

A Pure Proportional System

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Reform

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Summary

This brief was written by a non-elected candidate from the riding of Joliette during the 2015 federal election in order to present a **proportional system** to the Special Committee on Electoral Reform (hereafter referred to as the "Committee"). Other recommendations are also presented regarding the **inclusion of independent candidates, the limitation of inactive candidates, mandatory voting, online voting and ways of voting.**

Introduction

After holding several discussions with residents in the riding of Joliette, attending the Committee's meeting in Joliette, reading the briefs on the Committee's website and working for several months on electoral reform in Canada, I have concluded the following:

- The only system that makes it possible to reduce bias and strengthen the connection between the intention of voters and the election of representatives is a proportional system. The other systems promote much greater bias in the voting results.
- Although a proportional system satisfies nearly all the criteria being considered by the Committee, i.e. effectiveness and legitimacy, participation, accessibility and inclusion as well as integrity, the biggest problem mentioned regarding this system is its lack of local representation.
- In order to remedy this problem, several people have proposed mixed member proportional systems.
- Regardless of the type of mixed member proportional system proposed, there is an increasing disconnect between the intention of voters and the representatives elected.
- I have therefore developed a proportional system that makes it possible to remedy the local representation problem highlighted by its opponents.
- Appendix A presents the results of the 2015 election based on this proportional system.

Proposed system:

- The system would be as follows:
 1. The number of seats that each party will have in the House of Commons must be calculated proportionally. A minimum percentage can be imposed. Based on my observations and Canadian cultural diversity, this limit must not exceed 3%. Personally, I favour 1%, but without limiting the right to elect independent candidates.

2. All votes that do not result in the election of representatives are eliminated and must not be taken into consideration in any calculations.

Territories

3. Territorial representation must still be based on First Past the Post (FPTP).
4. The elected delegation is subtracted from the delegation of their respective parties.
5. All territorial votes are redistributed by party equally across the provinces.
6. A penalty corresponding to one seat is applied to the parties' vote for each representative elected in the territories. This penalty is redistributed equally across the provinces.

Provinces

7. The vote percentage for each party in each Canadian province must be calculated. In this step, the votes from step 2 must not be included.
8. These percentages are then applied to the number of ridings per province.
9. To finish, these results are slightly balanced using the proportional results calculated in step 1 while respecting the number of ridings per province. **This result allows us to determine the number of MPs from each party in each province and makes it possible to greatly strengthen the connection between the intention of the voters and the representatives elected.**

Distribution

10. The election of representatives in a province is based on their popularity in their riding as a percentage of votes in relation to the other members of their party throughout the province.
11. In a single riding, priority goes to candidates who have the highest percentage of votes so that a third-place candidate does not take the spot of second-place candidate if this candidate could have been elected based on the results calculated in step 9. This step completes the distribution of MPs across the provinces.

The five principles of electoral reform:

- This system will increase the trust of Canadians based on the fact that their democratic will, as expressed by their votes, will be translated fairly in the voting results. It will also reduce bias and strengthen the connection

between the intention of voters and the election of representatives since the composition of the House of Commons will accurately represent the intention of voters. **(Principle 1)**

- This system encourages voting and participation in the democratic process, promotes increased civility and collaboration within the political sphere, improves social unity and helps underrepresented groups be included in the political process. Since each vote counts, the House of Commons will be more diversified than ever, not to mention that the underrepresented groups (four out of five parties in the last election) would now occupy their rightful place in the House of Commons. **(Principle 2)**
- This system prevents undue complexity in the voting process while respecting the other principles. It also promotes access to all eligible voters, regardless of their physical or social condition. Since it can be described in only 11 steps, it is a system that remains relatively simple and without undue complications. Furthermore, access for all voters is not compromised, compared with the current system. **(Principle 3)**
- This system can be implemented while ensuring the public's trust in the electoral process by guaranteeing reliable and verifiable results using an effective, objective process that is secure and preserves voter confidentiality since it does not involve any major changes to the electoral map or in how people vote. Furthermore, the results are easily counted and verified. In reality, this system primarily changes how votes are counted. **(Principle 4)**
- In the 2015 election, this system would have made it possible to elect the leading candidate in approximately 80% of Canada's ridings. This system is therefore more effective than a mixed member proportional system that would elect 50% or 66% of MPs locally. Furthermore, each candidate is associated with an existing riding. **(Principle 5)**

Other Comments

Voting Ballot

- In order to ensure better representation using the system proposed in this brief, I recommend that the Committee grant each citizen two votes, one for the party they support and one for a candidate in their riding. This way, citizens will have a say at the local level (for a candidate) and at the national level (for the number of seats that the party gets), thereby strengthening the connection between voter intention and the election of representatives even more. It will complicate the voting method somewhat. However, this change is really worthwhile and it is something that came up often in my discussions with voters.

Party-Imposed List

- Parties **should not** impose a list of candidates, whether in a mixed-member proportional system or a pure proportional system, since it would greatly reduce local representation in the proportional system. Voters would no longer feel they are being represented locally.

Candidacy of independent candidates and paper candidates

- In order to be elected, an independent candidate must receive a sufficient number of votes to win a seat. This number of votes is equal to approximately 0.3% of the votes (1 seat out of 338 total seats).
- Since it is very difficult for one person to amass this vote percentage, I would suggest allowing a candidate to **run in several ridings**, under certain conditions:
 1. The candidate can run in a maximum of two **adjacent** ridings and would therefore need to receive approximately 50% of the votes on average in each riding to earn a seat in the House of Commons. Increasing the number of ridings in which a candidate can run to more than two would cause seat distribution problems. If a seat is won in this way, it must be removed from the seat distribution calculations.
 2. The current rules (the number of signatures needed for each riding, riding ceilings, one candidate per party per riding, etc.) would apply separately in each riding where a candidacy is submitted, except for the \$1,000 deposit, which would remain at \$1,000 regardless of the number of ridings in which a candidate submits their candidacy.
 3. A candidate elected in this manner would be attached to the riding in which they obtained the highest vote percentage.
- The benefit of this new element in any electoral system is that it gives an independent candidate a bit more of a chance of being elected and it **can reduce the presence of inactive candidates (paper candidates)** by allowing smaller parties to run active candidates in one out of two regions instead of finding inactive candidates to fill regions where no active candidate could be found.

Mandatory Voting

- I am against mandatory voting. I believe people should vote of their own volition once they have taken the time to inform themselves and gotten interested in the election campaign. Voting must remain a right, not a duty. Furthermore, voting should not become a chore.

Online Voting

- As for online voting, I agree with the brief submitted by Simply Voting on this issue since I believe it confirms the fears of many voters. “Despite the fact that Simply Voting is a major Canadian Internet voting vendor, its recommendation **is against the use of Internet voting for federal elections**. The heightened threat level of a federal election pushes the security of Internet voting past its limits and poses too much of a risk.”

Conclusion

I want to thank you for taking the time to consider my brief, and I would be proud to see some of my suggestions retained by the Committee.

I hope this brief has been useful to you.

Mathieu Morin

Appendix A

1. Calculation of seats in Canada:

Parties	Votes (%)	Number of seats	Seats (%)
Liberal Party of Canada (LPC)	39.5	134	39.6
Conservative Party of Canada (CPC)	31.9	109	32.2
New Democratic Party (NDP)	19.7	67	19.8
Bloc Québécois (BQ)	4.7	16	4.7
Green Party of Canada (GPC)	3.4	12	3.6

2. Elimination of votes that are not allocated to parties that won seats.

3. During the election for seats, all the territories were won by the Liberal Party of Canada.

4. Now that three Liberals were elected, only 131 need to be distributed across the 10 Canadian provinces.

5. Distribution of territory votes across the provinces

Riding	LPC	CPC	NDP	GPC
Northwest Territories	9,166	3,415	5,845	535
Yukon	10,715	4,800	3,890	577
Nunavut	5,618	2,956	3,153	183
Total	25,499	11,171	12,888	1,295
Total per province	2,550	1,117	1,289	130

6. Calculation of the penalty for electing MPs in the territories:

(Total votes x one seat / number of seats / number of provinces)

$17,416,410 \times 1 / 338 / 10 = 5,153$ votes removed from each province per penalty

Since the LPC elected three MPs in the territories, it has three times the penalty:

$5,153 \times 3 = 15,549$ votes removed in each province for the LPC.

7. Calculation of the vote percentage that each party represents in each province. The total in each province must be 100%. Certain calculations have been omitted to get directly to the results. In the real calculations, the results were not rounded off.

Provinces	LPC (%)	CPC (%)	NDP (%)	BQ (%)	GPC (%)	Total
Alberta	24.44	61	11.96	0	2.6	100%
British Columbia	35.01	30.36	26.3	0	8.32	100%
Prince Edward Island	49.6	23.46	19.92	0	7.02	100%
Manitoba	43.65	38.59	14.45	0	3.3	100%
New Brunswick	49.91	26.2	19.09	0	4.8	100%
Nova Scotia	60.92	18.55	17.02	0	3.5	100%
Ontario	44.95	35.34	16.77	0	2.93	100%
Quebec	35.72	16.9	25.59	19.5	2.29	100%
Saskatchewan	22.05	49.88	25.91	0	2.16	100%
Newfoundland and Labrador	64.01	11.58	23.19	0	1.21	100%

8. and 9. Conversion of the percentages obtained into seats per province. Certain calculations have been omitted to get directly to the results.

Provinces	LPC	CPC	NDP	BQ	GPC	Total
Alberta	8	21	4	0	1	34
British Columbia	14	13	11	0	4	42
Prince Edward Island	2	1	1	0	0	4
Manitoba	6	5	2	0	1	14
New Brunswick	5	3	2	0	0	10
Nova Scotia	7	2	2	0	0	11
Ontario	54	43	20	0	4	121
Quebec	28	13	19	16	2	78
Saskatchewan	3	7	4	0	0	14
Newfoundland and Labrador	4	1	2	0	0	7
Total	131	109	67	16	12	335

10. and 11. For technical reasons, the results from the 335 ridings in the 10 provinces are not posted in this appendix, but they are available upon request.

An interactive map is also available upon request.