

Plebiscites and Referendums Held

- There have been a number of plebiscites and referendums in Canada related to electoral reform over the past 20 years.
- Here are some of the key referendums and plebiscites related to voting systems during that period.
- **Prince Edward Island–Nov 2005:** Plebiscite (outside of election)
 - **Question:** Should Prince Edward Island change to the Mixed Member Proportional System as presented by the Commission of PEI's Electoral Future? No or Yes
 - **Threshold:** 60% of Yes votes to pass.
 - **Results:** No 63.6% (25/27 districts). Yes 36.4% (2/27 districts). The threshold was not met.

- **Prince Edward Island – Nov 2016:** Plebiscite (outside of election)
 - **Question:** Rank the following electoral systems in your order of preference, 1 through 5 (with "1st Choice" being your most preferred and "5th choice" being your least preferred). You may choose as many, or as few, of the electoral system options as you want. Options were
 - Dual Member Proportional Representation
 - First-Past-The-Post (FPTP -the current system),
 - First-Past-The-Post Plus Leaders
 - Mixed Member Proportional (MMP)
 - Preferential Voting (similar to ranked vote).

This was conducted using a ranked ballot which went four rounds of counting. Of the 37,040 voters and ranking for up to 5 options, 20.7% had 1 preference, 17.7% had 2 preferences, 5.5% had 3 preferences, 1.1% had 4 preferences, and 54.9% had all 5 preferences.

- **Threshold:** A majority of 50% + 1 The plebiscite was non-binding.
- **Results.** The final three options were DM MMP, MMP, and FPTP with the DM MMP being eliminated. MMP received a majority with 52.4%. FPTP received 42.8%. FPTP was leading first 3 rounds and lost on the 4th round when the majority of votes from the eliminated option of DM MMP were redistributed to MMP. There were 5.7% exhausted votes (1753 votes).

The Premier cited low turnout as factor in choosing not to proceed. Turnout was 36.5%

- **Prince Edward Island–Apr 2019:** Referendum with Provincial General Election
 - **Question:** Should Prince Edward Island change its voting system to a mixed member proportional voting system? Yes or No
 - **Threshold:** 50% +1 of the votes in at least 60% of the districts (17/27 districts).

- **Results:** Yes (48.2% with 14/27 districts supporting), No (51.9% with 13/27 district supporting). The threshold was not met
- **British Columbia–May 2005:** Referendum with Provincial General Election.
 - **Question:** Should British Columbia change to the BC-STV electoral system as recommended by the Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform? Yes or No (Note: STV is single transferable vote)
 - **Threshold:** Two thresholds were established to be binding on government; at least 60% of the valid votes in favour of the proposal, and a simple majority of 50% =1 in 60% of districts (48/79)
 - **Results:** 58% Yes. Threshold 1 was not met. A total of 77/79 districts voted Yes with more than 50%. Threshold 2 was not met.

The government was re-elected. The Premier rejected the call to introduce STV immediately and rejected a re-opening of the process to consider other options. A second referendum on the STV proposal was announced for 2008 and later postponed the referendum until 2009.
- **British Columbia–May 2009:** Referendum with Provincial General Election.
 - **Question:** Which electoral system should British Columbia use to elect members to the provincial Legislative Assembly? The existing electoral system (First-Past-the-Post) or the single transferable vote electoral system proposed by the Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform?
 - **Threshold:** Two thresholds were established to be binding on government; at least 60% of the valid votes in favour of the proposal, and a simple majority of 50% =1 in 60% of districts (51/85)
 - **Results:** Threshold 1 FPTP: 61% STV 39% (8/85 districts), The threshold was met to use the FPTP system.
 - **Results** Threshold 2: A total of 77/85 districts voted in favour of the FPTP system. The threshold was met to maintain the FPTP system.
- **British Columbia–Dec 2018:** Referendum vote by Mail Ballot (outside of general election)
 - **Question 1:** Which system should British Columbia use for provincial elections? (Vote for only one.)
 - The current First Past the Post voting system
 - A proportional representation voting system
 - **Question 2:** If British Columbia adopts a proportional representation voting system, which of the following voting systems do you prefer? (Rank in order of preference. You may choose to support one, two or all three of the systems.)
 - Dual-member proportional (DMP)
 - Mixed-member proportional (MMP)
 - Rural–urban proportional (RUP)

- **Threshold:** The threshold for question 1 was set at 50% plus 1 vote. There was no threshold set for question 2.
- **Results:** Question 1: 61% were in favour of keeping the current FPTP system. The Threshold was not met to change to a proportional representation system.
- **Results:** Question 2: Of the alternate systems, MMP was the preferred choice.
- **Ontario: Oct 2007 - Referendum with Provincial General Election:**
 - **Question:** Which electoral system should Ontario use to elect members to the provincial legislature? The existing electoral system (First-Past-the-Post) or the alternative electoral system proposed by the Citizens' Assembly (Mixed Member Proportional)
 - **Threshold:** Threshold 1 was at least 60% of the valid votes in favour of one of the options the proposal. Threshold 2 was a simple majority of 50% + 1 in 60% of the districts (64/107)
 - **Results:** Threshold 1. 63% voted in favour of the existing FPTP system. The threshold was met.
 - **Results** Threshold 2: A total of 102/107 districts voted to keep the existing FPTP system. The threshold was met.