

***Plurality & Majority Systems***

**GLOSSARY**

**False winner** – When a party gets more seats but fewer votes than another party and wins the election. Such a result is a possible outcome of disproportionality.

**Gatekeeping function** – the barriers that electoral systems put in the way of new and, particularly, small parties. On the one hand, these may prevent the proliferation of small parties and an overly fragmented party system; on the other, it may prevent the entry of new perspectives and voices into the legislature and government.

**Informal ballots** – In Australia, the term for spoiled ballots: those that are marked in some way contrary to the rules and are therefore ineligible to be included in the count of any candidate or party.

**Manufactured majority** – A party that wins a majority of the seats but with less than a majority of the votes has a manufactured majority. In other words, a seat bonus creates the majority.

**Margin of victory** – The amount by which the winning candidate's or party's vote total exceeds the second-place candidate's or party's total.

**Seat bonus (deficit)** – A seat bonus is awarded by the electoral system when a party obtains a seat share that is larger than its vote share; a seat deficit is suffered when a party receives a seat share that is smaller than its vote share.

**Surplus votes** – Votes a candidate receives beyond the total necessary to win a seat.

**Wasted votes** – Votes that do not find direct expression in election results – that is, they do not bring representation in the legislature. The term applies, for example, to all votes for non-winning candidates in plurality and majority systems.