



Suite 30 Ground Floor | Bretton Hall | # 16 Victoria Avenue | Port of Spain

It's Broken

So Fix It!



Suite 30 Ground Floor | Bretton Hall | # 16 Victoria Avenue | Port of Spain

What's wrong with our current voting system?

- A party can win the majority of seats even when the majority voted for other parties
- There are many groups who do not get representation in Parliament
- An unrepresentative Parliament is not accountable to the entire electorate
- A culture of complacency and arrogance develops as parliamentarians are not truly accountable to the people
- The proliferation of safe seats means political parties focus on voters in marginal seats which ultimately determine the outcome of the election

The Solution: A Better Electoral System

What are the Benefits of Proportional Representation?

- Majority governments represent a genuine majority as political parties have the percentage of legislative seats which reflect their public support
- Greater choice at the ballot box
- Politicians are more accountable, particularly on the most pressing national issues
- More diverse representation
- Every vote counts and helps shape the Parliament
- There are no safe seats so political parties must work hard for all voters
- Cleaner campaigns run on national issues
- Higher voter turn out



Suite 30 Ground Floor | Bretton Hall | # 16 Victoria Avenue | Port of Spain

Proportional Representation

Proportional representation (PR) voting systems are used by most of the world's major democracies.

Over 80 countries now use the system. Some of these countries are Germany, Sweden, Switzerland, Denmark, Holland, Spain, Australia, Japan, Ireland, New Zealand, Mexico, Brazil and Suriname.

What is Proportional Representation?

It's an electoral system where the number of seats won is directly linked to the number of votes cast for each party

PR is not the same as a parliamentary system. A parliamentary system is a type of governmental system, while PR is a type of voting/electoral system. One is about the structure of government, the other about how votes are counted.

Types of PR

There are many variations of the system but they all have the same core principle: a party gaining seats in direct proportion to the number of votes they accrue at an election.

The List System

This is by far the most widely used form of PR. The voter selects one party and its slate of candidates to represent them. Party slates can be either "closed" or "open," allowing voters to indicate a preference for individual candidates.

If a party receives 40% of the vote, they receive 40% of the seats in the legislature, 20% of the vote receives 20% of the seats, and so on.



Suite 30 Ground Floor | Bretton Hall | # 16 Victoria Avenue | Port of Spain

The Mixed Member System

This is where half the legislature is elected from single-seat, “winner-take-all” districts and the other half by the List System.

Preference Voting

The voter ranks candidates in an order of preference (1,2,3,4, etc...) Voters can back their favourite candidate, knowing that if that candidate doesn't receive enough votes their vote will “transfer” to their next preference.

With preference voting, every vote counts and very few votes are wasted. This method is also called the “Single Transferrable Vote” or “STV”.