

Electoral Systems I



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POL 002: Introduction to Comparative Politics

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Outline

1. Defining electoral system types
2. Majoritarian types
3. Semi-proportional types
4. Proportional types
5. Tomorrow: what do electoral systems affect?

Electoral System Types

Defining Electoral Systems

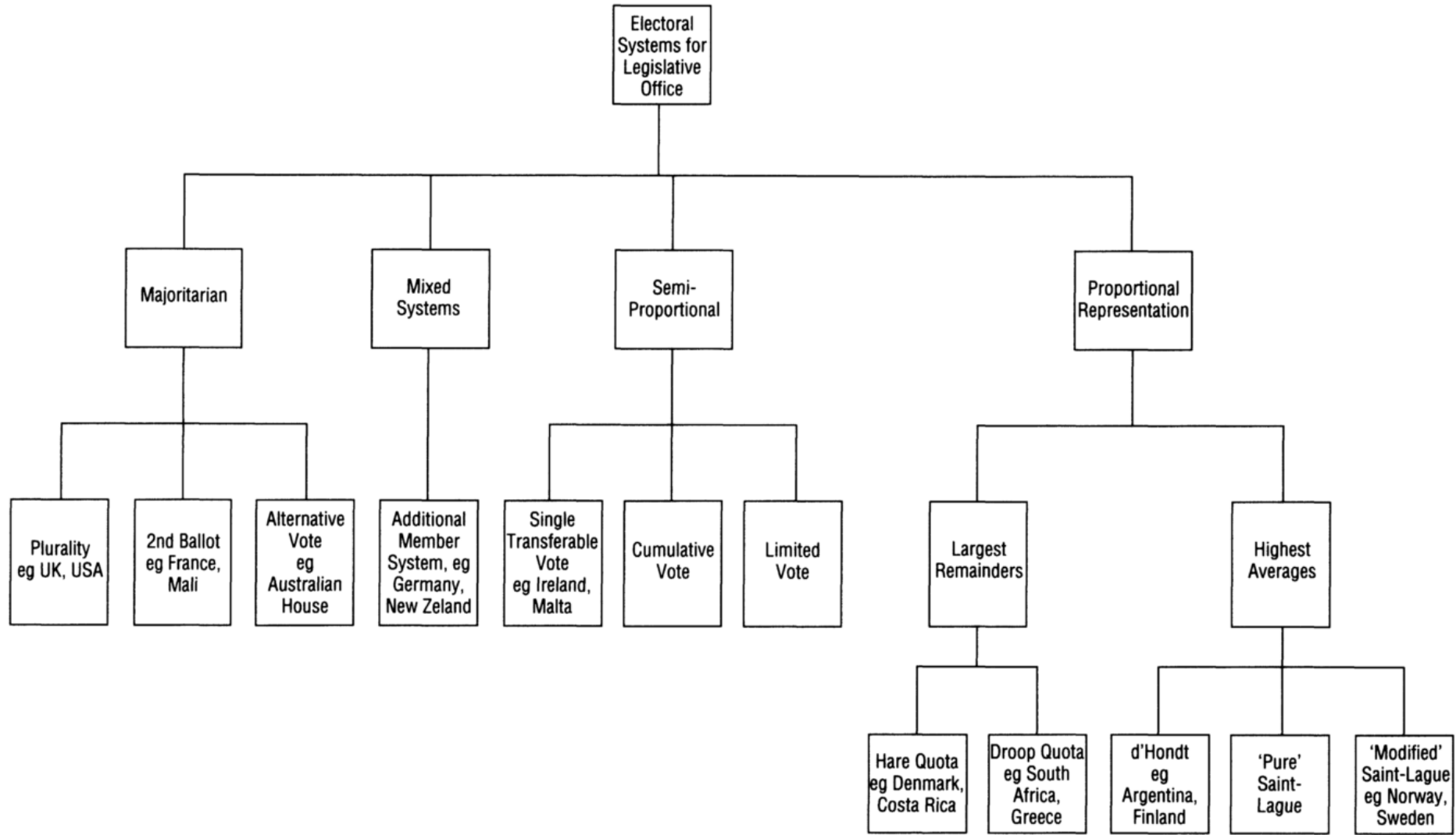
- What is an electoral system?
- The translation of votes into seats
- Electoral systems determine how assembly members and presidents are elected
- Electoral systems rarely change within countries – though there are notable exceptions!

Key Concepts

- **Assembly size (S):** the total number of seats in the assembly
- **District magnitude (M):** the number of seats in a district
 - In US House districts, UK parliamentary constituencies, and Canadian ridings, $M=1$.
 - In national PR systems, like Israel, $M=S$
 - In districted PR systems, like Portugal, M varies by district

Main Electoral System Categories (Norris)

- *Majoritarian* – plurality, two-round plurality, alternative vote
- *Semi-proportional* – single transferable vote (STV), cumulative vote, limited vote
- *Proportional representation* – open party list, closed party list. Uses an “allocation formula.”
- *Mixed* – mixed member proportional (MMP), mixed member majoritarian (MMM)
- We will analyze some, but not all, of these types



Electoral Systems Type Matters

Electoral System I

Electoral System II

% votes	% seats	% votes	% seats
35.2	55.1	37.7	42.5
32.3	30.6	30	34.5
22.1	9.6	10.8	9.3
		10.1	7.1

“Plurality”

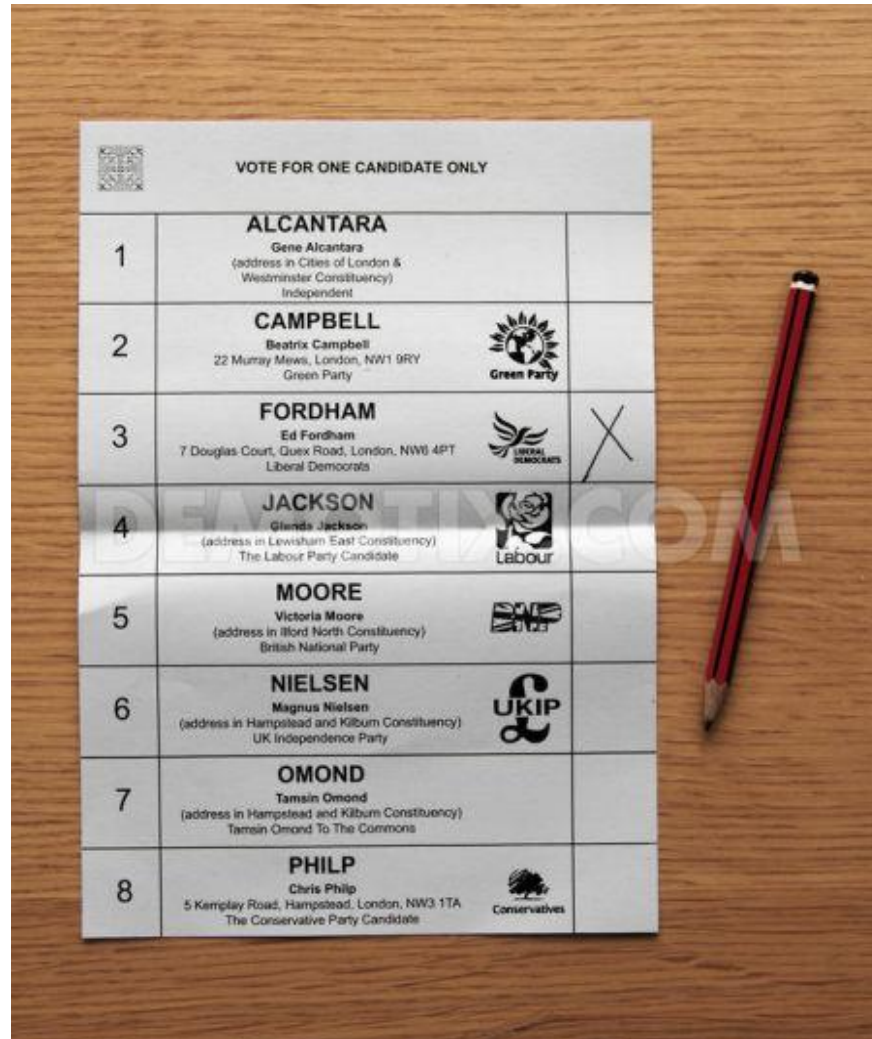
“Proportional”

Majoritarian Types

Plurality Elections

- “First-past-the-post” is one of the most common electoral systems, and it is also quite simple
- Countries are divided into districts, and the candidate who wins **plurality** of the vote in each district takes office
- This system often creates **manufactured majorities**, whereby the largest party gets a majority of seats despite not receiving a majority of votes
- $M=1$

Sample Ballot: UK

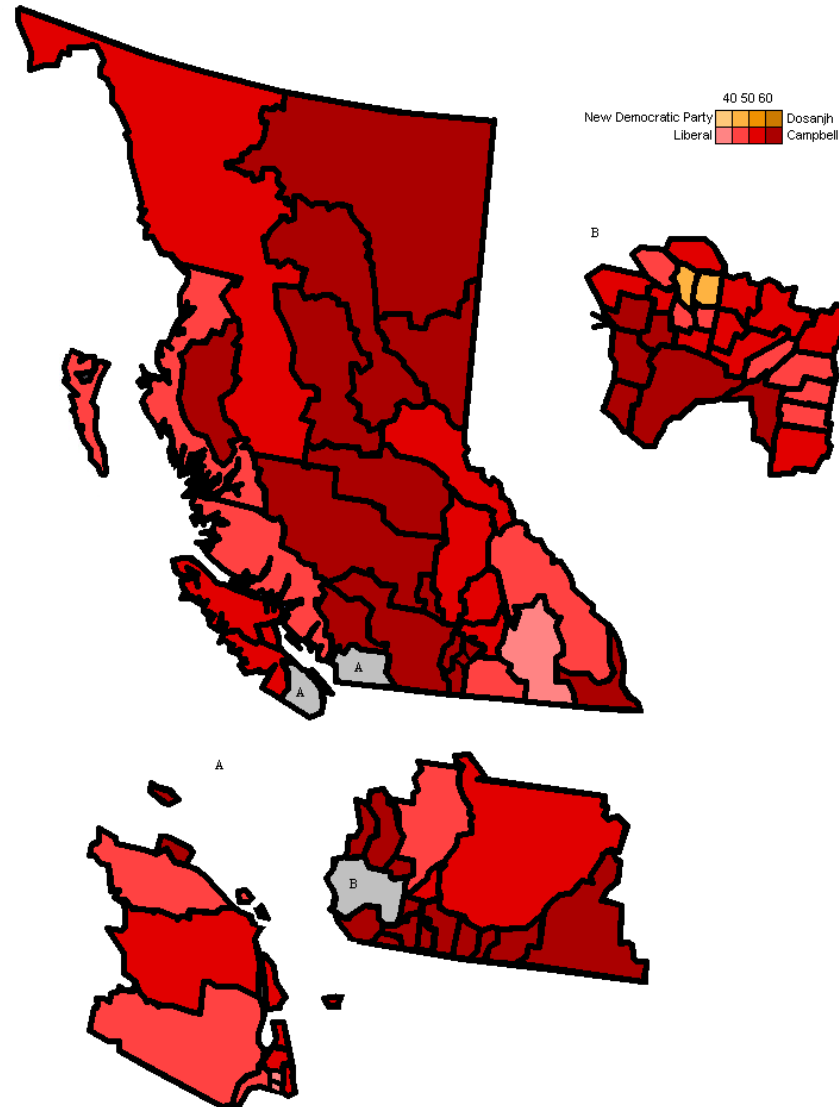


Majoritarian Example: British Columbia

2001**2013**

Party	% votes	% seats	% votes	% seats
BC Liberals	57.6	97	44.1	58
BC NDP	21.6	3	39.7	40
Green Party	12.4	0	8.1	1
Others	8.4	0	8.1	1

British Columbia 2001



Example: Bahamas 2012

Single-seat constituency system

COMMONWEALTH OF THE BAHAMAS
LEGISLATIVE ELECTION OF 7 MAY 2012

Source: Bahamas Elections website

* DNA - Democratic National Alliance

* FNM - Free National Movement

* PLP - Progressive Liberal Party

NATIONAL SUMMARY OF VOTES AND SEATS

Registered voters:	171,932		
Votes cast:	156,088	90.8	

Party	Votes	%		Seats	
Democratic National Alliance	13,366	08.6		-	
Free National Movement	65,634	42.1	-07.8	9	-14
Progressive Liberal Party	75,815	48.6	+01.6	29	+11
Others	1,273	00.8		-	
Total	156,088			38	-03



Bahamas has S=38

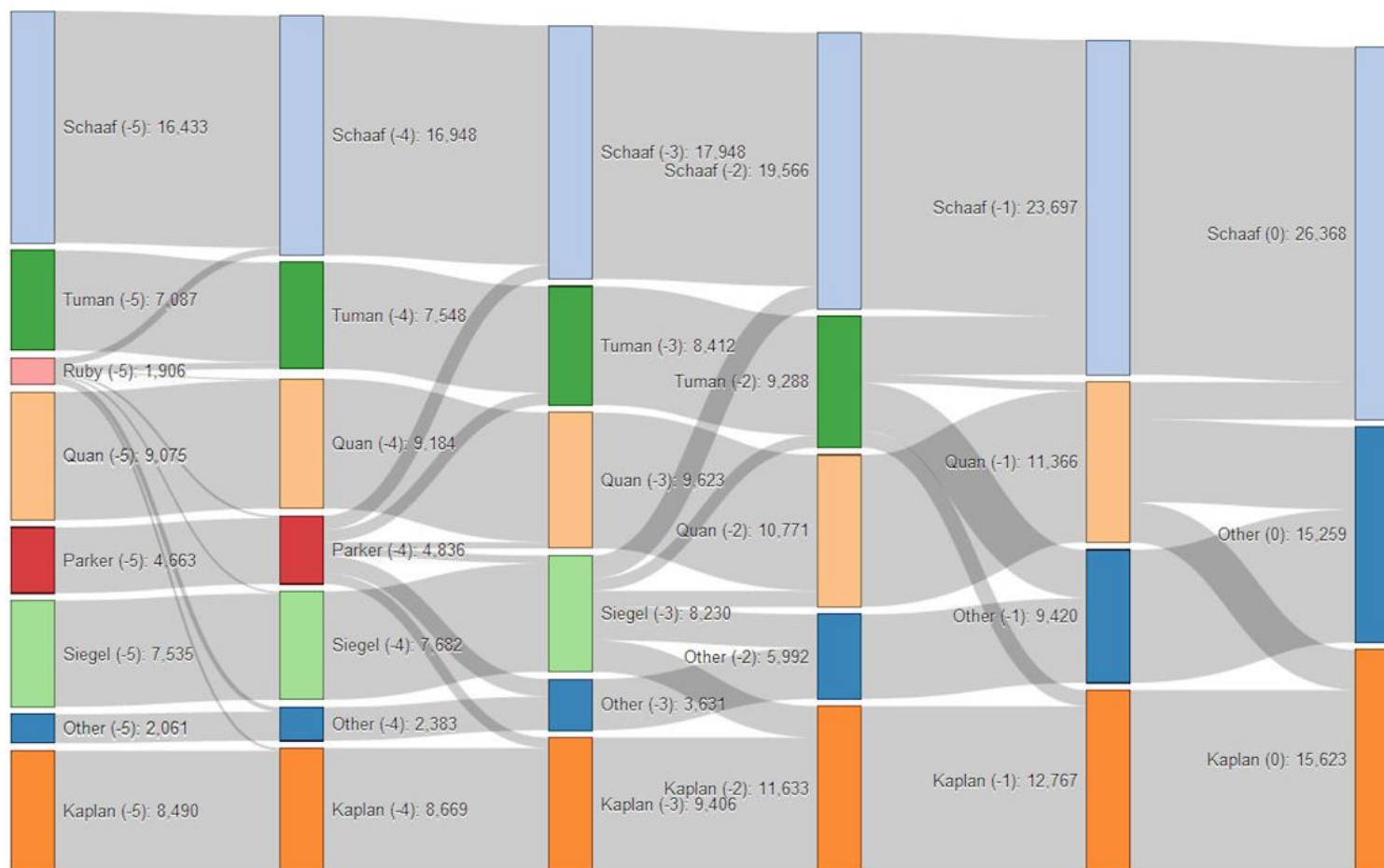
Other Majoritarian Types

- Two-round systems
 - Majority-runoff: unless a candidate gets over 50% of the vote, they face the second-place finisher in a second round (e.g. French presidential elections)
 - Top-two: the top-two candidates face each other in a second round, regardless of their initial vote shares (e.g. California assembly races)
- Alternative vote (AV)
 - Voters rank the candidates on the ballot in order of preferences, then votes are eliminated and redistributed (e.g. San Francisco and Oakland mayoral elections) ($M=1$)

Sample Ballot: Berkeley

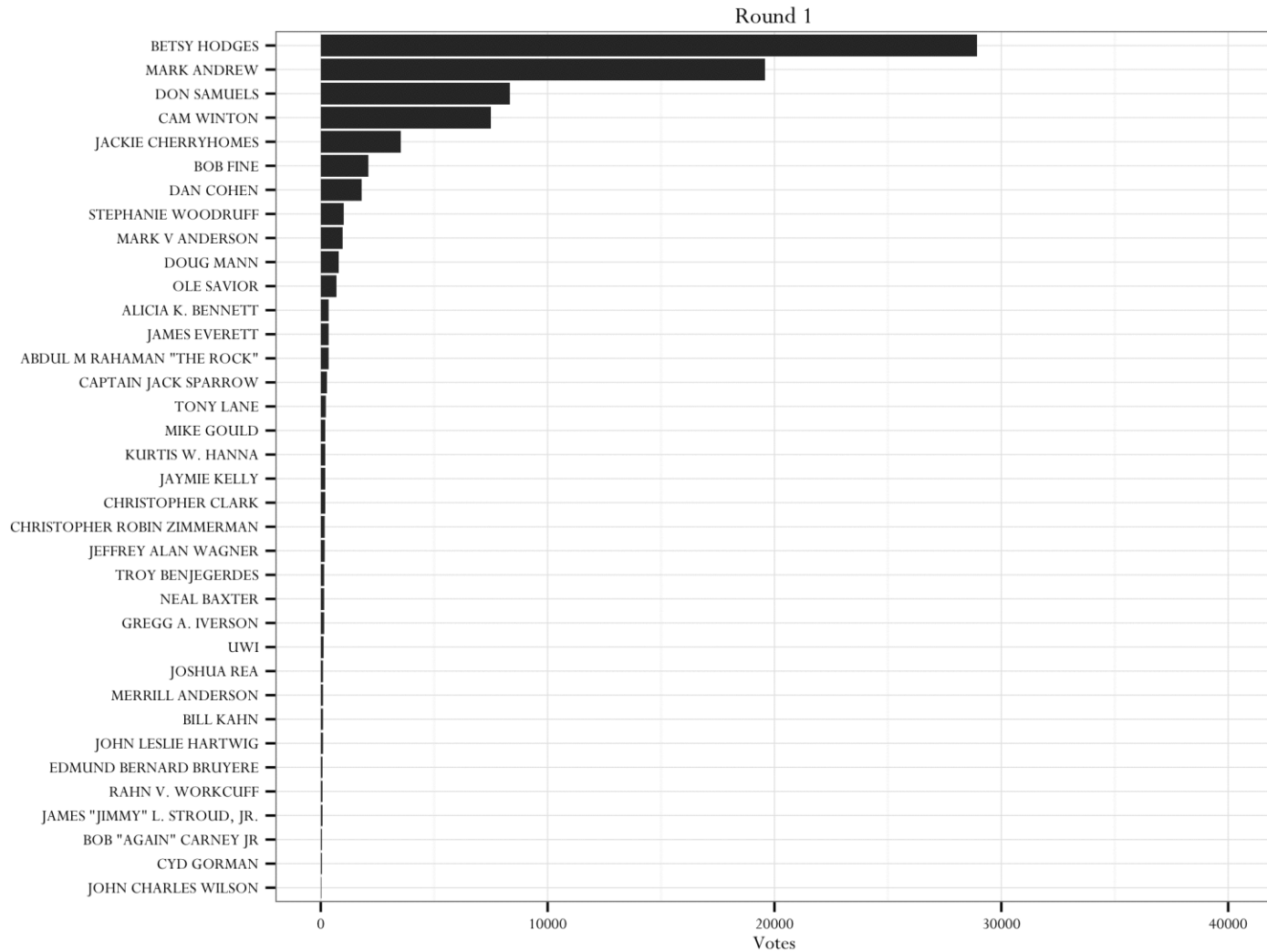
NONPARTISAN	NONPARTISAN	NONPARTISAN
CITY	CITY	CITY
FOR MAYOR	FOR MAYOR	FOR MAYOR
1 FIRST CHOICE <i>Vote for One</i>	2 SECOND CHOICE <i>(This must be different from your first choice.)</i> <i>Vote for One</i>	3 THIRD CHOICE <i>(This must be different from your first and second choices.)</i> <i>Vote for One</i>
ELEANOR ROOSEVELT ← <input type="checkbox"/>	ELEANOR ROOSEVELT ← <input type="checkbox"/>	ELEANOR ROOSEVELT ← <input type="checkbox"/>
BOOKER T. WASHINGTON ← <input type="checkbox"/>	BOOKER T. WASHINGTON ← <input type="checkbox"/>	BOOKER T. WASHINGTON ← <input type="checkbox"/>
DIEGO RIVERA ← <input type="checkbox"/>	DIEGO RIVERA ← <input type="checkbox"/>	DIEGO RIVERA ← <input type="checkbox"/>
ARTHUR MILLER ← <input type="checkbox"/>	ARTHUR MILLER ← <input type="checkbox"/>	ARTHUR MILLER ← <input type="checkbox"/>
SHIRLEY HORN ← <input type="checkbox"/>	SHIRLEY HORN ← <input type="checkbox"/>	SHIRLEY HORN ← <input type="checkbox"/>
BRUCE LEE ← <input type="checkbox"/>	BRUCE LEE ← <input type="checkbox"/>	BRUCE LEE ← <input type="checkbox"/>
← <input type="checkbox"/>	← <input type="checkbox"/>	← <input type="checkbox"/>

Example: Oakland Mayor (2014)



Source: Alameda County Registrar of Voters,
http://www.acgov.org/rov/rcv/results/226/OaklandMayor/pass_report.pdf

Example: Minneapolis Mayor (2013)



Proportional Types

Proportional Representation



- Votes are made for **party lists**. These lists can be either **closed** or **open**
- Proportional representation can be national ($M=S$), as in Israel
- Often PR is districted, as in Belgium or Portugal
- Electoral formulas are used to allocate seats proportionally
 - Examples include D'Hondt, Hare quota and largest remainders (LR-Hare), Saint-Laguë, and the Droop quota





Closed-list

- Categorical vote for one party list only

Party name and symbol only: Portugal

Party name, symbol, and names of all candidates: Nicaragua

ELEIÇÃO DA ASSEMBLEIA DA REPÚBLICA Circulo eleitoral do Porto			
Frente da Esquerda Revolucionária	FER		<input type="checkbox"/>
Partido do Centro Democrático Social	CDS		<input type="checkbox"/>
Partido Comunista dos Trabalhadores Portugueses	PCTP/MRPP		<input type="checkbox"/>
Força de Unidade Popular	FUP		<input type="checkbox"/>
Partido Democrático do Atlântico	PDA		<input type="checkbox"/>
CDU – Coligação Democrática Unitária	PCP-PEV		<input type="checkbox"/>
Partido de Solidariedade Nacional	PSN		<input type="checkbox"/>
Partido Social Democrata	PPD/PSD		<input type="checkbox"/>
Partido Renovador Democrático	PRD		<input type="checkbox"/>
Partido Popular Monárquico	PPM		<input type="checkbox"/>
Partido Socialista Revolucionário	PSR		<input type="checkbox"/>
Partido Socialista	PS		<input type="checkbox"/>

LA REPRESENTANTES ANTE LA ASAMBLEA NACIONAL ELECTORAL SUYA			
4	5	6	7
			
PARTIDO REVOLUCIONARIO DE LOS TRABAJADORES	FRENTE SANDINISTA DE LIBERACION NACIONAL	PARTIDO MARXISTA LENINISTA	PARTIDO SOCIAL CRISTIANO
PROPIETARIOS	PROPIETARIOS	PROPIETARIOS	PROPIETARIOS
JOSÉ ENRIQUE TORRES CARLOS JOSÉ RAMÍREZ CARMELITA VÁSQUEZ LUCAS RIVERA ANGELINA VÁSQUEZ MARTHA CARRERA LUCAS RIVERA ANGELINA VÁSQUEZ MARTHA CARRERA LUCAS RIVERA ANGELINA VÁSQUEZ MARTHA CARRERA LUCAS RIVERA ANGELINA VÁSQUEZ MARTHA CARRERA	CARLOS NUÑEZ LUCAS RIVERA ANGELINA VÁSQUEZ MARTHA CARRERA LUCAS RIVERA ANGELINA VÁSQUEZ MARTHA CARRERA LUCAS RIVERA ANGELINA VÁSQUEZ MARTHA CARRERA LUCAS RIVERA ANGELINA VÁSQUEZ MARTHA CARRERA LUCAS RIVERA ANGELINA VÁSQUEZ MARTHA CARRERA	FERNANDO MOLINA DANIELA VÁSQUEZ CARLOS NUÑEZ LUCAS RIVERA ANGELINA VÁSQUEZ MARTHA CARRERA LUCAS RIVERA ANGELINA VÁSQUEZ MARTHA CARRERA LUCAS RIVERA ANGELINA VÁSQUEZ MARTHA CARRERA LUCAS RIVERA ANGELINA VÁSQUEZ MARTHA CARRERA LUCAS RIVERA ANGELINA VÁSQUEZ MARTHA CARRERA	ALEJANDRO GARCÍA LUCAS RIVERA ANGELINA VÁSQUEZ MARTHA CARRERA LUCAS RIVERA ANGELINA VÁSQUEZ MARTHA CARRERA LUCAS RIVERA ANGELINA VÁSQUEZ MARTHA CARRERA LUCAS RIVERA ANGELINA VÁSQUEZ MARTHA CARRERA LUCAS RIVERA ANGELINA VÁSQUEZ MARTHA CARRERA LUCAS RIVERA ANGELINA VÁSQUEZ MARTHA CARRERA
SUPLENTES	SUPLENTES	SUPLENTES	SUPLENTES
... (names listed in smaller font) (names listed in smaller font) (names listed in smaller font) (names listed in smaller font) ...

Open-list

- Categorical vote for one **candidate** only

Colombia (2006)

VOTO PARA SENADO DE LA REPÚBLICA CIRCUNSCRIPCIÓN NACIONAL

1 SI SU VOTO NO ES PREFERENTE: ÚNICAMENTE MARQUE EL LOGOSÍMBOLO DEL PARTIDO, MOVIMIENTO POLÍTICO O GRUPO SIGNIFICATIVO.

2 SI SU VOTO ES PREFERENTE: MARQUE EL LOGOSÍMBOLO DEL PARTIDO, MOVIMIENTO POLÍTICO O GRUPO SIGNIFICATIVO Y LUEGO EL NÚMERO DEL CANDIDATO DE SU PREFERENCIA (VERIFIQUE EN EL CUADERNILLO ANEXO).

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36
37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48
49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60
61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72
73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84
85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96
97	98	99	100								

PARTE A

Example: Poland 1991

PARTY/GROUPING	VOTES	% VOTES	SEATS	% SEATS
TOTAL	11,218,602	100	460	100
UD - DEMOCRATIC UNION	1,382,051	12.32	62	13.47
SLD - ALLIANCE OF THE DEMOCRATIC LEFT	1,344,820	11.99	60	13.04
WAK - CATHOLIC ELECTION ACTION	980,304	8.74	49	10.65
PSL - POLISH PEASANT PARTY	972,952	8.67	48	10.43
KPN - CONFEDERATION FOR INDEPENDENT POLAND	841,738	7.5	46	10
POC - CIVIC CENTRE ALLIANCE	977,344	8.71	44	9.56
KLD - LIBERAL DEMOCRATIC CONGRESS	839,978	7.49	37	8.04
PL - PEASANT ALLIANCE	613,626	5.47	28	6.08
SOLIDARITY TRADE UNION (SOLIDARNOSC)	566,553	5.05	27	5.86
PPPP - POLISH FRIENDS OF BEER PARTY	367,106	3.27	16	3.47
GERMAN MINORITY	132,059	1.18	7	1.52
DC - CHRISTIAN DEMOCRACY	265,179	2.36	5	1.08
SP - LABOUR SOLIDARITY (SOLIDARNOSC PRACY)	230,975	2.06	4	0.86
PCD - PARTY OF CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS	125,314	1.12	4	0.86
PZZ - POLISH WESTERN UNION	26,053	0.23	4	0.85
UPR - UNION OF POLITICAL REALISM	253,024	2.26	3	0.65
PARTY X (PARTIA 'X')	52,735	0.47	3	0.65
MOVEMENT FOR SILESIA AUTONOMY	40,061	0.36	2	0.42
SD - DEMOCRATIC PARTY	159,017	1.42	1	0.21
RDS - DEMOCRATIC-SOCIAL MOVEMENT	51,656	0.46	1	0.21
PIAST PEASANT ELECTION ALLIANCE	42,031	0.37	1	0.21
KRAKOW COALITION OF SOLIDARITY WITH THE PRESIDENT	27,586	0.25	1	0.21
PODHALAN UNION	26,744	0.24	1	0.21
GREAT POLAND AND POLAND (WIELKOPOLSKA I POLSKA)	23,188	0.21	1	0.21
PEASANT UNIY	18,902	0.17	1	0.21
ELECTORAL COMMITTEE OF ORTHODOX BELIEVERS	13,788	0.12	1	0.21
SOLIDARITY '80 (SOLIDARNOSC' 80)	12,769	0.11	1	0.21
UNION OF GREAT POLES	9,019	0.08	1	0.21
ALLIANCE OF WOMEN AGAINST LIFE'S HARDSHIPS	1,922	0.02	1	0.21
PPEZ - POLISH ECOLOGY PARTY-GREENS	91,726	0.82	0	0
ZP - HEALTHY POLAND	89,034	0.79	0	0
PW - FREEDOM PARTY	78,704	0.7	0	0
SN - NATIONALIST PARTY	74,082	0.66	0	0
PPE-PPZ - POLISH ECOLOGY AND POLISH GREEN PARTY	71,043	0.63	0	0

There were 41 other parties, each with under 40,000 votes and no seats

Example: Tunisia (2011)

Party	Ideology	% votes	% seats
Ennahda	Center-right (Islamist)	37.4	41.0
CPR	Leftist (secular)	8.7	13.4
Aridha	Populist	6.7	12.0
Ettakatol	Leftist (secular)	7.0	9.2
PDP	Center-left (secular)	3.9	7.4
Others		36.3	17.0

CONTRAST: British Columbia - 1996

Party	% votes	% seats
BC Liberals	41.8	44
BC NDP	39.5	52
Reform	9.3	3
Progressive Democrat	5.7	1
Green Party	2.0	0
Others	1.8	0

Thresholds Under Proportional Representation

- Some proportional systems have electoral **thresholds**
- Thresholds are a minimum percentage of votes required for a party to earn seats
- These thresholds exist to *decrease* the number of parties in the assembly
- The reason for doing so may be practical or political

Example: Israel (2013): 2% Threshold

Party	Leader	%	Seats
Likud Yisrael Beiteinu	Benjamin Netanyahu	23.34%	31
Yesh Atid	Yair Lapid	14.33%	19
Labor	Shelly Yachimovich	11.39%	15
The Jewish Home	Naftali Bennett	9.12%	12
Shas	Eli Yishai	8.75%	11
United Torah Judaism	Yaakov Litzman	5.16%	7
Hatnuah	Tzipi Livni	4.99%	6
Meretz	Zehava Gal-On	4.55%	6
United Arab List	Ibrahim Sarsur	3.65%	4
Hadash	Mohammad Barakeh	2.99%	4
Balad	Jamal Zahalka	2.56%	3
Kadima	Shaul Mofaz	2.09%	2

Example: Israel (2015): 3.25% Threshold











Party	Votes	%	Seats	+/-
Likud	985,408	23.40	30	+12
Zionist Union	786,313	18.67	24	+3
Joint List	446,583	10.61	13	+2
Yesh Atid	371,602	8.82	11	-8
Kulanu	315,360	7.49	10	New
The Jewish Home	283,910	6.74	8	-4
Shas	241,613	5.74	7	-4
Yisrael Beiteinu	214,906	5.10	6	-7
United Torah Judaism	210,143	4.99	6	-1
Meretz	165,529	3.93	5	-1
Yachad	125,158	2.97	0	New
Ale Yarok	47,180	1.12	0	0

Semi-proportional Types

Semi-proportional systems

- Cumulative vote
 - Voters have as many votes as there are seats to be filled (# of votes = M)
- Limited vote
 - Voters have fewer votes than the number of seats to be filled (# of votes $< M$)
- These systems are both rare
- Single Transferable Vote (STV)
 - Like AV, but for districts with more than one seat ($M > 1$)

Sample Ballot: Edinburgh, Scotland

EDINBURGH CITY COUNCIL: LEITH WALK WARD		
<p>Four of the candidates listed below will be elected. You can make as many or as few choices as you wish. Put the number 1 in the voting box next to your first choice. Put the number 2 in the voting box next to your second choice. Put the number 3 in the voting box next to your third choice. And so on.</p>		
BALFOUR, Jeremy 6 Featherhall Drive, Corstorphine Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party		<input type="checkbox"/>
BROCK, Deirdre L. 3 Lorne Avenue, Edinburgh Scottish National Party		<input type="checkbox" value="6"/>
BUCHANAN, Tom 2 Little Lane, Liberton Scottish National Party		<input type="checkbox" value="3"/>
BURNS, Andrew 78 Buccleugh Avenue, Edinburgh Scottish Labour Party		<input type="checkbox"/>
CHAPMAN, Maggie 6 Bellevue Lane, Broughton Scottish Green Party		<input type="checkbox" value="1"/>
DUNBAR, William Henry 122 Mountcastle Avenue South, Portobello Independent		<input type="checkbox" value="2"/>
FROST, Mark 24 Leadervale Crescent, Liberton Independent		<input type="checkbox" value="5"/>
MACLAREN, Marilyne Angela 19/10 Fowler Street, Edinburgh Scottish Liberal Democrats		<input type="checkbox"/>
MILLIGAN, Eric 2 Craighleight Terrace, Edinburgh Scottish Labour Party		<input type="checkbox"/>
MUNN, Rob 67 Montgomery Road Scottish National Party		<input type="checkbox" value="4"/>
ROSE, Cameron 21 Blair Close, Edinburgh Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party		<input type="checkbox"/>
WHITTAKER, Judith 3/3 Inverleith Court, Edinburgh Scottish Socialist Party		<input type="checkbox"/>

Example: Ireland (2016)

- <http://electionsni.org.s3-website-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/results/>
- <http://clairebyrne.ie/counts/>

Next:

Why do electoral system differences matter politically?

Questions?