

## Electoral Engineering

From Kosovo to Kabul, recent decades have witnessed multiple attempts at electoral engineering designed to improve political representation and alter voting behavior. This study compares and evaluates two broad schools of thought about this process, each offering contrasting expectations. Rational-choice institutionalism claims that by changing the incentives offered by electoral rules, reformers have the capacity to alter the behavior of parties, politicians, and citizens, thereby solving multiple social problems, whether by mitigating ethnic conflict, improving turnout, strengthening voter-party bonds, generating democratic accountability, or boosting women's representation. Alternative theories of cultural modernization are more cautious about the capacity of electoral engineering to achieve these goals, suggesting that formal rules adapt to, rather than alter, deeply embedded patterns of human behavior. To examine these accounts, in this study Pippa Norris compares new survey evidence derived from about three-dozen parliamentary and presidential elections in a wide range of established and newer democracies, spanning the globe from the United States to the Ukraine, and from Australia to Peru. The author concludes that formal rules *do* matter, with important implications for the choice of electoral systems.

Norris integrates the extensive literature on electoral systems with studies of voting behavior and political representation; develops a clear theoretical framework supported by original empirical research based on new cross-national data; presents the findings in an accessible, stimulating, and nontechnical manner; covers a broad sweep of nations around the globe; and provides results of interest for political scientists and policymakers in many countries.

Pippa Norris is the McGuire Lecturer in Comparative Politics at the John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University. Her work compares elections and public opinion, gender politics, and political communications. Companion volumes by this author, also published by Cambridge University Press, include *A Virtuous Circle* (2000), *Digital Divide* (2001), *Democratic Phoenix* (2002), and *Rising Tide* (2003, with Ronald Inglehart).

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## *Voting Rules and Political Behavior*

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*Harvard University*



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## Preface

*“It is complicated.”* With these words, Hans-Dieter Klingemann warned me, with typical German understatement, of what was ahead when I first mentioned plans for this book over a (not very good) dinner in Turin. The words have echoed in my mind on countless occasions since then, sticking rather like an annoying few bars from a television commercial. He did not say impossible. He did not say impractical. He said complicated. “Yes,” I said casually, “of course.” But I didn’t really listen. I had just completed another book that covered 193 nations. The core dataset for this volume covers just more than 30. It was a little puzzling to me that so few others had ever attempted a book comparing voting behavior across many different types of societies, including older and newer democracies. But with the arrogance of ignorance I plunged ahead. After all, courtesy of the hardworking team at the University of Michigan, I had access to the first integrated cross-national dataset bringing together election studies from Australia to the Ukraine. But as I soon discovered, complicated it was, and still is. But it was also, I happily discovered, fascinating, stimulating, and challenging.

This book would not have been possible without the work of all those who contributed toward the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES), especially Virginia Sapiro, Phil Shively, David Howell, Karen Long, and all the staff who worked on this project at the Center for Political Studies, Institute for Social Research, at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. Details are available online at [www.umich.edu/~nes/cses](http://www.umich.edu/~nes/cses). The 1996–2001 Module I Study was carried out by CSES collaborators in more than 30 countries. These collaborators are: Australia (Ian McAllister), Belarus (David Rotman and Larysa Saglaeva), Belgium (in Flanders, Jacques Biliet), Canada (André Blais and Neil Nevitte), Chile (Marta Lagos), Czech Republic (Gabor Toka), Denmark (Ole Borre), Germany (Bernhard Wessels and Hermann Schmitt), Great Britain (Anthony Heath, Roger Jowell, and John Curtice), Hong Kong (Pang Kwong Li and Kwong Ka Shi), Hungary (Gabor Toka), Iceland (Olafur Hardarson), Israel (Michal Shamir), Japan (Yoshitaka Nishizawa),



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Work on this book gradually developed over the years in conjunction with many other projects. As ever, I am indebted to many. Research on women's election to office, on gender quotas, and on constituency service was developed in collaboration with Joni Lovenduski and in successive surveys of British parliamentary candidates in the British Representation Study 1992–2001, resulting in numerous related publications. A special issue of the *International Political Science Review* that I edited in 1995, originally suggested by Pat Dunleavy, generated my initial interest in the comparative politics of electoral reform. Work with colleagues on the 1997 British Election Study helped clarify my ideas on social and partisan dealignment. An earlier version of Chapter 9 was presented at the International Conference on Institutional Design, Conflict Management and Democracy in the Late Twentieth Century, Kellogg Institute, University of Notre Dame, December 9–11, 1999. I would like to thank Andy Reynolds, Jorgen Elklit, and Giovanni Sartori for many helpful comments at the meeting that stimulated my thinking on this topic. An earlier version of Chapter 10 (on constituency service) was presented at the British Politics Group annual meeting at the American Political Science Association meeting in August 2000. Other chapters were presented as works-in-progress at other professional meetings, including the conference Political Reform in Brazil in Comparative Perspective, in Rio de Janeiro in June 2002; the symposium, Exporting Congress, at Florida International University, Miami, in December 2002; the Center for Social Science Research Seminar at the University of Cape Town in January 2003; the Mid-West Political Science Association meeting in Chicago in April 2003; and the centennial meeting of the American Political Science Association in Philadelphia in

*Preface*

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