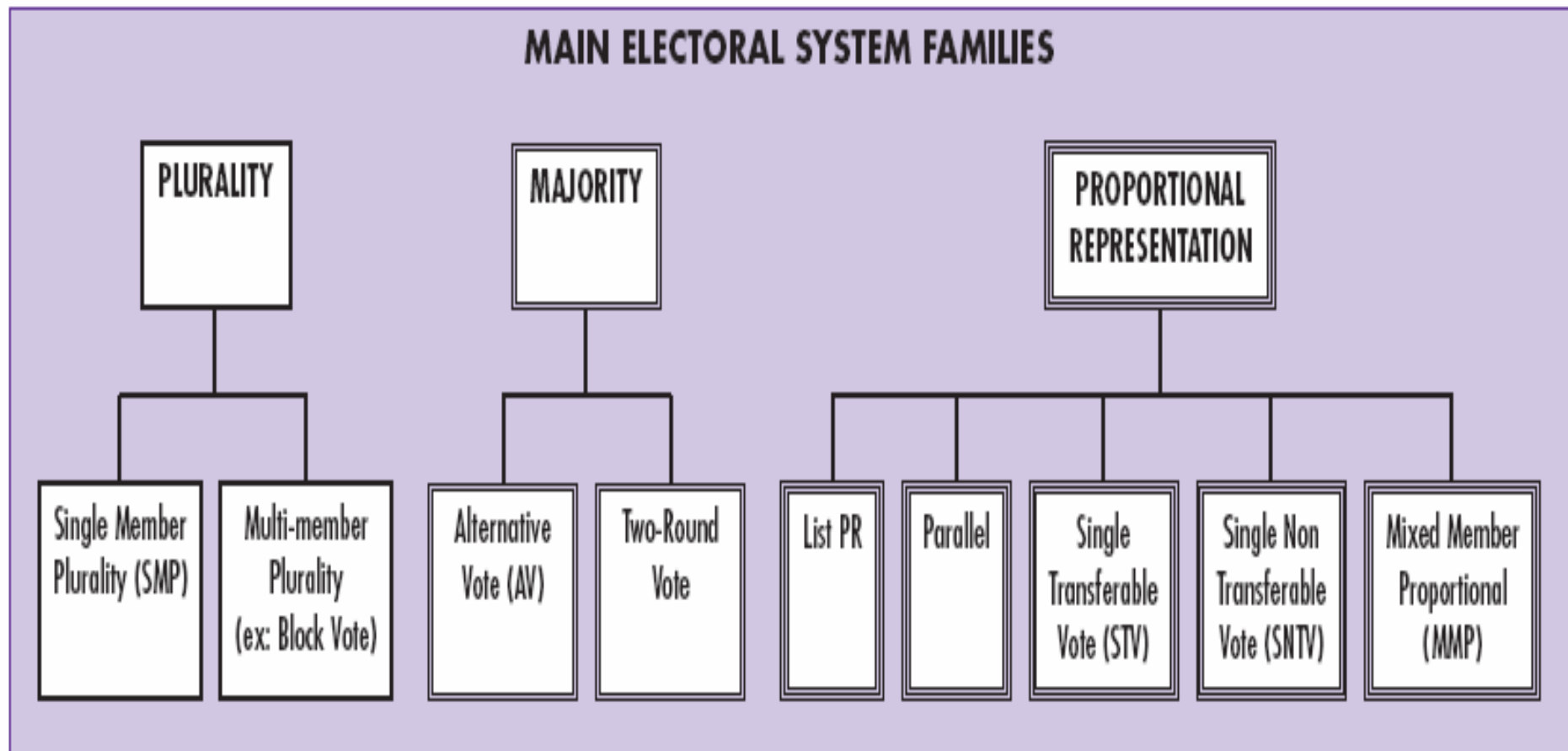


The background of the slide is a collage of Euro banknotes and the European Union flag. In the foreground, a 100 Euro note is prominent, showing the number '100' and the word 'EURO'. Behind it, a 50 Euro note is visible, and further back, a 20 Euro note. The European Union flag, with its twelve yellow stars on a blue field, is also visible in the lower right corner. The overall image has a soft, bokeh-like effect, giving it a sense of depth and movement.

Electoral System Families

Ing. Mansoor Maitah Ph.D. et Ph.D.

Electoral Systems





What is an electoral system?

What is an electoral system?

- An electoral or voting system is how votes are translated into seats. It determines how many votes and what kinds of votes are necessary to award seats to candidates and parties in an election. Different electoral systems produce different kinds of results, and give voters different kinds of choices.

What types of electoral systems exist?

- There are three main types or families of electoral systems in the world, with several variations among each one. The three main types are:
 1. **Plurality** – candidates are elected with a plurality (i.e. not a majority) of votes cast. Main models include: Single Member Plurality; Multi-Member Plurality (also called Block Vote).
 2. **Majority** – candidates are elected with a majority (i.e. more than 50%) of votes cast. Main models include: Alternative Vote; Two-Round Vote.
 3. **Proportional Representation** – candidates are elected based on the total percentage of votes cast for their party. Main models include: List; Mixed Member Proportional; Single Transferable Vote; Single Non-Transferable Vote; Parallel.



Electoral Systems

About choosing representatives

- ➔ Need to serve interests of:
 - * voters
 - * politicians
 - * legislatures & governments

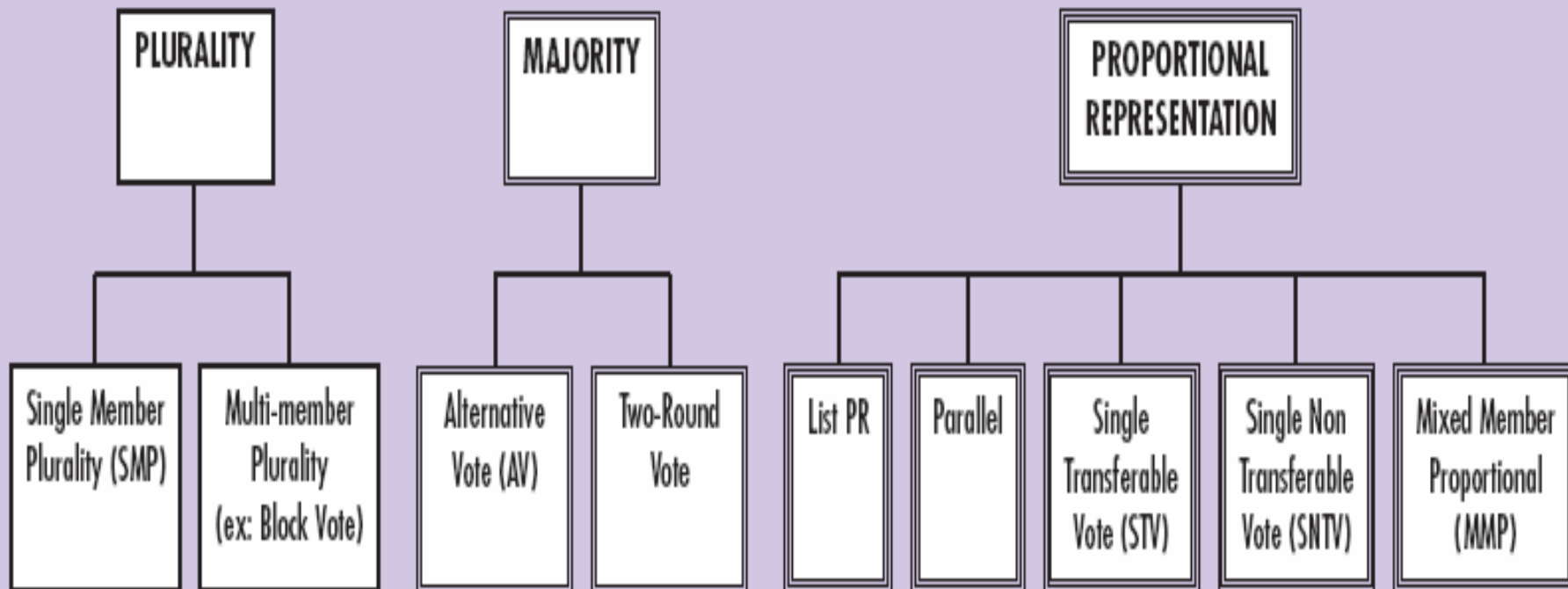


Mixed Systems

- Combines (best) features of two other families
- ↪ Combinations quite varied so it is possible to mix features of ballots forms, counting rules and electoral districting practices
- ↪ Proportional variations tend to increase numbers of political parties and lead to coalition government
- ↪ Some produce two different types of legislators
- ↪ May produce two different kinds of parties operating quite differently

Electoral Systems

MAIN ELECTORAL SYSTEM FAMILIES





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Plurality Systems

- Voters choose among local candidates
- Candidate with the most votes wins
- ↪ Seats \neq votes: rewards large parties
- ↪ Tends to produce adversarial 2-party competition
- ↪ Elections are about choosing governments
- ↪ Majority governments *created*
- ↪ Accountability clear – not always effective



Plurality System

- FPTP chooses a government.
 - Key word: **accountability**
- PR elects a legislature.
 - Key word: **representation**



Plurality System

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Plurality System

FPTP – Arguments Against

Results

- Majority of votes cast not needed to win (“winner take all”)
- “Wasted” votes
- Arbitrary translation of votes into seats
- Regional political “wastelands”
- Women/minorities under-represented

Accountability

- Dominant one-party rule
- Reduces opposition representation

Parties

- Minority/third parties excluded
- Adversarial system encouraged
- Discourages compromise / inclusion / brokerage

Satisfaction

- Turnout declining
- “extra-political” activities increasing

'First Past the Post'

- **UK 1951**

- Lab 48.8 % votes 259 seats
- Cons 48.0 % votes 321 seats

- **UK 1974**

- Labour 37.1 % votes 301 seats
- Con 37.8 % votes 297 seats

- **UK 2001**

- Lab 41.0 % votes 64 % seats
- Cons 32.0 % votes 25 % seats

'First Past the Post'

E.g. UK, USA, Canada, India, Thailand

- 'winner takes all' – simple plurality
- Leading candidate elected on first and only ballot
- Regarded as the simplest method of electing representatives
- Big parties favoured ('bonus')
- Third parties disadvantaged



Majority Systems

- Voters choose among local candidates
- Candidates require majority support for election
- ↪ System must establish a process for producing a majority – if one not won:
 - second round of voting
 - use preferential ballots
- ↪ More voters see their votes contributing to an election
- ↪ Tends to work like a plurality system



Proportional Representation - List

- Voters indicate preference for a party
- Seats are allocated in proportion to votes received
- ↪ Candidates elected from party lists
- ↪ Leads to more parties contesting elections
- ↪ Produces coalition, not 1-party majority, government
- ↪ Elections about indicating preferences
- ↪ No identifiable local representative
- ↪ Parties can better control composition of parliamentary caucus



Single Transferable Vote (PR)

- Voters rank preferred candidates
- Votes are 'transferred' → proportional outcomes
- ↪ Maximum voter choice among candidates & parties
- ↪ Politicians represent identifiable constituencies
- ↪ Increases public competition within parties
- ↪ More likely than plurality to produce coalition governments
- ↪ Does not discriminate against independents



Proportional System

PR – Arguments For

Results

- Congruence between votes cast and seats won
- Fewer “wasted” votes
- “Mirror” representation of society in legislature
- More women, minorities elected
- Produces coalition/minority governments

Accountability

- Single member component can exist

Parties

- More parties represented in legislature
- Parties more representative
- Encourages inter-party cooperation / compromise
- Some internal democratization

Satisfaction

- Increased turnout
- Checks and balances on government
- Economic/social progress



Proportional System

PR – Arguments Against

Results

- Minority/coalition governments
- Less “effective” / “stable” government
- Not always true proportionality

Accountability

- Direct link with member diffused

Parties

- Party leadership power reinforced
- Extremist parties can gain
- “narrow” political appeals rewarded

Satisfaction

- More “politics” by parties and members



Mixed Electoral Systems

Systems that mix different electoral families across the province

In mixed systems that attempt to combine local representation with some form of proportionality, the most common method is to essentially split the legislature into two types of members: Some members are elected in individual districts, while others are elected by some form of PR-List system.

For example, Germany elects half its 600-member parliament from single-member districts using the plurality system, while the other half are chosen by a party list system with regional lists of candidates.

- German voters have two votes – one for the local member, one for the party list
- Their parties must win 5 per cent of the national vote or three individual constituency seats before they are eligible to receive any list seats



Mixed Electoral Systems

Mixed electoral systems

In some ways, it is misleading to call mixed systems a distinct “family” of electoral systems. As the name implies, these systems mix two – or more – different systems in an attempt to obtain the advantages of the different systems while minimizing their disadvantages.

The most widely used mixed systems attempt to balance two key principles that are generally seen as mutually exclusive: identifiable local representation and some measure of proportionality.

While there are many ways in which systems can be mixed, the possibilities include:

- Using a mix of systems across the province
- Using different systems in different areas of the province
- Using different systems to elect different levels of government
- Using a mix of different kinds of options



Families of Electoral Systems

- Plurality
 - Columbia. USA, UK
India
- Majority
 - Australia
France
- Proportional (list)
 - Finland
Israel
- Transferable Vote
 - Ireland
Tasmania
- Mixed
 - New Zealand
Japan



Remember:

- There is no perfect electoral system
- ❖ All involve trade-offs between desirable features
- ❖ We can't predict how another system may work— there are always unexpected, unintended consequences of any institutional design



Thank You for your Attention