

UNDERSTANDING, TYPES AND STRUCTURAL ELEMENTS OF ELECTORAL SYSTEMS

Abstract

Discussion about elections and electoral systems is in fact discussion about the effects of representative bodies in democratic political systems. Understanding of that link is not possible without knowing technical details used for forming electoral systems. Despite nonexistence of generally accepted conceptual framework and complexity of different definition approaches and interpretation bases of both elections and electoral systems, there is an agreement that elections are related to representative democracy and they represent its central institution, while electoral systems represent the ways in which voters can express their preferences through their votes and possibilities how those voices can be turned into representative mandates. Which elections strategy, formed in electoral model, should be applied? How to combine structural elements of electoral systems in order to achieve hoped-for political effects? Those are the question which could be answered only by good knowledge of the complex electoral problem area which is in contact with total political landscape: institutions, processes and contents.

Key words: elections, electoral systems, structural elements, electoral units, electoral competition, voting, recomputation of votes