6

Examples of Electoral Systems: Districted PR and List Type in Finland, Portugal, and Elsewhere

In Chapter 5, we contrasted single-seat district FPTP against nationwide PR. We emphasized there that the key distinction between such systems is in their relationships between districts and assembly size. At one extreme, in a system of FPTP, each of S members of the assembly is elected in his or her own unique district. Each of these districts has a magnitude M=1. At the other extreme, there is just one district, hence M=S, with a simple proportional-representation (PR) formula.

In this chapter, we consider the more common intermediate case in which PR is used, and so is districting. That is, there are districts that have more than one seat, but fewer than S; it may be the case that one or a few districts have just one seat, but most have M>1. These are systems of districted PR. The examples that we draw on most extensively to illustrate district PR are two countries at the "corners" of Europe: in the far northeast, Finland, and in the far southwest, Portugal.

The two systems differ on another important dimension, their type of party list, with Portugal using closed lists, whereas in Finland lists are open. When a list is open, the voter has the ability to cast a vote below the level of the party, for one (or sometimes more) of the candidates included on a list and candidates are elected from a list in the order of the votes they obtain. We briefly introduced such an example from Poland in Chapter 1. The type of list may seem like a truly arcane detail of electoral systems. However, as we show, it makes a difference for who is elected within a party, and sometimes for the balance of parties themselves, in cases in which two or more parties combine in an alliance and submit a common list. Moreover, the consequences of open versus closed lists are sometimes important enough to generate mass protests, as occurred precisely over what kind of list to use in Iraq in 2009.

INTRODUCING DISTRICTED PR

Both Portugal and Finland base their electoral districts around pre-existing administrative boundaries. Because these regions differ in population, and

the countries' electoral laws are designed to keep the ratio of legislators to citizens from deviating too much from region to region (minimizing malapportionment – see Chapter 3), the districts vary in their magnitude, *M*. In Finland, before a change in 2015, there were fifteen districts, ranging in magnitude from one to thirty-four (Raunio 2005).[1] Given an assembly size of 200, we can calculate Finland's mean district magnitude as 200/15=13.3. In Portugal, there are twenty-two districts, and they range in magnitude from two to forty-seven. Given an assembly size of 230, mean district magnitude is 230/22=10.45.

In Finland, there is a single-seat district, and it is a region that is both outlying and distinct culturally. The Åland Islands are in the Gulf of Bothnia between Sweden and mainland Finland, and have an almost entirely Swedish-speaking population. They enjoy an autonomous status, have a separate set of political parties from mainland Finland, and even issue their own postage stamps. However, the Åland Islands are part of Finland, and send a single representative to the Finnish parliament, the Eduskunta, on behalf of a voting population of just over 26,000.

The variation in district magnitude, and varying voting strength of parties across the country, results in proportionality being less "pure" than is the case under a single nationwide district, as in Israel. Table 6.1 shows examples of one recent election in Finland and one in Portugal, using nationwide statistics. We see that the party systems are very different in the two countries. While the electoral system is a crucial factor shaping party systems – as is a consistent theme of this book – they are obviously not the only factor.

In Portugal, the largest party in the 2005 election was almost exactly twice the size of the largest in Finland in 2007. Correspondingly, the effective number of parties (either votes or seats) is much higher in Finland than in Portugal. A noteworthy feature of both of these elections is that, when compared to our case of nationwide PR, Israel (shown in Table 5.1), the larger parties tend to be somewhat overrepresented, while the smaller ones tend to be somewhat underrepresented. However, the pattern is not quite as simple as that: the Swedish People's Party in Finland has about the same vote and seat percentages, while the True Finns party is considerably more underrepresented. The reason lies in the districting, and more to the point, how efficiently a party has its votes spread across different districts.

We also see that deviation from proportionality is much higher in Portugal than in Finland. In fact, the largest party in Portugal in 2005 has a manufactured majority despite the use of a "proportional" system (both countries use D'Hondt). This is due mainly to the range of district magnitudes in Portugal,

[1] In 2015, some smaller adjacent districts were merged to allow for higher magnitude; the mean *M* is now 15.4, with thirteen districts (von Schoultz 2018).

TABLE 6.1 *Examples of election results under districted PR in Finland and Portugal*

	Finland, 2007				Portugal, 2005		
Party	% votes	seats	% seats	Party	% votes	seats	% seats
Centre Party (Kesk)	23.1	51	25.5	Socialist	46.4	121	52.6
National Coalition Party (KOK)	22.3	50	25.0	Social Democrat	29.6	75	32.6
Social Democratic Party (SD)	21.4	45	22.5	Communist	7.8	14	6.1
Left Alliance (Vas)	8.8	17	8.5	People's Party	7.5	12	5.2
Green Party	8.5	15	7.5	Bloc of the Left	6.6	8	3.5
Christian Democrats	4.9	7	3.5	others	2.2	0	0.0
Swedish People's Party	4.6	9	4.5				
True Finns (PS)	4.1	5	2.5				
others	2.4	1	0.5				
total	100.1	200	100.0		100.1	230	100.0
Effective N	5.88	5.13			3.13	2.56	
Deviation (D_2 %)		3.2				5.75	

where ten of the twenty-two districts have just two to six seats apiece, whereas in Finland only one of fifteen districts has a magnitude under six.

We can consider some specific districts to get a clearer idea of how this reduced proportionality come about. Table 6.2 shows several selected districts in Portugal in 2005: Lisbon (M=48 at that time), Setúbal (M=17), Santarém (M=10), and Portalegre (M=2). Note that the same parties are running in all three districts. The Socialist Party is the largest in each of the districts shown, although the second party varies according to local preferences.

The most important thing to note about these selected districts is how the district magnitude affects the proportionality. In the very high magnitude district of Lisbon, seat percentages closely match vote percentages, despite the use of the D'Hondt formula, which somewhat favors the larger parties. We see that the Socialists won 47.9 percent of the seats on 45.6 percent of the votes – a large-party advantage, but a small one, compared to what it obtains in the smaller-M districts. For instance, in ten-seat Santarém it has 60 percent of seats on less than 50 percent of votes, and in two-seat Portalegre, it won both seats because it had more than twice the votes of the runner-up (see the explanation in Chapter 2 of how D'Hondt divisors work).

TABLE 6.2 *Results of selected districts in Portugal, 2005*

	Lisbon		Setúbal		Santarém		Portalegre	
Party	Votes (%)	Seats (%)	Votes (%)	Seats (%)	Votes (%)	Seats (%)	Votes (%)	Seats (%)
Socialist	45.6	23 (47.9)	44.9	8 (47.1)	48.1	6 (60.0)	56.1	2 (100.0)
Social Dem.	24.4	12 (25.0)	16.5	3 (17.7)	27.2	3 (30.0)	20.8	0
Communist	10.1	5 (10.4)	20.5	3 (17.6)	8.9	1 (10.0)	12.4	0
Left Bloc	9.1	4 (8.3)	10.5	2 (11.8)	6.7	0	4.7	0
Peoples	8.5	4 (8.3)	5.2	1 (5.9)	7.2	0	4.3	0
Others	2.3	0	2.4	0	2.3	0	1.7	0
Effective *N*	3.4	3.16	3.51	3.32	3.09	2.17	2.65	1
D_2 (%)		3.25		5.34		16.0		43.9

The last line of Table 6.2 indicates the deviation from proportionality (D_2) of the seat allocation in each district. In the high-M case of Lisbon, D_2=3.25 percent. The values are correspondingly higher as the magnitude decreases, as is typically the case. In two-seat Portalegre, D_2=43.9 percent, a very high value for a "proportional representation" system. The next-to-last line indicates the effective number of parties, by both votes and seats, in each district. It is noteworthy that it is the case in each district that $N_S<N_V$, as is typical, but the N_V–N_S difference is notably greater in the two districts with the lower magnitude, most strikingly in Portalegre where N_S=1 because only one of the parties won representation.

LIST TYPES: OPEN VERSUS CLOSED

Most proportional-representation systems entail each party (or sometimes an alliance of parties) presenting a list of candidates. The first step in determining seats in a district is to apply one of the PR formulas – D'Hondt in both Finland and Portugal, but it could be any of the formulas discussed in Chapter 2. Then the seats won by each list must be allocated to individual candidates. When lists are closed, as in the Israeli example discussed in Chapter 5, the order in which candidates are elected from the list is set by the party prior to election day. By contrast, some systems use open lists, whereby the rank order depends on votes obtained by individual candidates. There are also hybrid list types, explained later.

The choice of closed or open list may seem like a mundane matter, but evidently it is not. We take a small detour from our discussion of the Finnish and Portuguese electoral systems to look at a country where there was a significant public controversy over list type, Iraq.

Closed Versus Open Lists in Iraq

Sometimes the type of party list for a proportional-representation system becomes a matter of considerable political controversy – even internationally. When Iraq first held elections following the overthrow of the dictator Saddam Hussein by American, British, and allied military forces, it used a PR system. The first two national elections, held in January and December, 2005, used closed lists.[2] However, before the next national elections, in March 2010, the law was changed to provide for open lists. The move was marked by conflict and proved highly consequential for the balance of political and sectarian forces (Darwisha 2010).

The main political formations that emerged to contest the elections in Iraq were themselves alliances of various groups. Under the closed list, the parties and factions that came together to forge alliances, such as the United Iraqi Alliance (of mainly Shiite religious groups) and the Democratic Patriotic Alliance of Kurdistan, negotiated before the election to designate candidates from each of their component groups for specific electable ranks. In this way they could ensure an internal balance of their legislative contingents. They also used list ranking to enforce a quota of 25 percent women among the elected (Darwisha 2010).

During parliamentary debates about the electoral law in 2009 there were mass protests in several cities, organized by followers of leading Shiite cleric Grand Ayatollah Ali Husseini al-Sistani.[3] A spokesman for the Ayatollah said, "we think the open list is one of the ways to push large numbers of Iraqis to vote in the elections."[4] The leader of another major Shiite movement, the so-called Sadrist bloc, stated forthrightly, "The Sadrist bloc opposes the closed-list system in the parliamentary elections law."[5] Meanwhile, Kurdish politicians, as well as another of the Shiite factions, the Islamic Supreme Council of Iraq, "actively used the gender quota as an argument against greater openness."[6] According to the US State Department, the Iranian government preferred that Iraq continue to use a closed list, but it was outmaneuvered in domestic Iraqi politics, mainly because Sistani's very public call for open lists forced several other Shia parties to follow him.[7]

[2] These two elections used systems that differed in other provisions that we will leave aside here.
[3] "Iraqis Protest against Controversial Voting System," Agence France Presse, October 10, 2009.
[4] "Iraq's Top Shiite Leader May Urge Vote Boycott," Middle East Online, October 5, 2009, www.middle-east-online.com/english/?id=34719 (last accessed January 3, 2016).
[5] "Sadrists Threaten to Walk Out of Session if Vote on Closed-List System is Held," Aswat al-Iraq, October 6, 2009.
[6] Reidar Visser, "A Litmus Test for Iraq," Middle East Report Online, January 30, 2009.
[7] "Iran's Efforts in Iraqi Electoral Politics," Cable 09BAGHDAD2992, Embassy Baghdad, released by Wikileaks, November 28, 2010.

Why would these various political actors care so much about something so seemingly arcane as list type? The answer is simple: they understood the political consequences. Those that had strong mobilizational capacity would stand to benefit from open lists, because they could push many of their favored candidates into higher list positions than they could via pre-election negotiations with other factions over list ranks. Such a result was precisely confirmed by the outcome of the 2010 elections. Within the mainly Shiite Iraqi National Alliance, the Sadrist bloc won more than half the seats, substantially increasing its share over the preceding, closed-list, elections. Some other Shiite factions saw their balance within the alliance sharply reduced. Another list, known as State of Law and headed by then-Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki, also saw a shift in its internal balance due to the open list. Reidar Visser notes:

> . . . much of the attempt by Nuri al-Maliki to build bridges to Sunnis and secularists by welding together a diverse list has been reversed by the electorate in places like Baghdad. Many Westerners hailed Maliki for bringing Sunnis and secularists . . . into his camp; however with less than a thousand votes each, [several such candidates] have all been demoted to non-winning positions on the Baghdad list for State of Law.[8]

In addition, Visser notes, the gender quota could be met only by the Electoral Commission bypassing male candidates with top preference-vote totals, because few women had been successful at obtaining sufficiently high votes.

The example of Iraq in 2005–2010 shows that even in a young democracy emerging from dictatorship and war (and still enduring internal conflict), political actors understand the consequences of electoral systems, including list type. Moreover, it shows that a list type that enhances voter choice might simultaneously undermine the representation of groups that are not among the top vote-mobilizers, such as minority factions within an alliance or women. Thus list type is an important component of proportional electoral systems. For this reason, we shall devote two chapters later in this book to matters of intraparty competition. We now return to an overview of the actual operation of closed and open lists in our two key examples of longer-term democracies using districted PR with each respective list type, Portugal and Finland.

List Types in Portugal in Finland

In Portugal, the voter casts a single categorical vote for a list, but in Finland the voter casts a single categorical vote for a candidate. Sometimes open-list systems

[8] Reidar Visser, "The Sadrist Watershed Confirmed," Iraq and Gulf Analysis, March 29, 2010, https://gulfanalysis.wordpress.com/2010/03/29/the-sadrist-watershed-confirmed/ (last accessed January 3, 2016).

give the voter an option of a categorical vote for a list or a candidate, while still others allow voters to vote for more than one candidate. Finland, however, offers the clearest contrast to Portugal in requiring a single candidate vote instead of a party-list vote. What makes it a case of *list* PR is that, prior to allocating any seats, the votes for all individual candidates are first summed to arrive at a list total.[9] In an open list, only after the list's seats are determined are the seats allocated according to candidates' preference votes. The procedure *within a list* then becomes akin to single nontransferable vote (SNTV), as we discuss extensively in Chapter 14.[10]

A key consequence of an open list is that it encourages "personal" campaigning. That is, the candidates seek to emphasize how they as individuals can be good representatives for some group of voters in the district. From the standpoint of the party, the "personal vote-seeking" behavior of the candidates is beneficial, because the candidates' success in attracting votes based on their personal attributes may help the party collectively win more seats than it would running on its party label and policy platform alone. Moreover, "vote splitting" is not a problem, as it is under the M=1 FPTP system (see Chapter 5), because all the candidates' individual votes "pool" on the list; they are summed first to determine how many seats the list wins before the individual winners are determined.

Foreign reporters covering Finnish elections have remarked on the personal nature of campaigning. For instance:

> Outside [a street market] stood at least half a dozen candidates . . . *handing out their own personal campaign leaflets* and engaging, when a voter showed the slightest interest, in vigorous political discussion.[11]

In order to attract votes to their lists, parties often nominate celebrities – persons publicly known for work outside of politics (Arter 2014, von Schoultz 2018). Some examples include Juha Väätäinen, an accomplished sprinter in the late 1960s and 1970s. He ran for the True Finns Party in the Helsinki district in 2011 and finished third in preference votes on the list, enough to win a seat. Also in Helsinki in 2011, the candidate who ranked fifth in preference votes on the list of the National Coalition Party was Jaana Pelkonen, a media personality.

In contrast to Finland, in countries that have closed lists, such as Portugal, the candidates have much reduced incentive to distinguish themselves from their

[9] Taagepera and Shugart (1989a) referred to this as a "quasi-list" because of the absence of a provision to vote directly for the list. See also Shugart (2005a).

[10] In those open-list systems in which the voter may cast more than one preference vote, the procedure typically is akin to MNTV, although in principle the intralist allocation could follow any of the candidate-based rules outlined in Chapter 3.

[11] Jonathan Holmes, "Mature Governments are Coalitions of the Willing," *Canberra Times*, April 8, 2015 (www.canberratimes.com.au/comment/mature-governments-are-coalitions-of-the-willing-20150407-1mflw4.html); last accessed November 17, 2015. Emphasis ours.

party. The voters are unable to favor one candidate on a list over another, implying that the candidates are more likely to emphasize what their party can do for voters. There is still the possibility that parties may place "celebrity" candidates on the lists and advertise their presence as a means to attract votes. We offered some examples in Chapter 5 from the case of Israel. However, key differences from open lists are: the voters drawn by the celebrity must be willing to cast their vote for the party as a whole, because they are unable to mark a preference for any specific candidate, and, as a result, even such a candidate is presumably far likelier to emphasize his or her partisan motivations for running than to run a personal campaign.

ALLIANCES: HOW OPEN AND CLOSED LISTS DIFFER

Already in Chapter 5, we discussed how parties might choose to form pre-electoral alliances, and we saw examples from the single-seat districts in Trinidad and Tobago, and in India. Parties in proportional systems also may form alliances, in order to maximize their collective seats. Certainly they typically do not face as critical a "vote-splitting" problem as in FPTP, where each seat is decided by plurality and thus two parties splitting the vote can be especially costly – it can hand the district's only seat to a mutual opponent. Nonetheless, the problem still exists for parties under PR, especially where district magnitude is smaller. Thus parties with similar goals in national politics might band together seeking to win seats that otherwise might go to a party disliked by each. As we shall see, even in Israel and other large-*M* cases, some lists are presented by pre-election alliances of parties. Thus alliances are far from a feature only of FPTP cases. They are a common feature in many countries' electoral scenes.[12] Let us see how the list type alters how alliances in PR systems work.

Alliances Under Open Lists

We start with Finland, which has long experience of alliances between two or more parties. We will use as an example one of the smaller districts, partly because it makes the example easier to understand, and partly because it is the smaller districts where alliances are most relevant (von Schoultz 2018), given greater disproportionality of small *M*.[13]

[12] In our discussion of alliances we focus only on cases where two or more parties combine on a single list. Other forms of alliances are possible in some PR systems. For instance, two separate lists may be able to pool their remainders, as in Israel (Hazan, et al., 2018) and the Netherlands (Jacobs 2018). Note that these provisions may allow for more than one layer of alliance – first on a joint list, and then pooling remainders with another list.

[13] While in Israel, any alliance would be nationwide (see Chapter 5), this need not be so in a multidistrict country. Indeed, in Finland alliances typically differ from district to district.

The example shown in Table 6.3 is from the district of Southern Savo (Etelä-Savo) in 2007, which had a district magnitude of six. It shows several candidates in each of the three lists, which won two seats each. One of these lists, which we designate List One,[14] contained candidates of only one party, the Center Party of Finland. The other two lists were alliances: List Two contained candidates from the Social Democratic Party of Finland, the Green League, and the Left Alliance; List Three contained candidates from the National Coalition Party, the Christian Democrats in Finland, and the True Finns.[15]

The first point to note about open lists from this example is that the candidates who win are not necessarily those with the *M* highest individual vote totals, as would have been the case were the system single nontransferable vote (SNTV, as explained in Chapter 3).[16] Under SNTV instead of open-list PR, the National Coalition Party, running on List Three, would have won no seats, because its leading candidate, Nepponen, had only the eighth highest vote total in the district. So how did the National Coalition Party elect not only Nepponen but a second candidate, Toivakka, as well? Because the first criterion in determining the winners is the collective vote totals of the lists, on which a proportional formula (here D'Hondt divisors) is applied. Only then do we turn to the intralist dimension to see which candidates obtain each party's or alliance's seats. The operation of the proportional formula resulted in each of these lists' obtaining two seats, based on each list's combined votes (which are 30,759, 29,837 and 21,108, respectively). The distinction between SNTV and open lists is the central topic of Chapter 13.

When we turn to the intralist dimension, we see from Table 6.3 that List Two elected candidates of two different parties: one Social Democrat and one Green. The success of the Green Party was made possible, despite its having barely a quarter of the votes of its larger partner in the alliance, because the Green League had more than 96 percent of its own votes concentrated on one of its candidates, Järvinen. This high concentration of the Greens' votes allowed it narrowly to beat out the second Social Democrat for the second of this list's two seats.[17]

The provision for alliances, and the success of the Green League in concentrating its votes resulted in four parties winning seats in this six-seat district, on three lists. In Chapter 14 we explore in greater detail the incentives that alliance partners have to concentrate votes on a subset of their candidates, and we offer a logical model of the extent to which the provision for alliance lists tends to increase the number of parties winning seats, for a given magnitude.

[14] These are not the official numbers of these lists; we number them in order of their collective votes, for convenience.

[15] Four other lists contested this district in 2007, none close to winning a seat.

[16] With *M*=6, those candidates would have been, in order of their votes, Viitamies, Komi, Leppä, Järvinen, Nousiainen, and Backman – three from the Center Party (List 1) and three from List 2.

[17] A third partner, The Left Alliance, contributed some votes to the list, but was far from winning a seat.

TABLE 6.3 *The intraparty dimension in Finland: Southern Savo (Etelä-Savo), 2007.*

List 1			List 2			List 3		
Name	**Party**	**Votes**	**Name**	**Party**	**Votes**	**Name**	**Party**	**Votes**
Komi, K.	**Center**	**5,885**	**Viitamies, P.**	**Social Democratic**	**6,690**	**Nepponen, O.**	**National Coalition Party**	**3,728**
Leppä, J.	**Center**	**5,762**	**Järvinen, H.**	**Green League**	**5,525**	**Toivakka, L.**	**National Coalition Party**	**3,233**
Nousiainen, P.	Center	5,267	Backman, J.	Social Democratic	5,259	Riikonen, T.	Christian Democrats	2,454
Korhonen, S.	Center	3,401	Seppälä, A.	Social Democratic	3,955	Linnamurto, S.	National Coalition Party	2,369
Nenonen, J.	Center	2,432	Ojala, S.	Social Democratic	1,716	Oksa, P.	National Coalition Party	2,123
Kakriainen, M.	Center	1,954	Taavitsainen, S.	Social Democratic	1,395	Pehkonen, T.	True Finns	1,865
8 others		6,058	8 others		5,297	8 others		5,336
List total		30,759	List total		29,837	List total		21,108
% of district vote		37.40			36.28			25.67
Party totals in list	Center (14)	30,759	Party totals in list	Social Democratic (10)	22,704	Party totals in list	National Coalition Party (9)	15,530
				Green League (2)	5,714		Christian Democrats (3)	2,925
				Left Alliance (2)	1,419		True Finns (2)	2,653

Numbers in parentheses indicate how many candidates each party had running on the list.
Showing only the lists that won seats, and the top six candidates in each list. Candidates who won a seat are in bold

Turning to List Three, we see that both seats were won by the leading party in the alliance, the National Coalition Party. The Christian Democrats would have remained short of winning a seat even if they had managed to pile all their votes on their top candidate, Riikonen. While neither the Christian Democrats nor the True Finns won a seat, we can determine from a close inspection of the original data that, had they run separately rather than on this alliance list, the result would have been the National Coalition Party's winning just one seat, with the Center Party's winning three.[18] Even though the two smaller partners of the National Coalition Party did not win seats on their own, presumably they preferred that an additional seat go to their big ally than to the Center Party. Thus, mission accomplished, from the standpoint of parties that are grouped into alliances, which pool their candidates' votes on Finland's open lists.

From the example in Table 6.3, we see that under the open lists used in Finland, parties that engaged in alliances with other parties win seats based on *how many candidates they have in the top ranks of the alliance's list*. This is because on each list, candidates – whether all of the same party or of different parties – win seats only according to their individual vote totals. We discuss further implications of this sort of candidate competition in Chapters 13 and 14.

Before we leave (for now) the open list system, what about the Åland Islands, which comprise a district electing just one member? Can there be an open list where only one seat is elected? Yes, under Finnish law, there can be. Each party is permitted to run up to four candidates in Åland. The winner of the district's seat is the candidate with the most votes among those in the list with the most votes. That is, it would be possible for the winner to be a candidate other than the one who had the most individual votes.[19] Why? Because, again, of the first criterion being to pool votes by list. The list with the most votes is awarded the first – here, the only – seat. Then, the rules go inside the list, seeing who has the most votes within that list. Thus we see that open-list PR is an exception to the more general rule that PR reduces to FPTP when M=1 (see Chapter 2); it is instead a simultaneous plurality rule within and across parties, where each party offers its voters a choice among candidates.

[18] One can determine this by inspecting the D'Hondt divisors. This assumes that voters' choices among parties and candidates are not affected by alliances. This is not to be taken for granted. For instance, the National Coalition alliance with the more radical True Finns may have dismayed some of their voters to the point of their shifting to a Center candidate. We assume here, for the sake of illustration, that such shifts would have been minor.

[19] This has not happened, at least recently. There is a dominant local party called, simply, the Åland List. For instance, in 2007, it won more than 85 percent of the vote. However, it had a closely fought internal contest, with its winner having 4,388 votes (45.9 percent of the list's total) against a close challenger who had 4,024 (42.1 percent).

Alliances in Closed Lists

It is also possible for parties to form alliances in closed-list systems. Because of the list type, the parties can structure the balance among themselves prior to the election, when they agree to rankings of their joint lists. As long as they do not miscalculate too badly how many seats they will win, they can ensure so many seats for party *A*, so many for party *B*, etc. We already discussed some examples of this phenomenon in Iraq earlier in this chapter, where we noted the consequences of list type for sectarian and gender balance. In the case of Portugal, a longer-term democracy, we can also see the impact of closed lists on alliance politics.

Portugal has sometimes had lists winning seats in an election that were alliances of parties. For example, prior to the 2015 assembly election, the Social Democratic Party (PSD) and the Democratic and Social Center–People's Party (CDS-PP) joined forces. The CDS-PP was itself already an existing alliance, which had won the third highest number of seats in the 2011 election. The center-right parties, PSD and CDS-PP, were attempting to ensure that they would form the largest bloc in the new assembly; as the election turned out, they did so, narrowly beating the Socialist Party for first place.[20]

An example of this alliance in action in 2015 comes from the district of Leira. The alliance won six of the ten seats, meaning that the top six candidates, as ranked on the closed list, won. Five of these were PSD, and one was CDS-PP. Of the four losers on the principal list,[21] the first two were PSD and the candidate with the list's overall ninth rank was CDS. Thus only in the extremely unlikely event that the alliance won nine of the ten seats would the CDS-PP elect two members from Leira. However, the CDS-PP was also essentially guaranteed a seat unless the alliance managed only three seats, which also presumably was unlikely. Thus, unlike in the case of open lists, the parties forming an alliance on a closed list were able to precommit to a preferred ratio of seats.[22]

As mentioned previously, even in the high-*M* nationwide PR case of Israel, lists are often presented by alliances. We offer two examples, to generalize the point just demonstrated in the Portuguese case of districted PR. In 2013, two center-right parties in Israel, the Likud and Yisrael Beiteinu, decided to present a joint list. In doing so they hoped to maximize their chances of being

[20] However, the PSD and its allies were unable to form a government, and a left-wing coalition formed after the election instead.

[21] Portuguese parties also present a "substitute" (*suplente*) list, which we do not consider here. Our information on the candidates, their ranks, and their party affiliations comes from the websites of the Portuguese National Assembly (www.parlamento.pt/deputadogp) and the Portuguese Elections Commission (www.cne.pt).

[22] In the preceding election in this district, running separately, the PSD had won six seats and the CDS-PP one.

collectively the largest bloc in the Knesset, to fend off a challenge from the new party of the center, Yesh Atid (see Chapter 5). The balance of list ranks they struck was to alternate ranks (one Likud candidate, then one Yisrael Beiteinu, etc.) through the first four slots, and then just below that following with two Likud, one Yisrael Beiteinu, etc. In this way the combined list would elect candidates in roughly the two-to-one ratio of their representation as separate parties at the preceding election.[23]

A second and politically consequential example from Israel occurred in 2015. Prior to this election, the Knesset passed a law raising the threshold to win any seats from 2.5 percent to 3.25 percent. Given that there were four parties in the Knesset elected in 2013 that had vote percentages in precisely the 2.5 to 3.25 percent range, the change was a clear threat to the representation of some existing parties. Some of these parties receive most of their votes from the Arab sector of the Israeli population, and thus in order to maximize their chances of crossing the threshold, they formed a Joint List.[24] It worked; they jointly cleared the threshold with 10.5 percent of the vote and thirteen seats, the third highest total for any list in the election. (The fourth party whose 2013 votes were below the new 2015 threshold, Kadima, went out of business.)

HYBRID LIST TYPES

This chapter thus far has considered two "pure" types of list, open and closed. There are also hybrids, usually known as "flexible" lists but sometimes as "semiopen" lists. In such lists, parties present rank-ordered lists, as in closed-list systems, but voters may give preference votes to individual candidates. (Sometimes, as in Estonia and the Netherlands, the voter must vote for a candidate.) The final ranks take into account both the pre-election rank by the party and the preference votes. Details vary with the system; there may be as many different flexible list systems as there are countries using these intermediate types.[25] For this reason, we will not attempt to generalize about them in this book. Such systems are

[23] For details see Matthew S. Shugart, "Likud and Yisrael Beiteinu," *Fruits and Votes* (https://fruitsandvotes.wordpress.com/2013/01/21/likud-and-yisrael-beiteinu/); last accessed November 17, 2015. The parties subsequently split and ran separately in the election of 2015.

[24] The four parties are: "Hadash, the Jewish-Arab Communist Party; Ra'am, an Islamist Group . . .; and Ta'al and Balad, Two Nationalist Groups" (http://forward.com/news/israel/215112/can-israels-new-arab-list-make-history/; last accessed November 30, 2015). Ra'am and Ta'al already had run on a combined list (the United Arab List) in several preceding elections; the other two had run separately.

[25] Typically, for a list's number of seats, *s*, won on the interparty dimension, the first criterion under flexible-list rules is to see if any candidates have obtained some legally stipulated quota of preference votes. Candidates with sufficient votes are elected in order of their preference votes, until *s* seats are filled. If seats remain unallocated, the rest go according to the order in which they were ranked on the pre-election list (skipping, obviously, any already elected on preference votes).

quite common in Europe, and therefore no treatment of electoral systems would be complete without acknowledging that "open" and "closed" lists do not exhaust the range of possibilities for list systems of PR. For details on specific provisions, the key source is Renwick and Pilet (2016). As with many features of electoral systems, there is no clear answer as to which is "best" – open, closed, or flexible – but there are different options which are conducive to achieving different goals in representation.[26]

CONCLUSIONS

This chapter has introduced systems of districted proportional representation. Focusing primarily on the cases of Finland and Portugal, we saw how variations in district magnitude affect the proportionality of the outcome in different regions of a country, given that magnitudes in these and many other districted PR systems are highly variable. Further, we introduced the distinction between closed and open lists. We saw how this distinction in list types – open, closed, and flexible – affects election of individual candidates. In the case of lists presented by alliances, the list type may alter the balance of representation of parties or factions within the alliance. These are among the issues that we will address more systematically in Chapters 13 and 14, which focus on the intraparty dimension of electoral systems.

[26] For empirical studies of the effects of flexible lists see André, et al., 2017; Crisp and Malecki 2013, Cahill, et al., n.d.