Finding Foreign Elections Data

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GODORT/PPIRS Help! I'm an Accidental Government Information Librarian - Election Data webinar

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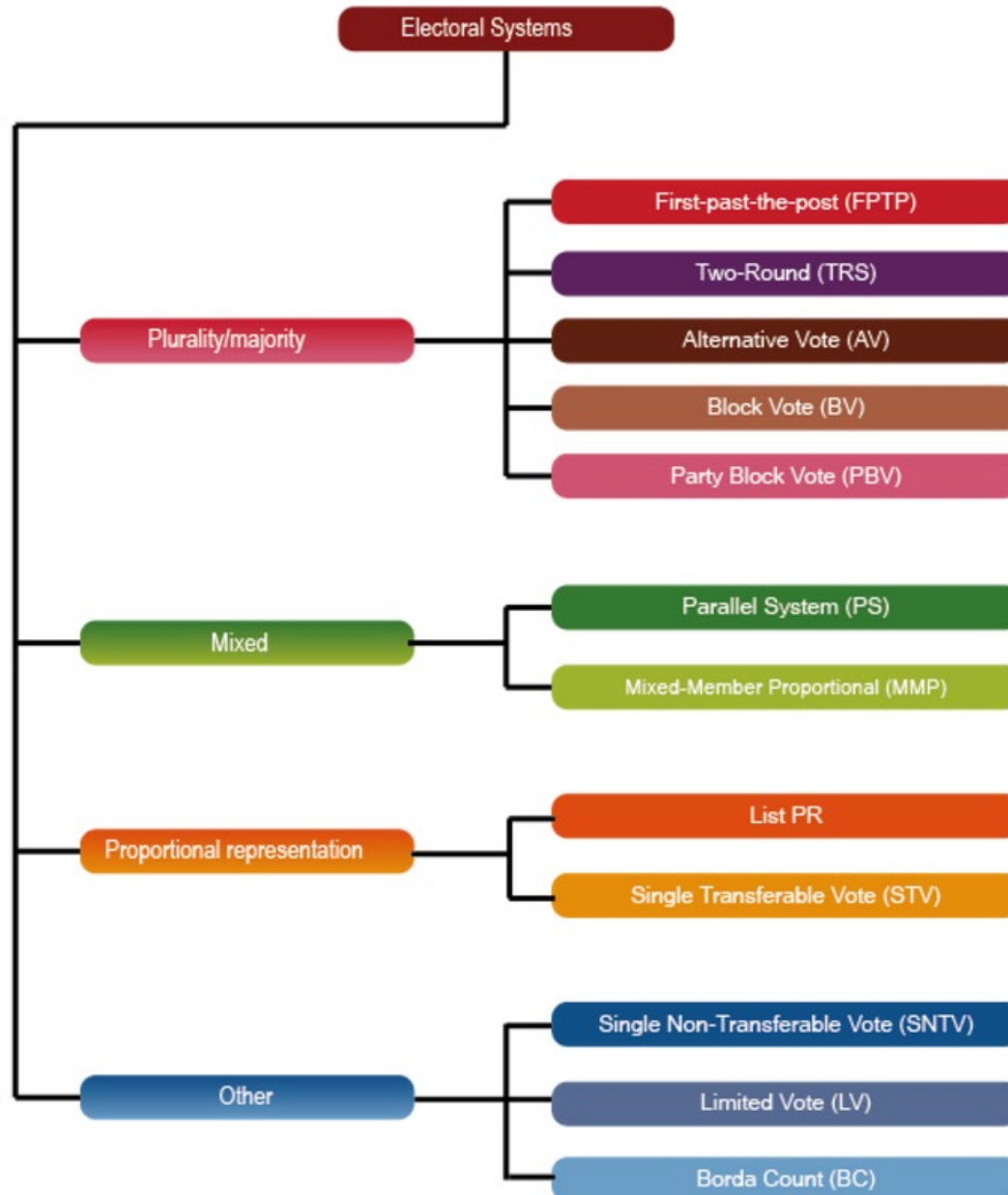
The Challenge: Diversity

- Diversity (electoral systems, regime type, level of development, language) and its implications for finding election data

Complexity: Electoral Systems

- At least a dozen major types
- **Proportionality** continuum
  - How well <u>votes</u> translate into <u>seats</u>
  - Level of "wasted" votes
- Other important considerations:
  - District magnitude
  - Seat allocation method
  - Minimum vote thresholds for representation

Figure 1. The Electoral Systems Families

Finding Elections Data:
Key Questions

- Questions to ask yourself and your researchers
  - What kind of election?
    - parliamentary vs. presidential (also local/municipal, regional, Euro Parl, etc.)
  - What kind of results?
    - total votes by party? party vote shares? seat totals? seat shares?
  - What geographic level?
    - national? constituency/district? by region/state/province? below constituency level (e.g., precinct/polling place/equivalent)?
  - What time period?
    - historical election data can be super hard/impossible to dig up
  - What format?
    - Machine readable format vs. lists of results

Finding Elections Data: Possible Sources

- Academic data collections
  - typically limited to parliamentary lower house, since that's the most prevalent form of government (CLEA)
- Electoral commissions and/or govt open data sites
- Research centers or social science data archives, esp. if one exists for the country you're interested in
- Wikipedia
  - especially as a source for finding authoritative reports, publications, references
- News sites
  - in addition to reporting results in articles, many major national papers create a dedicated election page with interactive results tables/visualizations
- IOs or hobbyist sites that aggregate
- Reference works on elections
  - Esp. for more historical

Additional resources

- See Elections Guide https://libguides.princeton.edu/elections/foreign for additional links on turnout, electoral administration, voting in IOs, and more.
- If you know of any great resources (types of sources) I should add, I always welcome suggestions!

Example links from the presentation

- https://www.oxfordhandbooks.com/view/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780190258658.001.0001/oxfordhb-9780190258658-e-49 | Terminology and Basic Rules of Electoral Systems - Oxford Handbooks
- https://aceproject.org/ace-en/topics/es/esd/esd02/default | Electoral Systems
- https://www.journalofdemocracy.org/subjects/elections/ | Subject: Elections | Journal of Democracy
- https://www.ifes.org/resources/election-faqs | Election FAQs | IFES
- https://electiondataarchive.org/data-and-documentation/clea-lower-chamber-elections-archive/online-subsetting-tool/ | Online Subsetting Tool CLEA
- https://results.aec.gov.au/ | Tally room archive - Australian Electoral Commission
- https://www.bundeswahlleiter.de/bundestagswahlen/2021/ergebnisse.html | Der Bundeswahlleiter
- https://elecciones2020.ceepur.org/ | Puerto Rico Elections
- https://www.data.gouv.fr/fr/pages/donnees-des-elections/ | French open election data
- https://beta.ukdataservice.ac.uk/datacatalogue/studies/#!?Search=elections&Rows=10&Sort=1&DateFrom=440&DateTo=2022&Page=1 | UK Data Service › Studies
- https://www.ssb.no/en/statbank/table/08092/ | Storting election. Valid votes, by party/electoral list (M) 1945 - 2021. Statbank Norway
- https://lokdhaba.ashoka.edu.in/ | Lok Dhaba (Indian parliamentary data)
- Wikipedia Election Lists by Country
- https://www.rte.ie/news/election-2020/results/#/national | Election 2020 Live Results RTÉ News
- http://psephos.adam-carr.net/countries/c/colombia/ | Psephos - Adam Carr's Election Archive
- https://catalog.princeton.edu/?q=dieter+nohlen+elections+data&search_field=all_fields&sort=pub_date_start_sort+desc%2C+title_sort+asc%2C+score+desc | Dieter Nohlen Election Handbooks
- https://catalog.princeton.edu/?f%5Blocation%5D%5B%5D=Firestone+Library&f%5Bsubject_facet%5D%5B%5D=Elections%E2%80%94Great+Britain%E2%80%94Statistics&q=craig&search_field=all_fields&sort=pub_date_start_sort+asc%2C+title_sort+asc%2C+score+desc | Craig British Election series