

Instructions for downloading federal political donation data for the last quarter of 2020

The story upon which the tutorial is based federal political parties filling coffers in the lead-up to a possible election in 2021.

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/grenier-2020-q4-fundraising-1.5896460>

This tutorial will help us locate the numbers driving Eric's story about the Conservative Party's total donation tally for the last three months of 2020 (\$7,661,755) and the number of people who contributed those amounts (46,234), compared to the \$6,499,668 and 48,282 for the Liberals and \$2,504,279 and 20,877 for the NDP. It is also worth noting that these donations are for all amounts. The dataset you are about to download contains two tables in one csv file: The main table provides the location and identify of the donors who contributed more than \$200.

A separate and much smaller table on the same worksheet contains all the amounts UNDER \$200, inexplicably aggregated by party.

So, while we can identify the country's largest donors and where they live, Canadians giving smaller amounts to our federal political parties can do so anonymously. Go figure! At any rate, it is still worth learning how to download this data.

So, here we go.

<https://www.elections.ca/wpapps/WPF/EN/Home/Index?returntype>

1. Select “Registered parties” and “Quarterly financial returns.”

Search for Financial Returns

Home > Political Financing > Search for Financial Returns

Select Search Criteria

Political Entity - mandatory:

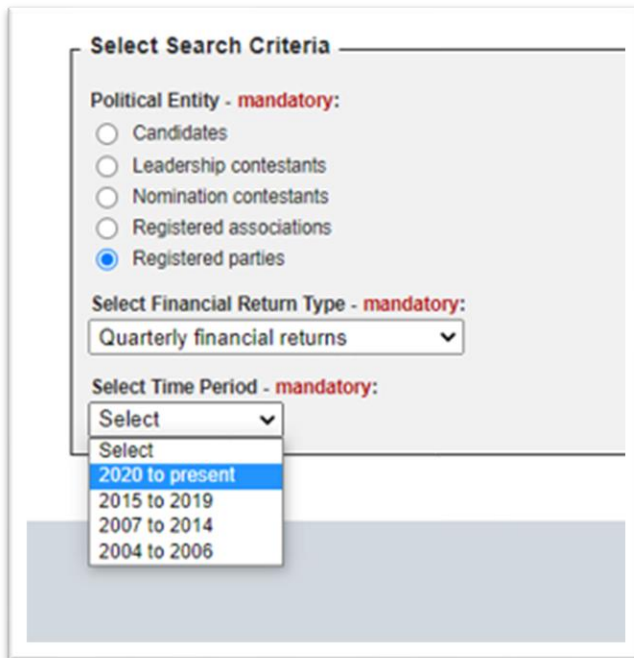
- Candidates
- Leadership contestants
- Nomination contestants
- Registered associations
- Registered parties

Select Financial Return Type - mandatory:

Select

- Select
- Annual financial returns
- Quarterly financial returns
- General election expenses returns

2. Select the “2020 to present” time period.



Select Search Criteria

Political Entity - mandatory:

- Candidates
- Leadership contestants
- Nomination contestants
- Registered associations
- Registered parties

Select Financial Return Type - mandatory:

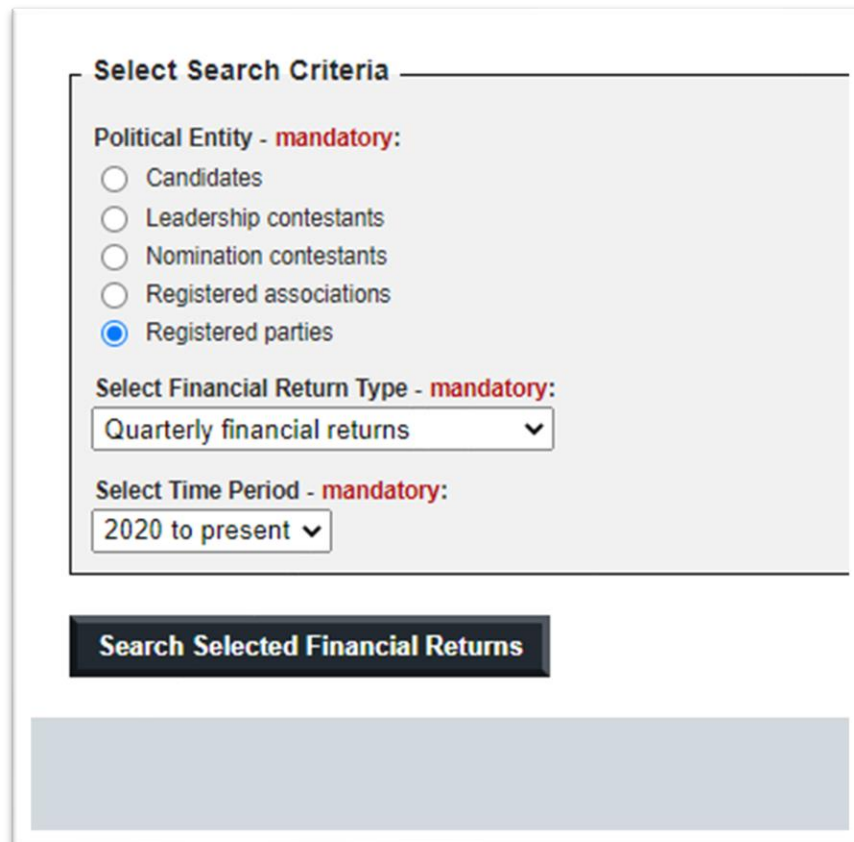
Quarterly financial returns ▼

Select Time Period - mandatory:

Select ▼

- 2020 to present
- 2015 to 2019
- 2007 to 2014
- 2004 to 2006

3. Click the “Search Selected Financial Returns” tab.



Select Search Criteria

Political Entity - mandatory:

- Candidates
- Leadership contestants
- Nomination contestants
- Registered associations
- Registered parties

Select Financial Return Type - mandatory:

Quarterly financial returns ▼

Select Time Period - mandatory:

2020 to present ▼

Search Selected Financial Returns

4. The database defaults to “Data as submitted” under the “Return Status.” So leave that as is. Check the boxes to the right of “Political Parties” and “Period,” as you can see in the screen grab below.

Search for Registered Party Returns

[Description of Return](#)

Enter Search Criteria

Return Status:

- Data as submitted
- Data as reviewed

Level of Detail:

- Complete Financial Return
- Financial Return Summary
- Corrections and Revisions - available for Data as reviewed

Political Parties - mandatory: Select all Parties

Bloc Québécois
Conservative Party of Canada
Green Party of Canada
Liberal Party of Canada
New Democratic Party

Period - mandatory: Select all Periods

2020

Find Parties

Select Registered Parties

Financial Returns Found - Political Party / Return Type / End Period: 0

Select All Remove Selected


Search Selected

5. Click the “Find Parties” tab, which will populate the section at the bottom of the screen grab above.

Search for Registered Party Returns

[Description of Return](#)

Enter Search Criteria

Return Status: 

Data as submitted
 Data as reviewed

Level of Detail:

Complete Financial Return
 Financial Return Summary
 Corrections and Revisions - available for Data as reviewed

Political Parties - mandatory: Select all Parties

Bloc Québécois
Conservative Party of Canada
Green Party of Canada
Liberal Party of Canada
New Democratic Party

Period - mandatory: Select all Periods

2020

Find Parties

Select Registered Parties

Financial Returns Found - Political Party / Return Type / End Period: 20

Bloc Québécois / Quarterly / Dec 2020
Bloc Québécois / Quarterly / Jun 2020
Bloc Québécois / Quarterly / Mar 2020
Bloc Québécois / Quarterly / Sep 2020
Conservative Party of Canada / Quarterly / Dec 2020
Conservative Party of Canada / Quarterly / Jun 2020
Conservative Party of Canada / Quarterly / Mar 2020
Conservative Party of Canada / Quarterly / Sep 2020
Green Party of Canada / Quarterly / Dec 2020
Green Party of Canada / Quarterly / Jun 2020

Select All **Remove Selected**

Search Selected

6. Click the “Select All” tab highlighted by the red rectangle, which will highlight all the parties as you can see below.

The screenshot shows a web interface with the following elements:

- A dark button labeled "Find Parties" at the top left.
- A section header "Select Registered Parties" followed by a horizontal line.
- A summary line: "Financial Returns Found - Political Party / Return Type / End Period: 20".
- A list of 10 entries, each representing a political party and its return type and period:
 - Bloc Québécois / Quarterly / Dec 2020
 - Bloc Québécois / Quarterly / Jun 2020
 - Bloc Québécois / Quarterly / Mar 2020
 - Bloc Québécois / Quarterly / Sep 2020
 - Conservative Party of Canada / Quarterly / Dec 2020
 - Conservative Party of Canada / Quarterly / Jun 2020
 - Conservative Party of Canada / Quarterly / Mar 2020
 - Conservative Party of Canada / Quarterly / Sep 2020
 - Green Party of Canada / Quarterly / Dec 2020
 - Green Party of Canada / Quarterly / Jun 2020
- Two dark buttons at the bottom of the list: "Select All" and "Remove Selected".
- A dark button labeled "Search Selected" at the bottom left, which is highlighted by a red rectangle.

7. Click the “Search Selected” tab.

Registered Party Quarterly Financial Returns

Home › Political Financing › Search for Financial Returns › Choose Registered Parties › Detailed Report

Part 1 - Declaration
[Description of Return](#)

Search Criteria

Return Status: ⓘ
 Data as submitted
 Data as reviewed

Return Part
Part 1 - Declaration

Political Parties Selected - Political Party / Return Type / End Period
Bloc Québécois / Quarterly / Dec 2020

Go

[Download](#) ⓘ

[Next Part](#) [Next Return](#)

Bloc Québécois / Quarterly / Dec 2020

Return information	
Political party	Bloc Québécois
Return type	Quarterly
End period	Dec 2020
Chief agent's information	
Full name of chief agent	Gauthier, Sylvain

8. Under “Return Status”, it defaults to “Data as submitted.” Leave that as is. Under “Return Part” select “Part 2a – Statement of Contributions Received” from the dropdown menu.

Search Criteria

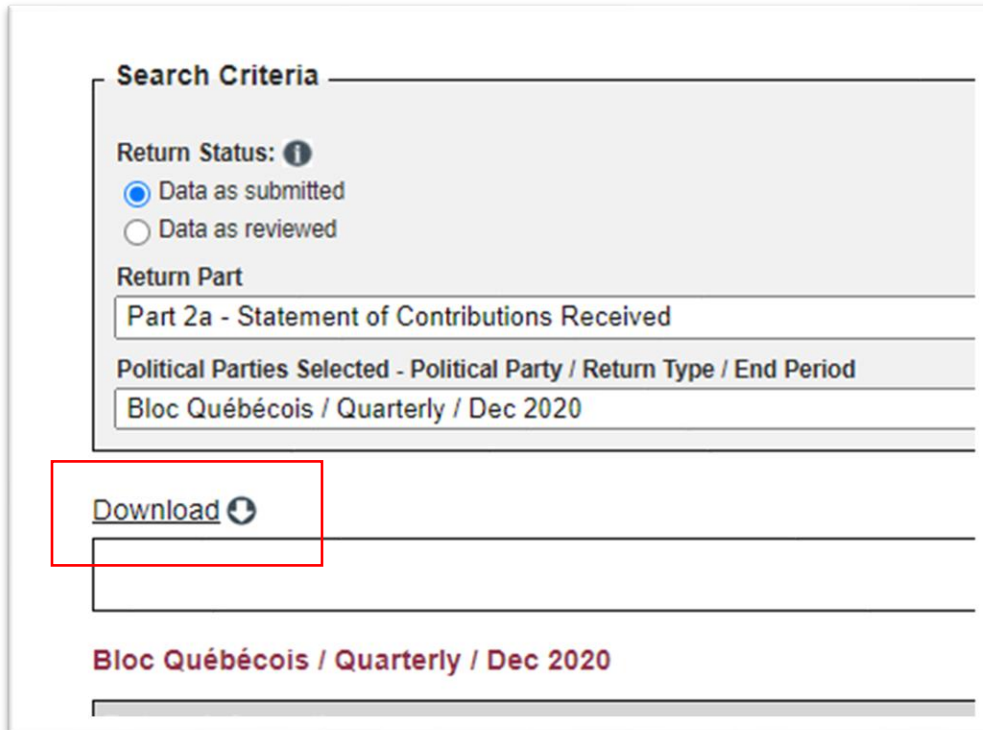
Return Status: ⓘ
 Data as submitted
 Data as reviewed

Return Part
Part 1 - Declaration
Part 1 - Declaration
Part 2a - Statement of Contributions Received
Part 2b - Statement of Directed Contributions Received
Part 2c - Statement of Contributions Returned to Contributors or Remitted to the Chief Electoral Officer
Part 2d - Statement of Transfers Received
Part 2e - Summary of Contributions and Transfers

Go

[Next Part](#) [Next Return](#)

9. Do not worry about selecting parties under the under the “Political Parties Selected – Political Party...” Section. Instead, click the “Download” tab.



The screenshot shows a web form titled "Search Criteria". It includes a "Return Status" section with two radio buttons: "Data as submitted" (selected) and "Data as reviewed". Below this is a "Return Part" section with a text input field containing "Part 2a - Statement of Contributions Received". A table below the input field has two rows: the first row contains "Political Parties Selected - Political Party / Return Type / End Period" and the second row contains "Bloc Québécois / Quarterly / Dec 2020". A red box highlights the "Download" button with a downward arrow icon. Below the button is a text input field. At the bottom of the form, the text "Bloc Québécois / Quarterly / Dec 2020" is displayed.



The screenshot shows a "Download" dialog box with a close button in the top right corner. It has an "Information" section with the text "Select download format from the list." Below this is a "Download format:" label followed by a dropdown menu currently set to "CSV". A "Download" button is located at the bottom left of the dialog box. The background shows a blurred view of the search criteria form from the previous screenshot.

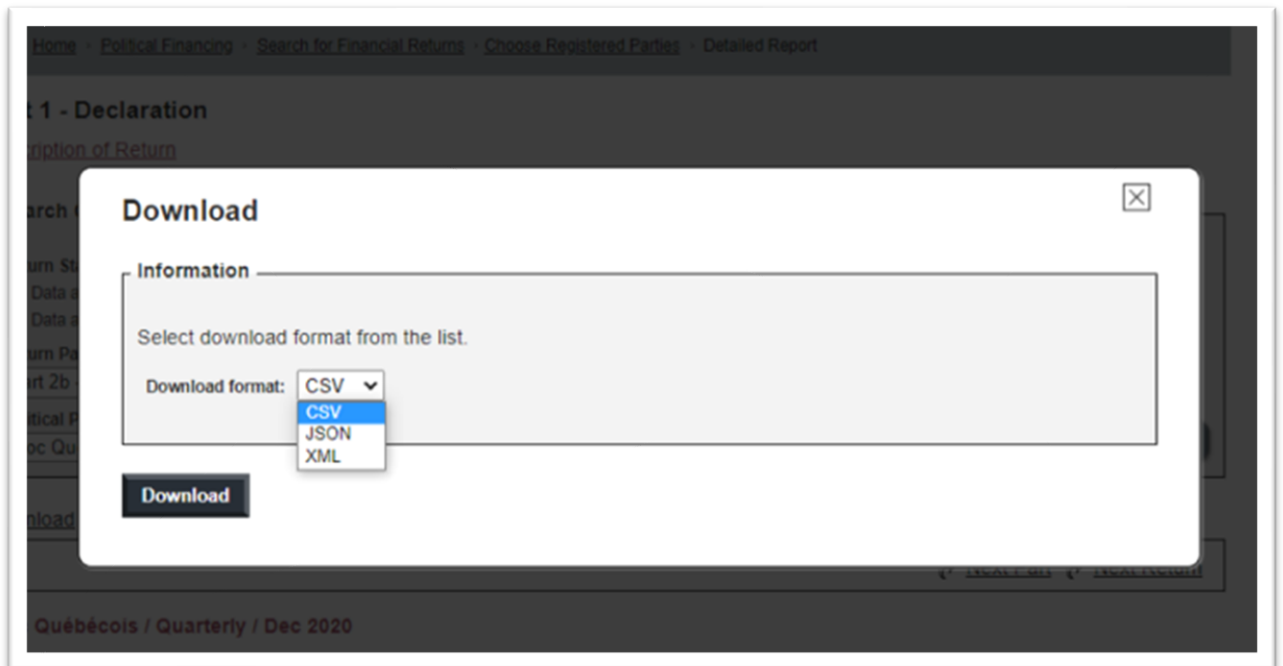
10. The default format is a “csv”, the acronym for “comma separated value”, a text file format in which the columns of information are separated by commas as you can see in this

screen grab.

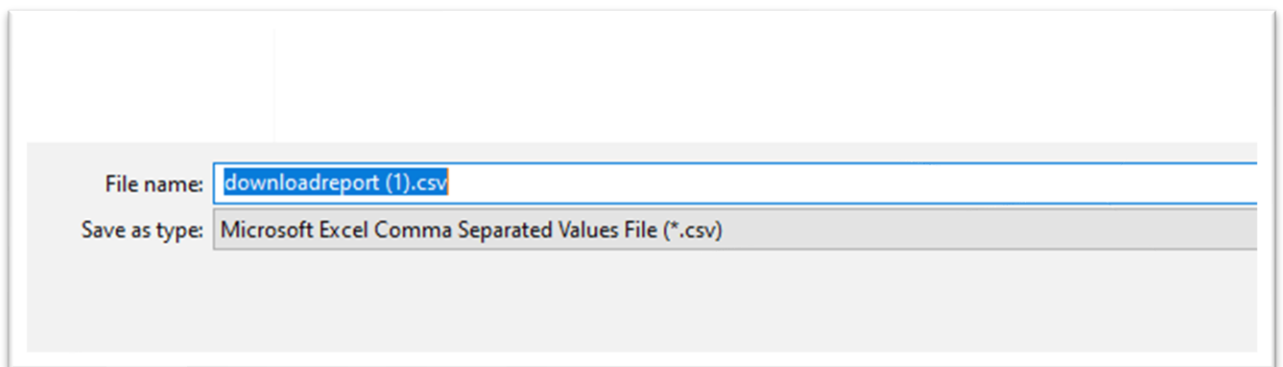
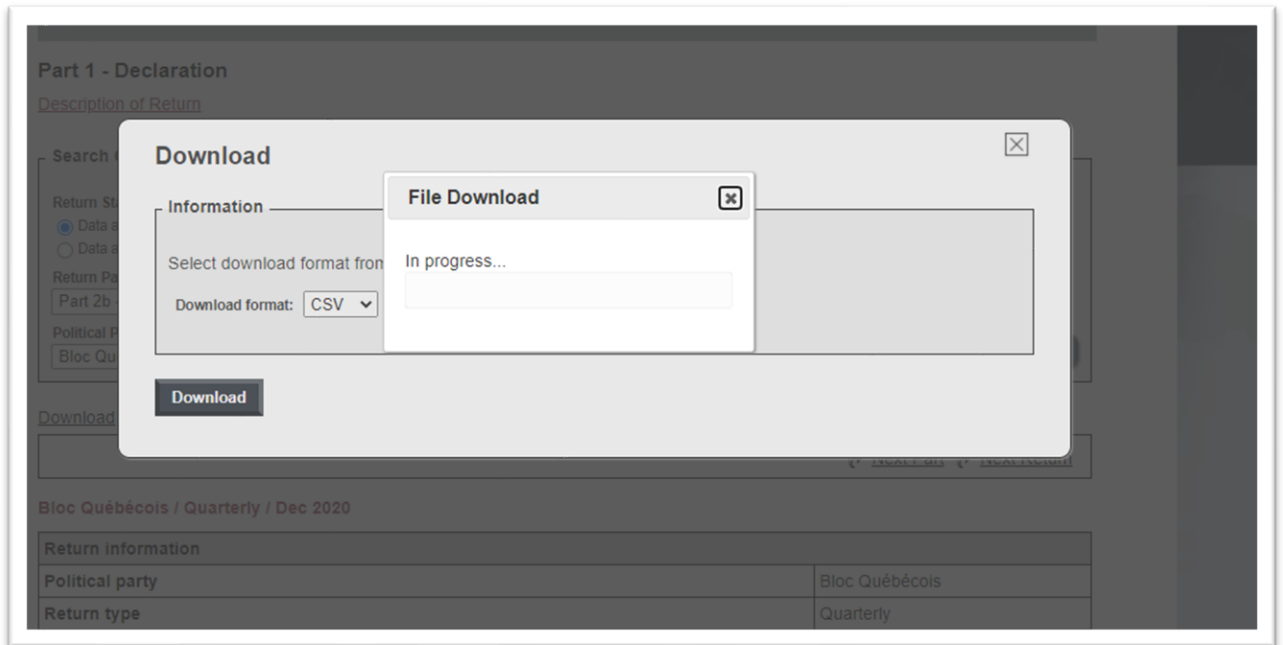
```
27 DETAIL_DATA↓
28 "Client_id","No","Contributor_last_name","Contributor_first_name","Contributor_m
iddle_initial","City","Province","Postal_code","Date_received","Monetary","Non_m
onetary","Amount_of_monetary_and_non_monetary_contributions"↓
29 "43103","1","Allard","Jacques","","Mont-Saint-Grégoire","QC","J0J1K0","Feb 13,
2020","400","0","400"↓
30 "43103","2","Audet","Carole","","Varenes","QC","J3X1V2","Feb 24,
2020","400","0","400"↓
31 "43103","3","Audet","Carole","","Varenes","QC","J3X1V2","Mar 16,
2020","20","0","20"↓
32 "43103","4","Aumond","François","","Lac-Beauport","QC","G3B1R9","Feb 13,
2020","400","0","400"↓
33 "43103","5","Baillargeon","Jacques","","Mont-Royal","QC","H3P2N7","Feb 17,
2020","300","0","300"↓
34 "43103","6","Barsalou","Louise","","Boucherville","QC","J4B7G7","Feb 02,
2020","400","0","400"↓
35 "43103","7","Barsalou-Duval","Alexandra","","Boucherville","QC","J4B6X7","Feb
08, 2020","400","0","400"↓
36 "43103","8","Barsalou-Duval","Xavier","","Boucherville","QC","J4B2T7","Jan 24,
2020","1600","0","1600"↓
37 "43103","9","Beauchesne","Mario","","Victoriaville","QC","G6P9M8","Mar 04,
2020","400","0","400"↓
38 "43103","10","Beaulieu","Daniel","","Rimouski","QC","G5L1T5","Jan 22,
2020","400","0","400"↓
39 "43103","11","Beaulieu","Jean","","Saint-Antoine-sur-Richelieu","QC","J0L1R0","M
ar 10, 2020","400","0","400"↓
40 "43103","12","Beaupré","André","","Saint-Georges","QC","G5Y7N4","Mar 23,
2020","300","0","300"↓
41 "43103","13","Beaupré","Lucien","","Aston-Jonction","QC","G0Z1A0","Feb 13,
2020","400","0","400"↓
42 "43103","14","Bélangier","Jules","","Gaspé","QC","G4X1S5","Mar 31,
2020","400","0","400"↓
43 "43103","15","Bellavance","Jean-Marie","","Québec","QC","G1R5H5","Jan 07,
2020","205","0","205"↓
44 "43103","16","Bérard","François","","Montréal","QC","H1K5C8","Feb 20,
```

Just to get a sense of what other formats are available, click the

arrow to the right of “csv” to obtain the drop-down menu.



11. Don't worry about the [JSON](#) and [XML](#) formats. It's just good to know that they are there.
12. Be sure that the “csv” option is selected before downloading.



13. Browse to your folder on your hard drive you have created for this project (NOTE: I have the #1 after my download because I have already done the exercise. You will just have the generic “downloadreport” title.) Be sure to rename the file to something that makes more sense such as “Federal quarterly political denotations 2020”.

14. You will be able to open the file in Excel.

DATE	TITLE	RETURN_STATUS	GROUP_DATA										
Client_id	Political	Return_ty	End_period	DETAIL_DATA									
Client_id	No	Contribu	Contribu	Contribu	City	Province	Postal_co	Leadershi	Date_rece	Total_amc	Directed_	Transferred_amount	
43103	Bloc Qué	Quarterly	Mar-20										
43123	Bloc Qué	Quarterly	Jun-20										
43143	Bloc Qué	Quarterly	Sep-20										
43163	Bloc Qué	Quarterly	Dec-20										
43121	Conservat	Quarterly	Mar-20										
43141	Conservat	Quarterly	Jun-20										
43161	Conservat	Quarterly	Sep-20										
43181	Conservat	Quarterly	Dec-20										
43116	Green Par	Quarterly	Mar-20										
43136	Green Par	Quarterly	Jun-20										
43156	Green Par	Quarterly	Sep-20										
43176	Green Par	Quarterly	Dec-20										
43104	Liberal Pa	Quarterly	Mar-20										
43124	Liberal Pa	Quarterly	Jun-20										
43144	Liberal Pa	Quarterly	Sep-20										
43164	Liberal Pa	Quarterly	Dec-20										
43115	New Dem	Quarterly	Mar-20										
43135	New Dem	Quarterly	Jun-20										
43155	New Dem	Quarterly	Sep-20										
43175	New Dem	Quarterly	Dec-20										
43115	1	Ashton	Niki		Thompsor	MB	R8N0Z3	Niki Ashtc	24-Jan-20	1500	1500	1500	
43116	31	Akhgar	Shadan		Montreal	QC	H3X2W9	Dylan Peri	#####	10	10	0	
43116	81	Aucoin	John		Montreal	QC	H3X1Y7	Dylan Peri	#####	10	10	0	
43116	127	Audrey	Mclean		Shipshaw	QC	G7P1C1	Dylan Peri	#####	10	10	0	
43116	59	Barker	Benjamin		Hatley	QC	J0B3H0	Dylan Peri	#####	10	10	0	
43116	74	Bateman	Colin		Montreal	QC	H2X2X8	Dylan Peri	#####	10	10	0	
43116	3	Beaton	Brian		Frederict	NB	E3B4Y2	Annamie	#####	100	100	0	
43116	5	Beaton	Brian		Frederict	NB	E3B4Y2	Judy Gree	#####	100	100	0	
43116	60	Beeson	Edward		Kentville	NS	B4N5E5	Judy Gree	#####	100	100	0	
43116	123	Bober	Jordan	J	Charlottes	PE	C1A1S4	Annamie	#####	100	100	0	

15. The hashtags in A2 and column J, beginning at row 9, are Excel's way of telling you to provide a tad more width for the

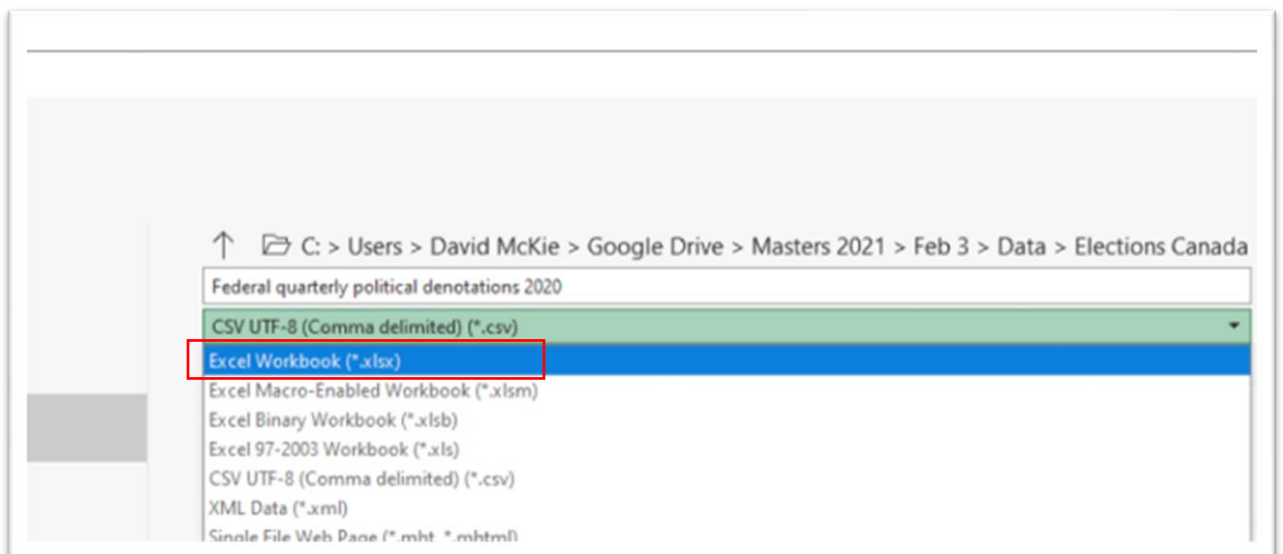
columns that contain numbers.

DATE	TITLE	RETURN_STATUS													
2021-02-03 12:51	Part 2b - S	Data_as_submitted													
GROUP_DATA															
Client_id	Political_f	Return_ty	End_period												
43103	Bloc Qué	Quarterly	Mar-20												
43123	Bloc Qué	Quarterly	Jun-20												
43143	Bloc Qué	Quarterly	Sep-20												
43163	Bloc Qué	Quarterly	Dec-20												
43121	Conservat	Quarterly	Mar-20												
43141	Conservat	Quarterly	Jun-20												
43161	Conservat	Quarterly	Sep-20												
43181	Conservat	Quarterly	Dec-20												
43116	Green Par	Quarterly	Mar-20												
43136	Green Par	Quarterly	Jun-20												
43156	Green Par	Quarterly	Sep-20												
43176	Green Par	Quarterly	Dec-20												
43104	Liberal Pa	Quarterly	Mar-20												
43124	Liberal Pa	Quarterly	Jun-20												
43144	Liberal Pa	Quarterly	Sep-20												
43164	Liberal Pa	Quarterly	Dec-20												
43115	New Dem	Quarterly	Mar-20												
43135	New Dem	Quarterly	Jun-20												
43155	New Dem	Quarterly	Sep-20												
43175	New Dem	Quarterly	Dec-20												
DETAIL_DATA															
Client_id	No	Contribu	Contribu	Contribu	City	Province	Postal_co	Leadershi	Date_receive	Total_amc	Directed_	Transferred_amount			
43115	1	Ashton	Niki		Thompso	MB	R8N0Z3	Niki Ashtc	24-Jan-20	1500	1500	1500			
43116	31	Akhgar	Shadan		Montreal	QC	H3X2W9	Dylan Peri	07-Mar-20	10	10	0			
43116	81	Aucoin	John		Montreal	QC	H3X1Y7	Dylan Peri	23-Mar-20	10	10	0			
43116	127	Audrey	McClean		Shipsaw	QC	G7P1C1	Dylan Peri	30-Mar-20	10	10	0			
43116	59	Barker	Benjamin		Hatley	QC	J0B3H0	Dylan Peri	13-Mar-20	10	10	0			
43116	74	Bateman	Colin		Montreal	QC	H2X2X8	Dylan Peri	20-Mar-20	10	10	0			
43116	3	Beaton	Brian		Frederict	NB	E3B4Y2	Annamie I	05-Feb-20	100	100	0			
43116	5	Beaton	Brian		Frederict	NB	E3B4Y2	Judy Gree	05-Feb-20	100	100	0			
43116	60	Beeson	Edward		Kentville	NS	B4N5E5	Judy Gree	14-Mar-20	100	100	0			
43116	123	Bober	Jordan	J	Charlottet	PE	C1A1S4	Annamie I	29-Mar-20	100	100	0			

16. Copy the URL from the Elections Canada site, and paste it into the first available cell in the first row: DA.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
1	DATE	TITLE	RETURN_S	https://www.elections.ca/WPAPPS/WPF/EN/PP/D				
2	2021-02-03 12:51	Part 2b - S Data_as_submitted						
3								
4	GROUP_DATA							
5	Client_id	Political_F	Return_ty	End_period				
6	43103	Bloc Québ	Quarterly	Mar-20				
7	43123	Bloc Québ	Quarterly	Jun-20				
8	43143	Bloc Québ	Quarterly	Sep-20				

17. As we've explained during previous sessions with tables from Statistics Canada, it's always good practice to do this so that we always know the origin of the data. We should never have to go hunting. This csv file will now become our backup. Remember, that although we can open a csv file in an Excel spreadsheet, it must actually be saved in this format.
18. This is a crucial step that you CAN'T skip. Save the csv file as an Excel spreadsheet



19. Unlike the csv or text file format, Excel allows for multiple worksheets that will contain your pivot tables.
20. Now we will be able to find the numbers in [Eric's story](#).