

The Vote

In the US, elections are held every four years, and presidents can hold only office for a maximum of 2 terms.

Therefore, Barack Obama can be President until this date:

- A) 2099
- B) 2012
- C) 2013
- D) 2016



If you choose “D” you are correct!

In Canada things are different!

An election must be called if:

- 1) There is a vote of non-confidence in the House of Commons
- 2) If a government sits longer than 4 years
- 3) If the Governor General dissolves Parliament

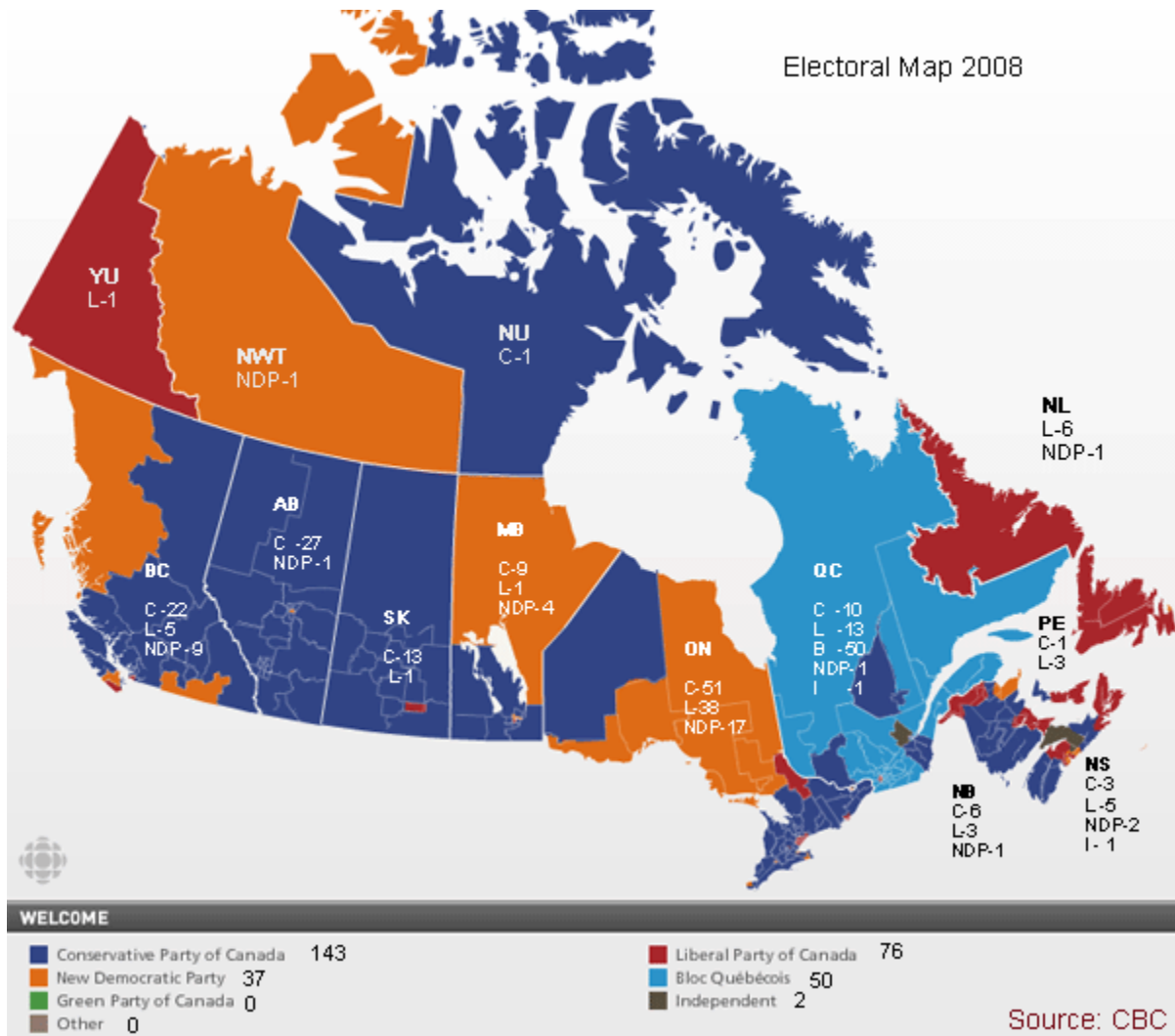
A Federal Election – cool facts

- To run a campaign in your riding all you need is \$1000.00 and 100 signatures
- The Canadian Federal campaign lasts 36 days
- It costs \$300,000,000....no foolin!
- Women began to vote after 1917 and the voting age was lowered from 21 to 18 in 1970
- You can vote if you are 18 and not in jail
- From 1867 – 1921 there were only 2 parties, so a majority Government was guaranteed!

In the last election there were Five Political Parties:



However, the Green Party received no seats. Let's look how the others did:



Harper's Conservatives (a.k.a. The Tories) won 143, but they did not receive the 155 seats needed for a majority. This puts the government in a weak position.

Why is Stephen Harper in a weak political position?

Canada has 308 ridings.

This means our country is divided into 308 sections. Each section gets a vote and each section sends a representative to Ottawa and he/she represents one of the 5 parties or is Independent. Therefore, simple math tells us that if a party wants to be strong, they must have at least 50% + 1 more seat (155 out of 308) to get their bills passed!

