

of population. Every province must have at least as many members in the Commons as it has in the Senate. The constituencies vary somewhat in size, within prescribed limits. The present distribution is as follows:

<i>Area</i>	<i>Seats</i>
Ontario	99
Quebec	75
British Columbia	32
Alberta	26
Manitoba	14
Saskatchewan	14
Nova Scotia	11
New Brunswick	10
Newfoundland and Labrador	7
Prince Edward Island	4
Northwest Territories	2
Yukon Territory	1
Total	295

Political parties

The political system could not work without political parties. Canada's major existing federal parties — Progressive Conservative, Liberal, and New Democratic — were not created by any law, though they are now recognized by the law. The Canadian people created them. They are voluntary associations of people who hold broadly similar opinions on public questions.

The party that wins the largest number of seats in the general election ordinarily forms the government. Its leader is asked by the governor general to become prime minister. If the government in office before an election comes out of the election without a clear majority, it has the right to meet the new House of Commons and see whether it can get enough support from the minor parties to carry on in office. This happened in 1925-26 and in 1972.

The second largest party (or, in the circumstances just described, the largest) becomes the official Opposition and its leader becomes "the person holding the recognized position of leader of the Opposition." The leader of the Opposition gets the same salary as a minister. The leader of any party which has at least 12 seats also gets a higher salary than an ordinary member of Parliament (MP). These parties also get public money for research.