**ELECTING AN ALL-PARTY COALITION**

**The de Borda Institute**

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(This is an edited extract from a paper presented to the founding conference of the EPSA in Dublin on 16.6.2011.)

**A better format**

In the Dublin experiment, three individuals were appointed to ministries for which they had received no points. One possible improvement is to allow each voter to express up to, say, three preferences as to which post he/she wanted the said nominee to be appointed to. In this latter scenario, a completed ballot paper would be as shown in Table A. In this ballot, the voter has expressed three preferences for most of the nominees; with Ms C, however, the voter has cast only two preferences while for Mr F the voter has cast only one.

One could allow the voters to cast even more preferences, but that would probably be unnecessary. As in Germany and even as in ni, the various parties would probably engage in negotiations prior to the vote, so most appointments would almost certainly be made on the basis of the candidates’ highest cell totals. Initially, then, the second election would be based on the voters’ first preferences only. If at any stage of the count, a cell total were found to have been superceded, then and only then would reference be made to those votes, to see for whom those concerned had cast their second preferences.

**Table A A completed ballot**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| MINISTERS | Names of candidates in order of preference |
| 1st  | 2nd  | 3rd  | 4th  | 5th  | 6th  | 7th  | 8th  | 9th  | 10th  |
| Ms J | Ms T | Mr L | Ms C | Mr F | Mr U | Mr K | Ms L | Ms M | Mr B |
| pm | 1 |  |  |  |  |  | 2 |  |  |  |
| Deputy pm | 2 |  |  | 2 |  |  | 1 | 3 |  |  |
| Minister of ***A*** |  | 3 | 1 |  |  | 3 |  |  |  |  |
| Minister of ***B*** |  |  |  |  |  | 2 |  |  |  | 1 |
| Minister of ***C*** |  | 1 |  |  |  |  |  | 2 |  |  |
| Minister of ***D*** | 3 |  |  |  | 1 |  |  |  | 2 |  |
| Minister of ***E*** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | 1 | 3 |  |
| Minister of ***F*** |  | 2 |  | 1 |  |  | 3 |  |  | 2 |
| Minister of ***G*** |  |  | 3 |  |  |  |  |  | 1 |  |
| Minister of ***H*** |  |  | 2 |  |  | 1 |  |  |  | 3 |

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