



The power of having powerful friends: Evidence from a new dataset of IMF negotiating missions, 1985-2020

Lauren L. Ferry¹ · Alexandra O. Zeitz² 

Accepted: 25 January 2024

© The Author(s), under exclusive licence to Springer Science+Business Media, LLC, part of Springer Nature 2024

Abstract

When countries are confronted with a crisis and have no alternative but to turn to the International Monetary Fund (IMF), speed is of the essence. Why do some countries negotiate IMF loans more quickly than others? We introduce an original dataset on the timing and intensity of negotiations between the borrowing government and IMF staff for more than 700 IMF loans agreed between 1985 and 2020. Applying concepts from this special issue on the “Power of the Weak” (Snidal et al., 2024), we argue that although borrowing countries are in a weak position when they approach the IMF, they nonetheless sometimes achieve more rapid negotiations. In particular, we argue that borrowers can obtain speedier negotiations on the basis of their ties to major IMF shareholder states, specifically through shared membership in other international organizations and financial exposure. Importantly, we suggest that well-placed borrowers can hasten the conclusion of negotiations without compromising on the conditions attached to IMF programs. We use our original data and an illustrative case study of Côte d’Ivoire to support our claims.

Keywords International Monetary Fund · Negotiations · Bargaining delay · Power

JEL Classification F33

1 Introduction

International cooperation requires negotiation. Divergent preferences must be reconciled and compromises reached, which takes time. But time is a luxury. Delay

Responsible editors: Karolina Milewicz & Duncan Snidal

✉ Alexandra O. Zeitz
alexandra.zeitz@concordia.ca

Lauren L. Ferry
leferry@olemiss.edu

¹ Department of Political Science, University of Mississippi, Oxford, Mississippi, USA

² Department of Political Science, Concordia University, Montreal, Canada

postpones benefits of cooperation and imposes costs on negotiating parties (Fearon, 1998; Bearce et al., 2014; Lechner and Wüthrich, 2018). This is especially apparent in countries' negotiations with the International Monetary Fund (IMF), where delay can deepen an ongoing economic crisis (Fernández-Arias, 2010). In the words of McDowell (2017, 40), "what good is a fire truck if it arrives after the house has burned down?"

In this paper, we introduce an original dataset on the length and intensity of IMF program negotiations from 1985 to 2020. For more than 700 programs, we collect data from the IMF archives on the dates when IMF staff met with borrowing government officials to negotiate the terms of an IMF loan. IMF staff travel to borrowing countries on "missions" to negotiate over program targets and reform requirements. In some cases, programs are agreed after a single two-week mission. In others, negotiations require multiple missions spread out over months or years. Our dataset captures this variation, recording the number of negotiating missions per program, as well as the dates of missions and subsequent IMF Board approval. Building on work on the timing of internal bureaucratic operations within the IMF (McDowell, 2017) or World Bank (Kilby, 2013), we track how negotiations between borrowing governments and the Fund unfold.

We examine this variation in the length of IMF negotiations, framing the investigation in terms of the focus of this special issue on the "Power of the Weak." Since borrowing countries approach the IMF in moments of crisis, they are usually the weaker actor in negotiations between IMF staff and government officials. Yet, existing research has emphasized that borrowing countries may nonetheless obtain IMF agreements more aligned with their interests. Previous studies have highlighted that borrowers that are of specific importance to major shareholders can use shareholders' interests to their advantage to receive larger loans, fewer conditions and shorter suspensions (Oatley and Yackee, 2004; Dreher and Jensen, 2007; Stone, 2004). For instance, borrowing governments' temporary membership on the United Nations (UN) Security Council has been linked to a greater likelihood of receiving an IMF program (Dreher et al., 2009) and fewer conditions attached to an IMF loan (Dreher et al., 2015). Studies have also found that borrowers receive more favorable agreements when major shareholders are more exposed to spillover from a crisis in the borrowing country (Broz and Hawes, 2006; Copelovitch, 2010b). Extending these arguments, we suggest that borrowing countries can benefit from connections to influential shareholders to gain more rapid access to IMF loans.

We argue that some borrowers have more leverage than others, and this leverage is associated with faster negotiations. All actors involved in designing and approving IMF programs — the borrowing government, the IMF staff, and major shareholders — have an interest in rapidly concluding negotiations. However, the borrowing government has the most to gain from accessing an IMF loan quickly, so long as the terms of the loan are held constant. Once a government has decided it is worth the political costs to pursue an IMF program, the sooner the negotiations are concluded, the sooner the country can access IMF funds, restore stability to the economy, and calm international markets. Building on the rich IMF literature, we expect to observe that governments with certain ties to major shareholders will receive IMF programs more quickly. We interpret this as evidence that these borrowers have greater influence, obtaining loans more

in line with their preferences. Specifically, when borrowers hold important positions in other international organizations, such as the UN Security Council, negotiations should conclude more rapidly. Additionally, when borrowing governments are more connected to the financial sectors of major shareholders, their recovery from crisis is more important to these shareholders, allowing borrowers to access an IMF program more quickly.

While our focus on negotiation speed is a novel contribution to the IMF literature, the claim that borrowing governments benefit from ties to major shareholders is not new. In fact, it aligns with several of the “strategies of the weak” discussed in the framework paper of this special issue. The framework distinguishes between strategies that allow actors weak in material resources to nonetheless increase and wield four different types of power, namely compulsory, institutional, structural, and productive power (Snidal et al., 2024, this issue). Most relevant to our analysis are strategies associated with compulsory and structural power. In the framework paper, building on the work of Barnett and Duvall (2005), *compulsory power* refers to the ability of an actor to directly impact the behavior of another. Since weaker states lack material resources to exercise compulsory power, they must rely on other strategies, such as building coalitions or linking to other issues. We suggest that borrowing governments’ ability to benefit from their status in other international organizations such as the UN Security Council is an example of a *linkage strategy*. The framework of the special issue further conceptualizes *structural power* as the influence derived from the constitutive network of relations between actors. Hierarchical structures in the international system and global economy mean that weak states are usually defined by their lack of structural power. Nonetheless, as described by Snidal et al. (2024, this issue), seemingly weak states can use connectivity strategies to enhance or benefit from their position in international structures. We argue that borrowing governments’ ability to benefit from their financial ties to major shareholders can be understood as a *connectivity strategy*. We contrast our arguments against a simpler claim about compulsory power based on material resources, which would expect that richer or more populous countries do better in negotiations with the Fund. Across our tests, we find that when borrowers can exercise linkage and connectivity strategies based on their IO memberships and financial ties, negotiations with the IMF are shorter, with no such relationship for measures of material power.

We supplement our findings with two additional pieces of evidence. First, for shareholder ties to be sources of power for the weak, rapid negotiations should not come at the expense of other borrower preferences. To examine this, we pair our original data with existing data on IMF conditionality (Kentikelenis et al., 2016) to create a typology of combined borrower preferences over process (speed) and outcome (conditionality). Of four possible combinations, borrowers’ preference is for quick negotiations that yield programs with few conditions. Our results show that borrowers with temporary membership on the UN Security Council (linkage) and financial exposure to major shareholders (connectivity) are more likely to achieve their preferred, rapidly negotiated, low conditionality program. Second, we offer a brief case study of Côte d’Ivoire’s negotiations with the IMF to illustrate the range of variation in negotiation speed and terms. In the single case of Côte d’Ivoire, all four possible combinations of negotiation speed and conditionality are present. The case also reveals negotiation dynamics that

are not apparent in the quantitative analysis, including the role of domestic constraints and strategic delay.

This paper contributes to the special issue by highlighting that even when countries are weak vis-à-vis an international organization, they can have access to strategies of influence. What is distinctive about the dynamics we explore compared to other strategies of the weak in the special issue is that in this case, borrowers benefit from the interests and influence of much stronger states, the major shareholders. This is an example of weaker actors benefiting from the power associated with having powerful friends. It is different from other issue areas where weak states try to curtail the influence of powerful states (Beall, 2024, this issue) or international organizations (Campbell and Matanock, 2024, this issue). To the scholarship on IMF lending, this paper adds novel data on the negotiation phase between the IMF and borrowing countries, and uses this data to test arguments about how borrowers achieve preferred outcomes during negotiations. The paper also contributes to broader research on international cooperation by extending the empirical study of bargaining delay from inter-state negotiations (Fearon, 1998; Lechner and Wüthrich, 2018) to negotiations between an international organization and member states.

2 Introducing the IMF missions dataset

The interactions between borrowing countries and the IMF to prepare a loan follow a fairly predictable pattern (see Fig. 1).¹ First, a country experiences adverse economic circumstances that call for an IMF loan. After a period of domestic deliberation about whether an IMF program is necessary and politically acceptable (Vreeland, 2003), the country's government approaches the IMF to express its interest in a loan. Once the IMF receives an expression of interest, the relevant regional department within the IMF (e.g. the Africa department) works with subject-specific departments (e.g. Fiscal Affairs) to prepare the outlines of a potential IMF program. In consultation with IMF management, these staff prepare a "mission brief," which outlines the Fund's expectations for a program, including the approximate size and timeline of the program and conditions that the borrower will need to satisfy. With this document in hand, IMF staff travel to the borrowing country on a negotiating trip known as a "mission."²

IMF missions involve both data gathering and negotiations over the terms of the loan with high-level borrowing country representatives such as the finance minister or central bank governor. Most missions last two weeks. In some cases, the IMF and borrowing government conclude negotiations at the end of the first mission. In other cases, however, IMF staff return to headquarters without an agreement, and a subsequent negotiating mission takes place several weeks or months later.

When the government and IMF staff conclude their negotiations, the program is said to be agreed "ad referendum," with only formal approval still required.³ At this

¹ The following description of IMF program preparation draws on Copelovitch (2010a, 41–42), McDowell (2017), and Mody and Saravia (2013), as well as interviews with IMF staff.

² Occasionally, missions are held in Washington, DC or a third country.

³ Sometimes, the head of the IMF mission will give a press conference to indicate that IMF staff and the borrowing government have agreed on the terms of an IMF loan.

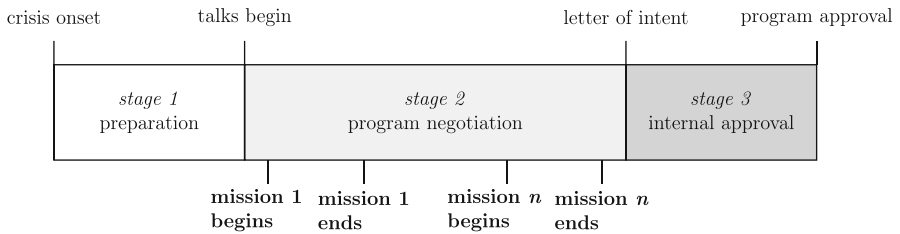


Fig. 1 Stages of IMF loan request and approval, elaborated from McDowell (2017)

point, IMF staff return to headquarters and prepare a staff report that provides the staff’s appraisal and recommendation for a program. At the same time, the authorities in the borrowing country correspond with staff to prepare a “letter of intent,” formally requesting an IMF program on the basis of the agreed terms. Once the letter of intent is received and the staff report completed, the proposed loan can be considered and voted on at a subsequent meeting of the IMF Executive Board. Programs that are recommended by IMF staff are almost always approved by the Executive Board, since internal discussions about the size and terms of a loan have taken place before the staff report is completed.

The few previous studies of IMF loan preparation have either examined the time from crisis onset to loan approval (Mody and Saravia, 2013) or the time from the formal request (letter of intent) to loan approval (McDowell, 2017). The former combines periods of time that are under the direct control of the borrowing country (crisis onset to initial contact with the Fund) with those that are under the sole control of the IMF (letter of intent to approval). The latter approach isolates the period that is under the IMF’s institutional control, and therefore acts as a measure of the organization’s responsiveness. By contrast, we seek to capture the phase of bargaining between a borrowing government and the IMF, measuring the intensity and duration of these encounters.

We collected original data on the dates of IMF negotiating missions, as well as other important milestones in the negotiation process. First, we defined our sample by identifying the date of Board approval of all IMF programs from 1985 to 2020.⁴ Second, we located the program request document, containing the staff report and letter of intent, for each of these programs from the IMF’s digital archives. Of the 786 program negotiations the IMF conducted between 1985 and 2020, we found request documents in the archives for 98%.⁵ Third, we extracted from the program request document the dates of IMF missions, the date the staff report was completed, and the date the letter of intent was formally submitted. Since negotiations for a program precede approval, sometimes by up to a year, the programs in our sample were negotiated between 1984 and 2020.

While defining our sample based on the list of agreed IMF programs is the dominant approach in the literature, it does mean that we only observe programs where both

⁴ Based on the IMF’s “Lending Commitments” by country. Available at <https://www.imf.org/external/np/fin/tad/extarr1.aspx>.

⁵ See Appendix A for information on the sample, available on the Review of International Organizations’ webpage.

the IMF and borrower have agreed to participate. Negotiations that were opened but ultimately failed would not yield a staff report for us to analyze. Our understanding, informed by press releases and conversations with IMF staff, is that this phenomenon is rare. If countries open negotiations with the Fund, they have likely already exhausted their outside options. Opening negotiations is also costly in financial markets (Gehring and Lang, 2020), so it is unlikely that countries would not proceed with their negotiations in order to access liquidity and the IMF's seal of approval. We emphasize that ours is the first systematic attempt to analyze the IMF's negotiation process, an area of international cooperation that is relatively opaque.

The vast majority of staff reports include a few sentences explaining when and where negotiations for the proposed program took place. In many cases, reports also note who took part in these negotiations on behalf of the IMF and the borrowing country. For instance, the staff report for Niger's 1986 stand-by arrangement states, "Discussions that provided the basis for these requests were held in Niamey during the period August 15-September 3, 1986. The representatives of Niger included Mr. Boukary Adji, Minister of Finance..."⁶ Sometimes there is only one mission,⁷ and sometimes there are several.⁸ Precise dates are usually available for each mission; however, there are cases where the month of negotiations is recorded without the exact day.⁹ Mission dates are available for more than 90% of the cases in our sample (714 programs). For 77% of our sample, dates can be recorded with precision (605 programs).

We use these dates to capture the length and intensity of the negotiation process. Specifically, we calculate the *Number of Missions*, which is a count variable of separate trips taken by the IMF staff to negotiate with a borrower country (see Fig. 2). It is our preferred measure as it speaks directly to the costliness of negotiating time. While it is not very costly for IMF staff to extend their stay by a number of days to finalize an agreement, it is costly to wait for an additional mission to be arranged and executed. Additionally, this measure allows us to include programs even where the mission dates were recorded imprecisely, minimizing bias in data collection. The data on negotiating missions shows that 58% of IMF programs require two or more missions to reach agreement on an IMF program (see Fig. 2). There is a slight downward trend in the number of missions per program over time, as the IMF appears to have sped up negotiating processes since the 1980s (see Fig. 3)

The dataset also allows for additional operationalizations. For example, we calculate the number of active negotiating days across all staff missions (see Fig. A3 in the Appendix). On average, IMF staff are on negotiating missions for 21 days, with significant variation stemming from the fact that some programs are negotiated over multiple missions. The data also includes the dates of different negotiation milestones,

⁶ IMF Country Report No. EBS/86/237.

⁷ For example, in Afghanistan's 2016 program, "discussions were held in Delhi during May 18-26, 2016" (IMF Country Report No. 16/252 2016).

⁸ For example, in Gabon's 2017 program, "discussions were held in Washington DC during January 26-27, in Libreville during February 14-28, and in Washington DC during March 29-April 7." (IMF Country Report No. 17/205 2017)

⁹ For example, in Egypt's 2016 program, "discussions were held in Washington DC in May, in London in June, and in Cairo in August" (IMF Country Report No. 17/17 2017).

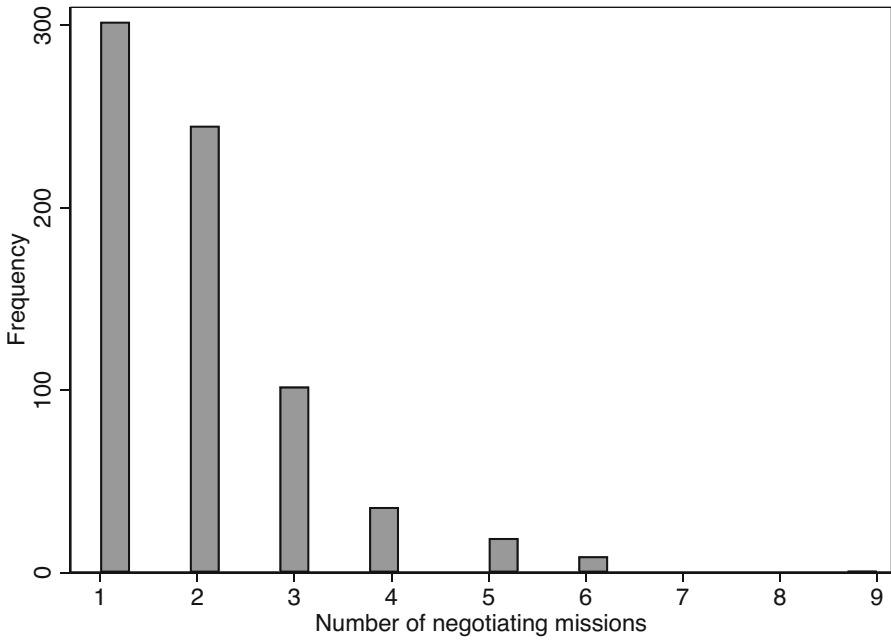


Fig. 2 Frequency of negotiating missions per IMF program, IMF programs approved 1985-2020

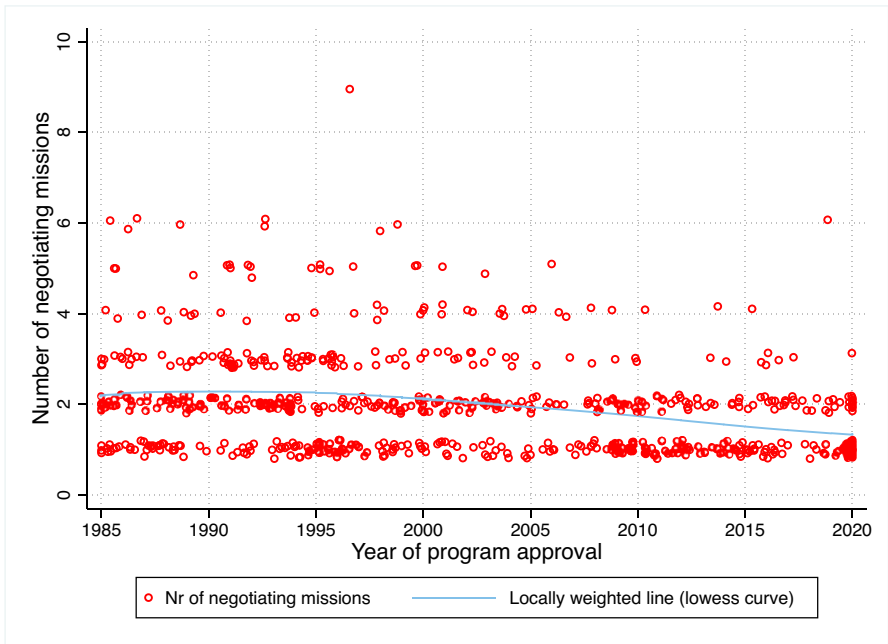


Fig. 3 Number of negotiating missions for IMF programs agreed 1985-2020

such as the letter of intent, staff agreement, and Board approval. These could be used to extend McDowell's (2017) study of IMF responsiveness to more recent IMF programs, measuring the time from letter of intent to Board approval. The time from the end of the last mission to the staff report could also be used as a measure of bureaucratic urgency, separate from the considerations of the Board. We provide descriptive statistics for several of these additional operationalizations in Appendix A. Finally, the dataset records the participants in each negotiation. For borrower countries, we code government representatives by their position (e.g. head of government, parliamentarian, central bank governor). For IMF staff, we code the relevant department (e.g. Monetary and Capital Markets or Strategy, Policy and Review department).

3 The negotiation process and borrower influence

Negotiations between the IMF and borrowing countries are characterized by power asymmetry. Borrowing governments approaching the IMF are usually in a weak position, dependent on the IMF for access to liquidity or external validation of their policies, whether facing an acute balance of payments crisis or enduring development challenges. While borrowers are the weaker actor in these negotiations, the existing literature on the IMF has demonstrated that there is significant variation in the IMF programs that countries receive, with some borrowers more likely to receive programs closely aligned with their preferences. Some countries receive more frequent loans, larger loans, or programs with fewer conditions and more lax enforcement.¹⁰ There are various explanations for borrowers' ability to achieve favorable outcomes, but one of the most prominent arguments is about the influence of major shareholders within the IMF, especially the US and other "G5" countries.¹¹ Favorable negotiation outcomes for certain borrowers can reflect shareholders' willingness to extend preferential treatment to countries that are important to them, leading to these countries receiving larger IMF loans or loans with fewer conditions.¹²

The existing literature has focused on differences among borrowers in their ability to receive large and flexible IMF programs. To this, we add the argument that borrowers also have preferences over the *speed* of negotiations with the IMF. It is not only the *outcome* of negotiations that matters to borrowing governments, but also *how quickly* that outcome is reached. It is in the borrower's interest to achieve their preferred outcome with the IMF as quickly as possible. In bargaining generally, delay postpones the benefits of cooperation (Fearon, 1998; Bearce et al., 2014; Lechner and Wüthrich, 2018). Moreover, in asymmetric negotiations, delay is especially costly for

¹⁰ See for example research on why countries receive IMF loans at all (Dreher et al., 2009; Vreeland, 2003), how IMF loans are designed (Caraway et al., 2012; Dreher et al., 2015; Reinsberg et al., 2022b), and how IMF programs are enforced (Stone, 2004; Reinsberg et al., 2022b).

¹¹ France, Germany, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States

¹² Borrowers also have alternative strategies at their disposal. See, for example, Caraway et al. (2012) on domestic politics, and Nelson (2014) and Chwieroth (2015) on ideology. Here, we narrow our focus to best emphasize the contributions of the special issue. We highlight the most predominant arguments in the IMF literature and leave the impact of other factors to future work. See also Copelovitch and Powers (2021) on problematizing "important" countries in IMF research. Mechanisms that link measures of "friendship" like UNGA voting alignment to IMF programs may be theoretically and empirically imprecise.

the weaker party. The longer negotiations drag on, the more financial, technical, and human resources are required to conclude the agreement, which imposes greater costs on the materially weaker actor.

In negotiations over an IMF program, borrowing countries have a specific interest in concluding the negotiations rapidly. Negotiation delay imposes and prolongs the opportunity cost of the status quo (Fearon, 1998), which in the case of a country requesting an IMF program is economic crisis. Of course, borrowing countries are not alone in wanting to conclude negotiations more quickly. IMF staff, especially if under pressure to keep costs low, will want to keep negotiations short. However, unlike a government facing a continued crisis, IMF staff do not directly internalize the costs of negotiating delay. Major IMF shareholders may also have an interest in rapid negotiations, if they are exposed to the spillover effects of the borrowing country's crisis. However, the impact of any spillover on major shareholders is unlikely to be as severe as the crisis itself. This suggests that while IMF staff, shareholders, and borrowing governments all have an interest in speedy negotiations, borrowers are the ones that will benefit the most. For borrowers, delay can allow crises to deepen, making the ultimate outcome worse than the status quo. As Gehring and Lang (2020) find, the beginning of negotiations correlates with a significant drop in creditworthiness that is not rectified until negotiations are concluded. The longer negotiations take, the longer these negative effects should persist. Therefore, expediency is arguably as important as liquidity for an international lender of last resort (Fernández-Arias, 2010).

While borrowers have a plausible preference for speed, studies have tended to focus on the outcomes of negotiations, rather than the process. The negotiation phase – and its duration – has been neglected, in part, because negotiations between the Fund and borrowing countries are often confidential prior to Executive Board approval. Scholars that have examined the negotiation phase have largely done so through case studies, as in the work of Kahler (1993), who applies the framework of two-level games to analyze negotiations between the Fund and borrowing governments, supporting his argument with case studies of Somalia and Jamaica's negotiations with the IMF. A more recent systematic examination of negotiations with the Fund is Gehring and Lang (2020), who use data on the timing of negotiations for 137 IMF programs as an extension of their analysis of market reactions to IMF programs. However, even here, the negotiation process is secondary to their main focus. Our new dataset allows us to directly examine the negotiation phase, and we argue that forms of borrower leverage that influence program outcomes should also influence the length of negotiations.

To explain why some borrowing governments experience more rapid negotiations with the IMF than others, we build on arguments in the existing IMF literature about the role of shareholder interests, framing these in terms of the “strategies of the weak” (Snidal et al., 2024, this issue). One mechanism the existing literature has identified for how shareholder interests allow borrowing government to obtain preferred outcomes is through borrowing countries' importance in other organizations. Dreher et al. (2009) argue that borrowers can use temporary membership on the UN Security Council to increase their likelihood of getting an IMF program and decrease the number of con-

ditions attached to loans. Temporary membership on the UN Security Council makes a country more important to permanent members of the Security Council (Dreher and Sturm, 2012; Dreher et al., 2009; Lockwood, 2013; Alexander and Rooney, 2019). This relationship helps to ensure that borrowing countries receive programs more aligned with their preferences.

Similarly, we argue that borrowing governments can benefit from their status in the UN Security Council to achieve their preference of concluding negotiations more quickly. A borrower that holds a high-status or influential membership in another international organization will have more influence in negotiations with the IMF than would otherwise appear to be the case. Using the terminology of the framework paper, this is an application of a *linkage* strategy, since borrowers can *link* their status in the UN Security Council to their objectives *via-á-vis* the IMF. As the framework explains, countries weak in material power can increase their power by making links across issue areas or forums. Benefiting from their status in the UN Security Council to achieve more rapid negotiations with the IMF is an example of this strategy at work. This leads to our first expectation:

H_{1a}: Borrowers that hold a temporary seat on the UN Security Council will receive IMF programs after shorter negotiations.

The second mechanism that allows borrowing governments to take advantage of shareholder interests to achieve their own preferred outcomes is concern about the spillover of a financial crisis. When a given country experiences economic or financial crisis, this can cause instability for major shareholders if their banks and domestic financial systems are heavily exposed to that country. When major shareholders are highly exposed to financial crisis in a particular country, they have an interest in that crisis being resolved quickly. This explains the findings that commercial bank exposure in the US and/or Group-of-Five is associated with greater domestic support for IMF bailouts (Broz and Hawes, 2006), and larger, less stringent IMF programs (Oatley and Yackee, 2004; Copelovitch, 2010b). Borrowers can benefit from major shareholders' self-interest to receive larger and more flexible IMF programs.

We extend this argument to suggest that borrowing governments can benefit from major shareholders' concern about crisis spillover to conclude negotiations with the IMF more quickly. Where crisis in a borrowing country risks spilling over to major financial centers, shareholders and IMF staff are likely to value a rapid injection of liquidity, which allows the borrower to push for a quicker conclusion to negotiations. This is an application of a *connectivity* strategy, since borrowers use their position in the global economy and their connections to other economies to achieve outcomes aligned with their interests. As explained by Snidal et al., (2024, this issue), even materially weak governments can use their position in international networks to enhance their structural power. Unlike Manulak's (2024, this issue) analysis of a weaker state increasing its power by increasing its centrality in networks of diplomatic relations, our argument expects that states benefit from existing ties to influential states. There is already evidence that concern for spillover induces IMF shareholders to be more responsive at the approval stage (McDowell, 2017). We anticipate that financial expo-

sure to major shareholders will also allow borrowers to benefit from greater speed during the negotiation phase. This leads to our second expectation:

H_{1b}: Borrowers that have deeper financial ties to major IMF shareholders will receive IMF programs after shorter negotiations.

In both cases, we expect that countries with ties to major shareholders will reach an IMF agreement more quickly. Theoretically, there are several mechanisms that could explain why borrowing countries with these ties would observe more rapid negotiations. IMF shareholders could use their formal power to demand quicker negotiations. More likely, shareholders could use their informal influence within the IMF to intervene and speed up negotiations (Stone, 2008). It is also possible that IMF staff, anticipating the preferences of shareholders to ensure Board approval (Copelovitch, 2010b), could move discussions along more quickly. Alternatively, borrowing governments could directly exploit their privileged position and importance to shareholders to obtain their preferred outcome. With our data on negotiation length, these mechanisms are neither mutually exclusive nor empirically distinguishable. However, because borrowers are the ones that obtain the greatest benefit from rapid negotiations, we interpret an association between borrowers' ties to shareholders and faster negotiations as indicative of borrowers' ability to achieve their preferred outcomes and therefore their influence.¹³ Even if it may be shareholders that take the steps that lead to quicker negotiations, borrowers benefit.

We contrast our argument against other explanations for borrower leverage with the IMF. One alternative explanation involves simple material bases of compulsory power, such as a larger economy or greater military power. We do not expect that countries with greater material power will be able to push for outcomes more aligned with their preferences because, in the IMF context, borrowers tend to approach the Fund as a lender of last resort during a period of economic weakness. Greater material resources are unlikely to translate into greater negotiating power. By contrast, linkage and connectivity strategies based on ties to major shareholders allow borrowers to benefit from the institutional features of the IMF, in which larger shareholders have greater formal and informal influence.

However, for any association between borrowers ties to shareholders and negotiation speed to be evidence of borrower power, borrowers with these ties must be able to achieve rapid negotiations *and* the negotiation outcomes they would prefer, such as fewer conditions. If negotiations are short because the borrower acquiesced to the Fund's preferred terms, then an observed correlation of shareholder interests with rapid negotiations is not evidence of greater influence. We argue that borrowing governments have good reasons to prefer rapid negotiation, but they also continue to have strong preferences over the terms of an IMF loan. We expect that a borrower's preferred outcome is a flexible IMF program negotiated quickly, and the worst outcome is a stringent program requiring drawn out negotiations. If we are correct that borrowers

¹³ We rely here on the "causal" notion of power, in which actors have influence if they are able to affect the action of others in line with their preferences. Dahl and Stinebrickner (2003, 17) describe influence as "a relation among human actors such that the wants, desires, preferences, or intentions of one or more actors affects the actions, or predisposition to act, of one or more actors in a direction consistent with - and not contrary to - the wants, preferences, or intentions of the influence-wielders".

with ties to major shareholders are better able to achieve their preferences, then we should see countries with these ties receiving flexible loans with shorter negotiations. This leads to our second set of hypotheses.

H_{2a}: Borrowers that hold a temporary seat on the UN Security Council will receive lower conditionality IMF programs after shorter negotiations.

H_{2b}: Borrowers that have deeper financial ties to major IMF shareholders will receive lower conditionality IMF programs after shorter negotiations.

4 Research design

The empirical analysis uses our original data on the timing of IMF negotiations to test our arguments about borrowers' strategies for influence derived from the special issue framework. Here, we briefly describe our outcome measures, the data we use to operationalize borrowers' power and strategies, control variables, and our estimation strategy.

4.1 Outcome measures

Our main outcome measure is *Number of Missions*, which comes from our original dataset. As described above, the *Number of Missions* is a count variable of separate trips taken by IMF staff to the borrowing country to negotiate an IMF agreement (see Fig. 2). This variable is measured at the program level and is our preferred outcome variable for a number of reasons. First, the number of missions speaks directly to delay and difficulty in concluding negotiations, since additional missions become necessary if earlier trips do not end in an agreement. While focusing on the number of missions sacrifices some granularity, we can be more confident that the measure is not inflated by travel delays, public holidays, or officials' scheduling. We can also be more confident in what the variation means; while the parameters of what a mission should accomplish are clear, the goals of a particular negotiating day are more ambiguous. Second, focusing on the number of missions allows us to include programs where mission dates are recorded imprecisely, minimizing bias in our sample. Restricting our analysis to only those programs for which we know the exact number of days of negotiation would narrow our sample by 20%.

In the second step of our analysis, we examine how borrowers' strategies impact the duration of negotiations and the terms of final agreements. Our hypotheses expect that borrowers will benefit from ties to major shareholders to speed up negotiations, but not at the expense of increased conditionality. To test this expectation, we combine our data on negotiation length with data from Kentikelenis et al. (2016) on the conditionality of IMF programs.¹⁴ As Fig. 4 shows, there is not a strong correlation between negotiation length and the terms of IMF agreements; these are two independent dimensions. Negotiation speed does not predict the terms of the agreement, which precludes a two-stage modeling strategy. Additionally, because negotiations precede

¹⁴ We use the authors' weighted measure of IMF conditionality, which counts the number of conditions and weights them by how demanding each condition is.

outcomes, we cannot simply control for the number of conditions in our estimation of negotiating missions. This would incorrectly represent the sequence of events by adding post-hoc information.

Therefore, we create four stylized combinations of negotiation speed and outcome. Speed can be fast or slow. Outcomes can be “good” (low conditionality) or “bad” (high conditionality). We rank these four combinations based on borrowers’ preferences and create an ordinal variable called *Missions-Conditions*. Borrowers would most prefer to receive an IMF agreement with the fewest possible conditions and to conclude negotiations over this program quickly. The worst possible combination from the borrower’s perspective are long negotiations that end in a program with high conditionality. The ordering of intermediate combinations is less clear.¹⁵ Under some circumstances, governments may be willing to withstand prolonged negotiations to achieve a favorable program, while in others they might be willing to compromise on the design of the loan if they can access funds quickly. For now, we assume that borrowers prioritize outcomes over process because the implications are longer lasting. We assume that the second best outcome for borrowers is slow negotiations and good (low) conditions. Borrowers may be willing to extend negotiations if this means resisting the inclusion of additional conditions. The third best outcome is fast negotiations with bad (high) conditionality. If borrowers are unable to bargain down the number of conditions, then they would at least like the negotiations to conclude quickly. We return to this assumption in our case study discussion.

Therefore, we code *Missions-Conditions* by splitting the number of negotiating missions and number of weighted program conditions at their median (shown in dashed lines in Fig. 4). Negotiations are coded as “fast and good” if they took two or fewer missions to negotiate and resulted in programs with a weighted condition count of 58 or fewer. At the other end of the scale, negotiations are coded as “slow and bad” if they required three or more missions to reach an agreement and produced programs with more than 58 weighted conditions attached.¹⁶ Constructing this variable requires a decision about how to delineate fast/slow and high/low conditionality programs, so we demonstrate in the Appendix C that our results are robust to alternative thresholds.

4.2 Independent variables

4.2.1 Simple power measures

As the special issue introduction notes, weaker actors are often characterized by their lack of power in simple material terms, whether economic size or military strength. We suggest that in the negotiations between IMF staff and borrowing countries, borrowers are almost always the weaker actor, even if by purely material definitions a country may have significant power in the global system. In a crisis context, a country’s raw material power is unlikely to be of help in negotiating with the IMF. Therefore, we include three

¹⁵ Here, we base assumptions on the vast literature on IMF conditionality. Understanding the circumstances in which speed trumps leniency, or vice-versa, is a fruitful future use for our data.

¹⁶ The ordering of the variable is as follows: 4 - Fast and good, 3 - Slow and good, 2 - Fast and bad, 1 - Slow and bad.

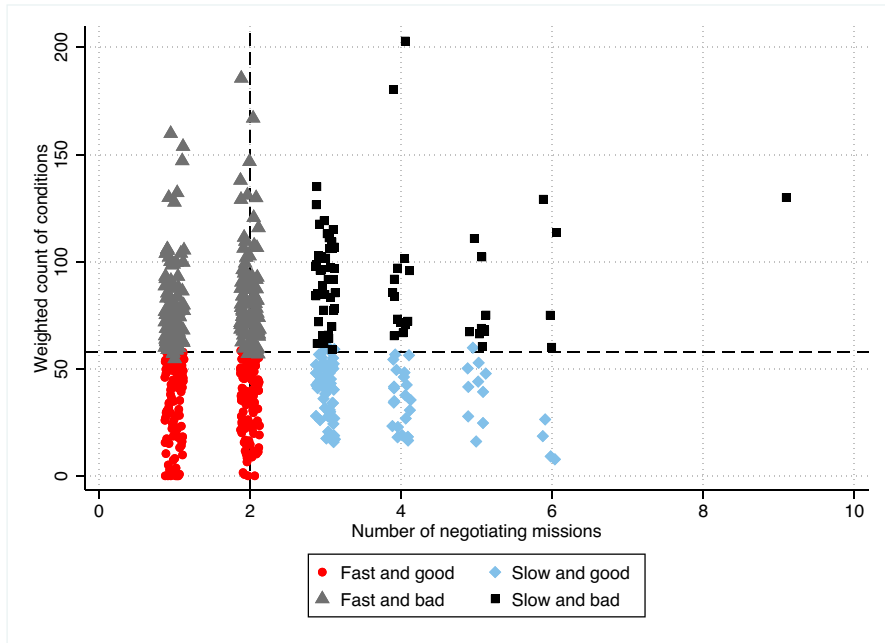


Fig. 4 Number of negotiating missions and program conditions (weighted) per IMF program, IMF programs approved 1985-2020

measures of “raw” power: *economic size* (GDP in logged constant US\$), *population* (logged), and *military capabilities* (Composite Index of National Capability (CINC)).

4.2.2 Strategies of the weak

To test our argument that borrowers’ linkage and connectivity strategies lead to faster negotiations, we use several measures. First, in the case of linkage strategies, we suggest that borrowing countries that have considerable influence in other organizations will benefit in their negotiations with the IMF. In the empirical analysis, we operationalize this using data on countries’ temporary *UN Security Council seat*. Several studies have found that temporary membership on the *UN Security Council seat* confers advantages on countries in their dealings with the IMF (Dreher et al., 2009, 2015), since major shareholders encourage lenience and flexibility for these countries in exchange for cooperative voting on the Security Council. We similarly expect that countries holding a temporary seat on the Security Council can use this as the basis for linkage strategies to receive loans more quickly.

Second, we measure borrowers’ connectivity strategies in terms of financial ties between the borrower and the five largest shareholders in the IMF, namely France, Germany, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States, known collectively as the “G5.” More specifically, we follow Copelovitch (2010a) and McDowell (2017) and measure ties between the borrower and G5 countries in terms of the borrower’s *debt to G5 banks* (% of G5 GDP). Higher amounts of lending from G5 commercial

banks to the borrower means that G5 banking sectors are more exposed to a crisis in the borrower country. Larger exposure by G5 banks implies that the borrower is more central in shareholders' financial network, giving the borrower leverage to achieve the rapid conclusion of a deal. More broadly, we also look at foreign policy goals by accounting for *G5 aid* (G5 ODA, % of G5 GDP).¹⁷ As the United States is the largest shareholder, we also replicate our analyses using measures specific to the US, *debt to US banks* and *US aid*.

4.3 Controls

To isolate the hypothesized relationship, we include three sets of controls that could determine negotiation speed: measures of the urgency of the crisis, borrower-level domestic factors, and IMF-level bureaucratic factors.

With respect to crisis urgency, Stone (2008) assumes that more dire economic circumstances should increase the motivation of all parties to reach an agreement. A country that approaches the IMF in more dire economic straights may also have less leverage vis-a-vis the Fund as the costs of delay are larger. For instance, Dreher (2003) finds that the IMF can maximize conditionality where the need for assistance is greatest. We capture economic conditions with *public debt* (% of GDP), *short term debt* (% of exports), *bond debt* (% private debt) and *natural resource rents* (% GDP).¹⁸ In additional specifications, we subset the data to look specifically at non-concessional IMF programs. Non-concessional programs (e.g. Stand-By Arrangements) are provided to middle-income countries, who have more access to international financial markets. This allows us to more confidently assume urgency because delay prolongs market panic. The costs of delaying negotiations should be smaller for countries that receive concessional loans and less attention from international investors.

The literature on the IMF has shown that domestic politics in the borrowing country can decisively shape the design and implementation of IMF programs, so we account for its effect on negotiating speed. We include a measure of the extent of liberal democracy in the borrowing country, the occurrence (0,1) of any elections in the year of the first mission, and the number of veto players.¹⁹

Finally, with respect to the IMF's bureaucratic considerations, we include dichotomous indicators for whether the program is a country's first ever IMF program, whether negotiations were concurrent with Article IV consultations, whether missions took place in Washington D.C.,²⁰ and whether the IMF loan was concessional. We also include a count of the total number of loans the IMF negotiated that year.

¹⁷ Data comes from the OECD, the BIS, and Bailey et al. (2017).

¹⁸ Data come from the World Bank's World Development Indicators and International Debt Statistics Database. Data on Public Debt comes from Abbas et al. (2010).

¹⁹ Data is from the Varieties of Democracy Project and the Database of Political Institutions.

²⁰ Occasionally, senior representatives of the borrowing country will meet with IMF staff while they are in D.C., usually alongside the IMF annual meetings. These are almost always short bouts of negotiation, and they may do less to move a negotiation to conclusion than week-long missions. These D.C. meetings may therefore inflate the true count of meetings required to reach an agreement. If borrowers that have closer ties to major shareholders are also more likely to participate in these DC meetings, this may bias estimates of borrowers' connectivity strategies.

4.4 Imputation

In our dataset, less than 50% of observations for which we have data on the dates and number of missions also have complete data on the full set of covariates.²¹ Many of the borrowers from the IMF are middle income and developing countries. Economic and political data on these countries are often characterized by high levels of missingness, which is unlikely to be random. Excluding observations with missing data using listwise deletion is likely to introduce bias into the estimates (Lall, 2016). Instead, we use multiple imputation to harness information from incomplete observations when estimating models. Specifically, we conduct multiple imputation by chained equations (MICE) to generate imputed values.²² This procedure uses a separate conditional distribution for each imputed variable, which is important for imputing variables that can only take on specific values (eg. dichotomous variables). Following Lall's rule of thumb we generate fifteen imputations and the coefficients and standard errors in the results reported below are adjusted for variability between imputations of the missing values. We impute data for our main independent variables and controls, where they are missing. However, although we include the variables from our dataset (eg. count of missions) in the imputation to provide additional information, we do not replace any missing values for these variables, since these are the original contribution of our dataset and we prefer to rely only on the data collected from the IMF's archival documents. This means that where this information is not provided in the IMF staff reports, we are constrained in our sample size. For robustness, we also run models without imputed data, instead using listwise deletion, which are reported in the Appendix.

4.5 Estimation

Our main measure of negotiating duration is the number of discrete negotiating missions required to conclude an agreement. Therefore, we use a negative binomial model for our first set of results. The data is characterized by overdispersion, leading us to prefer the negative binomial estimator to the Poisson estimator. We include a linear time trend in the models, since there is a downward trend in negotiation duration over time, with programs approved in the 2000s and 2010s requiring fewer missions than those in previous decades. Models of the number of negotiating missions are estimated as follows:

$$\lambda_{it} = e^{(\beta_1 UNSC\ seat_{it} + \beta_2 Debt\ to\ G5\ banks_{it} + \beta_3 X_{it} + \alpha t + \epsilon_{it})} \quad (1)$$

where λ_{it} , the count of negotiating missions to conclude an IMF loan in country i in year t , is an exponentiated function of a borrower's UN Security Council membership, its financial ties to major shareholders, a vector of controls (X_{it}), including measures of "raw" power, and a linear time trend α . ϵ_{it} is the error term.

²¹ On average, covariates are missing roughly 15% of observations, but these do not overlap, leading to a high rate of missingness across the dataset as a whole.

²² We implement this using the STATA `mi impute chained` command. See Appendix B for a description.

In an extension of the analysis, in which we investigate the combination of negotiation speed and program conditionality, the dependent variable is an ordinal variable ranging from 1 (slow and bad) to 4 (fast and good). These models are estimated using an ordered logit estimator, as we are interested in the probability that an event will be in category j where $j=1,2,3$ and 4. We only observe the threshold points (κ) of the latent measure, where the thresholds are determined by the number of missions and weighted conditions, so the probability of an observation being between two threshold points can be estimated as:

$$\begin{aligned}
 Pr(Y_i = j) &= Pr(\kappa_{j-1} < \beta_1 UNSC\ seat_{it} + \beta_2 Debt\ to\ G5\ banks_{it} \\
 &\quad + \beta_3 X_{it} + \alpha + \epsilon_{it} \leq \kappa_j) \\
 &= \frac{1}{1 + e^{-\kappa_j + (\beta_1 UNSC\ seat_{it} + \beta_2 Debt\ to\ G5\ banks_{it} + \beta_3 X_{it} + \alpha + \epsilon_{it})}} \\
 &\quad - \frac{1}{1 + e^{-\kappa_{j-1} + (\beta_1 UNSC\ seat_{it} + \beta_2 Debt\ to\ G5\ banks_{it} + \beta_3 X_{it} + \alpha + \epsilon_{it})}} \quad (2)
 \end{aligned}$$

Across all models, covariates are measured in the year that negotiations begin in order to capture the circumstances at the time negotiations are taking place. Standard errors are clustered at the country level.

5 Results

5.1 Negotiation length

We first present our main results on the number of negotiating missions required to agree an IMF program in Table 1. We begin with measures of material power in the first model, before subsequently adding indicators for UN Security Council membership and financial ties to major shareholders. Looking just at the relationship between negotiation length and borrowers' material power in Model 1, we find that none of the measures are related to achieving more rapid resolutions. In fact, there is a positive and statistically significant relationship between economic size (measured in log GDP) and the duration of negotiations; countries with a larger economy tend to require a greater number of missions to reach an IMF program. Rather than reflecting borrower power, this may simply suggest that IMF programs in larger economies are more complex, requiring more extensive negotiations to design.

In the second model of Table 1, we find evidence consistent with Hypotheses 1a and 1b. First, we find a negative and statistically significant relationship between holding a UN Security Council seat and the number of negotiating missions. Second, while there is no systematic difference in the negotiating length for countries that are major aid recipients, countries that have borrowed heavily from G5 banks receive loans more quickly. In Model 3, we probe whether our results are driven by borrowers' links to all G5 countries or to the US in particular. The substantive effect for US exposure is very similar to that of the G5, suggesting that the US is the main driver of our results.

Table 1 Predictors of the number of IMF negotiating missions, negative binomial model

	(1) Crude power	(2) + G5	(3) + US	(4) + Controls	(5) Non concessional
Economic size (log GDP)	0.049** (0.022)	0.063*** (0.022)	0.061*** (0.022)	0.055* (0.028)	0.057 (0.040)
Population (log)	-0.015 (0.023)	-0.022 (0.022)	-0.021 (0.022)	-0.012 (0.029)	0.003 (0.042)
Military capabilities	2.324 (4.013)	2.337 (4.372)	1.196 (4.120)	-0.099 (3.807)	-1.935 (4.397)
UNSC seat		-0.145* (0.079)	-0.144* (0.079)	-0.161** (0.068)	-0.208*** (0.071)
G5 aid (% G5 GDP)		264.897 (646.770)			
Debt to G5 banks (% G5 GDP)		-185.813* (98.334)			
US aid (% US GDP)			470.996 (583.522)	1001.643 (842.019)	1336.440 (877.027)
Debt to US banks (% US GDP)			-119.142* (61.856)	-172.001*** (37.393)	-184.202*** (39.619)
Public debt (% GDP)				0.000 (0.000)	0.000 (0.001)
Short-term debt (% exports)				0.000 (0.000)	0.000 (0.001)
Bond debt (% private)				0.000 (0.000)	0.000 (0.000)
Resource rents (% GDP)				0.002 (0.002)	0.000 (0.003)
Electoral democracy				-0.195 (0.130)	-0.313* (0.162)
Election held				0.059 (0.043)	0.055 (0.056)
Nr of veto players				0.020 (0.017)	0.021 (0.022)
First IMF Program				0.132 (0.083)	0.168* (0.090)
Negotiation with Art IV				0.070* (0.040)	0.096* (0.052)
One+ mission in DC				0.452*** (0.047)	0.510*** (0.057)
Concessional				-0.008 (0.054)	

Table 1 continued

	(1) Crude power	(2) + G5	(3) + US	(4) + Controls	(5) Non concessional
Annual nr. of IMF programs				-0.003*** (0.001)	-0.002 (0.002)
Time trend	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
Nr of countries	135	135	135	133	110
Observations	702	702	702	650	353
Nr of imputations	15	15	15	15	15

Standard errors in parentheses

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Variables related to linkage strategies (UNSC seat) and connectivity strategies (G5/US aid, Debt to G5/US banks) are highlighted in bold

In Model 4, we introduce additional control variables that are likely to impact the duration of negotiations and find that the results for institutional linkages and financial connectivity are robust. Substantively, the results of Model 4 indicate that a borrower holding a temporary UN Security Council seat should expect 1.68 missions to reach an agreement with the IMF, while a borrower without a temporary UN Security Council seat will require 1.98 missions. While our data does not directly speak to the mechanism, whether it is shareholders or borrowers exercising their voice, we interpret this as evidence that borrowing countries benefit when they have linkages to other forums that shareholders value. Of course, given the lengthy process of being selected to hold a temporary seat on the UN Security Council, it is unlikely that countries attempt to obtain a seat in anticipation of using it as leverage in negotiations with the Fund. Instead, those countries that find themselves holding a temporary UN Security Council seat are better positioned to achieve their preferred outcome – shorter negotiations.

Turning to borrowers' financial connections, the results of Model 4 indicate that a country approaching the IMF with no exposure to the US banking sector can expect 1.98 negotiating missions to reach agreement. As exposure to the US banking sector increases by one standard deviation, with all other variables held at their means, the predicted number of negotiating missions declines to 1.90 missions. At two standard deviations above zero, the number of predicted negotiating missions is 1.82, and at three it declines to 1.74 missions. Agreeing an IMF program quickly is in the interests of both the borrower and the major shareholders, whose banks would experience a shock if the borrower were suddenly unable to honor its debt obligations. Moreover, the IMF staff has an interest in quickly providing support if a continued crisis in the borrowing country could spill over into financial instability in major financial centers. Through this confluence of interests, the borrower is poised to benefit from rapid negotiations. The type of structural power we discuss here thus involves relying on an existing level of connection. Unlike other types of structural power, for example centrality in diplomatic networks (Manulak, 2024, this issue; Mesquita, 2024, this issue), connectivity through financial vulnerabilities is not a tactic that states work

to deepen. Though predating the crisis that leads the borrower to approach the IMF, financial dependency would not otherwise make the borrower appear especially strong in the global financial market. Higher levels of external debt and a higher concentration of this external debt is a form of vulnerability that can paradoxically become a benefit when the potential spillovers of that vulnerability encourage other countries and the IMF to act in the interests of the borrower, resolving the crisis more quickly.

The broad patterns also suggest that the length of negotiations are less likely to be determined by financial or institutional attributes of the borrowing country, but are impacted by the borrower's history with the Fund and the IMF's bureaucratic capacity. When the IMF is negotiating many different programs simultaneously, such as during a period of global crisis, the negotiations for each individual program are shorter. Negotiations concurrent with an Article IV consultation take longer. Finally, Model 5 reports results for the subset of non-concessional IMF programs negotiated in our sample. These are the types of programs that go to middle-income borrowers most likely to suffer reputational costs in international financial markets. In support of our argument, non-concessional programs, where time is more of the essence, drive our findings. Results for concessional programs, presented in the Appendix, are weaker.

We conduct a number of extensions and robustness checks. We describe them here and report results in the Appendix. First, in Table A2, we replicate Model 4 by time period (1985-1991, 1992-2007, and 2007-2018). IMF practices have evolved substantially over the organization's existence. For one, the end of the Cold War altered the global political context in which the IMF operates (Moser and Sturm, 2011). In the 1990s, the IMF's strategy regarding private market actors also changed (McDowell, 2017). More recently, the global financial crisis reinvigorated the IMF's lending operations, drawing renewed attention to crises in industrialized countries. We find that the results based on connectivity to the US banking system are strongest in the late Cold War period (1985-1991) when the IMF was also most likely to engage in "concerted lending" and push banks from major financial centers to lend alongside the IMF program (Copelovitch, 2010a). The results for borrowers' links to the UN Security Council persist for longer, with no significant relationship in the final period. While it is difficult to disentangle explanations for these temporal effects, the results demonstrate that borrowers benefit differently from their ties to major shareholders over time.

We also analyze our results with alternative specifications and control variables. In Table A3, we report results for models where the dependent variable is the number of negotiating days, rather than discrete negotiating missions. The variable measuring negotiating days is sparser and noisier, since minor differences may be due to patterns of working days and/or holidays. The coefficient estimates are similar to our main models, but the standard errors are much larger and the results miss conventional levels of significance. We also show that results are robust to including regional fixed effects, excluding the IMF's Rapid Finance Instrument (RFI), as it is explicitly designed to be negotiated quickly, and controlling for bureaucratic quality in borrowing states. Neither does using listwise deletion rather than imputation to deal with missing data change our results. Finally, we collected data on negotiation participants and in Table A4 we use this information to control for potential confounders. We generate a count for the number of government offices and IMF departments involved in negotiations, ranging

from zero to six. We also highlight specific participants (e.g. head of government or IMF Executive Directors) that may signal important interests in the negotiation process. Unfortunately, data on negotiation participants is sparser. Nevertheless, our main results are similar when controlling for negotiation level attributes. Generally, as more and important offices are involved, negotiations are longer.

5.2 Negotiation length and negotiation outcomes

Our expectations are that negotiations will be faster when there are institutional linkages or connections to international financial networks. However, these benefits should not come at the cost of worse terms on IMF loans. Table 2 provides our second set of results, from ordered logit models predicting the combinations of negotiating speed and outcomes, with outcomes measured as the weighted number of conditions attached to an IMF loan. These specifications allow us to test whether institutional linkages and financial connections not only lead to quicker negotiations, but also to terms more aligned with borrowers' interests.

Overall, the results are similar to analyzing negotiation duration independently. The results in Model 1 of Table 2 show that simple measures of material power have little predictive power in explaining the combination of negotiation duration and outcomes. Model 2 confirms that temporary UNSC membership and exposure to G5 banks not only impact the speed of negotiations, but also the terms of the final agreement. Turning to institutional linkage, while a borrower without a temporary UN Security Council seat has a 40% probability of experiencing a "short and good" negotiation with the IMF, a borrower holding a temporary seat has a 54% probability of experiencing this duration-outcome combination. While this implies that borrowers benefit in terms of both speed and conditionality when they possess linkage opportunities, the results are more suggestive than they were in the previous section. The coefficient estimates are positive and similar in size, but significance declines as we add additional controls.

Turning to the importance of financial connections, support for hypothesis 2b is stronger. Borrowers that have high exposure to the G5 and US banking sectors are more likely to experience "short and good" duration-outcome combinations. In a model with full controls (Model 4), borrowers with higher levels of debt owed to G5 banks are more likely to rapidly conclude negotiations on IMF programs with fewer conditions attached. As a borrower goes from zero debt to US banks as a share of US GDP to one standard deviation above zero, the probability of obtaining a "short and good" outcome goes from 39% to 42%. While simply concluding negotiations quickly is in the interest of both the borrower and IMF staff, the staff have an interest in a greater conditionality of agreements to increase their influence over borrower policy (Reinsberg et al., 2022b). Thus, the fact that bank exposure leads to not only shorter negotiations but also fewer conditions makes it more likely that borrowers are receiving asymmetric benefits from connectivity strategies.

Just as for the negotiation length measures, we report a number of robustness checks in the Appendix. The results are similar to our main specifications, with the findings for connections to shareholders' banking networks being more conclusive than institutional linkages. First, our combined measure requires a decision about the

Table 2 Predictors of preferred outcome-duration combination, ordered logit model

	(1) Crude power	(2) + G5	(3) + US	(4) + Controls	(5) Non concessional
Economic size (log GDP)	-0.033 (0.081)	-0.084 (0.086)	-0.080 (0.085)	-0.009 (0.135)	0.109 (0.169)
Population (log)	0.019 (0.090)	0.039 (0.091)	0.038 (0.090)	-0.036 (0.121)	-0.132 (0.165)
Military capabilities	-3.007 (15.503)	-9.355 (18.569)	-5.165 (15.728)	1.211 (16.062)	9.337 (15.868)
UNSC seat		0.578* (0.343)	0.589* (0.348)	0.551 (0.355)	0.543 (0.436)
G5 aid (% G5 GDP)		1527.874 (2213.185)			
Debt to G5 banks (% G5 GDP)		875.100** (438.912)			
US aid (% US GDP)			1795.065 (2295.159)	-897.401 (4182.876)	-3772.298 (4057.998)
Debt to US banks (% US GDP)			526.237* (276.948)	544.486** (257.948)	415.949 (273.498)
Public debt (% GDP)				-0.002 (0.002)	-0.001 (0.003)
Short-term debt (% exports)				0.004 (0.002)	0.005 (0.004)
Bond debt (% private)				0.000 (0.000)	0.000 (0.000)
Resource rents (% GDP)				-0.017 (0.011)	-0.025* (0.014)
Electoral democracy				-0.643 (0.535)	-1.047 (0.670)
Election held				-0.009 (0.231)	0.001 (0.249)
Nr of veto players				-0.048 (0.073)	-0.002 (0.087)
First IMF Program				0.256 (0.370)	0.087 (0.399)
Negotiation with Art IV				0.148 (0.192)	0.212 (0.253)
One+ mission in DC				-0.224 (0.240)	-0.436* (0.253)

Table 2 continued

	(1) Crude power	(2) + G5	(3) + US	(4) + Controls	(5) Non concessional
Concessional				-0.033 (0.253)	
Annual nr. of IMF programs				-0.002 (0.007)	0.001 (0.010)
Time trend	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
Nr of countries	135	135	135	133	110
Observations	702	702	702	650	353
Nr of imputations	15	15	15	15	15

Standard errors in parentheses

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Variables related to linkage strategies (UNSC seat) and connectivity strategies (G5/US aid, Debt to G5/US banks) are highlighted in bold

thresholds used to delineate fast/slow and high/low conditionality. In Table A5, we demonstrate that results are robust to coding negotiations as above/below the mean based on a moving (yearly) average. Results are also robust to coding good (low) conditionality as below the 25th and 33rd percentile (39 and 46 weighted conditions respectively) and fast negotiations as 3 or fewer missions. Second, Table A6 replicates our results by time period. Third, we turn to specification in Table A7. Connectivity strategies are robustly significant to including regional fixed effects, excluding RFIs, and controlling for borrower bureaucracy. Results also hold using listwise deletion in lieu of multiple imputation. Finally, Table A8 controls for negotiation participants.

Both parts of our analyses suggest that borrowing countries can achieve their preference for speed without necessarily compromising on conditionality. To further analyze variation in how negotiation speed and outcomes interact, we offer a brief discussion of a single country's interactions with the IMF.

5.3 Côte d'Ivoire and the IMF

Specifically, we explore negotiations between Côte d'Ivoire and the IMF. The Ivorian case is helpful for illustrating the trade-offs between negotiating speed and negotiation outcomes, because Côte d'Ivoire has experienced each of the four combinations of speed and conditionality in the history of its interactions with the IMF (see Fig. 5). This within-case variation allows us to explore the relationship between borrower strategies, negotiation processes, and outcomes while holding many cultural and historical details constant.

Our aim in this short case is to provide an illustration of the combination of negotiation processes and negotiation outcomes that we used in our analyses above, and to probe the factors associated with more rapid negotiations, paving the way for future research. Unfortunately, we are unable to definitively test the mechanisms that led to more rapid negotiations for some Ivorian programs rather than others, since much

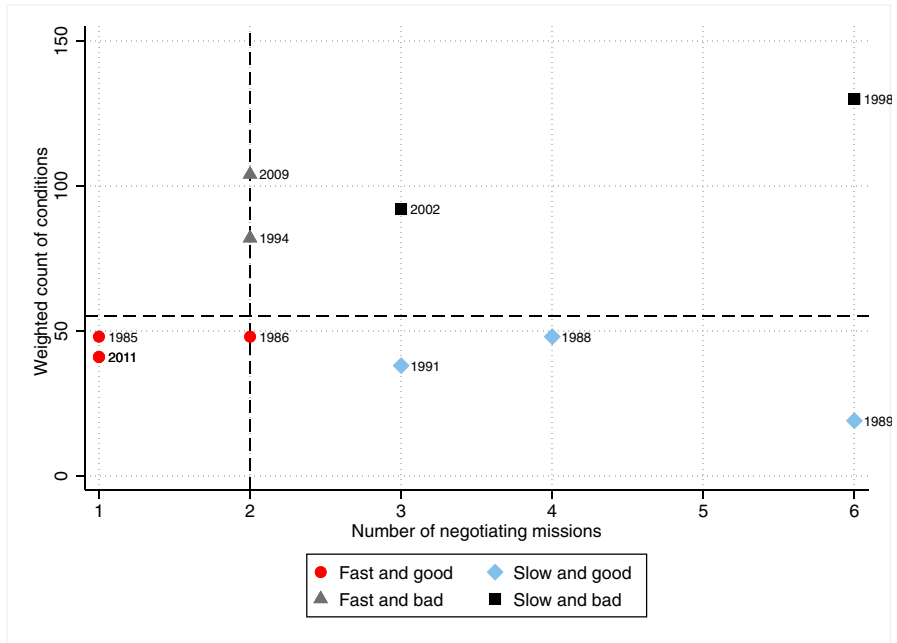


Fig. 5 Number of negotiating missions and conditions (weighted) of Côte d'Ivoire's IMF programs, 1985-2009

about the process of negotiations remains confidential. However, as summarized in Table 3, we do find evidence for associations between the strength of Côte d'Ivoire's ties to France and faster negotiations, as well as between the country's time on the UN Security Council and speedier negotiations.²³ In addition, there is evidence of the role of domestic constraints in affecting the speed of negotiations with the IMF, which may be a fruitful source of variation for future studies. Of the seven programs we consider in Côte d'Ivoire's history with the IMF from 1985 to 1998, three programs align broadly with our argument about connectivity and linkage, one represents an intermediate case and three do not conform to our expectations. While we argue that borrowers prefer short over long negotiations, Côte d'Ivoire's experience with the Fund demonstrates there may be times, perhaps driven by domestic political demands, when borrowers are willing to trade expediency for low conditionality. At other times, domestic political concerns can work against the government's negotiating position.

The first set of negotiations between Côte d'Ivoire and the IMF in our dataset, for programs agreed in 1985 and 1986, fall in the category of low conditionality agreements reached quickly, which we argue is borrowers' preferred combination of process and outcome. These programs conform to our expectations, suggesting that ties to a major shareholder, France, played a role in achieving a quick and favorable agreement. As shown in Appendix Table A9, Ivorian debt to French commercial banks was double the average French exposure.²⁴ More importantly, Côte d'Ivoire was one

²³ Appendix Table A9 provides additional descriptive statistics for each of the seven programs we analyze.

²⁴ Mean exposure of French banks is approximately 0.004% of French GDP

Table 3 Summary of negotiations between Cote d'Ivoire and the IMF, 1985-1998

Year/Program	# Missions	Conditions	UNSC seat	Financial Connections	Other factors
1985 SBA	1	48	No	High	
1986 SBA	2	48	No	High	
1988 SBA	4	48	No	High	Domestic politics: distributional conflict
1989 SBA	6	19	No	High	Domestic politics: distributional conflict
1991 SBA	3	38	Yes	High	Domestic politics: distributional conflict
1994 ECF	2	82	No	Low	
1998 ECF	6	130	No	Low	Domestic politics: governance challenges

*Darker shaded programs indicate greater alignment with our theoretical expectations

of the largest members of the CFA franc zone, a currency zone pegged to the French franc. In 1986, there was significant tension among major IMF shareholders about the disproportionate trade benefits that France enjoyed thanks to the link between the CFA zone and France (Boughton, 2001). Given French interests, Côte d'Ivoire benefitted from its connections such that any structural reforms relating to the exchange rate “had simply been set aside.”²⁵ This helped expedite the negotiation process by taking one politically contentious issue off the table.

The subsequent set of negotiations over IMF programs fell in the category of slow negotiations ending in low conditionality programs. Here, our preferred explanations are less helpful, and domestic politics played a more prominent role. After the 1985 and 1986 programs, the Ivorian economy continued to deteriorate, leading to another two IMF programs in 1988 and 1989. These negotiations were led by the same IMF mission chief and the Ivorian delegation was led by the same Minister of State, yet they unfolded much more slowly. The most obvious explanation is domestic political disagreement over the terms of the program. In their report on the 1988 program, the IMF notes that the Ivorian “authorities were reluctant to strengthen the adjustment process under the existing program on the ground that they had already imposed too harsh a burden on the [Ivorian] population” and additional contractionary measures would “stir social unrest.”²⁶ In 1989, the IMF originally argued for stronger adjustment policies but when cocoa prices continued to plummet, the IMF softened their stance (Boughton, 2001). According to the Executive Board, there were worries that “social constraints to adjustment” would be worsened by “highly visible cuts in nominal incomes.”²⁷ Aligned with the importance of domestic opposition, our data (see Appendix Table A9) records a large number of Ivorian political and economic offices that participated in negotiations. Notably, this is the first time a parliamentary representative was present.

²⁵ Executive Board Minutes EBM/87/172

²⁶ IMF Country Report EBS/87/249

²⁷ Executive Board Minutes EBM/89/151

These slow speed - low conditionality negotiations in 1988 and 1989 suggest an alternative dynamic that does not appear in our quantitative analysis above. When borrowers have especially strong preferences over the terms of an agreement, they may be able to strategically prolong negotiations to achieve their preferred outcomes. While we argue that borrowers prefer short over long negotiations, they may at times sacrifice speed for lower conditionality. This accords with arguments by Fearon (1998) about strategic delay signaling credibility.

In the early 1990s, Côte d'Ivoire returned to the IMF, again experiencing rapid negotiations leading to low conditionality. Ties to major shareholders, as well as domestic constraints, appear to matter - perhaps working in opposite directions. By the time Côte d'Ivoire returned to the negotiating table in 1990, the country had been elected to the UN Security Council. There is no explicit mention of the country's UN Security Council status in IMF reports, but linkage strategies that involve trading favors generally happen behind closed doors (Dreher et al., 2009). While linkage strategies based on UN Security Council membership may have led to faster negotiations, we cannot discount the importance of domestic politics. In the negotiations, the government agreed to conditionality on wages, only for the news to be leaked to the press. Protests erupted, troops were deployed, and the government was forced to open up the political process to multiparty elections (Boughton, 2001). As cited by the Fund staff, Côte d'Ivoire's efforts were "met with strong domestic opposition that disrupted economic activity and disturbed the political situation."²⁸ In this context, Côte d'Ivoire negotiated the lowest number of conditions of any of its IMF agreements in three missions. Linkage strategies based on the country's UN Security Council membership may have been decisive, but IMF staff were also reacting to domestic political limits to conditionality, which is why the 1991 case exemplifies an intermediate outcome.

In 1994, Côte d'Ivoire experienced negotiations that were quick, but led to high conditionality. The government agreed to reform proposals, seemingly because of the withdrawal of French support, but also received the program relatively quickly, contrary to our expectations of the role of shareholder support in negotiation speed. In 1993, the new French prime minister announced that France would stop providing aid to CFA franc zone countries without an IMF-supported program (Boughton, 2012). Without French backing, monetary reform, and therefore increased conditionality, became increasingly likely. In December 1993, the Fund sent a staff team to begin negotiations for new programs following the devaluation, concluding these in January 1994 after President Houphouët-Boigny's death in office postponed negotiations from December to January.²⁹ In finalizing the 1994 program, it appears Côte d'Ivoire was a program taker. Counter to our expectations, negotiations were short even though French support had declined.

Finally, Côte d'Ivoire's 1998 program exemplifies the last combination of process and outcomes. Negotiations were long and conditionality was high - the worst possible outcome from a borrower's perspective. Part of the explanation lies in the type of program being negotiated. In 1998, Côte d'Ivoire entered the Highly Indebted Poor Countries Initiative (HIPC), and the process of securing debt relief required more

²⁸ IMF Country Report EBS/89/212

²⁹ IMF Country Report EBS/94/12

lengthy negotiations. Furthermore, connectivity and linkage strategies had waned, giving less leverage for speedy negotiations. Moreover, domestic politics played an important role in prolonging negotiations. Unlike in 1988 and 1989, domestic political challenges were a hindrance rather than a point of leverage for Côte d'Ivoire. Specifically, the staff report notes that discussions were prolonged because of "governance issues."³⁰ These stemmed from a 1996 IMF technical assistance mission that uncovered significant customs fraud. This exemplified the more widespread issues of corruption and lack of social cohesion which "increasingly thwarted economic progress" (Boughton, 2012). These domestic challenges sowed distrust with the IMF, making it harder for the two sides to reach an agreement and encouraging the IMF to attach high numbers of conditions as insurance.

While limited by the data available, the Ivorian case illustrates three things. First, it demonstrates that negotiation length is meaningful on its own, and cannot simply be subsumed by the terms of the loan that emerge from the negotiations. Côte d'Ivoire's experience shows that governments can experience quick or slow negotiations in combination with different program designs. Second, while our brief analysis cannot speak definitively to the mechanism of influence, it shows that when the government had access to connectivity strategies based on its financial ties to France and linkage strategies based on its membership in the UN Security Council, the country received favorable loans more quickly. Finally, the discussion of Côte d'Ivoire's negotiating history with the Fund also highlights additional dynamics that shaped the progress of negotiation, especially domestic constraints. When the IMF's preferred reforms imposed unacceptable costs on domestic populations and influential interest groups, negotiations were drawn out as the government resisted the inclusion of conditionality related to these reforms. The availability of our dataset will allow future work to examine strategies of deliberate delay.

6 Conclusion

The extensive literature on the design, implementation, and enforcement of IMF loans often rests, implicitly or explicitly, on the assumption that loan agreements reflect the balance of bargaining power between borrowing governments and the Fund at the time the agreement is concluded. However, few studies have systematically investigated the negotiation phase between the IMF and borrowing governments. This paper introduces data that allows scholars to study the negotiation between the IMF and borrowing countries more directly.

When we apply our data to the subject of this special issue, our findings indicate that negotiations proceed more rapidly when borrowers have access to institutional linkages and financial connections. In the case of linkage strategies, borrowers benefit from their status in the UN Security Council and reach IMF agreements more quickly. In the case of connectivity strategies, borrowers benefit from closer financial ties to major shareholders, leading to negotiations concluding more quickly. Importantly, our results show that borrowers with these attributes, particularly connections

³⁰ IMF Country Report EBS/98/36

to shareholders' financial networks, conclude negotiations more rapidly without compromising on conditionality. This increases our confidence that we observe borrowers benefiting from connectivity and linkage strategies, rather than being steamrolled into programs by impatient IMF staff.

This paper makes a number of contributions to debates on the power of the “weak” (Snidal et al., 2024, this issue). First, it highlights that even weak countries can benefit from existing connections. Other papers in this special issue highlight how materially weak(er) states can nonetheless benefit from network centrality, with Manulak (2024, this issue) describing how Canada used its position in diplomatic networks to influence foreign policy outcomes and Mesquita (2024, this issue) arguing that Cuba has benefited from its position as a diplomatic broker to resist pressures for change. Our paper highlights that weak states can use connectivity to more powerful states, their “friends”, even when they are not central to the global network. Though a strategy with more enduring effects is for a country to shift its pattern of connections to decrease vulnerabilities in the long-term, our findings highlight that existing connections can prove useful. The form of connectivity that we examine — external debt to banks based in major shareholder countries — is not self-evidently a source of strength. In fact, high levels of external debt are usually a form of weakness, especially for developing countries. In the crisis context, however, the risk of financial spillovers from the borrowing country to the banking sectors of lending countries turns this form of connectivity into a source of strength that countries can exploit in their negotiations with the IMF. In the words of John Maynard Keynes, “Owe your banker £1,000 and you are at his mercy; owe him £1 million and the position is reversed” (Keynes, 1978, 258). More broadly, this suggests that a strategy for the weak is to lean into the spillover effects of global phenomena. Other work has shown that countries are more likely to receive emergency loans when they pose a spillover risk to others (Schneider and Tobin, 2020) and likely to receive higher amounts of aid when donor countries expect larger flows of outmigration (Bermeo and Leblang, 2015). Future research should consider the interplay between states' strategies of altering the pattern of their interdependence to increase their leverage and exploiting existing connections, especially ones that imply spillovers to stronger states.

A second contribution to the themes of the special issue is to identify the strength of weaker actors based on the interests of stronger actors. It is commonplace in the IMF literature to identify the outsize influence that major shareholders, especially the US, have on the operations of the IMF. In this paper, we have extended these arguments to the negotiation phase and built on findings that borrowing countries can use the interests of major shareholders to their advantage. The very asymmetry within the institutional structure of the IMF, which gives some countries greater influence than others, creates opportunities for smaller and weaker countries to benefit from their connections to influential countries. In other words, weaker countries can become more powerful by virtue of having powerful friends. Notably, this does not correct imbalances of power within the organization in the way that strategies of institutional modification (Beall, 2024, this issue; Campbell and Matanock, 2024, this issue; Lugg, 2024, this issue) or coalition-building might do. Instead, it offers opportunities for some countries, though lacking in material sources of compulsory power, to obtain their preferred outcomes. This is in keeping with findings that international organi-

zations with unequal voting power, such as the World Bank or regional development banks, extend benefits to countries favored by major shareholders (Kilby, 2009; Clark and Dolan, 2021). It suggests that weaker states can benefit from their relationships with stronger states in international organizations where the latter wield considerable influence, whether that is based on voting rules or informal power. Cultivating those relationships may require significant concessions from weaker states, and must therefore be traded off against the potential benefits from the bilateral relationship and greater flexibility within relevant international organizations.

Another fruitful avenue for future research is to focus on the relationship between the process of negotiation and the terms of IMF agreements. Our findings suggest that some borrowers can use their influence to speed up negotiations without compromising on the terms of the agreement. But under which conditions would borrowers prefer to extend and delay negotiations? If this ever a successful tactic to improve the terms of agreements, leading to the “slow and good” outcome? When do these strategies fail, leading to the “slow and bad” outcome? How do domestic politics of adjustment, including coalitions in support and opposition to the terms of the IMF program, affect the duration and sequence of the negotiations?

More broadly, our data makes it possible for future research to examine the determinants and consequences of the timing of negotiations between borrowing countries and the IMF. For instance, future research may wish to use this data to examine the reaction of international financial markets to negotiations between the Fund and borrowers. Scholars have investigated whether IMF loans act as a signal of economic weakness or reassurance for investors (Chapman et al., 2015), and how markets respond to the interruption of IMF loans (Reinsberg et al., 2022a). Studies have largely focused on the announcement of IMF loans, but it is conceivable that program negotiation already reveals information to market observers, such that markets are “pricing in” the effect of an IMF loan, biasing estimates of the effect of loan announcements (Gehring and Lang, 2020). Additionally, future work may consider whether the intensity of negotiations waxes or wanes as the IMF’s institutional rules change (Schneider, 2011). Other applications could use the length of negotiations as an explanatory variable, investigating whether the duration of negotiations is related to the failure or success of the subsequent program (Kilby, 2013).

Beyond information on the dates of negotiation, the dataset also includes data on the timing of borrowers’ official requests for assistance, the staff report, and board approval. This allows future research on the speed of other phases of the loan preparation process, building on the work of McDowell (2017). Moreover, the dataset includes the names of IMF staff participating in negotiations, where available, allowing for future network analysis investigating which negotiators shaped particular sets of negotiations. Casting a light on bargaining between the IMF and borrowing countries can expand the literature on the IMF in new directions. As such, it can contribute to future research on how seemingly “weak” states are able to have an influence in asymmetric negotiations.

Supplementary Information The online version contains supplementary material available at <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11558-024-09537-4>.

Acknowledgements Thanks to Claas Mertens, Katharina Michaelowa, Karolina Milewicz, Bernhard Reinsberg, Sam Rowan, Randall Stone, participants of the APSA 2021 panel on “New Research on IMF Programs,” participants of the 2022 PEIO conference, organizers and participants of the 2022 “Power of the Weak” workshops, and especially the editors of the “Power of the Weak” Special Issue for comments on earlier versions of this paper. Thanks to Christina Lepore, Kamilah Mohammad, Doris Nyilidandi, Jay Palen, and Laura Sofía Rivera for excellent research assistance. Any errors are the authors’ own.

Authors’ contributions Author contributions to research design and conceptualization: L.L.F (50%), A.O.Z (50%); statistical analysis: L.L.F (50%), A.O.Z (50%); writing: L.L.F (50%), A.O.Z (50%). Authors are listed alphabetically.

Data availability statement The data used for the analyses in this paper will be made available upon publication.

Declarations

Conflict of interest/Competing interest statement The authors have no conflicts of interest to declare.

References

- Alexander, D., & Rooney, B. (2019). Vote-buying by the United States in the United Nations. *International Studies Quarterly*, 63(1), 168–176.
- Bailey, M. A., Strezhnev, A., & Voeten, E. (2017). Estimating dynamic state preferences from United Nations voting data. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 61(2), 430–56.
- Barnett, M., & Duvall, R. (2005). Power in international politics. *International Organization*, 59(01), 39–75
- Beall, K. (2024). Empowering to constrain: Procedural checks and constraint through delegation. *Review of International Organizations*
- Bearce, D. H., Eldredge, C. D., & Jolliff, B. J. (2014). Do finite duration provisions reduce international bargaining delay? *International Organization*, 69(1), 219–239.
- Bermeo, S. B., & Leblang, D. (2015). Migration and foreign aid. *International Organization*, 69(3), 627–657.
- Boughton, J. M. (2001). *Silent Revolution: The International Monetary Fund 1979-1989*. The International Monetary Fund
- Boughton, J. M. (2012). *Tearing down walls: the International Monetary Fund 1990-1999*. The International Monetary Fund
- Broz, J. L., & Hawes, M. B. (2006). Congressional politics of financing the International Monetary Fund. *International Organization*, 60(2), 367–399.
- Campbell, S. & Matanock (2024). Weapons of the weak state: How post-conflict states shape international state building. *Review of International Organizations*
- Caraway, T. L., Rickard, S. J., & Anner, M. S. (2012). International negotiations and domestic politics: the case of IMF labor market conditionality. *International Organization*, 66(1), 27–61.
- Chapman, T., Fang, S., Li, X., & Stone, R. W. (2015). Mixed signals: IMF lending and capital markets. *British Journal of Political Science*, 47(2), 329–349.
- Chwieroth, J. (2015). Professional ties that bind: how normative orientations shape IMF conditionality. *Review of International Political Economy*, 22(4), 757–787.
- Clark, R., & Dolan, L. R. (2021). Pleasing the principal: US influence in World Bank policymaking. *American Journal of Political Science*, 65(1), 36–51
- Copelovitch, M. S. (2010). *The International Monetary Fund in the global economy: Banks, bonds, and bailouts*. Cambridge University Press.
- Copelovitch, M. S. (2010). Master of servant? Common agency and the political economy of IMF lending. *International Studies Quarterly*, 54(1), 49–77.
- Copelovitch, M. S., & Powers, R. (2021). Do we really know what we think we know about the politics of IMF lending? Measuring and reassessing us influence in global financial governance. *Working Paper*.

- https://static1.squarespace.com/static/6481deed0153f18f9ecde16/t/64b4be128e9bb75619d88740/1689566739071/2021-10-20-18_58_04-copelovitch%40wisc.edu.pdf
- Dahl, R. A., & Stinebrickner, B. (2003). *Modern Political Analysis* (6th edn.). Prentice-Hall
- Dreher, A. (2003). The influence of elections on IMF programme interruptions. *Journal of Development Studies*, 36(9), 101–120.
- Dreher, A., & Jensen, N. M. (2007). Independent actor or agent? An empirical analysis of the impact of US interests on International Monetary Fund conditions. *The Journal of Law and Economics*, 50(1), 105–124.
- Dreher, A., & Sturm, J.-E. (2012). Does the IMF and the World Bank influence voting in the United Nations General Assembly. *Public Choice*, 151, 363–397.
- Dreher, A., Sturm, J.-E., & Vreeland, J. R. (2009). Global horse trading: IMF loans for votes in the United Nations Security Council. *European Economic Review*, 53(7), 742–757.
- Dreher, A., Sturm, J.-E., & Vreeland, J. R. (2015). Politics and IMF conditionality. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 59(1), 120–148.
- Fearon, J. D. (1998). Bargaining, enforcement, and international cooperation. *International Organization*, 52(2), 269–305.
- Fernández-Arias, E. (2010). International Lending of Last Resort and Sovereign Debt Restructuring. In C. A. Primo Braga & G. A. Vincelette (Eds.), *Sovereign Debt and the Financial Crisis* (pp. 331–353). *World Bank*
- Gehring, K., & Lang, V. (2020). Stigma or cushion? IMF programs and sovereign creditworthiness. *Journal of Development Economics*, 146, 102507.
- Kahler, M. (1993). *Bargaining with the IMF: Two-level strategies and developing countries*. University of California Press
- Kentikelenis, A., Stubbs, T., & King, L. (2016). IMF conditionality and development policy space, 1985–2014. *Review of International Political Economy*, 23(4), 543–582.
- Keynes, J. M. (1978). *The Collected Writings of John Maynard Keynes*. Cambridge University Press.
- Kilby, C. (2009). The political economy of conditionality: an empirical analysis of World Bank loan disbursements. *Journal of Development Economics*, 89(1), 51–61.
- Kilby, C. (2013). The political economy of project preparation: an empirical analysis of World Bank projects. *Journal of Development Economics*, 105, 211–225.
- Lall, R. (2016). How multiple imputation makes a difference. *Political Analysis*, 24(4), 414–433.
- Lechner, L., & Wüthrich, S. (2018). Seal the deal: bargaining positions, institutional design, and the duration of preferential trade negotiations. *International Interactions*, 44(5), 833–861.
- Lockwood, N. (2013). International vote buying. *Harvard International Law Journal*, 54(1), 97–156.
- Lugg, A. (2024). Re-contracting intergovernmental organizations: Membership change and the creation of linked intergovernmental organizations. *Review of International Organizations*
- Manulak, M. (2024). The sources of influence in multilateral diplomacy: Replaceability and intergovernmental networks in international institutions. *Review of International Organizations*
- McDowell, D. (2017). Need for speed: the lending responsiveness of the IMF. *The Review of International Organizations*, 12(1), 39–73.
- Mesquita, R. (2024). The only living guerrillero in New York: Cuba and the brokerage power of a resilient revisionist state. *Review of International Organizations*
- Mody, A., & Saravia, D. (2013). The response speed of the International Monetary Fund. *International Finance*, 16(2), 189–211
- Moser, C., & Sturm, J.-E. (2011). Explaining IMF lending decisions after the Cold War. *The Review of International Organizations*, 6(3–4), 307–340.
- Nelson, S. (2014). Playing favorites: how shared beliefs shape the IMF's lending decisions. *International Organization*, 68(2), 297–328.
- Oatley, T., & Yackee, J. (2004). American interests and IMF lending. *International Politics*, 41, 415–429.
- Reinsberg, B., Stubbs, T., & Kentikelenis, A. (2022a). Compliance, defiance, and the dependency trap: International Monetary Fund program interruptions and their impact on capital markets. *Regulation & Governance*, 16(4), 1022–1041
- Reinsberg, B., Stubbs, T., & Kentikelenis, A. (2022b). Unimplementable by design? Understanding (non-) compliance with International Monetary Fund conditionality. *Governance*, 35(3), 689–715
- Schneider, C. J. (2011). Weak states and institutionalized bargaining power in international organizations. *International Studies Quarterly*, 55(2), 331–355.

- Schneider, C. J., & Tobin, J. L. (2020). The political economy of bilateral bailouts. *International Organization*, 74(1), 1–29.
- Snidal, D., Hale, T., Jones, E., Mertens, C & Milewicz, K. (2024). The Power of the “Weak”: Strategies through International Organizations
- Stone, R. (2004). The political economy of IMF lending in Africa. *American Political Science Review*, 98(4), 577–591.
- Stone, R. (2008). The scope of IMF conditionality. *International Organization*, 62(4), 589–620.
- Vreeland, J. R. (2003). Why do governments and the IMF enter into agreement? Statistically selected cases. *International Political Science Review*, 24(3), 321–343.

Publisher's Note Springer Nature remains neutral with regard to jurisdictional claims in published maps and institutional affiliations.

Springer Nature or its licensor (e.g. a society or other partner) holds exclusive rights to this article under a publishing agreement with the author(s) or other rightsholder(s); author self-archiving of the accepted manuscript version of this article is solely governed by the terms of such publishing agreement and applicable law.