The **Occupy movement** is an international [protest](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Protest) [movement](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_movement) which is primarily directed against [economic](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Economic_inequality) and [social inequality](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_inequality).[[7]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occupy_movement#cite_note-businessweek-6)[[8]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occupy_movement#cite_note-lessighp-7) The first Occupy protest to receive wide coverage was [Occupy Wall Street](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occupy_Wall_Street) in New York City, which began on September 17, 2011. By October 9, Occupy protests had taken place or were ongoing in [over 95 cities across 82 countries, and over 600 communities in the United States](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Occupy_movement_protest_locations).[[9]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occupy_movement#cite_note-theatlantic-8)[[10]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occupy_movement#cite_note-nytimes-9)[[11]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occupy_movement#cite_note-10)[[12]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occupy_movement#cite_note-11)[[13]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occupy_movement#cite_note-guardian2-12) As of December 10 the [Meetup](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Meetup) page "Occupy Together" listed 2,720 Occupy communities worldwide.[[1]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occupy_movement#cite_note-mu-0)

The movement was initiated by the [Canadian](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Canadian) activist group [Adbusters](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Adbusters),[[14]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occupy_movement#cite_note-Fleming-13)[[15]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occupy_movement#cite_note-adbusters-14) [[16]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occupy_movement#cite_note-15) and partly inspired by the [Arab Spring](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arab_Spring),[[17]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occupy_movement#cite_note-16)[[18]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occupy_movement#cite_note-17) especially Cairo's [Tahrir Square](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tahrir_Square) protests, and the [Spanish Indignants](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2011_Spanish_protests).[[19]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occupy_movement#cite_note-cnn-18)[[20]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occupy_movement#cite_note-adbusters1-19)[[21]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occupy_movement#cite_note-guardian-20) The movement commonly uses the slogan [*We are the 99%*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/We_are_the_99%25), the #Occupy [hashtag](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hashtag) format, and organizes through websites such as "Occupy Together".[[22]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occupy_movement#cite_note-21) According to the [*Washington Post*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Washington_Post), the movement, which has been described as a "democratic awakening" by [Cornel West](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cornel_West), is difficult to distill to a few demands.[[23]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occupy_movement#cite_note-westc-22)[[24]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occupy_movement#cite_note-washingtonpost22-23)

Just after midnight on November 9 in [London, Ontario](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/London,_Ontario), police evicted protesters from the city's Victoria Park, becoming the first forced evictions in Canada.[[25]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occupy_movement#cite_note-londononteviction-24) On the afternoon of November 11 in [Halifax, Nova Scotia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Halifax_Regional_Municipality),[[26]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occupy_movement#cite_note-halifaxarrests-25)[[27]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occupy_movement#cite_note-halifaxclear-26) and later on the night of November 14, authorities forcefully closed down camps around the world in cities such as [New York](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_York_City), [Oakland](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oakland,_California) and [Zurich](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zurich). Occupy protestors immediately regrouped and vowed to continue their protests, often returning to the cleared sites.[[28]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occupy_movement#cite_note-globalCrackdown-27)[[29]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occupy_movement#cite_note-cityBycity-28) On November 24, [Edinburgh City Council](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edinburgh_City_Council) became the first governmental body in the world to grant the Occupy movement official recognition.[[30]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occupy_movement#cite_note-29)

**Background**

On May 30, 2011, a leader in the [Spanish Indignants movement](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2011_Spanish_protests), inspired by the [Arab Spring](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arab_Spring),[[31]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occupy_movement#cite_note-Frayer19052011-30)[[32]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occupy_movement#cite_note-From_Europe_to_the_US.2C_protesters_are_inspired_by_Arab_spring-31) made a call for [a worldwide protest on October 15](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/15_October_2011_global_protests).[[33]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occupy_movement#cite_note-Democracia_Real_Ya_prepara_una_convocatoria_mundial_para_el_15_de_octubre-32) In mid-2011, the Canadian-based group [Adbusters Media Foundation](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Adbusters_Media_Foundation), best known for its advertisement-free [anti-consumerist](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anti-consumerism) magazine [*Adbusters*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Adbusters), proposed a peaceful occupation of Wall Street to protest corporate influence on democracy, address a growing disparity in wealth, and the absence of legal repercussions behind the recent [global financial crisis](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Global_financial_crisis).[[14]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occupy_movement#cite_note-Fleming-13) According to the senior editor of the magazine, "[they] basically floated the idea in mid-July into our [email list] and it was spontaneously taken up by all the people of the world, it just kind of snowballed from there."[[14]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occupy_movement#cite_note-Fleming-13) One of the inspirations for the movement was the [Democracy Village](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Democracy_Village) set up in 2010, outside the [British Parliament](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/British_Parliament) in [London](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/London). The protest received additional attention when the internet group [Anonymous](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anonymous_(group)) encouraged its followers to take part in the protests, calling protesters to "flood lower Manhattan, set up tents, kitchens, peaceful barricades and [Occupy Wall Street](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occupy_Wall_Street)".[[19]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occupy_movement#cite_note-cnn-18)[[34]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occupy_movement#cite_note-anonmessage-33)[[35]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occupy_movement#cite_note-adbusters3-34)[[36]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occupy_movement#cite_note-Occupy_Wall_Street_-_Sep17-35) They promoted the protest with a poster featuring a dancer atop Wall Street's iconic [Charging Bull](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charging_Bull).[[37]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occupy_movement#cite_note-inline.poster-36)[[38]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occupy_movement#cite_note-nation.FAQ-37) The first protest was held at [Zuccotti Park](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zuccotti_Park) in New York City on September 17, 2011.[[39]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occupy_movement#cite_note-twsC65-38) The protests were preceded by a similar [Occupy Dataran](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occupy_Dataran) movement in [Kuala Lumpur](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kuala_Lumpur) in July, seven weeks before Occupy Wall Street.[[40]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occupy_movement#cite_note-occupydataran-chronology-39)

**"We are the 99%" Slogan**

The phrase "The 99%" is a [political slogan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Political_slogan) used by protesters of the Occupy movement.[[41]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occupy_movement#cite_note-dcourier-40) It was originally launched as a Tumblr blog page in late August of 2011.[[42]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occupy_movement#cite_note-motherjonesfoundation-41)[[43]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occupy_movement#cite_note-foreignpolicy-42) It refers to the concentration of wealth among the top 1% of income earners compared to the other 99 percent;[[44]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occupy_movement#cite_note-cbsprotestsspread-43) the top 1 percent of income earners nearly tripled after-tax income over the last thirty years according to a [Congressional Budget Office](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Congressional_Budget_Office) (CBO) report.[[45]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occupy_movement#cite_note-ref_name-44)

The report was released just as concerns of the Occupy Wall Street movement were beginning to enter the national political debate.[[46]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occupy_movement#cite_note-WashPostBloomberg-45) According to the CBO, between 1979 and 2007 the incomes of the top 1% of Americans grew by an average of 275%. During the same time period, the 60% of Americans in the middle of the income scale saw their income rise by 40%. Since 1979 the average pre-tax income for the bottom 90% of households has decreased by $900, while that of the top 1% increased by over $700,000, as federal taxation became less [progressive](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Progressive_tax). From 1992-2007 the top 400 income earners in the U.S. saw their income increase 392% and their average tax rate reduced by 37%.[[47]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occupy_movement#cite_note-Stupid-46) In 2009, the average income of the top 1% was $960,000 with a minimum income of $343,927.[[48]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occupy_movement#cite_note-CNNstats-47)[[49]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occupy_movement#cite_note-CBPP-48)[[50]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occupy_movement#cite_note-doubled-49) In 2007 the richest 1% of the American population owned 34.6% of the country's total wealth, and the next 19% owned 50.5%. Thus, the top 20% of Americans owned 85% of the country's wealth and the bottom 80% of the population owned 15% —an example of the [Pareto principle](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pareto_principle). Financial inequality (total net worth minus the value of one's home)[[51]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occupy_movement#cite_note-50) was greater than inequality in total wealth, with the top 1% of the population owning 42.7%, the next 19% of Americans owning 50.3%, and the bottom 80% owning 7%.[[52]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occupy_movement#cite_note-ForbesJacobs-51) However, after the [Great Recession](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Great_Recession) which started in 2007, the share of total wealth owned by the top 1% of the population grew from 34.6% to 37.1%, and that owned by the top 20% of Americans grew from 85% to 87.7%. The Great Recession also caused a drop of 36.1% in median household wealth but a drop of only 11.1% for the top 1%, further widening the gap between the 1% and the 99%.[[52]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occupy_movement#cite_note-ForbesJacobs-51)[[53]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occupy_movement#cite_note-52)[[54]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occupy_movement#cite_note-53) During the economic expansion between 2002 and 2007, the income of the top 1% grew 10 times faster than the income of the bottom 90%. In this period 66% of total income gains went to the 1%, who in 2007 had a larger share of total income than at any time since 1928.[[55]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occupy_movement#cite_note-autogenerated1-54) This is in stark contrast with surveys of US populations that indicate an "ideal" distribution that is much more equal, and a widespread ignorance of the true [income inequality](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Income_inequality) and [wealth inequality](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wealth_inequality).[[56]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occupy_movement#cite_note-55)

## Aims

Initially, journalists such as Shannon Bond for the [*Financial Times*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Financial_Times) had said it was hard to discern a unified aim for the movement, though by later October Adbusters had been trying to "rally it around a single, clear demand" for a [Robin Hood tax](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robin_Hood_tax), with a global march in support of the tax planned for October 29.[[57]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occupy_movement#cite_note-Obamasupports-56)[[58]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occupy_movement#cite_note-RobinHood-57) [Naomi Wolf](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Naomi_Wolf) has argued that the impression created by much of the media that the protestors do not have clear demands is false. Wolf argues they do have clear demands including a desire to end what they see as the corrupting effect of money on politics. [[59]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occupy_movement#cite_note-58) According to [Bloomberg Businessweek](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bloomberg_Businessweek), protesters want more and better jobs, more equal distribution of income, bank reform, and a reduction of the influence of corporations on politics.[[60]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occupy_movement#cite_note-59)

In late November, the London contingent of the Occupy movement released their first statement on Corporations, where they called for measures to end [Tax evasion](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tax_evasion) by wealthy firms. The reason for the delay in articulating a clear demand was given as the time it takes to reach a consensus with the sometimes slow processes of *participatory democracy*. [[61]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occupy_movement#cite_note-60) Efforts are still underway to reach consensus with other occupy groups around the world for a global statement. [[62]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occupy_movement#cite_note-61)

**Structure**

The movement has been described as having an "overriding commitment" to [Participatory democracy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Participatory_democracy). [[69]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occupy_movement#cite_note-NYtimes-68) Much of the movement's democratic process occurs in "working groups," where any protestor is able to have their say. Important decisions are often taken at "General assemblies"[[70]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occupy_movement#cite_note-69), which can themselves be informed by the findings of multiple working groups. General assemblies take place at most Occupy sites every evening at 7PM. Decisions are made using the [consensus](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Consensus) model of direct democracy, waving hands in various simple signals and operating with discussion facilitators rather than leaders, a system that may have originated in the [Quaker](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Quaker) movement several centuries ago. [[71]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occupy_movement#cite_note-byConcensus-70) At the assemblies, working group proposals are made to meeting participants, who comment upon them using a process called a "stack," a queue of speakers that anyone can join. In New York, Occupy Wall Street uses what is called a [progressive stack](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Progressive_stack), in which people from [marginalized groups](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marginalized_groups) are sometimes allowed to speak before people from dominant groups, with [facilitators](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Facilitator), or stack-keepers, urging speakers to "step forward, or step back" based on which group they belong to, meaning that women and minorities get to go to the front of the line, while white males must often wait for a turn to speak.[[72]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occupy_movement#cite_note-71)[[71]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occupy_movement#cite_note-byConcensus-70) The progressive stack concept has been criticized by some outside of the movement as "forced equality" and "unfair."[[73]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occupy_movement#cite_note-72)

**Canada**

"Occupy" demonstrations have been taking place in at least 20 Canadian cities since October 15. On that day, 5,000 people gathered in Vancouver to protest social injustice, while 150 stayed the night in front of the Vancouver Art Gallery.[[121]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occupy_movement#cite_note-News1130_Occupy_Vancouver-120)[[122]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occupy_movement#cite_note-Vancouver_Sun_Occupy_Vancouver-121) 2,000 people marched in Toronto on October 15 and around 100 continued to occupy St James Park,[[123]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occupy_movement#cite_note-The_Star_Occupy_Toronto-122) and 1,000 gathered in Montreal to march down Ste-Catherine Street; 85 tents were set up in Victoria square.[[124]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occupy_movement#cite_note-CBC_News_Occupy_Montreal-123) Beginning on October 23, 2011 approximately 40 people occupied Memorial Park on Minto St in downtown Sudbury and still continue to do so.[[125]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occupy_movement#cite_note-OccupySudbury-124)

Events have been concentrated in provincial urban areas, and there have yet to be any demonstrations in the territories of Yukon, Northwest Territories, or Nunavut.[[126]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occupy_movement#cite_note-Occupy_Canada_rallies_spread_in_economic_.27awakening.27-125)[[127]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occupy_movement#cite_note-This_is_what_democracy_looks_like:_Occupying_Wall_Street_and_Bay_Street-126)

On November 5, 2011, Ashlie Gough, 23, was found dead in one of the tents at Occupy Vancouver.[[128]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occupy_movement#cite_note-127) The cause of death is determined to be overdose of cocaine and heroin. [[129]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occupy_movement#cite_note-128)

There are currently a number of court proceedings across Canada on whether or not the eviction of protestors and violence from police is an infringement of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.[[130]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occupy_movement#cite_note-CCRF-129)

**FOOD FOR THOUGHT:**

**Okay, this information was taken from Wikipedia. I’m sorry. It had the most info for the least amount of work, and lots of citation. Forgive me.**

**Now that I have that out of the way, let’s do a little thinking...**

1. **What’s your view on being one of the 99%? Is that OK by you? Do you believe that you could ever be part of the 1%? Is it fair? Do they deserve to be there, maybe more than anyone else does? Why or why not? (Evaluating)**
2. **Does the “Occupy” movement remind you of any other time or movement in history? Even just a little is fine. Explain clearly, please. (Applying)**