Electoral Mathematics and Asymmetrical Treatment to Political Parties: The Mexican Case

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Abstract : The Mexican Chamber of Deputies is composed of 500 representatives: 300 of them elected by relative majority and another 200 ones elected through proportional representation in five electoral clusters (constituencies) with 40 representatives each. In this mixed-member electoral system, the seats distribution of proportional representation is not independent of the election by relative majority, as it attempts to correct representation imbalances produced in single-member districts. This two-fold structure has been maintained in the successive electoral reforms carried out along the last three decades (eight from 1986 to 2014). In all of them, the election process of 200 seats becomes complex: Formulas in the Law are difficult to understand and to be interpreted. This paper analyzes the Mexican electoral system after the electoral reform of 2014, which was applied for the first time in 2015. The research focuses on contradictions and issues of applicability, in particular situations where seats allocation is affected by ambiguity in the law and where asymmetrical treatment of political parties arises. Due to these facts, a proposal of electoral reform will be presented. It is intended to be simpler, clearer, and more enduring than the current system. Furthermore, this model is more suitable for producing electoral outcomes free of contradictions and paradoxes. This approach would allow a fair treatment of political parties and as a result an improved opportunity to exercise democracy.

Keywords : electoral mathematics, electoral reform, Mexican electoral system, political asymmetry, proportional representation

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