

Dear Editor

Everyone knows by now that the first-past-the-post system of electing MPs is grossly unfair. The most popular party always gets far more seats than it deserves, and minorities are always completely excluded.

Interestingly, if you assign the 301 House of Commons seats in the proportion the political parties were supported nation-wide, you get an allocation that is not very different from the one you get if you apportion seats province by province.

The number of seats won nation-wide according to the popular vote was as follows (the actual number is in parentheses):

LIB	123	(173)	difference = -50
CA	77	(66)	difference = +11
PC	37	(12)	difference = +25
BQ	32	(37)	difference = -5
NDP	25	(13)	difference = +12
Other	7	(0)	difference = +7

The break down if you allocate seats proportionally within each province is as follows:

ALBERTA:

CA	15	(23)	difference = -8
LIB	6	(2)	difference = +4
PC	3	(1)	difference = +2
NDP	1	(0)	difference = +1
Other	1	(0)	difference = +1

BRITISH COLUMBIA:

CA	17	(27)	difference = -10
LIB	9	(5)	difference = +4
NDP	4	(2)	difference = +2
PC	2	(0)	difference = +2
Other	2	(0)	difference = +2

MANITOBA:

LIB	5 ( 5)	difference = 0
CA	4 ( 4)	difference = 0
NDP	3 ( 4)	difference = -1
PC	2 ( 1)	difference = +1

NEW BRUNSWICK:

LIB	4 ( 6)	difference = -2
PC	3 ( 3)	difference = 0
CA	2 ( 0)	difference = +2
NDP	1 ( 1)	difference = 0

NEWFOUNDLAND:

LIB	4 ( 5)	difference = -1
PC	2 ( 2)	difference = 0
NDP	1 ( 0)	difference = +1

NOVA SCOTIA:

LIB	4 ( 4)	difference = 0
PC	3 ( 4)	difference = -1
NDP	3 ( 3)	difference = 0
CA	1 ( 0)	difference = +1

ONTARIO:

LIB	53 (100)	difference = -47
CA	24 ( 2)	difference = +22
PC	15 ( 0)	difference = +15
NDP	9 ( 1)	difference = +8
Other	2 ( 0)	difference = +2

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND:

LIB	2 ( 4)	difference = -2
PC	2 ( 0)	difference = +2

QUEBEC:

LIB	33 (37)	difference = -4
BQ	30 (37)	difference = -7
CA	5 ( 0)	difference = +5
PC	4 ( 1)	difference = +3
Other	2 ( 0)	difference = +2
NDP	1 ( 0)	difference = +1

SASKATCHEWAN:

CA	7 (10)	difference = -3
LIB	3 ( 2)	difference = +1
NDP	3 ( 2)	difference = +1
PC	1 ( 0)	difference = +1

TERRITORIES:

LIB	3 ( 3)	difference = 0
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Interesting regional breakdowns are:

Central Canada:

LIB	86 (137)	difference = -51
BQ	30 ( 37)	difference = -7
CA	29 ( 2)	difference = +27
PC	19 ( 1)	difference = +18
NDP	10 ( 1)	difference = +9
Other	4 ( 0)	difference = +4

Four western provinces:

CA	43 (64)	difference = -21
LIB	23 (14)	difference = +9
NDP	11 ( 8)	difference = +3
PC	8 ( 2)	difference = +6
Other	3 ( 0)	difference = +3

Maritimes:

LIB	14 (19)	difference = -5
PC	10 ( 9)	difference = +1
NDP	5 ( 4)	difference = +1
CA	3 ( 0)	difference = +3

Territories:

LIB	3 ( 3)	difference = 0
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Life would be a lot more interesting if this was all done properly. The Canadian Alliance may claim that Liberals are over represented in the east. This is true, but it is also true that the Alliance is over represented in the west. Hence the bitter and unnecessary east-west split. The "others" would also get a say in a proportional representation system, seven seats in all, two of them here in BC.

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