**PRESS RELEASE**

**IMMEDIATE – 7.9.2020**

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| **The Politicians’ Prayer:**  ***“DEAR LORD, GIVE US CONSENSUS…... BUT NOT YET.”***  You cannot best get a consensus with majority voting. With so many votes ‘for’ and so many ‘against’, it measures the very opposite, the degree of *dissent*. So, just as you would not measure the temperature of a Covid-19 patient with a thermometer which had only two readings, ‘hot’ and ‘cold’, so too in politics, we should not seek to identify the MPs’ or the voters’ opinions with an instrument which has only two calibrations, ‘yes’ and ‘no’. |

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| **The People’s Plea:**  ***“LEADERS, LEAD US NOT INTO DIVISION.”***  ‘If the problem ain’t binary, don’t take a binary vote.’ Let every option be ‘on the table’ ***and*** on the ballot paper – a (short) list of about 4-6 options – and then let every MP in parliament or voter in a referendum cast their preferences. At best, the winner is the option with the highest *average* preference; and an average includes every MP/voter, not just a majority of them. |

***DEMOCRATIC DECISION-MAKING,***

***Consensus Voting for Civic Society and Parliaments****,*2020, (Springer, Heidelberg)

will be presented to the President of Ireland, Michael D Higgins, at 2.30 pm on Friday 2nd October in Áras an Uachtaráin.

Binary voting, firstly on amendments and then on the motion, may sometimes produce the wrong answer. Consider three people debating a motion, option ***A***; two amendments, options ***B*** and ***C***; and the status quo ante, option ***D***, with (1st-2nd-3rd-4th) preferences of ***A-B-C-D, B-C-D-A*** and ***C-D-A-B***. The procedure is, first, choose the more popular amendment, ***B*** or ***C*** – the winner here is ***B***; next amend or no the motion, which is ***A*** or ***B***, and ***A*** wins; then the substantive, ***A*** or ***D***, and ***D*** wins. So the answer is ***D,*** by 67%***.*** All very democratic. But all three prefer ***C*** to ***D***. The answer is wrong.

Majority voting, a blunt (and ancient) instrument, may produce an outcome which is inaccurate if not indeed, as above, wrong. In contrast, preferential points voting – the Modified Borda Count MBC – is robust, inclusive, and far more accurate. First proposed in 1774, it is also non-majoritarian. If it were the international norm, every democracy could have an all-party power-sharing government (and not just the Swiss). A fuller description of the argument is attached.

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