

The Mixed Member Proportional electoral system

description	Mixed Member Proportional is a proportional electoral system that combines elections in single-member districts (normally using First Past the Post) with a PR closed list system. Usually about half the seats are from the single member districts. Voters have two votes. One vote is for a party, and the votes cast for each party determine the total number of seats each party will have. The second vote is for one candidate for a single-member district. Once the district results are known, list seats are allocated to parties so that each party's share of all the seats is close to its share of all the party votes. A party may have to reach a qualifying level of party votes, called a 'threshold', before it can receive any list seats, for example 3% or 5%.
some of the countries that use the system	Albania, Bolivia, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Lesotho, Mexico, New Zealand, Venezuela
advantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • parties' percentages of seats are close to their percentages of the party votes • parties with support that is wide but not concentrated can win seats • district representatives have strong links with the voters • most party votes are effective because they help parties win seats • voters are allowed to vote for a local candidate from a party that is different from the party they support with their party vote
disadvantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • it is more difficult for voters to understand how parties are allocated seats, which may lead to increased complaints • it creates two classes of elected members
effect of the number of district seats	Too many district seats make it harder to achieve a closely proportional result, but too many list seats means districts have to be larger.
implications for drawing district boundaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • expensive and time-consuming • requires accurate population and geographic data • location of district boundaries can affect a party's chances in a district, but district boundaries attract less political pressure because the party votes determine the overall election result
implications for political parties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • party lists give power to party leaderships • small parties can win seats
representation of women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • parties that don't nominate women for winnable district seats or include women in their lists may lose support from women • parties may voluntarily decide on quotas for women in their party lists, or the law may require this to be done • seats can be reserved to which only women can be elected
representation of minorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • parties that don't nominate minority candidates for winnable district seats or include minority candidates in their lists may lose support from minorities • parties representing minorities will win list seats if they get enough party votes to qualify • a qualifying threshold may be waived for minority parties • the only ways to guarantee minority representation are through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – reserved seats or – mandatory quotas of minority candidates in high positions on party lists

Example 1

election for 100 seats, comprising 60 district seats and 40 list seats, no threshold

	% party votes	total seat entitlement	district seats won	list seats allocated
Party A	10	10	1	9
Party B	40	40	28	12
Party C	35	35	31	4
Party D	4	4	0	4
Party E	11	11	0	11
Total	100	100	60	40

Example 2

election for 100 seats, comprising 60 district seats and 40 list seats, threshold of 5% of the party votes

	% party votes	total seat entitlement	district seats won	list seats allocated
Party A	10	10	1	9
Party B	40	42	28	14
Party C	35	37	31	6
Party D	4	0	0	0
Party E	11	11	0	11
Total	100	100	60	40

Party D did not receive any list seats because it did not win at least 5% of the party votes.