



# MAKE EVERY VOTE COUNT—ALWAYS!

**PPR 123: 'Perfect Proportional Representation' + 'Instant Runoff Voting' = 'True' Democracy!**

## PPR 123 IMPLEMENTATION

**PPR 123 (Perfect Proportional Representation)** should ultimately prevail as the predominant electoral system used by most democratic nations. That prediction is simply based on the objective superiority of **PPR 123** over all other electoral systems.

As a 'made-in-Canada' innovation, inspired by the promise to "Make Every Vote Count", and with Canada's present Parliament committed to electoral reform, it's of course hoped that **PPR 123** would be adopted first by Canada. **PPR 123** should become a 'legacy' achievement of the leadership that brings it to *each* country, with special pride and honour to the nation that's *first* to adopt it.

That said, electoral reform of any kind and anywhere will always face strong resistance. Resistance to change is always led by those with the most to lose—specifically, the parties that are the undeserving beneficiaries of distortions of the existing electoral system. And those are the *major* political parties (i.e. all of the parties that have ever formed Government). Associates of those parties are usually the most vocal in calling for a public referendum on electoral reform. Then, their political 'backroom' operatives normally spearhead disinformation through a coordinated '*FUD campaign*' (Fear, Uncertainty, Doubt) to dupe an unaware public into voting against the people's interests and defeating the referendum.

These are simply the unstated facts of political life. So achieving electoral reform requires leadership that is exceptionally principled, visionary and courageous—leadership that builds trust and inspires both the *people* and the *parliamentarians* to come together and do '*what is right*' to make Democracy better for all!

This analysis is to urge Canada's Parliament to rise to the challenge, and collectively provide the leadership—decisively and across party lines—to build a stronger and healthier Democracy, that future generations will greatly appreciate and honour!

The following points are specific recommendations on electoral reform, along with implementation considerations.

1. **PPR 123 (Perfect Proportional Representation)** should be adopted as Canada's new electoral system, to be implemented in two stages.
2. The first stage should be the implementation of **IRV** (i.e. **Instant Runoff Voting**, the "**123**" component of **PPR 123**) as the voting system to be used in the next election (2019), along with a **Referendum on PPR** to be held coincident with that election.
  - While there's no legal necessity for a referendum, it would certainly be necessary to conduct a thorough public information campaign on the chosen electoral reform, to explain the preferential ballot and how it provides the basis for Perfect Proportional Representation. So all voters should understand how the **IRV** works to elect all representatives with a *majority* (50%+1). And the people should also understand that the referendum empowers them to vote on whether their liberated and hence '*true*' *1<sup>st</sup>*-choice vote should be used *only once*, on election night, in the election of their representative—or, alternatively,

whether their vote should also be used by that party in every parliamentary vote—regardless of whether or not their chosen candidate was elected! With the ballot question properly framed and well explained, the referendum would provide an excellent opportunity to allay any doubts and build public trust and confidence in **PPR123** as the best electoral system.

- Parliamentarians must know that electoral reform is very important and ‘*the right thing*’ to do; also, that most people have hardly any knowledge and perhaps even less interest in the subject. Furthermore, recent experience in several provinces has demonstrated that referenda on electoral reform are routinely defeated by a dose of demagoguery and duplicity to dupe a disinterested public.
  - Is there any constitutional or ethical need for a referendum?  
Absolutely not. Parliamentarians are elected to do what is best for the people and the nation, to study all the details and collectively decide what is best, and then to *just do it!*
  - Given that a referendum is not required, is it advisable?  
Yes. There is some degree of public expectation that a referendum is ‘*called for*’ before changing the electoral system. This is based on prior examples, political posturing, public suspicions of politicians and their motives, and media buzz.
  - With the adoption of **PPR123**, there are several strong reasons for recommending a referendum on just the **PPR** component as the new Parliamentary Voting Procedure. Firstly, **PPR** is the true innovation that’s without political precedent, and it’s the key part of **PPR123** that truly ‘*makes every vote count*’. Secondly, **PPR** requires the *preferential ballot*, which is also integral to IRV, and hence must be well explained to everyone before the election.
  - If there should be a referendum on **PPR**, why should there not be a prior referendum on IRV?  
There are several good reasons. Firstly, there are so many precedents and so much prior experience with IRV [Australia switched from FPTP to IRV in 1919; BC used IRV in the mid-1950s; also used elsewhere in Canadian cities and many countries; used as the basis of electing all party leaders]. Secondly, IRV provides numerous improvements upon FPTP, so even in the unlikely situation that the referendum on **PPR** might be defeated, IRV would still be an electoral reform upgrade over FPTP. Thirdly, it would waste considerable time and money to hold a prior referendum on IRV (or **PPR123**).
  - How should the referendum question on **PPR** be framed?  
This should be determined by a panel of experts; one suggestion:  
*For all voting in Parliament, whose votes should be counted and equal? (n.b.: only one choice is possible)*
    - Every Citizen’s vote
    - Every MP’s vote
  - Should approval be based on a simple *majority* (50%+1 of the national vote)?  
Yes. A higher value could lead to a defeat of the proposed reform—but also with the possibility that a majority might have rejected the existing voting system (which itself was never approved by the people). This would lead to a serious issue of legitimacy of a future election under *either* system.
3. The second stage would be the implementation of the **PPR** component as the new Parliamentary Voting Procedure, subject to public approval in the referendum on **PPR**, to occur as quickly as possible.
- Until then, or in the unlikely event that the referendum on PPR failed to obtain public approval, the existing Parliamentary Voting Procedure (i.e. *one-member=one-vote*) would remain in effect.

4. With the full implementation of **PPR 123**, consideration should be given to the advisability of a ‘double-majority’ requirement (i.e. a Parliamentary *majority* under *both* the existing and the **PPR** Parliamentary Voting Procedures) applicable to *motions of non-confidence*, to ensure no increased risk of instability.
  - By switching from FPTP to any PR system, minority or coalition governments would become the new norm. This might raise concerns about an increased risk of instability.
  - In the event of a dysfunctional or ‘grid-locked’ Parliament, the Government would still be able to precipitate its defeat to force an early election.
5. As a minor refinement on **IRV**, it is suggested to use a modified *Borda count* (i.e. based on the expressed voting preferences as **1,2,3**) to determine the order of elimination of candidates, to ensure that each person elected is *always* the candidate with the highest public approval.
  - Without this, there would be a small risk that a more widely accepted candidate might be prematurely eliminated by having fewer *1st-choice* votes.
  - **Borda** would provide an easier and perhaps quicker way to determine the winner than **IRV**, and could be considered as a substitute for **IRV** as it would function equally as well with **PPR 123**. But only **IRV** ensures that all who are elected have *majority* (50%+1) support, as a higher standard of legitimacy.
6. Clear guidelines or formulae should be established for each party to follow in their reassignment of all votes for their *defeated* candidates amongst their elected candidates. This should address the possibility of more balanced demographic distribution of parliamentary voting power.
  - Typically, more than half of all Citizens’ votes are for defeated candidates (hence ‘wasted’ votes under **FPTP** and most electoral systems).
  - Under **PPR 123**, *all* votes for defeated candidates are *retained* by each party, and *reassigned* amongst their elected members [adding to the votes they personally received, to determine the parliamentary voting power of each member].
  - Vote reassignment should primarily be within the same province and region.
  - Vote reassignment would allow considerable potential to improve demographic balance [e.g. gender balance etc.] through parliamentary voting power.
7. Some accommodation should be provided to ensure that the Government has representation from all provinces and/or regions. Similar accommodations could also be considered for the Official Opposition. (Some suggestions are provided in **PPR 123** analyses.)
  - The risk of regional polarization is a potential problem that should be addressed through electoral reform.
  - Both **FPTP** and **IRV** tend to *exaggerate* the problem of regional *polarization*.
  - **PPR 123** effectively overcomes this problem—provided that the disadvantaged party elects at least one member in each province (or region).
  - Parliamentary democracy is seriously degraded if the Government does not have representation from all provinces/regions. Where/when this occurs (due to a high degree of regional *polarization* or a ‘*landslide*’ election), it is suggested that an “*At-large*” member (perhaps the ‘*best loser*’, or that party’s candidate with the most votes in that province/region) should be appointed to serve in Parliament, to represent all of those who voted for that party in that province/region.

8. Some accommodation(s) should be provided to avoid wasting votes for small parties and independent candidates. (Some suggestions are provided in **PPR123** analyses.)
  - For small parties that achieve an established threshold [suggested as 3% of national votes, or 5% of regional votes], it is suggested that an “*At-large*” member (perhaps the ‘*best loser*’, or the *party leader*) should be appointed to serve in Parliament, to represent all of those who voted for that party in that province/region.
  - For all independent candidates and small parties that did not achieve the established threshold, it is suggested that an “*At-large*” member (perhaps the independent candidate with the most votes, or perhaps a distinguished citizen selected by a *non-partisan* committee) should be appointed to serve in Parliament (perhaps as an parliamentary ‘*watch-dog*’ or *ombudsperson*), to represent all of those whose votes would otherwise be *wasted*, on either a national/provincial/regional basis.
9. At some point, consideration should be given to riding modifications that would improve overall effectiveness of representation in *under-populated* areas and reduce travel burdens on MPs. An advantage of **PPR123** is that it provides much greater flexibility in determining riding boundaries, as population levels and growth are automatically reflected in parliamentary voting power.