



Teacher guide: executive, legislature, and parliamentary confidence

Laboratory implementation, theoretical foundations,
experimental evidence, and variants

Behavioral and Experimental Economics Research Lab
Department of Economics



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<https://beer-lab.org/>

How to use this guide

This guide supports the preparation, implementation, and classroom discussion of the executive–legislative relations family available through the Behavioral and Experimental Economics Research Lab (BEER Lab) at the Department of Economics of Tecnológico de Monterrey. It is written for instructors with different levels of familiarity with game theory, legislative bargaining, political institutions, and experimental economics.

The quick guide is sufficient to run a session; operational chapters describe each screen; conceptual chapters develop predictions, evidence, and limits; and variants are collected in one document so common material is not repeated. The activity is a teaching adaptation inspired by research on legislative bargaining, agenda power, confidence, and vetoes.

It is neither a certified replication of one article nor a complete representation of an actual political regime. Parameters and comparisons are documented so the instructor can state exactly which mechanism changes and which claims are not supported by a descriptive comparison.

Author

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For the instructor

The guide follows the English interface. Spanish configurations reproduce the same logic, parameters, and measures. Never project individual codes or connect results to names, student numbers, or seats in the laboratory.

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Quick implementation guide

1.1 Access through the updated laboratory website

Start at <https://beer-lab.org/en/>. Select **CLASSROOM** in the top navigation menu; it opens <https://teaching.beer-lab.org/en/>. In the **Classroom experiments** catalog, use the search box to locate the activity by name. You can also filter by **Topic** or **JEL code**. Clear any filters left from an earlier search before looking for another game.

Each family's card distinguishes **Español** and **English** access links. The **Show extended version** checkbox selects that edition before following a link. Catalog language and session language are separate choices: verify both. Students use the room specified by the instructor; the instructor prepares and monitors the session through this family's own administrative pages.

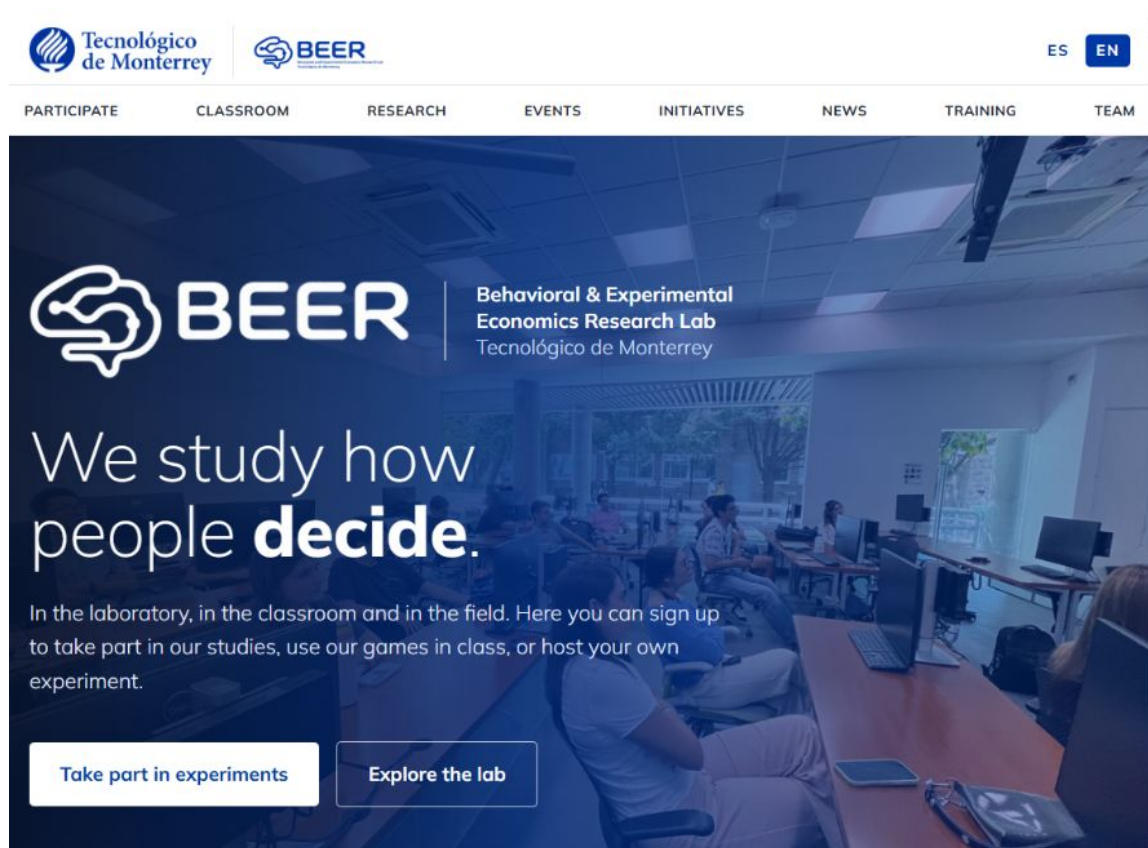


Figure 1.1: Current institutional website. Select CLASSROOM in the top navigation menu to open the teaching experiments. Captured on October 7, 2026.



Figure 1.2: Current catalog: search by title, topic, or JEL code. Then locate this family's card and select language and edition. Captured on October 7, 2026.

Checking resources, comprehension, and participant requirements

Before opening the room, check the selected configuration and the number of students present. The session-creation form states the group size and minimum required by that configuration. An individual activity accepts any positive participant count; an interactive activity must satisfy its stated requirement: complete groups when size is fixed, or a minimum participant count when size is flexible. Requirements may change across treatments, for example when adding a third party or changing an institution's size. If you edit a grouping parameter, check the requirement for the edited configuration, rather than relying only on the demo's suggested count.

In the instructions, ensure that students can identify what each role receives, what they can decide, and how the outcome is calculated. An initial account, a distributable budget, and final earnings need not be the same amount. Refer to the resources panel and the example for the selected treatment. Do not carry the basic edition's endowment into a treatment that changes accounts or introduces additional positions.

ECU stands for *Experimental Currency Units*: the activity's unit of account. An outcome of 100 ECU does not automatically equal 100 pesos or 100 dollars. Conversion depends on the session configuration. Before announcing a payment, confirm with the laboratory whether money is paid, the conversion rate, and which decisions count for payment. In hypothetical modules, describe amounts as outcomes in the stated situation.

When a comprehension check is included, an incorrect response receives an explanation beside that question, identifying the submitted answer and the correct answer. Other answers remain in the form. Ask the student to return to the example, locate the relevant rule, and redo the calculation before correcting the response. Avoid revealing answers to the entire class for an individual error, and do not interpret a comprehension mistake as an economic choice in the game.

oTree
Demo
Sessions
Rooms
Data
Server Check
Logout

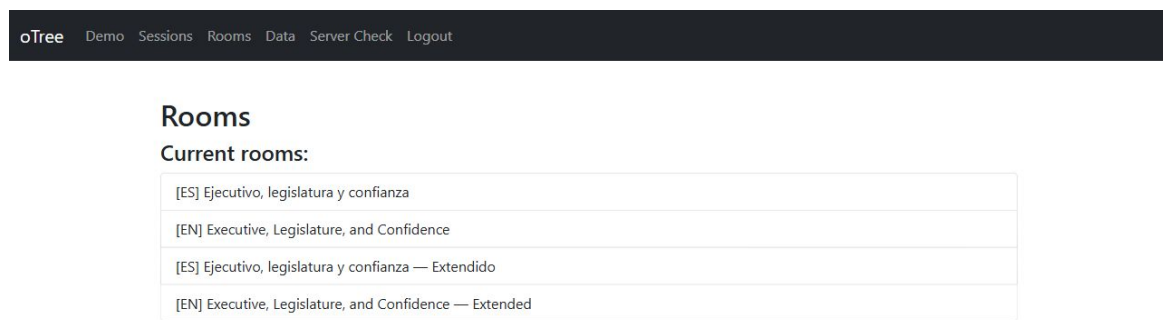
Demo

[ES] Ejecutivo y legislatura — una ronda, mandato fijo
[ES] Ejecutivo y legislatura — 6 rondas, mandato fijo
[ES] Ejecutivo y legislatura — 6 rondas, confianza opcional
[EN] Executive and Legislature — one round, fixed mandate
[EN] Executive and Legislature — 6 rounds, fixed mandate
[EN] Executive and Legislature — 6 rounds, optional confidence
[ES] Ejecutivo y legislatura extendido — referencia: mandato fijo
[ES] Ejecutivo y legislatura extendido — confianza opcional
[ES] Ejecutivo y legislatura extendido — confianza obligatoria
[ES] Ejecutivo y legislatura extendido — agenda abierta
[ES] Ejecutivo y legislatura extendido — veto ejecutivo
[ES] Ejecutivo y legislatura extendido — paquete parlamentario
[ES] Ejecutivo y legislatura extendido — paquete presidencial
[ES] Ejecutivo y legislatura extendido — bicameralismo
[ES] Ejecutivo y legislatura extendido — coalición partidaria observable
[EN] Extended Executive and Legislature — benchmark: fixed mandate
[EN] Extended Executive and Legislature — optional confidence
[EN] Extended Executive and Legislature — mandatory confidence
[EN] Extended Executive and Legislature — open agenda
[EN] Extended Executive and Legislature — executive veto
[EN] Extended Executive and Legislature — parliamentary package
[EN] Extended Executive and Legislature — presidential package
[EN] Extended Executive and Legislature — bicameralism
[EN] Extended Executive and Legislature — observable party coalition
Concentración fiscal (6 rondas)
Separación fiscal (6 rondas)
Ratificación ciudadana (6 rondas)
Presupuesto de rechazo positivo (6 rondas)
Rentas individuales no observables (6 rondas)
Reelección con cuentas públicas (6 rondas)
Reelección con rentas no observables (6 rondas)
Negociación previa no vinculante (6 rondas)
Unified fiscal powers (6 rounds)
Separated fiscal powers (6 rounds)
Citizen ratification (6 rounds)
Positive rejection budget (6 rounds)
Unobserved individual rents (6 rounds)
Reelection with public accounts (6 rounds)
Reelection with unobserved rents (6 rounds)
Nonbinding prior negotiation (6 rounds)

Ejecutivo, legislatura y confianza parlamentaria / Executive, Legislature, and Parliamentary Confidence — BEER Lab

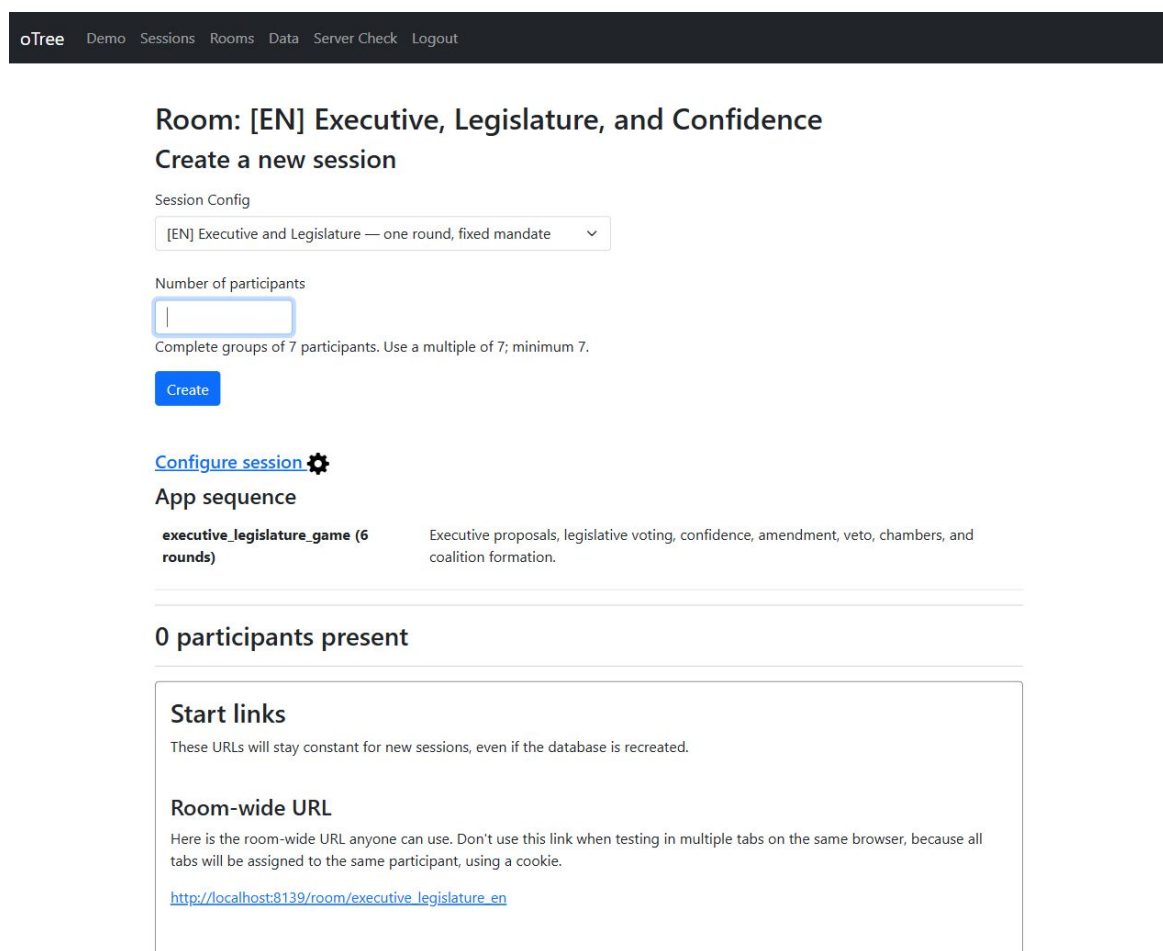
Seleccione una variante de este juego. Select a version of this game.

Figure 1.3: Demo contains only the configurations of this game family, in both languages and editions.



Current rooms:
[ES] Ejecutivo, legislatura y confianza
[EN] Executive, Legislature, and Confidence
[ES] Ejecutivo, legislatura y confianza — Extendido
[EN] Executive, Legislature, and Confidence — Extended

Figure 1.4: Rooms contains the four rooms for this family: basic and extended editions in Spanish and English.



Room: [EN] Executive, Legislature, and Confidence

Create a new session

Session Config
 [EN] Executive and Legislature — one round, fixed mandate

Number of participants

Complete groups of 7 participants. Use a multiple of 7; minimum 7.

Create

[Configure session](#) ⚙️

App sequence

executive_legislature_game (6 rounds) Executive proposals, legislative voting, confidence, amendment, veto, chambers, and coalition formation.

0 participants present

Start links
 These URLs will stay constant for new sessions, even if the database is recreated.

Room-wide URL
 Here is the room-wide URL anyone can use. Don't use this link when testing in multiple tabs on the same browser, because all tabs will be assigned to the same participant, using a cookie.
http://localhost:8139/room/executive_legislature_en

Figure 1.5: Session-creation form for the basic English room. Check the selected configuration and participant requirement before creating the session.

Downloading a session with several rounds

For the instructor

Open **Data** within the relevant session and use that session's CSV or CSV-for-Excel download link. The general export has one row per participant and columns for the different rounds. Ten rounds do not necessarily mean ten rows per person. When the family provides its own long-format export, observations may instead be organized by participant and round or another unit defined by the design.

Save the original file together with the configuration name, session code, and active-round count. Check that columns for the last active round are present and that the data belong to the selected session. Empty cells can represent inactive rounds, a pending decision, or a field that does not apply to a role; do not automatically recode them as zeros. To compare learning, preserve round and group identifiers alongside participant identifiers. Share only anonymous aggregates in class, and record session incidents before constructing derived tables.

1.2 Core facts

Purpose	Examine how tenure, confidence, agenda, veto, chambers, elections, and coalitions shape approval and distribution of a public budget, and examine taxation, rents, and accountability in the fiscal module.
Experimental unit	A seven-person group for core mechanisms and a twelve-person group for parliamentary and presidential packages. The fiscal module uses seven people with three citizens. In repeated designs, the group trajectory is the natural unit.
Basic edition	One round with fixed tenure; six rounds with fixed tenure; six rounds with optional confidence.
Extended edition	Seventeen conditions: eight fiscal conditions (final chapter) and nine institutional conditions: benchmark, optional or mandatory confidence, open agenda, veto, parliamentary and presidential packages, bicameralism, and observable coalition.
Decision	In the fiscal module: taxation, provision, rents, acceptance, and citizen control. In the institutional core, the incumbent allocates 100 ECU between a public good and five transfers; representatives vote and, by treatment, select executive, agenda, confidence, veto, or coalition.
Topics	executive-legislative relations; confidence votes; agenda and veto; fiscal separation; political rents; accountability.
JEL codes	A22, C92, D72, D73, H41, H61.
Participants	Seven or twelve per group, depending on the configuration.
Suggested duration	35–45 minutes for one round; 60–85 minutes for six rounds; 80–100 minutes for citizen packages.
Student access	Open the English basic room.
Instructor access	executivelegislature.beer-lab.org/demo .

Outcome	ECU payoffs and an anonymous report with approval, public good, votes, dispersion, payoffs by role, histogram, evolution, and mechanism metrics.
JEL	A22; C92; D72; D73; H41; H61.

1.3 Learning objectives

Students should reconstruct the institutional sequence; calculate payoffs; identify the rejection policy; distinguish proposal, decision, veto, and replacement powers; predict winning coalitions; compare fixed tenure and confidence; explain why chambers or supermajorities add veto points; and read aggregates without confusing rounds, persons, and groups. Advanced classes should recognize compound treatments, endogenous linkage, coalition selection, and limits to external validity.

1.4 Minimum classroom sequence

1. Confirm that attendance supports complete groups of seven or twelve and prepare an explicit absence policy.
2. Start at beer-lab.org, open teaching.beer-lab.org, and locate this family.
3. Open instructor access, verify the isolated subdomain, and select one of four rooms.
4. Confirm language, edition, treatment, active rounds, and participant count before creating the session.
5. Share only the room link. Keep Monitor and Report open with results hidden.
6. Read neutral instructions. Do not imply that an institution is superior or suggest a coalition.
7. Verify comprehension of payoffs and the rejection policy before decisions begin.
8. Solve technical problems without commenting on choices. Do not reveal partial results.
9. At completion, elicit predictions, reveal distributions, and move from description to mechanism and limits.
10. Export data only for a clear teaching purpose and preserve anonymity.

Checkpoint

The instance must display exactly 40 configurations and four rooms: three choices in each basic room and seventeen in each extended room. If another family appears, do not start.

Access, rooms, and isolation

2.1 Institutional path

Access begins on the laboratory website and continues through the teaching directory. The proposed family address is executivelegislature.beer-lab.org. The subdomain must run a family-filtered instance so Demo, Rooms, Sessions, and Data contain only these configurations. The validated local server is localhost:8139/demo; it works only on the computer running the server.

2.2 Four stable rooms

The basic rooms are `ejecutivo_legislatura_es` and `executive_legislature_en`; each offers three modes. The extended rooms are `ejecutivo_legislatura_extendida` and `executive_legislature_extended`; each offers seventeen treatments, including eight fiscal conditions. Visible names and routes remain stable when code is updated.

The English student routes end in `/room/executive_legislature_en` and `/room/executive_legislature_extended`. Spanish equivalents end in `/room/ejecutivo_legislatura_es` and `/room/ejecutivo_legislatura_extendida`. Students never need Demo, Sessions, Data, or Server Check.

Attention

Do not create two active sessions in the same room. A participant code belongs to one database; after a local reset, an old code no longer exists. Keep the links page available throughout class.

oTree
Demo
Sessions
Rooms
Data
Server Check
Logout

[EN] Executive and Legislature — one round, fixed mandate: session 'sui1n965' (demo)

New
Links
Monitor
Data
Payments
Report
Description

Below are temporary links for testing and demonstration. To launch a real study, either create persistent links by setting up a [room](#), or create a session through the [sessions page](#).

Choose one of the following options to play the session:

Split-screen view
Not available ⓘ

Grid view
[Launch](#)

Session-wide testing link

Open the below link in up to 7 browser tabs.

<http://127.0.0.1:8091/join/zekopivi>

Single-use links

Open each link in its own browser tab.

P1	http://127.0.0.1:8091/initializeParticipant/rkmypihh
P2	http://127.0.0.1:8091/initializeParticipant/6yor7pnr
P3	http://127.0.0.1:8091/initializeParticipant/plvp52es
P4	http://127.0.0.1:8091/initializeParticipant/n1p6t7b7
P5	http://127.0.0.1:8091/initializeParticipant/ux34nmqs
P6	http://127.0.0.1:8091/initializeParticipant/3ayp0gtc
P7	http://127.0.0.1:8091/initializeParticipant/pwtxm88a

Figure 2.1: Anonymous links for a seven-person session.

Participant experience

3.1 Welcome and laboratory rules

The welcome page identifies the BEER Lab and Department of Economics, displays both logos, and requires acceptance of silence, no-communication, and technical-help rules. The confirmation is part of the protocol: a coalition treatment enables a specific signal inside the interface but never authorizes unrestricted conversation.

3.2 Instructions, budget, and payoffs

Every group contains five district representatives and two executive candidates. The incumbent allocates exactly 100 ECU between g and $x_1, \dots, x_5$. Representative i receives $x_i + 0.3g$; both candidates receive $10 + 0.3g$, and the incumbent adds a 10-ECU office rent. If the proposal is not implemented, $g = 0$ and every district receives 20. The screen describes the session institution without normative labels.

The rejection policy supplies a concrete consequence for no and a benchmark for voting. A current-payoff representative supports whenever $x_i + 0.3g \geq 20$, subject to the applicable institutional rule. At equality, reciprocity, future beliefs, fairness, or responsibility may decide the vote.

3.3 Comprehension and practice

Questions require the 24-ECU calculation for $g = 40, x_i = 12$, the three-of-five majority, and the 20-ECU rejection payoff. Practice presents a complete budget with no payoff consequences. Participants should not continue if they confuse transfers with payoffs or add the executive rent to a representative.

3.4 Role, incumbent, and proposal

The round page announces role, district, incumbent, and challenger. Only the incumbent sees the six proposal fields. A live counter verifies that the total equals 100. Optional confidence adds an explicit linkage decision; mandatory confidence states that linkage is automatic.



Welcome to the BEER Lab

The Behavioral and Experimental Economics Research Lab of the Department of Economics at Tecnológico de Monterrey is a space designed to learn about economic decision-making through controlled activities.

This activity examines how rules connecting an executive to a legislature shape proposals, voting, and continuation in office.

General laboratory rules

- Remain quiet and do not talk to other participants.
- Make every decision individually and privately.
- Follow the instructions shown on screen.
- Do not refresh, close, or leave this page.
- If you have a question, raise your hand and wait for laboratory staff.

☐ I have read these rules and agree to follow them.

Start

Powered by [oTree](#)

Figure 3.1: Institutional welcome and general rules.



Fixed mandate

Game instructions

7 · Participants

Resources and unit of account

Initial common fund: 100 ECU.

ECU stands for Experimental Currency Units. It is the unit of account for this activity.

This session does not convert ECU into real money.

The activity

Each unit has five district representatives and two executive candidates. The institutional packages also include five citizens, one per district.

In each round, the incumbent allocates a 100 ECU budget between a public good g and five district transfers. The allocation must sum to exactly 100.

Figure 3.2: Current instructions for the basic edition: initial resources, decision rules, and experimental units. Continuation 1/2.

Each representative earns the district transfer plus $0.3g$. Each candidate earns $10 + 0.3g$, and the incumbent receives an additional 10 ECU salary. If policy is rejected, $g=0$ and every district receives 20 ECU.

1

The incumbent is identified and, when relevant, a coalition forms or the executive is elected.

2

The incumbent proposes a budget; some institutions permit a legislative alternative.

3

Representatives vote. Some variants add confidence, veto, override, or two chambers.

4

Payoffs are calculated, results are shown, and the next round incumbent is determined.

Representative i : $x_i + 0.3g$ · Incumbent: $20 + 0.3g$ · Challenger: $10 + 0.3g$

Institution in this session: Fixed mandate

The incumbent remains in office throughout the block; the policy vote cannot change the executive.

Continue

Con tecnología de [oTree](#)

Figure 3.3: Current instructions for the basic edition: initial resources, decision rules, and experimental units. Continuation 2/2.



Review the marked questions. Each shows your answer and an explanation; your other answers are retained.

Fixed mandate

Check your understanding

Resources and unit of account

ECU stands for Experimental Currency Units. It is the unit of account for this activity.

This session does not convert ECU into real money.

If $g=40$ and your district receives 12 ECU, what is the representative payoff?

Your answer: 25. The correct answer is 24. Review the rules: the example pays 24 ECU, simple majority requires 3 votes, and the reference budget pays 20 ECU to each district.

How many of five votes are needed under simple majority?

If policy is rejected, how many ECU does each representative receive?

Continue

Con tecnología de oTree

Figure 3.4: Current comprehension check: specific feedback explains the incorrect answer and preserves the other responses.



Fixed mandate

Worked example

Suppose $g=40$ and all five transfers equal 12. The budget sums to 100.

Each representative payoff

24 ECU

Incumbent payoff

32 ECU

Challenger payoff

22 ECU

Each representative earns $12 + 0.3(40)=24$; the incumbent earns $10+12+10=32$ and the challenger earns $10+12=22$.

Continue

Powered by [oTree](#)

Figure 3.5: Worked nonpaying example.



Fixed mandate

Your position this round

Round 1 of 1

Your role

Representative for district 1

District 1

Current incumbent

Candidate A

Current challenger

Candidate B

District roles and the identities of the two candidates remain stable throughout the block.

Continue

Powered by [oTree](#)

Figure 3.6: From assignment to proposal. Role and institution at the start.



Candidate A · Fixed mandate

Prepare the executive budget

Round 1 of 1

Allocate exactly 100 ECU between the public good and the five district transfers.

Public good g

Transfer to district 1

Transfer to district 2

Transfer to district 3

Transfer to district 4

Transfer to district 5

Total allocated

100 / 100 ECU

[Confirm decision](#)Powered by [oTree](#)

Figure 3.7: The incumbent's complete budget.

3.5 Vote, outcome, and explicit ending

Representatives see the relevant policy and their potential payoff before voting. The outcome page displays passage, vote count, implemented policy, district payoffs, individual payoff, and group total. After the last active round, a final page summarizes the trajectory and avoids a technical no-pages message.



Representative for district 1

Final policy vote

Round 1 of 1

Vote for or against. If the threshold is not met, the reference budget is implemented.

Executive budget

Public good g

40 ECU

District	Transfer	District payoff
1	12 ECU	24 ECU
2	12 ECU	24 ECU
3	12 ECU	24 ECU
4	12 ECU	24 ECU
5	12 ECU	24 ECU

Your payoff if approved

24 ECU

 **Vote yes**

 **Vote no**

Confirm decision

Powered by [oTree](#)

Figure 3.8: Decision and consequence. A representative's vote.



Executive budget

Round result

Round 1 of 1

Policy approved

Yes votes: 5 / 5

Implemented policy

Public good g

40 ECU

District	Transfer	District payoff
1	12 ECU	24 ECU
2	12 ECU	24 ECU
3	12 ECU	24 ECU
4	12 ECU	24 ECU
5	12 ECU	24 ECU

Your round payoff

24 ECU

Sum of group payoffs

174 ECU

Continue

Powered by [oTree](#)

Figure 3.9: Outcome and implemented policy.



Fixed mandate

Activity completed

You have completed every round. Wait for the instructor's directions and do not close this page.

Cumulative payoff

24 ECU

Round	Incumbent	g	Approved	Replacement	Payoff
1	Candidate A	40	Yes	No	24 ECU

Finish activity

Powered by [oTree](#)

Figure 3.10: Explicit completion with cumulative payoffs.

Reference economic model

4.1 Sequence and feasibility

The budget set is $g + \sum_{i=1}^5 x_i = 100$ with nonnegative components. Under simple majority, a proposal requires three votes. The incumbent anticipates five political participation constraints but need not satisfy all of them. With current-payoff representatives, three districts can be recruited by ensuring $x_i + 0.3g \geq 20$. Raising g reduces transferable resources while increasing every district's common return.

4.2 Coalitions and proposal power

The structure echoes legislative bargaining in [Baron and Ferejohn \(1989\)](#): a recognized proposer can form a minimal coalition and retain benefits, although the public good and rejection policy modify the canonical logic. A full equilibrium requires assumptions about information, horizon, and tie behavior. The guide therefore emphasizes qualitative predictions: institutions that alter agenda, survival, or thresholds change feasible coalitions and the threat attached to rejection.

4.3 Confidence and cohesion

In [Diermeier and Feddersen \(1998\)](#), confidence can produce cohesion by joining policy and government survival. Here, a linked defeat does not automatically replace the incumbent; it opens a second vote, and three representatives must support the challenger. Students can therefore observe rejection without replacement. Optional linkage also teaches selection: incumbents choose which proposals become matters of confidence.

4.4 Agenda, veto, and chambers

Open agenda permits a complete legislative alternative, inspired by experimental comparisons of open and closed rules in [Fr chet te et al. \(2003\)](#). The veto adds a second threshold: three votes pass, four override. Bicameralism requires concurrent chamber majorities and makes the upper chamber a veto point. Each mechanism modifies a distinct node and should be drawn as a decision tree.

4.5 Social preferences and behavior

Monetary payoffs need not exhaust motives. Participants may value district equality, efficiency, reciprocity, responsibility for government termination, congruence with a citizen signal, or reputation. Repetition creates learning and relational strategies. Treat these as competing hypotheses: equality does not prove altruism if it is a cheap way to gain support, and rejection of inequality does not prove inequality aversion if it also improves private payoff.

Theory and evidence

5.1 Legislative bargaining

Formal work studies how proposer recognition, amendment rules, majority thresholds, and horizon distribute power. [Baron and Ferejohn \(1989\)](#) establishes the role of agenda control in distributive bargaining. Subsequent experiments show that procedure and amendment opportunities affect proposals, coalitions, and efficiency. This application preserves that intuition while adding a public good and executive roles for teaching comparative institutions.

5.2 Open and closed rules

[Fréchette et al. \(2003\)](#) experimentally compares open and closed amendment rules. This family's open-agenda condition is not a replication of all parameters. It is a teaching translation: an executive submits one budget, a representative submits another, and the chamber selects which reaches a final vote. The sequence makes clear why “who proposes” and “who votes” are different questions.

5.3 Confidence procedure

[Diermeier and Feddersen \(1998\)](#) formalizes how confidence votes can induce cohesion. The family distinguishes mandatory, optional, and absent confidence. This supports discussion of commitment, threat, and selection. An incumbent may link a proposal because discipline is expected or because legislators should be exposed. The report separates linkage, defeat, and replacement rather than collapsing them into one rate.

5.4 Committee procedure

The experiments of [McKelvey and Ordeshook \(1984\)](#) show that procedural rules alter committee outcomes. The lesson is not that one procedure always produces a fixed result, but that it structures options, sequence, and blocking power. The interface associates each page with a theoretical concept: proposal, agenda selection, vote, veto, override, or replacement.

5.5 Regime comparison

Parliamentary and presidential packages are stylized comparisons. The former combines a citizen signal, legislative selection, open agenda, and optional confidence. The latter combines direct citizen selection, fixed tenure, open agenda, and veto. Because multiple components change, an observed difference does not identify a regime effect. It generates mechanisms and a next design that varies one component.

Theoretical foundation

A prediction should follow the institutional tree: budget feasibility, payoff against rejection, required coalition, consequence of rejection, and subsequent moves. A treatment label is not a substitute for analysis.

5.6 Basic modes

5.7 One round with fixed tenure

This is the recommended first class. The incumbent proposes, representatives vote, and outcomes are calculated. No reputation or replacement complicates the logic. Use it to master payoffs, coalition requirements, and the rejection policy. Reserve institutional comparisons for a second run.

5.8 Six rounds with fixed tenure

Roles remain stable and the incumbent stays in office. Repetition permits accommodation, punishment, reputation, and learning. Six rounds from one fixed group are not six independent groups. Ask whether g changes after defeat, coalitions stabilize, or dispersion falls.

5.9 Six rounds with optional confidence

The incumbent chooses whether to link every proposal. Linked defeat opens a replacement vote except after the final round. This adds an institutional choice while holding the basic accounting constant. Record linkage before observing support and compare with caution because linkage was selected.

Extended variants

6.1 Complete map and comparison logic

The original institutional core of the extended edition contains nine Spanish configurations and the same nine in English. Each configuration in that core preserves the 100-ECU budget, five representatives, and two executive candidates; only the parliamentary and presidential packages add five citizens. The instructor should state the comparison before looking at outcomes. A descriptive difference between two sessions is not by itself a causal effect, especially when a package changes several rules or each condition contains few groups.

6.2 Benchmark: fixed mandate

This condition modifies one explicit institutional component: the incumbent remains in office for all six rounds and defeat on the budget does not trigger a continuation vote. The accounting for the public good, five transfers, relevant passage rule, and rejection policy remains visible. That continuity lets students identify what changed before interpreting behavior. Ask the class to reconstruct the sequence, identify who moves, state what each role observes, and name the consequence attached to every vote.

The central teaching purpose is to separate distributive bargaining from executive survival. A strategic prediction requires comparing marginal payoffs with the rejection policy and anticipating which coalition can sustain an allocation. Preferences for equality, reciprocity, responsibility, or public goods can alter that prediction. It is useful to record a narrow self-interest benchmark first and then behavioral alternatives, without declaring one to be correct before the evidence appears.

In the instructor report, emphasize approval, public-good provision, district dispersion, and payoffs by role. State numerators and denominators before comparing distributions and paths. An average across rounds can hide a break after defeat, replacement, or veto. With few groups, treat the display as a structured case and invite explanations that are consistent with the sequence actually observed.

The main interpretive caution is that office stability may support intertemporal accommodation, while removing the discipline created by a replacement threat. Include this point in the debrief so students do not attribute every difference to a broad label such as presidentialism or parliamentarism. The application implements stylized teaching mechanisms; it does not reproduce all powers, parties, elections, or constitutional constraints of an actual political system.

For the instructor

Teaching key: elicit a prediction before the first decision, reconstruct the sequence after the outcome, and request a rival explanation based on preferences or beliefs. Put all three on the board before showing another treatment.

6.3 Optional confidence

This condition modifies one explicit institutional component: the incumbent decides in every round whether to tie the budget proposal to continuation in office. The accounting for the public good, five transfers, relevant passage rule, and rejection policy remains visible. That continuity lets students identify what changed before interpreting behavior. Ask the class to reconstruct the sequence, identify who moves, state what each role observes, and name the consequence attached to every vote.

The central teaching purpose is to study when an executive turns a policy vote into a matter of confidence. A strategic prediction requires comparing marginal payoffs with the rejection policy and anticipating which coalition can sustain an allocation. Preferences for equality, reciprocity, responsibility, or public goods can alter that prediction. It is useful to record a narrow self-interest benchmark first and then behavioral alternatives, without declaring one to be correct before the evidence appears.

In the instructor report, emphasize linkage frequency, linked defeats, replacements, and subsequent proposal changes. State numerators and denominators before comparing distributions and paths. An average across rounds can hide a break after defeat, replacement, or veto. With few groups, treat the display as a structured case and invite explanations that are consistent with the sequence actually observed.

The main interpretive caution is that linkage is endogenous, so linked and unlinked proposals should not be compared as if they were randomly assigned. Include this point in the debrief so students do not attribute every difference to a broad label such as presidentialism or parliamentarism. The application implements stylized teaching mechanisms; it does not reproduce all powers, parties, elections, or constitutional constraints of an actual political system.

For the instructor

Teaching key: elicit a prediction before the first decision, reconstruct the sequence after the outcome, and request a rival explanation based on preferences or beliefs. Put all three on the board before showing another treatment.

6.4 Mandatory confidence

This condition modifies one explicit institutional component: every defeated proposal automatically opens a replacement vote before the next round. The accounting for the public good, five transfers, relevant passage rule, and rejection policy remains visible. That continuity lets students identify what changed before interpreting behavior. Ask the class to reconstruct the sequence, identify who moves, state what each role observes, and name the consequence attached to every vote.

The central teaching purpose is to isolate the effect of a rule that strengthens legislative discipline without leaving activation to the incumbent. A strategic prediction requires comparing marginal payoffs with the rejection policy and anticipating which coalition can sustain an allocation. Preferences for equality, reciprocity, responsibility, or public goods can alter that prediction. It is

useful to record a narrow self-interest benchmark first and then behavioral alternatives, without declaring one to be correct before the evidence appears.

In the instructor report, emphasize rejections, replacement votes, executive turnover, and the path of allocations. State numerators and denominators before comparing distributions and paths. An average across rounds can hide a break after defeat, replacement, or veto. With few groups, treat the display as a structured case and invite explanations that are consistent with the sequence actually observed.

The main interpretive caution is that the treatment changes the institutional consequence of a no vote and can therefore produce anticipatory cohesion. Include this point in the debrief so students do not attribute every difference to a broad label such as presidentialism or parliamentarism. The application implements stylized teaching mechanisms; it does not reproduce all powers, parties, elections, or constitutional constraints of an actual political system.

For the instructor

Teaching key: elicit a prediction before the first decision, reconstruct the sequence after the outcome, and request a rival explanation based on preferences or beliefs. Put all three on the board before showing another treatment.

6.5 Open agenda

This condition modifies one explicit institutional component: a designated representative submits a complete alternative and the chamber selects which proposal reaches the final vote. The accounting for the public good, five transfers, relevant passage rule, and rejection policy remains visible. That continuity lets students identify what changed before interpreting behavior. Ask the class to reconstruct the sequence, identify who moves, state what each role observes, and name the consequence attached to every vote.

The central teaching purpose is to show that control over what is voted on can matter as much as vote counting at the final stage. A strategic prediction requires comparing marginal payoffs with the rejection policy and anticipating which coalition can sustain an allocation. Preferences for equality, reciprocity, responsibility, or public goods can alter that prediction. It is useful to record a narrow self-interest benchmark first and then behavioral alternatives, without declaring one to be correct before the evidence appears.

In the instructor report, emphasize selection of the alternative, the composition of both budgets, and final support. State numerators and denominators before comparing distributions and paths. An average across rounds can hide a break after defeat, replacement, or veto. With few groups, treat the display as a structured case and invite explanations that are consistent with the sequence actually observed.

The main interpretive caution is that the legislative alternative is a complete 100-ECU budget rather than a marginal amendment. Include this point in the debrief so students do not attribute every difference to a broad label such as presidentialism or parliamentarism. The application implements stylized teaching mechanisms; it does not reproduce all powers, parties, elections, or constitutional constraints of an actual political system.

For the instructor

Teaching key: elicit a prediction before the first decision, reconstruct the sequence after the outcome, and request a rival explanation based on preferences or beliefs. Put all three on the board before showing another treatment.

6.6 Executive veto

This condition modifies one explicit institutional component: after the chamber selects and approves a legislative alternative, the incumbent may veto it; four of five votes override. The accounting for the public good, five transfers, relevant passage rule, and rejection policy remains visible. That continuity lets students identify what changed before interpreting behavior. Ask the class to reconstruct the sequence, identify who moves, state what each role observes, and name the consequence attached to every vote.

The central teaching purpose is to compare proposal power, veto power, and a supermajority within one sequence. A strategic prediction requires comparing marginal payoffs with the rejection policy and anticipating which coalition can sustain an allocation. Preferences for equality, reciprocity, responsibility, or public goods can alter that prediction. It is useful to record a narrow self-interest benchmark first and then behavioral alternatives, without declaring one to be correct before the evidence appears.

In the instructor report, emphasize veto use, override attempts, successful overrides, and the policy ultimately implemented. State numerators and denominators before comparing distributions and paths. An average across rounds can hide a break after defeat, replacement, or veto. With few groups, treat the display as a structured case and invite explanations that are consistent with the sequence actually observed.

The main interpretive caution is that the veto appears only after a legislative alternative has been selected and approved, so its denominator must be stated. Include this point in the debrief so students do not attribute every difference to a broad label such as presidentialism or parliamentarism. The application implements stylized teaching mechanisms; it does not reproduce all powers, parties, elections, or constitutional constraints of an actual political system.

For the instructor

Teaching key: elicit a prediction before the first decision, reconstruct the sequence after the outcome, and request a rival explanation based on preferences or beliefs. Put all three on the board before showing another treatment.

6.7 Parliamentary package

This condition modifies one explicit institutional component: five citizens cast an electoral signal and five representatives formally choose the incumbent; open agenda and optional confidence also apply. The accounting for the public good, five transfers, relevant passage rule, and rejection policy remains visible. That continuity lets students identify what changed before interpreting behavior. Ask the class to reconstruct the sequence, identify who moves, state what each role observes, and name the consequence attached to every vote.

The central teaching purpose is to discuss indirect selection, executive dependence on the legislature, and shared accountability. A strategic prediction requires comparing marginal payoffs with the rejection policy and anticipating which coalition can sustain an allocation. Preferences for equality, reciprocity, responsibility, or public goods can alter that prediction. It is useful to record a narrow self-interest benchmark first and then behavioral alternatives, without declaring one to be correct before the evidence appears.

In the instructor report, emphasize citizen votes, legislative selection, linked proposals, replacements, and congruence between signal and choice. State numerators and denominators before comparing distributions and paths. An average across rounds can hide a break after defeat, replacement, or

veto. With few groups, treat the display as a structured case and invite explanations that are consistent with the sequence actually observed.

The main interpretive caution is that several rules change together, so the comparison concerns an institutional package rather than one pure component. Include this point in the debrief so students do not attribute every difference to a broad label such as presidentialism or parliamentarism. The application implements stylized teaching mechanisms; it does not reproduce all powers, parties, elections, or constitutional constraints of an actual political system.

For the instructor

Teaching key: elicit a prediction before the first decision, reconstruct the sequence after the outcome, and request a rival explanation based on preferences or beliefs. Put all three on the board before showing another treatment.

6.8 Presidential package

This condition modifies one explicit institutional component: five citizens directly elect the incumbent; the term is fixed, the agenda is open, and the executive has a veto. The accounting for the public good, five transfers, relevant passage rule, and rejection policy remains visible. That continuity lets students identify what changed before interpreting behavior. Ask the class to reconstruct the sequence, identify who moves, state what each role observes, and name the consequence attached to every vote.

The central teaching purpose is to contrast more separate electoral origins and survival with the parliamentary package. A strategic prediction requires comparing marginal payoffs with the rejection policy and anticipating which coalition can sustain an allocation. Preferences for equality, reciprocity, responsibility, or public goods can alter that prediction. It is useful to record a narrow self-interest benchmark first and then behavioral alternatives, without declaring one to be correct before the evidence appears.

In the instructor report, emphasize citizen election, veto use, legislative override, approval, and distribution. State numerators and denominators before comparing distributions and paths. An average across rounds can hide a break after defeat, replacement, or veto. With few groups, treat the display as a structured case and invite explanations that are consistent with the sequence actually observed.

The main interpretive caution is that this is also a compound package; differences may arise from selection, tenure, or veto power. Include this point in the debrief so students do not attribute every difference to a broad label such as presidentialism or parliamentarism. The application implements stylized teaching mechanisms; it does not reproduce all powers, parties, elections, or constitutional constraints of an actual political system.

For the instructor

Teaching key: elicit a prediction before the first decision, reconstruct the sequence after the outcome, and request a rival explanation based on preferences or beliefs. Put all three on the board before showing another treatment.

6.9 Bicameralism

This condition modifies one explicit institutional component: representatives 1–3 form a lower chamber and representatives 4–5 an upper chamber; passage requires two lower and two upper votes. The accounting for the public good, five transfers, relevant passage rule, and rejection policy remains visible. That continuity lets students identify what changed before interpreting behavior. Ask the class to reconstruct the sequence, identify who moves, state what each role observes, and name the consequence attached to every vote.

The central teaching purpose is to teach how veto points and concurrent majorities alter the winning coalition. A strategic prediction requires comparing marginal payoffs with the rejection policy and anticipating which coalition can sustain an allocation. Preferences for equality, reciprocity, responsibility, or public goods can alter that prediction. It is useful to record a narrow self-interest benchmark first and then behavioral alternatives, without declaring one to be correct before the evidence appears.

In the instructor report, emphasize votes by chamber, joint approval, district distribution, and failed proposals. State numerators and denominators before comparing distributions and paths. An average across rounds can hide a break after defeat, replacement, or veto. With few groups, treat the display as a structured case and invite explanations that are consistent with the sequence actually observed.

The main interpretive caution is that the upper chamber has only two members and requires unanimity, a pedagogical simplification that should be explicit. Include this point in the debrief so students do not attribute every difference to a broad label such as presidentialism or parliamentarism. The application implements stylized teaching mechanisms; it does not reproduce all powers, parties, elections, or constitutional constraints of an actual political system.

For the instructor

Teaching key: elicit a prediction before the first decision, reconstruct the sequence after the outcome, and request a rival explanation based on preferences or beliefs. Put all three on the board before showing another treatment.

6.10 Observable party coalition

This condition modifies one explicit institutional component: before the proposal, every representative publicly chooses whether to join a coalition; the final vote remains free. The accounting for the public good, five transfers, relevant passage rule, and rejection policy remains visible. That continuity lets students identify what changed before interpreting behavior. Ask the class to reconstruct the sequence, identify who moves, state what each role observes, and name the consequence attached to every vote.

The central teaching purpose is to distinguish visible affiliation, realized discipline, and policy support. A strategic prediction requires comparing marginal payoffs with the rejection policy and anticipating which coalition can sustain an allocation. Preferences for equality, reciprocity, responsibility, or public goods can alter that prediction. It is useful to record a narrow self-interest benchmark first and then behavioral alternatives, without declaring one to be correct before the evidence appears.

In the instructor report, emphasize coalition size, member cohesion, approval, and district benefits. State numerators and denominators before comparing distributions and paths. An average across rounds can hide a break after defeat, replacement, or veto. With few groups, treat the display as a

structured case and invite explanations that are consistent with the sequence actually observed.

The main interpretive caution is that affiliation creates neither a contract nor unrestricted communication; it is a minimal public-coordination device. Include this point in the debrief so students do not attribute every difference to a broad label such as presidentialism or parliamentarism. The application implements stylized teaching mechanisms; it does not reproduce all powers, parties, elections, or constitutional constraints of an actual political system.

For the instructor

Teaching key: elicit a prediction before the first decision, reconstruct the sequence after the outcome, and request a rival explanation based on preferences or beliefs. Put all three on the board before showing another treatment.

Instructor report and debrief

7.1 Controlled reveal

The report displays progress before outcomes are revealed. The reveal button protects timing and prevents early finishers from informing active participants. Once groups are complete, the instructor may hide and reveal again.

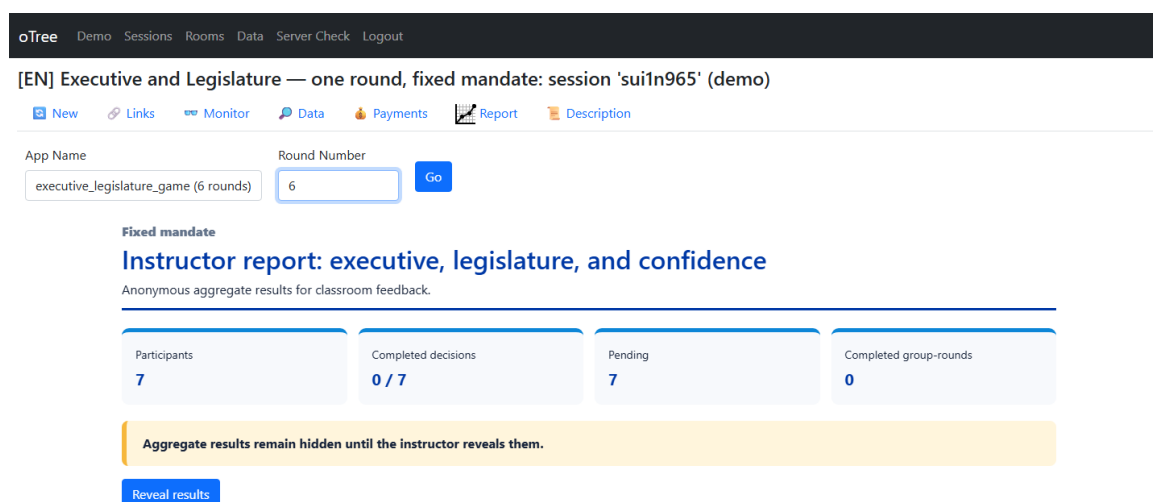


Figure 7.1: Instructor control of classroom feedback. Report hidden during decisions.

7.2 Indicators and denominators

Approval uses completed group-rounds. Mean public good and dispersion use implemented policies, including rejection where relevant. Payoffs separate representatives, incumbent, challenger, and citizens. Confidence, replacement, alternative, veto, override, and cohesion appear only when available. State the denominator and number of groups before interpreting a percentage.

The histogram displays bins of g , not a continuous density. The round path aggregates groups and is not an individual history. A mean decline can reflect every group or one extreme group. Combine tables, distributions, and anonymous examples.

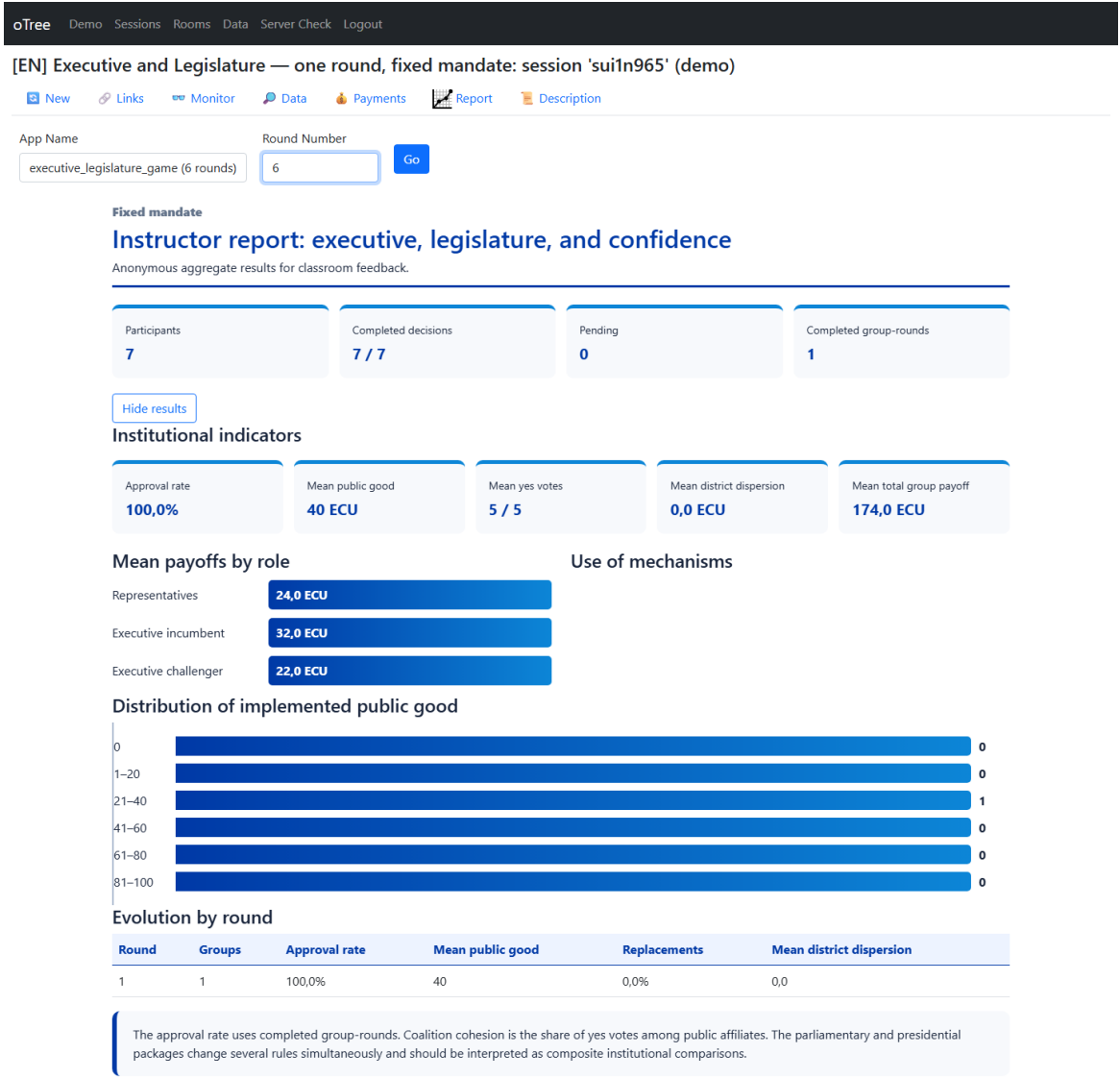


Figure 7.2: Indicators, payoffs, histogram, and path.

7.3 Debrief script

Feedback script

1. Describe approval and the distribution of g .
2. Reconstruct the stage and threshold that determined the outcome.
3. Compare the benchmark.
4. Explain with payoffs, beliefs, fairness, responsibility, or learning.
5. State the number of groups and components that cannot be isolated.
6. Propose a new comparison that separates explanations.

7.4 Extension screens

Confidence separates policy rejection from replacement. Open agenda places two complete budgets side by side. In the parliamentary package, the citizen vote is a signal and the legislature retains formal selection.



Representante del distrito 2

Votación sobre la continuidad del ejecutivo

Ronda 1 de 6

La política vinculada fue rechazada. Elija quién ocupará el ejecutivo desde la próxima ronda. Se requieren 3 votos por el suplente para reemplazar al titular.

Titular actual

Aspirante A

Suplente actual

Aspirante B



Mantener al titular



Nombrar al suplente

Confirmar decisión

Powered by [oTree](#)

Figure 7.3: Continuation vote after a confidence-linked defeat.

7.5 Class plans



Representative for district 1

Prepare a legislative alternative

Round 1 of 6

You were selected to propose the alternative. Allocate exactly 100 ECU. The legislature will then choose between your alternative and the executive budget.

Executive proposal

Public good g

40 ECU

District	Transfer	District payoff
1	12 ECU	24 ECU
2	12 ECU	24 ECU

Figure 7.4: Open agenda in two stages. Representative submits an alternative. Continuation 1/2.

3	12 ECU	24 ECU
4	12 ECU	24 ECU
5	12 ECU	24 ECU

Public good g

Transfer to district 1

Transfer to district 2

Transfer to district 3

Transfer to district 4

Transfer to district 5

Total allocated

100 / 100 ECU[Confirm decision](#)Powered by [oTree](#)

Figure 7.5: Open agenda in two stages. Representative submits an alternative. Continuation 2/2.



Representative for district 4

Vote on which proposal reaches the final decision

Round 1 of 6

Choose between the executive budget and the designated representative's alternative. At least 3 votes select a proposal.

Executive proposal

Public good g
40 ECU

District	Transfer	District payoff
1	12 ECU	24 ECU
2	12 ECU	24 ECU
3	12 ECU	24 ECU
4	12 ECU	24 ECU
5	12 ECU	24 ECU

Legislative alternative

Public good g
50 ECU

District	Transfer	District payoff
1	10 ECU	25 ECU
2	10 ECU	25 ECU
3	10 ECU	25 ECU
4	10 ECU	25 ECU
5	10 ECU	25 ECU



Executive proposal



Legislative alternative

Confirm decision

Powered by [oTree](#)

Figure 7.6: The chamber selects the final proposal.



Voto ciudadano

Seleccione un aspirante al ejecutivo

Ronda 1 de 6

Su rol

Ciudadano del distrito 5

Su voto es privado. En el paquete presidencial determina directamente el titular; en el paquete parlamentario constituye una señal pública antes de la elección legislativa.

A Elegir al aspirante A**B** Elegir al aspirante B

Confirmar decisión

Powered by [oTree](#)

Figure 7.7: Selection in the parliamentary package. Citizen electoral signal.



Elección legislativa del titular

Seleccione un aspirante al ejecutivo

Ronda 1 de 6

Su rol

Representante del distrito 5

Voto ciudadano previo: 5 por A y 0 por B. La legislatura conserva la decisión formal.

A Elegir al aspirante A**B** Elegir al aspirante B

Confirmar decisión

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Figure 7.8: Formal legislative selection.

7.6 Fifty-minute class

Use five minutes for access, eight for instructions, ten for predictions, ten for one round, twelve for the report, and five for closure. Choose one-round fixed tenure. The product should be an institutional tree and a proposal-versus-rejection calculation rather than a general claim about regimes.

7.7 Eighty-minute class

Use six-round optional confidence. Reserve fifteen minutes for payoffs, ten for linkage, thirty for decisions, and twenty for debrief. Mark every linked defeat and ask why legislators may reject policy while retaining the government.

7.8 Two-session comparison

Run the benchmark and one extension with separate groups or classes. Define the main outcome in advance and hold language, size, and explanation constant. Compare distributions and paths rather than mechanical significance tests with few units. Collect signed predictions before each session.

7.9 Advanced seminar

Assign [Baron and Ferejohn \(1989\)](#), [Diermeier and Feddersen \(1998\)](#), and [Fr chet te et al. \(2003\)](#). Students map assumptions into software, identify teaching adaptations, and propose a one-component design. Assessment can require treatment, mechanism, prediction, measure, identification threat, and extension.

Quantitative and interpretation case bank

This bank turns the activity into guided practice. Each case can be solved before displaying class data or used afterward to check whether an interpretation respects rules, payoffs, and denominators. In every case, the budget satisfies $g + \sum_i x_i = 100$, representative i receives $x_i + 0.3g$, the nonincumbent candidate receives $10 + 0.3g$, and the incumbent receives an additional 10 ECU office rent. If policy is not implemented, $g = 0$ and every $x_i = 20$.

8.1 1. Equal budget

Consider a public good of 40 ECU and district transfers of 12, 12, 12, 12, 12 ECU, respectively. The five representative payoffs are 24.0, 24.0, 24.0, 24.0, 24.0 ECU; the nonincumbent candidate receives 22.0 ECU and the incumbent receives 32.0 ECU. Compute every representative's payoff and both executive candidates' payoffs. Ask why an equal allocation may pass even when it does not maximize any one representative's isolated private payoff.

A complete answer states which decision rule applies, what is implemented if the proposal fails, who controls the next agenda move, and what constitutes the observational unit. It also separates a payoff-based prediction from an account based on fairness, reciprocity, responsibility aversion, or learning. Whenever the case uses a percentage, the denominator should be written before the calculation.

Feedback script

Ask for three sentences: a description without interpretation, a strategic explanation, and a behavioral alternative. Then request one additional observation that could distinguish them.

8.2 2. High public good

Consider a public good of 80 ECU and district transfers of 4, 4, 4, 4, 4 ECU, respectively. The five representative payoffs are 28.0, 28.0, 28.0, 28.0, 28.0 ECU; the nonincumbent candidate receives 34.0 ECU and the incumbent receives 44.0 ECU. Compare the rise in the common return with the reduction in transfers. Identify who gains and whether the incumbent must compensate particular districts to obtain three votes.

A complete answer states which decision rule applies, what is implemented if the proposal fails, who controls the next agenda move, and what constitutes the observational unit. It also separates

a payoff-based prediction from an account based on fairness, reciprocity, responsibility aversion, or learning. Whenever the case uses a percentage, the denominator should be written before the calculation.

Feedback script

Ask for three sentences: a description without interpretation, a strategic explanation, and a behavioral alternative. Then request one additional observation that could distinguish them.

8.3 3. Minimal coalition

Consider a public good of 10 ECU and district transfers of 23, 23, 23, 10, 11 ECU, respectively. The five representative payoffs are 26.0, 26.0, 26.0, 13.0, 14.0 ECU; the nonincumbent candidate receives 13.0 ECU and the incumbent receives 23.0 ECU. Identify three districts that could form a majority and the distributional consequence for the remaining two. Discuss why minimal winning coalitions can generate dispersion.

A complete answer states which decision rule applies, what is implemented if the proposal fails, who controls the next agenda move, and what constitutes the observational unit. It also separates a payoff-based prediction from an account based on fairness, reciprocity, responsibility aversion, or learning. Whenever the case uses a percentage, the denominator should be written before the calculation.

Feedback script

Ask for three sentences: a description without interpretation, a strategic explanation, and a behavioral alternative. Then request one additional observation that could distinguish them.

8.4 4. Rejected proposal

Consider a public good of 70 ECU and district transfers of 6, 6, 6, 6, 6 ECU, respectively. The five representative payoffs are 27.0, 27.0, 27.0, 27.0, 27.0 ECU; the nonincumbent candidate receives 31.0 ECU and the incumbent receives 41.0 ECU. Compute offered payoffs and compare them with the rejection policy, where every district receives 20 and the public good is zero. Give a rational account of five possible votes.

A complete answer states which decision rule applies, what is implemented if the proposal fails, who controls the next agenda move, and what constitutes the observational unit. It also separates a payoff-based prediction from an account based on fairness, reciprocity, responsibility aversion, or learning. Whenever the case uses a percentage, the denominator should be written before the calculation.

Feedback script

Ask for three sentences: a description without interpretation, a strategic explanation, and a behavioral alternative. Then request one additional observation that could distinguish them.

8.5 5. Candidate asymmetry

Consider a public good of 30 ECU and district transfers of 14, 14, 14, 14, 14 ECU, respectively. The five representative payoffs are 23.0, 23.0, 23.0, 23.0, 23.0 ECU; the nonincumbent candidate receives 19.0 ECU and the incumbent receives 29.0 ECU. Show that the incumbent obtains ten additional ECU from office. Discuss how this rent can affect the choice to make a proposal a confidence matter.

A complete answer states which decision rule applies, what is implemented if the proposal fails, who controls the next agenda move, and what constitutes the observational unit. It also separates a payoff-based prediction from an account based on fairness, reciprocity, responsibility aversion, or learning. Whenever the case uses a percentage, the denominator should be written before the calculation.

Feedback script

Ask for three sentences: a description without interpretation, a strategic explanation, and a behavioral alternative. Then request one additional observation that could distinguish them.

8.6 6. Linked defeat

Consider a public good of 40 ECU and district transfers of 12, 12, 12, 12, 12 ECU, respectively. The five representative payoffs are 24.0, 24.0, 24.0, 24.0, 24.0 ECU; the nonincumbent candidate receives 22.0 ECU and the incumbent receives 32.0 ECU. Suppose the proposal is linked and obtains two votes. Describe the implemented policy, the replacement vote, and the point at which a new incumbent can take office.

A complete answer states which decision rule applies, what is implemented if the proposal fails, who controls the next agenda move, and what constitutes the observational unit. It also separates a payoff-based prediction from an account based on fairness, reciprocity, responsibility aversion, or learning. Whenever the case uses a percentage, the denominator should be written before the calculation.

Feedback script

Ask for three sentences: a description without interpretation, a strategic explanation, and a behavioral alternative. Then request one additional observation that could distinguish them.

8.7 7. Failed replacement

Consider a public good of 35 ECU and district transfers of 13, 13, 13, 13, 13 ECU, respectively. The five representative payoffs are 23.5, 23.5, 23.5, 23.5, 23.5 ECU; the nonincumbent candidate receives 20.5 ECU and the incumbent receives 30.5 ECU. The proposal loses but only two representatives support the challenger. Explain why policy defeat and government termination are separate events.

A complete answer states which decision rule applies, what is implemented if the proposal fails, who controls the next agenda move, and what constitutes the observational unit. It also separates a payoff-based prediction from an account based on fairness, reciprocity, responsibility aversion, or learning. Whenever the case uses a percentage, the denominator should be written before the calculation.

calculation.

Feedback script

Ask for three sentences: a description without interpretation, a strategic explanation, and a behavioral alternative. Then request one additional observation that could distinguish them.

8.8 8. Legislative alternative

Consider a public good of 50 ECU and district transfers of 10, 10, 10, 10, 10 ECU, respectively. The five representative payoffs are 25.0, 25.0, 25.0, 25.0, 25.0 ECU; the nonincumbent candidate receives 25.0 ECU and the incumbent receives 35.0 ECU. Compare this alternative with an executive budget of $g=20$ and transfers of 16. Compute district payoffs and predict the agenda-selection vote.

A complete answer states which decision rule applies, what is implemented if the proposal fails, who controls the next agenda move, and what constitutes the observational unit. It also separates a payoff-based prediction from an account based on fairness, reciprocity, responsibility aversion, or learning. Whenever the case uses a percentage, the denominator should be written before the calculation.

Feedback script

Ask for three sentences: a description without interpretation, a strategic explanation, and a behavioral alternative. Then request one additional observation that could distinguish them.

8.9 9. Veto without override

Consider a public good of 45 ECU and district transfers of 11, 11, 11, 11, 11 ECU, respectively. The five representative payoffs are 24.5, 24.5, 24.5, 24.5, 24.5 ECU; the nonincumbent candidate receives 23.5 ECU and the incumbent receives 33.5 ECU. The chamber approves the alternative, the incumbent vetoes it, and only three representatives vote to override. Identify the governing policy and explain why three votes pass but do not override.

A complete answer states which decision rule applies, what is implemented if the proposal fails, who controls the next agenda move, and what constitutes the observational unit. It also separates a payoff-based prediction from an account based on fairness, reciprocity, responsibility aversion, or learning. Whenever the case uses a percentage, the denominator should be written before the calculation.

Feedback script

Ask for three sentences: a description without interpretation, a strategic explanation, and a behavioral alternative. Then request one additional observation that could distinguish them.

8.10 10. Successful override

Consider a public good of 60 ECU and district transfers of 8, 8, 8, 8, 8 ECU, respectively. The five representative payoffs are 26.0, 26.0, 26.0, 26.0, 26.0 ECU; the nonincumbent candidate receives 28.0 ECU and the incumbent receives 38.0 ECU. Four representatives vote to override. Reconstruct the full sequence and distinguish support for the proposal, the veto decision, and the override vote.

A complete answer states which decision rule applies, what is implemented if the proposal fails, who controls the next agenda move, and what constitutes the observational unit. It also separates a payoff-based prediction from an account based on fairness, reciprocity, responsibility aversion, or learning. Whenever the case uses a percentage, the denominator should be written before the calculation.

Feedback script

Ask for three sentences: a description without interpretation, a strategic explanation, and a behavioral alternative. Then request one additional observation that could distinguish them.

8.11 11. Decisive upper chamber

Consider a public good of 20 ECU and district transfers of 16, 16, 16, 16, 16 ECU, respectively. The five representative payoffs are 22.0, 22.0, 22.0, 22.0, 22.0 ECU; the nonincumbent candidate receives 16.0 ECU and the incumbent receives 26.0 ECU. All lower-chamber members vote yes but only one upper-chamber member does. Compare the result under simple majority and bicameral passage.

A complete answer states which decision rule applies, what is implemented if the proposal fails, who controls the next agenda move, and what constitutes the observational unit. It also separates a payoff-based prediction from an account based on fairness, reciprocity, responsibility aversion, or learning. Whenever the case uses a percentage, the denominator should be written before the calculation.

Feedback script

Ask for three sentences: a description without interpretation, a strategic explanation, and a behavioral alternative. Then request one additional observation that could distinguish them.

8.12 12. Divided lower chamber

Consider a public good of 50 ECU and district transfers of 10, 10, 10, 10, 10 ECU, respectively. The five representative payoffs are 25.0, 25.0, 25.0, 25.0, 25.0 ECU; the nonincumbent candidate receives 25.0 ECU and the incumbent receives 35.0 ECU. One lower representative and both upper representatives vote yes. Verify why upper unanimity cannot substitute for two lower votes.

A complete answer states which decision rule applies, what is implemented if the proposal fails, who controls the next agenda move, and what constitutes the observational unit. It also separates a payoff-based prediction from an account based on fairness, reciprocity, responsibility aversion, or learning. Whenever the case uses a percentage, the denominator should be written before the calculation.

Feedback script

Ask for three sentences: a description without interpretation, a strategic explanation, and a behavioral alternative. Then request one additional observation that could distinguish them.

8.13 13. Citizen signal

Consider a public good of 40 ECU and district transfers of 12, 12, 12, 12, 12 ECU, respectively. The five representative payoffs are 24.0, 24.0, 24.0, 24.0, 24.0 ECU; the nonincumbent candidate receives 22.0 ECU and the incumbent receives 32.0 ECU. Four citizens support A but three legislators choose B. Discuss indirect representation, congruence, and the distinction between an informative signal and a binding mandate.

A complete answer states which decision rule applies, what is implemented if the proposal fails, who controls the next agenda move, and what constitutes the observational unit. It also separates a payoff-based prediction from an account based on fairness, reciprocity, responsibility aversion, or learning. Whenever the case uses a percentage, the denominator should be written before the calculation.

Feedback script

Ask for three sentences: a description without interpretation, a strategic explanation, and a behavioral alternative. Then request one additional observation that could distinguish them.

8.14 14. Direct election

Consider a public good of 30 ECU and district transfers of 14, 14, 14, 14, 14 ECU, respectively. The five representative payoffs are 23.0, 23.0, 23.0, 23.0, 23.0 ECU; the nonincumbent candidate receives 19.0 ECU and the incumbent receives 29.0 ECU. Three citizens choose A and two choose B. Explain why A takes office in the presidential package and which instruments remain available to the legislature.

A complete answer states which decision rule applies, what is implemented if the proposal fails, who controls the next agenda move, and what constitutes the observational unit. It also separates a payoff-based prediction from an account based on fairness, reciprocity, responsibility aversion, or learning. Whenever the case uses a percentage, the denominator should be written before the calculation.

Feedback script

Ask for three sentences: a description without interpretation, a strategic explanation, and a behavioral alternative. Then request one additional observation that could distinguish them.

8.15 15. Large undisciplined coalition

Consider a public good of 25 ECU and district transfers of 15, 15, 15, 15, 15 ECU, respectively. The five representative payoffs are 22.5, 22.5, 22.5, 22.5, 22.5 ECU; the nonincumbent candidate

receives 17.5 ECU and the incumbent receives 27.5 ECU. Four representatives affiliate but only two vote yes. Compute cohesion and explain why affiliation and discipline are distinct.

A complete answer states which decision rule applies, what is implemented if the proposal fails, who controls the next agenda move, and what constitutes the observational unit. It also separates a payoff-based prediction from an account based on fairness, reciprocity, responsibility aversion, or learning. Whenever the case uses a percentage, the denominator should be written before the calculation.

Feedback script

Ask for three sentences: a description without interpretation, a strategic explanation, and a behavioral alternative. Then request one additional observation that could distinguish them.

8.16 16. Small cohesive coalition

Consider a public good of 55 ECU and district transfers of 9, 9, 9, 9, 9 ECU, respectively. The five representative payoffs are 25.5, 25.5, 25.5, 25.5, 25.5 ECU; the nonincumbent candidate receives 26.5 ECU and the incumbent receives 36.5 ECU. Two representatives affiliate and both vote yes. Compare perfect cohesion with the inability to pass a policy without outside support.

A complete answer states which decision rule applies, what is implemented if the proposal fails, who controls the next agenda move, and what constitutes the observational unit. It also separates a payoff-based prediction from an account based on fairness, reciprocity, responsibility aversion, or learning. Whenever the case uses a percentage, the denominator should be written before the calculation.

Feedback script

Ask for three sentences: a description without interpretation, a strategic explanation, and a behavioral alternative. Then request one additional observation that could distinguish them.

8.17 17. Unequal efficient offer

Consider a public good of 70 ECU and district transfers of 18, 3, 3, 3, 3 ECU, respectively. The five representative payoffs are 39.0, 24.0, 24.0, 24.0, 24.0 ECU; the nonincumbent candidate receives 31.0 ECU and the incumbent receives 41.0 ECU. Compute payoffs and ask whether a high public good makes the policy equal. Separate efficiency, inequality, and political feasibility.

A complete answer states which decision rule applies, what is implemented if the proposal fails, who controls the next agenda move, and what constitutes the observational unit. It also separates a payoff-based prediction from an account based on fairness, reciprocity, responsibility aversion, or learning. Whenever the case uses a percentage, the denominator should be written before the calculation.

Feedback script

Ask for three sentences: a description without interpretation, a strategic explanation, and a behavioral alternative. Then request one additional observation that could distinguish them.

8.18 18. Symmetric low-g offer

Consider a public good of 5 ECU and district transfers of 19, 19, 19, 19, 19 ECU, respectively. The five representative payoffs are 20.5, 20.5, 20.5, 20.5, 20.5 ECU; the nonincumbent candidate receives 11.5 ECU and the incumbent receives 21.5 ECU. Compare the district payoff with the rejection benchmark. Explain why representatives may approve even though public-good provision is almost zero.

A complete answer states which decision rule applies, what is implemented if the proposal fails, who controls the next agenda move, and what constitutes the observational unit. It also separates a payoff-based prediction from an account based on fairness, reciprocity, responsibility aversion, or learning. Whenever the case uses a percentage, the denominator should be written before the calculation.

Feedback script

Ask for three sentences: a description without interpretation, a strategic explanation, and a behavioral alternative. Then request one additional observation that could distinguish them.

8.19 19. Incumbent learning

Consider a public good of 40 ECU and district transfers of 12, 12, 12, 12, 12 ECU, respectively. The five representative payoffs are 24.0, 24.0, 24.0, 24.0, 24.0 ECU; the nonincumbent candidate receives 22.0 ECU and the incumbent receives 32.0 ECU. The first proposal fails; next round the incumbent raises transfers to three districts. Identify which report pattern would support an interpretation of strategic learning.

A complete answer states which decision rule applies, what is implemented if the proposal fails, who controls the next agenda move, and what constitutes the observational unit. It also separates a payoff-based prediction from an account based on fairness, reciprocity, responsibility aversion, or learning. Whenever the case uses a percentage, the denominator should be written before the calculation.

Feedback script

Ask for three sentences: a description without interpretation, a strategic explanation, and a behavioral alternative. Then request one additional observation that could distinguish them.

8.20 20. Turnover and reputation

Consider a public good of 30 ECU and district transfers of 14, 14, 14, 14, 14 ECU, respectively. The five representative payoffs are 23.0, 23.0, 23.0, 23.0, 23.0 ECU; the nonincumbent candidate receives 19.0 ECU and the incumbent receives 29.0 ECU. After replacement, the new incumbent offers a similar budget. Discuss what this says about institutional reputation and what cannot be inferred from one unit.

A complete answer states which decision rule applies, what is implemented if the proposal fails, who controls the next agenda move, and what constitutes the observational unit. It also separates a payoff-based prediction from an account based on fairness, reciprocity, responsibility aversion,

or learning. Whenever the case uses a percentage, the denominator should be written before the calculation.

Feedback script

Ask for three sentences: a description without interpretation, a strategic explanation, and a behavioral alternative. Then request one additional observation that could distinguish them.

8.21 21. Package comparison

Consider a public good of 50 ECU and district transfers of 10, 10, 10, 10, 10 ECU, respectively. The five representative payoffs are 25.0, 25.0, 25.0, 25.0, 25.0 ECU; the nonincumbent candidate receives 25.0 ECU and the incumbent receives 35.0 ECU. The same allocation appears in parliamentary and presidential packages. List differences in selection, tenure, confidence, agenda, and veto that prevent a one-channel claim.

A complete answer states which decision rule applies, what is implemented if the proposal fails, who controls the next agenda move, and what constitutes the observational unit. It also separates a payoff-based prediction from an account based on fairness, reciprocity, responsibility aversion, or learning. Whenever the case uses a percentage, the denominator should be written before the calculation.

Feedback script

Ask for three sentences: a description without interpretation, a strategic explanation, and a behavioral alternative. Then request one additional observation that could distinguish them.

8.22 22. Veto denominator

Consider a public good of 45 ECU and district transfers of 11, 11, 11, 11, 11 ECU, respectively. The five representative payoffs are 24.5, 24.5, 24.5, 24.5, 24.5 ECU; the nonincumbent candidate receives 23.5 ECU and the incumbent receives 33.5 ECU. Across ten rounds, four alternatives pass, three are vetoed, and one veto is overridden. Compute rates with explicit denominators and show how interpretation changes if ten is used.

A complete answer states which decision rule applies, what is implemented if the proposal fails, who controls the next agenda move, and what constitutes the observational unit. It also separates a payoff-based prediction from an account based on fairness, reciprocity, responsibility aversion, or learning. Whenever the case uses a percentage, the denominator should be written before the calculation.

Feedback script

Ask for three sentences: a description without interpretation, a strategic explanation, and a behavioral alternative. Then request one additional observation that could distinguish them.

8.23 23. Histogram

Consider a public good of 40 ECU and district transfers of 12, 12, 12, 12, 12 ECU, respectively. The five representative payoffs are 24.0, 24.0, 24.0, 24.0, 24.0 ECU; the nonincumbent candidate receives 22.0 ECU and the incumbent receives 32.0 ECU. A class produces g values of 0, 10, 35, 40, 40, 55, and 90. Assign each value to a bin and explain why the mean does not reveal multimodality.

A complete answer states which decision rule applies, what is implemented if the proposal fails, who controls the next agenda move, and what constitutes the observational unit. It also separates a payoff-based prediction from an account based on fairness, reciprocity, responsibility aversion, or learning. Whenever the case uses a percentage, the denominator should be written before the calculation.

Feedback script

Ask for three sentences: a description without interpretation, a strategic explanation, and a behavioral alternative. Then request one additional observation that could distinguish them.

8.24 24. Experimental unit

Consider a public good of 35 ECU and district transfers of 13, 13, 13, 13, 13 ECU, respectively. The five representative payoffs are 23.5, 23.5, 23.5, 23.5, 23.5 ECU; the nonincumbent candidate receives 20.5 ECU and the incumbent receives 30.5 ECU. One fixed group plays six times. Explain why this gives six observed rounds but one group trajectory, and why treating every round as independent exaggerates precision.

A complete answer states which decision rule applies, what is implemented if the proposal fails, who controls the next agenda move, and what constitutes the observational unit. It also separates a payoff-based prediction from an account based on fairness, reciprocity, responsibility aversion, or learning. Whenever the case uses a percentage, the denominator should be written before the calculation.

Feedback script

Ask for three sentences: a description without interpretation, a strategic explanation, and a behavioral alternative. Then request one additional observation that could distinguish them.

8.25 Notes for rigorous interpretation

8.26 Description, mechanism, and causality

An approval rate is descriptive. Saying that replacement threatens disciplined voting is a mechanism hypothesis. Claiming that confidence caused a difference requires a valid comparison and sufficient units. Keep these layers separate on the board and in written work.

8.27 Rounds, people, and groups

Five votes are not five independent institutions. Six rounds from a fixed group share history, roles, and beliefs. Use paths for discussion and aggregate at assignment level for inference. A classroom session does not automatically become publishable evidence.

8.28 Compound treatments

Parliamentary and presidential packages make an architecture visible but cannot identify whether differences arise from election, tenure, confidence, agenda, or veto. Use the mechanism map to formulate the next comparison rather than rank systems.

8.29 Normative caution

More public good need not imply more equality; approval need not imply welfare; cohesion need not imply representation. Present payoff, distribution, procedure, and legitimacy as separate dimensions before opening normative discussion with explicit criteria.

8.30 Closure

End with one rule that changed behavior, one rival explanation, and one limit. Remind students that data are anonymous and classroom choices do not diagnose personal traits. Point to the literature and the room for another variant.

Fiscal powers, rents, and accountability

9.1 The question added by this module

The earlier core examines how confidence procedures and agenda rights affect bargaining over a given budget. The fiscal module asks a different question: who decides how much to collect, who allocates revenue, and who can prevent a proposal from becoming policy. A district transfer in the institutional core should not be interpreted as an official's private rent. Here rents explicitly enter the account of the person holding office and provide no benefit to citizens. This accounting distinction permits a discussion of extraction and public provision without assigning unobserved motives.

The extension is available in the extended rooms of the same family. Eight fiscal conditions per language accompany the nine existing institutional conditions. The complete instance contains forty configurations: three basic and seventeen extended in each language. All four room routes and existing configuration names remain stable. Earlier screenshots of institutional decisions still describe that core; the figures in this chapter show the fiscal module and do not replace the earlier rules.

For the instructor

For an introductory fiscal class, use Separated fiscal powers and contrast its outcome with Unified fiscal powers. Allow approximately 50–70 minutes for instructions, six rounds, and discussion. With small classes, frame the comparison as an exercise in mechanisms. One trajectory per condition cannot provide a precise estimate of an institutional effect.

9.2 Unit, resources, and sequence

Each group contains seven participants: two executive candidates, two legislature candidates, and three citizens. One candidate from each pair initially holds office; the other is the challenger. Participants are randomly assigned to positions when groups form. Group membership and candidacies remain fixed for six rounds. Without elections, officeholders also remain fixed. Challengers make it possible to introduce later elections without changing group size or inventing an automated candidate.

Each round renews a 100-ECU endowment for each citizen and a 20-ECU base for each of the four candidates. ECU means Experimental Currency Units. The base is not financed through the game's tax. There is no saving, debt, or carryover of taxes between rounds. Initial group resources

are therefore $3(100) + 4(20) = 380$ ECU. No conversion into real money is promised; any payment procedure used in an applied session must be announced before play.

The executive chooses a *total* tax $T \in \{0, 30, 60, 90\}$. Each citizen contributes $T/3$; candidates do not pay this tax. The legislature allocates exactly T between public provision G , executive rent r_E , and its own rent r_L . All three components are nonnegative integers satisfying $G + r_E + r_L = T$. The executive then accepts or rejects the entire allocation. There is no second offer or automatic renegotiation after rejection. Under Unified fiscal powers, the executive chooses both taxation and allocation; implementation requires no legislative response. The legislator and legislative challenger retain their base.

Wait pages synchronize participants who do not have an active turn. Challengers should not attempt to act as officeholders. Instructions, round summaries, and decision screens identify who controls each resource. Before play, comprehension questions check individual taxation, citizen benefits, and incumbent rent using the same example. Each error provides the relevant calculation and permits correction without a penalty.

9.3 Accounts and a worked example

If the proposal is implemented, payoffs are

$$\pi_E = 20 + r_E, \quad \pi_L = 20 + r_L, \quad \pi_C = 100 - \frac{T}{3} + 0.5G.$$

Each challenger receives 20 ECU. One unit of G produces half an ECU for *each* citizen, giving an aggregate social return of 1.5. Rents are paid once to the respective officeholder. Tax is charged once when the budget is implemented, rather than when a proposal is submitted.

With $T = 60$, $G = 30$, and $r_E = r_L = 15$, each citizen pays 20 and receives 15, ending with 95 ECU. Both incumbents receive 35, and both challengers receive 20. The total is $3(95) + 2(35) + 2(20) = 395$. Under ordinary rejection, nobody pays tax or receives public benefits or rents: citizens keep 100 and all four candidates receive 20, totaling 380. Both incumbents may prefer the rent proposal even when citizens prefer rejection. That conflict is the subject of the game.

Now compare $T = 60$, $G = 60$, $r_E = r_L = 0$. Each citizen receives $100 - 20 + 30 = 110$, and each candidate receives 20. The group total is 410. Revenue is identical across these examples; its composition changes. Finally, $T = 90$, $G = 90$ gives each citizen 115 and the group 425. Aggregate objectives and incumbents' private incentives can point in different directions.

Theoretical foundation

Adding all payoffs and applying the budget constraint gives $\sum_i \pi_i = 380 + 0.5G$. Rents are transfers within the group. Their social cost in this design arises when they displace public provision, rather than disappearing from the accounting identity. Keep taxation, rents, and production separate.

9.4 Eight comparisons and what they identify

Unified fiscal powers assigns taxation and spending to the executive, without a legislative veto. **Separated fiscal powers** assigns allocation to the legislature and allows the executive to accept or reject. Population, endowments, public technology, and tax choices remain constant. Both incumbents nevertheless value rents. Giving power to two actors does not ensure representation of citizens: they can find a mutually acceptable division with little public provision.



Reelection with unobserved rents · Round 1 / 6



Budget composition

Your role: **Incumbent legislator**

TOTAL tax T (divided among three citizens): **60 ECU**

The three components must sum exactly to T. Each officeholder starts with 20 ECU.

Public provision G

Executive private rent

Legislator private rent

Continue

ECU stands for Experimental Currency Units. It is the unit of account for this activity.

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Figure 9.1: Actual fiscal allocation screen. The officeholder's base and total taxation are distinguished from the allocation of funds.

Citizen ratification adds a decision after executive acceptance. Two out of three citizens must ratify, with simultaneous votes. If the executive rejects first, citizens are not asked to ratify an offer already discarded. All accounts are public in this condition. Citizens have identical payoffs and an ordinary rejection reference of 100. Acceptance yields a net gain of $-T/3 + 0.5G$, so reaching that reference requires $G \geq 2T/3$. This inequality describes monetary incentives; it does not require a particular vote or assume exclusively selfish preferences. Equality may produce indifference.

Positive rejection budget retains the separated sequence and changes only the alternative: rejection implements $T = 30, G = 30, r_E = r_L = 0$. Each citizen receives 105, and each candidate receives 20. This comparison changes citizens' cost of gridlock; it does not increase the executive's rent from rejecting. Rejection no longer means an absence of government. Always distinguish the proposed budget from the budget actually implemented.

Unobserved individual rents retains separation and hides the rent split from citizens and challengers. Officeholders see the complete allocation. Everyone knows taxation and public provision. They can therefore infer $r_E + r_L = T - G$: opacity affects attribution across offices, rather than total extraction. Showing an incumbent's payoff to citizens would indirectly reveal that incumbent's rent and invalidate the contrast. Participant screens and information retain this restriction.

Reelection with public accounts adds electoral evaluation after the outcome. Each citizen votes separately on retaining the executive and retaining the legislator. Two votes to retain keep the respective incumbent; with fewer than two, the challenger takes office next round. Both offices can change simultaneously, or only one can change. Elections do not revise the budget already implemented. No election follows round six because no future office reward remains inside the game.

Reelection with unobserved rents uses exactly the same electoral procedure with the previous information restriction. Compare it with public reelection to study attribution, and compare public reelection with separation to study the availability of future office. Candidates have identical resources and abilities. The design may reveal discipline, reciprocity, or observed punishment, but cannot identify selection of competent politicians because it introduces no different competence types.

Nonbinding prior negotiation permits an executive message and a legislative reply before taxation. Each message allows up to 160 characters, without personal details. Both incumbents see the messages. Other participants see public accounts, rather than the conversation. Communication neither executes transfers nor changes the budget constraint, and promises do not bind later decisions. Friendly communication does not demonstrate collusion. Examine whether the mix of rents and provision differs from separation without messages. Free text may require additional anonymization before sharing a native export.

Attention

Do not compare the original parliamentary or presidential packages with these conditions to attribute differences exclusively to fiscal separation. Those packages use different actors and payoffs. Within the fiscal module, the stated comparisons preserve the relevant accounts.

9.5 Theory and evidence

Persson, Roland, and Tabellini analyze separation of powers and political accountability as problems of incentives and control. The possibility of improving accountability depends on the allocation of decisions and conflicts between authorities. This activity is a classroom adaptation with a single offer, a restricted tax menu, and linear public benefits. It does not reproduce their complete model

or justify automatically transferring theoretical results to the classroom. Their subsequent work on comparative politics and public finance connects government rules with the size and composition of expenditure.

As related experimental evidence, López Vargas, Medina, and Moromizato (2022) study elections and congressional vetoes in laboratory presidential democracies. They find no general average veto effect across the studied outcomes, while documenting effects conditional on electoral fragmentation and opposition. Their environment differs from this activity. Use the finding to formulate conditions under which a check could matter, rather than as a guaranteed prediction for this game.

The simplest case offers a weak but useful prediction: an incumbent concerned only with personal earnings receives no direct monetary gain from increasing G while keeping personal rent fixed. A citizen does gain when T remains fixed. Ratification creates an additional constraint; elections can introduce a continuation incentive. The last round provides a contrast for discussing horizons, although learning and position in the sequence also change. A final-round decline in provision is not conclusive evidence of one mechanism.

9.6 Reading the report and leading discussion

The private report initially hides aggregates. Instructors can reveal and hide them without altering decisions. Progress counts participant-round records: seven people across six rounds imply 42 expected records per group. Completed budgets have a different denominator: six group-round observations. The histogram displays implemented G ; the time table separates taxation, provision, rents, and the percentage of proposals implemented. Mean payoffs distinguish incumbents, challengers, and citizens. Pending observations are excluded from means.

The report download identifies the selected session. The native file is wide, with one participant per row and rounds in columns. The module's custom export has one row per participant and active round, including proposals, responses, implemented accounts, retention votes, and next officeholders. A valid zero, such as $T = 0$, differs from a pending field. Do not count seven copies of a group variable as seven independent budgets. Technical identifiers link rounds and should be removed before sharing a dataset with students.

Feedback script

First ask students to distinguish proposed and implemented budgets. Next compare two budgets with equal taxation and different provision. Ask who benefits from each rent and which actor can prevent implementation. Only then reveal the report and compare predictions with completed observations.



Reelection with unobserved rents · Round 1 / 6

Round outcome

Your role: **Citizen**

The proposal was implemented

TOTAL tax T (divided among three citizens)	60 ECU
--	--------

Public provision G	30 ECU
--------------------	--------

Rejection budget: tax 0; public provision 0; rents 0.

Your payoff this round: **95,0 ECU**

Continue

ECU stands for Experimental Currency Units. It is the unit of account for this activity.

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Figure 9.2: Citizen outcome: tax, public provision, and own payoff. Visibility of individual rents depends on the treatment.

Instructor report: fiscal powers

Reelection with unobserved rents

Participant-round records with calculated payoffs / expected: **7 / 42** · Pending: 35

Completed group-round budgets: 1

Pending electoral evaluations after completed budgets: 0

Means and distributions use completed budgets only. Each group-round counts once. Pending records are excluded from means and remain blank in CSV.

[Download this session \(wide CSV\)](#) · [Download this session \(CSV by round\)](#)

Hide aggregate outcomes

Means over completed budgets

TOTAL tax T (divided among three citizens)	Public provision G	Executive private rent + Legislator private rent	Group total (ECU)
60,0	30,0	30,0	395,0

Payoffs by role (mean)

Incumbent executive	35,0 ECU	n = 1
Incumbent legislator	35,0 ECU	n = 1
Executive challenger	20,0 ECU	n = 1
Legislature challenger	20,0 ECU	n = 1
Citizen	95,0 ECU	n = 3

Distribution of implemented public provision

0	0
1–30	1
31–60	0
61–90	0

Figure 9.3: Fiscal report from the final technical round. Completed budgets and pending records have explicit denominators.

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