



Direct Party and Representative Voting (DPR Voting)



A new voting system is central to UK electoral and political reform.

**Any new system needs to be better than First Past the Post.
We need a better balance between government, the people, political
parties and elected members.**

We need a form of Proportional Representation.

Fair votes in Parliament

If the voter is asked on the ballot paper to vote for a party rather than a candidate, it is possible to say how many votes each party should have in the parliament, based on the votes cast for each party across the whole country.

Let's call these numbers the 'Fair Votes'.

Can you have 'Fair Votes' in a parliament? It depends on the electoral system.

First Past the Post cannot result in 'Fair Votes' except by an unlikely accident.

In order to reflect the way the votes were cast, many 'proportional voting' (PR) systems try to match the number of MPs to the number of Fair Votes for each party. In each case compromises have to be made. Some compromises are less satisfactory than others.

This is most clearly seen in List PR systems where MPs are 'elected' from a party list in proportions as close to the Fair Vote numbers as possible. The compromise is that the voter has little influence on the election of the individual MPs. The Party determines the order of candidates on the list. There are no constituency MPs.

Other 'hybrid' systems use a mix of constituency MPs and top up list MPs. This means two types of MPs and two ways that they may be elected. These systems require new larger constituencies than those in use for the current FPTP system.

DPR Voting overcomes these problems.

DPR Voting bypasses these issues by simply sharing out equally the number of Fair Votes for each party amongst their elected constituency MPs – the members of the parliamentary party. The total number of parliamentary votes each party has is still the Fair Votes total.

Each MP has a share of these votes equal to every other member of that parliamentary party. No change to constituencies is required.

An advantage of the system is that all MPs are constituency MPs and can be elected based on the merit of the individual rather than their party label.

from Arend Lijphart, Professor Emeritus of Political Science, University of California, San Diego. (Nov 2011)

Thank you for bringing the DPR Voting system to my attention. I had not heard of it before.

I agree with you that it represents a big improvement compared with the current FPTP system in the UK, because it is basically a PR instead of a majoritarian system. My own preference is for straightforward list PR, but the practical advantage of DPR Voting may be that it may be more acceptable to the British public. Good luck with your proposal! Arend.