Make Every Vote Count

Fair Representation
Vote équitable
Canada au Canada
Make Every Vote Count

- Prepared for:
  - CCL
- Tuesday 20 September 2016
- As Modified by Bruce Hyer
What is Fair Vote Canada?

- National, non-profit organization
  - Not affiliated with any political party
  - Run by volunteers

- Advocates for Proportional Representation (PR)
  - Our current electoral system…
    - does NOT reflect the wishes of voters
    - results in a parliament that does NOT adequately represent voters
    - discourages cooperation
“... will make every vote count.”

“...2015 will be the last federal election conducted under the first-past-the-post voting system.”

“...will convene an all-party Parliamentary committee to review a wide variety of reforms, such as ranked ballots, proportional representation…”

“...within 18 months ... we will introduce legislation…”
Promise Kept?

- Last election under FPTP?
- Convene a Parliamentary Committee?
  - Done! (After eight months)
- … which reflects the popular vote?
  - Eventually, after persuasion.
- Now the work really begins!
  - Summer of consultations
  - Report to Parliament December 1st 2016
The real issue

How do we elect the parliament Canadians want?
Outline

‣ What is the parliament Canadians want?
‣ Which electoral systems are other countries using?
‣ How do these electoral systems work?
‣ Do these systems deliver the parliament we want?
‣ Summary
‣ Where to find more information
Parliament should provide...

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Types of Electoral Systems

Electoral Systems

- Winner-Take-All Systems
  - First-Past-The-Post
  - Alternative Vote

- Proportional Systems
  - Multi-Member
  - Mixed Member
Who is Using What?

Looking at democracies scoring the highest on the UN’s Human Development Index...
### Who is Using What?

**Winner-Take-All Systems:**
- First-Past-The-Post:
  - Canada
  - United States
  - United Kingdom
- Alternative Vote:
  - Australia
- Other:
  - France

**Proportional Systems:**
- Multi-Member
  - Argentina
  - Belgium
  - Chile
  - Croatia
  - Cyprus
  - Czech Republic
  - Denmark
  - Estonia
  - Finland
  - Greece
  - Iceland
  - Ireland
- Israel
- Italy
- Kuwait
- Latvia
- Liechtenstein
- Luxembourg
- Malta
- Netherlands
- Norway
- Poland
- Portugal
- Slovakia
- Slovenia
- Spain

**Mixed Member**
- Austria
- Germany
- Hungary
- Mexico
- New Zealand
- Scotland

**Other**
- Andorra
- Japan
- South Korea
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- First-Past-The-Post
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Proportional Systems
- Multi-Member
- Mixed Member
Canada uses FPTP now

In each district, the candidate with the most votes wins
FPTP results are often unfair

2015 Federal Election

- **Liberal**
  - MPs: 54%
  - Votes: 40%

- **Conservative**
  - MPs: 29%
  - Votes: 32%

- **NDP**
  - MPs: 13%
  - Votes: 20%

- **Bloc**
  - MPs: 3%
  - Votes: 5%

- **Green**
  - MPs: 0%
  - Votes: 3%

“False Majority”
FPTP false majorities are common

Canadian Governments Since 1930

- False Majority: 50%
- True Majority: 35%
- Minority: 15%

Since 1930, FPTP elections have resulted in frequent false majorities.
FPTP can be really unfair

1987 New Brunswick Election

- **Independent**
  - MPs: 0%
  - Votes: <1%

- **NDP**
  - MPs: 0%
  - Votes: 11%

- **Conservative**
  - MPs: 0%
  - Votes: 29%

- **Liberal**
  - MPs: 100%
  - Votes: 60%
FPTP tends to elect few women

Women Elected to National Legislatures

- Sweden PR: 45%
- Finland PR: 43%
- Norway PR: 40%
- Denmark PR: 39%
- Netherlands PR: 39%
- Germany PR: 37%
- New Zealand PR: 32%
- Australia AV: 26%
- Canada FPTP: 25%
- United Kingdom FPTP: 23%
- USA FPTP: 18%
FPTP: Like-minded MPs

Voters’ Local Representative

- Represented by someone they did not vote for: 51%
- Represented by the someone they voted for: 49%
FPTP: Elections since WWII

Canada (FPTP)  22
Ireland (PR)  19
Germany (PR)  18
Switzerland (PR)  18
Italy  17
FPTP: Policy Lurch

- Sign on to Environment Treaty
- Drop out of Environment Treaty
- Cancel Long-Form Census
- Bring back Long-Form Census
- Lay off scientists; close programs
- Re-hire scientists; re-open programs
- Cancel veteran monthly pensions
- Restore veteran monthly pensions
- Start Community Mailboxes
- Stop Community Mailboxes
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Alternative Vote

- Uses a ranked ballot
- When counted, the candidate with the least votes is dropped and those ballots redistributed to the next ranked candidate. Repeat until someone has 50%+1.
- Ranked (Preferential, Instant Run-off) Ballot is not proportional in a WTA system, often less than FPTP.
- Could lead to a two-party system!
Alternative Vote Counting

Con 48%
NDP 40%
Lib 31%
Grn 8%
Ind 2%

Con 38%
NDP 29%
Lib 26%
Grn 5%
Ind 2%

Con 39%
NDP 29%
Lib 26%
Grn 6%
Ind 2%

Con 40%
NDP 29%
Lib 31%
Grn 5%
Ind 2%

Con 48%
NDP 29%
Lib 31%
Grn 8%
Ind 2%

Lib 52%
Alternative Vote Results

- Usually gives same winner as FPTP
- Unfair results
- Limited diversity
- Many voters without a like-minded representative
- Worse than FPTP!
- A party in power often favours AV as it reinforces the votes for the two main contenders
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- Proportional Systems
  - Multi-Member
  - Mixed Member
Multi-Member Systems

- Combine several ridings into one
- Elect the same total number of MPs
- Example: Waterloo Region (Waterloo, Kitchener Centre, Kitchener-South Hespeler, Kitchener-Conestoga, Cambridge)
Multi-Member Systems

2015 Federal Election
Waterloo Region

- **Liberal**
  - MPs: 80%
  - Votes: 46%

- **Conservative**
  - MPs: 20%
  - Votes: 36%

- **NDP**
  - MPs: 0%
  - Votes: 14%

- **Bloc**
  - MPs: 0%
  - Votes: 0%

- **Green**
  - MPs: 0%
  - Votes: 3%
Multi-Member Systems

2015 Federal Election
Waterloo Region with Multi-Member

- **Conservative**
  - MPs: 40%
  - Votes: 36%

- **Liberal**
  - MPs: 40%
  - Votes: 46%

- **NDP**
  - MPs: 20%
  - Votes: 14%

- **Bloc**
  - MPs: 0%
  - Votes: 0%

- **Green**
  - MPs: 0%
  - Votes: 3%
Multi-Member Systems

Many ways to fairly count ballots to arrive at five winners.
Types of Electoral Systems

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Mixed Member Proportional

- Single-member ridings in a multi-member region
- Example: Southern Ontario
Mixed Member Proportional

- Single-member ridings in a multi-member region
- Example: Southern Ontario
Mixed Member Proportional

2015 Federal Election
Southwestern Ontario Region

- **Liberal**
  - MPs: 67%
  - Votes: 41%

- **Conservative**
  - MPs: 33%
  - Votes: 42%

- **NDP**
  - MPs: 0%
  - Votes: 12%

- **Bloc**
  - MPs: 0%
  - Votes: 0%

- **Green**
  - MPs: 0%
  - Votes: 5%
Mixed-Member Proportional

- Single-member ridings in a multi-member region
- 15 MPs
  - 10 in single-member ridings
  - 5 in the region-at-large
  - Regional MPs are chosen to ensure proportionality
- How will the top-up / regional MPs be chosen
  - Party ‘closed’ lists are not popular
  - What other method might be used?
Mixed-Member Proportional
Mixed Member Proportional

Estimated 2015 Federal Election Southwestern Ontario Region

Liberal: MPs: 40% (6) Votes: 42%
Bloc: MPs: 0% Votes: 0%
NDP: MPs: 13% (2) Votes: 12%
Green: MPs: 7% (1) Votes: 5%
Everyone has two votes:

- Local riding
- Region
  - Option 1: Balance the parties with the remaining candidates having the most votes
  - Option 2: Members of each party rank their candidates during nomination; balance the parties with the top-ranked remaining candidates
  - Option 3: …
Mixed Member Proportional

- Everyone has two votes:
  - Local riding
  - Region

  - **Option 1:** Balance the parties with the remaining candidates having the most votes
  - **Option 2:** Members of each party rank their candidates during nomination; balance the parties with the top-ranked remaining candidates
  - **Option 3:** Vote for specific regional candidates ...

Indicate your choice of MP for your riding.

- **Conservative**
  - Carrie Cohn (Conservative)
  - Charles Cooper
  - Caleb Chong

- **Green**
  - Gary Gronau (Green)
  - Lily Laverty (Independent)
  - Greta Gill

- **Liberal**
  - Logan Long (Liberal)
  - Lily Laverty
  - Lisa Lawson

Rank one or more candidates in your order of preference.

- **Conservative**
  - Carrie Cohn
  - Charles Cooper
  - Caleb Chong

- **Green**
  - Gary Gronau
  - Lily Laverty
  - Greta Gill

- **Liberal**
  - Logan Long
  - Lily Laverty
  - Lisa Lawson

- **Independent**
  - Izzy Imlay (Independent)
  - Lisa Lawson

- **New Democrat**
  - Norma Nabers (New Democrat)
  - Nicole Noble
  - Nina Nunn
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Indigenous people have the right to participate in decision-making in matters which would affect their rights, through representatives chosen by themselves in accordance with their own procedures, as well as to maintain and develop their own decision-making institutions.

We call upon federal, provincial, territorial, and municipal governments to fully adopt and implement the UNDRIP as the framework for reconciliation.
New Zealand Example

- New Zealand uses Mixed Member Proportional System
  - MPs elected in a District, plus Party MPs elected for a region bring proportionality.
- All voters have two votes (party and district)
- Voters of Maori descent (self declared on census)
  - Can register to vote
    - EITHER
      - in one of 7 Maori districts
      - OR
      - In a general population district
New Zealand

- Referendum AFTER trying out PR!
FPTP results are often very different from the popular vote
FPTP systems limit diversity
AV (Alternative Vote) doesn’t solve FPTP problems
In winner-take-all systems, many votes do not count
There are many proportional representation (PR) methods

- Features can be combined or tweaked for a made-for-Canada solution

MOST PR systems are better than winner-take-all systems!

- Fairly represent voters’ ideas
- Elect a more diverse group of candidates
- Most voters have a like-minded representative
- Produces longer-lasting policies resulting in better governance
Parliament can and should enact PR for our next election
Parliament can and should make every vote count!

Questions?
More Information

- Fair Vote Canada
  https://fairvote.ca

- Fair Vote Calgary:
  www.fairvotecalgary.ca

- Bruce Hyer:
  bruce@brucehyer.ca

- Waterloo Region Fair Vote:
  http://www.fairvotewrc.ca/
Acknowledgements

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Appendices

Stuff that might be useful for some audiences.
Variations in voter distribution give the “right” results (sometimes).
FPTP Instability

Perfectly even voter distributions give every riding to the same party.

100 Voters
40 Liberal
35 Conservative
25 NDP
Uneven voter distributions can give skewed or wrong results.
Wrong Winner Alternative Vote

Con 38% (NDP 3%, Lib 35%)

NDP 29% (Con 4%, Lib 25%)

Lib 26% (Con 10%, NDP 10%, Grn 6%)

Grn 5% (Lib 4%, NDP 1%)

Ind 2% (NDP 2%)

Con 38% (NDP 3%, Lib 35%)

NDP 31%

Lib 26%

Grn 5%

Con 38% (NDP 3%, Lib 35%)

NDP 32%

Lib 30%

Grn 5%

Con 48+???

% 10% + ???

NDP 42+???

% 0% + ???

1st or 2nd:

Lib 90%

Con 52%

NDP 45%
Are PR governments less stable than FPTP?
- Common examples are Italy and Israel. But they use forms of PR that no one has suggested for Canada.
- FPTP countries averaged 16.7 elections between 1945 and 1998; PR countries averaged 16.0 elections.

Is PR is too complicated?
- Voting: a little more complicated than now
- Counting: professionals at Elections Canada can handle it

Do small, single-issue parties have too much power?
- 3-5% threshold before given top-up seats
Is a referendum needed?

- Canada is a representative democracy
  - Choose representatives to study issues on our behalf and make decisions
  - Well-suited to complex decisions

- Canada hardly ever uses referendums
  - 1898 (Prohibition), 1942 (Conscription), 1992 (Charlottetown Accord)
  - Provincial referendums are also rare

- Many electoral changes have been made without a referendum
  - Eg: replace oral votes with secret ballots (1874), removal of property and income restrictions (early 1900’s), giving women the vote (universally) (1918), etc.
Many changes to elections in Canada *without* referendums

- 1874: Move from oral votes to secret ballots, all constituencies vote on the same day
- 1885: Defining elector qualifications becomes federal responsibility
- Early 1900’s: removal of property and income restrictions
- 1918: Women allowed to vote
- 1948: Racial discrimination ends (except First Nations)
- 1960: All status Indians allowed to vote
- 1982: Charter guarantees voting rights to all citizens
Do we want a referendum?

- Referendums are not good ways to decide complex questions.
- If used, referendums need a clear, simple question:
  - Choose one:
    - _I support changing to a proportional system of voting_ (each party’s share of seats in Parliament is about the same as their share of the popular vote)
    - _I support continuing with our current system of voting_ (in each riding, the candidate with the most votes wins and all others lose)
- Best: Referendum _after_ the new system is used twice