

## FIRST PAST THE POST – FOR AND AGAINST

FOR	ISSUE	AGAINST
FPTP structures electoral choice by offering voters a clear and simple choice between potential parties of governments	<i>Electoral choice</i>	FPTP offers voters an artificially narrow choice of parties/candidates, in that votes for them appear to be 'wasted' – small parties are not 'electable'
Extremism is kept at bay because it is more difficult for small, radical parties to gain representation and thus respectability	<i>Party representation</i>	The over-representation of large parties and parties with geographically concentrated support, at the expense of small parties and parties with evenly spread support, is systematically unfair and unjustifiable
MPs have a strong constituency role because they have a clear responsibility to take up constituents interests and grievances – one MP serves one constituency	<i>Constituency representation</i>	In 'safe' seats there is no guarantee that MPs will be good constituency representatives, and they may be unsympathetic to particular causes or concerns
The winning party can claim a popular mandate to carry out its policies because the largest body of voters have endorsed its manifesto commitments	<i>Mandates</i>	The winning party cannot claim a popular mandate as it (usually) wins less than 50% of the vote - more voters vote against it than for it
Single-party majority governments are strong and effective because they can (usually) ensure that their legislative programmes are enacted – governments can govern	<i>Strong government</i>	Government (the executive) is over-strong in that it is able to dominate the House of Commons and so render Parliament ineffective ('elective dictatorship')
Single-party governments are stable and cohesive, rarely collapsing as a result of disunity and friction (coalition governments are inherently fractured and unstable)	<i>Stable government</i>	The transfer of power from one single-party government to another may result in destabilising shifts in government policy, damaging, in particular, economic prospects