

Context card

Case study: Inuit

Inuit are a distinct Indigenous people. Their homelands are in northern Canada. For thousands of years, they have governed themselves.

Much of the Arctic, where Inuit live, became part of Canada in the 1880s. Inuit got the right to vote in federal elections in 1950.

Today, Inuit are active in Canada's elections and democracy.



Source: NWT Archives, Archibald Fleming fonds, N-1979-050-1122

1880

Inuit



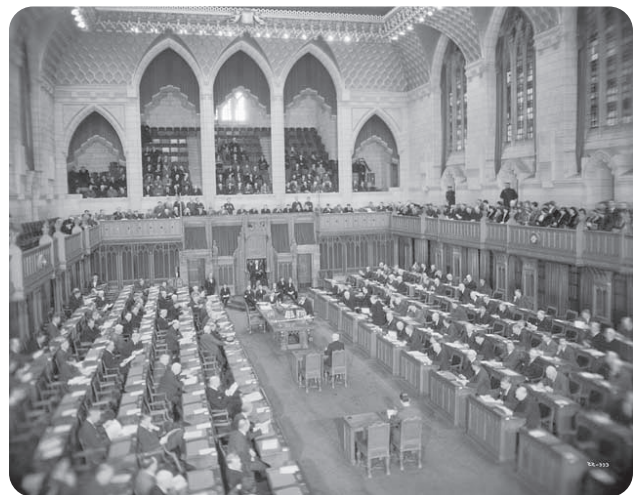
Source: A.P. Low, Library and Archives Canada, PA-051445

Canada expands its borders to include the Arctic lands where Inuit live. Inuit are not asked about this change. Canada's laws do not say whether Inuit can vote.

Inuit continue to govern themselves in their own ways.

1934

Inuit

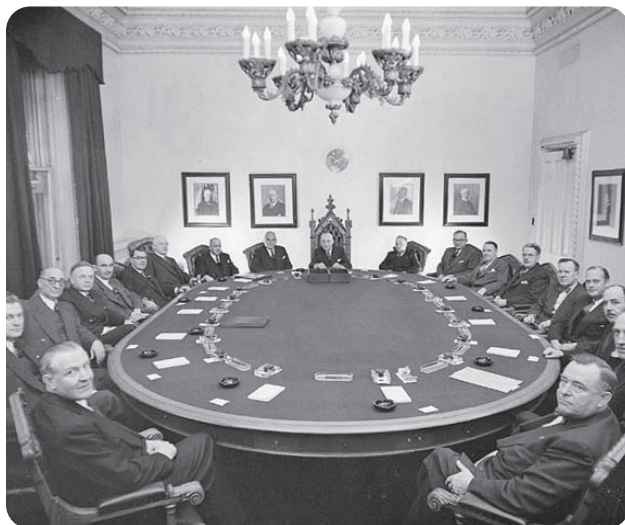


Source: National Film Board of Canada. Photothèque, Library and Archives Canada, PA-801205

Parliament creates a new law. The law makes it clear that Inuit are not allowed to vote. This is the same as the rules for First Nations peoples.

1950

Inuit



Source: C. Lund, National Film Board of Canada, Library and Archives Canada, PA-196460

Inuit gain the right to vote in federal elections.
The federal government makes this decision.

1953

Inuit



Source: 1953 – National Film Board of Canada

Inuit vote for the first time in a federal election.
Some communities have voting places but others do not.

In this photo from Labrador, Joe Millik is trained as an election worker.

1962

Inuit

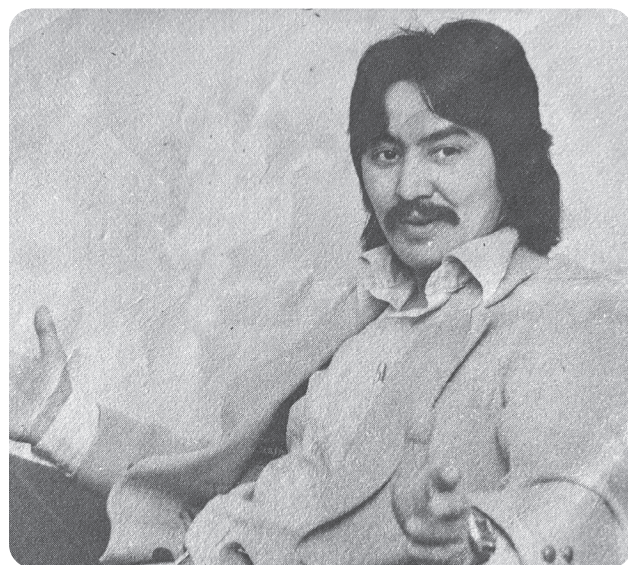


Source: Wilfred Doucette, National Film Board of Canada. Photothèque, Library and Archives Canada, PA-111207

Voting services are expanded to all Inuit communities. Voting materials arrive by ship, helicopter and even parachute.

1979

Inuit



Source: Courtesy of Peter Ittinuar

Peter Ittinuar is the first Inuk in Canada to be elected as a member of Parliament.

