

List System

List System is another method of securing proportional representation. This method also operates in multiple member constituencies. Different parties put up lists of as many candidates (each) as number of members to be elected. Thus, if seven persons are to be elected each party will put up a list of seven candidates in the preference in which they would like to be elected. The voters vote for parties and not individuals. Quota is fixed by dividing total number of votes by of seats. Electors vote for one of several lists of candidates, usually prepared by the political parties. Each party is granted seats in proportion to the number of popular votes it receives. There are several rules for computing the number of seats awarded to a party, the best known being the “d’Hondt rule” and the “largest-remainder rule.”

- D’Hondt rule- Under the d’Hondt method, each party's total number of votes is repeatedly divided, until all seats are filled, by the divisor $1 +$ the number of seats already allocated (i.e. 1, 2, 3, 4, etc.). Each division produces an average, and the list with the 'highest average vote' is awarded the first seat, the next highest the second seat, and so on, until all seats have been allocated.
- Largest-remainder rule- The *largest remainder method* requires the number of votes for each party to be divided a quota representing the number of votes *required* for a seat, and this gives a notional number of seats to each, usually including an integer and either a fraction or alternatively a remainder. Each party receives seats equal to the integer. This will generally leave some seats unallocated: the parties are then ranked on the basis of the fraction or equivalently on the basis of the remainder, and parties with the larger fractions or remainders are each allocated one additional seat until all the seats have been allocated. This gives the method its name.

Advantages of List System

- *Allow Parties to Present Diverse Lists of Candidates*- The incentive under List PR systems is to maximize the national vote, regardless of where those votes might come from. Every vote, even from an electorally weak area, goes towards filling another quota,

and thus gaining another seat. While this point should not be overemphasized, the experience of South Africa suggests that List PR gives the political space which allows parties to put up multi-racial, and multi-ethnic, lists of candidates.

- *Make it More Likely that Women are Elected-* PR electoral systems are often seen as more friendly to the election of women than plurality-majority systems. In essence, parties are able to use the lists to promote the advancement of women politicians, and allow the space for voters to elect women candidates without limiting their ability to vote with a mind on other concerns. While much of the evidence for a link between List PR and women's representation comes from Western democracies, there is some preliminary evidence to suggest that a similar pattern is being followed in new democracies, such as those in Africa (South Africa, Mozambique), and in Central and South America (Argentina, Brazil, and Costa Rica).
- *Make Power-Sharing More Visible-* In many new democracies, power-sharing between the numerical majority of the population who hold political power and a small minority who hold economic power is an unavoidable reality. Where the numerical majority dominates parliament, negotiations between different power blocks are less visible, less transparent, and less accountable.

Disadvantages of List System- List PR is criticized for leaving too much power entrenched within party headquarters and wielded by senior party leadership. A candidate's position on the party list, and therefore likelihood of success, is dependent on currying favour with party bosses, whose relationship with the electorate is of secondary importance. Furthermore, the use of a PR system presumes some kind of recognized party structure, since voters are expected to vote for parties rather than individuals or groups of individuals. This makes List PR particularly difficult to implement, and probably less meaningful, in those societies which do not have parties, or have very embryonic and loose party structures.