

Role of political parties



Reviewing Democracy



- ☞ Canada is a democracy
 - ☞ The people rule – direct democracy
 - ☞ The people rule by having someone represent them in governing institutions – representative democracy



Politics



❧ *“The theory and practice of government, especially the activities associated with governing, with obtaining legislative or executive power, or with forming and running organizations connected with government. The interrelationships between the people, groups, or organizations in a particular area of life especially insofar as they involve power and influence or conflict.”*

❧ In other words, the activities associated with governing a country.

Political Parties



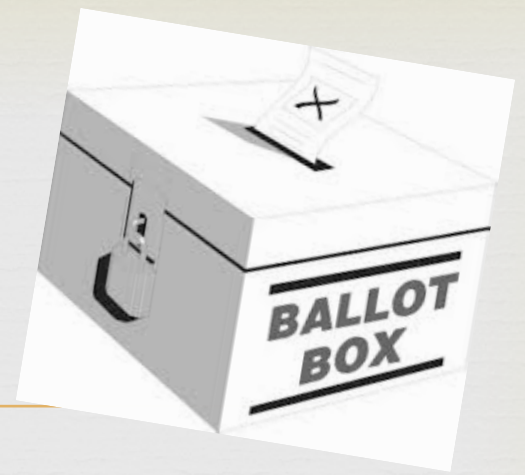
- ❧ a group of people who share the same ideas and gather together with the intent of having their chosen candidate be elected to represent a region and their party become the government.
- ❧ *“Our system could not work without political parties. Our major and minor federal parties were not created by any law, though they are now recognized by the law. We, the people, have created them ourselves. They are voluntary associations of people who hold broadly similar opinions on public questions.”*

Party Platform

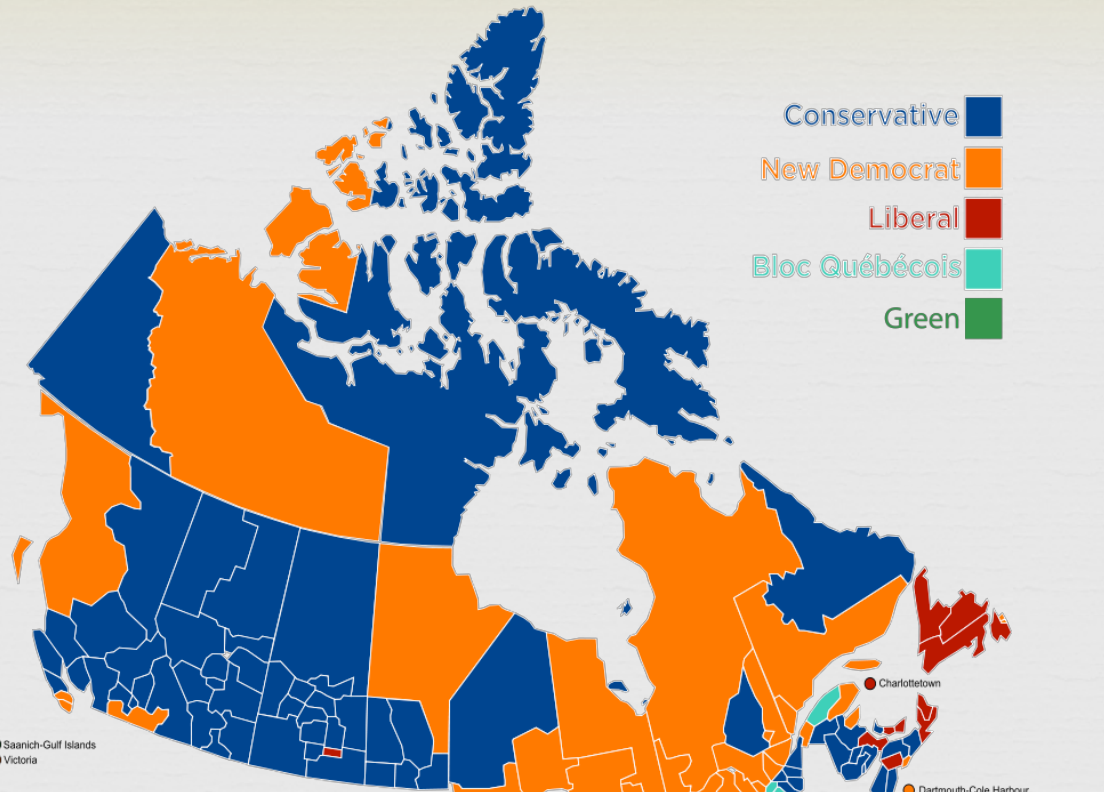


- ❧ Each party has a platform, which outlines the policies they feel are most important
 - ❧ Environment, social programs, taxation, military spending, foreign policy, education
- ❧ In an election, parties will advertise these ideas through the media to help voters know who they should vote for
 - ❧ The party will often create a slogan to catch the attention of voters
- ❧ If a party gains power and becomes the government, they will introduce bills that will make their platform law

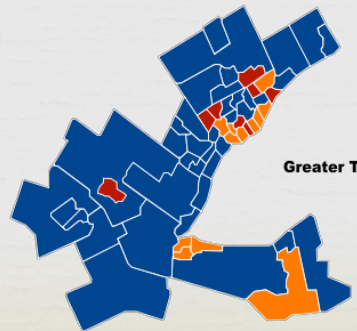
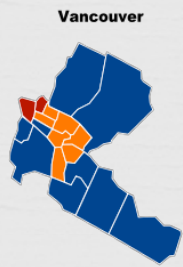
Elections



- ❧ In Canada, we elect a person to represent an area, known as a riding or a constituency
- ❧ These representatives are responsible to voice the opinion of the majority of people in their constituency
- ❧ However, because most candidates elected in Canada belong to a political party, they are also responsible to their party
 - ❧ Party solidarity *(remember that idea of responsible government, and how the executive branch is responsible to the legislative branch because they get their power by leading the largest group in the House of Commons)*



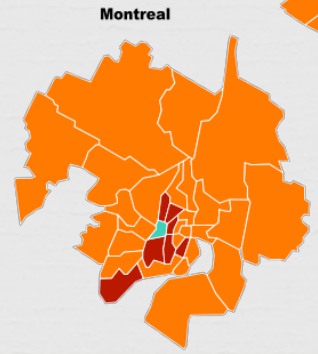
● Saanich-Gulf Islands
 ● Victoria



● London West
 ● London North Centre
 ● London Fanshawe
 ● Barrie
 ● Windsor West
 ● Windsor-Tecumseh



● Dartmouth-Cole Harbour
 ● Halifax
 ● Halifax West
 ● Moncton-Riverview-Dieppe
 ● Trois Rivières
 ● Sherbrooke
 ● Kingston and the Islands



Becoming the government



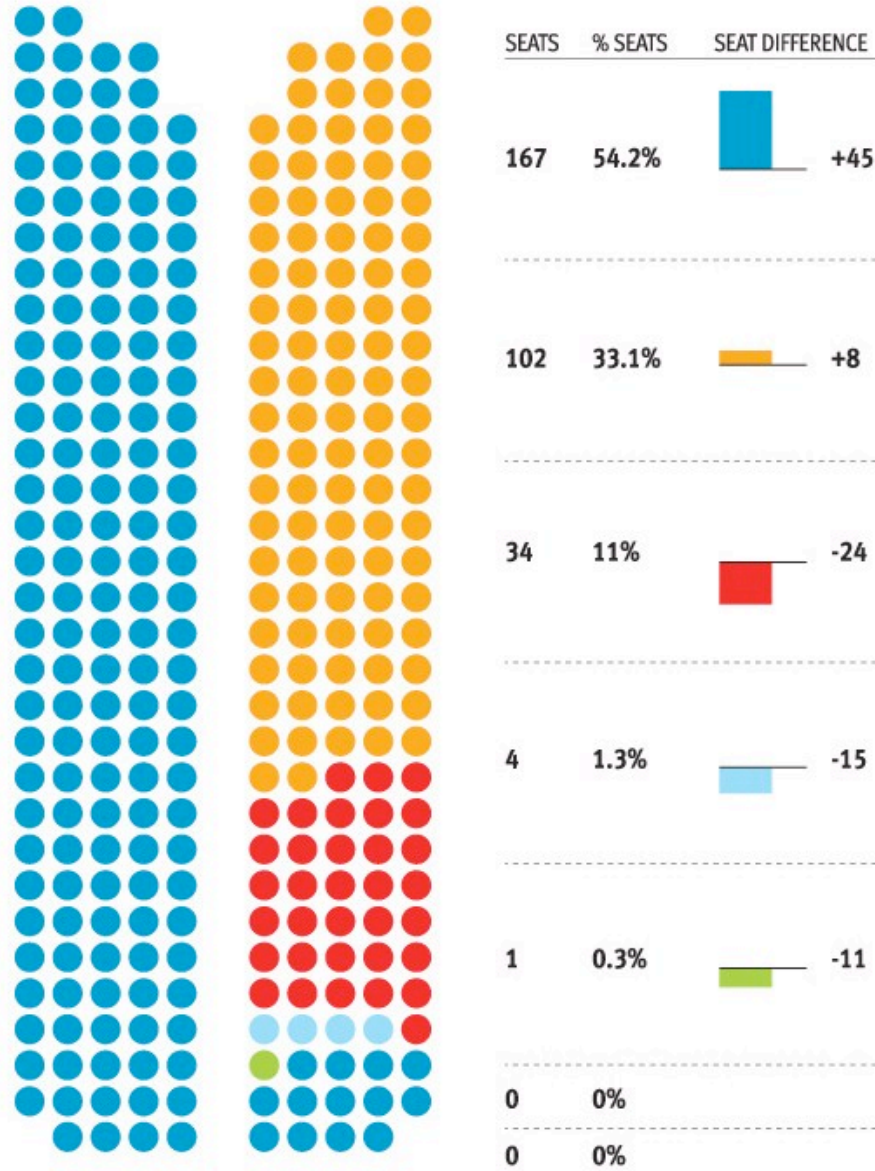
- ❧ The number of individuals belonging to a specific political party that are elected to the House of Commons decides which political party gets to become the government of Canada
 - ❧ The group with the most members (or seats) is the government
 - ❧ The group with the second most seats is the official opposition
 - ❧ Role: to oppose the government – to find flaws in government policy so it can be perfected

Independent Candidates



- ❧ What about someone who wants to be a representative but doesn't want to belong to a political party?
- ❧ You can run as an independent, but it is rare for you to win an election, because Canadians want to vote for someone who has a chance of being in the government
- ❧ An independent candidate can never be the actual government because they are not part of the largest group (they'd have to become a member of that party)

Seating in the House of Commons



2011

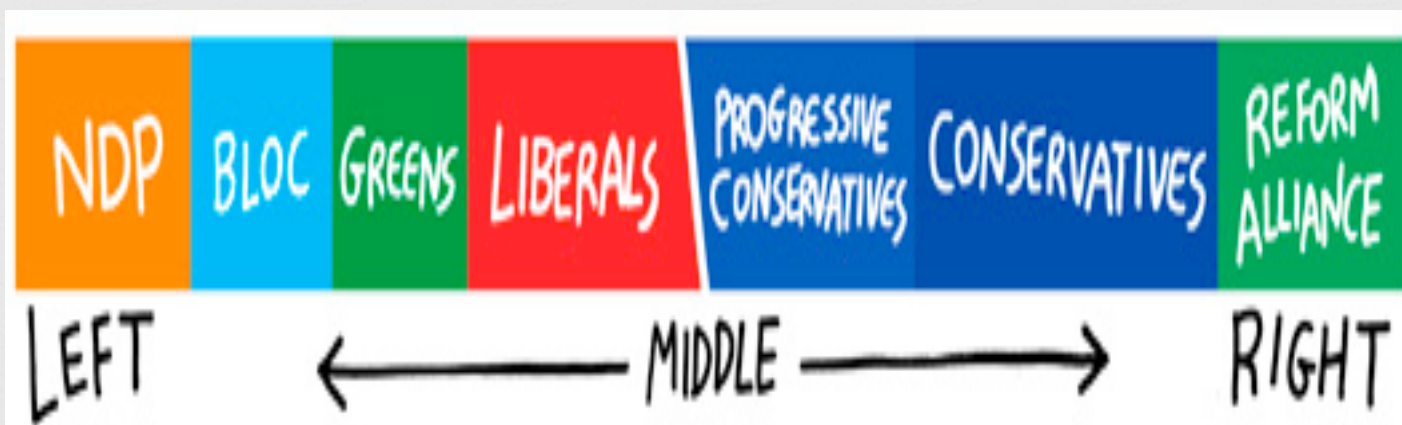
Canada's Political Parties



Multi-party System



- ❧ The role of political parties is to represent the views of those who support them
- ❧ We have a variety of parties to choose from to represent our ideology
 - ❧ There are dozens of parties in Canada
 - ❧ This allows for minority groups to express their opinions during elections
- ❧ Currently there are 5 main parties



Conservative Party



- ❧ created in 2003 by blending other right-wing parties that have existed since the creation of Canada.
- ❧ are associated with right wing views that want to see more individualism in Canada.
- ❧ includes lower taxes to allow people to support their own needs instead of depending on social programs.
- ❧ conservative = want to keep traditional values (often related to Christianity)



Liberal Party



- ⌘ longest running party in Canada
- ⌘ seen as the centrist party
 - ⌘ wanting to balance freedom and government control (in social programs, taxation and individual rights)



New Democratic Party (NDP)

- ⌘ until the 1990s they were seen as a fringe party
- ⌘ created to represent the Canadians who have more left wing views
 - ⌘ E.g. members of unions
- ⌘ want more government controls to ensure high quality social programs
- ⌘ want more laws to protect individual rights (like gay marriage)



Bloq Québécois



- œ created in 1990 to represent the views of Quebec separatists in federal elections
 - œ why it only has candidates in Quebec
 - œ that doesn't mean they are not powerful – 1993 -1997 they were the Official Opposition (second largest party in Canada).
- œ fairly left wing in their social and economic policies
 - œ makes sense as Quebec is often seen as the most left-wing province in Canada.



Green Party



- ❧ only recently elected a member to the House of Commons
- ❧ initially created to raise awareness of issues relating to the environment
 - ❧ There are Green Parties in most democratic nation-states
- ❧ has evolved to look at broader issues
- ❧ left of center
 - ❧ means it is left of the Conservative Party but to the right of the NDP party when it comes to economic issues

Political Parties in the United States



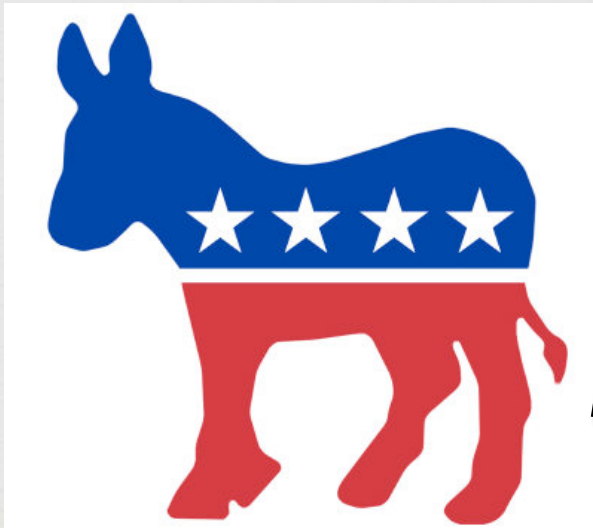
Like Canada, there are dozens of political parties in the United States, but they have two main parties: Republican and Democratic

The Democratic Party



☞ left of center

☞ greater emphasis on the government providing support for social programs and promoting individual rights

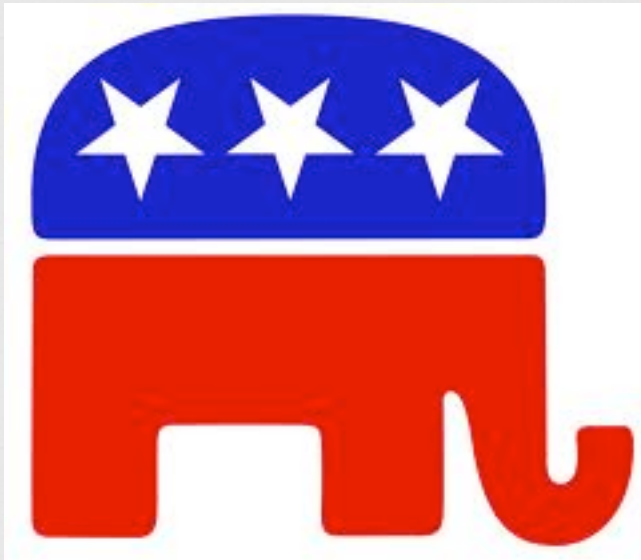


The Republican Party



☞ right of center

☞ greater emphasis on self-reliance and lower taxes, and protecting traditional rights



Key terms covered today



- Accountability
- Constituent
- Constituency
- Minority groups
- Political party
- Slogan