

Introduction to Researching Government Information

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Step 1:

Identify the government agencies or bodies active in your area of interest. Start by searching for background information:

- periodical literature (newspapers, magazines, journals)
- books and publications via the library catalogue (keyword searching)

Step 2:

Use the information found in Step 1 to help identify the level and branch of government responsible for the information you need:

Levels

- Domestic: Canadian Federal, Provincial, Inter-Governmental, Municipal
- Foreign Governments (e.g., United States of America, United Kingdom)
- International governmental organizations (e.g., UN, OECD, ILO, etc.)

Branches

Different tools are used to find information produced by different branches of government:

- Legislative: access parliamentary/governance documents through relevant web sites and/or specific indexes as described in online library research guides
- Executive: recent publications are often full-text online; identify both print and electronic publications by using the library catalogue and various indexes, e.g., Microlog/Canadian Research Index (Canadian), GPO Access (United States), AccessUN (United Nations)
- Judicial: consult with law librarians or use Law Library research guides

Step 3:

Use navigational web sites, like the one shown below, to identify the tools that will assist you with the retrieval of government information. Note: this web page is linked from "Government Sources" on the library homepage, under "eResources."

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Government Information on the Internet

[Government of Canada](#)

[Provincial, Territorial, and Municipal Governments](#)

[Government of Ontario](#)
[City of Toronto](#)

[United States, United Kingdom and Other Foreign Governments](#)

[International Governmental Organizations](#)

[United Nations](#)
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[World Bank](#)
[International Monetary Fund](#)
[Other IGOs](#)

[Citing Government Information](#)

Government Publications in the News
[Government of Canada News](#)

[Government of Ontario News](#)

[City of Toronto News Releases](#)

Research Guides

Links by Level of Government

Introduction to Researching Government Information: Specific Government Collections at York University Libraries

Canadian Materials

Federal, provincial and municipal government publications can be found by searching in the Library Catalogue. Most documents can be found in the Scott Government Reference section on the 2nd floor of the Scott Library and online (linked from the Library Catalogue) from 1995 forward.

Microlog: Canadian Research Index

Indexes Canadian federal, provincial and municipal government publications (1982-present). Materials are either linked to their full-text online version, available on microfiche in the Scott Library Microtext Department (arranged by year and Microlog Number), or found in paper (search the Library Catalogue to determine availability of paper version).

International Governmental Organization (IGO) Materials

Publications from the United Nations family, Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), World Bank, International Monetary Fund (IMF), International Labour Organization (ILO), Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and other international governmental organizations can be found by searching the Library Catalogue.

United Nations

Publications that are available in paper can be found by searching in the Library Catalogue. The Scott Library has a substantial microtext collection of United Nations documents and official records. The records are available on microfiche from 1982 to the present. Consult the library research guides for detailed information about these holdings.

AccessUN

Indexes United Nations documents (1991-present) including Official Records and sales publications, many of which are linked to their online versions. Most documents are also available on microfiche in the Scott Library Microtext Department (organized by Readex Year and Document number) and some are available in print (search the Library Catalogue to determine availability of paper version).

Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)

Most OECD publications are available in both paper and online formats. Publications that are available in paper can be found by searching the Library Catalogue.

SourceOECD

This is the online library of the OECD. It provides fulltext access to books, reports, periodicals, and statistical databases.

Additional Resources

International Information: Documents, Publications and Electronic Information of International Governmental Organizations. 2nd ed. Edited by Peter I. Hajnal. Englewood, Co.: Libraries Unlimited, 1997. [JZ 4850 I58 1997 SC-GOV-REF, 2nd floor, Scott Library]

Yearbook of International Organizations. Brussels: Union of International Associations, 2005-2006. [JX 1904 Y4 SCOTT-REF, 2nd floor, Scott Library]

Journal of Government Information: An International Review of Policy, Issues and Resources. [Z 7164 G7 G68, 1974 -, 5th floor, Scott Library, 1982- online]

Government Information Quarterly: An International Journal of Information Technology Management, Policies, and Practices. [1984- online]