



## Electoral Reform & Fragmented Multipartyism

The mechanical and psychological effects of electoral systems on party systems

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**Synopsis:** Debates about constitutional reform in Brazil have surfaced on many occasions due to the classic difficulties of governability in a political system combining a fragmented multiparty system with personalistic and undisciplined parties, the separation of executive-legislative powers, and vigorous state federalism. Many constitutional reforms have been debated to overcome these problems, including modifications to the proportional electoral system used for the lower house of Congress. To understand the broader context for these issues, *Part I* of this paper considers the process of electoral reform experienced by many countries during the last decade. In this study we focus upon understanding the consequences of electoral systems for party systems, and in particular whether there is convincing evidence that the adoption of a combined (mixed-member) electoral system has either (i) the *mechanical* capacity to reduce the problems of fragmented multipartyism, or (ii) the *psychological* capacity to strengthen voter-party alignments, thereby generating the foundations of a more stable party system. *Part II* briefly summarizes the classification of electoral systems worldwide and the sources of CSES data used as evidence in this study. *Part III* analyzes mechanical effects and *Part IV* examines the psychological effects. The conclusion summarizes the major findings and considers their implications for debates about electoral reform in the context of the Brazilian political system.

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Debates about constitutional reform in Brazil have surfaced on many occasions due to the classic difficulties of governability in a political system combining a fragmented multiparty system with personalistic and undisciplined parties, the separation of executive-legislative powers, and vigorous state federalism. Parties-in-government should function as the glue that binds together the federal executive and legislature horizontally, while parties-as-organizations should link members of Congress with local activists and voting supporters vertically, but in Brazil these institutions commonly fail for many reasons. As Scott Mainwaring notes, in principle Brazilian presidents have sweeping formal constitution powers to set the policy agenda and yet in practice they have only limited ability to implement their legislative program, due to lack of partisan support in Congress<sup>1</sup>. Since 1950, no popularly elected president has enjoyed a Congressional majority, mainly because concurrent elections generate weak Presidential coattails<sup>2</sup>. To secure support for their policy proposals, Presidents have attempted to build multiparty coalitions within Congress; used patronage appointments and financial resources to get the backing of individual legislators; and attempted to circumvent Congress when implemented policies by decree and by bureaucratic agencies. Catchall, fluid, and personalistic Congressional parties do support popular presidents in temporary alliances, but these coalitions disintegrate when presidents fall from public esteem in difficult times<sup>3</sup>. Weak party discipline in Congress, and minimal accountability of elected members to grassroots party members or local constituents, generates few effective sanctions if politicians cast legislative votes contrary to the party line, or if they switch party affiliations and cross the floor<sup>4</sup>. The use of compulsory (mandatory) voting laws means politicians have little incentive to develop local party organizations for get-out-the-vote drives<sup>5</sup>. Presidential campaigns revolve primarily around the personalities of alternative leaders, rather than involving serious and sustained debate about substantive policy issues and each party's collective programmatic platform<sup>6</sup>. Attempts to introduce other electoral reforms have had only mixed success, including those regulating campaign finance and introducing gender quotas into the candidate nomination process<sup>7</sup>. As a result of divided government and the weaknesses of parties, Brazilian democracy has frequently experienced legislative-executive stalemate and policymaking logjams, generating what has been termed 'deadlocked democracy', or a crisis of governability<sup>8</sup>.

Many believe that the electoral system contributes towards and help maintain fragmented multipartyism. The Brazilian electoral system, adopted in the 1988 constitution, uses open party list PR (with preferential voting) in elections held every four years for the Congress, with 513 seats in 27 electoral districts (states) in the lower house and seats allocated by the d'Hondt highest averages electoral formula. Electoral thresholds in qualifying for a seat operate at district (state) not national level. The party system exhibits all the classic characteristics of fragmented multipartyism. The November 1998 Congressional elections resulted in a five-party coalition government, with no party winning more than one fifth of the vote, and the entry into Congress of sixteen parties. Using the Laakso and Taagepera (1979) measure of the effective number of parliamentary parties (ENPP)<sup>9</sup>, the 1998 Congressional election generated a remarkably high ENPP of 7.13; in comparison only a few other democracies have registered greater party fragmentation in recent elections, and these have usually been plural societies with deep ethno-political cleavages, exemplified by Belgium and Israel. Presidential and Vice Presidential contests use the majoritarian 2<sup>nd</sup> Ballot runoff electoral system with concurrent 4-year fixed-term elections.

Debate about constitutional reforms in the Brazilian system have considered multiple remedies designed to reduce party fragmentation, to strengthen the personal accountability of elected representatives to local constituents, and to develop responsible, cohesive and disciplined political parties<sup>10</sup>. The classic question arising from this debate in Brazil, as in other fragmented multiparty systems such as Italy and Israel, is whether constitutional engineering could strengthen governability<sup>11</sup>. To consider these issues, drawing upon a broader analysis forthcoming elsewhere<sup>12</sup>, *Part I* of this paper considers the process of electoral reform experienced by many countries during the last decade. *Part II* briefly sets out the

conceptualization and classification of electoral systems worldwide and the sources of evidence used in this study. *Part III* analyzes the mechanical consequences of majoritarian, combined and proportional formula for patterns of party competition in countries worldwide. *Part IV* explores the psychological consequences of electoral systems for the strength of party-voter linkages, using the CSES 30-nation dataset. The conclusion summarizes the major findings and considers their possible consequences for Brazilian debates about electoral reform.

### **I: The Process of Electoral Reform**

From East Timor to Kosovo, and from Cambodia to Kabul, the last decade has witnessed growing interest in 'electoral engineering'. The end of the Cold War, the global spread of democracy, and new thinking about development, all spurred this process. During the late 1980s and early 1990s the flowering of transitional and consolidating third wave democracies around the globe generated a wave of institution building. International agencies like the World Bank came to understand that good governance was not a luxury that could be delayed while more basic social needs were being met, like the provision of clean water, basic health care and schooling, but instead the establishment of democracy was an essential pre-condition for effective human development and the management of the problems of poverty, inequality and ethnic conflict<sup>13</sup>. The downfall of many corrupt and incompetent dictatorships in Latin America, Central Europe, Asia and Africa created new opportunities for political development that were recognized by the donor community<sup>14</sup>. Subsequent histories show that the process of deepening democracy and good governance has proved fraught with many difficulties, with little change to many repressive regimes in the Middle East, fragile and unstable consolidation in parts of Latin America like Argentina, Venezuela and Peru, and even occasional reversions back to authoritarian rule in places like Zimbabwe, Gambia, and Pakistan<sup>15</sup>.

International agencies used a triple strategy to promote democratic consolidation. Aid has been devoted to building state institutions capable of curbing and counterbalancing executive powers, by strengthening independent judiciaries and effective legislatures. Democratic assistance flowed into attempts to foster and expand civic society, nurturing grassroots organizations, advocacy NGOs, and the news media. But among all the issues of democratization, perhaps the most resources have been invested in strategies designed to establish competitive, free and fair elections. Only elections provide the opportunity for the public to select representatives, to hold governments to account, and to 'kick the rascals out', where necessary. Electoral systems are commonly regarded as some of the most basic democratic structures, from which much else flows. Regular elections are not sufficient by themselves for representative democracy, by any means, but they are a necessary minimal condition. The commonly accepted criteria that elections must meet to insure democratic legitimacy include being free of violence, intimidation, bribery, vote-rigging, irregularities, systematic fraud and deliberate partisan manipulation; providing a free choice of competing parties and candidates without repression of opposition parties or undue bias in the distribution of campaign resources and access to the news media; employing fair, honest, efficient and transparent procedures from voter registration to the final vote tally; and generating widespread public participation<sup>16</sup>. Where rulers have blocked, derailed or corrupted the outcome of the electoral process, in their attempts to retain power, this has undermined their legitimacy and attracted critical scrutiny. Until the 1980s, international electoral assistance was fairly exceptional, applied only in special cases, such as in the first transfer of power following decolonization or the end of civil wars. Yet from the early 1990s onwards, international observers, technical aid experts, and constitutional advisers played a leading role as dozens of transitional elections occurred in Central and Eastern Europe, Asia and Latin America. Efforts focused on the basic design of electoral systems, and more generally on the administration of elections, voter education, election observing, and party capacity building, all aiming to deepen and strengthen good governance<sup>17</sup>. Elections have played

a particularly important role in attempts to manage or reduce ethnic tensions and accommodate ethno-political diversity in transitional democracies, such as in Bosnia and Somalia. Debates about the most appropriate electoral system to adopt in transitional and consolidating democracies have traditionally revolved around the desirability of adopting either majoritarian electoral systems, designed to promote accountable single-party government, typically by giving greater representation to the two parties that receive the most votes, or alternatively proportional electoral systems that aim to generate inclusive and consensual power-sharing, usually by producing parliaments that largely reflect the vote shares of multiple parties. During the 1990s these debates have also increasingly considered the virtues of combined or mixed-member systems, incorporating features of each of the major types.

Yet interest in electoral engineering has not been limited to the world of 'new' democracies; in many Western nations, basic features of electoral systems that were often believed to have been settled decades ago have arisen again with renewed urgency on the policy agenda. During the post-war era, wholesale and radical reform of the basic electoral formula -- meaning the way votes are translated into seats -- was fairly rare in older democracies<sup>18</sup>. The party or parties in power have generally favored maintaining the status quo, from which they usually benefited, and they have controlled the process of electoral reform. In majoritarian systems with two-party systems, exemplified by New Zealand and the United Kingdom, in the past the critical voices of parties or minorities systematically excluded from elected office rarely proved strong enough to amend the rules of the game, even where there was widespread public disaffection with government. In proportional systems with fragmented multiparty systems, exemplified by Israel and Italy, it has usually proved difficult to amend the electoral law to reduce the number of minor parties, even when countries experienced a crisis of governability. During the last decade, however, policymakers in many Western nations have increasingly debated reform of the basic electoral law, as well as ways to overhaul the administrative procedures governing party eligibility and candidate nomination, electoral registration and voting facilities, and election management. Advocates have proposed electoral reform as the solution to many perceived problems, whether the need to strengthen the legitimacy of scandal-ridden governments and restore faith in the policy process; to consolidate unstable and fragmented multiparty systems; to expand opportunities for women and ethnic minorities in elected office; to encourage voter participation at the ballot box; to strengthen governance by overcoming legislative-executive gridlock and policy stalemate; or alternatively to reduce the excessive centralization of power in the hands of predominant governing parties.

In some countries, debate has overcome institutional inertia and led to incremental reforms, usually moving from pure to mixed-member or combined systems, although reforms have often failed to achieve their initial objectives. It remains difficult to generalize about why reform has occurred in some countries, and not others, as a combination of inherent generic preconditions plus contingent specific political events have led to these developments<sup>19</sup>. Within the space of a few years the electoral system of first-past-the-post was radically overhauled by the Blair government in the United Kingdom, with alternative systems adopted at almost every level except for Westminster and local councils, with the introduction of the Additional Member system for the Scottish Parliament, the Welsh Assembly, and the London Assembly; the Supplementary Vote for the London Mayor; the Regional Party List system for European elections; and the Single Transferable Vote for the Northern Ireland Assembly<sup>20</sup>. In 1993, after more than a century of first-past-the-post, fuelled by growing public disillusionment with strong single-party governments, New Zealand switched to a mixed-member proportional system (MMP), producing a sudden fragmentation of the party system<sup>21</sup>. Dissatisfaction has not been confined to nations using majoritarian and plurality electoral systems. Among countries using proportional representation systems, in 1992 Israel introduced direct elections for the prime minister in the attempt to create a stronger executive capable of counterbalancing party

fragmentation in the Knesset and overcoming the problems of growing electoral volatility and frequent government turnover<sup>22</sup>. The following year, after prolonged debate about the best way to overcome unstable party governments, and a deep crisis in the parliamentary system, Italy adopted a mixed electoral system where three-quarters of the parliamentary seats were distributed by plurality vote in single member districts and the remaining one-quarter as a proportional compensation for minor parties<sup>23</sup>. Japan also introduced reforms in March 1994, moving from a Single Non-Transferable Vote to a system combining PR seats with first-past-the-post single-member districts in the attempt to craft a competitive two-party, issue-oriented politics and a cleaner, more efficient government<sup>24</sup>. In 1993, Venezuela, one of Latin America's oldest democracies, moved from a closed list PR system for the Chamber of Deputies to a combined system, aiming to strengthen the independence of elected members over the national party leadership<sup>25</sup>. Bolivia followed suit the following year, while Mexico repeatedly amended its electoral rules over successive contests. The strength of institutional inertia helps to explain 'the dog that did not bark' or why major reforms have not occurred so far in other countries where there appears to be a misfit between the type of electoral system and the party system, whether those like Canada and India, exemplifying pluralist multiparty societies operating with majoritarian electoral rules, or countries like Brazil typifying a fragmented multiparty system.

Beyond the basic electoral formula, the rules concerning candidate, party and voter registration have changed more regularly in many countries, as have the regulations concerning electoral management, campaign finance, and election broadcasting. Nations have occasionally switched electoral formulas between d'Hondt and LR-Hare, adjusted the effective voting threshold, changed the conditions of electoral suffrage, and altered the size of their legislative assemblies<sup>26</sup>. The United States has experienced growing debate about electoral procedures, and some experimentation at local and state levels, generated by concern about the barriers to registration and turnout<sup>27</sup>, dissatisfaction with the low representation of women and ethnic minorities<sup>28</sup>, and, more recently, by serious problems of electoral administration experienced in Florida during the 2000 Bush-Gore race<sup>29</sup>. Experiments have been conducted with newer technological innovations, exemplified by e-voting<sup>30</sup>. Candidate nomination procedures have seen the introduction of affirmative action and gender quotas into party rules in many Latin American, Scandinavian and West European nations, as well as the use of legal quotas in Argentina, Belgium, France and Mexico<sup>31</sup>. Therefore in recent decades debate about electoral engineering moved from margin to mainstream on the policy agenda in many nations.

Political discussions about electoral reform have largely revolved around the practical options, the sometimes-bewildering combination of trade-off choices, and the consequences of particular reforms for the status quo within each state. Underlying these pragmatic arguments are contested normative visions about the fundamental principles of representative government<sup>32</sup>. The most fundamental debate raises questions about the ultimate ends as well as means of elections<sup>33</sup>. The general consensus in the literature emphasizes that no 'perfect' bespoke electoral system fits every society. Instead, arrangements have to be tailored to different contexts and choices require trade-offs among competing public goods<sup>34</sup>. The most common debate today revolves around the pros and cons of majoritarian, combined, or proportional types of electoral systems. Fundamental normative questions underlying these arguments concern what forms of representative democracy are more desirable and what functions electoral systems should perform. Democratic theories about the virtues of alternative electoral systems have been framed in multiple ways<sup>35</sup>. In this study the major debate about the fundamental ideals that electoral systems should meet is conceptualized as one between advocates of either 'adversarial' or 'consensual' visions of representative democracy, with the main contrasts summarized in Table 1.

[Table 1 about here]

For proponents of adversarial political systems, representative democracy is preserved by rigorous scrutiny of government actions, by vigorous debate between government and opposition parties, and by the ability of the electorate to reward or punish parties when asked to judge their performance and promises. Electoral systems designed to give the leading party the majority of parliamentary seats, through the use of majoritarian and plurality electoral formula, represent an essential, although not sufficient, institution underpinning the workings of adversarial democracy. The purported virtues of these electoral systems, advocates claim, are that they are believed to maximize democratic accountability, strengthen voter-member linkages, facilitate governability, generate decisive electoral outcomes, and maximize political responsiveness. Yet critics suggest that adversarial democracy suffers from certain well-known dangers. In particular, adversarial democracy involves a zero-sum game between the 'Ins' and the 'Outs'. If one party is repeatedly returned to government over successive elections, with a majority or even just a plurality of votes, the opposition has limited powers of checks and balances. Where communities are divided into multiple cleavages, especially between enduring majority and minority populations, and where these social divisions and ethnic cleavages are reflected in party politics, then the balanced rotation between government and opposition implied in the adversarial model may be absent. Predominant parties can exercise undue power and trample over the interests of minority groups. The potential dangers, it is argued, are 'elective dictatorship', disregard for minority rights, administrative corruption arising from insufficient checks and balances, unfairness to minor parties, and public disillusionment if citizens feel that governments are unresponsive to their needs and if fragmented opposition parties mean that elections are unable to insure a regular rotation of parties in power.

To guard against these dangers, critics present many alternative visions of how representative democracy should function and what institutions are necessary as the structural foundations for these normative ideals. These arguments can also be discussed and framed in many ways, including as Madisonian, deliberative, or consociational models of democracy<sup>36</sup>. This study focuses upon the arguments developed by Lijphart in favor of 'consensus' democracy, as the most systematic comparative treatment of the subject. The vision of consensual representative democracy emphasizes that political institutions should promote consensual decision-making, bargaining and compromise among multiple parliamentary parties, each with a stake in power, and dispersed decision-making processes. Proponents suggest that proportional electoral systems facilitate deliberative and collaborative governance, reduce the barriers to minority parties, broaden electoral choice, boost voting turnout, and ensure that parliaments faithfully mirror the social and political diversity in society, all of which can be regarded as essential, but not sufficient, conditions for checking and balancing the power of predominant majorities. Against these arguments, most critics of proportional representation emphasize certain well-known themes, arguing that these electoral systems are prone to generate indecisive electoral results and weak, ineffective, and unstable governing coalitions where it is difficult for voters to assign clear responsibility; create institutional checks and balances characterized by policy stalemate, administrative paralysis, and legislative gridlock; foster cautious, slow and incremental decision-making and limit the inability of policymakers to respond in timely and coherent fashion to a sudden crisis; encourage the legitimization of extremist parties on the far right and left; reduce the accountability of elected members to local parties and constituents; and weaken the inability of the electorate to throw out some 'king-making' parties that are semi-permanent members of coalition governments.

## **II: Comparative framework, evidence, and data sources**

The contesting visions of adversarial and consensus democracy have fuelled attempts to reform the electoral system to achieve either greater government accountability through majoritarian systems or wider parliamentary diversity through proportional systems. Underlying

the normative debate are certain important empirical claims about the consequences of electoral rules for voting behavior and for political representation. In this limited study we will focus upon the consequences of electoral systems for party systems, and in particular whether there is convincing evidence that the adoption of a combined electoral system could generate the foundations of a more stable party system by either (i) the mechanical capacity to reduce the problems of fragmented multipartyism or (ii) the psychological capacity to strengthen voter-party alignments. In considering these two issues separately, we are drawing upon an older tradition established by Duverger<sup>37</sup>. We know more from the literature about the 'mechanical' effects that flow directly from electoral rules, and the structural conditions in which such relationships vary in a consistent manner at macro-level, exemplified by legal vote thresholds or small magnitudes that limit minor parliamentary parties. In contrast, we know far less from prior studies about the 'psychological' effects of how political actors respond to electoral rules, and hence the underlying reasons for how the institutional context influences the attitudes or behavior of parties and voters.

Much existing research on electoral systems and voting behavior is based upon analysis of established democracies, notably the Anglo-American countries, as well as Western Europe and Scandinavia. Yet it is unclear how far generalizations can be drawn more widely from these particular contexts, and during the last decade we have learnt much about the impact of electoral systems in transitional and consolidating democracies elsewhere. This study draws upon two primary sources of data and evidence.

For a worldwide comparison of the *mechanical* effects of electoral systems used in national-level parliamentary and presidential elections, and their consequences, as in previous work this study also utilizes multiple datasets, including those drawn from International IDEA and the Inter-Parliamentary Union. Electoral systems vary according to a number of key dimensions; the most important concern district magnitude, ballot structures, effective thresholds, malapportionment, assembly size, and the use of open/closed lists. The classification of electoral systems worldwide for elections to the lower house of parliament is illustrated in Figure 1 and the data forming the basis of the classification is derived originally from *The International IDEA Handbook of Electoral System Design*. Electoral systems in the countries with an elected lower house of parliament are classified according to the electoral formula used for translating votes into seats into three major families (see Figure 1), each including a number of sub-categories: *majoritarian* formula (including First-Past-the-Post, Second Ballot, the Block vote, Single Non-Transferable Vote, and Alternative Voting systems); *combined* systems (incorporating both majoritarian and proportional formula); and *proportional formula* (including Party Lists as well as the Single Transferable Vote systems). The majoritarian and proportional categories follow standard conventions that are widely used in the literature, and the classification is discussed in detail elsewhere, although the division of the combined systems into dependent and independent subtypes is a less familiar procedure which requires further clarification here. An increasing number of electoral systems, including those adopted during the last decade in Italy, New Zealand, and Russia, use 'combined' systems, employing different electoral formulae in the same election, although with a variety of alternative designs. In this regard we follow Blais and Massicotte in classifying 'combined' systems (otherwise known in different accounts as 'mixed', 'mixed-member', 'hybrid' or 'side-by-side' systems) according to their mechanics, not by their outcome<sup>38</sup>. If we followed the later strategy, such as classifying electoral systems based on their level of proportionality, then this approach would be in danger of creating circular arguments, confounding the independent and dependent variables. There is an important distinction within this category, overlooked in some discussions, between *Dependent Combined* systems, where both parts are interrelated (exemplified by Germany), and *Independent Combined* systems, where two electoral formulae operate in parallel towards each other (exemplified by Russia). Accordingly based on this classification we can consider the relationship between (i) the type of

electoral system and patterns of party competition worldwide at aggregate level, as well as (ii) the type of electoral system and patterns of partisan identification in the 30 CSES nations.

[Figure 1 about here]

To explore the 'psychological' effects the research draws from Module 1 of the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES). The CSES project is based on a special battery of questions that were included as part of the national election studies conducted from 1996-2001, covering thirty societies and thirty-five separate national elections. The study's focus on voter choices, the cross-national integration, and the timing of the data collection (within a year following each of the elections), provide a unique opportunity to compare electoral behavior in a way that is not possible through other common sources of comparative survey data such as the World Values Study. The project is designed to understanding how variations in the institutional arrangements that govern the conduct of elections affect the nature and quality of democratic choice. The results of the separate surveys were coordinated, integrated and cleaned by the Center for Political Studies, Institute for Social Research, at the University of Michigan<sup>39</sup>. The integrated dataset facilitates the comparison of macro and micro-level electoral data. The thirty societies included in the survey range from low or middle-income nations such as Thailand, Mexico and Peru to some of the most affluent societies in the world, including Sweden, the United States, and Japan. The range of societies provides significant variations in types of political systems, as well as rates of human development, patterns of democratization, and cultural regions, all of which are incorporated into explanations of electoral behavior. The framework contains relatively homogeneous nations such as Poland, Norway and Britain as well as plural societies with multiple cleavages exemplified by Israel and the Netherlands. Countries like Australia are long-established democracies, others such as Spain consolidated within recent decades, while still others like the Ukraine remain in the transitional stage, characterized by unstable and fragmented opposition parties, ineffective legislatures and limited checks on the executive. The nations under comparison in the CSES data are listed in Table 2 along with the electoral system used for the lower house of parliament and Table 3 gives the system used for the presidential contests in these same countries. Although the CSES provides a unique source of individual-level survey data, the thirty countries included in the project reflect the distribution of national election studies, and so cannot be regarded as more broadly representative of elections elsewhere.

[Tables 2 and 3 about here]

### **III: The Mechanical Effects of Electoral Systems on Party Competition**

The direct impact of electoral systems on party competition has long been regarded as one of the most important effects. Electoral engineering has been advocated in systems suffering from the dangers of excessively unstable and fragmented party systems, such as Italy, Brazil and Israel, or from the opposite dangers of unchanging one-party predominant systems, exemplified by Singapore and Japan. Effective parties are critical for democracy by serving multiple functions: simplifying and structuring electoral choices; organizing and mobilizing campaigns; articulating and aggregating disparate interests; channeling communication, consultation and debate; training, recruiting and selecting candidates; structuring parliamentary divisions; acting as policy think tanks; and organizing government<sup>40</sup>. Where parties fail in these regards, especially in linking separate branches of government horizontally, and well as linking representatives and citizens vertically, then countries can experience a crisis of governability.

The classic starting point for any analysis is Duverger's famous claims about the relationship between electoral systems and party systems. Duverger's first law is (1) "*the plurality single-ballot rule tends to party dualism.*" The second claim is that (2) "*The double-ballot system and proportional representation tend to multipartyism.*"<sup>41</sup> While originally stated as a universal

law-like regularity, without exception, Duverger subsequently suggested that this was only a weaker probabilistic generalization<sup>42</sup>. The conditions under which this relationship holds, and its status as a law, have attracted considerable debate marked by continued reformulations of the original statement and many efforts to define precisely what is to 'count' as a party in order to verify these claims<sup>43</sup>. The effects of electoral systems are partly mechanical, depending upon the vote hurdles that single-member districts create for minor parties with dispersed support, and partly psychological, by shaping the incentives facing parties and the public, for example if minor party candidates are discouraged from running in elections where they believe they cannot win, or if citizens cast a strategic or tactical vote for a major party in the belief that voting for minor parties in these systems is a 'wasted vote'. Subsequent studies have recognized that the hurdles facing minor parties under majoritarian electoral systems vary under certain conditions, the most important of which concern (i) the geographic distribution or concentration of party support; (ii) specific aspects of electoral systems beyond the basic formula, notably the use of voting thresholds and the size of the district magnitude in proportional systems, and manipulated partisan bias such as the use of gerrymandering to include or exclude minor parties; and also (iii) the number and depth of social cleavages within a nation, an issue explored in the next chapter. Minor parties with support that is geographically concentrated can still win seats in single-member districts and plurality elections, such as regional, nationalist, or ethnic parties that are strong in particular constituencies, exemplified by the success of the Bloc Quebecois and the Reform party in Canada, or the Scottish National Party and Plaid Cymru in the UK. Plurality systems are most problematic for parties with modest support that is widely dispersed across many seats, such as the Australian Greens or the Canadian Progressive Conservatives. Moreover minor parties still face considerable barriers to election in proportional formula that combine small district magnitudes with high vote thresholds, exemplified in the countries under comparison by elections to the Polish Sejm. Partisan manipulation of the electoral rules, such as the use of malapportionment (producing constituencies containing different sized electorates), gerrymandering (the intentional drawing of electoral boundaries for partisan advantage), as well as restrictive legal rules for nomination to get on the ballot, can also function to benefit or penalize minor parties.

Before examining the evidence for the relationship between electoral systems and party systems in the societies under comparison, we need to consider what is to 'count' as a party. One problem concerns how to distinguish between fringe parties and independent candidates, a problem particularly evident in the Ukrainian and Russian parliamentary election, where many candidates stood simply to avoid criminal prosecution. The best strategy is to use alternative summary measures of party systems, ranging from simple to more complex indices, to see if the specific choice of measures makes a substantial difference to the interpretation of the results. Electoral parties are most simply defined as all those standing for election, and parliamentary parties as all those that have at least one seat in the lower house. Yet this simple measure is too generous to capture many of the most important distinctions commonly made between systems: for example, if all electoral parties count equally for 'one', then almost every country except those where opposition parties are banned by law would qualify as a multiparty system. In the United States, for example, normally understood as a classic two-party system, the Democrats and Republicans would count as equal to all other fringe parties holding no seats but contesting presidential elections, including the Greens, the Reform party, the Communist party, the Natural Law party, the Libertarians, and the Workers' Party. One way to narrow this measure to generate a more meaningful comparison is to count *relevant parties*, defined as those gaining more than a certain threshold of national votes or parliamentary seats; in this study relevant electoral parties are defined as those gaining 3% or more of the national vote, while relevant parliamentary parties are understood as those getting 3% or more of seats in election to the lower house.

Yet the 3% threshold is arbitrary, as the cut-off point could equally be set slightly higher

or lower, and measures of relevant parties can also prove misleading. For example, if four parties are of roughly equal size, gaining about one quarter of the parliamentary seats, then there is no problem about counting them all equally as a four-party system. But if there are considerable disparities in size among parties, for example, if two major parties predominate with over 75% of all parliamentary seats, holding the balance of power between the opposition and government, and yet another eight fringe parties each get only 3% of seats, given the imbalance of power it does not seem satisfactory to count each party equally to produce a ten-party system. The most popular method to overcome this problem is the Laakso and Taagepera measure of the 'effective number of parliamentary parties' (ENPP), and also the 'effective number of electoral parties' (ENEP), both of which take account not only of the number of parties but also the relative size of each<sup>44</sup>. Although the measure is fairly abstract, it is also fairly straightforward to understand the difference between party systems containing, say, 2.6 and 5.5 effective parliamentary parties. Using this measure, Lijphart reexamined the evidence for the Duverger thesis by comparing election results in 27 advanced industrialized democracies from 1945-90. The study estimated that the effective number of parliamentary parties was 2.0 in plurality systems, 2.8 in majority, and 3.6 in proportional systems. Yet even here there are important variations beyond the basic formula, because Lijphart found that the minimum threshold of votes within proportional systems also had an important effect on the inclusion of minor parties<sup>45</sup>. An alternative study by Katz compared a broader range of countries, using a database with over 800 national elections held until 1985, and found many significant deviations around the mean effective number of parliamentary parties, particularly among sub-types within the basic proportional and majoritarian families<sup>46</sup>. The study concluded that there was little support for any simple version of Duverger's claim that plurality elections inevitably generate two-party systems, as a universal law, although nevertheless as a probabilistic generalizations plurality systems usually proved more reductive than PR elections.

[Table 4 about here]

To examine the evidence for a wider range of countries in recent years we can compare party systems in national elections for the lower house of parliament held under the different electoral families and their sub-types. Table 4 presents the results of four summary indicators of party competition:

- The mean number of *all* parliamentary parties (defined as all parties winning at least one seat),
- The mean number of *relevant* parliamentary parties (all parties holding 3% or more of parliamentary seats),
- The *percentage share of the vote won by the party in first place*, to provide an indication of how far electoral systems generated a vote majority for the leading party.
- The *percentage share of seats won by the party in first place*, to provide an indication of how far the electoral system generated a parliamentary majority for the leading party.

The estimates are based on the most recent national election for the lower house of parliament, with 170 contests held from 1995 to 2000, derived from *Elections Around the World*<sup>47</sup>.

The table shows that worldwide the mean number of parliamentary parties (based on the simplest definition of parties holding at least one seat) was 5.22 in the countries using majoritarian systems, 8.85 in combined systems, and 9.52 in societies with proportional electoral systems. In other words, there are almost twice as many parliamentary parties in countries using

PR rather than majoritarian electoral systems. Confirming this broad pattern, although with less of a sharp contrast between the major types of electoral system, the comparison of the mean number of *relevant* parties (holding over 3% of parliamentary seats) was 3.33 in all majoritarian systems, 4.52 for combined systems, and 4.74 for all proportional systems. Yet at the same time there are also some important variations evident among sub-types of electoral systems within each family, for example among proportional systems there were more parliamentary parties (and relevant parliamentary parties) in systems using party lists than in the two nations (Ireland and Malta) using the Single Transferable Vote. Duverger claims an important difference between simple plurality (first-past-the-post) and majoritarian 2<sup>nd</sup> ballot systems. The comparison shows that there were indeed more parliamentary parties (and more relevant parties) in the 28 nations using 2<sup>nd</sup> ballot runoff elections than in the 49 states using first-past-the-post. On the other hand, at the same time there were far few parliamentary parties and relevant parliamentary parties elected under the 2<sup>nd</sup> ballot system than under party list PR.

The indicators of the capacity of the election to generate a working majority include the vote and seat share for the leading party. These confirm, as expected, that the party in first place usually won a comfortable majority of votes (54.5%) and seats (56.8%) in majoritarian and plurality electoral systems (with the exception of the Australian AV system first preference distribution). Majorities of votes and seats for the winning party were also evident in the independent-combined electoral systems. In contrast, in combined-dependent and in proportional party list systems the party in first place generally failed to gain a majority of votes or seats. As proponents of each type of electoral system suggest, PR systems are more likely to prioritize legislative inclusiveness and multiparty systems while majoritarian systems are more likely to provide a decisive outcome and single-party executives.

[Figure 2 about here]

Nevertheless there are important cross-national differences within each of the electoral families, as the relationship between electoral systems and party systems is conditioned by the geographical distribution of party support, the type of electoral threshold, the size of district magnitude, and manipulated partisan bias. To illustrate this, the mean number of effective parliamentary parties (ENPP) for the thirty elections in the CSES dataset under comparison is illustrated in Figure 2. The pattern shows that among plurality systems the mean ENPP is 2.0 in the United States, 2.1 in the UK, but 3.0 in Canada where regional parties gain seats in their heartland provinces. There is some overlap between plurality systems and the least proportional party list electoral systems, notably Spain (with a mean ENPP of 2.7) due to small district magnitude and Poland (ENPP 3.0), with a 7% vote threshold to enter the Sejm. Nevertheless many of the PR systems under comparison can be regarded as moderate multiparty systems, with an ENPP ranging from 3.4 to 5.6, while Belgium qualifies as a polarized party system with an ENPP of 9.1.

The combined or mixed-member electoral systems show substantial variations in party competition in the expected direction. As predicted, the dependent combined systems, with the outcome based on the party list share of the vote, exemplified by New Zealand and Hungary, are closer to the multiparty system common under PR systems. Some of the independent combined systems with a high proportion of single-member districts, including Korea, Japan and Taiwan, are closer to the mean ENPP found in majoritarian systems. The primary exceptions to this general pattern are Russia and Ukraine, which both have fragmented multiparty systems, despite using independent combined electoral systems. The instability of party systems in these nations, and the fragility of the consolidation process in their democratic transitions, along with the existence of important social cleavages, and the election of many independents via the single-member districts, help explain the pattern in these nations<sup>48</sup>, for reasons explored more fully elsewhere.

[Figure 3 about here]

The proportionality of the electoral systems can be compared using many indicators, including the votes to seats ratio for each party in elections held from 1995 to 2000 in 143 nations around the globe, and the summary unstandardized regression coefficient (beta) for each electoral family, illustrated in Figure 3. The results in Figure 3 confirm as expected that proportional electoral formula produce the closest reflection of votes to seats ratios ( $R^2 = .95$ ). There are a few parties that scatter more widely around the top of the regression line in these systems but most fall where expected. In comparison, the combined formula proved marginally less proportional ( $R^2 = .93$ ), while the majoritarian formula show the widest scatter caused by minor and fringe parties failing to gain any electoral seats ( $R^2 = .82$ ).

[Figure 4 about here]

For another summary indicator, the standardized Loosemore-Hanby index of proportionality is calculated for the 30 nations under detailed comparison<sup>49</sup>. The results illustrated in Figure 4 confirm that proportionality was usually lower in majoritarian systems, with the exception of the United States that generates a highly proportional result despite plurality elections due to the two-party predominance in the House of Representatives. Proportionality was usually highest under party list PR, although again there are some exceptions due to high thresholds or low district magnitudes in Poland and Romania. Combined systems generally fell into the middle of the distribution although dependent-combined systems prove more proportional than independent-combined systems.

#### **IV: The Psychological Effects of Electoral Systems on Party Identification**

We know far less about the indirect psychological effects of the structure of electoral laws upon patterns of party loyalties in the electorate. Classic 'Michigan' theories of electoral behavior, dominating the field of voting behavior for many decades, focused on individual-level voting choices rather than their broader institutional context. The model suggested that most voters in Western democracies were anchored over successive elections, and sometimes for their lifetimes, by long-standing party loyalties.<sup>50</sup> Partisan identification has been regarded as a stable, affective orientation that guides electoral choices, even where voters lacked detailed information about the particular candidates and the policy issues under debate. In turn, socialization theory suggested that these partisan identifications developed from formative experiences in the family, school, local community, and workplace, as well as from long-standing structural cleavages in the electorate, especially those of class, religion, gender, and ethnicity. During the 1970s, accounts of partisan dealignment suggested that traditional party loyalties were fraying in many advanced industrialized societies, boosting electoral volatility, the proportion of late-deciders, more split ticket voting, the influence of short-term factors like campaign events and media coverage, and support for minor parties and protest parties<sup>51</sup>. The partisan dealignment argument rests on three major premises: (i) in postindustrial societies, many citizens no longer have a strong and stable commitment to anchor them to political parties; (ii) as a result many voters have become more volatile in their electoral behavior, more willing to desert the major parties, thereby producing erratic waves of support for minor parties; and that as party loyalties have weakened, (iii) short-term factors have become more influential in voting choice, such as the outgoing government's record, the major issues of the day, the party leader's personal qualities, and campaign events. In the transitional and consolidating democracies that emerged during the late 1980s and early 1990s, party loyalties are expected to prove an even weaker influence on voting choice than in established democracies with well-established patterns of party competition over many successive elections<sup>52</sup>.

Yet although neglected in the early social psychological theories of voting behavior, the broader institutional context within each nation, and in particular the logic of electoral systems,

can also be expected to have an important impact upon the incentives facing candidates and therefore upon the strength of partisan identification and general party orientations in the electorate<sup>53</sup>. Candidates have an electoral incentive to downplay party labels and to emphasize personalistic appeals, like the provision of constituency service, the delivery of pork to the district, and personal leadership qualities, in three types of contest: (i) in single member districts with plurality elections; (ii) in multimember constituencies with low magnitude where candidates compete for popular votes with others from within their own party, exemplified by the Single Transferable Vote in Ireland and the Single Non-Transferable Vote used in pre-reform Japan and still used for some districts in Taiwan; and to a lesser extent in open party list PR systems allowing preferential voting whereby voters can rank their choices from among candidates on the ballot, such as that used in Brazil and Belgium<sup>54</sup>. In extremely candidate-centered systems, the identity of specific candidates influences the calculus of voters more than collective party labels. By contrast, politicians have greater incentive to emphasize party labels in proportional electoral systems with closed party lists, such as in Norway, the Netherlands and Romania, since all candidates on the ticket win or fail together. In extremely party-centered systems, common in Western Europe, voters can only choose from among parties, the party list of nominees is determined by the party leadership or membership, and parliamentary candidates may not even engage in any real campaigning beyond lending their name to the list. In all these regards, electoral systems can be expected to influence not just which parties-in-government, but also parties-as-organizations and more generally how the public feels about political parties and whether there are strong party-voter linkages in the electorate.

[Table 5 about here]

These considerations lead to complex comparisons of electoral behavior under different arrangements that would take us well beyond the scope of this paper, including comparisons of voting choices among different types of district within particular countries. To explore briefly some of the preliminary evidence, which currently remains under investigation, we can compare several indicators of party orientations in the 30 nations included in the CSES dataset. Table 5 presents the simple distribution of these indicators, without any controls, when people were asked whether they felt close to any party, whether they believed that political parties care about what ordinary people think, and whether political parties are a necessary part of the political system. These attitudes were strongly interrelated, and factor analysis revealed that they formed one consistent dimension. All of these attitudes towards parties can be expected to be influenced by many other factors beyond the basic type of electoral system, which would need to be included in full multivariate models, including the standard social variables that usually help predict partisan attitudes (such as age, gender, education, and income); institutional factors and the predominant historical traditions and political cultures within each country, such as the legacy of Communism in Central and Eastern Europe; as well as general patterns of democratic and socioeconomic development distinguishing types of society and types of democracy. Nevertheless if the electoral system makes as much of a difference to partisan orientations as is sometimes claimed then we might expect to find some consistent patterns across the range of countries under comparison. Instead the simple cross-tabulation results, without any prior controls, show that there was no apparent relationship between the type of electoral system and attitudes towards political parties. Instead the results show considerable variations in support for parties both across and within each electoral family. This analysis remains preliminary and further work can help reveal patterns using multivariate analysis. Nevertheless the initial patterns suggest that the direct mechanical effects of electoral systems may be easier to establish than any indirect psychological effects.

### **Conclusions: The Implications for Electoral Reform in Brazil**

Reformers suggest that constitutional changes, particularly modifications to the electoral system, can contribute towards better governance, either through more majoritarian

arrangements that are believed to strengthen governability or through more proportional formula that are designed to improve power-sharing and social inclusiveness. In this study we focus upon the consequences of electoral systems for party systems, and in particular whether there is convincing evidence that the adoption of a combined (mixed-member) electoral system has (i) the *mechanical* capacity to reduce the problems of fragmented multipartyism, and also (ii) the *psychological* capacity to strengthen voter-party alignments, thereby generating the foundations of a more stable party system. Overall the results of the comparison of elections in all nations worldwide, and the detailed analysis of elections held in the thirty countries in the CSES dataset, lends further confirmation to support the reductive mechanical effect of the basic electoral formula. The results support Duverger's generalization that plurality electoral systems tend towards party dualism, while PR is associated with multipartyism, although at the same time there are important variations within each electoral family. As discussed earlier, the relationship between electoral systems and party systems is conditional upon many factors, including most importantly (i) the geography of electoral support; (ii) specific features of electoral design such as the use of thresholds and the size of districts; and (iii) the number and depth of social cleavages within a nation. Minor parties can do well in gaining seats under first-past-the-post, especially regional or ethnic-national parties with spatially concentrated support, while at the same time minor parties can also be heavily penalized in proportional systems that have high thresholds and small district magnitudes. The initial results of this study are less conclusive regarding the psychological effects of electoral systems in fostering strong voter-party linkages, but this could be because further analysis is required breaking down the results for comparison of attitudes and behavior in different types of districts within combined systems, as well as incorporating multivariate controls.

What are the implications of these results for debates about electoral reform in Brazil? The analysis suggests that two alternative strategies, one moderate and one more radical, might help overcome problems of fragmented multipartyism in Brazil.

The more moderate reforms would involve modifying certain features of the current proportional electoral system in Brazil, for example by introducing a moderately high (4 to 7%) national vote threshold; by adopting a slightly less proportional electoral formula such as the Droop largest remainder method used in the Czech republic and Greece; or by sharply reducing the mean district magnitude size by subdividing states to allow, say, 7 or 8 members per district, as in Spain or Poland. All these strategies could serve to slightly raise the hurdles facing minor parties while adjusting the number of seats awarded to the leading parties and retaining a PR electoral system.

For those favoring more radical or wholesale reform, the adoption of a 'combined' or 'mixed-member' system is another popular option, introducing a certain number of single-member Congressional districts elected either through plurality or majoritarian rules. Evidence about the workings of combined systems remains limited, in part because other than Germany and Mexico, many of these systems have only recently been introduced and we would expect their effects on the behavior of parties and voters to become fully apparent over repeated contests. There is a tendency to generalize from a few well-known cases but these are not necessarily representative of other combined systems, whether the apparent success of the combined electoral system in Germany or the apparent failure in Venezuela. Moreover the impact of electoral systems remains difficult to disentangle from many other institutional arrangements, social cleavages and historical traditions in these countries that could be expected to influence party systems. Nevertheless we are developing an accumulating body of evidence about the operation of combined systems in countries such as New Zealand, Hungary, Bolivia, and Mexico<sup>55</sup>. This evidence strongly suggests two conclusions: first, that *countries which have switched from majoritarian to 'combined' or 'mixed-member' systems*, including New Zealand and Britain (the latter at the sub-national level),

*have strengthened the representation of minor parties, facilitating multiparty competition. For example, the average effective number of parliamentary parties in New Zealand rose from 1.97 in the postwar period to 3.76 after introduction of MMP<sup>56</sup>. But, secondly, it remains 'unproven' (the Scottish verdict) whether countries can reverse this process, and thereby put the genie back in the bottle, by reducing fragmented multipartyism through the adoption of more majoritarian principles.* Evidence shows that combined systems can continue to have considerable party fragmentation, such as in Italy, Russia and Ukraine, depending upon factors such as whether a 'dependent' or 'independent' combined electoral system is used, the level of any voting threshold in the proportional element, the geographical distribution of minority party support in the single-member districts, and the degree of consolidation of the party system. Democracies that have attempted electoral engineering to overcome problems of fragmented multiparty systems provide little support for the more optimistic scenarios that these strategies would provide an automatic fix in practice.

Moreover attempts to implement either moderate or wholesale electoral reform would obviously face formidable political obstacles. Unless popular referendums can be used to bypass Congress, implementation of all these steps would require constitutional reforms or legislation that could be blocked by incumbent political actors. In fragmented multiparty systems, reform proposals seeking to raise the hurdles facing minor parties is analogous to the classic dilemma of asking turkeys to vote for Christmas. Even though there may be widespread public disillusionment with the present system, and some consensus among the major parties about the need to change, before simple theoretical solutions derived from electoral engineering could work they would need to overcome many practical, and perhaps insurmountable, political hurdles and institutional inertia. Nevertheless, although difficult, surmounting these barriers does seem important for strengthening the capacity for governance and for consolidating the future of democracy in Brazil.

**Table 1: The ideal functions of electoral institutions**

	<b>Adversarial democracy</b>	<b>Consensual democracy</b>
<i>Ideal function of the political system</i>	Should promote government accountability, transparency of decision-making, and responsible parties through single-party executives, effective opposition parties, vigorous parliamentary debate, and decisive elections.	Should promote consensual decision-making, bargaining and compromise among multiple parliamentary parties, each with a stake in power, and dispersed decision-making processes.
<i>Ideal function of the electoral system</i>	The system should maximize electoral decisiveness by directly linking the votes cast to the parties and members elected to parliament, thereby providing an indirect link from voters to the party in government. The system should winnow the number of electoral parties and candidates that enter parliament and should ensure that the leading party gains a workable parliamentary majority.	The system should maximize electoral choice among multiple parties, should fairly translate vote shares into seat shares, and should be socially inclusive in parliamentary representation.
<i>Ideal function of opposition parties</i>	Should function to provide adversarial scrutiny of government policy proposals and actions.	Should function as part of the consultation process and act as an important check on the power of the largest party.
<i>Ideal function of citizens</i>	Should be able to evaluate the performance of the governing party and the prospective policies offered by alternative electoral parties in opposition.	Should be able to evaluate the performance and policies of parties that are empowered to negotiate, bargain and compromise on behalf of their supporters.
<i>Ideal function of elected representatives</i>	Should act as community spokespersons reflecting local concerns and representing all local constituents in parliament.	Should deliberate, negotiate, and bargain as spokespersons on behalf of their party supporters.
<i>Potential dangers</i>	May lead to 'elective dictatorship' characterized by entrenched power for predominant majority populations, disregard for minority rights, and lack of effective checks and balances.	May lead to problems of governance associated with extreme multiparty fragmentation, unstable governments, lack of accountability for the government and for elected representatives, and indecisive election results.

Table 2: Electoral Systems for the Lower House of Parliament, selected CSES elections under comparison, 1996-2001

TYPE OF DISTRICTS	Year of Election	Electoral System	Party List	Formula	Threshold % Nat Vote	Total N. of MPs	N. Of SMD MPs	N. Of List MPs	Total number of Districts for Lists	Voting Age Population (VAP)	Average VAP per member	Mean District Mag. List seats	Prop.	ENPP	Max. Years between Elections
<b>MAJORITARIAN</b>															
Australia	1996	AV	None	Majority	None	148	148	0	0	13 547 900	91,500	1	84	2.61	3
Canada	1997	FPTP	None	Plurality	None	295	295	0	0	23 088 800	78,300	1	83	2.98	5
UK	1997	FPTP	None	Plurality	None	659	659	0	0	45 093 500	68,400	1	80	2.11	5
USA	1996	FPTP	None	Plurality	None	435	435	0	0	196 511 000	436,700	1	94	1.99	2
<b>COMBINED</b>															
<b>INDEPENDENT</b>															
Japan	1996	FPTP+PR	Closed			500	300	200	11	96 672 700	193,400	18	86	2.93	4
Korea, Republic of	2000	FPTP+PR		LR-Hare		299	253	46	1	34 364 700	114, 900	46	84	2.36	4
Russia	1999	FPTP+PR	Closed	LR-Hare	5	450	225	225	1	109 212 000	242,700	225	89	5.40	4
Taiwan	1996	SNTV+PR	Closed	LR-Hare	5	334	234/27	100	2	14 340 600	42,900	50	95	2.46	4
Ukraine	1998	FPTP+PR		LR-Hare	4	450	225	225	1	38 939 100	86,500	225	86	5.98	5
<b>DEPENDENT</b>															
Germany	1998	FPTP+PR	Closed	LR-Hare	5	656	328	328	1	65 942 100	100,000	328	94	3.30	4
Hungary	1998	FPTP+PR	Closed	D' Hondt		386	176	110	20	7 742 900	20,000	6	86	3.45	4
New Zealand	1996	FPTP+PR	Closed	St Laguë	5	120	65	55	1	2 571 800	21,400	55	96	3.78	3
Mexico	1997	FPTP+PR	Closed	LR-Hare	2	500	300	200	5	55 406 900	110,800	40	92	2.86	3
Thailand	2001	FPTP+PR	Closed		5	500	400	100	1	42 663 000	85, 000	100	88	2.92	4
<b>PROPORTIONAL</b>															
Belgium	1999	PR Lists	Open	D' Hondt		150	0	150	20	8 000 000	53 300	7.5	96	9.05	4
Czech Republic	1996	PR Lists	Closed	LR-Droop	5	200	0	200	8	7 859 200	39,300	25	89	4.15	4
Denmark	1998	PR Lists	Open	St Laguë	2	179	0	179	17	4 129 000	23,000	7.9	98	4.92	4
Israel	1996	PR Lists	Closed	D' Hondt	1.5	120	0	120	1	3 684 900	30,700	120	96	5.63	5
Netherlands	1998	PR Lists	Closed	D' Hondt	0.67	150	0	150	1	11 996 400	80,000	150	95	4.81	4
Norway	1997	PR Lists	Closed	St Laguë	4	165	0	165	19	3 360 100	20,000	8.7	95	4.36	4
Peru	2000	PR Lists	Open	D' Hondt	0	120	0	120	1	15 187 000	127 000	120	98	3.81	
Poland	1997	PR Lists	Open	D' Hondt	7	460	0	460	52	27 901 700	60,700	8.8	82	2.95	4
Romania	1996	PR Lists	Closed	D' Hondt	3	343	0	343	42	16 737 300	48,800	8.2	82	3.37	4
Slovenia	1996	PR Lists		LR-Hare	3	90	0	90	8	1 543 000	17,000	11	84	5.52	4
Spain	1996	PR Lists	Closed	D' Hondt	3	350	0	350	52	31 013 030	88,600	7	93	2.73	4
Sweden	1998	PR Lists	Open	St Laguë	4	349	0	349	29	6 915 000	19,800	10.7	97	4.29	4
Switzerland	1999	PR Lists	Panachage	D' Hondt	None	200	0	200	26	5736 300	28,700	7.7	93	5.08	4

**Notes:** PR Proportional Representation; FPTP First Past the Post; AV Alternative Vote; SMD Single Member Districts; List Party List; SMD Single Member Districts; List Party List. For the measures of proportionality and ENPP see Table A1. ENPP is the Effective Number of Parliamentary Parties calculated following the method of Laakso and Taagepera (1979). Prop. The Index of Proportionality is calculated following as the difference between a party's share of the vote and its share of the total seats in Parliament, summed, divided by two, and subtracted from 100. Theoretically it can range from 0 to 100. This is a standardized version of the Loosemore-Hanby index. For details see Rose, Munro and Mackie (1998). Note that the classification distinguishes between combined dependent systems, where the outcome depends upon the proportion of votes cast in the party lists, and independent combined systems used in Japan, Russia and Korea where the single member districts and party lists operate in parallel. *Voting Age Population:* IDEA Voter Turnout from 1945 to 1997. [www.idea.int](http://www.idea.int) Sources: Successive volumes of *Electoral Studies*; Richard Rose, Neil Munro and Tom Mackie. 1998. *Elections in Central and Eastern Europe Since 1990*. Strathclyde: Center for the Study of Public Policy. <http://www.aceproject.org/>; Lawrence LeDuc, Richard G. Niemi and Pippa Norris. Eds. 2002. *Comparing Democracies 2: New Challenges in the Study of Elections and Voting*. London: Sage. Table 1.2; CSES Macro-Level Dataset.

**Table 3: Direct elections for president/prime minister, selected CSES elections under comparison, 1996-2001**

	Type	Year of Election	Electoral System	In conjunction with legislative elections	Voting Age Population	Vote/VAP	Max. Years between Elections
Belarus	Majoritarian	2001	2 <sup>nd</sup> Ballot	Yes	7 585 000	81.3	5
Chile	Majoritarian	1999	2 <sup>nd</sup> Ballot	No	10 066 000	72.8	6
Israel (i)	Majoritarian	1996	2 <sup>nd</sup> Ballot	Yes	3 995 000	84.5	4
Lithuania	Majoritarian	1997	2 <sup>nd</sup> Ballot	No	2 740 000	70.7	5
Peru	Majoritarian	2000	2 <sup>nd</sup> Ballot	Yes	15 430 000	78.6	5
Romania	Majoritarian	1996	2 <sup>nd</sup> Ballot	Yes	16 737 000	78.1	4
Russia	Majoritarian	2000	2 <sup>nd</sup> Ballot	No	109 037 000	68.8	5
USA	Majoritarian	1996	Electoral College	Yes	196 511 000	49.3	4
Mexico	Plurality	2000	FPTP	Yes	62 685 000	60.0	6
Taiwan	Plurality	1996	FPTP	Yes	14 154 000	76.9	4

Note: (i) Direct elections for the Prime Minister, not the president.

**Table 4: Electoral systems and party systems, in 143 election worldwide 1995-2000**

	Mean number of parliamentary parties (with at least one seat)	Mean number of relevant parliamentary parties (with over 3% of seats)	% Vote for the party in first place	% Seats for the party in first place	Number of countries
<b>All Majoritarian</b>	<b>5.22</b>	<b>3.33</b>	<b>54.5</b>	<b>56.8</b>	<b>83</b>
Alternative Vote	9.00	3.00	40.3	45.3	1
Block vote	5.60	4.57	52.9	56.2	10
2 <sup>nd</sup> Ballot	6.00	3.20	54.8	57.8	23
FPTP	4.78	3.09	55.1	57.8	49
<b>All Combined</b>	<b>8.85</b>	<b>4.52</b>	<b>46.8</b>	<b>49.5</b>	<b>26</b>
Independent	8.89	3.94	51.7	53.9	19
Dependent	8.71	6.17	33.9	36.9	7
<b>ALL Proportional</b>	<b>9.52</b>	<b>4.74</b>	<b>45.3</b>	<b>43.8</b>	<b>61</b>
STV	5.00	2.50	45.3	50.1	2
Party List	9.68	4.82	44.5	43.6	59
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>7.05</b>	<b>4.12</b>	<b>48.7</b>	<b>50.0</b>	<b>170</b>

Note: The data includes the results for 1,263 parties contesting the latest elections to the lower house of parliament from 1995 to June 2000 in 143 nations. Parliamentary parties are defined as those winning at least one seat in the lower house. Seven countries were excluded as not holding competitive elections for the lower house. The results of the elections were calculated from *Elections Around the World*. [www.agora.stm.it/elections/alllinks.htm](http://www.agora.stm.it/elections/alllinks.htm).

The classification of electoral systems is discussed fully elsewhere and is derived from Andrew Reynolds and Ben Reilly, 1997. *The International IDEA Handbook of Electoral System Design*. Stockholm: International IDEA. Annex A. 'Independent' combined systems include two electoral systems used in parallel. 'Dependent combined' systems include two electoral systems used where the results depend upon the combined share of the vote.

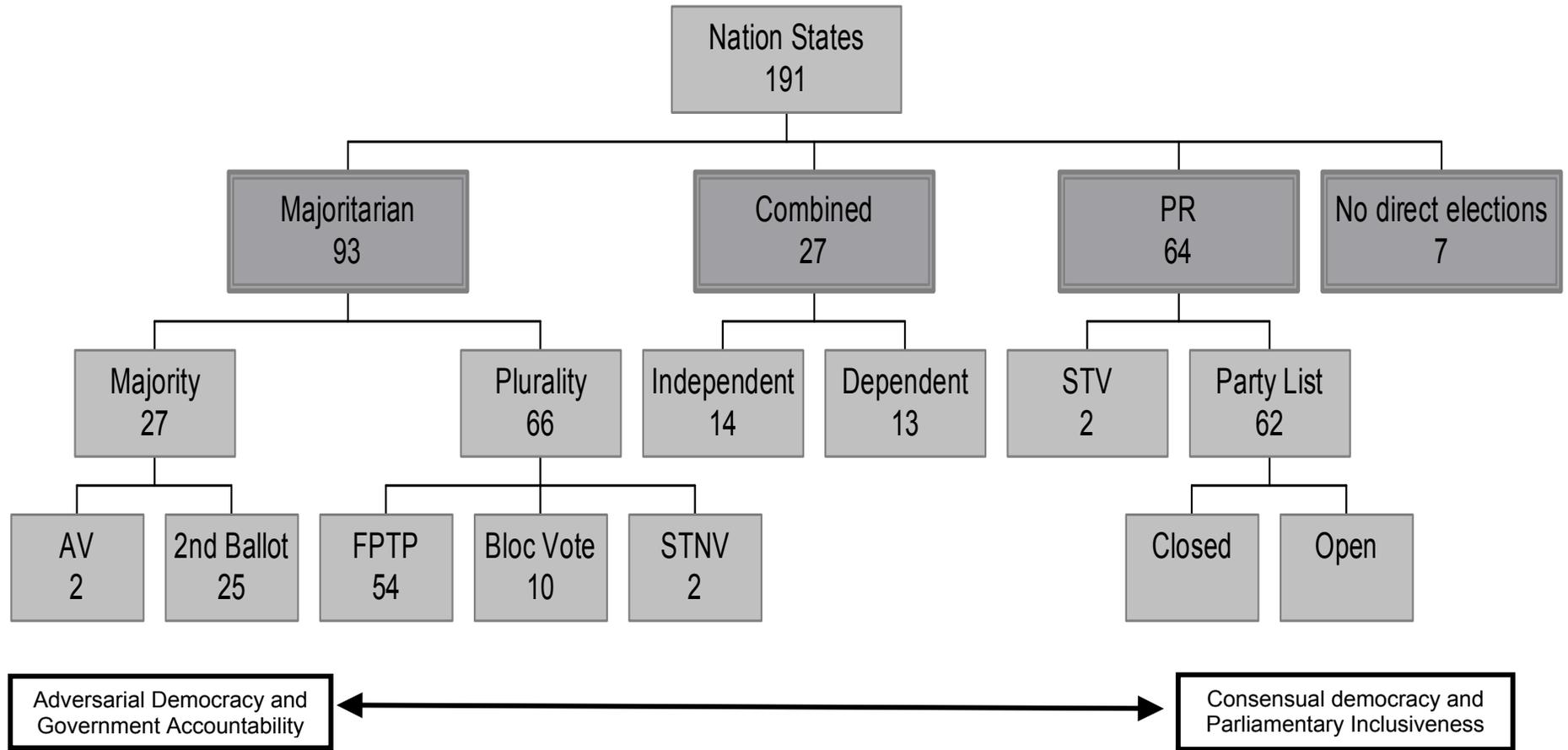
Table 5: Electoral systems and indicators of party orientations, selected CSES elections under comparison, 1996-2001

	Electoral System	Party List	% Parties care what people think (% Agree/Agree strongly)	% Parties are necessary (% Agree strongly)	% Close to any political party (% Yes)
<b>MAJORITARIAN</b>			<b>30</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>57</b>
Australia	AV	None	23	44	84
Canada	FPTP	None	23	25	39
UK	FPTP	None	34	43	49
USA	FPTP	None	38	25	57
<b>COMBINED</b>			<b>25</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>INDEPENDENT</b>					
Japan	FPTP+PR	Closed	21	37	39
Korea, Republic of	FPTP+PR	Closed	19	34	27
Russia	FPTP+PR	Closed	24	35	56
Taiwan	SNTV+PR	Closed	31	59	34
Ukraine	FPTP+PR	Closed	28	43	21
<b>DEPENDENT</b>					
Germany	FPTP+PR	Closed	18	58	37
Hungary	FPTP+PR	Closed	35	45	36
New Zealand	FPTP+PR	Closed	26	39	56
Mexico	FPTP+PR	Closed	30	56	49
Thailand	FPTP+PR	Closed	39	70	22
<b>PROPORTIONAL</b>			<b>33</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>32</b>
Switzerland	PR Lists	Panachage	38	54	37
Belgium	PR Lists	Open	23	29	N/a
Denmark	PR Lists	Open	48	70	51
Peru	PR Lists	Open	37	57	18
Poland	PR Lists	Open	16	38	54
Sweden	PR Lists	Open	23	60	53
Czech Republic	PR Lists	Closed	23	39	49
Israel	PR Lists	Closed	31	53	64
Netherlands	PR Lists	Closed	43	61	28
Norway	PR Lists	Closed	39	68	53
Romania	PR Lists	Closed	45	65	47
Spain	PR Lists	Closed	40	56	43
Slovenia	PR Lists	Closed	29	38	21

Notes: PARTIES CARE: Q4: "Some people say that political parties in [country] care what ordinary people think. Others say that political parties in [country] don't care what ordinary people think. Using the scale on this card, (where ONE means that political parties care about what ordinary people think, and FIVE means that they don't care what ordinary people think), where would you place yourself?" PARTIES NECESSARY: Q5: "Some people say that political parties are necessary to make our political system work in [country]. Others think that political parties are not needed in [country]. Using the scale on this card, (where ONE means that political parties are necessary to make our political system work, and FIVE means that political parties are not needed in [country]), where would you place yourself?" CLOSE TO PARTY: Q3: "Do you usually think of yourself as close to any particular political party?"

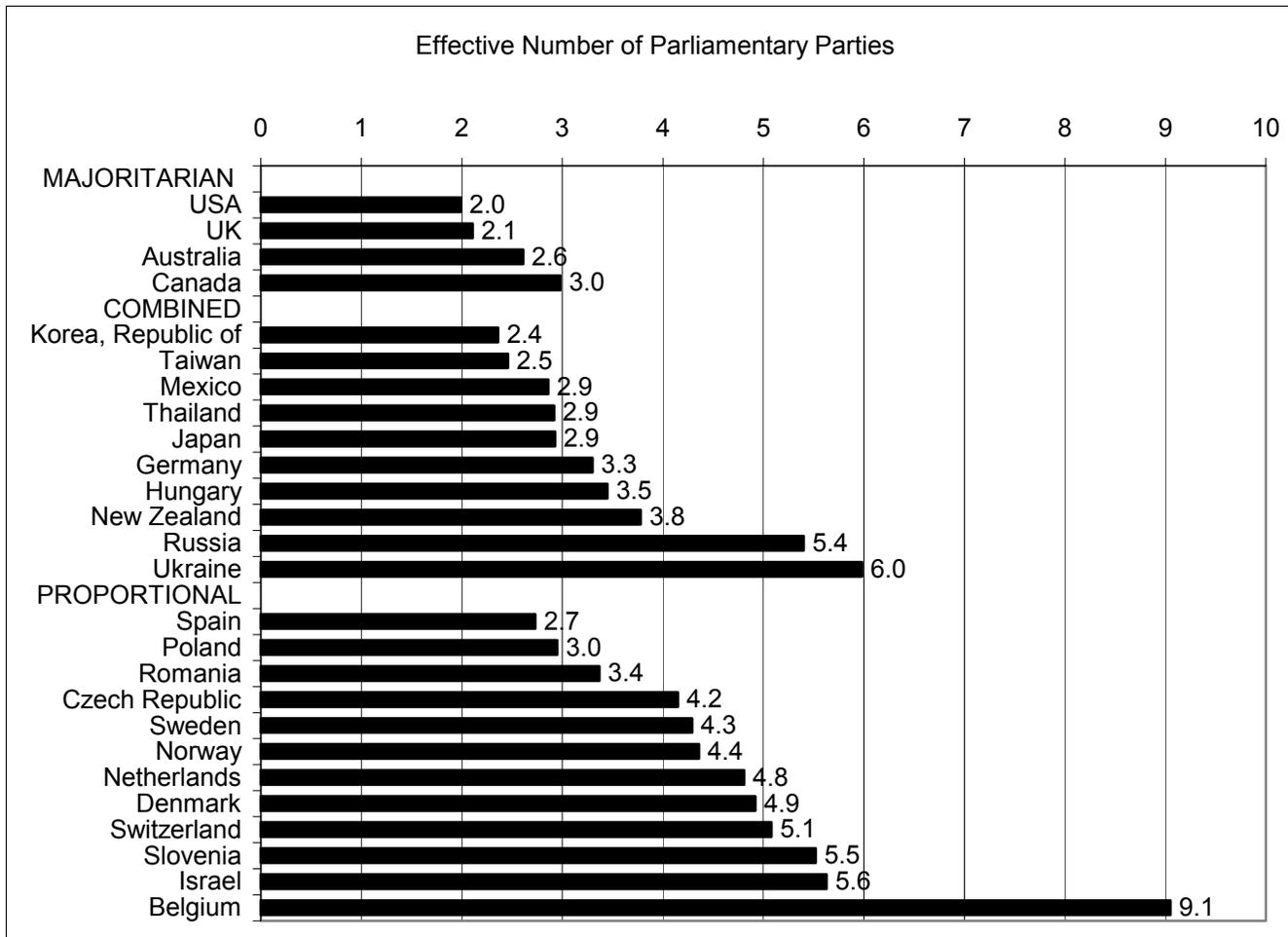
Source: Comparative Study of Electoral Systems, Module 1 1995-2001.

Figure 1: Electoral systems used worldwide for the lower house of parliament, 1997



**Notes:** FPTP First Past the Post; 2<sup>nd</sup> Ballot; Block Vote; AV Alternative Vote; SNTV Single Non-Transferable Vote; STV Single Transferable Vote. Systems are classified based on Appendix A in Andrew Reynolds and Ben Reilly. Eds. *The International IDEA Handbook of Electoral System Design*. Stockholm: International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance. For more details see <http://www.aceproject.org/>

Figure 2: Effective Number of Parliamentary Parties by Electoral Family



Note: The Effective Number of Parliamentary Parties (ENPP) is calculated following the method of Laakso and Taagepera (1979).

Figure 3: The proportionality of votes to seats by party, 143 general elections worldwide 1995-2000

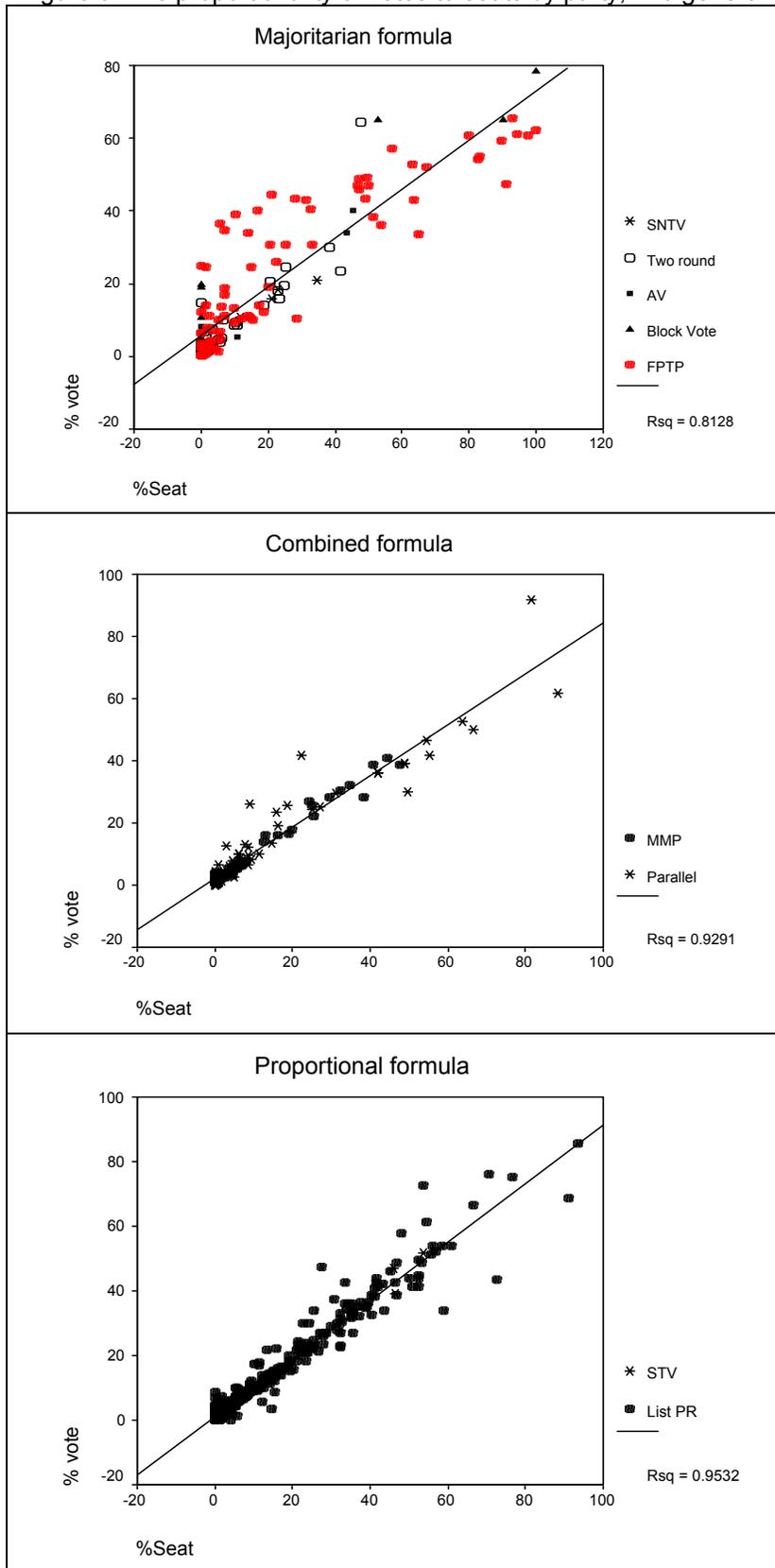
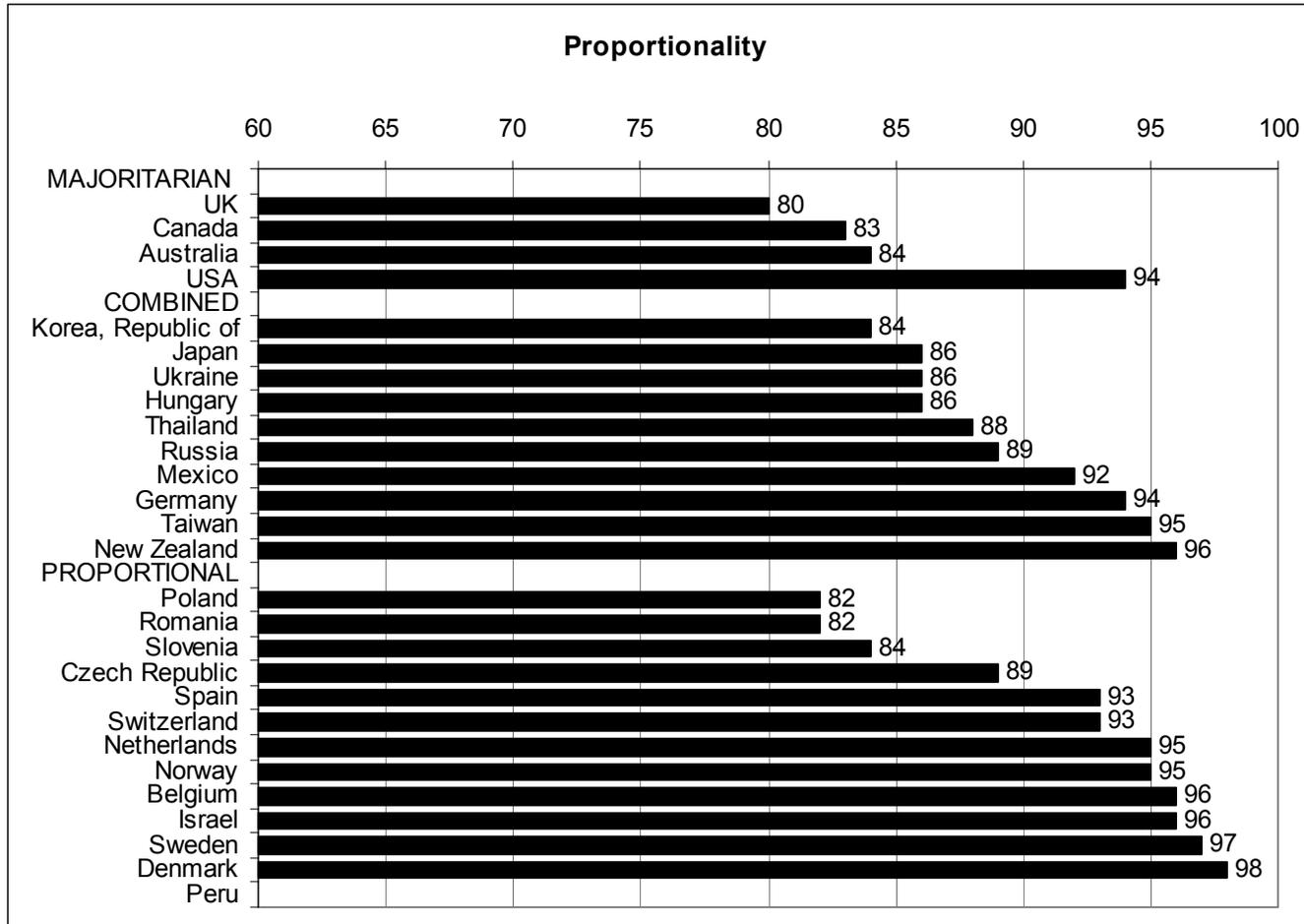


Figure 4



Note: The Index of Proportionality, following Rose, is a standardized version of the Loosemore-Hanby index. This is calculated as the difference between a party's percentage share of the vote and its percentage share of the total seats in Parliament, summed, divided by two and subtracted from 100. Theoretically it can range from 0 to 100. For details see Rose, Munro and Mackie 1998. For details of the elections see Table 2.

**Note:** I am most grateful to the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES), based at the Center for Political Studies, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI for release of the CSES dataset, particularly Phil Shively, and all the national collaborators who made this possible. More details of the research design are available at [www.umich.edu/~nes/cses](http://www.umich.edu/~nes/cses). Further details of the analysis contained in this paper are available from Pippa Norris. Fall 2003. *Institutions Matter: Electoral Rules and Voting Choices*. New York: Cambridge University Press. (Forthcoming) [www.pippanorris.com](http://www.pippanorris.com)

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<sup>3</sup> Scott Mainwaring. 1997. 'Multipartyism, robust federalism, and Presidentialism in Brazil.' In *Presidentialism and Democracy in Latin America*. Eds. Scott Mainwaring and Matthew Soberg Shugart. New York: Cambridge University Press; Mathew Soberg Schugart and John Carey. 1992. *Presidents and Assemblies: Constitutional Design and Electoral Dynamics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; Octavio Amorim Neto and Fabio Santos. 2001. 'The executive connection: Presidentially defined factions and party discipline in Brazil.' *Dados-Revista De Ciencias Sociais* 44 (2): 291-321; Scott Mainwaring. 1999. *Rethinking party systems in the third wave of democratization: the case of Brazil*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

<sup>4</sup> Carlos Pereira and Lucio Rennó. 2001. 'What are reelected legislators all about? Local and national political and institutional dynamics in the 1998 elections to the Brazilian House of Representatives.' *Dados-Revista De Ciencias Sociais* 44 (2): 323-362; Carlos Ranulfo Felix de Melo. 2000. 'Parties and party migration in the chamber of deputies.' *Dados*, 2000, 43(2).

<sup>5</sup> In parliamentary and presidential elections held in Brazil during the 1990s the average number of votes cast as a proportion of the voting age population was 75%. International IDEA. IDEA. *Voter Turnout from 1945 to 2000*. Stockholm: International IDEA. [www.int-idea.se](http://www.int-idea.se). See also T.J. Power and J.T. Roberts. 1995. 'Compulsory voting, invalid ballots, and abstention in Brazil.' *Political Research Quarterly* 48 (4): 795-826; Pippa Norris. 2002. *Democratic Phoenix*. New York: Cambridge University Press p.89.

<sup>6</sup> R. Meneguello. 1995. 'Electoral behaviour in Brazil: The 1994 presidential elections.' *International Social Science Journal* 47 (4): 627

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<sup>10</sup> Mark P. Jones. 1994. 'Presidential Election Laws and Multipartyism in Latin America.' *Political Research Quarterly*. 47: 41-57; Mark P. Jones. 1995. *Electoral Laws and the Survival of Presidential Democracies*. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press.

<sup>11</sup> For a discussion about recent reform proposals see Adhemar Altieri. 1999. 'Political Reform: Moving at last.' *Brazzil*. September. [www.brazzil.com](http://www.brazzil.com). Jose Antonio Giusti Tavares. 1998. *Reforma politica e retrocesso democratico: agenda para reformas pontuais no sistema eleitoral e partidario brasileiro*. Porto Alegre: Mercado Aberto; Vicente Palermo. 2000. 'How to govern Brazil? The debate on political institutions and the policy-making process.' *Dados*, 43(3).

<sup>12</sup> Materials for this paper are largely drawn from two forthcoming books: Pippa Norris. 2002. *Democratic Phoenix: Reinventing Political Activism*. New York: Cambridge University Press; Pippa Norris. 2003. *Institutions Matter: Electoral Rules and Voting Choices*. More details including draft chapters are available at [www.pippanorris.com](http://www.pippanorris.com).

<sup>13</sup> For one of the clearest arguments for this thesis see Amartya Sen. 1999. *Development as Freedom*. New York: Anchor Books.

<sup>14</sup> See Thomas Carothers. 1999. *Aiding Democracy Abroad: The Learning Curve*. Washington DC: Carnegie Endowment.

<sup>15</sup> For an annual assessment of the state of democracy and changes worldwide see Freedom House. *Freedom in the World*. see [www.freedomhouse.org](http://www.freedomhouse.org).

<sup>16</sup> See for example the other procedural requirements discussed by Robert Dahl. 1971. *Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition*. New Haven: Yale University Press. See also the discussion in Robert A. Pastor. 1999. 'The role of electoral administration in democratic transitions: Implications for policy and research.' *Democratization*. 6(4): 1-27; Shaheen Mozaffar and Andreas Schedler. 2002. 'The comparative study of electoral governance.' *International Political Science Review*. 23(1): 5-28.

<sup>17</sup> See Thomas Carothers. 1999. *Aiding Democracy Abroad: The Learning Curve*. Washington DC: Carnegie Endowment.

<sup>18</sup> For the frequency of a 'major' change in the electoral system in these nations from 1945-1990, and the definition and measurement of this phenomenon, see Arend Lijphart, 1994. *Electoral Systems and Party Systems*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Appendix B.

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- <sup>33</sup> See G. Bingham Powell, Jr. 2000. *Elections as Instruments of Democracy*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press. Chapter 1.
- <sup>34</sup> See, for example, the discussion in Andrew Reynolds and Ben Reilly. 1997. *The International IDEA Handbook of Electoral System Design*. Stockholm: International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance.

- <sup>35</sup> Richard Katz provides the most comprehensive overview of classic debates in the history of political thought, although some of the considerations in democratic theory are rather remote from the practical arguments commonly heard in policy debates, as well as from the operation of actual electoral systems. See Richard Katz. 1997. *Democracy and Elections*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- <sup>36</sup> For a discussion see Jon Elster. Ed. 1998. *Deliberative Democracy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; John S. Dryzak. 2000. *Deliberative Democracy and Beyond: Liberals, Critics, Contestations*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- <sup>37</sup> Maurice Duverger. 1954. *Political Parties: Their Organization and Activity in the Modern State*. New York: Wiley.
- <sup>38</sup> For a discussion and classification of 'mixed systems' see Louise Massicotte and Andre Blais. 1999. 'Mixed Electoral Systems: A Conceptual and Empirical Survey.' *Electoral Studies* 18(3): 341-366; Matthew Soberg Shugart and Martin P. Wattenberg. Eds. 2001. *Mixed-Member Electoral Systems: The Best of Both Worlds?* New York: Oxford University Press. Combined systems are also sometimes known as 'mixed', 'mixed-member', or 'hybrid'.
- <sup>39</sup> Details are available at [www.umich.edu/~nes/cses](http://www.umich.edu/~nes/cses).
- <sup>40</sup> Russell J. Dalton and Martin P. Wattenberg. 2001. *Parties without Partisans: Political Change in Advanced Industrial Democracies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
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- <sup>46</sup> Richard Katz. 1997. *Democracy and Elections*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- <sup>47</sup> Election results were compared based on the data contained in *Elections Around the World*. [www.agora.stm.it/elections/alllinks.htm](http://www.agora.stm.it/elections/alllinks.htm). Where election results were missing from this source then alternatives were used, including *Electoral Studies* and the *International Foundation for Electoral Systems* (IFES) <http://www.ifes.org/eguide/eleguide.htm>. The total analysis compared elections held from 1995 to 2000 for the lower house of parliament in 143 nations where results were available, including the share of votes and seats held by 1,244 electoral parties.
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- <sup>49</sup> Other standard indicators of proportionality including Rae's index, the Gallagher Least-Squares Index and the Largest deviation index, calculated elsewhere but not presented here for reasons of limited space, confirm similar results.
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- <sup>51</sup> Ivor Crewe and David Denver. Eds. 1985. *Electoral Change in Western Democracies: Patterns and Sources of Electoral Volatility*. New York: St. Martin's Press; Russell J. Dalton, Scott C. Flanagan, Paul A. Beck, and James E. Alt. Eds. 1984. *Electoral Change in Advanced Industrial Democracies: Realignment or Dealignment?* Princeton: Princeton University Press; see also Russell J. Dalton and Martin Wattenberg. Ed. 2001. *Parties without Partisans*. New York: Oxford University Press.
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