**PRESS RELEASE**

**IMMEDIATE – 7.9.2020**

**BEYOND THE BIND OF BINARY BALLOTS**

We would not want elections based on “Candidate ***X***, yes-or-no?” questions.

Why then do we rely on “Option ***X***, yes-or-no?” questions in decision-making?

**In Referendums or in Parliament, the ‘Will of a Majority’ may be sought in:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **(i) BINARY BALLOTS** | | |
| **A MAJORITY OPINION** may perhaps be *ratified* (but  cannot best be *identified*) in: | | Application |
| i | **a majority vote** | Everywhere, from USA to China |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **(ii – iv) MULTI-OPTIONAL and (v – vii) PREFERENTIAL BALLOTS** | | |
| **A MAJORITY OPINION** may perhaps be *identified* in: | | Application |
| ii | **a plurality vote** | Danish Parliament (often) |
| iii | **a two-round system** | Norwegian Parliament (once)  Some New Zealand referendums |
| iv | **serial voting,** a knock-out series of majority votes which can identify a Condorcet winner (if there is one) | Finnish and Swedish Parliaments (sometimes) |
| v | an **alternative vote** AV {also known as  the (non-PR) **single transferable vote** STV} | The SNP wanted AV for Scotland’s referendums of 1997 and 2014 |
| vi | a **modified Borda count** MBC, a preferential  points system | A Borda Count is used in Slovenian elections |
| vii | a **Condorcet** count: the winner is the option which wins the most pairings | Nowhere |

Most parliamentary votes and referendums are binary. As shown above, some of both are multi-optional or even preferential. Majority voting is exclusive, divisive and often inaccurate. The MBC/Condorcet count is inclusive, cohesive and far more accurate It is therefore more democratic.

|  |
| --- |
| ***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. |

Peter Emerson

Director, the de Borda Institute

[www.deborda.org](http://www.deborda.org)

[www.debordavote.org](http://www.debordavote.org)

36 Ballysillan Road

Belfast BT14 7QQ 07837717979