



Provincial elections 2018: About Vote Compass

Description

A tool that shows you how your views align with those of the candidates

By Patricia Dumais

It is a citizen's duty to vote in government elections. It is also their duty to be aware of the platforms of the parties from which they will choose a candidate. Unfortunately our hectic lifestyles afford us little time to do the research and more often we vote not having done our homework.



2011 during the Canadian Federal Election, I discovered an interactive online application called **Vote Compass** (**Boussole électorale** in French). Created by Toronto-based **Vox Pop Labs** and commissioned by some of the most respected media organizations in the world, including the **Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC)**, Vote Compass helps voters determine how they fit in the political landscape. This year the CBC is running Vote Compass for both the 2018 Quebec Provincial Election and the 2018 New Brunswick Provincial Election.

Developed by political scientists, Vote Compass has been run in more than 25 elections across the globe (including the 2016 United States Presidential Election and the 2017 French Presidential Election) and used by millions of people. It's easy and it's quick to do.

Keep in mind that Vote Compass is not a poll, nor is it meant to tell you how to vote. Political scientists developed this tool with the goal of sparking debate and engaging voters.

Here is a CBC report on Vote Compass:

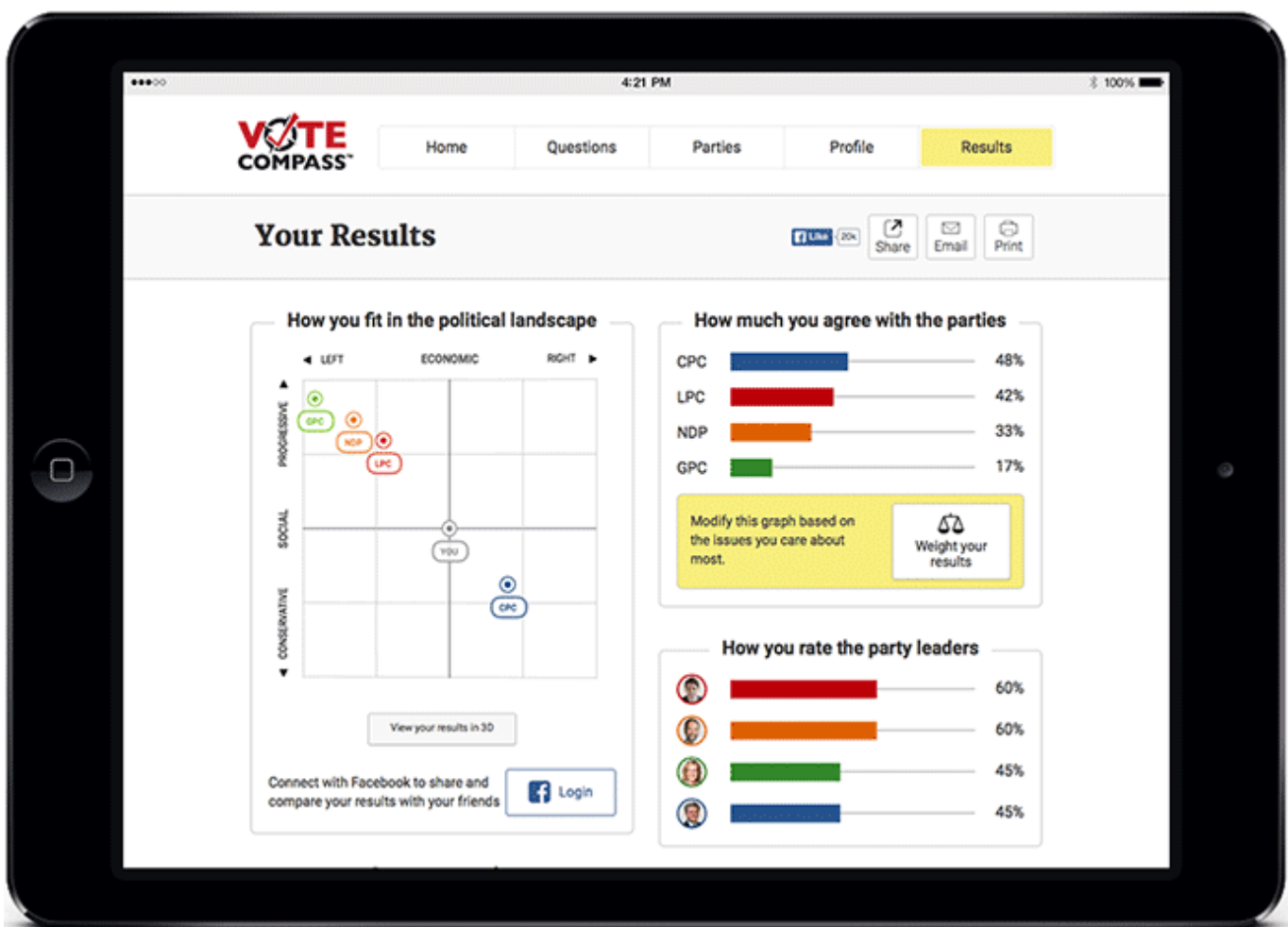
How to use Vote Compass

You launch Vote Compass by indicating your postal code, which determines your district, electorate or riding. With no login, and no registration, you keep control of your info.

You then take the quiz, which is typically 30 questions and takes about 10 minutes to complete. It also includes an open-ended question: “What issue is most important to you in this election?” Once you finish, Vote Compass analyses your responses and compares them with the policies of the candidates.

Within seconds, your Vote Compass results show you how your views compare to the policy proposals of the candidates and help you understand how you fit into the political landscape. You can see where you agree and disagree with each of the candidates.

Vote Compass even allows you to dive deep into the platforms of each party or candidate with comparisons by topic, candidate statements, and options to weight the issues most important to you.



Example of a Vote Compass snapshot from the 2015 Canadian Federal Election

The methodology behind Vote Compass in a nutshell

Using a Likert scale, users indicate their responses to a series of policy propositions designed to discriminate between candidates' policies on prominent issues relevant to the election. Propositions are crafted in collaboration with political scientists local to each jurisdiction in which Vote Compass is run.

Based on a candidate or political party's public disclosures (i.e. party manifestos, policy proposals, official



websites, speeches, media releases, statements made in the legislature, etc.) they are calibrated on the same propositions and scales as are users. A series of aggregation algorithms calculate the overall distance between the user and the candidates or parties. ¹

For more information on Vote Compass and to participate visit votecompass.com

¹ *Vote Compass Methodology – Vox Pop Labs*

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Date Created

September 2018