

Equalization Vote Proportional (EVP)

An Easier Proportional Solution

submitted by:

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Guiding principles addressed in this submission:

- strengthening the link between voter intention and the electoral result
- encouraging greater participation in the democratic process
- avoiding undue complexity in the voting process
- preserving the accountability of local representation

This submission is a proposal for a system of proportional representation, EVP, that, like other proportional systems, encourages voter participation because every vote counts, but, unlike the other systems, requires no change to the way we currently vote, thereby avoiding the voter-alienating complexity of those systems.

The proportional systems currently under consideration, (List, Single Transferable Vote, and MMP,) all use different and more complicated voting procedures than we're used to with an aim to provide each party with a share of seats in the House that matches their share of the popular vote. The system I am proposing uses *votes*, not seats, to achieve the same effect.

Equalization Vote Proportional (EVP)

First, *no change is made to the way we currently cast our votes*. On election day, voters go to the polls and make one mark on one ballot for one candidate. The candidate that gets the most votes wins the riding.

Then, after all the votes are counted, the party that wins the largest share of the popular vote gets the first opportunity to form the government and, *Equalization Votes*, if required, are allocated to every party that won at least one seat in the election so that each party's share of the House vote matches their share of the popular vote.

The result is a parliament configured according to the popular vote and proportional representation for all parties, (see below for an example.) All without changing the way we vote.

Features of EVP

1. Every Member of Parliament is *directly elected* by the voters in their riding, (accountability of local representation.)
2. The form of the government is determined by the popular vote, not the number of seats won, therefore *every vote cast in the election will count*, (link between voter intention and the electoral result; encourage greater participation in the democratic process.)
3. The way we vote is unchanged, (avoid undue complexity in the voting process.)

Further, there is absolutely no change made to our existing electoral system beyond the simple and straightforward administration of the Equalization Votes, making this system the easiest and, by far, least expensive proportional system to implement.

And, finally, a change as easy to implement and as *reversible* as this one might be more acceptable to Canadians who aren't comfortable with the complexity of other systems. We can try it and, if we're unhappy with it, we can easily change it back or try something else.

Notes

Equalization Votes (EV)

The number of EVs each party is allocated is determined by the mathematical calculation below.

In any House of Commons vote, a party's EVs are cast *automatically* in the same proportion as the party's caucus votes. For instance, if all the MPs of any party vote one way, all the EVs are cast that way. If only half the caucus is present for a vote, only half the EVs are cast. If a caucus is split during a free vote, the EVs are split the same way.

The Calculation

(I have used the results of the 2015 federal election for illustration only.)

We first determine each party's seat-to-vote-share ratio by dividing the number of seats each party won by their percentage share of the popular vote. We then calculate how many votes are required by each party so their share of the House vote will match their share of the popular vote by multiplying their share of the popular vote by the largest seat-to-vote-share ratio:

Party	% of vote	Seats	Ratio	Votes Req'd
Liberal	39.5	184	4.66	184
Conservative	32.0	99	3.09	149
NDP	20.0	44	2.20	93
BQ	5.0	10	2.00	23
Green	3.5	1	0.29	16

Once we've determined the number of votes required by each party, we subtract the number of seats the parties won and the remainder will be the number of Equalisation Votes each party is allocated:

Party	Seats	+	EV	=	Votes	% of House vote	% of Popular Vote
Liberal	184		0		184	39.5	39.5
Conservative	99		50		149	32.0	32.0
NDP	44		49		93	20.0	20.0
BQ	10		13		23	5.0	5.0
Green	<u>1</u>		15		<u>16</u>	<u>3.5</u>	3.5
	338				465	100.0	

Result:

- the Liberal Party, with the largest share of the popular vote, gets the first opportunity to form the government
- each party's share of the votes cast in the House of Commons matches their share of the popular vote
- every MP is directly elected by their constituents