

Report for EJ Manuscript 20240844

1 Paper Overview

This paper studies the empirical prevalence of the Condorcet paradox. It provides an overview of the theoretical and empirical work on this topic. It utilizes the CSES polling data across 60 countries. Results indicate that Condorcet paradoxes are rare. Some differences across political party lines are discussed.

2 Major Comments

- The result is very interesting with great data but makes the reader wanting a thorough discussion. For example, the paper would benefit from a mechanism exploration for general interest journal like EJ. In some sense it's a descriptive analysis of the Condorcet issue (which is an important first step), but the next step is to determine what factors correlate with it. There is some exploratory analysis along this line, but is based only on party. It would be interesting to also analyze countries / institutional differences. The authors should investigate what specific factors (e.g., electoral systems, political culture, party fragmentation) correlate with the presence or absence of Condorcet winners. A first start would be to look at other work; do the papers that this paper improves over do anything more than just counting winners/losers? I understand that finding variables to study mechanisms in this cross-country context may be very difficult.
- Related to the last point, how do the results change compared to the older papers that use worse data? Understanding the bias of those papers and how it shows up in the results would be illuminating (and boost the argument for contribution). I understand

this may be difficult if the elections don't overlap (like their discussion on the Van Deemen & Vergunst), but just an overall result comparison may be useful.

- Why is this relevant beyond theoretical interest? Is there evidence policymakers take Condorcet paradox into account when devising voting rules? If so, you can quantify the extent of the over-correction. Overall, more discussion and some real-world policy relevance/recommendation would benefit the reader.
- If the number of Condorcet paradoxes in the data is “surprisingly” small (from a theory perspective), what explains the discrepancy? Are there nuances to the electoral systems that make them more complex than the idealized models?
- For a general interest audience, more discussion on the Condorcet paradox (winner/loser) is needed. The concise definition in the intro doesn't feel sufficient.

3 Minor Comments

- More details on data. For example, why just 1996/2004 for the US? The reform party only did well in 1992/1996. What about Nader in 2000 with the greens? Is this scattered years list simply based on what CSES has (my guess for why 1992 is missing) or are there additional data processing steps that removed some years?
- Other recent work that may be relevant for authors to compare to: “The Core of the Party System” by Desai & Kalandrakis (2022); “Evaluative voting or classical voting rules: Does it make a difference? Empirical evidence for consensus among voting rules” by Darmann et al. (2019).
- Alternative measure / aggregation rule to see how things change?
- The mention of non-reporting of null results is interesting but is the claim that some authors sought evidence, presented, but did not end up publishing results a guess or based on knowledge? If the latter, the presentations could be cited.
- Typo in Figure 1 for Conservative.