

## 5 things to know about proportional representation

Our current first-past-the-post (FPTP) system has been around since before cars, electricity, and penicillin. It gave the Liberals in 2015 and the Conservatives in 2011 a “false majority” government with 100% of the power in the House of Commons by winning only 39% of Canadians’ votes. The overwhelming majority of Canadians think this model is unfair – and so does the NDP.

We in the NDP think that a fair system is one where a party that gets about 20% of the votes should get about 20% of the seats. They are called proportional systems because the number of seats a party gets is based on the share of votes they received. Here are a few things you might not know about proportional representation:

1. **Proportional representation is incredibly popular:** Over 90 countries use a proportional voting system, including 85% of OECD countries, such as Ireland, Germany, Scotland, Wales, Sweden, and Denmark.
2. **Proportional representation means higher voter turnout:** Research shows that voter turnout is five to 7.5% higher on average in countries that use proportional representation.
3. **Proportional representation leads to a more diverse, gender balanced Parliament:** Countries that use proportional representation have more diverse parliaments with more individuals from under-represented groups. Of the countries that have more than 30% women in their legislature, the majority use PR. And countries that use proportional representation see up to eight per cent more women in their legislatures compared to first-past-the-post systems.
4. **Proportional representation does not lead to instability or never-ending elections:** Canada, under first-past-the-post, has had more elections since WWII than Germany, Ireland, Sweden, and Spain – all countries who use proportional representation.
5. **You can have proportional representation and a local MP:** Many proportional systems, such as Mixed Member Proportional (MMP), allow voters to elect a local representative and a representative for the broader region. This ensures that the number of seats a party wins is proportional to the vote that party receives, while also giving voters a local voice that is responsive to their local needs and concerns.

Canada's electoral system gets a failing grade:



*Said Liberal Leader Justin Trudeau: "2015 will be the last first-past-the-post election".*

**In 2015, 39% of the votes got 54% of the seats, which got 100% of the power!**

**In most elections Canadians voted for minority governments, but got majority governments instead.**

**Since WWI, Canada has had 16 "majority" governments, but only 4 of these had won a majority of the popular vote.**

**In every election *half* of all votes cast *don't* elect anyone! (in 2015, that was 9 million votes!)**

**IN A DEMOCRACY – SHOULDN'T EVERY VOTE COUNT?**

