

Representation in Canada: How Close Are Governments to Citizens' Preferences?

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Abstract

I apply two approaches, ideological congruence and the representation of party preferences, to evaluate how well governments formed in Canada following elections held since 2000 represent Canadians' preferences. I first show that Canadians have centrist preferences, but, nevertheless, have distinct evaluations of each party. I then show that governments in Canada most of the time score highly on three of four criteria for evaluating representation. If coalition governments had been formed following these elections they would have improved party preference representation on at least one criterion but only improved ideological congruence when the Conservative Party of Canada governed, because the Liberals share the position of the median voter. I then show that changes in the representation of party preferences matter more for determining citizens' satisfaction with democracy than changes in ideological congruence. I thus conclude that we should care about how well represented party preferences are. By this standard, there are clear trade-offs involved in moving towards more proportional governments.

After Justin Trudeau became prime minister in fall 2015, many Canadians have engaged in debates about changing Canada's electoral system. Such debates have overwhelmingly focused on the representation of Canadians' vote choice. A common claim is that millions of votes are wasted. However, assessments of the representation in Canada on the basis of the representation of votes is extremely limiting. According to the 2015 Canadian Election Study, 44.8% of voters decided how to vote during the election campaign and 13.9% of voters decided how to vote on the day of the election itself. If such preferences were formed so recently is their representation really an appropriate benchmark for the current system. I instead suggest that analyses of the current system should go beyond vote choice and focus on how well represented citizens preferences are.

In recent years, a considerable number of comparative studies have considered how well represented citizens' preferences are. Several approaches have been used to assess the quality of representation. These include ideological congruence (e.g. Blais and Bodet, 2006; Golder and Lloyd, 2014), policy responsiveness (e.g. Bartels, 2008; Gilens, 2012; Soroka and Wlezien, 2010), and the representation of party preferences (Blais, Guntermann and Bodet, 2016). Many studies have focused exclusively on the United States. While Canada does figure prominently in the analyses by Soroka and Wlezien (2010), to my knowledge, little work has focused on how well represented preferences are in Canada. It is particularly important to evaluate representation in this country in the present context of debates over electoral reform. Scholars should understand how well represented Canadians' preferences are compared to how well represented these could be under an alternative system.

Especially relevant for the present debate is the conventional opposition between majoritarian and proportional visions of democracy. In the majoritarian view, the party that wins a majority (or at least a plurality) of votes has a mandate to govern and thus should be allowed to govern on its own. It should then be held accountable by voters in the following election. In the proportional (or consensus) approach, governments should represent the greatest proportion of citizens possible, whether in their composition or by allowing a wider

range of actors to participate in policymaking (Lijphart, 1999; Powell, 2000).

Canada is presently clearly a majoritarian system. Elections are held using single member plurality and the party that wins elections in Canada always has formed a single-party government. The major alternative system would be a proportional electoral system, which would nearly guarantee that governments in Canada would be coalitions of two or more parties. In this paper, I thus consider how well represented Canadians' preferences are in the current system by focusing on governments formed following elections held since 2000. I compare representation under these governments to that under alternative coalition governments that could have been formed. I also assess how well represented the preferences of traditionally advantaged groups (men, the rich, citizens born in Canada) are compared to those of disadvantaged groups (women, the poor, and immigrants).

In this paper, I rely on data from the 2000, 2004, 2006, 2008, 2011, and 2015 Canadian Election Studies (CES). I apply four criteria to evaluate the quality of representation in Canada. The first criterion is ideological congruence, meaning how close governments are to citizens' preferences on the left-right ideological dimension (e.g. Blais and Bodet, 2006; Golder and Lloyd, 2014). The other three consider how well citizens' evaluations of parties are reflected in the composition of governments in Canada (Blais, Guntermann and Bodet, 2016). The first of these party preference criteria is the proportion of citizens whose preferred party is in cabinet. The second is whether the overall most liked party is in government. The last is how well liked parties in government are compared to parties in opposition.

We will see that, if we rely on the left-right dimension to evaluate representation, Canada already has perfect representation when the Liberal Party governs. Any alternative coalition government would include parties that are further from most Canadians' preferences, thus worsening representation. Coalitions would only improve representation if they were alliances between the Conservatives and a party that is closer to Canadians' preferences rather than a single-party Conservative government. Coalition governments may, however, increase the proportion of citizens whose preferred party is in government. We must, nevertheless,

consider the influence it has on the representation of all party preferences. We will see that there may be trade-offs involves in moving towards governments that are made up of more than one party. In the final section of this paper, in an analysis of panel data, we will see that the representation of party preferences matters most in determining Canadians' levels of satisfaction with democracy. Consequently, we should consider the implications of greater proportionality for their representation.

The Nature of Canadians' Preferences

In order to assess how well represented Canadians' preferences are, it is first necessary to consider the nature of those preferences. Figure 1 shows the proportions of CES respondents who identified with each of the 11 points on the left-right ideological scale in 2015. Respondents who did not provide an answer were excluded from the graph. We can see that the modal category is the midpoint, 5 (it is also the mean and the median). Slightly more than a third of respondents provided this response.

Figure 1: Left-Right Positions of CES Respondents in 2015

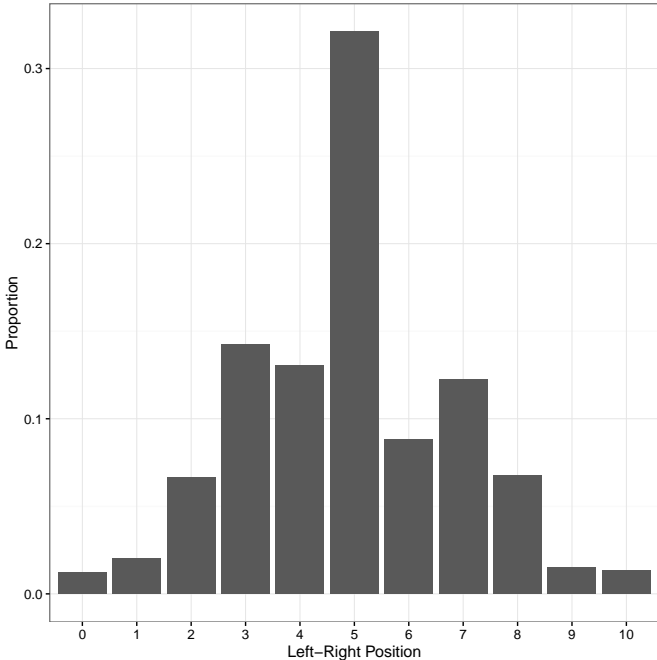


Figure 2 shows distributions of ideological positions in different segments of the population. The left graph compares men and women. The centre graph compares high (greater than or equal to \$110,000) and low income (under \$30,000) respondents. The graph on the right compares people who were born in Canada to those who were born outside the country. If the top of a bar is light grey, that means that the proportion of people in the disadvantaged group (women, the poor, immigrants) who gave a particular position is greater than the proportion of the advantaged group (men, the rich, Canadian born) who identified with that position. The main point to observe is that women and poor Canadians tended to identify with the centre of the distribution more than men and rich Canadians. Conversely, people who were born in Canada were more likely than immigrants to identify with the centre of the scale. Consequently, women, the poor, and native-born Canadians should be advantaged by centrist governments.

Figure 2: Left-Right Positions of Subsets of CES Respondents in 2015

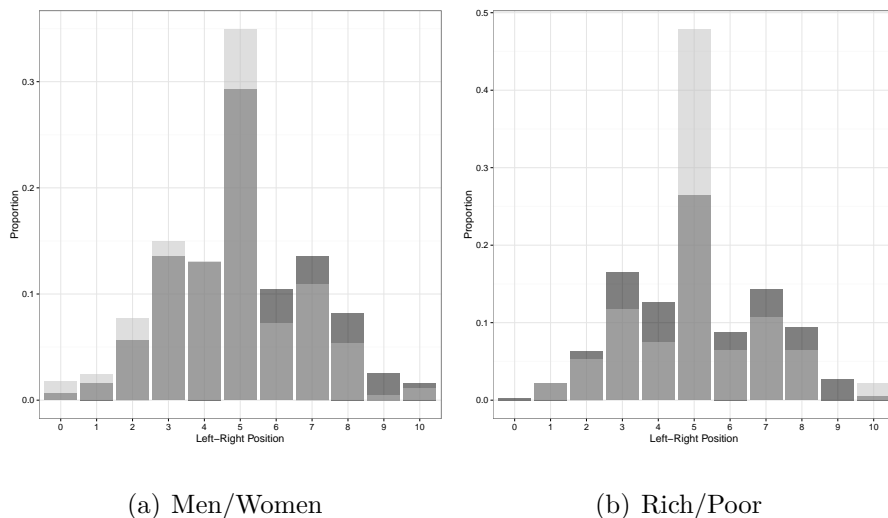


Figure 3 shows the distribution of the number of unique party evaluations CES respondents provided in 2015. In other words, it counts how many parties people gave different numbers of distinct party ratings. Party evaluations are responses to questions asked in all Canadian Election Studies about how much people like/dislike parties on a scale from 0 to 100 where 0 means they strongly dislike a party and 100 means they strongly like it.

The modal number of ratings was 4 (the mean and median were 3). Note that in Quebec, the maximum number of possible unique ratings was 5, due to the presence of the Bloc Québécois there. In the rest of Canada, it was 4. We can see that almost half of respondents provide the maximum number of distinct evaluations of parties. Moreover, about four out of five respondents provided three or more distinct scores, showing that the vast majority of Canadians have feelings towards parties that go beyond their vote choice. Thus, in spite of being concentrated in the centre of the left-right scale, Canadians have complex party evaluations. They have different feelings towards different parties. These reflect much more than their vote choice. If party evaluations were merely based on Canadians' vote choice, they would only have two distinct preferences, one for the party they support and one for all other parties which they do not.

Figure 4 shows the number of distinct evaluations among subgroups of Canadians. We can see that men and women have similar numbers of unique party preferences. However, rich citizens are more likely than poor citizens to provide a single unique evaluation and to provide three, while the poor are more likely to provide four or five distinct ratings. Immigrants are slightly more likely than native-born Canadians to provide a single distinct party rating, while Canadians who were born in Canada are slightly more likely to have two and five distinct preferences. The latter is probably due to the fact that the Bloc Québécois is present in Quebec and there are fewer immigrants in Quebec. Overall, Figure 4 shows that all groups of Canadians have multiple distinct party evaluations.

Figure 3: Numbers of Distinct Party Evaluations Provided by CES Respondents in 2015

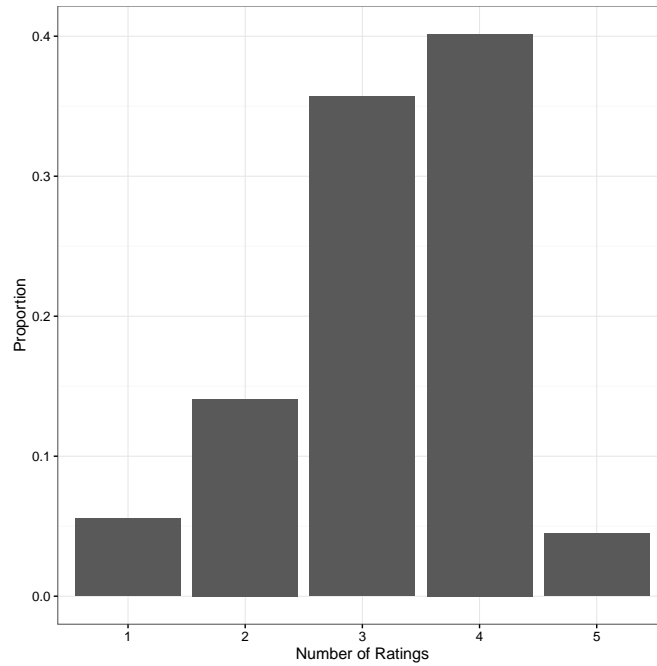
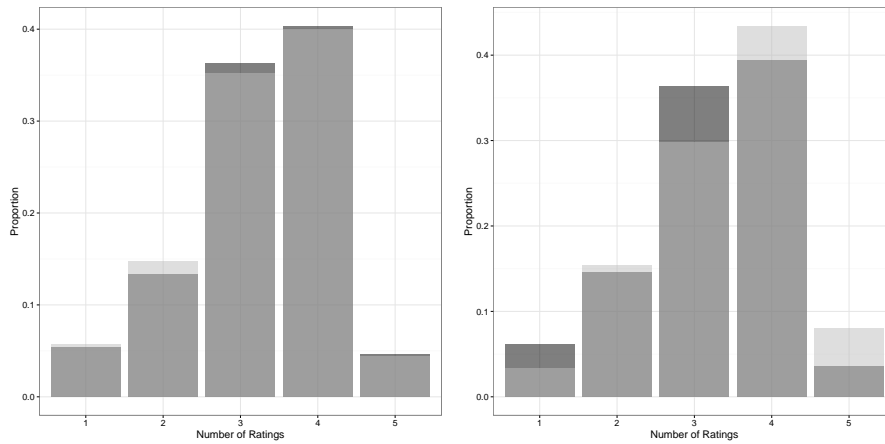


Figure 4: Number of Distinct Party Evaluations Provided by Subsets of CES Respondents in 2015



(a) Men/Women

(b) Rich/Poor

The Quality of Representation since 2000

In this section I evaluate the quality of representation of governments in Canada since 2000 using the criterion of ideological congruence and the three criteria of party preference representation.

Criterion 1: How Close Are Governments to Canadians on the Left-Right Scale?

Table 1 shows the average distance between Canadian citizens' self-placements on the left-right dimension and the position of the party in government. It, like the other tables and graph in this section, assesses representation under the government that actually formed (indicated by an asterisk) and other possible governments. Simulated coalitions include the parties in proportion to their proportions of seats in the House of Commons. I only consider governments that included one of the two main parties (Conservative and Liberal) and up to one other party that received representation in Parliament. I also only consider coalitions between the centrist party (Liberals) and the other parties. Coalitions between the Conservative Party and left-wing parties are unlikely. Left-right placement questions were not asked in 2000. I thus did not assess congruence following that election.

I measure congruence using the approach Golder and Stramski (2010) call "absolute citizen congruence". It is calculated by taking the absolute value of the difference between each citizen's self-placement on the left-right position of the government and the position of the government (93). I do not use assess "relative citizen congruence", which scales absolute citizen congruence by the dispersion of preferences, because I compare congruence in the same country during a relatively short period of time (2000 to 2015). Ideological positions are unlikely to have be more or less spread out among different parties or at different points in time.

Like Blais and Bodet (2006); Golder and Stramski (2010), I use citizens' perceptions

of governing parties' positions to determine the position of the party in government. This approach has the advantage of placing citizens and governments on the same left-right scale (Blais and Bodet 2006, 1248; Golder and Stramski 2010, 99). However, while Golder and Stramski (2010) use the median party placement of the most educated citizens, on the assumption that placements by less educated respondents are less likely to reflect real positions. I use the median placement by all citizens, because sophisticated citizens are likely to rely on rationalization when placing parties on the ideological dimension (Achen and Bartels, 2016).

We can see that Liberal governments always maximize congruence, while Conservative governments minimize it. Coalitions between the Liberals and any other party would increase the distance between Canadians' on the left-right scale and the government. If the Conservative Party were to form coalition governments with the Liberals, congruence would improve compared to single-party Conservative governments. The same would be true if the Liberals had formed a government with the NDP instead of the Conservatives in 2006, 2008, and 2011. The explanation is that Canadians are overwhelmingly centrist. Thus, the closer the government is to the centre, the higher congruence is. According to this criterion, representation is best when the Liberals govern. Coalitions are only useful to minimize the distance between citizens and a non-centrist governing party like the Conservatives.

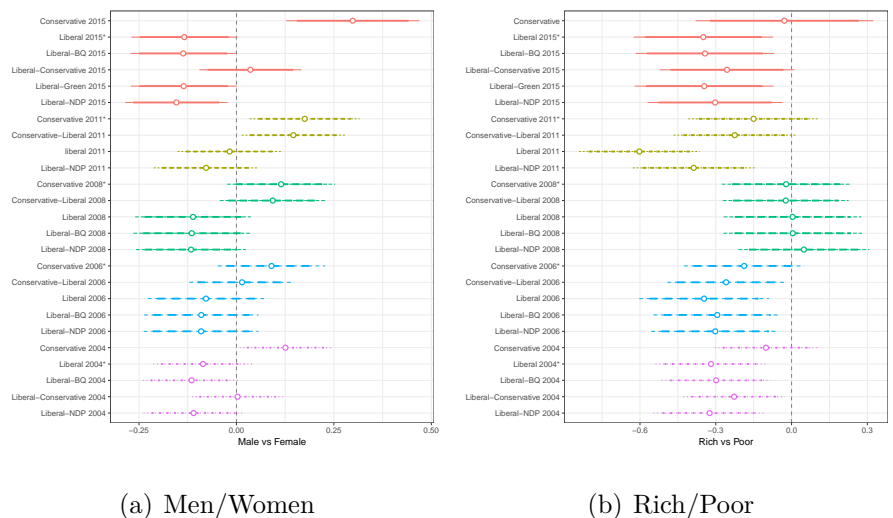
Table 1: Mean Distance between Citizens and Governments on the Left-Right Dimension

	2004	2006	2008	2011	2015
Liberal	1.23*	1.23	1.23	1.37	1.51*
Liberal-NDP	1.23	1.30	1.37	1.71	1.56
Liberal-BQ	1.29	1.31	1.22		1.52
Liberal-Green					1.51
Conservative	1.59	1.59*	1.87*	2.16*	2.59
Liberal-Conservative	1.38	1.43	1.74	2.00	1.73

Is ideological congruence stronger for some groups than for others? Figure 5 shows regres-

sion coefficients in which each citizens' absolute distance from the government is regressed on a dummy distinguishing females from males, the poor from the rich, and immigrants from native-born Canadians. Because representation is best when the distance between citizens and governments is smallest, the coefficients on these dummies (indicating disadvantaged groups) allow me to assess how much better represented the advantaged group (men, the rich, and native-born) is compared to the corresponding disadvantaged group (women, the poor, and immigrants). Each graph includes 90% and 95% confidence intervals. To make it easier to distinguish governments formed (or that could have been formed) after each election, confidence intervals for each election are in different colours and line types.

Figure 5: Differences in Ideological Congruence Among Groups of Canadians



The left graph shows how much better represented men are compared to women. We can see that all Conservative governments that were formed (2006, 2008, and 2011) or that could have been formed (2004 and 2015) better represent men than women. Liberal-Conservative coalitions would have closed the gap in 2004 and 2015. We can also see that there is no gap in representation between men and women in governments led by Liberals. This can be explained by the fact that there are more women in the centre.

Now, looking at the middle graph, we can see that the two Liberal governments (2004 and 2015) slightly overrepresented the poor relative to the rich, while the three Conservative

governments equally reflected the preferences of the rich and the poor. Hypothetical Liberal governments in 2006 and 2011 (but not 2008) would also have overrepresented the poor. In sum, by the criterion of ideological congruence, the poor do pretty well. They are as well represented as the rich when the Conservatives govern and better represented than them when the Liberals are in government. This result can be explained by their concentration in the centre of the left-right dimension.

The graph on the right shows how much better (or worse) represented native-born Canadians are compared to immigrants. We can see that there were never any significant differences between these two groups except in 2011, when a Liberal government would have been closer to the preferences of citizens who were born in Canada.

In sum, governments in Canada are closest to Canadians' left-right preferences when the Liberals are in government. Coalitions would improve the government congruence compared to single-party Conservative governments, particularly with respect to the preferences of women. We will see below, however, that this criterion of representation is not the most important determinant of representation.

Criterion 2: What Proportion of Canadians' Most Liked Parties Are in Government?

Table 2 shows the proportion of Canadians' whose preferred party was in government following each of the federal elections since the 2000 election. It also shows the proportions of Canadians whose favourite parties would have been in government if instead of the single-party governments that actually did form, two-party coalitions had come to power. I first determined for each CES respondent the party they rated highest. When there was a tie, I randomly selected one of the parties they rated highest. I then consider whether their preferred party was part of the government formed following each election. Note that, in this subsection and in those that follow, I do not assess representation under a single-party Conservative government in 2000, since that party received only 4% of seats in the election

held that year.

Table 2: Percentage of Canadians Whose Most Liked Party Is in Government (%)

	2000	2004	2006	2008	2011	2015
Liberal	49.5*	41.1*	39.2	33.3	31.0	39.2*
Liberal-NDP	61.5	60.6	57.4	52.3	55.1	60.3
Liberal-BQ	59.2	52.9	49.4	44.9	41.2	43.1
Liberal-Green					40.9	49.6
Conservative		41.6	38.9*	48.1*	44.1*	41.2
Liberal-Conservative	63.1	68.9	68.8	69.0	66.2	69.0
Liberal-Alliance	73.0					

As we can see the quality of representation by this criterion is modest. The highest proportion whose most liked party was in government was 37.9%. The present Liberal government is formed by the preferred party of the smallest proportion of Canadians (28.5%). The proportion of citizens whose preferences are satisfied is thus usually between 3 and 4 out of 10. It would be higher if there were coalition governments, especially ‘grand coalitions’ between the Liberals and Conservatives, which always represent at least half of Canadians’ favourite parties. Liberal-NDP alliances also would represent more than half of citizens’ preferences in half of the elections considered (2000, 2004, and 2015). A Liberal-Alliance coalition in 2000 would have done the same.

Criterion 2 thus points to a major weakness in the representation of party preferences in Canada. Blais, Guntermann and Bodet (2016) found that, on average in non-presidential systems, 49.5% of first preference parties are in cabinet (42.7% in non-proportional systems and 50.2% in proportional systems). This shortcoming may simply reflect the fact that many Canadians may not clearly prefer one of the centre and centre-left parties over the others.

Figure 6: Difference in Probability of Having One’s Most Liked Party in Government Across Groups

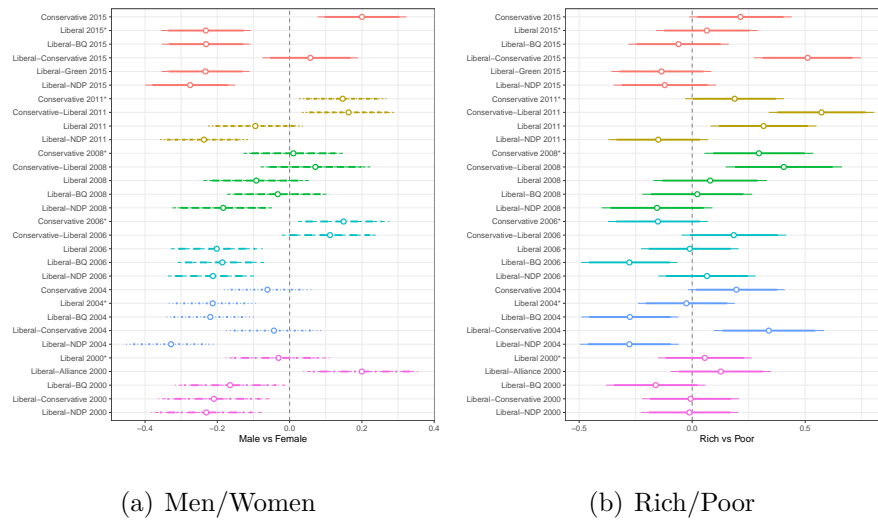


Figure 6 shows coefficients from logistic regression models in which a binary variable indicating that one’s most liked party is in cabinet is regressed on a dummy indicating that a respondent is male, rich or born in Canada. Note that the dummies are the opposite those used in Figure 5, given that positive values here (a 1 rather than a 0) indicate better representation. We can see that all three Conservative governments that were formed (2006, 2008, and 2011) and a hypothetical Conservative government in 2015 would have represented men’s preferences better than women. Liberal governments equally represent the preferences of males and females, except the current government which better represents women than men.

The middle graph shows how much better or worse represented the richest Canadians are compared to the poorest. Generally, income is not associated with the quality of representation on this criterion. However, in 2006, richer Canadians would have been more likely than the poor to find their most liked party in a Liberal government or a coalition between the Liberals and the Conservatives. In 2011, better-off Canadians were better represented than the poor under the Conservative government that formed. They also would have been more likely to find their preferred party in cabinet under a Liberal government or a coalition of the

Liberals and Conservatives. In 2015, either a Conservative or a Liberal-Conservative government would have been more likely to over-represent the preferred party of the rich. Overall, neither group is advantaged or would be over-represented under an alternative government.

The graph on the right shows that the Liberal government formed in 2000 better represented immigrants than native-born Canadians, while the Conservative government in 2008 overrepresented citizens born in Canada. Liberal governments in 2008 and 2011 alone or in coalition with any party except the Bloc Québécois would have better represented the preferences of immigrants. Thus, in general, immigrants' preferences are well reflected in the composition of governments in Canada.

In sum, criterion 2 is a major weakness overall in Canada. Generally, between 30 and 40 % of Canadians' most liked parties are in government. No groups are consistently disproportionate represented. Women tend to do better under Liberal governments. The rich have been better represented in recent years by the Conservatives. Finally, immigrants have generally done well under Liberal governments. The primary shortcoming is thus that large majorities of Canadians find, in election after election, that their preferred party is in the opposition. It may be possible to improve this situation by moving in a proportional direction.

Criterion 3: Is the Overall Most Liked Party in Government?

Criterion 3 considers the overall average rating of each party. It identifies the party with the highest rating and then determines whether it is or was in government. Table 3 shows, for each election, how much more liked the party that formed government is than the party that is next most likely to govern, the second most liked party. It shows this difference for Canadians overall and for each subgroup considered in this paper. When the second most liked party was in government but not the most liked party, I gave the difference a negative sign.

The most important finding is that, on this criterion, which is most clearly related to

the majoritarian approach to representation, governments in Canada quite accurately reflect Canadians’ preferences. The governing party was the aggregate most liked party in five of the six elections considered. The 2011 Canadian election failed to bring to power the party that was preferred in the aggregate. In that year, the preferred party was the NDP, while the Conservatives won the election. This finding is striking, because, in every single election held in a non-proportional system considered by Blais, Guntermann and Bodet (2016), the overall most liked party ended up in government. The 2011 election was thus an exceptional election.

Looking at different groups of citizens, we can see that the most liked party of men always ended up in government. Women’s most liked party did not end up in cabinet in 2006 or in 2011. In 2006, they liked the Liberals most and, in 2011, they preferred the NDP. The best-off citizens found their preferred party in cabinet following all elections except 2006, when they preferred the Liberals to the Conservatives, the preferred party of the poor at that time. The poor’s most liked party only was in government following the 2000, 2004, and 2006 elections. In 2008, 2011, and 2015, the most liked party of the poor has been the NDP, which still has not formed a government. Citizens born in Canada found their most liked party in government after all elections except 2011, when they preferred the NDP. The preferred party of immigrants was in government after four out of six elections. They preferred the Liberals to the Conservatives in 2006 and in 2011.

Table 3: Difference between the Evaluations of the Party in Government and the Most Liked Opposition Party

	2000	2004	2006	2008	2011	2015
Overall	10.73	-0.82	0.77	2.22	-0.56	1.37
Men	11.03	-1.94	2.95	3.44	0.77	1.90
Women	9.89	0.22	-1.34	0.21	-1.65	0.85
Rich	9.49	0.54	-1.21	2.30	0.29	4.56
Poor	11.21	0.36	0.83	-1.73	-3.73	-1.10

In short, elections in Canada usually bring the overall most liked party into government with the exception of the anomalous election of 2011. However, women, immigrants, and especially the poor are less likely to find their most favourite party in cabinet.

Criterion 4: Are Parties in Government More Liked than Opposition Parties?

Table 4 shows the average difference between citizens' weighted evaluations of governing and non-governing parties, where weights are the proportion of seats each parties in Parliament among parties that are, respectively, in government and in opposition. We can see that governments that have been formed following elections in Canada have always been more liked than opposition parties except the Conservative minority that was formed in 2006.

Table 4: Average Difference between the Weighted Evaluations of Government Compared to Opposition Parties

	2000	2004	2006	2008	2011	2015
Liberal	13.45*	-0.85*	-1.33	-2.10	-8.54	4.83*
Liberal-NDP	11.56	-1.74	8.80	-2.88	-0.31	5.98
Liberal-BQ	14.02	0.08	-0.27	-1.01		4.54
Liberal-Green						4.71
Conservative		0.85	0.57*	1.73*	0.57*	-5.67
Liberal-Conservative	13.11	1.24	-0.44	0.78	-0.76	0.24
Liberal-Alliance	9.07					

Coalitions may improve representation following some elections. The current government would have been almost a full point better liked relative to the opposition if the Liberals had formed a coalition with the NDP. In 2008 and 2011, however, the Conservative governments were better liked than all the alternatives. In 2006, any government including the Liberals would have been better liked than the Conservative minority that was formed. In 2004, if the

Liberals had asked the Bloc Québécois to join them in government, that government would have been slightly more than half a point more liked than the Liberal minority that was actually formed. A Liberal-Bloc Québécois government would also have slightly improved representation in 2000. Note, however, the major limitation of our ability to consider how well such a government would represent Canadians' preferences. Only CES respondents in Quebec were asked to evaluate the Bloc Québécois. Consequently, we do not know how it would affect relative evaluations of the government and opposition in the rest of Canada. Thus, it is only clear that coalition governments would have improved representation on this criterion following the 2006 and 2015 elections.

Figure 7: Difference in Relative Evaluations of Government and Opposition Parties Across Groups

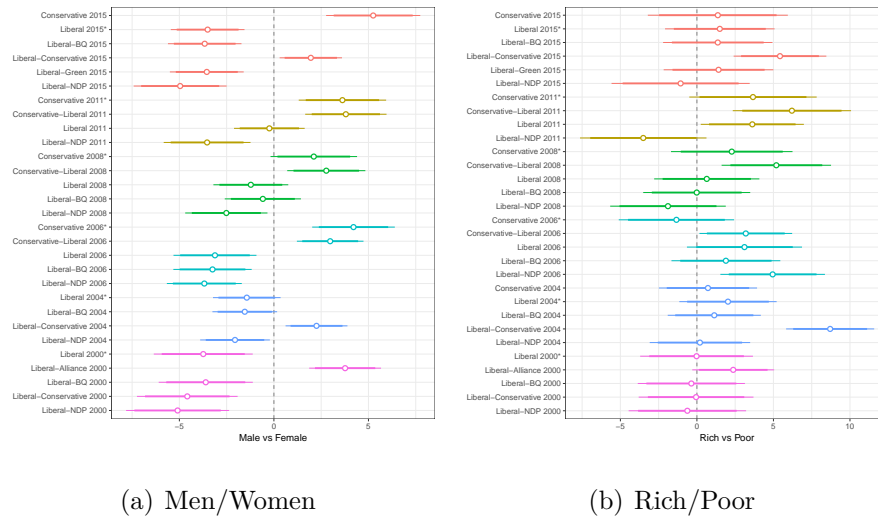


Figure 7 shows coefficients on the dummies for males, for the rich, and for people born in Canada. We can see in the left graph that the Liberal governments formed in 2000 and 2015 were better liked relative to the opposition by women than men. This is true of all possible coalitions except those with the Canadian Alliance in 2000 and that with the Conservatives in 2015. The 2004 Liberal minority government did not privilege either sex. The 2006 and 2011 Conservative governments were more liked by men than women. This would have been true even if they had included the Liberals. The 2008 conservative government was not more liked

by men, but a coalition of the Conservatives and the Liberals would have been. The middle graph shows that none of the governments that were actually formed better represented either the best or worst off. Conservative-Liberal coalitions, which we showed would lead to the greatest satisfaction of first choices, would actually have given the rich an advantage in 2008, 2011 and 2015. This would also have been the case following a Liberal-NDP coalition in 2006 or a Liberal-Bloc Québécois government in 2004. In the right graph, we can see that the only government that over-represented native-born Canadians was the Conservative minority formed in 2008. The Liberal government of 2000 was more liked relative to the opposition by immigrants. There was no difference under any other government. A coalition including the Liberals would have led to immigrants being overrepresented in 2008 instead of native-born Canadians. All possible coalitions in 2000 would have left immigrants overrepresented.

In short, there is little evidence that a more proportional government would improve representation as measured by criterion 4. Coalitions would only have improved overall representation following the two most recent elections. Coalitions may also have improved the representation of men and the rich. In only one case, the 2008 government, would an alternative coalition government have improved the representation of a disadvantaged group, immigrants.

The different criteria we have considered point in different directions. Ideological congruence suggest that centrist governments are best for the representation of Canadians' aggregate preferences as well as or those of women and the poor. The current system delivers such governments when Liberal governments take power. At best, coalitions would improve congruence when a non-centrist party, like the Conservatives, comes to power. However, this would compromise the stronger congruence when the Liberals govern alone.

The biggest weakness facing representation in Canada is that the proportion of Canadians whose most liked party is in government. This is the criterion on which representation would improve the most under a more proportional government.

The overall most liked party nearly always ends up in government. This is a great

strength of non-proportional election systems (Blais, Guntermann and Bodet, 2016). However, the preferred party of women, immigrants, and, particularly, the poor is not always in government.

We also saw that there is limited evidence that a more proportional approach to government would improve how much more governments are liked than opposition parties. Moreover, it may improve the representation of men and the best-off citizens. The findings for this criterion are particularly striking since they suggest that, although proportionality may lead to an increase in the proportion of Canadians whose most liked party is in cabinet, it may lead to the over-representation of some advantaged groups. Since these criteria point in different directions, the next section evaluates the influence each of them has on citizens' satisfaction with democracy.

The Impact of Representation on Satisfaction with Democracy

Given these conflicting results in the previous section, we should consider which of the four approaches to evaluating representation is most consequential. Here, I judge these standards of representation by their influence on satisfaction with democracy. The Canadian Election Study conducted a panel survey between 2004 and 2008. I use questions from the various waves of the 2004 and 2006 election surveys, allowing me to see how earlier changes in representation lead to later changes in democratic satisfaction.

This is an interesting period to consider, since the government shifted from a Liberal minority government to a Conservative minority in 2006. How did this change affect satisfaction with democracy? More importantly, how much did the changes in people's distances from the Liberal government to the Conservative government on the left-right dimension affect their satisfaction with democracy? How much did their scores on the two individual-level criteria of party preference representation affect democratic satisfaction?

Criteria 1, 2, and 4 can be evaluated at the individual level. In other words, we can calculate the distance between the ideological position of each respondent and the government. It is also possible to determine whether a person's preferred party is in government and how much they like governing parties compared to opposition parties. Criterion 3 is about aggregate representation. It is thus of little use to us here.

In the following analyses, the dependent variable is the change in satisfaction with democracy between the 2006 campaign-period survey and the post-election survey. This period between survey waves thus included the change in government. The democratic satisfaction question was asked with four categories, "very satisfied", "fairly satisfied", "not very satisfied", and "not satisfied at all". I assigned respondents scores from 1 to 4, where 1 is the lowest satisfaction category and 4 is the highest satisfaction category. I then calculated the difference between their satisfaction score in each of the 2006 election waves. I consider four independent variables: changes in ideological congruence, dummies for whether one's most liked party entered government in 2006 (i.e. for people whose preferred party was the Conservative Party) and for whether one's most liked party left government in that year (i.e. for people whose most liked party was the Liberal Party), and changes in overall like/dislike scores of governing compared to opposition parties from 2004 to 2006. All variables except the dummies were rescaled from 0 to 1. All models control for earlier satisfaction with democracy, as Blais, Morin-Chassé and Singh (2015); Singh, Karakoç and Blais (2012) did in their models of change in satisfaction.

Table 5: Models of Change in Satisfaction with Democracy (2006)

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7
(Intercept)	0.08	0.04	0.10***	0.07*	0.02	0.07*	0.04
	(0.06)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.06)	(0.03)	(0.05)
congchange	-0.02				-0.04		-0.04
	(0.04)				(0.04)		(0.04)
age	0.00	0.00*	0.00**	0.00*	0.00	0.00*	0.00
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
female	-0.03	-0.01	-0.01	-0.01	-0.02	-0.01	-0.02
	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)
education<HS	0.02	0.02	0.01	0.02	0.03	0.02	0.04
	(0.03)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.03)	(0.02)	(0.03)
education>HS	-0.03	-0.02	-0.02	-0.00	-0.02	-0.00	-0.01
	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)
mlintogov		0.12***			0.13***	-0.02	
		(0.02)			(0.02)	(0.02)	
mleavesgov			-0.13***				
			(0.02)				
lddiff				0.00***		0.00***	0.00***
				(0.00)		(0.00)	(0.00)
<i>N</i>	1051	1662	1662	1662	1051	1662	1051
<i>R</i> ²	0.01	0.04	0.04	0.08	0.04	0.08	0.10
adj. <i>R</i> ²	0.00	0.03	0.04	0.08	0.04	0.08	0.10
Resid. sd	0.32	0.31	0.31	0.31	0.32	0.31	0.31

Standard errors in parentheses

† significant at $p < .10$; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

Model 1 only includes changes in congruence. We can see that if the government became more distant from a respondent in 2006, their satisfaction with democracy dropped. Model 2 includes only the dummy indicating that one's most liked party joined government. We can see that people who preferred the Conservative Party increased their satisfaction with democracy. Model 3 shows that people whose preferred party left government did not become less satisfied with democracy. This may be due to the fact that the Liberal Party was tainted by the sponsorship scandal at this time. Those who preferred the Liberals may thus have felt that it was normal for a party that was associated with such a scandal to leave government. Model 4 shows that changes in evaluations of governing compared to opposition parties had a positive impact on satisfaction with democracy.

Models 5 to 7 include each of the party preference variables in addition to the ideological congruence variable. We can see that the effect of having one's favourite party enter government (Model 5) and changes in overall evaluations wash out the impact of changes in ideological congruence (Model 7). Ideological congruence only continues to matter when controlling for one's most liked party leaving government, which as we saw does not lead to a decrease in satisfaction with democracy. In short, satisfaction with democracy appears to be most responsive to changes in the representation of party preferences but not responsive to changes in ideological congruence. When considering reforms of Canada's political institutions, if democratic satisfaction is something we care about, we should, therefore, focus on improving the representation of party preferences. Moreover, while having one's preferred party enter government seems to have a positive effect on democratic satisfaction, the overall evaluation of government compared to opposition parties also does, suggesting that we should consider both when evaluating representation. We thus should keep in mind the trade-off between increasing the proportion of citizens whose preferred party is in government and the improved representation of advantaged groups.

Conclusion

We have seen that representation of preferences in Canada is strong when using the standard of ideological congruence (criterion 1), when considering whether the overall most liked party is in government (criterion 3), and when assessing how much more liked the government party is compared to opposition parties (criterion 4). However, representation in Canada faces a serious deficiency according to criterion 2, the proportion whose most liked party is in government. Less than half of Canadians find that their preferred party is in government following elections. This is the criterion that most closely corresponds to the proportional vision of democracy. Moreover, advocates of reforms that would move the political system in a proportional direction argue that they would increase the proportion of citizens whose preferences are represented.

A more proportional approach to government in Canada would clearly improve representation as measured by criterion 2. However, there is little evidence that it would have a positive effect on how well government reflects preferences as assessed by criterion 4. In fact, it may actually lead to the over-representation of advantaged groups. It is particularly important to keep this trade-off in mind given that my analyses of the determinants of satisfaction with democracy show that this overall measure of the representation of party preferences plays an important role in determining citizens' levels of satisfaction with democracy.

Of course, the analyses presented above are limited in that they do not allow us to observe the effects of changing electoral institutions per se. We must also assume that evaluations of the parties would be the same. These analyses thus allow us to see how representation would be influenced by changing the composition of governments, given existing preferences. These analyses also do not allow us to know how parties' shares of seats in Parliament would be influenced by a change in the electoral system. However, they do allow us to assess the state of representation in Canada and to suggest its strengths and its shortcomings and how it might be improved.

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