



ADVISORY
CONSEILS

The Same but Different Federal Advocacy 2.0

PREPARED FOR



Professional
Association of
Canadian Theatres

May 2025

ARTS & CULTURE TEAM: PAA ADVISORY | CONSEILS



Sean Casey, Managing Director

- Managing Director of Arts and Culture group, with 20 years' experience in supporting the cultural industries in federal government relations
- Over a decade of experience in both federal and municipal politics, including with five Conservative MPs, the Opposition House Leader and in the Office of the Leader of the Official Opposition, the Hon. Stephen Harper in Ottawa
- Former radio journalist covering Parliament Hill



Sonja Tilroe, Advisor

- Experience in federal politics in the House of Commons, working with MPs from the Liberal Party of Canada and the Bloc Québécois.
- 17+ clients supported across the arts, culture, and charitable sectors, on files related to the performing arts, book publishing, audiovisual, and more.
- Previous personal experience in the arts, both in the world of theater and music, as a musician playing cello and clarinet.

HOW DID WE GET HERE?

The Federal Landscape

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NATIONAL POLLING

One Year Out to Election Day

Key dates that led to the election

December 16, 2024: Chrystia Freeland resigned

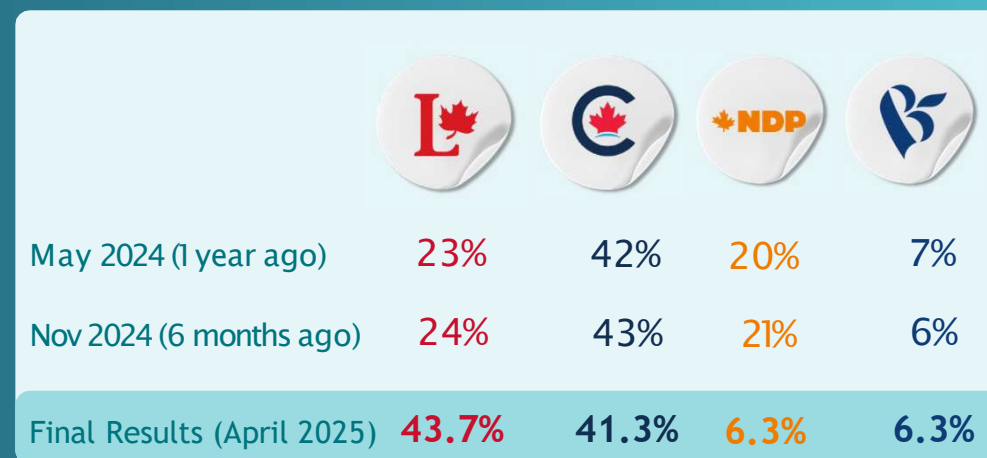
January 6, 2025: Justin Trudeau announced his resignation

Late January 2025: Donald Trump began trade war rhetoric and "51st state" comments

March 14, 2025: Mark Carney became Prime Minister

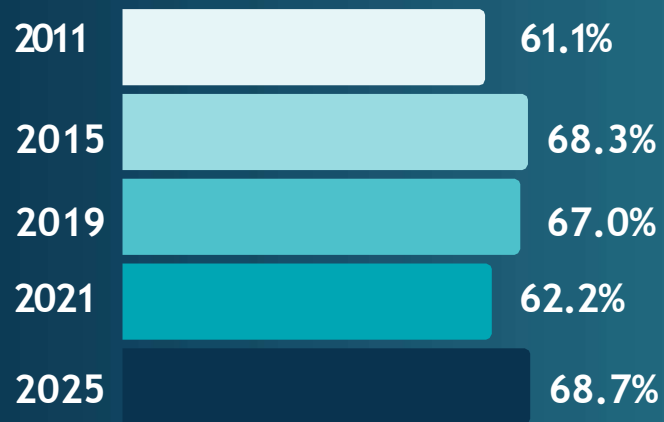
March 23, 2025: Federal election officially began (writs issued)

Voting Intentions Over Time



TURNOUT AND FINAL RESULTS

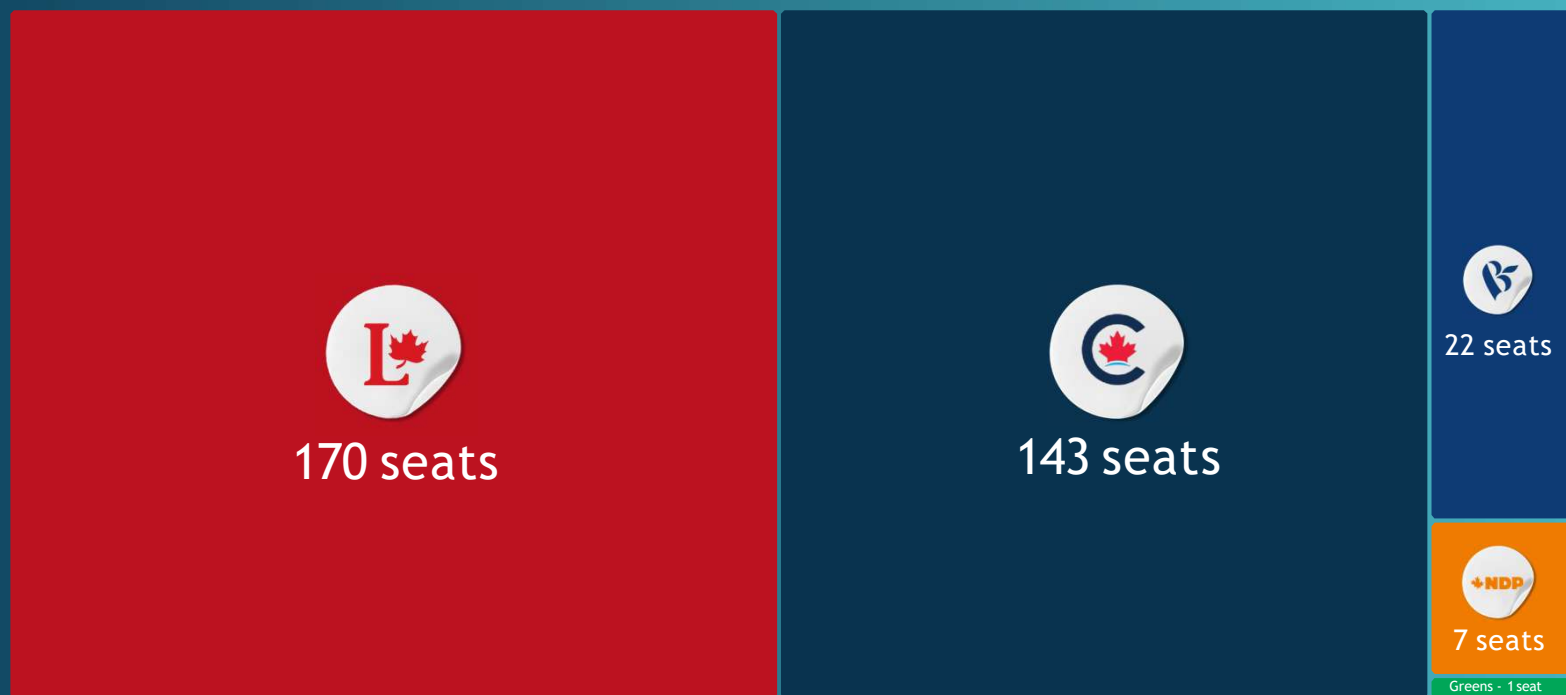
Voter Turnout in Federal Elections



Final Results

- 18 ridings were decided by fewer than 1,000 votes.
- 112 new MPs were elected to this new Parliament
- 20205 election highest turnout since the 1990s
- Liberal Party 2 seats short of a majority government, with 170 seats.

A LOOK AT THE 45TH PARLIAMENT



WHAT'S NEXT?

Political Parties	Focused on . . .
Liberal	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Creating a strong negotiating position with Trump and building relationships with other key allies• Moving fast with efficiency - a no-nonsense economic perspective• 7 mandate letter priorities for the entire cabinet – laser focused on topline platform priorities• 2 budgets in just over half a year, roughly
Conservatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Get Pierre Poilievre back in the House – Fall 2025• Slight shift in tone – more unity, less divisive, appeal to those we need to form government• Holding the government to account – “steal our ideas!”
NDP	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rebuilding from the ground up – broke and leaderless• Don Davies as interim leader, and leadership race over the next 8-9 months• Seeking official party status
Bloc Québécois	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Balance of power and voice of Quebec in the House of Commons• Cultural Sovereignty tied to national sovereignty, on both fronts• Quebec Elections in 2026 – resources tied with Parti Québécois

28 MINISTERS & 10 SECRETARIES OF STATE

Who are the new faces?



Gregor Robertson

Minister of Housing and Infrastructure

Former Vancouver mayor and Happy Planet co-founder; returns to politics to defend Canada's sovereignty and values.



Eleanor Olszewski

Minister of Emergency Management and Community Resilience

Lawyer and new representative for Edmonton Centre after Randy Boissonault. Voice for Alberta in cabinet.



Evan Solomon

Minister of AI and Digital Innovation

Veteran political journalist and former CBC/CTV broadcaster; transitions from media to federal politics.



Tim Hodgson

Minister of Energy and Natural Resources

Former CEO of Goldman Sachs Canada and Chair of Hydro One; previously served as senior advisor to Mark Carney.



Jill McKnight

Minister of Veterans Affairs

Former CEO of the Delta Chamber of Commerce; focused on small business advocacy and regional economic growth.



Rebecca Chartrand

Minister of Northern and Arctic Affairs

Anishinaabe educator and arts advocate with previous experience in music and the performing arts.

FAMILIAR FACES

Returning Leadership in Carney's Cabinet



Dominic LeBlanc

Minister for Canada-US Trade,
Intergovernmental Affairs and One Canadian
Economy



François-Philippe Champagne

Minister of Finance and National Revenue



Steven Guilbeault

Minister of Canadian Identity and Culture
and Minister responsible for Official
Languages



Patty Hajdu

Minister of Jobs and Families



Melanie Joly

Minister of Industry



Anita Anand

Minister of Foreign Affairs



Chrystia Freeland

Minister of Transport and Internal Trade

KEY DATES FOR PARLIAMENT'S RETURN

Parliamentary Calendar

- May 26: Parliament officially recalled; Speaker of the House to be elected.
- May 27: King Charles III to address Parliament with Speech from the Throne outlining government priorities
- By July 1: Pass targeted motions on middle-class tax cut and removing internal trade barriers

To Come: Committees, critics, parliamentary secretaries, further mandate clarity?

Over Summer 2025

- Staffing Minister and new MP parliamentary offices
- Engagement for new MPs in their communities

Fall 2025

- Fullsome early Fall Budget

THE SAME BUT DIFFERENT

Engaging with a Carney-led government

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THE CABINET TABLE MANDATES

The topline priorities - but not the be all end all

1. **Establishing a new relationship with the United States** and strengthening collaboration with reliable trading partners.
2. **Building one Canada economy** by removing barriers to interprovincial trade and identifying and expediting nation-building projects that will connect and transform country.
3. **Bringing down costs** for Canadians and helping them to get ahead.
4. **Making housing more affordable.**
5. **Protecting Canadian sovereignty** by strengthening the Canadian Armed Forces, securing our borders, and reinforcing law enforcement.
6. **Attracting the best talent in the world** to build economy, and returning immigration rates to sustainable levels.
7. **Spending less on government operations** so that Canadians can invest more in the people and businesses

UNDERSTANDING MARK CARNEY

What will his PMO
look like?

THE SAME . . .

- Bureaucracy will continue to play a prominent role in stewarding the government's agenda
- Will maintain major infrastructure investments, just at an increased and more targeted pace
- Carney's circle of trust is very small and a mixture of old and new faces, including many 2015 Liberal staff

. . .BUT DIFFERENT

- New PM and Cabinet focused on diversifying Canada's relationships to protect economic and political autonomy
- Fiscal pressures will bear down on a government that needs to find money for national security and defence, but the Carney government will pursue an ambitious agenda, and **treat operations and capital as distinct.**

ARTS PRIORITIES

Advocacy with the Carney Government

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MINISTER STEVEN GUILBEAULT'S PRIORITIES

Minister of Canadian Identity and Culture, Official Languages, and Quebec Lieutenant



- A return to a familiar portfolio with a new name – was Minister of Canadian Heritage 2019-2021
- Priority of protecting Canadian Culture in the face of the United States?
- Platform priorities
 - 70M for Telefilm, National Film Board, and Canada Council for the Arts in the platform – a marker with more to come?
 - 150M for CBC
 - Infrastructure – not under Guilbeault, but noteworthy inclusion of “community spaces” and the Enabling Accessibility Fund
- Previous Minister Topline Priorities
 - Modernizing CBC Radio-Canada
 - Canada Council for the Arts

CANADA COUNCIL FOR THE ARTS

Strategic Direction And Leadership

Director and CEO, Michelle Chawla

- A focus on resetting the tone with more transparency
- Spent her first year travelling the country engaging with the sector
- Has called for a shift in how we talk about the arts in Canada
- Concerned about the impacts of tariffs, but also how sector can bring unity

Priorities

1. Strengthen the contribution of the arts to Canada's economic prosperity and social cohesion
2. Foster the sustainability and resilience of Canada's arts sector
3. Make the arts more deeply connected to Canadians
4. Improve how we engage and support the arts sector

Canada Council Budget Ask

1. Focus on core grant recipients
2. Addressing regional inequities
3. Business models, financial resiliency, diversify revenue



THE LATEST ON PACT PRIORITIES

Progress on our 2024 prebudget recommendations

The Ask:

That the Government of Canada allocate no less than 1% of its overall spending towards arts, culture, and heritage. As part of this allocation, we recommend an additional investment of \$270 million into the arts, culture, and heritage sectors, via: \$140 million to the Canada Council for the Arts & \$130 million to the Department of Canadian Heritage

The Timeline: Shorter term goal with clear opportunity for action

- This is a longstanding ask with the now Minister of Canadian Identity and Culture.
- First submitted as part of the budgetary cycle in summer 2024 by the Canadian Arts Coalition, and echoed by many across the sector, including PACT.
- This percentage was specifically cited by the Minister during an election campaign debate on culture – at the time he was “actively working on it” .
- Notably the increase portion of the 1% that is directed to the Canada Council for the Arts (\$140 million) has the greatest receptivity across government.
 - Michelle Chawla has spoken with many across government on this, including Minister Champagne, the current Finance Minister.

THE LATEST ON PACT PRIORITIES

Progress on our 2024 prebudget recommendations

The Ask:

The Government of Canada invests in job creation and cultural industry growth by implementing a live performing arts tax-credit, allowing those in the live performance sector to receive a refundable tax rebate towards a portion of their labour expenses.

The Timeline: Longer term goal with a multi-year strategy

- Much groundwork has been accomplished with the Conservative Party, with energies recently shifting to the Liberals with the election result.
- This is THE revolutionary idea that will change how we invest in the arts in Canada. Communicating the scale and ROI of this idea and not getting sticker shock – softening the ground – is an ongoing process.
- Working on eligibility, design, and framing of programming – clear ROI and economic argument will be necessary with the version of the Liberal government.
- Meetings with Minister of Canadian Identity and Culture on this are imminent.

****If you have a Liberal MP in your riding and would like to flag a good relationship with this MP and are comfortable speaking about how the LPTC would impact your organization – let us know! ****

PACT'S NEXT STEPS

How is PACT engaging with this government?

Building and joining the coalition of voices across the sector and across disciplines

PACT is an active member and valued stakeholder within the sector. Has done a lot of work alongside the Canadian Arts Coalition and bringing together folks on the Live Performing Arts Tax Credit to help the sector sing from the same songbook.

Re-engaging with the Minister of Canadian Identity and Culture

While many staffers will be returning from the pre-Carney days, PACT will be engaging with renewed force and energy with the Minister's office.

Identifying the new players in town

With a "new" government, PACT is working to identify those within the Minister's Offices and the Prime Minister's Office who will be the behind-the-scenes movers and shakers, not only within CIC.

Engaging with newly elected MPs and Ministers who have a large number of theatres in their ridings.

Beyond the Minister's Office, it is vital to build a chorus of allies and friendly faces around the cabinet table, within the Liberal caucus, and across the aisle. Especially with new MPs, they are eager to work on new projects and engage with their new constituents! This is where you come in!

SETTING THE STAGE

Steps for successful arts advocacy

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ADVOCACY PRECONDITIONS FOR SUCCESS

The strategy behind successful arts advocacy

There is no, one formula to guarantee success in advocacy. Instead, we centre on setting as many preconditions as possible to achieve our goals.

Preconditions include:

1. A defined and urgent ask
2. A rhetoric that matches the priorities of decision-makers
 - a) Data driven impact of investment and ROI?
3. A political champion
4. A chorus of voices/momentum
5. An opportunity for action

EXAMPLE

PRAIRIES ARTS COALITION

17 performing arts organisation in the Prairies, gathered around a question of regional equity and underfunding

- **A defined and urgent ask:** \$45 million to PrairiesCan over three years for a runway, not a bailout
- **A rhetoric that matches the priorities of decision-makers:** Downtown revitalization and regional equity
 - **A data driven impact:** Data backed up lack of arts public funding per capita on the Prairies
- **A political champion:** First meetings with CCA, PrairiesCan
- **A chorus of voices/momentum:** Support from Prairies and North Caucus, Minister Boissonnault, PMO, Finance, organization supporters
- **An opportunity for action:** Budget 2024

Result: Prairies Performing Arts Initiative, \$20 million over three years

Advocacy 2.0

Bringing your advocacy voice to the table

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HOW TO CRAFT YOUR MESSAGE

Remember, you are the experts!

- Bring your unique voice and perspective to PACT's established shared goals – whether that's the Tax Credit or Canada Council or a program at Canadian Heritage or a mixture of the three!
 - How your operations or other asks or challenges you have may be relived via the above?
- Make sure to answer these questions in your messaging:
 - Why should the Government invest, and why now?
 - Why does this matter for this theatre and for this community specifically?
 - How should I shift my messaging on what this do depending on who I'm talking to?
- Look into whether your elected official plays a particular role – parliamentary secretary, committee, minister, shadow minister. Can they be a powerful champion based on this? What will they need to hear in order to view this ask as relevant to their portfolio?
- Consider who else can join you in support of this as an ally? Other levels of government? Sector partners? Board Members?
- When in doubt, engaging with an MP is just about making a friend, even if you don't have specific messaging down! Making a friend sometimes matters more than making progress!

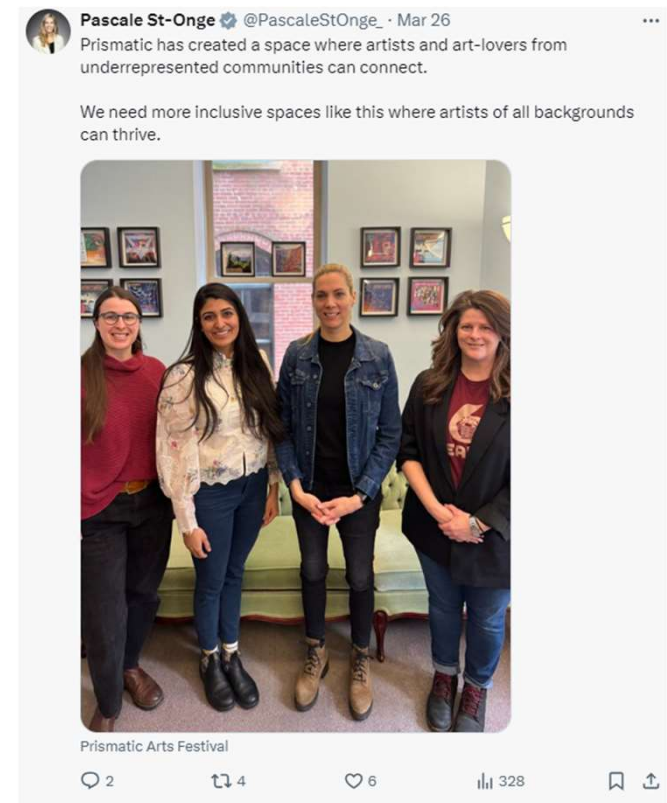
WHAT DOES ENGAGEMENT LOOK LIKE?

There is no one version of success here

Of course, we always encourage sending a meeting request and meeting at a constituency office or at your facility, however engagement can take many forms!

- Sending congratulation letters to local MPs and relevant Ministers.
- Happen to be in Ottawa? Try reaching out then!
- Invite newly elected or re-elected MPs to a show or for a backstage tour.
- Encourage audience members to bring up the importance of the arts and their local theatre in conversation with elected officials!
- Send flyers, reports, shows, other events, and more to local elected officials – a simple fyi email always works!
- Participate in community events – during the summer this can include BBQs, townhalls, etc.

If there are multiple theatres in one riding, consider collaborating with other peers to maximize advocacy efficiency.



TIMING IS EVERYTHING?

When in doubt, squeaky wheel method!

- If you have a new MP, it is highly encouraged to reach out to them right now to congratulate them and let them know that you're in their riding and an important stakeholder and partner in the community.
 - This summer new MPs will be seeking to establish further connections with their new constituents.
- If your MP was re-elected, it's still encouraged to reach out right now. This is an opportunity for renewed engagement and energy. They will similarly be looking to engage with community members this summer.

The House of Commons will be sitting likely most of June. However MPs will be home for the entire summer and will not return to the House of Commons until mid-September. Now is the perfect time to build relationships, especially with new MPs!

***If you are worried about how or when to reach out, ask the PACT team or PAA directly! ***

Advocacy Tools

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PACT ADVOCACY WEBSITE

This is your one
stop shop!

ADVOCACY TOOLS & RESOURCES

ADVOCACY AT PACT – MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD!

PACT has had a long-standing and important position in Canadian Arts Advocacy. The mechanisms have changed and grown over time but the key to succeeding in ensuring that Theatre has a secure and healthy future benefitting all Canadians is when we come together as a united voice.

We want all of you to feel empowered to engage in Arts Advocacy. This can come in many forms and happen in many venues – but to do so you need the best tools.

Welcome to our Advocacy Resources Page – your one-stop shop for all your Advocacy needs.

We have recently reenergized this space to make it more current and user-friendly. Whether you want to know how to start your journey or need deeper strategic support, we aim to provide as much as possible to assist you – including tips, tools and statistics from other partners in the sector and beyond.

Of course, PACT engages year round at the institutional level and through its hard-working Advocacy Committee. Organizationally, we connect regularly with various federal ministries ([Canadian Heritage](#), [Finance](#), [Infrastructure](#), [Economic and Social Development Canada](#) to name but a few) as well as working closely with the [Canada Council for the Arts](#). Advocacy can also be defined purely as a positive voice for the arts and PACT has been a key animator of Canada's participation in World Theatre Day and World Day of Theatre for Children & Young People for many years.

So, please engage with the materials we've curated for you here – if you have requests or questions, let us know. Advocacy is a fluid space – we aim ensure that, moving forward, this portal is too. So keep an eye open for updates and additions. And if you think you'd like to become even more involved and are interested in our Advocacy Committee, please contact Membership & Communications Manager Ainslee Jessiman (ainsleej@pact.ca) for more information – new members are always welcome!

PACT RESOURCES

FILTER BY CATEGORY

☐ Advocacy Handouts

FIND YOUR LOCAL MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT & HOUSE SITTING CALENDAR

The screenshot displays the official website of the House of Commons of Canada. At the top, the House of Commons logo is visible on the left, and navigation links for 'Parliamentary Business', 'Members', 'Participate', 'About the House', and 'Employment' are on the right. A 'Share this page' button is also present. Below the navigation bar, the 'Members of Parliament' section is highlighted. A search bar titled 'FIND MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT' allows users to search by name, constituency, or postal code. Below the search bar, a link to 'Show All Current Members' is provided. To the right of this link, a text box states: 'Each member of Parliament is elected to represent a constituency in the House. There are currently 336 members in office in the 44th Parliament.' Below the search section, there are two main areas: 'VIEW BY POLITICAL AFFILIATION' and 'SEE WHERE MEMBERS SIT IN THE CHAMBER'. The 'VIEW BY POLITICAL AFFILIATION' section shows a table of political parties and their number of members. The 'SEE WHERE MEMBERS SIT IN THE CHAMBER' section features a 3D rendering of the House of Commons chamber with the text 'Seating Plan' at the bottom.

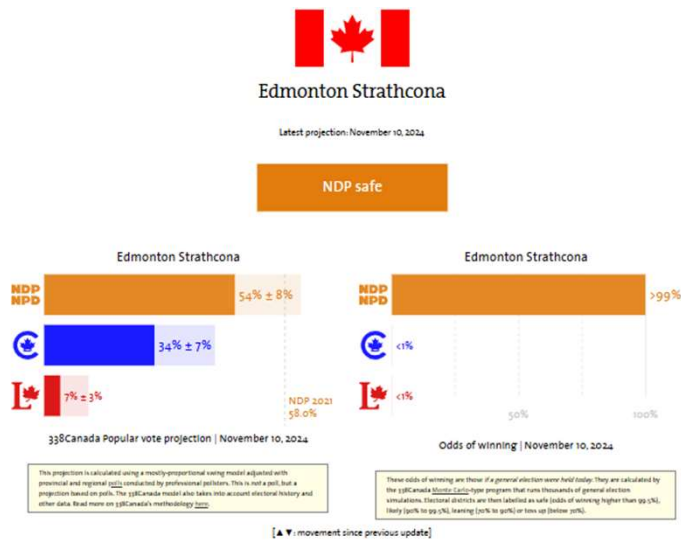
VIEW BY POLITICAL AFFILIATION	
Liberal 153	Conservative 119
Bloc Québécois 33	NDP 25
Independent 4	Green Party 2

Seating Plan

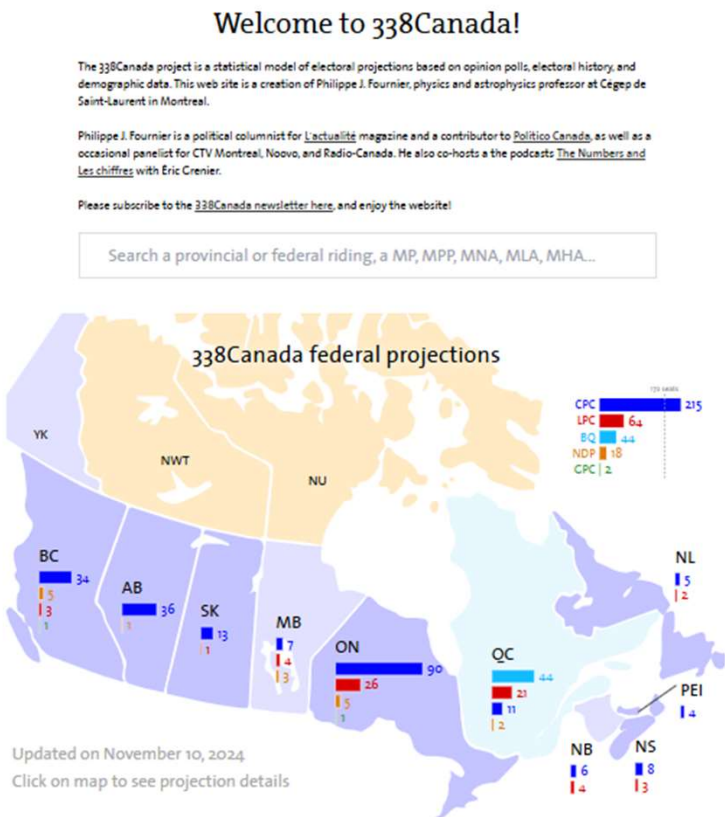
Head to ourcommons.ca/Members to find your MP, their role, committee placements, and much more!


POLITICAL POLLING ACROSS CANADA

Head to **338Canada.ca** to find out how your ridding fared this past election.



With aggregated polling data, 338Canada will help you find out if your riding was a close call, was considered safe, etc.





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Department Listing

Search in : Canada

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Examples

(1) Smith (2) Smith, John (3) John Smith (4) 613-999-0101 (5) "Da Vinci" (6) minister

[Click here for more help.](#)

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[Accessibility Standards Canada](#)

[Administrative Tribunals Support Service of Canada](#)

[Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada](#)

[Association of Professional Executives of the Public Service of Canada](#)

[Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency](#)

[Atlantic Pilotage Authority](#)

[Atomic Energy of Canada Limited](#)

MINISTERIAL STAFF AND BUREAUCRATS

geds-sage.gc.ca is a wealth of information and lists every department and its minister office(s).

However, take much of the information found on geds-sage.gc.ca with a grain of salt. It is often out of date.

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Thank you! Merci!
Questions?

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