The Irish voting system uses a form of proportional representation called the **single transferable vote.**

Irish voters indicate their preferences for candidates in ***ascending*** order of preference; 1 for the ***most preferred candidate***, 2 for the next preferred candidate and so on.

When assessing a candidate or party’s share of the overall vote, analysts tend to look at how many first preference votes were obtained by the candidate (or the candidates belonging to a party) https://www.thejournal.ie/how-does-prstv-work-2619448-Feb2016/. The first preference votes are the ones counted in the **first count** of the vote counting process.

The counts indicated by the first count give the number of first preference votes that a candidate has received. For this assignment, you may use the first preference numbers as a basis to compare the performance between the 2016 and 2020 elections.