

## The Continuity and Change of the Party System in Taiwan

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This research will study the continuity and change of the party system in Taiwan from 1989 to 2011. Both the theoretical discussion of party systems and the empirical description of Taiwanese party systems will be covered, so the concept of party systems will be discussed first, followed by the introduction of methods used in this research, and end it up in describing the Taiwanese party system over time.

The complete picture of party systems must include the numbers and configurations of political parties. Therefore, the first half of this paper will focus on how many political parties competed in elections and had significant influence in political arena. The numbers of parties will be calculated by a variety of methods such as Rae's index of fractionalisation and Taagepera and Laakso's effective numbers of parties based on the official records of shares of votes and seats. On the one hand, both national and local elections will be examined to show the fluctuation of the numbers of parties in Taiwan over the past twenty years. On the other hand, both national and regional numbers of parties will be provided to show the central tendency and diversity of party systems across regions in Taiwan.

The second half will discuss which policy dimensions are important in Taiwanese elections and try to locate the main parties' positions in elections and describe their movements over elections in the policy space. The configurations of parties' policy positions will be sketched based on the method of content analysis developed by the Manifesto Research Group and the qualitative method proposed by the International Comparative Political Parties Project.