



Trends in Public Consultation in Canada

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Canadian Policy Research Networks (CPRN) and Ascentum

Canadian Context

- Structure of government
- Westminster model of Parliament
- Charter of Rights and Freedoms
- BNA Act, 1867
- Federal government organization
- Role of Ministers and the public service
- Legislative process and consultation

Recent Trends

- Asymmetrical federalism
- Democratic deficit
- Disenchanted and alienated citizenry
- Increasing interest in citizen engagement
 - Citizens and government

Policy Making Lifecycle and Consultation

- Stages of the policy making process
- Dimensions of citizen involvement
- Public involvement spectrum
- Participant commitment spectrum
- Principles of good public involvement
- Challenges to public involvement

“Scaling Up” Public Consultation

- Lots of experimentation
- Advances in technology
- New structures
- Adapting methodologies
- Role of non-governmental organizations
 - Think tanks
 - Consultants

Case Studies

- Federal government
 - Royal Commissions
 - Parliamentary Committees
 - Departments
- Provinces
 - Democratic reform/renewal
- Municipalities
 - “Listening to Toronto”

Conclusions

- Pace and challenge of change
- Public consultation and accountability
- Democracy in evolution
- Much experimentation
- Adaptation from Canadian practices
- Ongoing learning and exchange

Contact Us

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