

Proportional Representation for Canada
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This 'Canadian blend' of proportional representation is designed to apply to each province for both Federal and Provincial elections to:

- keep the same number of total seats
- keep constituency or riding representation
- have legislative seats correspond to percentage vote so that every vote is represented in the legislature
- avoid constitutional change.

As well as the theoretical beauty of having every vote count by being represented in the legislature, it would have the practical beauty of significantly increasing the voter turnout. This is shown by a recent table in Maclean's magazine (2004-07-19, page 18) where the four countries not having proportional representation ranked last out of eighteen in voter turnout.

The actual mechanism would be to increase each riding (constituency) seat size by 1/3 and decrease the number of ridings by 1/3 while adding the decreased 1/3 seats as proportional seats which would be allocated to produce overall provincial proportional representation. This 1/3 figure is the safe minimum to permit full overall proportional representation so that every vote counts. Fortunately, it keeps the riding size workable.

The proportional seats, representing 1/3 of the total provincial seats, would be filled by allocation according to ranking by votes received by the parties' candidates that did not win a 'riding' seat. This means that a voter only has to vote once for their riding - and everyone receiving a seat ran in the election and was in contact with the voters as a candidate. There are no backroom deals or shadow candidates. This allows each party the same rights as currently to nominate a candidate for each riding. Further, it would encourage people to run for office since each candidate would have a chance at two seats.

Each enlarged riding would have a riding representative in the legislature as well as proportional representatives which results in 1 ½ representatives per riding while giving representation according to the provincial percentage votes. Also, it would offer the voter more choice for ongoing practical representation since the proportional seat representatives would be free, and likely eager, to assist voters not satisfied with assistance from their riding representative. Indeed, it would increase the responsiveness of riding representatives!

Note: (1) If there are significant differences in the number of eligible voters in different ridings, then the proportional seats could be filled by allocation according to ranking by percentage of votes received by riding. The ideal would be to have provincial ridings equal, within 10% or so, in eligible voters.

(2) The three Territories are a special problem for Federal elections because they have only one seat each which is unsuitable because one cannot divide one seat.