



6

INSTITUTIONS OF PARTICIPATION AND REPRESENTATION IN DEMOCRACIES

KEY QUESTIONS

- Do some types of institutions in democracies provide better overall representation of and influence for average citizens?
- How do institutions affect the representation of ethnic, gender, religious, and other groups?
- Why do people join political parties and participate in other kinds of political activity?
- How do different electoral and party systems affect political leaders' behavior?
- Are there clear patterns of when and where particular party and electoral systems develop?

This chapter examines the institutions that shape political participation and interest representation in democracies, the core elements of vertical accountability. Virtually all regimes allow some degree of participation and representation, if only to shore up their own legitimacy or at least the appearance of it. Regimes differ dramatically, however, in the degree to which they seek to control and limit participation and representation. Democratic regimes all claim to value and promote widespread participation and representation, but they differ significantly in how they promote citizen involvement and fair and accurate representation of interests. Because participation and institutions in these regimes first. In chapter 8, we examine and compare the same kinds of institutions in authoritarian regimes.

Participation and representation clearly have major implications for answering the question, “Who rules?” Different electoral systems embody different principles of representation and have different effects on accountability. We can demonstrate this by examining how well the systems represent those who seem likely to have less power in the society at large, such as women or racial or ethnic minorities. Given that these groups typically have fewer economic resources, do some systems of representation and participation allow them to have greater influence than do other systems? Elite theorists argue that modern electoral



Women wait to vote in state-level elections in West Bengal, India, in April 2016. India is the world's largest democracy and holds the world's largest elections in terms of voters and voting places. After long domination by a single party, India now has a multiparty system with two large, national parties and numerous regional ones that compete for voters' support.

Photo by Subhendu Ghosh/Hindustan Times via Getty Images

democracies in reality give limited power to those in more marginalized positions; elites dominate the national discourse, control major institutions, and influence voters more than voters influence who is in office. If true, this allocation of influence obviously undermines vertical accountability, a crucial element of democracy.

Another central question regarding participation and representation is, Why do people participate in politics in the first place? We might imagine that the answers would be obvious: people want to have power or influence, to make a contribution to their community and nation, or to gain recognition and status. While all this is undoubtedly true for some political activists, rational actor theorists long ago explained that for most people most of the time, there is no rational reason to participate in political activity, including voting, because most people cannot significantly influence political outcomes. Expending time or money to work toward any political goal is irrational, given the huge number of citizens and the correspondingly small impact of each individual (Downs 1957). This is an obvious problem in a democracy, and it is exacerbated by the fact that members of the elite, with much greater direct access to key decision makers, have a greater incentive to participate and



collective action problem

Individuals being unwilling to engage in a particular activity because of their rational belief that their individual actions will have little or no effect, yet collectively suffering adverse consequences when all fail to act

thus seem more likely to influence policy. Without any ameliorating circumstances, this would suggest that elite theory is correct: “democracies” are really elite controlled.

Democracies must resolve this **collective action problem**: individuals are unwilling to engage in a particular activity because of their rational belief that their individual actions will have little or no effect, yet when they all fail to act, all suffer adverse consequences (in the case of participation in democracy, losing control to the elite). If individuals participate in politics, they may be able to benefit collectively, but it is irrational for each individual to participate in the first place because his individual impact will be negligible. While this is certainly a problem, it is equally clear that millions of people around the world do in fact participate in politics. Besides achieving direct influence over government, which certainly motivates many in spite of the odds against individual influence, some citizens participate because they gain expressive or solidaristic benefits: they find satisfaction in the act of expressing their political beliefs publicly or in being part of a community of like-minded activists. The personal appeal or charisma of a particular leader can also inspire people to engage in the political process (Blondel et al. 2010).

Political institutions, the main focus of this chapter, can also help overcome the collective action problem. Aina Gallego (2015) showed how excessively complex political systems can discourage less educated citizens from participating, even though similar citizens in other political systems do engage. More optimistically, Peter Hall and colleagues (2014) argued that institutions such as political parties and interest groups help citizens identify their interests and then mobilize them to action. Different types of parties, party systems, and interest groups can have great influence over who participates and to what effect.

A final important question is, What influence do institutions—in this chapter, in particular, electoral and party systems—have on political leaders’ behavior? What incentives do they give leaders? Do these incentives encourage leaders to promote more participation and representation, or less?

We will see that democracies vary greatly in terms of the three key institutions of representation and participation: electoral systems, parties and party systems, and civil society. A glance at the Country and Concept table shows variation among our case study countries across all the institutions we will define and examine in this chapter. Can we explain these patterns? If certain types of institutions can better represent people than others, where and why have they developed, and can they be replicated elsewhere to the betterment of democracy overall?

THE ELECTORAL SYSTEM

electoral systems

Formal, legal mechanisms that translate votes into control over political offices and shares of political power

Electoral systems are formal, legal mechanisms that translate votes into control over political offices and shares of political power. Different electoral systems provide distinct incentives to individual voters and political leaders, and affect political parties’ strengths and numbers, so they are crucial to understanding what opportunities parties provide for citizen participation.

COUNTRY AND CONCEPT

Parties, Elections, and Civil Society



Country	Electoral system	Party system	Number of significant parties in legislature ¹	Interest-group system
Brazil	Open-list PR	Multiple	19	Pluralist
China	NA	One	1	State corporatist
Germany	Mixed PR	Two and a half	4	Neocorporatist
India	SMD/FPTP	Multiple	8 (in addition to dozens of minor parties)	Pluralist
Iran	Mixed SMD and multimember districts	None	0 ²	Weak
Japan	Mixed PR	Multiple	5	Pluralist
Mexico	Mixed PR	Multiple	3	Neocorporatist
Nigeria	SMD/FPTP	Two	3	Weak
Russia	Mixed PR	Dominant	4	Weak
United Kingdom	SMD/FPTP	Two	3	Pluralist
United States	SMD/FPTP	Two	2	Pluralist

¹Data on number of parties in legislatures are from *Political Handbook of the World, 2015* (Washington, DC: CQ Press, 2015).

²Although political parties are permitted under the constitution, none were recognized following the formal dissolution of the government-sponsored Islamic Republican Party in June 1987, despite Tehran's announcement in October 1988 that such groups would henceforth be welcomed if they "demonstrated commitment to the Islamic system."

In almost all elections, enfranchised citizens vote for people who will represent them rather than voting directly on policy. This raises a key issue for electoral systems: How are votes aggregated and counted? Different systems are based on fundamentally different normative theories of what "good" representation looks like. One common choice is to represent people geographically; a country divides its territory into geographic units, and each unit elects one or more representatives. This system assumes that citizens can best be represented via their membership in geographically defined communities. In contrast, some countries elect their legislatures nationally, or in very large districts. This system assumes that citizens' beliefs as espoused by parties or individual candidates, rather than geographical community, are most important for

representation. In rare cases, democratic countries choose to represent specific groups within society rather than or in addition to geographic districts or parties. After an ethnic conflict, for instance, a country may decide it needs to provide special representation for ethnic minorities. Several countries have also legally reserved seats in parliament specifically for women to ensure that they are represented. Ultimately, electoral system choice depends on an answer to the questions, On what basis do we wish to be represented? and, With whom do we share our most important political interests or views?

In addition, electoral institutions often have important effects on governance because they affect the composition of legislatures and the executive branch. Familiar examples of gridlock in American politics or the legendary instability of Italian parliamentary regimes after World War II illustrate this dynamic. These problems do not result from presidential or parliamentary institutions, per se, but rather from the ways in which these institutions interact with the electoral system. Electoral systems help determine as well how majoritarian or consensual a particular democracy is. Systems that encourage many, fragmented parties are more consensual: they provide representation of diverse views in the legislature, but they may make effective government difficult because of the instability of coalition governments in parliamentary systems or the gridlock of different parties controlling the executive and legislative branches in presidential systems. Systems that encourage fewer parties tend to have the opposite effect and therefore are more majoritarian.

Single-Member Districts: “First-Past-the-Post” and Majoritarian Voting

single-member district (SMD)

Electoral system in which each geographic district elects a single representative to a legislature

plurality

The receipt of the most votes, but not necessarily a majority

“first-past-the-post” (FPTP)

An SMD system in which the candidate with a plurality of votes wins

Americans borrowed the **single-member district (SMD)** from Great Britain. In both countries, each geographic district elects a single representative. Two versions of SMD exist: plurality and majoritarian. In a **plurality** system, whoever gets the most votes, even if it's not a majority, wins the election. In a race with more than two contestants, the winner can be elected with a relatively low percentage of the vote total. This system is often called **“first-past-the-post” (FPTP)** because, as in a horse race, the single winner merely needs to edge out the next closest competitor. In a majoritarian system, the winner must gain an absolute majority of the votes (50%, plus one) rather than just a plurality. If no candidate wins an absolute majority, a second election takes place between the top two candidates to produce a winner. Because SMD systems produce one winner per district, they tend to be part of and support the majoritarian model of democracy; a single-party government is more likely to result, and each voter has a specific representative from his electoral district to hold accountable for government actions. Minority voices, however, are less likely to be represented.

Advocates of SMD systems argue they can give constituents a strong sense of identification with their representative. Even if you didn't vote for your representative and you disagree with her, she is still expected to work for you (as U.S. representatives

often do by solving Social Security problems for constituents or writing letters of nomination to service academies). Your most vital needs and interests are assumed to have been aggregated into those of your district. Curtice and Shively (2009), however, examined this empirically and found no significant differences between SMD and other systems in terms of voters' level of contact with their representative, their knowledge of who their representative was, or their sense that their representative was representing them well.

Critics of the SMD system make two main arguments against it. First, many votes are "wasted," in the sense that the winning candidate does not represent the views of the voters who did not vote for him. This is especially true in systems with more than two viable parties. Perhaps only 30 or 35 percent of voters actually favored the winner, so the votes of the majority were arguably wasted. This may be one reason why voter participation tends to be lower in countries with SMD than elsewhere. Voters—especially those who prefer minor parties—may find voting a waste of time; the system doesn't encourage them to overcome the collective action problem. Supporters of SMD argue, however, that even voters who have not voted for their representative are represented via **virtual representation**: candidates from their party are elected in other districts and so their views are represented in the legislature, albeit not by their representative.

virtual representation

When voters' views are represented indirectly in the legislature by their chosen party's candidates who have been elected in districts other than their own

Second, this problem can be compounded by the under- or overrepresentation of particular parties. Consider a case in which a third party wins a significant share of the votes in many districts but a plurality in only one or two. The party would win a lot of votes but get only a couple of seats in the legislature. Conversely, if a large number of candidates from a particular party win by a very small plurality in their districts, that party's vote in the legislature will be inflated. The number of its representatives will suggest an overwhelming national consensus, when in fact the party may not even have won a majority of the vote nationwide. Figure 6.1 gives an example from Great Britain's 2005 election, in which the two major parties, Labour and Conservative, won similar vote shares but very different numbers of seats, and the third party, the Liberal Democrats, won a far larger share of votes than parliamentary seats. Even when there are only two parties, SMD lends itself to gerrymandering, the drawing of electoral districts to favor a particular party. Both major parties in the United States have done this over the years to varying degrees. Most recently, after the 2010 census, the Republican Party set out to gain control of state legislatures in order to redraw congressional districts in its favor. In the 2012 election, the popular vote for seats in the House of Representatives was a virtual tie but Republicans won thirty-three more seats, and the biggest gaps between the popular vote and seats won were in states where Republicans controlled redistricting. In the ten most imbalanced states, Republicans won 7 percent more votes than Democrats by 76 percent more seats ("Imbalance of Power" 2013). SMD makes the system majoritarian—it may promote efficient, stable policymaking by allowing decisive legislative action—but it may come at the cost of accurate representation of the citizens' preferences.

Norbert Hofer, presidential candidate for Austria's Freedom Party, speaks to supporters in May 2016. Although the office of president is ceremonial in Austria's parliamentary democracy, the first-round election shook up the political establishment, as the right-wing Freedom Party and left-wing Green Party came in first and second. The Greens narrowly won the runoff election but Austria's supreme court annulled the election due to voting irregularities. Whatever the outcome, the election demonstrated the rise of right-wing parties that is common across Europe and the increasing difficulty that traditional, "mainstream" parties have in attracting voters.

Lisi Niesner/Bloomberg via Getty Images



Proportional Representation

proportional representation (PR)

Electoral system in which seats in a legislature are apportioned on a purely proportional basis, giving each party the share of seats that matches its share of the total vote

closed-list proportional representation

Electoral system in which each party presents a ranked list of candidates, voters vote for the party rather than for individual candidates, and each party awards the seats it wins to the candidates on its list in rank order

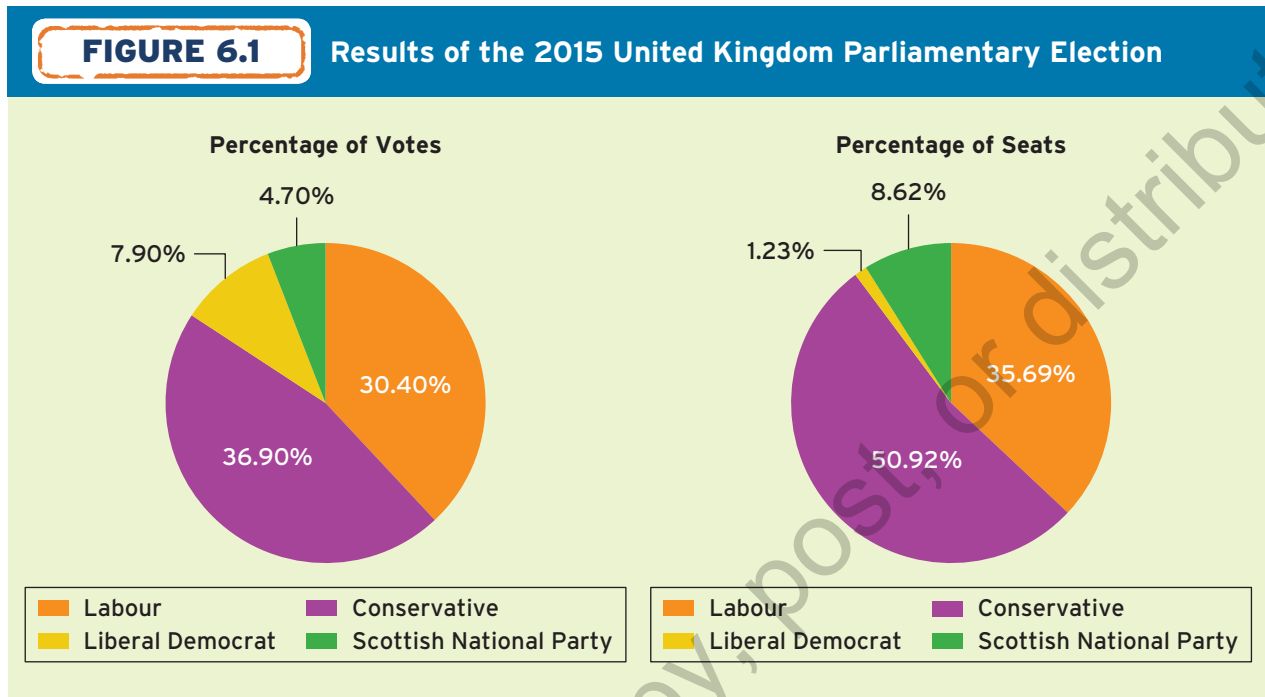
open-list proportional representation

Electoral system in which multiple candidates run in each district, voters vote for the individual candidate of their choice, and the candidates with the most votes in the party get the seats the party wins

Proportional representation (PR) differs from SMD in almost every conceivable way. In PR, representatives are chosen nationally or in large electoral districts with multiple representatives for each district. Thus, either a national legislature is simply divided on a purely proportional basis, or multiple representatives for large districts are allocated proportionally according to the vote in each district. So, for instance, a party that gains 25 percent of the national vote receives a quarter (or very nearly a quarter) of the seats in the legislature. Most PR systems, though, include a minimal electoral threshold—for example, 3 or 5 percent of the vote—a party must cross to gain representation in parliament. Any parties that cross that threshold can be certain that they will be represented. As Figure 6.2 demonstrates for the 2014 Swedish parliamentary elections, a PR system translates each party's share of the votes into almost exactly the same share of legislative seats (in stark contrast to the FPTP system in Britain, as a quick comparison of Figures 6.1 and 6.2 shows). PR systems tend to be part of and support consensus models of democracy; multiple voices via multiple parties are likely to be represented in the legislature, and coalition government is common.

If voters are not choosing among individuals running for a single seat, whom or what are they voting for, and who ends up in the legislature? The answer reflects a very different view of representation from SMD, because in PR systems, the voter is usually voting for a party, not an individual. In **closed-list proportional representation** (the version of PR most dissimilar to SMD), each party presents a ranked list of candidates for all the seats in the legislature. Voters can see the list and know who the "top" candidates are, but they actually vote for the party. If party X gets ten seats in the legislature, then the top ten candidates on the party list occupy those seats.

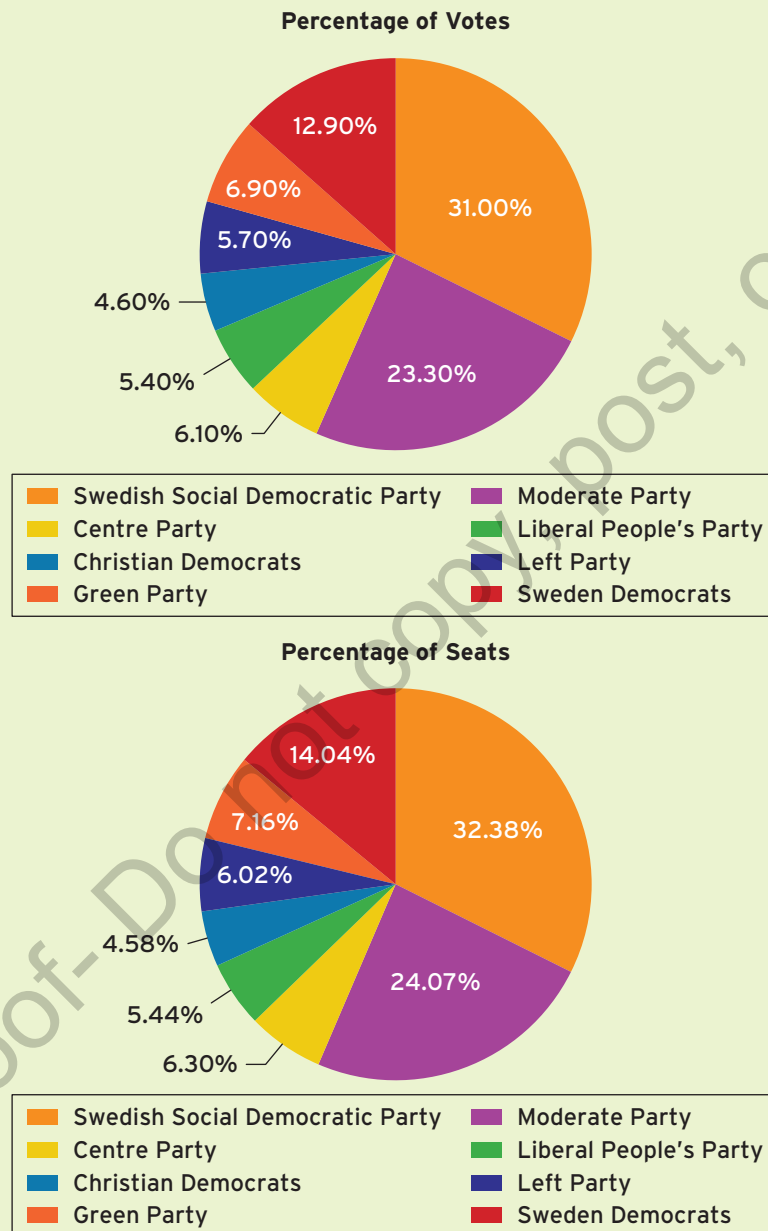
Another variant of PR is called **open-list proportional representation**. In this version, voters are presented with a list of candidates and vote for the candidate of their choice. When the votes are counted, each party receives a number of seats



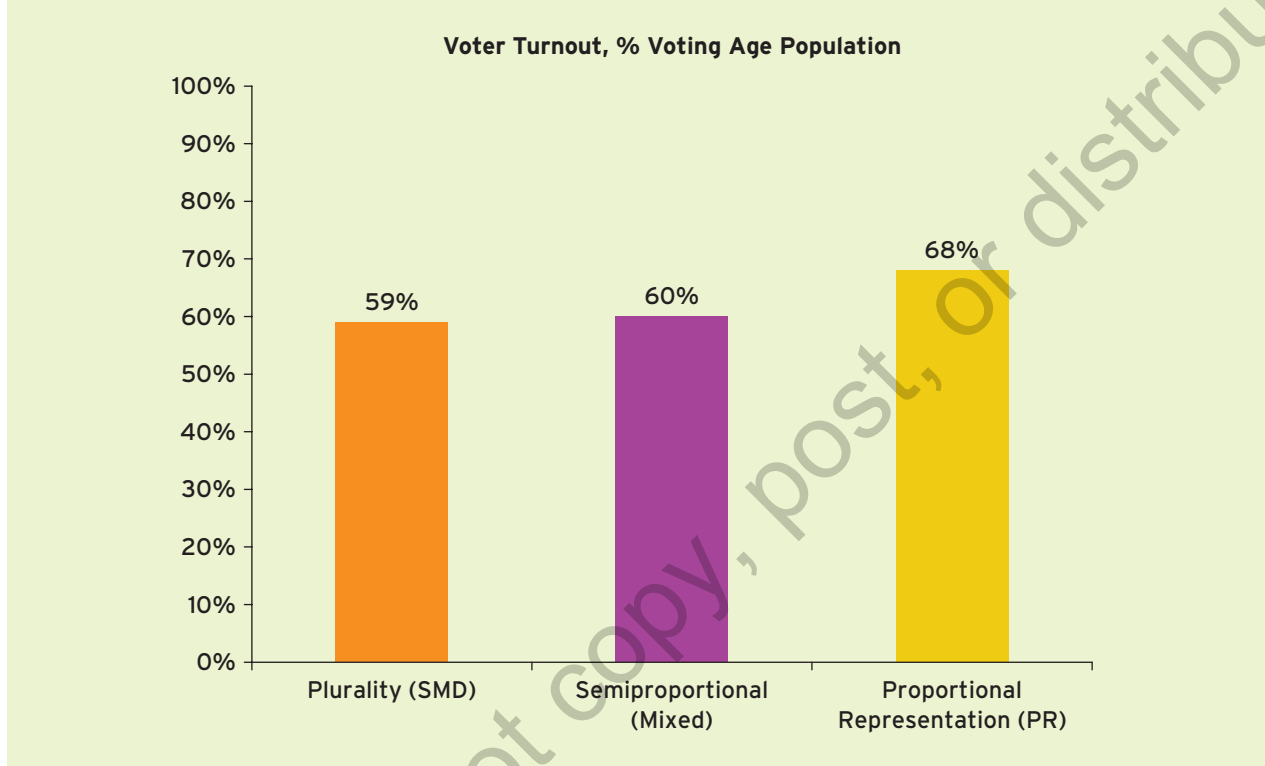
Source: BBC, "Election News, UK Results" (<http://www.bbc.com/news/election/2015/results>).

proportional to the total number of votes its candidates received. Those seats are then awarded to the top individual vote getters within the party.

PR assumes that voters primarily want their ideas and values represented. Voters are represented by the party they support in the legislature, regardless of the geographic origins of individual legislators. PR has some obvious advantages over SMD. First, there are very few wasted votes, because even very small parties can gain some seats. To the extent that voters feel represented by a party, they can be assured that someone in the legislature is there to give voice to their views—although realistically, smaller parties can usually only impact policy via coalitions with larger parties. Second, perhaps because fewer votes are wasted, participation rates in PR countries are higher, as Figure 6.3 shows. Proponents of PR argue that it is therefore more democratic and more broadly representative, since larger percentages of voters participate and virtually all are guaranteed to have their views represented in the legislature. PR systems also tend to elect women and members of ethnic or racial minorities more frequently than SMD systems do, as party leaders often feel compelled (and in some countries are required by law) to include women or minority candidates on their party lists. Salomon Orellana (2014) borrowed theories of small-group decision making to argue that PR systems that produce more parties result in voters having more information available to them and faster changes to policies. He examined New Zealand,

FIGURE 6.2**Results of Sweden's 2014 Parliamentary Election**

Source: Election Resources on the Internet, "Elections to the Swedish Riksdag" (<http://electionresources.org/se/riksdag.php?election=2010>).

FIGURE 6.3**Which System Increases Turnout?**

Sources: Data are from the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, "Table of Electoral Systems Worldwide" (<http://www.idea.int/esd/world.cfm>) and "Voter Turnout" (<http://www.idea.int/db/upload/codedFiles/Voter-Turnout.xls>). Elections in transition countries (Somalia and Thailand) have been excluded. Data for Armenia, East Timor, Laos, the Faroe Islands, and Yugoslavia are coded as missing and are thus excluded.

which switched from SMD to a partially proportional system, and the UK, which has SMD for its national elections but PR for elections to the European Parliament (the parliament of the EU). He found that the proportional systems in both cases provide a greater range of party positions and information for voters. He also used the World Values Survey to demonstrate that countries with proportional systems were more tolerant of diversity, more likely to adopt policy changes such as same-sex marriage, and more likely to have policies reducing inequality. Mukherjee (2013) used a large-scale quantitative analysis to show that PR systems are associated with higher overall human well-being, arguing that the multiple parties they produce bring more issues into the political arena and create greater competitiveness, giving parties incentives to perform better when in power.

Of course, the PR system has its critics, who point to the "indirect" nature of PR elections: voters don't really choose individual representatives, even in an open-list system. In large, multimember districts, the individual voter does not know that a

certain person is “her” unique representative. And in a closed-list system, party officials are the ultimate arbiters of a candidate’s fate because they assign the ranking. Because of this, legislators are less likely to open local offices and focus on local issues (Shugart 2005). Proponents of PR argue that in spite of this, voters are represented via the parties that are close to their ideological preferences. Orit Kedar (2009), however, disputed this. Using a rational choice model of voting, she argued that voters use their vote to ensure that their preferred policy would be carried out. In majoritarian, SMD systems, this is straightforward because the winning party will control government and can implement its preferred policy. In consensual PR systems with multiple parties, though, policy is based on negotiated compromises after the election, so voters compensate for this by voting for parties more ideologically extreme than their own positions, assuming negotiations will then result in their preferred and more moderate



CRITICAL inquiry

Women in Power

Americans are used to considering themselves progressive when it comes to women’s rights, yet in 2016 only 19.4 percent of representatives in the House and 20 percent of senators were, slightly below the global average of 22.9 percent. As Table 6.1b shows, in some democracies women constitute nearly half of the legislature, while others fare far worse than in the United States. What explains these disparities in how many women achieve power at the national level?

Table 6.1a suggests an initial hypothesis based on political culture, because regional breakdowns seem to suggest that it plays a role. An alternative hypothesis is that the election of women is a case in which institutions matter. Table 6.1b suggests that PR systems are more conducive to electing women than are SMD systems. Because closed PR systems (most PR systems are closed) require parties to submit lists of candidates, more women are nominated. A party may be under some pressure to include at least some women on its list, since an all-male (or even overwhelmingly male) list could provoke negative reaction. Some PR systems include a quota system: parties must include a certain percentage of women candidates on their lists. A third hypothesis is that the longer a country is democratic, the more women will gain office; democracy provides an opportunity for under-represented and marginalized groups to gain more influence, and the longer democracy lasts the more likely it will be that such groups will gain influence.

TABLE 6.1a

Percentage of Seats in Lower House Occupied by Women, Regional Averages

Region	% women
Nordic countries	41.1%
Americas	27.7
Europe, OSCE member countries, including Nordic countries	25.8
Europe, OSCE member countries, excluding Nordic countries	24.3
sub-Saharan Africa	23.1
Asia	19.2
Arab states	18.4
Pacific	13.5

Source: Data are from Interparliamentary Union, “Women in National Parliaments” (<http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/world.htm>).

Look at the tables carefully. Based on the data, which of the hypotheses seems to be the best explanation for how many women are elected to national legislatures? Why do you come to the conclusion you do on this question? What implications does your answer have for which electoral system is most democratic?

TABLE 6.1b**Women in World Legislatures**

Country	% women in lower house	Type of electoral system	Length of current regime in years
Bolivia	53.1%	Mixed	33
Sweden	43.6	PR	98
Senegal	42.7	Mixed	15
South Africa	42.4	PR	21
Mexico	42.4	Mixed	18
Finland	41.5	PR	71
Namibia	41.3	PR	25
Spain	40	Mixed	37
Norway	39.6	PR	70
Mozambique	39.6	PR	21
Belgium	39.3	PR	71
Denmark	37.4	PR	69
Slovenia	36.7	PR	24
Germany	36.5	Mixed	25
Argentina	35.8	PR	32
Portugal	34.8	PR	39
Serbia	34	PR	9
Costa Rica	33.3	PR	96
El Salvador	32.1	PR	31
Switzerland	32	Mixed	167
New Zealand	31.4	Mixed	138
Tunisia	31.3	PR	1
Italy	31	PR	67
Austria	30.6	PR	69
Philippines	29.8	Mixed	28
United Kingdom	29.4	SMD	135
Poland	27.4	PR	24
Israel	26.7	PR	67
France	26.2	SMD	46
Peru	26.2	PR	14
Australia	26	SMD	114
Canada	26	SMD	127
Lithuania	23.4	Mixed	24
Ireland	22.2	PR	94

Country	% women in lower house	Type of electoral system	Length of current regime in years
Bosnia-Herzegovina	21.4	PR	0
Albania	20.7	PR	18
Bulgaria	20.4	PR	25
Czech Republic	20	PR	22
Bangladesh	20	SMD	1
Slovakia	20	PR	22
Colombia	19.9	PR	58
Cyprus	19.6	PR	41
United States	19.4	SMD	206
Panama	18.3	Mixed	26
Latvia	18	PR	24
Montenegro	17.3	PR	9
Indonesia	17.1	PR	16
South Korea	17	Mixed	27
Malawi	16.7	SMD	21
Uruguay	16.2	PR	30
Chile	15.8	Other	26
Paraguay	15	PR	23
Turkey	14.9	PR	1
Niger	14.6	Mixed	4
Mongolia	14.5	Mixed	23
Guatemala	13.9	PR	19
Romania	13.7	Mixed	19
Zambia	12.7	SMD	14
Sierra Leone	12.4	SMD	13
India	12	SMD	65
Ukraine	12	Mixed	24
Georgia	11.3	Mixed	24
Ghana	10.9	SMD	14
Hungary	10.1	Mixed	25
Brazil	9.9	PR	30
Botswana	9.5	SMD	49
Japan	9.5	Mixed	63
Benin	7.2	PR	24

Source: Inter-Parliamentary Union, "Women in National Parliaments," World Classification Table (<http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/classif.htm>). Based on figures for lower or single house.

policy. She found, for instance, that voters in the UK choose the party closest to them ideologically at a much higher rate than do voters in most European countries with PR systems, where voters choose a more extreme party instead. (She used the same theory to explain why voters tend to vote for the party in opposition to the president in legislative elections in presidential systems.)

In addition, opponents of PR argue that having a broad range of parties in a legislature often has negative effects. Small parties, as noted above, often have little voice unless they join coalitions, but small extremist parties may gain inordinate power if they are able to negotiate key roles in ruling coalitions. Coalitions can be hard to form in such a fragmented environment, and where they do form, they may be unstable, as the case of Israel demonstrates.

Because Israel is a country of numerous ideological, religious, and ethnic divisions, multiple parties compete in each election, and coalitions of parties must band together to form a government in its parliamentary system. The country uses a pure, closed-list PR system: the entire country is one electoral district and citizens vote for their preferred party. The 120 seats in its parliament, the Knesset, are then allocated based on each party's share of the vote. Every party or coalition of parties that receives 3.25 percent of the national vote gets at least one seat in the Knesset. Most elections feature as many as two dozen parties, with at least a dozen winning seats in parliament. While two or three major parties have always existed, almost all governments are coalitions of one major party, which provides the prime minister, and at least three others—sometimes as many as six—who also receive cabinet seats to ensure their support in parliament.

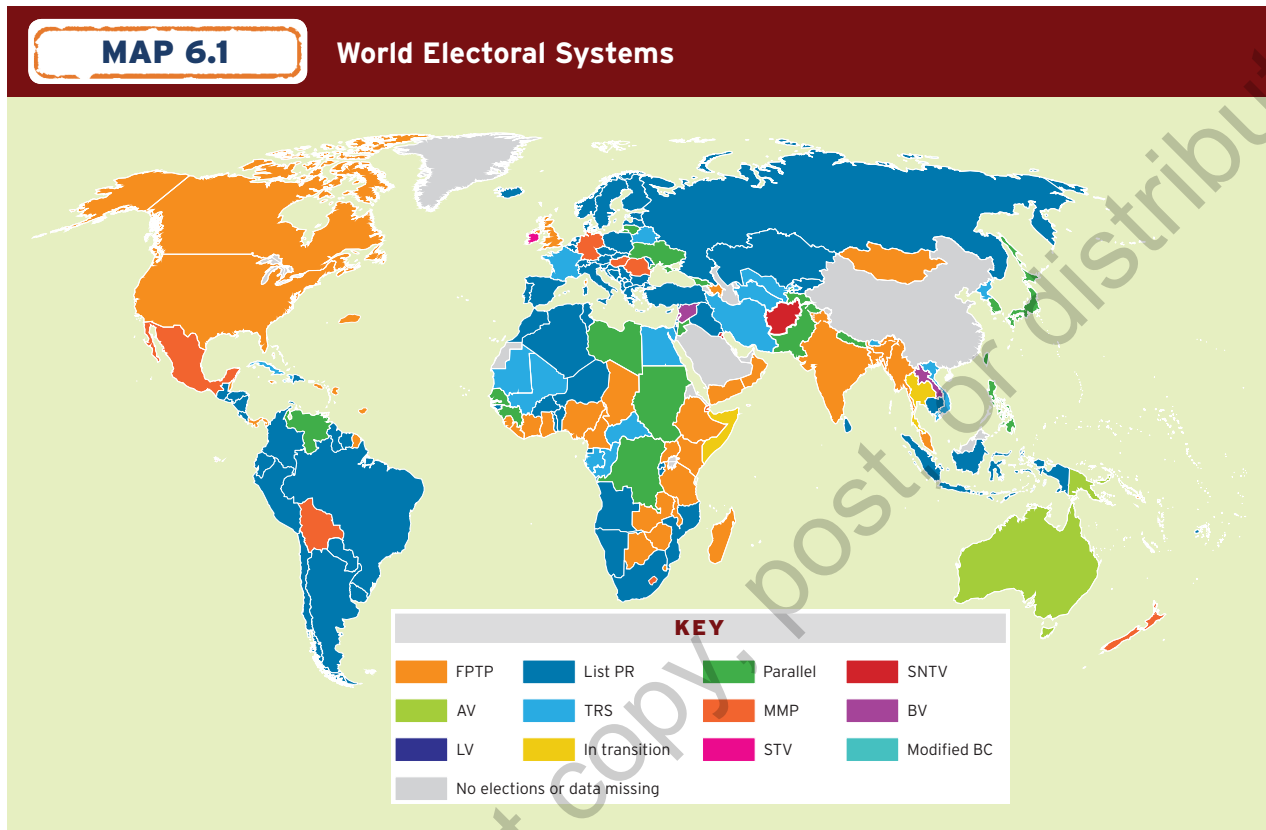
The 2015 election resulted in ten parties (some of which were actually coalitions of smaller parties) winning seats in parliament, with Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu's Likud bloc winning the most—one quarter of the total. His governing coalition before the election disintegrated over the country's budget and the issue of whether to define Israel as a "Jewish state," so Netanyahu asked for a dissolution of parliament and an early election. After the election, it took him over six weeks to put together a working coalition government that included five parties in the cabinet, barely gaining him the sixty-one votes he needed to get a majority vote in parliament. With an extremely ideologically diverse cabinet, the prime minister must negotiate policies continuously to keep the government together. Governmental dissolution and the instability that comes with it often lurk right around the corner. Israel demonstrates what critics point to as a weakness of a PR system: government instability. The average government lasts just over two years.

mixed, or semiproportional

An electoral system that combines single-member district representation with overall proportionality in allocation of legislative seats to parties; Germany is a key example

Mixed, or Semiproportional, Systems

Given the plusses and minuses of SMD and PR, it is not surprising that some countries, including our case studies of Germany and Japan, have chosen to combine the two. The resulting hybrid is called a **mixed, or semiproportional**, system. A semiproportional system combines single-member district representation with overall



Source: International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (<http://www.idea.int/esd/world.cfm>). Modified by the authors.

proportionality. Voters cast two ballots: one for a representative from their district, with the winner being the individual who gains a plurality, and a second for a party list.

Under the compensatory mixed system in Germany, the legislature is composed by first awarding seats to all the district representatives, after which the party lists are used to add members until each party gets seats approximately equal to its share of the party list vote. So, for example, a very small party that crosses the 5 percent threshold required to enter parliament might send one or two representatives from its list to the legislature even though none of its candidates for individual district seats were elected. On the other hand, a large party that narrowly sweeps quite a few seats might gain no more from its list when proportional representation is factored in. At the end of the day, the party composition of the legislature looks fairly similar to what it would have if it had been chosen based strictly on PR, but each district is also guaranteed its own, individual representative, as in a single-member system. In Japan, the noncompensatory mixed system reserves separate seats for representatives from the individual districts and from the party list vote. Parties get whatever the two seat totals happen to be, making Japan's system less proportional than Germany's.

Mixed systems share some of the advantages of SMD and PR systems. Because they waste fewer votes, participation rates tend to be slightly higher, as in PR (see Figure 6.3), yet citizens are also guaranteed a personal representative to whom they can appeal. In addition, the single-district component of semiproportional systems tends to reinforce the dominance of a couple of large parties that find it easier to win a significant number of individual seats. Small parties also form and are represented, but the dominance of a couple of major parties facilitates coalition formation and stability.

Electoral systems clearly influence the type and extent of representation citizens in a democracy have, and all systems involve trade-offs to some extent. Electoral systems also have an important impact on two other institutions: political parties and party systems.

FORMAL INSTITUTIONS: POLITICAL PARTIES AND PARTY SYSTEMS

American political scientist E. E. Schattschneider wrote that “modern democracy is unthinkable save in terms of parties” (1942/2009, 1). Political parties are associations that seek to formally control government. In democracies, parties seek to control the government via elections and are limited in what they can do once they gain control. They bring together individual citizens and a number of discrete interests into a coalition of broadly shared interests that potentially helps to overcome the collective action problem. The number of parties and their relative institutional strength constitute a **party system**. Parties perform important functions in any democracy, such as mobilizing citizens to participate in the political process, recruiting and training political elites, clarifying and simplifying voter choices, organizing governments, and providing opposition to the current government. Political scientists compare parties and party systems based on their ideologies, internal organization and strength, and the number of parties. These differences have important implications for where and how citizens can participate in a political system and the extent to which diverse interests are represented in a legislature.

party system

The number of parties and their relative institutional strength

Political Parties

Party organizations and their relationships to their members vary widely. Many parties in Europe began in the nineteenth century as cadre parties, collections of political elites who chose candidates and mobilized voters to support them. They had small memberships and often started among elected politicians who restricted membership to themselves and their closest elite supporters. With the universal franchise and full-scale industrialization, cadre parties became mass parties that recruited as many members as possible who participated actively in the party organization and expected to have some influence over it. Parties thus became important organizations within which political participation takes place; their internal organization and processes of leadership selection help determine how much influence citizens have. Exactly how

party members are involved and how much influence they have varies from country to country and over time, as our case studies at the end of the chapter demonstrate.

All parties must mobilize citizens to support them, so how do they overcome the classic collective action problem of convincing the average citizen to participate? Most people would answer that citizens join parties because they agree with their ideas. This is the reason implicit in democratic theory: voters examine available alternatives and support the party that best represents them. Scholars of American politics, in particular, have long noted that the process seems far less rational than that. For most people, party membership and support can become a source of identification that they are socialized into; new voters join and support the party their families “have always supported” without necessarily making a conscious choice. The best predictor of which party any individual will vote for is the party they voted for in the last election; party membership tends to be enduring and crosses generations. It can also come almost automatically from being a member of a particular group, as in the case of ethnically or religiously divided societies in which each group has its own party, or in the case of the Labour Party in Britain, which most union members automatically join via their union membership. Social identities based on ethnicity, religion, region, and work are more important for most people than political loyalties, so the former produce the latter.

People also join or support parties to gain direct material benefits. We defined clientelism in chapter 2 as the exchange of material benefits for political support. It is one of the most widespread of political phenomena; political parties and their candidates practice it regularly. The party machines in early-twentieth-century U.S. cities, for example, offered preferential treatment to party members when allocating jobs or awarding business contracts with city governments. In authoritarian regimes in which formal institutions typically do not allow real citizen participation, individual loyalty to a political leader can be the best means to survive, thrive, and gain influence, as we will discuss in chapter 8. Most political scientists argue that in democracies, clientelism is more common in relatively poor societies and/or in new democracies in which parties are institutionally weak.

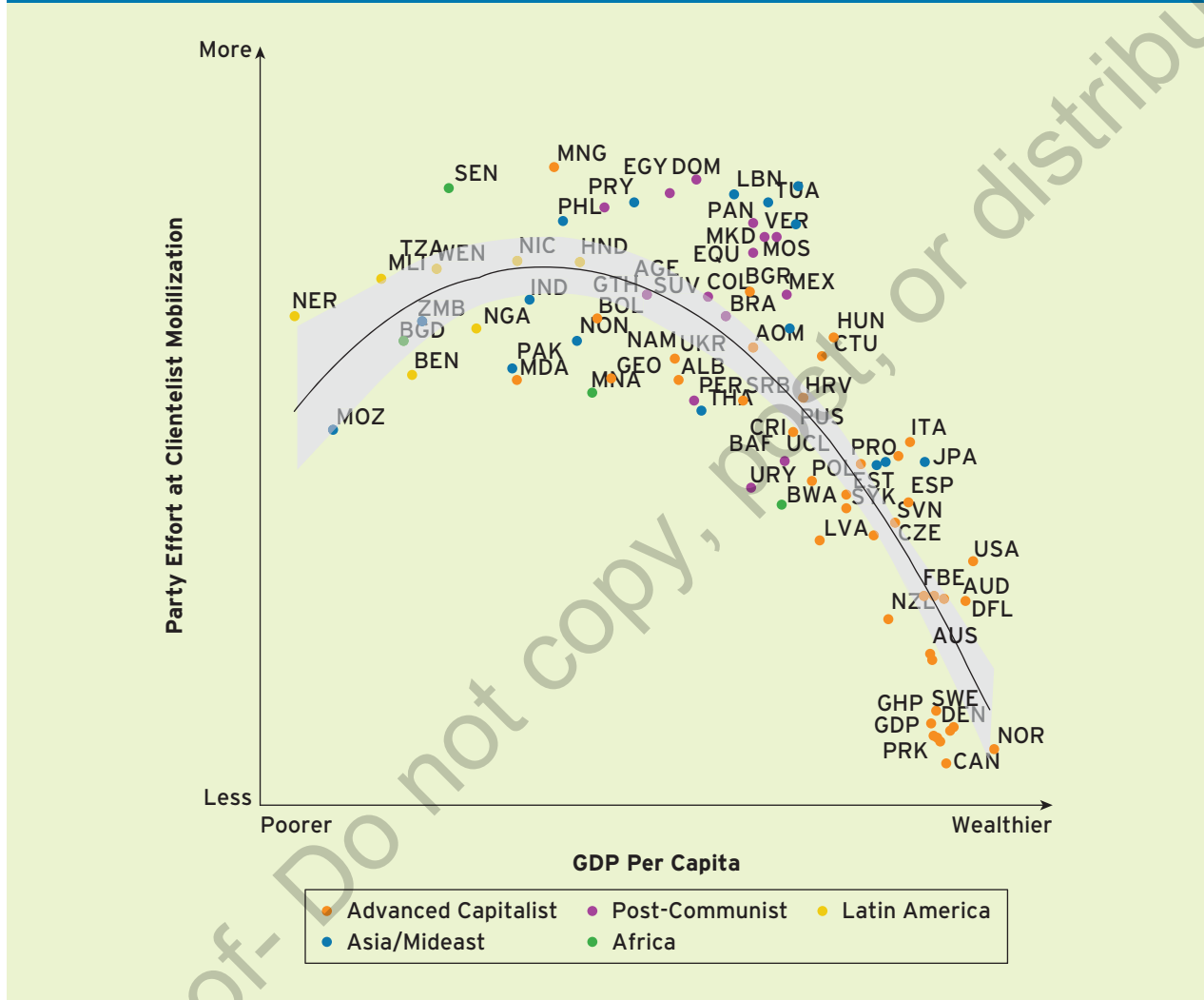
In poor and unequal societies, poor people are more likely to need and accept material inducement in exchange for their political support, and a large income gap between political leaders and their potential clients gives the leaders plenty of resources to pass out to clients. Clients provide political support, including votes, in exchange for material help. In new democracies, political parties are typically new as well, and therefore weak as institutions. Without well-established bases of ideological and programmatic support, parties turn to clientelism as an alternative means to mobilize support. In the weakest systems, parties are really just vehicles for key patrons to contest elections; when a patron changes parties, his clients move with him. Loyalty to the patron, not the party, is key. Kitschelt (2014) found that parties use clientelism most frequently in middle-income countries in which the state is typically very involved in the economy; poorer people in these societies will respond to

material inducements, and government involvement in the economy gives opportunities for parties to provide public resources to their supporters (see Figure 6.4). Clientelism, though, played an important part in the early growth of many parties that went on to become strong institutions with ideological bases of support, including in the United States. Our case studies show that at least some elements of clientelism exist in all countries.

The relationships among party members, political candidates, and campaign resources (mainly money) are important to a party's institutional strength. Parties that have internal mechanisms through which registered members select candidates are likely to be stronger than those that select candidates via external processes, such as primaries in the United States. Candidates who are chosen by party members in an internal process like that used in Britain are likely to be very loyal to the interests and demands of the party members who formally select them and who provide the bulk of their campaign resources. Once elected, they are more likely to vote as a block in support of official party positions. In contrast, candidates in the United States raise most of their own campaign funds and gain their party's nomination via a primary election that is open to all voters in the party (or, in some states, to all voters regardless of party), not just formal party members who have paid dues and attended meetings. This means that candidates in the United States are much more independent of party leaders' demands, so they can act more independently once in office. U.S. parties were traditionally less unified and weaker than many of their European counterparts for this reason. A parliamentary system in which top party leaders can aspire to become cabinet members also strengthens parties, as MPs follow their party leaders' wishes in the hope of being selected for the cabinet.

When most people think of parties and their differences, though, the first thing that comes to mind is ideology. Klaus von Beyme (1985) created an influential categorization of European parties based on their origins and ideologies. The most important categories are explained in Figure 6.5. They reflect the social and economic changes that characterized nineteenth- and twentieth-century Europe. For example, conservative parties originated as cadre parties that were interested in defending the traditions and economic status of the landed elite against the liberals, who pressed for expanded rights for the bourgeoisie and the growth of market economies. Socialists and communists, meanwhile, tried to create mass parties to represent the interests of the emerging working class.

The ideological distinctions among the parties and loyalty to them, however, seem to be changing over the past generation. In the last twenty years, political scientists have noted, in particular, a decline of partisan loyalty toward the traditional parties in wealthy democracies. Declining party loyalty has resulted in lower voter turnout in most countries; increased electoral volatility (voters switch parties more frequently from one election to the next); more single-issue voting, especially on postmaterialist issues such as the environment or abortion; more new parties successfully entering the political arena; and greater focus on the personality of individual candidates rather than on parties. Most analysts see the decline of the traditional social divisions of class

FIGURE 6.4**Clientelist Appeals and GDP per Capita**

Comparativist Herbert Kitschelt measured the parties' efforts at using clientelist appeals and compared them to the GDP per capita, finding that parties in middle-income countries use clientelism the most and parties in wealthiest countries use it the least because in those countries programmatic and ideological appeals mobilize most voters.

Source: Figure is modified from Herbert Kitschelt, "Parties and Party Systems," in *Comparing Democracies: Elections and Voting in a Changing World*, edited by Lawrence LeDuc, Richard G. Niemi, and Pippa Norris (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2014), 32-57.

and religion on which major parties were based as part of the reason for the parties' decline. The extent of this decline varies from one country to another, as Figure 6.6 demonstrates. The United States, where the two-party system is still firmly entrenched, has seen the least decline, while the greatest decline is mostly in European countries with PR electoral systems.

Two schools of thought have emerged to explain these changes and predict where they will lead. Russell Dalton and others saw a fundamental partisan *dealignment*, as voters and parties disconnect, probably for the long term. They argued that major parties used to serve two key functions: educating voters about political issues, and simplifying voters' choices. As voters have become more educated and media outlets have multiplied, they no longer need parties to educate them. The media changes have also prompted parties to campaign increasingly via national media rather than by mobilization of grassroots membership, and this has made it less important for them to maintain their membership base (Dalton and Wattenberg 2000).

Another school, more optimistically perhaps, sees a less permanent *realignment*: voters' preferences have changed and the traditional parties haven't kept up, but as parties change or new parties emerge, voters and parties will once again come into alignment. Inglehart's (1971) theory of postmaterialism (see chapter 1) is perhaps the most widely accepted explanation of realignment: the traditional economic divisions on which parties were based are no longer as important to voters. Others have argued that economic concerns are still important but that in postindustrial service economies and the age of globalization, those interests no longer fall neatly on either side of the "left-right" divide that long separated major parties (Iversen and Wren 1998; Rodrik 1997). Kitschelt (2014) pointed out that major parties' decline in terms of their share of the vote has been greater in countries with proportional representation, in which new parties can succeed relatively easily, and in welfare states that include virtually all citizens in social insurance systems that do not redistribute income significantly, depoliticizing the traditional economic issues (see chapter 12). Regardless of the details, realignment proponents argue that as parties respond to these changes, they will capture voters' preferences better and Western democracies will enter a new era of partisan stability. Recently, Dalton (with two collaborators) shifted his earlier position (Dalton et al. 2011). Using a new dataset of multiple surveys in thirty-six democracies, they argued that parties continue to serve important functions in mobilizing voters and representing their views reasonably accurately. Parties achieved this task by adapting to the new environment: using media more wisely, shifting sources of funding from membership dues to state subsidies, and maintaining party discipline within legislatures.

Whatever the cause of the drop in partisan loyalty, parties have responded by changing how they conduct campaigns and how they relate to their members. In almost all countries, parties today have fewer members than in the past, though in many cases the members who remain have been given a greater role in choosing candidates and setting policies (Scarrow 2015). The ideological differences among parties have also tended to narrow over time, as parties can no longer rely on a core of committed partisan voters and must instead try to attract the growing number of uncommitted voters. Many parties have therefore become what are termed "catch-all" parties. Geoffrey Evans, Nan Dirk De Graaf, and colleagues (2013) argued that part of the disconnect between voters and parties is not due to social changes but to parties narrowing their ideological distinctions: when parties move toward the center, voters

FIGURE 6.5

Von Beyme's Categorization of Political Parties

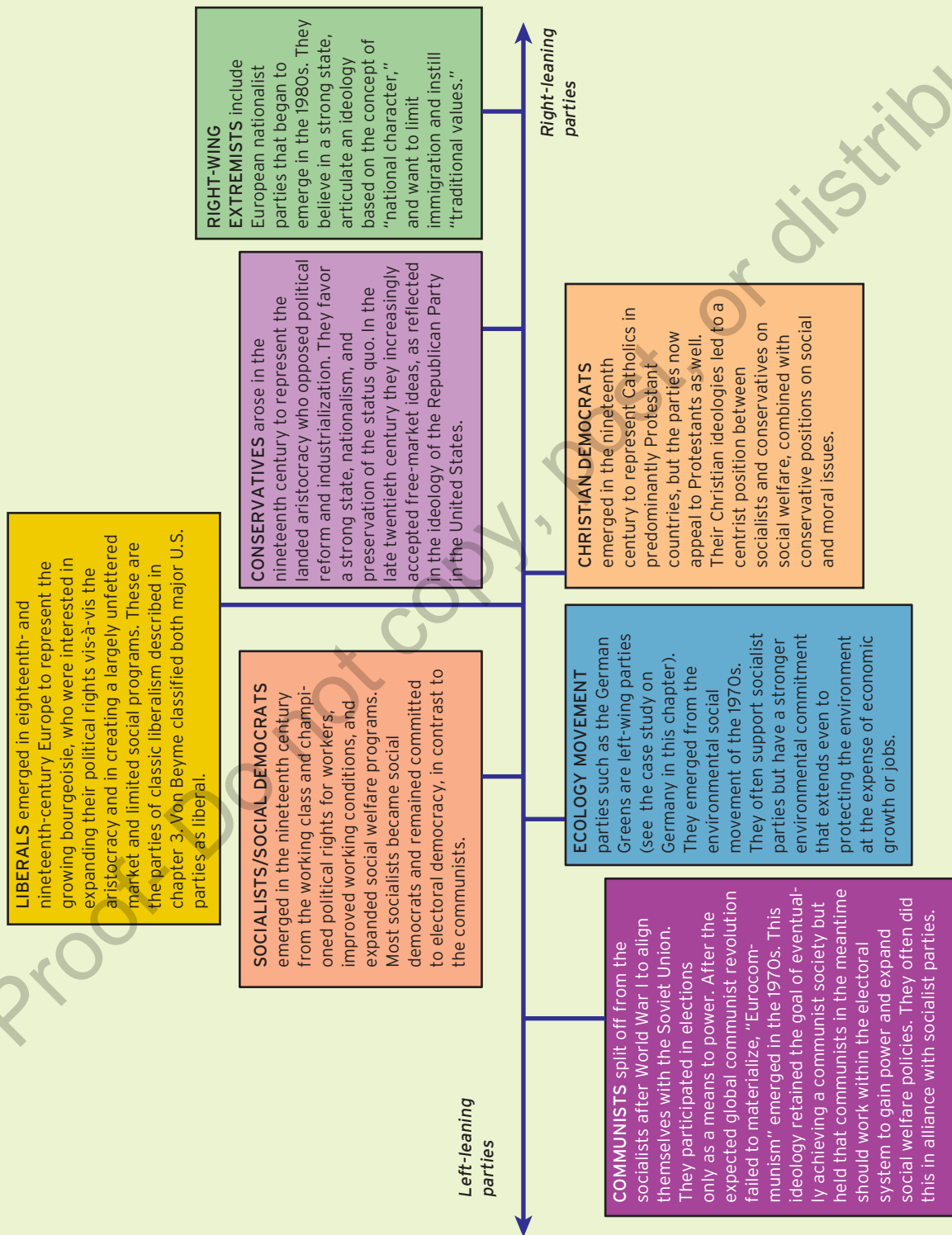
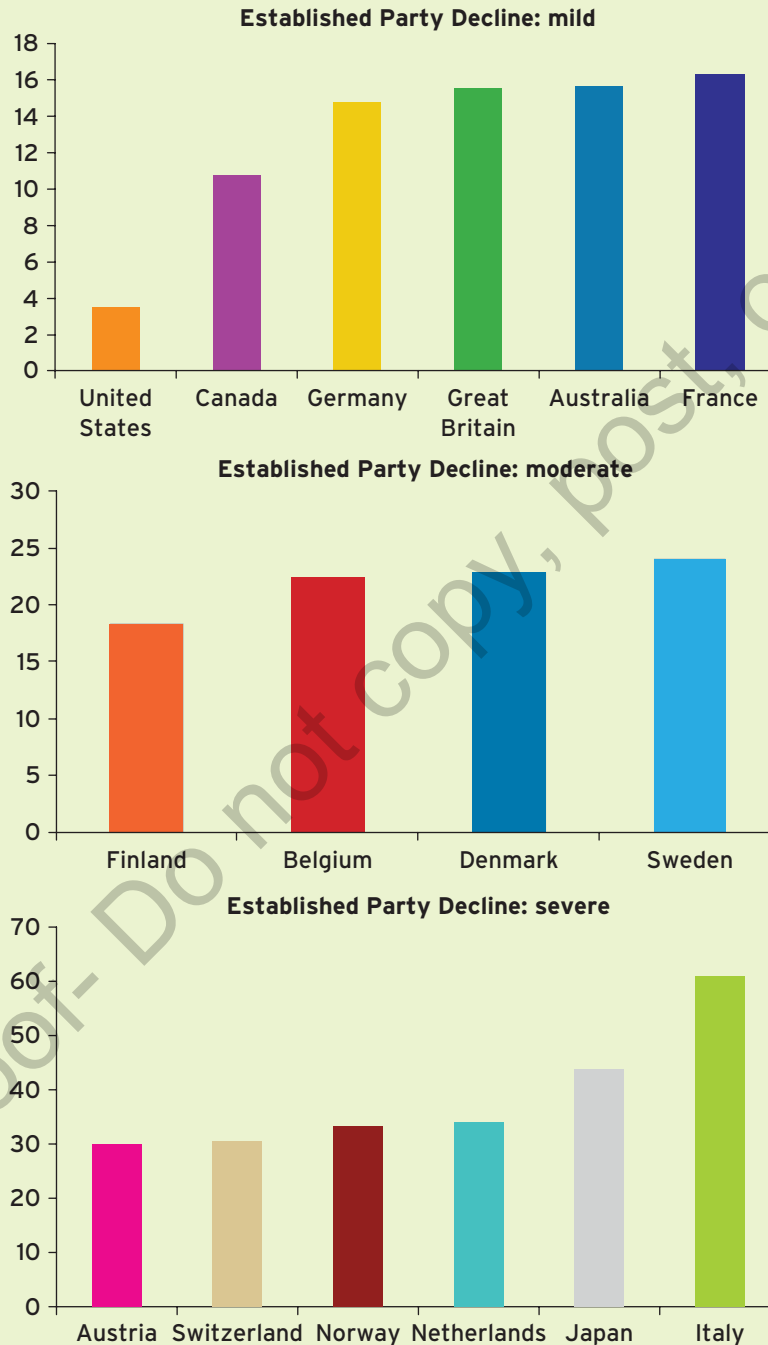


FIGURE 6.6**Average Decline of Established Parties in Wealthy Democracies**

The bars show the average decline of the long-established parties in a group of wealthy democracies. It compares the vote share of the parties that were the most important from 1955-1965 with those same parties' vote share in 2001-2011.

Source: Herbert Kitschelt, "Parties and Party Systems," in *Comparing Democracies: Elections and Voting in a Changing World*, edited by Lawrence LeDuc, Richard G. Niemi, and Pippa Norris (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2014), 32-57.

are less likely to vote along the traditional class and religious lines, but when parties give voters distinct ideological choices the traditional voting patterns often still hold. Timothy Hellwig (2014), on the other hand, sees these changes as a rational response to globalization. He used survey research across multiple countries to argue that in countries in which globalization has stronger effects, voters and parties shift away from directly economic issues because they no longer believe their government can influence those areas; instead, voters demand (and parties supply) changes in noneconomic issues over which the government still has control.

Political scientists Mark Blyth and Richard Katz (2005) took this party-focused approach one step further, creating an elite theory of contemporary parties. Using a political economy argument, they suggested that formerly catch-all parties are now becoming what they term “cartel parties.” Catch-all parties, they argued, attracted voters by offering more and more government aid and services to them. By the late twentieth century, however, this strategy was meeting fiscal constraints, in part created by globalization. Governments were no longer able to expand social benefits, so parties could no longer offer more to attract voters. They instead accepted market-oriented economic theories that argued for more limited government services (see chapter 10) and sold those to the electorate, lowering expectations about what was possible. At the same time, changes in media meant elections were won and lost based on access to large amounts of money for successful media campaigns. Mobilizing party members based on ideological passion and commitment was no longer necessary. Competition came to be about “managerial competence” rather than ideological differences or promises of benefits. In effect, major parties formed a cartel to maintain power, using media and money from the government to fund their own activities; all major parties implicitly came to agree on preserving the status quo. Among other things, this hurts citizens’ sense of political efficacy, the feeling that their participation can have a political impact (Pardos-Prado and Riera 2016). The only innovative policy alternatives in this context come from minor parties, which is perhaps one reason why their share of votes is increasing in most countries. SMD systems that keep minor parties out of power, then, would seem to be the most elitist under this theory.

Whatever the long-term trends, the growing disconnect between voters and established parties has created an opportunity for new parties. On the left, “green” parties focused on environmental and peace issues emerged across Europe, especially in countries with PR electoral systems. Our case study of Germany is a major example. A more powerful trend, though, has been the emergence of “far-right” parties. While their precise ideologies vary, far-right parties generally espouse a populist nativism that focusses on economic decline and opposes immigration. **Populism** is an amorphous political phenomenon, often referred to as a political “style” rather than ideology, that emphasizes a united and morally superior “people” battling corrupt elites, denies divisions among the “people,” and often follows a charismatic leader who claims that once in power he alone will implement the popular will. Nativism is an extreme form of cultural nationalism that sees the nation, or “people,” as culturally threatened by outsiders and demands a return to a more culturally pure era.

populism

A political “style” or ideology emphasizing a united “people” pitted against corrupt elites, denying divisions among the “people,” and often led by a charismatic leader

The success of far-right parties has varied across Europe, with some gaining as much as a third of the electorate's support while others receive less than 10 percent. The National Front in France is probably the best known example (see chapter 3), but far-right parties have participated in governments in Austria, Italy, the Netherlands, and Switzerland. In our case study of Britain, the United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP) convinced Britons to vote to leave the European Union in 2016, using a strongly anti-immigrant campaign to do so. And in the United States, Donald Trump's campaign for president as the Republican nominee had many elements of populism and nativism as well (Rahn and Oliver 2016).

Comparativists have sought to explain the rise of the far right mainly as a response to modernization and globalization that has imposed economic costs on certain segments of the population, such as workers in traditional manufacturing. This is often combined with cultural grievances against immigrants. The European refugee crisis in 2015–2016 that saw a million Middle Eastern refugees arrive in Europe in a matter of months significantly strengthened far-right parties, including in our case study of Germany. The nature of the political system, of course, influences far-right parties' success as well; they are more likely to thrive in PR systems, though the passionate commitment of their core supporters allows some to survive even in SMD systems. How established parties respond to the demands of far-right supporters can also influence how successful the new parties are (Golder 2016). David Art (2011) argued as well that who is in the parties themselves is important to explaining their success: where they are able to recruit committed and skilled activists they are able to survive, but where established parties and political activists shun them early on, they are short-lived.

The idea of declining partisan loyalty and the rise of new parties may seem odd to most Americans, who see the two major parties maintaining their share of the national vote and national politics as "too partisan." Compared with most European parties, however, American parties have always been less ideologically divided and more "catch-all" parties without a clear basis in a core social group. America's growing partisan division is often implicitly contrasted to an earlier era of bipartisan respect and cooperation. Political science research shows that partisanship has indeed risen in the United States, but also that it is a return to long-standing patterns. The relative bipartisanship of the New Deal consensus from World War II through the 1970s was an anomaly in U.S. history. Furthermore, although the United States may be returning to greater partisanship, American parties are still no more, and in many cases less, ideologically distant from one another than are European parties (Dalton et al. 2011, 132–137).

Frances Lee (2009) argued that ideological differences do not fully explain the partisan divisions and "gridlock" that characterize U.S. politics. Looking at the Senate, where the requirement of sixty votes to pass major legislation creates a significant veto player, Lee analyzed roll-call votes to argue that senators have a joint electoral interest in opposing one another, even when they do not disagree ideologically. This is especially true when parties can block an opposing president's goals and control the congressional agenda to assert their electoral message. American partisanship, she

suggested, is as much about gaining electoral advantage as it is about real ideological differences.

Before these recent changes, the European ideologies that arose in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries influenced parties throughout the world, though many countries have parties based on social divisions and ideas other than those derived in Europe. In Latin America, as in Europe, cadre parties emerged in the nineteenth century that pitted some type of conservative party favoring the landholding elite against liberals favoring reforms in the interest of industry and urbanization. Later, socialist parties championing workers' interests emerged as well. With industrialization, parties expanded their mass membership to some extent, though in many countries they remained rather weak due in part to authoritarian interruptions to the democratic process. Populism was a common phenomenon as well, best exemplified by President Juan Perón (1946–1955) of Argentina. Latin American populists' policies were often based on a form of clientelism—they rewarded urban supporters with government services and infrastructure. Military governments in the 1960s and 1970s banned or severely limited the freedom of political parties. Parties had to reemerge and rebuild whenever democracy was restored.

Parties emerged as part of the nationalist movements in Asia and in Africa opposing colonial rule. These were mass parties from the start but often remained very weak, in part because they were so new. In addition, their primary ideology was anti-colonialism, and their members often did not agree on much else. Many, in reality, were collections of disparate leaders, each with a following based on patronage and ethnic or religious identity. After independence, many of these parties fragmented, inviting military intervention. Alternatively, one faction would gain control, create a one-party state, and eliminate democracy. Either outcome eliminated real party competition by destroying or emasculating most parties. Parties would eventually reemerge in the 1990s as very weak institutions in new democracies, a subject to which we turn in chapter 9. In these situations, high levels of uncertainty about the stability of the regime and its institutions make it extraordinarily difficult for parties to organize and mobilize voters the way they do in more established democracies (Lupu and Reidl 2013).

Party Systems

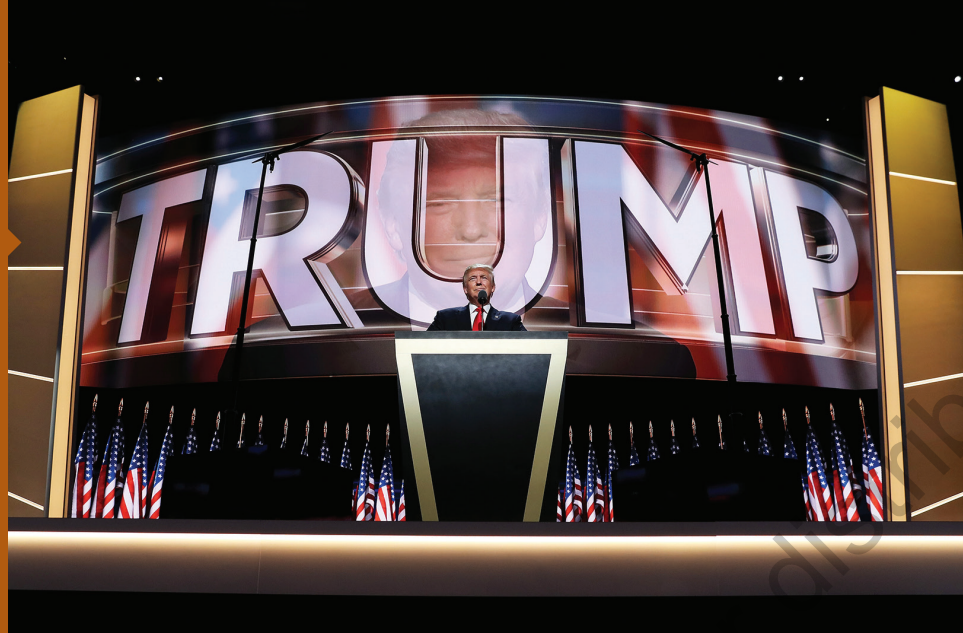
Individual parties exist in party systems, which are categorized by the number of parties and their relative strength. By definition, democratic party systems include at least two parties, but they vary beyond that. At one extreme is the **dominant-party system**, in which multiple parties exist but the same party wins every election and governs continuously. In this system, free and (more or less) fair elections take place following the electoral rules of the country, but one party is popular enough to win every election. In South Africa, for instance, the African National Congress (ANC), Nelson Mandela's party that led the struggle for liberation from apartheid, has won

dominant-party system

Party system in which multiple parties exist but the same one wins every election and governs continuously

Donald Trump, the Republican nominee for United States president, delivers his acceptance speech at the 2016 party convention. Many analysts saw Trump as a populist candidate, campaigning on a rhetoric of uniting the “people” against corrupt elites and emphasizing a strong sense of nativism.

Photo by John Moore/Getty Images



all five national elections easily. (It garnered 62 percent of the vote in the 2014 election, a drop of 4 percent from 2009.) Numerous opposition parties exist, have some seats in the legislature, and are allowed to compete openly in the elections. The ANC remains dominant, however, though it lost several important local elections in 2016, leading some analysts to predict an end to the dominant-party system there. The line can be thin between a dominant-party system and an electoral authoritarian regime; in the latter, a dominant party maintains power not only via its popularity but also via manipulation of the electoral system, control of government resources, and intimidation of other parties.

two-party system

Party system in which only two parties are able to garner enough votes to win an election, though more may compete; the United Kingdom and United States are key examples

multiparty systems

Party systems in which more than two parties could potentially win a national election and govern

In a **two-party system**, only two parties are able to garner enough votes to win an election, though more may compete. The United States is a classic case of a two-party system: no third party has had significant representation in government since the Republicans emerged in the 1850s. Third parties, such as H. Ross Perot's Reform Party during the presidential campaigns of the 1990s, arise to compete in particular elections, but they never survive more than two elections as a political force of any significance.

Finally, **multiparty systems** are those in which more than two parties could potentially win a national election and govern. In some of these, such as Italy for most of its post-World War II history, two of the parties are quite large but one of them almost always has to form a coalition with one or more of the smaller parties in order to gain a majority in parliament and govern. In still other multiparty systems, three or four relatively equal parties regularly contend for power, with a legislative majority always requiring a coalition of at least two of them.

How and why did these different party systems emerge and change over time in different countries? The main explanations are sociological and institutional. Sociological explanations posit that a party system reflects the society in which it emerges. Parties arise to represent the various interests of self-conscious groups in particular societies. In nineteenth-century Europe, two major conflicts emerged: an economic one between capital and labor, and a religious one either between Protestants and Catholics or between church supporters and more secular voters. The economic conflict became universal as industrialization expanded. All countries eventually had

some sort of party defending business interests (usually called “liberal”) and a socialist or social democratic party championing workers’ concerns. Religious divisions, on the other hand, existed in some places but not everywhere. For instance, Germany has a Christian Democratic Party that originally represented the Catholic minority, but France, which was all Catholic, does not. Where economic and religious divisions were politically salient, multiparty systems emerged; where only the economic division was important, two-party systems emerged.

Institutionalists, on the other hand, argue that the broader institutional setting, especially a country’s electoral system, shapes both the number and strength of parties. Political leaders will respond rationally to the institutional constraints they face by creating the types of parties that will help them gain power in the system in which they operate. One classic institutionalist argument is **Duverger’s Law**, named after French political scientist Maurice Duverger. He contended that the logic of competition in SMD electoral systems results in the long-term survival of only two parties. Multiple parties are unlikely to survive because all political parties must gain a plurality (or a majority, if required) in a particular district to win that district’s legislative seat. The successful parties will be those whose members realize that their parties must have very broad appeal to gain majority support. Relying on a small, ideologically committed core group will yield no legislative seats. Parties without any legislative seats are less appealing to voters, who don’t want to “waste” their vote. Over time, ambitious politicians realize that the way to electoral victory is through the already established major parties rather than the creation of new ones. Duverger’s native France is one of the clearer examples of his law at work (see box).

Duverger’s Law

Institutionalist argument by French political scientist Maurice Duverger that SMD electoral systems will produce two major parties, eliminating smaller parties

In contrast, PR systems create an incentive for small, focused parties to emerge. The German environmental movement was able to create a successful Green Party because even with a narrow focus, the party could get enough votes to cross the minimum threshold and gain seats in parliament. Conversely, the United Kingdom does not have a strong Green Party because it could not compete for a meaningful number of seats with the Labour Party and the Conservatives. PR systems tend to create more parties and parties that are more ideologically distinct than SMD systems.

The debate between sociological and institutional theories of party systems creates something of a “chicken and egg” question: Did political leaders create electoral systems to match the number and kinds of parties they led, or did the electoral systems provide incentives to create particular kinds of parties? The logic in both directions seems strong. In a society with multiple viable parties, party leaders seem likely to favor a proportional system if given the opportunity to choose. No one or two parties are dominant, so all would fear they would lose out in an SMD electoral system. Conversely, in a two-party system like that in the United Kingdom in the late nineteenth century, the two dominant parties would logically prefer to create or preserve an SMD system, which strongly favors them over newer and smaller rivals.

Charles Boix (2007) presented a historical analysis to try to bring the two approaches together. He argued that in almost all of Europe, parties began as cadre parties—one

liberal and one conservative—among the elite, with tiny electorates in SMD systems. Where religious divisions grew, religiously based parties challenged and sometimes split the two established parties. With the rise of the working class and its enfranchisement in the late nineteenth century, socialist parties emerged as well. Where SMD systems were well entrenched, such as in the United Kingdom, the socialists tended to displace one of the prior parties, and both the two-party and SMD systems survived. Where religious divisions had already split the two parties—or in newer democracies in the early twentieth century that did not have well-institutionalized electoral systems—the socialists and other smaller parties successfully demanded a proportional system. Amel Ahmed (2013) made a slightly different argument: both SMD and PR were products of efforts by conservative parties to contain workers' parties. Where conservative parties did not face a serious threat from a workers' party with socialist leanings, they would preserve SMD; where they faced a greater threat from workers, they created a PR system to accept but limit the electoral potential of the working class. More recently, Heather Stoll (2013) combined institutional and sociological factors to explain how new social groups such as women and ethnic or racial minorities were incorporated into party systems: Did they form their own parties, or were they absorbed into existing ones? She found that while the electoral system matters, more important is the prior homogeneity of the society, the size and type of the new group, its level of politicization, and the response of existing parties; on the whole, sociological factors mattered more than institutional ones.

The debate between sociological and institutional understandings of party development also raises the question of whether the institutionalist argument about the effects of electoral systems on parties really reflects the logic of the institutions or the underlying society in which the institutions operate: Does SMD really lead to only two parties, or does that electoral system happen to exist in societies with only one major cleavage that would produce two parties no matter what electoral system you used? Comparativists Robert Moser and Ethan Scheiner (2012) found a way to examine this question by focusing on countries with semiproportional systems. By comparing election results for the SMD and PR seats within the same country, they were able to see the effects of the two different electoral systems in a single sociological context. Scientifically speaking, this allowed them to control for cultural and other variables, isolating the effects of the institutions. They found that SMD and PR systems had the effects institutionalists claim in long-established democracies such as those in western Europe. In newer democracies with less-institutionalized party systems, however, the electoral systems did not have any effect. In newer democracies, SMD did not tend to produce two parties because voters were not very strategic in their voting; for instance, they might have loyalty for a particular party because it represents their ethnic group, and they will not change that allegiance regardless of whether their party wins or not. Leaders of such parties know they can count on that support, so they have less incentive to compromise. In this situation, FPTP produces a winning candidate with only 20 to 30 percent of the vote in some cases because

France and the Shift toward a Two-Party System

France provides a classic case of Duverger's Law, though the country's two-round system and multiparty heritage has meant that even there the law has not worked perfectly. France's Third (1871–1940) and Fourth (1946–1958) Republics had parliamentary governing structures with PR electoral systems, which facilitated the election of numerous parties into parliament and unstable coalition governments. A crisis at the end of the Fourth Republic led to the creation in 1958 of the Fifth Republic, whose semipresidential system was designed to end the instability.

The constitution of the Fifth Republic created an SMD two-round, majoritarian electoral system. For both legislative and presidential elections, a first-round election is open to all registered parties. If a candidate for a legislative district (or nationally, for the presidency) wins a majority of the votes in the first round, she is elected. If not, a runoff election is held two weeks later between the top two candidates in the first round, producing a majority winner. This allows all of France's numerous parties to contest the first-round election. When a second round takes place, the losing parties usually support the candidate who is ideologically closest to them.

This system resulted in the creation of two "families" of ideologically similar parties, one on the left and one on the right, which were pledged to support each other in the second-round elections. By the 1970s, each party family consisted of

two significant parties, the Communists and the Socialists on the left and the Gaullists (political descendants of the Fifth Republic's founder, Charles de Gaulle) and Centrists on the right. Within each family, the two major parties were almost equally represented in the National Assembly, thus producing four major parties.

Further movement toward a two-party system came in the 1980s and 1990s. The Communists became less popular with the end of the Cold War, and the Socialists won the presidency for the first time in 1981. By 1988, the Socialists held nearly 90 percent of the seats won by the left as a whole. On the right, the two main parties survived longer, but once the Gaullist Jacques Chirac became president in 1995, his movement also became dominant, gaining nearly 90 percent of the seats controlled by the right. By 2012, the two largest parties, the Socialists on the left and the Gaullists on the right, controlled 82 percent of the seats in the National Assembly, compared with only 56 percent in 1973. While the smaller parties continue to exist and gain some legislative seats, Duverger's Law has worked in his own country; the shift from PR to a majoritarian system has come close to producing a two-party system. This has provided much greater political stability, but some would argue that it has diminished representation of the country's ideologically diverse citizenry.

many candidates are competing, but the number of parties does not drop over time. The ultimate question, perhaps, is whether the institutional logic will start having an effect over a longer time period as the democracies endure and parties become more institutionalized.

Parties and party systems have important implications for democratic rule. The number of parties influences the type of parties that exist, the choices voters have, and the stability of governments. SMD tends to encourage two-party systems rather than the multiparty systems that are more likely under PR (at least in well-established democracies). Most analysts have argued that an SMD system with only two broad parties makes governing easier and policy more coherent. Multiparty systems, on the other hand, give more formal voice to diverse opinions in the legislature but can produce unstable coalition governments. Lorelei Moosbrugger (2012), however, questioned the claim that SMD systems make governing easier. She argued that because politicians in SMD systems must appeal to a broad coalition of voters, they are vulnerable to the threatened loss of even a small group in their electoral coalition. By threatening to vote against incumbents, small groups can veto policy changes they oppose,



What Explains Government Effectiveness?

This chapter and the last have discussed at length the relationship between the type of political system and the effectiveness of policymaking. The data below allow us to examine this relationship ourselves. Table 6.2 lists a large set of electoral democracies. The first column is a measure of “government effectiveness” created by the World Bank. It assesses the quality of public services and the quality of policy formulation

and implementation. The other columns identify key elements of the political systems: the electoral system, the executive-legislative system, and the number of “effective” political parties (a measure of the number and share of legislative seats of parties). Look closely at the table. Can you develop hypotheses for which elements of the political system produce more effective governance? Does a particular type of electoral system or executive-legislative system seem to be associated with more effective government? Do more parties or fewer create government effectiveness? Do you need to combine the variables to explain why some countries achieve more effective government than others? Finally, look at the list of countries and think about where they are in the world. Do other hypotheses emerge about government effectiveness that have nothing to do with the type of political system? What is your overall conclusion based on the table?

TABLE 6.2
Measures of Government Effectiveness

Country	Effectiveness (2014)*	Electoral system	Executive-legislative system	Number of effective parliamentary parties
Finland	2.02	PR	Parliamentary	6.47
New Zealand	1.93	Mixed	Parliamentary	2.96
Switzerland	2.13	Mixed	Presidential	5.57
Canada	1.76	SMD	Parliamentary	2.41
Netherlands	1.83	PR	Parliamentary	5.70
Norway	1.81	PR	Parliamentary	4.39
Liechtenstein	1.68	PR	Semipresidential	3.31
Australia	1.59	SMD	Parliamentary	3.23
Iceland	1.50	PR	Parliamentary	4.42
United Kingdom	1.62	SMD	Parliamentary	2.57
Germany	1.73	Mixed	Parliamentary	3.51
Ireland	1.60	PR	Parliamentary	3.52
United States	1.46	SMD	Presidential	1.96
France	1.40	SMD	Semipresidential	2.83

Country	Effectiveness (2014)*	Electoral system	Executive-legislative system	Number of effective parliamentary parties
Japan	1.82	Mixed	Parliamentary	2.42
South Korea	1.18	Mixed	Presidential	2.28
Israel	1.16	PR	Parliamentary	6.94
Chile	1.14	Other	Presidential	2.09
Spain	1.15	Mixed	Parliamentary	2.60
Czech Republic	1.02	PR	Parliamentary	6.12
Portugal	1.01	PR	Semipresidential	2.93
Slovak Republic	0.87	PR	Parliamentary	2.85
Mauritius	1.13	SMD	Parliamentary	2.0
Hungary	0.53	Mixed	Parliamentary	2.01
Latvia	0.97	PR	Parliamentary	5.13
Lithuania	0.99	Mixed	Parliamentary	5.28
Poland	0.82	PR	Parliamentary	3.0
Uruguay	0.48	PR	Presidential	2.65
Croatia	0.69	PR	Parliamentary	2.59
Georgia	0.48	Mixed	Semipresidential	1.97
Botswana	0.32	SMD	Presidential	1.95
Greece	0.40	PR	Parliamentary	3.09
Italy	0.38	PR	Parliamentary	3.47
Turkey	0.38	PR	Parliamentary	2.34
South Africa	0.33	PR	Presidential	2.60
Costa Rica	0.40	PR	Presidential	4.92
Mexico	0.19	Mixed	Presidential	2.80
Jamaica	0.14	SMD	Parliamentary	1.8
Montenegro	0.28	PR	Parliamentary	3.18
Panama	0.27	Mixed	Presidential	3.01
Namibia	0.20	PR	Presidential	1.54

(Continued)

(Continued)

Country	Effectiveness (2014)*	Electoral system	Executive-legislative system	Number of effective parliamentary parties
Tunisia	-0.13	PR	Semipresidential	4.62
Bulgaria	0.09	PR	Parliamentary	5.06
Brazil	-0.15	PR	Presidential	13.22
India	-0.20	SMD	Parliamentary	3.45
Ghana	-0.27	SMD	Presidential	2.04
El Salvador	-0.02	PR	Presidential	3.31
Macedonia, FYR	0.15	PR	Parliamentary	2.86
Serbia	0.09	PR	Parliamentary	4.87
Peru	-0.28	PR	Presidential	3.97
Argentina	-0.18	PR	Presidential	6.49
Albania	-0.07	PR	Parliamentary	2.78
Romania	0.00	Mixed	Semipresidential	2.12
Indonesia	-0.01	PR	Presidential	8.16
Bolivia	-0.59	Mixed	Presidential	1.91
Senegal	-0.39	Mixed	Semipresidential	1.57
Benin	-0.50	PR	Presidential	8.83
Mozambique	-0.73	PR	Presidential	2.16
Moldova	-0.38	PR	Parliamentary	4.80
Niger	-0.74	Mixed	Semipresidential	4.64
Bosnia and Herzegovina	-0.47	PR	Parliamentary	7.60
Ukraine	-0.38	Mixed	Semipresidential	3.3
Paraguay	-0.92	PR	Presidential	2.39
Sierra Leone	-1.22	SMD	Presidential	1.9
Liberia	-1.37	SMD	Presidential	6.34

Sources: Government effectiveness data are from the World Bank, Worldwide Governance Indicators, "Government Effectiveness" (<http://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/index.asp> [<http://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/wgidataset.xlsx>]). Data for the degree of institutionalization of democracy are from Polity IV (<http://www.systemicpeace.org/inscr/inscr.htm>). Data for number of effective parties are from Michael Gallagher, 2015, Election indices dataset at http://www.tcd.ie/Political_Science/staff/michael_gallagher/EISystems/index.php, accessed August 2016. These indices: data for electoral family are from IDEA (<http://www.idea.int/uid/fieldview.cfm?id=156&themeContext=4>). 350.

*Estimate of governance (ranges from approximately -2.5 [weak] to 2.5 [strong] governance performance).

even if the policies have majority support. In PR systems with multiple parties, on the other hand, politicians are less threatened by the loss of a particular, small group upset over one issue. She demonstrated that farmers were able to prevent widely supported environment policies more effectively in SMD than in PR systems. By bringing organized interest groups into the analysis, she was able to conclude that the conventional wisdom about which type of party system is more effective at governing may be incorrect. We turn, then, to the important role of interest groups in modern democracies.

CIVIL SOCIETY

A great deal of participation and representation occurs in civil society, the sphere of organized citizen activity between the state and the individual family or firm that we discussed in chapter 3. As that chapter delineated, civil society arose in Europe with capitalism, industrialization, and democracy. It provides a space within which groups of citizens organize to influence government. As with parties, we ask questions about how well organizations in civil society enhance democracy: Are their internal rules democratic? Do they represent their constituents accurately? Do they gain undue influence? Do they have beliefs and foster policies that enhance democracy or harm it?

Our definition of civil society is a very broad one. It includes every conceivable organized activity that is not focused on individual self-interest and is not controlled by the government. Do all of these necessarily enhance democratic participation and representation? Does a parent-teacher organization or a local Little League matter to democracy? More troubling, does the Ku Klux Klan (KKK)? Is it a viable member of civil society? The KKK is clearly an organized group of citizens that provides a venue for participatory activities that could certainly include trying to influence governmental policy. Its core beliefs, however, violate the basic tenets of liberal democracy, so we could liken it to a political party that runs on a platform that questions the legitimacy of democracy (as the Islamic Front did in Algeria in the early 1990s). Should democracies allow such organizations to exist, and does their existence contribute positively or negatively to participation and representation in democracy?

The internal structure of organizations in civil society and the reasons why their members join them can matter as well. These issues come up, in particular, with organizations focused on propagating ethnic or religious ideologies. Often, though certainly not always, membership in such organizations requires being born into the broader group that it represents. Ethnic and religious organizations are therefore typically different from groups in which individual citizens choose to come together based on a shared concern. Ethnic and religious groups also often view any internal dissent as a threat to the group's sense of identity, resulting in an undemocratic internal organizational structure. As more and more different kinds of countries become democratic, more and more varied types of civil society organizations arise, making the study of their impact on democracy increasingly important.

Timeline

Political Institutions

Country	Institution development
18th Century	
United Kingdom	Cadre parties
Early 19th Century	
Europe	Rudimentary social movements begin to emerge
United Kingdom	Beginnings of liberal parties
United States	Beginnings of liberal parties
United States	Cadre parties
Mid-19th Century	
United States	Expansion of voting rights to all white men
United States	Beginnings of mass parties
United States	Origins of modern Republican and Democratic Parties
Late 19th Century	
Brazil	First Republic with cadre parties controlled by rural elites
Germany	Corporatist tradition begins under Bismarck
India	Indian National Congress formed
Europe	Mass parties and parties of the left emerge, including Germany's SDP
Russia	Communist Party origins
United States	Tammany Hall and the heyday of patronage
United Kingdom	Expansion of voting rights to all men
United Kingdom	Emergence of socialist parties, beginnings of mass parties, including the Labour Party

(Continued)

In most long-standing democracies, though, the term *civil society* typically connotes interest groups. These associations of individuals attempt to influence government, and most claim to represent clearly defined interests that their members share, such as protecting the environment, advancing civil rights, or representing various industries. They are formally organized, though their degree of institutionalization varies widely. They also are often regulated by the government and have to follow certain rules and procedures if they wish to be recognized as legitimate. Ideally, well-institutionalized interest groups are visible, have relatively large and active memberships, and have a significant voice on the issues in which they are interested. Less-institutionalized groups are less effective, and their legitimacy as representatives on various issues is often questioned. Similar to parties, interest groups bring together like-minded individuals to achieve a goal, but interest groups do not seek formal political power. If they are effective in carrying out their functions, the political system becomes more responsive and inclusive.

Modern interest groups emerged in the nineteenth century alongside mass electoral democracy. Labor, business, and agriculture became the key "sectoral" categories of interest groups; that is, they represented the three key sectors of the economy. As the bulk of the citizenry became more involved in the political process, other interest groups emerged as well, including groups focused on expanding participation rights for women and racial minorities. In postcolonial countries, similar groups emerged. In Latin America, unions and business associations arose with the beginning of industrialization in the late nineteenth century. In Asia and Africa, trade unions developed under colonial rule as colonial subjects began to work for wages and started to organize. Unions became important in the nationalist struggles for independence in most countries. In ethnically and

religiously divided societies, though, ethnic or religious organizations are often more politically important than unions or other sectoral groups. In these societies, the questions we ask above about which types of groups should be included in civil society loom large: Do strong ethnic group organizations into which a citizen must be born serve to strengthen democracy?

As is true for political parties, analysts have grown increasingly concerned about the strength of civil society even in well-established democracies. Robert Putnam (2000) decried a decline in **social capital**—that is, social networks and norms of reciprocity that are crucial to democratic participation. Even apparently “nonpolitical” organizations in civil society, he argued, create social networks and mutual trust among members, which can be used for political action. In the United States, in particular, Theda Skocpol (2003) argued that the system of mass-membership organizations that arose in the nineteenth century declined in the late twentieth century. They were replaced with what she called “managed advocacy” groups that rely on members for financial support and for occasional phone calls, e-mails, or presence at rallies, but no longer have active local branches that bring members together on a regular basis. Van Deth, Maloney, and colleagues (2012) note that many citizens seem willing to “contract out” political participation to professionals in interest groups, supporting them via “chequebook” participation. The question they ask is, What effect does this have on the quality of democracy?

Other scholars, however, point out that some types of political activity have held steady or even increased. They argue that while levels of trust and membership in formal organizations have declined, involvement in political activities has not. Rather, it has shifted to new and different organizations and forms. Citizens may participate in these new groups and perhaps influence government successfully, but they move relatively quickly among different issues and movements and may not develop strong ties with any particular group. Americans also volunteer more than ever before and join small groups such as self-help groups at higher rates than in the past. These scholars argue that new forms of activity have arisen to replace, at least in part, those that have declined. Much of this activity takes place via social movements and involves the use of social media, both of which we address in chapter 7.

social capital

Social networks and norms of reciprocity that are important for a strong civil society

Government–Interest Group Interaction: Two Models

No matter their origin, cause, or relative strength, the formal and informal relationships that interest groups have with government are crucial to how they operate and how effective they can be. The two major democratic models of government–interest group interaction are known as “corporatist” and “pluralist.”

Interest-Group Pluralism We used the word *pluralist* in chapter 1 to describe one of the major theories that attempts to answer the question “Who rules?”; here, however, **interest-group pluralism** means a system in which many groups exist to

interest-group pluralism

Interest-group system in which many groups exist to represent particular interests and the government remains officially neutral among them; the United States is a key example

Timeline

Political Institutions (continued)

Early 20th century

Brazil	Populist political leaders and parties
China	Origins of Chinese Communist Party
Germany	Origins of National Socialist (Nazi) Party
Japan	Taisho Democracy with electoral competition, 1912-1926
Russia	Russian Revolution; Soviet Communist Party becomes ruling party
United Kingdom	Labour replaces Liberals as second major party
United States	Progressive movement (social movements such as temperance, women's suffrage); early interest groups such as Sierra Club, League of Women Voters

Mid-20th century

Brazil	New Republic; rapid industrialization and expansion of labor unions
Brazil	Military rule and state corporatism with limited party competition, 1964-1985
Germany	Electoral system created
Germany	New social movements, including Greens, antinuclear, women's movements
India	Mass nationalist parties and independence
Iran	Competitive elections; Mossadegh elected prime minister in 1951, later overthrown
Japan	Electoral system created
Japan	Origins of Japan's LDP
Nigeria	Mass nationalist parties and independence
United States	New social movements, including civil rights, antiwar, women's; new interest groups arise, including NOW, EarthFirst!, PETA

(Continued)

represent particular interests and the government remains officially neutral among them. Under a pluralist system in this sense, many groups may exist to represent the same broad "interest," and all can try to gain influence. The government, at least in theory, is neutral and does not give preferential access and power to any one group or allow it to be the official representative of a particular interest. The United States is the primary model of this pluralist system. The Chamber of Commerce exists to represent business interests, but so does the National Association of Manufacturers, the National Association of Realtors, and myriad other groups. Washington, D.C., contains literally thousands of interest groups, sometimes dozens organized around the same issue, all vying for influence over decision makers. This is repeated, on a smaller scale, in all fifty state capitals. The government of the day may listen more to one than another of these groups on a particular issue, but no official and enduring preference or access is given to one over others. Even when one large organization speaks on behalf of most of a sector of society—such as the AFL-CIO for labor—it is a loose confederation of groups whose individual organizational members can and do ignore positions and policies of the national confederation. Alternative groups have the right to organize as best they can. Figure 6.7 depicts this often confusing system, with multiple groups interacting directly with the government as well as forming various loose affiliations (such as the AFL-CIO) that also interact with the government.

Corporatism The major alternative to interest-group pluralism is corporatism. Unlike pluralism, which exists only in democracies, corporatism has more democratic (societal or neocorporatist) and less democratic (state corporatist) variants. We discuss the latter in chapter 8. **Neocorporatism**, also known as societal corporatism, is most common in northern Europe, where strong **peak associations**

represent the major interests in society by bringing together numerous local groups, and government works closely with the peak associations to develop policy. Figure 6.7 depicts this more hierarchical system, in which government tends to interact with fewer, larger, and more highly institutionalized peak associations than under pluralism. Germany is a key example, examined in greater detail below. In a neocorporatist system, peak associations maintain their unity and institutional strength via internal mechanisms that ensure local organizations will abide by the decisions of the national body. By negotiating binding agreements with them, the state in effect recognizes the peak associations as the official representatives of their sectors. Unlike **state corporatism**, however, no individuals or groups are required to belong to these associations, and they maintain internal systems of democratic control. Dissatisfied members may try to change the association's policies or found alternative organizations, but most do not pursue the latter option because membership in the main body provides direct access to government.

Pluralism and Neocorporatism Compared Both pluralist and neocorporatist models have strengths and weaknesses. Pluralism allows greater local control and participation because any individual or group is free to start a new organization. National organizations have limited control over their local affiliates, so local members can work internally to move their local organization in whatever direction they wish. Because the state does not officially recognize any one group, there are fewer incentives for large organizations to maintain unity. This decentralization may limit the institutional strength and overall power of organizations in national politics. France is well known for its weak labor unions, for instance, in part because its two largest unions (one communist and one Catholic) are deeply divided over ideology.

neocorporatism

Also called societal corporatism; corporatism that evolves historically and voluntarily rather than being mandated by the state; Germany is a key example

peak associations

Organizations that bring together all interest groups in a particular sector to influence and negotiate agreements with the state; in the United States, an example is the AFL-CIO

state corporatism

Corporatism mandated by the state; common in fascist regimes



A boy practices target-shooting via a video game at the National Rifle Association's Youth Day in 2013. The NRA is one of the most powerful interest groups in the United States. The pluralist U.S. system gives interest groups exceptional access to legislators, in particular. Critics argue these "special interest groups" unduly influence policy and help create the "gridlock" familiar to Americans.

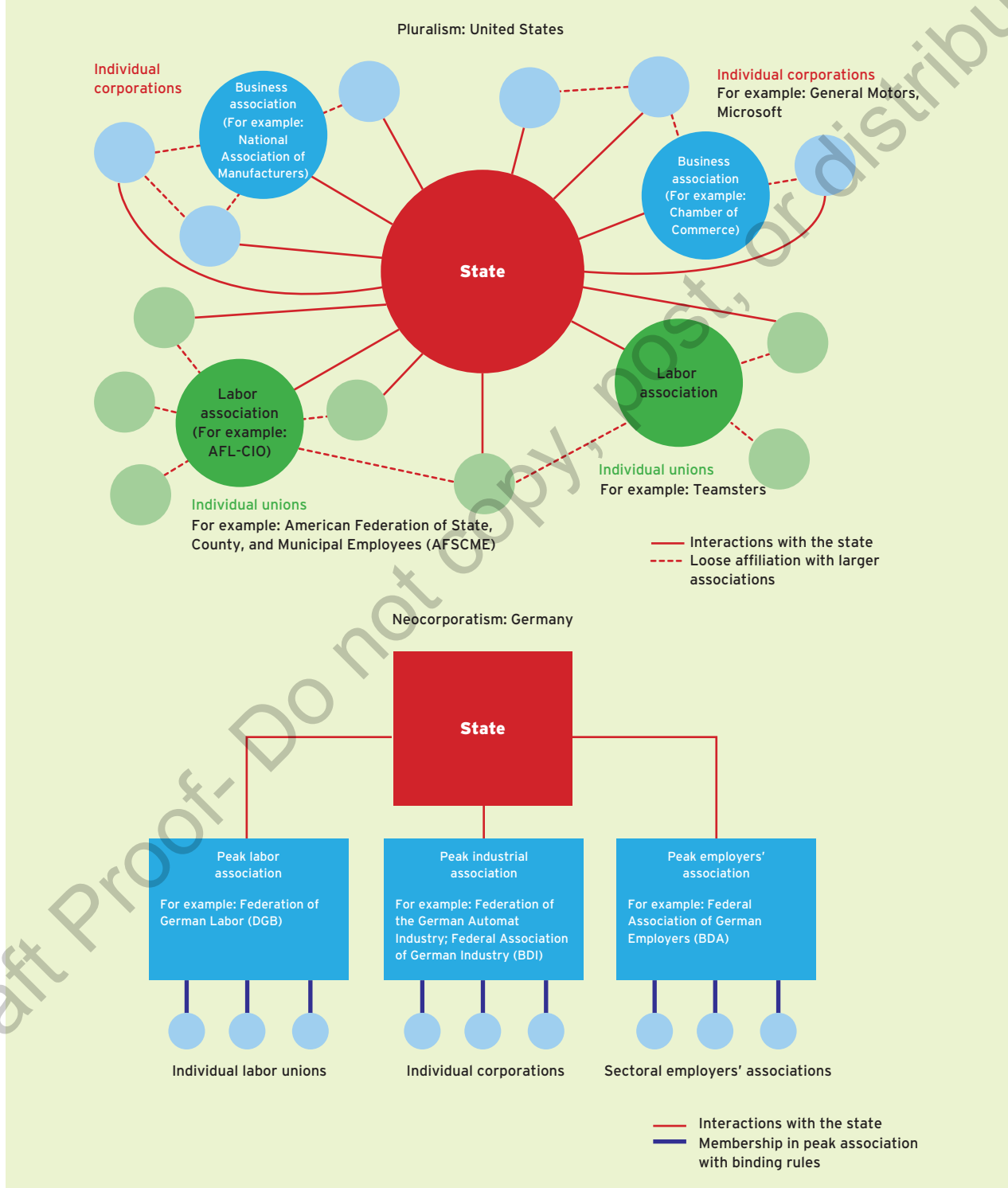
AP Photo/Houston Chronicle, Johnny Hanson;

Late 20th/early 21st century

Brazil	Transition to multiparty democracy, 1985-1989
Brazil	Presidential victory of strong, programmatic party, the PT, in 2002
China	Emergence of very limited civil society under state corporatism
Germany	Reunification of East and West Germany, rise of Green Party, and expansion of number of parties from three to five
India	Rise of religious parties
India	End of Congress Party dominance, replaced by coalition governments from 1989 onward
India	Rise of lower-caste movements and parties
Iran	Elections, some with parties, under Islamic Republic, from 1980 onward
Japan	Electoral reform from SNTV to semiproportional system in 1993; watershed defeat of long-ruling LDP in 2009
Nigeria	Transition to multiparty democracy in 1999, though with seriously flawed elections; rise of dominant party, the PDP, by 2007
Russia	Fall of communism and birth of new parties, 1991
Russia	Reduction of party competition under Putin from 2000 onward; shift from mixed to PR electoral system in 2005
United Kingdom	Continued dominance of centrist, mass parties; first coalition government in sixty years after 2010 election
United States	Continued dominance of centrist, mass parties; growing electoral volatility from one party to the other

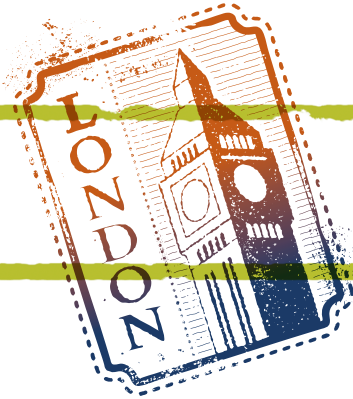
Interest groups gain power vis-à-vis the state due to the resources they can bring to bear on the government. More centralized organizations have more resources and can legitimately claim to speak on behalf of more citizens. These factors increase their potential clout, although critics point out that no government treats each kind of group equally, at least in a market economy. Business interests are crucial for the well-being of the economy; therefore, the government in any market economy, even in the most pluralist systems, will pay more attention to business interests than to others, no matter how effectively others organize. Critics of the pluralist model contend that groups such as workers are better off under neocorporatist systems, in which they are united in large, strong organizations that have a better chance of countering the always strong influence of business.

Because neocorporatist associations are so large and united, they typically have more direct influence on government than does any single national association in a pluralist system. The disincentives to creating new organizations, however, and the power that government recognition provides to the elite leadership of the peak associations, make neocorporatist associations seem less participatory. The incentives against starting alternative organizations are so strong that the vast majority of relevant constituents remain in the confines of already established entities rather than starting new ones, no matter how dissatisfied they may be. A crucial question in these systems, then, is the degree of democratic control *within* the peak associations. If the association has strong mechanisms of internal democracy, such as open elections for leadership positions and constituent participation in setting organizational policies, its leaders can legitimately claim to represent members' views. If the association does not, it may have significant access to government and influence, but it may not really represent its members' views.

FIGURE 6.7**Contrasting Models of State-Interest Group Interaction**

CASE STUDIES IN PARTICIPATION AND REPRESENTATION

We now turn to an examination of participation and representation in several of the established democracies among our case studies. This will allow us to examine the interaction and overall effect of the electoral system, parties and the party system, and civil society on citizens' ability to participate and be represented. It will illustrate as well the questions and trade-offs addressed above.



CASE Study

THE UNITED KINGDOM: SMD/FPTP, TWO PARTIES, AND PLURALISM

CASE SYNOPSIS

The United Kingdom is a paradigmatic case of a two-party, SMD system with a pluralist interest-group system. Of thirty-six long-established democracies, Britain ranked third on an "index of interest-group pluralism," behind only Canada and Greece (Taylor et al. 2014, 196). As Duverger's Law would predict, its FPTP system has produced a two-party system, but there are indications that this may be evolving. Due to both the origins and more recent internal battles of the Labour Party, a third party has always survived, though the electoral system prevented it from winning many seats. The 2010 election produced a rare coalition government that included the third party, the first coalition since World War II, but the 2015 election once again gave one of the two major parties a clear majority. Britain nonetheless is part of a European trend of declining support for the major parties, with new parties gaining ground in recent elections as well. A similar decline of traditional interest-group influence has occurred. What exactly this portends of the country's political system in the longer run remains uncertain.

- **ELECTORAL SYSTEM** SMD and FPTP
- **PARTY SYSTEM** Two-party, but third-party survival, and declining support for major parties
- **CIVIL SOCIETY** Pluralist, but declining social capital and traditional interest groups
- **TRENDS AND REFORMS** Referendum to change the electoral system

In 2016 the long-standing British two-party system looked to be in disarray. Having lost the referendum on leaving the European Union (EU), Conservative prime minister David Cameron resigned only a little more than a year after winning an outright majority in Parliament, and was replaced as PM by one of his cabinet ministers, Theresa May. The other major party, Labour, was under the leadership of Jeremy Corbyn, a leftist popular with the party's core supporters but so unpopular with his own MPs that they forced an unusual party leadership election in 2016 to try to unseat him. Despite Labour MPs' opposition, party members easily reelected Corbyn as leader. The perennial third party, the Liberal Democrats who had been in an unusual coalition government with the Conservatives from 2010 to 2015, saw their share of the vote collapse from 23 percent in 2010 to 8 percent in 2015. Meanwhile, the Scottish National Party (SNP) that favored the secession of Scotland swept almost all the Scottish seats in Parliament in 2015, decimating Labour's vote there, and the nationalist United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP) that favored leaving the EU quadrupled its share of the vote (see Figure 6.8). The leadership of both major parties supported staying in the EU, though the Conservative Party was split on the issue; the voters, however, supported "Brexit," responding to a populist, anti-immigration campaign led by UKIP and the maverick Conservative mayor of London. In spite of the seeming decline of the major parties, though, opinion polls in 2016 showed about two-thirds of Britons still planned to vote for one of the two major parties in the next general election. Despite the turmoil, the SMD system still seems likely to favor the two major parties.

British parties began in the nineteenth century as cadre parties within Parliament, divided primarily over how much power they thought should be reserved for the long-ruling aristocracy. As the reforms of the later nineteenth century (see chapter 3) expanded the franchise, the two major parties, the Conservatives and the Liberals, slowly built mass parties to incorporate and appeal to the growing number of (male) voters. In 1900 trade unions and socialist societies founded the Labour Party. Throughout the world, parties formed or evolved to represent workers as industrialization expanded,



Jeremy Corbyn, leader of the Labour Party, speaks to supporters in August 2016. Corbyn was elected by party stalwarts as party leader, but the party's MPs held a vote of no confidence in him after Britain voted to leave the EU, forcing a second party election in late 2016. In the 2015 general election, Labour lost badly, leading to Corbyn's selection as the new party leader, but opinion polls in 2016 suggested that under him the party would lose the next election as well.

Photo by Rob Stothard/Getty Images

but only in Britain did labor unions successfully create their own party. By the 1920s, Labour had replaced the Liberals as the second major party and had led its first government. The Liberals survived as a third party, but until the 1970s they received a small fraction of the vote and only a handful of seats in Parliament. In terms of seats and votes, the United Kingdom for all intents and purposes had a two-party system. The SMD system that relies on simple FPTP to determine the winner of each election usually translates modest electoral victories into significant parliamentary seat majorities, as Figure 6.8 demonstrates for 2015, ensuring that one of the two dominant parties can form a single-party government.

The origins of British parties show clearly why British elections were long influenced by exceptionally strong class-based voting. The Conservative Party is historically the party of the aristocracy, long proclaiming what it termed “Tory paternalism”: the upper class would take good care of the rest of society. Liberals arose originally as the class of the new entrepreneurs of the industrial era, favoring free enterprise and reduction in aristocratic privilege. Both gained support mainly from the middle and upper classes by the mid-twentieth century. Labour, of course, was literally the party of trade unions, the vast majority of whose members supported it. This class-based voting broke down, as it did all over Europe, as manual workers’ share of the total population shrank and their interests diverged. In response, the Labour Party in particular shifted its ideology under party leader and PM Tony Blair in the 1990s, moving to a more centrist position to attract more middle-class voters. Evans and Tilley (2013) argued that Britons’ class-based ideologies had not shifted that much; instead, the main party’s ideologies had moved to the center, leaving voters on both sides without parties to support. On the right, the success of the nationalist UKIP may reflect that. On the left, the election of a much more leftist Labour leader, Jeremy Corbyn, in 2015 may augur well for the party’s future, though opinion polls in 2016 suggested just the opposite.

As elsewhere in Europe, the decline of class-based voting also resulted in the decline of the two major parties’ share of the vote. Between 1974 and 2010, the Liberal Party (renamed the Liberal Democratic Party in 1988) won between 15 and 25 percent of the vote but always a much smaller share of seats, thanks to the FPTP electoral system. In 2010 neither major party was very popular in the context of the Great Recession. The election (see Figure 6.8) denied the Conservatives a majority of seats, necessitating a coalition government for the first time since World War II. The Conservative PM, David Cameron, invited the Liberal Democrats to join his government to form a parliamentary majority. The two major parties’ combined share of the vote fell to just over 65 percent, the lowest total in decades. The thirty-year slide of support for the two major parties finally went far enough to deny either party a parliamentary majority, even given the effects of FPTP.

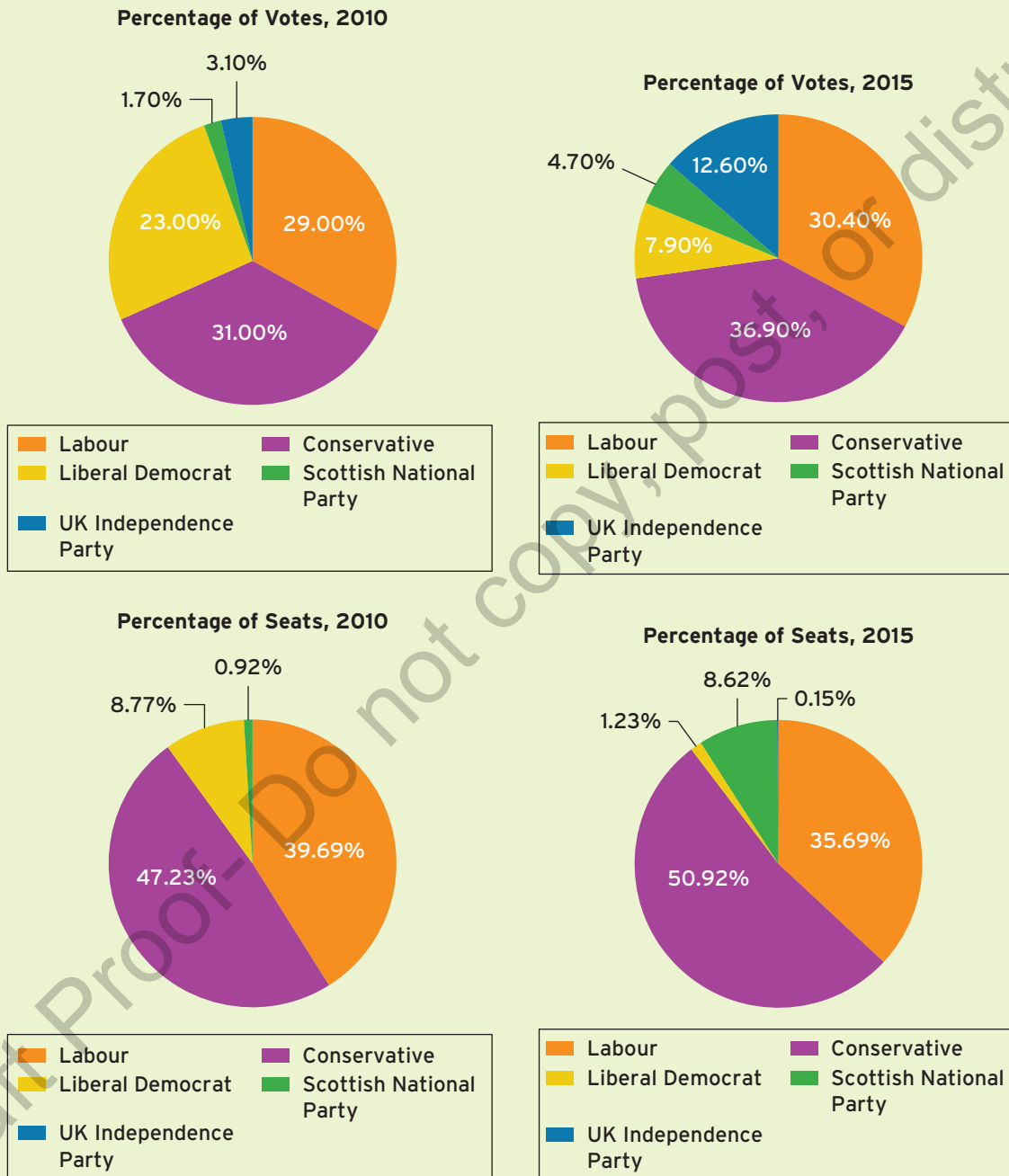
The 2015 election, though, returned the country to its traditional status of a two-party system, as the incumbent Conservatives secured a majority in Parliament and the Liberal Democrats’ share of the vote collapsed. It was clear that the Liberal Democrats’ support had been in part a “protest vote” against both major parties; once they were part of government, that support evaporated. As the traditional third party lost votes,

though, two others gained, the SNP and UKIP, as Figure 6.8 demonstrates. Figure 6.8 also shows the effects of the FPTP system. While UKIP and the Liberal Democrats gained a larger share of the vote than had the SNP, the latter got far more seats in Parliament because its support was regionally concentrated in Scotland, where it won virtually all the seats. UKIP's 12.6 percent of the vote was unprecedented in the nationalist party's history, but because it was spread throughout England it gained only one seat in Parliament. The Green Party (not shown in Figure 6.8) won 3.8 percent of the vote—almost as much as the SNP—but won only one parliamentary seat, as opposed to SNP's fifty-six.

The disproportionality of Britain's elections stems from the combination of its FPTP system and the continuing presence of smaller parties that collectively gained close to a third of the popular vote in recent elections. Clearly, institutional logic alone cannot explain this outcome; instead, we must turn to sociological explanations. The traditional third party, the Liberal Democrats, was long the party ideologically positioned between Labour and the Conservatives, and a haven for those unhappy with the two major parties; its historical legacy and a split in Labour in the 1980s allowed it to survive for decades. The SNP has arisen with Scottish nationalism. It has controlled the government in Scotland most of the time since devolution gave the region its own parliament. Although it lost the 2014 referendum on Scottish independence, its membership swelled dramatically after that loss and it subsequently swept Scotland's seats in the UK Parliament in 2015. UKIP's popularity, heavily based in England, has grown in recent years based on its primary focus: anti-immigration and leaving the EU. Its longtime leader, Nigel Farage, was a leader of the successful campaign for "Brexit" in the 2016 referendum, as he and the party rode a wave of populist support for anti-immigration policies that affected much of Europe and the United States that year. When Duverger's Law does not work for sociological reasons, the result is extreme disproportionality in the electoral system. The Liberal Democrats recognized this and demanded a most unusual referendum on a new and more proportional electoral system as a price for joining the coalition government in 2010, but Britons voted a year later to keep the FPTP system they have had for so long.

The internal organization of British parties has evolved as the parties' electoral fortunes have shifted. As is true for much of Europe, the major parties have tried to increase the role of individual members as the number of members has plummeted. Britain had no tradition of primary elections like those in the United States. Parties selected their MP candidates for each constituency and presented them to the voters. Like most European parties, sitting MPs had long controlled most real decision making in the Conservative Party. That changed after 1997, when a new party leader proposed direct election of the leader by all dues-paying party members. Candidates for individual seats are selected by dues-paying members in each constituency but are still subject to approval from national headquarters.

The Labour Party's initial organization was most unusual, having been created by unions rather than coming out of Parliament. Union members were automatically party members via their union membership, whatever their individual party

FIGURE 6.8**British National Election Results, 2010 and 2015**

Source: BBC, "Election 2010" (<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/shared/election2010/results/>); BBC, "Election 2015" (<http://www.bbc.com/news/election/2015/results>).

preference. Initially, unions controlled 90 percent of the voting power in the party, so they could set the party platform, while the party's MPs selected the party leaders. Pressure from new social movements and party leaders wanting to distance the party from the declining labor unions led to reforms in the 1980s that gave equal voting weight for both the platform and leadership to three separate groups: (1) paid-up individual members, (2) unions, and (3) party MPs. In 2014 the system was changed again, giving each member one vote, thus requiring unions to have their members register as individual party members; the special role of trade unions in the party was over. While membership of both major parties is a fraction of what it was a half century ago, internal rules make both appear more "democratic" to the broader electorate.

The most important players in Britain's pluralist interest-group system have long been somewhat more centralized than are interest groups in most pluralist systems because the peak associations have greater control over their members. However, the system was never as centralized as corporatist systems, as our case study of Germany below shows. Business and labor are each represented by one major peak association: the Confederation of British Industry (CBI) for business and the Trades Union Congress (TUC) for labor. In the 1960s and 1970s, Labour Party governments even created quasi-corporatist arrangements in which the party consulted regularly and formally with both groups in an attempt to set wages and other economic policies. The limited ability of the groups to control their members, though, resulted in widespread strikes in the 1970s, culminating in the "winter of discontent" in 1978–1979 and Labour's electoral defeat in 1979 at the hands of Margaret Thatcher, the new Conservative leader. Thatcher immediately ended the corporatist arrangements and largely shunned not only the TUC but also the CBI, preferring the advice and support of various conservative think tanks and ideological pressure groups.

Because decision making in Britain's parliamentary system is centralized in the cabinet, interest groups focus much more on lobbying the executive than the Parliament. Indeed, they lobby MPs primarily as a conduit to gain access to cabinet members. How much influence particular groups have, then, depends very much on which party is in power and with which groups the prime minister, in particular, is willing to work. Of course, all groups still have other means of influencing policy, such as petitioning, gaining media attention, contributing to campaigns, etc. Moosbrugger (2012) demonstrated that British interest groups can certainly have a powerful influence. The main farmers' union worked with relevant ministries to block



First Past the Post

- In 2016, some fifty-six countries used "first-past-the-post" rules for their legislative elections
- These countries included the Bahamas, Canada, Jamaica, Kenya, Malaysia, Yemen, and Zambia
- The vast majority of countries using FPTP are former British colonies
- In 2016 no country in continental Europe used FPTP

Source: International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, Table of Electoral Systems Worldwide (<http://www.idea.int/esd/world.cfm>).

several significant environmental policies that would hurt farmers, in spite of the fact that the vast majority of the British public favored the changes. British civil society has seen the same evolution that we noted earlier throughout Western societies: a decline in the support of traditional interest groups and the rise of new social movements. This was spurred in part by Thatcher's preference for working with smaller groups that shared her conservative ideology and her aggressive anti-union policies in the 1980s, which made organizing and striking much more difficult. Environmental, women's, antinuclear, and racial groups became important in the struggle for reorganization of the Labour Party in particular. The number of these groups has exploded since the 1960s. At the same time, the TUC in particular has declined as its membership base has contracted.

CASE Questions

1. Britain's FPTP electoral system and party structure (particularly for the Labour Party) are unlike those in most European countries, yet it has faced several of the same trends of other European countries. What might explain this?
2. What explains the survival of a viable, if small, third party in spite of Britain's FPTP electoral system? What does this suggest for the theoretical debate over sociological versus institutional explanations of the development and evolution of political parties?



CASE Study

GERMANY: TWO-AND-A-HALF-PARTY SYSTEM AND NEOCORPORATISM UNDER THREAT

Germany's democracy had been viewed as an unusual and exceptionally stable "two-and-a-half-party" system, with a semiproportional electoral system and a neocorporatist interest-group system. Changes in the class structure, the rise of new social movements, and the decline of religious observance have eroded the major parties' bases of support, following the trends noted for Western democracies

CASE SYNOPSIS

in general. Globalization and European unification also threatened Germany's neocorporatist system. Declining support for and power of the peak associations have made the neocorporatist institutions ever more difficult to maintain. Germany's semiproportional electoral system has allowed these changes to result in the rise of significant new parties that influence elections, most recently via the rise of a new, anti-immigrant conservative party.

- **ELECTORAL SYSTEM** Mixed proportional
- **PARTY SYSTEM** "Two-and-a-half-party," becoming multiparty
- **CIVIL SOCIETY** Neocorporatist
- **TRENDS AND REFORMS** Weakening peak associations and neocorporatism; weakening support for major parties; rising right-wing populist party and anti-immigrant movements

In the 2013 parliamentary election, Germany's two major parties gained only 67 percent of the vote, though this was better than their share of the vote in 2009 (57%), their lowest combined total ever. Chancellor Angela Merkel of the Christian Democratic Union (CDU/CSU) scored a personal victory, with her party receiving more votes than either major party had in years. Nonetheless, the decline of the long-dominant parties was clear, as were its causes: the waning significance of long-standing class and religious divisions and the partial unraveling of Germany's neocorporatist system. The 2013 election also heralded the demise of Germany's traditional third party; support for the Free Democrats Party (FDP), which had been the junior coalition party in most of Germany's post-World War II governments, fell so low that it failed to gain representation in parliament for the first time in its history. Leftist parties, the Left Party and Green Party, gained some seats, while a new anti-immigrant party, Alternative for Germany (AfD), just missed getting enough votes to enter parliament, suggesting Germany has shifted definitively to a multiparty system.

The instability of Germany's first democracy, the Weimar Republic (1918–1933), and subsequent rise of Adolf Hitler profoundly influenced the post-World War II system the Allies helped create in West Germany. Parties were central to the new democracy and were explicitly recognized and regulated in the Basic Law, West Germany's constitution. The major parties that developed were the Christian Democrats and the Social Democrats (SPD). The third or "half" party was the liberal FDP, which, as in Britain, lies ideologically between the two major parties. The key difference with Britain is that in Germany's mixed PR system the FDP regularly participated as a junior partner in coalition governments, as neither major party won enough seats to govern alone. The German electoral system also requires that a party must receive 5 percent of the national vote to win seats in parliament, thus excluding the very smallest parties from power. This produced the stable, "two-and-a-half-party" system that continued

through the end of the twentieth century. Since 1969, power has shifted back and forth between the two major parties, almost always in coalition with the FDP or, more recently, the Green Party (in a coalition with the SPD). The two major parties increasingly became catch-all parties, competing for the most votes via expanded government programs but having limited ideological differences.

At the same time that the stable party system flourished, German neocorporatism reached its zenith. The German Trade Union Federation claimed to represent 85 percent of the unionized workforce. Business is represented by three peak associations, each representing different-sized firms. From the 1950s through the 1970s, these peak associations worked closely with the major political parties and the government to set wages and social policies. Most MPs on key committees were members of one of the peak associations, and many had worked professionally for them before entering parliament. SPD MPs often had strong union backgrounds, and CDU/CSU MPs had business connections, though labor and business associations had members in and maintained close contact with both parties.

Political scientists saw this model of stability and neocorporatism as a great success into the 1970s. Underlying it, however, were trends that would raise serious questions. Popular discontent became quite apparent by the late 1960s. A strong student movement arose that was opposed to the Vietnam War, German rearmament, the consumer culture, and Germany's strong support for the United States in the Cold War. Growing unemployment affected would-be middle-class college students and working-class young adults alike. All of this discontent culminated in widespread protests in 1968, which the government forcefully put down. The demise of this movement led young political activists to pursue several different paths. Some founded feminist, antinuclear, and environmental groups, while others formed what came to be known as "civil action groups." These were small, local groups of usually not more than thirty people that were focused on petitioning local government on issues such

German chancellor Angela Merkel meets with cabinet ministers and leaders of Germany's peak labor and business associations in 2015. Under Germany's neocorporatist system, the peak associations and government leaders regularly set economic policies collectively. In recent years, globalization has weakened the power of the peak associations and governments have had repeated problems negotiating agreements to guide economic policy.

ADAM BERRY/AFP/Getty Images



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as building new schools or cleaning up pollution. By 1979, some 1.5 million Germans were participating in at least fifty thousand such groups. In the mid-1970s, some of the groups that focused primarily on the environment came together to form a national association. By 1980, this association helped create the Green Party, and in 1983 it became the first new party since 1949 to break the 5 percent barrier and gain seats in parliament, taking votes mainly from the SPD. In 1998 it joined a coalition government with the SPD, creating what came to be called the “Red–Green Alliance” (*Red* referring to socialism), which ruled until 2005. The semiproportional system allowed the environmental movement to become a successful political party, in contrast to Britain, where a Green Party exists but has never gained significant representation.

The second major shift in the German party system came with the reunification with East Germany in 1990. With reunification, the West German electoral system and constitution covered the entire reunited country, and initially, the major parties in the west reached out and worked with like-minded parties in the east. Ultimately, they absorbed many of the eastern parties. The former ruling Communist Party rebranded itself as the Party of Social Democracy (PDS) and positioned itself ideologically left of the SPD to champion causes particularly relevant to the poorer and heavily unemployed regions in eastern Germany. While initially receiving little support, it slowly expanded its appeal, winning 21 percent of the eastern vote by 1998. In 2007 it merged with some former members of the SPD to create the Left Party and became the third-largest party in parliament after the 2013 election, winning 8.6 percent of the national vote.

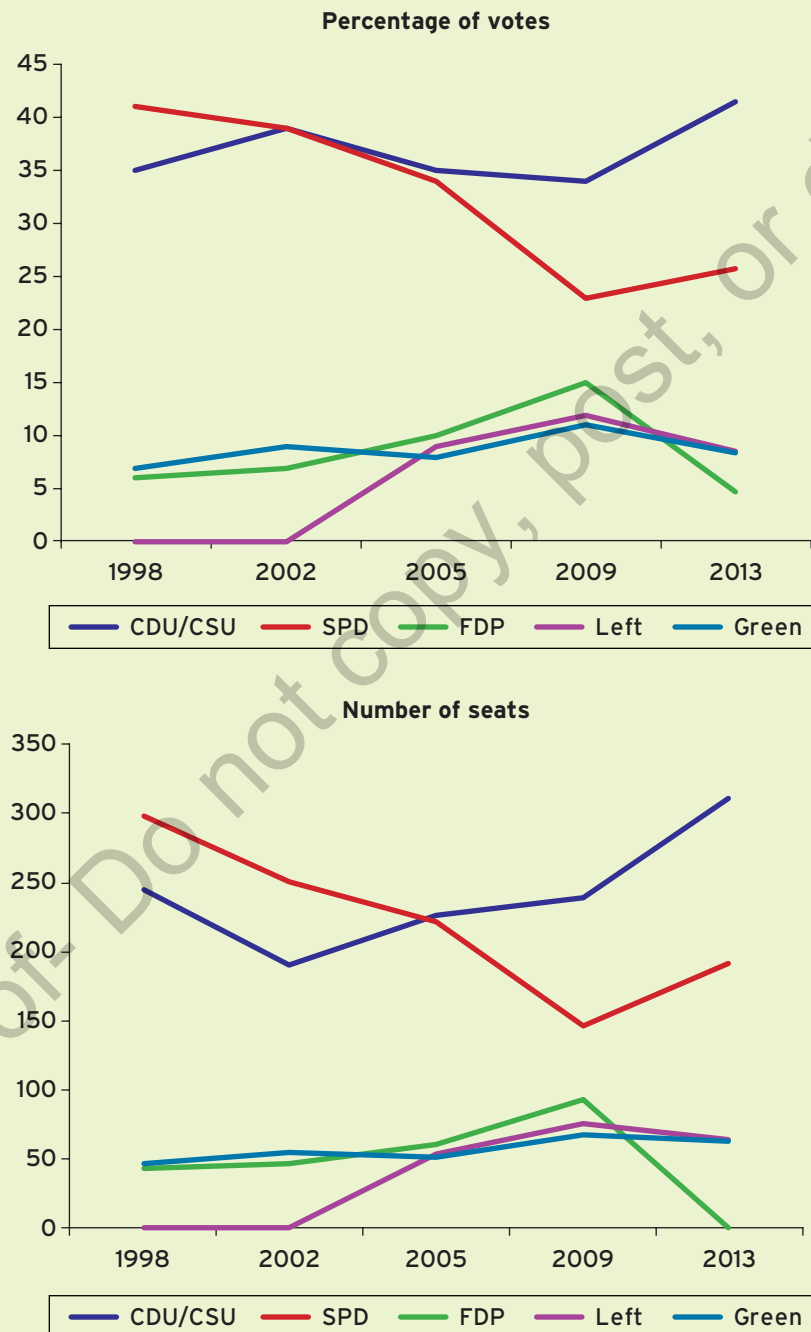
At the same time that the new social movements, new parties, and reunification were altering the landscape of party politics, economic problems were threatening neocorporatism. The ability of the peak associations to enforce collective wage agreements was key to their power and influence. In the 1980s, these key associations began to weaken as unemployment rose and unions allowed greater flexibility in setting working conditions within firms. As control of working conditions became more localized, however, local unions had less reason to obey the dictates of the peak associations, thereby weakening their role. Facing rising costs from exporters elsewhere in the world, smaller businesses began leaving the employers’ associations as well. The decline of traditional manufacturing, meanwhile, caused union membership to plummet by four million during the 1990s. The peak associations for both business and labor were speaking for and able to enforce central agreements on a shrinking share of the private sector, further weakening neocorporatism.

Politicians responded to these trends by distancing themselves from the peak associations. Far fewer members of parliament from both parties were members of or worked in the key associations. In the face of these changes and continuing high unemployment, neither the CDU/CSU government prior to 1998 nor the SPD/Green government from 1998 to 2005 was able to negotiate new binding agreements with business and labor for fundamental economic reforms. The result was the closely divided 2005 election that led to an unusual “grand coalition” government that included both

major parties. The new chancellor, Angela Merkel, was the leader of the CDU, and the first woman and first East German to lead the country. Although the CDU/CSU won the 2009 election, the major parties' share of the total vote dropped to an all-time low of 57 percent, largely due to an 11-point decrease in support of the SPD. As Figure 6.9 shows, the vote share of all three minor parties increased, with each surpassing 10 percent. The elimination of the FDP from parliament in the 2013 election forced Merkel once again to form a "grand coalition" with the SPD in order to form a government.

Most union members still support the SPD and religious voters support the CDU/CSU, but economic changes and secularization have meant fewer voters in both categories. In 2011 the Green Party reached a new milestone by winning control of the government in a *Land* (state) government for the first time, and coming in second (ahead of the CDU/CSU) in another. In 2013 a new right-wing populist party opposed to Germany's policies on the euro crisis (see chapter 10) almost gained enough votes to enter parliament. The Alternative for Germany (AfD), founded in April 2013, garnered 4.7 percent of the national vote in the September 2013 elections. The party initially focused on economic issues, criticizing Chancellor Merkel's policies toward Greece and other bankrupt "Eurozone" countries. While the party continued to gain attention, it also had to contend with internal strife—one faction focused on economic issues and another on immigration. This increased attention on immigration coincided with the rise of an anti-immigrant movement, Patriotic Europeans Against the Islamization of the West (PEGIDA), which held weekly rallies of up to 10,000 people by December 2014.

In 2015 tensions within AfD grew and by mid-year the party split, with a majority supporting Frauke Petry, who shifted the party's focus to immigration, arguing that too many immigrants, particularly Muslims, were threatening national identity. While AfD and PEGIDA remain separate entities, AfD nonetheless began championing the anti-immigrant cause; by 2016 it gained representation in nine (of sixteen) German state parliaments. The most notable elections were held in September 2016 in Chancellor Merkel's home state, Mecklenburg–West Pomerania, where the AfD won 21 percent of the regional election vote and outpolled the Christian Democrats, and in Berlin, where the CDU suffered its worst defeat since World War II and the AfD entered the legislature for the first time. Although the CDU led in many public opinion polls in September 2016 (31% support), fewer than 50 percent of respondents agreed that Merkel should run for reelection as chancellor (DW.com 2016). Much of the AfD support, and disagreement with Frau Merkel, comes as a reaction to her and the government's response to the 2015–2016 refugee crisis in which the chancellor welcomed over 1.1 million Syrian and other refugees. While initially supportive, popular opinion quickly turned against her policies, with people fearing that the country could not absorb that many immigrants that quickly. While Germans are not as anti-immigrant as many other European countries, 61 percent in 2016 believed that Muslim immigrants increased the possibility of a terrorist attack and that Muslims did not want to integrate culturally into Germany (Wike, Stokes, and Simmons 2016).

FIGURE 6.9**German General Election Results, 1998-2013**

Source: Election Resources on the Internet, "Elections to the German Bundestag" (<http://electionresources.org/de>).

These trends of declining older parties and the rise of several new ones have been strong enough that Thomas Poguntke (2012) argued that Germany's "two-and-a-half-party" system has fundamentally changed to a multiparty system similar to what Italy used to have, with two large parties vying for control but likely to require the support of at least one of several minor parties to form coalition governments. If true, this change has the potential to reduce Germany's famed political stability.

CASE Questions

1. Germany has faced many of the same long-term trends as Britain in terms of declining strength of the largest parties and interest groups. In what ways are these changes different in the two countries, and what explains those differences?
2. Does Germany's mixed electoral system seem to give more representation to diverse groups than in Britain? Does this seem likely to make policymaking better or worse?
3. Does the German case support the arguments in favor of "dealignment" or "realignment" that we discussed earlier in the chapter?



CASE Study

JAPAN: FROM DOMINANT-PARTY TO TWO-PARTY SYSTEM?

CASE SYNOPSIS

A 1994 electoral reform in Japan was one of the biggest systemic changes in established democracies of the last generation. It created a mixed electoral system that showed the distinct differences between SMD and PR elections in the same country. By 2009, an opposition party defeated the long-ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) and took the reins of government for the first time. The fifteen-year history since the reform appeared to provide a textbook example of Duverger's Law at work, as a new electoral system seemed to transform Japan into a two-party system. The LDP's return to power in late 2012, though, raised questions about whether that transformation would really occur. The electoral change also resulted in internal strengthening of Japan's parties. Participation is increasing in what had been a very weak civil society, though voter turnout has hit historic lows.

- **ELECTORAL SYSTEM** Mixed
- **PARTY SYSTEM** Dominant-party system, shifting to two-party system?
- **CIVIL SOCIETY** Weak interest groups, but signs of growing strength
- **TRENDS AND REFORMS** Electoral reform from SNTV to mixed system; shift to two-party system?; low voter turnout

On August 30, 2009, the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) swept into power, winning 308 of the 480 seats in the lower and more powerful house of the Diet, Japan's parliament. It unseated the LDP that had ruled nearly continuously since 1955. Many analysts saw the 2009 election as the dawning of a new era in Japan. The LDP had dominated Japanese politics from the first election in 1955. Despite its name, it was a conservative party that supported the interests of business and economic growth. The party guided the creation of Japan's phenomenally successful development model (see chapter 10), winning a majority of the legislative seats in every election to the Diet from 1955 to 1993 and always gaining a plurality (though, after 1963, rarely a majority) of the national vote. Its great economic success until 1990 allowed it to provide benefits to large segments of the population, including the rapidly growing urban middle class. It was a relatively weak party in terms of internal organization, with strong factions, but the electoral system allowed those factions to share power and keep the party from splitting.

Japan's unusual single, nontransferable vote (SNTV) electoral system prior to 1993 was crucial to the LDP's success. SNTV has large, multimember districts, but each voter votes for only one candidate. The candidates who receive the most votes win. Each party, therefore, runs several candidates in each district, and the winning candidates often receive only 15 to 20 percent of the votes in their district. Like SMD, the system gave the winning party a larger share of seats in the legislature than its share of votes, so even as the LDP's popularity declined, it maintained majority control of the Diet. In addition, district lines were intentionally gerrymandered to overrepresent rural areas, the LDP's main support base.

The multimember districts under SNTV allowed several factions within the dominant party to run candidates and potentially win seats in each district. Most campaigns were battles among the LDP factions rather than between the LDP and other parties. LDP factions were based not on ideology but rather on clientelist networks. Under SNTV, a winning party had to run several candidates in each district who would draw support from different groups of voters so as not to dilute the support of other candidates in the party. To gain the resources to compete, potential candidates would become loyal members of a faction. A patron who was a leading national party (and often government) official led each faction and provided campaign funds as well as patronage to his followers. To make sure no single candidate took too many votes away from the party's other candidates in the same district, each candidate also developed a

local voter-mobilization machine, called *koenkai*, which consisted of area notables who could deliver votes. A candidate then promised the factional leader that he could use his *koenkai* to deliver a certain percentage of the vote in a district if the patron would provide campaign financing. Locally, a *koenkai* could transfer its loyalty from a retiring candidate to a new one, sometimes the original candidate's son. As in any other dominant-party systems, several small opposition parties continued to exist, but they never threatened the LDP's grip on power.

An economic crisis in 1990 and growing corruption scandals inspired the 1994 reform of the electoral system. Patronage politics in the LDP took the form of governmental largesse such as infrastructure improvements (and awarding the associated construction contracts to local supporters). Although this is common in many countries, Japanese politicians were also expected to attend local events, such as the weddings and funerals of their supporters, and provide generous gifts. Japanese elections, not surprisingly, became the most expensive in the world, in spite of the fact that candidates were not allowed to advertise on television and the length of campaigns was strictly limited. Patrons had to raise huge sums via corrupt deals that provided kickbacks from large businesses in exchange for government contracts or exemptions from governmental regulations. As the economy and therefore the popularity of the LDP slipped, citizens and the media began to question this system, leading to the revelations of major corruption we discussed in chapter 5. The economic crisis was the final straw. Perceiving imminent electoral disaster, several major LDP leaders left the party in 1993 to form new opposition parties. Some formed a coalition government after the 1993 election that would briefly exclude the LDP from power for the first time since its founding.

The new government passed a fundamental reform of the electoral system, creating a mixed system in which 300 seats in the Diet would be elected in single-member districts and 180 would be elected via closed-list PR. A crucial difference between this

Prime Minister Shinzō Abe, second from left, and other LDP leaders smile at party headquarters during the 2016 vote for Japan's upper house of parliament. The LDP won handily, giving it a two-thirds majority in both houses of parliament and therefore the ability to change the constitution, which it might do to remove the "pacifism" rule imposed by the United States after World War II.

Tomohiro Ohsumi/Bloomberg via Getty Images



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new system and Germany's is that Japan's is noncompensatory, meaning that the SMD and PR votes are completely separate (though candidates can simultaneously run in both elections). Because there are far more SMD than PR seats, the system overall is more majoritarian than proportional. This is reinforced by the practice of both major parties awarding PR seats to candidates who perform well but do not win SMD seats. This gives candidates an incentive to campaign hard in an SMD election even if they have little chance of winning. Reformers believed this new system would reduce the role of money (and therefore corruption) in the electoral system, limit the power of the LDP, and lead to the emergence of a two-party system.

As Figure 6.10 demonstrates, until the 2012 election Japan seemed to be a model of the power of Duverger's Law. By the 2000 election, the DPJ had emerged as the primary opposition to the LDP. Smaller parties survived, but over the first five elections after the reform, the two largest parties' share of both votes and parliamentary seats rose, mainly due to the SMD seats. The difference between votes and seats in the SMD results demonstrates once again the disproportionality of the SMD system. At the district level, the trend was toward two candidates per district, and increasingly those contests are between the two largest parties (Reed 2005, 283). The DPJ's failure to revive the economy in the wake of the Great Recession and respond well to the devastating *tsunami* in 2011, however, caused it to fragment, as dozens of the party's MPs defected to other parties or created new ones; it suffered a huge loss in popularity. Forced to hold an early election in December 2012, it lost at the hands of the LDP, which regained majority control of the Diet and therefore the government.

Reed and colleagues (2012) argued that the 2012 election resulted in "the at least temporary disappearance of Japan's Duvergerian two-party system." The LDP landslide resulted not from the party's renewed popularity but from the collapse of the DPJ, which allowed a significant third party to arise and split the anti-LDP vote. Voter turnout in 2012 plummeted to 59 percent from 69 percent in 2009, and the vast majority of the abstentions were former DPJ voters who were alienated but did not support the LDP either. The LDP won only 2 more PR seats than it did in 2009, but the divided opposition vote allowed it to add a whopping 173 additional SMD seats (see Figure 6.10).

In December 2014 victorious LDP PM Shinzō Abe called a "snap election" just two years after winning office in order to secure a new term while he was still popular. The 2014 election largely replayed 2012, with the LDP garnering almost exactly the same



SNTV

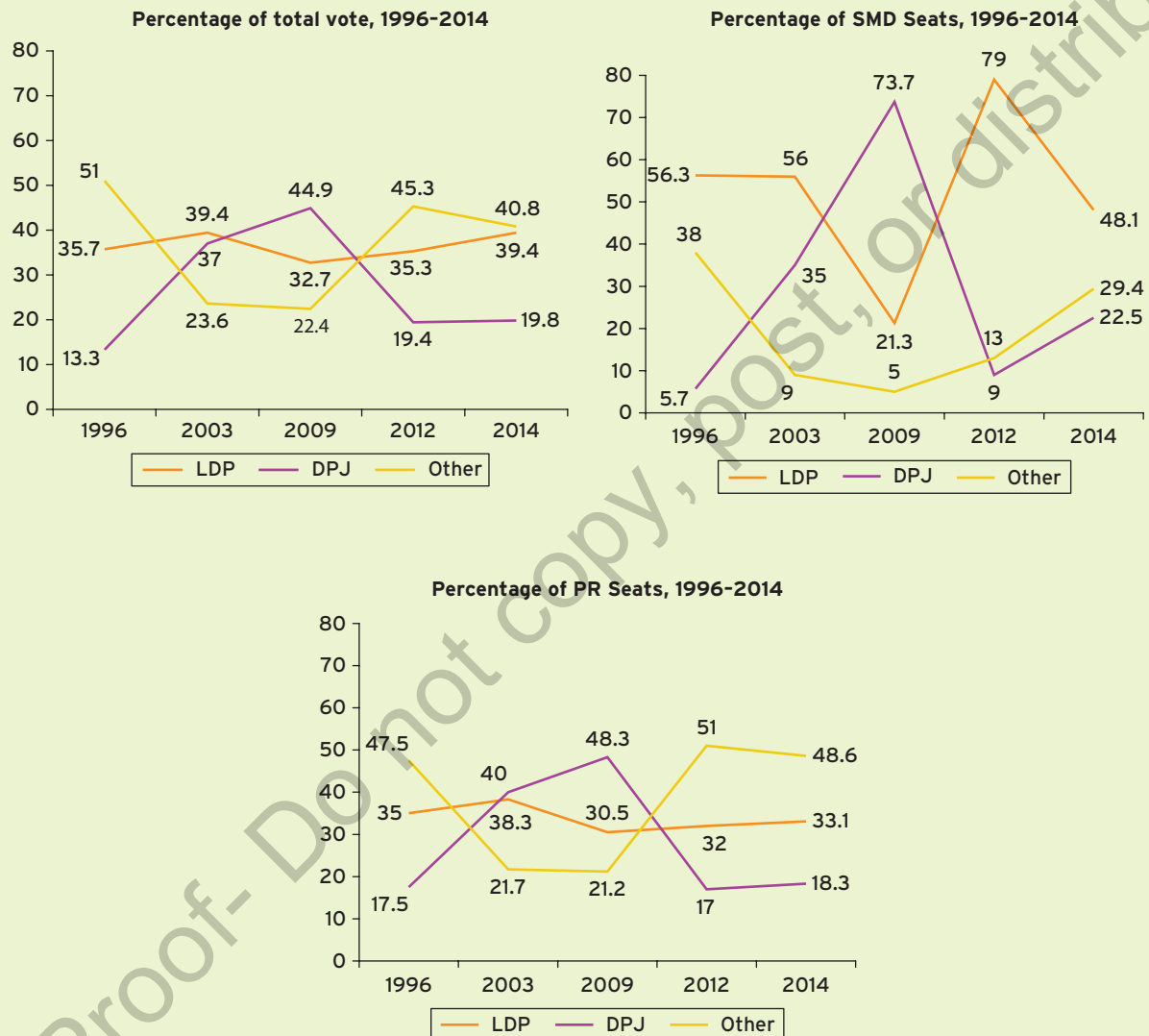
- The SNTV voting system used in Japan prior to 1993 is one of the world's rarest electoral systems
- Currently, only two countries use SNTV: Afghanistan and the Pitcairn Islands
- SNTV systems have the lowest average turnout of any electoral system: just 54 percent
- SNTV encourages better representation of minority parties and independent candidates than do simple SMD systems because SNTV elects multiple candidates in the same district

Source: International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, Table of Electoral Systems Worldwide (<http://www.idea.int/esd/world.cfm>).

share of the vote and parliamentary seats. The opposition, though, seemed to start to learn the lesson of 2012 and the logic of Duverger's Law. The DPJ and smaller opposition parties coordinated their campaigns much more in 2014, with only one party running a candidate in many constituencies where that particular party or candidate seemed most likely to win (Scheiner, Smith, and Thies 2016). In 2016 the DPJ merged with a smaller party to form the new Democratic Party to contest elections to Japan's weaker upper house of parliament. While the electoral results did not improve for the opposition, coordination and then merger among opposition parties showed the logic of SMD elections. As of 2016, though, the LDP and its coalition partner commanded a two-thirds majority in both houses of parliament, allowing Abe to reform the constitution single-handedly if he could gain his party's support. He hoped to use that power to end Japan's pledge never to have a military, imposed by the American occupation after World War II.

The electoral reform induced internal changes to parties as well: all have become more centrally controlled. With the advent of the closed-list PR system, party endorsement became more important, enhancing party leaders' influence over local politicians in all parties. The combined effect of the rise of charismatic leader and PM Junichirō Koizumi and the end of multimember districts greatly reduced the power of factions within the LDP. They still matter for gaining certain party and bureaucratic posts but no longer dominate the electoral process as they once did. Politicians still have and use their *koenkai* to campaign and raise funds, but their share of total campaign expenditures has dropped relative to central party money, and the overall cost of campaigns has declined as well (Carlson 2007). Kabashima and Steel (2010) found that *koenkai* also became less important to voters; they increasingly shifted their attention during campaigns from local leaders to national media and the prime ministerial candidates.

Political scientists have always considered Japan's civil society rather weak. Business was certainly very well represented and served during the period of LDP dominance. Most major business interests were represented in the *Keidanren*, a single organization closely associated with and supported by the ruling party in a neocorporatist manner. At least as important, though, were the connections among key bureaucrats, major political leaders, and individual businesses. A major business interest, a relevant bureaucratic agency, and key members of the Diet would form an iron triangle. They allowed privileged business interests, especially the large conglomerates known as *keiretsu* (see chapter 10), personal access to and influence over governmental decisions, but they excluded other interests. They also fuelled the corruption for which Japan would become famous in the 1980s and 1990s. As globalization rose, larger businesses became increasingly active in global trade and therefore needed less from the government in terms of special favors and regulations. Accordingly, they reduced their unquestioned support of the LDP, a factor that led to the LDP splits in the early 1990s. Even with all of these changes, however, business remains the organized interest with the greatest access to and influence over the central government.

FIGURE 6.10**Japan's House of Representatives Election Results, 1996-2014**

Source: Election Resources on the Internet, "Parliamentary Elections in Japan" (<http://electionresources.org/jp>).

Japan's rate of unionization has always been lower than that found in most of Europe and, as in other wealthy nations, has declined in the face of globalization. Two major union organizations existed until their merger in 1989. The group actually fielded its own candidates in the first elections after the merger, arguing that no major party could defend workers adequately. By the mid-1990s, though, its members

increasingly supported the LDP or the DPJ. Throughout this process, unions never gained great influence over government policy.

Japan has a pluralist interest-group system, but one tightly regulated by the bureaucracy. To gain legal status, organizations in civil society must have the approval of a relevant ministry, a process the government has used to limit the scope of interest groups. Many environmental, women's, senior citizens', and religious groups exist, as in other pluralist systems (more than 400,000 were legally recognized in the late 1990s), but the vast majority are local and have few professional staff and little expertise or influence. Political scientist Robert Pekkanen (2006) characterized Japan's interest groups as having "members without advocates." In the United States, nearly 40 percent of all research reported in major newspapers comes from civil society organizations; in Japan, only about 5 percent does. Instead, the government itself is the major source of reported research.

This civil society weakness, however, may be changing. In 1999 the government passed a law creating a nonprofit organizations (NPOs) legal category. This significantly liberalized the regulations on civil society organizations and provided tax breaks for financial support to many of them. More than forty thousand NPOs were officially recognized by 2011. The new law gives civil society organizations much greater autonomy from the government and the ruling party. Whether NPOs' new status gives Japan's civil society significantly greater autonomy and influence is yet to be determined. The majority of the new NPOs focus on social welfare issues that do not involve much direct "political" activity. Ogawa (2009) contended that the government actively encourages volunteerism via NPOs because they provide unpaid social services so that the state no longer needs to. Furthermore, volunteerism is encouraged in particular areas that are supportive of the state's needs but not in others that could be seen as oppositional or threatening. Martin (2011), on the other hand, saw the proliferation of groups as a sign that civil society and citizen engagement are increasing. Focusing on local women's groups, she found that since decentralization gave local governments more power, citizens have engaged in more participatory activity such as referenda and demonstrations, belying the image of Japanese society (and women in particular) as passive. Greater volunteer activity is certainly occurring, and with it presumably social capital is increasing, but whether this is creating a stronger civil society to represent Japanese citizens in the political realm is less clear.

CASE Questions

1. What does the complex history of the effects of electoral reform in Japan since 1994 teach us about Duverger's Law?
2. The recent rise of civil society in Japan has been primarily at the local level. Can such activity have a major impact on how well a democracy functions, or are national-level changes essential?



CASE Study

INDIA: FROM DOMINANT-PARTY TO MULTIPARTY DEMOCRACY

CASE SYNOPSIS

Institutionalists would expect India's FPTP electoral system to create a two-party system. In India, however, great social and cultural diversity, a federal system, and FPTP have combined to produce numerous state-level two-party systems (following Duverger's Law). These forces have collectively created a multiparty national system, with two large national parties competing for power, usually leading multiparty coalitions. Both major parties have lost support to the growing numbers of regional and state-level parties. This history is partly explained by the expansion of civil society, as excluded groups have organized and begun demanding greater access and participation. A pluralist interest-group system looks quite different in a country where the most important divisions are based not on industrialization but on region, ethnicity, caste, and religion. While often corrupt and sometimes violent, India's democracy has nonetheless kept interest groups and parties mostly operating within institutionalized bounds. It has also been a system in which participation and representation have expanded over the decades.

- ELECTORAL SYSTEM SMD/FPTP in a federal system
- PARTY SYSTEM Dominant party, 1947-1977; multiparty since
- CIVIL SOCIETY Language, caste, and religious groups more important than sectoral groups
- TRENDS AND REFORMS Shift to multiparty system and coalition government, but SMD produces two-party contests in many states; single-party government since 2014

The Indian National Congress party (commonly called the "Congress") led India to independence. The charismatic leaders Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru created a party that dominated Indian politics for four decades. Nehru served as prime minister until his death and was succeeded two years later by his daughter, Indira Gandhi, who led the country from 1966 to 1984 (except for 1977-1980); she in turn was succeeded by her son, Rajiv, from 1984 to 1989. To achieve this dominance, Congress became a very broad-based party. While proclaiming a transformative ideology of social democracy, it mobilized support primarily via local Brahmin landowners, who effectively controlled the votes of millions of peasants. Ziegfeld (2016), among others, termed India a "clientelistic democracy" because clientelism is the primary (though not only) way parties mobilize support. Because India uses an

Hindu nationalism

In India, a movement to define the country as primarily Hindu; the founding ideology of the BJP

FPTP electoral system (adopted from its British colonizers), Congress never had to win an outright majority of the vote to control a majority of seats in parliament, typically winning a little over 40 percent of the vote. As in any dominant-party system, the most important political battles were among factions within the ruling party.

Opposition to Congress initially came from two ideological alternatives: communism and Hindu nationalism. The larger of two communist parties controlled two state governments for many years. It was sometimes part of a Congress-led coalition government at the national level and maintained a steady share of parliamentary seats until a precipitous drop in 2009. **Hindu nationalism** dates back to the late nineteenth century. Hindu nationalists call for a Hindu conception of the Indian nation, one based on the three pillars of geographical unity of all of India, racial descent from Aryan ancestors, and a common culture with Hindu roots, as we discussed in chapter 4. In the 1980s, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) emerged as the primary Hindu nationalist party and the largest rival to the Congress, with its greatest strength in the northern, Hindi-speaking region of the country, where both Hinduism and caste identities are strongest.

The first opposition victories over Congress came at the state level in 1967. In many states, elections became essentially two-party races between Congress and a local, state-level party (or the communist party in a couple of states). With the rise of the BJP in the 1980s and 1990s, the Hindu nationalists came to compete with state-level parties, especially in the north, to the exclusion of Congress. The importance of regional parties increased notably after the 1989 election that produced a coalition government; prior to then they typically gained about a quarter of the total vote, but after 1989 they averaged about 45 percent. Zeigfeld (2016) argued that regional parties gained such support not because Indian voters supported appeals to regional interests but because Indian elites found it beneficial to create regional parties. All parties, whether national or regional, rely primarily on clientelist means of mobilizing voters, so voters care more about the benefits they might receive from a party than its ideology or identity. Because clientelism requires local connections, creating nationwide parties is difficult, Zeigfeld argued, and India's federal and FPTP electoral system provide an institutional context in which it is easy to create regional parties. In the era of coalition government after 1989, regional politicians could potentially benefit greatly by controlling a regional party with which they could bargain for a place in the coalition government. Hence, after 1989, the number of regional parties increased significantly. What emerged, then, was a system with two major national parties (Congress and the BJP) and numerous regional parties. Each regional party that competed against a national party successfully at the state level sent a handful of MPs to the national parliament. In the process, the total number of parties has exploded, from only 50 in 1952 to 342 in 2009 (Hasan 2010, 245). The number of "effective parties" in parliament increased from 4.8 in 1989 to 7.7 in 2009 (Palshikar 2013, 95).

Every election from 1989 to 2014 resulted in a coalition government, since neither of the major parties has been able to win a majority of parliamentary seats. Anti-Congress coalitions ruled from 1989 to 1991 and 1996 to 2004, while Congress led coalition governments from 1991 to 1996 and again from 2004 to 2014. By the late

1990s, as political leaders realized coalitions were essential, they began forming them before elections, led by a national party and supported by numerous state-level allies, so that elections came to be contests among two major alliances and one or two smaller ones. Electoral losses were the result not only of receiving fewer votes but also of parties' shifting alliances. The alliances were based more on practical considerations, such as geographic interests and striking deals with the national parties, than on ideological affinities among coalition partners.

In a sweeping victory, the BJP became the first party besides Congress to win an outright majority in parliament since independence. The Congress-led coalition that had been in power for a decade became increasingly unpopular, as economic growth slowed, corruption scandals grew, and Prime Minister Manmohan Singh seemed ineffectual. Both parties entered the campaign under unusually prominent leaders. Rahul Gandhi, scion of the Nehru–Gandhi dynasty, led Congress, while Chief Minister (the equivalent of governor) Narendra Modi of Gujarat led the BJP. Modi had become a charismatic leader who grew up in poverty and was seen to have instituted effective economic reforms in his home state. The BJP emphasized economic reforms over its traditional Hindu nationalism (though the latter did not disappear entirely) and successfully tailored its campaign message to the interests of voters in differing states (Mitra and Schöttli 2016). Voter turnout set an all-time record and the BJP increased its share of the vote from 19 percent in 2009 to 31 percent, with Congress dropping from 29 percent to 19 percent. It was a historic loss for Congress. In India's SMD system, the BJP's 31 percent of the vote was widespread, so it captured 52 percent of parliamentary seats, giving it sole control of the government—the first time any party had achieved that since 1989. While it was a historic victory, subsequent BJP losses in state elections in 2015 and 2016 still suggested that Indian politics would remain competitive for years to come.

These fundamental electoral changes played themselves out at the same time major changes in Indian civil society were taking place. As in most postcolonial, primarily rural countries, the most important groups in civil society are not trade unions and business associations. Both certainly exist, but they are relatively weak. Most workers are in the informal sector and are typically not members of unions. They do organize, however, and in India women in the informal sector in particular have formed associations to demand greater social services from the state, rather than the traditional labor rights that typically interest unions (Agarwala 2013). Indeed, in September 2016, Indian trade unions called what became one of the biggest strikes in human history, as tens of millions of public-sector employees walked off the job to protest the Modi government's market-oriented economic reforms. In response, the government increased the minimum wage, among other reforms. An important farmers' movement is probably the strongest formal-sector organization.

While these class-based groups certainly mattered, they are ultimately overshadowed in civil society by groups championing ethnic, religious, or caste interests. These groups came out of and appeal to the poor, rural majority but ultimately have come to speak for many urban citizens as well. Numerous movements initially arose around ethnic identity, based primarily on language. This was particularly true in the

non-Hindi-speaking south of the country, where groups demanded greater recognition and autonomy in India's federal system. In the end, a major government commission created additional states, drawn largely along linguistic lines, to appease these groups (see chapter 5).

Movements based on religion proved much more explosive. A Sikh movement in the 1970s ultimately turned violent. The government defeated it, but a Sikh nationalist subsequently assassinated Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. The largest religious movement is Hindu nationalism. Muslims and Sikhs vociferously oppose Hindu nationalists' emphasis on the Hindu cultural heritage of all Indians. The primary organization of Hindu nationalists is the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), founded in 1925. It became a militaristic—many say neofascist—organization that trained young men for nationalist struggle, rejecting Mahatma Gandhi's nonviolence and his mobilization of the lower castes. After being fairly quiescent during the period of Congress dominance, the RSS reemerged strongly in the 1980s and helped found the BJP. Its greatest cause became the destruction of a mosque and construction of a Hindu temple in its place in the northern city of Ayodhya. Occasional violent conflicts between Hindus and Muslims have occurred ever since, as religion has replaced language as the most volatile basis of political divisions in India. Modi was the chief minister of the state of Gujarat in 2002, when India's worst religious violence this century took place there, as Hindus massacred Muslims after the latter attacked a train of Hindu pilgrims returning from Ayodhya. While he has never been formally charged, many believe Modi at a minimum allowed the anti-Muslim pogrom to take place, and some believe he encouraged it. Since the BJP gained control of the national government under Modi, the RSS has expanded its membership dramatically.

The most common elements of Indian civil society, however, have been based on caste. The Indian caste system is an exceptionally complex social hierarchy that has changed dramatically over the past century. At an abstract level, virtually the entire society is divided into four large *varna*, or castes; in reality, there are literally thousands

Members of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) meet at a rally in 2009. The RSS is a Hindu nationalist organization that supports the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). Critics argue the RSS is neofascist because of its demands that India reject its long-standing secularism and embrace a more Hindu identity.

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of *jati*, localized castes with more specific identities. Traditionally, most of the distinctions among castes were based on occupation, with certain castes performing certain types of work. Along with these economic distinctions came strict social practices, such as not eating with, drinking from the same well as, or marrying a member of a caste beneath you. At the bottom of this hierarchy were the so-called untouchables, now known as *dalits*.

Technological change, increased access to education, urbanization, and employment/education quotas for lower castes have changed the economic basis for caste divisions. Brahmin landlords no longer control land as completely and thoroughly as they once did; many of the lower-caste occupations no longer exist; and growing numbers of people of all castes have moved to cities, taking up new occupations at various levels of education and compensation. Nonetheless, caste remains very important. A 1999 survey found that 42 percent of Brahmins worked in “white-collar” professional positions or owned large businesses, as opposed to only 17 percent of middle castes and 10 percent of *dalits*. Conversely, less than 4 percent of Brahmins worked as agricultural laborers, as opposed to 35 percent of *dalits*.

Although the Indian constitution legally banned “untouchability” at independence, the data show that *dalits*’ position in society remains rather poor. They started associations in the colonial period, which developed rapidly after independence, and have expanded further since the 1980s. The colonial government started what Americans would call an “affirmative action” program (Indians refer to it as “positive discrimination”) for *dalits*, which gives them preferential access to education and government employment. The Indian government substantially expanded these programs starting in the 1970s. *Dalit* groups have also successfully championed the reservation of parliamentary seats exclusively for *dalits* and “other backward castes and tribes”; these seats now constitute 120 of the nearly 600 seats in parliament. In Uttar Pradesh, a northern state, a party led by and championing *dalits* became the BJP’s chief rival for control of the state in the 1990s. Developing these caste associations has involved shifting the social construction of caste identity. Traditionally, specific caste identities were very localized, and people mainly thought of themselves in relation to other local castes above and below them. Leaders of caste-based movements, associations, and parties have helped create a more “horizontal” understanding of caste, forging common identities among similar castes with different names in different locales. These movements created a new type of caste identity to which major parties had to respond if they wanted to win elections.

Identity-based groups, however, were not the only players in Indian civil society. Movements arose shortly after independence to champion a variety of environmental issues and women’s concerns. These have been quite influential. Most recently, a social movement has arisen around the issue of battling the extensive corruption that plagues India. Symbolically led by Kisan Baburao “Anna” Hazare, movement members demanded that the government pass a bill creating an anticorruption agency designed in a way they believed would produce a real reduction in corruption. Hazare went

on hunger strikes in April 2011 and August 2012 that captured national and international attention and brought out tens of thousands of protesters demanding passage of the anticorruption bill. His supporters, without his approval, created a political party, Aam Aadmi, dedicated to reducing corruption. They swept into power in New Delhi, the capital, in the local elections of 2015, capturing 95 percent of the vote, but a subsequent split among their leadership hurt their ability to battle corruption in the nation's capital.

CASE Questions

1. What does the history of India's electoral and party systems teach us about the debate between institutional and sociological explanations of the evolution of political parties?
2. The "civic culture" argument we outlined in chapter 1 argued that democracy requires a certain type of culture to survive, one that characterizes the United Kingdom and the United States in particular. Comparing political participation in the Indian and the United Kingdom cases, what is your assessment of that argument?



CASE Study

BRAZIL: PARTIES AND CIVIL SOCIETY IN A YOUNG DEMOCRACY

CASE SYNOPSIS

Brazil's still-young democracy is an example of a successful transition to democracy, though it certainly has continued problems. The institutions created in the 1988 constitution satisfied the various interests involved, though they perhaps did not create the most coherent political system imaginable. Most important are weak parties, which have made policymaking difficult and accountability limited. Party strength seems to have started rising recently, though weak institutions and corruption remain serious problems. Participation is undoubtedly greater than at any time in Brazil's history, and the prominence of the PT until 2016 allowed poorer citizens more access to government

CASE SYNOPSIS

than ever before. When economic growth was strong and poverty dropping, the government was quite popular. Once economic decline set in and the PT was embroiled in a massive corruption scandal, millions turned against it, protesting in the streets, supporting the president's impeachment in 2016, and creating the greatest political crisis in the Third Republic's history.

- **ELECTORAL SYSTEM** Open-list PR
- **PARTY SYSTEM** Multiple and weak
- **CIVIL SOCIETY** Strong democracy movement; 2013 demonstrations
- **TRENDS AND REFORMS** Parties getting stronger; less clientelism

Brazil has long been one of the world's most unequal societies. From the *coronelismo* of the nineteenth century to the populism of the more industrialized twentieth century, Brazil's elite has kept the masses under its control. Given this history, January 1, 2003, was not your average day for poor Brazilians. On that day, they celebrated the inauguration of President Luiz "Lula" Inácio da Silva, a trade-union leader who grew up in poverty with a fourth-grade education. The inauguration of the leader of the social democratic Workers Party (PT) seemed to herald the fruition of Brazil's new democracy. His party, born out of the workers' struggle to gain the right to form their own unions and end military rule, was a new type of political organization. It had been created from the bottom up rather than from the top down. The popularity of Lula's innovative social welfare program (see chapter 12) and rapid economic growth (see chapter 11) gave him approval ratings of 75 percent in 2010, prompting U.S. president Barack Obama to call him "the most popular politician in the world." It came as a shock, then, when support for the PT began to collapse in 2013, and the vast majority of the country supported the impeachment of Lula's hand-picked successor in 2016.

After twenty-five years of military rule, Brazil became a full democracy again in 1989. Its long but successful shedding of military rule was a classic transition to democracy. The 1988 constitution created the presidential system we outlined in chapter 5. The most interesting and controversial element of the new democratic constitution, however, was the electoral system that has helped produce the extremely fragmented party system. Brazil uses an open-list PR system for the Chamber of Deputies, which is the lower and more powerful house of the National Congress. Each state is an electoral district that has a number of seats based loosely on its population. *Open-list* means that the individual candidates are listed on the ballot and voters can vote either for the party or an individual candidate. Within each district, a party is allotted a number of seats that is proportional to its total share of the vote, and then the individual candidates from that party who receive the most votes get those seats.

This system gives candidates an incentive to garner as many individual votes as possible to place them as high as possible among their party's candidates. It provides no incentive for candidates within the same party to cooperate with one another.

Protests like this one in Belo Horizonte broke out across Brazil in June 2013. Dismayed by the cost of new stadiums being built for the 2014 World Cup, corruption scandals, and a sudden slowing of economic growth, Brazilian civil society organized demonstrations that brought millions of people into the streets in over one hundred cities across the country. In 2015 and 2016, even larger protests took place, as Brazilian civil society was angered by the economic recession and massive corruption scandal that resulted in the president's removal from office in August 2016.

AP Photo/Felipe Dana, File;



Given the long-standing role of patronage in Brazilian politics and the decentralized federal system, candidates understandably focused primarily on local issues. Most were really representatives of particular areas or particular social groups, rather than party stalwarts. They were dependent on their own ability to mobilize supporters in their home areas and on important local leaders such as mayors and governors, but they were not dependent on national parties. Indeed, national parties were dependent on locally popular candidates to garner votes that add to the party's total tally in a state.

The obvious result is weak parties. In fact, parties were so weak that between 1989 and 1995, one-third of legislators switched parties while in office. With the exception of a few major parties, most parties (like most candidates) are really local. They represent one region or sometimes are just vehicles for a particular local candidate. The electoral system has no minimum threshold of votes a party must get to gain representation in the chamber, so a locally popular candidate with a tiny fraction of the national total may well end up in office. And yes, this produces many parties in the legislature—twenty-eight after the 2014 election—though these were grouped into three broad coalitions: one supporting the PT-led government and two opposing it.

Forged in the massive strikes of 1978–1979, the PT was different from other parties in Brazil. From its first election in 1982, it refused to play by the rules of “politics as usual,” insisting instead that it would recognize only those candidates whom it vetted as supporting its ideology. Because of its scathing critique of the corruption of the Brazilian political elite, it refused to cooperate with any other party. It also refused to use patronage to gain political support. Its longtime leader, Lula, began as a union leader who campaigned wearing blue jeans and using the working-class vernacular. The party's discipline and success by the 1990s led other parties to become somewhat more disciplined in imitation. Lula ran for president and came in second in the elections of 1989, 1994, and 1998, finally winning the presidency in 2002. In the end, the PT did have to make compromises to win. Most important, it dropped its opposition to forming coalitions, a crucial factor in Lula's eventual election. A scandal in 2005 involving the PT government bribing members of Congress to vote for its policies

revealed that once in office it had also fallen into long-standing patterns of clientelism and patronage in order to rule.

The degree and effect of this party weakness has been the subject of significant debate among scholars of Brazil. Initial assumptions in the 1990s were that such weak parties inhibited the system's ability to pass coherent legislation, thereby threatening the effectiveness of the new democracy. Legislators seemed to vote as they pleased, ignoring party leaders' positions and instructions. Political scientist Barry Ames (2001) suggested that when legislators did vote with their parties they did so not because of party loyalty but instead because they could gain patronage and resources for their home areas in exchange for their votes.

Research by Brazilian scholars Argelina Figueiredo and Fernando Limongi (2000), however, showed that legislators voted with their parties to a higher degree than had been assumed, suggesting that party leaders were able to marshal their troops in favor of their preferred policies. In the 2000s, legislators were increasingly voting as a bloc, party switching had dropped to half of what it was in the early 1990s, and electoral volatility (voters switching parties from one election to the next) was down (Hagopian et al. 2009; Santos 2008). Frances Hagopian and colleagues (2009) used a rational choice analysis of politicians' incentives to argue that changes in economic policies reduced the amount of government "pork" available to legislators. This has made politicians more dependent on parties' "brands" to secure office, which in turn has led them to support their party leadership more faithfully in legislative votes, stick to one party longer, and campaign on the party's platform. And though they are quite vague, the major Brazilian parties can loosely be grouped into "right," "center," and "left" parties (with several in each category). In recent elections, parties have formed coalitions to support the most popular candidates. In 2007 Brazil's top court imposed a rule that legislators could not switch parties after being elected and retain their seat, further reducing party switching; the court argued that under the PR system, legislative seats belong to the party, not the individual. Brazilian parties have gained some strength, even if they remain weak compared with parties in older democracies.

Hagopian (2016) argued that the political crisis of 2013–2016 was in part a reflection of parties' greater but still limited strength. Economic growth and improved social programs cut both inequality and poverty substantially in Brazil in the new millennium. Poor voters had greater access to formal social programs and less need for the clientelist favors politicians traditionally offered. Surveys showed that party support was increasingly based on voters' assessment of how well the parties ruled rather than their distribution of patronage. In a relatively young democracy, though, partisan loyalty remains weak. When the PT and its allies were successful, voters supported them readily, but once economic performance dropped and the party was implicated in a massive corruption scandal involving the national oil company, that support collapsed. What had been the strongest party in the Brazilian political system for two decades dramatically lost support, as Brazilians cheered the impeachment of PT president Dilma Rousseff in August 2016.

Brazil's civil society has long been active. It was instrumental in the transition to democracy, and massive street protests were a regular part of the pressure that forced the military to leave power. Lula and his supporters helped create independent trade unions that broke the monopoly of state corporatism imposed by the military government; women's movements and Catholic organizations based around liberation theology also became active participants demanding democracy. Ironically, once achieved, democracy has led to concern about the effectiveness of participation. The country's exceptional social inequality, many argue, affects participation in the same way that it affects the rule of law: the poor, who are often black, are left out. The PT was innovative in trying to overcome this problem. Starting in the city of Porto Alegre under a PT government, the party instituted a "participatory budgeting" (PB) system in which citizens in neighborhoods meet to set their priorities for the annual government budget. These groups elect representatives who meet at higher levels to produce a set of budget proposals for the city's officials to consider and enact. The system gives local citizens a voice and serves as a means of higher-level participation for more active citizens, who typically are members of local social movements or NGOs. The PB process has provided an avenue for greater participation for local civil society organizations (Avritzer 2009), though it's not clear that this was also effective at changing policy (Montero 2011). Once in power, the PT initially tried to institute national-level versions of participatory democracy, but these were ultimately criticized by participants as being only advisory and having little real impact (Goldfrank 2011).

An economic slowdown hit the country in 2011, just as it agreed to host both the 2014 World Cup and the 2016 Olympics. By 2013, it had turned into a full-blown recession, with the economy shrinking every year from 2013 to 2016. In that context, when the government announced rate hikes to the crucial urban public transportation sector in June 2013, massive demonstrations broke out. A group called "Free Fare" called a demonstration in São Paulo, the country's largest city, and was overwhelmed by thousands of people heeding the call to take to the streets in a peaceful protest. The police responded with force, and within a week, demonstrations of thousands—in some cases, hundreds of thousands—of people had spread to at least one hundred Brazilian cities. Showing it clearly was a democracy, if a flawed one, the government responded with announcing reduced transit fares and more spending of oil revenues on schools.

Widespread protests erupted again in March 2015, continuing off and on through Rousseff's impeachment in 2016. The massive "Car Wash" scandal (so called because of the use of car washes in laundering money) pursued by the increasingly independent and aggressive judiciary we discussed in chapter 5 resulted in hundreds of arrests, including the Speaker of the National Assembly and prominent PT officials. In the midst of a recession and the expenses associated with the upcoming Olympics, millions of Brazilians took to the streets demanding justice and the president's ouster. At one point, protests were held simultaneously in all twenty-six states and over 200 cities. By March 2016, protests had spread to over 300 cities, with one protest in São Paulo, the largest city, drawing an estimated 1.4 million people. The government introduced anticorruption legislation, but far too late to matter:

Rousseff's approval rating barely topped 10 percent, and she was duly impeached by the end of August.

Civil society in Brazil in the form of protests at the time of crisis seems alive and well, but Alfred Montero (2011) argued that while Brazil's civil society includes numerous active groups, their effectiveness is limited. Long-standing clientelism continues to be the predominant relationship between political leaders and citizens, as the latter vote for local politicians who provide services and infrastructure, regardless of their party, ideology, or level of corruption. The weak parties created by the electoral system reinforce these tendencies. Thus, in spite of an active civil society, Brazil's citizens may not have much influence. The question is whether the massive mobilizations of the last few years will mark a significant change, strengthening civil society's voice permanently.

CASE Questions

1. What would you say are the strengths and weaknesses of Brazil's open-list PR system? How does it compare with closed-list PR systems? Do you think it should be changed? If so, why and how? If not, why not?
2. The outbreak of massive demonstrations in Brazil in 2013 is an interesting case of a social movement in formation. What does the episode teach us about how social movements form and expand?

CONCLUSION

Citizen participation and representation are at the heart of democracy, which ideally gives each citizen equal voice and power. The reality, of course, is that no set of institutions can translate participation into representation and power in a way that treats everyone perfectly equally. Different electoral, party, and interest-group systems channel participation and provide representation in different ways. These institutions also interact with the governing institutions we outlined in chapter 5, creating yet more variation as we seek to understand who rules and what affects political behavior in democracies.

The most fundamental question about institutions of participation and representation is which system, if any, facilitates greater participation and better representation. Those systems that are more open to diverse organizations and viewpoints seem to create greater participation: multiparty systems, PR electoral systems, and pluralist interest-group systems. Whether they provide greater representation, however, depends on whether representation means only giving a set of people a voice or actually giving them influence. If the latter is a concern, then some would argue that a neocorporatist interest-group system that is based on stronger interest groups is better. While they may limit the ability to form new interest groups, neocorporatist systems arguably provide the greatest influence for recognized groups. Similarly, fewer and larger parties may provide less representation but more influence for their constituents than more numerous and smaller parties would.

This discussion raises the trade-off that Powell (2000) discerned between opportunities for participation and representation on the one hand and accountability on the other. Institutions that allow much representation of diverse interests often make it more difficult for citizens to know exactly whom to hold accountable for government action. More majoritarian systems, with a single ruling party at any given time, arguably provide less representation of diverse voices but make accountability more clear. Similarly, institutions of participation and representation influence the trade-off we discussed in chapter 5 between participation and effective governance. PR electoral systems that allow numerous, small parties to gain legislative representation arguably allow more distinct viewpoints to be expressed. The party coalitions that are then necessary to govern may make governing a challenge, though some political science research has questioned this conclusion.

Institutions affect the representation and participation of marginalized groups even more than they do average citizens. Ethnic or racial minorities and women are often unrepresented in large, catch-all parties or interest groups controlled primarily by the dominant groups in a society. One of the most robust findings in comparative politics is that PR systems provide greater representation of women in parliament. India is an example of going even further to ensure representation of minorities, reserving a specific share of legislative seats for them. While India does this on the basis of caste, several countries do it for women as well, as we discussed in chapter 4. Such laws implicitly assume that members of these groups can only be truly represented if members of their own groups are their official representatives. An SMD system without reservations, such as in the United States or the United Kingdom, assumes that people will be adequately represented by whomever voters collectively choose, regardless of the individual's own characteristics. In a two-party system, though, the choices are limited and disproportionately exclude women and racial or ethnic minorities.

The ultimate "Who rules?" question goes back to the classic debate between pluralist and elite theorists: Do modern democracies really provide government in which average citizens have effective power, or do elites' abilities to gain direct access to decision makers, shape the political agenda, and influence (or control) key institutions mean that they really rule? In the elite model, voters occasionally get a limited choice among a handful of alternatives, all of them led by elites and all typically within a relatively narrow ideological debate. Declining partisan loyalty and social capital in recent decades simply strengthen these trends of elite control. Pluralists counter that institutions can and do make a difference in who is represented and in how much meaningful participation average citizens, and especially more marginalized citizens, can have. Regardless of institutional differences, liberal democracies ultimately provide all voters with the ability to organize and sanction leaders via the ballot box.

Most political participation happens within institutions. When citizens find that available parties, interest groups, and other institutions fail to represent them adequately, though, they may choose to make demands outside institutions' bounds, the realm of what comparativists refer to as "contentious politics," to which we turn next.

KEY CONCEPTS

closed-list proportional representation (p. 288)	open-list proportional representation (p. 288)
collective action problem (p. 284)	party system (p. 296)
dominant-party system (p. 305)	peak associations (p. 317)
Duverger's Law (p. 307)	plurality (p. 286)
electoral systems (p. 284)	populism (p. 303)
"first-past-the-post" (FPTP) (p. 286)	proportional representation (PR) (p. 288)
Hindu nationalism (p. 340)	single-member district (SMD) (p. 286)
interest-group pluralism (p. 315)	social capital (p. 315)
mixed, or semiproportional (p. 294)	state corporatism (p. 317)
multiparty systems (p. 306)	two-party system (p. 306)
neocorporatism (p. 317)	virtual representation (p. 287)



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