

# A new majority and proportional electoral system

GOSSELIN P.

2018-11-06

## **Abstract**

Having criticized the Québec electoral system, we set up the necessary principles and methods to build a new electoral system characterized by :

- Always a majority government;
- Proportional representation of all elected party;
- Representation of the greatest number of electors;
- Keeping the same electoral districts;
- Keeping the same voting system;
- End of complementary elections;
- Elections at fixed date;
- Progressive normalization of the number of voters per electoral districts;
- Greater opportunity for electing independent candidates;
- The elector may vote independently for both the party and the deputy.

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# **1 The present system**

## **1.1 Introduction**

We describe hereafter a new electoral system which must replace the one turn uninominal majority voting system actually in force in Québec. Having reviewed the causes of its obsolescence and other systems in use abroad, we state the principles we will use in elaborating this new system. We design it while keeping most of the present system characteristics just adding a few minimal changes. We demonstrate with a simulation using past electoral data.

## **1.2 Obsolescence**

The principal cause of the present voting system being obsolete come from the great number of competing party while it was designed for a two party only system. More than two party make less probable a stable government. To maintain a strong link between a governing party and other partners imply negotiations and specific strategies based on compromises which are not easy at all. The second cause making it obsolete is the use of the territorial concept as the base element for the selection of deputy, that is to say the electoral district. It is the source of the recurrent conflict between regional and urban representation. An elected deputy may represent large populations localized in urban districts or low density populations of rural districts. This population inequality lead to a lack of equilibrium between the number of elected deputy and the population they represent. This happen even if the Québec electoral representation commission (QERC) try to reduce those inequalities by an appropriate reorganization of the electoral district frontiers in order to have the population number the closer to the mean. This voting system is known as a one turn uni-nominal majority system because it need a single event to get the vote, because there is only one deputy elected under simple majority for each electoral district and where the party who own the greatest number of districts is running the government. Such systems are in use in Great Britain, British Dominions, Latin America, Sweden and Danes.

It must be reminded the important action the Mouvement Démocratie Nouvelle made to bring the government with some changes to the present electoral system. The publication «Vers un nouveau mode de scrutin, cahier 1, S'informer et comprendre» [3] present the stakes, define the voting system, examine the proportional representation concept and finally approve a mixed compensatory solution.

## **1.3 Other systems**

There exist many voting systems, generally used in Europe, making a proportional representation between the global vote and the number of elected party deputy. However, the proportionality is gained only in part. All systems that have been tried up to now are marked by distortions that favor a group or another depending on the compensation method used create the proportionality. Those methods are numerous and here we do

not need to make a review since many experts have already studied them.<sup>1</sup> We just need to keep in mind that none of them lead to a true proportionality and even less to a majority government. With such systems it happen from time to time that a state stays without a government for many months since none of the elected party is strong enough to run a stable government and that negotiations must be made between them to reach to an agreement.

#### **1.4 Using lists**

Various studies show that the proportional representation can be reached only with the use of lists for the distribution of seats both to the majority and the minority party. It must be reminded that even with the inherent distortions, to render the method is very complicated. This lead some countries to opt for mixed system made of half majority and half proportional system. Clearly nobody has found a miracle solution for a system leading to a majority government with a proportional representation. We propose to show that it is perfectly possible to build such an electoral system. And we can easily start with the actual system with some minor conservative procedural changes to keep its integrity.

#### **1.5 Deputy base**

The base on which the deputy is selected rely on the electoral district. The Quebec territory being divided into 125 electoral districts with about 5 millions of voters, this make a mean of 40 000 voters per district. The determination of the electoral district frontiers become a difficult task for the Commission de la représentation électorale du Québec (CRÉQ) since it must consider social, geographical and political data. The consequence is that some districts fall apart far from the mean of voters. This fact make deputies associated with very different voting population so that the governing party does not have a real legitimacy. And usually the opposition party are under represented considering the number of their voters. Clearly we must review the base on which the determination of the deputation is founded in order that it represent really and equitably the voting population.

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<sup>1</sup>One may learn more upon by following these references: Duverger [2], Canada [1], O'Neal [4], Wikipedia [5]

## **2 A new system**

### **2.1 Principles**

To build such system, a new method must enforce two objectives. The first one is to have the same proportion of voters each party has as there are deputies of that party at the national assembly. The second objective is the production of a majority government. And we also need to keep most of the actual system in order to make things simple and easy.

### **2.2 Two turns**

First of all, it is clear that it is impossible to reach those objectives with a single turn of vote, two turns are needed. The first turn will show the vote received by each party for each electoral district. This will be used to compute the global vote each party got throughout the Quebec. Then it will be possible to compute the proportions of the vote for each party and later attribute accordingly the electoral districts to each of them. Up to now nothing much different from the actual system. The first difference happen at the second voting turn where only the two party who received the two greatest number of votes at the first voting turn are to compete. Since only two party are on the list, this will bring a majority party. This way, the dispersion of the vote as it appeared at the first voting turn due to third party disappear by forcing the voters to select a governing party form the two who received the greatest number of votes at the first turn. Since the winning party get a majority of votes, this party will receive the same proportion of seats at the national assembly making it the leader of a majority government. The second difference come from the method chosen to attribute the balance of the seats to the opposition. Each party forming the opposition will receive the same proportion of seats as the proportion of votes it got at the first voting turn. Then every party get the same portion of seats as the same portion of votes it got, so for the proportionality. For example let us consider a second voting turn where the winning party got 60% of the vote. It will get the same portion of seats at the national assembly that is 75 seats ( $0.6 \times 125$ ). The balance of 50 seats ( $125 - 75$ ) is for the opposition. If we suppose that five party got enough votes to get at least one seat in the proportion of 46%, 24%, 14%, 10% and 6%, then each will get 23, 12, 7, 5 and 3 seats respectively. This way each elected party has a proportion of seats the same as the vote it got and we have at the same time a majority government.

### **2.3 Attribution of the electoral districts**

This being, it must be determined which electoral districts will belong to a given party and by the way which deputy will be elected. In order to obey our first objective, we must maximize the weight of votes that each party represent so we select the electoral districts who got the greatest number of votes for a given party. This way the vote associated to a given party reflect the most its representativity. Each party being attributed the number of seats it own and following our example, the governing party will be attributed the 75 districts who ranked with the greatest number of votes for that party. And the same

for each of the opposition party. Always in order to follow our first objective, it will be necessary to proceed to the attribution of the districts in a determined order. Necessarily, we must begin the attribution according to the increasing number of seats the party got that is to say first by the party who got the least of seats and finish by the government party who got the most. This is to make sure that the party who get the least seats see itself attributed the districts who produced the greatest number of votes for it. Doing inversely beginning by the government party, followed by the opposition party who own the greatest number of seats and so on, the opposition party who hold the least districts may not see themselves be given the districts that voted the most for them because those districts may have been collected by other party, breaking our first objective.

To resume, the strategy to determine the representatives at the national assembly is to not use the electoral district anymore but rely on the use of the global vote. Instead the votes of the party within the electoral district is used to determine to which group it will be associated that is the party who won that district.

## **3 Implications**

### **3.1 The fractions**

Two kind of numbers are present in the attribution process. The number of seats available is an integer while computing it from the proportion of votes lead to a fractionary number. This conundrum is solved by completing any fractionary numbers to the next higher integer if its fraction part is equal to or greater than a half. This is done first while determining the number of seats the governing party hold and then for each party of the opposition. Because of this rounding process, the total number of computed seats may differ from the real one. Then the rule to balance the numbers will be to add or subtract a seat according to the case, firstly to the opposition party who got the greatest number of seats, then to the second opposition party who got the next greatest number of seats and so on as necessary.

### **3.2 Automatic normalization**

Since the attribution of the electoral districts for a given party rely on the number of votes that party got in that district, it is clear that in order to make sure to be selected all party will look for that a district has the greatest number of voters as possible. This will modify the actual attitude in favor of the normalization of the number of voters towards the desired mean since all electoral districts will compete together for the greatest number of voters. This will ease the work of the CRÉQ in face of the determination of the electoral district frontiers.

### **3.3 Same date elections**

Having always a majority government bring naturally its temporal stability and it may not be defeated by the opposition. Unless the government decide for strategic reasons to proceed to anticipated elections, the elections will be at a fixed date.

### **3.4 Replacing a deputy**

Let us remind that the attribution process of the seats at the national assembly rely on a selection of electoral districts in favor of a party each of them being represented by a deputy of that party. The deputy is indirectly elected, it is its electoral district that is selected. So if a seat become vacant due to a sickness, a death or a withdrawal of the party, the seat always stays associated to the electoral district and the party. The only change is its representative and its replacement is the responsibility of the party or the party association of that district. Consequently an election is not necessary as it could happen within the actual system. The sole difference is that the selected representative will be automatically a deputy. So a deputy cannot change of allegiance or be an independent one. He must resign and step down. This will influence the ethic of the deputation where loyalty and strong values will be put forward.

### **3.5 Independents**

This system does not favor the independent candidate since he is the sole representative of its own party. To be equitable and to follow our rules, we must consider a virtual party made of all the independent candidates. This is their global vote that decide if they may own an electoral district. If so, the electoral district where the independent candidate has the greatest number of votes will be selected as an independent one.

### **3.6 Opposition**

Considering the actual system, the official opposition is the party who will loose the most of its power because within this new system, we force a majority government and the proportionality of the representatives. This party will have a reduced number of electoral districts.

### **3.7 The chief of a party**

The electoral district selection process may not select the district of the chief of a party. This is a lesser problem since any deputy already selected may resign in favor of the party chief. This is not a dishonour but only a selection constraint of the process. It could be the rule that if the chief of a party does not see its district selected for its party the representative of the last selected district for the party resign in favor of its chief.

### **3.8 Strategic vote**

It will not be a wise strategy not to have a representative in any district because the attribution process is based on the number of votes a party got. Consequently the strategic vote shall disappear since it is of no value in this system.

### **3.9 The electoral districts**

This system keep intact the electoral districts without any territorial modification. Regional and urban representation is preserved. A deputy will always be associated to a



district but the selected one may vary as it is actually the case. This is of no value to consider the strength, the size, the representativity between rural and urban districts. Each of them keep its characteristics. Change happens internally to a district by a different determination of the party winning the district. The choice is not the result of a contest between local forces but determined globally by the global vote. This is a good advantage to keep intact the electoral districts without any modification.

### **3.10 The voting system**

**T**he voting system is maintained without any modification. However it is repeated two times. The first time, the citizen make a single choice of candidate belonging to a single party with a single ticket which is put in the voting box. This is what will determine the proportional representativity of the opposition. The second time the citizen always using a single voting ticket make its choice between two party and drop it in the voting box. This determine the governing party.

### **3.11 L'électeur**

**A** note on the elector options facing this system. For example what can do the elector who opt for the party «P» but do not wish to vote for its party representative «R» in his electoral district. The vote at the second turn is more important for determining the party than at the first turn. By voting at the first turn for the representative of a party other than the one he favor or could be the government party, he maximize the chances to see this representative «R» be selected since the selection process is based on the number of votes in the district. It is then clear that this system priorise independently both a representative and a party. This is contrary to the idea that the vote is only for the party and cannot make a difference for the representative.

## 4 Application

### 4.1 Example

In order to show how this system may be used and to discover its simplicity, we use the data from the fall 2014 Québec election. This data make the first turn. We make an arbitrarily manipulation of this data to create a second turn where there are only two party. Then follow the stages as described earlier leading to the composition of the national assembly. These operations are processed on large tables that may be downloaded at the "Download" section of the main menu. <sup>2</sup>

### 4.2 First turn

Table 1 shows the first turn results mainly the number of votes each party got with the corresponding percentage.

### 4.3 Second turn

To build a second turn, we use the first turn data where we arbitrarily merge the data from third party to the two who got the greatest number of votes on the first turn. Our choice are CAQ(part), PVQ, PCQ, IND, PN, PMLQ, PSP, MPQ and UCQ merged with PLQ and CAQ(part), QS, ON, BP, PE, EA, PUN, QRD et PI merged with PQ. Table 2 show the second turn votes.

### 4.4 Seats

The Quebec Liberal Party being majority with 57% of the vote it get 71 deputy or electoral districts. The balance or 54 seats are distributed to the opposition party proportionally to the votes they got at the first turn. So the Parti Québécois get 24 seats, the Coalition Avenir Québec get 21 seats, Québec Solidaire get 7 seats, Option Nationale get 1 seat, The Green Party get 1 seat and no seats for the remaining party. Tables 3 to 11 show this.

This new system bring a majority government of the Québec Liberal Party with 71 seats for a representativity of 57% of the vote. The opposition is made of five party having 54 seats for a representation of 43% of the vote. The opposition is made of the Parti Québécois with 24 seats (43% of the vote), the Coalition Avenir Québec with 21 seats (39% of the vote), Québec Solidaire with 7 seats (13% of the vote), Option nationale with 1 seat (1,2% of the vote) and the Quebec Green Party with 1 seat (0,9% of the vote). Table 12 show this.

### 4.5 2018 Election

We apply this methodology to the 2018 election data. The table showing the complete operations is downloadable through section «Download» of at our internet site <sup>3</sup>. Table

<sup>2</sup>URL: [http://phrenocarpe.org/vote/eng/vote\\_en\\_ver\\_2.html](http://phrenocarpe.org/vote/eng/vote_en_ver_2.html)

<sup>3</sup>URL: [http://phrenocarpe.org/vote/eng/vote\\_en\\_ver\\_2.html](http://phrenocarpe.org/vote/eng/vote_en_ver_2.html)

[13](#) show this.

## **4.6 Discussion**

**T**he 2014 and 2018 elections made majority government with nearly the same numbers of seats (56% and 59,2%) but with percentages of votes less representative (41,52% and 37,42%). The new system would have made similar proportions of seats (56,80% and 55,20%) but with the same proportions of votes (56,92% and 54,88%) which is much better than the actual system. For the opposition, the actual system has brought only three opposition party (2014 and 2018) while the new system would have given five (2014) or six (2018).

**A**dopting this new system imply to review the subsidizing mode of the elected party. Actually only the governmental party, the opposition and the second opposition, if it fill specific constraint, are subsidized. The equity principle imply to subsidized all party and this could be in proportion to the number of seats it hold. The method or formula shall be adopted by the national assembly.

**I**t worth mentioning that this system favor a change of customs and behavior. This will be the case while determining the electoral district frontiers and for the loyalty of a deputy to its party. Another advantage is the ability of the elector to make an independent choice of the party and the deputy.

**A** compensation mixed proportional system as it may be introduced make major changes to the voting system. It use lists of candidates. To the actual electoral districts it add a superposition of new regional districts. It use new and complex methodologies to dispatch seats with inherent distortions. And the more numerous are third party the more problematic is the formation of a government.

## 5 Conclusion

### 5.1 Résumé

To conclude, we consider to have build a new electoral system based on the actual one that we modified very lightly. It follow rigorously the rules that make the proportional representation real. It always produce a majority government assuring its stability. It is based on the global vote instead of the electoral district. It use an original method to determine the seats or the districts represented. It preserve the present structure, the electoral district and the voting system. Truly this system reach the looked for objectives:

- Always a majority government;
- Proportional representation of all elected party;
- Representation of the greatest number of electors;
- Keeping the same electoral districts;
- Keeping the same voting system;
- End of complementary elections;
- Elections at fixed date;
- Progressive normalization of the number of voters per electoral districts;
- Greater opportunity for electing independent candidates;
- The elector may vote independently for both the party and the deputy.

This system apply the economy principle by the preservation of the actual system and is really of a less complexity than a mixed system making use of lists and compensation methods. This is the most simple system, the most practical and the least expensive that may be adopted. It may be used right now and its application need only a simple change of the computational method used by the Director General of Elections.

Why make complicated when it can be done better and simpler?

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Party	Number of votes	Percentage
PLQ	1 757 071	42%
PQ	1 074 120	25%
CAQ	975 607	23%
QS	323 124	8%
ON	30 697	1%
PVQ	23 163	0%
PCQ	16 429	0%
IND	15 361	0%
PN	7 539	0%
BP	2 690	0%
PMLQ	2 016	0%
PE	1 645	0%
PSP	1 291	0%
MPQ	521	0%
EA	400	0%
PUN	241	0%
QRD	163	0%
PI	126	0%
UCQ	58	0%
Total	4 232 262	100%

Table 1: First turn

Party	Number of votes	Percentage
PLQ	2 408 813	57%
PQ	1 823 449	43%
Total	4 232 262	100%

Table 2: Second turn

Party	Number of votes	Percentage	Number of seats
PLQ	2 408 813	57%	71
Opposition	1 823 449	43%	54
Total	4 232 262	100%	125

Table 3: Seats

Party	Number of votes	Percentage	Number of seats
PQ	1 074 120	43%	24
CAQ	975 607	39%	21
QS	323 124	13%	7
ON	30 697	1,2%	1
PVQ	23 163	0,9%	1
PCQ	16 429	0,7%	
IND	15 361	0,6%	
PN	7 539	0,3%	
BP	2 690	0,1%	
PMLQ	2 016	0,1%	
PE	1 645	0,1%	
PSP	1 291	0,1%	
MPQ	521	0%	
EA	400	0%	
PUN	241	0%	
QRD	163	0%	
PI	126	0%	
UCQ	58	0%	
Total	2 475 191	100%	54

Table 4: Opposition

Rank	District	Number of votes
1	Notre-Dame-de-Grâce	1 318
Total	4 232 262	100%

Table 5: PVQ districts

Rank	District	Number of votes
1	Taschereau	1 513

Table 6: ON district

Rank	District	Number of votes
1	Gouin	16 155
2	Mercier	13 228
3	Laurier-Dorion	9 330
4	Sainte-Marie-Saint-Jacques	8 437
5	Hochelaga-Maisonneuve	7 926
6	Rosemont	6 930
7	Rimouski	4 851

Table 7: QS districts



Rank	District	Number of votes
1	Chauveau	22 679
2	La Peltrie	21 386
3	Chutes-de-la-Chaudière	21 288
4	Arthabaska	19 393
5	L'Assomption	18 719
6	Granby	18 441
7	Mirabel	16 359
8	Beauce-Nord	15 761
9	Blainville	15 075
10	Montarville	14 999
11	Rousseau	14 667
12	Vanier-Les-Rivières	14 535
13	Borduas	14 331
14	Montmorency	14 323
15	Lévis	14 131
16	Repentigny	13 889
17	Terrebonne	13 707
18	Johnson	13 621
19	Drummond-Bois-Francis	13 600
20	Saint-Hyacinthe	13 245
21	Masson	13 235

Table 8: CAQ districts

Rank	District	Number of votes
1	Verchères	18 467
2	Matane-Matapédia	18 025
3	Joliette	17 477
4	Bertrand	15 232
5	Berthier	15 070
6	Labelle	13 806
7	Saint-Jérôme	13 647
8	Jonquière	13 487
9	Saint-Jean	13 486
10	Lac-Saint-Jean	13 159
11	Saint-François	12 725
12	Bourget	12 525
13	Groulx	12 484
14	Charlevoix-Côte-de-Beaupré	12 201
15	Taillon	12 148
16	Pointe-aux-Trembles	12 021
17	Vachon	11 983
18	Laval-des-Rapides	11 902
19	Beauharnois	11 891
20	Chambly	11 722
21	Richelieu	11 695
22	Marie-Victorin	11 614
23	Richmond	11 521
24	Bonaventure	11 380

Table 9: PQ districts

Rank	District	Number of votes
1	Robert-Baldwin	36 763
2	Nelligan	36 494
3	Saint-Laurent	31 454
4	Jacques-Cartier	30 823
5	Chomedey	30 604
6	Vaudreuil	27 750
7	Jeanne-Mance-Viger	27 007
8	D'Arcy-McGee	26 983
9	Marguerite-Bourgeois	26 251
10	La Pinière	25 955
11	Pontiac	25 659
12	Acadie	24 211
13	Mont-Royal	23 297
14	Gatineau	22 852
15	Lafontaine	22 476
16	Fabre	20 614
17	Marquette	20 342
18	Westmount-Saint-Louis	20 297
19	Saint-Henri-Sainte-Anne	19 795
20	Chapleau	19 697
21	Lotbinière-Frontenac	19 296
22	Soulanges	18 925
23	Papineau	18 330
24	Louis-Hébert	18 327
25	Hull	18 213
26	Brome-Missisquoi	18 103
27	Rivière-du-Loup-Témiscouata	18 086
28	Bourrassa-Sauvé	17 905
29	Châteauguay	17 876
30	Roberval	17 816
31	Vimont	17 584
32	Côte-du-Sud	17 348
33	Verdun	17 172
34	Beauce-Sud	17 055
35	Charlesbourg	16 934

Table 10: PLQ districts 1/2

Rank	District	Number of votes
36	Sainte-Rose	16 520
37	Mille-Îles	16 499
38	Anjou-Louis-Riel	16 049
39	Viau	15 945
40	Bellechasse	15 843
41	Laporte	15 804
42	Jean-Talon	15 492
43	Outremont	15 368
44	Huntingdon	14 115
45	Maskinongé	13 658
46	Crémazie	13 440
47	Orford	13 055
48	Portneuf	12 779
49	Laviolette	12 422
50	Sherbrooke	12 380
51	Argenteuil	11 676
52	Trois-Rivières	11 658
53	Jean-Lesage	11 645
54	Champlain	11 615
55	Dubuc	11 386
56	La Prairie	11 110
57	Mégantic	10 840
58	Rouyn-Noranda-Témiscamingue	10 644
59	Chicoutimi	9 640
60	Deux-Montagnes	8 913
61	Iberville	8 602
62	Duplessis	8 513
63	Abitibi-Est	8 476
64	Saint-Maurice	8 244
65	Nicolet-Bécancour	8 038
66	Abitibi-Ouest	7 615
67	Sanguinet	7 301
68	Gaspé	6 513
69	Ungava	4 615
70	René-Lévesque	4 366
71	Îles-de-la-Madeleine	4 137

Table 11: PLQ districts 2/2

		PLQ	PQ	CAQ	QS	ONQ	PVQ	Partys	Total
Actual	Seats	70	30	22	3	0	0		125
	%	56	24	17,6	2,4	0	0		100
Actual	Votes	1 757 071	1 074 120	975 607	323 124	30 697	23 163	4 183 782	4 232 262
	%	41,52	25,38	23,05	7,63	0,73	0,55	98,85	
2 turn	Votes	2 408 813	1 823 449						4 232 262
	% Gov. Opp.	56,92 71,15	43,08 54						100
Oppo.	Votes		1 074 120	975 607	323 124	30 697	23 163	2 426 711	2 475 191
	% Seats		43,40 23,43	39,42 21,28	13,05 7,05	1,24 0,67	0,94 0,51	98,04	100
Final	Seats	71	24	21	7	1	1		125
	%	56,80	19,20	16,80	5,60	0,80	0,80		100
	Élect. % Élect. %	1 193 210 67,91 62,15	319 608 29,76 16,65	337 384 34,58 17,57	66 857 20,69 3,48	1 513 4,93 0,08	1 318 5,69 0,07		1 919 890 100,00

Table 12: 2014 Elections

		CAQ	PLQ	QS	PQ	PVQ	PCQ	NPDQ	Partys	Total
Actual	Seats	74	32	10	9	0	0	0		125
	%	59,2	25,6	8	7,2	0	0	0		100
Actual	Votes	1509459	1001039	649505	687999	67870	59053	22863	3997785	4033545
	%	37,42	24,82	16,10	17,06	1,68	1,46	0,57	99,11	
2 turn	Votes	2213765	1819780							4033545
	% Gov. Opp.	54,88 68,60	45,12 56							100
Oppo.	Votes		1001039	649505	687999	67870	59053	22863	2488357	2524117
	% Seats		39,66 22,21	25,73 14,41	27,26 15,26	2,69 1,51	2,34 1,31	0,91 0,51	98,58	100
Final	Seats	69	23	14	15	2	1	1		125
	%	55,20	18,40	11,20	12,00	1,60	0,80	0,80		100
	Elect.	1012734	331875	169870	190232	3766	3371	836		1712656
	% Elect.	67,09	33,15	26,15	27,65	5,55	5,71	3,66		
	%	59,13	19,38	9,92	11,11	0,22	0,20	0,05		100,00

Table 13: 2018 Election