A new electoral system:

Majoritarian Election of Candidates with Proportional Allocation of Seats

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Introduction

This is a proposal for a new electoral system that combines valuable features of the Single Member Plurality (SMP, First-past-the-post) system and of the proportional representation systems that ensure a closer correlation of each party's vote with its number of seats in parliament. The new system's distinctive feature is the separation of the process of electing candidates in constituencies from the process of allocating seats to parties, which passes to larger electoral districts (EDs). Such a separation allows candidates to be elected on a plurality/majoritarian basis from within a small single-member constituency, which forms part of a larger electoral district in which seats are allocated in a fairly proportional way to each party according to its total vote in the district, as opposed to in the constituency.

Thus, constituency-based voters with a strong preference for one candidate will see their favourite win a seat, but the electorate of the wider electoral district will see their party preferences reflected in a fairly proportional manner in the district and consequently in parliament too. Such a system safeguards the constituency links of popular representatives but also ensures that the composition of legislative chambers fairly represents the preferences of the countrywide electorate overall. The political system thus benefits from having a more representative balance of parties in Parliament, and a more varied set of legislators speaking on behalf of increasingly diverse 21st century populations.

This proposal for a new electoral system was devised in the context of the discontent manifested against the British SMP system, which led to a failed attempt at electoral reform in 2010, and is therefore designed for a transition from a single-winner majoritarian system to a more proportional one. But it could also be used to modify PR systems in countries where popular discontent reigns over their excessive - or conversely insufficient - proportionality and over allegedly weak links between representatives and constituents that lead to charges of a lack of accountability.

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Part 1. The deficiencies of Single Member Plurality /Majoritarian systems, and ten goals for a modernised system.

The British referendum held in May 2011 on whether to move from the Single Member Plurality (SMP/First-past-the-post) to the Alternative Vote system provoked a discussion of the drawbacks of each, mainly with regard to allowing a third-placed party - in this case the Liberal Democrats - to obtain more seats. But the discussion did not go as far as to examine comprehensively the range of desirable features that a new electoral system should have in the light of the expectations of 21st century electorates nor address the need to offer improved representation to maintain trust and interest in the face of falling voter turnout. In this context, it was not surprising that AV was roundly rejected as an alternative.

Specific questions needing to be examined include: Should a change away from SMP merely be fairer to the eternally squeezed third party? Should it allow further small parties to obtain MPs? Should it facilitate getting more women and members of ethnic minorities into parliament? Must it save the MPs' 'constituency links' at all costs? Should it strengthen opposition parties in the face of the power of a Prime Minister enjoying parliamentary dominance, thereby generating more consensual government? Would it be desirable to reinforce parliamentary scrutiny of government by legislators who are currently burdened by constituency casework, as the British Speaker of the House of Commons suggested?

Unfortunately, electoral systems do not come presented like a box of chocolates, each with its special ingredients and flavours neatly labelled for the consumer to make the most satisfying choice. What we know about their technical properties is insufficient to assure us of their user-friendliness and representative power for modern electorates. Here follows a critique of SMP and a discussion of 10 key goals of an improved system.

A.   The drawbacks of the single-winner SMP system

Arguably, the full gamut of drawbacks of the single-winner/majoritarian/ SMP system for 21st century electorates has never been adequately set out. The 1998 Jenkins Commission in Britain and the Plant Committee before it were constrained by a remit to 'observe the requirement for broad proportionality, the need for stable government, an extension of voter choice and the maintenance of a link between MPs and geographical constituencies'.[1] They were charged with squaring the circle in technical terms without considering what would ideally be needed to effectively modernise relations between citizens and their representatives. For instance, 'extending voter choice' was never considered in terms of *offering voters more than a single representative* – this advantage was invisible. And while the Plant Committee had reported in 1991 on the need for 'fairness to groups, such as ethnic minorities, and women currently under-represented in the Commons',[2] this was not their specific goal, and nothing came of it.

Neither did the Adoption of the Additional Member System (AMS) for the Welsh and Scottish devolved regional assemblies not fully address the problems of the single-winner/SMP system, as

most seats remain governed by the same SMP system, continuing the disproportional allocation of seats to the leading party. Only a small part of its unfair effects was re-balanced by the Additional Members through the use of male-female alternating 'zip' lists with the aim of getting more women elected. But these gender-balanced lists in Wales only apply to 20 seats, one third of the Assembly. As to proportionality, AMS merely reinforces the *dis*proportional allocation of the constituency seats, since voters mostly repeat their party preference when choosing the Additional Member, thus aggravating the problem. To counteract this, a perverse seat allocation method was adopted, one that punishes the leading two parties for their 'excessive' amount of constituency seats by obliging them to receive *fewer* seats than warranted by their true vote at the Additional Member level. Such 'reverse disproportionality' merely distorts the popular vote in a new way, and cannot be regarded as a better system, even though the change actually raised party awareness and caused more women to be fielded and win.

Worse, the count and allocation of AMS is complicated and opaque: *four* sets of counts and recalculations for *every* party in *every* electoral district are required, each using varying formulas.[3] As the Electoral Commission itself commented, the method of calculation of seats 'is known and understood only by the keenest of Assembly and election watchers'.[4] The successful Additional MPs cannot claim to have really won in any district or region as they are allocated a seat by the luck of the formula, while many of their fellow Assembly Members who received more votes were denied that particular seat because the losing candidates had to be given it to compensate for their party having been deprived of seats by the SMP system in the constituencies vote. Thus in 2007 Scottish Labour won 29% of the Scottish Assembly vote but only 5 of the 'regional'/top-up seats, while the Conservatives won only 14% of the vote yet got *thirteen* top-up seats.[5] This means that the 56 Scottish Labour candidates standing for the 'regional' Additional seats have a minimal chance of winning: Labour has only ever been given 5, 4 and 9 Additional seats in the three elections since 1999, despite being the leading party. In Wales, Labour has sometimes won no Additional seats at all, precisely because it was popular at constituency level. This is not to say that AMS systems do not work elsewhere such as the fully mixed-member parliament of Germany, but the criticism above is presented to explain why moving from SMP to AMS is not considered a solution of any kind for the goals of transparency and user-friendliness and better representation used as benchmarks here.[6]

Other deficiencies of Single-Member systems include:

1. *MPs are unable to represent 'interests' adequately on their own*. Single-member MPs are poorly placed compared to multi-member teams of MPs – precisely because they operate on their own - to represent both the social, gender and ethnic diversity of the area's residents, and the micro-branches of nationwide conflicts between different economic lobbies and policy communities operating in their area, while at the same time representing the policy dictates of their party. Contrary to traditional parlance, there is no authentic 'constituency interest' since a (boundary-changing) spatial agglomeration of residents is not constituted as a single stakeholder, except when uniting over NIMBY issues against the wider picture.

2. *Depolitisation of constituency relations.* Being on their own, MPs strive to look and act non-party political, which discourages political discussion and policy debate. An indication of this de-politicised culture is the fact that surveys often carry a question about 'contact with your MP', but this is only formulated as 'Have you sought personal assistance from your local member of parliament?' and 'Was the assistance provided satisfactory?' as if the MP were a service provider, not a political representative. Though it would be a welcome sign of a

responsive state if citizens were allocated a personal Ombudsman/Defender of the People for their personal problems, such assistance is arguably not the main job of an MP who is needed to be pro-active on legislative matters and in scrutinizing government actions.

3. *Constituency residents are left unrepresented*. Between elections, the voters for any of the *other* parties that did not manage to occupy the single seat available are *left without political representation*, especially when such voters remain politically attached to their losing candidate, who tends to disappear from the scene. One MP for all is inadequate. On principle, citizens should be able to have an official representative who is from the party they voted for (within the range of 3 or 4 mainstream parties). This is more likely to happen under PR with multiple-member constituencies. A multi-party team of representatives encourages political communication between citizens and their preferred party or individual, and would therefore foster feelings of inclusion.

4. *The politically unrepresented are nearly always the majority.* Most candidates in the UK obtain less than 50% of the vote. A review of 532 UK Labour- and Conservative-held constituencies in 2005 showed that only 40 Labour MPs and 102 Conservatives were elected with over 50% of the turnout - 27% of the total of the two main parties.[7] This indicates not only wasted votes, but a lack of political legitimacy of the majority of MPs elected on a (sometimes tiny) plurality. Aware of this, MPs unwittingly contribute to the de-politicisation of their relations with constituents (see point 3. above) by claiming to act for all and avoiding talking serious politics. This is then reflected in the British public's widely lamented lack of knowledge about what goes on in parliament.

5. *The wasted votes that discourage turnout*. While votes for candidates on the far poles of the ideological spectrum will always be 'wasted' in terms of choosing the next Prime Minister, it is a duty of electoral designers not to create systems that deliberately reduce the electorate's chance of effecting outcomes. But single-winner systems (Majoritarian/SMP) do just this because many candidates compete for only one seat. In 2005, 52% of all votes were wasted on losing candidates to Westminster. With multi-member constituencies fewer votes are wasted because the 3rd and sometimes the 4th placed candidates in a constituency are likely to gain a seat, not to mention the teams of 31-35 MPs elected in large cities such as Barcelona and Madrid. Knowing that several parties have a chance of winning a seat, voters can feel their vote counts.

6. *The excessive number of 'safe' seats leads to political disenfranchisement*. 'Safe' seats or historically entrenched majorities are endemic to small constituencies in single-winner majoritarian systems. Entrenched re-election of the same person occurs in the vast majority of UK seats. In fact only 18% of them (117of 650) were predicted to change hands in 2010[8] , and only 16.5% (107) did so; in other words, 84% of MPs were re-elected or elected as inheritors of a safe seat.[9] Alarmingly, this means that a *vast number of voters will never be able to elect the MP of their choice - and will remain politically unrepresented for life*.

    In addition, the values and policy priorities of such voters are deprived of any formal political platform of discussion in their constituency, decade after decade – to the point where ordinary citizens caught in this trap often claim they are disenfranchised. It only happens because the system imposes one winner; if there were 2 or 3 MPs from different parties

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elected in bigger constituencies, such disenfranchisement would be reduced to voters of the small minority parties.

7.   *Domination by male incumbents*. The Westminster system is widely dominated by male incumbents in safe seats. In the UK, 543 out of 650 seats were predicted not to change hands in 2010, the same as in several previous elections. Around 400 of the 'no change' seats are occupied by men - over 60% of Parliament.[10] It is questionable whether virtually impregnable security of tenure is desirable for any political representative, in contrast to re-selection on the grounds of their legislative competence or persuasive advocacy of political and policy solutions.

8.   *Single-winner SMP system tolerates discrimination against women candidates*. Much research has identified single-winner systems as most 'woman-unfriendly' and Party List PR as the most woman-friendly of all electoral systems. The focus on a single candidate in each constituency puts women at a disadvantage. Research shows that when women stand individually for the one and only top post, they are less likely to gain support from local party members, local male leaders, and voters, as if these were reluctant to be deprived of a male representative. Whereas when women are presented as part of a team of candidates such as on the party lists of multi-member systems, or as running mates, they are welcome. Mayors are overwhelmingly male even in countries where women are prominent as MPs and cabinet members, e.g. Spain. In England, of 18 directly elected mayors, only 2 have been women, 11%. Since efforts to improve women's representation in the UK date back to the 1990s, it seems that that SMP acts as an obstacle to the parties' efforts to include more women in winnable seats, notwithstanding the much larger numbers of women in devolved assemblies.

9.   *Under-representation of ethnic minorities*. Ethnic minorities can get representation under single-winner SMP if candidates stand for constituencies with concentrated levels of ethnic minority residents: in Ealing Southall (UK) in 2010, all six candidates (including those for the Christian Party and the English Democrats) had Asian-origin surnames. But British ethnic minority citizens should also be able to have representatives in parliament even when they live dispersed across the country. This is unlikely to happen if there is only one local candidate. Thus, ethnic minorities continue to be under-represented, even when there is a consensus that there should be more of them. Just 3.4% of the House of Commons MPs are from ethnic-minority backgrounds (based on 22 named MPs). In the 2001 census, 92.1% of the population (54.2 million people) reported themselves or their family members as 'White'[11], making the 'non-white' population 7.9% including children. By 2011, the 'non-whites' had grown to 14%[12].

Clearly, the Westminster-style single-winner system has considerable drawbacks, with the issue of political disenfranchisement being the most serious at the formal level, together with the barriers to women obtaining representation, because both affect many millions of people. In such a context, goals for improving the SMP system while safeguarding its advantages need to be set out.

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B. Ten priority goals for a modernised electoral system

Goal 1. Simplicity and transparency

Selecting a straightforward and transparent system that can be understood and used by the public with minimum effort, and which is easy to administer and quick to count.

Expert advice for designers of an electoral system states that the more easily understood by the voter and the politician, the more likely it is to be effective and sustainable: 'Too much complexity can lead to misunderstandings, unintended consequences, and voter mistrust of the results'.[13] System simplicity and transparency to the public should therefore be key to achieving popular support for electoral reform, since this will most likely be put to a referendum. On these grounds alone, all preferential systems should be discounted, such as AV, and STV as used in the Irish Republic. Because they are complicated to work out, counting of ballots takes up much time, making the process dependent on expert administrators, and millions of ballot papers have to be reassigned from the losing party to the winners and runners up (nearly 50% in Australia). While the provisional count is announced by the next day, the final results can take weeks. In addition, preference voting systems offer voters so many choices that a) they don't use their preferences, leading parties to campaign to be a *low* preference so as to be named, and other such oddities, or b) where marking preferences is compulsory, people are unclear about the lower preferences. Furthermore there is a danger of voters ranking parties arbitrarily, which would distort the results. The fear of this is sufficient for each political party to feel obliged to hand out their preferred order on flyers or crib sheets, which voters take into polling booths so as to copy out their chosen party's preferred order of candidates onto their ballot paper. Evidently, a system founded on the knowledge that voters will need help to make it work does not pass the transparency test.

By contrast, the Party List with the D'Hondt and the Sainte-Laguë seat allocation methods which are moderately proportional versions of PR are transparent and simple because the count can be done manually without a calculator – see Examples A-C in Part III -- and all citizens can check the seat allocation figures themselves, armed with no more than a pencil and the party totals in each electoral district.

Goal 2. Avoiding 'wasted' votes

Avoiding the systematic waste of votes in single-winner systems and all 'safe' seats; and increasing turnout.

The waste of the electorate's vote in SMP/FPTP systems amounts to an undemocratic disregard of the citizen, depriving even supporters of mainstream parties of any political representation, and can have a depressing effect on turnout, because lack of competition deters voters.[14] All single-winner/single-member, plurality or majoritarian systems waste votes.

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Preference voting systems in theory make more votes count, since second-preference votes (and third and subsequent preferences) get redistributed to other parties. But there are serious pitfalls. With AV, candidates must end up with over 50% of the votes cast after the alternative preferences have been allocated. So, if the leading candidate only has a plurality, the second and subsequent preferences need to be allocated, but the procedure is to first distribute the second preference votes of the least popular candidate to the remaining candidates. If this is enough to push one of them over the 50% mark, then s/he is declared the winner. If not, then the next least popular candidate also gets his/her second preferences distributed among the more popular ones. The process is repeated until every candidate tops the 50% mark and is declared elected. But *what is not counted in this system is every single 2nd, 3rd, 4th etc preference of all ballots* – thus wasting a whole range of preferences. In elections for the leadership of smaller bodies such as professional institutions, the complete set of members' second and subsequent preferences can be reallocated, but nationwide this would take too long (3 weeks in Australia) so the short cuts applied end up ignoring (wasting) voters' expressed preferences. On balance, preference voting does not offer a satisfactory solution to the vote wastage problem.

By contrast, the important goal of avoiding wasted votes is achieved in PR systems through the competition for high 'distribution numbers' used in the D'Hondt and Sainte-Laguë seat allocation methods in multi-member constituencies. Even one vote can raise a party's 'distribution number' to top that of a rival party's and get the seat allocated to it, although is more likely to be a handful. When electorates understand the seat allocation method, there is a clear incentive for undecided individuals to go to the polls, as they know their vote can make all the difference, and that might be blamed by their friends or family – whether seriously or in jest - that they deprived a favoured party of a seat in the electoral district.

Goal 3. A fair share to the 3rd party
Giving the third nationwide party a fair share of the seats for the votes it regularly receives.

Clearly, the situation of third-ranked parties such as the British Liberal Democrats is not an equitable one in a democracy. They gained only 10,4% (67) of the seats in 2005 for 21% of the popular vote, and less than 9% of the seats (57) in 2010 for 23% of the vote, with the anomaly that they won less seats for more votes in 2010 – a clear fault of the Westminster system. If the major goal of electoral reform were no more than giving the a third party its 'fair' share, a move towards PR Party List system with D'Hondt as the seat allocation method would meet this goal, for it is still quite disproportional. It would still favour larger parties such as the main left and right ones to some extent but far less so than under SMP/FPTP, and in a more predictable way. Predicting how many seats would go to the third-ranked party is difficult, but under the new electoral system proposed they would certainly gain seats, as seen in the examples in Part 111.

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<u>Goal 4. The chance of having a 4th nationwide party in parliament</u>

Allowing a 4th nationwide party to gain a seat if the electorate gives it a politically significant proportion of the vote, e.g. 10-15%.

Many supporters of electoral reform away from SMP would like to give a fourth nationwide party the chance of entering parliament as the possibility of, for instance, Green MPs is attractive to them. By contrast a wide spread of votes across different parties leading to a fragmented multi-party parliament is considered a danger to stable government from several perspectives, and an electoral system that avoids that tends to assuage fears of political instability. A UK Ministry for Justice report (2007, §48) states that "Support for PR decreases in survey results when questions suggest that PR would result in more small parties in Parliament, indicating that there is concern and public uncertainty about the influence of small parties and coalitions on government". Indeed, an electoral system that allocates seats to 4 nationwide and a handful of regionalist parties brings forward the probability of minority of even coalition government.

The UK's Green Party single seat or handful of seats is about as much as an SMP system will deliver for a 4th option with supporters spread across the country. In fact, the D'Hondt seat allocation method is unfriendly to 4th nationwide parties when used with few-seat electoral districts, *not producing proportional enough* allocation of seats to bring it into parliament. 4th-ranked nationwide parties need large electoral districts with many seats to share out, and to gain at least 10% of the vote in every electoral district, and. The proposed majoritarian election of candidates with proportional allocation of seats would suit currently 4th–placed parties, in so far as it can also be used with Sainte-Laguë seat allocation method (as an alternative to D'Hondt) and is designed to have a number (not necessarily all) electoral districts of at least 10 seats. In other words, it is a political choice and depends on whether voters have a tradition of spreading their votes across a number of parties.

Anti-coalition government electoral reformists should espouse the goal of traditional PR Party Lists with D'Hondt seat allocation in *small* multi-member districts to stay close to a 2-party system. The proposed new system raises the goal of enlarging the party system since this would respond to the discontent expressed in the UK. It is worth noting that minority governments, in which a single leading party receives the parliamentary votes it needs to pass legislation by negotiating a firm pact before government formation with small parties who guarantee to support it for the duration of the legislature, are configurations for government that already function effectively under PR systems.

Finally, the goal of adopting an electoral system that allows a third and fourth nationwide parties to gains seats must address the issue of anti-system and flash-in-the-pan discontent parties. For instance, could UKIP or the BNP in the UK take advantage of this new electoral system to grow? UKIP received 919,546 votes nationally in 2010 or 3.1%, and the BNP 564,331 votes nationally, or 1.9%). As mentioned, PR Party List with D'Hondt does not usually allow any party with less than 10% of the district vote a seat.[15] The new system proposed does not either, though a version of it with high district magnitude (e.g. 12 seats) with Sainte-Laguë, if chosen, could bring this down to below 10%.

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Therefore, those tussling with the possibly treacherous goal of opening up the political system to more nationwide parties to offer the electorate more choice in an era of consumer selection and diversity need to note three alternatives:

- 1. A system producing a very similar distribution of parties to the majoritarian/SMP, namely 2 large and 1 small parties: D'Hondt seat allocation across *small* electoral districts with 5-9 seats.

- 2. Fairness to a 3rd party as long as it gains 12-20% of the vote in an electoral district: D'Hondt seat allocation across *large* electoral districts with 10-12 or more seats to allocate.

- 3. A chance for a 4th nationwide parties to gain a seat as long as they gain 9-10% of the vote in an electoral district: Sainte-Laguë allocation of seats in a large electoral district with 12 or more seats.[16]

Goal 5. Keeping the representatives' links to their constituency:

Ensuring a system which supports representatives in maintaining frequent contacts with and presence in the district that elected them, so as to foster his/her' accountability to the residents of a geographic area of preferably around 100,000 inhabitants.

Preserving the individual MP's contact and accountability to a small constituency is a high-ranking political value among the British political class, despite having been termed a 'myth' some 25 years ago (with substantial evidence[17]) and notwithstanding the extensive interviews with MPs conducted in the 1990s showing that the constituency was not the main concern of most MPs in career terms.[18] There are debates in a number of countries (France, Germany) about time-consuming casework that does not clearly lead to party political preferment, nor substantially aid re-election. It is rare for individual MPs to buck their party's declining national trend and save their seat if a clear majority of voters want a change of government.

Despite the burden of constituency servicing and the mainly a-political nature of the work, it is doubtful that current MPs in majoritarian systems would publicly support any new reform that curtailed such links, believing that Party List PR does. Nonetheless, German mixed-member and Belgian Party List deputies also believe in constituency service, while Spanish PR Party List deputies profess to be much more connected to their district owing to a growing belief in the value of such contact, while at the same time electoral reform towards a majoritarian system is voiced as a tool to encourage citizen engagement. Indeed, nothing prevents Party List MPs from being allocated to an area of their electoral district to service the residents. In both single- and multi-member systems, representatives make choices of whether to settle for being a good local MP or to cultivate political advancement through parliamentary and party work; both bring political dividends and votes.

But concerns remain that Party Lists MPs will be more beholden to the national party leadership for preferment in order to be reselected to stand again. Here is it useful to look at candidate selection procedures that remain outside the domain of electoral reform: these can be centralised or de-centralised according to party cultures. It is misleading to assume that decisions are made wholly at central office level under Party List systems and wholly in the small constituency under SMP/majoritarian systems. The district-level Party branch and its members can be closely involved in

the confection of their list of candidates, since all parts of the party are keen to attract votes by fielding both locally-based candidates and known national figures. Indeed when a country has few large electoral districts such as in Spain (52) and Poland (41), district-level party leaderships are bigger and more powerful in negotiations with the national leadership than party leaders in small constituencies who are just one out of hundreds. Nonetheless, the idea of each MP being accountable to a small number of electors gives the impression of closeness, and is perceived as building confidence in the political system.

Therefore, this 5th goal for a new system is to preserve constituency links while avoiding the pitfalls of mixed-member second tiers of unattached MPs claiming to represent only their parties' vision. Preserving the constituency link cannot be achieved by creating more deputies who are *even less attached than the allegedly unattached PR representatives*. Scotland has tried to anchor the Party List candidates to established regions within Scotland, but this in effect means constituencies are represented twice at Scottish level as well as once at the national level.

Instead, the goal of preserving the constituency link while reforming the electoral system is best served by: a) keeping to the existing constituencies for MPs to campaign in, and for voters to vote in, b) moving the allocation of seats to parties to a new level of larger electoral districts. Here seats can be distributed in a more proportional way across a collection of, say, 10-12 constituencies.[19]

Goal 6. Improving the political dialogue between deputies and their constituents

Ensuring that relations between deputies and their constituents become channels for a two-way political dialogue, in order to inform, persuade and foster feelings of inclusion and of being taken into account.

Goal 7. Reducing the burden on MPs

Ensuring MPs are not over-burdened with constituency affairs of a servicing nature given their duties to legislate, scrutinise government activity, and account for their parliamentary work to their constituents and party.

Given the political class's concerns about citizens' alleged growing disaffection with politics, a reform of the electoral system needs to seize any opportunity for engaging residents with the political process. A number of ideas have been produced for encouraging political activism in interest groups and advocacy organisations as well as parties. But few have addressed the *revitalisation of the formal representation process*, that between legislators and those who elected them. This is another key goal. To kindle interest in politics, MPs can engage with constituents in a two-way dialogue over issues and policies by devoting less time to servicing routine cases for which constituents could use local councillors, Citizens' Advice Bureaux, statutory agencies, charities, specialist support groups, and the Ombudsman services whose statutory role is to investigate complaints. The fact that increasing numbers of people are turning to MPs for help is a good reason for improving public information services but not for shifting large amounts of a legislator's time away from Parliament. The UK MP Keith Vaz reported in 2010 "Since January 2009, my offices have taken up 340 constituent cases and answered 471 calls. Weekly, my staff respond to 400 letters and emails".[20] Seemingly, little of this involves constituents' views on public matters, even though Vaz offers to take these up as an Early Day Motion or a Parliamentary Question. In this context it seems desirable that representatives should operate as teams in multi-member electoral districts where they can benefit from teamwork

and economies of scale, and where constituents can chose the MP to approach according to their political, gender, ethnic, or other personal preferences.

In an increasingly educated, opinionated and rights-aware society, the parliamentarians' time needs to be freed up for furthering political understanding of policies and law through web or email-based dialogues with constituents and periodic emailed reports to individuals who sign up for them. Such issue-based contact is arguably a key to promoting constituents' feelings of inclusion in the political system and gaining consent for policies. Outreach is already a priority for the UK House of Commons, as the Speaker has made clear[21], so Goal 7 is a key goal for current practice and any electoral reform project. Efficient ways to do this are not hard to find since impecunious pressure groups currently do it with a variety of ways such as mail shots. So do some parties, showering their members with emailed messages from party leaders. Often, representatives do the same sort of work as statutory agencies, thus relieving them from case work, when in fact this is a hidden subsidy to the public administration that legislators ought not to bear given their limited resources. Constituency links should mainly be about informing constituents about the political process, engaging with them about local improvements, and learning from them about their policy priorities and problems, while helping the most urgent rather than the most routine cases of need.

Goal 8. Fair Representation for women

Ensuring equitable representation of women by women, given that societies always comprise two genders with both different and comparable needs, deserving of equal treatment.

The principle of balanced political representation for and by women has gained acceptance since the 1990s. The need for women to take on at least 40% (if not half) of the tasks of representing a 50-50 male-female society is already implemented as a party rule or national law in over one hundred cases worldwide. Balanced gender representation is most easily achieved via the PR Party List system as, unique among electoral systems, it allows all parties to present a *diverse team* of candidates in every electoral district. The requirement of a 40-60 balance between the sexes at candidate selection time helps local party branches seek out an array of women to stand and has been far more effective than all the efforts in SMP systems, such as the Labour Party launching all-women shortlists for the selection of the candidates. Party Lists may contain a 'zip-list' of alternating male/female candidates all the way down if parties want to ensure that if it gets 3 or 4 seats allocated to it, 1 out of 3 or 2 out of 4 will go to a woman. Much will depend on the will of the parties to ensure zipping is used throughout the country. Unfortunately, all single-winner systems end up over-representing middle-class white men to the detriment of women, minorities, working class men and women, and other discriminated or disadvantaged groups.

Goal 9. Representing ethnic minorities in an inclusive way

Ensuring the presence of an adequate number of deputies who represent substantial ethnic minorities in a way that engenders feelings of inclusion.

In the UK, Labour's victory in 1987 brought the first four ethnic minority MPs to Westminster since World War II. But a decade later a survey showed that 'Black people feel that without better representation, local or national politics at best fails to understand the concerns of Black

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communities and at worst does not care'[22], sentiments that echo the rationales for achieving a balanced representation of women. The need to 'be there', the modern politics of 'presence', also echo the convictions of the British workers who set up the Labour Party, who could not feel represented by the Tories or Liberals. The claim to being represented by 'one of your own kind' is reiterated today by organisations such as the UK's *Operation Black Vote*, devoted to recruiting potential Black candidates and persuading the parties to field more of them. And as the Muslim population has reached 2.4 million, demands for Muslim MPs have arisen. Representation by likeness is thus a reiterative demand made by those who feel excluded by the privileged or by the majority, on grounds of class, gender, ethnicity, and many other physical characteristics that have been used as pretexts to impose an inferior status on people. Therefore an important goal of electoral reform is to enable easier access to parliament for a variety of ethnic and other minorities. The move towards having lawmakers who more closely reflect the make up of the society they are legislating for is lagging across the world, partly because the SMP/FPTP system makes it too difficult.

Parties are already encouraged, whether by law or public demands, to consider the composition of their candidate lists in terms of the image of exclusivity or inclusiveness they project in different geographies, also bearing in mind the rural, farming and commuter populations of non-urban areas as well as other social and business interests. *Single*-member/*single* winner systems are unable to do this.

Goal 10. The desirable qualities of representatives

Maintaining a high quality of representation, with a range of MPs who are able to: - represent the social groups in society that currently require protection from social exclusion, discrimination and abuse; -deploy expertise in recent and upcoming economic, technological, scientific and environmental developments; foster fair and enforceable legislation; and scrutinise government action effectively.

The final goal in any reform of the electoral system should be a greater renewal of the body of MPs, to ensure their ability to represent the groups who would benefit from stronger advocacy by representatives drawn from their own ranks such as underprivileged groups in general, women and ethnic minorities. Ever fewer Labour MPs come from severely disadvantaged backgrounds or lack a university education, perhaps due to the professionalisation of the job and rising public expectations of MPs' educational attainment levels and technical competence.

Therefore, a reformed electoral system should see parties deploying teams of candidates who are more than just hard-working local MPs. A body of legislators needs to be able to represent those who need representing; to specialise in economic, technological, legal, scientific, social and environmental issues, so as to ensure the quality of the legislation drafted; to make governments accountable to the public; to reach out to communicate their party's message and policies to the public in ever more articulate ways – all the while maintaining personal qualities of honesty and probity. While there is evidently a case for supporting MPs with adequate resources to have a full career as grass-roots representatives *and* legislators, their orientation should be, as with all jobs, the result of their individual abilities rather than the quirks of their electoral system that pushes them in one direction or another rather than allowing them balance.

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Finally, the PR Party List system has shown itself to be more open to a renewal of individual incumbents within a team, with some studies critiquing the high levels of turnover. Party candidate lists may lend themselves to be dictated by party leaders, but at the same time larger electoral districts lead to bigger local parties, so candidates can be proposed by a wider selectorate of district-level party members together with regional and national party selection committees. Clearly in single-member constituencies, de-selection of an incumbent is a more accusatory process of pointing the finger and voicing charges of incompetence. An ideal system should probably be designed to avoid small constituency parties becoming dominated by short-sighted local members; and also avoid weak local organisations being dictated to by big regional or central party offices. It is hard to ensure accountability in relations between representatives and the represented just by a form or organisation, but more attention should be given to how to facilitate a flow of political communication between the two. In the new proposed system, it is hoped that by ensuring individual incumbents or new candidates have a chance to make their personal mark on a small area of about 70-100,000 inhabitants – the typical size of a British constituency, while also being involved in the much wider electoral district-level representation process, might engender a good balance between attention to local issues and nationwide policy concerns, thereby improving the quality of representation.

The next Part explains the method of implementing a new electoral system based on Majoritarian Election of Candidates with Proportional Allocation of seats.

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Part 2.

A NEW ELECTORAL SYSTEM

Majoritarian Election of Candidates with Proportional Allocation of Seats

An electoral system to meets social and political goals

No current electoral system is perfect in the sense of achieving all desirable technical, political and social objectives. Advocates of Single-Member Plurality voting systems and supporters of Proportional Representation have long debated the merits of both systems but have seen them as alternatives creating a difficult all-or-nothing choice. While other systems seek to ameliorate some of the defects of both, they do not offer a satisfactory resolution of the key debate: *how to offer the electorate a broadly representative set of members of parliament while keeping them in close association with their constituents so as to maintain accountability.*

In the design of a new system, specific consideration has been given to overcoming common and new defects perceived as creating public dissatisfaction with SMP, such as in the UK, while maintaining its advantages and incorporating some key aspects of proportional representation. The new design addresses trenchant critiques of the social and political defects of current systems and focuses on the goal of meeting the needs and expectations of the better educated and more diverse electorates of the 21st Century, who now expect more from their representatives.

In brief, *Majoritarian Election of Candidates with Proportional Allocation of Seats* keeps the majoritarian tradition of single MPs maintaining a presence in their constituency and servicing its residents' needs, but it separates the election of party candidates from the allocation of seats to them. Candidates may win a plurality or majority in a constituency but only the ED will allocate a seat to them depending on the strength of their vote. This removes the winner-take-all problem [one candidate gets the seat and all the rest lose and disappear], but allows popular candidates to keep their link with the geographical unit. Divided constituencies not giving any candidate a clear win will be allocated an MP in order to ensure that each party' total share of the ED vote is reflected more or less proportionately by the number of seats it gains in the ED.

The choice of the D'Hondt allocation system will result in more seats going to the leading party, whose majority in parliament will thereby be reinforced, allowing for single party government if the electoral has given the leading party a clear lead. The choice of the Sainte-Laguë seat allocation method will result in a closer proportionality between each party's votes and seats. This may deprive the leading party of an overall majority in parliament and lead to minority government.

There is therefore some flexibility in this new system, depending on the allocation method but also on the number of constituency seats contained in the Electoral District, and the propensity of the electorate to concentrate, or to spread, their vote across the parties.

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<u>*Continuity and Innovation*</u>

To make it both effective and acceptable, the new system combines continuity and innovation in equal measure as it:

- Keeps the existing map of constituencies, but superimposes on it a new map of larger Electoral Districts (EDs), to encompass all constituencies. For instance, in the UK, 650 constituencies could be grouped into 65 EDs of 10 constituencies each. The number of seats per ED can vary.

- Keeps each MP's link to a small geographical area of no more than 100,000 residents.

- Keeps candidates standing for election in a named constituency.

- Keeps campaigning, voting and counting in the current constituencies.

- Introduces a new single ballot paper for each Electoral District.

- At the Electoral District level, applies the *moderately disproportional* seat allocation method known as D'Hondt to allocate seats to parties. Also allows for variations in district magnitude and the use of the more proportional Sainte Lagüe seat allocation model.

- While candidates are voted for individually, only strong winners such as those with 50% of the constituency vote, are guaranteed a seat. Weak plurality winners receive a seat only in the context of their party's earned allocation of seats across the Electoral District.

<u>*An electoral system that removes the major weakness of SMP*</u>

The new hybrid system would liberate the process of electing representatives from the major criticisms it receives, by offering:

- A substantial reduction in the current excessive disproportionality between a party's votes and the seats it wins.

- No seats for parties with less than around 9% of the vote.

- Dramatic reductions of the 'wasted votes' and 'excess votes' syndromes.

- High incentives for electors to turn out, because every vote makes a difference.

- Incentives for the greater representation of women and for ethnic and social minorities.

- Elimination of a single party's domination over large areas of the country and of the 'electoral deserts' this creates for other parties.

- A reduction of the entrenched safe seats that leave people feeling politically disenfranchised.

<u>*An electoral system that produces desirable effects*</u>

Specifically, *Majoritarian election of candidates with Proportional Allocation of Seats* produces the following desirable effects:

- Increases the lead in seats of the most popular party.

- Increases the incentive to vote.

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- Motivates parties to field an array of different candidates in every Electoral District.

- Facilitates the entry of more women into electoral politics as part of political teams.

- Facilitates a degree of parliamentary renewal by breaking up electoral deserts.

- Offers rewarding campaigning to candidates from 2nd and 3rd ranked parties

- Increases the incentive for every candidate to campaign both for their party and for themselves.

- Remains simple and transparent to administer.

- Facilitates a smoother changeover: all incumbents can stand again in their own constituency.

- Performs better than systems that use SMP or Additional Members.

- Remains simple to count and produces more transparent and acceptable results than the Alternative Vote and AMS.

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Majoritarian Election of Candidates with Proportional Allocation of Seats

Implementation Guide

Step 1. Create new Electoral Districts (EDs) in order to allocate seats to winners.

Electoral Commission would have to group the existing SMP constituencies into new Electoral Districts (EDs). EDs of 8 to 12 constituencies are desirable for slightly disproportional to moderately proportional allocation of seats to parties, on the understanding that pure proportionality is not being sought. Examples of a new ED in the UK could be "Birmingham South East", "Norfolk" or "London South East". The latter could be made up of the existing constituencies of 'Beckenham' + 'Bexleyheath & Crayford' + 'Bromley & Chislehurst' + 'Eltham, Erith & Thamesmead' + 'Greenwich & Woolwich' + 'Lewisham & Deptford' + 'Lewisham East' + 'Lewisham W. & Penge' + 'Old Bexley & Sidcup'.

For the UK House of Commons, the 650 seats could be grouped into 65 new Electoral Districts of 10 constituencies each[23], keeping the existing constituency boundaries and respecting traditional regions and nations as far as possible. The Boundary Commission would continue its work of ensuring the relative homogeneity of the population sizes represented.[24]

The new Electoral Districts (EDs) Returning Officers would be in charge of seat allocation to parties, after aggregating the votes of the EDs' 8-12 constituencies by party. It would then allocate each of the party's seats to the highest-voted party candidates whose name figures on the ballot paper (see Example 1. and the following Steps below).

Step 2. Parties field their candidates for each constituency, but ballot papers contain names of all Electoral District candidates grouped by party.

Key to the working of the new system is a redesigned ballot paper. At election time, all candidates for the Electoral District are listed on a single ballot paper under the name of their party. The example design below shows a partial view of ballot paper with only 3 party lists on it due to lack of space. The proposal is for a large ballot paper showing all Party Lists on one piece of paper, to avoid the need for several ballot papers per voter.

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Exhibit 1. A New Ballot Paper

(partial view with only with 3 parties of the proposed single ballot paper for each Electoral District)

Electoral District "Birmingham South East"					
YOU MAY ONLY MARK **ONE** OF THESE PARTIES' WITH AN 'X'					
Conservative Party	Mark 'X' here	**Labour Party**	Mark 'X' here	**Liberal Party**	Mark 'X" here
Constituency A [(1)] – Mervyn	photo	Constituency A - Grace	photo	Constituency A - Darren	photo
Constituency B - Tamsin	photo	Constituency B - Mehmet	photo	Constituency B - Vivien	photo
Constituency C - Bikkhu	photo	Constituency C - Carolina	photo	Constituency C - Faisal	photo
Constituency D - Diana	photo	Constituency D - Russell	photo	Constituency D - Joan	photo
Constituency E - Greg	photo	Constituency E - Gloria	photo	Constituency E - Lloyd	photo
Constituency F - Surinder	photo	Constituency F - Jason	photo	Constituency F - Amira	photo
Constituency G - Larry	photo	Constituency G - Rachel	photo	Constituency G - Richard	photo
Constituency H - Eva	photo	Constituency H - Firoz	photo	Constituency H - Carmen	photo
Constituency I - John	photo	Constituency I – Jenny	photo	Constituency I - Howard	photo
Constituency J - Seila	photo	Constituency J - Allan	photo	Constituency J - Carol	photo

Source: Designed by M.Threlfall. Note (1) Constituencies A, B, C etc mean that existing constituencies are listed alphabetically by name. Re "photo", I have included a space for a candidate photo to help voters put a name to a face and increase the visibility of women and men.

As seen above:

a) Candidates stand individually for constituencies. They campaign in, are voted for in, and win/lose in their constituency – *but candidates only become representatives if their vote count is high and they are allocated the seat by the Electoral District according to the D'Hondt (or if preferred) Sainte-Laguë method* (see below).

b) Constituencies are placed in *alphabetical* order on the party's list of candidates for the Electoral District.

c) Ballot papers are distributed to all constituencies in the ED, voted on according to the constituency register of voters and first counted up in the constituency, with the results passed to the ED.

d) On the ballot paper, voters can see all the parties' candidates for their local constituency, with photos, to help them consider the party list as a whole and to choose between parties on partisan, policy, geographical or social grounds.

e) Voters mark the ballot only once, for one party list only, at their local polling station in the constituency they are registered in. They do not need to place a cross next to their preferred candidate because it is clear that voters registered in Constituency A can only be voting for candidates standing in Constituency A. And all ballots issued in Constituency B will go to the candidates standing in Constituency B, etc.

f) The design of the ballot caters for voters who want to vote for a party in general or vote for an individual standing for their constituency.[25]

g) The same ballot paper is used throughout the Electoral District; each constituency counts the X vote marks towards that constituency's own candidates only.

h) The results are communicated to the Electoral District.

Step 3. The Vote Count at Electoral District level.

Returning Officers at Electoral District level

a) Receive the ballot results from each of the 10 constituencies of the ED.

b) Aggregate the results from each constituency, by party (and independent candidates).

c) Apply the D'Hondt or Sainte-Laguë method [depending on electoral law] in order to see which party should get how many seats [see below].

d) Allocate the seats to the parties' winning candidates in each constituency.

The D'Hondt method of allocating seats to parties introduces some disproportionality between the percentage of votes and the percentage of seats obtained by each party. It strengthens the leading party considerably, and the runner-up somewhat. The third-ranking party receives a more balanced proportion as long as it has won around 20% of the vote. Fourth and smaller parties do not manage to be allocated any seats unless they obtain around 10% or more of the vote. Thus, no fringe parties receive any seats until they have built up a following of about 10% in the Electoral District.

Majoritarian Election of Candidates with Proportional Seat Allocation is designed to maintain some disproportionality, but far less than FPTP or any other Majoritarian system, to satisfy those preferring a system that can more easily lead to single-party government. But It can also be adapted to offer more or less proportionality to suit political ends, e.g. 8 constituencies per ED will produce less proportionality (closer to FPTP) than 10 will, and 12 will produce strong proportionality. PR experts recommend a 'district magnitude' of over 8 seats in any case.

Example A. Results in a London Electoral District

A fictitious Electoral District was designed to (as far as possible) match the boundaries of two London Assembly seats (Greenwich & Lewisham, and Bexley & Bromley), grouping 10 constituencies in to a

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so-called "London South East" Electoral District. An Electoral District does not have to have 10 seats (see above). With 10, it is also clear to see that if a party wins 30% of seats it means 3 our of 10.

The actual votes emitted in for the 2010 Westminster parliamentary elections have been used below to recalculate the results that would have been obtained under this new system.

EXAMPLE A. ELECTORAL DISTRICT OF "LONDON SOUTH EAST "										
Party: Seats % Vote % seats	Total votes	D'Hondt method distribution numbers								
	Divide by 1	Divide by 2	Divide by 3	Divide by 4	Divide by 5	Divide by 6	Divide by 7	Divide by 8	Divide by 9	Divide by 10
CONSERVATIVES 4 seats 37% of vote 40% of seats	**163,703 1st seat**	**81,851 4th seat**	**54,568 6th seat**	**40,926 9th seat**	32,741	27,281	23,386	20,463	18,189	16,370
LABOUR 4 seats 34% of vote 40% of seats	**149,751 2nd seat**	**74,875 5th seat**	**49,917 7th seat**	**37,438 10th seat**	29,950	24,959	21,394	18,719	16,639	14,975
LIB DEMS 2 seats 19% of vote 20% of seats	**83,949 3rd seat**	**41,975 8th seat**	27,983	20,987	16,789	13,991	11,993	10,494	9,328	8,395
Total Electoral District turnout/vote = 442,984 votes				3-party % of total vote = 90%						

Source: Compiled by M.Threlfall from the 2010 results from Beckenham, Bexleyheath & Crayford, Bromley & Chislehurst, Eltham, Erith & Thamesmead, Greenwich & Woolwich, Lewisham & Deptford, Lewisham East, Lewisham W. & Penge, Old Bexley & Sidcup constituencies.

Note 1: Distribution numbers have been rounded up to a complete integer. Note 2: The "1st", "2nd", "3rd" etc seat indicates the numerical order in which a 'distribution number' is identified as becoming an 'allocation number', i.e. one of the 10 top numbers.

How to work out the winning parties:

a. Write down one party's total vote, then divide it repeatedly by 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10 (for 10 seats, or 8 times for 8 seats etc) and set out these 'distribution numbers' in a row.

b. Create a new row for every party, forming columns of 'distribution numbers' under the divisors 1, 2, 3 etc.

c. With 10 seats to distribute, pick out the 10 top distribution numbers from the whole set. These become the key seat 'allocation numbers'.

d. If they fall in a party's row, that party gets as many seats as it has 'allocation numbers'. Number them in order of descending magnitude for giving the seats to winning candidates in that order [see below].

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e.   Parties with less than 10% of the vote do not have a chance of winning a seat, so there is no need to divide their total votes by 1, 2, 3 etc to create these 'distribution numbers'.

Results in this example

a.   Conservatives have got 4 of the top 10 distribution numbers in their row, so they get:
4 seats (the 1st, 4th, 6th, 9th seat allocated) - 40% of seats for 37% of the ED vote.

b.   Liberal Democrats have got 2 of the top 10 distribution numbers in their row, so they get:
2 seats (the 3rd and 8th seat allocated) - 20% of seats for 19% of the ED vote.

c.   Labour has got 4 of the top 10 distribution numbers in their row, so they get:
4 seats (the 2nd, 5th, 7th, 10th seat allocated) - 40% of seats for 34% of the ED vote.

Change compared to SMP in 2010

- Conservatives would have undergone no change. Their 4 seats would remain.

- Labour would have lost 2 seats to the Liberal Democrats because their candidates did not get a majority and the Liberal Democrat's overall ED vote merited 2 seats from within the 10 available.

- Liberal Democrats would have gained 2 seats on the grounds of their 10% of the vote.

However, this does establish a pattern: in Conservative areas, Labour would gain seats, and in large Labour areas, Conservatives will gain seats. Liberal Democrats will gain seats according to their performance. In is impossible to predict the overall national change under this "Constituencies + PR" system because the boundaries of the new Electoral Districts are not known. But the following Examples will give clear pointers.

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Example B. The Vote Count in a Labour 'electoral desert'

The East of England, East Anglia or Eastern Region represented an 'electoral desert' for Labour in 2010 as it won no seats at all except for two in proximity to London. For this example, Norfolk was chosen as a likely entity given the natural coastal boundaries, and Waveney in Suffolk was added to make up the 10th constituency needed. The seats are allocated to the parties in the same way as above. The 4th party in the ED, UKIP, obtained 22,866 votes (4,7% of the ED turnout) and therefore comes nowhere near receiving the final 10th seat, for which it would have needed a minimum of 42,084 votes.

EXAMPLE B. ELECTORAL DISTRICT OF "NORFOLK"										
PARTY seats % votes & seats	D'Hondt method: divide party totals by 1,2,3, etc to create distribution numbers									
	Total ÷1	Total ÷2	Total ÷3	Total ÷4	Total ÷5	Total ÷6	Total ÷7	Total ÷8	Total ÷9	Total ÷10
CONSERVATIVE 5 seats 43% of votes 50% of seats	**210,416** 1st	**105,208** 3rd	**70,139** 5th	**52,604** 8th	**42,083** 10th	35,069	30,059	26,302	23,380	21,042
LABOUR 2 seats 21% of votes 20% of seats	**102,890** 4th	**51,445** 7th	34,297	25,723	20,578	17,148	14,690	12,861	11,432	10,289
LIBERAL DEMOCRAT 3 seats 26% of votes 30% of seats	**128,517** 2nd	**64,259** 6th	**42,839** 9th	32,129	25,703	21,419	18,360	16,064	14,280	12,852
TURNOUT in Electoral District = 489,367, 3-party % of turnout = 90%										

Note 1. The Electoral District is made up of the constituencies of Broadland, Great Yarmouth, Norfolk Mid, Norfolk North, Norfolk North West, Norfolk South, Norfolk South West, Norwich South, Norwich North, and Waveney.

Prospective Results for "Norfolk" ED

    Conservatives: 5 allocation numbers = 5 seats (1st, 3rd, 5th, 8th, 10th seat allocated)
            50% of seats for 43% of the ED vote
    Labour: 2 allocation numbers = 2 seats (4th, 7th seat)
            20% of seats for 21% of the ED vote
    Liberal Democrats: 2 allocation numbers = 3 seats (2nd, 6th, and 9th seat allocated)
            0% of seats for 26% of the ED vote.

Change compared to FPTP in 2010

a. Conservatives would have lost 3 seats out of their actual 8 seats (2010) because their candidates only won these with pluralities, and Labour's overall vote of 21% in the Electoral District entitled it to 2 seats.

b. Labour would have taken 2 seats from the Conservatives as their overall vote in the ED entitled them to 2 seats instead of 0.

c. Liberal Democrats would have taken 1 seat from the Conservatives, as their overall vote in the ED entitled them to 3 seats instead of 2.

d. Instead of being an 'electoral desert' for Labour, East Anglia would become a mixed area. Residents would have access to 2 Labour, 3 Liberal Democrat and 5 Conservative MPs - in a system that encourages MPs of the same party to collaborate within the Electoral District, as they will stand listed on the same Ballot paper, and as every vote counts towards the key distribution numbers that will affect each party collectively.

Example C. The Vote Count in a Conservative 'electoral desert' and Labour 'heartland'

The Electoral District was designed to cover a part of a Labour heartland around Sheffield, using the southern boundary of the South Yorkshire region as a starting point and adding ten contiguous constituencies in the direction of Birmingham but avoiding Birmingham itself as it contains Labour-held seats. The questions are therefore: How many seats might Labour lose in one of its heartlands? Can the Conservatives gain representation in a Labour heartland?

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EXAMPLE C. ELECTORAL DISTRICT OF "SOUTH EAST YORKSHIRE"										
PARTY seats + % of votes in ED + & of seats	D'Hondt method: divide party totals by 1,2,3, etc to create distribution numbers									
	Total ÷1	Total ÷2	Total ÷3	Total ÷4	Total ÷5	Total ÷6	Total ÷7	Total ÷8	Total ÷9	Total ÷10
CONSERVATIVE	**89,346**	**44,673**	29,782	22,336	17,870	14,891	12335	11168	9927	8935
2 seats 20.7% of votes 20% of seats	3rd seat	7th seat								
LABOUR	**175,585**	**87,793**	**58,528**	**43,896**	**35,117**	29,264	25084	21948	19509	17559
5 seats 40.8% of votes 50% of seats	1st seat	4th seat	5th seat	8th seat	10th seat					
LIB DEMOCRAT	**111,446**	**55,723**	**37,149**	27,862	22,289	18,574	15,921	13931	12383	11145
3 seats 25.9% of votes 30% of seats	2nd seat	6th seat	9th seat							
TURNOUT: 430,122 - 3-party % of turnout = 87.4%										

Notes: 1. The Electoral District is made up of the constituencies of Sheffield Hallam, Sheffield Heeley, Sheffield Central, Sheffield Brightside, Sheffield South East, Rother Valley, Rotherham, Penistone & Stockbridge, Wentworth & Deane, Don Valley. 2. UKIP received 18,953 votes (4,7% of the ED). To win even the 10th seat, UKIP would have had to obtain a minimum of 35,118 votes in this ED.

Prospective Result for "South East Yorkshire" ED

    Conservatives: 2 seats (3rd and 7th allocated)   - 20% of seats for 20,7% of votes

    Labour: 5 seats (1st, 4th, 5th, 8th, 10th allocated)   - 50% of seats for 40.8% of votes

    Liberal Democrats 3 seats (2nd, 6th, 9th allocated)   - 30% of seats for 25.9% of votes

Change compared to the 'electoral desert' for the Conservatives under SMP in 2010

    a. Conservatives would obtain 2 seats where they had 0 in the 2010 election, because they got over 20% of the vote in the Electoral District. This gives them a proportional outcome.

    b. Labour would have to cede 4 of the 9 seats it won in this part of Yorkshire in 2010, because it obtained only 40.8% of the Electoral District vote, entitling it to 50% of the seats, but no more (i.e. not 90%). As the leading party of the ED, it remains advantaged by the system, getting rather more seats than votes.

    c. Liberal Democrats would be entitled to 3 seats instead of 1 since they received 25.9% of the vote. And as the second-placed party in the ED, they would benefit from a slightly greater share of the seats than votes.

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Therefore the proposed new hybrid "Constituencies + PR" system could put an end to the phenomenon of electoral deserts and heavily reduce the political disenfranchisement of citizens in the South Yorkshire area who would have access to 2 Conservative MPs and 3 Liberal Democrats instead of only Labour MPs and 1 Liberal Democrat.

Example D. The vote count in a Conservative 'heartland' and Labour 'desert'

This Electoral District was designed to cover the wholly Conservative-held region stretching between Wales and the Birmingham-Coventry industrial area, starting with the Welsh border and keeping within the traditional administrative borders of the West Midlands region, hence the ED is named 'South West Midlands'. The constituencies included are: Herefordshire South, Herefordshire North, Worcester West, Worcester, Worcester Mid, Redditch, Bromsgrove, Wyre Forest, Halesowen & Rowley Regis, and Stourbridge.

EXAMPLE D. DISTRIBUTION OF SEATS IN ELECTORAL DISTRICT "SOUTH WEST MIDLANDS"										
PARTY	D'Hondt method: divide party totals by 1,2,3, etc to create distribution numbers									
Seats % votes % of 10 seats	Total ÷1	Total ÷2	Total ÷3	Total ÷4	Total ÷5	Total ÷6	Total ÷7	Total ÷8	Total ÷9	Total ÷10
CONSERVATIVE	**220,095**	**110,048**	**73,365**	**55,024**	**44,019**	36,682	31,442	27,512	24,455	22,010
5 seats 45% of votes, 50% of seats	1st seat	3rd seat	5th seat	7th seat	9th seat					
LABOUR	**95,410**	**47,705**	31,803	23,852	19,082	15,902	13,630	11,626	10,601	9,541
2 seats, 19.6% votes 20% of seats	4th seat	8th seat								
LIB DEMOCRAT	**114,681**	**57,3416**	**38,227**	28,670	22,936	19,114	16,383	14,335	12,742	11,468
3 seats 23.5% of votes 30% of seats	2nd seat	6th seat	10th seat							
TURNOUT for whole ED = 487,657				3-party total % of votes = 88.1%						

Note 1) Party totals are the actual number of votes received in 2010 in the constituencies: 2) UKIP received 21,739 votes (4.5% of the ED total turnout). To gain the 10th seat, it would have had to obtain a minimum of 32,228 votes.

Prospective Result in "South West Midlands" ED

- Conservatives: 5 seats (1st, 3rd, 5th, and 9th allocated)   - 50% of seats for 45% of votes
- Labour: 2 seats (4th and 8th allocated)   - 20% of seats for 19.6% of votes
- Liberal Democrats 3 seats (2nd, 6th and 10th allocated)   - 30% of seats for 23.5% of votes

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<u>Change compared to the 'electoral desert' for Labour under FPTP in 2010</u>

a. Conservatives lose 5 seats, keeping half of the 10 they won in 2010, since they only won 45% of the vote in this electoral district. Under FPTP, they took 100% of the seats in this area with less than half the popular vote.

b. Labour gain 2 seats where they had none, owing to the fact they gained nearly 20% of the vote, a proportional result.

c. Liberal Democrats make a surprising gain of 3 seats instead of none under FPTP, which shows how distorting FPTP can be in view of the fact that the Liberal Democrats had gained 23.5% of the vote. Liberal Democrats also benefit in this example from coming second-place since the D'Hondt system adds to the two leading parties' seats. Therefore, they obtain more seats for their votes, as shown above.

This Example constitutes another case that shows that 'electoral deserts' are merely products of FPTP and not the parties' performance. Under this proposed "SMP + PR" system, the apparently 'solid' Conservative "South West Midlands" area would become mixed, no longer a desert for Labour and the Liberal Democrats, with residents enjoying a far greater chance of being represented by someone whom they voted for and identify with.

Step 4. Announcing the winners

a. With this hybrid system of SMP + PR, there is a clear change from SMP as candidates obtaining a plurality in their constituency cannot immediately be announced as winners of the seat. Only those who have obtained an outright majority of the vote can do so – which is in fact one of the 'legitimacy' benefits sought by electoral reformers.

b. Candidates who have obtained only a plurality must wait for Electoral District Returning Officers to announce the seat allocation to candidates across the 10 constituencies.

c. Equally, the overall winning party will not be known till all the Electoral District results are in, as under FPTP.

Step 5. Allocating a party's seats to named constituency candidates

The new system represents a breakthrough in electoral design because at this point the PR/D'Hondt) method is applied to the Majoritarian system of single MPs linked to an individual constituency. This avoids the pitfall associated with the Party Lists of PR systems in which candidates are ranked by their party in a fixed order with no link to a particular area of their large multi-member constituencies - the feature that is often considered a weakness of PR. Instead, this new system links candidates to constituencies on the ballot paper, but asks voters to choose a party only, not individuals. The virtue of new system is that it retains the MP's direct attachment to a specific area (within the seat allocation method described in Step 3). It then allocates seats to MPs according to their performance

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in terms of the % of the constituency vote they have obtained. Therefore, MPs are not ranked by party selection committees, but by the vote of the electorate.

a. As seen in *Exibit 1. The Ballot Paper* [above], candidates' names appear on the ballot among their party's list of candidates in the alphabetical order of the constituency they are standing for.

b. Every vote for a party on the ballot counts towards the candidate in whose constituency the voter has registered, and in which the vote has been emitted. Thus all voters voting in, for instance, Beckenham and marking the ballot with an X for the Conservatives are counted as votes for the Beckenham Conservative candidate.

c. When the ballots are counted and the results communicated to the Electoral District, the latter should enter the results from each constituency into a table like the one in Example E. MPs win/lose a Seat [below].

d. Then the ED Returning Officer distributes the district's 10 seats to 10 candidates as follows:

e. All the seats are distributed to candidates in the order of each candidate's % of vote in their constituency. No party can receive more than their share of seats allocated by the PR-D'Hondt method.

o When a party has been allocated the number of seats it has been allowed by the ED-level seat allocation (4 or 2 in Example E), no more of its candidates can be given a seat, whatever their % of the constituency vote. The exception is when a party has obtained more constituency majorities than seats. There would be a case for granting that seat before continuing with the distribution, thereby allowing greater disproportionality in these cases.[26]

o If the next most popular candidate is in the same constituency as a candidate who has already received the seat by majority vote, or on account of having obtained a higher % of that constituency's vote, then this next most popular candidate under consideration does not get the seat because s/he has lost it to a rival from another party.

In Example E below, the list of constituencies in the Electoral District "London South East" is shown, with the number of real 2010 votes received by each candidate of the 3 parties. In Example A above, the allocation of seats for a proportional representation of each party in the ED was: Conservatives 4, Labour 4, Liberal Democrats 2. Which candidate in each party will be give these 10 seats?

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EXAMPLE E. DISTRIBUTION OF SEATS IN NEW UK ELECTORAL DISTRICT "LONDON SOUTH EAST".

CONSTITUENCIES UK, 2010	TURNOUT UK, 2010	LIBERAL DEMOCRAT Seats allocated with new system: 2 Votes:		CONSERVATIVE Seats allocated with new system: 4 Votes:		LABOUR Seats allocated with new system: 4 Votes:	
Beckenham	47,686	9,813	20.6%	27,597	**57.9%**	6,893	14.5%
Bexley Heath & Crayford	43,182	5,502	12.7%	21,794	**50.5%**	11,450	26.5%
Bromley & Chislehurst	44,037	9,669	22.0%	23,569	**53.5%**	7,295	16.6%
Eltham	41,964	5,299	**12.6%**	15,753	37.5%	17,416	41.5%
Erith & Thamesmead	42,476	5,116	12.0%	13,365	31.5%	19,068	**44.9%**
Greenwich & Woolwich	41,188	7,498	18.2%	10,109	24.5%	20,262	**49.2%**
Lewisham & Deptford	41,220	9,633	23.4%	5,551	13.5%	22,132	**53.7%**
Lewisham East	41,719	11,750	28.2%	9,850	16.4%	17,966	**43.1%**
Lewisham West & Penge	54,020	12,673	**23.5%**	11,489	21.3%	18,501	34.2%
Old Bexley & Sidcup	45,492	6,996	15.4%	24,625	**54.1%**	8,768	19.3%
Total 3-party ED Turnout	*442,984*	*83,949*		*163,702*		*149,751*	

Source: compiled by M. Threlfall, using results for each constituency found in BBC, Election 2010, Results, Find your result > Constituency List. http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/shared/election2010/results/ [May 7th onwards]

Potential results in a new "London South East" ED

a. The Conservative candidates, with their absolute majorities, would get Beckenham, Bexley Heath & Crayford, Bromley & Chislehurst, and Old Bexley & Sidcup.

b. Labour, also due 4 seats, would get Erith & Thamesmead, Greenwich & Woolwich, Lewisham & Deptford, as well as Lewisham East.

c. This leaves the Liberal Democrats with the 2 seats to which they are entitled due to the number of votes they received across the ED. Their candidates would become the MPs for Eltham, and Lewisham West & Penge, even though they were the voters' 3rd choice in both. The reason is no candidate gained a majority, and so these constituencies receive the MP who makes up the proportional distribution of the seats to parties across the ED. Thus, the Liberal Democrats' 83,949 votes are not wasted.

d. MPs are rewarded if they get a high proportion of the vote in the constituency where they campaigned in, within their party's allocation of seats. But candidates who only obtained a plurality are not automatically rewarded with a seat. This prevents the anomalies of SMP from occurring, namely that an MP can 'represent' a whole constituency by obtaining a handful more votes than the next candidate.

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Change compared with SMP in 2010

a.   Only 2 seat changes out of 10 would have taken place in Electoral District "South East London" under the new system.

b.   Evidently, the Labour candidates in Eltham and Lewisham West & Penge constituencies might feel disappointed at not winning these seats with their 41.5% and 34.2% of the vote, respectively, but the point is that the new system distributes seats proportionately across the ED, and these MPs represent the whole electoral district, not just their constituency. Also, Labour would have won 40% of the seats in "South East London", while only getting 34% of the vote in the Electoral District. So their result is already more than purely proportional.

c.   Constituency politics remain important while campaigning in election years, but ED politics also comes in to play for the interim of the 4 years. District-level party politics can take a wider view of the priorities of the residents across a bigger cross-section than the less representative small constituency. Those who feel closer to one or other parties can approach any of their MPs in the ED, while those who are not partisan have a range of ten individuals to chose from and to approach. As a result there are more chances of the public finding an affinity with a representative.

d.   In May 2010, Labour actually won 6 and the Conservatives 4 of the constituencies now grouped together in this hypothetical Electoral District of "London South East" – and did so with nearly 14,000 *fewer* real votes than the Conservatives. This is the kind of anomaly that Single-Member Plurality systems produce, and that many wish to see corrected. Labour was not entitled to more than 4 seats: in such a context, affected Labour MPs would have to look at the bigger picture. The same is true of the Conservatives who won all 10 (100%) seats in the South West Midlands area. If it were transformed into an Electoral District under this new system, they would lose half of them because they only obtained 45% of the vote and still get 50% of the seats.

Summary of the outcomes from using *Majoritarian Election of Candidates with Proportional Allocation of Seats*

Proportionality and Majority Government

a)   Slightly more proportional outcome in 2010 than under SMP: Clearly, the fact that the examples are based on 2010 UK results (where the two big parties ended up on 36% and 29% of the vote) is reflected in the new system's seat allocations, i.e. the disparity between the two leading parties is not great. But under SMP the Conservatives got 47.2% of the seats (a 12 percentage point gain) and Labour got 39.7% of the seats (close to an 11 percentage point gain), leaving the Liberal Democrats with 23% of votes but 8.8% of seats -

an unfair 14 percentage point *loss*. In 2010, SMP had highly disproportional effects even when voters spread their votes more evenly than before. By contrast, this new system would have spread the seats more fairly, creating a lesser degrees of disproportionality, of the order of 5-10 percentage points. Nonetheless, a minority or coalition government would also have been necessary.

b) However, if the British electorate had returned to their previous more polarised voting, the proposed new system would not sweep away those majorities.

c) Therefore, if electoral policymakers are primarily concerned about producing parliamentary majorities, there is the option of adjusting the seat allocation method to increase the leading party's lead. To concentrate more seats on the leading party in each ED, thereby encouraging single party dominance and majority government, all that needs to be done is to create Electoral Districts with only 8 seats in each, or less (lower 'district magnitude') – while keeping the other benefits of the new system.

d) 8-seat constituencies would provide an outcome closer to SMP and offer the bonus of making Electoral Districts geographically smaller, which some might find reassuring in general.

e) If on the other hand, policymakers wish to make it easier for a 4th nationwide party to gain seats, then the D'Hondt calculation method can be replaced by the similar 'Sainte-Laguë' method [27], which spreads seats more widely across parties, though any vote under 10% is in danger of getting no seat.

No more 'electoral deserts': The effect of using a *moderate* degree of <u>dis</u>proportionality (as opposed to the *extreme* distortion of SMP) is to break up electoral deserts, while respecting the relative dominance of the most popular party. Electoral deserts damage citizens' representation and cause disaffection as votes are seen as 'wasted'.

No more 'excess majorities': Labour in some areas has a very concentrated vote producing huge majorities for a few MPs, and losses in other constituencies. This is the 'excess votes' syndrome that also wastes votes. Under this new system, all these votes would come into play across the Electoral District, would boost the party's 'distribution numbers', and would allow it to obtain seats in these 'deserts'. If the same phenomenon occurred to the Conservatives or Liberal Democrats or any other party, they would benefit in the same way.

Seat allocation at Electoral District level: Clearly the major change is that MPs and voters would have to accept this innovation, recognising its merits:

a) It provides fairer outcomes than the small constituency;

b) It encourages cooperation and a wider outlook among candidates. *A plurality of the vote does not guarantee them a seat* since Single Member Plurality has been abandoned. They win a seat if they are top-ranked across the ED and fall within their party's performance-based allocation of seats. Thus, candidates are subject to a degree of <u>intra</u>-party competition - as well as mutual support - as *each other's votes count towards the party's district-level gain*. The result is less predictable than under SMP, but fairer.

c) ED-based seat allocation creates many more incentives than SMP to candidates who are opposing incumbent MPs with huge followings. *Instead of working for a lost cause, every one of their votes will boost the party's total and its distribution numbers for the whole ED*. And with 10 candidates named on the same ballot, candidates can also campaign for their party in any of the other constituencies of the district. If a constituency's votes are more evenly spread than average for the whole ED, 3rd-placed candidates may even find themselves called upon to represent the constituency on the grounds of their party's support across the ED.

d) ED-based ballot papers allow the parties with their teams of candidates to offer the electorate the right kind of representation for the area, which invariably requires some gender balance. This is impossible for one person to do. They also create or reinforce intermediary party structures, opportunities for collaboration between MPs for the benefit of the District, a rationalisation of tasks, and savings of party and personal resources.

Conclusions

Majoritarian Election of Candidates With Proportional Allocation of Seats produces the following desirable effects:

a. *Increases the lead in seats of the most popular party* by maintaining some disproportionality, to enable majority governments to be formed if the electorate displays a strong preference for one party, thereby avoiding the pitfalls of *exact* proportional representation.

b. *Increases the incentive to vote* of every single supporter of the three largest nationwide parties in every Electoral District given their chances of getting a seat, and the fact that every extra vote could lead to an extra seat.

c. *Motivates parties to field an array of candidates* in every Electoral District who clearly represent the interests and diverse profiles of its population including women and men, and ethnic and other minorities where relevant.

d. *Facilitates the entry of more women into electoral politics* as part of political teams, and by reducing the number of safe seats with male incumbents not subject to re-selection.

e. Facilitates a degree of parliamentary renewal by breaking up electoral deserts.

f. *Offers challenging campaigning experiences to candidates from 2nd and 3rd ranked parties* who are contesting incumbents in safe seats. Votes for such parties contribute to their overall Electoral District totals, increasing their chances of winning a seat through the proportional seat allocation method.

g. *Increases the incentive for every candidate to campaign* both for their party and for themselves as every vote counts both for the candidate at constituency level and for the party at Electoral District level.

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h. *Remains simple to administer*: only requires a one-off delineation of new Electoral Districts; can identify winners by simple additions, divisions and percentages with no other formulas; can save on administrative and distribution costs by reducing the current 650 different ballot paper designs to around 65 (depending on the size of electoral districts); though requires additional District-level Returning Officers

i. *Facilitates a smoother changeover*: all incumbents can stand again in their own constituency.

j. *Performs better than mixed systems* that use Single-Member Plurality plus Additional Members (top-up lists). Mixed systems retain all the unfairness inherent to SMP (MPs winning with only a small plurality of the vote, the wasted vote syndrome, severe disproportionality, etc). Scotland and Wales only produce relatively proportional outcomes by adding extra Members elected on a 'loser-take-all' basis that contradicts the popular vote. Remains simpler to apply and to calculate the results than the Alternative Vote (AV) preferential system, which is *not proportional* anyway.

As to drawbacks, these tend to emerge after a system has come into use and a political practice has developed around it. From the candidate's point of view, one can predict there might be resistance from incumbents who always win with a simple plurality to find this is no longer enough to win a seat. But that was never fair to Parliament, so it should be considered an advance that the new system assures a seat to candidates who do get a majority. From the point of view of two leading parties under SMP, the new system may be seen as overly proportional, depriving them of their over-representation in Parliament. In that case, an 8 seat Electoral District may be a preferred option than 10 or 11, and that the proposal can be adjusted to fit this preference.

But rather than pointing at potential drawbacks, it is fitting to highlight the changes of culture that it might bring. The look of the party's list of candidates must surely shine light on its priorities. How much would an all-male list - or an all-white team in the London area - constitute an embarrassment? A party unable to field candidates in all constituencies, such as the fringe parties, would be shown up as marginal. The concept of presenting a political team to the electorate is a move away from the individualism of the single party candidate, and has implications for internal party recruitment procedures, for party organisation at ED level, and for MPs' campaigning and teamwork within it. But would the presentation of relatively mixed and balanced teams of candidates across the whole country – an approachable and intelligent-looking bunch of faces - not help to make the electorate in general feel more confident they will be well represented?

As it stands, *Majoritarian Election of Candidates with Proportional Allocation of Seat*s presents clear solutions to the current defects of parliamentary representation in many countries of the world, as well as introducing welcome improvements to meet the needs and expectations of 21st century electorates.

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Further Information:

For an in-depth critique of the Alternative Vote system, see: Threlfall, M. (2010) **Electoral Reform Briefing Nr.1 'What is Wrong with the Alternative Vote?**' http://www.londonmet.ac.uk/research-units/iset/staff/monica-threlfall.cfm#Publications

For a reflection on the British situation on the eve of the referendum of 2011, see Threlfall, M. (2010) 'The Purpose of Electoral Reform', *Political Quarterly*, Vol.81, Nr.4, December 2010.

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[1] Jenkins Commission (1998) The Report of the Independent Commission on the Voting System, Presented to Parliament by the Secretary of State for the Home Department by Command of Her Majesty, October 1998, p.3, The Stationery Office, http://www.archive.official-documents.co.uk/document/cm40/4090/4090.htm

[2] Plant Committee (1991) *Democracy Representation and Elections,* Report of the Working Party on Electoral Systems set up by the Labour Party, chaired by Lord Plant.

[3] See 'The Scottish electoral system' BBC, 8 April 1999, http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/events/scotland_99/the_scottish_parliament/304923.stm . Demonstration of the count at http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/events/scotland_99/the_scottish_parliament/309426.stm
[4] The Electoral Commission, (2003) *The National Assembly for Wales Elections 2003*, p.21 § 2.16, London and Cardiff. http://www.assemblywales.org/n0000000000000000000000000015452.pdf
[5] Scottish Parliament (2007) MSPs > Elections > 2007 > Results Analysis, Tables 1 and 2, http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/msp/elections/2007/analysis.htm

[6] It is worth noting that in Thailand the mixed-member system is thought to have created two classes of politicians with radically divergent career incentives for election. See Reilly, Benjamin (2004) *Democratization and political reform in the Asia-Pacific: Is there an 'Asian model' of institutional design?,* Discussion Paper 04-04, Australia National University, http://apseg.anu.edu.au

[7] Author calculation from Electoral Calculus Website (2010) > Ordered Seats > Majority-Sorted Seats, produced by by Martin Baxter. http://www.electoralcalculus.co.uk/ Accessed various dates, April-May 2010.

[8] (Electoral Calculus website May 2010).
[9] Author calculation from data in The Observer 9 May, p.12, p.24.
[10] (calculated from data on Electoral Calculus pages)
[11] Dorling, Danny (2004) *People and Places: A 2001 Census Atlas of the UK*, Bristol: The Policy Press, p.45.

[12] *Ethnicity and National Identity in England and Wales 2011*, Part of 2011 Census, http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/census/2011-census/key-statistics-for-local-authorities-in-england-and-wales/rpt-ethnicity.html#tab-Ethnicity-in-England-and-Wales
[13] ACE Project (2005) 'Advice for Electoral Systems Designers', taken from *The New International IDEA Handbook*, Stockholm: International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance. http://aceproject.org/ace-en/topics/es/esg?toc

[14] Selb, Peter (2009) 'A Deeper Look at the Proportionality-Turnout Nexus', *Comparative Political Studies*, Vol. 42, No. 4, 527-548.

[15] Nick Griffin may have got 14.9% in Barking, but as multi-member electoral districts are much bigger than a British constituency, this result would have been heavily diluted by being counted together with the vote in the neighbouring constituencies (in this case Dagenham & Rainham where he only received 11%, Hornchurch & Upminster (6.4%), Romford (5.2%), Ilford North (3.3%), Ilford South (0% - no candidate), East Ham (0% - no candidate), giving him a very low average.
[16] Sainte-Laguë is similar to D'Hondt but spreads the 'distribution numbers' more widely, so that an outlier might gain the last seat allocated.
[17] Crewe, Ivor (1984) 'British MPs and their constituents: how strong are their links?', Essex Papers in Politics and Government, Nr.10, http://www.essex.ac.uk/government/Essex_Papers/essex_papers_new2004.shtm . Also published in

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Bogdanor, V. (1985) ed., *Representatives of the People? Parliamentarians and constituents in Western democracies*, London: Gower.

[18] Searing, Donald D. (1994) *Westminster's World*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.

[19] To see how this works in practice, see Monica Threlfall (2010) *Ten Goals and One Solution for Westminster Reform: Marrying Constituency Links with Proportional Representation*, ISET Working Paper 16, http://www.londonmet.ac.uk/research-units/iset/wps/wps_home.cfm

[20] Vaz, Keith (2010) 'Letter to Constituents on Expenses', undated, Website http://www.keithvaz.labour.co.uk/letter-to-constituents-on-expenses2

[21] House of Commons Outreach Unit, public statements; The Speaker's public statements, eg. 30 November 2009 to The Hansard Society.

[22] See The 1990s Trust (2007) *A Black Manifesto 2007*, p.4, p.26.

[23] As the Electoral Knowledge Network states" … when designing an electoral system, district magnitude is in many ways the key factor in determining how the system will operate in practice, the strength of the link between voters and elected members, and the overall proportionality of election results". See 'District Magnitude', ACE, http://aceproject.org/ace-en/topics/es/esd/esd02/esd02e/esd02e01?toc

[24] For instance, the London area's 73 constituencies make for 7 new Electoral Districts (3 of them with 11 seats) if the current boundaries of the London region are to be kept. Alternatively, there could be 8 EDs of 8 seats and one of 9.

[25] In the UK, a substantial proportion of residents in a constituency, sometimes over half, are not aware of their MP's name.

[26] This alternative takes into account the problem of a majority-winning candidate not being given the seat won. So in the exception mentioned, the 3rd-ranked or even the 2nd-ranked parties would not be granted their proportional share of the seats in that ED, thus introducing more disproportionality.

[27] The Sainte-Laguë method is similar except that it only uses the distribution numbers from columns 1, 3, 5, 7, 9 to allocate the seat. And Column 1, instead of being the same as the party's total, is divided by 1.4 [No explanation for this integer has been found].

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