

**Subject:** FW: New submission from Research Form

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**From:** The Electoral Commission <noreply@electoralcommission.eu>

**Sent:** Wednesday 14 February 2024 16:28

**To:** ELC Research <research@electoralcommission.ie>

**Subject:** New submission from Research Form

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**1. What is your view on the five proposed research strands? Are there amendments or additions you would suggest?**

While a focus on all of the proposed areas is welcome given the nature of the countries electoral system. I believe that Strand B has missed an opportunity to explore the area of the implementation of single seat constituencies and an open list electoral system.

**2. Which of the research questions under section 4 would you consider most important and why?**

Strand B is an important draft in relation to electoral reform given the shortcomings of Irelands electoral system.

**3. Are there additional research projects that you consider important to promote and enhance Ireland's democracy and electoral events? If yes, please specify?**

I would seriously look at adding a research project to investigate the impact of adding single seat constituencies only for the country. The reason for this are as follows.

1. Ireland's electoral system as it stands disincentivises long term planning
2. The impact of the above is that areas such as housing and healthcare are consistently neglected in favour of local clientelism. A prime example/scenario of this is as follows.
  - a) A proposal for delivery of a housing development is submitted for planning to local government.
  - b) The above development impacts on incumbent residents so much so that they contact their local td's to object/add observations or complain.
  - c) In a three seat consistency, where the local td is competing for his/her seat with two other td's who may be from a different party or may be independent this creates local clientelism in so far as each td will view objection as an opportunity to gather votes in the local community. At this point the proposed development is modified or cancelled and the nation as a whole looses out on more housing/ more suitable housing.
3. While housing is used in the above example, the same problem can occur across a range of issues that effect the nation as a whole

**4. Are there any other comments or observations that you wish to make regarding An Coimisiún's research programme?**

I welcome all research areas but would stress the need to expand stream B as described above.

**Name**

Jonathan Hanley

**Email**

[REDACTED]

**Are you replying as an Individual or representing an Organisation?**

I am responding as an Individual