

## Ballot Testing and Voting System Survey

[Screen for PC-only – won't work on mobile]

[Intro Screen]

As you may have heard, there has been some discussion about possibly changing Canada's electoral system. We want to ask people their views on this.

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[half the sample will see Qs 4 -- 6 here at the beginning of the survey, the other half after the ballot/system testing]

Let's consider the overall voting or electoral system in Canada. By “electoral system”, we're referring to things like how the ballot works, how votes are counted to decide who forms the government, and whether it's a majority government.

Q1. What are your overall views on this? Do you:

- Strongly favor **keeping** the current system
- Moderately favor **keeping** the current system
- Undecided/Don't really care either way
- Moderately favor **changing** to a different system
- Strongly favor **changing** to a different system

Q2. Putting this another way, how much of a priority do you personally consider changing Canada's electoral system to be? Would you say this is a:

- Very high priority
- High priority
- Lower priority
- Very low priority

Q3.. When it comes to the way we vote and the main concerns some people have about the current system and the main types of alternative voting systems, would you say you are:

- Well informed about this issue
- Know the main points about it
- Don't know much
- Don't know anything about it

[New Screen]

Let's consider a few different possible voting systems. For each one, we'll give you a brief explanation of how the system works, ask you to fill out a sample ballot online, and then ask a few couple of quick follow-up questions.

[New Screen]

FPTP

First, there is the **First Past the Post or FPTP** system, which is the electoral system currently used in Canadian federal elections.

In a FPTP system, political parties run a candidate in each riding. The candidate who receives the most votes wins the riding. The party that wins the most ridings forms the government.

In the FPTP system the parties' seats in the House of Commons are not strictly proportional. This means it's possible for a party to form a majority government even though it didn't get the majority of votes. Smaller parties usually win fewer seats compared to their share of the popular vote.

Let's look at the FPTP ballot. Please fill out the sample ballot below - who you vote for isn't important here, only that you provide a response.

To mark the ballot, click beside a candidate's name on the ballot. To redo, click 'Clear' in the top right corner of the screen.

**FIRST PAST THE POST (FPTP) / SYSTÈME MAJORITAIRE UNINOMINAL À UN TOUR**

Place an X in the circle next to the candidate of your choice.  
Veuillez inscrire un X dans le cercle en regard du candidat de votre choix.

CANDIDATE A / CANDIDAT A  
PARTY 1 / PARTI 1

CANDIDATE B / CANDIDAT B  
PARTY 2 / PARTI 2

CANDIDATE C / CANDIDAT C  
PARTY 3 / PARTI 3

CANDIDATE D / CANDIDAT D  
PARTY 4 / PARTI 4

CANDIDATE E / CANDIDAT E  
PARTY 5 / PARTI 5

Q4. Would you say the average Canadian voter filling out this [Insert system here] ballot would find it clear or confusing? (Keeping in mind they would be filling it out on a pencil and paper ballot in the voting booth, not in an online survey).

Very clear, easy to fill out

Quite clear

Not very clear  
Not clear at all, confusing

Q5. Overall, what do you think are the strengths of the current FPTP system? Pick your top one or two from this list:

Easy to understand

Stable system

Tends to create majority governments

Other (Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

I don't think that FPTP has any strengths

Q6.. And what do you think are the FPTP system's weaknesses? Pick up to two from this list.

Unfair to smaller parties

Less diversity of MP's

It means my vote doesn't really count in my riding

There are other better systems

Other (Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

I don't think that FPTP has any weaknesses

[New Page]

In discussions about possibly changing Canada's electoral system, the alternatives being considered are more proportional systems. This means seats in the House of Commons are distributed in a way that more closely reflects the actual popular vote.

For today's survey, we want to ask about four of these alternative proportional electoral systems.

[ROTATE MMP/STV/LPR SECTIONS]

## MMP

An electoral system is called: **Mixed Member Proportional or MMP**. This system has a few variations. We'll be looking at an open-list MMP system.

Briefly, under an open-list MMP electoral system, people have two votes:

- One for a candidate in your riding – same as FPTP
- Another vote for a regional candidate: you can vote either for a party in general or for one of the parties' candidates

Let's look at the MMP ballot. You have one vote for a candidate in your riding, and another for the regional candidate or party of your choice. Please fill out the sample ballot below - who you vote for isn't important here, only that you provide a response.

To mark the ballot, click in the boxes beside the candidate or party on the ballot. To redo, click 'Clear' in the top right corner of the screen.

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## You have two votes:

### **1** Please mark an "X" beside one candidate for LOCAL MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT

- |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Candidate A<br>Party X | <input type="checkbox"/> Candidate B<br>Party Y | <input type="checkbox"/> Candidate C<br>Party Z | <input type="checkbox"/> Candidate D<br>Party V |
|---|---|---|---|

### **2** Please mark an "X" beside EITHER one party OR one candidate for REGIONAL MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT.

A vote for a candidate counts as a vote for that candidate's party. This vote helps elect regional MPs, topping-up the numbers of MPs from your region so the total is proportional to the votes for each party.

- |                                  |                                  |                                  |                                  |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Party X | <input type="checkbox"/> Party Y | <input type="checkbox"/> Party Z | <input type="checkbox"/> Party V |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|

- |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Candidate A<br>Party X | <input type="checkbox"/> Candidate A<br>Party Y | <input type="checkbox"/> Candidate A<br>Party Z | <input type="checkbox"/> Candidate A<br>Party V |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Candidate B<br>Party X | <input type="checkbox"/> Candidate B<br>Party Y | <input type="checkbox"/> Candidate B<br>Party Z | <input type="checkbox"/> Candidate B<br>Party V |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Candidate C<br>Party X | <input type="checkbox"/> Candidate C<br>Party Y | <input type="checkbox"/> Candidate C<br>Party Z | <input type="checkbox"/> Candidate C<br>Party V |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Candidate D<br>Party X | <input type="checkbox"/> Candidate D<br>Party Y | <input type="checkbox"/> Candidate D<br>Party Z | <input type="checkbox"/> Candidate D<br>Party V |

Q7. Would you say the average Canadian voter filling out this [Insert system here] ballot would find it clear or confusing? (Keeping in mind they would be filling it out on a pencil and paper ballot in the voting booth, not in an online survey).

Very clear, easy to fill out  
Quite clear  
Not very clear  
Not clear at all, confusing

After the votes are counted under the MMP system, House of Commons seats are then split between:

- Local MPs - same as FPTP
- Regional seats that are assigned based on the parties' and candidates' share of the regional vote

MMP is a proportional electoral system which means that, compared to the current system, the number of seats each party gets is closer to their actual share of the popular vote.

Smaller parties may win more seats, and the bigger parties would need a higher percentage of the popular vote to win a majority government. This type of system generally results in more minority and coalition governments.

Q8. Compared to the current FPTP system we have, do you think having [System] instead would strengthen, weaken, or have no impact on:

[Rotate:]

How meaningful your own vote is

The political choice of people in your community

[Columns:]

Weaken  
No impact  
Strengthen

Q9.. Suppose you had to choose between this kind of electoral system and the currently used First Past The Post. Which of the two systems would you prefer?

First Past The Post (FPTP)  
[Insert system here]  
Not sure/Can't choose

STV

An electoral system that might be considered for Canada is called: Single Transferable Vote or STV.

Briefly, under STV:

- Ridings are larger and also have multiple MPs (the number would vary depending on population)
- Parties run multiple candidates in each riding
- Voters rank their candidate choices in order of preference.

Let's look at the Single Transferable Vote (STV) ballot. You rank the candidates in order of your preference. You can rank as many or as few candidates as you like - from as many parties as you like or just one. Please fill out the sample ballot below – who you vote for isn't important here, only that you provide a valid response.

On a real ballot, you would write in rank numbers for the candidates. For our online example, please "drag and drop" the ranking numbers. Start by putting the "1" beside your first-choice candidate, and continue ranking as many candidates as you please.

**SINGLE TRANSFERABLE VOTE / VOTE UNIQUE TRANSFÉRABLE**

There are three members to be elected in this riding.  
Place a 1 next to your first choice candidate  
and number as many other candidates as you wish in  
order of preference.

Il y a trois députés à élire dans cette circonscription.  
Veuillez inscrire un 1 en regard du candidat  
qui est votre premier choix et numéroter par ordre de  
préférence tous les autres candidats que vous désirez.

PARTY X / PARTI X	PARTY Y / PARTI Y	PARTY Z / PARTI Z	INDEPENDENT INDÉPENDANT
<input type="checkbox"/> CANDIDATE A CANDIDAT A			
<input type="checkbox"/> CANDIDATE B CANDIDAT B	<input type="checkbox"/> CANDIDATE B CANDIDAT B	<input type="checkbox"/> CANDIDATE B CANDIDAT B	
<input type="checkbox"/> CANDIDATE C CANDIDAT C	<input type="checkbox"/> CANDIDATE C CANDIDAT C		

[ASK STV Q1 HERE]

[STV further explanation/outcomes]

When the votes are counted in an STV system, seats are filled in each riding using a formula based on how voters ranked candidates on their ballots.

STV is a proportional electoral system which means that, compared to the current system, the number of seats each party gets is closer to their actual share of the popular vote.

Smaller parties may win more seats, and the bigger parties would need a higher percentage of the popular vote to win a majority government. This type of system generally results in more minority and coalition governments.

[ASK STV Q's 2 AND 3 HERE]

LPR

An electoral system that might be considered for Canada is called: Open List Proportional Representation or LPR.

Briefly, under an Open List LPR electoral system:

- The electoral ridings are larger and have multiple MPs (the number would vary depending on population)
- Parties run multiple candidates in each riding
- Voters select one candidate from the list offered

Let's look at the Open List LPR ballot. Choose one from a list of candidates representing the different parties. Please fill out the sample ballot below - who you vote for isn't important here, only that you provide a valid response.

To mark the ballot, click beside a candidate's name on the ballot. To redo, click 'Clear' in the top right corner of the screen.

**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 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	

[ASK LPR Q1 HERE]

When the votes are being counted in an LPR system:

- Riding seats are distributed according to the parties' share of the vote in that riding.
- Successful candidates who fill those party seats are chosen based on how many votes they specifically received.

LPR is a proportional electoral system which means that, compared to the current system, the number of seats each party gets is closer to their actual share of the popular vote.

Smaller parties may win more seats, and the bigger parties would need a higher percentage of the popular vote to win a majority government. This generally results in more minority and coalition governments.

[ASK LPR Q's 2 AND 3 HERE]

RUPR [TO BE PLACED LAST FOR CLARITY]

And one other electoral system that might be considered for Canada is called: Rural-Urban Proportional Representation or RUPR.

Briefly, under a RUPR electoral system:

- Ridings are divided into two groups: rural ridings have smaller populations (under 100,000 residents), and urban ridings are bigger (over 100,000 residents)
- In rural ridings, a single MP is elected and parties run a single candidate
- In urban ridings, there would be multiple MPs (depending on population) and parties run multiple candidates.
- In both rural and urban ridings, voters rank their candidate choices in order of preference

[For Rural Ballot – use AV ballot]

Let's look at the RUPR ballot for **rural** ridings where a single MP will be elected. You rank the candidates in order of your preference. You can rank as many or as few candidates as you. Please fill out the sample ballot below – who you vote for isn't important here, only that you provide a valid response.

On a real ballot, you would write in rank numbers for the candidates. For our online example, please "drag and drop" the ranking numbers. Start by putting the "1" beside your first-choice candidate, and continue ranking as many candidates as you please.

[For Urban Ballot – use STV ballot]

Let's look at the RUPR ballot for **urban** ridings where multiple MPs will be elected – it's the same as the STV ballot you have already seen. You rank the candidates in order of your preference. You can rank as many or as few candidates as you like - from as many parties as you like or just one. Please fill out the sample ballot below – who you vote for isn't important here, only that you provide a valid response.

On a real ballot, you would write in rank numbers for the candidates. For our online example, please "drag and drop" the ranking numbers. Start by putting the "1" beside your first-choice candidate, and continue ranking as many candidates as you please.

[ASK RUPR Q1 AFTER EACH BALLOT]

When the votes are being counted in a RUPR system:

- Individual riding MPs are selected based on voters' ranked preferences
- Some 'top-up' seats are awarded based on a party's share of the regional popular vote

RUPR is a proportional electoral system which means that, compared to the current system, the number of seats each party gets is closer to their actual share of the popular vote.

Smaller parties may win more seats, and the bigger parties would need a higher percentage of the popular vote to win a majority government. This type of system generally results in more minority and coalition governments.

[ASK RUPR Q's 2 AND 3 HERE]

[Ask Q 1 following the presentation of each ballot, including FPTP and for both ballots at RUPR]

[FOR ALL SYSTEMS BUT FPTP: CONTINUE WITH MORE EXPLANATION/OUTCOMES AND Q'S 2 AND 3]

[again, half the sample will see Q's 4 -- 6 here after the systems/ballots, half at the beginning]

7. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.

[Randomize statements]

The government might talk about it and study it, but meaningful electoral reform won't happen

A system that more closely reflects the parties' actual popular support would increase voter turnout

A different electoral system will be too difficult for lots of people and turn them off politics and voting

I don't like the idea of Canada having more minority and/or coalition governments

There should be a referendum before any major change is made to the electoral system

Strongly Disagree

Moderately Disagree

Moderately Agree

Strongly Agree

8. Some other proposals have been made regarding voting in Canada. Do you support or oppose each of the following:

Mandatory voting (required by law)

Lower the voting age to 16

Strongly Oppose

Moderately Oppose

Moderately Support

Strongly Support

9. In 2015, Justin Trudeau and the Liberal Party won a majority government. Overall, would you say you are pleased or upset with this outcome?

Very pleased

Somewhat pleased

Neutral

Somewhat upset

Very upset

10. Vote 2015