

Presidents in Parliamentary Democracies

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Abstract

Management and administration of a state are important functions to ensure security, protection, and shape environments where peoples of a country live. Depending on the context, various institutional design options have served as basis for governing a country. In democratic societies, three main institutional design options for a country's governance are observed. The first institutional design option is Parliamentarism, where main officials mandate originates from an electoral system. The second is Presidentialism, where citizens can select directly by the vote the Parliamentarian/Congressman and the President through different election processes. The third is Semi-presidentialism, where there is more integration of the different branches, and the executive and legislative aren't so strictly separated. This abstract gives a snapshot in the current year, about the main powers of the Presidents across Europe, by analyzing the exercising of power of the Presidents that is at an extent is influenced by the election procedure, whether the President derives from the election of the members of the Parliament or by electoral vote of the citizens (<https://crsreports.congress.gov>). This article provides an overview of the features of the key institutional design options in a country's governance, with a view on the role and merits of Presidents versus types of institutional designs. At the same time, it contributes to raising consciousness about reforms needed in the current governance system, and setting priorities for

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choosing the institutional rules. The research method used for the purposes of writing of this article, is secondary research. This has involved review of various external sources from a variety of channels. Format sources reviewed have included published datasets, reports, articles, other. The analytical framework covers the following data sets: political systems, regime types, economic freedom, government defense integrity, freedom in the world, corruption perception index. The results indicate for a potential correlational relationship between the governance institutional design and level of development of a country. Data gathered shows that presidentialism and semi-presidentialism are prevailing governance systems. But parliamentarisms countries', tend to perform better in national sectoral assessments. Presidentialism's or semi-presidentialism countries, perform lower and, usually poor, in what is assessed as quality governance, and democratic regimes.

Keywords: *President, presidentialism, parliamentarism, semi-presidentialism, governance.*

I. Introduction

Management and administration of a state are important functions to ensure security, protection, prosperity, and shape environments where peoples of a country live. To implement these functions, delivery of public services, and addressing a country's challenges, governance systems have been established. Depending on the context, various institutional design options have served as basis for governing a country. In his work about political variables, Colomer (2008), writes that institutional design is the choice of rules for collective decision-making.

In democratic societies, there are three main known institutional design options for a country's governance. The first institutional design option is Parliamentarism, - the Parliamentarians and main officials mandate originates from an electoral system. The parliamentary regime facilitates the coexistence of multipartyism with fair representation, socially efficient outcomes, and relatively effective government. In these countries, in most cases the head of state is a separate official from the head of government. The second is Presidentialism – In this system, citizens can select directly by the vote both the Parliamentarian/ Congressman and the President through different election processes. In this system, the President/ head of state is in most cases also the ruler of the government. There is a clearer separation of powers between the legislative branch and the executive branch, both having the legal framework within they can function separately and simultaneously. It is common that in presidential governance, the President and executives belong to different parties, with different platforms and political programs. The third, is

Semi-presidentialism - In this system, there is more integration of the different branches than clear separation as in the presidential system described above, the executive and legislative aren't so strictly separated.

Seen as a very important variable to regulate public life, governance defines the extent to which powers are exercised, responsible decision-making bodies, responsible for law execution, and interpreting the law. Considering the importance of a governance system design for the public interest, it is important to identify features of a sustainable and quality governance. The concept of quality of government (QoG) has emerged as "a key factor" for understanding gaps in development, being theorized as a concept of impartiality in the exercise of power, equal treatment of citizens, provision of "ethical universalism", or guarantee of an "open access order" within a society (see SIEPS, 2018).

This article will provide an overview and explore the features of the key institutional design options in a country's governance, with a view on the role and merits of Presidents versus types of institutional designs. At the same time, the article will contribute to raising consciousness about reforms needed in the current governance system, and setting priorities for choosing the institutional rules.

II. Methodology

II. 1. Research methodology

The research method used for the purposes of writing of this article, is secondary research. This has involved review of various external sources from a variety of channels, including governmental institutional sites, key organizational structures, scientific journals, and other internet sites, which has greatly supported exploring details on the topic. Format sources reviewed have included published datasets, reports, articles, other. This article is conducted based on what is already known about the subject, in such case using a deductive approach. The process has included finding key sources and channels that allowed for data collection, identifying relevant information, categorizing information and synthesizing of content of the sources reviewed.

II. 2. Limitations

Analysis and findings of this work are based on data aggregated from different secondary sources, that have aimed to offer an overview of key features of countries overall, based on their governance institutional design setting, with considerations on the role of the President. While this article has explored and used several global



sources, it does not exclude the possibility that other data sources could have been selected to enrich data and analysis.

Data sources and data sets used, although they cover important aspects of a country's governance, are not standardized. Further, data are analyzed using simple analytical tools (Excel spreadsheets), which have not provided enough details on the correlation between data sets (potential variables). Although, considering the nature of data sets used, and the scope of reports upon which the analysis is based, this article allows for some data generalization. A further analysis though, could be used to further explore key gaps and critical areas identified here. It is recommended that future studies are conducted to further this analysis.

III. Literature review

III. 1. What is a parliamentary democracy?

A parliamentary democracy is a system of government in which citizens elect representatives to a legislative parliament to make the necessary laws and decisions for the country (borgenproject.org); a democratic parliament is one that is representative, open, and transparent, accessible, accountable and effective (ipu.org). According to Cheibub (2021), the government in a parliamentary system or parliamentary democracy derives from the Parliament, to which it is accountable. General elections in these systems are held to choose through a direct vote the members of Parliament, either votes for different parties that then are translated into seats in Parliament. In their work about "Parliamentary Democracy: Promise and Problems", Strøm, Müller, and Bergman (2003), state that. Cheibub, J. A., & Rasch, B. E. (2021).

Parliamentary democracy is a chain of delegation and accountability, from the voters to the ultimate policy makers, in which at each link (stage), a principal (in whom authority is originally) delegates to an agent, whom the principal has conditionally authorized to act in his or her name and place. The parliamentary chain of delegation is characterized by indirectness and singularity (i.e., at each link of the parliamentary chain, a single principal delegate to a single agent). At each stage of this chain, delegation problems (such as adverse selection and moral hazard) can occur.

The main characteristic in parliamentary system, is the existence of a head of state, being a different person from the head of government. The head of state in a parliamentary system can be:

- i) a monarch (constitutional monarchies), where the head of government is in most cases a member of parliament. Monarchy countries are represented by a monarch, who does not factually have political power and plays any important role in politics, but the role is only to represent the country, and this privilege is inherited. In Europe, constitutional monarchy systems are found in United Kingdom, Netherlands, Belgium, Norway, Denmark, Spain, Luxembourg, Monaco, Liechtenstein, and Sweden.
- ii) a federal president (federal states), where the federal president is not chosen through a popular vote. Instead, a special committee is formed with the sole purpose of selecting the president via a vote. This governance system is observed in countries like Austria and Germany.
- iii) a President (parliamentary republics), not necessarily a political figure, with limited powers and the head of the executive which mandate derives from the Parliament. This form of governance is found to be predominately present in European Union countries, including Latvia, Poland, Finland, Cyprus, Slovakia, Malta, Romania, Bulgaria, Slovenia, Hungary, Italy, Portugal, Lithuania, Ireland, France, Hungary, Greece, Czech Republic, and Estonia. There are only a few cases in parliamentary systems, where the head of government is also head of state. In this case, they are accountable to Parliament, where their mandate's legitimacy derives from Parliament.

III. 2. Governance forms in a parliamentary democracy

Two of the fundamental ways to organize a political system in countries that seek to establish and sustain democracy include presidentialism and parliamentarism. In presidential systems, both the head of the government and the legislature are independently and popularly elected for a fixed term in office. In parliamentary systems, the legislature, but not the government, is popularly elected: the government remains in office if it is at least tolerated by a majority in the parliament. As such, parliamentary systems are referred as systems with assembly confidence or government responsibility.

Parliamentarism

In Europe, the prevailing form of governance is parliamentarianism. The primary overarching feature defining a parliamentary system is the blending of the executive and legislative powers and the accountability of the government to the parliament. The government must have the support of the parliament for it to enter and remain in office. Parliamentary systems can maximize the inclusiveness of parliament and can give rise to coalition governments that are representative of several political

choices, even in divided societies. Parliamentary systems are also inherently flexible, as they enable removal of the head of government or the call of new elections when the majority of parliament no longer supports the government's approach.

The President elected by the parliamentarian, have less power and authority, and instead the higher power belongs to the government, for decision-making, policy making and budget planning, etc. In the federal republics, there is a distribution of power i.e., decentralization of power to the local administration, which has a larger number of responsibilities and competences. There are some exemptions in countries such as Belgium, where the regional organization of the country influences the distribution of power (monarchy and a federal state).

According to Juan Linz, parliamentarism, is seen as a flexible system that provides an easy-to-invoke and relatively cheap mechanism for resolving conflicts between the executive and the legislative powers. This representing a 'built-in' mechanism of conflict resolution that is not available in presidentialism. Strøm (2000), states that parliamentarism should be seen as a single and continuous chain of delegation and accountability, starting with the voters and proceeding to the parliament, the government and the bureaucracy. Scholars of parliamentarism assume that the mere presence of a parliament is seen as sufficient to guarantee the peaceful operation and survival of the political system.

Presidentialism

In a presidential system of Government, governments are likely not to be supported by a majority of the legislature since generally there are no guarantees in the system that such a majority can exist. Gridlocks between the executive and the legislature could arise and can lead to conflict between the two powers, unless the constitution provides for designs that compel them to cooperate. Coalitions are relatively rare as there are limited incentives in the system for individual politicians and their political parties to cooperate with one another and the government. Decision making is normally considered to be decentralized – that is, to be such that the president can respond to proposals originated in the legislature, which are in turn organized in such a way as to allow for political representatives to pursue individualistic rather than partisan strategies. Consequently, the government's ability to influence and implement policy can be reduced. In a presidential system of government, the president is elected for a constitutionally accepted fixed term in office. The head of state is elected directly through popular vote. In such case, this gives the President a broader spectrum of responsibilities and higher authority and possible decision-making competencies.

Linz argues that the fixed term of executive and legislature powers – a key feature of presidentialism, is to be seen as a problem. According to him, fixed terms powers would bring no institutional solutions in case of deadlock between the two powers.

He argues that presidentialism is less likely to sustain stable democratic regimes. While Mainwaring and Shugart, in their article “Juan Linz, Presidentialism, and Democracy: A Critical Appraisal” claim that presidentialism has some advantages that partially offset its drawbacks. They argue that these advantages can be maximized by paying careful attention to differences among presidential systems. They further argue that presidentialism tends to function better where presidencies have weak legislative powers, parties are at least moderately disciplined, and party systems are not highly fragmented.

IV. The President in presidential and parliamentary systems

The key distinction of the role of a President in a Parliamentary country compared to that of a Presidential country, is to which extent the power is exercised and influences the governance.

In countries with a Presidential system, the Head of state, so the President is the one who also governs (e.g. USA, Mexico). In countries with a Parliamentary system, the legislative branch (Parliament) has greater power and the Prime Minister deriving from Parliament rules and exercise the competencies to govern. Heads of state is purely symbolic figure, either it can be a monarch (example England), or a President in Parliamentary systems. Also has the functions of ceremonial and symbolic leader. The President or the Monarch has no real decision-making or policy-making power.

In Parliamentary systems, by law there is a clear distinction of the functions, competencies, and responsibilities of the head of government being the Prime Minister and the Head of State, being a formal figure with very limited powers (either a President, i.e., a popular nonpolitical person elected by the Parliament representing the unity between parties, or a monarch which position is inherited, in constitutional monarchy countries).

In a presidential system, the President is the most important figure that has the greatest extent of power, is the head of the executive, is elected by citizens through a separate election process and is the big “guy” (ozerim.yasar.edu.tr). The member of the cabinets i.e., the Ministers, or the secretaries in case of USA are appointed then by the President itself. This system is characterized by a clear distinction of power because the executive branch (President) and the legislative (the Congress), are separately elected through vote, so in a way they function independently from one another.

Another characteristic of parliamentary democracies is the existence of a multi-party systems that enhances more participation and representation in the seats of Parliaments, more often found in countries that use proportional representation.

This characteristic does not give a single branch to exercise the full power without challenge. Consequently, this can affect that the President and the Head of Governance, are from different parties, so needing to have a clear separation of the spectrum of competencies and responsibilities.

24 countries in Europe have an electoral system for the President, which is different and separated from the electoral system for the national legislature (Austria, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Cyprus North, Czech Republic, Finland, France, Iceland, Ireland, Lithuania, Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, and Ukraine). In these countries, the President represents the state, but also might some have some executive power, e.g., to appoint the Prime Minister (the chancellor in Federal countries).

The duration of a President's mandate is generally 5 years in most of the European countries, but it can be shorter e.g., 4-years duration in countries such as Estonia, Latvia, Moldova, or it can be longer such as in Finland and Austria 6 years and Ireland 7-years duration. IFES. (October 2022).

V. The election procedure of a President

A very important institutional decision in any democracy is selection of the electoral system. This is considered as such because it determines the overall political structure and governance rules, focusing on defining the rules of the political game, most importantly, who governs and the competencies and functions of the head of state and the head of the executive. Historically, however, despite the importance of such a decision, rarely has been observed a case when the electoral system is designed or chosen to respond to particular historical and social conditions of a country. To the contrary, the design of the electoral system has been guided and influenced by other neighboring countries systems, or the impact of colonialism in other cases.

Using the Database of Idea on Electoral Systems, regarding whether there is an electoral system for the President or not, European countries can be classified (<https://www.idea.int>) and crosschecking with other international official websites (<https://www.electionguide.org>):

- 11 countries in Europe do not apply an electoral system for the President. President is elected indirectly by the Parliament. Examples include Albania, Estonia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Kosovo, Latvia, Malta, San Marino, and Switzerland. President is the head of state and has separate power from the executive, or the Prime Minister. Actually, the President in

these cases have limited power is a more honorific figure, promoting peace and inclusiveness between parties and branches of the judiciary, legislative and executive branches.

- 11 countries in Europe have a monarch as the head of state. These are Andorra, Belgium, Denmark, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Monaco, Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden, and United Kingdom. The monarch's main function is to represent the state. The Monarch duties, those that are statutory and institutional, are developed over years of history. And further to the state duties, the Monarch also plays a less formal role, that of the 'Head of Nation'. In this case, the Monarch plays an important role in matters related to national identity, unity, and pride; strives to provide a sense of stability and continuity; publicly promotes success and excellence; and supports the ideal of voluntary service.
- 24 countries in Europe have an electoral system for the President, which is different and separated from the electoral system for the national legislature (Austria, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Cyprus North, Czech Republic, Finland, France, Iceland, Ireland, Lithuania, Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, and Ukraine). In these countries, the President represents the state, but also might some have some executive power, e.g. to appoint the Prime Minister (either the chancellor in Federal countries).
- 5 territories not applicable (Holy See/ Vatican is one of the last remaining seven absolute monarchies in the world; Gibraltar has almost complete internal self-governance through a parliament, having the British monarch as a head of state; There are three territories under The Crown Dependencies (Guernsey, Isle of Man and Jersey), they have the status of "territories for which the United Kingdom is responsible", rather than sovereign states.)

VI. The power of the President in a parliamentary democracy

The powers of the President are exercised differently in various institutional designs and countries, and their role and authority are clearly defined in the country's constitution. Choosing an appropriate electoral system is the key factor influencing the level of democracy of a country, because it deeply affects the political environment and safety of that country. Countries that have an electoral system for the President, the President is more powerful, and has also executive powers. In countries that do not have an electoral system, but the President mandate derives from the Parliament, the power is modest and its pure symbolic representative of

the state. In this case, being elected by most parliamentarians, and representing a multiparty system, is more likely to promote stability and coherence in a country (www.mass.gov).

A President in a Parliamentary Democracy cannot make laws – the President can veto a law approved in the Parliament. But it is not under the President's full authority to decide whether the law is passed. The power to make a new law is under Parliament's competencies (legislative branch). A President neither can decide how budget money will be spent, or can ask for demonstration of accountability – it is the executive branch (Prime Minister's Cabinet) that is responsible for the revenue collection and planning how the money is allocated and spent, in collaboration with the Parliament (legislative branch). A President cannot interpret laws, this function belongs to the judicial branch, i.e. the Supreme Court, which decides for the meaning and how the laws should be implemented, how laws can be applied to certain circumstances, and have the final decision on different interpretations of law in other levels of any of the branches. Instead, the President sometimes can elect some of the Member of higher judicial institutions.

What a President can, may or shall do, can be categorized as following:

(1) The Head of State.

In a parliamentary republic, the role of the Head of State is performed by the President. The primarily role of the President in such case is mainly representative, but this again highly depends a state's political system. In certain contexts, the President is entitled with representing one's country, performing ceremonial duties, providing civic leadership. When serving as head of state, the President cannot perform certain functions, and these may include: holding other public posts, being a member of a party, or even carrying out other private activity.

(2) Representing the unity of the sovereign

The President is voted secretly by the members of the Parliament, requiring the majority number of the Parliamentarians. Being so, representing most of the Parliament, indirectly represents the unity of the sovereign. The President convenes the newly elected Parliament. They can request the Assembly to meet in extraordinary sessions. The President at different timing can address messages to bring to the attention of the agenda of the Parliament the highest interest and priorities of the citizens.

(3) Representing the state

One of the roles entitled to a President, is carrying out the function of the representative of the nation. In this role, the focus of the President is on matters related to public diplomacy such as promoting a country's image and reputation.

Due to their non-executive status, Presidents are more prone to engage in these types of activities and are less easily compromised by the political decisions of their governments. The President is entitled to coordinate certain diplomatic representatives of other states and international organizations activities, accredited to the country. They serve as a connection with foreign countries, by bridging communications, and have the capacity to organize cultural events of a diplomatic nature. Further, the President can recognize foreign countries, and in some countries, they can lead a country's foreign policy.

(4) Ensuring governance continuity

The mandate of a President usually is longer than of the government or Parliament mandate. This fact is important, especially in specific crisis when the government is not constituted, or during governmental transitions, the state is still functioning. This is important for internal safety and security issues and the international reputation of the country. In some countries where cabinets functions in short duration, or where is a frequent change in short periods of time in the Prime Minister's Office, the President can be the source of continuity to maintain the institutional memory. Also, the role of the President is important when the government is under constitution and the formation of the cabinet takes longer than expected or when parliament is dissolved.

(5) Ensuring the political neutrality and balance of the state

The President is proposed by the group of Parliamentarian (the number required changes from country to country) and is elected through a voting system by the Parliament. Being so, the President represents most of the Parliament, where at most times it is required a higher majority in the number of votes needed to be elected (for example 2/3 of the votes in the Parliament; but this is different from country to country), than needed to create the governance (e.g., simple majority 50% + one vote). By which means that the President symbolizes the unity of the Parliament. The President ensures neutrality between state's, maintaining a healthy separation between the government that is party-politically influenced and the other state institutions that are supposed to be citizen-oriented and not being affected by politics. The head of state could not directly influence and interfere the leading and ruling processes of those institutions, but with their neutral role, should be able to avoid any possible influence of parties.

(6) Civic leadership

The President has the official status as a civic leader. They promote the highest values of people and keeps up the aspirations of a country that might include hosting different ceremonial events with national or international public figures,



supporting or participating in different activities to encourage the civic engagement and empowering local communities. The President can make speeches and talk directly to the people about problems, representing the best interest of all the people. However, there is a distinction to be noted between civil leadership and political interference. To protect the independence of some institution, by law is clearly defined that the President cannot make public comments in many jurisdictions that could be interpreted as politically controversial. Even if it's not under the President's responsibility to find solutions to sectorial aspects of the governance, their presence and engagement can play a role and influence the outcome for a safer and better environment for all, enhancing the improvement of the quality of life. The President can choose to engage in different economic, social, health, cultural events, the most relevant at a specific time for the communities.

(7) Discretionary powers

Defined as the autonomy to practice own professional judgement, for governance-ruled affairs, discretionary power is one of the responsibilities conferred to a President. A President may be entitled with certain discretionary powers, which, as defined in a country's constitution, are to be executed at the President's personal discretion. Despite this authority to exercise discretionary powers, the President is limited to practice their discretion in the performance of certain official duties. Such examples include a President's responsibility to signing a treaty ratified by the parliament, but where their power to refuse signature is simply missing. A President's presence weighs more as an institutional authority to strengthen the legitimacy of government acts. Discretionary powers of a President include also granting medals, titles of gratitude and awards, in recognition of a valuable contribution. In certain countries, a President is entitled to accredit and receive ambassadors, appoint certain high-ranking officials, formally promulgate laws (put a law or decree into effect by official proclamation). A President exercises the right of pardon in accordance with the law. Another very important discretionary power of a President is exercising the role of a constitutional arbiter or guarantor - an extraordinary political intervention.

(8) Appointing certain high officials

In some countries, the law defines that the President is empowered to appoint specific high officials and/ or civil servants, but specifics and the extent to exercise this power varies by country. The President is responsible, depending on the country context, to:

- i) Appoint the Prime Minister, and/ or recommend appointment and/ or dismissal of the other members of the Cabinet and the Undersecretaries.

- ii) Appoint and release members of government/ State officials in cases as provided by law.
- iii) Appoint and dismiss judges, or Magistrates in compliance with the law.
- iv) Appointments in the defense sector, including promoting generals; appointing the Commander of the Security Force, appointing and dismiss the commanders of the army, navy, and air force.
- v) Approving the Head of Supreme Courts and judicial bodies. The President could, appoint and dismiss Chief Prosecutor and prosecutors, issue the post of President or Vice-President of the Supreme Administrative Court, of the Supreme Civil and Criminal Court and of the Court of Audit, appoint the Chief/ Chancellor of Justice of the Supreme Court, propose the President of the National Office for the Judiciary, and the Prosecutor General.
- vi) Appoint and recall diplomatic missions: The President appoints and releases plenipotentiary representatives of the country to other states and international organizations; receives the credentials of diplomatic agents accredited in country, appoints and dismisses heads of diplomatic missions.
- vii) Appointing Governor of the Bank. The President appoints the President of the Budget Council, the Governor and Deputy Governors of the National Bank, the heads of autonomous regulatory organs, or other members of the Bank's Board.
- viii) Academic appointments and leadership experience: The President nominates the Chairman of the Academy of Sciences, the rectors of universities and university professors pursuant to law; confirms the President of the Academy of Sciences, the President of the Academy of Arts.
- ix) Other appointments: The President may appoint citizens who have honored the Nation through their outstanding achievements in the social, scientific, artistic and literary fields; appoint and dismiss federal civil servants; appoint the Chair of the Central Election Commission, appoint the Director, Deputy Director and Inspector General of the Intelligence Agency.

(9) National Defense

The President plays an important role in the National Defense of a country. Examples show that national defense and security of a country is often chaired by the President. The President could hold the prime responsibility for the conduct of foreign relations, which may include holding the power to deploy forces abroad, engage in military operations when such action is deemed necessary to maintain

the security and defense of the country. When it comes to managing matters related to security and defense, these are chaired by a President. The President serves also as the commander-in-chief of the armed forces, and in specific contexts serves as the supreme commander of national defense. It is noted that in some countries the President is the Commander in chief of the nation's Armed Forces, and in some other countries the command shall be exercised by the government.

(10) Diplomatic role

Many country's constitutions explicitly stress functions and responsibilities of the President that focus on their role as a Diplomat. The role of a head of state is codified in the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, a Convention ratified by 191 sovereign states. According to this Convention, the head of state in the generic sense presents international treaties (treaties.un.org).

(11) A non-executive president

A non-executive president is a symbolic leader of a state who performs a representative and civic role and separates the representative embodiment of the permanent institutions of the state from the leader of the incumbent government. A non-executive president is found in almost all parliamentary republics. Examples include Bangladesh, Dominica, Germany, India, Italy, Lebanon, Malta, Mongolia and Vanuatu. Bulmer, E. (August 2014) page VI.

VII. Analytical framework

The secondary research conducted, has contributed to the overall design of this article, including the design of the analytical framework, that will be used to identify patterns across countries and identify potential trends in national development matters.

The analytical framework used for the purposes of this article, involves collection and analysis of the following data sets:

TABLE 1

Political system	Regime Type	Index of Economic Freedom	Government Defense Integrity Index	Freedom in the world	Corruption Perception Index (CPI)
Parliamentarism					
Presidentialism					
Semi-presidentialism					

VII. 1. Results

VII. 1. 1. Regime Type

According to Democracy Index 2021 - Economist Intelligence measure of democracy², less than half (45.7%) of the world's population now live in a democracy of some sort, a significant decline from 2020 (49.4%). Even fewer (6.4%) reside in a “full democracy”; this level is down from 8.4% in 2020, after two countries (Chile and Spain) were downgraded to “flawed democracies”. Substantially more than a third of the world's population (37.1%) live under authoritarian rule, with a large share being in China.

TABLE 2

	Full democracy	Flawed democracy	Hybrid regime	Authoritarian regime
Parliamentarism (*8 not ranked)	7/43	23/43	8/43	5/43
Presidentialism (*6 not ranked)	3/58	12/58	20/58	23/58
Semi-presidentialism (*1 not ranked)	1/28	9/28	4/28	14/28

(DEMOCRACY INDEX 2021, Democracy Index 2021,)

Note: Other countries not included in this list have either a socialist or monarchy system of governance.

Out of 151 countries³, only 11 countries have *Full democracy*; of which seven are parliamentarism governance systems, three presidentialism, and 1 semi-presidentialism. 44 of these countries have a *Flawed democracy*, where Presidents in 19 of these countries have limited/ceremonial power, 17 having the President as Head of state and government and in 8 countries the President being the Head of State. 34 countries have a *Hybrid regime*, where Presidents of 27 countries serve either as Head of state and government (22) or Head of State/ diplomacy (5). 46 countries are under an *Authoritarian regime*, with the President serving as Head of State and Government or Head of State, in 43 cases. Of these countries, their territories are mainly in Africa, Asia, and Latin America.

Out of 51 countries having a parliamentarism governance system: 7 have *full democracy* (scoring 8 and above, out of 10), with 6 countries being in Europe,

² Economist Intelligence Democracy Index measures democracy in five categories: I- Electoral process and pluralism; II- Functioning of government; III- Political participation; IV- Political culture; V- Civil liberties.

³ Oceania and microstates don't have a classification on the regime type (16 states in total).



and only one in Africa (Mauritius), and in all cases with the President having limited/ceremonial power; 23 have *Flawed democracy* (scoring under 8, out of 10); 8 have *Hybrid regime* (scoring under 6, out of 10); 5 have an *Authoritarian regime* (Ethiopia, Iraq, Lebanon, Myanmar, and United Arab Emirates), where the President has either Limited/ceremonial power (3), or serves as Head of state and government (1) or Head of State (1). From countries with a parliamentarism governance system, 36 have the President exercising limited/ceremonial power. Less than 50% of these countries, are territories located in Europe.

Out of 64 countries applying a presidentialism governance system, 3 have *full democracy*, in all cases with the President being Head of state and government (Costa Rica, South Korea and Uruguay); 12 have *Flawed democracy*; 20 have *Hybrid regime*; 23 have an *Authoritarian regime*. From countries with a presidentialism governance system, 61 have the President exercising the role of Head of State and Government. Around 45% of countries with a presidentialism governance, are in Africa, 31% in Latin America, and 17% in Asia.

Out of 29 countries applying semi-presidentialism governance system, only one (Taiwan), has full democracy; 9 have Flawed democracy; 4 have a Hybrid regime; and 14 have an Authoritarian regime. The President exercises the role of the Head of State or Head of State and Government, in 26 cases.

VII. 1. 2. *Index of Economic Freedom*

The Index Economic Freedom 2022⁴, has measured economic freedom of countries based on 12 quantitative and qualitative factors, grouped into four broad categories, or pillars, of economic freedom: 1- Rule of Law (property rights, government integrity, judicial effectiveness); 2- Government Size (government spending, tax burden, fiscal health); 3- Regulatory Efficiency (business freedom, labor freedom, monetary freedom); 4- Open Markets (trade freedom, investment freedom, financial freedom). Each of the twelve economic freedoms within these categories is graded on a scale of 0 to 100. A country's overall score is derived by averaging these twelve economic freedoms, with equal weight being given to each.

The data from the Index report show the following state of economic freedom for countries based on their governance system type:

TABLE 3

	Free	Mostly free	Moderately free	Mostly unfree	Repressed
Parliamentarism governance (*2 countries are not ranked)	4/41	11/41	14/41	7/41	5/41

⁴ Index of Economic Freedom is an annual guide published by The Heritage Foundation, a Washington's think tank. The Index covers 12 freedoms – from property rights to financial freedom – in 184 countries.

Presidential governance	0/58	5/58	14/58	26/58	13/58
Semi-presidential governance (*2 countries are not ranked)	1/26	2/26	4/26	12/26	6/26

(UNESCO Global Report 2021-2022)

VII. 1. 3. Government Defense Integrity Index

According to the 2020 Government Defense Integrity Index (GDI)⁵, nearly two-thirds of countries face a high to critical risk of corruption in their defense and security sectors. Countries that score poorly in the GDI have weak or non-existent safeguards against defense sector corruption and are more likely to experience conflict, instability, and human rights abuses. According to this report, 62 per cent of countries receive an overall score of 49/100 or lower, indicating a high to critical risk of defense sector corruption across all world regions.

With a view of the GDI data as per governance system types of countries, the following can be summarized:

TABLE 4

	Very low risk	Low risk	Moderate risk	High risk	Very high risk	Critical risk
Parliamentarism (*18 countries are not ranked)	0/25	3/25	10/25	6/25	4/25	2/25
Presidentialism (*37 countries are not ranked)	0/21	0/21	5/21	5/21	7/21	4/21
Semi-presidentialism (*14 countries are not ranked)	0/14	1/14	2/14	4/14	3/14	4/14

(UNESCO Global Report 2021-2022)

VII. 1. 4. Freedom in the world

Freedom House's flagship publication Freedom in the World - a standard-setting comparative assessment of global political rights and civil liberties, assesses political rights and civil liberties around the world. *Freedom in the World* analyses the electoral process, political pluralism and participation, the functioning of the government, freedom of expression and of belief, associational and organizational rights, the rule of law, and personal autonomy and individual rights. In their 2022 publication report, the following data have been reported:

⁵ The GDI assesses and scores 86 countries across five risk areas – financial, operational, personnel, political and procurement – before assigning an overall score.



TABLE 5

	Free	Partly-free	Not free
Parliamentarism governance	23/43	16/43	4/43 (*all of which authoritarian regimes)
Presidential governance	12/58	23/58	23/58
Semi-presidential governance	9/27	9/27	9/27

In the Global Report of World Trends in Freedom of Expression and Media Development, it is shown that in the Asia and the Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean regions (123 journalists killed in each region), have the highest number of reported killings of journalists. This is followed by the Arab region (90 journalists killed), while less than a quarter of the total number of killings took place in Africa, Western Europe, and North America, and Central and Eastern Europe combined.

VII. 1. 5. Corruption Perception Index (CPI)

According to the Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI)⁶ countries with well-protected civil and political liberties generally control corruption better, while countries who violate civil liberties tend to score lower. Though, corruption levels are at a worldwide standstill. Two-thirds of countries score below 50, indicating that they have serious corruption problems, while 27 countries are at their lowest score ever. The highest scoring region is Western Europe & European Union (66/100), and the lowest scoring region is Sub-Saharan Africa (33/100). (Transparency International, Corruption Perceptions INDEX ,2021)

Denmark, Finland, and New Zealand, each score 88 (top three in the list), followed by Norway, Singapore, Sweden, Switzerland, the Netherlands, Luxembourg and Germany that complete the top 10. Except Singapore, the other 9 countries are territories in Europe (Western Europe). Venezuela, Somalia, Syria, and South Sudan, are at the bottom of the index. Countries experiencing armed conflict or authoritarianism tend to earn the lowest scores, including Venezuela, Yemen, North Korea, Afghanistan, Libya, Equatorial Guinea, and Turkmenistan. Overall, the CPI shows that control of corruption has stagnated or worsened in 86 per cent of countries over the last decade.

Viewing the CPI scores, based on political systems countries represent, it is noted that the average score for countries having a parliamentarism governance, is 50.62 (out of 100), compared to 34.01 (out of 100) with countries having a presidential governance system, and 37.18 (out of 100) for countries with semi-presidential governance system.

CPI average (out of 100), according to institutional design options:

⁶ The index ranks 180 countries and territories by their perceived levels of public sector corruption according to experts and businesspeople. It relies on 13 independent data sources and uses a scale of zero to 100, where zero is highly corrupt and 100 is very clean.

TABLE 6

	Total average	Full democracy	Flawed democracy	Hybrid regime	Authoritarian regime
Parliamentarism governance (43 countries)	50.62	75.43	49.10	42.13	36.6
Presidential governance (58 countries)	34.01	64.33	43.16	32.8	26.35
Semi-presidential governance (26 countries, one not ranked)	37.18	68 (*one countries only)	51	32.5	26.69

VII. 2. Discussions

Analysis of key reports and data sets covering political and economic elements of a country's governance, indicate for a potential correlational relationship between the governance institutional design and level of development of a country. The data gathered from various data sets of international reports, showed that presidential and semi-presidential governance systems overall prevail throughout the globe. But countries applying a parliamentarisms governance system, tend to perform better in national sectoral assessments; while countries having a presidentialism's or semi-presidentialism governance system, perform lower and, usually poor, in what is assessed as quality governance, and democratic regimes. This supports Juan Linz argument that presidentialism is less likely to sustain stable democratic regimes, and other scholars finding who say that the mere presence of a parliament is seen as sufficient to guarantee the peaceful operation and survival of the political system.

This article analyzed five global datasets (Regime type, Economic freedom, Government Defense Integrity, Freedom in the World, and Corruption Perception Index), versus the institutional design setting of a country's governance system, and found that:

Countries with a parliamentarism governance system have more democratic regime types, compared to presidentialism governance systems, which appear to have a more hybrid or authoritarian regimes. Parliamentarism governance systems are found mainly in Europe, and of those having a hybrid/ or authoritarian regime, are found mainly in Asia. Presidentialism governance systems are found mainly in Latin America, Africa, and Asia, and of those having a hybrid/ or authoritarian regime, are found mainly in Africa and Asia. Similarly, semi-presidentialism governance systems, are mainly found in Africa. (DEMOCRACY INDEX 2021, Democracy Index 2021)

Countries with a parliamentarism governance system, more than half, have free/ moderately free economic freedoms; while more than half of presidentialism governance systems, and more than half of semi-presidentialism governance

systems, are mostly unfree, or have repressed economic freedoms. Such countries face risks about rule of law, government size, regulatory efficiency, open markets. (2022 Index of Economic Freedom)

Half of countries of with a parliamentarism governance system, face low to moderate risk of corruption in their defence and security sectors; while two-third of countries with a presidentialism governance system, face high to critical risks. The same is noted for countries with a semi-presidentialism governance system.

For all countries, drafting a new constitution or amending an existing one is a stimulating challenge, but also a demanding process from both a political and technical standpoint. This report presents the results of a benchmarking exercise conducted by the OECD of possible constitutional provisions, reflecting the experiences of OECD member countries. The components covered include economic and social rights, the system of government, multi-level governance, constitutional review, fiscal governance, and the role and functioning of central banks. OECD (February 2022).

Regarding political rights and civil liberties, it is observed that countries with parliamentarisms are either free or partly free, with only a small percentage being reported as non-free (all of which authoritarian regimes); while in presidential countries it is noted that they are either partly free (about half of the countries) or not free (about the other half). Semi-presidential countries are reported to be a third free, a third partly-free and a third not free.

Countries with a parliamentarism governance, tend to score better in the protection of civil and political liberties, while countries with a presidential and semi-presidential governance, score much lower. This indicates higher violation of these rights in countries with such institutional design settings.

Considering the role and status of the President as a civic leader, who promotes the highest values of people and keeps up the aspirations of a country, it can be deliberated that in presidential and semi-presidential countries, this critical role has failed to be accomplished, while certainly there are present gaps in parliamentarism societies as well.

VIII. Conclusions

Political instability has been an issue all over the world and continues to escalate in different countries in Europe and wider. Conflicts all over the world have arisen, and although between specific countries, their consequences affect the wider population. An important role in this, has played the political system of a countries. Looking at countries in conflict, or those that have critical issues with national freedoms and good governance, it is noted that their governance system,

institutions, processes, and practices are fragile, or do not purposely guarantee such freedoms and rights to their citizens.

The governance system of a country appears to have a meaningful role in securing respect for human rights, rule of law, political pluralism, efficient delivery of public services, economic freedoms, and many others. While different governance institutional settings seem to secure these in different scales, specific systems (presidentialism and semi-presidentialism) do not manage to achieve this. These systems indicate for serious problems in managing to meet a minimum requirement of political, economic, and civil rights. The governance system should be guided by national interests, and not fulfillment of personal interests, or perspective.

Governance systems should be designed such that allow for political and institutional processes and outcomes to achieve national development goals, by delivering effectively human rights: civil, economic, political rights. Institutions of governance should redesign themselves to guarantee a state of welfare to all.

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