

# Comparative Politics

## Electoral systems

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# Electoral systems

Figure 13.3 Electoral System Families

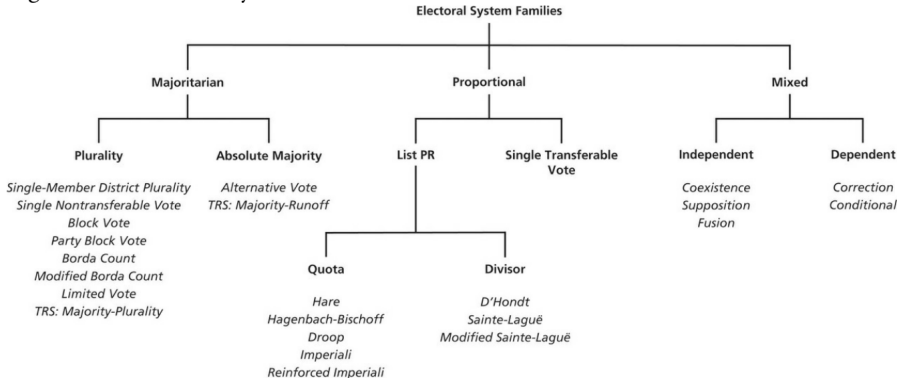


Figure 1: Electoral systems of the world

Wait, what electoral system does Brazil have?

# Trick question!

- SMD Plurality
- TRS
- Open list PR
- Senators and mayors in cities <200k
- President, governors and mayors in cities >200k
- Federal, state and district representatives and city councillor

And how does this make you feel?



Figure 2: Class poll

<https://fast-poll.com/poll/39ad1e8c>

What electoral system **should** Brazil have?

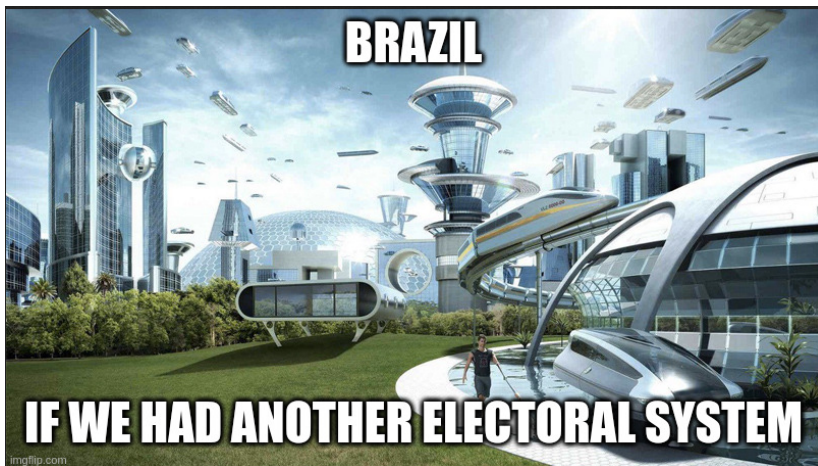


Figure 3: Imagine a future unburdened by SMPD

# Why do we care about electoral systems?



Figure 4: Why should I care?

# The rules of the game shape the outcome - Germany

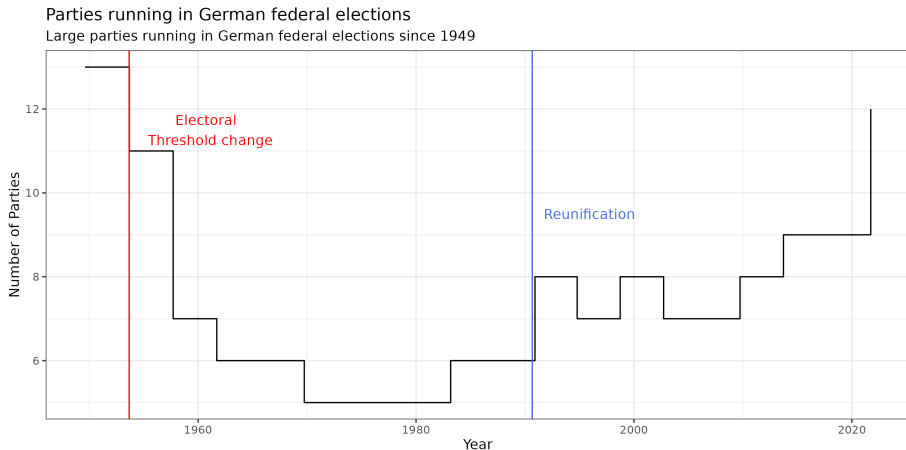


Figure 5: Political parties running in Germany



# The rules of the game shape the outcome - Germany

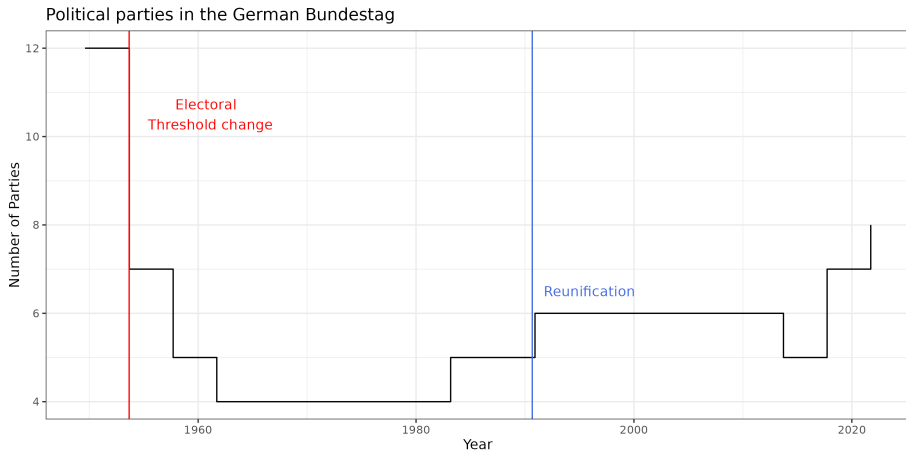


Figure 6: Political parties in the German Bundestag

# The rules of the game shape the outcome - New Zealand

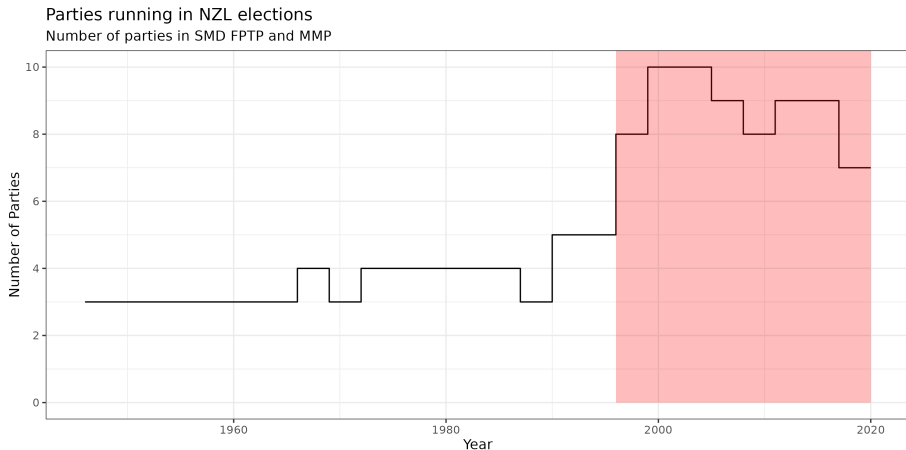


Figure 7: Political parties running in New Zealand

# The rules of the game shape the outcome - New Zealand

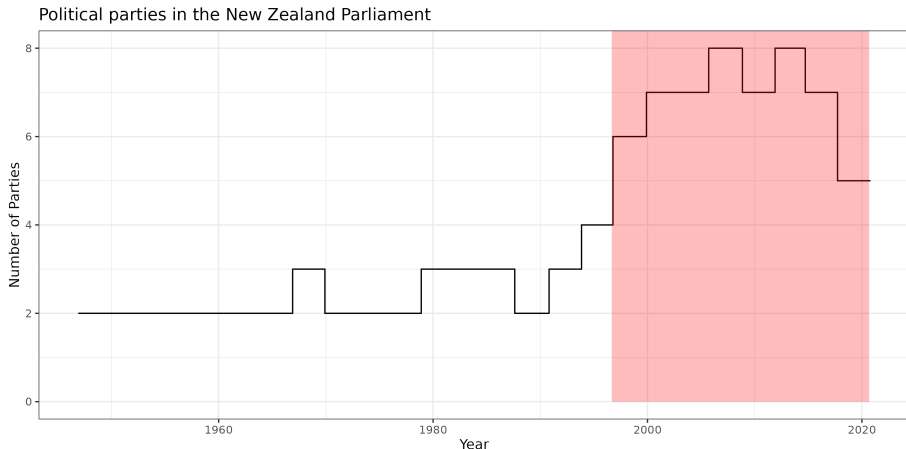


Figure 8: Political parties in the New Zealand Parliament/ Pāremata Aotearoa

# Parties in Government

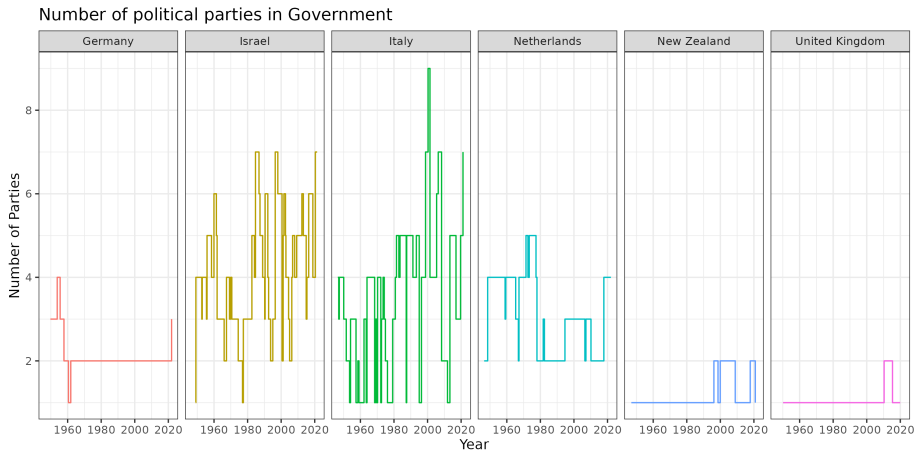


Figure 9: Parties in Government

# Number of cabinets per year

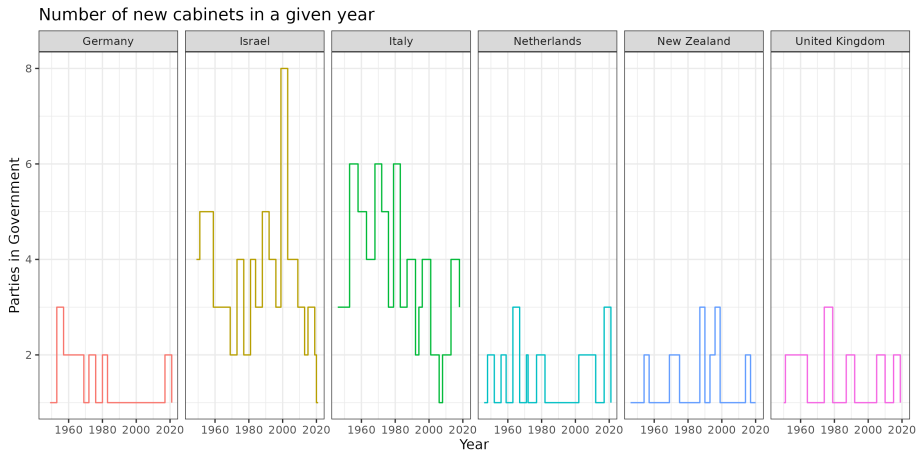


Figure 10: How often does the government change?

# What are things that an electoral system influences?

# What are things that an electoral system influences?

|  |                       |
|--|-----------------------|
| Number of Political Parties                        | Section 16            |
| Clarity of Responsibility                          | Section 17            |
| Ideological Composition of Parliament & Government | Section 18            |
| Representation of Voter Preferences                | Section 19            |
| Government Stability                               | Section 20            |
| Government Efficiency                              | Section 21            |
| Voter Turnout                                      | Section 22            |
| Policy Extremism                                   | Section 23            |
| Strategic Voting                                   | Section 24            |
| Geographic Representation                          | Section 25            |
| Inclusiveness of Minorities                        | Section 26            |
| Electoral Strategies of Candidates & Parties       | Jump to<br>Section 27 |

# Number of Political Parties

Proportional systems encourage multi-party systems, while majoritarian systems tend to result in fewer parties (often two dominant parties).

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# Clarity of Responsibility

Majoritarian systems often provide clearer responsibility, as single-party governments are more common. In proportional systems, coalition governments can make it harder to pinpoint accountability.

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# Ideological Composition of Government

PR systems tend to produce a more ideologically diverse government by including smaller parties, while majoritarian systems often lead to centrist or moderate policy outcomes driven by large parties.

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# Representation of Voter Preferences

Proportional systems better reflect the overall vote share of political parties, ensuring that minority views are represented, while majoritarian systems can distort this, leading to “wasted” votes and less direct representation.

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# Government Stability

Majoritarian systems typically result in more stable single-party governments, while PR systems may lead to less stable coalition governments.

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# Government Efficiency

Majoritarian systems allow for quicker decision-making and policy implementation, while coalition governments in PR systems can slow down the process due to negotiation and compromise.

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# Voter Turnout

Voter turnout is generally higher in proportional systems because voters feel their votes are more likely to have an impact.

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# Policy Extremism

Majoritarian systems often marginalize extreme parties, encouraging centrist policies, while PR systems may give more space for ideological extremes to enter parliament.

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# Strategic Voting

In majoritarian systems, voters are more likely to vote strategically (choosing a viable party rather than their preferred one), whereas in PR systems, voters tend to vote more sincerely for their preferred party.

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# Geographic Representation

Majoritarian systems emphasize local geographic representation (e.g., districts or constituencies), whereas PR systems focus more on party-based representation, which may dilute local concerns.

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# Inclusiveness of Minorities

PR systems often lead to better representation of minority groups, while majoritarian systems may underrepresent them if their votes are spread out across districts.

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# Electoral Systems

Figure 13.3 Electoral System Families

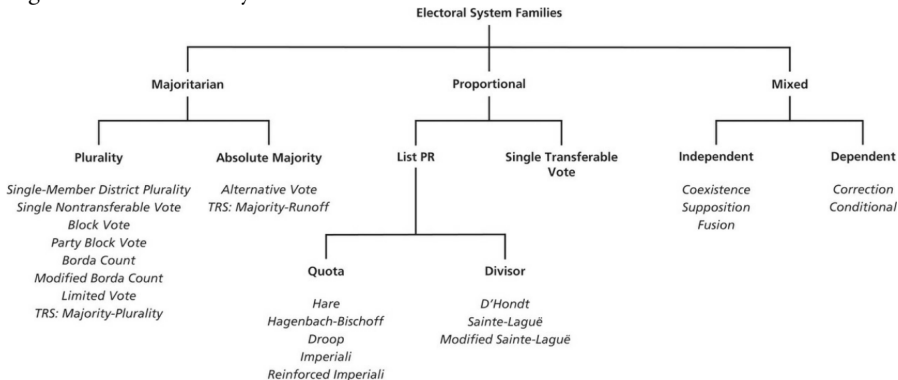


Figure 11: Electoral systems of the world

# The different electoral systems

- **Majoritarian Electoral Systems:** These are systems in which candidates or parties that receive the most votes win. The sources discuss two main types of majoritarian systems: single-member district plurality (SMDP) systems and single nontransferable vote (SNTV) systems
- **Proportional Electoral Systems:** These systems aim to allocate seats in a legislature proportionally to the share of votes that each party receives. Proportional representation (PR) systems are quota- or divisor-based systems. The sources discuss several different PR systems: list PR systems and single transferable vote (STV) systems
- **Mixed Electoral Systems:** These systems combine elements of both majoritarian and proportional systems. The sources discuss two types of mixed systems: independent mixed systems and dependent mixed systems

# Single-Member District Plurality (SMDP) Systems

- Key Features:
  - These systems are the most common type of majoritarian system. They are used in many countries, including the United States, Canada, India, and the United Kingdom.
  - Voters cast a single vote for a candidate in their local district.
  - The candidate with the most votes in each district wins the seat.
- Example: Brazil, U.S.

# Single-Member District Plurality (SMDP) Systems

- Pros:
  - These systems are relatively simple to understand and administer.
  - They tend to produce clear and decisive outcomes.
  - They encourage a strong link between representatives and their constituents.
- Cons:
  - They can lead to unrepresentative outcomes, as they do not always accurately reflect the distribution of votes across the country.
  - They can encourage strategic voting, as voters may choose to vote for a less preferred candidate in order to prevent a more disliked candidate from winning.
  - They can make it difficult for smaller parties and independent candidates to gain representation.

# Single Nontransferable Vote (SNTV) Systems

- Key Features:
  - This system is a second type of majoritarian system. It is used in multimember districts.
  - Voters cast a single vote for one candidate.
  - The candidates with the top number of votes in each district are elected.
- Example: Kuwait, Vanuatu, Lybia (but cited as a cause for the civil war)

# Single Nontransferable Vote (SNTV) Systems

- Pros:
  - SNTV systems are relatively easy to administer.
  - They can help to ensure that minority groups have a voice in the legislature.
- Cons:
  - They can lead to factionalization and weaken political parties.
  - They can lead to high levels of voter confusion, particularly in countries with highly fragmented political landscapes.
  - They can be susceptible to manipulation by powerful politicians.



# Alternative Vote (AV) Systems

- Key Features:
  - This system is a candidate-centered preference voting system used in single-member districts.
  - Voters rank candidates in order of preference.
  - If no candidate receives a majority of the first-preference votes, then the candidate with the fewest first-preference votes is eliminated, and their votes are redistributed based on the voters' second preferences.
  - This process continues until a candidate receives an absolute majority of the votes.
- Example: Australia (Legislative elections)

# Alternative Vote (AV) Systems

- Pros:
  - AV systems are more proportional than SMDP systems.
  - They can help to reduce strategic voting.
  - They tend to produce winners who have broad appeal.
- Cons:
  - They are more complex than SMDP systems and can be more difficult to administer.
  - They can lead to a lack of clear decisive outcomes.
  - They are often used in single-member districts which can limit proportionality.

# Majority-Runoff Two-Round System (TRS)

- Key Features:
  - This system is a candidate-centered system that involves two rounds of voting in single-member districts.
  - Voters cast a vote for their preferred candidate in the first round.
  - If no candidate receives a majority of the votes, then a second round of voting is held with only the two candidates who received the most votes in the first round.
- Example: Burkina Faso, Benin, Brazil, Haiti

# Majority-Runoff Two-Round System (TRS)

- Pros:
  - TRS systems are more likely to produce a winner with a majority of the votes than SMDP systems.
  - They give voters a second chance to express their preferences.
  - They can help to reduce the risk of electing a candidate who is not representative of the will of the people.
- Cons:
  - TRS systems are more expensive than SMDP systems.
  - They can be more complex to administer than SMDP systems.
  - They can lead to a lack of clear decisive outcomes.

# Proportional Representation

- List PR
- Single Transferable Vote (STV) Systems

# List PR Systems

- Key Features:
  - Voters vote for a party list in multimember districts.
  - The number of seats that each party wins is determined by the proportion of votes they receive.
  - The seats are then allocated to candidates on the party list in order of their position on the list.
- Example: one district systems in Serbia, Netherlands, Slovakia, Israel

# List PR Systems

- Pros:
  - List PR systems are very proportional.
  - They ensure that smaller parties and minority groups have a voice in the legislature.
  - They can help to reduce the power of individual politicians.
- Cons:
  - They can lead to weak political parties and factionalization.
  - They can make it difficult to hold politicians accountable to their constituents.
  - They can make it difficult to build a strong link between representatives and their constituents.

# Single Transferable Vote (STV) Systems

- Key Features:
  - This system is a candidate-centered preferential system used in multimember districts.
  - Voters rank candidates in order of preference.
  - The candidates who reach a certain quota of votes are elected.
  - If there are surplus votes for elected candidates, those votes are redistributed to the remaining candidates based on the voters' second preferences.
  - This process continues until all seats are filled.
- Example: Australia (Senate), Ireland, Malta



# Single Transferable Vote (STV) Systems

- Pros:
  - STV systems are very proportional.
  - They can help to reduce strategic voting.
  - They can encourage a strong link between representatives and their constituents.
- Cons:
  - They are complex and can be difficult to understand and administer.
  - They can be susceptible to manipulation by powerful politicians.
  - They can lead to a lack of clear decisive outcomes.

# Mixed Systems

- Independent Mixed Electoral Systems
- Dependent Mixed Electoral Systems

# Independent Mixed Electoral Systems

- Key Features:
  - This system combines elements of both majoritarian and proportional systems.
  - Voters elect representatives through two different systems: one majoritarian and one proportional.
  - The seats in the legislature are allocated independently of each other.
- Example: Ukraine

# Independent Mixed Electoral Systems

- Pros:
  - Independent mixed systems are more proportional than SMDP systems.
  - They can help to reduce strategic voting.
  - They can encourage a strong link between representatives and their constituents.
- Cons:
  - Independent mixed systems can be more complex to administer than SMDP systems.
  - They can lead to a lack of clear decisive outcomes.

# Dependent Mixed Electoral Systems

- Key Features:
  - This system combines elements of both majoritarian and proportional systems.
  - Voters elect representatives through two different systems: one majoritarian and one proportional.
  - The proportional formula is used to allocate a certain number of seats in the legislature, while the rest of the seats are allocated based on the outcome of the majoritarian elections.
- Example: Germany and New Zealand

# Dependent Mixed Electoral Systems

- Pros:

- Dependent mixed systems are more proportional than SMDP systems.
- They can help to reduce strategic voting.
- They can encourage a strong link between representatives and their constituents.

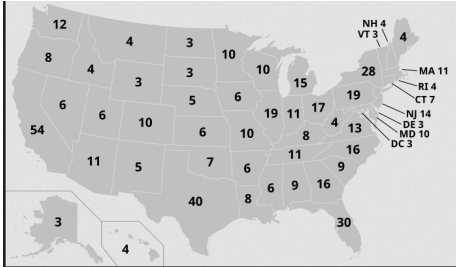
- Cons:

- Dependent mixed systems can be more complex to administer than SMDP systems.
- They can lead to a lack of clear decisive outcomes.
- The sources also mention electoral thresholds which are minimum levels of support that parties must achieve to be represented in a legislature.

## Uma actividade



# You are asked to advise



(a) The U.S. electoral map for 2024



(a) Your team, brainstorming

The 2024 United States elections are scheduled to be held on Tuesday, November 5, 2024.



# The U.S. presidential elections

- Indirect electoral system (voters -> electors -> president).
- There are 538 electors in total, at least 270 electoral votes to win the presidency.
- State-by-State Elections.
- Winner-takes-all system for electors (except Maine and Nebraska).
- Swing states or battleground states are central.
- Electoral districts are drawn by states.
- No mandatory voting, voters need to register.
- No CPF or federal ID.