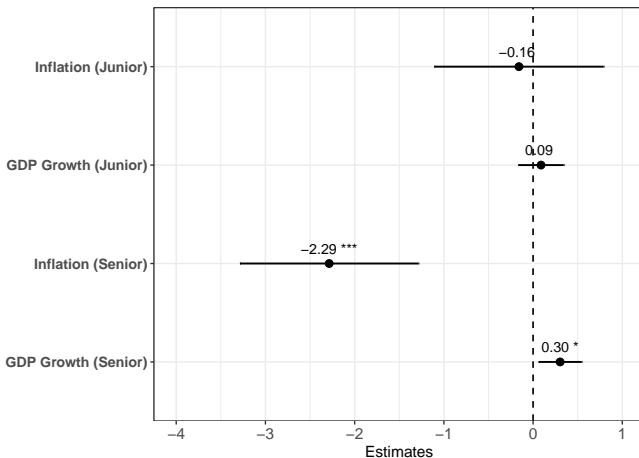
Data: Junqueira, Silva, and Whitten (2022). Senior parties (parties of the chief executive) only. Including 393 aggregate-level observations from 36 countries from 1940 to 2018.

Economic Vote by Government and Opposition Status



Data: Junqueira, Silva, and Whitten (2022). Including 3,010 aggregate-level observations from 36 countries from 1959 to 2018.

Economic Vote by Coalition Party Status



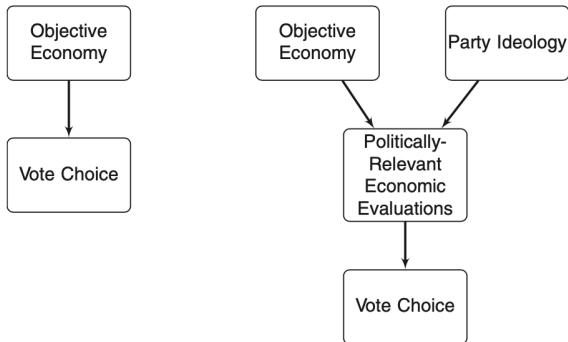
Data: Junqueira, Silva, and Whitten (2022). Including 3,010 aggregate-level observations from 36 countries from 1959 to 2018.

*A Cross-National Analysis of Economic Voting: Taking Account of the Political Context**

G. Bingham Powell, Jr., *University of Rochester*
Guy D. Whitten, *University of Rochester*

A large literature has demonstrated that such economic factors as growth, inflation, and unemployment affect the popularity of incumbents within many democratic countries. However, cross-national aggregate analyses of “economic voting” show only weak and inconsistent economic effects. We argue for the systematic incorporation of political factors that shape the electoral consequences of economic performance. Multivariate analyses of 102 elections in 19 industrialized democracies are used to estimate the cross-national impact of economic and political factors. The analyses show that considerations of the ideological image of the government, its electoral base, and the clarity of its political responsibility are essential to understanding the effects of economic conditions on voting for or against incumbents.

Early theories of economic voting

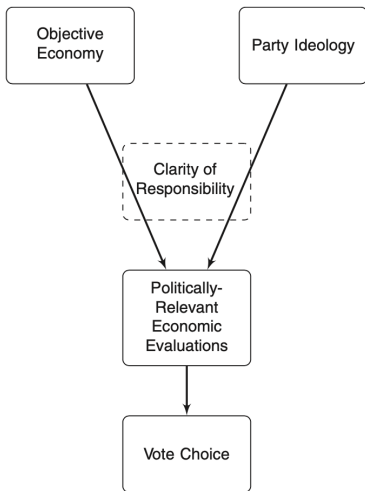


Source: Silva and Whitten (2017, p. 82).

Responding to the heterogeneous evidence of economic voting in the pioneering cross-national studies, Powell and Whitten (1993) suggested that:

- ▶ The influence of perceived economic performance on a voter's choice might vary with the political institutional context.
- ▶ More specifically, the influence of the economy on voting behavior would be strongest when the combination of **institutional arrangements** and **the parties holding power across powerful institutions** is such that it is clear in the minds of voters who is responsible for recent economic performances.

Economic voting with clarity of responsibility

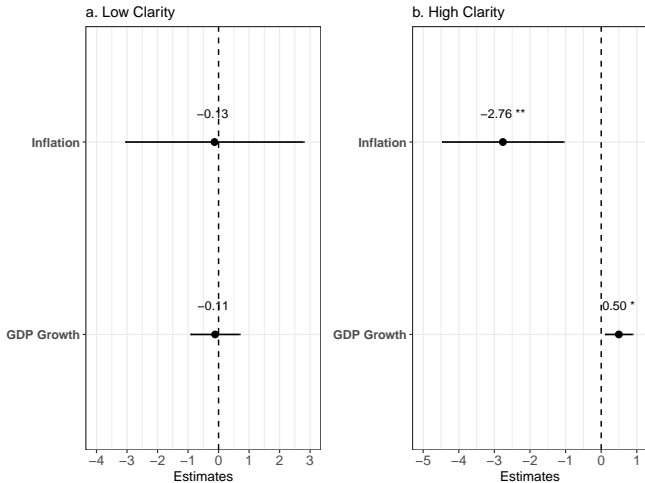


Source: Silva and Whitten (2017, p. 83).

The theoretical consideration of the “clarity of responsibility” on economic voting led to the following new hypotheses:

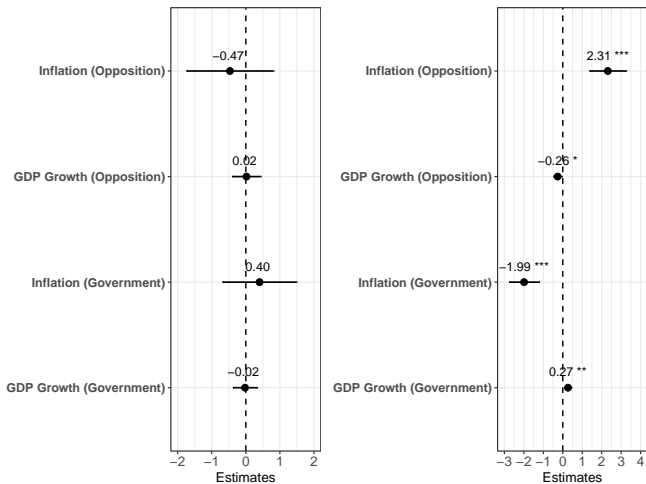
- ▶ When responsibility for policy-making is clear, economic voting relationships will be strongest.
- ▶ When responsibility for policy-making is clouded by institutional settings, coalition government, and other circumstances, economic voting relationships will be weaker or non-existent.

Economic Vote of the Chief Executive by “Clarity of Responsibility” (Government Majority Status)



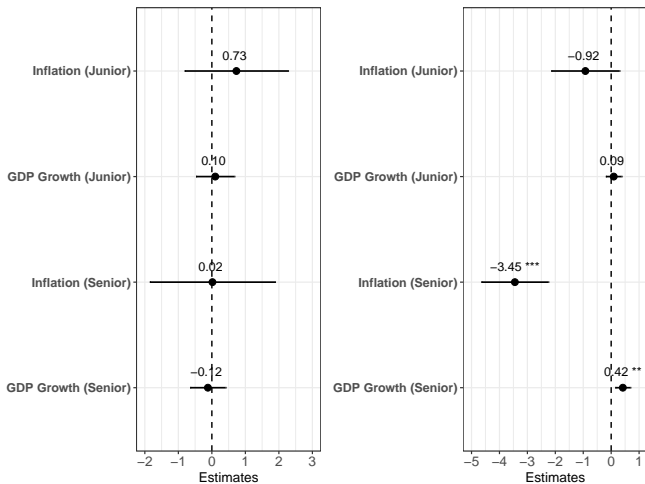
Data: Junqueira, Silva, and Whitten (2022).

Economic Vote of the Chief Executive by Government Status and “Clarity of Responsibility” (Government Majority Status)



Data: Junqueira, Silva, and Whitten (2022).

Economic Vote of the Chief Executive by Coalition Party Status and “Clarity of Responsibility” (Government Majority Status)



Data: Junqueira, Silva, and Whitten (2022).

- ▶ Experimental Research Design (Duch, Przepiorka and Stevenson 2015);
- ▶ Clarity of Responsibility and Corruption (Tavits 2007, Schwindt-Bayer and Tavits 2016)
- ▶ Clarity of Responsibility in Multilevel Governance (e.g., the European Union) (Wilson and Hobolt 2016)

- ▶ Economic vote in presidential democracies with multiparty systems;
- ▶ Clarity of responsibility and compulsory voting.

► **Thursday, 28 April.**

Week 8. The Limits of Political Accountability

Compulsory readings:

- Pavão, Nara. 2018. “Corruption as the only option: The limits to electoral accountability.” *The Journal of Politics* 80 (3): 996–1010.
- Cantú, Francisco. 2019. “Groceries for votes: The electoral returns of vote buying.” *The Journal of Politics* 81 (3): 790–804.