

New Brunswick Commission on Electoral Reform



**A pathway to an
inclusive democracy**

A pathway to an inclusive democracy

Province of New Brunswick
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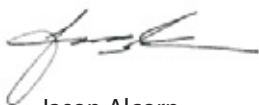
March 1, 2017

Judy Wagner
Clerk of the Executive Council and Head of the Public Service
675 King Street, Chancery Place
Fredericton NB E3B 1G1

Dear Ms. Wagner,

In accordance with the mandate of the New Brunswick Commission on Electoral Reform, we are pleased to present you with our final report and recommendations that identify options for strengthening New Brunswick's rich democracy by building on the values, heritage and culture of our province.

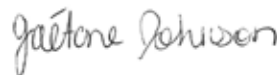
Yours sincerely,




Jason Alcorn



Bev Harrison



Gaétane Johnson



Carolyn MacKay



Constantine Passaris

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Message from the New Brunswick Commission on Electoral Reform

As New Brunswickers, and as Canadians, we are truly fortunate to live in a democratic society. This is something for which many countries have fought, and it is something to be valued.

Our society is constantly changing. Democracy and its institutions must evolve to reflect these societal values and renew public trust.

As New Brunswickers, we are honoured to have been selected to represent our province and prepare a report that will serve as a guide for government on this very important topic.

As members of an independent, non-partisan commission, we were tasked with a mandate to help create a more effective legislature, and to identify ways to improve participation in the democratic process.

During the last few weeks and months, we heard from and spoke with many New Brunswickers, stakeholders and provincial, national and international experts on electoral reform. We have heard a broad range of perspectives about how we can best improve our province's electoral system. We reflected during our deliberations on the evolution of societal values.

As a commission, one of our first tasks was to establish a code of conduct to guide our deliberations. (See Appendix F) We made our work as open and as transparent as pos-

sible. We engaged New Brunswickers by holding public stakeholder sessions, which were live-streamed on the commission's website. We held a town hall meeting, in addition to allocating time during each stakeholder session for members of the public to express their opinions. We also provided the opportunity for New Brunswickers to express their thoughts and suggestions on electoral reform over seven months.

We thank all those who participated and who provided written and verbal submissions to the commission. We truly appreciate your time and interest in helping us complete our mandate. Your contributions and insight were invaluable in our deliberations.

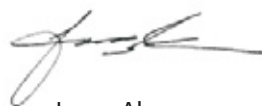
We are encouraged by what we heard.

New Brunswickers are engaged in improving electoral outcomes in the province. They care deeply about our democratic process.

We exercised diligence throughout the process. Through careful and thoughtful deliberations, commission members are in agreement with the recommendations in this report.

We believe the recommendations contained within this report outline a pathway toward an inclusive democracy and reflect the best way for us to move forward as a province.

Yours sincerely,



Jason Alcorn



Bev Harrison



Gaétane Johnson



Carolyn MacKay



Constantine Passaris

Executive summary

In the fall of 2016, the Government of New Brunswick put out a call for interest in serving on a commission on electoral reform to study some of the fundamental issues facing the voting process in the province. The five of us who were selected from those who put their name forward come from a variety of backgrounds, with each member bringing a different perspective to the table. But, to a person, we shared a common goal: to present a report that makes some practical suggestions to the government to engage more New Brunswickers than ever in our democratic process.

Our mandate is focused on some key areas. They include eliminating barriers for under-represented groups and finding ways to improve participation in democracy by examining topics such as preferential balloting and online voting.

We were also asked to assess New Brunswick's voting age, fixed election date and political financing, including contribution and spending rules.

While some of those issues might appear simple on the surface, most are complex and multi-layered. We were fortunate to have the assistance of hundreds of groups and individuals who lent their expertise or opinions either by sending in written submissions or taking the time and effort to appear before the commission.

It was through this engagement process that we formed a series of recommendations that we believe will better engage New Brunswickers in the electoral process and, we hope, create a more robust democracy that better represents the face, or faces of New Brunswick today.

Some of our recommendations will be viewed as fundamental change to how we vote and elect our governments. Other recommendations will modernize how we participate in the political process. And in some cases, we recommend staying with what works well, or warn against moving too hastily in certain areas.

We thank the government for the opportunity to make recommendations that we believe will move our democratic system forward. We ask that our recommendations be given serious consideration for implementation.

The commission's work

Members of the commission

The members of the New Brunswick Commission on Electoral Reform are a diverse group of people with different life experiences, some of whom had little interaction with provincial and municipal government and others with more experience. The members represent a diversity of language, age, backgrounds and regional representation.



From left: Jason Alcorn, Carolyn MacKay, Honourable Victor Boudreau (Minister of Health), Gaétane Johnson, Bev Harrison and Dr. Constantine Passaris

Mandate

The commission was mandated to examine democratic reform in the province. This mandate specifically included an assessment of ways to make the legislature more effective by eliminating barriers to entering politics for under-represented groups as well as investigating means to improve participation in democracy, such as Preferential Ballots and online voting.

The commission discussed and deliberated on these topics at length, and recommendations surrounding each are included in this report.

Throughout their meetings and deliberations, other topics emerged that went beyond the original scope of the mandate. These included ways to improve the participation and representation of women, Aboriginal communities, visible minorities and persons with disabilities in the legislature, as well as the need for enhanced civic education in New Brunswick schools.

While these particular topics did not make up the original mandate, commission members felt they were sufficiently important to merit thought and consideration. As such, a number of the recommendations in this report aim to address these specific concerns.

The commission believes it has fulfilled the requirements of its mandate to the best of its ability. For the commissions' full mandate, refer to Appendix E.

Process

The commission began its work in November 2016 and concluded in February 2017.

The commission sought a broad range of perspectives to ensure that discussions about electoral reform were informed by the insights of New Brunswickers from a diverse range of fields, including academics, stakeholder groups and individuals as well as provincial, national and international experts.

During the last few weeks and months, the commission heard a broad range of perspectives on how to best improve the electoral system in New Brunswick. It heard about what works, what does not, and how the government should proceed in a way that would prove to be beneficial to the democratic system.

In addition to public meetings, members held a number of separate meetings to gain perspective and insight from other jurisdictions that have undergone similar reforms.

Members also held several meetings as a group to discuss and deliberate on what they had heard. These expert testimonies provided much food for thought and encouraged energetic and fruitful discussions.

The commission recognizes that there were some challenges throughout this process, including inclement weather and scheduling conflicts. However, it is appreciative of the many individuals and groups from around the province that participated.

Public hearings

The commission tried to make this process as open and as transparent as possible. Six public consultation meetings were held with stakeholders and interest groups over two months. These meetings were live-streamed on the commission's website. Thirty minutes were allocated at the end of each public hearing for an open mic session to allow interested members of the public to address commission members.

The commission also held a town hall meeting, which more than 80 New Brunswickers attended. This session was also live-streamed on the commission's website.

Discussions held during these public hearings were of tremendous benefit to the commission. Members are hopeful New Brunswickers were able to follow these important conversations through the commission's website.

Written submissions and correspondence

New Brunswickers were invited to submit their opinions and ideas to the commissioners from July to November 2016. An extension of the deadline for online submissions to January 31, 2017, was made to allow New Brunswickers more time to provide their input and recommendations.

The commission received and considered 134 written submissions and correspondence from organizations, academics and individuals. The commission is truly appreciative of those groups and individuals who took the time to prepare and submit their thoughts and suggestions.

These submissions provided a variety of perspectives from around the province. The observations from these submissions are incorporated throughout the report where feasible.

Acknowledgments

The commission thanks the many New Brunswickers who took the time to write or send emails with their thoughts and feedback, attended its public consultations, provided comments on the discussion paper or used it as part of their group or classroom discussions. The commission is grateful to these dedicated individuals for engaging in this important issue.

Through consultations, many New Brunswickers and citizens' groups presented the commission with their ideas, many of which are embodied in this report. They argued that it was time to reflect on New Brunswick's democratic aspirations and how they relate to the current electoral system. Groups, individuals and stakeholders who made representations to the commission are listed in Appendices G and H.

The commission believes the recommendations in this report best reflect the views and suggestions heard during this process. The commission tried to provide a balanced approach to electoral reform in New Brunswick.

Goal 1: Eliminating barriers to entering politics for under-represented groups

Entering politics demands commitments from individuals and support from society in accepting and promoting change. Since the beginning of the province, as a true partner in the Confederation, New Brunswick's form of government has gradually and steadily evolved to become fairer and more inclusive by expanding the right to vote and the ability to offer as a candidate. No longer are these rights and abilities limited to men 21 or older who are property owners.

The Canadian Constitution, first through the *British North America Act* (1867)¹, provided for the continuance of electoral rules as a provincial matter. No standard electoral laws existed, and the right to vote, including the definition of the electorate, diverged greatly among provinces until the federal government decided otherwise and set three standards necessary to vote by retaining basic conditions common to all provinces: being male, 21 or older and British subject by birth or naturalization alongside a property-based qualification that differed between those living in urban or rural constituencies. It was therefore impossible for many people excluded from this definition to seek a nomination as a candidate to an election. It took almost a century in New Brunswick before all persons at the age of majority or older were granted the right to vote and the ability to enter politics.

When it's such an imbalance in terms of the representation within the Legislative bodies compared to the overarching population, to me, that's something that needs to be addressed.

Dr. Joanna Everitt, University of New Brunswick

Since the 1960s, democracy has evolved rapidly through changes removing most impediments and restrictions affecting residents to allow a more comprehensive right to vote and enhancing the ability of women and minorities to seek support in their quest for a nomination as a candidate. Under-represented groups within the New Brunswick context include First Nations people, persons with disabilities and other non-traditional ethnic groups. Some sporadic success has been achieved over the years. Elections New Brunswick has taken steps to remove barriers

by ensuring that buildings are accessible and, through the introduction of technology such as audio-vote machines, to provide independence to voters who otherwise would have to rely on someone to mark and cast their ballots. In an era where most New Brunswickers have been recognized as full citizens, the commission was mandated to examine the exclusions affecting those who are not citizens of the country in which they reside; and those citizens of the country who have not yet reached a certain minimum age. Under the current electoral law in New Brunswick, an individual who is at least 18 and a Canadian citizen has the right to vote. The age standard was adopted by the Legislative Assembly of New Brunswick in 1971.² The requirement for citizenship was introduced as a consequence of the adoption of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* in 1982³.

The commission was asked to investigate whether those conditions remained appropriate today and for the years to come. The following sections discuss those two issues individually and the commission's findings.

Voting by Permanent Residents

The face of New Brunswick is evolving. During the past number of years, New Brunswick has seen a greater number of individuals from areas around the world come and call this province home. The government has recognized that the province faces demographic challenges and that immigration is an important part of the solution to these challenges. In collaboration with the federal government, the provincial government has made strides in attracting and retaining immigrants. Some 28,325 foreign-born people lived in New Brunswick in 2011, according to a 2011 National Household Survey of Statistics Canada⁴. Five years later, the Express Entry,⁵ the Provincial Nominee and the Syrian Refugees programs⁶ have all been beneficial in increasing that number. A Canada Immigration newsletter of September 29, 2016⁷, reported that during one year ending July 2016, New Brunswick took in record numbers of immigrants: some 4,435 individuals moved from another country and made this province their home. While the number of permanent residents is still relatively small compared to other provinces, the potential exists for further increases.

Immigration is widely recognized as a means of economic development and demographic renewal, and perhaps most importantly, an enrichment to Canadian culture and society.

Mike Timani, New Brunswick Multicultural Council

Against that backdrop, the commission was asked to consider whether Permanent Residents should be granted the right to vote similarly to other residents who are Canadian citizens. Currently in New Brunswick, as well as across the country, Permanent Residents are not eligible to vote. Canada's *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act*⁸ defines Permanent Residents as those who have immigrated to Canada to set up permanent residence. They have been granted this status federally by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada and must prove, every five years through the renewal of their permanent status card, their attachment to Canada and their residential address in the country. Their inability to vote has become a concern, as the province works to attract more newcomers and become more diverse. More importantly, New Brunswick wants newcomers to build successful lives for themselves and their families and be involved in their communities. The commission is aware that the current 40-day residency rule may attract concerns that newcomers would not have had the opportunity to become integrated within their communities. But for long-standing Permanent Residents who are contributing to their communities, there appears to be few reasons why they should not be allowed to vote and actively participate in decisions affecting local services and issues, particularly when many of them had the right to vote in municipal elections until they lost that right in 1998 due to changes to the *Municipal Elections Act*⁹ to effect compliance with the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*.

Permanent Resident landings in New Brunswick, 2005-2015					
2005	1,091	2009	1,914	2013	2,020
2006	1,646	2010	2,125	2014	2,836
2007	1,643	2011	1,968	2015	2,578
2008	1,856	2012	2,212		

Source: Department of Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour; Population Growth Division

The commission has heard from many New Brunswickers who have stated that if an individual lives, works and pays taxes here, he or she should be granted the right to vote. The commission has also heard the strong belief that once

an individual has established roots in the province, he or she is more likely to stay here for an extended period.

The commission believes it is important to build on New Brunswick's nature as a welcoming and inclusive province. New Brunswickers have expressed the desire for a legislature that reflects the views of all those living in the province.

Therefore, the commission makes the following recommendations:

- ♦ Permanent Residents who are not yet Canadian citizens be granted the right to vote in future provincial and municipal elections.
- ♦ Permanent Residents who are not yet Canadian citizens be allowed to seek public office.

Voting age and youth voting

Democracy in the province has evolved greatly. Until 1919, only men who owned property were allowed to vote. In that year, women who owned property were granted the right to vote. New Brunswick lowered the voting age from 21 to 18 in 1971. And now, some people are requesting that the voting age be lowered again to include those New Brunswickers who are 16. Lowering the voting age to 16 has been a topic of discussion both federally and in a number of jurisdictions. However, none of these jurisdictions has moved forward with this initiative and thus the voting age across the country remains 18. Since women, youth and minorities have persevered in their fight for their right to vote, they have helped change the perception of voting as not just a privilege but a fundamental right. The battle for suffrage continues today, most evident among savvy, astute and articulate young people.

Reducing the voting age to 16 years is an effective way of removing barriers to entry for under-represented groups such as young people while at the same time increasing participation in democracy.

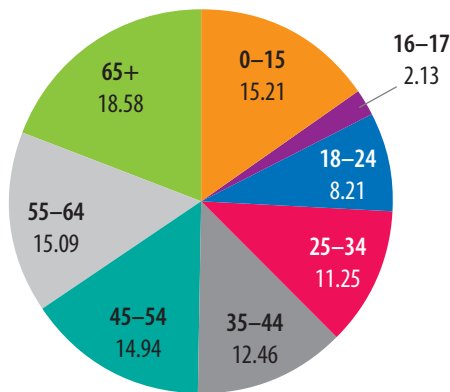
Sue Duguay, Fédération des jeunes francophones du N.-B.

The commission have been reminded that young New Brunswickers are becoming increasingly more involved in their communities and in the issues that matter and are of importance to them. Through the public school curriculum, media information and online activities, they are proving themselves to be better prepared for the responsibilities involved in obtaining the right to vote. These youth are

eager to have a say in the direction in which their community is moving and to contribute to how the land on which they reside is being transformed. They are more than capable of voting knowledgeably, responsibly and for the political party they feel best represents the interests, needs and concerns of their communities.

During its meetings, the commission was encouraged by the level of maturity and intelligence displayed by the young New Brunswickers with whom it met. The commission heard from many other stakeholders who believe New Brunswickers who are 16 years should be granted the right to vote. These youth are ideal voters as it is easier to carry out voter education and registration through high schools. Attending high school is the last time these young potential voters would all be in one place.

Age profile of New Brunswick's population, 2015 (%)



Source: Projection for NB's population by age for 2015, Statistics Canada, *Annual Demographic Statistics, 2011*

Proponents further argue that individuals who become involved in politics at a younger age are more likely to remain involved in some way or fashion throughout their lives. It has also been argued that living with one's parents and having a stable home and school environment encourage a more informed participation in the electoral process. It is harder to register first-time voters and expose them to the process of what is involved when they are not affiliated with some kind of an institution. The commission heard that youth are engaged in society in various ways, through work, volunteering or by means of public demonstration. Youth wish to continue their engagement within their communities and society by becoming participants in the electoral system.

As for those New Brunswickers who are 18 and currently have the right to vote, it has been argued that their attention is elsewhere. Many of them are moving or have moved away from home to pursue a post-secondary education or a profession. They are establishing more independence, and are focusing on their studies and their career. Many stakeholders with whom the commission met argued that as a result of other priorities, voters 18 to 25 years old are less likely to become informed on the electoral system.

Number of youth who will be turning 16 in:		
2014-2018	2018-2022	2022-2026
38,213	28,478	28,788

Source: Department of Finance, Government of New Brunswick

The commission heard loud and clear the pleas to continue the journey of removing barriers for those who are fighting for their right to vote. The commission believes New Brunswick has an opportunity to be a nationwide leader on this topic. By lowering the voting age to 16, New Brunswick would signal to these individuals that their voices and their opinions matter. The commission believes this is important if New Brunswickers want to encourage greater involvement and participation among youth.

The commission also believes that if New Brunswick can trust 16-year-olds to vote, then these same individuals should be permitted to run for office. Cognizant of the requirement of the public education system that youth must attend school until they have either obtained a high school diploma or have attained age 18, the commission would retain this education policy as an eligibility requirement for any individuals 16 or 17 wanting to run for office.

For those potential first-time voters who may feel that they lack the knowledge and skills necessary to participate in the election process and the debate, the commission will address such concerns in the engagement portion of this report. Changes to the voting age are closely related to the education for youth, and any necessary increased investment in public education for youth votes will be addressed.

Therefore, the commission makes the following recommendations:

- ♦ The voting age in New Brunswick be lowered to 16.
- ♦ New Brunswickers 16 and older who have completed high school be allowed to seek public office. The requirement of possessing a valid high school diploma would not apply to individuals 18 or older.

Goal 2: Investigating means to improve participation in democracy

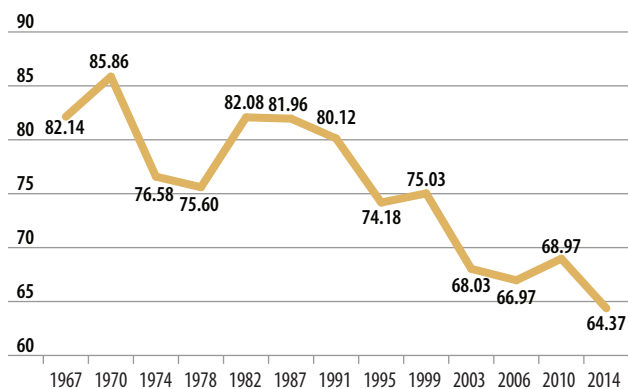
The commission heard from proponents of change who demanded a more meaningful voice in decision-making and expressed disenchantment with the electoral system. Others tended to be comfortable with what is familiar as years of use have given them satisfaction in being directly involved in selecting their representatives through voting. The cornerstone of democracy is the voting process. This is why New Brunswick's basic values become important when choosing an electoral system as such a choice is one of the most important decisions for any democracy. New Brunswick's choice of a system, regardless of the type of system, will have a profound effect on the overall future political life and culture of the province and its system of governance.

Often in government we look for a systemic response or a systemic answer, when what we need is a cultural shift.

Charles Murray, Ombud

The long-term effect of these changes may take some time to analyze. Parties, candidates and voters may take two or three election cycles to observe fully and respond to the effects and incentives of particular changes. Judgment may be necessary as to whether problems in a new or amended electoral system are merely transitional, or whether they show that the system is fundamentally flawed and requires urgent amendment or a debate about replacement.

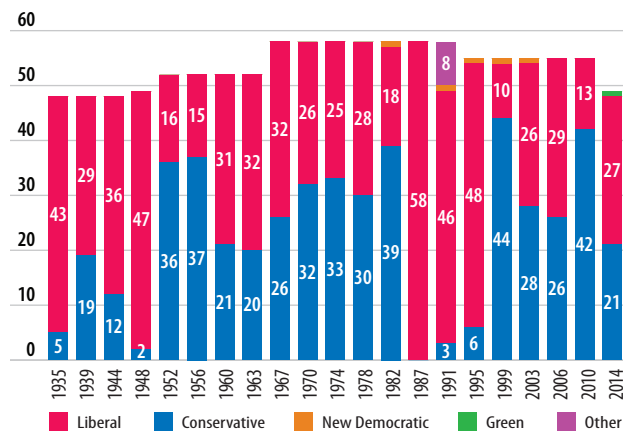
Voter turnout in provincial elections 1967 - 2014 (%)



Source: Elections New Brunswick, *Provincial General Election Report*

New Brunswick can learn from the experiences of others countries that have a comparable electoral system and draw some conclusions from those experiences. Notwithstanding those learnings, fear of the unknown and reticence can create anxiety that cannot be avoided completely. Awareness of this dynamic is important but should not prevent elected officials from becoming agents of change. They cannot sit back as changing how New Brunswickers elect their representatives may address participation in democracy and the concerns respecting the system of governance. The effects of an electoral system can only be assessed with use. How an electoral system performs is directly influenced by the socio-political context of the province; namely, its political and societal stability. The commission believes that changes in the electoral system will be conducive to improvements to the political establishment and citizen engagement.

New Brunswick Provincial Elections 1935-2014:
Number of seats won by major parties at each election (%)



Source: Legislative Assembly New Brunswick

New Brunswick's electoral system cannot be viewed in isolation: it is one of the building blocks to political institutions and an access point to the governance ecosystem. Its design and effects are heavily contingent on other structures within and outside of its legislated framework. A successful electoral system design comes from looking at the framework of political institutions as a whole: changing a single component of this framework is likely to cause adjustments in how other institutions within it work.

Families of electoral systems

There are a variety of electoral systems used in the world at different levels of government; each electoral system has radically different implications for voters, for parties, for government and the Legislative Assembly of New Brunswick.

Those systems can be categorized, for the sake of simplicity, into three families: plurality/majority systems; proportional systems; and mixed systems. From those main families, the numerous electoral system and their many permutations, can be split into 12 main systems. To understand how votes translate into seats, the most common way to look at those electoral systems is to group them by how closely they translate votes won into legislative seats won; that is, how proportional they are.

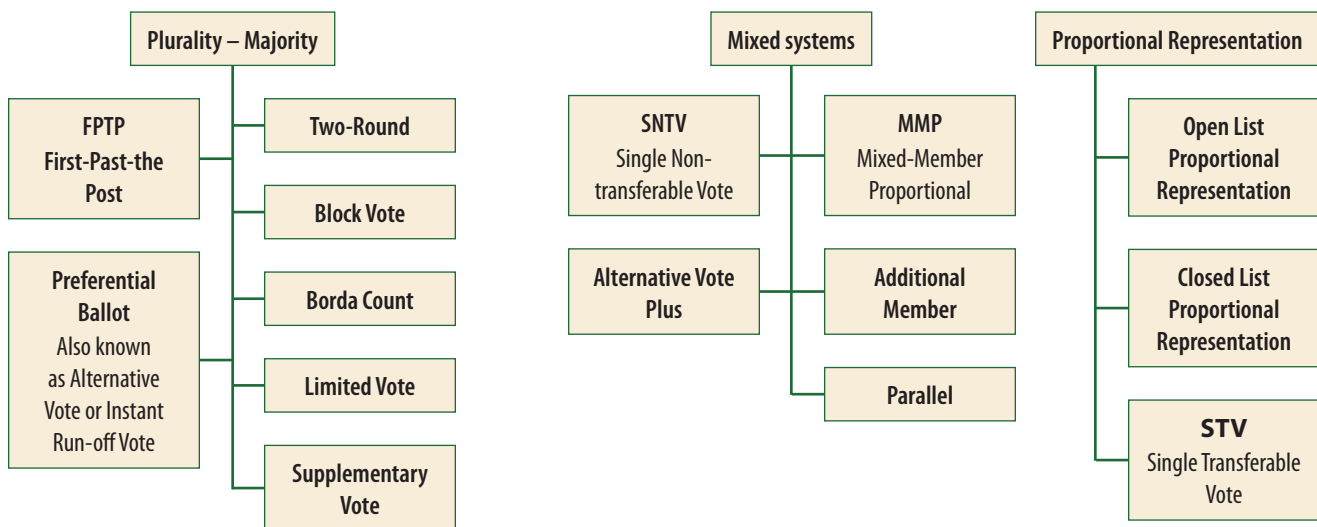
During the consultation process, three electoral systems were identified most frequently; namely, the current First-Past-the-Post (FPTP), the Preferential Ballot and the Mixed Member Proportional (MMP) system.

FPTP is a single-member plurality system where the candidate who obtains more votes than any others is elected, even if that person only wins a minority of the votes cast.

The Preferential Ballot is a single-member majority system where voters indicate an order of preference among candidates. If no candidate obtains a majority outright, the last-place candidate is removed and the associated second-choice votes are added to the totals of the remaining candidates. The process is repeated until a candidate secures a majority.

MMP is a mixed proportional system. The legislature consists of a block of seats elected by plurality or majority from single-member ridings and another block of seats elected in multi-member districts under a proportional system. The proportional seats are awarded in such a way as to compensate for disproportional effects in the single-member riding outcomes.

Families of electoral systems



Electoral reform in Canada: past and present

The pursuit of building a strong democratic institution that safeguards public trust in the electoral process has been ongoing during New Brunswick's history. New Brunswick inherited its electoral system from Great Britain. In 1785, only male landowners older than 21 had the right to vote in provincial elections by a show of hand registered in a book. People sought and gained changes over the years to improve fairness and equity for all residents and to ensure reliable and verifiable results.

The foundation of New Brunswick's electoral system was established in 1855 with the introduction of the secret ballot.¹⁰ Anonymity of voters when casting a ballot has become a pillar that has influenced the design of the electoral system. Equity was improved in 1919 when women who owned property won voting rights comparable to male land-owners. Deciding what values to emphasize came in the mid-1960s with Equal Opportunity, which restructured roles and responsibilities of governing entities, and with

the extension of the right to vote to all residents who were a majority age. This age was lowered in 1971 from 21 to the current voting age of 18.

Significant milestones that influenced the reliability and improved representation included a major overhaul of the entire electoral system in 1974,¹¹ seeing the replacement of the old multiple-member county system with smaller, single-member districts. This was a radical reorganization of the government at that time, but one that was arguably necessary to ensure elected representation and fair and equitable public services available throughout New Brunswick. Since then, New Brunswick explored electoral system reform between 2003 and 2006 with the establishment in December 2003 of the Commission on Legislative Democracy¹² and instructed it to propose an appropriate proportional representation model for the province. In January 2005, the commission recommended a regional MMP system and advised that a binding referendum be held no later than the 2007 provincial election. The government responded to the commission's final report and recommendations twice, first in the June 2006 through *Improving the Way Government Works*¹³ and, subsequent to a change of government in the fall of 2006, a new response was released in June 2007. Entitled *An Accountable and Responsible Government*¹⁴, it included 20 initiatives the government to undertake to improve and enhance democracy in New Brunswick between 2007 and 2012.

Federal

Electoral system reform has been a subject of interest at the federal and provincial levels for nearly a century. At the federal level, dating to 1921, the elements of electoral system reform have been studied on eight occasions. With the proliferation of parties and alternative methods of voting gaining popularity, particularly in Western Canada, a special Parliamentary committee was mandated to examine proportional representation. It reported in May 1921¹⁵ on the desirability of reforming the electoral system from the FPTP to a single transferable or preferential vote. While the committee did not make any specific recommendation, it did propose that a plebiscite be held on the principle of proportional representation.

The subject of electoral reform was again scrutinized by the House of Commons in 1935 when it struck a special committee on elections and franchise acts. This committee's report,¹⁶ in 1936, recommended against electoral reform. Following the attempts of reform during the 1920s and

1930s, electoral system reform was not studied at the federal level until 1979 when the Task Force on Canadian Unity, often referred to as the P  pin-Robarts Commission,¹⁷ made significant recommendations respecting restructuring federalism and for electoral reform that included an element of proportionality through a form of MMP. Agreement on these recommendations could not be reached, and the report was shelved permanently.

Examination of the future economic prospects of the country and the effectiveness of its political institutions were again studied in 1982 by the Royal Commission on the Economic Union and Development Prospects for Canada¹⁸ (known as the MacDonald Commission). The commission's recommendations in 1985 reflected three underlying themes: adaptive economy, reform of income security programs and elected representation. It reaffirmed the traditional model of electing the government but recommended moving to an elected Senate and using proportional representation to sensitize the federal government on the aspirations of Canada's diverse regions. There was never any coordinated government response to the commission's report although some suggestions such as trade agreements were implemented.

In its report in 1992, the Royal Commission on Electoral Reform and Party Financing¹⁹ (the Lortie Commission) recommended maintaining the FPTP system and indicated support for the MacDonald Commission's suggestion for a Senate elected by proportional representation. However, the Lortie Commission made significant recommendations on many areas of federal electoral practice, including the right to be a candidate, the role and the financing of parties and their electoral district associations, election expenses controls, public funding, disclosure, enforcement, voting by special ballot, a voters' register and broadcasting. Those recommendations precipitated much of the commission's recommendations; the spirit of those recommendations has been implemented or encompassed over 15 years.

Electoral reform became a topic of interest again at the federal level at the turn of the millennium. In March 2004, the independent Law Commission of Canada²⁰ concluded a three-year study on electoral reform and submitted its report recommending the adoption of an MMP system to the Minister of Justice. In 2005, the House of Commons dealt with the process to engage the public and parliamentarians. In March 2007, the government held a citizens' forum on democratic reform in each province and territory along

with one national youth forum. The outcome of those fora indicated a preference to move away from FPTP to one that included proportional representation.

In June 2016, the House of Commons appointed a special parliamentary committee on electoral reform to identify and conduct a study of viable alternate voting systems to replace FPTP; to examine mandatory voting and online voting; and to assess the extent to which the options identified could advance principles for electoral reform. The committee presented three reports to the House in December 2016.²¹ On February 1, 2017, the federal government announced it was abandoning electoral reform due to, among other reasons, the lack of support from a majority of the population.

Prince Edward Island

Prince Edward Island first explored potential provincial electoral system reform in December 2003, when the Prince Edward Island Electoral Reform Commissioner,²² the Hon. Norman Carruthers recommended that the province adopt an MMP system subject to a further study of the issue and more public consultation and public education. The commissioner also recommended that any changes to the province's electoral system be made by referendum.

In response to the report, the legislature established the Commission on Prince Edward Island's Electoral Future²³ to develop a clear plebiscite question and recommend a date for holding the plebiscite. The plebiscite held in November 2005 had a threshold for voter approval set at 60 per cent. The proposal was defeated with support from only 36 per cent of the voters.²⁴

In July 2015, the Island government released a *White Paper on Democratic Renewal*,²⁵ and created a special legislative committee to explore whether to replace FPTP by a Preferential Ballot or a proportional representation voting system. Following initial consultations, the committee tabled its second report²⁶ in April 2016, in which it recommended that voters be able to rank the five electoral system options in order of preference in a plebiscite to be held in November 2016:

- ◆ Dual Member Proportional Representation;
- ◆ FPTP (the current system);
- ◆ FPTP Plus Leaders;
- ◆ MMP; and
- ◆ Preferential Voting.

A non-binding plebiscite²⁷ on the five electoral system reform options took place between October 29, 2016, and November 7, 2016. Any citizen 16 or older was considered eligible to vote and were able to cast their vote via Internet or telephone as well as in person. Despite a variety of voting options and a long voting period, the final 36.46 per cent voter turnout was very low by Island standards. The vote was based on a preferential system that was a unique experience in Canada. Given the low turnout, the government recognized the need for enhancing democracy, but it has not committed to making changes.²⁸

Ontario

In November 2004, the Ontario Premier announced that a Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform²⁹ would be created to examine the FPTP electoral system and a referendum held if an alternative electoral system was recommended. The selection process for the Citizen's Assembly on Electoral Reform was not completed until June 2006. In May 2007, the assembly released a report entitled *One Ballot: Two Votes – A New Way to Vote in Ontario*.³⁰ The report recommended an MMP system combining members elected in local districts and members elected from the whole province from closed province-wide lists. A province-wide referendum on this system was held in conjunction with the provincial election in October 2007. However, the resulting vote, expressed as either Yes or No, was heavily in favour of the existing plurality voting or FPTP system.

The 2016, Ontario adopted the *Municipal Elections Modernization Act*,³¹ which allowed for regulations to be passed to give municipalities the option, through bylaws, to use Preferential (ranked) Ballot voting, beginning in the 2018 municipal elections. Ranked ballots will allow a voter to rank candidates in order of preference.

Quebec

Between 2004 and 2007, the Province of Quebec explored electoral reform between 2004 and 2007. After 14 months of work by the Government of Quebec and Prof. Louis Massicotte, the government presented a draft bill in the national assembly proposing, among other reforms, a new mixed electoral system. The proposal intended to combine elements of the existing FPTP system and a new proportional representation approach.

In June 2005, the national assembly adopted a motion to create a parliamentary commission on Electoral Law³² consisting of a nine-member to study and make recom-

mendations on the draft bill. This commission was assisted by four men and four women who formed a citizens' committee. Sixteen public consultations were held across Quebec beginning in January 2006 resulting in 379 group and individual presentations. In April 2006 the commission reported its findings to the national assembly rejecting the status quo along with most elements of the government's draft bill and instead favouring an MPP system similar to that of Germany. The Quebec FPTP electoral system remains unaltered since the tabling of this report.

Reforms initiatives in Western Canada

From the 1920s to the 1950s, Alberta and Manitoba adopted the Single Transferable Vote (STV) for elections in urban ridings and the Alternative Vote (AV) system for elections in rural ridings. In both provinces, this popular electoral system was adopted as a result of pressures from farmers and their political active associations. There were complaints from rural citizens that they were ignored by the larger districts, which consisted of afternoon centres (known now as cities).

British Columbia

British Columbia adopted the AV system for the 1952 provincial election and then reverted to the FPTP system. The government explored electoral reform between 2003 and 2009. An independent non-partisan citizens' assembly on electoral reform composed of 80 women and 80 men from diverse backgrounds representing the 79 British Columbia electoral districts was established in 2003.³³ Its report³⁴ in December 2004 recommended a proportional voting system used in Ireland, coined the, termed "BC-STV," as the best choice for the province.

The proposal was put to the voters as a referendum question in the May 2005 general provincial election.³⁵ The referendum vote narrowly missed the 60-per-cent threshold required for implementation, with 57 per cent voting in favour. Given the significant support for the proposed STV system, the government committed, during the 2005 Speech from the Throne address, to a second referendum, with the same approval thresholds to be held in conjunction with the 2008 municipal election. On the advice of the Chief Electoral Officer, the government changed the date of the referendum to May 2009.³⁶

The second referendum,³⁷ garnered significantly less support with 62 percent of voters opposing the change and only seven of 85 electoral districts, receiving sufficient support to ensure its implementation.

That election, it should be noted, was contested on a new electoral map completed in 2008 with the number of constituencies increasing from 79 to 85. There were 15 parties with candidates in that election, with the three main parties, namely the Liberals, the NDP and the Greens, being the only parties being invited to the planned debates.

Systems and values: a need for trade-offs

To choose what is important to us, New Brunswick needs a set of principles that the public values as a democratic society. Only then can New Brunswick effectively decide which electoral system best reflects those principles.

Five fundamental principles are normally identified as valued by Canadians: legitimacy, integrity, representation, equality and accessibility. In New Brunswick, the principles of an effective government and an effective legislature are also valued as measures that increase public confidence.

- 1. Legitimacy:** The electoral system should inspire confidence and would be accepted as legitimate if the system is based on principles that most New Brunswickers value.
- 2. Integrity:** The electoral system should safeguard public trust by ensuring reliable and verifiable results through a secure and objective process that preserves vote secrecy.
- 3. Representation:** The electoral system should recognize the value that New Brunswickers attach to fair and local representation for all areas of the province. New Brunswickers' voices are fairly represented in the legislature and have access to a local MLA who understands local conditions and needs and represents their interests.
- 4. Equality:** The electoral system should ensure that each voter is treated equally and all ballots have equal influence in determining an election's results.
- 5. Accessibility:** The electoral system should avoid undue complexity in terms of how voters cast their ballots and how results are calculated to translate votes into elected seats. The system would support access by all voters.

6. Stable and effective government: The electoral system should contribute to the continuity of government. Governments would manage the affairs of the province, develop and implement agendas and take decisive action when required.

7. Effective legislature: The electoral system should contribute to the continuity of the Legislative Assembly of New Brunswick that includes a government and opposition. The legislature should be able to perform its parliamentary functions successfully.

The commission recognizes that emphasis is more predominant on some of the principles than others, depending on the type of electoral system chosen. Evaluating how the principles inter-relate with each other to create a robust system is important in choosing an electoral system that reflects as many of those principles to a high degree. There are, however, limits to what any system, by itself, can accomplish. Many other factors, such as the quality of political leadership and candidates, the success of negotiation and compromise in times of minority governments and the rules of the legislature itself, can influence how well the principles valued by people will be reflected.

The commission, in its discussions on the electoral system tried to ensure any proposed changes adequately reflect the contemporary values of society and the public needs of the province while retaining the traditions that underpin it.

The current system

The FPTP system is based on electing individual members to represent local and provincial interests in a legislature. An executive or government is drawn from members of the legislature to govern.

Under FPTP, the candidate with the most votes win, regardless of the percentage of votes received. This is a single-choice voting, single plurality or relative simple majority system. Ties are decided by lot, most often by a draw. FPTP is used throughout Canada.

The central feature of a liberal democracy is that the people elect their representatives. Canada holds free, fair elections under single member plurality, and there is nothing undemocratic about the very straightforward notion that the candidate who garners the most support wins.

Kira Chisholm, Student, St. Thomas University

Supporters of FPTP point to the ease of casting a vote, counting the votes cast and reporting the results publicly within hours of the polls closing. New Brunswickers have come to expect such efficiency. Knowing accurate results in an efficient turnaround time fosters the credibility of the system. Proponents disagree that a voter's choice on the ballot is restrictive because the ballot only allows for the choice of one of the candidates: the voter can express a view on which candidate or which party he or she supports by casting his or her vote. While this system tends to produce a two-party system, the result is usually a single-party government that does not have to rely on support from other parties to govern, thus increasing stability. For many people, such a system has performed in terms of having established clear lines of accountability between the elected candidates and their constituencies and between the elected government and the population.

Critics argue that FPTP fails to reflect the actual electorate support for each candidate and rewards a party that strategically pursues support through the nomination of a "star" candidate or by concentrating campaign efforts on targeted geographical areas. Results are disproportional as a candidate can get elected with limited amount of public support, particularly in a tight race with several candidates. Critics argue that it does not matter the amount of votes received as long as the candidate receives more votes than his or her opponents. The system encourages tactical voting such as instances where voting is about the candidate or party voters most dislike as opposed to voting for the candidate they like the most. Such behaviour leads to another criticism that the ballot restricts the voter's choice to indicate support for party but not the candidate or vice versa.

The basic criticism is that, notwithstanding its simplicity, FPTP tends to give some voters more say than others by how winning candidates are decided. These shortcomings

can result in a legislature that fails to reflect accurately the diversity of opinion in the province.

Preferential Ballots

A Preferential Ballot is not a new concept; it has been used in Australia since 1918 when the *Commonwealth Electoral Act*³⁸ was comprehensively rewritten to introduce alternative (“preferential”) vote. The alternative vote is an increasingly popular proposal for electoral reform, largely due to Australia’s success with it.

A Preferential Ballot is also known as a ranked ballot system or an instant runoff voting system. This system retains many of the electoral elements New Brunswickers are accustomed to under FPTP while recognizing preferences expressed during voting. Those preferences are often referred to as the popular votes, which means that elected candidates would not only have to win the majority of votes among other candidates for their ridings but would have to received at least 50 per cent of the constituency votes.

I do believe strongly that electoral system reform should not be considered in isolation of other factors and potential alternatives that could expand and increase access to the voting process and participation in government.

Jamie Gillis, St. Thomas University

Under the Preferential Ballot, ballots are structured to allow voters to rank their candidates in order of preference. Allowing for preference ranking on the ballot enables voters to express themselves in respect of their first choice candidate and allows them to vote for their second choice (or a number of choices) in the event that the preferred candidate may not be elected. Preferential Ballots in essence give more choices to the voters but do not force them to make a multitude of choices. For those voters who strongly support only one candidate, they would not have to rank any candidate they do not want. Voters are free to back as many or as few candidates as they like, giving them a strategic advantage as voters do not need to choose between voting for the party they like and voting for the party they think can beat the candidate or party that has lost their confidence: they can do both. Affiliation and loyalty to a party would not be affected.

Results would be tallied to determine which candidate is preferred by the majority of voters. Counting takes into consideration the popular vote, particularly in ridings where there is a tight race among many candidates. When the ballots are counted the first time, only the first choices are tabulated. A candidate who receives 50 per cent plus one or more of the first count is declared elected at that point. If no one has a majority, the candidate with the fewest number of first preferences is removed and all those ballots are transferred to other candidates based on the indication of second preference. The process of recounting, elimination and vote transfer is repeated until someone emerges with a majority, at which point the victor is declared. This method preserves votes to ensure a candidate can ultimately achieve majority while preserving the preferences expressed.

The features of a Preferential Ballot are the same as those of FPTP. The ridings retain the same boundaries and are still represented by a single MLA. Voters still vote for candidates representing parties, thereby maintaining the tradition that a vote is an expression of support for the candidate as opposed to the candidate’s party. The only difference from FPTP as far as the voter is concerned is the choices: instead of putting an X before the name of the favoured candidate, the voter can choose to rank all the candidates from first to last, marking them 1, 2, 3, etc. What Preferential Ballots do is reveal that the old political dichotomies of “us versus them” or “left versus right,” hide shades of opinion within voters. While the FPTP ballot would produce just three possible outcomes in a three-way race, a Preferential Ballot would reveal six preference orders for the three candidates. Such differences do affect who ultimately wins.

This is a modest, pragmatic choice for reform that does not create its own series of problems, as a wholesale change to another electoral system would. It also keeps things simple and easy, so that everyone can understand how to vote and that their vote really counts. Election results are more legitimate as they are more closely reflecting the preferences of voters. It encourages candidates to use moderation with other candidates as they court voters for their support as the first preference. To avoid vote-splitting in a multi-race situation, candidates will also have to seek support for second preference in addition to first preference from voters. It creates an incentive for parties to be cognizant that there are other candidates whom a majority may prefer. A Preferential Ballot levels the playing field for all candidates. The change, even a modest one,

is a stepping stone in a continued evolutionary path of New Brunswick's democratic institutions if such change enhances confidence and credibility.

Proportional systems

While not within the mandate of the commission to explore a proportional system, it has not gone unnoticed that many individuals appearing before it and making submissions requested consideration of the merits of such a system. The commission would be remiss not to take under consideration the voices of all New Brunswickers.

Proportional Representation is a type of electoral system that decides the make-up of a legislature by allocating seats on the basis of the number of votes each party received. There are many different types of Proportional Representation: the submissions advocating such a system supported mostly a mixed-member representation electoral system as advocated by the 2005 Commission on Democracy. Proportional Representation is a voting system whereby successful parties gain seats in direct proportion to the number of votes they accrue at an election. This is the base requirement for a system to be described as proportional. Rather than the winner-take-all approach of other systems, Proportional Representation ensures that votes carry equal weight. To do this, multi-member constituencies are used, normally one associated with the constituency and one with the party. This means that a single area elects more than one representative.

How ballots are counted depends on the electoral system chosen: the system produces two kinds of MLAs, the first elected directly in constituency races, and the second elected via a list. An electoral formula is used to translate the party vote into the specific number of seats. After the total number of constituency seats won by each party is known, parties are assigned list seats equal to the number of proportional seats they are entitled to "top up" the number of constituency seats won in each geographical region. Simply put, the party vote determines the total number of seats each party receives, and list MLAs make up the difference between that total and the number of constituency seats won. Depending on the total number of MLAs and the ratio of list to constituency MLAs, ridings could be anywhere from the same size to twice as big as they are now. The government is chosen based on a party's share of the seats that roughly mirrors its share of the overall vote: coalitions or agreements between parties are usually needed before a government can be formed.

Proponents of a proportional system argue that voting turnout is significantly higher in democracies that practise proportional representation for the simple reason that voters have a greater motivation to be involved in decision-making and that every vote counts.

One of the most common arguments against Proportional Representation is that it often creates a legislature with multiple parties and minority governments; a stable coalition representing a majority to form government cannot always be counted on. Such situations create a crisis in the election cycle, often shortening the term of the minority government elected.

Advocates for a proportional system argued before the commission that such a system would offer women, Aboriginal persons and minor-party candidates a better chance of election to the parliamentary system as these individuals could be elected through the list MLAs pending greater acceptance by the constituency electorate.

In looking at New Brunswick's history, the commission realized that Canadians have avoided radical changes to their democracy and have instead changing their democratic institutions only gradually. For those who feel FPTP needs improvement and it does not do a good job of translating voters' view into results, there is no question that the Preferential Ballot helps to solve that problem. As referenda have shown across Canada, voters are not ready to make a revolutionary leap directly to proportional representation, but for those who believe that that is where we should end up, they should take comfort in the fact that the Preferential Ballot can be an incremental step along that road. The commission believes New Brunswick may wish to further examine proportional representation in the future.

The commission recognizes the adoption of a proportional electoral system will be a significant departure from FPTP and will require significant investments in civic education and awareness and in the election processes.

Therefore, the commission makes the following recommendations:

- ♦ The government enhance the voting system by moving to Preferential Ballots.
- ♦ Consideration be given to some form of Proportional Representation during the process of considering the redistribution of electoral boundaries.

Goal 3: E-voting

New Brunswick has seen numerous technological advancements and improvements during the past few years. The Internet alone has greatly changed the way many of us live. From online diplomas, job application, shopping or banking, many Canadians, including New Brunswickers, are taking advantage of the evolving technology and its convenience. Thus it did not come as a complete surprise that the subject of online or Internet voting has become a topic of conversation in many jurisdictions, and there have been questions about the viability of such a step in New Brunswick.

Everyone globally is grappling with this question about internet voting.

Dr. Aleksander Essex, Western University

The main reasons expressed in favour of online voting include: speed, convenience and accessibility. Internet voting is viewed as a tool that could remove barriers and make a vote more accessible for certain groups such as voters with mobility challenges or visual impairments. It has also been argued that online voting could help increase voter turnout. However, there was no evidence presented to the commission to support this.

Remote voting for has been in used in Canada for some time. Eligible electors for a federal election can apply to vote by special ballot, with which the voter can vote by mail from anywhere in the world. Individuals living in Canada can apply once an election is under way, thus assisting persons residing in very remote areas easier access. Persons living abroad can apply anytime. The commission heard evidence of challenges provincially in sending and receiving mail-in ballots in a timely fashion. Internet voting is not permitted at this time.

In the Maritime provinces, the non-binding plebiscite on electoral reform on Prince Edward Island offered the choice to voters to cast their vote via Internet or telephone, as well as in person. Another example is the Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM), which introduced remote Internet voting in its municipal and school board elections in 2008 as part of a pilot project that sought to establish the viability and reliability of electronic voting. The municipality decided to offer remote Internet and telephone voting, given that voting over the telephone appealed to a wider

demographic; especially older electors who might have greater difficulty using the Internet. While public acceptance and support of electronic voting in Halifax was relatively strong, voter turnout did not increase overall and in fact registered a drop from 48 per cent in 2004 to 38 per cent in 2008. The Prince Edward Island and HRM cases may be particularly valuable to study were New Brunswick to consider a pilot project.

While the reasons in favour are positive factors on the surface, it is important to consider the safety aspects associated with online voting. Many people compare online Internet voting to online banking. The common belief here is that if it is safe to do your banking online, then it should be safe to vote online. During the commission's meetings with experts in cybersecurity, it was explained why that is not necessarily the case.

Cybersecurity is no longer an IT problem; it is everyone's problem. It affects everyone. Therefore, it requires a collective effort from all disciplines and all researchers to come together when it comes to building a viable, powerful cybersecurity solution.

Ali Ghorbani, University of New Brunswick

The commission learned that during an online banking transaction, a client's bank can determine when a certain transaction was made and from which location as well as identify who made the transaction. This is to ensure client protection if or when banking fraud should occur. Because current systems servicing online transactions trace the client identity from beginning to the end, such a scheme cannot easily be transposed for e-voting without raising concerns about the reliability and security of maintaining anonymity of the voter's choice or choices at the ballot box.

Voter secrecy is paramount. New Brunswickers do not want someone to be able to link their identity to a specific vote. Were it possible to determine for whom an individual votes, it would run the risk of causing widespread mistrust and a general lack of confidence in election results.

There are a number of other issues surrounding online voting. These include potential issues with vote manipulation, voter identification, ensuring an individual can only vote once, ensuring the safety and security of the devices used to cast and receive ballots as well as addressing what happens in the event a recount is required. Because there is only a traceable digital imprint, solid recount records to replace the backup paper trail would have to be considered carefully while preserving anonymity. Caution is needed to ensure that New Brunswickers continue to have the same high level of trust in the integrity of their elections without fear of cyber-hacking or interruptions.

Accessibility

The commission heard that e-voting, in some form, could remove barriers and make a vote more accessible for certain groups such as voters with mobility challenges or visual impairments if adaptive technology were provided. Many persons who are visually impaired have never experienced the full secrecy of the ballot as assistance is required to ensure the appropriate place on the ballot is marked. Braille ballots offered during an election are only sufficient in making the voting secret if the blind or visually impaired read Braille. Many do not, thus requiring someone's assistance. If some form of electronic voting, such as kiosk voting, were to be developed to permit unassisted voting, these electors would be afforded a greater degree of anonymity and equality when casting a ballot. The reliability of the Internet infrastructure would need to be considered.

There were concerns that if online voting were implemented, accessibility to the vote could actually be reduced and may disadvantage others, particularly those voters who do not have Internet access, have limited access to a computer or are unfamiliar with its use. If e-voting is adopted, it should be one of the forms of voting and not the sole form.

Security

When considering online voting, it is important to remember that voting in New Brunswick is by secret ballot. The preservation of secrecy of the ballot is paramount; it is intended to avert attempts to influence the voter by intimidation and potential vote buying and a means of achieving the goal of political privacy. When the commission asked if New Brunswick has an online voting system that respects the principles of voting secretly and securely, cybersecurity experts emphatically said no. All electronic systems, regardless of their levels of security, are constantly under attack, and a security breach can occur at any time with or without the knowledge of the system owner. Security of online voting is thus one of the most significant challenges of implementing online voting. Security breaches could jeopardize the integrity of the voting process and lead to compromised election results. Cybersecurity cannot be guaranteed, at least not in the foreseeable future.

To be fully confident in an online voting system, New Brunswick must ensure this system can provide election results that the electorate can trust. Without this, democracy is at risk.

Therefore, the commission makes the following recommendations:

- ♦ The government not proceed with electronic voting at this time, due to concerns related to security, confidentiality and privacy.
- ♦ The government consider electronic voting once these concerns have been addressed beginning with a pilot project.

Goal 4: Election dates

The timing of provincial elections has historically been the responsibility of the Premier, who may call an election at any time, provided it was within a five-year period of the previous election date. Since the early 2000s, many Canadian incumbent governments have moved from the traditional Westminster system and have surrendered their right to choose the timing of the next election in favour of a system that fixes the next election date. Fixed election dates are considered to be more acceptable, as they are associated with increased electoral fairness and political integrity, transparency and predictability. It has also been argued that fixed election dates lead to better electoral administration, better party planning, and better government planning and protection of the Crown.

Having fixed election dates in the third week of September excludes the majority of first-year students, out-of-province students and those who would have moved here in an election year.

Robert Burroughs, New Brunswick Student Alliance

The concept of fixed election dates is relatively new in New Brunswick, having first been adopted in 2007. The last two provincial elections have since been held every four years, on the fourth Monday in September.

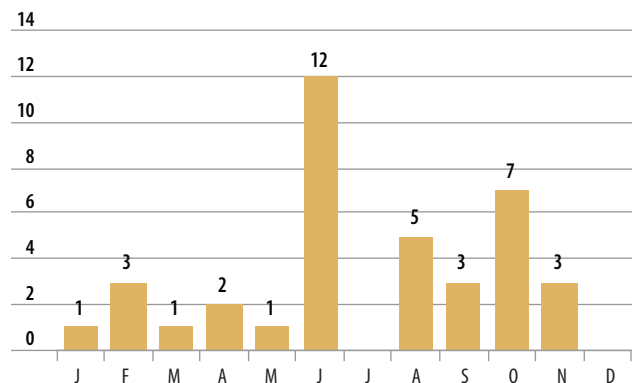
During its meetings, the commission did not encounter a strong desire to move away from a fixed election date every four years. The commission believes the experience of the last two elections has provided comfort in maintaining this schedule. There were, however, some stakeholders who expressed the need to move from a September election date to one held in October. The rationale is that this would accommodate a greater number of post-secondary students who wish to participate in the electoral process.

Currently, a period of 40 days is required to establish residency in the province. This requirement directly impacts first year students, out-of-province students, and those students who would have moved to the province during an election year, if the election date remains in September. These students would not have lived in the province long enough to allow them to vote.

Moving the fixed election date to October would encourage higher participation rates among this age group, and it would help increase opportunities for youth voting. It would allow student unions more time to organize and include electoral information in student packages. It would also provide professors time to build and prepare their curricula to include a component on the electoral system, especially during an election year.

September is also traditionally a busy month, normally associated with Labour Day weekend, back to school for pupils and parent/teacher meetings to discuss the upcoming school year. A fixed election date in October would allow for improved involvement of parents with children in public school and have a positive impact on high school students, by providing an opportunity for schools to deliver a civics education module to help these students be better prepared for election day.

Election dates by month, 1866–2014



Source: Elections New Brunswick

The commission understands that a fixed election date only works as long as the government retains confidence of the legislature. The commission recognizes that while in practice, the Lieutenant-Governor dissolves a legislature on the formal request by the Premier, it does not detract from the principle that only the Lieutenant-Governor can legally initiate an election if confidence is lost or deemed lost. Under the Westminster system, the Lieutenant-Governor retains the right, as the Queen's representative, to dissolve formally a legislature and issue the writs of elections. This is an inescapable consequence of the logic of responsible government that cannot and should not be prevented. The commissioners respect the responsibility vested in

the Lieutenant-Governor in making the decision when necessary for the betterment of the democratic society.

Therefore, the commission makes the following recommendations:

- ◆ Fixed term election dates be maintained.
- ◆ The election date be changed from the fourth Monday in September to the third Monday in October.

Goal 5: Election financing

Election financing is a building block of the electoral system as, for better or worse, money is required for a modern electoral campaign. The issue that is constantly being scrutinized is not the money itself but how such funds are obtained and from whom. There is this underpinning assumption from a segment of the population that campaign financing causes undue influence because politicians are largely dependent on funds from large donors that are often trade unions and corporations. While rules and limits have been established for campaign financing and spending, some remain concerned that the modern transparent process continues to retain that element of economic influence by allowing any trade unions and corporate donations.

What has been missing from the in recent years is the question of freedom of expression. As most people would attest, such freedom allows voters to actively support, financially and otherwise, a chosen charitable cause. In an era when everyone can access the world one tweet at a time and can expend resources when necessary, it is evident that Canadians have a fairly wide latitude in their freedom of expression. Political contributions are a real manifestation of this freedom; trade unions, associations and corporations also enjoy the protection of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Those rights are regarded differently, but they certainly exist. Striking the right balance between the values of liberty can be difficult. Nevertheless, it is widely accepted that limits on political contributions and expenses promote the proper functioning of a democratic society.

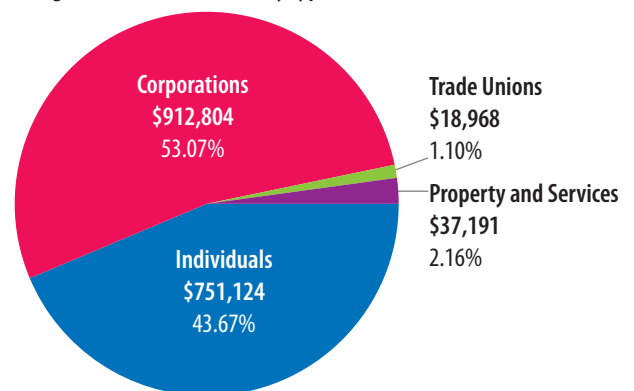
Such limits exist mainly to ensure transparency and fairness and to reduce the possibility of undue influence by any donor. The underlying principle is to maintain a level playing field that attracts more participants and diversifies political discourse with a view to increase overall engagement and participation, including attendance at the polls. The collection and spending of funds are congruent elements for political financing and must be examined as a whole package to ensure the right balance is maintained.

Allowable sources and limits of contributions

Under the current rules for political financing, contributions to a party or an election campaign may be made by individuals, corporations and trade unions, with no requirements for residency for individuals. The approach is similar to other Canadian jurisdictions, except for six jurisdictions, the federal government, Quebec, Nova Scotia, Manitoba, Alberta and Ontario, which have restricted contributions to individuals. A jurisdictional comparison can be found in Appendix C.

Restrictions on the types of donors and residency requirements could reduce public perception of the capacity of specific donors through money interest ending up controlling certain issues or influencing favourable treatment through large donations. However, with a limited population from which to raise funds, adopting a ban on corporate and trade union donations in New Brunswick could be disadvantageous to parties unless the amount of public funding is raised. Completely preventing corporations and trade unions from making contributions to candidates and parties does not remove them from the political process. That contribution limit in New Brunswick is one of the highest in the country, the upper threshold for maximum donations being set at \$6,000. The limits on amounts contributed require adjustments.

Average annual contributions by type, 2000–2014

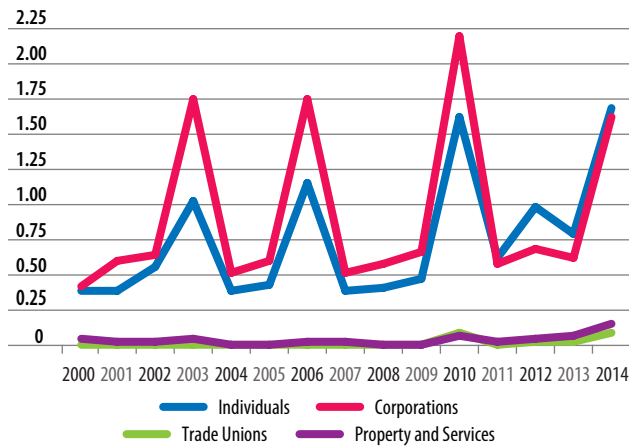


Source: Elections New Brunswick, Annual Reports of the Supervisor of Political Financing

Those limits and rules are contained in the *Political Process Financing Act*.³⁹ They are intended to maintain public trust and confidence in the electoral process and reinforce the principles of transparency, equality and participation of parties, candidates and individuals that are central to democratic government. Political financing has a profound impact on democracy and democratic participation. How elections are funded and the nature of any associated controls and restrictions are of critical importance to the integrity of the electoral process, both actual and perceived, and the strength of parliamentary democracy.

The objective of the legal framework is not to prevent or interfere with the flow of ideas and information but rather to establish a “level playing field” for all candidates, parties and third parties. This level playing field prevents the wealthy from overwhelming and controlling the political process.

Contributions to registered political parties, district associations, independent candidates and third parties, 2000–2014 (\$M)



Source: Elections New Brunswick, *Annual Reports of the Supervisor of Political Financing*

Underlying the push for election financing reform has been a desire to introduce some degree of financial equality in creating opportunity for persons to put themselves forward as candidates and run a viable campaign. Parties and their candidates want a modern funding scheme that adapts efficiently to the corporate world and its many new organizational and transformational entities. The current funding scheme has not kept pace with such corporate changes, which has led to grey areas as to what is and is not permissible. This has created a disadvantage for some candidates while creating confusion for others.

Taxpayer subsidies to the electoral process

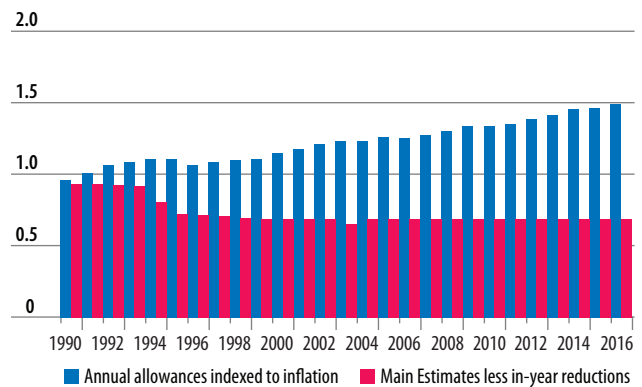
Annual allowance

Since 1978, each registered party has been subsidized annually through public funding at a base amount initially set at \$1 for each valid vote cast for the official candidates of the party at the immediately preceding general election. After 1981, the formula was reviewed and the \$1 in the base amount was adjusted to \$1.30 indexed to the Consumer Price Index for Canada. That change provided for indexation of the basic annual amounts payable to parties.

However, when public resources are scarce and needed for everything from schools and hospitals to roads and salaries for staff, allocating public funds to give to parties and candidates would be far down the list of priorities. This phenomenon materialized between 1990 and 2003 where several years of budgetary and in-year funding reductions occurred. From 2004 to 2009, the total amount of the basic annual allowances available was capped at \$668,000.

In response to growing concerns respecting fairness, the legislation was changed in 2009 to provide that the allowance formula became the amount appropriated by the legislature less the audit fee reimbursements, with the balance allocated based on the number of valid votes received by each party in the previous general election. This meant that the parties and candidates, who would collect the money, also make the decision. This fact notwithstanding, the annual amount appropriated by the legislative assembly has continued to be \$668,000 since 2009. The lack of adjustment in the annual subsidies has resulted in parties having a greater reliance on private donations to meet their everyday expenditures.

Annual allowance payments to political parties, adjusted for inflation versus actuals (\$M)



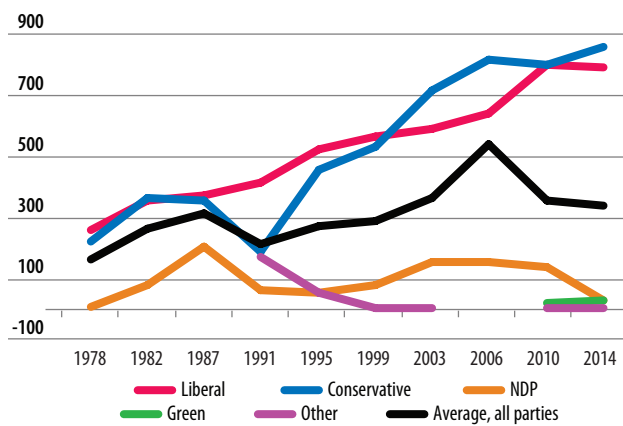
Source: Elections New Brunswick, Supervisor of Political Process Financing

Expense reimbursement

The concept of political financing can affect the confidence in elected government. Proper and adequate handling of political financing is important in effectively maintaining free and fair elections and an effective governance structure within the democratic system. Avoiding real or perceived corruption and moneyed interest through a regulatory framework that places limits on donations and electoral expenditures has proven to be beneficial to candidates, parties and the public.

The *Political Process Financing Act* is the legislative framework to offset the effect of limits placed on donations and instill confidence in the electoral process through various rules and incentives, including an arrangement for basic public funds support to parties. This framework encourages the sustainability of a multi-party system. The scheme provides that a candidate who receives at least 15 per cent of the vote in his or her district may be reimbursed for the lesser of actual expenses incurred or 35 cents per elector on the preliminary list of electors for the district and the cost of mailing a first-class letter to each elector.

Political party expenses in election year (\$000)



Source: Elections New Brunswick,
Annual Report of the Supervisor of Political Financing

This funding supports the democratic process by recognizing that candidates should have sufficient funds to participate in elections without having to resort to spending most of their time raising money and relying on private donations. Public funding is a natural and necessary cost of democracy because parties and candidates need money for their electoral campaigns, which include keeping contacts with their constituencies and preparing policy decisions.

In recent years, many criticisms have been raised by parties respecting the fairness and effectiveness of the current methods for delivering public funding, including the variable of the price of a first-class stamp. A significant increase in postage in 2014 has raised the effective rate of reimbursement for the 2014 general election to 40 per cent of permissible election expenses, an increase from the 32 per cent recorded in 2008. As the price of the first-class stamp continues to rise, parties will see a comparable or improved reimbursement rate of eligible expenses during an election year. The price of the stamp in the reimbursement scheme acts akin to an inflammatory measure.

Spending limits have not kept pace with inflation. Appendix B provides a list of current spending limits for parties and what they would be with inflationary adjustments

The threshold of 15 per cent of eligible voters has been criticized for disadvantaging new or smaller parties with province-wide rather than regionally concentrated support. This may make it more difficult for new political forces to gain representation. Other jurisdictions such as Nova Scotia and Manitoba and the federal system have a threshold of 10 per cent of votes cast which may improve sustainability.

The *Political Process Financing Act* sets out limits on the amount that may be spent by a party and candidates during an election campaign. The formulas for limits vary across Canada, but all jurisdictions have adopted expense limits as a means to promoting accessibility, fairness and competitiveness of electoral races and by curbing the impact of financial resources during the campaign. Standards, from time to time, must be scrutinized for their fit with modern time. The system review shows that the rules have not been adapted to reflect the adoption of fixed date elections in 2007 and the advancement of new technology media.

With the introduction of fixed-date elections, it became evident that the political strategies for the election would change significantly from those of previous general elections. Because of the changes, many candidates were nominated months ahead of the election period, and therefore incurring pre-writ expenses to set up campaign offices. While the Act allows the allocating of certain expenditures into “election expenses” and “non-election expenses” based on the number of days of the election period as a proportion of the total number of days covered by the expenditure, most official agents instinctively included them as election expenses.

As a result of these changes, parties can only claim election expenses incurred 30 days prior to the fixed election date. However, because the election date is fixed, expenses are incurred months prior to the election.

Platform commitment costing

During an election, all parties respond to the electorate through commitments that form their electoral platform. For many voters, understanding the real costs associated with the platform commitments is an integral part of the political agenda of a party. Everyone welcomes the idea of a new hospital in their community or a new highway, but the question is whether voters are willing to foot the costs or are willing to trade off another commitment. This is an integral part of a healthy debate that ensues and informs. Only when voters have the pertinent details can they make an informed decision.

To ensure accountability and transparency, parties should be responsible to cost election commitments in a fair and diligent manner during a campaign. Without such information, the electorate has limited information on some specific expenditure announcements but few relevant details on the overall costs of a party's platform.

Accurate costing ensures voters are aware of the likely impacts of election commitments, thus lending clarity to the debate, not only among voters but also between candidates. To effect such clarity, registered parties should carefully consider the likely fiscal impacts of a potential election commitment before making it and should prepare, publish and file cost estimates of the fiscal impacts of their commitments. It is also important that parties take seriously the need for accurate costing of electoral commitments by ensuring clear consequences are identified under the law for the failure to disclose the costs of platform commitments or the failure to identify a platform commitment.

Many believe this approach benefits the party in government because of its knowledge of finances and programming. One should remember, however, that financial outlooks and expenditures are regularly published and the business of government is scrutinized by the legislative

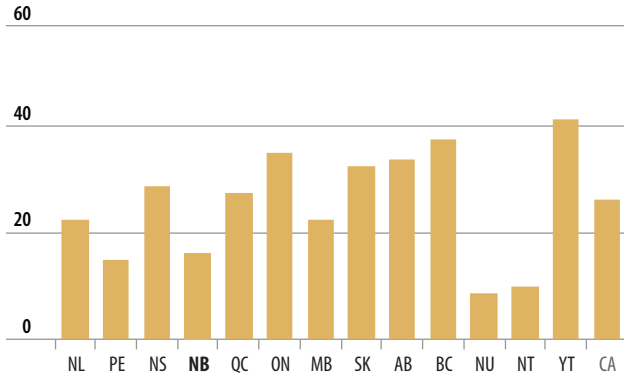
assembly through main estimates and public accounts. Information about specific programs and services can also be found on the Government of New Brunswick website. Encouraging the incorporation and consideration of the likely fiscal impacts of each party's election commitments will permit political discourse during a campaign. This may also foster an understanding among candidates and their parties that only those election commitments with proper costs, which are published and filed, can be expected to be commitments that will be implemented if a registered party is elected.

Put into practice, such measures improve accountability and transparency in elections commitments to ensure electors can make informed decisions for the promises made by parties as part of an election campaign. It also renders a registered party responsible and accountable for its management when elected.

Temporary financial incentives

The electoral process involves much more than voting. Political participation is an important component of the process because, without candidates or with a limited number of candidates, the electoral system cannot function as a democratic institution. Political participation derives from the freedom to speak and to associate under the Constitution. A free society allows individuals the right to assembly and the ability to take part in the conduct of public affairs, resulting in the opportunity to register as a candidate, to campaign, to be elected and to hold office at all levels of government. Under international standards, men and women have an equal right to participate fully in all aspects of the political process. In a perfect society, the Parliamentary representatives are a reflection of its society, being proportional in its composition by gender, ethnicity and culture of the population. New Brunswick parties aspire to having a legislature that mirrors the electorate. In practice, however, it is often harder for women to exercise this right. There are frequently extra barriers to women's participation, and special care is required to ensure their rights are respected in this regard. In Canada, it is unclear why so few women aspire to being candidates and ultimately elected representatives.

Percentage of women elected to provincial legislatures across Canada (last election)

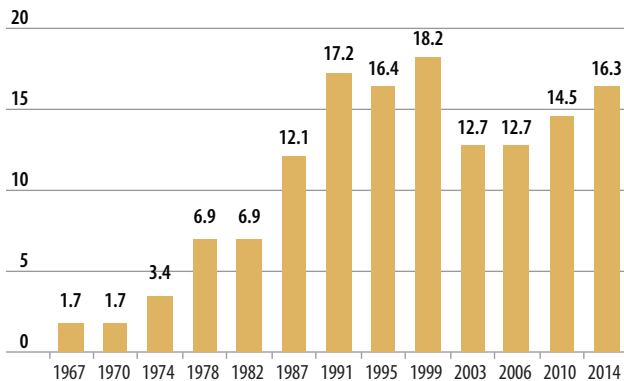


Source: Provincial and territorial legislative assembly websites

Parties are among the most important institutions affecting women’s political participation. In Canada, as most countries, parties determine which candidates are nominated for potentially being elected and which issues achieve national or provincial prominence. The role of women in parties is therefore a key determinant of their prospects for political empowerment. Because parties are so influential in shaping women’s political prospects, governments and international organizations seeking to advance the participation of women in elections justifiably tend to focus on the role of parties as political parties are one of the many building blocks of democracy.

The rights of women are enshrined in law and there are therefore no formal legal barriers to their participation in the election processes. In practice, however, there are often formidable obstacles to women’s active participation. The hurdles to be overcome, such as family responsibilities, acceptance into what has traditionally been a boys’ club, campaign financing and the demands on one’s time, can be particularly daunting for women considering running for office.

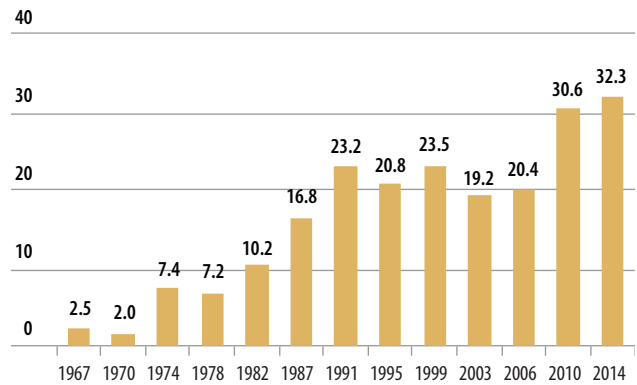
Percentage of female MLAs in the New Brunswick legislature, 1967–2014



Source: Legislative Assembly New Brunswick

It has been identified that the role of parties in promoting and supporting women to run for nominations is the most important factor in increasing the representation of women as elected representatives. When more women run for office, more of them are elected. Parties that have a greater proportion of women candidates tend to have a higher proportion of women in their caucuses. Since 2006, the percentage of women who have been nominated as candidates for the New Brunswick’s four major parties has risen from 20 per cent to 32 per cent. This is a positive achievement, but more must be done as the population in New Brunswick is composed of at least 50 per cent of females.

Percentage of women candidated in New Brunswick elections, 1967–2014



Achieving gender equality, including in the realm of political representation, is an increasingly consensual goal. The commitment to promote gender equality and improve the representation of women is often reiterated by political leaders, parliamentarians and members of governments. The federal government had shown leadership in appointing a Cabinet representative of the gender proportion. This said, the number of federally elected women forming government represents 27 per cent of the party’s caucus, only a one-per-cent increase from the previous federal election. Thus for many elected governments, the question remains how to accelerate progress in practice, which at present is slow.

We continue to see women represented in disproportionately small numbers in both candidates and in elected MLAs in New Brunswick

Beth Lyons, New Brunswick Women’s Council

Simply nominating more female candidates does not always translate into the election of greater numbers of elected women. How can society assist in the evolutionary process? An option proposed to the commission is the use of public funds as financial incentives for better representation of women within political parties. This approach may be preferable to encourage parties to enhance mechanisms geared to help women in campaign financing. The proposed option, while promoting female candidates, should ensure transparency in the use of public funding aimed at enhancing gender equality. A public subsidy could take a variety of forms, such as a fixed amount or percentage of public funding allocated to parties based on their share of women nominated or allocating the proportion of public funding being lost by parties that do not respect an established threshold for representation by women being distributed as a bonus to parties that do comply, thus incentivizing parties to truly support great gender equality within their select and support of candidates.

When it is such an imbalance in terms of the representation within the Legislative bodies compared to the overarching population, to me, that's something that needs to be addressed.

Dr. Joanna Everitt, University of New Brunswick

A growing number of countries are providing financial incentives, allocating party funding according to the share of women who are actually elected. Apart from Kenya and Ireland, where a party loses eligibility for state funding if more than two-thirds of its elected officials are of one gender, these provisions generally take the form of posi-

tive rather than negative incentives. In states as diverse as Bolivia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Colombia, Mali, and Niger, between five and 10 per cent of state funding is allocated to parties based on their share of women elected.

This is a different approach that is becoming increasingly more common as it frames the issue in a more positive way by encouraging parties to nominate and robustly support as many women as possible. In those countries that have adopted that approach, parties are encouraged for nominating women rather than penalized for falling short of legal mandates or established policies.

Therefore, the commission makes the following recommendations:

- ♦ Political contributions by individuals, corporations and trade unions be lowered from the current \$6,000.
- ♦ Political contributions from corporations and trade unions be phased out following the 2018 provincial election.
- ♦ Reimbursement of election expenses begins effective January 1 of the election year.
- ♦ The annual allowance and election reimbursement formulas be re-evaluated in conjunction with other recommendations made by the commission and consideration be given to providing inflationary adjustments to certain spending limits.
- ♦ Election commitment costing legislation be re-established.
- ♦ The government create a temporary special measure in the *Political Process Financing Act* to provide a financial incentive for parties to nominate as candidates more women.

Engagement and awareness

Concern about downward trend in voter turnout is not unique to New Brunswick. Declining turnout is a phenomenon found throughout Canada, both federally and provincially, as well as in countries throughout the industrialized world. The reasons are varied. Some may argue that people no longer feel engaged in decision-making, leaving others to decide for them. Others are suggesting that, in this electronic age, individuals are pressed for time; juggling family and work obligations is creating time constraints that limit or reduce civic engagement. Other reasons mentioned include voter apathy as well as the feeling that their vote does not count. In addition, the commission heard that a person may choose not to vote because he or she lacks an understanding of the electoral system or has little to no information about the parties and their platforms.

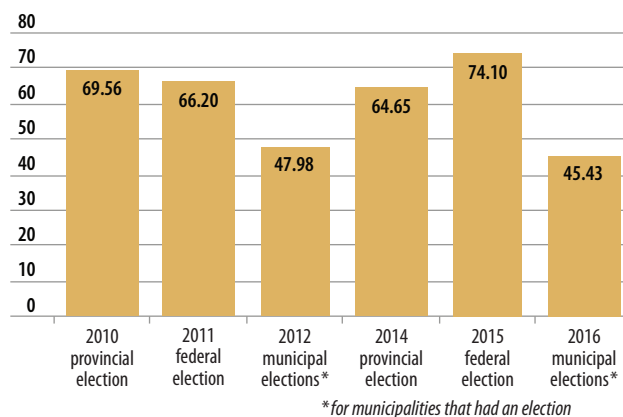
The best voter education is not voter education but broader civic or political education.

Alan Sears, University of New Brunswick

During the commission's consultation process, many stakeholders and individuals expressed the need for a civic education program and improved public awareness campaigns to better educate those who are voting for the first time or those who simply want to learn more about New Brunswick's political and electoral systems. While civic education was not a specific component of the commission's mandate, the need for an improved civic education program in the province was repeated on numerous occasions as a means to improve participation in democracy.

The commission believes an informed electorate is good for democracy. A multi-pronged strategy is needed that is aimed at increasing youth and young population's understanding of the electoral process and people's role in that process; at removing administrative barriers to electoral participation; and at raising public awareness of the problems created by a declining voter participation among young people and adults. An improved civic education and greater awareness campaigns have the potential to improve voter turnout as well as help New Brunswickers be better informed and prepared during an election period

Comparison of voter participation rates across various elections in New Brunswick (%)



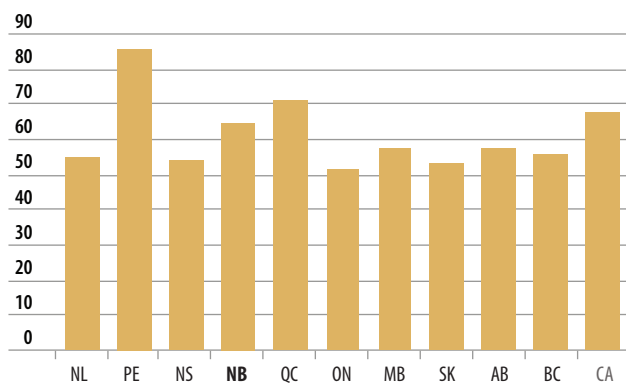
Source: Elections New Brunswick and Elections Canada

Increasing the understanding of youth of the electoral process can be achieved through the public school system. Schools clearly have an important role to play in producing politically knowledgeable and interested young Canadians and residents. Formal civic education in the classroom would be the primary means by which young people acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to participate in their democracies in an informed and engaged fashion. The principle objective of civic education is to impart a knowledge and understanding of the basic principles of government in addition to creating a basic familiarity with prevailing social values and norms and fundamental rights and responsibilities. At high school, courses material should address the conflict-driven realities of modern politics, should introduce students in an even-handed manner to the partisan positions that characterize many current issues, and should help students develop the habit of keeping up with events.

Studies have shown that an individual's likelihood of voting increases with higher levels of knowledge and interest in politics. In addition to enhancing these variables, civic education can foster values and attitudes that encourage political participation while increasing the motivation to vote. Civic education related curriculum material should promote the habit of attentiveness to political information and debate. Demanding that social studies play a more prominent part in the lives of students requires that teachers be afforded time to properly prepare for this important responsibility. Investments in school materials, tools and

professional development for educators to undertake this responsibility must be a priority.

Provincial participation rates across Canada, most recent election (%)



Source: Provincial and federal election office websites

Raising public awareness of the adult population will require the involvement of many groups, associations and diverse media forums. Contrary to school pupils who are all within a confined environment, adults are dispersed. Public awareness campaigns should therefore target groups of adults who are most likely to benefit from additional information.

An improved civic education program and public awareness campaigns are major components of the commission's recommendations to lower the voting age to 16 as well as granting the right to vote to Permanent Residents. It will also require a commitment to work in partnership with many not-for-profit organizations and non-government agencies to communicate the changes and assist these new voters in understanding their rights and the electoral process.

Policy designed to address engagement must avoid the temptation to reflect a one size fits all framework. New Brunswick consists of diverse groups, and some of those subgroups require an approach tailored to their needs. Aboriginal populations, immigrants, visible minorities, the poor and the less educated face unique challenges that should be addressed in a constructive manner.

Civic education stands as an effective, if not the most effective, mechanism for addressing deficiencies in political knowledge and understanding of the public responsibilities associated with citizenship. Accommodating the needs of New Brunswickers in their attempt to assume this respons-

ibility ought to be a priority. When people vote, there are benefits to themselves and their communities, including higher levels of civic participation, stronger connections within communities and better outcomes for the individual voters themselves, including improved health, social connections, mental health and overall well-being. This relationship between individual and community well-being is important to foster confidence in the electoral system.

Long-term, what we are trying to cause or change is ensuring that there is a culture in the education systems across the country of teachers using experiential learning when it comes to civic education.

Taylor Gunn, Civix

The commission believes an informed electorate is good for democracy. An improved civic education has the potential to improve voter turnout as well as help New Brunswickers be better informed and prepared during an election period.

As with any new program, benchmarking will need to be performed to properly assess the impact of the commission's recommended civic and awareness program. While the public education system will be able to grade its pupils, the awareness component of the commission's recommendations should be measured by a series of performance indicators and reported on annually. Such indicators could include:

- ♦ the number of women and other under-represented groups registered in electoral lists;
- ♦ the number of women and other under-represented groups actually elected to decision-making bodies;
- ♦ the pieces of legislation introduced to increase women's political participation;
- ♦ the number of female and other under-represented participants in training programs designed to promote participation in politics (such as mentoring or media training programs); and
- ♦ the number of women and other under-represented groups in key positions.

In addition to complement the performance indicators, the annual report should include a qualitative analysis of items that are not readily quantifiable.

Therefore, the commission makes the following recommendations:

- ◆ A module on civics be introduced as part of the professional development days for all educators.
- ◆ Civic education programs be enhanced and applied consistently in all schools.
- ◆ A public awareness campaign to inform/educate voters of the electoral system, and of any changes.
- ◆ The government develop a strategy to encourage voter participation and raise awareness of the electoral process.
- ◆ Additional investments be made to increase turnout of younger voters.
- ◆ Elections New Brunswick explore additional scenarios and initiatives to help increase registrations and voter turnout by students on university, college campuses and high schools.
- ◆ A report on the state of democracy in New Brunswick be tabled in the legislature each year.

Moving forward

The journey the commission has been on for the past few months has been enlightening for all members. The commission has discovered that many New Brunswickers are passionate about the issues surrounding how they choose their elected members and how New Brunswick can boost participation in the electoral process. Again, the commission thanks all those who have participated in this process.

Trends indicate that now is the time to address some of these questions. The commission believes the recommendations in this report give the government a path to a more inclusive democracy that will address some of the negative trends in areas such as voter participation.

Some of these recommendations, it can be argued, would be relatively simple to implement. A more inclusive civic education regime, for example, is a policy question that could gain quick public support. Other questions, such as lowering the voting age or moving to a preferential voting system could be the subject of considerable public debate.

The commission has chosen to remain silent on how the decisions regarding these recommendations are made. Not all recommendations are similar in scope or scale. At the end of the day, the commission viewed its mandate as examining the issues contained in this report, not the means by which they might be implemented.

Change can be difficult, but the commission believes that change is needed to best serve the people in this province who care about the democratic process and how they choose their governments. The commission believes this report and its recommendations can raise the bar for the province.

Appendices

Appendix A: Summary of recommendations

Permanent Residents

- ◆ Permanent Residents who are not yet Canadian citizens be granted the right to vote in future provincial and municipal elections.
- ◆ Permanent Residents who are not yet Canadian citizens be allowed to seek public office.

Voting age and youth voting

- ◆ The voting age in New Brunswick be lowered to 16.
- ◆ New Brunswickers 16 and older who have completed high school be allowed to seek public office. The requirement of possessing a valid high school diploma would not apply to individuals 18 or older.

Voting system

- ◆ The government enhance the voting system by moving to Preferential Ballots.
- ◆ Consideration be given to some form of Proportional Representation during the process of considering the redistribution of electoral boundaries.

E-voting

- ◆ The government not proceed with electronic voting at this time, due to concerns related to security, confidentiality and privacy.
- ◆ The government consider electronic voting once these concerns have been addressed beginning with a pilot project.

Election date

- ◆ Fixed term election dates be maintained.
- ◆ The election date be changed from the fourth Monday in September to the third Monday in October

Electoral financing

- ◆ Political contributions by individuals, corporations and trade unions be lowered from the current \$6,000.
- ◆ Political contributions from corporations and trade unions be phased out following the 2018 provincial election.
- ◆ Reimbursement of election expenses begins effective January 1 of the election year.
- ◆ The annual allowance and election reimbursement formulas be re-evaluated in conjunction with other recommendations made by the commission and consideration be given to providing inflationary adjustments to certain spending limits.
- ◆ Election commitment costing legislation be re-established.
- ◆ The government create a temporary special measure in the *Political Process Financing Act* to provide a financial incentive for parties to nominate as candidates more women.

Engagement and awareness

- ◆ A module on civics be introduced as part of the professional development days for all educators.
- ◆ Civic education programs be enhanced and applied consistently in all schools.
- ◆ A public awareness campaign to inform/educate voters of the electoral system, and of any changes.
- ◆ The government develop a strategy to encourage voter participation and raise awareness of the electoral process.
- ◆ Additional investments be made to increase turnout of younger voters.
- ◆ Elections New Brunswick explore additional scenarios and initiatives to help increase registrations and voter turnout by students on university, college campuses and high schools.
- ◆ A report on the state of democracy in New Brunswick be tabled in the legislature each year.

Appendix B: Limits and expenses: adjustments for inflation

Item	Value	Date of coming into force	CPI at date of coming into force ¹	CPI at March 2016 ²	Inflation adjustment factor	Inflation adjusted value
Spending limits for political parties						
General election	\$1 / elector	Sept. 30, 1986	66.0	127.9	1.938	\$1.94
By-election	\$7,000	Sept. 30, 1986	66.0	127.9	1.938	\$13,566
Spending limits for candidates						
General election	\$1.75 / elector	Sept. 30, 1986	66.0	127.9	1.938	\$3.39
By-elections	\$2 / elector	Sept. 30, 1986	66.0	127.9	1.938	\$3.88
Ceiling and floor	\$11,000 and \$22,000	Sept. 30, 1986	66.0	127.9	1.938	\$21,318 and \$42,636
Elections expenses reimbursement	35¢ / elector	Sept. 30, 1986	66.0	127.9	1.938	\$0.68
Election expenses						
Election expenses of candidate	\$1,000	June 28, 1978	36.6	127.9	3.494	\$3,494
Supplier to verify spending authority	\$100	June 28, 1978	36.6	127.9	3.494	\$349.4
Candidate's personal expenses constituting election expenses	\$2,000	June 28, 1978	36.6	127.9	3.494	\$6,988
Contributions						
Annual contribution limit	\$6,000	June 28, 1978	36.6	127.9	3.494	\$20,964
Cash contribution limit	\$100	June 28, 1978	36.6	127.9	3.494	\$349.4
Expenditures						
Annual advertising limit for political parties	\$35,000	April 20, 1994	85.4	127.9	1.498	\$52,430
Annual advertising limit for district associations	\$2,000	April 20, 1994	85.4	127.9	1.498	\$2,996
Non-contributions						
Membership dues	\$25	June 28, 1978	36.6	127.9	3.494	\$87.35
Registration fees from political conventions	\$25	June 28, 1978	36.6	127.9	3.494	\$87.35
Entrance fee to a political activity	\$10	June 28, 1978	36.6	127.9	3.494	\$34.94
Non-monetary annual donation	\$100	June 28, 1978	36.6	127.9	3.494	\$349.4
Non-expenditures						
Expenses for political purposes not considered an expenditure under the <i>Political Process Financing Act</i>	\$100	June 28, 1978	36.6	127.9	3.494	\$349.4
Auditors						
Auditing expense reimbursement	\$2,000	June 28, 1978	36.6	127.9	3.494	\$6,988

1 Consumer Price Index for Canada, All-items, Table 326-0020, Statistics Canada, March 31, 2016.

2 Consumer Price Index for Canada, All-items, Table 326-0020, Statistics Canada, March 31, 2016.

Appendix C: Contributions – limits and allowable sources (jurisdictional scan)

Jurisdiction	Limit on contribution	Contributors outside jurisdiction	Individuals	Corporations	Trade unions	Anonymous contributors	Testamentary contributions
Canada	<p>From an individual:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$1,500 total per year to each registered party; • \$1,500 total per year to the registered association, nomination contestants and candidates of each registered party; • \$1,500 total to each candidate for a particular election not of a registered party; and • \$1,500 total to the leadership contestant in a particular leadership contest. <p>Limits are adjusted for inflation.</p>	No	Yes	No	No	Yes (up to \$20)	One time contribution of \$1,500
Newfoundland and Labrador	--	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes (up to \$100)	—
Prince Edward Island	--	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	—
Nova Scotia	\$5,000 total per year from an individual to each registered party and all electoral district associations and candidates of that party as well as to independent candidates and registered third parties.	No	Yes	No	No	No	Up to \$5,000 per year
New Brunswick	\$6,000 per year from an individual, corporation or trade union to each registered political party or its district associations and to one independent candidate.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	—
Quebec	<p>\$100 in total from the same elector in same year to each party, independent member and independent candidate.</p> <p>An additional contribution of \$100 from same elector to each party, independent member and independent candidate during a general election or by-election.</p> <p>Only cash contributions amounting to \$50 or less can be directly remitted to the official representatives of the party of the candidates. Amounts exceeding \$50 must be remitted to the Chief Electoral Officer for the benefit of an authorized party.</p> <p>\$500 in total per elector during a leadership campaign.</p>	No	Yes (only electors)	No	No	No	—

Jurisdiction	Limit on contribution	Contributors outside jurisdiction	Individuals	Corporations	Trade unions	Anonymous contributors	Testamentary contributions
Ontario	From a person, corporation or trade union: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To each party: \$7,500 per year * indexation factor; To each constituency association: \$1,000 per year * indexation factor; To constituency associations of any one party: aggregate amount of \$5,000 per year * indexation factor; To each candidate: \$1,000 per campaign * indexation factor; To candidates endorsed by one party: aggregate amount of \$5,000 per campaign * indexation factor. 	No	Yes	Yes (except registered charities)	Yes	No	—
Manitoba	\$3,000 total in a calendar year from an individual to candidates, constituency associations or registered political parties or any combination of them and \$3,000 total in leadership contest period to one or more contestants.	No	Yes	No	No	Yes (up to \$10)	—
Saskatchewan	—	Yes (must be a Canadian citizen)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes (up to \$250)	—
Alberta	From individuals ordinarily resident in Alberta: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To a party \$15,000; To a constituency association \$1,000; To constituency association of each party \$5,000 in aggregate. During a campaign: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To a party: \$30,000 less amounts contributed in the year; To a candidate \$200; To candidates of each party \$10,000 in aggregate. 	No	Yes	No	No	Yes (up to \$50)	—
British Columbia	Political parties and constituency associations must not accept more than \$10,000 in anonymous contributions in a calendar year. Candidates, leadership contestants and nomination contestants may only accept up to \$3,000 from anonymous sources in relation to any one election or contest.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes (up to \$50; at fund-raising functions only)	— Yukon
Yukon	A candidate or registered political party cannot accept a contribution of more than \$50 from an unincorporated group unless it is accompanied by a statement disclosing the necessary information.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	—

Jurisdiction	Limit on contribution	Contributors outside jurisdiction	Individuals	Corporations	Trade unions	Anonymous contributors	Testamentary contributions
Northwest Territories	An official agent or authorized person cannot accept more than \$1,500 in anonymous contributions in a calendar year. From an individual, association or organization to a candidate during a campaign \$1,500 ¹ . Contributions cannot be made prior to the beginning of a campaign period.	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes (up to \$100)	—
Nunavut	From an individual corporation, association or organization to a candidate during a campaign \$2,500 ¹ .	No	Yes	Yes	Yes ²	Yes (up to \$100)	—

1 Political parties are not recognized in the Northwest Territories or Nunavut.

2 Unincorporated organizations and association with the inclusion of a statement.

Appendix D: Glossary

Ballot: A piece of paper on which are printed the names of the candidates, their political parties and a place for the voter to indicate the preferred candidate.

Ballot structure: The way in which electoral choices are presented on the ballot paper, in particular whether the ballot is candidate-centred or party-centred.

Borda Count (BC): A candidate-centred preferential system used in either single- or multimember districts in which voters use numbers to mark their preferences on the ballot paper and each preference marked is then assigned a value using equal steps. These are summed and the candidate(s) with the highest total(s) is/are declared elected.

By-election: An election held in a particular electoral district to fill a vacancy in the Legislative Assembly at any time other than during a general election.

Candidate: A person who seeks election to public office. A candidate is someone who is running in a provincial election or by-election who is trying to be elected a member of the legislature.

Candidate's representative: A candidate's representative may be present at the polling station during the voting and counting of the ballots. This is often called a scrutineer.

Chief Electoral Officer: The independent officer of the legislature responsible for the management of provincial and municipal elections and referendums.

Closed List: This is a type of ballot found in a List Proportional Representation (PR) system, in which voters can only vote for a political party and its list of candidates. Voters cannot express a preference for any candidate within a party list.

Coalition: An alliance of two (or more) political parties, usually with the goal of forming a government.

Compensatory Seats: The list proportional representation seats in a Mixed Proportional electoral system that are awarded to political parties on the basis of their vote share to help correct disproportionality in electoral district seat results.

Democracy: From the Greek "demos" meaning the people and "Kratia," meaning power. It refers to government in which the supreme power is vested in the people and exercised directly by them or indirectly through a system of representation, usually involving elections.

Direct Democracy: The concept of people governing themselves by deciding issues directly through a vote, rather than indirectly through electing representatives. The referendum and recall vote are examples of instruments of direct democracy.

Electoral Boundaries: The lines defining the outer limits of electoral districts.

Electoral District: A geographical area represented by a member of the legislature; often called a riding or constituency. There are 49 electoral districts in New Brunswick.

Electoral System: Also called a "voting system," this is the set of procedures that determine how people are elected to office. These procedures include how the ballot is structured, how people cast their votes, how those votes are counted, and how the winners are determined.

Election System: This is a broad term that refers to all the procedures involved in elections, including ballot access, campaign finance laws, etc.

First-Past-the-Post (FPTP): A plurality electoral system, which almost always uses single member electoral districts. The candidates and political party receiving the largest vote share are elected. The winning candidate/party does not have to receive a majority of votes to win.

Fixed Election Date: A recurring, set date or time frame (i.e. the third Monday of a particular month) for a general election, usually within a four-year cycle.

Gerrymandering: The deliberate manipulation of electoral district boundaries so as to advantage or disadvantage a particular political interest.

Government: Refers to the Premier and ministers who are responsible for implementing the policies of the political party with the support of the majority of the members of the legislature. Also refers to the ministers and public officials who oversee and undertake the day-to-day operations of departments and agencies.

Legislative Assembly: The Legislative Assembly of New Brunswick is the elected component of our system of legislative democracy. It is a representative body of 49 members elected from single member electoral districts for a term of four years. The government must maintain the support of a majority of the members of the Legislative Assembly to stay in office. The functions of the Legislative Assembly include passing legislation, authorizing the raising and spending of public money, scrutinizing the activities of government, raising issues of public concern, investigating matters of public interest and acting as a forum to publicize the concerns of individuals and groups throughout the province.

Limited Vote (LV): A plurality system that uses multimember districts and in which voters have more than one vote, but fewer votes than the number of seats being contested. For example, there might be five seats to fill, but voters have only three votes to cast. The candidates with the most votes are declared the winners.

List Proportional Representation (List PR): A system that uses multimember districts and in which voters choose between lists of candidates offered by political parties. The seats in the district are distributed among the parties according to their proportion of the vote. The two basic forms are closed list and open list PR.

Majority Government: A government that has the support of a majority of the members of the legislature or Parliament, all of whom are members of the same political party.

Minority Government: A government in which the governing political party does not have a majority of the members of the legislature or Parliament, and therefore relies on the support of members of parties outside the governing political party to stay in office.

Majority System: A single-member district system or single office election system that tries to ensure that the winning candidates receive an absolute majority of the votes. Examples include the two ballot run-off system and instant run-off voting.

Majority of votes: More than half, or at least 50 per cent plus one, of the votes.

Mixed Member Proportional (MMP): A Proportional Representation system that combines list PR and single-member plurality districts. In the German variant, one-half of the legislators are elected in single member districts. The other half of the seats are filled from the party lists, and they are added on to the number of districts seats that a party wins so that their total share of the legislative seats is equivalent to the proportion of the votes won by that party on the list portion of the ballot.

Open List: A type of ballot found in list proportional representation in which voters can express a preference for a candidate within a party list as well as vote for that list. Votes for individual candidates improve their chances of being elected.

Parallel Systems: A Parallel System is a mixed system in which the choices expressed by the voters are used to elect representatives through two different systems – one List Proportional Representation (PR) system and (usually) one plurality/majority system – but where no account is taken of the seats allocated under the first system in calculating the results in the second system.

Party List: A list of candidates put forward by a political party to the electorate in a List Proportional Representation (PR) system. A party list can be an open list or a closed list.

Plurality System: Voting systems which use single or multi-member districts and in which the winner is the candidate or candidates with the most votes. The most common in the United States is the single-member district plurality system.

Political Party: A group of people, recognized by law, who share a common ideology or set of policy principles and who seek to elect representatives to a legislature with the goal of forming the government.

Premier: The name given to the head of the government of a province. The Premier is almost always the leader of the political party that has won the majority or most of the seats in the legislative assembly.

Proportional Representation (PR): A group of voting systems whose major goal is to ensure that parties and political groups are allocated seats in legislative bodies in proportion to their share of the vote. So a party receiving 45 per cent of the provincial vote should receive 45 per cent of the seats in the legislature.

Representation: The idea that one thing or person can stand for another. Within our democratic system, it refers to the concept that the elected legislature can stand for or represent the varied interests of the community (geographic, linguistic, cultural, etc.) as a whole.

Responsible Government: A system of government in which members of the executive (that is, Cabinet ministers) are responsible to the elected members of the legislature, who are in turn responsible to the people.

Seat: A position within the legislature occupied by a Member of the Legislative Assembly.

Single Non-Transferable Vote (SNTV): Under the Single Non-Transferable Vote system, voters cast a single vote in a multi-member district. The candidates with the highest vote totals are declared elected. Voters vote for candidates rather than political parties.

Single Transferable Vote (STV): The Single Transferable Vote is a preferential system in which the voter has one vote in a multi-member district and the candidates that surpass a specified quota of first preference votes are immediately elected. In successive counts, votes are redistributed from least successful candidates, who are eliminated, and votes surplus to the quota are redistributed from successful candidates, until sufficient candidates are declared elected. Voters normally vote for candidates rather than political parties, although a party-list option is possible.

Spoiled Ballots: These are ballots which, because of accidental or deliberate errors in the marking process, are declared invalid and are eliminated from the count.

Trade Union: includes any organization of employees formed for purposes that include the regulation of relations between employers and employees that has a written constitution, rules or bylaws setting forth its objects and purposes and defining the conditions under which persons may be admitted as members thereof and continued in such membership and includes a provincial, national or international trade union and a certified council of trade unions but does not include an employer-dominated organization.

Two-Round System (TRS): The Two-Round System is a plurality/majority system in which a second election is held if no candidate or party achieves a given level of votes, most commonly an absolute majority (50 per cent plus one), in the first election round. A Two-Round System may take a majority-plurality form—more than two candidates contest the second round and the one wins the highest number of votes in the second round is elected, regardless of whether they have won an absolute majority – or a majority run-off form — only the top two candidates in the first round contest the second round.

Voter Turnout: Is calculated in Canada as the percentage of electors on the voters list who marked a ballot during an election or a referendum. Voter turnout is also calculated (for example, in the United States) as the percentage of possible voters (who may or may not be on the voters list) who have marked a ballot during an election or a referendum.

Voters List: List of names of possible electors used as a control document during the taking of the vote in the polling stations.

Wasted votes: Valid votes that do not ultimately count toward the election of any candidate or party.

Westminster System: A type of Parliamentary system used in countries of British origin.

Appendix E: **Mandate of the commission**

The Commission on Electoral Reform is being established to examine democratic reform in the province.

The commission is being given the following mandates:

- ♦ Assess commitments made by the provincial government in 2014 to contribute to making a more effective Legislature by:
 - eliminating barriers to entering politics for under-represented groups; and
 - investigating means to improve participation in democracy, such as preferential ballots and online voting.
- ♦ Assess other electoral reform matters that have been raised recently, namely:
 - the voting age;
 - political contribution rules; and
 - political spending rules.

The commission is required to consult with New Brunswickers by:

- ♦ engaging experts, interest groups and the public about the issues and options presented in this discussion paper; and
- ♦ giving New Brunswickers the opportunity to make written submissions

The Commission is to submit its final report through the Clerk of the Executive Council and Secretary to Cabinet by March 1, 2017.

Appendix F: **Code of conduct of the commission**

We have developed a Code of Conduct that will guide our work. It states:

- ♦ Commissioners agree to serve with integrity.
- ♦ Commissioners will declare all potential conflicts of interest as we conduct our work.
- ♦ Commissioners shall be open-minded and respectful of all positions.
- ♦ Commissioners will share any work we do individually on behalf of the Commission with the group of Commissioners in the spirit of integrating our individual work with group decision-making.
- ♦ Members of the Commission, including staff, shall be collegial and respectful at all times.
- ♦ Commissioners and staff to assist the Commission shall not lobby on behalf of any external parties or represent their interests to the Commission.
- ♦ The Commission will maintain a public record of all formal submissions and will strive to be transparent in its deliberations while respecting requests for confidentiality.
- ♦ The Commission will not communicate publicly on its deliberations or conclusions until the Commissioners have agreed upon the content and timing of any public communications.
- ♦ Commissioners agree there shall be a rotating chair for all meetings.
- ♦ Commissioners will make decisions on a consensual basis.
- ♦ This code of conduct may be modified from time to time upon unanimous consent of all Commissioners.

Appendix G: Groups/individuals who made online submissions to the commission

Groups

- ◆ Richard Akerman for Paper Vote Canada
- ◆ Marc-Samuel Larocque, communications officer for la Fédération des jeunes francophones du Nouveau-Brunswick
- ◆ Linda Landry-Guimond, office manager for the New Brunswick Women's Council
- ◆ Kevin Lacey, Atlantic Canada Director for the Canadian Taxpayers Federation
- ◆ Garry Guild for the Council of Canadians, Fredericton Chapter
- ◆ Brian Saunders, Executive Director for the Premier's Council on the Status of Disabled Persons
- ◆ Marc-Alain Mallet, Director for the New Brunswick Human Rights Commission
- ◆ Wayne Dryer, President for the New Brunswick Green Party
- ◆ Marilyn Kaufman, President, Sgoolai Israel Synagogue Inc.
- ◆ Fredericton Jewish congregants
- ◆ Saint John Jewish congregants
- ◆ Moncton Jewish congregants

Students submissions

from Dr. Thomas Bateman's political science class

Contemporary Issues in Canadian Politics, St. Thomas University:

- ◆ Emily Down
- ◆ Samantha McCormack
- ◆ Matthew Gamble
- ◆ Liam McBride
- ◆ John Blackmore
- ◆ Amy Baldwin
- ◆ Brian Rose
- ◆ Haley Coburn
- ◆ Kira Chisholm
- ◆ Matthew LeBlanc
- ◆ Brianna Workman
- ◆ Telina Debly

Individuals

A

Richard Akerman
Don Anderson
Alexander Aubé
Heather Avery

B

Madeleine Blanchard
J. E. Brewer
Joan Brewer
Paul Brooker
Tim Brooks
Kris Bulmer
Ken Burke

C

Chris Cates
Michael Clow
Mary Ann Coleman
Ray Comeau
D.H. Coombs
Pierre Cyr

D

Renee Davis
Jon Debly
Pascale Desrosier-Hickey
Stewart Donovan
Brian Doucet
Stephen Drost

E

Bryce Eagles
Margaret Eaton
Tamara Elisseau
Jim Emberger

Aleksander Essex

F

David Flemming
David Forgie
Marty Forsythe

G

Amanda Gallant
Dustin Gamblin
Rabbi Yosef Goldman
Joan Green

Nathan Gullison

H

Elizabeth Hamilton
Katherine Hannah
Julia Hansen
James Hartley
Janice Harvey
Marc Henrie
Peter Higham
Rod Hill
Michael Hugenholtz
Russell Hunt
David Hutchinson

J

Jeff Jardine

K

David Kersey

L

Darcie Lanthier
Mathieu LaPlante
Norman Lavery
Benoit LeBlanc
Keith LeBlanc
Luc LeBlanc
Simone LeBlanc-Rainville
Yvon Léger

Daniel Legere
J.D. LeJeune

Aaron Lewis
Steve Long

Vernon Losier
Richard Lung

M

Andrew MacLean
David MacLean
Raissa Marks
Joel May
Allan McDonald
Maggie McDonald
Charles McFadden
David McKenzie

Marilyn Merrit-Gray

Keith Miller

Heidi Moss

Douglas Mullin

Rodney Munn

Paul Musgrave

N

Graham Neill
Hon. Graydon Nicholas
Jesse Norrad
Denis Noel

P

Christiane Paponnet-Cantat
Jacob Patterson
Johanne Perron
Bonny Pond

R

Maurine Rainville
Chris Rendell
Roy Ries
Edward Roback
Jeanette A. Robertson
Roslyn Rosenfeld
Rick Roth

S

John Sabine
Markus Schulze
Margo Sheppard
Kim Smith MacLean
Bob Spence
Vallie Stearns Anderson
Gary Stone

T

Nick Taggart
Earl Toner
Elmer Tory

M.K. Trahms

Adam Trider

U

Vivian Unger

V

Pamela Voisine

W

Nancy Watters
Kelsey Wilson
Jim Wolstenholme

Appendix H: **Stakeholders and subject matter experts who presented to the commission**

Stakeholder engagement meetings

December 7, 2016

- ◆ Elections New Brunswick

December 13, 2017

- ◆ Dr. Paul Howe, professor, University of New Brunswick
- ◆ Matt DeCoursey, Member of Parliament for Fredericton

January 6, 2017

- ◆ New Brunswick Women's Council – Beth Lyons, Executive Director
- ◆ New Brunswick Liberal Party – Joel Reed, President, and Pete Belliveau, Executive Director
- ◆ New Brunswick Ombud – Charles Murray
- ◆ New Brunswick New Democratic Party – Kelly Lamrock, Acting Executive Director

January 9, 2017

- ◆ New Brunswick Multicultural Council – Mike Timani, President, and Alex LeBlanc, Executive Director
- ◆ Dr. Jamie Gillies, assistant professor, communications and public policy, St. Thomas University, Fredericton

January 13, 2017

- ◆ Taylor Gunn, President and Chief Election Officer, Civix
- ◆ Dr. Don Desserud, professor, political science, University of Prince Edward Island, Charlottetown, P.E.I.

January 16, 2017

- ◆ Dr. Alan Sears, professor, education, University of New Brunswick
- ◆ Dr. Aleksander Essex, assistant professor, electrical and computer engineering, Western University, London, Ont.
- ◆ Dr. Joanna Everitt, professor of political science and Dean of Arts, University of New Brunswick, Saint John

January 20, 2017

- ◆ Dr. Ali Ghorbani, Canada Research Chair in Cybersecurity and Dean of Computer Science, University of New Brunswick
- ◆ David Kersey, Vivian Unger and Andrew MacLean – Fair Vote Canada – Fredericton Chapter
- ◆ Garry Guild, Council of Canadians, Fredericton Chapter
- ◆ Rhonda Connell

January 23, 2017

- ◆ Mark Perry, Social Studies Learning Specialist, Department of Education and Early Childhood Development
- ◆ Dr. John McEvoy, professor, Faculty of Law, University of New Brunswick

January 27, 2017

- ◆ Jordan Brown, MLA for Charlottetown-Brighton, Prince Edward Island
- ◆ Robert Burroughs, Executive Director, New Brunswick Student Alliance
- ◆ Sue Duguay, President, Fédération des jeunes francophones du Nouveau-Brunswick
- ◆ Elections New Brunswick

February 3, 2017

- ◆ John Poulos, President and CEO, Dominion Voting

February 5, 2017

- ◆ Tom Rogers, Electoral Commissioner, Australian Electoral Commission

February 17, 2017

- ◆ Elections New Brunswick
- ◆ Sylvie LeBel, Agente pédagogique provincial en sciences humaines, Direction des programmes d'études, Department of Education and Early Childhood Development
- ◆ Union of Municipalities of New Brunswick – Arthur Slipp, Mayor of Woodstock, and Beverly Gaston, Mayor of Doaktown

Town hall meeting

A town hall meeting was held in Fredericton on Monday, January 23, 2017. About 80 people attended. Individuals who expressed opinions on the issues and options presented in the discussion paper included:

Robert Burroughs	Janice Harvey	Daniel Leger	Devin Patterson
Mark D'Arcy	Myron Hedderson	Andrew MacLean	Zachary Robichaud
Nicolas Décary	Russ Hunt	Sally McGrath	Margo Sheppard
Randy Dickinson	David Kersey	Derek Ness	Nicholas Tracy
Alex Grimaldi	Norman Laverty	Simon Ouellette	

Meetings held with individual commission members

- ◆ PRUDE Saint John (Jocelyn Stevens, Chief Executive Officer, and Ralph Thomas, Board Chair)
- ◆ University of New Brunswick, Saint John campus – POLS 3205, Canadian Provincial Politics
- ◆ Hampton High School – Political Science class (Michael Wetmore)
- ◆ Economic and Social Inclusion Corporation – Stéphane LeClair, Executive Director
- ◆ Rothesay High School – Political Science class
- ◆ Simonds High School – Political Science, World Issues (2), History, Grade 9
- ◆ University of New Brunswick – Macroeconomics class
- ◆ Women for 50% - (Roxanne Fairweather and Elizabeth Weir)
- ◆ Cities of New Brunswick Association – Mike O'Brien, Mayor of Fredericton; Eric Megarity, president of Cities of NB Association, councilor in Fredericton; Dawn Arnold, Mayor of Moncton; Shawn Crossman, 1st Vice president Cities of NB Association, councilor in Moncton; Stephanie Anglehart-Paulin, Mayor of Campbellton; Lee Stever, Deputy Mayor of Bathurst; Charles Fournier, Councillor Edmundston; Ernest Thibodeau, Deputy-Mayor in Dieppe; Shirley McAlary, Deputy Mayor of Saint John

Appendix I: Commission member profiles

To participate as a member of the New Brunswick Commission on Electoral Reform, the government sought individuals to reflect the provinces' diversity including representation from different sectors, generations, cultural and geographic diversity, its English and French linguistic duality and the need for balanced gender representation. Below are the profiles of the commission's members:

Member, Region	Profile
Carolyn MacKay, Douglas	A career civil servant with the provincial government, MacKay held a number of senior positions over the course of her 37-year career. In 2007, she was named deputy minister, a post she held until she retired in February 2014. She has a bachelor's degree in nursing and a master's degree in business administration from the University of New Brunswick.
Bev Harrison, Hampton	Harrison was first elected as a member of the legislative assembly in 1978. He served six terms as an MLA in the ridings of Saint John-Fundy, Hampton Belleisle, and Hampton Kings. A former high school teacher and principal, he held different positions including minister of supply and services, government house leader and speaker of the legislative assembly. He also served on various standing committees.
Gaétane Johnson, Rogersville	Johnson was elected as a councillor for the Village of Rogersville in May 2016. The 18-year-old, who is studying psychology at Université de Moncton, has received various honours over the course of her studies, including the Governor General's Academic Medal and the Roméo-LeBlanc Excellence Scholarship.
Jason Alcorn, Saint John	Alcorn joined the Financial and Consumer Services Commission in May 2006, where he works as senior legal counsel within the securities division. He holds a bachelor of laws from Université de Moncton, a master's degree in International Affairs from Institut d'études politiques de Paris and a bachelor of arts in political science from University of New Brunswick, Saint John campus. He is a former student of the prestigious École nationale d'administration in France.
Dr. Constantine Passaris, Fredericton	An economics professor at the University of New Brunswick, Passaris has extensive experience in the private and public sectors. Along with experience in teaching, research and administration at the university level, Passaris has worked in banking in the private sector and served as a policy consultant for the federal government and several provincial governments. Along with his role at the university, Passaris is an Onassis Foundation Fellow, a research affiliate of the Prentice Institute for Global Population and Economy at the University of Lethbridge, an affiliate professor of the Canadian Centre for German and European Studies at York University and a member of the Academic Scientific Board of the International Institute of Advanced Economic and Social Studies.

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