

Joannes Jacobsen

“Longevity and Electoral Rules as Determinants of Comparative Development”

The thesis consists of four papers. The first three papers examine the effects of increases in life expectancy around the world, caused by the revolution in medical technology which started in the mid 1940s, on markers of development. The three papers consider in turn, the effect of increases in life expectancy on income per capita, schooling and democracy. The effects of increases in life expectancy are found to be that:

1. Measures of democracy improve substantially.
2. Income per capita decreases initially but recovers to its initial level after 30 years.
3. Literacy and primary school enrolment rates increase substantially. Secondary school enrolment rates decrease substantially initially but recover partially over a 30 year period.

The last paper examines the effect of choice of electoral system on corruption levels. It concludes that majoritarian electoral systems imply economically and statistically significantly lower corruption levels than proportional representation electoral systems.