**PRESS RELEASE**

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**CITIZENS’ ASSEMBLY CALLS FOR MULTI-OPTION VOTING**

The de Borda Institute welcomes Ireland’s Citizens’ Assembly’s call for multi-option referendums, but it’s a pity they did not recommend the best forms of preferential voting, the Borda & Condorcet rules.

Consider the following profile: 14 voters casting their preferences on four options, ***A, B, C*** and ***D***.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Preferences | 14 voters and their preferences | | | |
| *5* | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| ***1st*** | ***A*** | ***B*** | ***C*** | ***D*** |
| ***2nd*** | ***B*** | ***C*** | ***B*** | ***B*** |
| *3rd* | ***C*** | ***D*** | ***D*** | ***C*** |
| ***4th*** | ***D*** | ***A*** | ***A*** | ***A*** |

***B***, the 1st or 2nd preference of *everybody*, obviously best represents the collective will. But…

In a plurality vote (which is like Britain’s first-past-the-post, fptp, electoral system),

the winner is ***A***.

In a two-round system, trs, (which is like the French electoral system),

the winner is ***D***.

In stv, (the non pr-version of pr-stv, the Irish system), (also known as the

alternative vote av).

the winner is ***C.***

While in a modified Borda count, mbc, (like part of the Slovenian electoral system),

and in a Condorcet count,

the winner is ***B***.

So the *totally* democratic decision of the 14 voters could be either ***A***, or ***B***, or ***C***, or ***D***! In this and many other voters’ profiles, it all depends upon which voting system is used. Which is why the choice of voting procedure is so important. Unfortunately however, as in question 7, the Citizens’ Assembly sometimes used the wrong voting procedure, and thus sometimes got the wrong answer.

Peter Emerson, (currently in the Caucasus which, like the Balkans, has suffered horribly from binary referendums).

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