

# Canadian government

[Government](#)



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The Canadian parliamentary system is mainly based on that of the UK and the USA. In 1867 Canada became partially independent of British rule. The Parliamentary system of the UK, accompanied by a constitutional monarchy was adopted by Canada. Moreover, Canada adopted the federal system of the US; and the Canadian federal government maintains a division of responsibilities between the national government and ten provincial governments and three territorial governments (Thomas).

Parliamentary reforms would engender change in the democratic process; and depend on the trickle - down effect. It does not constitute the complete process and any change, due to this trickle-down effect, would influence the function of the Members of Parliament. These changes would invariably influence the life of citizens. Hence, there should be a balance between parliamentary reform and the function of MPs. The reason for this is that parliamentary reform directly affects the interests of ordinary citizens.

Despite these facts, parliamentary reform is essential and should be done in a timely manner (Rowbotham). Subsequent to the 1993 general elections in Canada, it was largely debated as to whether the voting system had to be reformed in order to provide proportional representation. Supporters of such electoral reform contended that such proportional representation would reflect the accurate percentage of votes received by all the parties in the House.

The existing electoral practice enables a candidate to assume the elected office, even by getting a single vote more than the closest contender. If there are more than two candidates, then the winners may require a mere lead of thirty to forty percent of the total votes, in comparison to the others (Loenen, <https://assignbuster.com/canadian-government/>)

Citizenship and Democracy: A Case for Proportional Representation). Canadians are disillusioned with politics and lack knowledge about the government and its functions.

Even the Aboriginal community people displayed disinterest towards the government and politics. At present, some scholars and sociologists are studying this phenomenon. However, politicians have ignored this issue (Plumptre and Graham). According to EKOS Research President Frank Graves, most Canadians had opined that Canada should be more democratic than at present. Parliamentarians can and do ignore the advice of citizens, sometimes. Citizens want a feedback from parliamentarians about how their advices have been followed by the latter.

Thus feedback plays a key role in democracy and in the success of consultation (Bennett, Grey and Morin). The expectations of the public should be considered in debates relating to parliamentary reform and most citizens feel that they have been excluded from parliamentary procedures. This sense of alienation experienced by citizens should be addressed and remedial action proposed by citizens is to be taken into consideration. The existing parliamentary system imposes exclusion on citizens and their representatives in several areas.

This is frustrating for both citizens and parliamentarians and requires a change in the entire system. The frustration felt by parliamentarians and citizens takes place conjointly. Therefore, reforming the parliamentary system does not concern only the parliamentarians. It is imperative for such reform to engender active participation in the democratic process by citizens

and their representative (Bennett, Grey and Morin). The government in Canada closely follows the Westminster model.

In this system, the executive is much stronger than the legislature. The majority of the parliamentary reformers have recommended major changes to the Canadian legislative system. Specifically, they advocated the adoption of a legislative system that could convert policy into law. They had made it very clear that any parliamentary reform had to make the parliamentary committees strong, loosen the discipline enforced by political parties and endow backbenchers in parliament with power (McKenzie).

The end results of the Canadian political practices and government's institutions are often seen to be trivial and confused. These structures impose certain limitations, within which the government institutions have to act. Furthermore, these limitations render these structures incapable of delivering the requirements of a modern, democratic and pluralistic society (Loenen, Citizenship and Democracy: A Case for Proportional Representation).

The ailing Canadian parliamentary system specifically requires a number of reforms and some of them are set out in the sequel. The electoral system has to be so reformed that truly representative parliaments can be elected. Such reforms should be engendered that permit the Canadian parliament to function optimally, without any interference from other institutions. Moreover, the functioning of parliament should be so changed as to render them more democratic and comprehensive.