New Electoral Systems Dataset:

ELECTORAL SYSTEMS AND THE PERSONAL VOTE

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 the nature of electoral competition to concerns about policy making and consequences of institutions that create incentives for politicians 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.

The database updates and expands the electoral systems coding presented in Wallack, et al (2003)'s *Database of Particularism*.[3] The information presented focuses on the aspects of electoral systems that affect candidates' incentives to seek a personal vote rather than cater to party leaders' wishes. As in the original database, the underlying rationale for coding is derived from Carey and Shugart (1995).[4]

We update, expand, and correct information concerning four aspects of electoral systems: party control over access to the ballot, the extent to which votes are shared with co-partisans, whether votes are primarily cast for parties or candidates, and district magnitude. Data now cover up to 180 countries from 1978-2005; the Czech Republic, Estonia, Slovakia, and Taiwan are new entries. The database has evolved to cover more aspects of electoral systems as well, providing additional information on more complex systems with multiple tiers and runoffs.

Both datasets as well as supplementary material may be found at **http://dss.ucsd.edu/jwjohnso/espv.html.**

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[3] Wallack, Jessica, Alejandro Gaviria, Ugo Panizza, and Ernesto Stein, (2003). "Political Particularism Around the World," *World Bank Economic Review* 17(1):133-143.
[4] Carey, John and Matthew S. Shugart, (1995). "Incentives to Cultivate a Personal Vote," *Electoral Studies* Vol. 14(4) 1995, p. 417-39

New Variables

The current database includes several new variables that capture the aspects of electoral systems that may affect the incentives for a personal vote. Central among these are two variables that provide ordinal rankings of electoral systems, two variables to capture district magnitude, and three sets of the core variables Ballot, Vote, and Pool. The various versions of the electoral system coding derive from the translation of Carey and Shugart's framework, which was concerned only with institutions at the level of the electoral district, to characterize legislatures that frequently consist of different sets of members elected under different electoral rules. The new variables not only facilitate transparency in our coding decisions and provide easier access to more information about countries' electoral systems, but also remain faithful to the theoretical framework in Carey and Shugart and allow users to make their own decisions about the precise manner in which whole legislatures ought to be compared.

Therefore, for each legislature, we code separate values for each electoral tier for each of the variables Ballot, Vote, and Pool. Due to the increasing popularity of mixed-member electoral systems, which combine two tiers of membership (one of single-member districts and another of multi-member districts) in an attempt to incorporate legislators with variation in their personal vote incentives, two of these sets of variables correspond to tiers that consist solely of single-member districts (SMD_BALLOT, SMD_VOTE, SMD_POOL) and tiers that consist of one or more multi-member districts (MMD_BALLOT, MMD_VOTE, MMD_POOL).[5] A third set of these variables consists of an average of the values for these two tiers (AVG_BALLOT, AVG_VOTE, AVG_POOL). These may be thought of as country-level values for ballot access, vote pooling, and recipients of votes.

Using Carey and Shugart's ranking system together with our coding decisions, we also provide two rank orderings of countries' personal-vote incentives. One orders countries according to the rank of the tier with the greatest incentives to cultivate a personal vote, (denoted PERS_RANK); the other ranks countries according to their most populous tier (DOM_RANK). Ranking countries in this manner (i.e. according to a single tier, instead of the averages weighted by tier), preserves the ordinal nature of the ranking proposed by Carey and Shugart.

In addition, we include two measures of district magnitude. The first is the standard measure of an average district magnitude: the number of legislators elected in the average district in a country (M_DIST). Where available, we also collected information to include the more relevant measure of the district magnitude faced by the average legislator (M_CAND). The district magnitude in which the average legislator competes may be significantly different from the magnitude of the average district. The two

[5] Not all countries have multiple tiers; a few countries have more than two electoral tiers. Others have two tiers that do not fit into our single-member-district and multi-member-district bifurcation. Countries with only one tier have only one set of values coded while all other countries that do not fit explicitly into our framework are noted in the database and their coding described in the accompanying Country Notes.

measures differ most when there is high variance among the district magnitudes in a country.

Outside of these core variables, the new dataset includes several new variables, including those that capture the legal ability of independent candidates to run (INDY), whether voters can rank order candidates (RANK_VOTE), the existence of multiple rounds (MULTIROUND), whether multiple tiers are allocated in parallel or are compensatory (PARALLEL), whether voters have separate votes for each electoral tier (TIERVOTE), which years had elections (ELECTION), and the proportion of legislators from each tier (PROPSMD, PROPMMD). Together, these variables provide a significant amount of information about a country's electoral system.

We 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.