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European Democracies
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Introduction

In 1973, Enid Lakeman published the booklet ‘Nine Democracies’ which described the voting systems used to elect the Lower House of each of the member-states of the European Community at that time. The booklet was revised and reprinted several times to take account of changes both to the voting systems and to the Community itself. That booklet has served as a basis and an inspiration for this work.

Here we have brought together detailed information about the voting systems of all 15 current members of the European Union, at all levels of government. The book also provides information about related areas such as the voting age, the age of candidature, compulsory voting, fixed terms and so on. An associated website (www.electionsineurope.org) provides further information.

We have sought neither to be exhaustive, nor analytical in our approach. Rather, we hope that the information that we have collected will provide a basis for others across Europe and elsewhere to make comparisons and to raise further questions. All too often, there is a belief that “our” way of doing things is the only way of doing things, and that our democratic structures are set in stone – we hope to begin to open people’s eyes to the breadth and diversity of possibilities.

Rebecca Williams

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Note

The Electoral Reform Society takes responsibility for the information in this book.

The European Commission is not liable for any use that may be made of the information contained herein.

Austria

Municipal Elections (Local)

At local level, Austria is divided into 2,359 local authorities (*Gemeinden*), each of which has a Municipal Council (*Gemeinderat*) which is directly elected for a fixed term of 5 or 6 years. Each Municipal Council has a number of councillors ranging from 7 to 100, dependent on the size of the population. Smaller local authorities elect councillors from a single authority-wide multi-member constituency, whilst larger authorities are divided into several multi-member constituencies. Each Municipal Council is chaired by a Mayor, who in 6 of the *Länder* is directly elected.

The electoral arrangements are decided at regional (*Land*) level. For this reason, there is not a uniform system for municipal elections across the country. However, the variations from *Land* to *Land* are not enormous, and generally affect issues such as the right to and method of casting a personal vote for a specific candidate, the existence and level of the threshold, compulsory voting and the length of the Municipal Council's term.

The voting age is 18 and the age of candidature is 19.

Voting is compulsory in two *Länder*: Tyrol and Vorarlberg. Although voters who fail to give a legitimate reason for failing to vote can be fined, in reality compulsory voting laws are weakly enforced.

Some *Länder* have a threshold of 4%.

Elections take place on Sundays or public holidays.

Regional Elections

At Regional level, Austria is divided into 9 *Länder*, each of which has a Regional Parliament (*Landtag*) which is directly elected for a fixed term of 5 years, though early dissolution is possible (Upper Austria is an exception in that its *Landtag* serves a six-year term). Each *Landtag* has between 36 and 65 mem-

bers, depending on the size of the population. Between them, the *Länder* comprise 43 multi-member constituencies.

Vienna's *Landtag* functions both as a Regional Parliament and a Municipal Council and has 100 members.

As with municipal elections, electoral arrangements are decided at regional (*Land*) level. For this reason, there is not a uniform system for *Landtag* elections across the country. However, the variations from *Land* to *Land* are not enormous, and generally affect issues such as the right to and method of casting a personal vote for a specific candidate, the existence and level of the threshold and compulsory voting.

The voting age is 18 and the age of candidature is 19.

Voting is compulsory in two *Länder*: Tyrol and Vorarlberg. Although voters who fail to give a legitimate reason for failing to vote may be fined, in reality compulsory voting laws are weakly enforced.

Some *Länder* have a threshold of 4%.

Elections take place on Sundays or public holidays.

Elections to the Nationalrat (Lower House)

The Lower House of Parliament in Austria, the *Nationalrat*, is elected for a fixed term of 4 years, though early dissolution is possible. It has 183 members who are elected from 43 local multi-member constituencies (which elect about 90 members), 9 regional multi-member constituencies corresponding to the *Länder* (which elect about 65 members) and a further proportional adjustment at national level (which accounts for about 25 seats).

The voting age is 18 and the age of candidature is 19.

Voting is compulsory in two *Länder*: Tyrol and Vorarlberg. Although voters who fail to give a legitimate reason for failing to vote may be fined, in reality compulsory voting laws are weakly enforced.

There is an artificial threshold of 4% of the vote at federal level, though this is dispensed with in the case of a party which has already won a constituency seat at local level.

Elections take place on Sundays or public holidays.

Elections to the Bundesrat (Upper House)

The Upper House of Parliament in Austria, the *Bundesrat*, has 64 members who are indirectly elected by the Regional Parliaments in the *Länder*.

Each Regional Parliament elects between 3 and 12 members to the *Bundesrat*, dependent on the size of the population in the *Land*. These members are divided amongst the parties in proportion with the party balance in the Regional Parliament. The members elected to the *Bundesrat* need not be members of the Regional Parliaments, but they must be eligible to be such a member.

Members sit in the *Bundesrat* for the same length of time as the term of the Regional Parliament from which they were elected (i.e. either 5 or 6 years). Substitute members are elected at the same time in order to fill any vacancies that should arise.

Elections to the European Parliament

Austria elects 21 members (18 from June 2004) to the European Parliament from a single nationwide multi-member constituency for a fixed term of 5 years.

The voting age is 18 and the age of candidature is 19.

Voting is compulsory in two *Länder*: Tyrol and Vorarlberg. Although voters who fail to give a legitimate reason for failing to vote may be fined, in reality compulsory voting laws are weakly enforced.

There is an artificial threshold of 4%.

Elections take place on Sundays.

The Chancellor (Head of Government)

The Head of Government in Austria, the Chancellor, is appointed by the President and is usually, though not always, the leader of the party that has won the most seats in the Parliamentary election.

The Federal President (Head of State)

The Head of State in Austria, the Federal President, is directly elected for a fixed term of 6 years.

The voting age is 18 and the age of candidature is 35. Re-election for the immediately following term of office is admissible once only.

Voting is compulsory in two *Länder*: Tyrol and Vorarlberg. Although voters who fail to give a legiti-

mate reason for failing to vote may be fined, in reality compulsory voting laws are weakly enforced.

Elections take place on Sundays.

The voting system for Municipal, Regional and European elections

Some *Länder* use a closed list system and others use a semi-open list system in one or several multi-member constituencies for municipal and regional elections. Elections to the European Parliament use a semi-open list system in a single nationwide multi-member constituency.

Parties put forward lists of candidates, in a specified order. Voters indicate the party of their choice. In some *Länder* (for municipal and regional elections) and also throughout the country for European elections voters may also cast a personal vote for a candidate within the party list.

Allocation of seats to parties: The Hare quota is calculated; each party's total number of votes is divided by the quota to decide how many seats each party has won. Any seats that remain to be filled are allocated to parties using the d'Hondt formula.

Allocation of seats to candidates: Once the seats have been allocated to parties, they are then allocated to candidates within those parties. In some *Länder* (for municipal and regional elections), they are allocated in accordance with the order in which the candidates' names appear on their party's list; in others, the number of personal votes is taken into account. For European elections, candidates who win a number of personal votes equivalent to 7% of their party's total number of votes are awarded a seat; otherwise candidates are elected in the order in which their names appear on their party's list.

Vacancies: The next candidate on the relevant party list fills any vacancies that may occur.

The voting system for elections to the Nationalrat (Lower House)

A semi-open list system is used.

Parties put forward lists of candidates, in a specific order. Voters cast a vote for a party list, and in addition have the option of casting a personal vote for two candidates from that party, one in the local constituency and one in the regional constituency.

Allocation of seats at local level: Seats are first allocated in the 43 local constituencies. The regional Hare quota is calculated; each party's total number of votes is divided by the quota to decide how many seats each party has won. Any local candidate who wins a number of personal votes equivalent to one-sixth of the party's votes gains a seat. This is also the case for any candidate who wins a number of personal votes equivalent to half of the Hare quota. Otherwise, candidates are elected in the order in which their names appear on their party's list.

Allocation of seats at regional level: After this process, there will be seats which have not been allocated. These seats are then aggregated in the 9 regional constituencies (the *Land*). Only parties that have already won a local constituency seat are entitled to take part in the allocation of seats at the regional level. Each party list's remaining votes from the local constituencies within the region, that is the votes that did not contribute to a whole quota, are added together. The seats are allocated to the parties by using the d'Hondt formula. Once again, seats are awarded to candidates who have won a certain number of personal votes, or otherwise in the order in which their names appear on their party's list.

Allocation of seats at national level: Finally there is a national distribution of seats. This acts as an adjustment to the proportionality of the seats across the country. It is based on the party list votes of all parties that have won at least 4% of the vote at federal level, and the d'Hondt formula is applied. Seats are

allocated to candidates in the order in which their names appear on their party's list.

Vacancies: The next candidate from the relevant party list fills any vacancies that may occur.

Changes since 1980: In 1992 (and with effect from May 1993), the electoral system in Austria was significantly changed. For the first time, the distribution of seats took place at 3 levels (local, regional and national) rather than at two (regional and sub-national). Voters were also given greater power over the individual candidates who won seats. A national threshold of 4% was also introduced at this time.

The voting system for directly elected Mayors and the Federal President (Head of State)

The Two-Round System is used. If, in the case of the Head of State, there is only one candidate, a referendum is held to approve that candidate.

Belgium

Municipal and Provincial Elections (Local)

At local level, Belgium is divided into 589 municipalities (*communes*), each of which has a Municipal Council which is directly elected for a fixed term of 6 years. Each municipality forms a single municipality-wide multi-member constituency.

Belgium also has 10 provinces, each of which has a Provincial Council which is directly elected for a fixed term of 6 years. Each province is divided into several multi-member constituencies.

The voting age and the age of candidature is 18.

Voting is compulsory for all registered voters with penalties ranging from a fine to removal from the electoral register. European Union citizens are under no obligation to register to vote in the municipal elections, however, if they choose to do so and fail to vote, they are committing an offence.

Elections take place on the second Sunday of October.

Regional and Language-Community Elections

Belgium is a Federal State which has two tiers of regional government; these are:

three Regions:

- the Flemish Region (Dutch-speaking), with a directly elected Parliament (11 multi-member constituencies)
- the Walloon Region (French and German-speaking), with a directly elected Regional Council (13 multi-member constituencies)
- the Brussels-Capital Region (bilingual), with a directly elected Regional Council (1 single region-wide multi-member constituency)

three Language-Communities:

- the Flemish Community, with a directly elected Parliament (as above)
- the French-Speaking Community, with an *indirectly* elected Council
- the German-Speaking Community, with a directly elected Council (single multi-member constituency)

In 1980, Flanders decided to amalgamate region and language-community; this means that one body, the Flemish Parliament, exercises both language-community and regional powers.

All of the directly elected institutions have fixed-terms (early dissolution is proscribed) of five years.

The voting age is 18 and the age of candidature is 21.

Voting is compulsory with penalties ranging from a fine to removal from the register.

Elections take place on Sundays, to coincide with elections to the European Parliament.

Elections to the Lower House of Parliament

In Belgium, the Lower House of Parliament is the: *Chambre des Représentants* or the *Kamer van volksvertegenwoordigers* or the *Abgeordneten-kammer*. It is directly elected for a fixed term of 4 years though early dissolution is possible and has 150 members elected from 11 multi-member constituencies corresponding to Brussels and the 10 provinces.

The voting age is 18 and the age of candidature is 21.

Voting is compulsory with penalties ranging from a fine to removal from the register.

Elections take place on Sundays, to coincide with elections to the Upper House.

There is an artificial threshold of 5% to gain representation in each constituency.

Change since 1980:

The electoral reform introduced in 2003 reduced the number of constituencies from 20 to 11 and brought in the 5% threshold.

Elections to the Upper House of Parliament

In Belgium, the Upper House is the *Sénat* or the *Senaat* or the *Senat*. It is partly directly-elected (40 members), partly indirectly-elected (21 members from the Language-Communities) and partly co-opted (10 members), giving a total of 71 Senators. In addition, certain members of the Royal Family are Senators by right. At present there are 3 members of the Royal Family in the Upper House, however in practice, they do not vote and they are not taken into account in determining the quorum of attendance. The Upper House has a fixed term of 4 years, though early dissolution is possible.

For elections to the Upper House, Belgium is divided into two electoral colleges. One is a French Electoral College (made up of voters from the Walloon Region and voters of that community from the Brussels-Halle-Vilvoorde district) which elects 15 Senators from a set of lists made up of French-speaking candidates. The other is a Flemish Electoral College (made up of voters from the Flemish Region and voters of that community from the Brussels-Halle-Vilvoorde district) which elects 25 Senators from a set of lists made up of Dutch-speaking candidates.

The voting age is 18 and the age of candidature is 21.

Voting is compulsory with penalties ranging from a fine to removal from the electoral register.

Elections take place on Sundays, to coincide with elections to the Lower House.

Elections to the European Parliament

Belgium elects 25 members (24 from June 2004) to the European Parliament for a fixed term of 5 years. It does this from three electoral colleges, which are:

- the Flemish Electoral College, made up of the Flemish Region and specific voters from the Brussels-Capital region; it elects 14 members from a set of lists of Dutch-speaking candidates
- the French Electoral College, made up of the Walloon Region and specific voters from the Brussels-Capital region; it elects 10 members (9 from June 2004) from a set of lists of French-speaking candidates
- the German Electoral College, which elects 1 member from a set of lists of German-speaking candidates

The voting age is 18 and the age of candidature is 21.

Voting is compulsory for all registered electors with penalties ranging from a fine to removal from the electoral register.

Elections take place on Sundays.

The Prime Minister (Head of Government)

The Monarch appoints the Prime Minister on the basis of his/her ability to gain support in the Chamber of Representatives.

Head of State

The Head of State in Belgium is a hereditary monarch.

The voting system for all levels of government

A semi-open list system is used.

Parties put forward lists of candidates in a specific order. Voters cast a vote either for a party list or for one or more candidates within a party list.

Allocation of seats to parties: Firstly, seats are allocated to each party list within each 'electoral college'. The Hare quota is calculated and each party's total number of votes (this includes both the votes cast for the list and for candidates within the list) is divided by the quota to decide how many seats each party has won. The Imperiali system is used to distribute seats in municipalities.

Allocation of seats to candidates: Once the seats have been allocated to parties, they are allocated to candidates within those parties. Looking firstly at the personal votes, any candidate who has won a quota of votes is elected (the quota is the number of votes won by each party, divided by one more than the number of seats won by each party). Then starting at the top of the list of candidates, the votes that were cast generally for the party list (and not for a specific candidate) are distributed amongst the candidates. So, the candidate at the top of the list, if s/he has not been elected on personal votes alone, is, in addition to his/her tally of personal votes, awarded as many votes as necessary from the party's total to reach the quota. If seats still remain to be allocated, the next candidate on the party list is awarded as many votes as necessary from the party's remaining total, to supplement their personal votes, in order to reach the quota. This process continues until all seats won by a party have been allocated to candidates from that list.

Vacancies: On the ballot paper each party lists the names of several substitutes; if a vacancy should occur, it is filled by the next candidate on the relevant list, or subsequently by one of the substitutes.

Denmark

Municipal and County Elections (Local)

Denmark has two tiers of local government.

At the most local level, Denmark is divided into 275 municipalities (*kommuner*), each of which has a Municipal Council which is directly elected for a fixed term of 4 years. Municipal Councils have a number of councillors ranging from 9 to 31 who are elected from a single municipality-wide multi-member constituency. The Municipal Council is chaired by a mayor who is elected by the councillors.

At a higher level, Denmark also has 14 County Councils (*amtskommuner*) which are directly elected for a fixed term of 4 years. These councillors are also elected from a single county-wide multi-member constituency. The County Council is chaired by a mayor who is elected by the councillors.

The cities of Copenhagen and Frederiksberg have the powers and responsibilities of municipalities and counties combined.

The voting age and the age of candidature is 18.

Elections take place on the third Tuesday in November.

Regional Government

The directly elected Assemblies of the Faroe Islands and Greenland are the only form of regional government in Denmark. Both have autonomous status (the Faroe Islands since 1948, and Greenland since 1979) and are exempted from Denmark's membership of the EU. For that reason, we shall not deal with their electoral systems here.

Elections to the *Folketing* (Lower House)

The Danish Parliament, the *Folketing*, is directly elected for a fixed term of 4 years, though the Prime Minister is permitted to call an election at

any time. It has 179 members (175 from Denmark, and a further two each from the Faroe Islands and Greenland, though the latter four are elected according to different rules) elected from 17 lower-level multi-member constituencies, and then supplemented by a number of compensatory seats calculated at national level.

The age of voting and candidature is 18.

Elections usually take place on Tuesdays.

Elections to the European Parliament

Denmark elects 16 (14 from June 2004) members to the European Parliament from a single nationwide multi-member constituency, for a fixed term of 5 years.

The voting age and the age of candidature is 18.

Elections usually take place on Thursdays (though counting is postponed until Sunday, in order to coordinate with the rest of the European Union).

The Prime Minister (Head of Government)

The Monarch appoints the Prime Minister with reference to the party composition of the *Folketing*.

Head of State

The Head of State in Denmark is a hereditary monarch.

The voting system for Municipal, County and European elections

A voting system is used which comprises elements of the open list system and the semi-open list system.

Parties present a list of candidates (in municipal and county elections, coalitions of lists are also permitted). These can either place the candidates in a specific order, or all on an equal footing. In the

case of a specifically ordered list, the candidates' names are preceded by a number showing their order on the list. In the case of candidates standing on an equal footing, the order in which they appear is decided by the party/organisation, but it has no effect on the order in which the seats are allocated.

Voters cast a vote for a list of candidates or for a specific candidate within a list (a vote for a specific candidate is also a vote for that list).

Allocation of seats to parties: This is done using the d'Hondt formula.

Allocation of seats to candidates: This is done in different ways, dependent on whether the order of the candidates has been specified, or whether they are all on an equal footing:

- if the candidates are all on an equal footing, then the allocation is decided simply by the number of personal votes gained by each candidate
- if the candidates appear in a specific order, the Droop quota is calculated for each party list and the result is then rounded up to the nearest whole figure (even if it is already a whole figure). If any candidates have a number of personal votes which is equal to or greater than this quota, they are elected. Then, starting from the top of the list, the party votes are shared out amongst the candidates with the top candidate being given as many of the party votes as are necessary in addition to his/her personal votes, to reach the quota; any remaining party votes may then be passed on to the second candidate on the list to bring his/her tally of personal votes up to the quota, and so on until either the requisite number of seats have been filled, or the party votes have been exhausted. If seats remain to be filled, they are allocated to candidates in the order in which their names appear on the list.

Vacancies: The initial allocation of seats to candidates puts all candidates in order (according either to the number of personal votes that they have won, or the total number of votes with which they have been credited (i.e. personal + party votes). Any vacancies that occur are filled by a candidate from the relevant list, in the order determined by this process.

In local elections, the party lists may contain more candidates than the number of places to be elected. These substitute candidates may fill any vacancies that occur.

The voting system for elections to the Folketing (Parliament)

A voting system is used which comprises elements of the open list system and the semi-open list system.

Parties present a list of candidates. These can either place the candidates in a specific order, or all on an

equal footing. In the case of a specifically ordered list, the candidates' names are preceded by a number showing their order on the list. In the case of candidates standing on an equal footing, the order in which they appear is decided by the party/organisation, but it has no effect on the order in which the seats are allocated.

Voters cast a vote for a list of candidates or for a specific candidate within a list (a vote for a specific candidate is also a vote for that list).

Seat allocation takes place at two levels, 17 multi-member (lower) level constituencies which elect 135 members, and a national (higher) level constituency. The allocation of seats takes place in the following manner:

a Allocating Lower-Level Constituency Seats

Seats are allocated to lists by using the Modified Sainte-Laguë formula.

b Determining Eligibility for Upper-Level (Compensatory) Seats

In order to qualify for the distribution of upper-level seats, a party must meet one of the 3 following requirements:

- winning a seat in one of the multi-member (lower level) constituencies
- obtaining in two electoral regions, at least as many votes as the average number of votes needed to win a constituency seat in the region
- obtaining 2% of all valid votes cast in the country as a whole

c Allocating Upper-Level (Compensatory) Seats to Parties

Parties which meet one of the above requirements move on to the next stage, which is the distribution of upper-level seats. This is calculated on the basis of the total number of votes cast for these parties across the whole country. The Hare quota is used to calculate how many of the 175 seats each party is proportionately entitled to. Any remaining seats are allocated to the parties with the largest remaining fraction of a quota. Each of these parties now has an 'ideally proportional' figure; from this figure the number of seats already won at constituency level is deducted. The resulting figure is the number of compensatory seats due to the party.

d Allocating Compensatory Seats to Regions

Once the number of upper-level seats to be allocated to each party has been decided, the seats need to be distributed between the three electoral regions (Metropolitan Copenhagen, the Islands, and Jutland). In each region, the Pure Sainte-Laguë formula is used. Any allocations that correspond to a seat that has already been won in the region are disregarded. The next 40 allocations across the 3 regions determine which

parties in which regions gain the compensatory seats. When all the compensatory seats available for a certain region or party have been allocated, further allocations to that region or that party, respectively, are disregarded.

e Allocating Compensatory Seats to Constituencies

Within each region, the compensatory seats are now distributed to individual constituencies. In each constituency, the Danish formula is used. Any allocations that correspond to a seat that has already been won in the constituency are disregarded. The next allocations across the constituencies within each region determine which parties in which constituencies gain the compensatory seats.

f Allocating Seats to Candidates

The final step establishes which candidates will actually fill the seats that the political parties have won in each of the 17 multi-member constituencies. Candidates are credited with a total number of votes equivalent to the sum of the personal

votes that they have won and a share of the votes cast for the party (which is calculated on the basis of nomination districts rather than the constituency as a whole). If the candidates have all been presented on an equal footing on their list, then the seats are simply allocated to the candidates credited with the largest number of personal votes. If the candidates were presented in a specific order on their list, then the Droop quota is calculated for each list. If any candidates have been credited with a number of votes which is equal to or greater than this quota, they are elected; otherwise, seats are allocated to candidates in the order in which their names appear on the list.

Vacancies: The initial allocation of seats to candidates puts all candidates in order (according either to the number of personal votes that they have won, or the total number of votes with which they have been credited (i.e. personal + party votes). Any vacancies that occur are filled by a candidate from the relevant list, in the order determined by this process.

Finland

Municipal Elections (Local)

At local level, Finland is divided into 452 Municipalities (*Kunta*). Each of these is governed by a Municipal Council (*Kunnanvaltuusto*), which is directly elected for a fixed term of 4 years. The number of councillors varies from 17 in municipalities with less than 2,000 residents, to 85 in municipalities with more than 400,000 residents (by special permission, the minimum number of councillors can be lowered to 13) and they are elected from a single municipality-wide multi-member constituency. The executive body of the Municipal Council is the Municipal Board (*Kunnanhallitus*).

The voting age and the age of candidature are 18.

Elections take place on the 4th Sunday of October except in the province of Åland which holds its municipal elections every four years but at a different time from the rest of Finland.

Regional Elections

At regional level, Finland is divided into 19 Regional Councils (*Maakunnan liitto*) which are indirectly elected by the municipalities of the regions in question.

It also has a directly elected Legislative Assembly in the Autonomous Province of Åland which is an autonomous Swedish-speaking province of Finland, which consists of more than 6,500 islands. The Legislative Assembly has 30 members who are elected from a single province-wide multi-member constituency for a fixed term of 4 years.

The voting age and the age of candidature is 18.

Elections take place on the third Sunday of October.

Elections to the Eduskunta (Parliament)

The Finnish Parliament, the *Eduskunta*, is directly elected for a fixed term of 4 years, though early

dissolution is possible. It has 200 members who are elected from 14 multi-member constituencies (each containing 7 – 32 seats) and one single-member constituency (the Province of Åland).

The voting age and the age of candidature is 18.

Elections usually take place on the third Sunday in March.

Elections to the European Parliament

Finland elects 16 members (14 from June 2004) to the European Parliament from a single nationwide multi-member constituency for a fixed term of 5 years.

The voting age and the age of candidature is 18.

Elections take place on Sundays.

The Prime Minister (Head of Government)

The groups represented in Parliament negotiate the political programme and composition of the Government. On the basis of these negotiations, and having heard the views of the Speaker of Parliament, the President informs Parliament of the nominee for Prime Minister. The nominee is elected Prime Minister if supported by more than half the votes cast in an open vote in Parliament, and is then formally appointed by the President.

The President of the Republic (Head of State)

The Head of State in Finland, the President of the Republic, is directly elected for a fixed term of 6 years.

The voting age and the age of candidature is 18.

Elections take place on the third Sunday of January. If there is a second round, it takes place three weeks later.

The voting system for all levels of government (except President)

An open list system is used for elections to Municipal Councils, Åland's Legislative Assembly, the *Eduskunta* and the European Parliament. For elections to the *Eduskunta*, in addition to the 14 multi-member constituencies which use an open list system, there is one single-member constituency (the Province of Åland) which uses First-Past-the-Post.

Political parties and other groupings put forward a list of candidates. Voters cast their vote for a specific candidate from one of these lists; they are not given the option of voting solely for a party. However, a vote for a candidate is also a vote for the list.

The allocation of seats takes place in several stages. In effect, it is the d'Hondt method, however in Finland it is conducted in a different way from in other countries.

- a the total number of votes for each party list or grouping is counted
- b the candidates within each list or grouping are placed in order according to the number of personal votes that they have won
- c each candidate is accorded a comparative index, whereby the candidate at the top of the party list (i.e. the candidate with the greatest number of personal votes) is accorded a total equal to the total number of votes cast for the party or grouping; the second candidate on the list (i.e. the candidate with the second greatest number of personal votes) is accorded a total equal to the total number of votes cast for the party or grouping divided by two; the third candidate on the list is accorded a total equal to the number of votes cast for the party or grouping divided by three, and so on
- d finally, all candidates from all lists and groupings are

placed in order, according to their comparative index (i.e. candidates with the highest comparative index at the top); the number of candidates to be elected are then taken in the order in which the names appear on this master-list

Vacancies: In Municipal elections, from each party list or grouping, a number of candidates equivalent to the number who have been elected from that list (though a minimum of two), are chosen as substitute councillors. They are chosen according to the number of personal votes they have won. From these lists of substitute councillors, the chairman of the council appoints a replacement to fill a vacancy. In all other elections vacancies are filled by the next candidate from the relevant party list.

The voting system for the President of the Republic

The Two-Round System is used.

If only one candidate is nominated, he or she becomes President without an election.

Changes since 1980: There have been several changes to the method of election for the President. From 1919 until 1987 Presidents were elected indirectly. Electors voted for a 300-strong (301 in 1982 and 1988) electoral college which then elected the President.

A new two-stage method of election was introduced under legislation enacted in 1987, but it was used only once, in 1988. In the first stage electors voted for one of the officially nominated Presidential candidates. At the same time, they voted for 301 members of an electoral college, which would elect the President in the event of none of the candidates obtaining more than half (50% + 1) of the votes in the popular ballot.

The present electoral method was introduced under legislation enacted in 1991 and first used in 1994.

France

Municipal and Département Elections (Local)

At local level, France is divided into 36,750 municipalities each of which has a directly elected Municipal Council. Each municipality forms a single municipality-wide multi-member constituency except for Lyon, Marseille and Paris which are divided into several multi-member constituencies (based on the number of 'arrondissements' in each). The Municipal Council is chaired by a Mayor who is elected by the councillors.

At intermediate level, France is divided into 96 *départements* and 4 Overseas *départements* (French Guiana, Guadeloupe, Martinique and Réunion), each of which has a directly elected General Council. Each *département* is divided into a number of cantons each of which forms a single-member constituency. The General Council is chaired by a president who is elected by the councillors.

Paris is both a municipality and a *département*. The four Overseas *départements* are both *départements* and regions.

All of these Councils are elected for fixed terms of 6 years.

The voting age is 18 and the age of candidature is 18 for municipal elections and 21 for department elections.

Artificial thresholds are in place for all of these elections. Please see the description of the voting system below for details.

Elections take place on Sundays.

Regional and Territorial Elections

At Regional level, France is divided into 22 Regions and 4 overseas Regions. Each of these has a Regional Council which is directly elected for a

fixed term of 5 years. Members of the Regional Council are elected from a single region-wide multi-member constituency. The Regional Council is chaired by a President who is elected by the councillors.

In addition, there are 4 overseas Territories. Each of these has a directly elected Territorial Assembly.

The voting age is 18 and the age of candidature is 21.

Artificial thresholds are in place. Please see the description of the voting system below for details.

Elections take place on Sundays.

Elections to the Assemblée Nationale (Lower House)

The Lower House of Parliament in France, the Assemblée Nationale, is directly elected for fixed terms of 5 years, though early dissolution is possible. It has 577 members (555 of these are in Metropolitan France, and the remaining 22 in overseas Territories and Regions) who are elected from single-member constituencies.

The voting age is 18 and the age of candidature is 23.

Artificial thresholds are in place. Please see the description of the voting system below for details.

Elections take place on Sundays.

The Senat (Upper House)

The Upper House of Parliament in France, the Sénat, has 321 members who are indirectly elected by an electoral college within each *Département* and overseas Territory. These electoral colleges are made up of elected representatives from other levels of government, mostly delegates from Municipal Councils. Voting is compulsory for members of the electoral colleges.

Members are elected for fixed terms of 9 years, with one-third retiring every 3 years.

Elections to the European Parliament

France elects 87 members (78 from June 2004) to the European Parliament from a single nationwide multi-member constituency for a fixed 5-year term.

The voting age is 18 and the age of candidature is 23.

There is an artificial threshold of 5% across the whole country.

Elections take place on Sundays.

The Prime Minister (Head of Government)

The Head of Government in France, the Prime Minister, is appointed by the President of the Republic.

The President of the Republic (Head of State)

The Head of State in France, the President of the Republic, is directly elected for a fixed term of 5 years.

The voting age is 18 and the age of candidature is 23.

Elections take place on Sundays.

The voting system for Municipal elections (in municipalities with fewer than 3,500 inhabitants)

In municipalities with fewer than 3,500 inhabitants, a party-based Two-Round system is used in a multi-member constituency.

Parties present a list of candidates and voters cast their vote for one of these party lists though they also have the opportunity to delete candidates' names and replace them with the names of candidates from other lists (*panachage*). Independent candidates may stand in constituencies with fewer than 2,500 inhabitants.

If a party list wins an absolute majority of the votes, and its total number of votes is equivalent to a quarter of the registered electors in the area, that party has won. If not, a second round of voting is held giving voters a choice between the two party lists which gained the greatest numbers of votes in the first round.

The alterations to the lists (deletions and insertions) made by the voters have an influence on the list of candidates that get elected.

Vacancies: The next candidate on the relevant party list fills any vacancy occurs.

The voting system for Municipal elections (in municipalities with 3,500 or more inhabitants) and Regional and Territorial elections

A party-based Two-Round system with an additional proportional element with closed lists is used in a multi-member constituency (or in the case of

Lyon, Marseille and Paris, in several multi-member constituencies).

Parties present a list of candidates and voters cast a vote for a party list rather than for a specific candidate. If a list obtains an absolute majority in the first round, it is awarded half of the seats (in the case of Municipal elections) or a quarter of the seats (Regional and Territorial elections). The remaining half (Municipal) or three-quarters (Regional and Territorial) of the seats are distributed proportionately amongst all of the lists which have won 5% of the vote, using the Hare quota. Remaining seats are allocated to the parties using the d'Hondt formula. Candidates are elected in the order in which their names appear on the party list.

If no party wins an absolute majority in the first round, a second round of voting takes place. Only lists which have won 10% of the vote may take part in the second round, though parties which have won 5% of the vote may negotiate to get some of their candidates onto one of the second-round party lists. The party which wins the largest number of votes in the second round is awarded half (Municipal) or a quarter (Regional and Territorial) of the seats. The other half (Municipal) or three-quarters (Regional and Territorial) of the seats are distributed proportionately amongst all of the lists which have won 5% of the overall vote, using the Hare quota. Remaining seats are allocated to the parties using the d'Hondt formula. Candidates are elected in the order in which their names appear on the party list.

Vacancies: The next candidate on the relevant party list fills any vacancy that may occur.

Changes since 1980: The system described above has been used in municipalities with 3,500 or more inhabitants since 1982 and for Regional and Territorial elections with effect from 2004.

Previously municipalities with 3,500 or more inhabitants used the same system as for municipalities with fewer than 3,500 inhabitants (described above).

Until 1982, the Regional and Territorial Councils were indirectly elected and from 1986 – 1999, a closed list system was used.

Since 2000, the lists of candidates have been required to provide an equal balance of men and women candidates for each group of 6 candidates.

The voting system for Département, Assemblée Nationale and Presidential elections

The Two-Round system is used.

Candidates are nominated and voters simply vote for their preferred individual candidate. If a candidate wins an absolute majority (and, in the case of *Département* and *Assemblée Nationale* elections, the candidate's total number of votes is equivalent to a

quarter of registered electors in the constituency) the candidate has won.

If no candidate wins an absolute majority in the first round, a second round is held. For *Département* elections, the candidates who may enter the second round are those who have won a number of votes equivalent to 10% of the registered electors in the constituency (though if no candidate has reached this threshold, then the two highest-scoring candidates go forward to the second round). For elections to the *Assemblée Nationale*, it is candidates who have won a number of votes equivalent to 12.5% of the registered electors in the constituency who go forward to the second round. In Presidential elections, the two candidates who have won the largest numbers of votes stand in the second round. The candidate who wins the greatest number of votes in the second round wins.

Vacancies:

- in the *départements*, by-elections are held to fill any vacancies
- in the *Assemblée Nationale*, if the vacancy is created by the member's death or appointment to Government, the vacancy is filled by a substitute elected at the same time as original member; otherwise, a by-election may take

place, except in the final year of the legislature's term, when the seat remains vacant

Changes since 1980: For elections to the *Assemblée Nationale*, a closed list system was introduced in 1986. However, this system was used for one election only before reverting to the previous system which remains in place and is described above.

Since 2000, parties have been encouraged to provide a rough balance between men and women candidates (49/51%). If they fail to do so, they lose a percentage of their public funding.

The voting system for European elections

A closed list system is used.

Parties present a list of candidates in a specific order. Voters choose one of these party lists. The d'Hondt formula is used to allocate seats. Any party list which has not won 5% of the national vote is not entitled to take part in the allocation of seats.

Vacancies: The next person on the relevant party list fills any vacancies that may occur

Changes since 1980: Since 2000, parties have been required to place men and women candidates alternately on their lists.

Germany

Municipal and District Elections (Local)

At local level Germany is divided into 13,862 Local Authorities (*Städte* and *Gemeinden*). Each of these has a Municipal Council which is directly elected for a fixed term of 6 – 8 years (dependent on the *Land*), with a directly elected mayor (*Bürgermeister*). Local authorities are divided into several multi-member constituencies, except in Hesse and Bavaria where each local authority forms a single authority-wide multi-member constituency.

At intermediate level Germany has 306 Regional Districts (*Landkreise*). Each of these has a District Assembly (*Kreistag*) which is directly elected for a fixed term of 5 – 8 years (dependent on the *Land*), with a directly elected Chair. Some municipalities (*kreisfreie Städte*) combine the local and *kreis* functions in a single authority. Regional districts are divided into several multi-member constituencies except Bavaria where each regional district forms a single district-wide multi-member constituency.

Structures and arrangements are determined at Regional (*Land*) level and therefore vary from *Land* to *Land* – however, the electoral arrangements for local and intermediate level will be uniform within each individual *Land*.

The voting age in some *Länder* (Mecklenburg-Western-Pomerania, Lower Saxony, North Rhine-Westphalia, Saxony-Anhalt and Schleswig-Holstein) is 16 and in the others it is 18. In all *Länder*, the age of candidature is 18.

Although many *Länder* (Lower Saxony, Hesse, Baden-Württemberg, Bavaria, Brandenburg, Saxony, North Rhine-Westphalia, Saxony-Anhalt) do not use a threshold, some use a 5% threshold (Schleswig-Holstein, Hamburg, Bremen, Saarland, Mecklenburg-Western-Pomerania, Thuringia), one

uses a 3.03% threshold (Rhineland-Palatinate) and one uses a threshold of 3% (Berlin).

Elections take place on Sundays or public holidays.

Regional Elections

At Regional level, Germany is made up of 16 Federal States (*Länder*). Each of these has a Regional State Parliament (usually, though not always called a *Landtag*) which is directly elected for a fixed term of either 4 or 5 years, though early dissolution is possible. The number of members in each *Landtag* ranges from about 51 to 231; some of these members are elected from single-member constituencies and others from larger multi-member constituencies. Each *Land* determines its own electoral system.

The voting age is 18. The age of candidature is also 18 in most *Länder*, though in Bavaria, Hesse and Lower Saxony it is 21.

There is a threshold in force which means that only parties that have won 5% of the vote across the *Land* are entitled to take part in the allocation of 'additional' members. However, there are some exceptions to this rule which are designed to allow minorities to gain representation:

- in Brandenburg, there is no threshold for the Sorb minority parties
- in Bremen, the *Land* is divided into two parts (Bremen and Bremerhaven) and the threshold applies to these areas rather than to the whole *Land*
- in Schleswig-Holstein, there is no threshold for the party of the Danish minority (the Southern Schleswig-Holstein Electors' Association)

Elections take place on Sundays or public holidays.

Elections to the Deutscher Bundestag (Lower House)

The Lower House of Parliament in Germany, the *Deutscher Bundestag*, is directly elected for a fixed term of 4 years, though early dissolution is possible under exceptional circumstances. There are 598 members of the Bundestag (though due to a quirk of the electoral system there may also potentially be a number of surplus seats, called *Überhangmandate*) half of whom are elected from single-member constituencies and half of whom are elected from 16 multi-member constituencies corresponding to the *Länder* (2 – 64 members each).

The voting age and the age of candidature is 18.

An artificial threshold is in place, which means that each party must have won 5% of the party list votes across the whole country in order to be entitled to take part in the allocation of 'additional' members. However, this does not apply to parties which:

- have won at least three constituency seats, or
- represent a national minority (for example, the Southern Schleswig Electors' Association, the party of the Danish minority in Schleswig-Holstein, or the Sorbs in the Free State of Saxony).

Elections take place on Sundays or public holidays.

The Bundesrat (Upper House)

The Upper House of Parliament in Germany, the *Bundesrat*, is an indirectly elected body of 69 members, made up of 3 – 6 elected representatives from the Government of each of the 16 *Länder*. It is a permanent body without terms of office and the membership changes as each *Land* holds its elections.

Elections to the European Parliament

Germany elects 99 members (unchanged in 2004) to the European Parliament from a single nationwide multi-member constituency for a fixed term of 5 years.

The voting age and the age of candidature is 18.

An artificial threshold of 5% across the whole country is used.

Elections take place on Sundays.

The Federal Chancellor (Head of Government)

The Head of Government in Germany, the Federal Chancellor, is indirectly elected by the Lower House, on the nomination of a single candidate by the Federal President, who also appoints the Chancellor.

The Federal President is under no obligation to nominate a member of the largest parliamentary

group for the Chancellorship, but the Federal Chancellor must be elected by a majority of the members of the *Bundestag*. If the *Bundestag* rejects the President's nominee it may, within fourteen days, elect another candidate of its own choice with a majority of its members.

Once elected, the person is then appointed by the Federal President and sworn in before the *Bundestag* on the same day.

The Federal President (Head of State)

The Head of State in Germany, the Federal President, is indirectly elected by a Federal Convention which is made up of members of the *Bundestag* and an equal number of members from the *Land* Parliaments. The election of the Federal President is the sole function of this body. The Federal President is elected for a fixed term of 5 years.

If a candidate receives an overall majority of the votes of the members of the Federal Convention, that candidate is elected. If after two ballots no candidate has obtained such a majority, the candidate who wins the greatest number of votes on the next ballot is elected.

The voting system for Municipal and District elections in some Länder

(Baden-Württemberg, Bavaria, Brandenburg, Hesse, Lower Saxony, Mecklenburg-Western-Pomerania, Rhineland-Palatinate, Saxony, Saxony-Anhalt and Thuringia)

An open list system is used.

In some *Länder* (Baden-Württemberg, Bavaria, Hesse and Rhineland-Palatinate), voters have as many votes as seats to be filled and these may be cast for candidates within or across party lists (*panachage*); voters may give up to 3 votes for a single candidate; alternatively voters may simply vote for a party list, or for a specific candidate from a party list (again, up to 3 votes for a single candidate). In other *Länder* (Brandenburg, Mecklenburg-Western-Pomerania, Lower Saxony, Saxony, Saxony-Anhalt and Thuringia) voters have 3 votes which may be cast for candidates within or across party lists (*panachage*); voters may give up to 3 votes for a single candidate.

In Bavaria, Baden-Württemberg, Lower Saxony and Saxony, the allocation of seats is decided by using the d'Hondt formula. In Brandenburg, Hesse, Mecklenburg-Western-Pomerania, Rhineland-Palatinate, Saxony-Anhalt and Thuringia the allocation of seats is decided by using the (Hare-) Niemeyer method. In both cases, the allocation of seats to candidates is decided by the number of personal votes won by the candidates.

Vacancies: There is great variation from *Land* to *Land*, however, in general, unelected candidates from the party list, as long as they gained at least one personal vote, act as substitutes; they fill vacancies in the order of their total numbers of personal votes

The voting system for Municipal and District elections in one Land (Saarland), for Regional elections in three Länder (Bremen, Hamburg and Saarland) and for elections to the European Parliament

A closed list system is used.

For Municipal/District and European elections, voters may cast a single vote for a party list. For Regional elections, voters may cast up to two votes for a party list.

For Municipal/District and Regional elections in Saarland, the seats are allocated using the d'Hondt formula, and candidates are elected in the order in which their names appear on their party's list.

For Regional elections in Bremen and Hamburg, and for elections to the European Parliament the (Hare-)Niemeyer method is used to allocate seats to parties, and candidates are elected in the order in which their names appear on their party's list. However, as of 2003, Bremen will use the Sainte Laguë formula.

Vacancies:

- for Municipal, District and Regional elections, the next candidate from the relevant party list fills the vacancy.
- for European elections, a number of substitute candidates are nominated at the same time as the main candidates and if a vacancy needs to be filled, it is filled by one of these substitute candidates. If no substitute candidate has been nominated or if s/he has withdrawn, the seat falls to the next available candidate on the relevant party list. If the list is exhausted, the seat remains vacant.

Changes since 1980: In 1989 the d'Hondt formula was replaced by the (Hare-)Niemeyer quota system for elections to the European Parliament.

The voting system for Municipal and District elections in two Länder (North Rhine-Westphalia and Schleswig-Holstein), for Regional elections in most Länder (Bavaria, Baden-Württemberg, Berlin, Brandenburg, Hesse, Lower Saxony, Mecklenburg-Western-Pomerania, North Rhine Westphalia, Rhineland-Palatinate, Saxony, Saxony-Anhalt, Schleswig-Holstein and Thuringia) and for elections to the Bundestag

The Additional Member System (AMS) is used. For most of these elections, the most usual form of AMS (that is, with closed lists) is used; however for Regional elections, one *Land* (Bavaria) uses AMS with semi-open lists and another *Land* (Baden-Württemberg) uses a variation of AMS whereby voters only have a single vote, and 'additional' seats are awarded to the best losing candidates (in terms of numbers of votes) from the constituencies, rather than to party lists.

For Municipal, District and Regional elections in North Rhine-Westphalia, voters have a single vote which they cast for their preferred candidate; the

vote also counts for the party list associated with that candidate.

In Baden-Württemberg, voters cast a single vote for a constituency candidate.

Otherwise (and more commonly) voters have two votes. Firstly voters make a mark next to the name of their preferred candidate in the local constituency. Then, voters make a mark next to the name of their preferred party list.

Ballot papers are marked in the same way in Bavaria, except that voters may also express a preference for a candidate within the party list.

First-Past-the Post contests are held in the single-member constituencies. Then, any parties that have passed the threshold (where one exists), or which are otherwise exempt from passing the threshold, take part in the allocation of the 'additional' members from the closed party lists in the larger multi-member constituencies.

For Regional elections in some *Länder*, seats are allocated to parties using the d'Hondt formula (Baden-Württemberg, Lower Saxony, Saxony, Schleswig-Holstein – though as of 2003, Bremen will use the Sainte Laguë formula) – that is, each eligible party list's total vote is divided by one more than the number of seats it has already won in the single-member constituencies.

For all other Municipal/District and Regional elections, and for elections to the *Bundestag*, the (Hare-)Niemeyer quota is used to allocate seats to parties. Any seats already won by parties at constituency level are removed from the total thus calculated in order to give the requisite number of 'additional' members. If any seats remain to be filled after this process, they are awarded to the parties with the highest remaining fraction of a quota.

Candidates are elected in the order in which their names appear on their party lists (other than in Regional elections in Bavaria, when personal votes for candidates are taken into account).

Occasionally, a party wins more constituency seats than it would be entitled to according to its share of the regional vote (i.e. it is not possible to deduct the total number of constituency seats already won (too many) from the number of seats to which it is entitled at regional level (too few)). This results in the creation of surplus seats in the *Bundestag* which are known as *Überhangmandate*.

Vacancies: Any vacancies that occur are filled by the next candidate from the relevant list (even for vacancies in constituency seats). If the vacancy is created by a non-party candidate in a constituency seat, a by-election is held. If a constituency seat falls vacant in a *Land* which has surplus seats (*Überhangmandate*), the seat remains vacant until the surplus seats have been eliminated.

Changes since 1980: Several Länder have switched from a single-vote Additional Member System (like North Rhine-Westphalia) to the more common two-vote Additional Member System for their regional elections; these include Hesse, Rhineland-Palatinate and Schleswig-Holstein.

For elections to the *Bundestag*, the d'Hondt

formula was replaced by the (Hare-)Niemeyer quota method in 1985.

In 2002, there was a decrease in the number of constituencies, from 328 to 299.

The voting system for directly elected Mayors and Chairs

The Two-Round system is used.

Greece

Communal/Municipal and Prefectural Elections (Local)

There are three tiers of local government in Greece.

At local level, there are two types of authority:

- 133 communes (*Kinotites*), each of which has a Community Council (*Simvoulio*), which is directly elected for a fixed term of 4 years. Between 7 and 11 members are elected from a single commune-wide multi-member constituency.
- 900 municipalities (*Dimoi*), each of which has a Municipal Council (*Dimotiko Simvoulio*) which is directly elected for a fixed term of 4 years; its executive powers reside with the Municipal Committee (*Dimarchiaki Epitropi*), which is chaired by a Mayor (*Dimarchos*), who is the candidate at the top of the winning party list. Between 11 and 41 members are elected from a single municipality-wide multi-member constituency.

At intermediate level, there are

- 51 prefectures (*Nomoi*), each of which has a Prefectural Council (*Nomarchiako Simvoulio*) which is directly elected for a fixed term of 4 years; executive powers reside with the Prefectural Committee (*Nomarchiakes Epitropes*), which is chaired by a Prefect (*Nomarchis*) who is the candidate at the top of the winning party list. Between 21 and 37 members are elected from a single prefecture-wide multi-member constituency.

The voting age is 18 and the age of candidature is 21 for Communal and Municipal elections, and 23 for Prefectural elections.

Voting is compulsory for those under the age of 70

who are within 200 kilometres of their polling place. Unlike at others levels of government, the laws governing compulsory voting have not been strictly enforced at local level.

Elections take place on Sundays.

Regional Government

There are 13 Regions, each of which has a Regional Council (*Peripheriako Simvoulio*), chaired by the Secretary-General of the region (*Genikos Grammateas*).

The Regional Councils are not elected – they comprise the prefects of each prefecture, a representative of the local unions of municipalities and communes and representatives of professional organisations or chambers.

The Secretary-General of the Region is appointed by central Government.

Elections to the Vouli (Parliament)

The Greek Parliament, the *Vouli*, is elected for a fixed term of 4 years, though early dissolution is possible. It has 300 members who are elected from 50 multi-member constituencies (each electing 2 – 32 members) and 6 single-member constituencies, electing 288 representatives in total, and then one nationwide multi-member constituency for 12 'national members'.

The voting age is 18 and the age of candidature is 25.

Voting is compulsory for those under the age of 70 who are within 200 kilometres of their polling place. The laws governing compulsory voting used to be strictly enforced with penalties including a term of 1 – 12 months in prison, however; as of 2001 there are no longer any penalties.

An artificial threshold is in place, meaning that a

party must receive 3% of the total national vote to qualify for parliamentary seats.

Elections take place on Sundays.

Elections to the European Parliament

Greece elects 25 members (24 from June 2004) to the European Parliament from a single nationwide multi-member constituency, for a fixed term of 5 years.

The voting age is 18 and the age of candidature is 21.

Voting is compulsory for those under the age of 70 who are within 200 kilometres of their polling place. The laws governing compulsory voting used to be strictly enforced with penalties including a term of 1 – 12 months in prison, however as of 2001 there are no longer any penalties.

An artificial threshold is in place, meaning that a party must receive 3% of the total national vote to qualify for seats.

Elections take place on Sundays.

The Prime Minister (Head of Government)

The Head of Government in Greece, the Prime Minister, is appointed by the President of the Republic.

If a party has an absolute majority of the seats in Parliament, the President is obliged to choose the leader of that party to be Prime Minister.

If no party has an absolute majority, the President gives the leader of the largest party the opportunity to form a Government which has the support of Parliament (this is called an 'Exploratory Mandate'). If this is not possible, the President gives the same opportunity to the leader of the second largest party in Parliament. If, once again this is not possible, the opportunity is given to the leader of the third largest party. Each leader has 3 days to form a government which has the support of Parliament.

If none of the leaders can form a government with the support of Parliament, the President convenes a meeting of all party leaders; if still no government can be formed, the President attempts to form a Cabinet made up of all parties simply for the purpose of dissolving Parliament and holding a General Election.

If this is not possible, the President of the Supreme Administrative Court (or of the Supreme Civil and Criminal Court, or of the Court of Auditors) forms a Cabinet which has the widest support possible, simply for the purpose of the dissolving Parliament and holding a General Election.

President of the Republic (Head of State)

The Head of State in Greece, the President of the Republic, is indirectly elected by the Lower House for a fixed term of 5 years. The age of candidature is 40.

If one candidate wins two-thirds of the votes, s/he is elected. If no candidate wins two-thirds of the votes, another election is held five days later. If no candidate wins two-thirds of the votes in this election, another election is held five days later again in which the winning candidate needs three-fifths of the votes to win.

If no candidate wins three-fifths of the votes, Parliament is dissolved and a General Election is held. Once re-elected, the process begins again – this time requiring the winning candidate to win three-fifths of the votes.

If no candidate wins three-fifths of the votes, another election is held five days later in which a candidate needs to win 50% of the votes cast in order to win the election. If no candidate wins 50% of the votes cast, another election is held five days later with only the two top-scoring candidates from the previous election. The candidate with the largest number of votes is declared the winner.

In all but the final round of voting, the majority is calculated not on the proportion of votes cast, but on the proportion of the total number of Members of Parliament.

The voting system for Communal/Municipal and Prefectural (Local) elections

A semi-open list (with a Two-Round element in larger communes).

Parties present a list of candidates. Voters cast a vote for a party list and they may also cast a vote for one or more candidates from that party list. Alternatively, voters may have the opportunity to cast a vote for an independent candidate who is not part of a party list.

The party that wins a majority of the votes is awarded three-fifths of the seats. The other two-fifths are divided proportionately amongst the other lists.

In communes with a population of over 5,000 inhabitants, a list needs an absolute majority (i.e. more than 50% of the votes) in order to be awarded three-fifths of the seats. If no list gains an absolute majority, a second round of voting is held between the candidates for chairman of the two lists who won the largest number of votes in the first round. Whichever of these wins the larger number of votes in the second round wins three-fifths of the seats.

Seats are allocated to candidates taking into account the number of personal votes that they have won, but otherwise in the order in which their names appear on the party list.

Vacancies: The next candidate on the relevant party list fills any vacancies that may occur.

The voting system for the Vouli (Parliament)

An open list system is used for most of the coun-

try; First-Past-the-Post is used in 6 of the smallest constituencies. In addition, 12 members are elected from a closed list at a national level.

In the single-member constituencies, voters cast a vote for their preferred candidate and the candidate with the greatest number of votes wins.

In all other constituencies, voters cast a vote for a party list. They may also cast a vote for one or more candidates from that party list. Alternatively, voters may have the opportunity to cast a vote for an independent candidate who is not part of a party list.

The votes are counted initially at constituency level. The Droop quota is used to allocate seats to party lists. Seats are allocated to candidates according to the number of personal votes they have won.

Any party which has not won 3% of the vote nationally is prevented from taking a seat, even if the calculation at this initial stage would deem the party eligible within an individual constituency.

Any remaining seats which it was not possible to allocate to a party during this process, are allocated at regional level. There are 13 regions which comprise 2 – 8 constituencies each. All *remaining* votes cast for parties in the constituencies within the region (having subtracted those that contributed towards the election of a candidate) are aggregated at regional level. The Hare quota is used to allocate seats to party lists. Seats are allocated to candidates who were not elected at the previous level according to the number of personal votes they have won.

If there are still seats which have not been allocated, this is done in two further stages. Firstly, the party with the largest number of votes across the whole country gains all unfilled seats in constituencies where it gained the largest number of votes (this is seen as a bonus for the largest party). Secondly, any remaining seats are allocated to parties in proportion to their national vote; that is, the Hare quota is calculated based on the total national vote; each party's national vote is divided by this quota to give the number of seats allocated to

each party – unallocated seats are awarded to party lists to give them a total number of seats as close as possible to their national entitlement. If there are any remaining seats to be allocated, they form another bonus for the party with the largest national vote.

The 12 'National Members' are elected from closed national party lists using the votes originally cast. The Hare quota is used to allocate seats to party lists. If there are any remaining seats to be allocated, the d'Hondt formula is used (that is, total remaining votes for each party list are divided by 1 more than the number of seats already won by that party). Seats are allocated to candidates according to the order in which their names appear on their party's list.

Vacancies: The next candidate on the relevant party list fills any vacancy that may occur.

Changes since 1980: Up until 1990, changes to the Greek voting system were many and frequent; the most recent changes introduced the 3% national threshold, and the extra stage of seat-allocation at national level (previously, unallocated seats after the second stage were awarded to the parties with the largest remaining fraction of a quota), including the bonus system for the largest party. This enables a degree of proportionality to be ensured – each party list will win at least 70% of the seats to which its proportion of the votes entitles it.

The voting system for elections to the European Parliament

A closed party list system is used.

Voters cast a vote for a party list. The d'Hondt formula is used to allocate seats to party lists. Seats are allocated to candidates in the order in which their names appear on their party's list.

Vacancies: The next candidate on the relevant party list, or a substitute (who was named on the ballot paper during the election) fills any vacancy that may occur; if there are not enough substitutes, a by-election is held.

Ireland

Local Elections

At local level, Ireland has two elected tiers of government:

At the most local level, Ireland has 5 Borough Corporations which elect 60 members, 49 Urban Districts which elect 450 members, and 30 Town Commissioners which elect 234 members. These are all directly elected.

At the next level up, Ireland is divided into 26 counties. Each of these has a County Council except Tipperary which has 2 (North and South), and County Dublin which has 3 – resulting in a total of 29 County Councils which elect a total of 753 members. In addition there are 5 City Boroughs, also known as Corporations which elect 130 members. All of these are directly elected.

Some authorities form a single authority-wide multi-member constituency whilst others are divided into several multi-member constituencies. In total, 268 constituencies elect 1,627 members. All of these institutions are elected for a fixed term of 5 years.

The voting age and the age of candidature is 18.

Elections usually take place in the month of June.

Elections to Dáil Éireann (Lower House)

The Lower House of Parliament in the Republic of Ireland, *Dáil Éireann*, has 166 members who are elected from 42 multi-member constituencies (each of which elects 3 – 5 members). The *Dáil* is elected for a maximum 5-year term, but it may be dissolved at any time by the President, on the advice of the *Taoiseach* (Prime Minister).

The voting age is 18 and the age of candidature is 21.

Elections to Seanad Éireann (Upper House)

The Upper House of Parliament in the Republic of Ireland, *Seanad Éireann*, has 60 members, 11 of whom are nominated by the *Taoiseach* (the Prime Minister), 6 of whom are directly-elected by university graduates, and 43 of whom are indirectly-elected by elected representatives from other institutions from panels of candidates representing specified vocational interests (Cultural and Educational; Agricultural; Labour; Industrial and Commercial; Administrative).

The age of candidature is 21.

Elections take place within 90 days of the dissolution of the *Dáil* (Lower House).

Elections to the European Parliament

Ireland elects 15 members (13 from June 2004) to the European Parliament from 4 multi-member constituencies (each of which elects 3 or 4 members) for a fixed term of 5 years.

The voting age is 18 and the age of candidature is 21.

Elections take place on Thursdays (though counting is postponed until Sunday, in order to co-ordinate with the rest of the European Union).

The Taoiseach (Head of Government)

The Head of Government in the Republic of Ireland, the *Taoiseach* is appointed by the President on the nomination of the *Dáil* (Lower House).

The President (Head of State)

The Head of State in the Republic of Ireland, the President, is directly elected for a fixed term of 7 years.

The voting age is 18 and the age of candidature is 35.

Elections take place on Thursdays.

The voting system for local elections, elections to Dáil Éireann, Seanad Éireann, and the European Parliament

The Single Transferable Vote system is used.

The names of the candidates in the constituency concerned appear in alphabetical order on the ballot paper, together with their political affiliation, if any. Voters indicate their preference order by writing 1 next to the name of their first choice of candidate, and then if they wish, 2 next to the name of the second choice, 3 next to the name of the third choice and so on. Voters may express as many preferences as they wish.

The Droop quota is calculated and the resulting figure is then rounded up to the next whole number, even if it is a whole number already. If any candi-

dates have enough first preferences to reach the quota, they are elected. If there are still places to be filled, the surplus votes of elected candidates are transferred to the next available preferences on those ballot papers. If there are still places to be filled, the candidate with the fewest votes is excluded, and the ballot papers are transferred to the next available preferences. This process continues until all places are filled.

Vacancies: In local government, if a vacancy occurs, it is filled by co-option; in the *Dáil* and *Seanad*, a by-election is held in order to fill a vacancy; for European elections, a list of 'replacement candidates' are presented at the time of the original election, and these substitutes fill any vacancies that may occur.

The voting system for the Head of State

The Alternative Vote is used.

Italy

Municipal and Provincial Elections (Local)

Italy has two tiers of local government.

At local level, Italy is divided into 8101 municipalities (*Comuni*). Each of these has a Municipal Council (*Consiglio*) which is directly elected for a fixed term of 5 years. Municipal Councils elect between 12 and 80 members from a single municipality-wide multi-member constituency. The Municipal Council's executive body is the Executive Committee (*Giunta*) which is appointed by a directly elected Mayor (*Sindaco*).

At 'intermediate' level, Italy is divided into 103 provinces (*Province*) and 9 Metropolitan Areas (*Aree Metropolitane*). Each Province has a Provincial Council (*Consiglio Provinciale*) which is directly elected for a fixed term of 5 years. Members are elected from a single Province-wide multi-member constituency. The Provincial Council's executive body is the Executive Committee (*Giunta*), chaired by a directly elected President. The Metropolitan areas are not elected bodies.

The voting age and the age of candidature is 18.

An artificial threshold is in place which means that for Municipal elections in municipalities with more than 15,000 inhabitants, and for Provincial elections, party lists must have won at least 3% of valid votes cast in order to take part in the allocation of seats.

Elections take place on Mondays. Municipal and Provincial elections are held at the different times across the country.

Regional Elections

There are 20 Regions (*Regioni*) in Italy and 2 autonomous Provinces (Bolzano and Trento).

15 of these regions are ordinary Regions. Each of these has a Regional Council (*Consiglio Regionale*)

which is directly elected for a fixed term of 5 years. Members are elected from several multi-member constituencies each of which correspond to a Province. The Regional Council's executive body is the Regional Government (*Giunta Regionale*) which is chaired by a directly elected President of the Region.

The other 5 are 'special statute' Regions (Sicily, Sardinia, Valle d'Aosta, Trentino Alto Adige and Friuli-Venezia-Giulia) established as a result of particular ethnic or geographical considerations. They, as well as the 2 autonomous Provinces, have a Regional Council (*Consiglio Regionale*) which is directly elected for a fixed term of 5 years. The Regional Council's executive body is the Regional Government (*Giunta Regionale*) chaired by a directly elected President of the Region.

The Regional Law currently governing these elections is provisional.

The voting age and the age of candidature is 18.

Voting is now voluntary, though it used to be compulsory.

An artificial threshold is in place which means that a party list must have won 3% of the valid votes across the region in order to take part in the allocation of seats.

Elections take place on Mondays.

Elections to the Camera Dei Deputati (Lower House)

The Italian Lower House, the *Camera dei Deputati*, is directly elected for a fixed term of 5 years, though early dissolution is possible. It has 630 members, 475 of whom are elected from single-member constituencies, and 155 of whom are elected from 26 multi-member electoral regions.

The voting age is 18 and the age of candidature is 25.

Since 1993, voting has not been compulsory. Even prior to 1993, it was not strictly enforced.

An artificial threshold is in place which means that each party needs to win 4% of the vote in the electoral region in order to be eligible to take part in the allocation of 'additional' members.

Elections take place on Mondays.

Elections to the *Senato Della Repubblica* (Upper House)

In Italy, the Upper House, the *Senato della Repubblica*, is directly elected for a fixed term of 5 years, though early dissolution is possible. The *Senato* has 315 members, 232 of whom are elected from single-member constituencies, and 83 of whom are elected from 20 multi-member electoral regions. In addition to these 315, anyone who has been President of the Republic is a senator by right, for life, unless s/he renounces the nomination (two former Presidents currently sit in the Upper House). The current President of the Republic may also nominate a maximum of 5 citizens who have made an outstanding social, scientific, artistic or literary contribution to the country. There are therefore currently 322 members of the *Senato*.

The voting age is 25 and the age of candidature is 40.

Since 1993, voting has not been compulsory. Even prior to 1993, it was not strictly enforced.

Elections take place on Sundays.

Elections to the European Parliament

Italy elects 87 members (78 from June 2004) to the European Parliament from 5 multi-member constituencies for a fixed term of 5 years.

The voting age is 18 and the age of candidature is 25.

Since 1993, voting has not been compulsory. Even prior to 1993, it was not strictly enforced.

Elections take place on Sundays.

The Prime Minister (Head of Government)

The Head of Government in Italy, the Prime Minister, is appointed by the President of the Republic. The President is under no constitutional obligation to favour the Prime Ministerial candidate put forward by the winning coalition.

The President of the Republic (Head of State)

The Head of State in Italy, the President, is indirectly elected by the Upper and Lower Houses in joint session, and by the representatives of Regional Councils (three delegates for each region, one delegate for Valle d'Aosta). The President is elected for a fixed term of 7 years.

The members are balloted successively until one

candidate has the majority required. In the first three rounds of voting, a candidate requires a majority of two-thirds. Subsequently, only an absolute majority is necessary.

The voting system for Municipal (municipalities with fewer than 15,000 inhabitants) and Regional elections

The voting system used is a combination of the following:

- First-Past-the-Post for directly-elected Municipal Mayor/President of the Region
- Fixed allocation of seats (dependent on result of elections for Mayor/President) + semi-open lists for Municipal and Regional Councils

Voters cast a single vote for the Mayor/President in a First-Past-the-Post contest. For the Municipal and Regional Councils, parties put forward a list of candidates in a specific order. In the Municipal elections, the vote cast for a mayoral candidate also automatically counts as a vote for the party list associated with that candidate; in addition, voters may mark a personal vote for a particular candidate within that party list. In the Regional elections, voters may cast a separate vote for any of the party lists, and for a specific candidate within that list.

In the Municipal elections, the party list associated with the candidate elected as Mayor automatically gains two-thirds of the seats (this is called a Bonus System or the *Premio di Maggioranza*). The other third of the seats are distributed proportionally between the remaining lists using the d'Hondt method. The number of personal votes won by individual candidates has an influence on the order in which they are elected.

In the Regional elections, the winning party list automatically gains 20% of the seats (again, this is the Bonus System or the *Premio di Maggioranza*). The remaining 80% of the seats are distributed proportionally between the remaining lists using the Hare quota. The number of personal votes won by individual candidates has an influence on the order in which they are elected.

Vacancies: The next candidate on the relevant party list fills any vacancies that may occur.

Changes since 1980: Mayors began to be directly elected in 1993; previously, they had been indirectly elected by the Municipal Councils.

The voting system for Municipal elections (municipalities with more than 15,000 inhabitants)

The voting system used is a combination of the following:

- The Two-Round System for directly-elected Municipal Mayor
- Fixed allocation of seats (dependent on result of

elections for Mayor) + semi-open lists for Municipal Councils

Voters in larger municipalities have three options: (1) vote for the mayor and for one of the parties associated with the candidate; (2) vote for a mayor, but not for one of the parties associated with the candidate and (3) vote for a candidate and for a list *not* associated with this candidate. For the election of the mayor a two round system is used. If (a) a mayoral candidate wins at least 50% of the votes in the first round *and* the associated lists also win at least 50% of the votes, the associated list receive 60% of the seats (seats distributed proportional over the associated parties) and the remaining seats are distributed proportionally. If (b) a mayoral candidate wins 50% of the votes in the first round but the associated list do not win at least 50% of the votes, then all seats are distributed proportionally over the political parties. If (c) a mayoral candidate wins at least 50% in a *second* round *and* no other group of lists *not* associated with the mayoral candidate wins more than 50% of the vote, then the associated lists receive 60% of the seats and the remaining seats are distributed proportionally. If (d) a mayoral candidate wins at least 50% in a *second* round *but* another group of lists *not* associated with the mayoral candidate wins more than 50% of the vote, the seats are distributed proportionally over the participating parties. For the proportional distribution of seats d'Hondt is used.

Vacancies: The next candidate on the relevant party list fills any vacancies that may occur.

Changes since 1980: Mayors began to be directly elected in 1993; previously, they had been indirectly elected by the Municipal Councils.

The voting system for Provincial elections

The voting system used is a combination of the following:

- Two-Round System for Provincial President
- Fixed allocation of seats (dependent on result of elections for President) + closed lists for Provincial Councils

Voters cast a single vote for the President who is elected by the Two-Round system. For the Provincial Councils, parties put forward a list of candidates in a specific order and the vote cast for a Presidential candidate automatically counts as a vote for the party list associated with that Presidential candidate. As with the Municipal Councils, the party list associated with the candidate elected as President benefits from a Bonus System, or the *Premio di Maggioranza* meaning that the party list automatically gains 60% of the seats (or more, in proportion to the votes obtained). Unlike the Municipal Council elections, the party lists do not need to fulfil any conditions to take advantage of the Bonus System. The remaining seats are distributed proportionally between the

remaining lists using the d'Hondt method. Seats are allocated to candidates in the order in which their names appear on their party list.

Vacancies: The next candidate on the relevant party list fills any vacancies that may occur.

Changes since 1980: presidents began to be directly elected in 1993; previously, they had been indirectly elected by the Provincial Councils.

The voting system for elections to the Camera dei Deputati

The Additional Member System is used.

Each voter uses two ballot papers, one for the First-Past-the-Post section where voters mark a cross for their preferred candidate, and the other for the closed party list section where voters mark a cross for a party list. 75% of the seats are elected by First-Past-the-Post in single-member constituencies. The remaining 25% are elected from regional closed party lists.

Once the single-member constituency winners have been determined (the candidate in each constituency with the greatest number of votes), the distribution of seats to 'additional' members begins; this is done in several stages:

- the total number of votes cast for each of the party lists *across the whole country* is calculated; any party lists which have won less than 4% of the total national vote are not eligible for 'additional' seats
- an 'electoral list figure' is then calculated for each party list which has passed the 4% threshold; this is done by adding up all the votes that the party needed to get any constituency candidates elected (that is the total number of votes won by the winning candidates in the constituencies), and subtracting that figure from the total party list vote
- then the Hare quota is used to allocate seats to party lists. If there are any remaining seats to be allocated, they are awarded to the parties which have the greatest remaining fraction of a quota
- the next stage is to allocate the seats to the appropriate party lists in the 26 electoral regions. The number of 'additional' members in each region is fixed. The Hare quota is calculated for each constituency (using the total number of votes cast for parties who have passed the 4% threshold as a basis, and dividing it by the number of 'additional' seats to be distributed in the constituency) and used to allocate seats to party lists. After this process, there are usually some seats which have not been allocated; starting from the smallest constituency, remaining seats are allocated to the parties with the highest remaining fraction of a quota; once a party has reached the total number of votes to which it is entitled on the basis of the national calculations, it

is no longer entitled to take part in the allocation of remaining seats

- seats are then allocated to candidates from the party lists in each electoral region; this is done in the order in which the candidates' names appear on the party list in that region; if all candidates on the list have been elected and that party list still has seats to fill, candidates associated with the party list who failed to get elected in single-member constituencies may fill these seats

Vacancies: By-elections are held to fill vacancies in the single-member constituencies; the next candidate on the relevant party list fills a vacancy in the electoral region, or if the list has been exhausted, unelected candidates from the single-member constituencies can fill vacancies.

Changes since 1980: Prior to 1991, Italy used a regional semi-open list system. Voters could cast a vote simply for a party list (in which case they were presumed to have given a personal vote to the 3 or 4 (depending on the number of seats to be elected) candidates at the top of that party list), or they could mark a cross next to the names of 3 or 4 candidates within a party list. Seats were distributed to parties in each electoral region using the Imperiali quota. Any seats that were not allocated at regional level were distributed by pooling at national level each party list's *remaining* votes (those which had not contributed to the election of a candidate). Seats were allocated to candidates according to the numbers of personal votes they had won.

In 1991, this system was amended to eliminate personal votes. The system operated in the same way, but as a regional *closed list* system.

In 1993, the Additional Member System was introduced. Despite two referendums to make further changes to the voting system (in which the turnout was too low for the result to be valid) the Additional Member System, as introduced in 1993 remains in place.

The voting system for elections to the Senato della Repubblica

The Additional Member System (with a single vote) is used.

Voters mark a cross next to the name of their preferred candidate. This vote automatically counts as a vote for the party list associated with that candidate. 75% of the seats are elected by First-Past-the-Post in single-member constituencies. The remaining 25% are elected on a regional basis.

Once the single-member constituency winners have been determined (the candidate in each constituency with the greatest number of votes), the distribution of seats to 'additional' members takes

place. This is done in several stages:

- within each electoral region, the votes cast for all of the candidates within each party are added together; from this regional party total, the votes of any winning candidates from that party are subtracted; this gives each party's 'electoral list figure'
- the d'Hondt formula is then applied to the 'electoral list figure' for each party in order to allocate seats to the parties
- the next stage is to distribute the seats amongst the candidates; this is done in the order of the personal vote percentages gained by each candidate

Vacancies: In the single-member constituencies, vacancies are filled by by-election. For the 'additional' members, the next candidate from the relevant party list fills the vacancy.

Changes since 1980: In 1993, a referendum substantially modified the voting system for the *Senato* by replacing a list system with the Additional Member System.

The voting system for elections to the European Parliament

An open list system is used.

Parties put forward a list of candidates. Voters may vote for at most three candidates in an initial constituency, two candidates in each of three further constituencies and one candidate in a final constituency.

The total number of votes cast across the whole country is calculated. The Hare quota is calculated and in the constituencies, each party's total vote is then divided by the quota to allocated seats to party lists. Seats are allocated to candidates with the highest number of personal votes.

A peculiarity of the Italian system is that if a party fails to win any seats in a particular constituency, these votes may be transferred to the equivalent party list in another constituency.

If any seats remain to be distributed after this process, any *remaining* votes for each party across the whole country (votes which did not contribute to the election of a candidate) are added up and the remaining seats are distributed at national level. The seats allocated to each list are then distributed back to the appropriate constituencies depending on the parties' vote totals and seats already won in each. Finally, these seats are allotted to the candidates with the highest number of personal votes.

Vacancies: The next candidate on the relevant party list fills any vacancies that may occur.

Luxembourg

Municipal Elections (Local)

At local level, Luxembourg is divided into 118 municipalities. Each of these has a Municipal Council which is directly elected for a fixed term of 6 years. Between 7 and 27 councillors are elected from each municipality (1150 in total) from a single municipality-wide multi-member constituency.

The voting age and the age of candidature is 18.

Voting is compulsory and failure to vote is punishable by fine.

Elections take place on Sundays.

Elections to the Chambre Des Deputes (Parliament)

The Parliament in Luxembourg, the Chambre des Députés, is elected for a fixed term of 5 years, though early dissolution is possible. It has 60 members who are elected from 4 multi-member constituencies.

The voting age is 18 and the age of candidature is 21.

Voting is compulsory and failure to vote is punishable by fine.

Elections take place on the first Sunday in June, or, if this date coincides with Pentecost Sunday, the last Sunday in May. If it is a year during which elections to the European Parliament are taking place, elections to the Chambre des Députés are scheduled to coincide with them.

Elections to the European Parliament

Luxembourg elects 6 members (unchanged in 2004) to the European Parliament from a single nationwide multi-member constituency, for a fixed term of 5 years.

The voting age is 18 and the age of candidature is 21.

Voting is compulsory both for citizens of Luxembourg and citizens of other European Union member-states if their names appear on the electoral register. Failure to vote is punishable by fine.

Elections take place on Sundays.

The Prime Minister (Head of Government)

The Head of Government in Luxembourg, the Prime Minister, is appointed by the Monarch taking into account the results of the Parliamentary Elections.

The Grand Duke (Head of State)

The Head of State in Luxembourg, the Grand Duke, is a hereditary monarch.

The voting system for all levels of government

In municipalities of fewer than 3,000 inhabitants a complicated two round system is used. Voters have as many votes as there are seats in the council. They can distribute these votes over the candidates (accumulation is not allowed). Candidates supported by at least 50% of the voters are directly elected. If some seats are still not distributed a second round is held. The number of seats left is multiplied by two. This is the number of candidates allowed to participate in the second round. Candidates are selected on the basis of the results of the first election: candidates with most votes are selected. In the second round the candidates with the most votes win.

In municipalities with more than 3,000 inhabitants, and for elections to the Chambre des Députés and the European Parliament, open lists are used.

Parties present a list of candidates and voters have as many votes as there are seats to be filled. These can be used to vote for one entire party list (which is then credited with a number of votes equal to the number of seats to be filled), or can be given to individual candidates within or across party lists

(with the possibility of giving up to two votes to an individual candidate).

Within each constituency, seats are allocated to party lists. The Droop quota is calculated and then rounded up to the next whole number, even if it is a whole number already. The total number of votes won by each party list (this includes party-list votes and votes for individual candidates from within the lists) is then divided by the quota to give the number of seats allocated to each party list. If seats remain to be filled after this process, the d'Hondt method is used (party list vote divided by one more than the number of seats already won).

The seats that each party list has won are then allocated to individual candidates on the basis of

the number of personal votes that they have won. If there is a tie, the eldest candidate has priority.

Vacancies: In municipalities with fewer than 3,000 inhabitants vacancies are filled by by-election; in municipalities that have 3,000 or more inhabitants, and for elections to the Chambre des Députés and the European Parliament, the next candidate from the relevant party list (having taken into account the numbers of personal votes) fills the vacancy.

Changes since 1980

In 2004 the line between small and large municipalities was lowered to 3,000 and the electoral system in small municipalities changed from First-past-the-post to two-rounds.

The Netherlands

Municipal Elections (Local)

There are currently 496 municipalities in The Netherlands each of which has a Municipal Council which is directly elected for a fixed term of 4 years. Each Municipal Council has between 7 and 45 members who are elected from a single municipality-wide multi-member constituency. The Municipal Council's executive body is made up of a Mayor (appointed) and 2 – 9 Aldermen (elected by the Municipal Council).

The voting age and age of candidature is 18.

Elections normally take place on Wednesdays.

Provincial Elections (Regional)

There are 12 Provinces in The Netherlands, each of which has a Provincial Assembly which is directly elected for a fixed term of 4 years. Each Provincial Assembly has between 43 and 83 members who are elected from a single Province-wide multi-member constituency. The executive body of the Provincial Assembly is a Council of State, chaired by a Royal Commissioner.

The voting age and age of candidature is 18.

Elections take place on Wednesdays.

Elections to the Tweede Kamer (Lower House)

The Lower House of Parliament in The Netherlands, the *Tweede Kamer* (literally, The Second Chamber), is directly elected for a term of 4 years. Early dissolution is possible. It has 150 members elected from a single nationwide multi-member constituency (there are 19 electoral districts, but this is purely for the purpose of allowing political parties to nominate candidates who are well known in a particular part of the country).

The voting age and age of candidature is 18.

Elections normally take place on Wednesdays.

The Eerste Kamer (Upper House)

The 75 members of the Upper House, *Eerste Kamer* (literally, The First Chamber), of the Dutch Parliament are indirectly elected by the members of the twelve Provincial Assemblies for a fixed term of 4 years.

Elections to the European Parliament

The Netherlands elects 31 members (27 from June 2004) to the European Parliament from a single nationwide multi-member constituency, for a fixed term of 5 years.

Elections take place on Thursdays (though counting is postponed until Sunday, in order to co-ordinate with the rest of the European Union).

The Prime Minister (Head of Cabinet)

After the Parliamentary elections, the monarch appoints an individual who will try to form the new Government. This person will usually become the Prime Minister.

Head of State

The Head of State is a hereditary monarch.

The voting system for all levels of government

A Semi-Open List system is used.

Voters cast their vote for a specific candidate from one of the party lists; they are not given the opportunity to simply vote for a party list.

Allocation of seats to parties: The Hare quota is used to allocate seats party lists.

After the first round of allocations, there are usually some seats which remain to be filled. These are then allocated (except in the case of municipalities with fewer than 19 members) using the

d'Hondt method (that is, the number of votes cast for each party is divided by one more than the number of seats already allocated to it). If any seats remain unfilled after this process, the parties with the highest remaining numbers of votes win the seats; in municipalities with fewer than 19 seats, unfilled seats are immediately allocated in this way.

In municipalities with fewer than 19 seats, only parties that have won a number of votes equivalent to 75% of a full quota are entitled to take part in the distribution of unfilled seats. In other municipalities and in provincial elections, all parties are entitled to take part in the distribution of unfilled seats. In elections to the *Tweede Kamer* and the European Parliament, only parties that have won a full electoral quota are entitled to take part in the distribution of unfilled seats.

Allocation of seats to candidates: Once the seats have been allocated to the parties, they must be allocated to candidates within the party lists. Votes cast for individual candidates are called personal votes. Candidates who receive a set minimum number of personal votes are automatically elected unless the group for which they are standing has been allocated too few seats or none at all. The minimum number of personal votes required in elections to larger municipalities, Provincial Assemblies, and the *Tweede Kamer* is 25% of the electoral quota. In elections to Municipal Councils with fewer than 19 members, the figure is 50% of the electoral quota and in elections to the European Parliament it is 10%. The remaining seats are allocated to candidates in the order in which their names appear on their party list.

Vacancies: The next candidate on the relevant party list fills any vacancies that may occur.

Portugal

Communal and Municipal Elections (Local)

At local level, Portugal has two tiers of local government:

At the lower level, there are 4241 *Freguesias* (communes or parishes) each of which has a Communal Assembly which is directly elected for a fixed term of 4 years. Each Assembly elects between 7 and 19 members from a single commune-wide multi-member constituency (numbers can be greater in communes with more than 30,000 electors). A Communal Council is indirectly elected by the Assembly and functions as the executive.

At a higher level, there are 308 *Municípios* each of which has a Municipal Assembly which is directly elected for a fixed term of 4 years. Each Assembly elects between 4 and 16 members from a single municipality-wide multi-member constituency. The executive body in each Assembly is called the Municipal Council and is also directly elected.

The voting age and the age of candidature is 18.

Elections take place on Sundays or a national holiday between the 22nd September and the 14th October.

Regional Elections

There is regional government only in Portugal's two Autonomous Regions, Madeira and Azores. Each has a Regional Legislative Assembly which is elected for a fixed term of 4 years.

Azores elects 52 members from 9 multi-member constituencies, and Madeira elects 61 members from 11 multi-member constituencies.

The voting age and the age of candidature is 18.

Elections take place on Sundays. The precise elec-

tion date, which is the same for both autonomous regions, is decided by the President of the Portuguese Republic and is usually in October.

Elections to Parliament

The Parliament in Portugal is called the Assembly of the Republic and it is elected for a fixed term of 4 years, though early dissolution is possible. The Assembly of the Republic has 230 seats elected from 22 multi-member constituencies (this includes 2 constituencies specifically for overseas electors – one for electors in Europe and the other for electors in other countries).

The voting age and the age of candidature is 18.

Elections take place on Sundays or national holidays, usually between 14th September and 14th October.

Elections to the European Parliament

Portugal elects 25 members (24 from June 2004) to the European Parliament from a single nationwide multi-member constituency, for a fixed term of 5 years.

The voting age and the age of candidature is 18.

Elections take place on Sundays.

The Prime Minister (Head of Government)

The Head of Government in Portugal, the Prime Minister, is appointed by the President of the Republic.

After the elections to the Assembly of the Republic or the resignation of the previous Government, the President of the Republic meets all the parties that have elected representatives and, taking the results of the Parliamentary elections into account, invites the leader of one of these parties to form the Government.

The President of the Republic (Head of State)

The Head of State in Portugal, the President of the Republic, is directly elected for a fixed term of 5 years.

The voting age is 18 and the age of candidature is 35.

Elections take place on Sundays. If there is a second round of voting, it takes place 21 days after the first round.

The voting system for Communal, Municipal and Regional elections, elections to the Assembly of the Republic and the European Parliament

The closed list system is used.

Parties present lists of candidates and voters mark their ballot papers with a cross for their preferred list. The d'Hondt method is used to allocate seats to party lists. Seats are allocated to candidates in the order in which their names appear on their party's list.

Vacancies: The next person on the relevant list fills any vacancies that may occur. At municipal level, each party list also contains a number of substitute candidates; if there are no more candidates from the main party list to fill the vacancies, these substitute candidates fill the vacancy.

The voting system for the Head of State

The Two-Round System is used.

Spain

Municipal/Provincial Elections (Local)

There are two tiers of local government in Spain:

There are 8089 municipalities (*municipios*) each of which has a Municipal Council which is directly elected for a fixed term of 4 years. Each municipality forms a single municipality-wide multi-member constituency which elects between 5 and 25 members (these numbers can be greater in municipalities with a population of more than 100,000). The executive body of the Municipal Council is the Local Government Council, chaired by a mayor.

There are 50 provinces (*provincias*) each of which has an indirectly elected Provincial Council (by and from the ranks of the municipal councillors) which serves a fixed term of 4 years. The executive body of the Provincial Council is the Provincial Government Council, chaired by a President.

The 3 Provincial Councils in the Basque Country and the 7 in the Canary Islands (where they are called *Cabildo Insular*) are directly elected for fixed terms of 4 years. In the Basque Country, each of the 3 provinces forms a single province-wide multi-member constituency electing 51 members each. In the Canary Islands, each island (*not* each province) forms a single multi-member constituency which elects between 11 and 21 members (these numbers can be greater on islands with a population of more than 100,000).

The voting age and the age of candidature is 18.

For Municipal and *Cabildo Insular* elections, a threshold of 5% is in place. For elections to the Basque Provincial Councils, a 3% threshold is used.

Elections take place on the fourth Sunday of May.

Regional Elections

Spain is divided into 17 Autonomous Communities and 2 Autonomous Cities (Ceuta and Melilla – in North Africa). Each of these has a Legislative Assembly which is directly elected for a fixed term of 4 years, though early dissolution is possible. In most Autonomous Communities each province forms a constituency, though the situation is different for the Canary and Balearic Islands. The Legislative Assemblies elect between 25 and 135 members each.

The voting age and the age of candidature is 18.

A threshold of 3% is in place in most of the Autonomous Communities, except in Generalitat Valenciana, Castilla y Leon, Balearics, Ceuta and Melilla, where it is 5%

Elections take place on Sundays. In 13 of the Autonomous Communities, elections are held on the same day as Municipal Elections (the fourth Sunday of May every four years). The other four Communities (The Basque Country, Catalonia, Andalusia and Galicia) hold elections at different times, but always on Sundays.

Elections to the Congreso De Los Diputados (Lower House)

The Lower House of Parliament in Spain, the *Congreso de los Diputados*, serves a fixed term of 4 years, though early dissolution is possible. It has 350 members who are elected from 50 multi-member constituencies which correspond to the country's provinces, and 2 single-member constituencies (Ceuta and Melilla). Each multi-member constituency contains a minimum of 2 seats, and additional seats in relation to the population.

The voting age and the age of candidature is 18.

An artificial threshold of 3% is used.

Elections take place on Sundays.

Elections to the Senado (Upper House)

In Spain, the Upper House of Parliament, the *Senado* is partly directly elected (208 seats) from 52 multi-member and 7 single-member constituencies, and partly indirectly elected (currently 51 seats) by the Legislative Assemblies of the Autonomous Communities. The *Senado* is currently composed of 259 senators, though this can vary by one senator in either direction, and it is elected for a fixed term of 4 years, though early dissolution is possible.

The voting age and the age of candidature is 18.

Elections take place on Sundays.

Elections to the European Parliament

Spain elects 64 members (54 from June 2004) to the European Parliament from a single nationwide multi-member constituency, for a fixed term of 5 years.

The voting age and the age of candidature is 18.

Elections take place on Sundays.

The Prime Minister (Head of Government)

In Spain, the Head of Government, *Presidente del Gobierno* is appointed by the Monarch taking into account the results of the parliamentary elections.

Once appointed, the *Presidente del Gobierno* is confirmed in office by the Lower House.

Head of State

The Head of State is a hereditary monarch.

The voting system for Municipal, Provincial and Regional elections, and elections to the Congreso de los Diputados and the European Parliament

A closed list system is used whenever direct elections are held.

The only exceptions to this are:

the smallest municipalities (those with 100 – 250 residents) which use an open list system.

Ceuta and Melilla in elections to the *Congreso de los Diputados*, each of which forms a single-member constituency using First-Past-the-Post.

Voters choose one party list. The d'Hondt method is used to allocate seats to party lists.

Vacancies: The next candidate on the relevant party list fills any vacancies that may occur. The names of substitutes also appear on the party lists, and these substitutes may fill a vacancy if no other candidates are available.

In Municipal Councils, if the list and the substitutes have been exhausted, the quorum of attendance and voting in the Municipal Council will be automatically adjusted to the new number of members. If the number of members in the Provincial Councils falls below 2/3 of the legal number, the Provincial Council may appoint new members, taking into consideration the results of the municipal elections.

The voting system for elections to the Senado

The Limited Vote (with some single-member constituencies using First-Past-the-Post) is used.

Vacancies: Each candidate has a substitute (who is named on the ballot paper at the time of the election); these substitutes fill any vacancies that may occur.

Sweden

Municipal Elections (Local)

At local level, Sweden is divided into 289 municipalities (*Kommuner*) each of which has a Municipal Council which is directly elected for a fixed term of 4 years. Each municipality elects between 31 and 101 members either from a single municipality-wide multi-member constituency, in the case of the smaller municipalities, or a number of multi-member constituencies (Stockholm, which is the largest is divided into 6 constituencies). The executive body of the Municipal Council is the Municipal Executive Committee (*Kommunalstyrelse*), which is chaired by the leader of the majority party.

The voting age and the age of candidature is 18.

Elections take place on the third Sunday in September (the same day as County/Regional and Parliamentary elections).

County/Regional Elections

At regional level, Sweden is divided into 21 counties (*Län*), each of which forms a single county-wide multi-member constituency for the purpose of these elections.

18 counties have a County Council Assembly (*Landstingsfullmäktige*) which is directly elected for a fixed term of 4 years. The executive body of the County Council Assembly is the County Executive Committee (*Landstingsstyrelse*) which is chaired by the leader of the majority party.

2 others (Skåne and Västra Götaland) have a Regional Council which is directly elected for a fixed term of 4 years. The executive body of the Regional Council is the Regional Executive Committee (*Regionstyrelse*) which is chaired by the leader of the majority party.

1 other (Kalmar) has an indirectly elected Regional Council which has 45 members (30 representing

the region's municipalities, 15 representing the County Council) and serves a fixed term of 4 years.

There is also one Municipality (Gotland) which has county status.

The voting age and the age of candidature is 18.

An artificial threshold of 3% across the county is in place.

Elections take place on the third Sunday in September (the same day as Municipal and Parliamentary elections).

Elections to the Riksdag (Parliament)

In Sweden, the Parliament, the *Riksdag*, is directly elected for a fixed term of 4 years, though early dissolution is possible. The *Riksdag* has 349 members, 310 of whom are elected from 29 multi-member constituencies (each electing between 2 and 38 members) and 39 of whom are elected as 'equalising' seats at a national level.

The voting age and the age of candidature is 18.

An artificial threshold is in place whereby parties that fail to win a number of votes equivalent to 4% of the total valid votes cast across the whole country are prohibited from taking part in the allocation of seats. The exception to this rule is that a party that wins 12% of the valid votes cast in the constituency may take part in the allocation of fixed constituency seats.

Elections take place on the third Sunday in September (the same day as Municipal and County/Regional elections).

Elections to the European Parliament

Sweden elects 22 members (19 from June 2004) to the European Parliament from a single nation-

wide multi-member constituency, for a fixed term of 5 years.

The voting age and the age of candidature is 18.

An artificial threshold of 4% of the national vote is in place.

Elections take place on Sundays.

The Prime Minister (Head of Government)

After every election the *Riksdag* elects a Speaker. It is the task of the Speaker to propose a new Prime Minister and at the same time to state which parties should be included in the government. The proposal is put to a vote in the *Riksdag*.

A majority for the Speaker's proposal is not required, however if more than half the total number of members, i.e. 175, have voted against the proposal, it is rejected.

If the Speaker's proposal is rejected by the *Riksdag*, the procedure has to be resumed and a new proposal presented. The Speaker may make up to four proposals. If s/he does not succeed in getting any of these four proposals approved, an extraordinary election must be held within three months, unless an ordinary General Election is due to be held within the same period of time. In fact, the Speaker has never had to submit more than one proposal – the *Riksdag* has always accepted the first proposal.

After the proposal has been approved by the *Riksdag*, the Speaker issues a letter of appointment to the new Prime Minister.

Head of State

The Head of State in Sweden is a hereditary monarch.

The voting system for all levels of government

A semi-open list system is used.

Voters choose a party list, but also have the option of casting a personal vote for a particular candidate from that party list, by marking an 'X' next to his/her name on the ballot paper.

In the Municipal and European elections, all of the seats within the constituency are allocated to party lists, using the modified Sainte Laguë method.

In the County/Regional elections, 9/10 seats are allocated to party lists using the modified Sainte Laguë method. These are the 'fixed' seats. Then, the

total votes across the whole of the county are added together. A calculation is then done to see how the *total* number of seats (i.e. 10/10) would have been allocated in relation to the votes cast – using the whole county as a single constituency. The difference between this notional number and the number of fixed seats already distributed constitutes each party's allocation of the remaining 1/10 seats. These are the 'equalising' seats. The geographical allocation of the equalising seats is done according to each party's highest comparative number of votes after the distribution of the fixed seats.

In the elections to the *Riksdag*, 310 seats are allocated (using the modified Sainte Laguë formula) within multi-member constituencies to party lists. These are the 'fixed' seats. Then, the total votes across the whole country are added together. A calculation is then done to see how the *total* number of seats (349) would have been allocated in relation to the votes cast – using the whole country as a single constituency. The difference between this notional number and the number of fixed seats already distributed constitutes each party's allocation of the remaining 39 seats. These are the 'equalising' seats. The geographical allocation of the equalising seats is done according to each party's highest comparative number of votes after the distribution of the fixed seats.

Within each party list, the seats that have been won are allocated to candidates according to the numbers of personal votes that they have won. Candidates who receive personal votes equivalent to 5% (for Municipal, County/Regional and European elections) or 8% (for elections to the Lower House) of the total votes cast for their party list are the first to receive seats. Otherwise, seats are allocated to candidates in the order in which their names appear on their party list.

Vacancies: Each party list has a number of substitutes who are named on the ballot paper at the time of the election; these substitutes fill any vacancies that may occur.

Changes since 1980: Previously, a closed list system was used – that is, candidates were elected in the order in which their names appeared on their party list. The semi-open list system was piloted in seven municipalities in 1994 and then in the elections to the European Parliament in 1995. The system was introduced across the whole country in 1998 for municipal, county/regional and Parliamentary elections.

United Kingdom

Local Elections

At local level, the United Kingdom is divided into:

- 47 English Shire Unitary Councils
- 36 Metropolitan Borough Councils
- 264 District Councils (in England and Northern Ireland)
- 32 London Boroughs and the City of London
- 54 Unitary Authorities (in Scotland, Wales and some parts of England)

At 'intermediate' level, there are 34 County Councils, in those areas of England which have District Councils.

These bodies are all directly elected for fixed terms of 4 years. All local authorities are divided into many constituencies (known as wards or electoral divisions); in England, Scotland and Wales, wards elect from 1-5 members; in Northern Ireland, wards elect 5-7 members. The executive arrangements vary from authority to authority and are currently undergoing reform.

The voting age is 18 and the age of candidature is 21.

In England, Scotland and Wales, elections take place on Thursdays, usually the first Thursday in May. In Northern Ireland, elections usually take place on the third Wednesday in May.

Regional Elections

At Regional level, the United Kingdom has a Greater London Assembly, National Assembly for Wales, Northern Ireland Assembly and Scottish Parliament. These are all directly elected for fixed terms of 4 years.

The London Assembly elects 25 members, 14 from

single-member constituencies and 11 from a single London-wide multi-member constituency.

The National Assembly for Wales elects 60 members, 40 from single-member constituencies and 20 from 5 multi-member constituencies (electing 4 members each).

The Northern Ireland Assembly elects 108 members from 18 multi-member constituencies (electing 6 members each).

The Scottish Parliament elects 129 members, 73 from single-member constituencies and 56 from 8 multi-member constituencies (electing 7 members each).

The voting age is 18 and the age of candidature is 21.

The London Assembly has an artificial threshold; parties must win over 5% of the entire London vote before they are entitled to enter the calculation for the 'additional' members.

Elections take place on Thursdays.

Elections to the House of Commons (Lower House)

The Lower House of Parliament in the United Kingdom, the House of Commons, is directly elected for a maximum term of 5 years, though terms are not fixed. It has 659 members elected from single-member constituencies.

The voting age is 18 and the age of candidature is 21.

Elections take place on Thursdays.

The House of Lords (Upper House)

The Upper House of Parliament in the United Kingdom, the House of Lords, is not an elected

body – members (peers) sit in the House of Lords by appointment, for life.

Elections to the European Parliament

The United Kingdom elects 87 (78 from June 2004) members to the European Parliament for a fixed term of 5 years. 84 members are elected from 11 regional multi-member constituencies in England, Scotland and Wales (electing between 4 and 11 members each and 3 to 10 after June 2004), and 3 are elected from a single multi-member constituency in Northern Ireland.

The voting age is 18 and the age of candidature is 21.

Elections take place on Thursdays (though counting is postponed until Sunday, in order to co-ordinate with the rest of the European Union).

The Prime Minister (Head of Government)

The Head of Government in the United Kingdom, the Prime Minister, is appointed by the Monarch taking into account the General Election results.

When the result in every constituency is known, if a party has won a majority of constituencies it will form the government and its leader will become the Prime Minister.

Head of State

The Head of State in the United Kingdom is a hereditary monarch.

The voting system for local elections in England, Scotland and Wales and elections to the House of Commons

The First-Past-the-Post voting system is used. For local elections, First-Past-the-Post is sometimes used in single-member constituencies and sometimes in multi-member constituencies; for elections to the Lower House, it is always used in single-member constituencies.

Parties put forward one candidate each in single-member constituencies, or one or more (up to the number of seats to be filled) in multi-member constituencies. Voters mark the ballot paper with an X next to the name of their preferred candidate in a single-member constituency, or next to several names (the maximum is the number of seats to be filled) in a multi-member constituency. The candidate (or candidates) with the largest number of votes wins.

Vacancies: Any vacancies that occur are filled by holding a by-election.

The voting system for local, Assembly and European elections in Northern Ireland

The Single Transferable Vote is used.

Each party may put forward several candidates (up to the number of seats to be filled). Voters cast their votes by putting the number 1 next to the name of their favourite candidate. They may then

put the number 2 next to the name of their second favourite candidate and so on. Voters may cast as many preferences as they wish.

The Droop quota is calculated and is rounded up to the next whole number, even if it is a whole number already. If any candidates have enough first preferences to reach the quota, they are elected. If there are still places to be filled, the surplus votes of elected candidates are transferred to the next available preferences. If there are still places to be filled, the candidate with the fewest votes is excluded, and those ballot papers are transferred to the next available preferences. This process continues until all seats are filled.

Vacancies: Any vacancies that occur are filled by holding a by-election (using the Alternative Vote), or in special circumstances in local elections by co-opting a new member.

Changes since 1980: The first elections to the Northern Ireland Assembly were in 1998.

The Voting System for Elections to the Greater London Assembly, the National Assembly for Wales and the Scottish Parliament

The Additional Member System is used.

Each elector has two votes, one for a constituency member in a single-member constituency (the voter marks a cross for one candidate), and the other for 'additional' members in a larger multi-member constituency (the voter marks a cross for one closed party list).

In the single-member constituencies, the candidate with the most votes wins. In the list section, the d'Hondt formula is applied (that is, the number of votes that each party list has won is divided by one more than the number of single-member constituency seats it has already won within the multi-member constituency).

Vacancies: In the case of constituency members, vacancies are filled by holding a by-election; in the case of additional members, vacancies are filled by the next candidate on the relevant party list.

Changes since 1980: The first elections to the National Assembly for Wales and the Scottish Parliament were in 1999; the first elections to the Greater London Assembly were in 2000.

The voting system for the Mayor of London (and Other Elected Mayors)

The Supplementary Vote is used.

Changes since 1980: The first elections for Mayor of London were in 2000; the first elections for other directly elected mayors were in 2002.

The voting system for elections to the European Parliament in England, Scotland and Wales
A Closed List System is used.

Voters simply choose one party list. Seats are distributed to parties using the d'Hondt method. Candidates are elected in the order in which their names appear on their party's list.

Vacancies: Any vacancies that occur are filled by the next candidate on the relevant party list; if the vacancy was created by the departure of an independent

candidate, or if the relevant list has been exhausted, the vacancy is filled by holding a by-election.

Changes since 1980: 1999 was the first time that electors in England, Scotland and Wales had used the closed list system; previously, the First-Past-the-Post system in single-member constituencies had been used.

Appendix I

Distribution of Voting Systems

	Local	Regional	Lower House	Upper House	Europe	Head of Govt.	Head of State
Austria	S-OL/CL	S-OL/CL	S-OL	not directly-elected	S-OL	not directly-elected	TR
Belgium	S-OL	S-OL	S-OL	S-OL	S-OL	not directly-elected	monarchy
Denmark	O/S-OL	n/a	O/S-OL	n/a	O/S-OL	not directly-elected	monarchy
Finland	OL	OL	OL	n/a	OL	not directly-elected	TR
France	TR/TR + CL	TR/CL	TR	not directly-elected	CL	not directly-elected	TR
Germany	OL/CL/AMS	AMS/CL	AMS	not directly-elected	CL	not directly-elected	not directly-elected
Greece	S-OL/TR S-OL	not elected	OL (+ CL)	n/a	CL	not directly-elected	not directly-elected
Ireland	STV	n/a	STV	not directly-elected	STV	not directly-elected	AV
Italy	FPTP/TR S-OL TR + CL	FPTP S-OL	AMS	AMS	OL	not directly elected	not directly-elected
Luxembourg	TR/OL	n/a	OL	n/a	OL	not directly-elected	monarchy
The Netherlands	S-OL	S-OL	S-OL	S-OL	S-OL	not directly-elected	monarchy
Portugal	CL	CL	CL	n/a	CL	not directly-elected	TR
Spain	CL	CL	CL	LV	CL	not directly-elected	monarchy
Sweden	S-OL	S-OL	S-OL	n/a	S-OL	not directly-elected	monarchy
United Kingdom	FPTP/STV	AMS/STV	FPTP	not elected	CL/STV	not directly-elected	monarchy

Key

AMS	Additional Member System
OL	Open List
AV	Alternative Vote
O/S-OL	Open/Semi-Open List
CL	Closed List
S-OL	Semi-Open List
FPTP	First-Past-the-Post
STV	Single Transferable Vote
LV	Limited Vote
TR	Two-Round system

Appendix 2

Glossary: Electoral Formulas

Electoral formulas are used for distributing seats with proportional voting systems. They can be divided into two basic categories:

Highest average methods – these work by taking a party's total number of votes and repeatedly dividing this total by a fixed series of numbers, increasing each time the party wins a seat; the party which has the highest figure at each stage once this division has been done is entitled to the next seat.

Quota methods – these work by calculating a quota (based on the total number of valid votes cast and the number of seats to be filled), which is equivalent to the number of votes a party needs to win a seat. Each party's total number of votes is divided by the quota in order to calculate how many seats are to be allocated to each party. Usually (though not always) any places which remain to be elected when no party has a complete quota left, are distributed to the parties with the highest remaining fraction of a quota.

Highest average methods

1.1 d'Hondt

With the d'Hondt method, each party's total number of votes is divided by the following series of numbers: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 etc.

1.2 Pure Sainte Laguë

With the Pure Sainte Laguë method, each party's total number of votes is divided by the following series of numbers: 1, 3, 5, 7, 9 etc. This method is very rare.

1.3 Modified Sainte Laguë

With the Modified Sainte Laguë method, each party's total number of votes is divided by the following series of numbers: 1.4, 3, 5, 7, 9 etc. This method is far more common than Pure Sainte Laguë.

1.4 Danish method

With the Danish method, each party's total number of votes is divided by the following series of numbers: 1, 4, 7, 10, 13 etc. This method is called the Danish method because it is used nowhere other than Denmark.

Illustration of the workings of the Highest Average Method (using the d'Hondt method as an example)

	Party A	Party B	Party C	Party D
Total Votes (V)	30,000	23,000	6,000	42,000
Stage 1 (V/1)	30,000	23,000	6,000	42,000
Stage 2	30,000	23,000	6,000	21,000 (V/2)
Stage 3	15,000 (V/2)	23,000	6,000	21,000
Stage 4	15,000	11,500 (V/2)	6,000	21,000
Stage 5	15,000	11,500	6,000	14,000 (V/3)
Stage 6	10,000 (V/3)	11,500	6,000	14,000

Stage 1: Party D has the greatest number of votes, so it wins the first seat.

Stage 2: Because Party D won the first seat (its first seat), its total number of votes is divided by 2. Party A now has the highest total and so it wins the second seat.

Stage 3: Because Party A won the second seat (its first seat), its total number of votes is divided by 2. Party B now has the highest total and so it wins the third seat.

Stage 4: Because Party B won the third seat (its first seat), its total number of votes is divided by 2. Party D now has the highest total and so it wins the fourth seat.

Stage 5: Because Party D won the fourth seat (*its second seat*), its total number of votes is divided by 3. Party A now has the highest total and so it wins the fifth seat.

Stage 6: Because Party A won the fifth seat (*its second seat*), its total number of votes is divided by 3. Party D now has the highest total and so it wins the sixth seat.

This process continues until all seats have been filled. With the other highest average methods, the series of divisors (in this case 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 etc) is replaced with other series (e.g. 1.4, 3, 5, 7, 9 etc).

Quota methods

2.1 Hare

The Hare quota is calculated by dividing the total number of valid votes by **the number of seats to be filled**.

$$\text{total valid votes} / \text{number of seats} = \text{quota}$$

2.2 Droop

The Droop quota is calculated by dividing the total number of valid votes by **one more than the number of seats to be filled**. Sometimes, as in the Republic of Ireland, the resulting figure is rounded up to the next whole number, even if it is already a whole number.

$$\text{total valid votes} / (\text{number of seats} + 1) = \text{quota}$$

2.3 Imperiali

The Imperiali quota is calculated by dividing the total number of valid votes by **two more than the number of seats to be filled**.

$$\text{total valid votes} / (\text{number of seats} + 2) = \text{quota}$$

Other methods

3.1 Hagenbach-Bischoff

The Hagenbach-Bischoff method is a variant of the Droop quota. It uses the Droop quota in the initial stages, and then rather than distributing remaining seats to the parties with the highest remaining fraction of a quota, it uses the d'Hondt method to distribute these remaining seats.

3.2 (Hare)-Niemeyer

The Hare-Niemeyer or Niemeyer method has exactly the same effect as the Hare quota. However, it is done in a different way: the number of seats to be filled is multiplied by the number of votes won by a party. The result of this calculation is divided by the total number of valid votes cast. This gives the number of seats to be allocated to the party. This method is used only in Germany.

Appendix 3

Glossary of Voting Systems

Additional Member System

A mixed system, with some single-member constituencies (using First-Past-the-Post), and a smaller number of multi-member constituencies (using closed lists) across a wider region encompassing several of the single-member constituencies. Voters mark an 'X' next to their preferred candidate in the single-member constituency, and then choose a party list in the wider region. In the single-member constituencies, the candidate with the greatest number of votes wins. In the wider region, the number of seats already won by each party in the relevant single-member constituencies is taken into account, and an electoral formula is used to distribute the remaining seats amongst the parties in order to provide a degree of proportionality.

Alternative Vote

Single-member constituencies. Voters rank as many candidates as they wish in order of preference (1, 2, 3 etc). If one candidate gets 50% or more of first preferences, s/he is elected. If not, the candidate with the smallest number of votes is excluded, and the ballot papers belonging to that candidate are transferred to the second (or next available) preference. This process continues until one candidate has 50% of the votes and is declared elected.

First-Past-the-Post

Usually in single-member constituencies, though multi-member constituencies are also possible. Voters mark an 'X' for their preferred candidate, or multiple 'X's for several candidates (voters are entitled to cast as many 'X's as there are places to be filled). The winner is the candidate with the greatest number of votes.

The Limited Vote

Very similar to First-Past-the-Post in multi-member constituencies, except that voters are entitled to cast one 'X' fewer than the places to be filled (i.e. maximum of 3 'X's where there are 4 places to be

filled). Again, the candidates with the greatest numbers of votes are elected.

List Systems:

Closed Lists

Multi-member constituencies. Each party or grouping puts forward a list of candidates. Voters choose one list. Seats are distributed to lists, in proportion to the votes cast, by means of an electoral formula. Candidates are elected in the order in which their names appear on their party's list. Voters are not able to influence the order in which candidates are elected.

Semi-Open Lists

Multi-member constituencies. Each party or grouping puts forward a list of candidates. Voters choose one list, or they have the option of choosing a particular candidate (or candidates) from a party list. Seats are distributed to lists, in proportion to the votes cast, by means of an electoral formula. Candidates are elected in the order in which their names appear on their party's list – but some candidates may get elected sooner because they have won a certain number of percentage of 'personal' votes. Voters have some influence over the order in which candidates are elected.

Open Lists

Multi-member constituencies. Each party or grouping puts forward a list of candidates. Voters choose a particular candidate (or candidates) from a party list. Seats are distributed to lists, in proportion to the votes cast, by means of an electoral formula. Candidates are elected in the order dictated by the 'personal' votes cast. Voters have absolute influence over the order in which candidates are elected.

Single Transferable Vote

Multi-member constituencies. Similar to the Alternative Vote, in that voters rank as many candi-

dates as they wish in order of preference (1, 2, 3 etc). A quota is calculated – if any candidates have enough first preferences to reach the quota, they are elected. If there are still places to be filled, the surplus votes of elected candidates are transferred to the next available preferences. If there are still places to be filled, the candidate with the fewest votes is excluded, and those ballot papers are transferred to the next available preferences. This process continues until all places are filled.

Supplementary Vote

Single-member constituencies. Voters place an 'X' in one column on the ballot paper for their first choice of candidate, and another 'X' in a second column for their second choice. If a candidate gets 50% or more of the first choices, s/he is elected. If not, all candidates are excluded except the two with the greatest number of votes. All ballot

papers from the excluded candidates are transferred to the second choice, if that candidate remains in the contest. The candidate with the greatest number of votes after this distribution is the winner.

Two-Round System

Usually, though not always, single-member constituencies. Similar to the Supplementary Vote, except that instead of two choices on a single ballot paper, voters vote for their first choice of candidate by marking an 'X'. If a candidate gets 50% or more of the votes, s/he is elected. If not, all candidates are excluded except the two with the greatest number of votes. Then there is a second round of voting, and voters choose between the two remaining candidates by marking another 'X'. The candidate with the greatest number of votes is the winner.

Notes

Notes

European Democracies is a survey of the electoral process in the 15 member states of the European Union in January 2004, covering:

- Methods of election for the upper and lower houses of parliament
- Local and regional electoral systems
- The electoral system for the European Parliament
- How the head of government and head of state are chosen
- Changes made since 1980
- The age at which people are allowed to vote and stand as candidates
- Whether voting is compulsory or voluntary
- How frequently and on what day elections normally take place.

European Democracies is the successor volume to Enid Lakeman's ground-breaking study *Nine Democracies* and a valuable reference source on European political systems.

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