

Legislation approved by Parliament, which has been in force since August 1, 1974, has the effect of limiting campaign spending. At the same time, candidates who are elected or who obtain at least 15 per cent of the valid votes cast are entitled to a reimbursement of 50 per cent of their actual expenses from the public treasury and registered political parties are also entitled to a reimbursement of 22.5 per cent of their actual expenses.

Large expenditures are required to finance the national campaigns of the parties, but these, too, are limited in law. They cover such areas as advertising in newspapers and other publications, radio and television broadcasts, printing and distribution of literature, travel expenses of the leaders and party organizers, and rental of office space and meeting halls.

Partisan radio and television broadcasts as well as advertising in periodical publications are prohibited from midnight on the day of the issue of the writs to the twenty-ninth day before polling day, as well as on polling day and on the day immediately preceding polling day. Owing to time-zone differences, election results in eastern Canada are known before voting ends in the west. Federal law therefore prohibits the publication or broadcast in any area, before polls close in that area, of the result of voting in any electoral district in Canada. This is intended to prevent late-voting westerners from being influenced by results already made public in the east.

Compilation of results

As soon as the polls close, counting of ballots begins. The deputy returning officer and the poll clerk are responsible for counting the votes in each polling division. These counts are transmitted to the returning officer and are made public as they are completed. Within a few hours of the closing of the polls, the result in most constituencies is known. The national outcome of the election is usually known by midnight, eastern time. The official count is usually undertaken in each electoral district by the returning officer a few days after polling day.