

HERE ARE SOME COMMON QUESTIONS BEING ASKED ABOUT THE REFERENDUM

What is a referendum?

A referendum is an event when the government asks voters an important question. All voters are asked to indicate which choice they prefer, using a ballot.

When is the referendum being held?

The next provincial election will happen on October 10, 2007. A referendum will be held at the same time.

Can I vote in the referendum but not vote for an election candidate?
Yes.

Can I vote for an election candidate but not vote in the referendum?
Yes.

Are there other provinces within Canada that use the Mixed Member Proportional System?

A Mixed Member Proportional system is not used by any other province.

The Mixed Member Proportional system recommended by the Ontario Citizens' Assembly is one type of Mixed Member Proportional system. In Canada, it would be unique to Ontario, but types of Mixed Member Proportional systems are used in other places around the world.

What happens if I vote for First-Past-the-Post or the alternative electoral system?

If at least 60% of all the referendum ballots across the province choose the alternative system recommended by the Citizens' Assembly AND 50% of the voters in at least 64 electoral districts vote for Mixed Member Proportional, then the Mixed Member Proportional system would be put forward as Ontario's electoral system in future.

By December 31st, 2008, the new government would have to introduce a law to officially make Mixed Member Proportional Ontario's new system.

If this does not happen, Ontario will keep using the same system used now to elect members to the provincial legislature (First-Past-the-Post).

Do I qualify to vote in the referendum?

To vote in the referendum, you must be 18 years of age or older, and a Canadian Citizen, and a resident of Ontario. To find out more visit www.elections.on.ca or call 1.888.ONT.VOTE.

REFERENDUM ONTARIO

LEARN MORE ABOUT YOUR CHOICES
www.YourBigDecision.ca
1.888.ONT.VOTE (1-888-668-8683)

YOU'RE ABOUT TO MAKE A BIG DECISION.

MAKE SURE YOU UNDERSTAND THE QUESTION.

Which electoral system should Ontario use to elect members to the provincial legislature?/Quel système électoral l'Ontario devrait-il utiliser pour élire les députés provinciaux à l'Assemblée législative?

The existing electoral system (First-Past-the-Post)/L'actuel système électoral (système de la majorité relative)

The alternate electoral system proposed by the Citizens' Assembly (Mixed Member Proportional)/L'autre système électoral proposé par l'Assemblée des citoyens (système de représentation proportionnelle mixte)

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UNDERSTAND YOUR CHOICES BEFORE HEADING TO THE POLLS.

In June 2005, the Ontario Legislature began a process to review electoral systems. In March 2006, the Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform, an independent body representing electors in Ontario, was created. They were asked to assess Ontario's current electoral system and different electoral systems, and recommend whether Ontario should retain its current system or adopt a different one. The Citizens' Assembly's proposal has resulted in this Referendum.

Whether you choose to vote during the extended advance poll period between September 22nd and October 4th or vote October 10th, you will be given two ballots: one for voting for a candidate in the general election — and one for voting for an electoral system in the referendum.

Here is the question being asked in this referendum:

WHICH ELECTORAL SYSTEM SHOULD ONTARIO USE TO ELECT MEMBERS TO THE PROVINCIAL LEGISLATURE?

- THE EXISTING ELECTORAL SYSTEM (FIRST-PAST-THE-POST)
- THE ALTERNATIVE ELECTORAL SYSTEM PROPOSED BY THE CITIZENS' ASSEMBLY (MIXED MEMBER PROPORTIONAL)

Referendums do not happen often. When they do it is because the opinion of the public, you the voter, is important.

If you are asking yourself, what does First-Past-the-Post mean? What is Mixed Member Proportional? How does a candidate win? Don't worry, that's what you're about to find out.

NAME	FIRST PAST THE POST	MIXED MEMBER PROPORTIONAL
WHAT IS THIS?	<p>This is the existing system used in Ontario now.</p> <p>The name, "First-Past-the-Post", comes from racing. In a race, whichever runner passes the finishing post first wins.</p> <p>In a First-Past-the-Post election, the candidate who gets the most votes in a district wins. It doesn't matter how close the race or the election is, there is only one winner.</p>	<p>This is a mixed system, because it's a combination of two voting systems: a First-Past-the-Post system and a Proportional Representation system.</p> <p>If this system were to be accepted, Ontarians would vote twice in future elections: once for a "Local Member", and once for a political party.</p> <p>This is the system proposed by the Citizens' Assembly.</p>
HOW ARE ELECTORAL DISTRICTS DIVIDED?	<p>For the general election on October 10th 2007, Ontario will be divided into 107 geographic areas called electoral districts. Districts are also called ridings or constituencies.</p>	<p>Ontario would be divided into 90 geographic areas, called electoral districts, and the provincial legislature would have 129 seats. 'Local Members' would fill 90 while "List Members" would fill 39.</p>
HOW MANY VOTES DOES EACH VOTER HAVE?	<p>In each district, voters get one vote to choose which candidate they feel should win a seat in the provincial legislature. One ballot. One vote.</p>	<p>Voters would vote twice on one ballot: once for a "Local Member" and once for a political party.</p>
HOW DOES A CANDIDATE WIN?	<p>In an election using the First-Past-the-Post system, the candidate with the most votes wins and will be the representative for the electoral district in the provincial legislature.</p> <p>Anyone who meets the rules for eligibility can be a candidate for election. Most of them represent a political party. If a candidate is representing a political party, it will say which party below their name on the ballot. Some candidates are called "independents" because they don't represent any political party.</p>	<p>In each electoral district, one vote would be used to elect a "Local Member" using a First-Past-the-Post system. The candidate with the most votes in an electoral district wins.</p> <p>The other vote would be for a political party. Votes for parties will be used to determine the number of "List Members" each party gets. This is the proportional representation part.</p> <p>Before an election, parties would nominate candidates as "List Members" and describe how they were chosen. If a political party is entitled to more seats than it won locally, "List Members" are elected to make up the difference. "List Members" can only be elected from a political party that received more than 3% of these votes.</p> <p>In the end, a political party's overall share of seats will roughly equal its share of the total votes for parties in the province.</p>
WHO FORMS A GOVERNMENT?	<p>After the election, the political party that wins the most electoral districts is asked to form a government.</p>	<p>The party with the largest number of seats in the legislature, including "Local Members" and "List Members," is asked to form a government.</p>
HOW DO I CHOOSE BETWEEN THE TWO SYSTEMS?	<p>In order to choose an electoral system, there are many factors to consider. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which system will provide an effective government? • Which system will improve voter participation for a truer democracy? • Which system is simple and practical? • Which system will hold policy makers accountable for their decisions? • Which system represents the wishes of the voters as fairly as possible? <p>These are just some of the considerations. So carefully think about what is important to you.</p>	

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