

OMAR ALGHABRA, MP
MISSISSAUGA CENTRE

TOWN HALL REPORT
ON ELECTORAL REFORM
PUBLIC CONSULTATION



HOUSE OF COMMONS
 CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES
 CANADA

DEPUTÉ OMAR ALGHABRA
MISSISSAUGA CENTRE

RAPPORT SUR LES CONSULTATIONS
PUBLIQUES SUR LA RÉFORME
ÉLECTORALE

Submitted by :

Omar Alghabra, Hon. Navdeep Bains, Peter Fonseca, Sven Spengemann, Iqra Khalid and Gagan Sikand.

CONSULTATION(S)			
Date(s) of the Meeting(s)	Time and Length (start time and end time)	Location of Consultation	Total Number of People in Attendance (you may indicate the number of volunteers and employees who assisted with the meeting)
1. 1/10/2016	10:00-13:00	Living Arts Centre, 4141 Living Arts Drive, Mississauga, ON L5B 4B8	Attendees: 140 Volunteers: 10 Staff: 16
2.			
3.			
4.			
Form: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Use of the Library of Parliament's visual presentation ○ Presentation from the MP's office ○ Open microphone ✓ Question and answer session ✓ Guest speaker: Mark Holland MP ✓ Other (please specify): 21 roundtable discussions 			
SUBJECTS DISCUSSED (summary)			
Voting systems: ✓	Replacement of the current voting system: ✓	Voter turnout: ✓	Accessibility and inclusiveness: ✓
Mandatory voting: ✓	Online voting: ✓	Local representation: ✓	Other (please specify and describe below) ✓ Simplicity, security, accountability, equality, decreasing party control, increased cooperation, voter education, voting incentives

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS
What did participants say about the current system for electing Members of Parliament (benefits/flaws)? Did participants feel that their votes are fairly translated? (suggested limit: 500 words)
The majority of participants (80/93) believed that the current system (FPTP) should be changed. Benefits: Easy to understand, avoids minority government, simple at ballot box, local representative.

Please return to:

Special Committee on Electoral Reform (ERRE)
 131, rue Queen Street, Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6
 Tel./tél.: 613-992-3150 Fax/télécopieur: 613-947-3089 ERRE@parl.gc.ca

Deadline: Friday, October 14, 2016

Flaws: Does not reflect what people want, encourages strategic voting, not all votes count, creates majority governments with plurality votes, not representative of local needs, concentrates effort of parties on swing ridings, supports two party system, poor participation, voter apathy, not representative, undemocratic.

Which alternatives to the current system were discussed? Did participants identify specific features that are important to them in an electoral system (for example local representation, proportionality, simplicity, legitimacy etc.)? (suggested limit: 500 words)

Alternative Systems	# of Voters
Alternative vote (AV)	17
Mixed member Proportional (MMP)	48
List Proportional Representation (Closed List PR)	4
Single Transferable Vote (STV)	11
Other: ranking via points, point based proportional representative, hybrid system	3

Specific features: local representation, simplicity, legitimacy, proportionality, democratic process where maximum participation and representation is achieved with online voting made available for disabled people and individuals outside of voting areas, equal representation, candidate-citizen accountability, stability, compromise, integrity of the vote, incentivized voting via a voter tax credit, increased youth participation, increased voter education, creating a voting culture.

Did participants discuss why they feel many Canadians choose not to engage in the democratic process? Did they suggest ways to encourage participation? (suggested limit: 500 words)

Some participants believed that voting was too hard for those with disabilities, the current system has taught strategic voting, and some people remain disengaged with Canadian politics. The participants felt that they could not accurately identify reasons why Canadians choose not to engage in the democratic process because they felt represent those that do engage.

On increasing voter participation: mandatory voting, online voting, door to door visits, weekend voting, voting holiday, educating the populous, accountability of the candidates to the citizens, lower voting age, regional representation, social media, non-partisan ads discussing and educating populous on issues, accessibility, incentives for voting, publish list of those who do not vote, engage youth, elections Canada should have more power to create a voting culture, to educate about voting, and encourage voting.

Did participants feel that it should it be mandatory to cast a ballot? (Can include spoiling a ballot.) (suggested limit: 500 words)

Mandatory Voting	For: 51 Against: 36
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Why recommend? Only as long as none of the above is an option, it will favour voter participation which is important, it is a citizen's obligation, punishment for not voting should be community service

Why not recommend? Electoral privilege should be up to individual, donkey voting, reward those who vote but don't punish those who don't, people may buy votes of complacent voters, true democracy does not need mandatory voting, educated population on importance of voting instead of forcing them to vote

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Did participants discuss online voting? Did they express a desire to maintain current voting practices? (i.e. presenting themselves at a polling station, vote secrecy etc.) (suggested limit: 500 words)

Online Voting

For: 58 Against: 22

Why Recommend? Accessible to people all over Canada, more engagement due to convenience, ensures decreased voter fraud, ensures voting during poor weather conditions, encourage youth voters, opportunity for citizens who are abroad during election

Why Not Recommend? Security issues (hackers, vote manipulation), not everyone uses the internet

Were any other major topics raised by the participants? (i.e. referendum, women/minority representation, accessibility, voter turnout etc.) (suggested limit: 500 words)

Feedback of this event suggested: more social forums for youth, increase frequency of town halls, more literature so people do not have to share, make it a longer event, friendlier attendants/ushers, send information about meeting in advance (most common suggestion), slide presentation, larger space, more tables, supply pens, better outreach to other political parties, facilitate better group discussion, provide specifics and agenda details, provide discussion outline, provide more education about electoral system, MP's should have more facetime with constituents.

SUMMARY OF KEY RECOMMENDATIONS AND COMMENTS FROM PARTICIPANTS (suggested limit: 1000 words)

Table Reports

Each table was given approximately one minute to report on the following: which system, online voting, mandatory voting, and other observations.

Table Number	System Chosen and Votes	Online Voting	Mandatory Voting	Other Observations/ Foundations
1	MMP, not against FPTP	Yes: For voters abroad and serving abroad, despite risks	Yes: To increase voter turn out	
2	FPTP, 1 for AV Referendum before system saved	No: not secure or transparent enough	No	
3	AV Eliminates two party system		50/50 For: think your vote counts more Against: a threat to our democracy	
4	MMP	Not domestically: the basic essence of democracy, security and transparency is compromised Exceptions: disabled, overseas	Yes	
5	3 STV 4 MMP	50/50 No place for online voting if	50/50	Elections Canada should have more power

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		there is mandatory voting Exceptions: abroad, remote communities		16 & 17 year old's should be preregistered to vote Foundations: Accountability, representation, local over national
6	6 MMP: easy to understand, national and local, every vote counts 1 FPTP	Yes: to allow more choice Security to prevent government manipulation	NO: waters down impact of everyone else's votes, increased apathetic votes	Voting over the weekends Foundations: Proportional representation, accountability, simplicity
7	No Consensus Least liked: Closed List PR Whole province could lose representation and small parties get smaller	YES	YES	Foundations: local representation, equality of votes, some choice better than none
8	4 AV 1 FPTP 2 Abstained	YES (4 Yes: 1 No)	NO (7 No: 1 Yes)	Foundations: Increasing voter participation, decreasing party control, proportionality, simplicity Comment: there are very little young people here
9	MMP	YES	NO: want informed, engaged, and educated voters	Foundations: less majorities, increased cooperation, equality of votes, local representation
10	AV & MMP Concerned about party lists under MMP, greater transparency	YES	50/50 Yes: other countries have it No: want people to informed, 2008 referendum most people did not know, how to represent a "none-of-the-above" option	Foundations: Proportionality, increasing the power of minority parties
11	MMP: the public should have a role in the composition of party lists	YES: because it's 2016	YES Caveats: increased voter education, responsibility of living in the country, uncomfortable with financial penalty for not voting,	Foundations: every vote should count, local representatives, accommodating independents

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			suggested community service instead	
12	MMP & AV	YES: because we haven't had major problems with hacking	YES: want an incentive to vote on taxes	Foundations: Proportionality
13	4 MMP 3 PR 2 FPTP	50/50 Against: LinkedIN privacy leak as an example, foreign intervention	YES: incentive to vote, punitive measures as community service	Foundations: each vote counts, increase civics education, mechanism for withdrawing a MP for behaviour (formal impeachment process), proportionality, need to create voting culture amongst the disenfranchised and disengaged
14	5 MMP 3 STV 1 FPTP	Yes: but must be secure	NO: 5 YES: 4	Observation: high school member present
15	3 AV 2 MMP 1 STV 1 Other	YES: to encourage more people to vote	NO: One in support, everyone else against	Foundations: encourage people to vote, proportional representation
16	MMP	YES: serious issues with security, if not addressed NO	YES: voting is serious and an important part of our democracy	Foundation: cooperation, minority governments have better track records
17	Not FPTP	YES: in parallel with paper ballots	Should be a holiday so everyone can vote	Elections Canada should do more work Foundations: every vote counts, more discussion and study, increase minority party representation
18	AV & MMP	YES		Need to make it easier for people to vote
19	Blended STV for local representation with PR overlay for national representation	NO: security issues, banking hasn't had major problems but did have minor problems	NO: we are a free country If we do reward those that vote, NO punishment	Foundations: Local representation, the PM should not have the responsibility of representing communities against others
20	3 MMP 1 Closed PR 1 AV	YES: 3 NO: 2	YES: 3 NO: 2	Foundations: increasing voter education Current system: does not represent ridings accurately
21	Proposed new system where PR and FPTP are mixed			

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Report submitted to Special Committee on Electoral Reform (ERRE)	Date:
MP's signature:	(Name)

Reports must be submitted to the Clerks of the Committee no later than Friday, October 14, 2016 in both official languages.

Please note that this document is for illustrative purposes only and can be modified or adapted to your needs. The report will be published on the Committee's web site.

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