Symposium Introduction

Elections Under the French Double-Ballot System: An Introduction

Bernard Grofman\textsuperscript{a} and Michael S. Lewis-Beck\textsuperscript{b}

\textsuperscript{a} School of Social Sciences, University of California, Irvine, 3151 Social Science Plaza, Irvine, CA 92697-5100, USA.
E-mail: bgrofman@orion.osc.uci.edu;
\textsuperscript{b} Department of Political Science, University of Iowa, Iowa City, IA, USA.
E-mail: michael-lewis-beck@uiowa.edu


The genesis of this mini-symposium was a conference on 20–23 June 2004 on ‘Majoritarian and Runoff Electoral Systems’ at the Château de la Breceshe in Missilac, Bretagne sponsored by the Albert and Elaine Borchard Foundation.\textsuperscript{1} Additional support was provided by the University of California, Irvine’s Center for the Study of Democracy\textsuperscript{2} as part of its ongoing study of the operation and political consequences of the major electoral systems of the world.\textsuperscript{3} The conference was co-organized by Bernard Grofman (University of California, Irvine), Shaun Bowler (University of California, Riverside), and James Adams (University of California, Santa Barbara).\textsuperscript{4} Earlier versions of all four of the papers in this mini-symposium were given at the conference.\textsuperscript{5}

Comparative elections research is a burgeoning topic in political science. The dramatic growth in the number of democracies, and the efflorescence of numerous variants of electoral rules used to elect national parliaments and other political leaders at all levels of government, has heightened interest in seeking to understand how voting rules operate, and their implications for voter choice, for candidates and political parties, and for governance and public policy outputs, more generally. Strong claims have been made about the effects of electoral systems on other variables such as party proliferation, strength of parties, government stability, minority representation, and incentives for localized and pork-barrel politics; and claims have been made that particular electoral rules are beneficial (or not) for the effective functioning of democracy, or appropriate (or not) for use in racially and ethnically divided societies.\textsuperscript{6}

Double-ballot methods are used for parliamentary and presidential elections in France as well at the local level, for example in departmental and municipal contests. These methods, while important in their own right, also can be usefully viewed in comparative perspective as a close relative of the first-past-the-post (plurality) and runoff methods used around the world, most commonly in English-speaking nations. To understand the place of double-ballot
The French double-ballot system has the simple plurality and the alternative vote. It also reduces strategic voting and encourages candidates to focus more on local issues. The French double-ballot system is similar to a two-round runoff election in that it allows for a second round of voting if no candidate receives a majority of the votes in the first round.

The French double-ballot system is a proportional representation system that is designed to elect a president and a parliament. It is a two-round system where the candidate with the most votes in the first round becomes the president, and the candidate with the second most votes becomes the vice president. If no candidate receives a majority of the votes in the first round, a second round of voting is held.

The French double-ballot system is often used in European countries, where it is known as the "second ballot" or "second round" system. It is also used in some Latin American countries, such as Chile and Argentina.

One of the main advantages of the French double-ballot system is that it reduces the possibility of a "runaway winner" in the first round of voting. This is because the candidate with the most votes in the first round becomes the president, regardless of whether or not they have a majority of the votes. This can help to ensure that the president is elected by the will of the majority of the voters.

However, the French double-ballot system also has some drawbacks. One of the main drawbacks is that it can lead to "strategic voting." This is because candidates may choose to focus on issues that they believe will help them win the second round of voting, rather than issues that they believe will help them win the first round.

In conclusion, the French double-ballot system is a proportional representation system that is designed to elect a president and a parliament. It is a two-round system where the candidate with the most votes in the first round becomes the president, and the candidate with the second most votes becomes the vice president. If no candidate receives a majority of the votes in the first round, a second round of voting is held. The French double-ballot system is often used in European countries, where it is known as the "second ballot" or "second round" system. It is also used in some Latin American countries, such as Chile and Argentina. One of the main advantages of the French double-ballot system is that it reduces the possibility of a "runaway winner" in the first round of voting. This is because the candidate with the most votes in the first round becomes the president, regardless of whether or not they have a majority of the votes. This can help to ensure that the president is elected by the will of the majority of the voters. However, the French double-ballot system also has some drawbacks. One of the main drawbacks is that it can lead to "strategic voting." This is because candidates may choose to focus on issues that they believe will help them win the second round of voting, rather than issues that they believe will help them win the first round.