

Why It Matters

Comparative research shows that PR countries tend to outperform winner-take-all systems on quality of life, income equality, environmental outcomes and economic growth.

Here are some specific practical benefits:

- By reducing the bias in favour of the winning party, PR ensures more diversity of representation in the legislature.
- Power is less concentrated. Instead of false majorities, minority or minority coalition governments would result.
- All MLA votes in the Legislature are equal. Unanimous Opposition votes have zero value in majority governments.
- The system encourages cooperation among parties, leading to better policy that is less likely to be reversed later on.
- Government is more accountable to voters because every vote counts.
- Voters recognize the fairness of the system and are more satisfied with the quality of their democracy.
- Voter turnout is higher.
- Regional imbalances like the one on the cover page are reduced because every party is likely to elect some representatives in every region.
- More women and minorities are elected.
- PR eliminates the need to vote strategically to make your vote count because you get what you vote for.

Get Involved!

Citizen engagement is critical, because politicians are not inclined to change the system that brought them to power.

Take action and help secure our future as a vibrant and modern democracy!

Here are examples of what you can do:

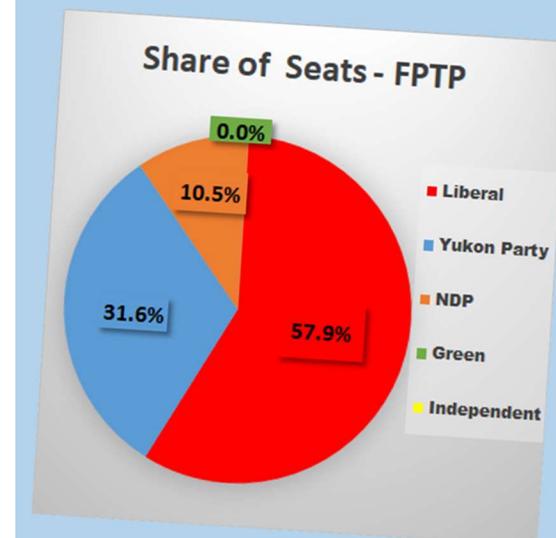
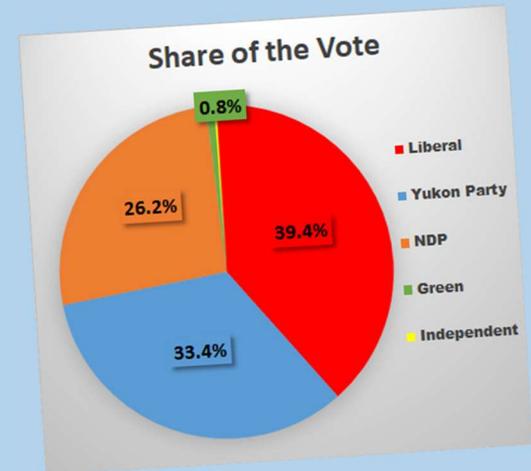
- Learn more about the issue on Fair Vote Canada's website: <http://www.fairvote.ca>
- Sign Fair Vote Canada's Declaration of Voters Rights online and sign up for updates.
- Let your MP or MLA know that you support PR and urge them to support the reform of our voting system.
- Support pro-PR candidates in upcoming elections.
- Volunteer. Send an email to Yukon@fairvote.ca and ask to be added to our volunteer list.
- Participate in local events or canvassing in favour of PR.
- Spread the message via social media; speak to your friends and neighbors.
- Donate to Fair Vote Canada.



Time to Modernize our Voting System

Imagine a democracy in which every vote counts equally to elect someone!

2016 Election Results Yukon Legislative Assembly



Our First-Past-the-Post System

The graphics on the cover demonstrate how relatively comparable shares of the 2016 vote for the Liberals, the Yukon Party and the NDP led to a hugely disproportionate result in terms of the share of seats obtained, leading to a majority Liberal government.

In the previous three elections, it was the Yukon Party that formed a majority with only about 40% of the vote. Before that, the NDP had several turns of ruling with this sort of false majority as well.

So while every party has been getting its turn at wielding unbridled power under first-past-the-post, the result is not reflective of the popular vote, and the quality of inter party collaboration is not what it could be.

As citizens, we all have one vote, but a vote for a losing candidate elects no-one. This does not make for a healthy democracy. It is unfair, and it leads to bad government in many ways:

- less choice for voters at the ballot box
- strategic voting and vote splitting
- loss of accountability to the voter
- over-concentration of political power
- hyper-partisan political behaviour
- policy reversals due to changes of government based on small shifts in voter preferences.

Canada is one of the very few industrialized countries still using the first-past-the-post system in modern times.



We Can Do Better Than That!

Proportional representation (PR) makes it possible for every vote to help elect a representative. Results are based on the principle that 40% of the vote should give a party around 40% of the seats.

More than 90 countries around the world, including 29 of the world's 35 most robust democracies use some form of PR for elections to the national legislature.

How Would It Work?

What messes up our system is the election of only one winner-take-all representative in each riding.

It is not possible for a single winner to represent the viewpoints of all voters in a riding.

The solution is to group ridings in some way so that the more votes a party gets in a region, the more seats they win.

PR systems work by avoiding a winner-take-all approach. This can be done in different ways:

- electing several representatives at a time in multi-member ridings;
- adjust our current system by setting aside a part of the seats to be used as “top-up” seats; or
- combining these two approaches.

This can be done without abandoning our tradition of local and regional representation.

Made-in-Yukon PR

While a PR system for the Yukon could be designed in any number of ways, Fair Vote Yukon would suggest a simple Mixed Member Proportional system (MMP).

MMP retains local representation like we have now but reduces the number of seats to make room for “top-up” seats used to make the system proportional. We propose three MMP top-up regions as follows:

- South Centre & East (3 local seats and 2 top-ups)
- Whitehorse (5 local, 5 top-up)
- West & North (3 local and 2 top-up).

Once the local seats have been filled, the top-up seats would be allocated by party to ensure overall proportionality in each region.

To ensure that every voter can more fully express their preferences, we recommend the use of a ranked ballot for both the local and regional votes. For the regional vote, a voter would rank the candidates for the party of their choice. A formula would be needed to identify the most preferred candidates at each level.

The ballot voting would remain quite simple under any of these models. Transitioning to PR would not be difficult, because redistricting could be done mainly by pairing up existing ridings so that two local ridings becomes one.

Contact us for more information.

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