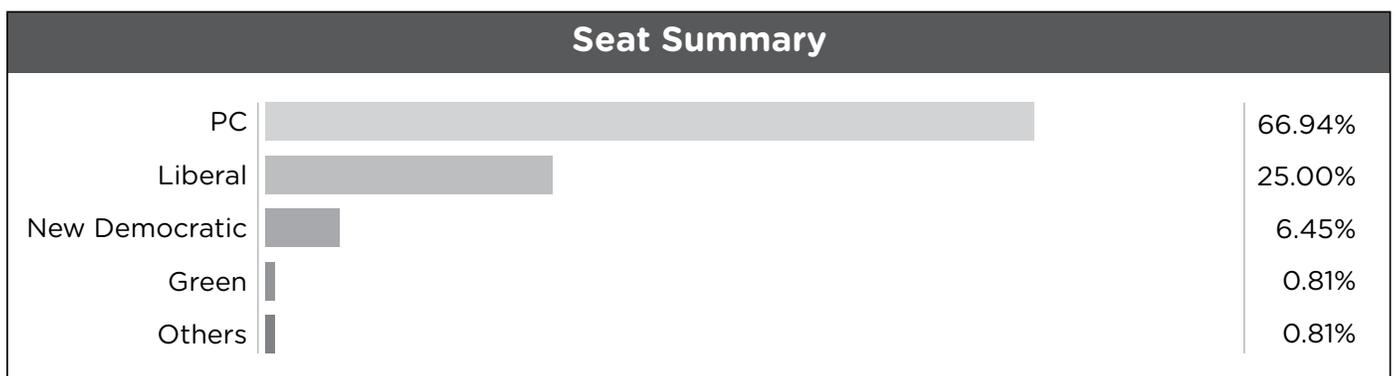
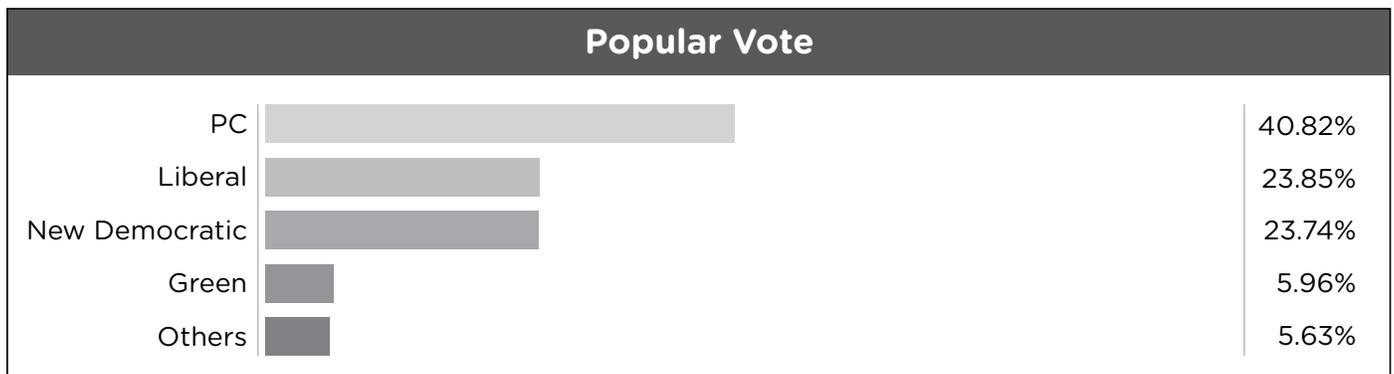


Appendix E

Case study #4: Ontario's electoral process

Evidence #1: Election results Ontario, 2022

Ontario's electoral process is called First Past the Post (FPTP). Voters in each electoral district in Ontario vote for one candidate in their voting district. Whoever has the most votes is elected as the Member of Provincial Parliament (MPP) for that electoral district. FPTP brings stability because it often results in single party governments, but it can also result in a party gaining power and the most seats without winning a majority of the popular vote. Consider the results of the 2022 Ontario general election in the charts below. A larger percentage of voters actually voted against the party that won the most number of seats. Because parties do not win seats based on popular vote, many voters may feel that their vote does not count on election day.



Share of the popular vote and seat totals, Ontario general election

Source: Elections Ontario

Evidence #2: First Past the Post statistics

Just like Ontario, Canadian federal elections use the FPTP system. Many critics of FPTP point out that it tends to favour parties that are well established and results in parliaments that do not reflect the make-up of the voting public. Consider these statistics about Canada's federal election in 2019.



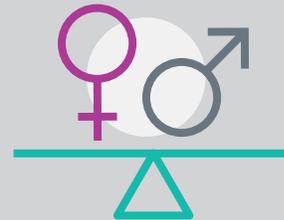
Members of Parliament (MPs) in Canada tend to be older. The biggest group (**41%**) of MPs in 2019 were **59-64**, with only **7%** under the age of 35.



MPs tend to be white. Ethnic minorities make up **27%** of Canada's population, but less than **18%** of Parliamentarians in 2019.



Indigenous people make up **4.9%** of Canada's population, but less than **3%** of our MPs in 2021.



Although representation of women has increased by **10% since 1994**, at the current rate it will be half a century or longer before gender balance is achieved.



MPs are most likely to be male. **70%** of our MPs in 2021 were men.



While **4%** of the population identifies as LGBTQ2+, **only 1.8%** of MPs elected in 2019 did.

Source: Fair Vote Canada

Evidence #3: Proportional representation

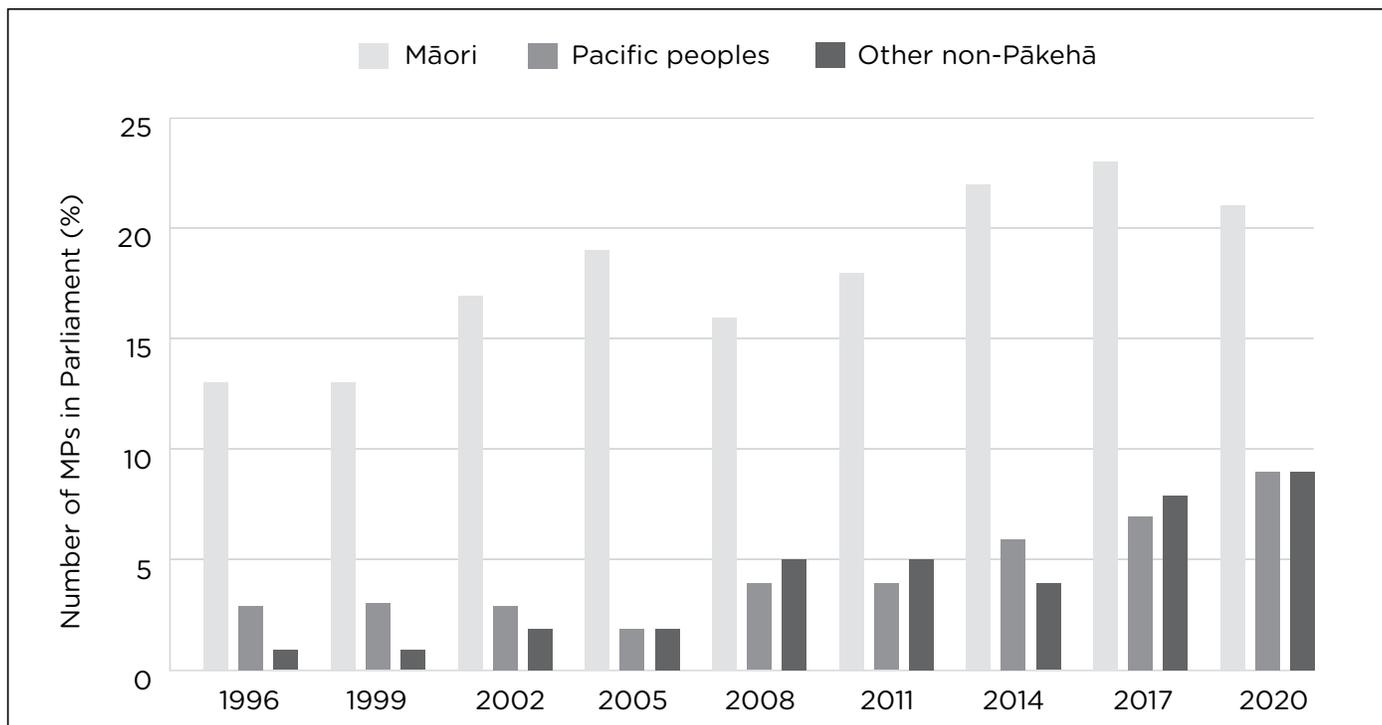
What would happen if Ontario changed its electoral system from First Past the Post to something else? Over the years, five provinces have explored changes to their electoral systems, including Ontario. Some critics of First Past the Post have called for a change to proportional representation. This is an electoral system in which parties get seats in proportion to the number of votes cast for them. This system results in more minority governments; this means no one party wins most of the seats. Minority governments must work together to form a government. In some proportional representation systems, voters cast a single vote for their preferred party rather than voting for a person from that party. Parties make a list of candidates who are elected in the order they are placed on the list.

“There are other advantages to moving to proportional representation. Minority parliaments require the large national parties to co-operate in order to be successful. Proportional representation also makes it easier for parties to represent women, ethnic minorities and other under-represented groups.”

- Matthew Hayes Associate Professor, Sociology, St. Thomas University (Canada) (2019). What the Canadian election results would have looked like with electoral reform.
The Conversation.

Retrieved July 18, 2022, from theconversation.com/what-the-canadian-election-results-would-have-looked-like-with-electoral-reform-125848

Proportional representation was adopted in 1996 in New Zealand. It has improved ethnic diversity in Parliament. After the final First Past the Post election in 1993, only eight MPs identified as Maori. The Maori are the Indigenous people of New Zealand. In 2020, there were 25 Maori elected. Before proportional representation, there had never been an Asian MP and only one from the Pacific. In 2020, people of Chinese, Cook Islands Māori, Eritrean, Indian, Iranian, Korean, Maldivian, Mexican, Samoan, Sri Lankan, and Tongan descent were elected.



Sources: Statistics New Zealand and New Zealand Parliament

“Ontario has a competitive multiparty system. If we brought in electoral reform that looked much more like pure proportional representation it would be very unlikely that we would have any majority governments going forward. So we would be perpetually in a state of minority government, which is inherently unstable because at any point the coalitions can crumble and we’re back to the polls.”

- Cristine de Clercy, Associate Professor of Political Science, Western University (Canada) (2022). Electoral reform favoured by three of Ontario’s four main parties. CityNews.

Retrieved June 25, 2022, from

toronto.citynews.ca/2022/05/22/ontario-election-electoral-reform-three-of-four-parties

Evidence #3: Continued



LIST PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION

OVERVIEW

List Proportional Representation (PR) systems are designed to match parties' proportion of seats in the legislature to their share of votes cast nationally, provincially or regionally—depending on the design of the system. **Ridings** are typically large (the average internationally is about 10 MPs per district), and each Canadian will thus have many MPs. Voters generally cast a ballot for a political party or a specific candidate on a list prepared by the party.

WHAT FAMILY DOES IT BELONG TO? **Proportional.**

WHERE IS IT USED TODAY? List PR is used in 83 countries around the world, including Denmark, Norway and Spain.

HOW DOES THE SYSTEM WORK FOR VOTERS? There are two major variants of list PR, "closed list" and "open list"; both employ multi-member districts. In closed-list PR, voters cast a single vote for their preferred party rather than voting for a person from that party. Before the election, parties set a list of candidates who are elected in the order they are placed on the list. It is typically left to parties' internal processes to set their candidate list. In this system, voters choose which party wins, but have little control over who their specific representatives are.

In open-list PR, voters express a preference for their party, as well as for one or more candidates on their party's list of candidates. The vote for a specific individual influences the order in which candidates are elected by a given party, effectively nudging voters' preferred candidate(s) up the party list. In some systems, voters may even support candidates from more than one party.

HOW ARE THE BALLOTS COUNTED? The proportion of votes cast for each party determines the number of seats it receives on the basis of an **electoral formula**. Different forms of List PR use different formulas to translate votes into seats, but generally, a party that receives 20% of the votes cast will win roughly 20% of the seats. However, parties that receive a share



LIST PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION

of votes below a **minimum threshold** (anywhere from under one to 5%, depending on decisions at implementation) do not receive any seats.

WHAT DO RIDINGS LOOK LIKE? List PR elects multiple candidates from large geographic regions. Depending on the way the system is implemented, votes may be counted at a district, regional, provincial or national level. For instance, if the system operated at the provincial level, each party would assemble a list of candidates for each province. It would then elect MPs from each geographic region in proportion to each party's share of the vote in that province. Alternatively, major cities and rural regions might constitute separate districts, each with its own list of candidates.

HOW ARE PARLIAMENT AND GOVERNMENT FORMED? HOW IS THE PRIME MINISTER SELECTED? Following an election, if a party receives more than half the seats, the governor general would invite its leader to form a government. However, under List PR it is less likely a single party would have a **majority**, requiring a **minority government** or a **coalition** of two or more parties to come together to form a government. The prime minister would usually be the leader of the largest party in the coalition. This would involve negotiation between the parties.

ALSO KNOWN AS: PR; party-list proportional representation; pure PR



WHAT DOES IT MEAN...

- 1. FOR CAMPAIGNING?** Campaigns would focus primarily on the central contest between parties and party leaders. Individual candidates would still campaign, however, especially under an "open list" where they can earn a direct vote as candidate. However, PR electoral districts will be larger than the single-member ridings in Canada today, and may require new campaign organizations and strategies. In general, the smaller the size of the geographic region (for example, a municipality instead of a province) at which lists are set and seats are allocated, the more candidates would see value focussing on local issues.
- 2. FOR VOTE CHOICE?** Closed-list ballots are straightforward, offering the voters a choice between competing parties. In contrast, open-list ballot styles vary considerably, offering different ways to incorporate votes for individual candidates. Given that voters choose from many candidates, sometimes from multiple parties, the ballots in open-list PR can be quite large, and voters who want to select individual candidates must familiarize themselves with a large number of contenders. Although voters may have more choice under open lists, their votes rarely shift the party's preferred order of candidates; many voters still cast a ballot for the party generally.
- 3. FOR LOCAL REPRESENTATION?** The relationship between voters and particular representatives can be diluted, particularly as the electoral district grows larger. Voters will not have a single MP who is directly responsible to them, but rather many MPs serving a much larger **constituency**. Instead, most voters will identify with one party in the legislature that they voted for and that they therefore feel best represents their perspective.
- 4. FOR PARTIES IN PARLIAMENT?** Proportional electoral systems like List PR will result in a



LIST PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION

greater number of parties represented in Parliament than less proportional systems, though this effect is modified by the minimum threshold discussed above, which makes it more difficult for **fringe parties** to win seats. List PR systems allow parties with small pockets of support spread out over the entire country to win seats in proportion to that national support.

MPs elected via party lists, however, may adhere closely to **party discipline** in order to keep or improve their standing on the list at the next election. This dynamic will be shaped by parties' internal processes to select their list and the decision-making power of senior party officials.

List PR allows for easy public scrutiny of the diversity of candidates. As such, parties may seek to put forward lists that increase the representation of women, visible minorities and other diverse Canadians in Parliament.

5. FOR GOVERNING? Many forms of government are possible under List PR though typically no single party will win a majority of seats. Parties thus have to work with other parties in order to govern. The largest party may form a minority government, or parties may form a government **coalition**. Party leaders may forge alliances with other parties before an election is held, or wait until after the results are known before agreeing to form a coalition. Accordingly, voters may not know who will be in government even after the votes are counted, as it may take time for party leaders to agree on a governing coalition. Governments may change when coalitions break down. Members can move to opposition, or join other parties to form a new governing coalition. If no coalition emerges, the sitting prime minister may request that the governor general call an election.

WHAT WOULD THE BALLOT LOOK LIKE?

LIST PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION / SCRUTIN DE LISTE (OPEN LIST)

Place an X in the circle next to the candidate of your choice.
(Your vote counts for both the candidate and the party.)

Veillez inscrire un X dans le cercle en regard du candidat de votre choix. (Votre vote compte pour le candidat et le parti.)

PARTY W / PARTI W	PARTY X / PARTI X	PARTY Y / PARTI Y	PARTY Z / PARTI Z
<input type="radio"/> CANDIDATE A CANDIDAT A	<input type="radio"/> CANDIDATE A CANDIDAT A	<input type="radio"/> CANDIDATE A CANDIDAT A	<input type="radio"/> CANDIDATE A CANDIDAT A
<input type="radio"/> CANDIDATE B CANDIDAT B	<input checked="" type="radio"/> CANDIDATE B CANDIDAT B	<input type="radio"/> CANDIDATE B CANDIDAT B	<input type="radio"/> CANDIDATE B CANDIDAT B
<input type="radio"/> CANDIDATE C CANDIDAT C	<input type="radio"/> CANDIDATE C CANDIDAT C	<input type="radio"/> CANDIDATE C CANDIDAT C	
<input type="radio"/> CANDIDATE D CANDIDAT D		<input type="radio"/> CANDIDATE D CANDIDAT D	

LIST PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION / SCRUTIN DE LISTE (CLOSED LIST)

Place an X in the circle next to the party of your choice.

Veillez inscrire un X dans le cercle en regard du candidat de votre choix.

<input type="radio"/> PARTY W PARTI W
<input checked="" type="radio"/> PARTY X PARTI X
<input type="radio"/> PARTY Y PARTI Y
<input type="radio"/> PARTY Z PARTI Z

Samara Centre for Democracy. (2016). What We Talk About When We Talk About Electoral Reform. Retrieved from: samaracanada.com/samara-in-the-classroom/electoral-reform