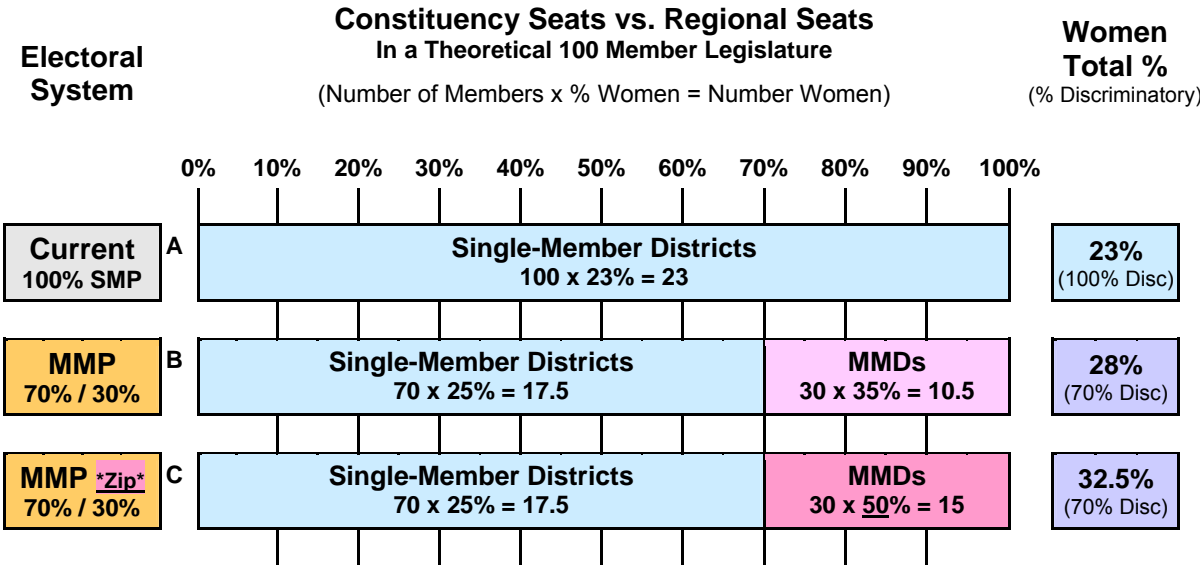


Single-Member Districts – The Fundamental Flaw of MMP

Breakdown of Women's Representation by System



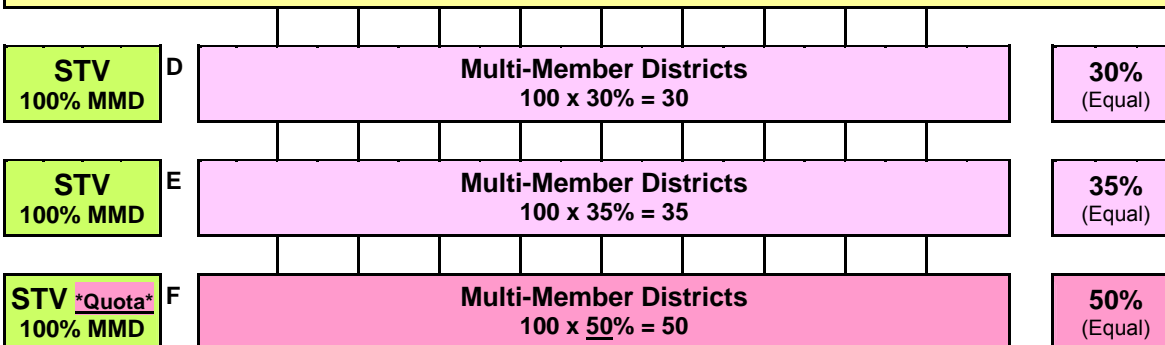
The Fundamental Flaw of MMP

MMP takes on all the flaws of Single-Member Districts (SMD) and tries to cure them with a second tier of Multi-Member District MPPs. The OCA's MMP model has 70% SMDs & 30% MMDs.

Mixed-member systems (MMP & MMM) would try to cope with a "Boil Water Advisory" (like we had in Vancouver and you had in Walkerton) by diluting your tap water, 70 / 30 with bottled water.

MMP retains the discrimination against women (& others) and the high levels of False Representation from the Single-Member Districts of our current system. No amount of watering down can cure these SMD flaws.

Using only multi-member districts, like with STV, avoids this systemic SMD discrimination.



* The current percentage of women in SMP districts (23%) may increase to 25% if successful female regional candidates can make the leap to constituency seats. The adjustment might take place in 8 to 12 years (2 or 3 elections with MMP). 25% is used in calculations to give MMP the benefit of the doubt.

Why MMP is Worse for Women than STV (& Other Under Represented Groups)

It's a mixed system, incorporating most of the undesirable characteristics of FPTP. The OCA's MMP is composed of 70% Single-Member Districts (SMDs) which will systemically discriminate against women & limit diversity.

Mixed Member Proportional Systems

The Multi-Member District part of MMP does a good job of providing province wide proportionality by using a compensatory method of seat allocation. It looks at the percentage of votes a party gets, and how many constituency seats it won, and then compensates the party for the missing seats, so that the overall result is proportional.

Unfortunately, for women, MMP is not compensatory. It doesn't look at how many women should be elected (52%) and then add women to the Legislature to get 52%. Instead, MMP accepts the discriminatory results of the Single-Member Districts (Constituency Seats) and simply adds the women elected from Multi-Member Districts (Provincial List).

With MMP, the improved results for women, from the List Seats, are always watered down by the discriminatory results from the Constituency Seats.

For this reason, MMP is always discriminatory, and not a very good performer for women. Even with closed zippered lists, MMP is not a great performer. There is always the watering down effect of the SMDs. Also, if Ontario is like BC, closed lists are not an option. The SMDs establish an upper limit of women's representation that mathematically cannot be broken.

MMP Segregates Women Away from Government: Most government seats are Constituency Seats (86%). (See next page) MMP adds women mostly to the List Seats, mostly held by Opposition MPPs.

Single Transferable Vote Systems

STV only has Multi-Member Districts, and therefore is not corrupted by Single-Member District discrimination. All STV MPPs are equal.

STV will always out perform MMP, as long as the jurisdiction's culture is the same.

Options B & E predict 35% women in Multi-Member Districts. Option D shows that STV with 30% outperforms MMP with 35%. Options C & F are quota based, indicating maximum benefit possible.

Multi-Member Districts in MMP & STV Help Women Similarly

DM Possible Ratios of Men & Women Candidates in Multi-Member Districts for Both MMP & STV

DM	M	F	SMDs		Male Candidate	Female Candidate	Unlikely Ratios	Probable Ratios	Ideal Ratios
1*	M 0%	F 100%			M	F	<20%	33.3%	50%
2	M 0%	M 50%	F 100%						
3	M 0%	M 33.3%	M 66.7%	F 100%					
4	M 0%	M 25%	M 50%	M 75%	F 100%				
5	M 0%	M 20%	M 40%	M 60%	M 80%	F 100%			
6	M 0%	M 16.7%	M 33.3%	M 50%	M 66.7%	M 83.3%	F 100%		
7	M 0%	M 14.3%	M 28.6%	M 42.9%	M 57.1%	M 71.4%	M 85.7%	F 100%	

* Only option for FPTP & MMP Single-Member Districts

This diagram shows the increased possibilities for women with MMDs compared to the single-member districts of FPTP & MMP.

John: "Wow, we certainly don't want that car. Look how slow it goes."
 Susan: "It's a Porsche being driven by an eighty year old. It's not a slow car, it's being driven slowly. Which car would you prefer?"
 John: "The other one's going much faster. I want that one."
 Susan: "It's a 15 year old economy compact being driven by a teenage boy. It's a slow car being driven as fast as it can go."
 John: "The Porsche is the slowest car on the road, and I'll prove it by getting all my friends to say so."

Electoral systems are a little like cars. How well cars perform depend on how fast they can mechanically go and also on how fast they're driven. How well an electoral system performs depends on the mechanics of the system and on how the culture of its jurisdiction takes advantage of its possibilities.

Woman's Representation – Statistics

- MMP performs well in **New Zealand** with 32.2% and poorly in **Albania** with 7.1%.
- STV performs well in the **Australian Senate** with 35.5%, **Tasmania (Lower House)**, (an Australian State that has had STV since 1896, with an electoral system similar to OCA's STV, DMs = 5), (2006 Election), 36% women, and poorly in **Malta** with 9.2%.
- (AV in Australian Lower House elects 24.7% women.)

Statistics show that depending on the jurisdiction and the exact design of the system, both MMP & STV can perform reasonably well, or very poorly.

In Ontario, the same culture would be operating on both MMP and STV. Therefore the mechanics of the systems is the critical factor.

The Mechanism of Multi-Member Districts is Similar for Both MMP & STV

Both MMP & STV use Multi-Member Districts (MMD) to reduce the discrimination caused by Single-Member Districts. STV replaces all SMDs & the OCA's MMP replaces 30% of SMDs.

For the purpose of electing women, an MMP district and an STV district of the same district magnitude would operate in the same way. Without the SMD pressure for parties to select a white male candidate, parties can put forward as many women and as much diversity as they want or are pressured to put forward by the public. Parties which do not put forward balanced and diverse slates of candidates will lose votes. (See Matland on Page 9)

These political party desires, competition, and public pressure operate equally on both MMP and STV MMDs. It's the same mechanism for both MMP and STV. Therefore, estimates of the performance of MMD in MMP & STV can be assumed to be the same, 35%. Page 10

The performance of Multi-Member Districts (MMD) for both MMP & STV depends on how many MMD there are and also on the District Magnitude (DM) of the districts. More MMDs are better & higher DMs are better.

MMP has fewer multi-member districts & smaller DMs, than STV.

Location of Government MPPs Elected Under MMP (2003 Estimate) (From Sub. #1249)					
MMP Plan	# MPPs (Local / Reg.)	# of Regions	# Local Gov't MPPs (%)	# Regional Gov't MPPs (%)	Total MPPs
A	139 (87/52)	11	57 (87.7%)	8 (12.3%)	65
B	135 (82/53)	15	55 (85.9%)	9 (14.1)	64

Women's Representation & Diversity

The Importance of Multi-Member Districts, District Magnitude, and Open or Closed Lists Excerpts from Richard Maitland - Summary by Craig Henschel

Excerpts from:

(Underlines are mine.)

Enhancing Women's Political Participation: Legislative Recruitment & Electoral Systems

By Richard Matland, University of Houston Texas, Chapter 3, *Women in Parliament: Beyond the Numbers, A Revised Edition*, International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, 2005. <http://www.idea.int/publications/wip2/index.cfm>

"When considering women's representation, a crucial factor is whether the electoral system has SMDs where only one legislator is elected in the district, or a multi-member district (MMD) system where several MPs are elected from each electoral district." Page 99

2.1. The Advantages of PR Systems

"The obvious question is why countries with PR electoral systems should show such a strong increase in representation and plurality/majority systems show such a modest effect? There are a number of explanations. First, PR systems have consistently higher district magnitudes, which lead to higher party magnitudes. (District magnitude is the number of seats per district; party magnitude is the number of seats a party wins in a district.) Party and district magnitudes are important because they affect party strategy when choosing candidates. The party gatekeepers, who choose candidates, will have a different set of concerns and incentives depending upon the electoral system.

When district magnitude is one, as it is in almost all plurality/majority systems, the party can nominate one person per district. By definition, the party has no chance to balance the party ticket. In nominating decisions in single-member districts, female candidates must compete directly against all men; and often when nominating a woman a party must explicitly deny the aspirations of the most powerful male politician in the same district. When district magnitude increases, the chance that a party will win several seats in the district increases. When a party expects to win several seats, it will be much more conscious of trying to balance its ticket. Gatekeepers will divide winning slots on the party list among various internal party interests, including, possibly, women's interests.

There are several reasons for this balancing process. First, party gatekeepers see balance as a way of attracting voters. Rather than having to look for a single candidate who can appeal to a broad range of voters, party gatekeepers think in terms of different candidates appealing to specific sub-groups of voters. Candidates with ties to different groups and different sectors of society may help attract voters to their party. A woman candidate can be seen as a benefit to the party by attracting voters without requiring the most powerful intra-party interests represented by men to step aside, as would be required in a plurality/majority system. Conversely, failing to provide some balance, that is, nominating only men, could have the undesirable effect of driving voters away.

A second reason is that within the party balancing the ticket is often seen as a matter of equity. Different factions in the party will argue that it is only fair that one of their representatives should be among those candidates who have a genuine chance of winning. Especially when a women's branch of the party has been established and is active in doing a significant amount of the

party's work, women can argue that equity requires that they get some of the slots in winnable positions. A third reason for balancing the slate is that dividing safe seats among the various factions within the party is a way of maintaining party peace and assuring the continued support of the different factions.

Proportional representation systems can also help women because a process of 'contagion' is more likely to occur in these systems than in plurality/majority systems." Page 101

"2.2. Why Some PR Systems are Better than Others

While proportional representation systems are more advantageous for women, not all PR systems are to be equally preferred. There are two particular aspects that can help or hinder women's representation within the broader umbrella of PR systems.

Higher district magnitude: parties have the chance to compete for and win several seats, allowing them to go further down the party lists, where women are usually listed.

High electoral thresholds: these discourage the creation of 'mini-parties' which often elect only one or two representatives, usually male." Page 103

"2.3. Type of Electoral List

Another distinction between different PR systems is that some systems have closed party lists, where the party determines the rank-ordering of candidates, and some have open party lists, where the voters are able to influence which of the party's candidates are elected by means of personal voting. The crucial question is whether it is easier to convince voters to actively vote for women candidates, or to convince party gatekeepers that including more women on the party lists in prominent positions is both fair and, more importantly, strategically wise. I suspect that the answer varies from country to country." Page 104

"Under preferential voting systems such as the Single Transferable Vote (STV) or open list PR voting systems, being a woman may be an advantage or a disadvantage. To the degree that women organize and actively encourage the striking out of male names and voting for female names, this procedure can produce a surprisingly strong showing by women." Page 98

For the initial version of this Handbook, published eight years ago, on the basis of the limited empirical work that had been done up to that point, I cautiously suggested that closed lists were preferable. Since then further research has analysed the effect of the open-list system in several countries. The most recent research indicates that it is not possible to make a general recommendation: the effects of open-list systems on women's representation in fact vary dramatically, depending on the party's supportiveness of women's candidacies. Page 105

Furthermore, Gregory Schmidt found in Peru that open-list voting did not disadvantage women. Women activists in Peru ran a campaign urging voters to give their preferential votes to 'one of each' (i.e. pick one man and one woman) and this led to female candidates in open-list voting doing as well as men. Based on a review of this (admittedly limited) research, it would appear that no strong or unambiguous recommendation can be made one way or the other in terms of whether preferential voting helps or hurts women. Page 10