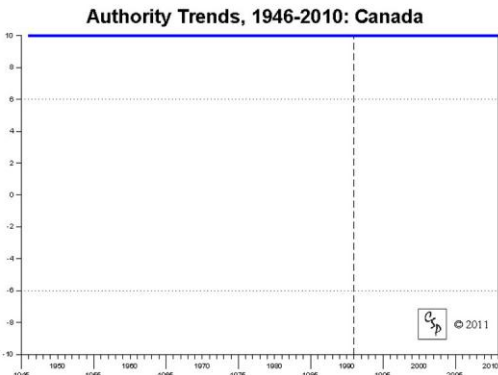


Polity IV Country Report 2010: Canada

<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 15%;">Score:</td> <td style="width: 15%;">2009</td> <td style="width: 15%;">2010</td> <td style="width: 15%;">Change</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Polity:</td> <td>10</td> <td>10</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Democ:</td> <td>10</td> <td>10</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Autoc:</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Durable:</td> <td></td> <td>122</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Tentative:</td> <td></td> <td>No</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	Score:	2009	2010	Change	Polity:	10	10	0	Democ:	10	10	0	Autoc:	0	0	0	Durable:		122		Tentative:		No		
Score:	2009	2010	Change																						
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Autoc:	0	0	0																						
Durable:		122																							
Tentative:		No																							
SCODE	CAN	CCODE	020	Date of Report	1 June 2011																				
Polity IV Component Variables																									
XRREG	XRCOMP	XROPEN	XCONST	PARREG	PARCOMP																				
3	3	4	7	5	5																				
Date of Most Recent Polity Transition (3 or more point change)																									
End Date	30 June 1888		Begin Date	1 July 1888																					
Polity Fragmentation: No																									
Constitution	1982 (1867)																								
Executive(s)	Prime Minister Stephen Harper (CPC); automatically assumed post as leader of majority party in Parliament, 6 February 2006																								
Legislature	Bicameral: House of Commons (308 seats; directly elected; most recent elections, 2 May 2011) Conservative Party of Canada (CPC; a merger of the Canadian Alliance and the Progressive Conservative Party): 166 New Democratic Party (NDP): 103 Liberal Party of Canada (LPC): 34 Other: 5 Senate (104 seats); appointed by governor-general																								
Judiciary	Supreme Court																								

Narrative Description:¹

Executive Recruitment: Competitive Elections (8)

The Canadian prime minister is recruited through a competitive multiparty electoral system. The majority party (or majority coalition) in the National Assembly selects the prime minister. Members of the National Assembly are directly elected. The current government, headed by Conservative party leader Stephen Harper, came to power in January 2006, ending 12 years of Liberal party rule. In these elections the Conservative party failed to secure an outright legislative majority thereby forcing Harper to form a minority coalition government. Harper called for early elections in October 2008 but failed to secure a

¹ The research described in this report was sponsored by the Political Instability Task Force (PITF). The PITF is funded by the Central Intelligence Agency. The views expressed herein are the authors' alone and do not represent the views of the US Government.

working majority. Two months later an alliance by the Liberal and New Democrat parties almost toppled the government. Harper avoided a no-confidence vote by suspending parliament for one month. Prime Minister Harper suspended the parliament for a second time in January 2010, this time for two months.

Executive Constraints: Executive Parity or Subordination (7)

The parliamentary structure of government places significant constraints on the autonomous actions of the chief executive. The prime minister is elected from, and is directly responsible to, the legislature. In addition to the significant powers of the legislative branch, horizontal accountability in Canada is maintained by an active and autonomous judiciary.

Political Participation: Institutionalized Open Electoral Competition (10)

Canada has a competitive multiparty democratic system. Freedom of speech and assembly are constitutionally protected and the civil rights of citizens are generally respected. While efforts by the French-speaking citizens of the province of Quebec to secede from the federal republic have been marked by violence in the past, in recent years this struggle has largely been played out inside the constitutional arena. In an October 1995 referendum held in Quebec the “federalists” narrowly defeated the “secessionists” by a vote of 50.56% to 49.44%. The concept of “western alienation” has also played an important role in Canadian political participation in recent years, with politicians and parties from western provinces of Alberta and British Columbia, in particular, demanding greater representation and influence in national affairs. Ontario and Quebec are perceived to benefit disproportionately both economically and politically as a result of their more central roles in politics.