



# HOW THE CANADIAN GOVERNMENT WORKS

Canada School of public service

Click on the blue button to start the course.



# Modules

This course is divided in 5 modules :

Setting the  
Stage for  
Results

01

02

Meeting  
the  
Players

Setting  
the  
Agenda

03

04

Advancing the  
Agenda

Implemen  
ting the  
Agenda

05

# How Things Work

The government makes decisions on what is in the public interest and acts on them.

One way to understand the system we work in is by examining the **relationships** involved in the delegation of responsibility.

## Take Action

Responsibility implies an authority to **take action**.

## Held to Account

Individuals with responsibility will be **held to account** by those who delegated the responsibility to them.

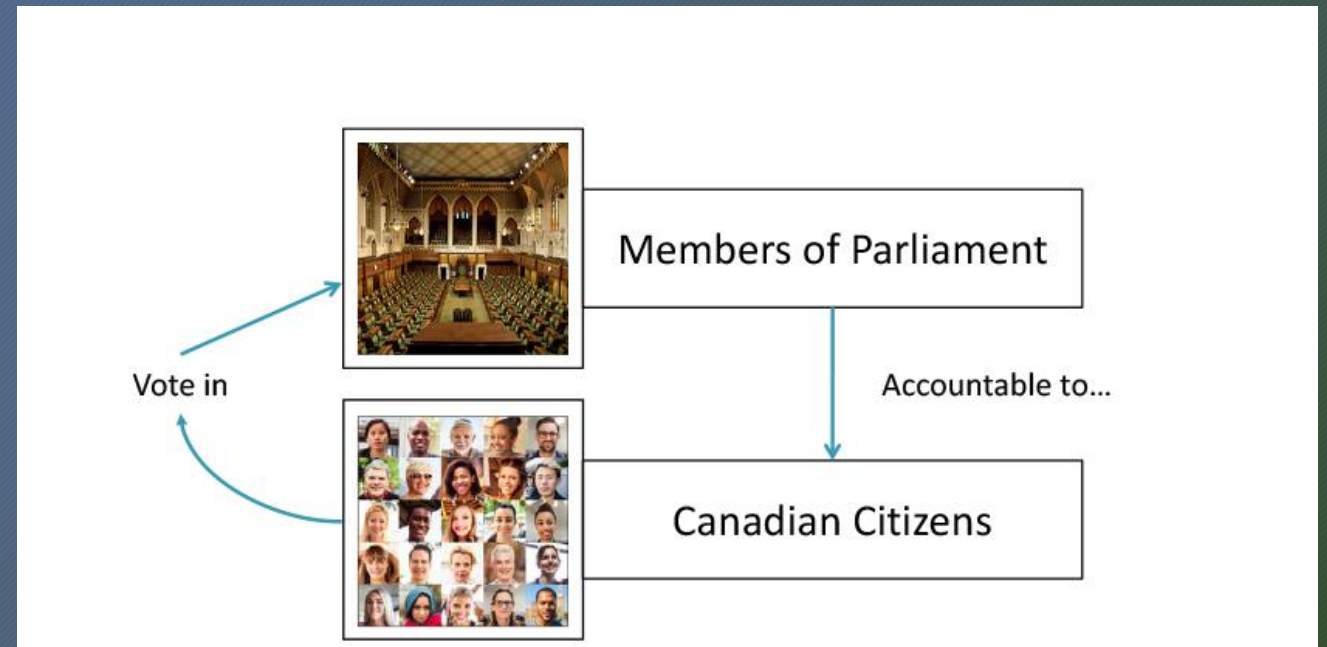
## Judge

Those to whom we are accountable, **judge** how we carry out our responsibilities based on information about our actions.



# Members of Parliament

- What this means is that there is a chain of delegated responsibility coupled with direct accountability.
- **Canadian citizens** vote in **Members of Parliament** and give them the responsibility to represent citizens. This is done through a federal election.
- Members of Parliament are accountable to the citizens.



To see the current list of Members of Parliament, click on this link:  
<https://www.ourcommons.ca/members/en/search>

# Separating Power

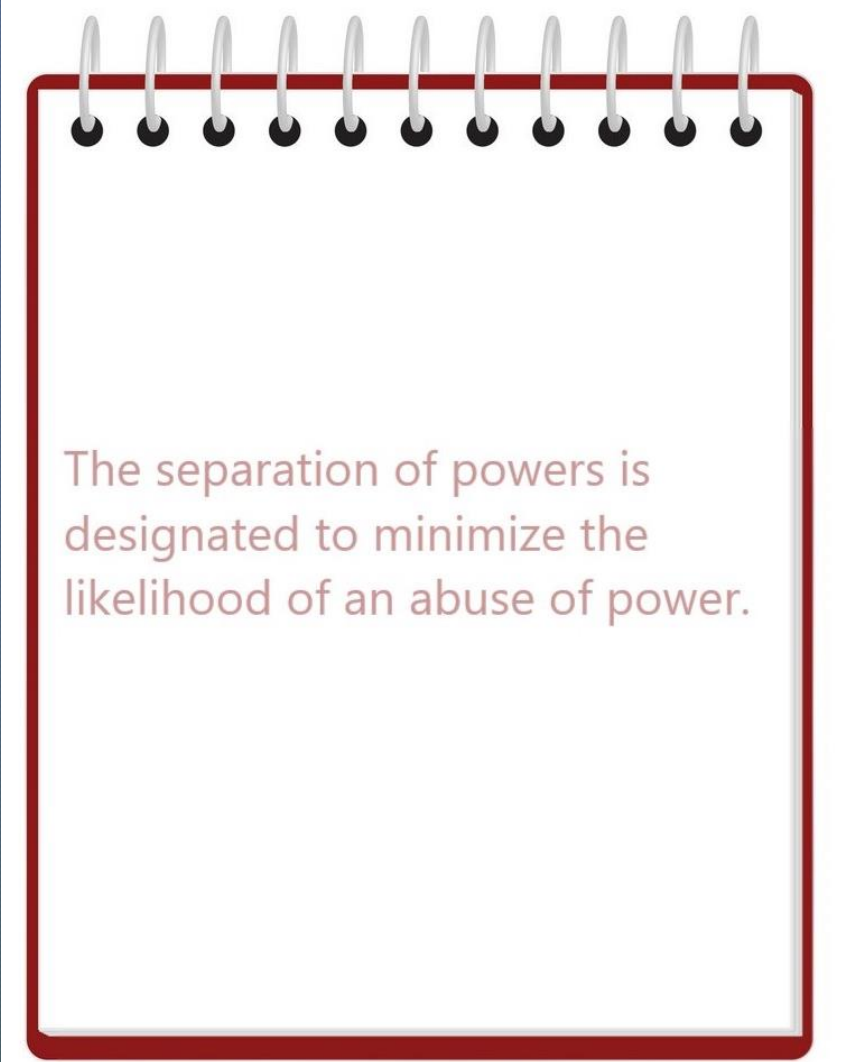
An important feature of our system is the separation and independence of powers among three branches of government:

- the Legislative Branch,
- the Executive Branch, and
- the Judicial Branch.



# Separating Power

Branch	Powers
Legislative Branch	<b>The Legislative Branch</b> , or Parliament, has the power to pass laws, including laws that allow for the spending of money.
Executive Branch	<b>The Executive Branch</b> has the power to propose action and follow through when the related spending is approved.
Judicial Branch	<b>The Judicial Branch</b> has the power to interpret the law and determine whether actions are in compliance with the law.



The separation of powers is designated to minimize the likelihood of an abuse of power.



# Central Agencies

Among departments, Central Agencies are unique in that they assist ministers in fulfilling their collective responsibilities. For example:

## Department of Finances

The **Department of Finance Canada** helps allocate resources to allow ministers to implement their agendas collectively.

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## PCO

The PCO helps coordinate implementation of the agenda and strives for coherence in Cabinet decisions.

The **Privy Council Office** helps coordinate implementation of the agenda and strives for coherence in Cabinet decisions.

## TBS

The TBS supports Treasury Board by proposing and implementing management policies.

The **Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat** supports Treasury Board by proposing and implementing management policies.

# Majority vs Minority government

## Majority government

In a majority government, the term (about four years) is more predictable because the governing party's members of Parliament will usually vote to support their party staying in power.

## Minority government

In a minority government, there is uncertainty with respect to the length of the term, because opposition parties may collectively out-vote the governing party on matters of "confidence."



# Map of the Canadian federal election 2019

