Of course the Tories like first past the post: they win...

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Unusually, this blog post shares a press release. It came to me from the Electoral Reform Society (of which I am a member) and seems to chime with the sentiments of many readers of this blog, whilst doing data to support their justified suspicion of bias with the UK's electoral system.

The progressive vote will be systematically 'split' in this week's council elections – with on average 1.9 candidates from Labour, the Liberal Democrats and the Greens running against just one right-wing candidate in England, new research has revealed.

Campaigners warn that this set of elections will yet again see the left and centre-left held back by the First Past the Post system – a system that has given the Conservatives an increasing advantage in recent elections.

The research from the Politics for the Many campaign, using data collated by [**Democracy Club**](#)**, finds that England's winner-takes-all voting system means voters on the left are in effect being punished for having a choice of parties to vote for, whereas voters on the right see their chances of success boosted by fewer candidates to choose from.**

In 33.1% of wards, there is one unified 'right' party (the Conservatives) standing candidates against all three of the progressive 'left' parties (Labour/Lib Dem/Green).

There are a further 31.9% of wards where there is one 'right' party (the Conservatives in all but 4 wards, where the 'right' party is Reform UK) standing candidates against two of the largest 'left' parties (either Labour, the Lib Dems or the Greens).

It means many voters may have to 'hold their nose' and vote tactically, opting

to support a party they view as a lesser evil, or risk seeing their vote 'let in' a right-wing party – a problem that voters on the right do not face this election.

Altogether, there are 3,345 wards (69.0% of all wards), where there are more 'left' parties standing candidates than 'right' parties (excludes 102 wards where no 'right' parties are standing).

The stark figures reveal that out of almost 5000 wards where elections will take place, there are only 76 wards in the whole of England (1.6% of wards) where there are more right parties standing than left parties (excludes 128 wards where no 'left' parties are standing).

There is just one ward where all three 'right' parties are standing candidates.

Pressure on Labour to back electoral reform is growing – at the party's 2022 Conference delegates overwhelmingly backed a motion calling on the party to support PR in the next manifesto and just last week USDAW became the latest affiliated union to come out in support of reform meaning that 2/3 of Labour affiliated trade unions now back reform.

With a proportional voting system like Single Transferable Vote (STV) – used for Scotland and Northern Ireland's local elections – voters can rank candidates from different parties by preference, almost entirely eliminating the issue of votes being 'split'. Voters can always vote for who they believe in and express a range of choices.