ELECTORAL SYSTEMS AND THE PERSONAL VOTE[1]

Update of database from "Particularism Around the World"

http://dss.ucsd.edu/~jwjohnso/espv.html

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In recent years, political scientists and electoral reformers have paid greater attention to how electoral institutions affect the extent to which electoral competition revolves around political parties versus individual candidates. The interest transcends simply understanding how institutions influence elections and outcomes to concerns about policymaking and the consequences of institutions for politicians' incentives to cultivate a "personal vote." We hope that our completion of a new dataset – *Electoral Institutions and the Personal Vote* – will assist researchers in the exploration of these and other questions about the relationships between electoral institutions, politics, and policy.

This paper provides a brief overview of the literature that motivated collection of the dataset and discusses the dataset itself. This database updates, expands, and (in some cases) corrects the electoral systems coding presented in Wallack, et al (2003)'s *Database of Particularism*. Data now cover up to 180 countries from 1978-2005; the Czech Republic, Estonia, Slovakia, and Taiwan are new countries. The database has evolved to cover more aspects of electoral systems as well, providing additional information on more complex systems with multiple tiers.

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[1] The authors thank, without implicating, Matthew Shugart for very helpful comments on the original database and suggestions for revision.

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Electoral Institutions and the Personal Vote: Motivation for the Data

Carey and Shugart (1995) was one of the earliest and most influential works to focus attention on the intra-party consequences of electoral laws. Carey and Shugart rank-ordered electoral institutions according to the degree to which they create incentives for candidates to showcase their characteristics, qualities, and achievements as unique individuals worthy of votes. The greater these incentives, they posited, the lesser candidates' reliance on their parties' collective reputations and the greater incentives candidates have to pursue a "personal vote," for which certain activities such as constituency service and the delivery of "pork" are valuable for election-minded candidates.

The obvious potential impacts on the quality and nature of public policy motivated an effort to a) develop a framework for understanding what aspects of the variation in electoral system characteristics are consequential for incentives to cultivate a personal vote, and b) test the empirical relationship between electoral systems and policy outcomes. Moreover, the proliferation of mixed-member electoral systems (legislatures that elect two nationwide tiers, one to select individual representatives for single-member districts, and to select partisan delegations via proportional representation) since the early 1990's has led not only scholars but electoral reformers and citizens to pay greater attention to the intra-party nature of political representation and its effects on governmental efficacy. [4]

Empirical analysis of the relationship between electoral institutions and personal vote incentives has not matched the development of the theoretical framework linking electoral institutions to incentives and policy outcomes. Individual-country studies of mixed-member electoral systems have tested some of the predictions (see, for example, Lancaster and Patterson 1990, Stratmann and Baur 2002, Herron 2002, Tatebayashi and

[4] These new mixed-member legislatures include those of Japan (both upper and lower house), Italy (both upper and lower house), New Zealand, the Ukraine, Hungary, the Russian Federation, South Korea, Taiwan, Bolivia, Armenia, Georgia, Thailand, and the Philippines. Germany was the first country to have a mixed-member electoral system, dating to 1949.

McKean (unpublished), and selections in Shugart and Wattenberg 2001), but there are only two multi-country studies of which we are aware that test Carey and Shugart's theory cross-nationally (Crisp et al., 2004 and Shugart et al., 2005; see also Thames, forthcoming).

Cross-national empirical analysis has been hampered in part by both the complexity of electoral systems and a lack of data. The present database seeks to redress these two shortcomings by coding most of the world's electoral institutions by electoral tier and by country (legislature). While there are inevitable problems and difficulties inherent in reducing complex institutional environments to a handful of variables or summary indices, we feel that the coding decisions explained below capture theoretical distinctions of interest. We hope that the database will serve to assist researchers in cross-national research.

Electoral Systems and the Personal Vote: Variables and Data

Carey and Shugart identified four main aspects of electoral systems that affect candidates' incentives to cultivate a personal vote: district magnitude, party control over the ballot, the degree of pooling of votes across co-partisans, and the numher of votes that citizens can cast for parties and/or candidates.

The "Ballot" dimension sought to capture party leaders' degree of "control over access to and rank on ballots." Candidates have greater incentives to showcase their individual accomplishments and characteristics as a vote-getting strategy, they argued, wherever voters, rather than party leaders, control candidates' access to electoral ballots and/or their position on party lists.

"Pool" represented the degree to which any votes were shared among candidates from a particular party. In order of increasing personal vote incentives, they may be pooled across the entire party, across a portion of the party, or apply only to the individual who receives the vote.

"Vote" ranked "whether voters cast a single intra-party vote instead of multiple votes or a party-level vote" (Carey and Shugart 1995, p 417). Personal-vote incentives are at their greatest when voters cast a single vote for a single individual, at their least when voters cast a single "party-level" vote, and at intermediate levels when voters have multiple votes (be they for different candidates, different parties, or across time as in runoff elections).

Carey and Shugart argued that district magnitude (M) interacts with these other variables: Increases in district magnitude increase personal vote incentives in systems where ballot selection, vote pooling, and voting rules already encourage personal vote-seeking and diminish personal vote incentives when other aspects of the electoral system provide for greater party control. With these variables, they proposed a rank order of various institutional combinations, from systems with the least personal vote incentives to those with the greatest.

Country Coding

The task of applying the theoretical framework in Carey and Shugart to the world's electoral systems is complicated primarily by a shift in the unit of analysis: Carey and Shugart focused on describing incentives for candidates in an electoral district, while cross-national analysis must deal with whole legislatures, most of which are composed of various members elected in different institutional settings. Mixed-member electoral systems incorporate the combination of different electoral rules explicitly, but other legislatures also have variation in the variables of primary interest (Ballot, Pool, Vote, and district magnitude) across electoral tiers or districts. One coding solution is to code values that correspond to the institutional setting for the "average legislator" for each legislature. As noted below, one of our measures for district magnitude does precisely this.

Because the other primary variables are ordinal, however, we choose to provide separate measures for Ballot, Pool, and Vote for each legislature which has two or more tiers of legislators. Due to the increasing popularity of combining single-member district and multi-member district tiers (in mixed-member electoral systems), as well as to their explicit attempt to incorporate legislators with variation in their personal vote incentives, we create separate sets of variables that correspond to each type of tier, those that consist solely of single-member districts (often called lower or nominal tier) and those that consist of one or more multi-member districts (often called upper or proportional tier) for legislatures with multiple electoral tiers. In the database, these are identified as SMD_BALLOT, SMD_POOL, SMD_VOTE and MMD_BALLOT, MMD_POOL, MMD_VOTE. Our inclusion of separate coding for each tier allows users to unpack not only our coding decisions by tier, but also to understand the complexity of each electoral system. Coding decisions for all countries, including those that do not fit neatly into this two-tier scheme (such as electoral systems that include multiple sets of MMD tiers), are noted in the database.[5]

We use Carey and Shugart's ranking system together with our coding decisions (as explained below) to rank countries according to both their more personalistic tier (or tier with the greater incentives to cultivate a personal vote) and their most dominant or populous tier (or tier with the greater number of legislators). In the dataset, these are termed PERS_RANK and DOM_RANK, respectively. They vary from 1-13 corresponding to the thirteen positions in Carey and Shugart's ranking, which was ranked alphabetically from A to M. A country with a PERS_RANK of 13, for example, would have a tier with the highest possible rank of incentives to cultivate a personal vote, although that tier may only account for a minority or small fraction of its members. Similarly, a country with a DOM_RANK of 1 would have a tier with the lowest possible rank of personal vote incentives, and that tier would account for the majority of the members in the assembly. Although they do not preserve the ordinal properties of the variables (and are thus left un-ranked), we also include a set of values which are average values across the tiers, weighted by the percent of members that originate from each tier.

[5] See Country Notes in the Excel file.

In the dataset, these are AVG_BALLOT, AVG_POOL, and AVG_VOTE.[6] These capture, albeit imperfectly, what the Ballot, Pool, and Vote values for the average member sitting in any legislature.

Tier Coding

As in Carey and Shugart and the *Database of Particularism*, each of Ballot, Pool, and Vote takes values of 0, 1, or 2, with 2 representing the greatest personal vote incentives and 0 the least. Again due to the variety in the world's electoral systems and the complexity involved in fitting multi-district and multi-tier electoral systems into the Carey and Shugart framework, we have modified the coding criteria to better capture the theoretical underpinnings of Ballot, Vote, and Pool. On occasion, we also seek to capture *de facto* practice that modifies the nature of the *de jure* electoral rules in order to facilitate inter-country comparison. Coding decisions for each country are explained in more detail in the Country Notes page of the Excel database.

Our Ballot variable focuses on the amount of party control over candidates' access to a competitive position on the ballot. A zero coding means that parties control both access and position on the ballot – generally known as a "closed list." Controlling access to the ballot is a necessary condition for controlling the order in which candidates are listed on the ballot: if parties cannot control access, a candidate whom they would list as tenth in line for obtaining a seat based on party vote totals could easily form his own list to be first. Values of one and two both have no party control over the position on the ballot, but vary in party control over access: one means that parties control access to the ballot, while two means that individuals can also obtain a spot on the ballot. Ballot is left blank where no information was available about candidacy requirements.

The extent and frequency to which parties control order on ballots is often ambiguous or difficult to determine. In some cases, voters may disturb party lists with preference votes

[6] The *Database of Particularism* had only presented this weighted average of ballot, pool, and vote, and no country level rankings or separate sets of variables for tiers. Note that due to weighting, these values are not necessarily integers – they can be anywhere between 0 and 2.

("flexible lists"), but the extent to which they are actually affected by preference votes varies according to thresholds and empirical circumstances. Absent information about the threshold requirements, we rely on electoral data or reports to code flexible lists as closed lists (Ballot=0) where there is little or no change in list order, and as open lists (Ballot=1) where preference votes seem to have a significant influence on which of a party's candidates are elected. In other cases (and unfortunately, too many), information about whether lists are open or closed is not readily available. We leave Ballot blank in these cases because the difference is important for assessing the degree of personal-vote incentives.

The determination of ballot access is more complicated. Oftentimes, where ballot access is legally controlled only by political parties, individual candidates may have *de facto* ballot access if they may simply establish new political "parties." Similarly, rules on the books regarding ballot access may imply that parties do not tightly control ballot access, but access is *de facto* prohibitive for other reasons, such as political dominance by a single-party or regime. To facilitate cross-country comparison in ballot access, we attempt to capture de facto practice that differs from *de jure* rules.

We relied on the "Candidacy Requirements" listed on the Inter-Parliamentary Union's Parline database (www.ipu.org) to determine whether individual candidates faced stringent requirements for ballot access. Where also available, we inferred from electoral data or country reports as to the relative ease for individual candidates to appear on the ballot. Where electoral data shows a proliferation of new, short lived, small parties with every election, for example, we coded Ballot = 2, even if the *de jure* requirements state that candidacy could only be conducted by the political parties.

We include a variable INDY that records on the *de jure* rules regarding ballot access for independent candidates as reported in the Parline database, for users who prefer to compare the *de jure* rules. This is coded as 1 where independent candidates can legally run, 0 if not. A user could adjust Ballot to be *de jure* if she replaced Ballot = 2 with

Ballot = 1 when INDY = 0. The few cases where *de jure* and *de facto* values differ are note in the database.

For single-member districts, Ballot (SMD_BALLOT) equals 1 where parties control access and 2 where they do not, since party control over list order does not apply for a list of one.[7] Most countries that use single-member districts either allow independent candidates and/or use primaries to select candidates, so have SMD_BALLOT = 2. Where ballot access seems more tightly controlled by established parties, we have coded SMD_BALLOT = 1.[8]

Our Vote variable focuses attention on the distinction between casting votes for either parties or individual candidates. Like in Carey and Shugart, Vote = 0 wherever voters have a vote only for a party, Vote = 1 wherever voters have multiple votes for multiple candidates or where voters may choose to vote for either a party or a candidate (as in many open list systems), and Vote = 2 wherever voters may choose only an individual candidate. Also, because in single-member districts there is often no distinction between a vote that is a party- or a candidate-vote, we code Vote = 1 for single-member districts; that is, SMD_VOTE is always equal to one. It is important to note that Vote is coded only for a given tier, and does not capture multiple votes across multiple tiers (as in mixed-member electoral systems). In these circumstances, the Vote variable is coded separately for each tier. Where Vote is equal to one, therefore, voters have either multiple votes due to runoffs or instant runoffs (e.g. the single-transferable vote). We have added the variables MULTIROUND and TIERVOTE (explained below) to record circumstances in which voters have more than one vote.

[7] Theoretically, SMDs could use something akin to flexible lists, where the top candidate is elected unless preference votes were sufficient to elect a candidate lower on the list. In this case, if thresholds were such as to make lists sufficiently inflexible, then it may be conceivable to consider parties to control both access and order. In some cases, thresholds for write-in candidacies might also be conceived in similar terms. To our knowledge, no electoral institutions merit this kind of classification.

[8] Carey and Shugart differentiated on ballot access for SMDs more liberally than we as ours includes countries with lesser democratic credentials – our values for ballot for SMDs generally are "more personalistic" than theirs.

At the country level, therefore, intermediate values (between 0 and 2) of AVG_VOTE arise under two circumstances. The first is where, in any given tier, voters have either multiple votes for multiple candidates, they may choose to vote for either a party or a candidate, or the tier consists of single-member districts. The second instance is where voters have a vote below the party level in one tier and at the party list level in another tier (as in mixed-member systems). In fact, even in mixed-member electoral systems in which voters do not have a separate vote for each tier (e.g. the votes are fused, as in Mexico), Vote for each tier is coded as if they did; (a separate variable, TIERVOTE, captures where voters have multiple votes for each tier and where they do not.) We feel that the intermediate value of AVG_VOTE that occurs at the country level justifies this decision because voters' decision about a candidate for the SMD tier is also a decision for a party in the list tier. Given the weighting of tiers, intermediate values of AVG_VOTE may be anywhere between 0 and 2 for mixed-member systems, depending on the relative size of the tiers.

Like Ballot, Vote is left blank where we could not definitively determine whether lists were closed (and voters have a vote only for a party list) or whether they were open (and voters may choose a party or a candidate, or either). Where, for example, IPU explicitly says that voters vote for "*closed* party lists", we code Vote as zero. But, where the source states merely "elected via proportional representation," we do not code vote one way or the other unless another source provides additional evidence. We sometimes were able to infer whether lists were open or closed by observing whether electoral results report votes for individual candidates or only parties. Still, for several countries this information was not forthcoming, and Vote was left blank. The "Country Notes" worksheet indicates alternative sources (often including electoral returns) that were used to determine the coding of this variable.

Our Pool variable, measuring the extent to which votes among candidates from the same party are pooled, codes systems in which votes are pooled among all co-partisans as 0. Systems that do not pool across co-partisans are coded Pool=2, while systems that pool across subsets of co-partisans are coded Pool=1.

We depart from Carey and Shugart's framework slightly by considering not just the amount of vote pooling within an electoral district, but how vote pooling is influenced by districting. Although any ballot using closed lists will pool votes among all candidates on the list, the extent of vote pooling among all of a party's candidates depends on districting. A national district will pool among all a party's candidates, while a districting arrangement that uses many districts with small district magnitudes will pool votes only among a small subset of a party's candidates (perhaps as few as one or two candidates). In these cases vote pooling among a party's (national) candidates may be small enough such that it seems meaningful (in terms of personal-vote getting strategies) to distinguish them from cases with moderate and high levels of vote pooling. Therefore, even if there is vote pooling among all co-partisan candidates within districts, we choose to code Pool = 1 instead of Pool = 2 where the average district accounts for 5% or less of a legislature's membership.[9] The 5% cutoff, though arbitrary, distinguishes the most fragmented of regionally-districted proportional representation tiers or legislatures (such as Spain) from others with greater district magnitudes. SMDs are also coded as having no pooling since the votes for a candidate are not shared with any co-partisan (that is, SMD_POOL = 2).

To summarize, for any given tier of legislators, our coding of Ballot, Vote, and Pool is as follows.

BALLOT =

- 0 where parties control access to ballots as well as the order in which individuals will fill the seats that the party wins (closed list, some flexible lists)
- 1 where parties control access to the ballot, but not the order in which candidates will receive seats (open lists, some flexible lists, and some SMDs)

[9] There are no cases where there is only some vote pooling within a district that use fragmented forms of districting that would merit a similar shift from Pool=1 to Pool=2. This rule, though applied to the coding for the MMD_POOL and AVG_POOL, was dropped for the purposes of ranking in DOM_RANK and PERS_RANK for Spain and Morocco – the institutional combination of Ballot=0, Vote=0, and Pool=1 did not exist in the Carey and Shugart framework and thus did not correspond to a rank. This is noted in the "Country Notes" portion of the dataset.

2 where there are few or no impediments to individual candidates' ability to appear on the ballot (some SMDs)

VOTE =

0 where voters have one vote for a party

1 where voters can vote for a party or a candidate (as in open or flexible lists), where voters have multiple votes for multiple candidates (as in STV), or where votes for a party or candidate are observationally equivalent (SMDs).

2 where voters have one vote for an individual candidate.

POOL =

0 pooling of votes across all candidates in a party in a district

1 pooling of votes across some, but not all, candidates in a party in a district, or, where there is vote pooling across all candidates in a party in a district, but where the average district accounts for 5% or less of a legislature's membership

2 no pooling of votes across candidates in a party (including SMD)

The database includes three sets of Ballot, Vote, and Pool variables, one for single-member district tiers (SMD_BALLOT, SMD_POOL, and SMD_VOTE), one for multi-member district tiers (MMD_BALLOT, MMD_POOL, and MMD_VOTE) of which are the country-level weighted averages of the previous two (AVG_BALLOT, AVG_POOL, AND AVG_VOTE).

District Magnitude

We code country district magnitude in two ways. The first measure, in keeping with our emphasis on the incentives faced by individual legislators, is the district magnitude considering the viewpoint of the average *legislator* (M_CAND). The second measure is the standard magnitude of the average *district* (M_DIST).[10] The former measure is computed as a weighted average of the various district sizes, where weights are computed

[10] The Database of Particularism had coded District Magnitude as M_CAND where the requisite information was available, and M_DIST elsewhere. The separation of District Magnitude into two variables here makes this distinction explicit.

as the number of legislators running in the district of each magnitude divided by the total number of seats. For example: A country with 300 seats divided among one national district with 200 members and 100 single-member districts would have a average district magnitude (M_DIST) of 2.97 (i.e., 300/101), but has a magnitude for the average legislator (M_CAND) of [(200*200)+ (100*1)]/300, which yields a figure of 133.67. Of the two measures, M_CAND is coded less frequently because it requires knowing the magnitudes of each and every district, and not merely the number of districts and number of legislators. Various sources on electoral returns have been consulted to provide this information, as noted in the "Country Notes" worksheet.

Other Variables

We have included several other new variables to provide further information about the world's electoral systems and our coding decisions.

MULTITIER indicates whether there are two or more tiers to the legislature, while TIERVOTE indicates whether voters have a separate vote for each legislative tier or whether seats are allocated based on votes cast for another tier. MULTITIER is equal to one wherever there are multiple allocation tiers, whether they are the result of mixed member systems that incorporate different members under different rules, or systems that have upper tiers to compensate for disproportionality in lower tiers.[11] Like the other variables in the dataset, MULTITIER is coded only with respect to elected deputies; appointed deputies are not considered another tier. TIERVOTE equals 1 when citizens have a vote for each tier, and 0 otherwise. TIERVOTE is left blank when we could not determine whether there were separate votes or not.

PARALLEL indicates whether multiple tiers are elected in parallel or compensatory fashion; it is 1 when parallel, 0 when (at least somewhat) compensatory. It is coded only when MULTITIER = 1, and thus not only for separate SMD and MMD tiers (which tend

[11] Multitier does not always imply multiple electoral systems in a country – in some cases the two tiers are elected in the same way and the tier values for Ballot, Vote, and Pool are the same as the country values.

to be mixed-member electoral systems), but also legislatures that include separate tiers of legislators from MMD tiers.

PROPSMD and PROPMMD, the proportion of coded legislators elected in SMDs and MMDs respectively, are also included; these provide the weights for the separate sets of Ballot, Pool, and Vote variables that for the averaged country values of the same. PROPN is the proportion of legislators that are elected via a national tier. This is often (but not always) similar to PROPMMD, the proportion elected via multimember districts – some electoral systems have proportional representation based on regional multimember districts as well as national tiers (e.g. Hungary).

LEGSIZE is the number of legislators coded in the dataset. These may not account for the total number of legislators if there are appointed legislators that have no electoral rules to code. Note that one can determine the number of legislators elected from each of the SMD and MMD tiers from LEGSIZE, PROPSMD, and PROPMMD. PROPCODED shows the proportion of total legislators (elected and non-elected) that are included in the database (i.e. those that are elected).[12]

MULTIROUND indicates whether there are run-off elections. These are usually for SMDs with absolute majority requirements. Where MULTIROUND is equal to one, voters have separate votes, albeit votes that occur on separate election days.

RANK_VOTE is a dichotomous variable equal to one in two circumstances, where voters may rank order candidates in order of preference as in Australia and Ireland's single-transferable vote system, or where citizens have multiple preference votes for multiple candidates, even if they may not specifically rank the candidates (e.g. Cyprus). Otherwise, RANK_VOTE is equal to zero.

INDY is 1 wherever independent candidates are legally allowed (even where the legal requirements are strict), and 0 otherwise. As noted above, this complements cases of

[12] This variable was formerly known as CINDEX.

Ballot= 1 and Ballot = 2 where we have made adjustments to capture *de facto* practice that differs from the *de jure* rules (captured in INDY).

Elections vs. Democracy

ELECTION indicates whether a legislative election was held that year. We code changes in electoral institutions as beginning the year of the election in question, though, of course, elections held late in the year will not result in legislatures composed of deputies elected via those rules until the following year.

The legislatures included in the database are those listed in the IPU Parline database, with a few additions (e.g. Taiwan, Czech Republic). We code both lower and upper houses where the latter exist (although they are less frequently coded because either their members are not popularly elected or sufficient information was not forthcoming). Many of the countries have dubious democratic credentials, and the information about their electoral systems – which originates from the legislatures themselves – can not easily be confirmed. For this reason, we have included variables to gauge their relative democratic legitimacy (including Freedom House scores, www.freedomhouse.org).

FH_POL and FH_CIV are the "Political liberties" and "Civil liberties" scores given by Freedom House (www.freedomhouse.org).[13] They range from 1 ("most free") to 7 ("least free"). These variables are included as a compliment to the ONE_PARTY (one party state) variable, which was an impressionistic assessment of whether elections had at least minimal degree of freedom for opposition parties and candidates that appeared in the *Database of Particularism* (and is retained in the current dataset).

New Sources:

The previous database relied heavily on the information on electoral systems contained in the Inter-Parliamentary Union's *Chronicle of Parliamentary Elections and*

[13] There is one missing year, 1981, in which Freedom House changed the starting date for its yearly evaluation.

Developments (www.ipu.org), supplemented by the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA, www.idea.int) *Handbook of Electoral System Design* (1997), Parlamento Latinoamericano's *Manual de los partidos políticos de America Latina* (1997), and Table 3.2 in Cox (1997) for district magnitude. This version of the database cross-checks information with election reports in *Electoral Studies*, information from Adam Carr Election Archive (psephos.adam-carr.edu), www.parties-and-elections.de for European countries, www.georgetown.edu/pdba for Latin America, and various other country-specific sources listed in the "Country Notes" accompanying the database.

Further Development

Thank you for your interest in the database. Please feel free to email Joel with comments, corrections, or information that would be helpful in filling in the remaining gaps. We hope the database can be updated and expanded in the future as more information becomes available.

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