

Do Institutions Matter?

Section 11

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Fall 2024

Gov 20: Foundations of Comparative Politics

- 1 Reminders
- 2 What is an institution?
- 3 Types of rules
- 4 Discussion

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 - Norris and Inglehart

Last week: we talked about ethnicity and ethnic conflict

In this section, we're talking about **electoral** and **constitutional** systems, in particular:

1. What is an institution?
2. Electoral rules and their implications

1 Reminders

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What is an institution?

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Rules and procedures that constrain or enable actors' behavior to shape political, economic, and social outcomes.



Figure 1: SCOTUS

Types of institutions

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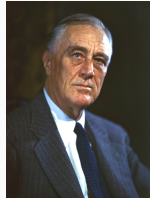
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Types of institutions

There are many different types of institutions! This week, we're talking about formal institutions, like electoral systems

- Formal: laws, constitutional rules
- Informal: customs, traditions, taboos



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Types of electoral systems

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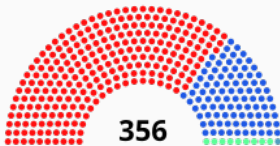
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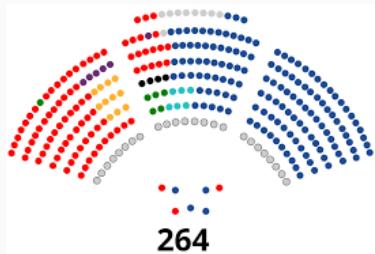
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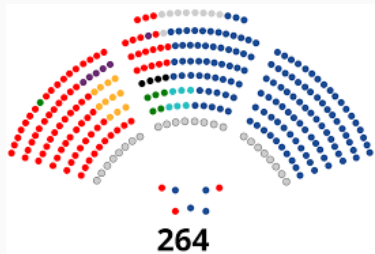


Types of electoral systems



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Types of electoral systems

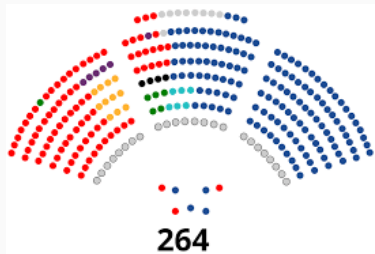


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- Proportional representation

Types of electoral systems



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- Multi-member districts

Types of electoral systems



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- Proportional representation
- Multi-member districts
- Party lists

Are there other electoral systems?

Types of electoral systems

Are there other electoral systems? Yes, mixed plurality/PR



Figure 2: Japan is an example

What is district magnitude?

Types of electoral systems

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Figure 2: Japan is an example

What is district magnitude?

- of reps elected from a district

What are the salient features of...?

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Presidentialism?

- Separation of power
- Fixed terms

Parliamentarism?

- Single-body
- No fixed terms

Types of constitutional systems

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What is the Westminster system?

Recap: 3x2 of electoral + constitutional systems

Test yourself! Fill in the blank table with cases

| | Constitutional system | <i>Presidential democracies</i> | <i>Parliamentary democracies</i> |
|------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Electoral system | | | |
| | <i>Plurality</i> | | |
| | <i>PR</i> | | |
| | <i>Mixed plurality + PR</i> | | |

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Build-a-democracy!

Split into groups and choose a: (1) constitutional and (2) electoral system.

How does each institutional choice affect:

- Representation?
- Efficiency?
- Potential for ethnic conflict?

Info sheet: https://docs.google.com/document/d/18TDprVMfcob_UoRpxOGpuXZT3-00WtovoQrauebbJvY/edit?usp=sharing

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Which do y'all think is more important for democratic stability?
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