

# Introduction

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For a clearer approach to the issues faced in this study there are three key elements to be taken into careful consideration. The first one is the way in which economics and elections interact and are used to explain each other. The literature concerning the role played by elections in democratic systems will be reviewed in an attempt to answer questions raised by political theorists using methods of analysis borrowed from economics. The second element is introducing the reader to the different electoral formulae adopted to implement the two electoral systems (PR and PL) which are investigated in this study. The importance of variations in electoral formulae derives from the fact that they determine the transformation of votes into seats, especially for those seats which cannot be distributed as 'full' seats. Indeed, such formulae would not be necessary if the results of elections (seats) could be distributed in a non-integral manner. Finally, it is surely useful to illustrate and comment on the features of the recent Italian electoral reform changing from PR to PL in both national and sub-national elections, as the central body of this work studies Italian elections before and after this change.