

VOTING AND ELECTIONS THE WORLD OVER



VASSIA GUEORGUIEVA
AND RITA J. SIMON

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Preface

Voting and Elections the World Over is the tenth in a series of volumes that examines a major social phenomenon using an explicitly comparative approach. Comparing twenty-two countries, *Voting and Elections* reports when the populace first gained the right to vote for persons seeking elective office. It then asks the following questions: Who among the country's inhabitants has the right to vote? What age must they be? When did women receive suffrage? Are non-citizens eligible to vote? Are felons allowed to vote? Is voting compulsory? Who administers the elections?

Each country's electoral system is described, and the offices for which people can vote are reported (i.e., members of parliament, prime minister, president, and state and municipal offices such as governors and mayors). For each country, we report voter turnout for national elections over at least the past ten years. We also report changes that have been made in the electoral process.

The countries included in this study are: Canada, the United States, Argentina, Brazil, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Sweden, the Russian Federation, Poland, Hungary, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Nigeria, South Africa, India, China, Japan, and Australia.

Introduction

Universal suffrage consists of the right to vote for all adults without distinction as to race, sex, belief, intelligence, or economic or social status. Generally franchises may be restricted on account of age, gender, nationality, race, religion, wealth, birth (inherited social status), education, or previous crimes. The first movement toward universal suffrage occurred in the early nineteenth century and focused on removing property requirements for voting. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the focus of the universal suffrage movement became the removal of restrictions against women having the right to vote.

The table shown below reports when states and countries first granted, and at times revoked, universal suffrage.

Table I.1. Universal suffrage by country/state in chronological order

<i>Year</i>	<i>Country/Territory</i>	<i>Notes</i>
1776–1807	New Jersey	First state to include both women and blacks. There was a property requirement; but its enforcement was and is disputed. New Jersey was independent until 1789.
1792	Principality of Liège	Universal suffrage (all inhabitants over 18, without distinction) in the state of Liège to elect all the members of the National Convention.
1820s–1840s	United States	Universal white manhood suffrage granted in most states regardless of property holdings.
1869	Wyoming	The first U.S. territory to allow women to run for the legislature. Upon the state's admission into the Union in 1890, Wyoming was the first U.S. state to grant women the voting franchise.

(continued)

Table I.1. (continued)

<i>Year</i>	<i>Country/Territory</i>	<i>Notes</i>
1886	Tavolara	Other Western states also had universal suffrage before 1920. During its republican period 1886–1895, this small island country near Sardinia became the first self-governing nation to grant universal suffrage. Later it became a part of Italy.
1893	New Zealand	With the inclusion of women, it became the first major nation to grant universal suffrage; however, women were not eligible to stand for parliament until 1919.
1894	South Australia	Women’s suffrage, but not universal. First state to also allow women as candidates for parliament. Other Australian states followed 1899–1908. Aborigines of Australia were allowed to vote, but this right was taken away at the time of Federation in 1901 and they were not allowed to vote in South Australia again until 1963.
1901	Australia	Women’s suffrage, but not universal; the first federal election in Australia. In 1902 restrictions were imposed on Chinese, Indians, Polynesians (except Maori) and Indigenous Australians amongst others and some of these persisted until 1965.
1906	Grand Duchy of Finland	As an autonomous Grand Duchy. It was the first nation to allow women as candidates and voters. This was the first time that women were actually elected (19 of 200 MPs). Finland became independent with Universal Suffrage in 1917.
1913	Norway	Including women, first independent nation to also allow women as candidates.
1915	Denmark	First voting rights to anyone came in 1849, and the rules were changed a number of times. But it was not until the change in the constitution in 1915 that all men and women had influence on all chambers.
1918	Canada	Last province to enact women’s suffrage was Quebec in 1940; status Indians gained the right to vote in 1960.
1918	Estonia	
1918	United Kingdom	Women over thirty had been given the right to vote in 1918 with some property restrictions and in 1928 universal suffrage for all.
1918	Soviet Union	With the 1918 Soviet Constitution, although direct voting and the lifting of some political

<i>Year</i>	<i>Country/Territory</i>	<i>Notes</i>
		restrictions did not occur until the 1936 Soviet Constitution.
1918	Austria	After the Central Powers' defeat in World War I.
1918	Czechoslovakia	After the Central Powers' defeat in World War I.
1918	Germany	After the Central Powers' defeat in World War I. Revoked during 1935–1945 by the Nuremberg Laws. The restrictions applied also to the territories occupied by the Nazis during World War II.
1918	Hungary	After the Central Powers' defeat in World War I.
1919	Democratic Republic of Armenia	Became part of the Soviet Union in 1920.
1919	Azerbaijan Democratic Republic	Became part of the Soviet Union in 1920.
1919	Democratic Republic of Georgia	Became part of the Soviet Union in 1921.
1919	Poland	
1919	Luxembourg	
1919	The Netherlands	Universal male suffrage in 1917.
1921	Sweden	Universal male suffrage 1909.
1922	Lithuania	
1922	Republic of Ireland	As the Irish Free State in 1922, law adopted from British law having been part of the United Kingdom. Law subsequently carried over during changes in constitutional status in 1937 and 1949.
1923	Romania	
1931	Sri Lanka (as Ceylon)	Indian Tamils disenfranchised 1949.
1931	Spain	Male suffrage over twenty-three. In 1933: Universal (for both male and female) suffrage. Revoked during Franco era, 1939–1975.
1932	Brazil	
1934	Turkey	
1935	Burma	Last free elections held in 1990.
1944	France	Universal male suffrage enacted in 1792, for the National Convention, enacted in 1793 and 1848, but restricted as to length of residence in 1851; reintroduced in 1852.
1945	Italy	Universal male suffrage 1912 for people thirty or older, 1918 for people twenty-one or older.
1945	Japan	Universal male suffrage 1926.
1947	Republic of China (now Taiwan)	Universal suffrage under the Constitution of the Republic of China.

(continued)

Table I.1. (continued)

<i>Year</i>	<i>Country/Territory</i>	<i>Notes</i>
1948	Israel	Universal suffrage since independence.
1948	South Korea	
1948	Belgium	
1950	India	As part of Constitution of India.
1951	Argentina	Universal male suffrage 1912.
1952	Greece	Universal male suffrage 1864; women permitted to vote in local elections 1930.
1955	Malaysia	The victory of Union Party convinces the British to grant Malaysia's independence in 1957.
1956	Colombia	
1963	Iran	Reforms under Shah's "White Revolution."
1964	Afghanistan	Constitution transformed Afghanistan into a modern democracy.
1965	Australia	A murky constitutional history regarding the voting rights of Aborigines of Australia was clarified and ratified at the federal government level and in subsequent state governments in the following years—see Human Rights in Australia for more.
1971	Switzerland	Introduction of women's suffrage at the federal level; for cantonal elections this was not completed until 1990.
1976	Portugal	
1979	European Community (now European Union)	
1984	Liechtenstein	
1990	Samoa	
1994	South Africa	White women's suffrage in 1930.
2002	Bahrain	Universal male suffrage in 1973, although parliament was suspended and dissolved in 1975 for approximately thirty years.
2003	Oman	
2005	Kuwait	Universal adult male suffrage since 1962, for citizens who are twenty-one or older, with the exception of those who, at the time of elections, serve in the armed forces and citizens who have been naturalized for fewer than thirty years. Note: As of 2005, women who satisfy the age and citizenship requirements are allowed to vote provided both men and women vote in separate polling locations.
2006–2010	U.A.E.	Limited, will be fully expanded by 2010.
2007	Qatar	

Source: Wikipedia, available at: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Universal_suffrage

The first women's suffrage (with the same property qualifications as for men) was granted in New Jersey in 1776 (the word "inhabitants" was used instead of "men") and rescinded in 1807. Various other countries and states granted restricted women's suffrage in the latter half of the nineteenth century, starting with South Australia in 1894.

The first unrestricted women's suffrage in terms of voting rights (women were not initially permitted to stand for election) in a major country was granted in New Zealand.

The first to grant women's suffrage and also allow women to stand for parliament was South Australia, in 1894.

The term democracy was coined in ancient Athens in the fifth century BCE. Athens is generally seen as the earliest example of a system corresponding to some of the modern notions of democratic rule. But only a minority had the right to vote: women, slaves, and foreigners were excluded. Only an estimated 16 percent of the total population had the right to vote (male Greek citizens). Freedom House reports that there was not a single liberal democracy with universal suffrage in the world in 1900. In 2007, there were 121 electoral democracies in the world, out of which 90 were liberal democracies.¹ As one reads this book, and any other literature on elections, it is important to have in mind that while democracy cannot exist without elections, democracy is more than the mere holding of elections.

Today age, and in some jurisdictions previous crimes, are the only restrictions that are compatible with the definition of modern democracy. Some areas, such as the European Union (EU), have developed policies that grant voting rights to citizens of other countries, both EU nationals and non-EU nationals. In a 1986 report to the European Parliament, the European Commission called for allowing all European Community nationals to vote in local elections where they live, regardless of citizenship. Subsequently the Maastricht Treaty (1992) granted all EU citizens who reside in another member state the right to vote and run for office in elections at the local level. Although the states that signed the Maastricht Treaty amended their constitutions to give voting rights to EU nationals, every state was able to add derogation provisions. Each state has the right to determine its own residency requirements for the purpose of enabling EU nationals to vote or stand for election in European or municipal elections. France limited access to some public posts (such as mayor) and the 1994 Directive contained a derogation provision that stated that for member states where the proportion of voting age EU citizens residing there (but who are not its own nationals) exceeds 20 percent of the total electorate, the state may require a minimum period of residence. Only Luxembourg restricts the right to vote to non-national citizens of the Union who have resided in its territory for six of the past seven

years before registration. This is because it has 28.7 percent non-national citizens of the Union who are of voting age out of the total number of voters in Luxembourg and the derogation was justified.

EU member states that grant electoral rights to non-EU nationals include Ireland (1963), Sweden (1975), Denmark (1981), Finland (1976), and the Netherlands (1985). These countries have been granting electoral rights to foreigners as far back as thirty years before the signing of the Maastricht Treaty. Furthermore, Spain (1978) and Portugal (1976) grant voting rights to certain foreign nationals on conditions of reciprocity or to certain nationalities; the United Kingdom, since 1949, allows Commonwealth citizens to participate in elections at the local level. In Estonia lawful resident non-citizens cannot participate in national elections, but they can vote in local elections (though only Estonian citizens can stand as candidates). The right to vote in local elections is granted to all lawful residents irrespective of their country of origin provided that they have lived in the territory of the local community for at least five years.

Elections can be used by totalitarian regimes to give a false sense of democracy, for example, 1960s right-wing military dictatorships in South America, the USSR until 1991, and China today.

In the chapters that follow we answer on a country by country basis the questions posed in the preface to this volume.

NOTE

1. Source: Freedom House. *Freedom in the World Survey*, available at: www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=395

Part One

NORTH AMERICA

Chapter One

Canada

ELECTORAL SYSTEM

Canada is a constitutional monarchy with a parliamentary system of government. Its federal Parliament consists of the sovereign (the governor general), the Senate (whose members are appointed by the governor general on the recommendation of the prime minister), and the House of Commons (whose members are elected by the citizens of Canada through federal general elections every five years).

Canada has a “first-past-the-post” (also called “single-member plurality”) electoral system. This means that the candidate with the most votes in each electoral district wins a seat in the House of Commons and represents the district as a member of Parliament (MP).

Representation in the House of Commons is based on electoral districts (also known as constituencies or ridings), with each district electing one member to the House of Commons. The number of districts is determined through a formula set out in the Canadian Constitution and boundaries are established by independent commissions on the basis of population and social and economic links. New commissions are set up every ten years after a population census to make any necessary revisions to existing boundaries, following criteria defined in the Electoral Boundaries Readjustment Act. The current number of districts is 301 as set by the Representation Order of 1996.

In each electoral district, any number of candidates may run for election, but they can do so in one electoral district only. Candidates can either be endorsed by a registered or eligible political party (a party can endorse only one candidate per riding) or they can run independently, in which case they are designated as “independent” or as having “no affiliation.”

WHO CAN VOTE?

The first Canadian election was held in 1867. Only 11 percent of the total population was qualified to vote at that time and consisted exclusively of white males with property.² In those early elections, the right to vote and to be a candidate in a federal election was restricted to males over the age of twenty-one who met certain property qualifications. Women, Aboriginal people, and members of certain religious denominations were not allowed to vote.

During the late 1800s, the franchise laws of individual provinces, rather than federal laws, determined who had the right to vote. In 1885, the Canadian Parliament established a federal franchise, based on property ownership and in some parts of the country, aboriginal people were given the right to vote.

In 1948, property qualifications, still in use in Quebec, were abolished; also the right to vote was extended to Canadians of Asian origin. In 1960, aboriginals with “registered Indian status” were permitted to vote in federal elections.

In 1982, the new Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms embedded in the Constitution the right of all citizens to vote and be a candidate for election. The Charter led to the lifting of the prohibition on federally appointed judges to cast votes in federal elections in 1988.

Women

Before Confederation in 1867, women had the right to vote in Upper Canada (called Ontario after 1867).³ In Lower Canada (Quebec), women, particularly widows who were likely to have the necessary property qualifications for the franchise, widely exercised their right to vote. However, they were disenfranchised in 1832.

In 1917, the right to vote was extended to all British subjects, male or female, who were active or retired members of the armed forces. All women twenty-one years of age and over became eligible to vote federally on May 24, 1918. Manitoba was the first province to extend the vote to women (1916) and Quebec was the last one (1941). In 1919, women also became eligible for election to the House of Commons. Thus, in 1921, women were able to vote and run as candidates for federal election for the first time.

In Canada, there are no constitutional election laws or regulation quotas for women in the national parliament; however, there are quotas for women in political parties.⁴ The New Democratic Party (NDP), in 1985, adopted to have the target rate of 50 percent women candidates at federal elections. Canada has also adopted and enforces a policy to have at least one woman competing

at the nomination stage in every federal district. In 1993, the Liberal Party of Canada (LPC) adopted to elect 25 percent women.

Minorities

The right to vote in Canadian federal elections was given to many Aboriginal people relatively recently. Inuit people received the right to vote in 1950. It was only in 1960 that First Nations people living on reserves acquired the right to vote at the federal level without having to give up their status under the Indian Act.

Voting Age

In 1970, the voting age and the age of candidacy were lowered from twenty-one to eighteen with a revised Canada Elections Act. Today all Canadian citizens at least eighteen years of age on election day are eligible to vote, with a few exceptions.

Felons

Canadians who on polling day are in a correctional institution or a federal penitentiary in Canada may vote by special ballot in a federal election or referendum regardless of the length of their sentences.⁵ This was ruled in 2002 by a Supreme Court decision.

WHO CAN PEOPLE VOTE FOR?

Canadians vote in federal, municipal, and provincial elections. From within the federal Parliament, they elect only the members of the House of Commons. Senate members are appointed.

THE ADMINISTRATION OF ELECTIONS

Canada has a non-partisan agency responsible for the conduct of federal elections, by-elections, and referendums: Elections Canada. It is headed by the Chief Electoral Officer of Canada, which was created in 1920 with a new Dominion Elections Act. The election officers must be politically neutral and all election workers must take an oath that they will uphold voters' rights, the secrecy of the vote, and perform their duties without favoritism. Every

candidate that runs for election can have representatives present on election day during both the voting and the counting of the votes to monitor that these proceedings are conducted fairly.

Canada also has a national register of electors, which is a computerized database of Canadians who are qualified to vote. It is used to produce the preliminary voter lists for a general election, by-election, or referendum. It is updated with data from the Canada Customs and Revenue Agency, Citizenship and Immigration Canada, provincial and territorial registrars of motor vehicles and vital statistics (deaths), and electoral agencies in British Columbia and Quebec (which have permanent voter lists). Also used are voter lists from certain provincial and territorial elections.

VOTING

Voting is not compulsory.¹ There are a number of ways to vote in Canada. Voters can cast their votes at the ordinary polls on election day, at an advance poll or at a mobile poll, or by special ballot (at the office of the returning officer or through the mail).

Electronic voting (e-voting) is also available. Ontario, from November 5–10, 2003, held the first full municipal and school board electronic elections in North America using either the Internet or the phone but no paper ballots.⁶ Electors voted for mayor, deputy mayor, assistant deputy mayor, ward councilors, and school board members. The registered voters, about 100,000, received a Voter Identification Number and a password to vote by Internet or touch-tone telephone. The Administration and Cost of Elections Project (ACE) reports that the e-voting helped increase turnout to 55 percent in some places where normal municipal election rates ranged from 25 to 30 percent. After the elections, the Ontario Secretariat for Democratic Renewal was created to work on proposals for a reform of the Ontario electoral process including making the Internet a voting option.

THE REGULATION OF ELECTIONS: POLITICAL AND FINANCIAL REGULATIONS PERTAINING TO VOTING

Canada has a system of regulation for the financing of elections. The body responsible for the administration and enforcement of these regulations is Elections Canada.

The 1974 Election Expenses Act, which was intended to equalize the chances of parties and candidates as well as to encourage active citizen involvement in the political process through financial contributions, introduced

spending limits for registered parties and candidates, and required parties and candidates to report their spending and revenues.⁷ The Act also introduced public funding through income tax credits for political contributions and post-election reimbursements to qualifying parties and candidates and established the position of the Commissioner of Canada Elections, who is responsible for ensuring that the Canada Elections Act is complied with and enforced. The Commissioner is selected and appointed by the Chief Electoral Officer.

Recent changes in the regulations on the financing of elections are in Bill C-24, An Act to Amend the Canada Elections Act and the Income Tax Act (political financing). It received royal assent and most of its provisions came into effect on January 1, 2004.⁸ This Act bans, with minor exceptions, political donations by corporations and trade unions, and limits contributions by individuals. Among other things, the Act provides for quarterly allowances to be paid to qualifying registered political parties, and increases the tax credits for political contributions.

Party Income: Ceilings, Bans on Sources of Income, and Disclosure Provisions

Political parties have to disclose contributions received. There is no ceiling on contributions to political parties and there is no ceiling on how much a party can raise.⁹ However, there are certain bans on donations to political parties. Besides the bans introduced by the Act to amend the Canada Elections Act and the Income Tax Act, there is also a ban on foreign donations to political parties and anonymous donations to political parties.¹⁰

Party Expenditures: Ceilings and Disclosure Provisions

There is a provision for public disclosure of expenditures by political parties and there is a ceiling on party election expenditures.¹¹ According to the Canada Elections Act [C.E.A., s. 422(1)], the maximum amount that is allowed for election expenses of a registered party for an election is the product of:¹²

- \$0.62 multiplied by the number of names on the preliminary lists of electors for electoral districts in which the registered party has endorsed a candidate or by the number of names on the revised lists of electors for those electoral districts, whichever is greater; and
- the inflation adjustment factor published by the Chief Electoral Officer that is in effect on the date of the issue of the writs for the election.

There are also limits on the expenditures by candidates. As stipulated by the Canada Elections Act [C.E.A., s. 441(1), 441(2), 441(3), 441(4)-(9)], the

Table 1.1. Parliamentary Election Turnout in Canada, 1945–2000

<i>Electoral System: First-Past-the-Post</i>							
<i>Year</i>	<i>Total Vote</i>	<i>Registration</i>	<i>Vote/Reg %</i>	<i>V/AP</i>	<i>Vote/VAP %</i>	<i>Invalid %</i>	<i>Pop. Size</i>
1945	5,305,193	6,952,445	76.30	7,560,340	70.20	1.10	12,394,000
1949	5,903,572	7,893,629	74.80	8,202,670	72.00	0.90	13,447,000
1953	5,701,963	8,401,691	67.90	8,720,790	65.40	1.10	14,781,000
1957	6,680,690	8,902,125	75.00	9,839,430	67.90	1.10	16,677,000
1958	7,357,139	9,131,200	80.60	9,758,400	75.40	0.90	17,120,000
1962	7,772,656	9,700,325	80.10	10,602,000	73.30	1.10	18,600,000
1963	7,958,636	9,910,757	80.30	10,599,680	75.10	0.80	18,928,000
1965	7,796,728	10,274,904	75.90	11,020,800	70.70	1.10	19,680,000
1968	8,217,916	10,860,888	75.70	12,023,400	68.30	1.10	20,730,000
1972	9,966,148	12,909,179	77.20	13,984,000	71.30	3.00	21,850,000
1974	9,671,002	13,620,553	71.00	15,061,600	64.20	1.70	22,480,000
1979	11,531,000	15,234,997	75.70	16,860,370	68.40	0.70	23,747,000
1980	11,014,914	15,890,416	69.30	17,070,530	64.50	0.60	24,043,000
1984	12,638,424	16,775,011	75.30	18,611,000	67.90	0.70	25,150,000
1988	13,281,191	17,639,001	75.30	19,433,250	68.30	0.80	25,911,000
1993	13,863,135	19,906,796	69.60	21,705,750	63.90	1.40	28,941,000
1997	13,174,698	19,663,478	67.00	23,088,803	57.10	—	30,785,070
2000	12,997,185	21,243,473	61.20	23,786,167	54.60	1.10	31,213,580

Notes: Registered voters—This represents the number of names on the voters' register at the time that the registration process closes, as reported by the electoral management body.

VAP (Voting Age Population)—The estimated voting age population is based on a country's population over the age of eighteen. It is not an exact measure of the VAP as it does not take into account legal or systemic barriers to the exercise of the franchise or account for non-eligible members of the population, such as resident non-citizens.

Invalid—The number of invalid votes, as reported by each country.

Source: International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA)

base amount of a candidate's election expenses in an electoral district is the higher of either the amount calculated on the basis of the preliminary lists of electors for the electoral district or the amount calculated on the basis of the revised lists of electors for the electoral district.

Direct and Indirect Public Funding

Recent changes in public funding have been introduced through Bill C-24 [Act to Amend the Canada Elections Act and the Income Tax Act (Political Funding)], which came into force on January 1, 2004. Parties in Canada receive direct public funding, which is available during the election period only. Its purpose is for general party administration and election campaign activities. This funding is allocated on the basis of the number of candidates put forward in a given election.

Indirect public funding, in the form of free media access as stipulated by the Broadcasting Act, is also available to political parties in the period beginning on the issue of the writs for a general election and ending at midnight on the day before polling day.

While parties do not have a special taxation status, donors to parties receive tax relief through tax credit receipts for their contributions.

TURNOUT IN ELECTIONS

The data shows that in 1945, 1949, 1958, 1963, 1965, and 1972, 70 percent or more of those of voting age opted to exercise their right to vote. In 1997 and 2000 the lowest percentage of those of voting age (57 and 54.6, respectively) took part in the electoral process.

NOTES

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Chapter Two

United States

ELECTORAL SYSTEM

The United States (U.S.) is a federation with a presidential system of government. Its federal legislature is a bicameral Congress, consisting of the Senate and the House of Representatives. The Senate has one hundred members that serve six-year terms. Each state has two popularly elected senators in Congress (regardless of state population size), according to a first-past-the-post system. No state's two senators are elected in the same election year. One third of the Senate is elected every two years.

The number of seats in the House of Representatives is 435 since 1912 and is determined by law. Each state is entitled to at least one seat in the House. The total number of seats per state are determined through the "Huntington-Hill" formula on the basis of population figures from the decennial census. House members serve two-year terms and are elected by popular vote in single-seat districts, according to the first-past-the-post system. The 435 representatives are voting members. American Samoa, the District of Columbia, Guam, and the United States Virgin Islands send non-voting delegates to the House; Puerto Rico sends a non-voting resident commissioner who serves a four-year term; and the Northern Mariana Islands are not represented.

Unlike members of Congress, the president of the United States is not elected through popular vote, but rather through the indirect method of popular election known as the Electoral College system. Before presidential elections, political parties in every state create lists of potential electors who pledge to vote for the party's candidate. A state's number of Electoral College votes equals the number of the state's congressional delegation. The District of Columbia has three electoral votes. During presidential elections, held in November every four years, the winner of the popular vote in each

state receives that state's number of Electoral College votes. The winner of presidential elections is the candidate who receives the majority of the votes of the Electoral College.

WHO CAN VOTE?

Women

In 1848 Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott organized the first women's rights convention in Seneca Falls, New York, and launched the women's suffrage movement in the United States. Beginning in 1838, Kentucky allowed women to vote in school elections. In 1869 the Wyoming Territory gave women suffrage rights on an equal basis with men and in 1887, Kansas granted women unlimited rights to vote in municipal elections. Progress continued, albeit slowly, with only ten additional states joining Wyoming by 1914. By the end of 1918, women had full suffrage rights in a total of fifteen of the forty-eight states then in the Union. The suffrage movement culminated in 1920 when the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment to the Constitution made American women eligible to vote in all local, state, and federal elections.¹

Minorities

The right to vote was technically extended to African Americans in 1868 with the passage of the Fourteenth Amendment, which provided a broad definition of citizenship, and was effectively enforced with the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. One year later, the Voting Rights Act was adopted at a time when African Americans were substantially disfranchised in many Southern states. The Voting Rights Act codifies and effectuates the Fifteenth Amendment's permanent guarantee that no person shall be denied the right to vote on the basis of race or color. The Act came into being after Congress determined that the existing federal anti-discrimination laws were not sufficient to help overcome the resistance by state officials to the enforcement of the 15th Amendment. The Act was extended in 1970, 1975, 1982 and 2006.

Section 4 of the Act ended the use of literacy requirements for voting in Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, South Carolina, and Virginia as well as in many counties of North Carolina, where voter registration or turnout in the 1964 presidential election was less than 50 percent of the voting-age population. Under Section 5 of the Act, voting changes were not legally enforceable in these jurisdictions until approved either by a three-judge court in

the District of Columbia or by the U. S. Attorney General. The Voting Rights Act also authorized the attorney general to appoint federal voting examiners who could be sent into jurisdictions covered by the Act to ensure that legally qualified persons were free to register for local, state, and federal elections, or to assign federal observers to oversee the conduct of elections.

Voting Age

All citizens at least eighteen years of age are eligible to vote.

Felons

Felon voting rights vary widely by state. Only two states—Maine and Vermont—allow inmates to vote. The District of Columbia and forty-eight states prohibit inmates from voting while incarcerated for a felony offense; thirty-five states prohibit felons from voting while they are on parole and thirty of these states exclude felony probationers as well.² Two states deny the right to vote to all ex-offenders who have completed their sentences; nine other states disenfranchise certain categories of ex-offenders and/or permit application for restoration of rights for specified offenses after a waiting period. Furthermore, each state has its own process of restoring voting rights to ex-offenders.

WHO CAN PEOPLE VOTE FOR?

The elected offices in the United States at the federal level are those of president and vice president and members of Congress (Senate and House of Representatives).

At the state level, the Secretary of State in thirty-eight states is elected at the general election, usually for a four-year term.³ The Secretary of State is appointed in nine states; the Secretary of the District of Columbia is appointed as well. In three other states (Maine, New Hampshire, and Tennessee), the Secretary of State is elected by the state legislature.⁴

At the local level, cities, towns, and counties hold elections to choose officials for their legislative and executive branches. Furthermore, some judicial officers may be elected at the local level, but these courts handle small-claims issues or local ordinances for minor matters. Mayors, city council members, county commissioners, and the like are elected at the local level. The duration of the mandate of these officials varies by state.

THE ADMINISTRATION OF ELECTIONS

The United States has a highly decentralized election administration system. Elections are administered at the state and local level, and the federal government had not historically provided federal funds to state and local jurisdictions for the administration of elections nor set any standards for voting systems. The Help America Vote Act (HAVA) of 2002 drastically changed this. It created the Election Assistance Commission (EAC), a bipartisan body, which acts as a clearinghouse for information and recommends best practices in election administration. It also distributed to the states federal funds for the replacement of outdated voting equipment and set requirements for voting systems (voting systems must provide for: error correction by voters, manual auditing, accessibility, alternative languages, and for maintaining voter privacy and ballot confidentiality).⁵

VOTING

Voting in the U.S. is not compulsory. Balloting takes place through one of three types of voting. Ballots can be cast on election day in person in the precinct where a voter is registered, which is referred to as precinct voting. Under HAVA, voters whose names are not listed in the list of eligible voters for a particular polling place, but who believe they should be listed there, are allowed to cast a provisional ballot whose validity is later established.

Ballots can be cast before election day through the early voting system and through absentee voting. About half the states (twenty-three states) offer some sort of early voting.⁶ Early voting differs from absentee voting in that voters may visit an election official's office or other designated voting locations (such as stores or community centers) and cast a vote in person—the early in-person voting—without having to provide an excuse for not being able to vote on election day. Absentee voting is conducted by mail-in paper ballot before the day of the election. All states offer some version of absentee voting, but there is quite a lot of variation in states' procedures for absentee voting: some states offer “no-excuse” absentee voting, which permits registered voters to vote absentee without having to provide a reason for their desire to vote absentee while other states allow voters to vote absentee only under a limited set of circumstances.

Vote-by-mail (VBM) is a system in which all voters receive and cast their ballots via regular mail. Vote-by-mail has been used in Oregon for all elections since 1998 and in some local elections in California.

A recent development in the process of casting ballots in the United States has been the use of vote centers. Vote centers are non-precinct based locations for voting on election day, where any registered voter in the political subdivision holding the election may vote, regardless of the precinct in which the voter resides. Among the arguments for vote centers is that they allow election officials to reduce the number of polling places to a smaller and more manageable number of sites; provide for a more efficient election administration with cost savings stemming from the use of fewer election workers and fewer election supplies; focus poll worker recruitment on experienced and more qualified personnel; and also provide additional convenience for voters, which can lead to an increased turnout on election day.⁷ Colorado's Larimer County was the pioneer of the vote center model, which has been used there for the 2003 Coordinated Election, both the Primary and General Elections in 2004, the 2005 Coordinated Election, and both the Primary and General Elections in 2006.

Provisions also exist to facilitate military and overseas voting. The Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA) of 1986 was passed by Congress to help ensure that eligible members of the armed forces and their families as well as other citizens overseas, can cast a ballot. The Act requires each state to have an office that provides information on voter registration and absentee voting procedures for military and other voters overseas. Furthermore, the Department of Defense launched a new site in September 2006—the Integrated Voting Alternative Site (IVAS)—aimed to provide information on electronic voting options for service members and other U.S. citizens living overseas.⁸ Every state has different laws regarding the use of electronic transmission with respect to absentee voting materials, but IVAS gave the alternatives of faxing or emailing of the Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) for Registration, the FPCA for Ballot Request, the Blank Ballot to citizens, the return of the Voted Ballot, and fax-to-email conversion of the above via the Department of Defense Electronic Transmission Service. In addition to the IVAS, a cadre of voting assistance officers (VAOs) assigned to every military command was created to assist with voting and to disseminate accurate and nonpartisan voting information.⁹

THE REGULATION OF ELECTIONS: POLITICAL AND FINANCIAL REGULATIONS PERTAINING TO VOTING

The Federal Election Commission (FEC) regulates money raised and spent by federal candidates, political parties, and political committees. States regulate state level activity.

Party Income and Expenditures: Ceilings, Bans on Sources of Income, and Disclosure Provisions

The U.S. Congress passed the Federal Election Campaign Act (FECA) in 1971, which requires full, detailed reporting of campaign contributions and expenditures by all federal candidates, including presidential candidates. The FECA requires candidate and party committees as well as Political Action Committees (PACs) to periodically file reports that disclose the money they raise and spend.

Foreign and corporate donations as well as donations from government contractors are banned.

Table 2.1. National Voter Turnout in U.S. Federal Elections, 1960–2006

<i>Federal Elections for Congress</i>			
<i>Year</i>	<i>Voting Age Population</i>	<i>Registration</i>	<i>Turnout of Voting Age Population %</i>
1960	109,159,000	64,833,096	63
1962	112,423,000	65,393,751	47.3
1964	114,090,000	73,715,818	62
1966	116,132,000	76,288,283	48.4
1968	120,328,186	81,658,180	61
1970	124,498,000	82,496,747	46.6
1972	140,776,000	97,328,541	55.2
1974	146,336,000	96,199,020	38.2
1976	152,309,190	105,037,986	53.5
1978	158,373,000	103,291,265	37.2
1980	164,597,000	113,043,734	52.5
1982	169,938,000	110,671,225	39.8
1984	174,466,000	124,150,614	53.1
1986	178,566,000	118,399,984	36.4
1988	182,778,000	126,379,628	50.1
1990	185,812,000	121,105,630	36.5
1992	189,529,000	133,821,178	55.1
1994	193,650,000	130,292,822	38.8
1996	196,511,000	146,211,960	49.1
1998	200,929,000	141,850,558	36.4
2000	205,815,000	156,421,311	52.3
2002	215,473,000	150,990,598	37
2004	221,256,931	174,800,000	55.3
2006	220,600,000	135,889,600	43.6

Source: Federal Election Commission. Data drawn from Congressional Research Service reports, Election Data Services Inc., and State Election Offices

Direct and Indirect Public Funding

The FEC administers public funding available to candidates in federal elections. The public funding grants aim to reduce the role of large private contributions in presidential elections. Candidates who take public money in the general election must forgo fundraising. Every presidential election since 1976 has been financed with public funds.

Indirect public funding such as free media access is not available in the United States.

TURNOUT IN ELECTIONS

Turnout for federal congressional elections has fluctuated in the past seventy years from a high of 63 percent in 1960, to about 52 percent in 1980, to 36 percent in 1990 and then again up to about 52 percent in 2000 (see Table 2.1).

NOTES

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Part Two

SOUTH AMERICA

Chapter Three

Argentina

ELECTORAL SYSTEM

Argentina is a presidential democracy. The country returned to elected civilian rule in 1983, after seven years of a far-right military regime. The president, who is chief of state and head of government, is directly elected for a four-year term by universal adult suffrage. Argentina's National Congress (Congreso de la nación) is bicameral and consists of the Chamber of Deputies (Cámara de Diputados) and the Senate. The Chamber of Deputies has 257 directly elected members for four-year terms by proportional representation, with half of the seats renewed every two years. The seventy-two members of the Senate are directly elected in twenty-five three-seat electoral districts (twenty-four provinces and the city of Buenos Aires) for a six-year term, with one-third renewed every two years. Two of each district's Senate seats are awarded to the most-voted party and one to the second-largest party.

WHO CAN VOTE?

Elections in Argentina before the passage of the Saenz Peña Law in 1912 were for the elites, mainly the landed oligarchy.¹ The Saenz Peña Law established universal, secret, and obligatory male suffrage and the creation of an electoral list (*Padrón Electoral*).

Women

In 1947, Argentina extended suffrage to women.

Minorities

About 3 percent of Argentina's population is Mestizo, Amerindian, or other nonwhite groups.² There is an absence of information on the extent of their participation in public affairs generally and voting specifically.³

Voting Age

The voting age is eighteen.

Felons

Argentina has a complete ban on inmate voting.⁴

WHO CAN PEOPLE VOTE FOR?

Elections are held for president and members of the National Congress. In addition, governors, municipal mayors, and local authorities are elected according to their provincial or municipal constitutions.

THE ADMINISTRATION OF ELECTIONS

The administration of elections is carried out by several authorities, some of which are set up temporarily. The authority responsible for the conduct of national elections and the resolution of election disputes is the National Electoral Court (*Justicia Nacional Electoral*).⁵ It consists of twenty-four federal judges with competence in every one of the electoral districts in which the country is divided: the twenty-three provinces and the city of Buenos Aires. It also consists of a Court of Appeals—the National Electoral Chamber—which exerts its jurisdiction throughout the country and which is the highest authority in this area.

Another entity involved in the administration of elections is the Ministry of the Interior. It has a National Elections Directorate, which is responsible for activities such as the maintenance of the electoral register and the programming, organizing, and executing of the preliminary vote count during national elections.⁶

The electoral *juntas*, or electoral commissions, are temporary administrative bodies which form sixty days prior to each election to answer questions pertaining to the administration of the elections, determining the reasons for

validating or nullifying elections, and announcing the elected candidates.⁷ They are integrated with the federal electoral judge and other magistrates of the judicial branch and their decisions can be appealed before the National Electoral Chamber.

VOTING

Voting in Argentina is compulsory for people between the ages of eighteen and seventy. This measure was introduced in 1912. For Argentineans who reside abroad, voting is not compulsory.⁸

Voters can only cast ballots in precincts where their name is on the registration list. They must present their national ID card, which is verified by the polling place authorities. The authorities place a mark on the ID documents that the citizen has voted and also place a mark on the voter rolls. After verifying their registration and identity, voters are given an envelope in which they can place their ballot. They are invited to step into the voting booths where they can place their ballot of preference. They seal the envelope and deposit it in the voting urn.

THE REGULATION OF ELECTIONS: POLITICAL AND FINANCIAL REGULATIONS PERTAINING TO VOTING

Party Income: Ceilings, Bans on Sources of Income, and Disclosure Provisions

There is no ceiling on how much a party can raise overall.⁹ But there is a ceiling on how much a party can receive from each donor. Per year, political parties cannot receive contributions and donations greater than 1 percent of the total of the expenditures allowed for an organization, institution, or company and not more than 0.5 percent in the case of an individual. There is a ban on foreign, corporate, and anonymous donations to political parties. Parties also cannot accept contributions from gambling activities or donations from individuals who are obliged to make a contribution by their superiors or employers. Political parties have to disclose contributions received.

Party Expenditures: Ceilings and Disclosure Provisions

Party spending has to be disclosed and parties have to comply with a ceiling on expenditures per election cycle consisting of about \$1.3 per registered voter.

Table 3.1. Parliamentary Election Turnout in Argentina, 1946–2005

Electoral System: List Proportional Representation							
Year	Total Vote	Registration	Vote/Reg %	VAP	Vote/VAP %	Invalid %	Pop.Size
1946	2,839,507	3,405,173	83.40	10,018,560	28.30	2.50	15,654,000
1951	7,593,948	8,633,998	88.00	11,286,400	67.30	1.60	17,635,000
1954	7,906,858	9,194,157	86.00	11,994,880	65.90	2.00	18,742,000
1958	9,088,497	10,002,327	90.90	12,837,120	70.80	9.20	20,058,000
1960	8,870,202	10,187,586	87.10	13,228,160	67.10	25.20	20,669,000
1962	9,084,512	10,596,321	85.70	13,704,960	66.30	3.60	21,414,000
1963	9,717,677	11,353,936	85.60	13,919,100	69.80	21.20	22,179,000
1965	9,565,574	11,460,766	83.50	14,417,000	66.30	4.20	22,180,000
1973	12,235,481	14,302,497	85.50	16,315,200	75.00	2.60	24,720,000
1983	14,927,572	17,929,951	83.30	19,257,550	77.50	2.50	29,627,000
1985	15,326,907	18,649,101	82.20	19,711,250	77.80	2.00	30,325,000
1987	16,263,572	19,452,790	83.60	20,293,650	80.10	5.30	31,221,000
1989	16,867,095	20,022,072	84.20	20,552,960	82.10	2.10	32,114,000
1991	18,609,221	20,742,631	89.70	20,812,743	89.40	7.70	32,863,366
1993	17,090,830	21,443,953	79.70	21,886,150	78.10	6.90	33,671,000
1995	17,939,156	22,158,612	81.00	22,488,050	79.80	3.70	34,597,000
1998	18,135,267	23,184,491	78.20	23,230,160	78.10	6.20	35,739,000
1999	18,953,456	24,109,306	78.60	n/a	n/a	n/a	36,554,185
2001	18,602,837	24,735,483	75.20	n/a	n/a	21.00	n/a
2005	18,513,717	26,098,546	70.90	n/a	n/a	8.30	n/a

Notes: *Registered voters*—This represents the number of names on the voters' register at the time that the registration process closes, as reported by the electoral management body.
VAP (Voting Age Population)—The estimated voting age population is based on a country's population over the age of eighteen. It is not an exact measure of the VAP as it does not take into account legal or systemic barriers to the exercise of the franchise or account for non-eligible members of the population, such as resident non-citizens.
Invalid—invalid votes as % of total votes cast.
 Source: International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA)

Direct and Indirect Public Funding

Parties are entitled to direct public funding both during the election period and in between elections for use in party administration activities and campaign activities. Public funding is based on previous performance in elections. Indirect public funding is also available. The properties and activities of all official parties are exempt from taxes. Equal radio time is given by the state to all official political parties; and donors receive tax deductions if donations are given to the Permanent Parties Fund (*Fondo Partidario Permanente*), but not if donations are given to the parties themselves.

TURNOUT IN ELECTIONS

Voter turnout in Argentina has been declining among registered voters since the 1990s despite its compulsory character (see Table 3.1).

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Chapter Four

Brazil

ELECTORAL SYSTEM

Brazil is a federative, presidential republic. The president is elected every four years. Brazil's National Congress (*Congresso Nacional*) has two chambers. The Chamber of Deputies (*Câmara dos Deputados*) has 513 members, elected for a four-year term by proportional representation and the Federal Senate (*Senado Federal*), which has eighty-one members elected for an eight-year term, with elections every four years for alternately one-third and two-thirds of the seats.¹

Brazil's first republic was established in 1889. A Constituent Assembly drafted a new constitution, which was adopted in February 1891. Brazil's constitution eliminated the monarchy and established a federal republic, which replaced a parliament of senators appointed for life with an elected congress consisting of a house and senate. It also provided for an independent judiciary and an executive branch headed by an elected president. During the first five years of the republic, Brazil was a military dictatorship, but in 1894 Brazil's first civilian president was elected during the republic's first elections.

WHO CAN VOTE?

Women

Women were initially enfranchised at the state level. In 1927, in Rio Grande do Norte, state election laws were amended giving women the right to vote.² Women received the right to vote throughout the country in 1934.³ By 1994

women constituted nearly half of the electorate. In 1996 the Congress adopted a quota system (20 percent) for female candidates for city council and in 1997 it extended the mechanism to the 1998 general elections.⁴

In 1995, Brazil introduced a law requiring a 20 percent quota for women at the local government level, which two years later was raised to 30 percent to be effective in 2000.⁵ Furthermore, in 1997, a law requiring a 25 percent quota for women for state assemblies and the Federal Chamber was passed and intended to apply to the 1998 election.⁶ This law also posits that the quota increase to 30 percent for all elections including municipalities from 2000 onward. There are sanctions for not meeting the requirements. Candidates of the over-represented sex can be removed (but not replaced by candidates of the under-represented sex). But this only applies if the party submits candidates of the stipulated maximum per constituency.

Minorities

The indigenous peoples of Brazil face no restrictions in terms of voting.⁷ But, if the indigenous community collectively decides not to vote, which is compulsory, the decision prevails over the obligatory voting legislation since the indigenous communities have the constitutional right to live according to their traditions and customs.⁸

An Indian can be a candidate, since s/he is a citizen with full rights. To be a citizen, however, there are some restrictions, such as knowledge of the Portuguese language, for some positions. If these requirements are fulfilled, one can be a candidate since one is a citizen with full rights.

Voting Age

The 1988 constitution lowered the voting age, permitting sixteen- and seventeen-year-olds to vote on a voluntary basis. Voting by the illiterate and those aged over seventy is also voluntary. However, electoral enrollment and voting are mandatory for all literate citizens between the ages of eighteen and seventy.

Felons

Imprisonment disqualifies one from voting in Brazil.

WHO CAN PEOPLE VOTE FOR?

Brazilians can vote in presidential, congressional, and state elections, as well as municipal elections. The president, governors, and mayors are elected by

absolute majorities. If no candidate for these positions receives an absolute majority in the first round, a runoff is required between the top two candidates.⁹ The president, governors, and mayors have their respective vice president, vice governors, and vice mayors, who are elected on unified slates. Senators are elected by simple majorities.

THE ADMINISTRATION OF ELECTIONS

The Superior Electoral Court (Tribunal Superior Eleitoral, TSE) is responsible for presidential and senatorial elections as well as those for representatives, and state and local offices. This is an independent body consisting of seven members. Five of them are chosen through elections; three of them are judges selected from among the Superior Federal Court and two are judges from the Superior Court of Justice.¹⁰ Two judges are nominated by the president.

According to the Constitution, every state has a Federal Regional Electoral Tribunal (TSE). The TSE, along with the Regional Electoral Courts, judges, and electoral *juntas* (councils) are responsible for applying Brazil's electoral laws.¹¹ The activities of the electoral judges and courts consist of registering political parties and controlling their revenue, fixing the date of elections, and prosecuting and judging electoral crimes.¹²

VOTING

In Brazil, voting is mandatory. Brazilian citizens who would like to be excused from voting must complete an "electoral justification" and submit it to an electoral judge in the designated voting district.¹³ Failure to register to vote once reaching the age of eighteen subjects one to payment of a fine as well as other sanctions including not being able to get a passport or ID issued or not being able to renew matriculation in educational institutions financed by the government.¹⁴

Election day is a national holiday.

The voting method has undergone a variety of changes. Until 1966 individual paper ballots were used for each office and voters placed them in an envelope, which was inserted into the ballot box.¹⁵ A unified single ballot was introduced in 1966.

In 1987 the Superior Electoral Court began creating a centralized database of registered voters in order to be able to identify multiple registrations by a single voter and other irregularities.¹⁶ In 1993 and 1994, a network was built to connect all regional electoral tribunals and allow them to communicate with each other and update the centralized national register. The specifications for

Table 4.1. Parliamentary Election Turnout in Brazil, 1945–2002

<i>Electoral System: List Proportional Representation</i>							
<i>Year</i>	<i>Total Vote</i>	<i>Registration</i>	<i>Vote/Reg %</i>	<i>VAP</i>	<i>Vote/VAP %</i>	<i>Invalid %</i>	<i>Pop. Size</i>
1945	6,122,864	7,499,670	81.6	25,880,440	23.7	3.2	46,215,000
1947	2,635,680	6,205,415	2.5	27,125,280	9.7	10.80	48,438,000
1950	8,234,906	11,455,149	71.9	29,106,560	28.3	7.0	51,976,000
1954	9,890,604	15,104,604	65.5	31,403,900	31.5	6.6	57,098,000
1958	12,678,997	12,780,997	99.2	35,499,600	35.7	8.4	65,740,000
1962	14,747,221	18,528,847	79.6	40,011,840	36.9	17.7	74,096,000
1966	17,285,556	22,387,251	77.2	45,003,600	38.4	21.1	83,340,000
1970	22,435,521	28,966,114	77.5	52,259,200	42.9	30.3	93,320,000
1978	37,629,180	46,030,464	81.7	67,764,600	55.5	20.7	112,941,000
1982	48,466,898	58,871,378	82.3	76,084,200	63.7	15.1	126,807,000
1986	58,791,788	69,166,810	85.0	83,484,860	70.4	n/a	134,653,000
1990	70,918,635	83,817,593	84.6	92,622,720	76.6	40.1	144,723,000
1994	77,950,257	94,782,803	82.2	97,590,050	79.9	18.8	153,725,000
1998	83,296,067	106,101,067	78.5	102,802,554	81.0	n/a	161,790,311
2002	79,200,181	114,894,949	68.9	n/a	n/a	8.32	174,485,400

Notes: Proportional Population Representation for 2002 based on World Bank data.

Registered voters—This represents the number of names on the voters' register at the time that the registration process closes, as reported by the electoral management body.

VAP (Voting Age Population)—The estimated voting age population is based on a country's population over the age of eighteen. It is not an exact measure of the VAP as it does not take into account legal or systemic barriers to the exercise of the franchise or account for non-eligible members of the population, such as resident non-citizens. Invalid—Invalid votes as % of total votes cast.

Sources: International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA), World Bank, Election Guide

an electronic voting system were established in 1994 and in the 1996 elections, around 30 percent of the voters cast their ballot using Direct Recording Electronic Voting Systems (DREs).

THE REGULATION OF ELECTIONS: POLITICAL AND FINANCIAL REGULATIONS PERTAINING TO VOTING

Party Income: Ceilings, Bans on Sources of Income, and Disclosure Provisions

Brazil imposes a ceiling on how much a party can receive as a contribution and that amount is periodically updated.¹⁷ It also bans donations from foreign and corporate donors as well as government contractors and trade unions.

Both donors and political parties are required by law to disclose contributions made and received.

Party Expenditures: Ceilings and Disclosure Provisions

Parties face limits on election expenditures but there is no provision for public disclosure of expenditures by political parties.¹⁸

Direct and Indirect Public Funding

Parties receive direct public funding for administration and election campaign activities. Funding is distributed based on performance at previous elections. Indirect public funding in the form of free media access and special taxation status for political parties is also available.

TURNOUT IN ELECTIONS

Electoral turnout for parliamentary elections in Brazil has been decreasing in the past decade (see Table 4.1).

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2. U.S. Library of Congress Country Studies. *Brazil: Women In Politics*, available at: [lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?frd/cstdy:@field\(DOCID+br0102\)](http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?frd/cstdy:@field(DOCID+br0102)).

3. Inter-Parliamentary Union. *Women's Suffrage: A World Chronology of the Recognition of Women's Rights to Vote and to Stand for Election*, available at: www.ipu.org/wmn-e/suffrage.htm.
4. U.S. Library of Congress Country Studies. *Brazil: Women In Politics*, available at: [lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?frd/cstdy:@field\(DOCID+br0102\)](http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?frd/cstdy:@field(DOCID+br0102)).
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Part Three

EUROPE

Chapter Five

United Kingdom

ELECTORAL SYSTEM

The United Kingdom¹ (UK) is a monarch with a parliamentary system of government. Its national parliament in Westminster is a bicameral body constituted by the House of Commons and the House of Lords. The members of the House of Lords have a continuous mandate and are not elected. They are either appointed, hereditary members, or senior archbishops and bishops of the Church of England (since the Church of England is the 'established' Church of the State). In contrast, the members of the House of Commons are directly elected every five years. Elections are held for 659 seats in 659 single-member constituencies (529 for England, 72 for Scotland, 40 for Wales, and 18 for Northern Ireland).

The electoral system used for elections to the House of Commons is the first-past-the-post system (FPTP). The country is divided up into single constituencies and the candidate with the largest number of votes is elected to be the Member of Parliament for that constituency. Candidates can be from one of the major political parties, from a minor party, from any other organization that has been registered with the Electoral Commission, or stand as an 'Independent,' if they do not represent a registered party or group.

FPTP is not used throughout the UK or for all types of elections. As part of the devolution program, the Labor government, which was elected in 1997, introduced a new system for elections for the Scottish Parliament, the Welsh and Northern Ireland Assemblies, the European Parliament, and for electing the London mayor and assembly (see Table 5.1).²

Table 5.1. Electoral systems in use in the UK today

<i>System</i>	<i>Body Elected</i>
First-Past-the-Post (also known as Single Member Simple Plurality)	House of Commons Some English/Welsh, all Scottish local authorities
Multi Member Simple Plurality Additional Member System	Some English/Welsh local authorities Scottish Parliament Welsh Assembly London Assembly
Single Transferable Vote	Northern Ireland Assembly
Regional Party (closed) lists	European Parliament
Supplementary Vote	London Mayor

Source: David Denver (2003). *Elections and Voters in Britain*. New York: Palgrave, p. 169

WHO CAN VOTE?

The first step toward a more inclusive electoral system began with the 1832 Representation of the People Act (also called the Great Reform Act), which made reductions in the property qualifications and established residency as a requirement for voting.³ The franchise was further extended by the 1867 Representation of the People Act, the Second Reform Act, and later by the 1884 Representation of the People Act, as these gave voting rights to all households who paid rates in boroughs (towns) and county (more rural) constituencies, respectively. By then the right to vote was held by about 58-60 percent of the adult male population.⁴

It is interesting to note that the principle “one person, one vote” came into force only in 1949. Before 1949, educated or affluent voters were allowed to vote multiple times in different constituencies.⁵

Currently, to vote in UK parliamentary elections, one must be a British citizen or other Commonwealth citizen or citizen of the Irish Republic who is resident in the UK. Groups disqualified from voting are those currently in prison (see below), those convicted for an electoral offense (disqualification for a period of five years), those in detention in mental health institutions, and members of the House of Lords. British citizens living abroad are also entitled to a postal vote, as long as they have been living abroad for less than fifteen years.

Women

Before 1918 only men were allowed to vote, but in that year, women aged thirty or over gained the right to vote and to be able to stand for election as

Members of Parliament.⁶ In 1928, the voting age for women was lowered to twenty-one (the same age as for men at that time).

In the UK, there is no constitutional or election law quota for women's representation in national parliaments, but there is a political party quota for women candidates.⁷ The Liberal Democrats have a rule that in each constituency at least one-third of the candidates must be female. The Labor Party reserved 50 percent of their winnable seats in the 1997 general election for female candidate-only shortlists, and for the first elections to the Scottish Parliament and National Assembly for Wales in 1999, it used a system of selecting their candidates so as to improve women's representation.

After the 2001 General Election, the Parliament passed the Sex Discrimination (Election Candidates) Act, which allows political parties to use positive action to get more women into elected positions, if they wish to do so, without infringing on the employment law.

Voting Age

The Representation of the People Act of 1969 lowered the voting age from twenty-one to eighteen.

Felons

Convicted persons who are currently detained in pursuance of their sentences cannot vote, but remand prisoners, unconvicted prisoners, and civil prisoners in default of fine or breach of collateral can vote.⁸

In the UK, convicted prisoners have been deprived of the right to vote since the Forfeiture Act of 1870. The origins of the electoral ban on convicted prisoners can be found in the notion of 'civic death,' which is a punishment that consists of withdrawing citizenship rights.

WHO CAN PEOPLE VOTE FOR?

In the UK, elections are held at the local, regional, national, and supranational level.⁹ At the local level, elections are held for councilors to serve on district, borough, city, county, and unitary councils. At the regional level, there are elections for members of the Greater London Authority, the National Assembly for Wales, the Scottish Parliament and, until its suspension in October 2002, the Northern Ireland Assembly. At national level—also called general elections—UK citizens vote for members of the House of Commons (MPs) in the Parliament at Westminster. Also, supranational level elections are held for British representatives (MEPs) at the European Parliament.

THE ADMINISTRATION OF ELECTIONS

Elections in the UK are run by government bodies, but in a decentralized manner.

The Department for Constitutional Affairs (formerly the Lord Chancellor's Department) is responsible for coordination of UK-wide electoral matters and for all issues covered by the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000, such as generic issues associated with national and regional referendums, registration of political parties, rules on donations to political parties, and third party donations.¹⁰

The Department for Constitutional Affairs is also responsible for House of Commons and European Parliament elections in England and Wales. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has responsibility for the policy and conduct of local and mayoral elections in England and Wales and any future English Regional Assembly elections.

The Secretary of State for Scotland is responsible for the conduct and funding of elections to the Scottish Parliament.¹¹ Scottish ministers are responsible for issuing rules for the conduct of local government elections and local authorities themselves are responsible for organizing and conducting these elections.

The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland is responsible for electoral law relating to the Northern Ireland Assembly. The chief electoral officer for Northern Ireland (the CEO) is the person responsible for all aspects of electoral administration in Northern Ireland, including the conduct of all elections and referendums and electoral registration.¹² The CEO holds a Crown appointment. The Electoral Office for Northern Ireland (EONI) is the organization that supports the CEO in performing his statutory duties. The EONI consists of headquarters based in Belfast and nine Area Electoral Offices located across Northern Ireland. EONI is funded by the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland through the Northern Ireland Office.

The Secretary of State for Wales is responsible for electoral law relating to the National Assembly for Wales.

The Role of the Electoral Commission

The UK's Electoral Commission, established in November 2000 by the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000, is an independent body that oversees new controls on donations to and campaign spending by political parties and others. It also keeps under review electoral law and practice and promotes public awareness of the electoral process. Furthermore, the Commission has a statutory responsibility to evaluate each local authority

pilot scheme to try new ways of voting and publishes the official results of parliamentary elections.

In 2002, the Boundary Committee for England (formerly the Local Government Commission for England), whose duties are to review local electoral boundaries, became a statutory committee of the Electoral Commission.¹³

VOTING

Voting in the UK is not compulsory. It can be done in person or, on application, by post or proxy.¹⁴

Voting is done through paper ballots, but pilot schemes of e-voting are being explored. In 1997, a government working party examined the electoral procedures and recommended that pilot schemes of innovative electoral procedures be used to evaluate their effectiveness. This recommendation was enacted through the Representation of the People Act 2000, which allowed local authorities to run electoral pilot schemes at local elections in England and Wales.¹⁵ Thus, election pilots using electronic voting and counting have taken place. In its report on the 2003 pilot projects, the UK Electoral Commission recommended the development of future e-enabled elections. This recommendation was accepted by the government.

THE REGULATION OF ELECTIONS: POLITICAL AND FINANCIAL REGULATIONS PERTAINING TO VOTING

Party Income: Ceilings, Bans on Sources of Income, and Disclosure Provisions

There are no ceilings on party income, but there is a ban on receiving contributions from anonymous sources.¹⁶

Party income is subject to disclosure provisions, which are mandated by the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000. It requires political parties to submit a quarterly return to the Electoral Commission detailing donations it has accepted in excess of £5,000 (when received by the party's central organization) or of £1,000 (when received by a local branch of the party).¹⁷ The reports are then published by the Electoral Commission.

Party Expenditures: Ceilings and Disclosure Provisions

Limits on campaign expenditures by political parties were introduced for the first time by the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000.¹⁸

Table 5.2. Parliamentary Election Turnout in the UK, 1945–2001

<i>Electoral System: First-Past-the-Post</i>							
<i>Year</i>	<i>Total Vote</i>	<i>Registration</i>	<i>Vote/Reg. %</i>	<i>VAP</i>	<i>Vote/VAP %</i>	<i>Invalid %</i>	<i>Pop. Size</i>
1945	24,117,191	33,240,391	72.60	34,427,400	70.10	n/a	49,182,000
1950	28,771,124	34,412,255	83.60	35,261,100	81.60	n/a	50,373,000
1951	28,596,594	34,919,331	81.90	35,148,400	81.40	n/a	50,202,000
1955	26,759,729	34,852,179	76.80	35,327,310	75.70	n/a	51,199,000
1959	27,862,652	35,397,304	78.70	35,968,320	77.50	n/a	52,128,000
1964	27,698,221	35,894,054	77.20	36,864,840	75.10	0.10	54,213,000
1966	27,314,646	35,957,245	76.00	37,026,000	73.80	0.20	54,450,000
1970	28,386,145	39,342,013	72.20	39,895,200	71.20	0.10	55,410,000
1974	31,382,414	39,753,863	78.90	40,298,400	77.90	0.10	55,970,000
1974	29,226,810	40,072,970	72.90	40,298,400	72.50	0.10	55,970,000
1979	31,233,208	41,095,490	76.00	41,608,720	75.10	0.40	56,228,000
1983	30,722,241	42,192,999	72.80	42,846,520	71.70	0.20	56,377,000
1987	32,566,523	43,180,573	75.40	43,326,080	75.20	0.10	57,008,000
1992	33,653,800	43,240,084	77.80	44,658,460	75.40	0.10	57,998,000
1997	31,289,097	43,784,559	71.50	45,093,510	69.40	n/a	58,563,000
2001	26,365,192	44,403,238	59.40	45,804,132	57.60	n/a	59,434,645

Notes: Registered voters—This represents the number of names on the voters' register at the time that the registration process closes, as reported by the electoral management body.

VAP (Voting Age Population)—The estimated voting age population is based on a country's population over the age of eighteen. It is not an exact measure of the VAP as it does not take into account legal or systemic barriers to the exercise of the franchise or account for non-eligible members of the population, such as resident non-citizens.

Invalid—Invalid votes as % of total votes cast.

Source: International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA)

The limit on what a party may spend is determined by the number of seats it contests. There are also provisions for disclosure of spending.¹⁹

Direct and Indirect Public Funding

Political parties are entitled to direct public funding, for the receipt of which parties must have current representation in the legislature.²⁰

Indirect public funding in the form of free media access is also available and it is allocated on the basis of the number of candidates put forward in the present election. Also, there is free broadcasting time for parties that are fielding candidates in more than one-sixth of the seats at Westminster, Scottish Parliament, National Assembly for Wales, Northern Ireland Assembly, Greater London Assembly, or local elections.

Parties have no special taxation status to act as a form of indirect public funding.

TURNOUT IN ELECTIONS

Generally, the turnout in the UK for European Union (EU) elections is quite low. In 1999, the turnout was the lowest in Europe at 24 percent. For the EU 2004 parliamentary elections, the UK had a voter turnout of 38.2 percent for seventy-eight seats in the Parliament (before EU's enlargement, the UK had eighty-seven seats).²¹

For the last three decades, turnout for parliamentary elections in the UK has been above 70 percent (see Table 5.2). However, during the elections in 2001, there was a decrease in turnout as only about 60 percent of the registered voters cast a ballot.

NOTES

1. The United Kingdom is comprised of the nations of England, Scotland, and Wales (which together comprise Great Britain) and Northern Ireland.

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Chapter Six

France

ELECTORAL SYSTEM

France is a presidential republic with a bicameral Parliament. The president, elected by direct popular vote, is head of state. He appoints the prime minister, who is head of government. The bicameral French Parliament consists of the National Assembly and the Senate. The National Assembly is more powerful than the Senate, though both chambers share legislative authority.

The 577 members of the Assembly are elected through the first-past-the-post system for five years by direct universal suffrage. This system was reinstated for the 1988 elections and has been in force ever since.¹ The 321 members of the Senate are elected by indirect universal suffrage by an electoral college in each department made up of deputies, general councilors, regional councilors, and representatives of the municipal councils. A law approved in July 2003, introduced reforms in senatorial elections that specified that senators would henceforth be elected to six-year terms, with one-half of the Senate elected every three years. Previously, senators were elected for nine-year terms with one-third of the Senate elected every three years. Furthermore, the law increased the number of Senate seats from 321 to 346, to take effect in 2010.

WHO CAN VOTE?

Women

Women acquired the right to vote in France in 1944.²

The French constitution was reformed in 1999, a reform known as the “parity reform,” to state that “the law favors the equal access of women and men

to electoral mandates and elective functions” and that political parties were responsible for facilitating equal access.

In 2000, a new election law mandated that the parity reform would apply to all elections with a proportional ballot: municipal elections for towns with more than 3,500 inhabitants; Senatorial elections for senators selected by proportional representation; regional elections; elections to the Assembly of Corsica; elections of the general council of the territory Saint-Pierre-et-Miquelon; European Parliament elections; council of Paris elections; and elections to the arrondissement councils of Paris, Lyons, and Marseille.

This law envisions sanctions for non-compliance. If the deviation from parity reaches 2 percent among electoral candidates, the public funding the party receives is reduced. Furthermore, at the municipal level, electoral authorities do not accept party lists that do not comply with the quota requirements.

In terms of party quotas, the Socialist Party (PS) has a 50 percent quota for electoral lists (1990).

Voting Age

The voting age for French citizens is eighteen years or older.

Felons

French courts have the power to impose loss of voting rights as an additional punishment.³

WHO CAN PEOPLE VOTE FOR?

Besides elections for the Parliament, France also holds presidential elections. The president is chosen by direct universal suffrage for a five-year renewable term in a two-ballot majority poll. Candidates must be sponsored by at least 500 national and/or local elected representatives. France also holds regional elections every six years (to elect regional councilors who in turn elect a regional president), municipal elections every six years (to elect city mayors and councilors), and cantonal elections every six years (to elect half of the members of the general councils of France’s 100 departments).

Furthermore, as France is part of the European Union, it holds elections for the European Parliament. These are held to elect the seventy-eight French members of Parliament for a five-year term by direct universal suffrage with voting by proportional representation for national lists.⁴ Under the terms of

the Treaty on European Union, citizens of other European Union states living in France may vote for one of the French lists of candidates.

THE ADMINISTRATION OF ELECTIONS

The French Ministry of Internal Affairs is the election management body. The Ministry supervises the organization of elections, which is decentralized through the municipalities. The municipalities are responsible for many of its aspects, including the maintenance of voter lists. The Ministry of Internal Affairs carries out its supervisory role by issuing instructions to the municipalities.⁵

VOTING

Voting is not compulsory. In 2003, the Internet Rights Forum, a private body supported by the French government, recommended that remote e-voting should only be introduced for French citizens abroad in order to elect delegates of the Assembly of the French Citizens Abroad (*Assemblée des Français de l'Étranger*—AFE)—a public legislative body, which elects 150 delegates who elect the twelve members of the Upper House of the French Parliament to represent the French citizens living abroad.⁶ However, they recommend that every voter should be able to use polling place e-voting.

In 2003, French citizens residing in the United States voted for their representatives to the AFE by remote e-voting. Polling place e-voting was made possible by a decree passed by the government on March 18, 2004. It initially authorized thirty-three municipalities, and later an additional twenty communes, to use electronic voting machines.

THE REGULATION OF ELECTIONS: POLITICAL AND FINANCIAL REGULATIONS PERTAINING TO VOTING

Party Income: Ceilings, Bans on Sources of Income, and Disclosure Provisions

French parties are required to disclose all contributions made to them.⁷ However, donors to political parties are not required to do so.

Parties do not have a ceiling on how much they can receive as contributions, but they do face restrictions regarding the sources of that income. France allows donations from foreign individuals, but not foreign subsidiaries.⁸ It also

Table 6.1. Parliamentary Election Turnout in France, 1945–2002

<i>Electoral System: First-Past-the-Post</i>							
<i>Year</i>	<i>Total Vote</i>	<i>Registration</i>	<i>Vote/Reg. %</i>	<i>VAP</i>	<i>Vote/VAP %</i>	<i>Invalid %</i>	<i>Pop. Size</i>
1945	19,657,603	24,622,862	79.80	26,588,000	73.90	2.4	39,100,000
1946	20,215,200	24,696,949	81.90	27,416,240	73.70	1.7	40,318,000
1951	19,670,655	24,530,523	80.20	28,721,840	68.50	2.8	42,238,000
1956	22,138,046	26,772,255	82.70	29,813,240	74.30	2.9	43,843,000
1958	21,026,543	27,244,992	77.20	29,560,740	71.10	2.5	44,789,000
1962	18,918,154	27,540,358	68.70	31,018,680	61.00	3.1	46,998,000
1967	22,910,839	28,242,549	81.10	32,207,500	71.10	2.3	49,550,000
1968	22,500,524	28,178,087	79.90	32,441,500	69.40	1.7	49,910,000
1973	24,299,210	29,883,738	81.30	34,405,800	70.60	2.3	52,130,000
1978	24,658,645	34,424,388	71.60	38,892,210	63.40	1.9	53,277,000
1981	25,182,623	35,536,041	70.90	39,395,180	63.90	1.4	53,966,000
1986	28,736,080	36,614,738	78.50	41,104,040	69.90	4.3	55,546,000
1988	24,472,329	36,977,321	66.20	42,088,500	58.10	2.0	56,118,000
1993	26,860,177	38,968,660	68.90	43,826,920	61.30	5.3	57,667,000
1997	26,649,818	39,215,743	68.00	44,521,902	59.90	4.9	58,581,450
2002	22,186,165	36,783,746	60.30	n/a	n/a	4.4	n/a

Notes: Registered voters—This represents the number of names on the voters' register at the time that the registration process closes, as reported by the electoral management body.

VAP (Voting Age Population)—The estimated voting age population is based on a country's population over the age of eighteen. It is not an exact measure of the VAP as it does not take into account legal or systemic barriers to the exercise of the franchise or account for non-eligible members of the population, such as resident non-citizens.

Invalid—Invalid votes as % of total votes cast.

Sources: International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IIDEA), International Foundation for Election Systems (IFES), World Bank

bans donations from corporations, government contractors, trade unions, and anonymous donations.

Party Expenditures: Ceilings and Disclosure Provisions

France has disclosure provisions for political party spending as well as ceilings on expenditures.

Direct and Indirect Public Funding

Parties are entitled to direct public funding based on the number of candidates they put forward in the election. They also receive indirect public funding in the form of free media access based on their current representation in the Assembly. Parties are not entitled to a special taxation status, but donors can deduct a donation from their taxable income.⁹

TURNOUT IN ELECTIONS

Electoral turnout for French parliamentary elections has been decreasing for the last three decades from a high of 82 percent in 1973 to a low of 60 percent in 2002. (See Table 6.1 above.)

NOTES

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Chapter Seven

Germany

ELECTORAL SYSTEM

The Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) is a parliamentary democracy. The Parliament consists of a lower house, the Bundestag, whose members are directly elected by universal adult suffrage, and an upper house, the Bundesrat, composed of representatives appointed by the Länder. The Bundestag is the more powerful of these two chambers and its members are elected for a four-year term of office. The Bundesrat does not have a fixed term. The terms of its members depend on that of the government of the Land (State) they represent.¹

The composition of the Bundestag is determined by the mixed member proportional (MMP) system, which combines elements of the single-member constituency plurality system with proportional representation.² The country is divided into single-member constituencies (*Wahlkreise*) equal to half the total amount of seats in the *Bundestag*. These constituencies are allocated among the Länder in proportion to the size of their populations, and seats are filled by the first-past-the-post method.

Political parties nominate individual candidates for the direct mandate (*Direktmandate*) elections at the constituency level and set up lists of individuals at the Land level (*Landesliste*). Thus, Germans casts two votes: a first vote (*Erststimme*) for a constituency candidate, and a second vote (*Zweitstimme*) for a closed party list. Half of the deputies are elected from among the individual candidates and half of them on the basis of the lists. The second vote is the most important as it determines the composition of the Bundestag.

To participate in the proportional allocation of Bundestag seats, a party must receive at least 5 percent of all valid second votes cast. This requirement is waived if a party wins three or more constituency seats. To determine how many seats each party will receive, its total number of second votes is divided by the aggregate sum of second votes cast for all qualifying parties, and this amount is multiplied by the total number of *Bundestag* seats to be allocated. This method produces a whole number, which is the number of seats initially allocated to the party, and a decimal fraction. Once this calculation is performed for all qualifying parties, the sum or aggregate number of allocated seats is obtained. If this total equals the number of Bundestag seats, the proportional allocation of seats at the federal level is concluded. On the other hand, if this total is smaller than the total number of seats to be allocated—as usually is the case—unallocated seats are awarded to the parties according to the descending order of their decimal fractions.

The mandates obtained by each party are then allocated at the Land level in proportion to the number of votes received by their Land lists. The direct mandates won by a party at the constituency level of a particular Land are then subtracted from the total number of seats allocated to that party's list, and the remaining seats are filled by the candidates on the Land list in the order determined before the election. In some cases, a party may win more constituency seats in the first vote of a particular Land than the number of seats it is entitled to according to the result of the second vote. In such cases, the party keeps the overlap or surplus seats (*Überhangmandate*), and the total number of seats in the Bundestag is increased accordingly.

Historically, the German Empire's Electoral Act of 1869 regulated elections to the *Reichstag* of the North German Confederation and was adopted as an imperial law in 1871.³ That same year, the Empire was divided into constituencies and the first general elections were held. The Reichstag was directly elected by universal manhood suffrage on the basis of one man, one vote: men aged twenty-five or over who lived in one of the federal states were allowed to vote.

WHO CAN VOTE?

Women

Women received the right to vote in 1918.⁴

In Germany, there are no constitutional or election law quotas for women in the *Bundestag*, but there are political party quotas.⁵ The Party of Democratic Socialism (*Partei der Demokratischen Sozialismus*, PDS) has a 50

percent quota for women on party lists. Since 1986, the Alliance 90/The Greens (*Bündnis 90/Die Grünen*) has a 50 percent quota for women on party lists. Since 1996, the Christian Democratic Union has provisions that at least one-third of the electoral list candidates must be women; and the Social Democratic Party of Germany (*Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands*, SPD) introduced a quota system in 1988, with the target being to have a 25 percent women's composition by 1990, 33 percent by 1994, and 40 percent by 1998. The only party that does not use a positive action system is the Liberal Party (FDP).⁶

Voting Age

In 1972, the voting age was lowered from twenty-one to eighteen.

Hence, the right to vote in Germany is accorded to German citizens who have reached the age of eighteen. Other requirements are residency in the country for at least three months, but under certain circumstances, German nationals who have not yet been resident in the Federal Republic for three months or who live outside the country may vote (ex: live outside Germany as civil servants, soldiers, or civil service employees by order of their supreme authority or reside in other EU Member States).

Felons

Courts have the right to withdraw voting powers for up to five years after the completion of the prison sentence as an additional punishment, but the actual use of this sanction is rare.

WHO CAN PEOPLE VOTE FOR?

Besides for the *Bundestag*, Germans can also vote in state and local elections.⁷ Elections to state parliaments are held in each of the sixteen states every four or five years. In addition to these federal and state elections, there are also local or communal elections in each city, town, and local community. These institutions are often called "*Kommunalparlamente*" (communal parliaments) and govern matters relating to the local community within the framework of the federal or state legislature. This is described as "communal self-government." The highest representative in a city or town is the mayor ("*Oberbürgermeister*" or "*Bürgermeister*") while in rural districts it is the chief administrative officer ("*Landrat*").

In addition to federal, state, and local elections, Germans also vote in European Parliament (EP) elections, which are held every five years. Germany has ninety-nine seats in the EP.⁸

THE ADMINISTRATION OF ELECTIONS

The electoral administration bodies in Germany are: the federal returning officer and the Federal Electoral Committee for the electoral area, a land returning officer and a Land Electoral Committee for each Land, a district returning officer and a District Electoral Committee for each constituency, an electoral officer and an Electoral Board for each polling district, and at least one electoral officer and one Electoral Board for each constituency to ascertain the results of the postal ballot.⁹

The federal returning officer is the one responsible for preparing and conducting Bundestag and European elections, supported by the electoral bodies at Land, constituency, and electoral district level.¹⁰ The federal returning officer and his deputy are appointed by the Federal Ministry of the Interior indefinitely. In continuation of an old tradition going back to the *Reichstag* elections, the president of the Federal Statistical Office is regularly entrusted with the responsibilities of the federal returning officer.

The members of the Federal Electoral Committee, which is composed of the federal returning officer as chairman and eight committee members, are appointed by the federal returning officer at the proposal of the parties.¹¹

VOTING

Voting in Germany is not compulsory. Only registered voters or those who have a polling card may vote (polling cards are given to voters who will be unable to go to his or her polling station on election day).¹² Anyone entered in a voters' register may only vote in the polling district in which he or she is entered. Anyone possessing a polling card may vote in the constituency in which the polling card was issued by casting his or her vote in any polling district of this constituency, or by postal ballot.

Germany started e-voting tests and pilot projects in 1999 at non-political elections (at universities), at the local advisory level (youth community and senior citizens councils), and at public and private employee councils.¹³ Efforts in the field of e-voting in Germany focus on connecting all polling stations through an electronic network and building an electronic voter register.

THE REGULATION OF ELECTIONS: POLITICAL AND FINANCIAL REGULATIONS PERTAINING TO VOTING

Party Income: Ceilings, Bans on Sources of Income, and Disclosure Provisions

Since German industry was instrumental in Hitler's rise to power, the German Constitution of 1949 (*Grundgesetz*) stipulated that parties have to account to the public for the sources of their funds.¹⁴ After a sharp decline of public confidence in political parties following a political finance scandal (the "Flick affair"), the constitution was amended in 1983 and since January 1984 parties have to publicly account for the sources and use of their funds.¹⁵

Germany has no ceilings on how much can be given to parties or how much a party can raise. There is a ban on anonymous donations to political parties, but there is no ban on foreign, corporate, or government contractors' donations to political parties. Also, donors do not have to disclose contributions made to political parties, but the parties have to disclose contributions received.

Party Expenditures: Ceilings and Disclosure Provisions

Germany has a provision for public disclosure of expenditures by political parties, but there are no ceilings on party election expenditures.¹⁶

Direct and Indirect Public Funding

Parties are entitled to direct public funding during the election period and between elections.¹⁷ The basis for allocating the fund is performance at the previous election. To qualify for access to public funding a party needs an 0.5 percent share of the national vote (in a federal or European election) or a 1.0 percent share of the vote in at least one of the (individually held) 16 state elections.¹⁸

Parties are also entitled to indirect public funding in the form of free media access. Parties may also receive indirect public funding in the form of special taxation status, and donors to parties are entitled to tax credits and tax deductions.

TURNOUT IN ELECTIONS

Above 70 percent of the German voting age population has voted in elections from 1949 through 1998 (see Table 7.1).

Table 7.1. Parliamentary Election Turnout in Germany, 1949–2002

Mixed Member Proportional (MMP)							
Year	Total Vote	Registration	Vote/Reg %	VAP	Vote/VAP %	Invalid %	Pop. Size
1949	24,495,614	31,207,620	78.50	32,035,480	76.50	3.1	47,111,000
1953	28,479,550	33,120,940	86.00	35,346,630	80.60	3.3	51,227,000
1957	31,072,894	35,400,923	87.80	35,484,630	87.60	3.8	51,427,000
1961	32,849,624	37,440,715	87.70	37,820,300	86.90	4.0	54,029,000
1965	33,416,207	38,510,395	86.80	41,328,000	80.90	2.4	59,040,000
1969	33,523,064	38,677,235	86.70	41,979,600	79.90	1.7	60,840,000
1972	37,761,589	41,446,302	91.10	42,552,300	88.70	0.8	61,670,000
1976	38,165,753	42,058,015	90.70	45,519,620	83.80	0.9	61,513,000
1980	38,292,176	43,231,741	88.60	46,786,360	81.80	0.9	61,561,000
1983	39,279,529	44,088,935	89.10	48,522,590	81.00	0.9	61,421,000
1987	38,225,294	45,327,982	84.30	50,954,310	75.00	0.9	64,499,127
1990	46,995,915	60,436,560	77.80	64,285,650	73.10	1.1	79,365,000
1994	47,737,999	60,452,009	79.00	65,942,100	72.40	1.3	81,410,000
1998	49,947,087	60,762,751	82.20	66,313,874	75.30	1.6	82,172,259
2002	48,582,761	61,432,868	79.10	n/a	n/a	1.2	82,508,000

Notes: Population size for 2002 based on World Bank data.

Registered voters—This represents the number of names on the voters' register at the time that the registration process closes, as reported by the electoral management body.

VAP (Voting Age Population)—The estimated voting age population is based on a country's population over the age of eighteen. It is not an exact measure of the VAP as it does not take into account legal or systemic barriers to the exercise of the franchise or account for non-eligible members of the population, such as resident non-citizens. Invalid—Invalid votes as % of total votes cast.

Sources: International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA), World Bank

NOTES

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Chapter Eight

Italy

ELECTORAL SYSTEM

Italy has a parliamentary system of government. It has a bicameral Parliament (*Parlamento*) consisting of the Senate (*Senato della Repubblica*) with 322 seats and the Chamber of Deputies (*Camera dei Deputati*) with 630 seats.

Elections for the Chamber of Deputies are conducted using a proportional representation system for 629 of 630 seats, using blocked party lists for 617 of the 630 members elected from Italy and for the twelve members elected by Italian citizens overseas. A first-past-the-post system is used for the single-member constituency in Valle d'Aosta.

The Senate has 315 elected members and seven appointed for life by the president of the Republic. For Senate elections, Italy is divided into twenty constituencies that correspond to Italy's twenty administrative regions. Most of them are multi-mandate constituencies with the number of seats proportional to the population. However, in five regions with special status, the number of Senate seats is fixed. Overall, 301 Senate seats are distributed proportionally to the successful coalition and party lists in eighteen regions. In the *Trentino-Alto Adige* region, six senators are elected under a first-past-the-post system, while one senator is elected based on the votes cast for unsuccessful candidates in the single-mandate constituencies. In Valle d'Aosta, one senator is elected in a single mandate constituency. Also, six senators are elected from the out-of-country constituency.

The Italian election legislation underwent major amendments in December 2005. The system was changed from a mixed one with a strong majoritarian component to a predominantly proportional system with closed lists.¹

WHO CAN VOTE?

Women

Women received the right to vote in Italy in 1945.

Voting Age

For Senate elections, citizens must be at least twenty-five years old to vote, while citizens eighteen years of age or more are entitled to vote for the Chamber of Deputies.

Felons

Not all felons are banned from voting. Disqualification from voting depends on the crime.

WHO CAN PEOPLE VOTE FOR?

Italy holds direct elections for the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate. Direct elections are also held for local council and mayor positions. As members of the European Union, Italians also vote directly for European Parliament members, which can have seventy-eight seats in the Union's Parliament.

Italy's president is indirectly elected. He is chosen in a joint session by deputies, senators, and representatives of the country's twenty regions.

THE ADMINISTRATION OF ELECTIONS

Italy's election administration structure is complex. Several judicial bodies and offices are responsible for tabulating official results and distributing seats. The National Central Electoral Office (NCEO), within the Court of Cassation, is responsible for tabulating results for the Chamber of Deputies and Regional Electoral Offices (REO). The regional Courts of Appeals are responsible for tabulating the Senate results. The judiciary's role in election disputes is limited as the ultimate authority in disputes over election results rests with the newly elected legislature.

The Ministry of the Interior's Central Directorate for Elections, a permanent body, makes administrative arrangements for the elections (ensures that ballots and other election material are available throughout the country), tabulates the unofficial results, and prepares the first calculations for the seat

allocations. Municipal offices have a leading role in preparing voter lists and implementing the election process at the local level.

Municipal authorities have a variety of electoral tasks, but their most important role lies in preparing the voter rolls and appointing Polling Electoral Office (PEO) members other than the chairpersons. These tasks are performed or overseen by Municipal Election Commissions (MECs), which are permanent bodies chaired by the mayor.

VOTING

Voting is a constitutionally mandated civic duty in Italy, but no sanctions are imposed on those who do not vote.

Voting is done in person at polling stations. There are, however, special voting provisions for certain types of voters, such as those in hospitals or in prisons or detention centers. Home voting is available for those unable to leave their homes to vote.

THE REGULATION OF ELECTIONS: POLITICAL AND FINANCIAL REGULATIONS PERTAINING TO VOTING

Party Income: Ceilings, Bans on Sources of Income, and Disclosure Provisions

The Italian electoral system has provisions for the disclosure of contributions to political parties.² Both donors and political parties are required to disclose contributions made and received, respectively. There is no ceiling on how much a party can raise, but there is a ceiling on how much a donor can contribute per election cycle.

There is no ban on foreign, corporate, or anonymous donations to political parties.

Party Expenditures: Ceilings and Disclosure Provisions

Italian law sets limits on campaign contributions and expenditures by both parties and candidates. There are provisions for public disclosure of expenditures by political parties.

Direct and Indirect Public Funding

Direct public funding is available to parties both during the election period and in between elections for campaign purposes. Indirect public funding is

Table 8.1. Parliamentary Election Turnout in Italy, 1946–2006

Year	Parliamentary Elections Electoral System: List PR						Pop. Size
	Total Vote	Registration	Vote/Reg %	VAP	Vote/VAP %	Invalid %	
1946	24,947,187	28,005,449	89.10	28,346,220	88.00	7.70	44,994,000
1948	26,854,203	29,117,554	92.20	28,794,780	93.30	2.20	45,706,000
1953	28,410,851	30,267,080	93.90	31,041,400	91.50	4.30	47,756,000
1958	30,399,708	32,436,022	93.70	32,367,060	93.90	2.80	49,041,000
1963	31,766,058	34,201,660	92.90	33,328,680	95.30	3.20	50,498,000
1968	33,003,249	35,566,681	92.80	35,449,700	93.10	3.60	52,910,000
1972	34,524,106	37,049,654	93.20	36,454,700	94.70	3.20	54,410,000
1976	37,741,404	40,423,131	93.40	39,547,710	95.40	2.70	55,701,000
1979	38,112,228	42,181,664	90.40	41,093,160	92.70	3.90	56,292,000
1983	39,114,321	43,936,534	89.00	42,627,000	91.80	5.70	56,836,000
1987	40,599,490	45,689,829	88.90	43,008,750	94.40	4.90	57,345,000
1992	41,479,764	47,435,964	87.40	44,918,610	92.30	5.40	56,859,000
1994	41,461,260	48,135,041	86.10	45,641,100	90.80	5.90	57,049,000
1996	40,496,438	48,846,238	82.90	46,363,590	87.30	7.80	57,239,000
2001	40,195,500	49,358,947	81.40	47,332,575	84.90	7.20	57,684,294
2006	39,425,980	47,160,264	83.60	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Notes: *Registered voters*—This represents the number of names on the voters' register at the time that the registration process closes, as reported by the electoral management body.

VAP (Voting Age Population)—The estimated voting age population is based on a country's population over the age of eighteen. It is not an exact measure of the VAP as it does not take into account legal or systemic barriers to the exercise of the franchise or account for non-eligible members of the population, such as resident non-citizens.

Invalid—Invalid votes as % of total votes cast.

Source: International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA)

also available. It varies from free media access, to tax deductions for donors to political parties, to parties being able to send electoral propaganda material by post at reduced rates.

TURNOUT IN ELECTIONS

For the past decade, turnout in Italy has remained high and stable above 80 percent (see Table 8.1).

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Chapter Nine

Spain

ELECTORAL SYSTEM

Spain is a parliamentary monarchy. An electoral system in Spain began to exist as early as the nineteenth century.¹ With the invasion of the Napoleonic army, there were calls for a national assembly (*las Cortes*). The deputies of this assembly—called “*Cortes de Cadiz*” (the Cadiz Parliament)—were elected by popular vote according to the “Instructions for the election of deputies” of 1810—an early version of electoral law in Spain. The Cadiz Parliament declared itself a sovereign and constitutive body and became the first modern parliament in Spanish history. That ended with the enactment of the Constitution of 1812.

The electoral laws formally began in 1837 and universal suffrage was established in 1869. The electoral laws were consolidated by the law of 1907. Between 1810 and 1936, twelve electoral laws had been passed as well as many other regulations governing the holding of fifty-five parliamentary elections in Spain. From 1936 to 1939, Spain plunged into civil war between the Popular Front government, a left-wing alliance of parties, and the nationalists, led by General Franco, which ended with the victory for General Franco. After the death of Franco in 1975, there was an almost general consensus on the need for a pact between the political forces, including the reformist wing of the old regime and in 1976, the Spanish people approved by referendum the law for the Political Reform of the state and chose democracy as their new political system.

The Spanish Constitution of 1978 established the Parliament, a bicameral body that consists of a lower chamber, Congress (*Congreso de los Diputados*), and an upper chamber, the Senate (*Senado*).² Parliamentary representatives are elected to Congress according to a “corrected proportional”

system with fifty-two districts.³ The Congress, the stronger of the two bodies, may comprise a minimum of 300 and a maximum of 400 members, but electoral legislation has set the number at 350 members.⁴ Population determines how many of the 350 congressional representatives correspond to each district.

Provinces elect four senators each. Each voter can choose three senators. The senators are elected by two distinct procedures:⁵

- directly elected senators: fifty-two multi-member constituencies corresponding to the country's provinces, plus Ceuta and Melilla. The provinces elect four senators each. In the case of insular provinces, major islands elect three senators each, while small islands elect one senator each. Ceuta and Melilla elect two senators each.
- indirectly elected senators: each of the seventeen autonomous communities return one senator, plus one more for each 1,000,000 inhabitants, chosen by the legislative assembly of each community.

By Constitution, no one may be a member of both Houses simultaneously, or be a representative in the Assembly of an autonomous community and a member of Congress at the same time.⁶

WHO CAN VOTE?

Women

Women received suffrage in Spain in 1931.

In Spain, there are no constitutional or election law quotas for women in the parliament.⁷ However, there are political party quotas. The PSOE (the Spanish Socialist Workers' Party) introduced party quotas in 1988, which were set at 25 percent.⁸ Currently, the PSOE has a 40 percent quota for either sex.⁹

Minorities

The electoral system even allows the Basque nationalist coalition party *Herri Batasuna* (HB), a legal political party which is also generally seen as the political expression of ETA, the Basque nationalist separatist organization, to stand in all elections: legislative, municipal, Basque Country/Autonomous, and European.¹⁰

Voting Age

All Spanish citizens eighteen years or older, who are in full possession of their political rights can vote.

Felons

Spain has no voting restrictions on prisoners.¹¹

WHO CAN PEOPLE VOTE FOR?

Spain has municipal and regional elections, as well as elections for the national and the European Parliaments. Currently, Spain has sixty-four seats in the European Parliament.

THE ADMINISTRATION OF ELECTIONS

The body charged with the supervision and control of the electoral process in Spain is the Electoral Council. The Electoral Council consists of the Central Electoral Council; the Provincial and Area Councils; and the Electoral Councils of the Autonomous Communities.¹²

The Central Electoral Council is a permanent body of thirteen members: eight judges of the Supreme Court appointed by lot and five other members, appointed by Parliament, who hold university chairs in the fields of law, political sciences, or sociology. The president is elected from among the judges and the secretary is the general secretary of the Congress of Deputies. The Central Electoral Council is renewed ninety days after the constitution of a new Parliament following the elections. Electoral Councils, within their respective territorial reach, have absolute power over all matters relating to elections and their organization. For efficiency, they do not physically organize the elections, but validate the operations and supervise their legality.

With the reform of the Electoral Law of 1995, the electoral census is now being updated monthly instead of yearly.

The Home Office is responsible for the logistics and financial management of expenses incurred in the organization of elections. The Home Office department in charge of running the elections is responsible for the preparation of the budget and the administration of public electoral funds. In addition, the Home Office is also empowered to contract for external materials

and services needed to organize the elections and attends to security for the peaceful running of the electoral campaign and the free exercise of voting rights. The Home Office also provides the public with the provisional results of the vote count.

VOTING

Voting is not compulsory and registry in the voter census is automatic.¹³ Spaniards who ordinarily reside abroad are also included on special electoral lists. The Electoral Law determines that the duration of voting is eleven hours and voting stations may not close even if all the electors on the list have voted.¹⁴

There is no voter card since identity is checked at the electoral tables. Instead, voters receive a card at their home address, which is not valid for voting, but shows that they are registered on the census, and the electoral table to which they belong. Identity is established using a passport.

The Electoral Census is managed by the Electoral Census Office, which is under the direct supervision of the Electoral Councils and financed by the National Statistics Council of the Ministry of Finance. The information for the census is provided by the city councils, by consulates and civil registers in the case of deaths.

Two types of postal voting are available: one for Spaniards registered as living in Spain and for residents living abroad.¹⁵ The postal vote by residents in Spain is deposited in the ballot box where the voter is registered. This happens when the electoral colleges close, making it impossible to know its aggregate result, unlike the absentee ballots, which are counted in each province the week after the elections.

Since 1995, the government of the autonomous region of Catalonia has run several pilot projects using electronic voting machines inside polling stations.¹⁶ During the Catalan Parliament elections in November 2003, a non-binding remote e-voting pilot project was held and Catalans residing in Argentina, Belgium, the United States, Mexico, and Chile were invited to participate. This pilot aimed to examine the use of secure electronic voting and 730 voters participated in it.

On March 14, 2004, several non-legally binding electronic voting trials were conducted in Spanish municipalities. In the municipality of Jun, near Granada, a total of 597 citizens tested electronic voting systems, with 400 people voting through computers connected to the Internet and 197 people voting by SMS sending in the ballots via their mobile phones. Internet voting pilots were also carried out in three polling stations in Zamora and Lugo,

where 274 citizens tested Internet voting machines at a number of polling stations.

THE REGULATION OF ELECTIONS: POLITICAL AND FINANCIAL REGULATIONS PERTAINING TO VOTING

Party Income: Ceilings, Bans on Sources of Income, and Disclosure Provisions

Spain has a ceiling on contributions to political parties.¹⁷ A donor can contribute up to EUR 55,000 per year. There is no ban on foreign donations or corporate donations to political parties. There is a ban on donations from government contractors to political parties. Furthermore, anonymous donations over 5 percent of the total public funding are banned. Spain also has provisions for disclosure of contributions to political parties.

Party Expenditures: Ceilings and Disclosure Provisions

Spain has a ceiling on party election expenditures, which is determined for each electoral cycle by the General Accounting Court. Also, political parties have to publicly disclose their expenditures.

Direct and Indirect Public Funding

According to the Spanish Electoral Law, the state subsidizes the organizational and logistical expenses of the conduct of any election and also, in compliance with the Constitutional Law on the Funding of Political Parties, it subsidizes the political parties during elections to the central, local, or European parliaments. Election expenses of the regional autonomous parliaments are born by each autonomous community.

Direct public funding is based on performance during the current election. Indirect public funding in the form of free media access is also available and broadcast time is allocated based on performance at the previous election. Parties also receive a special taxation status and receive subsidies on mailing.

TURNOUT IN ELECTIONS

Voter turnout in Spain has fluctuated in the past decade from 77 percent in 1993 to 69 percent in 2000, and then 77 percent again in the 2004 elections (see Table 9.1).

Table 9.1. Parliamentary Election Turnout in Spain, 1977–2004

Electoral System: List Proportional Representation							
Year	Total Vote	Registration	Vote/Reg. %	VAP	Vote/VAP %	Invalid %	Pop. Size
1977	18,175,327	23,616,421	77	22,901,130	79	1.7	36,351,000
1979	18,284,948	26,836,500	68	25,284,440	72	1.8	37,183,000
1982	21,439,152	26,855,301	80	25,795,580	83	2.4	37,935,000
1986	20,489,651	29,117,613	70	27,794,880	74	2.1	38,604,000
1989	20,788,160	29,694,055	70	29,166,000	71	1.4	38,888,000
1993	23,907,495	31,030,511	77	30,875,570	77	1.3	39,083,000
1996	24,985,097	32,007,554	78	31,013,030	81	1.5	39,257,000
2000	23,339,490	33,969,640	69	31,631,640	74	0.7	39,394,773
2004(a)	25,846,620	33,473,081	77	—	—	1.0	41,101,430

Notes: (a): 2004 results based on IFES data. Population size based on World Bank data for 2003.

Registered voters—This represents the number of names on the voters' register at the time that the registration process closes, as reported by the electoral management body.

VAP (Voting Age Population)—The estimated voting age population is based on a country's population over the age of eighteen. It is not an exact measure of the VAP as it does not take into account legal or systemic barriers to the exercise of the franchise or account for non-eligible members of the population, such as resident non-citizens.

Invalid—Invalid votes as percent of total votes cast.

Sources: International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA), International Foundation for Election Systems (IFES), World Bank

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Chapter Ten

Sweden

ELECTORAL SYSTEM

Sweden is a constitutional monarchy with a proportional representation (modified Saint-Lague system) electoral system. It has a unicameral parliament, the *Riksdag*, which consists of 349 directly elected members for a four-year term. Currently, of the available seats in the *Riksdag*, 310 are allocated on a constituency basis in twenty-eight multi-member constituencies; the remaining thirty-nine seats are divided nationally. To win parliamentary representation, a party must poll 4 percent overall (to receive a seat from the national allocation) or 12 percent in any one constituency.

The *Riksdag* has existed since 1435, when it first convened the nobles, the clergy, and the commons. In 1841, the parish meetings were reformed by law and it was established that craftsmen, tradesmen, and industrial workers should have the right to vote if they earned enough.

In January 1863, a measure to restructure the *Riksdag* to have two chambers—an upper one to be an aristocratic senate and a lower one, whose members should be elected every three years by the people—was proposed.¹ In 1866, the measure was promulgated by the crown as an integral part of the fundamental law of the kingdom of Sweden and on September 1, 1866, the first national elections under the new system were held. Since then, the upper chamber has represented principally the nobles and clergy and the lower has represented the townsmen and peasants.

Until 1866, the *Riksdag* had four congregations that represented the different social classes: the nobility, the clergy, the burghers, and the peasants.² In 1866, a bicameral *Riksdag* was established. The second chamber was directly elected every four years. The first chamber was elected indirectly by electors and only one-third of the seats were up for election at any one time. Furthermore, these

elections were coordinated with municipal elections and took place two years after each election to the second chamber. Suffrage differed by financial status and the richest had forty votes while those without assets did not have the right to vote.

WHO CAN VOTE?

Women

According to the Municipal Laws of 1862, some women had the right to vote in local elections quite early, but just a few could actually vote due to the requirements: they had to be of age, unmarried, and have an income at a certain level or a certain amount of property. Universal male suffrage was introduced in 1909, but Swedish women did not have the right to vote and were not eligible to join the Parliament until 1921. In 1918, universal and equal suffrage in local elections was introduced. In 1919, the Swedish Parliament gave equal suffrage and eligibility for women. After the election of 1921 the reform was confirmed.³

Minorities

Sweden has five minorities: Jews, Roma, Sami, Swedish Finns, and Tornedalers. A Sami Parliament (*Sametinget*) of thirty-one elected members was created in 1991 to foster Sami culture, language, and advise the Swedish authorities on Sami affairs, among other functions. Sami parties take part in the elections to the Sami Parliament (there are eleven different parties) but they do not play any significant role in local elections.

Voting Age

Voting age is eighteen.

Felons

Sweden allows prisoners and felons to vote.

WHO CAN PEOPLE VOTE FOR?

Elections in Sweden are held for the *Riksdag* as well as for county councils and municipal councils. Citizens of the European Union and citizens

of Iceland and Norway also have the right to vote in county and municipal elections, if they are eighteen years of age by election day and are registered within the county council area or municipality concerned.⁴

Swedish citizens who attain the age of eighteen years by election day and who are or at some time have been registered residents in Sweden as well as citizens of other member states of the European Union can vote in European Parliament elections. As a precondition, they must be registered residents in Sweden and must hand in a notification to be listed on the electoral roll. They may not then vote in any other member state. Sweden is entitled to eighteen seats in the European Parliament.

THE ADMINISTRATION OF ELECTIONS

The Swedish Election Authority is responsible for planning and coordinating the conduct of elections and referendums.⁵ It also prepares the voter rolls, the voting cards, the ballot papers, and other election material. It distributes seats amongst the parties and announces which members have been elected in *Riksdag* elections and elections to the European Parliament. It also provides information technology (IT) support for the entire electoral administration.

The regional election authority is the County Administrative Board. The Board decides on electoral districts, is responsible for the final counting of votes in all elections, and confirms the results of county council and municipal council elections.

The local election authority of each municipality is the Election Committee. The Committee nominates election officers, ensures that there are polling stations in the municipality, and has full responsibility for advance voting there. The Election Committee is also responsible for the preliminary count of the votes. The municipality covers the costs associated with election officers and polling stations.

The Election Review Board is the authority that decides on decisions against which appeal has been made. The board has seven members, appointed by the *Riksdag*, and its chair must be or have been a regular judge and may not at the same time be a member of the *Riksdag*.

VOTING

Voting in Sweden is not compulsory. To vote, it is necessary to be included in the district electoral rolls and to show identification to the election officers.

The election officers must make a note of how they have checked the voters' identities.⁶

The premises where voting takes place must have screens so that voters can cast their ballots in an envelope in privacy. The voter then gives her/his voting envelope to the election officers. Voters can cast ballots through one of the following available alternatives: (1) they can vote at the polling station on election day; (2) they can vote in advance; (3) they can vote by messenger; (4) they can vote at diplomatic missions abroad; or (5) they can vote by mail from abroad.

People who have voted in advance (in Sweden or from abroad) may change their vote. The voter needs to go to a polling station on election day and the vote in the station will then be accepted and the advance vote will be declared invalid.

THE REGULATION OF ELECTIONS: POLITICAL AND FINANCIAL REGULATIONS PERTAINING TO VOTING

Sweden has no compulsory system of regulation of political party financing, but law No. 625 from 1972 contains rules and moral guidelines for political parties.⁷ However, in 1980, political parties voluntarily agreed among themselves to make available for annual inspection the income and expenditures of their headquarters.⁸ Parties must have an annual report checked by an authorized accountant but the report is not made public.⁹ There are no restrictions on corporate donations. Parties can opt to voluntarily ban their acceptance of such donations. For example, the Conservative party decided to stop accepting direct donations from companies in 1977.

Direct and Indirect Public Funding

Swedish parties are entitled to direct public funding.¹⁰ One part of the funding is given on the basis of current representation in the legislature and the other part is based on the mandates won at the previous election. Indirect public funding such as equal air time is available, but parties and donors do not have a special taxation status.

TURNOUT IN ELECTIONS

For the past six decades, the lowest turnout in Swedish parliamentary elections occurred in 2002 when 80 percent of registered voters cast a ballot (see Table 10.1).

Table 10.1. Parliamentary Election Turnout in Sweden, 1948–2002

Electoral System: List Proportional Representation							
Year	Total Vote	Registration	Vote/Reg %	VAP	Vote/VAP %	Invalid %	Pop. Size
1948	3,895,161	4,707,783	82.70	4,749,270	82.00	0.40	6,883,000
1952	3,801,284	4,805,216	79.10	4,916,250	77.30	0.50	7,125,000
1956	3,902,114	4,902,114	79.60	5,047,350	77.30	0.60	7,315,000
1958	3,864,963	4,992,421	77.40	5,112,210	75.60	0.50	7,409,000
1960	4,271,610	4,972,177	85.90	5,161,200	82.80	0.40	7,480,000
1964	4,273,595	5,095,850	83.90	5,286,090	80.80	0.70	7,661,000
1968	4,861,901	5,445,333	89.30	5,616,100	86.60	0.70	7,910,000
1970	4,984,207	5,645,804	88.30	5,708,400	87.30	0.20	8,040,000
1973	5,168,996	5,690,333	90.80	6,023,600	85.80	0.20	8,140,000
1976	5,457,043	5,947,077	91.80	6,166,500	88.50	0.40	8,222,000
1979	5,480,126	6,040,461	90.70	6,303,440	86.90	0.60	8,294,000
1982	5,606,603	6,130,993	91.40	6,327,000	88.60	0.90	8,325,000
1985	5,615,242	6,249,445	89.90	6,513,000	86.20	0.90	8,350,000
1988	5,441,050	6,330,023	86.00	6,580,860	82.70	1.20	8,437,000
1991	5,562,920	6,413,172	86.70	6,721,260	82.80	1.70	8,617,000
1994	5,725,246	6,496,365	88.10	6,848,400	83.60	1.50	8,780,000
1998	5,374,588	6,603,129	81.40	6,915,438	77.70	2.10	8,780,000
2002	5,385,430	6,722,152	80.10	n/a	n/a	1.50	n/a

Notes: *Registered voters*—This represents the number of names on the voters' register at the time that the registration process closes, as reported by the electoral management body.

VAP (Voting Age Population)—The estimated voting age population over the age of eighteen. It is not an exact measure of the VAP as it does not take into account legal or systemic barriers to the exercise of the franchise or account for non-eligible members of the population, such as resident non-citizens.

Invalid—Invalid votes as percent of total votes cast.

Source: International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA)

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Part Four

**RUSSIAN FEDERATION/
EASTERN EUROPE**

Chapter Eleven

The Russian Federation

ELECTORAL SYSTEM

The Russian Federation has a presidential system of government. Parliamentary elections were held in Russia as early as 1906. However, at the time, the franchise did not include groups such as students, people under twenty-five, women, servicemen, foreigners, and convicts, among other groups. This dramatically changed with the February 1917 Revolution, after which suffrage was accorded to women, servicemen, and people who were twenty years of age. Thus, Russia had the most universal suffrage at the time since servicemen were allowed to vote for the first time in the world, and voting age was the lowest anywhere.¹ Since 1918 until the dissolution of the Soviet Union, one-party elections were the norm. In 1989, as part of the *perestroika* process, Mikhail Gorbachev introduced multi-candidate elections. One year later, with a constitutional change in 1990, the Communist Party no longer had a monopoly on power.²

The 1993 Constitution established a semi-presidential system for the Russian Federation. The election of the president is mainly regulated by the Presidential Election Law (PEL) and the Basic Guarantees of Electoral Rights Law (BGL). The president is elected by popular vote on a two-round system every four years, with a two-term limitation. If no candidate wins an absolute majority in the first election round, a second is held between the two leading contenders, and the winner is required to win 50 percent or more votes for election. The prime minister must receive a majority vote from the Duma (the lower chamber of Parliament). If the candidate is rejected three times in a row the president can dissolve the Parliament and call for a new election.

The Russian Parliament is bicameral and consists of the Duma, and the Council of the Federation, the upper chamber. For the election of the 450 deputies in the Duma, a parallel electoral system is used. Half of the deputies are elected with first-past-the-post (FPTP) and the other half with party-list proportional representation (PR) voting among the federal constituency with a threshold of 5 percent required for any party to win a seat.³ Duma deputies serve for a period of four years.

The Council of the Federation consists of 178 seats and as of July 2000, its members are appointed by the top executive and legislative officials in each of the eighty-nine federal administrative units.⁴ Each region chooses two representatives to serve in the Council, one from the legislature and one from the executive. They serve for a period of four years.

Recent political trends in Russia have led to a decrease in civil liberties and a movement toward authoritarianism, according to Freedom House.⁵ As part of the events that Freedom House points out as signaling a decrease in political rights and civil liberties have been the prosecution of the economic magnate Michail Chodorkowski, who supported liberal opposition parties. Another event was a police raid on the headquarters of a political consulting firm working for a major opposition party.

WHO CAN VOTE?

There has been universal suffrage since 1936, when restrictive provisions in the 1918 constitution, which did not allow people with property or church officials to vote, were lifted. The 1993 constitution does not contain a special section on suffrage.

Voting is tied to citizenship and regulated by the PEL, BGL, and the Russian Federation Constitution.⁶

Women

Women were given the right to vote as early as 1917.

During the Communist era, there was a quota requirement that women constitute 33 percent of the Soviet Union's Congress of People's Deputies, the removal of which led to an unprecedented decline in women's representation in the Russian legislature in 1990 to only 5 percent.⁷ In 1993, women in the Duma constituted 13.5 percent of deputies and after the 1995 elections, 9.8 percent.⁸ At the 2003 Duma elections, 9.8 percent of elected deputies were women.⁹

Table 11.1. Russian Federation: Freedom House Ten-Year Ratings Timeline (Political Rights, Civil Liberties, Status)

1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
3, 4, PF	3, 4, PF	3, 4, PF	3, 4, PF	4, 4, PF	4, 5, PF	5, 5, PF	5, 5, PF	5, 5, PF	5, 5, PF

Notes: PF—Partly Free. Political Rights Rating: 1—country comes closest to ideals of guaranteed political rights and freedoms and free and fair elections; 7—political rights are absent or virtually nonexistent. Civil Liberties Rating: 1—country comes closest to ideals of freedom of expression, assembly, association, education, and religion; 7—virtually no freedom.

Source: Freedom House

Minorities

The majority of Russia's minority populations do not face legal impediments to vote since most minority groups in the Russian Federation have Russian Federation passports.¹⁰

Voting Age

All citizens eighteen and older are allowed to vote.

Felons

The only two restrictions on suffrage in Russia concern prisoners and citizens who have been declared incapable by a court.¹¹ Persons under criminal investigation have the right to vote.

WHO CAN PEOPLE VOTE FOR?

Elected offices at the federal level are those of the presidency of the Russian Federation and the Duma deputies.

At the regional level, elections are held for presidents of Russia's twenty-one national republics, for governors in Russia's eighty-nine regions, for mayors, and for the local legislative bodies.

THE ADMINISTRATION OF ELECTIONS

The election of a president of the Russian Federation involves four levels of election commissions.¹² The Central Election Commission (CEC), eighty-nine Subject Election Commissions (SEC), and about 2,750 Territorial Election Commissions (TEC) are permanent bodies and have a four-year mandate. At the lowest level are the Precinct Election Commissions (PEC), which are appointed specifically for the elections no later than one month before the polling day.

The CEC was established as a permanent institution with a decree from President Boris Yeltsin in 1993 who directed it to draft the new federal legislation on elections, which was approved in October 1994 as the Federal Law on the Basic Guarantees of Electoral Rights of the Citizens of the Russian Federation.

The CEC is presided over by a commission of fifteen members: five appointed by the president, five by the Duma, and five by the Federation Council. Its role consists of explaining electoral procedures and surveying regional state authorities' compliance with federal electoral laws. It also has a prominent role in the drafting of legislation, but only the Duma can pass it. Regarding regional elections, it also monitors compliance with electoral rights of citizens and provides organizational and technical assistance to the local electoral commissions.

The law provides that election commissioners are independent within their competence of the state bodies or bodies of local self-government while preparing and conducting elections. However, election commissions at the lower level are dependent on local executive authorities for financing, staffing, and resource and logistical support. Local executive authorities also play a role in the appointment of lower level commissions.

VOTING

During the Soviet era, abstaining from voting was treated by the authorities as an open challenge to the regime. The results of this policy were turnout rates that varied from 99.74 percent to 99.99 percent.¹³

Currently, voting is voluntary in Russia, but the democratization process has resulted in reduced voter turnout, which has led to the establishment of a legal provision for the turnout rate: 50 percent required turnout for presidential elections and 25 percent for parliamentary elections.¹⁴

Polling operations are organized in a fairly decentralized manner. The form and text of the presidential ballot is established by the CEC, but the printing is the responsibility of the subject commissions. The territorial commissions organize the distribution of the ballots to the polling sites. Overseas and absentee voting is allowed in Russia.

One of the options on the ballots is "against all candidates." In the 1995 elections, 2.77 percent voted "against all." In the 1999 Duma elections, 3.36 percent of the votes were cast "against all" parties and movements and in the 2003 elections, 4.78 percent choose "against all."

The counting of the ballots takes place at the polling stations and is done manually. The information is then sent to the CEC where it is aggregated by computer before being reported to the public. In the 2004 presidential elections, there was an experimental use of automated vote scanning machines in about 500 polling stations in Moscow and St. Petersburg.¹⁵

THE REGULATION OF ELECTIONS: POLITICAL AND FINANCIAL REGULATIONS PERTAINING TO VOTING

Party Income: Ceilings, Bans on Sources of Income, and Disclosure Provisions

The legislation in the Russian Federation requires that parties set up special electoral accounts, where the funds intended for the electoral campaign are credited and must be made public.¹⁶

There is a ceiling on contributions to parties. For parliamentary elections, in a multi-mandate constituency, individual donors can contribute 150 times the minimum wage and legal entities can contribute 20,000 times the minimum wage. However, there is no ceiling on how much a party can raise.¹⁷

There is no total ban on corporate donations, except donations from corporations with more than 30 percent foreign/state entity ownership, or if they have been registered for less than one year. There is also no ban on trade union donations to political parties.

There is a ban on: anonymous donations and several other sources, such as foreign states/nationals, stateless persons, citizens of the Russian Federation who have not attained the age of eighteen years on voting day, legal entities with foreign participation if the foreign stake exceeds 30 percent, bodies of state power and local self-government, and military institutions, among others.¹⁸

In the Russian Federation, there are provisions for disclosure of contributions to political parties. Both donors and political parties are subject to these disclosure laws. Donors must disclose contributions over 1000 times the minimum wage, while parties must disclose contributions over 1000 times the minimum wage for legal entities and 100 times the minimum wage for individuals.

Party Expenditures: Ceilings and Disclosure Provisions

The ceiling on party election expenditures is 250,000 times the minimum wage and there are provisions for public disclosure of expenditures by political parties.

Direct and Indirect Public Funding

Parties receive direct public funding, but only during the election campaign and it is intended to cover signature collection activities, payment for information and consulting services, and electoral deposits.¹⁹ In the 1995 Duma

Table 11.2. Parliamentary Election Turnout in Russia, 1993–2003

<i>Parallel System (List Proportional Representation and First-Past-the-Post)</i>							
Year	Total Vote	Registration	Vote/Reg. %	VAP	Vote/VAP %	Invalid %	Pop. Size
1993	52,600,000	105,200,000	50.00	111,390,000	47.22	n/a	148,520,000
1995	69,587,454	107,496,856	64.73	110,864,250	62.77	1.90	147,819,000
1999	65,370,690	108,073,956	60.49	109,211,997	59.86	2.00	146,309,000
2003(a)	60,633,179	108,906,244	55.67	—	—	1.56	143,425,000

Notes: (a) 2003 results based on IFES data. Population size based on World Bank data for 2003.

Registered voters—This represents the number of names on the voters' register at the time that the registration process closes, as reported by the electoral management body.

VAP (Voting Age Population)—The estimated voting age population is based on a country's population over the age of eighteen. It is not an exact measure of the VAP as it does not take into account legal or systemic barriers to the exercise of the franchise or account for non-eligible members of the population, such as resident non-citizens.

Invalid—The number of invalid votes, as reported by each country.

Sources: International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA), International Foundation for Election Systems (IFES), World Bank

Table 11.3. Presidential Election Turnout in the Russian Federation, 1991–2004

Year	Presidential Elections						
	Total Vote	Registration	Vote/Reg. %	VAP	Vote/VAP %	Invalid %	Pop. Size
1991	79,498,240	106,484,518	74.66	108,495,520	73.27	0.40	148,624,000
1996	74,800,449	108,589,050	68.88	110,642,250	67.61	1.20	147,523,000
2000	75,070,776	109,372,046	68.64	109,037,258	68.85	0.90	146,595,254
2004(a)	69,581,761	108,064,281	64.39	–	–	0.94	143,425,000

Notes: (a) 2004 results based on IFES data. Population size based on World Bank data for 2003.

Registered voters—This represents the number of names on the voters' register at the time that the registration process closes, as reported by the electoral management body.

VAP (Voting Age Population)—The estimated voting age population is based on a country's population over the age of eighteen. It is not an exact measure of the VAP as it does not take into account legal or systemic barriers to the exercise of the franchise or account for non-eligible members of the population, such as resident non-citizens.

Invalid—The number of invalid votes, as reported by each country.

Sources: International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA), International Foundation for Election Systems (IFES), World Bank

elections, state funding for all of the political parties amounted to \$1 million. In the 1999 election, the state funding rose to \$4.6 million.²⁰

Indirect public funding is also available in the form of free airtime and free transportation. A change in the Russian electoral law in 2003 prevents parties from having free airtime if they have debts to media organizations. Parties are not entitled to a special taxation status.

TURNOUT IN ELECTIONS

Voter turnout in parliamentary elections since the transition has been the highest during the 1995 elections (see Table 11.2), after which it began to decline. A decline in turnout can also be observed from the first presidential elections in Russia in 1991, when 75 percent of registered voters went to the polls to 64 percent in the 2004 elections (see Table 11.3). However, turnout for presidential elections has been consistently higher than turnout for parliamentary elections.

NOTES

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Chapter Twelve

Poland

ELECTORAL SYSTEM

Poland has a presidential-parliamentary system. Poland has a long history of elections. The year 1382 marks the beginning of the general assemblies of the whole kingdom, i.e., the Privy Council (a forerunner of the Polish Senate), district officials, the landed gentry, and representatives of chapters and cities meet to elect a king and to approve taxes. The Polish *Sejm* grew out of these assemblies and was formed in 1493 as a national body that passed laws with the agreement of the king, the Senate, and the Chamber of Deputies. The deputies were elected at regional *Sejmiks* (regional assemblies). From 1573, Polish kings were elected and Poland became an elective monarchy. The first modern and free elections were held in Poland in 1918. The first partially free elections in Poland's post-war history were held in 1989, as a result of negotiations between the Communists and the Solidarity-led opposition. A one time "compartmentalized" election was set up, in which 65 percent of the *Sejm* seats, the lower chamber of Poland's bicameral parliament, were allocated to the Communists and 35 percent were to be openly contested.¹ The Senate, the upper chamber of the parliament, was re-established and its members were to be elected through a free election.

The *Sejm* has 460 deputies elected for a four-year term through a proportional representation system (PR). The Senate has one hundred deputies elected for a four-year term of office. In 1989, a majority was needed to win a seat in the Senate, but at subsequent Senate elections, plurality vote replaced majority vote.

WHO CAN VOTE?

Women

Polish women received the right to vote in 1918.

In Poland, there are no constitutional or election law quotas for women in the national Parliament, but there are political party quotas: the Democratic Left Alliance (SLD), the Labour Union (UP), and the Freedom Union (UW) all have a 30 percent quota for women.²

Minorities

As of 2002, about 96.7 percent of the population in Poland was of Polish origin and its minorities were: German (0.4 percent), Belarusian (0.1 percent), Ukrainian (0.1 percent), other (2.7 percent).³ Poland's electoral law exempts ethnic minority parties from the requirement that they win 5 percent of the vote nationwide to qualify for seats in individual districts.⁴

Voting Age

The right to vote is held by all Polish citizens who are eighteen years or older and whose rights have not been revoked by a legally binding court decision.⁵

Felons

Poland allows prisoners to vote.

WHO CAN PEOPLE VOTE FOR?

National Elections

Polish citizens vote for elections to the Parliament—*Sejm* and Senate, presidential elections (every five years), and local government elections (every four years). The first Polish elections for the European Parliament were held on June 13, 2004. The 20 percent turnout was the lowest in any Polish election since the country's transition to democracy in 1989.⁶ Poland has fifty-four seats in the European Parliament (out of a total of 732 seats).

THE ADMINISTRATION OF ELECTIONS

The National Electoral Commission, a permanent organ, is responsible for the organization, conduct, and supervision of elections at the national level.⁷ The Commission is appointed by the president of the Republic and consists of nine members: three judges of the Constitutional Tribunal, three judges of the Supreme Court, and three judges of the High Administrative Court.

In addition, there are constituency electoral commissions (also composed of judges), which are appointed separately for individual elections by the National Electoral Commission, and district electoral commissions that are appointed (from among voters by the executive committees of the communes) for the conduct of voting in the polling districts.

The National Electoral Commission establishes the results of voting throughout the country. The Supreme Court determines the validity of the elections after considering electoral protests, which can be lodged by any voter.

VOTING

Voting in Poland is not compulsory. The election is held on a non-working day.

Voting in general elections may only be done in person at a polling station on the day of the election; ill and disabled voters, prisoners, and Polish citizens living abroad vote through special polling stations that are established in hospitals, social welfare homes, penitentiaries, Polish embassies and consulates, and ships sailing under the Polish banner.⁸

THE REGULATION OF ELECTIONS: POLITICAL AND FINANCIAL REGULATIONS PERTAINING TO VOTING

Party Income: Ceilings, Bans on Sources of Income, and Disclosure Provisions

Donors do not have to disclose contributions, but parties do.⁹ There is also a ceiling on contributions to political parties. Contributions by an individual cannot exceed fifteen times the minimum monthly wage per year. There is no ceiling on how much a party can raise.

Foreign donations, donations by corporate donors, donations from trade unions, and anonymous sources are banned. There is no ban on donations from government contractors.

Table 12.1. Parliamentary Election Turnout in Poland, 1989–2001

<i>Electoral System: List</i>							
Year	Total Vote	Registration	Vote/Reg. %	VAP	Vote/VAP %	Invalid %	Pop. Size
1989	16,994,732	27,362,313	62.10	26,572,700	64.00	n/a	37,961,000
1991	11,886,984	27,516,166	43.20	26,771,500	44.40	5.60	38,245,000
1993	14,415,586	27,677,302	52.10	27,723,600	52.00	4.30	38,505,000
1997	13,616,378	28,409,054	47.90	27,901,720	48.80	3.90	38,752,000
2001	13,559,412	29,364,455	46.20	28,469,123	47.60	4.00	38,251,000

Notes: Population size for 2001 based on World Bank data.

Registered voters—This represents the number of names on the voters' register at the time that the registration process closes, as reported by the electoral management body.

VAP (Voting Age Population)—The estimated voting age population is based on a country's population over the age of eighteen. It is not an exact measure of the VAP as it does not take into account legal or systemic barriers to the exercise of the franchise or account for non-eligible members of the population, such as resident non-citizens.

Invalid—Invalid votes as percent of total votes cast.

Sources: International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA), World Bank

Party Expenditures: Ceilings and Disclosure Provisions

Poland has provisions for public disclosure of expenditures by political parties. There is also a ceiling on party election expenditures. The limit per constituency is calculated by dividing the registered voters by 560 and multiplying the result by the numbers of deputies/senators elected in a given electoral constituency.

Direct and Indirect Public Funding

Public funding is available to parties based on performance in previous elections. Parties also have indirect public funding in the form of free media access, but they do not have a special taxation status. Donors to political parties also do not have any taxation relief.

TURNOUT IN ELECTIONS

Voter turnout in Poland has been declining since its first free elections in 1989, from 62.1 percent to 46.2 percent of registered voters (see Table 12.1) in 2001.

NOTES

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Chapter Thirteen

Hungary

ELECTORAL SYSTEM

Hungary has a parliamentary system of government. Hungary's parliament, the *Országgyűlés*, is unicameral and has 386 members, elected for a four-year term: 176 members come from single-seat constituencies, and 210 members are elected through a party-list proportional representation system. Hungarians cast two votes to elect the members of the *Országgyűlés*: one for a single-member constituency candidate and one for the district lists. No vote is cast for the national list. If no candidate obtains an absolute majority of the votes in the first ballot within the constituency, or if less than half of the registered voters cast ballots, a second ballot is held.¹ In the latter case, all candidates may run again and the one who gets the most votes is declared elected, given that at least 25 percent of the constituency's electorate have voted. If there is no absolute majority for any individual, all candidates who gained at least 15 percent of the valid votes may run again; if this number is only one or two, the three with the most first-ballot votes are entitled to continue.² Either way, the candidate with the most votes is declared elected, given that at least 25 percent of the constituency's electorate has voted.

The Hungarian Parliament was established by Acts IV and V in 1848.³ Act V provided for representative elections, which meant that members of the Parliament were to be elected by popular votes in constituencies rather than delegated by the counties. Elections for the Parliament were held that same year. Voting in the 1848 and 1865 as well as the thirteen elections held during the period of the dual monarchy from 1867 to 1918 was by open ballot in constituencies.⁴ Voting rights remained practically the same throughout this period and were based on wealth, education, and local residence.

WHO CAN VOTE?

Women

Women received the right to vote in 1918.⁵

Minorities

The national and ethnic minorities living in Hungary constitute part of the body politic, and have, among other rights, the right to establish local and national municipalities.⁶

Voting Age

The voting age is eighteen.

Felons

One is disqualified from voting in Hungary by court decision, imprisonment, and institutional medical care pursuant to criminal procedure.⁷

WHO CAN PEOPLE VOTE FOR?

Hungarians can directly elect the members of their Parliament, their mayors; the county and Budapest assemblies; and the municipal corporations of their local settlement or Budapest district. Hungarians also vote to elect twenty-two representatives to the European Parliament.

The president of Hungary is elected by the Hungarian Parliament (*Országgyűlés*) to serve a five-year term.

THE ADMINISTRATION OF ELECTIONS

The electoral authorities in Hungary span four levels—national, territorial, constituency, and polling station—and each has an election commission consisting of elected and party nominated members.⁸ Each level has a corresponding office that provides logistical and administrative support for the conduct of the election.

The National Election Commission (NEC) is the main custodian for the legality and fairness of the election process.⁹ The NEC interprets election laws and promotes uniform election practices; makes decisions about the

registration of candidates; approves the content of the ballots; determines the achievement of voting thresholds; publishes the election results; and decides in the first instance election cases that require national competence.¹⁰ County Election Commissions (CEC), Constituency (district) Election Commissions, and Polling Station Commissions (PSC) provide similar services in the jurisdictions for which they are responsible. The NEC is established immediately after the elections are called and consists of five members elected by the Parliament and additional delegates appointed by political parties that qualify to present a national candidate list.¹¹

The administrative management of the election process is done by the National Election Office (NEO), which is part of the Ministry of the Interior.¹² The Election Office structure has a hierarchy of offices in the Ministry of the Interior at the county and district levels. They organize and conduct elections and provide information to voters and candidates.

Voter registration lists are updated regularly and maintained by the Central Data Processing Office of the Ministry of Interior and at the local level by the so-called “document offices.”¹³

VOTING

Voting is not compulsory.

Before being allowed to cast a ballot, the voter’s identity must be verified and the voter’s name must appear on the voter registration list.¹⁴ Each voter is required to sign the voter register thus acknowledging the receipt of a ballot, which is stamped with the official stamp before being issued to the voter.

Secrecy screens are provided to allow voters to vote in private, but voters are not obliged to use them. There is only one correct way to mark a ballot—by making “two intersecting lines” in the circle appearing next to the party or candidate’s name.

The overall electoral process in Hungary is highly computerized and decisions are promptly made available to the public.¹⁵

THE REGULATION OF ELECTIONS: POLITICAL AND FINANCIAL REGULATIONS PERTAINING TO VOTING

Party Income: Ceilings, Bans on Sources of Income, and Disclosure Provisions

Hungary has provisions for the disclosure of contributions made to political parties. It is the responsibility of political parties, not donors, to disclose all

Table 13.1. Parliamentary Election Turnout in Hungary, 1990–2006

<i>Electoral System: Mixed Member Proportional</i>							
Year	Total Vote	Registration	Vote/Reg %	VAP	Vote/VAP %	Invalid %	Pop. Size
1990	5,901,931	7,822,764	75.40	7,773,750	75.90	3.60	10,365,000
1994	5,485,538	7,959,228	68.90	7,900,970	69.40	n/a	10,261,000
1998	4,570,400	8,062,700	56.70	7,742,951	59.00	n/a	10,056,000
2002	4,423,806	6,018,069	73.50	n/a	n/a	0.60	n/a
2006	3,257,244	5,059,002	64.40	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Notes: Registered voters—This represents the number of names on the voters' register at the time that the registration process closes, as reported by the electoral management body.
VAP (Voting Age Population)—The estimated voting age population is based on a country's population over the age of eighteen. It is not an exact measure of the VAP as it does not take into account legal or systemic barriers to the exercise of the franchise or account for non-eligible members of the population, such as resident non-citizens.
Invalid—Invalid votes as percent of total votes cast.
Source: International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA)

contributions received. There are no ceilings on how much a party can raise or how much a donor can contribute. Hungary does not ban foreign donations, but donations above a certain sum from outside the country must be disclosed. There is, however, a ban on corporate donations, donations from government contractors, and anonymous donations to political parties.

Party Expenditures: Ceilings and Disclosure Provisions

Hungary has provisions for public disclosure of expenditure by political parties, but there is no ceiling on party expenditures. The ceiling is on spending per candidate and per election.

Direct and Indirect Public Funding

Parties are entitled to direct public funding based on performance at the previous election. Free media access and a special taxation status are also available.

TURNOUT IN ELECTIONS

Turnout in parliamentary election in Hungary has fluctuated, with a high of 75 percent of registered voters in 1990 during the first post-communist elections and a low of 57 percent during the 1998 elections (see Table 13.1).

NOTES

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2. Inter-Parliamentary Union. *“Parline” Database*, available at: www.ipu.org/english/home.htm.

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Part Five

MIDDLE EAST

Chapter Fourteen

Egypt

ELECTORAL SYSTEM

Egypt has a parliamentary system of government. Egypt has a bicameral parliament that consists of the People's Assembly (Majlis Al-Chaab) and the Advisory Council (Majlis Ash-Shura). The People's Assembly has 444 members elected by popular vote to serve a five-year term and ten members who are appointed by the president to serve a five-year term. The Advisory Council has 176 members elected by popular vote to serve a six-year term and eighty-eight members appointed by the president to serve a six-year term.¹ The country has a two-round system, in which a second election is held if no candidate or party achieves a given level of votes in the first election round.

In 1952, an authoritarian system was established in Egypt, but parliamentary elections continued to be held.² These were not competitive, but were a mechanism for the regime to co-opt into parliament politically acceptable local notables and serve as a way to diffuse pressures for participation. In the 1960s, a dual-member constituency system was introduced, in which one of two seats was reserved for a worker or peasant as an attempt to draw such people into the electoral process. This system was later replaced with large multimember districts in which party lists competed, which reduced the influence of local notables vis-à-vis the government as well as the regime's ability to co-opt them since many refused to run for election under this system. The guarantee of half of the seats for workers and peasants was also revoked.

Currently, for elections to the People's Assembly, each of Egypt's 222 electoral districts elects two members, one of which must be a worker/farmer, by absolute majority of valid votes cast.

WHO CAN VOTE?

Women

In 1956, Egyptian women were given the right to vote and stand for office in parliamentary elections.

Voting Age

Egyptian citizens (or people naturalized for at least five years) aged eighteen or older have the right to vote.

Felons

Persons convicted of a felony, those whose property is under sequestration, imprisonment for certain crimes, civil servants or employees of the public sector dismissed for dishonorable reasons (in five years preceding election), and persons placed under guardianship within five years of election are ineligible to vote.³

WHO CAN PEOPLE VOTE FOR?

The elected offices in Egypt are those for members of the People's Assembly and the Advisory Council. In 2005, President Hosni Mubarak proposed amending the Egyptian constitution to allow, for the first time in Egypt's history, competitive, multicandidate presidential elections. The constitutional amendment was drafted by Parliament and approved by public referendum in late May 2005 thus allowing for the President to be elected for a six-year term by popular vote. Elections for President were first held in Egypt in September 2005.

THE ADMINISTRATION OF ELECTIONS

The High Elections Commission oversees the parliamentary electoral process. The Commission consists of eleven members (of which six are sitting or retired judges) including: the Minister of Justice (chairman); three sitting judges, whose rank is equivalent to that of a vice president of the Court of Appeals, chosen by the Supreme Judicial Council; three retired and non-

partisan judges chosen by Parliament; three public and non-partisan figures chosen by Parliament; and one representative of the Ministry of Interior.⁴ The Commission oversees the preparation of voter lists, recommends rules for defining electoral districts, establishes rules regulating electoral campaigns and the electoral process, contributes to awareness efforts related to elections, monitors compliance with codes of ethics related to elections, announces referendum and election results, and expresses opinions on draft laws related to elections. The voter registration process is carried out by committees established by the Ministry of Interior and under guidelines established by the High Elections Commission.

With the introduction of elections for the presidential position in 2005, a Presidential Election Commission (PEC), a ten-member independent body composed of current and former judges and other public figures, was created to oversee the presidential election process. Five of the PEC members are chosen by the Parliament. The PEC has the sole authority to approve the candidates, supervise the electoral process, and tally the results. It is the final authority (its decision has no appeal) on any contestation or challenge to the elections.

VOTING

Voting is compulsory and failure to do so results in a fine of £E20.⁵ Officers and members of the armed forces and police forces are exempted from this obligation during their service.⁶ In order to vote, one must present a voting card and be on the registered voters list. Voters cast their ballots on balloting cards provided to them by the head of the polling station.⁷ The card is sealed and carries the date of the election or referendum. The voter is directed to the voting booth and, after marking the ballot, returns the card folded to the head of the station while the polling station secretary places a tick in front of the name of the voter who cast his/her vote.

People with disabilities, who cannot cast their votes by themselves, may express their opinions verbally to be heard only by the members of the committee in charge of the polling station. The secretary records the voter's opinion in his/her balloting card, which will be signed by the head of the station. The counting of votes takes place in the presence of the heads of the sub-polling stations, each one counting the votes of his station. The counting committee may request them to take care of the counting process under its supervision.

Table 14.1. Parliamentary Election Turnout in Egypt, 1976–2005

<i>Electoral System: Two-Round System</i>							
Year	Total Vote	Registration	Vote/Reg %	VAP	Vote/VAP %	Invalid %	Pop. Size
1976	3,803,973	9,564,482	39.80	20,068,980	19.00	n/a	37,866,000
1984	5,323,086	12,339,418	43.10	24,654,780	21.60	3.30	45,657,000
1987	7,207,467	14,324,162	50.30	26,487,000	27.20	5.50	49,050,000
1990	7,253,168	16,326,229	44.40	28,980,050	25.00	4.80	52,691,000
1995	10,072,017	20,987,453	48.00	33,115,600	30.40	2.50	59,135,000
2000	n/a	24,602,241	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	67,285,500
2005	30,000,000	31,890,106	94.07	n/a	n/a	33.33	n/a

Notes: Registered voters—This represents the number of names on the voters' register at the time that the registration process closes, as reported by the electoral management body.

VAP (Voting Age Population)—The estimated voting age population is based on a country's population over the age of eighteen. It is not an exact measure of the VAP as it does not take into account legal or systemic barriers to the exercise of the franchise or account for non-eligible members of the population, such as resident non-citizens.

Invalid—Invalid votes as percent of total votes cast.

Sources: International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA), International Foundation for Election Systems (IFES)

THE REGULATION OF ELECTIONS: POLITICAL AND FINANCIAL REGULATIONS PERTAINING TO VOTING

Party Income: Ceilings, Bans on Sources of Income, and Disclosure Provisions

Candidates are not allowed to accept donations from Egyptians living abroad or from foreigners and campaign contributions are audited by the Central Auditing Agency.⁸

Party Expenditures: Ceilings and Disclosure Provisions

During the 2005 parliamentary elections, the Parliamentary Election Commission, chaired by the justice minister, set a campaign spending limit of 70,000 Egyptian pounds (about \$12,150) per candidate.

Direct and Indirect Public Funding

Presidential candidates in 2005 were entitled to receive 500,000 pounds (\$87,000) from the state.

TURNOUT IN ELECTIONS

From 1976 to 2000, less than 30 percent of the voting age population cast a ballot in parliamentary elections despite the fact that voting in Egypt is compulsory (see Table 14.1).

NOTES

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Chapter Fifteen

Israel

ELECTORAL SYSTEM

The state of Israel was founded in 1948 and is a parliamentary democracy with an electoral system based on nationwide proportional representation. The entire country is treated as a single electoral district insofar as the distribution of *Knesset* seats is concerned. The House of Representatives of the state of Israel, the *Knesset*, is unicameral and has 120 members representing numerous lists that are elected every four years. The electoral system is based primarily on the Basic Law: the *Knesset* of 1958 and the *Knesset* Elections Law of 1969. In accordance with the Parties Law of 1992, only registered parties can present a list of candidates and participate in the elections.

Elections were first held in Israel in 1949.

WHO CAN VOTE?

Women

Women received the right to vote in Israel in 1948. Israel has no constitutional quota for women in the *Knesset*, but parties have quotas for political candidates.

Minorities

About 19.5 percent of the population in Israel is Arab, but has been granted Israeli citizenship since Israel's foundation and can participate in the country's political life by electing officials at the municipal and national levels.

Voting Age

Every citizen of the state of Israel over the age of eighteen years has the right to participate in elections for the *Knesset*. For local government elections, the minimum voting age is seventeen.¹

Felons

Prisoners are allowed to vote.

WHO CAN PEOPLE VOTE FOR?

In addition to voting for members of the *Knesset* and the prime minister, who are directly elected by all eligible voters, Israeli citizens can also vote every five years for local government bodies: municipalities (which manage the larger urban areas with populations over 20,000), local councils (which manage towns with populations between 2,000 and 20,000), and regional councils (which manage several villages or localities within a certain radius). Residents vote for a party list of candidates and the number of seats that each party gets is proportional to the percentage of votes received by the party.² Until the 1973 municipal elections, mayors and members of the municipal councils were elected by universal, secret, direct, and proportional balloting for party lists the same way as *Knesset* members were elected.³ Council members in turn chose mayors and municipal council chairpersons. This process changed after 1978, when mayoral candidates began to be elected directly by voters in a specific municipality, while members of municipal and local councils continued to be elected according to party list performance and on the basis of proportional representation.⁴

The president of Israel, who serves a term of seven years and whose office is mainly ceremonial, is elected by a simple majority of the *Knesset* and is nominated on the basis of his personal stature and contribution to the state.⁵

THE ADMINISTRATION OF ELECTIONS

The Central Elections Committee is the body responsible for carrying out elections to the *Knesset*.⁶ The Committee is formed within sixty days of the induction of the newly formed *Knesset*, and continues to function until the next committee is formed. The Committee consists of *Knesset* members (or their delegates) representing various parliamentary groups. For every parliamentary group with four or more members, there is one member in the Central Elections Committee per four members of *Knesset*. The Committee is chaired by a Supreme Court justice. The duties of the Committee include

the authorization and registration of lists, the financing of elections, the organization and implementation of the election day, the publication of election results, and appeals on the results.

The Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA) is responsible for the organization and administration of local authority elections and preparation of electoral rolls for national (*Knesset*) elections.⁷ The National Elections Supervisory Commission, a staff division within the MIA, supervises and organizes elections for local authorities, regional councils, local committees in non-cooperative settlements, and agricultural committees. The Commission also supervises elections to the *Histadrut*, the largest workers' organization in Israel, and maintains the voter registers.⁸

VOTING

Voting is not compulsory. Election day is a public holiday. People who are not mobile or handicapped are able to vote at special polling stations set up specifically for them.⁹

Prior to voting, prospective voters must identify themselves before the secretary of the polling station committee only with his/her official identity card issued by the Ministry of the Interior. The citizen receives an envelope stamped by the Central Elections Committee and its chairman, which also has the signature of two members of the polling station committee. In the voting booth, the citizen can find slips of paper representing all of the lists running for the *Knesset*. The voter chooses only one slip, which represents the party he/she wants to vote for, and places it into the envelope and seals the envelope. In the booth, there will also be blank white slips of paper, which the citizen can use to write (in Hebrew or Arabic only) the name of the party list and its respective letter.

Blank white slips of paper are considered invalid votes and are not counted. If there are more than two slips or if there are two different slips, the vote is considered invalid. If there are two slips for the same party list, only one will be counted.

THE REGULATION OF ELECTIONS: POLITICAL AND FINANCIAL REGULATIONS PERTAINING TO VOTING

Party Income: Ceilings, Bans on Sources of Income, and Disclosure Provisions

Israel has provisions for the disclosure of contributions to political parties, but donors do not have to disclose contributions.¹⁰ Disclosure is a responsibility

Table 15.1. Parliamentary Election Turnout in Israel, 1949–2006

<i>Electoral System: List Proportional Representation</i>						
Year	Total Vote	Registration	Vote/Reg %	VAP	Vote/VAP %	Invalid %
1949	440,095	506,507	86.90	671,580	65.50	1.20
1951	695,007	924,885	75.10	955,080	72.80	1.10
1955	876,188	1,057,795	82.80	1,066,280	82.20	2.60
1959	994,306	1,218,483	81.60	1,215,990	81.80	2.50
1961	1,037,030	1,274,880	81.30	1,289,150	80.40	2.90
1965	1,244,706	1,449,709	85.90	1,510,400	82.40	3.10
1969	1,427,981	1,758,685	81.20	1,720,200	83.00	4.20
1973	1,601,098	2,037,478	78.60	1,958,100	81.80	2.10
1977	1,771,726	2,236,293	79.20	2,203,930	80.40	1.30
1981	1,954,609	2,490,014	78.50	2,447,760	79.90	0.90
1984	2,091,402	2,654,613	78.80	2,600,280	80.40	0.90
1988	2,305,576	2,894,267	79.70	2,798,460	82.40	1.00
1992	2,637,943	3,409,015	77.40	3,227,490	81.70	0.80
1996	3,119,832	3,933,250	79.30	3,684,850	84.70	2.20
1999	3,372,952	4,285,428	78.70	3,994,784	84.40	5.30
2001	2,805,938	4,504,769	62.30	n/a	n/a	3.00
2003	3,200,773	4,720,074	67.80	n/a	n/a	1.60
2003	3,200,773	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1.60
2006	3,186,739	5,014,622	63.50	n/a	n/a	n/a

Notes: Registered voters—This represents the number of names on the voters' register at the time that the registration process closes, as reported by the electoral management body.

VAP (Voting Age Population)—The estimated voting age population is based on a country's population over the age of eighteen. It is not an exact measure of the VAP as it does not take into account legal or systemic barriers to the exercise of the franchise or account for non-eligible members of the population, such as resident non-citizens.

Invalid—Invalid votes as percent of total votes cast.

Source: International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA)

that falls upon the parties. They are required to provide information on all contributions received, regardless of the amount. There is a ceiling on how much donors can give to parties annually, but there is no ceiling on how much parties can raise. Foreign, corporate, and anonymous donations are forbidden.

Party Expenditures: Ceilings and Disclosure Provisions

Disclosure provisions for party expenditures exist, but there is no ceiling on how much can be spent.

Direct and Indirect Public Funding

Public funding is available to political parties based on their number of seats in the outgoing Knesset. New parties receive a similar allocation retroactively for each member elected. Indirect public funding, such as free media access and a special tax status (during election time, persons working for the elections are entitled to tax exemptions; donors to parties are also entitled to tax credits) is also available.

TURNOUT IN ELECTIONS

Turnout ranged between 77 and 87 percent until 2001 when it declined to 62 percent of registered voters and remained in the sixtieth percentile through 2006 (see Table 15.1).

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Chapter Sixteen

Jordan

ELECTORAL SYSTEM

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, a hereditary monarchy, has a bicameral legislature, the National Assembly (*Majlis al-Umma*), which is composed of the House of Notables or Senate (*Majlis al-Ayan*) and the House of Representatives (*Majlis al-Nuwaab*). The king appoints the fifty-five members of the House of Notables for four-year terms. Until 2001, the House of Representatives had eighty members elected for four-year terms under a plurality system from twenty-one multi-member constituencies with each constituency electing between two and nine seats. The new Elections Law of 2001 raised the number of House of Representatives seats from eighty to 104 and increased the number of constituencies from twenty-one to forty-four. In 2003, a royal decree allocated an additional six seats to women, thus increasing the number of seats to 110.

Jordan's electoral system has undergone substantial changes. In 1957, all political parties were banned. Up to 1993, the Kingdom went through a period of political unrest due to the conflicts in the region, constitutional amendments, amendments of the election laws, and suspension or delays of elections.¹ During the latter 1970s and early 1980s, the Jordanian National Assembly was suspended and legislative powers reverted to the executive branch. An appointed National Consultative Council (NCC) was created to advise and support the executive. The NCC served in this capacity from 1978 to 1984, when the government announced a return to a parliamentary form of governance and reconvened the National Assembly.² This Assembly ruled until the 1989 elections, when a new one was chosen.

In 1989, Jordan held its first competitive election in nearly thirty years. For that election, Jordan used the block vote electoral system to elect an

eighty-member legislature. Out of these seats, eight were reserved for Christians and another three for Circassians. In 1993, the government introduced the single non-transferable vote system (SNTV).

Jordan's first National Assembly elections were held in 1929.³

WHO CAN VOTE?

Women

In 1955, Jordanian women gained the right to vote, but not stand for election, which was restricted to women with primary education or above.⁴ This condition was dropped in 1960. In 1974, women were accorded the full right to vote and stand for election. However, since the Jordanian National Assembly stopped working from 1968 to 1984, the first parliamentary elections in which women voted were held in 1989.⁵

Minorities

The Jordanian National Assembly has nine seats reserved for Christians and three for the Circassian and Chechen minorities.

Voting Age

All Jordanian citizens over the age of eighteen have the right to vote.

Felons

Those sentenced to a year or more for a non-political crime are ineligible to vote.⁶

WHO CAN PEOPLE VOTE FOR?

Elections in Jordan are held to elect members of the National Assembly. In addition, a 2007 law allows Jordanians to elect the presidents of municipal councils (except the council of Greater Amman where voters elect half the members and the Ministry of Municipal Affairs appoints the other half as well as the council's president) and a member of those councils. The previous 2003 law allowed voters to elect only half of every municipal council while the other half was appointed by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs. The Ministry had also appointed the heads of all municipal councils.

THE ADMINISTRATION OF ELECTIONS

The Ministry of Interior administers the entire election process.⁷ The minister of the interior chairs the Higher Committee for Election Supervision, which also includes the secretary-general of the Ministry, the director-general of the Civil Affairs and Passports Department, a high-ranking judge named by the chairman of the Judicial Council, and the head of the relevant department at the Ministry of the Interior.⁸ The Higher Committee for Election Supervision settles all issues relayed by the Central Election Committees in the various governorates. The minister also forms a special committee, headed by an administrative governor, which deals with the task of filling the additional seats designated for women.⁹

In every governorate a Central Election Committee is formed by the minister of the interior and is headed by the governor. In every electoral district, the governor forms a committee headed by an administrative governor to supervise the electoral process. Each committee also includes a judge and a civil affairs employee.

VOTING

Voting is not compulsory and is direct and universal.

To vote, Jordanians need to register and present their personal identity cards.¹⁰ After casting a ballot, the voter receives back his/her identity card from the polling station officials, which is stamped to ascertain that the voter has already cast a ballot in the election.

THE REGULATION OF ELECTIONS: POLITICAL AND FINANCIAL REGULATIONS PERTAINING TO VOTING

Political propaganda must not attack other candidates or instigate tribal, regional, or sectarian strife.¹¹ Also, there are restrictions on where one can advertise: election propaganda in government departments or ministries is forbidden.

Candidates are forbidden to give gifts, donations, or assistance and to promise such items; people are also forbidden from requesting them. Parties do not have access to direct public funding.¹²

TURNOUT IN ELECTIONS

Turnout in elections is quite low: around 58 percent of registered voters cast ballots in the last elections in 2003 (see Table 16.1). The turnout numbers are even lower when looking at turnout for the voting age population.

Table 16.1. Parliamentary Election Turnout in Jordan, 1989–2003

<i>Electoral System: Single Non-Transferable Vote</i>							
Year	Total Vote	Registration	Vote/Reg %	VAP	Vote/VAP %	Invalid %	Pop. Size
1989	541,426	1,020,446	53.10	1,901,640	28.50	n/a	4,134,000
1993	822,294	1,501,279	54.80	2,369,280	34.70	n/a	4,936,000
1997	702,260	1,480,000	47.40	2,644,116	26.60	n/a	5,508,576
2003	1,342,999	2,325,496	57.80	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Notes: *Registered voters*—This represents the number of names on the voters' register at the time that the registration process closes, as reported by the electoral management body.
VAP (Voting Age Population)—The estimated voting age population is based on a country's population over the age of eighteen. It is not an exact measure of the VAP as it does not take into account legal or systemic barriers to the exercise of the franchise or account for non-eligible members of the population, such as resident non-citizens.

Invalid—Invalid votes as percent of total votes cast.

Source: International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA)

NOTES

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Part Six

AFRICA

Chapter Seventeen

Nigeria

ELECTORAL SYSTEM

Nigeria is a federal republic with a presidential system. It has a first-past-the-post electoral system and the representatives of its bicameral National Assembly, as well as the president, are directly elected by the electorate. The winner of the electoral race is the person who wins the most votes, even though he/she might not have the absolute majority of votes.

Since its independence from Great Britain in 1960, Nigeria has had civilian rule for only fifteen years. For the rest of the time, it was under military rule, until its presidential election in 1999. For a short period in 1993, a civilian-led government was installed, but the military seized power after three months and General Sani Abacha took over the country and solidified his dictatorship by jailing and executing dissenters. Abacha allowed five political parties to exist, but all of them had to nominate him for the presidency.

Following the sudden death of Abacha in 1998, General Abdulsalami Abubakar assumed power and began a process of democratic reforms, such as legalizing political parties, releasing political prisoners, and allowing for freedom of the press. Elections were scheduled for February 1999 and voter registration began in October 1998, just four months before the election. Power was to be handed over to a civilian government in May 1999, after a series of elections scheduled for December 5, 1998 (local government), January 9, 1999 (state assembly and governors), February 20, 1999 (national assembly), and February 27, 1999 (presidential). The winner of the presidential election, with 62.78 percent of the valid votes, was Olusegun Obasanjo.¹

On April 12, 2003, elections were held for the two houses of Nigeria's National Assembly: the House of Representatives (360 seats) and the Senate (109 seats). The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) reported that about thirty political parties had candidates in this election. In contrast, only two parties participated in the 1999 elections.²

On April 19, 2003, Nigeria also held its presidential election. Among the nineteen registered candidates, there was one woman. The main contenders in the race were the incumbent President Obasanjo, from the People's Democratic Party (PDP), and Mr. Muhammadu Buhari, a former military ruler from the All Nigeria People's Party (ANPP). This was the first time since independence that the country transferred power from one civilian administration to another without the intervention of the military.³ However, the elections were accompanied by a cycle of political violence including Christian-Muslim riots in northern Nigeria. On election day, there were at least two dozen deaths, hundreds fled from their homes, and there was a boycott in the oil-producing Niger Delta.⁴

The general and presidential elections were observed by about 70,000 local and international observers, including observers from the European Union (EU) and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). ECOWAS observers declared the legislative and presidential elections as "free, fair and transparent" while most other observers, particularly those from the European Parliament, objected that the elections, while more peaceful than expected, suffered from significant flaws.⁵

The outcome of the elections were Obasanjo's election to the presidency with 54.5 percent of the votes and 213 seats in the House of Representatives. The main opposition parties, the ANPP and the Alliance for Democracy (AD), received ninety-five and thirty-one seats, respectively. The ruling party won seventy-three seats in the Senate, while the ANPP took twenty-eight and the AD six seats.⁶ The election results were rejected by the opposition. Mr. Obasanjo was sworn in for a second term on May 29, 2003.

The elections held in 1959, 1979, 1993, and 1999 are considered to be the most free, fair, and peacefully conducted elections in Nigeria, whereas those in 1964 and 1983 are considered to be violent and disrupting.⁷ This is explained by the fact that the former were 'transition' elections and the regimes in power and responsible for organizing the elections were to transfer power to a democratic civilian regime (for example, in 1959 the British colonial regime aimed to transfer power to Nigerian self-government), while in the latter elections the incumbent regime was reluctant to hand over power to a successor.⁸

During the last decade, Nigeria has made advancements toward democratic practices. Its Freedom House rating (see Table 17.1) has moved from seven

Table 17.1. Nigeria's Rating by Freedom House, 1994–2003

		<i>Ten-Year Ratings Timeline (Political Rights, Civil Liberties, Status):</i>									
		1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
7, 6, NF		7, 7, NF	7, 6, NF	7, 6, NF	7, 6, NF	6, 4, NF	4, 3, PF	4, 4, PF	4, 5, PF	4, 5, PF	4, 4, PF

Notes: PF—Partly Free, NF—Not Free. Political Rights Rating: 1—country comes closest to ideals of guaranteed political rights and freedoms and free and fair elections; 7—political rights are absent or virtually nonexistent. Civil Liberties Rating: 1—country comes closest to ideals of freedom of expression, assembly, association, education, and religion; 7—virtually no freedom.

Source: Freedom House

on the scale for political rights, which indicates absent or virtually nonexistent political rights, to four, which is indicative of an environment where there are some elements of political rights, including reasonably free elections. Improvements in civil liberties have also been observed.

WHO CAN VOTE?

Women

Women received the right to vote in several stages. The first to receive suffrage (federal) were the women in the Eastern Region in 1954; then, in 1955, women in the Western Region received suffrage, if they paid taxes.⁹ Next, women in the South (which is mostly Christian) received suffrage in 1958, while those in the North (which is mostly Muslim) received it in 1978.¹⁰ Women received the right to stand for election in 1958.¹¹ As of the 2003 elections, more women received seats in the House of Representatives than in the Senate (see Table 17.2).

Age and Citizenship

The Nigerian Constitution establishes that citizens of Nigeria, who have attained the age of eighteen and are residing in Nigeria at the time of the registration of voters for purposes of election to a legislative house, are entitled to register as a voter.¹²

WHO CAN PEOPLE VOTE FOR?

Nigerians vote for president and members of both chambers of the National Assembly, the Senate and the House of Representatives. There are also local government council (municipal) elections and elections for state assemblies (regional).

Table 17.2. Women Elected during the 2003 National Assembly Elections

<i>National Assembly</i>		
	<i>House of Representatives</i>	<i>Senate</i>
Men	336	106
Women	22	3
Women (as percent of total)	6.11%	2.75%

Source: Inter-Parliamentary Union, Parline Database

THE ADMINISTRATION OF ELECTIONS

There have been electoral bodies in Nigeria since the pre-Independence era, when the Electoral Commission of Nigeria (ECN) was established to conduct elections in 1959.¹³ A year later, the Federal Electoral Commission (FEC) was established. The FEC conducted the post-independence federal and regional elections of 1964 and 1965 respectively, but was dissolved after the military coup of 1966. In 1978, the Federal Electoral Commission (FEDECO) was established by General Obasanjo. This electoral body organized the general elections of 1979 and of 1983. It was dissolved in 1983 by the military administration of General Mohammed Buhari.

In 1987, the military coup of General Ibrahim Badamosi Babangida established the National Electoral Commission (NEC) to conduct elections, but it was dissolved twice in 1993: once after the annulled presidential election in June and then after the military coup of General Sani Abacha, who came to power in November 1993. In December 1995, General Sani Abacha established the National Electoral Commission of Nigeria (NECON), which conducted elections from Local Government Councils to National Assembly. In 1998, after the death of General Sani Abacha, General Abdulsalam Abubakar dissolved NECON and established the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC).

INEC is the electoral body that currently administers elections in Nigeria. INEC organized the transitional elections that ushered in the 4th Republic on May 29, 1999. The Commission has offices in all the thirty-six state capitals and 774 local governments established by the 1999 Constitution.¹⁴ The Commission consists of a chairman, the chief national electoral commissioner, and the chief executive of the commission, and twelve other members known as national electoral commissioners. The chairman and members of the commission are not less than fifty and forty years of age respectively and persons of unquestionable integrity. The chairman and the twelve other members are nominated for their positions by the president and their nominations must be confirmed by the Senate. They all have a tenure of five years.

INEC is responsible for dealing with practically all aspects of the electoral process except adjudication. It delimits constituencies; registers voters and maintains the electoral roll; registers political parties and monitors their activities; and administers all aspects of elections.¹⁵

The lack of independence of the INEC has been criticized from two main standpoints. On one side, criticisms have been that its independence is jeopardized by the fact that it lacks autonomous sources of funding, since its funding has to be approved and provided by the executive branch.¹⁶ Its

independence has also been under question due to the fact that the president appoints the members of the Commission.¹⁷

VOTING

Voting is not compulsory and is done through paper ballots.

Since parts of the country are predominantly Muslim, the electoral law contains a provision that election officials “shall separate the queue between men and women if in that area of the country the culture is such that it does not permit the mingling of men and women in the same queue.”¹⁸

Citizens have voter cards, which are stamped and dated to indicate the voter has already cast a ballot. Another measure to ensure the integrity of elections is putting indelible ink on the left-hand thumbnail of each voter who has been issued a ballot.¹⁹

THE REGULATION OF ELECTIONS: POLITICAL AND FINANCIAL REGULATIONS PERTAINING TO VOTING

Political parties in Nigeria gather and spend massive amounts of money. It is reported that some candidates for the 1992 presidential primary election spent over \$204 million dollars. At a pre-election fundraiser meeting of the People’s Democratic Party, whose candidate won the election, over \$11.6 million dollars were raised.²⁰

Party Income: Ceilings, Bans on Sources of Income, and Disclosure Provisions

The 1999 Constitution stipulates that no political party shall be entitled to retain any funds or assets remitted or sent to it from outside Nigeria.²¹

Party Expenditures: Ceilings and Disclosure Provisions

The 2002 Electoral Act stipulates that election expenses incurred by a political party for the purpose of management or the conduct of an election are not to exceed in the aggregate the sum of multiplying twenty Naira (about \$.15) by the number of names appearing in the final voters’ list for each constituency where there is a candidate sponsored by the Political Party.²² In the event that election expenses surpass the limit stipulated in the Electoral Act, a party is liable on conviction to a fine of 500,000 Naira.²³

Table 17.3. Election Turnout in Nigeria for Parliamentary Elections, 1959–2003

<i>Nigeria Electoral System: First-Past-the-Post</i>							
Year	Total Vote	Registration	Vote/Reg. %	VAP	Vote/VAP %	Invalid %	Pop. Size
1959	7,185,555	9,036,083	79.50	16,532,640	43.50	—	34,443,000
1979	15,686,514	48,499,091	32.30	38,142,090	41.10	4.00	77,841,000
1983*	25,400,000	65,300,000	38.90	43,620,780	58.20	—	89,022,000
1999	49,136,212	57,938,945	84.80	52,792,781	93.10	2.40	108,258,359
2003(a)	30,190,721	60,823,022	49.64	—	—	3.51	135,632,000

Notes: * Registered and total votes are approximate.

2003 results based on IFES data for Senate and House of Representatives elections: registration for both elections is equal; Total Vote, Vote/Reg, Invalid votes are based on average for the two elections. Population size based on World Bank data for 2003.

Registered voters—This represents the number of names on the voters' register at the time that the registration process closes, as reported by the electoral management body.

VAP (Voting Age Population)—The estimated voting age population is based on a country's population over the age of 18. It is not an exact measure of the VAP as it does not take into account legal or systemic barriers to the exercise of the franchise or account for non-eligible members of the population, such as resident non-citizens.

Invalid—Invalid votes as percent of total votes cast.

Sources: International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA), International Foundation for Election Systems (IFES), World Bank

Table 17.4. Election Turnout in Nigeria for Presidential Elections, 1979–2003

Year	Presidential Elections						
	Total Vote	Registration	Vote/Reg. %	VAP	Vote/VAP %	Invalid %	Pop. Size
1979	17,098,267	48,499,091	35.30	38,142,090	44.80	2.00	77,841,000
1993	14,039,486	—	—	50,526,720	27.80	—	105,264,000
1999	30,280,052	57,938,945	52.30	52,792,781	57.40	1.40	108,258,359
2003(a)	42,018,735	60,823,022	69.08	—	—	6.04	135,632,000

Notes: (a) 2003 results based on IFES data. Population size based on World Bank data for 2003.

Registered voters—This represents the number of names on the voters' register at the time that the registration process closes, as reported by the electoral management body.

VAP (Voting Age Population)—The estimated voting age population is based on a country's population over the age of eighteen. It is not an exact measure of the VAP as it does not take into account legal or systemic barriers to the exercise of the franchise or account for non-eligible members of the population, such as resident non-citizens.

Invalid—The number of invalid votes, as reported by each country.

Sources: International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA), International Foundation for Election Systems (IFES), World Bank

Nigeria has no disclosure laws for the amounts of money raised by political parties and election campaigns.²⁴

Direct and Indirect Public Funding

Nigeria does not have direct public funding for candidates and parties and does not allow for free TV time for them.²⁵

TURNOUT IN ELECTIONS

Turnout during Nigeria's last two parliamentary elections has fluctuated substantively. In 1999, it was 85 percent while in 2003, it was a mere 50 percent of registered voters (see Table 17.3). Turnout for the presidential election has also shown fluctuation, but in the opposite direction: from about 52 percent in 1999 to 69 percent of registered voters in 2003 (see Table 17.4).

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Chapter Eighteen

South Africa

ELECTORAL SYSTEM

South Africa has a parliamentary system of government. The first multi-party democratic elections in South Africa were held in April 1994, putting an end to 300 years of colonialism and four decades of apartheid. The elections were conducted under a form of national list proportional representation (PR). The elections of April 1994 signaled a major breakthrough in South Africa as political control was shifting from the white minority to the black majority.

South Africa has a bicameral parliament, which is elected every five years. It consists of the National Assembly (*Volksraad*) and the National Council of Provinces (*Nationale Raad van Provinsies*). Half of the members of the National Assembly, 200 members, are elected from nine provincial lists and the other half elected from a single national list.¹ The choice of a PR system is seen as crucial for creating an atmosphere of inclusiveness and reconciliation. The other chamber of Parliament, the National Council of Provinces (*Nationale Raad van Provinsies*), consists of ninety members, who are indirectly elected.

During the last decade, South Africa has made advances toward democratic practices with the abolition of apartheid and the holding of elections open to all sectors of society. The Freedom House ratings (see Table 18.1 below) are a reflection of this progress.

WHO CAN VOTE?

During most of the twentieth century, the franchise in South Africa was racially restricted. This resulted in an arrangement where the white minority

Table 18.1. South Africa's Rating by Freedom House, 1993–2003

		<i>Ten-Year Ratings Timeline (Political Rights, Civil Liberties, Status):</i>										
		1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
5, 4, PF		5, 4, PF	5, 4, PF	2, 3, F	1, 2, F	1, 2, F	1, 2, F	1, 2, F	1, 2, F	1, 2, F	1, 2, F	1, 2, F

Notes: PF—Partly Free, NF—Not Free. Political Rights Rating: 1—country comes closest to ideals of guaranteed political rights and freedoms and free and fair elections; 7—political rights are absent or virtually nonexistent. Civil Liberties Rating: 1—country comes closest to ideals of freedom of expression, assembly, association, education, and religion; 7—virtually no freedom.
Source: Freedom House

had voting rights which most of the black majority did not have until the end of apartheid and the 1994 elections.² White males were enfranchised from 1910, but there were property and education requirements in some territories. In 1931, the vote was extended to all white men.

Very few Asian, black, and Indian voters were enfranchised before the establishment of the Union of South Africa in 1910 and until the 1994 elections, they were subject to restrictions and inconsistent voting rights. For example, Indian and colored voters were removed from the common municipal registers in Natal and the Cape in 1964 and 1968, but were re-enfranchised in 1984 after the establishment of the Tricameral Parliament. This parliament had a House of Representatives for Colored Affairs and a House of Delegates for Indian Affairs. The white population was represented by the House of Assembly. The Tricameral Parliament ceased to exist in 1994.

Women

White women gained the right to vote in 1930. In 1994, black women also received that right.

South Africa does not have a constitutional or election law quota or regulation for women's representation in the National Parliament, but the Municipal Structures Act of 1998 establishes that political parties should "seek to ensure" that 50 percent of the candidates on the election lists at the local level are women.³ There is no penalty if this is not complied with.

In the 1994 elections, the African National Congress (ANC) established an internal quota that commits the party to ensuring that at least 30 percent of their PR list is comprised of women.⁴ At the local level, the ANC has adopted a 50 percent quota for women on party lists.

Voting Age

South African citizens over the age of eighteen who are living in the country at the time of the election may vote providing their name appears on the Voters' Roll.

Felons

Before the April 2004 election, South Africa's Constitutional Court ruled that all South African prisoners have the right to vote, stating that the government's December 2003 decision to limit prisoner voting to those awaiting trial was unconstitutional.⁵

WHO CAN PEOPLE VOTE FOR?

Elections in South Africa are held for national, provincial, and municipal bodies.

THE ADMINISTRATION OF ELECTIONS

South Africa has an independent electoral commission, which was first convened in December 1993. The Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) is a permanent body created by the Constitution to promote and safeguard democracy in South Africa. It is accountable to the parliament, but is independent of the government. Its task is the impartial management of free and fair elections at all levels of government.

The Commission is composed of at least three people and one of them must be a judge. To be appointed a member of the Commission, one must be a South African citizen with a high party-political profile. The commissioners are appointed for a period of seven years unless they resign, die at an earlier date, or are removed from office on grounds of misconduct, incapacity, or incompetence.

One of the duties of the IEC, stemming from the Constitution and the Electoral Commission Act, is to compile and maintain a national common voters' roll.⁶ The IEC is also responsible for all the logistics of running elections and for overseeing political party financing and keeping parties informed of relevant rules and regulations. The chief electoral officer of the IEC is responsible for the management and administration of the Represented Political Parties' Fund, from which funds are allocated for public funding of parties, and is its accounting officer and CEO.

VOTING

Voting is not compulsory.

Voters queue outside their voting station entrance, and their names are checked against the voters' roll. To prevent multiple voting, the voter's thumb is examined under an ultra-violet scanner for traces of the indelible ink that is applied to everyone who has voted.

After this procedure, citizens are issued two ballot papers: one to elect members of the National Assembly and the other to elect members of the relevant provincial legislature. Each ballot paper has a list of all registered political parties and alongside each party name one can find other identifying information, such as the photograph of the party leader, the party's logo, and

a block where voters can make their mark. After the vote is marked, the ballot is cast in a sealed ballot box.

THE REGULATION OF ELECTIONS: POLITICAL AND FINANCIAL REGULATIONS PERTAINING TO VOTING

Party Income: Ceilings, Bans on Sources of Income, and Disclosure Provisions

Political parties can obtain funds from their members and from other sources, such as business (both local and foreign) and civil society groupings.⁷ There is no ban on the sources of the funds: they can come from private domestic or foreign sources, from anonymous contributors, trade unions, etc.⁸

There are no provisions of disclosure of political party income and there are no ceilings on how much a political party can raise.⁹

Party Expenditures: Ceilings and Disclosure Provisions

There is no provision for public disclosure of expenditures by political parties and there is no ceiling on party election expenditures.¹⁰

Direct and Indirect Public Funding

Public funding is available to parties under the Public Funding of Represented Political Parties Act of 1997, which governs party eligibility and the allocations they receive from the Represented Political Parties' Fund. Parties are entitled to public funding for any financial year that they are represented in the National Assembly or in any provincial legislature or both in the National Assembly and in any provincial legislature.¹¹ Parties that receive allocations from the fund must keep a separate account with a bank in the Republic, where the allocations are deposited. The funds are intended for general party administration, political education, promotion of active political participation, and other party activities.

Indirect public funding is also available in the form of free media access, but parties do not have a special taxation status nor do they receive any taxation relief.¹²

TURNOUT IN ELECTIONS

During the first free elections in 1994, turnout was 85.5 percent of the voting age population (see Table 18.2). For 2004, voter turnout was 76.7 percent.

Table 18.2. Election Turnout in South Africa Parliamentary Elections, 1994–2004

Year	Electoral System: Proportional Representation						Pop. Size
	Total Vote	Registration	Vote/Reg. %	VAP	Vote/VAP %	Invalid %	
1994	19,726,579	n/a	n/a	23,063,910	85.50	n/a	40,436,000
1999	16,228,462	18,177,000	89.30	25,411,573	63.90	1.50	42,424,823
2004(a)	15,863,554	20,674,926	76.73	—	—	1.58	45,294,000

Notes: (a): 2004 results based on IFES data. Population size based on World Bank data for 2003.

Registered voters—This represents the number of names on the voters' register at the time that the registration process closes, as reported by the electoral management body.

VAP (Voting Age Population)—The estimated voting age population is based on a country's population over the age of eighteen. It is not an exact measure of the VAP as it does not take into account legal or systemic barriers to the exercise of the franchise or account for non-eligible members of the population, such as resident non-citizens.

Invalid—Invalid votes as percent of total votes cast.

Sources: International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA), International Foundation for Election Systems (IFES), World Bank

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Part Seven

ASIA

Chapter Nineteen

India

ELECTORAL SYSTEM

India has a parliamentary system of government. The parliament consists of the president, the Lok Sabha (House of the People), and the Rajya Sabha (Council of States).¹ The president appoints the prime minister, who runs the government, according to the political composition of the Lok Sabha.

Elections to the Lok Sabha are carried out every five years using a first-past-the-post electoral system, a legacy of the British colonialism that ended in 1947. The Constitution limits its members to 550.² Scheduled castes and tribes are also entitled to representation. They have reserved constituencies where only candidates from these communities can stand for election.³ The Lok Sabha can be dissolved by the president who can call a general election before five years is up, if the government can no longer command the confidence of the Lok Sabha, and if there is no alternative government available to take over.

The members of the Rajya Sabha are elected indirectly by each state, using the single transferable vote system. They can serve for six years. The number of members returned by each state is roughly in proportion to its population.

The president can nominate two members of the Lok Sabha if the representation of the Anglo-Indian community is inadequate, and twelve members of the Rajya Sabha, to represent literature, science, art, and social services.⁴

WHO CAN VOTE?

Currently, the electoral system of India is based on the principle of universal adult suffrage, which was introduced after the end of British colonial rule and

the adoption of the Indian Constitution in 1950.⁵ The right to vote is irrespective of caste, creed, religion, or gender.

Women

Women were granted the vote in 1950.

The 73rd and 74th Amendments to the Indian Constitution, which came into effect in 1994, require that 33 percent of seats in all local bodies (panchayats and municipalities) be reserved for women.⁶ There are sanctions for non-compliance with these requirements. Some Indian parties also have quotas for women. The Indian National Congress has a 15 percent quota and the Assa People's Council has a 35 percent quota.⁷

Minorities

The Indian Constitution reserves 22 percent of all seats for historically disadvantaged groups known as scheduled castes (seventy-nine reserved seats) and scheduled tribes (forty-one reserved seats). Only a member of the scheduled castes or tribes may stand for election in these constituencies, but all electors have voting rights.⁸

Voting Age

Before 1989, the age limit for voting in India was twenty-one. Currently, it is eighteen.

Felons

Conviction and an imprisonment sentence of at least two years within the last six years disqualifies one from voting in India.⁹

WHO CAN PEOPLE VOTE FOR?

Elections determine the composition of the parliament, the state and union territory legislative assemblies, and the presidency and vice-presidency.¹⁰ The Vidhan Sabhas (legislative assemblies) are directly elected bodies responsible for administering the government in India's twenty-eight states. Elections for state legislative assemblies are held every five years unless called earlier. Some of these states have a bicameral organization of legislatures. Two of the seven Union Territories, the National Capital Territory of Delhi and Pondicherry, also have legislative assemblies.

Elections to the Vidhan Sabhas are carried out in the same manner as for the Lok Sabha election: through a first-past-the-post system in states and union territories divided into single-member constituencies.

The members of the Vidhan Sabhas, Lok Sabha, and Rajya Sabha elect the president, who serves for a period of five years. A formula is used to allocate votes so there is a balance between the population of each state and the number of votes assembly members from a state can cast. In the event that no candidate has a majority of votes there is a system to eliminate the losing candidates from the election and transfer votes for them to other candidates, until one gains a majority. The vice president is elected by a direct vote of all elected and nominated members of the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha.

THE ADMINISTRATION OF ELECTIONS

The Election Commission of India, an independent body established under the Constitution on January 25, 1950, is responsible for the administration and control of the process of elections to parliament and to the legislature of every state and to the offices of president and vice president. Initially, a chief election commissioner ran the commission, but first in 1989 and later again in 1993 two additional election commissioners were appointed.¹¹

The chief election commissioner and election commissioners are appointed by the president for a period of six years, or up to the age of sixty-five years, whichever is earlier. The Commission has a secretariat of about 300 staff members. At the state level, a chief electoral officer and a core staff are also available on a full time basis. At the district and constituency level, officers and staff of the civil administration also serve as election officials. Additional staff is hired temporarily during the conduct of elections for about two weeks. Their main function is to serve as polling and counting officials.

The activities of the Election Commission include the preparation and maintenance of the electoral roll, the organization of the polling booths, the monitoring of the counting of votes, and declaration of results. Furthermore, it also supervises the nomination of candidates, the registration of political parties, and the election campaign as well as the candidates' funding. The Commission also appoints election observers to ensure the conduct of free and fair elections.

The secretariat of the Commission has an independent budget drafted in consultation between the Commission and the Finance Ministry. In the case of parliamentary elections, their costs are born by the Union Government. If the elections are for a state legislature, the expenditures are born by that state. If these elections are held simultaneously, the costs are borne equally between the Union and the state governments.

VOTING

Voting is not compulsory. Only people whose names are on the electoral roll are allowed to vote. The roll is generally revised every year to add the names of those who are to turn eighteen on January 1 of that year or to update for those who have moved in or out of the constituency as well as for those who have died. The updating of the electoral roll only stops during an election campaign, after the nominations for candidates have closed.

In 1998, the Election Commission decided to computerize the electoral roll of 620 million voters. The computerization allows the printing of the electoral rolls, which also include the photo identity card number of the voter for cross-linking purposes. The printed electoral roll and the CDs containing it are given for free to the national and state parties after each revision of the rolls. They are also available for sale to the general public.

To improve the accuracy of the electoral roll and prevent electoral fraud, in 1993 the Commission decided to order the making of photo identity cards for all voters in the country.

Since 1998, the Election Commission has increasingly used Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs).¹² In 2003, all state elections and by-elections used the EVMs.

THE REGULATION OF ELECTIONS: POLITICAL AND FINANCIAL REGULATIONS PERTAINING TO VOTING

Party Income: Ceilings, Bans on Sources of Income, and Disclosure Provisions

Parties must disclose contributions only when the donor is a public company and donors have to disclose contributions. There is no ceiling on contributions to political parties. There are also no bans on sources of income.

Party Expenditures: Ceilings and Disclosure Provisions

Parties are required to disclose election expenditures, but there is no ceiling on party expenditures.

Direct and Indirect Public Funding

No direct public funding is available, but indirect funding exists in the form of free media access (broadcasting and television time in the state-owned media). Neither parties nor donors have a special taxation status.

Table 19.1. Parliamentary Election Turnout in India, 1952–2004

<i>Electoral System: List First-Past-the-Post</i>							
Year	Total Vote	Registration	Vote/Reg %	VAP	Vote/VAP %	Invalid %	Pop. Size
1952	105,940,000	173,210,000	61.20	179,830,000	58.90	n/a	367,000,000
1957	123,460,000	193,650,000	63.80	197,090,250	62.60	n/a	402,225,000
1962	119,910,000	217,680,000	55.10	220,324,090	54.40	n/a	449,641,000
1967	152,730,000	250,600,000	60.90	241,996,800	63.10	n/a	504,160,000
1971	151,296,749	273,832,301	55.30	2,693,600	57.20	3.2	550,820,000
1977	193,953,183	320,682,598	60.50	300,392,640	64.60	2.8	625,818,000
1980	201,269,129	354,024,081	56.90	325,162,040	61.90	2.4	663,596,000
1984	240,846,499	379,116,623	63.50	373,371,000	64.50	2.5	746,742,000
1989	290,366,661	498,647,786	58.20	474,143,040	61.20	n/a	817,488,000
1991	282,700,000	498,363,801	56.70	493,963,380	57.20	n/a	851,661,000
1996	343,308,035	592,572,288	57.90	562,028,000	61.10	2.5	952,590,000
1998	373,678,215	602,340,382	62.00	556,651,400	67.10	1.9	970,933,000
1999	370,579,735	620,394,065	59.70	565,780,483	65.50	n/a	986,856,301
2004	387,779,784	671,524,934	57.75	n/a	n/a	0.01	1,079,721,000

Note: Population size for 2004 based on World Bank data.

Registered voters—This represents the number of names on the voters' register at the time that the registration process closes, as reported by the electoral management body.

VAP (Voting Age Population)—The estimated voting age population is based on a country's population over the age of eighteen. It is not an exact measure of the VAP as it does not take into account legal or systemic barriers to the exercise of the franchise or account for non-eligible members of the population, such as resident non-citizens.

Invalid—Invalid votes as percent of total votes cast.

Sources: International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA), International Foundation for Election Systems (IFES), World Bank

TURNOUT IN ELECTIONS

Electoral turnout in India has been ranging between a low of 55 percent of registered voters (in 1962 and 1971) and a high of 63.8 percent (in 1957) (see Table 19.1).

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Chapter Twenty

China

ELECTORAL SYSTEM

The Chinese electoral system combines direct and indirect elections. Deputies to the people's congresses at the county and township levels are elected directly by their constituencies while deputies to the National People's Congress (NPC), China's parliament, and to the people's congresses of provinces, autonomous regions, municipalities directly under the Central Government, cities divided into districts, and autonomous prefectures are elected by the people's congresses at the next lower level.¹

Deputies of the NPC are elected by China's twenty-two provinces, five autonomous regions, three municipalities, and the armed forces for a period of five years.² The size of each college of delegates is commensurate to the number of voters in the constituency. Since 1997, the Special Administrative Region of Hong Kong also elects deputies.

The NPC deputies are elected from multi-candidate constituencies by absolute majority vote within their respective electoral units. If the number of candidates that receive a majority vote exceeds the deputies to be elected, those with the most votes are considered elected. If the candidates obtaining a majority vote are less than the number to be elected, another election is held.

The NPC may not have more than 3,000 deputies. The allocation of the number of deputies to the NPC is decided by its Standing Committee (a permanent body through which the NPC functions due to infrequent meetings and whose members are elected by the NPC) in accordance with the principle that the number of citizens represented by each rural deputy is four times that represented by each urban deputy. The Standing Committee also allocates the number of deputies elected by minority nationalities, which are entitled

to representation through the Constitution, depending on the population and distribution of these nationalities.

WHO CAN VOTE?

Women

Women received the right to vote in 1949.³ In many locations, a seat on the village committee is reserved for a woman, who would be responsible for family planning.⁴

Minorities

Besides the Han Chinese, there are fifty-five ethnic groups, which are minorities.⁵ China has a system of regional national autonomy in areas with concentrated minority nationalities. Autonomous areas are classified as regions, prefectures, and counties. There are five autonomous regions (the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, the Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region, and the Tibet Autonomous Region), thirty autonomous prefectures, 116 autonomous counties, and three autonomous banners in the country. The organs of self-government of autonomous areas are the people's congresses and people's governments of autonomous regions, autonomous prefectures, and autonomous counties.

One or more citizens of the nationality of the autonomous region are the chairman and vice chairmen of the standing committee of the people's congress of the region, prefecture, or county.

Voting Age

All citizens of the People's Republic of China who have reached the age of eighteen have the right to vote and to stand for election, except persons deprived of political rights.

Felons

Those convicted to prison terms, serving short-term forced labor under detention or under surveillance, but who have not been stripped of political rights, have the right to vote. In addition, those in custody, under investigation, on bail, in residences under surveillance, reeducated through labor, and those who have been punished with detention can vote.⁶

WHO CAN PEOPLE VOTE FOR?

The people's congresses have four levels, national, provincial, county, and local. The two higher levels are indirectly elected. The NPC deputies are elected by provincial congresses and provincial-congress deputies are elected by county congresses.⁷ Local (village) congresses have been directly elected since the first elections in 1954 and the Electoral Law of 1979 provided for direct election at the county level.⁸

In 1987, the NPC enacted the Organic Law on Village Elections, which introduced elections for village committees to be conducted on a trial basis.⁹ The law encouraged all villages to hold elections every three years for their committee (which is the executive branch of the village, but is not a government body) and that villagers nominate all candidates. The goal of this policy was to help maintain social order during intensive economic reforms.¹⁰ However, the holding of these elections was not mandatory and the law did not stipulate how the elections are to be conducted.¹¹ An amendment to this law later made the elections mandatory.

THE ADMINISTRATION OF ELECTIONS

In general, direct elections are presided over by election committees of the same level whereas indirect elections are presided over by the standing committees of people's congresses of the same level.¹² The standing committee of the NPC ensures the completion of election of deputies to the succeeding NPC. Standing committees of people's congresses of provinces, autonomous regions, and municipalities directly under the Central Government and the armed forces are responsible for organizing consultations to elect deputies at their level.

The functions and powers of election committees include examining the qualifications of and registering voters; publicizing the lists of voters; looking into appeals lodged by voters concerning the lists of voters; deciding on the division of constituencies and allocating the number of deputies to the constituencies; tallying and publicizing the names of candidates for deputies and publicizing the official lists of candidates; dispatching staff to preside over ballot casting stations; deciding on the validity of the election and publicizing the names of elected deputies; and processing charges of violations during the election.¹³

The Ministry of Civil Affairs provides guidance on the holding of village elections, but the Organic Law leaves it at the discretion of provincial governments to design the electoral process.¹⁴ Thus, when village elections were

introduced on a trial basis some areas did not conduct elections at all (prior to 1998, about 10 percent to 33 percent of Chinese villages conducted elections, according to Chinese and foreign estimates) or kept the nomination process under control.¹⁵ Consequently, the NPC passed a revised Organic Law in 1998, which made local village elections mandatory. In addition, the new law specified the conditions that the elections had to meet: secret ballot, open counting of votes, and the immediate announcement of the winner.

VOTING

In 2005, NPC deputies changed the balloting method for electing state leaders and deciding on government lineups.¹⁶ The old method provided that only those who abstain or vote against the candidates need to write on the ballot. While this procedure supposedly spares the trouble of marking the ballot for those who vote in favor of the candidates and shortens voting time, it compromises the secrecy of the vote and places those against the candidates under pressure. During NPC sessions, balloting booths had been set up, but these were seldom used since it would be too conspicuous for people to go and vote there.¹⁷

With the new method, every ballot sheet has three oval-shaped blanks (“pro,” “con,” and “abstention”) and lawmakers fill in the corresponding blank. An electronic voting system has been introduced, but paper ballots still need to be cast on major issues such as the election of top state and government leaders and the adoption of Constitutional amendments.¹⁸

THE REGULATION OF ELECTIONS: POLITICAL AND FINANCIAL REGULATIONS PERTAINING TO VOTING

Expenses for the elections are covered by the state.

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Chapter Twenty-One

Japan

ELECTORAL SYSTEM

Japan is a constitutional monarchy with a parliamentary government. The Parliament of Japan, the National Diet, consists of a lower house, the House of Representatives (*Shugiin*), and an upper house, the House of Councilors (*Sangiin*). The House of Representatives has 480 members, while the House of Councilors has 242 directly elected members.

The electoral system for the House of Representatives is a mixed one, with 300 members elected from single-member constituencies and the remaining 180 seats filled through a party list under the proportional representation system using the d'Hondt method, with the allocation of seats based on the parties' share of the national vote in the eleven large districts.¹ Candidates may run in both the single-seat constituencies and the proportional representation poll, but they are only allowed to run in a single-seat constituency located within their proportional representation bloc. Elections to the House of Representatives are held every four years.

Elections for the House of Councilors are held under a mixed direct voting system in which seventy-three members are chosen by a simple majority system in geographical constituencies and forty-eight members are elected by proportional representation system, from a single constituency covering the whole country, in accordance with the d'Hondt method.² Elections to the House of Councilors are held every six years with one half of the membership renewed every three years.

Elections, though not in the modern sense of the word, have been held in Japan since the Middle Ages (the *Tokugawa* era of 1603 to 1867) when the heads of the neighborhood associations or villages were elected.³ A Japanese election system, in the modern sense, surfaced after the Meiji Restoration

(1868) when in 1878 the Prefectural Assembly Law created an assembly of publicly elected members.⁴ After having established publicly elected administrators and legislative members at the local level the government promulgated a Meiji Constitution and the imperial Diet, Japan's legislature, was established in 1890. The Diet took its current form in 1947 in the aftermath of World War II.

WHO CAN VOTE?

Women

Women received the right to vote in 1945 and during Japan's initial post-war election in April 1946 women exercised their franchise for the first time.

Voting Age

To vote for members of the House of Representatives, the minimum age is twenty years and voters must also hold Japanese citizenship with a recorded domicile in the constituency for at least three months. To vote for the House of Councilors, citizens must be thirty years old.

Felons

Persons sentenced to imprisonment or a more severe form of punishment and who have not completed their sentences; persons sentenced to imprisonment or to a more severe form of punishment for an electoral offence, and who are given suspended sentences; and persons who, during their tenure as public office holders, have been convicted of bribery are disqualified from voting.⁵

WHO CAN PEOPLE VOTE FOR?

Three types of elections are held in Japan: general elections to the House of Representatives (every four years), elections to the House of Councilors (every three years to choose one half of its members), and local elections (every four years) for offices in prefectures, cities, and villages. For the governors of prefectures, the mayors and the headmen of *shi* (cities), *machi* (towns), and *mura* (villages), and the local assemblymen, the elections have been conducted simultaneously throughout the country since 1947 when the new local autonomy system was inaugurated.⁶

THE ADMINISTRATION OF ELECTIONS

Japan's national election management body is the Central Election Management Council, which is an internal organization of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications.⁷ However, the Council does not cover all nationally held elections. It regulates the elections of proportional representation constituencies for both Houses, while the elections of other constituencies for both chambers are controlled by an Election Control Committee set up by each prefectural government.⁸ The Council consists of five members with three-year terms who are nominated by the Diet and appointed by the cabinet, with no more than two members representing the same party.

Prefecture electoral management committees are responsible for the election of the members of the House of Representatives from single-member electoral districts, the members of the House of Councilors from electoral districts, the governors of prefectures, and the members of prefecture assemblies.⁹ Prefecture election management committees are composed of four members with four-year terms that are chosen by prefecture assemblies.

Municipal (city, town, and village) electoral management committees are responsible for administering the election of the heads of municipalities and the members of municipal assemblies.¹⁰ These committees have four members with four-year terms selected by municipal assemblies. Every prefecture and municipality sets up such a committee. In addition, electoral management committees are set up in the special wards of the Tokyo metropolitan government and in the administrative wards of twelve designated cities.

VOTING

Voting is not compulsory. Japan has allowed absentee voting to allow eligible overseas voters to cast ballots in the proportional representation section of national elections since 1998.

THE REGULATION OF ELECTIONS: POLITICAL AND FINANCIAL REGULATIONS PERTAINING TO VOTING

Party Income: Ceilings, Bans on Sources of Income, and Disclosure Provisions

Disclosure provisions in Japan only require the political parties to disclose contributions received.¹¹ Donors are not required to disclose their contributions,

Table 21.1. Parliamentary Election Turnout in Japan, 1946–2005

Parliamentary Elections Electoral System: Parallel							
Year	Total Vote	Registration	Vote/Reg %	VAP	Vote/VAP %	Invalid %	Pop. Size
1946	26,582,175	36,878,420	72.10	40,932,000	64.90	1.80	75,800,000
1947	27,796,840	40,907,493	68.00	42,174,540	65.90	1.60	78,101,000
1949	31,174,957	42,105,300	74.00	44,161,200	70.60	1.90	81,780,000
1952	35,749,709	46,772,584	76.40	46,170,000	77.40	1.20	85,500,000
1953	34,946,130	47,090,167	74.20	49,419,000	70.70	1.00	86,700,000
1955	37,334,338	49,235,375	75.80	50,730,000	73.60	0.90	89,000,000
1958	40,042,489	52,013,529	77.00	54,924,000	72.90	0.70	91,540,000
1960	39,920,119	54,312,993	73.50	55,926,000	71.40	1.00	93,210,000
1963	41,458,946	58,281,678	71.10	60,416,370	68.60	1.10	95,899,000
1967	46,599,456	62,992,796	74.00	63,522,900	73.40	1.30	100,830,000
1969	47,442,401	69,260,424	68.50	69,123,900	68.60	1.00	103,170,000
1972	52,929,059	73,769,636	71.70	71,663,200	73.90	0.90	106,960,000
1976	57,231,993	77,926,588	73.40	77,814,750	73.50	1.10	112,775,000
1979	54,518,515	80,169,924	68.00	79,964,100	68.20	0.90	115,890,000
1980	60,338,439	80,925,034	74.60	80,771,400	74.70	2.20	117,060,000
1983	57,240,830	84,252,608	67.90	84,673,890	67.60	0.80	119,259,000
1986	61,703,794	96,426,845	64.00	86,259,320	71.50	2.00	121,492,000
1990	66,215,906	90,322,908	73.30	88,348,250	74.90	0.60	124,434,155
1993	63,574,819	94,866,020	67.00	95,955,900	66.30	1.20	124,670,000
1995	43,307,400	97,320,000	44.50	96,460,210	44.90	n/a	125,273,000
1996(1)	57,766,696	97,909,655	59.00	96,672,730	59.80	n/a	125,549,000
2000(2)	60,882,471	100,433,798	60.60	103,155,387	59.00	3.00	126,996,466
2003	61,183,286	102,306,684	59.80	n/a	n/a	3.40	n/a
2005	69,532,186	103,067,966	67.50	n/a	n/a	1.70	n/a

Notes: Registered voters—This represents the number of names on the voters' register at the time that the registration process closes, as reported by the electoral management body.

VAP (Voting Age Population)—The estimated voting age population is based on a country's population over the age of eighteen. It is not an exact measure of the VAP as it does not take into account legal or systemic barriers to the exercise of the franchise or account for non-eligible members of the population, such as resident non-citizens.

Invalid—invalid votes as percent of total votes cast.

(1) Total votes are approximate

(2) Results of single-member constituency. Total votes in proportional representation were 59,844,601.

Source: International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA)

but they do face a ceiling of how much they can contribute per year. There is a ban on anonymous and foreign donations to political parties, but no ban on corporate donations.

Party Expenditures: Ceilings and Disclosure Provisions

Japan does have provisions for public disclosure of political party expenditures but no ceilings on how much those expenditures can be.

Direct and Indirect Public Funding

Political parties are entitled to direct public funding both during the election period and between elections on the basis of current representation in the legislature. Indirect public funding such as free media access (to TV and radio broadcast as well as newspaper advertisements) during the election campaign is also available as is indirect public funding such as tax deductions to donors to political parties.

TURNOUT IN ELECTIONS

Turnout has fluctuated substantially since the 1980s, dropping to 45 percent of registered voters in 1995, but then increasing in 2005 to 68 percent of registered voters (see Table 21.1).

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Part Eight

OCEANIA

Chapter Twenty-Two

Australia

ELECTORAL SYSTEM

Australia is a constitutional monarchy. Australia has a national (Commonwealth) parliament as well as six state and two territory parliaments, each with its own electoral system. The Commonwealth (national, federal) parliament has two houses: the House of Representatives (lower house) and the Senate (upper house). At the national level, elections are held at least once every three years.

The parliament of the Commonwealth has two chambers: the House of Representatives and the Senate.¹ The House of Representatives has 150 members elected for a three-year term in single-seat constituencies with a preferential voting system. The Senate has seventy-six members elected through a preferential system in twelve-seat state constituencies and two-seat territorial constituencies with a single non-transferable vote system. State senators serve for a six-year term, with half of the seats renewed every three years.

WHO CAN VOTE?

The first parliamentary elections were held in 1843 for the New South Wales Legislative Council.² Only men with land valued at 200 pounds or a house with rental worth 20 pounds annually had the right to vote in this election. In 1856, all professional and property qualifications were eliminated and the franchise was extended to all male British subjects over the age of twenty-one in South Australia. The other states followed between 1857 and 1896.

In the 1890s the colonies adopted the principle of one vote per person, thus stopping the practice of plural voting.

Women

South Australia was the first state to give women, over twenty-one, the right to vote in 1894. The other states granted women suffrage rights between 1899 and 1908.³ In 1902, the Commonwealth Franchise Act was passed, which enabled all women (except Aboriginal women in some states) to vote for the federal parliament.

Minorities

From the 1850s, the constitutions of Victoria, New South Wales, Tasmania, and South Australia gave voting rights to all male British subjects over twenty-one, including Aboriginal men.⁴ When South Australia gave women the right to vote and sit in parliament in 1895, Aboriginal women shared the right and only Queensland and Western Australia barred Aborigines from voting. However, few Aborigines knew their rights so very few voted. But Aboriginal men and women in South Australia did vote for the first Commonwealth Parliament in 1901.⁵ That first Commonwealth Parliament, however, later issued the 1902 Franchise Act that gave women a Commonwealth vote but excluded Aborigines and other 'colored' people unless entitled under section 41 of the Constitution, which said that anyone with a state vote must be allowed a Commonwealth vote.⁶

After the 1940s, the Aborigines received voting rights throughout Australia. In 1949, the Chifley Labor government passed an act to confirm that everyone who voted in their states could vote for the Commonwealth.⁷ In 1962, Western Australia gave Aborigines state votes and the Menzies Liberal and Country Party government gave them a Commonwealth vote.⁸ With that, all Aborigines had full and equal rights.

Voting Age

Voting in national elections is open to Australian citizens (and British subjects on the electoral roll prior to January 25, 1984) who are eighteen or older.

Felons

The Commonwealth Franchise Act of 1902 disqualified from voting those convicted and under sentence for offences punishable by imprisonment for one year or longer.⁹ The provision was amended in 1983 to apply to persons under sentence for an offence punishable under the law of the Commonwealth or of a state or territory by imprisonment for five years or longer.¹⁰ In

1995 a provision was introduced excluding from the franchise persons that serve a sentence of five years or longer.

WHO CAN PEOPLE VOTE FOR?

Voters elect representatives at regular intervals to each of the three levels of government: the local councils, the state government, and the federal government.

THE ADMINISTRATION OF ELECTIONS

The Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) is the body responsible for the conduct of federal elections and referendums in Australia. Between 1973 and 1984, AEC was known as the Australian Electoral Office and was first established as a branch of the Department of Home Affairs in 1902. In 1984, after major amendments to the Commonwealth Electoral Act of 1918, the AEC was established as an independent statutory authority.

The Commission is also responsible for the administration and maintenance of the electoral rolls; the enforcement of compulsory enrollment and voting; providing information and education about elections; and the administration of the public funding and disclosure provisions of the Commonwealth Electoral Act of 1918.

In every state and the Northern Territory, the Australian Electoral Officer (AEO) is responsible for the management of electoral activities within the respective state or territory.¹¹ Every electoral division has a permanent Divisional Returning Officer (DRO) responsible for the electoral administration in that division.

VOTING

Currently, both the registration of eligible voters and voting are compulsory.¹² The first federal elections in Australia were held in 1902. Voting has been compulsory since 1924.¹³ Australia first introduced reforms that today form the basis for the electoral practices of modern democracies. Such a reform was the “Australian ballot,” which was introduced in 1855 in Victoria.

One can vote at a polling place in the elector’s home division on election day; through an absent vote, or a vote cast by an elector out of the home

division but still within the voter's home state or territory on election day; through an early vote in person or by post; through an interstate vote that can be cast on election day at an interstate voting center by an elector who is not within their home state or territory; and through a provisional vote cast in circumstances in which an elector's name cannot be found on the roll or the name has already been marked off the roll (but the vote is not counted until a check of enrollment records and entitlements has been made).¹⁴ Another way to vote in Australia is provided by AEC mobile polling teams that take portable polling places to voters who are not able to get to a polling place, such as people in hospitals, nursing homes, prisons, and remote areas.¹⁵

THE REGULATION OF ELECTIONS: POLITICAL AND FINANCIAL REGULATIONS PERTAINING TO VOTING

Party Income: Ceilings, Bans on Sources of Income, and Disclosure Provisions

Australia requires the disclosure of contributions to political parties, but there is no ceiling on the contributions that can be made.¹⁶ There are no bans on foreign donations or corporate donations to political parties. However, all anonymous donations over AUD 1,000 (about \$670) are banned.

Party Expenditures: Ceilings and Disclosure Provisions

Disclosure of certain financial details is required by candidates, registered political parties, and other groups in returns filed with the AEC. However, there is no ceiling on party election expenditures.

Direct and Indirect Public Funding

Public funding of elections was introduced in 1983. Registered political parties, independent candidates, and Senate groups not endorsed by registered political parties may receive payment at a set rate if they receive 4 percent or more of the total formal first preference votes.¹⁷ Parties and candidates that want to receive public funding are required to register with the AEC.

TURNOUT IN ELECTIONS

Since the 1960s, turnout at elections in Australia has been steady around 95 percent of registered voters, which can be attributed to the fact that voting is compulsory (see Table 22.1).

Table 22.1. Parliamentary Election Turnout in Australia, 1946–2004

<i>Electoral System: Alternative Vote (Preferential Voting)</i>							
Year	Total Vote	Registration	Vote/Reg. %	VAP	Vote/VAP %	Invalid %	Pop. Size
1946	4,453,941	4,739,853	94.00	4,852,250	91.80	2.50	7,465,000
1949	4,697,800	4,895,227	96.00	5,142,800	91.30	2.00	7,912,000
1951	4,654,406	4,962,675	93.80	5,480,150	84.90	1.90	8,431,000
1954	4,619,571	5,096,468	90.60	5,661,810	81.60	1.30	8,987,000
1955	4,525,774	5,172,443	87.50	5,796,000	78.10	2.90	9,200,000
1958	5,141,109	5,384,624	95.50	6,003,620	85.60	2.90	9,842,000
1961	5,384,350	5,651,561	95.30	6,409,880	84.00	2.60	10,508,000
1963	5,575,977	5,824,917	95.70	6,549,600	85.10	1.80	10,916,000
1966	5,892,327	6,193,881	95.10	6,960,000	84.70	3.10	11,600,000
1969	6,273,611	6,606,873	95.00	7,478,600	83.90	2.50	12,260,000
1972	6,747,247	7,074,070	95.40	7,905,600	85.30	2.20	12,960,000
1974	7,535,768	7,898,922	95.40	8,937,800	84.30	1.90	13,340,000
1975	7,881,873	8,262,413	95.40	9,308,310	84.70	1.90	13,893,000
1977	8,127,762	8,553,780	95.00	9,620,530	84.50	2.50	14,359,000
1980	8,513,992	9,014,920	94.40	10,139,550	84.00	2.40	14,695,000
1983	8,870,174	9,373,580	94.60	10,919,090	81.20	2.10	15,379,000
1984	9,293,021	9,866,266	94.20	11,036,240	84.20	6.80	15,544,000
1987	9,715,428	10,353,213	93.80	11,546,730	84.10	4.90	16,263,000
1990	10,225,800	10,728,435	95.30	12,457,450	82.10	3.20	17,065,000
1993	10,900,861	11,384,638	95.80	13,065,440	83.40	3.00	17,656,000
1996	11,182,467	11,668,852	95.80	13,547,920	82.50	3.20	18,308,000
1998	11,476,609	12,056,625	95.20	14,039,112	81.70	3.80	18,750,982
2001	12,054,664	12,708,837	94.90	n/a	n/a	4.80	n/a
2004	12,354,983	13,098,461	94.30	n/a	n/a	5.20	n/a

Notes: Registered voters—This represents the number of names on the voters' register at the time that the registration process closes, as reported by the electoral management body.
 VAP (Voting Age Population)—The estimated voting age population is based on a country's population over the age of eighteen. It is not an exact measure of the VAP as it does not take into account legal or systemic barriers to the exercise of the franchise or account for non-eligible members of the population, such as resident non-citizens.
 Invalid—The number of invalid votes, as reported by each country.
 Source: International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA)

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Chapter Twenty-Three

Comparative Analyses of Voting and Elections

In this explicitly comparative chapter we report responses to the questions posed in the Introduction across the twenty-two countries.

Table 23.1 shown below reports the year that each of the countries held their first election, although not always in the modern sense of the word.

The United Kingdom is the country in which by far the earliest elections were held (general elections in pre-Union Scotland were held in 1702 and members of the English House of Commons had been elected in 1705), with the United States coming in second, at 1789, followed closely by France in 1793. Countries in which the populous gained the right to vote most recently were Nigeria in 1964 and China in 1954 (for village elections). In South Africa, black and Indian men and women voted for the first time in 1994.

The first country in which women gained the right to vote was Australia in 1902, with the exception of Aboriginal women. Canada, the United Kingdom, Germany, Poland, and Hungary granted women the right to vote in 1918. Russia did so in 1917 following the revolution, and the United States granted this right in 1920. Upon gaining independence in 1948, Israeli women, and in 1950 Indian women, were granted the right to vote at the same time as men. The country included in our study in which all women gained the right to vote most recently was Nigeria in 1978 (after several rounds of regional enfranchisement).

Table 23.2 reports the year that women gained the right to vote.

In response to the questions about who can vote we found that in almost all of the countries, citizens had to be at least eighteen years of age; and in all of the countries only citizens were eligible to vote for presidential and parliamentary elections. However, some European countries (see Introductory chapter) do allow foreigners to participate in some elections (mostly local and European parliament elections) and under certain conditions. In Brazil citizens who were

Table 23.1. Year of First Election in Country

<i>Country</i>	<i>Year of First Election</i>	<i>Notes</i>
Canada	1867	11 percent had right to vote
United States	1789	White males with property
Argentina	1912	
Brazil	1894	
United Kingdom	1702–1705	For British Parliament (general elections in pre-Union Scotland were held in 1702 and members of the English House of Commons had been elected in 1705)
France	1793	
Germany	1871	
Italy	1912	For people over 30
	1918	For people over 21
Spain	1869	
Sweden	1866	
Russia	1906	
Poland	1918	
Hungary	1848	
Egypt	1950	
Israel	1949	
Jordan	1929	
Nigeria	1964	
South Africa	1910	White males with property
	1994	White, blacks, Indians
India	1951	
China	1954	
Japan	1890	
Australia	1843	

sixteen and seventeen years of age could vote on a voluntary basis; for persons eighteen and older voting was mandatory. In Italy citizens had to be at least twenty-five years of age to be eligible to vote for Senate elections. At eighteen they could vote for members of the Chamber of Deputies. In Japan citizens had to be at least twenty years of age to vote for members of the House of Representatives and thirty years old to vote for members of the House of Councilors.

Members of minority communities (for example, the Inuit in Canada, Aborigines in Australia) are eligible to vote. Several countries also have special arrangements for minorities, such as reserved seats (India) or no electoral threshold (Poland) as a way to foster representation in parliament or other elected bodies.

Voting is compulsory in Brazil, Egypt, and Australia.

Table 23.2. Women Gained the Right to Vote

<i>Country</i>	<i>Year Granted</i>	<i>Notes</i>
Canada	1918	
United States	1920	
Argentina	1947	
Brazil	1934	
United Kingdom	1918	Over 30 and with property restitution
	1928	Universal suffrage for all
France	1944	
Germany	1918	
Italy	1945	
Spain	1931	
Sweden	1919	
Poland	1918	
Russia	1917	
Hungary	1918	
Egypt	1956	
Israel	1948	
Jordan	1955	
South Africa	1930	White women
	1994	Black women
Nigeria	1954	East Nigeria Region
	1955	West Nigeria Region
	1958	South Nigeria Region
	1978	North Nigeria Region
India	1950	
China	1949	
Japan	1945	
Australia	1894	Women in South Australia
	1902	All, except Aboriginal
	1962	Aboriginal

Felon voting rights vary across countries. Felons have the right to vote in Canada, Spain, Sweden, Poland, Israel, South Africa, and China (unless they have been stripped of political rights). In India, felons who have been convicted and imprisoned for at least two years within the past six years may not vote. In Russia, persons under criminal investigation but not convicted may vote in a forthcoming election. In Germany, courts have the right to withdraw voting powers for up to five years after completion of a prison sentence. In the United States, felon voting rights vary by states.

In general, the countries reviewed hold elections (direct or indirect) for national and local offices, and in some cases, such as countries that are members of the European Union, elections are also held for supra-national bodies, such as the European Union Parliament.

National elections are held every four or five years in most of the countries. The United States is one exception and Australia is the second exception. National elections in Australia are held every three years for the 150 members of the House of Representatives and every six years for the seventy-six members of the Senate. In the United States, national elections are held every two years for members of the House of Representatives and every six years for members of the Senate.

In the countries with compulsory voting (Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Egypt, and Italy), turnout among the voting age population is the lowest in Egypt, despite the compulsory nature of voting.

As to the percentage of persons who vote in elections, the highest turnout historically (since 1945) has been observed in Italy, South Africa, and Australia, while the lowest turnout has been observed in Egypt and Jordan.¹

In spite of the considerable diversity in the countries included in this study, we see important commonalities in the area of elections and voting. For example, women have gained the right to vote in all of the countries, as have members of minority communities. Voting is voluntary in all but five of the countries. In most of the countries felons lose their right to vote.

Finally, it is important to emphasize that in more and more countries of the world, free elections are being held. With the downfall of the Soviet Union most of the countries of Eastern Europe now hold free elections. As of 1994, we see that South Africa and more recently Nigeria, the two biggest countries in Africa, have held relatively free elections. Among countries included in this study, the big exception is China.

NOTE

1. International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA), *Turnout in the World—Country by Country Performance*, available at: www.idea.int/vt/survey/voter_turnout_pop2.cfm.

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