



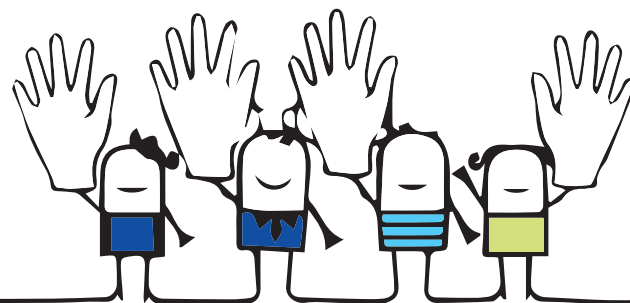
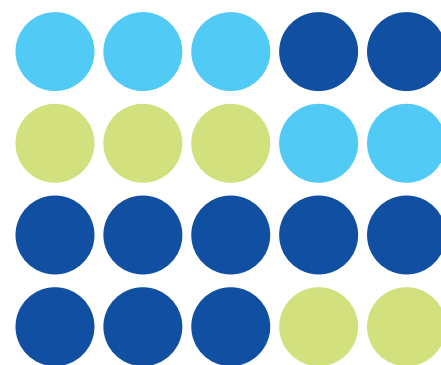
GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO
MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS

Q&A
Questions & Answers

Proportional Representation

Proportional Representation (PR) is a voting method that ensures the representation in the elections is equivalent to the votes cast for the various parties by the electorates. This means that Proportional Representation gives a more accurate representation of the will of the electorate.

This will be the first time that Proportional Representation will be used to determine the placement of Aldermen to Councils. As this is a new system being implemented, there will be some questions about it. Listed below are questions and answers to assist in bringing clarity about this new electoral system.



What is Proportional Representation?

Proportional Representative is a voting method that ensures the representation in the elections is equivalent to the votes cast for the various parties by the electorates. In the case of this year's Local Government Elections, the number of Aldermen to be selected from a party in each Council is to be worked out by a system of Proportional Representation.

How does this electoral system work?

There are different systems of Proportional Representation. The system being used is the H-A-R-E quota system which is named after its inventor. Simply put, this means that the largest remainder of votes is used to determine which party will obtain another seat. The quota is the minimum number of votes required for a party or candidate to capture a seat.

How is Proportional Representation (H.A.R.E System) different from 'First Past the Post' System?

First Past the Post system ensures that the candidate with the highest overall votes takes all. Therefore if Party A receives the most votes Party A wins the Council seat. Proportional Representative System (H.A.R.E system) ensures that each party obtains a representative if each party obtains the quota necessary to gain a seat.

How is the quota calculated?

There are fourteen (14) corporations, each corporation possesses a council, each council will be allotted four (4) aldermen.

For example, if the Diego Martin Regional Corporation has 10 electoral districts and five candidates representing five political parties contesting the polls and the total number of valid votes cast in Diego Martin is 20,000, and there is room for four aldermen on the Council, this means that the Party of Candidate would have to secure at least 5,000 valid votes to be allocated an Alderman:

Electorate / Number of Aldermen allocated to Corporation
20,000 / 4= 5,000

Therefore, for every 5,000 votes a political party or independent candidate receives, they would be allocated an Alderman. However, this is in a perfect scenario. What happens if a Candidate of a Political Party or Independent Candidate falls short of the required amount of valid votes to appoint an Alderman? The seats will be distributed based on the highest surplus of the remaining votes.



Using Diego Martin Regional Corporation as an example:

- Candidate A- 8,000 votes**
- Candidate B- 6,500 votes**
- Candidate C- 5,500 votes**

TOTAL # OF VALID VOTES= 20,000

However, the required amount of valid votes a Candidate should receive to be able to appoint an Alderman is 5,000. As it stands, all of the candidates would appoint one candidate.

To determine which Candidate gets the last seat, the required amount of valid votes to appoint an Alderman has to be subtracted from the amount of votes secured by the Candidate and whichever Candidate has the largest remainder of votes cast would be allocated the last seat:

- Candidate A- 8,000 votes – 5000 votes = 3,000 votes (remaining votes)**
- Candidate B- 6,500 votes – 5000 votes = 1,500 votes (remaining votes)**
- Candidate C- 5,500 votes – 5000 votes = 500 votes (remaining votes)**

For Example:

Each Party Has candidates for Councillors	Votes Received	ALLOCATION for seats of aldermen on the council	The party with the highest remaining votes gets the remaining seat for an alderman on council
Candidate for Councillor from party A	8,000 votes (this party wins the seat as Councillor only)	$8000/5000=1.6$ (gets 1 alderman in Council)	$8000-5000=3000$ remaining votes
Candidate for Councillor from party B	6,500	$6000/5000=1.3$ (gets 1 alderman in Council)	$5000-5000=1,000$ remaining votes
Candidate for Councillor from party C (independent)	5,500	$5500/5000=1.1$ (gets 1 alderman in Council)	$5200-5000=500$ remaining votes
No other Party	5,500	There is a remaining alderman but no other party.	Party A gets the remaining alderman as he has the highest extra votes.

Therefore, the Party that has the largest amount of the remainder of valid votes cast shall obtain the last allotted seat. In this example it would be Party A that has the majority after the quota is removed.

This system of allocation of seats to contesting Political Parties after the results of elections is used in several countries in the Region and Internationally. The overall, general sense is that such a system affords Political Parties whose candidates have garnered substantial amounts of votes to get the opportunity to have seats in government and have a voice on issues affecting the governance or otherwise of the Councils.

What are the advantages of the Proportional Representation System?

- There are many advantages to the implementation of this new system;
- Each party will get a fairer representation.
 - It reduces marginalization
 - Facilitates the voice of minority parties with a substantial number of votes
 - It gives choice to a wide cross-section of citizens

Who is a Candidate?

A person who at that election is elected to serve in the House of Representatives, the Municipal Council or Tobago House of Assembly or a person who is nominated as a candidate at that election.

Who is an Alderman?

The Alderman is a member of a municipal assembly or council. They shall be persons who qualify to be councillors and who possess demonstrated knowledge, expertise or experience in professional or vocational occupations suitable to the development of the Municipality.

What is the difference between a Councillor and an Alderman?

A Councillor has an electoral district directly under his/her management while an Alderman, participates in the governance of the community and sits on the council. In the context of the Local Government election carded to take place on October 21, 2013, a List of Aldermen will be generated as representative of each political party: When the electorate votes for a councillor, a vote is simultaneously being cast for the candidates on that Party's List of Aldermen.

What is a Municipality?

A municipality is an urban district, city, town or borough with powers of self governance through a local authority.

They are listed as;

- The City of Port of Spain
- The City of San Fernando
- The Borough of Chaguanas
- The Borough of Point Fortin
- The Borough of Arima
- The Region of Penal/Debe
- The Region of Couva-Tabaquite- Talparo
- The Region of Princes Town
- The Region of Mayaro/ Rio Claro
- The Region of Sangre Grande
- The Region of Tunapuna/Piarco
- The Region of San Juan/ Laventille
- The Region of Diego Martin
- The Region of Siparia

How many Councillors are voted in?

At the Local Government Elections on October 21, 2013, there will be one (1) Councillor voted into each electoral district. The Councillors are voted in by First Past the Post and the Aldermen are appointed by Proportional Representation.

What is a Corporation?

A Corporation is the body corporate constituted by the Mayor, Aldermen, Councillors and Electors of any of the cities, towns, districts or places.

What happens if a vacancy arises?

At the time of nomination of candidates for Councillors, the relevant party would also nominate candidates for aldermen on a list to be called the list of aldermen. The amount of names on the list submitted by each party will be equal in number to the number of councillors to be elected in council.

Where, during the life of the council, a person on the list of aldermen of a party becomes disqualified from serving for any reason unable to serve as an aldermen the relevant party may submit to the Elections and Boundaries Commission the name of the substitute alderman. In other words, you will always have representation.

