

National Electors Study on the 43rd Canadian Federal General Election

Report on the Voter Information Campaign and Elector Awareness

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**National Electors Study on the 43rd Canadian Federal General Election
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Final Report**

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This public opinion research report presents the results of the voter information campaign research conducted to help evaluate the October 21, 2019, federal election.

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Table of Contents

Executive Summary.....	1
Introduction	6
1. Background and Objectives.....	6
2. Methodology.....	7
2.1. Quantitative Methods.....	7
2.2. Qualitative Methods	8
3. Notes to Reader	9
Part 1: Quantitative Findings	11
1. Awareness of the Federal Election.....	11
2. Media Exposure	12
3. Unaided Recall of EC Advertising and Communications.....	14
4. Aided Recall of Key EC Communications.....	20
5. Aided Recall of Specific EC Advertising	22
6. Evaluation of Specific Ads	24
7. Satisfaction with Electoral Information	27
8. Knowledge of and Interest in Employment Opportunities.....	33
9. Knowledge of Voter Registration	36
10. Registration Action During the Election.....	42
11. Knowledge of Identification Requirements	43
12. Knowledge of Voting Methods	46
13. Awareness and Perceptions of Elections Canada	49
Part 2: Qualitative Findings.....	52
1. Voting Experience and Impressions	52
2. Media Consumption.....	55
3. Review of the Voter Information Campaign Materials.....	57
3.1: Overview	57
3.2: Assessment of Ads by Medium.....	57
3.3: Assessment of Ads by Phase.....	64
4. Perceptions of Elections Canada Guide	68
5. Overall Assessments of the Information Campaign.....	70
Appendix	74
1. Profile of Survey Respondents (Quantitative Research).....	74
2. Voter Journey (Qualitative Research)	76

List of Figures

Figure 1: Awareness of the federal election during the election period.....	11
Figure 2: Media used in the last two weeks	12
Figure 3: Unaided recall of EC advertising	15
Figure 4: Sponsor recognition	16
Figure 5: Channel of unaided ad recall	17
Figure 6: Unaided recall of main ad message	19
Figure 7: Aided recall of slogan.....	20
Figure 8: Recall of VIC and brochure.....	21
Figure 9: Aided recall of specific ads by format and phase	22
Figure 10: Perception of main ad message.....	24
Figure 11: Ad evaluation overall	25
Figure 12: Satisfaction with information on the voting process.....	27
Figure 13: How informed electors felt about where to vote.....	28
Figure 14: How informed electors felt about when to vote	29
Figure 15: How informed electors felt about the ways to vote.....	31
Figure 16: Ease of finding information on the voting process.....	32
Figure 17: Knowledge of employment opportunities.....	33
Figure 18: Interest in employment opportunities	34
Figure 19: Knowledge of need to be registered to vote.....	36
Figure 20: Knowledge of need to update registration.....	37
Figure 21: Unaided knowledge of ways to register/update information	38
Figure 22: Aided knowledge of online registration.....	40
Figure 23: Aided knowledge of polling day registration	41
Figure 24: Registration actions	42
Figure 25: Knowledge of proof of identity requirements [formulation 1]	43
Figure 26: Knowledge of proof of residence [formulation 1]	44
Figure 27: Knowledge of identification requirement [formulation 2]	45
Figure 28: Unaided knowledge of different ways to vote	46
Figure 29: Aided knowledge of different ways to vote.....	47
Figure 30: EC as top-of-mind organization for electoral information	49
Figure 31: Familiarity with EC	50
Figure 32: Trust in EC as a source of information	51

Executive Summary

Elections Canada (EC) is the independent, non-partisan agency responsible for conducting Canadian federal elections. In the context of the 43rd federal general election (GE) held on October 21, 2019, EC conducted the 2019 National Electors Study (NES), the largest public opinion study of electors ever conducted by EC for a federal election. This study measures electors' attitudes and experiences of the GE to inform evaluation and development of EC policy, programs, and services to electors.

The NES consisted of two components: 1) a national longitudinal survey of electors and 2) a series of post-election focus groups and interviews.

The survey component was conducted between June and December 2019 by telephone and online with eligible electors (i.e. Canadian citizens at least 18 years of age on election day), and involved three waves of surveys conducted before, during, and after the election period. Respondents to each survey were as follows: n=49,993 for the pre-election survey; n=23,880 for the election period survey; and n=21,435 for the post-election survey.

Two-thirds of initial respondents were obtained via random sampling; the remainder were sourced from an online panel of volunteer participants. The inclusion of this non-random sample means no estimate of sampling error can be calculated for the entire sample. When only the random samples are considered, all samples are of a size such that overall results across all waves would have a margin of sampling error less than $\pm 1\%$, 19 times out of 20.

The qualitative component included 13 in-person focus groups, two online focus groups, and 10 in-depth telephone interviews conducted in November and December 2019 with voters, non-voters, youth electors, new Canadians, Indigenous electors, and electors with disabilities. Qualitative findings are not statistically projectable but offer detailed opinions that complement the broader quantitative findings.

This report presents results from the survey and focus groups on electors' recall and evaluation of EC's voter information campaign for the 43rd GE and electors' awareness of when, where, and the ways to register and vote before, during, and after the election.

Presented below is an integrated summary of the quantitative and qualitative results found in the detailed findings, organized by theme.

Two other reports present the findings of the NES on other topics, including a report on electors' experience of the voting process during the 43rd GE and a report on electors' views on election-related policy issues.

Recall of Elections Canada Advertising and Communications

Over the course of the voter information campaign, respondents increasingly recalled, without prompting, that they had seen or heard Elections Canada advertising or communications about where, when, and the ways to register and vote in the election. Most often, respondents recalled television as the source of the advertising or communications, followed by a postcard or brochure in the mail. Electors who recalled seeing or hearing Elections Canada advertising or communications were most likely to say that the main point of what they saw or heard was to "get out and vote."

- Unaided recall of advertising or communications from Elections Canada increased over the election period, from 21% of respondents early in the election up to 81% by the early voting phase and through to the end of the election day phase. Post-election, when ads were no longer being shown, unaided recall receded to 66%.
- Through the election period and post-election surveys, electors increasingly mentioned that they knew the advertising or communications they saw was from Elections Canada because it said Elections Canada (from 27% early in the election period up to 47% post-election) or they recognized the logo or branding (from 17% up to 25%).
- Among post-election respondents who recalled seeing EC advertising or communications, the top sources of recall were television (56%) and a postcard or brochure in the mail (38%). These were followed by radio (34%), newspaper (25%), Facebook (21%), and internet websites in general (20%).
- Electors who recalled seeing or hearing Elections Canada advertising or communications were most likely to say that the main point of what they saw or heard was to “get out and vote”: half (50%) of post-election respondents said this was the main point of the ads.

Aided recall of key Elections Canada communications and specific advertisements generally increased with each phase of the voter information campaign. When presented with specific ads, respondents most often recalled the radio ads, followed by the video ads, compared to other ad formats.

- Aided recall of the slogan “It’s Our Vote” doubled from 12% of electors during the early election phase to 24% of electors in the week leading to election day. Post-election, recall of the slogan jumped to 42%.
- Post-election, approximately nine in 10 (93%) of those aware of the federal election said they received a voter information card (VIC) in the mail (compared to 80% during the VIC phase of the election period). Almost half (48%) of electors aware of the federal election said they received the brochure titled *Guide to the federal election* (compared to 23% during the VIC phase).
- Across all ad formats, aided recall of specific ads generally increased with each phase of the voter information campaign. Aided recall of radio ads was higher than other formats: Between one-quarter and nearly half of surveyed electors recalled a radio ad about registration (25%), the VIC (42%), early voting options (41%), and election day (49%). Video ads had the second highest levels of aided recall overall, with 7% of electors recalling a video ad early in the election, 22% a registration ad, 32% a VIC ad, 37% an early voting options ad, and 36% an election day ad.

Evaluation of Advertising and Communications

The ads and communications products were generally well-received by electors, in particular for being clear and useful. The television and radio ads received the most positive reactions.

- When presented with a selection of advertisements, the vast majority of survey respondents somewhat or strongly agreed that the presented ads were clear (87%) and provided useful information (86%), while smaller majorities agreed that they were relevant (71%) and attention-catching (67%).
- According to electors who took part in the qualitative research, the stories of the TV ads made them relatable and easy to understand. The radio ads were clear and easy to understand, mainly as a result of captivating voiceovers that delivered short, to the point messages, while the style of the animated

social media ads made them attention-grabbing and appealing to younger voters. The web banner ads were clear, but not attention-grabbing. Similarly, the print ads tested well in terms of content, but were viewed as boring or unattractive from the perspective of presentation.

- Among electors who took part in the qualitative research, overall impressions of the *Guide to the federal election* tended to be positive or very positive, characterizing the guide as “comprehensive,” “informative,” “detailed,” “attention-grabbing,” and “useful.”
- Among qualitative research participants, overall impressions of Elections Canada’s voter information campaign were positive and sometimes very positive across all groups, with participants routinely describing it as a good effort, comprehensive, inclusive, well thought out, and informative. Youth participants and new Canadians in particular emphasized the relevance of the campaign to themselves personally as new voters.

Satisfaction with Electoral Information

By the end of the voter information campaign, the vast majority of surveyed electors were satisfied with the information they had received from Elections Canada on the voting process, and most felt very informed about where, when, and the ways to vote.

- Satisfaction with the information electors received from Elections Canada on the voting process increased over the course of the voter information campaign, from 68% who were satisfied (25% very satisfied) during the early election phase of the election period survey up to 95% who were satisfied (70% very satisfied) with the information they received on the voting process by the post-election survey.
- Electors increasingly reported that they felt informed about where to vote in the election. Early in the election period, most (81%) electors said they felt at least somewhat informed, including 41% who felt very informed. By the post-election survey, 96% of electors reported feeling informed, including 78% who said very informed.
- Throughout the election, strong majorities of electors felt at least somewhat informed about when to vote in the federal election, including half or more who felt very informed. The proportion of electors who felt informed steadily increased from a baseline of 88% early in the election period, including 58% who felt very informed, up to 98% who felt informed in the post-election survey, including 86% who felt very informed.
- Most surveyed electors also felt somewhat or very informed about the ways to vote in the federal election. During the election period, the proportion of electors who felt very informed increased significantly between the registration (57%) and voter information card (71%) phases, followed by a smaller increase at the early voting (75%) and election day (76%) phases. This receded in the post-election survey to two-thirds (65%) of electors feeling very informed, while more than a quarter (28%) reported feeling somewhat informed about the ways to vote in the federal election. Overall, 93% of post-election respondents said they felt informed about the ways to vote in the end.

Knowledge of Voter Registration

Stable majorities of electors knew that they needed to be registered on the list of electors to vote and that they would need to update their voter registration information if it changes.

- Throughout the study, at least seven in 10 electors knew that they need to be registered on the list of electors to vote in a Canadian federal election. Knowledge fluctuated only slightly over the course of the election campaign, from 74% of electors in the pre-election survey to 72% during the early election phase, 70% during the registration phase in the election period, and 73% post-election.
- Higher proportions of electors knew of the need to update their voter registration if their information changes. This knowledge remained effectively stable throughout the research period, from 87% of respondents at the pre-campaign baseline to 82% during the early election phase, 84% during the registration phase in the election period, and back to 87% following the October 21, 2019, election.
- When asked, on an unaided basis, how someone could register or update their voter registration information, post-election respondents most often mentioned contacting Elections Canada through its website (22%), at the polling station before voting (14%), and online in general (12%).
- The proportion of electors who did not know how someone can register or update their information declined over the course of the election period, from 38% during the early election phase to 34% during the registration phase and 21% post-election.
- When asked directly about the main registration methods, over two-thirds (68%) of post-election survey respondents said they had knowledge of Elections Canada's online voter registration service (a significant increase from 51% of electors during the 2015 GE), while seven in 10 (71%) respondents were aware that electors can register at the polling place on election day.

Knowledge of Identification Requirements

There was widespread awareness of the need to provide proof of identity and address in order to vote in a Canadian federal election, although knowledge of the proof of address requirement was lower depending on how the question was asked.

- The vast majority (97%) of electors in the post-election survey said they were aware that voters have to present proof of identity in order to vote in a Canadian federal election, the same as the result from the 2015 Survey of Electors. The proportion of electors who were aware of the proof of identity requirement increased over the election period, up from a baseline of 93% pre-election.
- Electors' awareness of the need to provide proof of address was slightly lower but still very high at 91% in the post-election survey, a slight increase from the 2015 Survey of Electors (88%). Awareness of the need to provide proof of address in the 2019 GE generally increased throughout the research period, ending eight percentage points higher than the baseline of 83% from the pre-election survey.
- When a split sample of electors were asked a single question about whether electors need to provide proof of identity, proof of address, both, or neither in order to vote in a federal election, this resulted in lower overall knowledge of the proof of address requirement in particular: In the post-election survey, just over one-half (55%) correctly responded that both proof of identity and address are required. Another 41% thought that only proof of identity was required (meaning 96% in total were aware of at least this requirement). In comparison, only 2% said that only proof of address was required (meaning only 57% in total were aware of at least this requirement).

Knowledge of Voting Methods

After the election, the majority of electors knew without prompting that they could vote at a polling place on election day and at advance polls. In addition, most electors recognized the main early voting options when aided.

- Post-election, unaided knowledge of the main voting methods was high and had increased from the pre-election survey: Post-election, nine in 10 (91%) telephone survey respondents said electors can vote in person at a polling station on election day (up from 84% pre-election) and 71% mentioned that electors can vote at an advance polling station (up considerably from 42%). Another 23% identified the option to vote by mail (up from 19%).
- When aided by a list of potential ways to vote besides at the polling station on election day, nearly all (92%) online survey respondents in the post-election survey knew it is possible to vote at an advance polling station, followed by 50% who identified voting at a local Elections Canada office and another 39% who identified voting by mail. Aided knowledge of each of these main early voting options increased over the course of the 2019 study, and during the early voting phase of the voter information campaign in particular, where awareness nearly matched post-election levels.

Awareness and Perceptions of Elections Canada as a Source of Electoral Information

Top-of-mind awareness of Elections Canada as a source for electoral information increased during the campaign. Moreover, there was widespread agreement that Elections Canada is the most trusted source of information about the electoral process.

- When asked in an open-ended manner, approximately six in 10 (62%) post-election respondents identified Elections Canada as the organization that first comes to mind when they think about sources of information on when and where to vote, or how to identify themselves at the polls. This represents a significant increase in awareness of Elections Canada from the pre-election baseline survey, when four in 10 (40%) said Elections Canada first comes to mind.
- Nine in 10 (91%) electors in the post-election survey agreed with the view that Elections Canada is the most trusted source of information about the electoral process, including over half (57%) who strongly agreed. This represents a small increase in the proportion who agreed during the pre-election survey (up from 88%), and a significant increase in those who strongly agreed (up from 42%).

Introduction

Elections Canada commissioned Phoenix Strategic Perspectives Inc. (Phoenix SPI) and Advanis to conduct research to help evaluate the 43rd federal general election.

1. Background and Objectives

Elections Canada (EC) is an independent, non-partisan agency that reports directly to Parliament. The agency is mandated to conduct federal general elections, by-elections, and referendums; administer the political financing provisions of the *Canada Elections Act*; monitor compliance; and enforce electoral legislation.

In the context of a federal general election (GE), EC conducts studies of electors that are used as part of the evaluation and development of EC's programs and services and to inform the Chief Electoral Officer's reports to Parliament.

The 2019 National Electors Study (NES) is EC's primary public opinion research study conducted for the 43rd GE held on October 21, 2019. The NES measures electors' values, opinions, and attitudes toward various election-related issues; their knowledge of, expectations toward, and experience with the electoral process; and their satisfaction with the agency's communications, services, and programs.

Many measures in the 2019 NES provide continuity with previous EC surveys conducted in 2015 for the 42nd GE, including the Survey of Electors, Evaluation of the Electoral Reminder Program, and the National Youth Survey.

The NES consisted of two components: 1) a national longitudinal survey of electors, and 2) a series of post-election focus groups and interviews. For the first time, the survey of electors included: a large-scale longitudinal sample in addition to a discrete random sample; integrated use of mixed online and telephone surveying; and three waves of data collection conducted before, during and after the election period.

This report presents results from the survey and focus groups used to evaluate EC's voter information campaign for the 43rd GE and measure electors' knowledge and awareness of the voting process, in terms of:

- recall and evaluation of advertising and communications from the voter information campaign
- satisfaction with information received about when, where, and the ways to vote in the election
- knowledge of various aspects of the electoral process, including voter registration, voter identification, and the different ways to vote
- awareness and perceptions of Elections Canada as the authoritative source of information about the electoral process

Two other reports present the findings of the NES on other topics, including a report on electors' experience of the voting process during the 43rd GE and a report on electors' views on election-related policy issues.

The results from all reports will be used to assist in evaluating and refining Elections Canada’s programs and services to the electorate.

2. Methodology

A brief overview of the 2019 NES quantitative and qualitative methodologies is provided in this section. A detailed description of the research methodologies, including the research instruments and the campaign materials tested, can be found under separate cover.

2.1. Quantitative Methods

Public opinion surveys were conducted by telephone (with live interviewers) and online (via Advanis’s online survey platform) between June and December 2019 in three survey waves. All respondents were eligible electors—Canadian citizens who were at least 18 years of age on polling day (October 21, 2019). The questionnaires varied in length from 15 to 20 minutes.

The longitudinal sample was recruited for the pre-election survey (W1) in June 2019 using probability sampling (random-digit dial phone recruitment using an overlapping dual frame including landlines and cellphones) and non-probability sampling (web panel). Two-thirds of respondents were obtained using probability sampling. Electors were recruited in proportion to the population by province, age, and gender. To ensure sufficient final sample sizes, the recruitment targets took into consideration expected attrition across each sample source. Respondents in the longitudinal sample were invited back to participate in subsequent survey waves. A discrete random-digit dial sample was recruited solely for the post-election survey wave to offset attrition in the longitudinal sample.

The table below presents technical information about each wave of surveying:

Wave	Sample	Method of data collection	Field period	Sample size
W1	Longitudinal	Online, telephone	Pre-election: June 12 to July 14, 2019	49,993
W2	Longitudinal	Online	Election period: September 3 to October 20, 2019	23,880
W3a	Longitudinal	Online, telephone	Post-election: October 23 to December 9, 2019	19,435
W3b	Discrete	Telephone	Post-election: October 22 to November 12, 2019	2,000

The W2 election period survey was fielded as a rolling cross-section and divided into five phases; questions changed based on the survey date to correspond with milestones in the election period and advertising phases in the voter information campaign, as follows:

- September 3 to 17: early election phase (W2a)
- September 18 to October 1: registration phase (W2b)
- October 2 to 8: voter information card phase (W2c)
- October 9 to 15: early voting phase (W2d)
- October 16 to 20: election day phase (W2e)

The W2 and W3a surveys were in part used to measure recall of Elections Canada's voter information campaign through the inclusion of questions from the Government of Canada Advertising Campaign Evaluation Tool (ACET).

The survey data have been weighted to correspond to the demographic composition of the full population of electors. Weighting was done in two stages: adjustments for factors related to the study design, including differences in probability of selection between sample frames, the in-scope rate, non-response, and household size, followed by post-stratification/calibration to align the results with known population characteristics of age, gender, and province/territory. Different weights were calculated at each wave to account for attrition in the longitudinal sample over the course of the study.

The inclusion of the non-random web panel means no estimate of sampling error can be calculated for the entire sample, and results are not statistically projectable to the entire elector population. A margin of sampling error and statistical estimations can be obtained if the panel is excluded and only the random samples are considered, in which case all samples are of a size such that overall results across all waves would have had a margin of sampling error less than $\pm 1\%$, 19 times out of 20. The margins of error for subsamples would be larger.

2.2. Qualitative Methods

Qualitative research was conducted with 121 eligible electors as follows:

- Thirteen in-person focus groups were conducted with voters, non-voters, youth, new Canadians, Indigenous electors, and electors with visual impairments between November 19 and 23, 2019. In-person focus groups were held in Vancouver (three groups), Winnipeg (two groups), Toronto (two groups), Montreal (four groups, conducted in French) and Halifax (two groups). These groups lasted 90 minutes and included a mix of participants by age, gender, employment situation, and education. Eight electors participated in all but one group; 10 electors participated in a group held in Winnipeg for youth not attending school, not employed, and not in vocational training.
- Two online focus groups were conducted: one with electors with mobility limitations (held November 27, 2019) and one with electors with hearing impairments (held November 28, 2019). These groups lasted 90 minutes and included a mix of participants by age, gender, education, and severity of disability. The group with electors with mobility limitations included nine participants and the group with electors with hearing impairments included 12 participants.
- Ten in-depth telephone interviews were conducted between December 2 and 11, 2019. Five interviews were conducted with Indigenous electors living in rural areas and five with electors who have mental health conditions or cognitive disabilities. Interviews lasted approximately 40 minutes and were conducted with a mix of participants by gender, age, and region of residence.

All participants were paid an honorarium to thank them for taking part in the research. Electors with visual impairments were paid \$150 and all other participants were paid \$100.

The moderators for this study were Philippe Azzie and Alethea Woods. Both contributed to the preparation of the final report.

3. Notes to Reader

- The survey research relies on self-reported voter turnout, which historically is over-reported in public opinion surveys: In this survey, self-reported turnout was 90%, while the official turnout rate for the 43rd GE among registered electors was 67%. A limitation of this current research, therefore, is that it over-represents voters in the survey sample. Two factors may be responsible for the over-representation of voters: 1) people who vote may be more likely than non-voters to participate in a study about voting (response bias); and 2) people who did not vote may report doing so because they think to present themselves in a more positive light (social desirability bias).
- The term *elector* denotes research participants who were eligible to vote in the 43rd GE (e.g., all survey respondents). The term *voter* denotes research participants who reported that they voted in the 43rd GE.
- This report identifies measures of respondent recall, awareness, and knowledge, based on aided or unaided questions. Aided questions include additional information that can help respondents answer the question, such as a list of suggested answers to a knowledge question, or a visual of an advertising piece for a recall question. Unaided questions provide limited information in an attempt to avoid leading respondents' answers: for example, by asking an open-ended question with no suggested answers. Aided measures tend to produce higher levels of recall, awareness, and knowledge among respondents than unaided measures.
- All survey results in Part 1 of the report are expressed as percentages, unless otherwise noted. Percentages may not always add up to 100% due to rounding or multiple mentions.
- In survey results, the number of respondents varies where questions were asked of sub-samples of the survey population and during different survey waves.
- Statistically significant subgroup differences are identified in Part 1 of the report. Subgroup reporting includes a variety of demographic, behavioural, and attitudinal variables. Particular subgroups were defined as follows:
 - Indigenous: Electors who self-identified as First Nations, Inuit, or Métis.
 - New Canadians: Immigrants to Canada who became citizens after the 42nd GE, and therefore were newly eligible to vote in the 43rd GE.
 - NEET youth: Electors 18 to 34 years old who were “Not Employed, in Education or in Training” during the fieldwork, compared to youth attending school (i.e. 18 to 34, full-time or part-time secondary or post-secondary students) and youth working full-time or part-time (and not attending school).
 - Electors with disabilities: These respondents were identified using a functional disability approach based on reported difficulty with various activities, combined to a single measure of overall level of disability, on a scale ranging from no disability to mild to very severe disability.
- The results of significance tests establish the extent of relationships among variables, but cannot be generalized to the population given the inclusion of respondents collected from a non-probability sample. When reporting subgroup variations, only differences that are significant at the 95% confidence level and that pertain to a subgroup sample size of more than n=30 are discussed. If one or more categories in a subgroup are not mentioned in a discussion of subgroup differences, it can be assumed that significant differences were found only among the categories reported.

- Comparisons to results from the 2015 [Evaluation of the Electoral Reminder Program \(ERP\) for the 42nd Canadian Federal Election](#) and [Survey of Electors Following the 42nd General Election](#) are included when possible.
- The qualitative results in Part 2 of the report provide an indication of participants' views about the issues explored, but they cannot be quantified or generalized to the full population of electors.

Part 1: Quantitative Findings

Part 1 presents survey results from the National Electors Study, with a focus on the voter information campaign and electors' awareness of the electoral process during the 43rd GE.

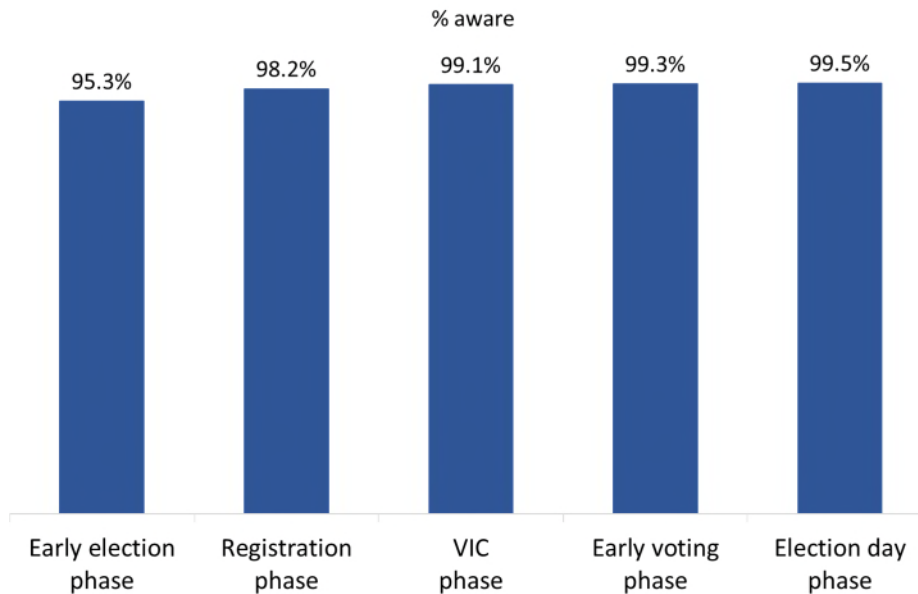
1. Awareness of the Federal Election

The election period survey began on September 3, 2019; the election period for the 43rd general election began officially on September 11, 2019. Through all phases of the election period survey, electors were asked whether they were aware that a federal election was scheduled to take place on October 21, 2019.

Virtually everyone was aware of the 43rd federal election; awareness increased over the campaign

Awareness of the October 21, 2019, federal election increased over the course of the election period, from 95% of respondents early in the election period survey to effectively 100% in the final week of the election period leading up to election day. This represents no difference from the 2015 Survey of Electors, when 99% were aware of the 42nd GE.

Figure 1: Awareness of the federal election during the election period



Q. Are you aware that a federal election is scheduled to take place on October 21, 2019? Base: all respondents (n=28,880). [WAVE 2]

Across the election period survey, those interested in politics (99%) were more likely than those not interested in politics (95%) to have been aware of the upcoming federal election.

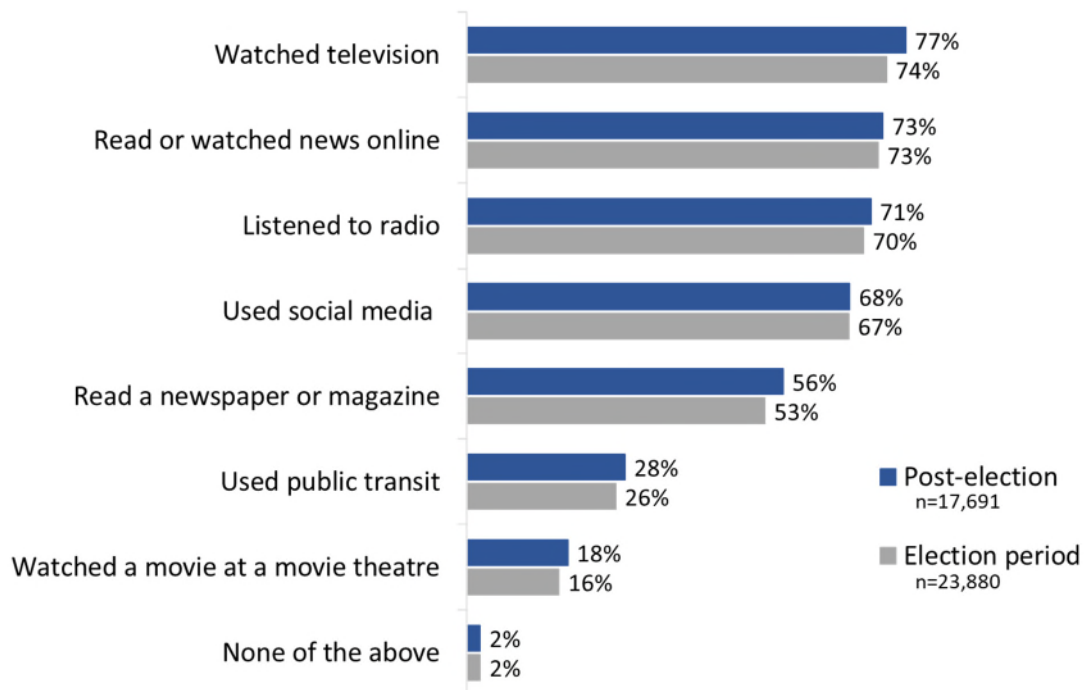
2. Media Exposure

To provide context for respondents' recall of Elections Canada's advertising and communications during the election, respondents were asked whether they had engaged with any media or in any activities where they could have encountered EC advertising in the two weeks prior to being surveyed.

Electors potentially exposed to ads via various media/platforms

Throughout the election period and post-election surveys, over two-thirds of respondents reported watching television, reading or watching news online, listening to the radio, and using social media in the last two weeks. Over half reported reading a newspaper or magazine. Smaller proportions used public transit or watched a movie at a movie theatre.

Figure 2: Media used in the last two weeks



Q. In the last two weeks, have you done any of the following? [Multiple responses accepted.] [WAVE 2, WAVE 3]

Among respondents to the post-election survey, notable subgroup differences included the following:

- Electors with a severe/very severe disability were less likely than electors with no disability to have done any of these activities.
- Indigenous electors were more likely than non-Indigenous electors to have reported using social media (71% versus 67%), and less likely to have read a newspaper or magazine (52% versus 56%) or to have watched television (69% versus 78%).
- New Canadians were more likely than other Canadians to have used public transit (42% versus 28%), and less likely to have read a newspaper or magazine (43% versus 56%), watched television (62% versus 78%), and listened to the radio (54% versus 72%).

- 18- to 24-year-olds were more likely than Canadians aged 25 and older to have used social media (88% versus 65%), read or watched news online (78% versus 73%), used public transit (59% versus 24%), and watched a movie at a movie theatre (25% versus 17%).

3. Unaided Recall of EC Advertising and Communications

This section of the report presents recall, on an unaided basis, of advertising and communications that formed Elections Canada's national voter information campaign for the 43rd GE. The objective of the campaign was to provide electors with all the information they needed on when, where, and ways to register and vote in the election.

The voter information campaign consisted of a pre-election campaign delivered exclusively through digital platforms and a multimedia election period campaign conducted in four phases with distinct focuses: registration, voter information card (VIC) awareness, early voting options, and election day. Phases in the election period survey largely corresponded with the election period phases of the voter information campaign.¹

Many had read, seen, or heard EC advertising or communications during the campaign period

Beginning in the election period survey, respondents were asked if they had seen, heard, or read any advertising or communications from Elections Canada about where, when, and the ways to register and vote in the Canadian federal election.

Unaided recall increased during the election period, from 21% of respondents early in the election up to 81% of respondents by the early voting phase and through to the end of the election day phase. Post-election, when ads were no longer being shown, unaided recall receded to 66% of surveyed electors.

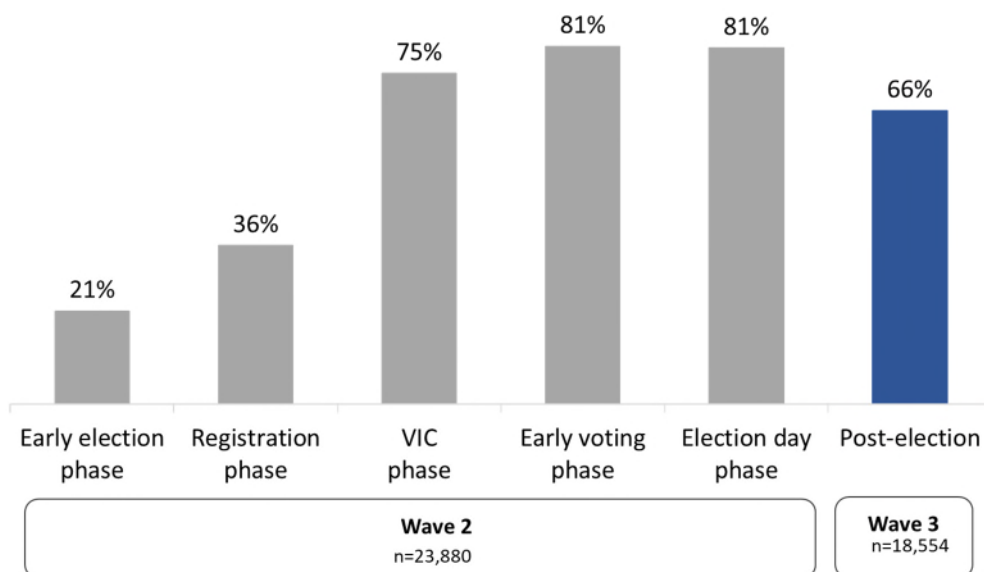
Post-election ad recall was lower in 2019 than in 2015 (66% compared to 79% in the 2015 ERP Evaluation), although this is at least in part likely due to a longer post-election data collection period in 2019 compared to 2015.² That said, ad recall in 2019 saw a larger increase between the baseline and post-election surveys (+45 percentage points in 2019 versus +41 percentage points in 2015). In addition, aided ad recall in 2019 was slightly higher at its peak in the early voting phase of the election period (81%, compared to 79% in the closest comparable period of the 2015 ERP Evaluation).³

¹ Survey phases tended to change one or two days after the start of a new advertising phase to allow time for the ads to be seen before measuring recall. The early election phase of the survey does not correspond to any particular phase of the voter information campaign, but instead refers to the two-week period prior to the registration phase. This amounts to one week of pre-election surveying and one week of election period surveying, because the election was called while the survey was in the field.

² The 2019 NES post-election survey was conducted beginning the day after election day for seven weeks, with 99% of data collected within five weeks of election day. The 2015 ERP Evaluation post-election survey, in comparison, was conducted within two weeks of election day.

³ In addition to the post-election comparisons, all direct comparisons between results from the 2019 NES and the 2015 ERP Evaluation are presented with the caveat that some part of observable differences might be explained by differences in the measure used in each study and/or the timing of measurements in the different contexts of the 2019 and 2015 election periods. Unlike the 2019 NES, the 2015 ERP Evaluation measure did not mention Elections Canada when measuring unaided recall of advertising about the voting process, which likely led to higher recall of advertising from sources other than EC: Among the 38% of respondents who recalled seeing an ad in the 2015 benchmark survey, 44% indicated that a political party was the sponsor of the ad. In addition, the 2015 benchmark survey was conducted some weeks after the election period had already begun. This may have contributed to a higher baseline of election-related ad recall compared to the 2019 NES baseline, when the first measurements were taken prior to the start of the election period.

Figure 3: Unaided recall of EC advertising



Q. Have you seen, heard, or read any advertising or communications from Elections Canada about where, when, and the ways to register and vote in the Canadian federal election? [Marketing filter applied.] Base: those aware of the election. [WAVE 2, WAVE 3]

In the post-election survey, the likelihood of recalling EC advertising or communications about the federal election was higher among:

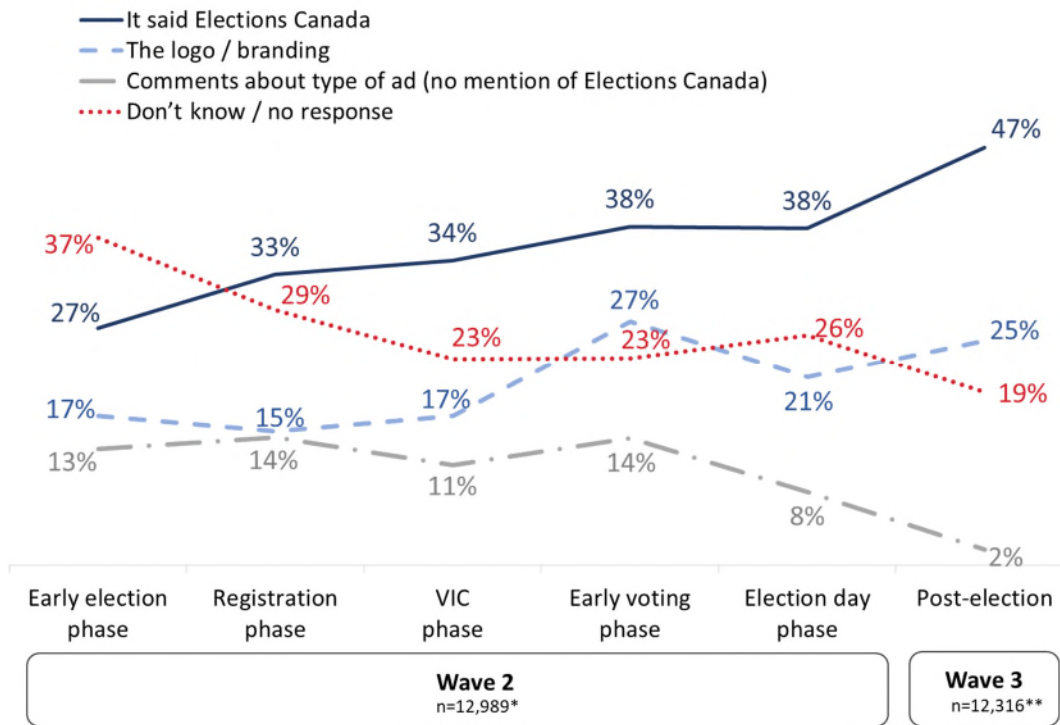
- those interested in politics (70% versus 53% of those not interested in politics)
- those who voted in the 2019 GE (68% versus 52% of non-voters)
- those who received a voter information card (VIC) (67% versus 57% of those who had not)
- those with no disability (67%) or a mild to moderate disability (66%) compared to electors with a severe or very severe disability (62%)
- non-Indigenous electors (67%) compared to Indigenous electors (62%)

In addition, electors who said they recalled seeing an EC ad in the post-election survey were more likely to say they voted in the 2019 GE (93% compared to 87% of those who did not recall an EC ad).

Sponsorship and branding – main reasons ads or communications were identified as being from EC

Through the election period and post-election surveys, electors increasingly mentioned that they knew the advertising or communications they saw was from Elections Canada because it said Elections Canada (from 27% early in the election period up to 47% post-election) or they recognized the logo or branding (from 17% up to 25%). Inversely, the proportions of respondents who did not identify how they recognized the ads decreased: In the early election phase, 37% said they did not know how they recognized the ads, while 19% gave comments that did not indicate how the ad connected to EC; post-election, these responses had decreased to 19% and 2% respectively.

Figure 4: Sponsor recognition



Q. How did you know that it was an ad or communication from Elections Canada? [Multiple responses accepted.] [Marketing filter applied.]

Base: those who recalled advertising or communications unaided. [WAVE 2, WAVE 3]

* Aside from DK/NR, results represent a random sample (n=1,484) of responses.

** Aside from DK/NR, results represent a random sample (n=1,396) of responses.

Other reasons were mentioned less frequently to explain how respondents knew advertising or communications were from Elections Canada. Notable reasons included:

- The ad topic (e.g. it was about how and when to vote and register), mentioned by 6% of post-election respondents, with a high of 12% during the VIC phase of the election period.
- Electors recognized the VIC, which peaked at 8% during the VIC phase of the information campaign compared to less than 1% post-election.
- The ad mentioned EC's website and/or provided EC's contact information, mentioned by 2% of respondents for most of the election period, with a high of 6% in the registration phase, before ending at 4% post-election.

Electors mainly recalled seeing EC advertising or communications on television

Among post-election respondents who recalled seeing EC advertising or communications, the top sources of recall were television (56%) and a postcard or brochure in the mail (38%). These were followed by radio (34%), newspaper (25%), Facebook (21%), and internet websites in general (20%).

In the 2015 ERP Evaluation, television and direct mail were also the main sources of unaided recall of advertising about the voting process at 50% and 30%, respectively. However, recall of ads on radio,

internet websites, and social media platforms was noticeably higher in 2019 compared to 2015, when 15% recalled ads from the radio, 14% from the internet, and only 7% from social media in general.

The full range of responses throughout the 2019 election period and post-election surveys can be found in figure 5.

Figure 5: Channel of unaided ad recall

Channels	Wave 2 (n=12,989)					Wave 3 (n=12,398)
	Early election phase	Registration phase	VIC phase	Early voting phase	Election day phase	Post-election
Television	46%	46%	44%	46%	46%	56%
Postcard or brochure in the mail	13%	11%	45%	47%	42%	38%
Radio	27%	22%	21%	26%	29%	34%
Newspaper	24%	16%	15%	18%	18%	25%
Facebook	23%	28%	15%	16%	21%	21%
Internet website	21%	17%	12%	14%	19%	20%
Outdoor billboards	9%	9%	8%	9%	12%	11%
Public transit (bus or subway)	7%	5%	5%	6%	8%	11%
YouTube	10%	8%	5%	6%	9%	9%
Instagram	7%	5%	3%	4%	6%	5%
Twitter	6%	5%	3%	5%	7%	6%
Movie theatre	1%	1%	2%	2%	2%	3%
Snapchat	3%	2%	1%	2%	2%	2%
Spotify	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	1%
Other	1%	2%	2%	2%	1%	3%
Don't know/don't remember	5%	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%

Q. Where did you see or hear this advertising or communication? [Multiple responses accepted.] [Marketing filter applied.]

Base: those who recalled EC ads or communications. [WAVE 2, WAVE 3]

The following results during particular phases of the 2019 voter information campaign were notable:

- As a proportion of those who recalled seeing EC ads or communications in a particular phase, those saying they recalled seeing ads on Facebook was highest in the registration phase (28%). During this period, Elections Canada partnered with Facebook to have a registration reminder placed in Facebook feeds that referred electors to EC's online registration service.
- Unaided recall of a postcard or brochure in the mail was highest in the VIC phase (45%) and the early voting phase (47%). This coincides with the period when the VIC and *Guide to the federal election* were delivered to households.

Among respondents to the post-election survey, notable subgroup differences included the following:

- Indigenous electors were more likely to report having seen or heard EC advertising or communications on: outdoor billboards (16% versus 11% of non-Indigenous electors), online, including Facebook (32% versus 20%), websites (27% versus 20%), YouTube (14% versus 9%), Instagram (8% versus 6%), and on

the radio (38% versus 34%). Indigenous electors were less likely to have seen EC advertising or communications on television (51% versus 56% of non-Indigenous electors).

- New Canadians were more likely to have seen ads on public transit (21% versus 11% of other Canadians), Facebook (27% versus 20%), websites (32% versus 20%), YouTube (17% versus 9%), and Twitter (11% versus 5%).
- Youth 18 to 24 were more likely to report having seen or heard EC advertising or communications online, including: Facebook (40% versus 18% of electors aged 25 and older), websites (36% versus 19%), YouTube (31% versus 7%), Instagram (25% versus 4%), Twitter (14% versus 4%), and Spotify (5% versus 1%). They were less likely to recall EC advertising from television (32% versus 58%), a postcard or brochure in the mail (34% versus 39%), radio (28% versus 35%), and newspapers (16% versus 26%).

Half of those who saw EC ads thought “get out and vote” was the main message

Electors who recalled EC advertising or communications were asked in an open-ended manner what they thought was the main point of what they saw or heard. Through the election period and post-election survey, respondents most often provided general responses for what they considered to be the overall message of the ads they saw or heard: Half (50%) of post-election respondents said the main point of the ads was to “get out and vote”; 12% thought the main message was that “it’s important to vote” (12%).

Among more specific ad messages, post-election respondents most often identified “you need to be registered to vote” (11%) as the main point, followed by “the federal election is on October 21” (8%), “the VIC tells you where and when to vote” (7%), and “check or update your registration” (6%). Five percent of post-election respondents indicated that the point of the ad was to provide general information on how, when, and where to vote—although significantly higher proportions mentioned this during the latter phases of the voter information campaign: 23% in the VIC phase, 26% in the early voting phase, and 23% in the election day phase.

Figure 6: Unaided recall of main ad message

Messages	Wave 2 (n=12,989)*					Wave 3 (n=12,150)**
	Early election phase	Registration phase	VIC phase	Early voting phase	Election day phase	Post-election
Get out and vote	24%	27%	28%	33%	30%	50%
It's important to vote	8%	9%	6%	8%	8%	12%
You need to be registered to vote	4%	9%	7%	4%	2%	11%
Federal election is scheduled in the fall/October 21	7%	7%	7%	6%	6%	8%
VIC tells you when and where to vote	0%	1%	3%	3%	4%	7%
Check or update your registration	4%	9%	7%	2%	3%	6%
General information on how, when, where to vote	9%	11%	23%	26%	23%	5%
It is easy to vote	4%	2%	3%	2%	8%	4%
There are ways to vote early/many ways to vote	3%	3%	5%	9%	7%	3%
The Elections Canada website has official information	1%	0%	1%	0%	1%	3%
You need to prove your identity and address to vote	1%	1%	2%	3%	4%	3%
Check the mail for your VIC	1%	1%	3%	2%	1%	2%
Comments about political parties	13%	6%	7%	3%	4%	1%
Who is eligible to vote	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	1%
It's our vote	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%
It is a right to vote	1%	2%	1%	1%	2%	0%
Other	8%	6%	3%	3%	2%	1%
Don't know/no response	30%	22%	20%	19%	19%	15%

Q. Thinking about the advertising and communications that you saw or heard, what do you think is the main point they were trying to get across? [Multiple responses accepted.] [Marketing filter applied.]

Base: those who recalled EC ads or communications unaided. [WAVE 2, WAVE 3]

* Aside from DK/NR, results represent a random sample (n=1,466) of responses.

**Aside from DK/NR, results represent a random sample (n=1,229) of responses.

Unaided recall of messages associated with specific phases of the voter information campaign was slightly higher during those phases:

- Recall of “you need to be registered to vote” and “check or update your registration” was higher during the registration phase (9% each) than during other phases of the election period survey.
- Recall of “there are ways to vote early/there are many ways to vote” was highest during the early voting phase (9%).

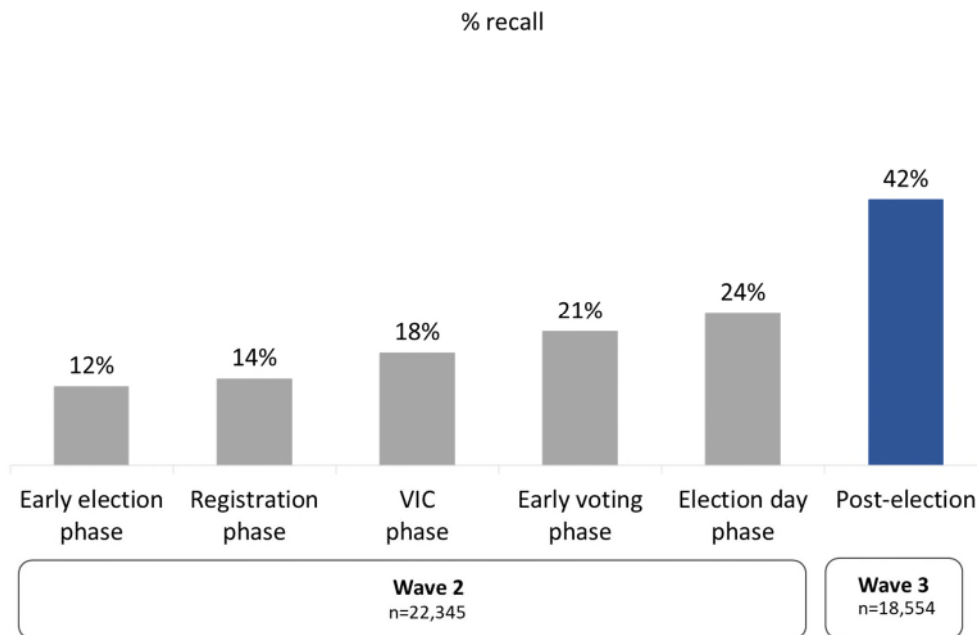
4. Aided Recall of Key EC Communications

This section of the report presents aided recall of key Elections Canada communications including the voter information campaign slogan and direct mail products sent to every registered elector and household in Canada: the voter information card (VIC) and the *Guide to the federal election*.

Aided recall of “It’s Our Vote” slogan increased significantly during the campaign

Electors were asked directly if they had heard or seen the slogan “It’s Our Vote” during the election period and post-election surveys. Recall of the slogan doubled from 12% of electors during the early election phase to 24% of electors in the week leading to election day. Post-election, recall of the slogan jumped to 42%.⁴

Figure 7: Aided recall of slogan



Q. Do you recall hearing or seeing the slogan "It's Our Vote"? [Marketing filter applied.] Base: those aware of the election. [WAVE 2, WAVE 3]

In the post-election survey, the likelihood of recalling the “It’s Our Vote” slogan was higher among the following groups:

- Indigenous electors (47% versus 42% of non-Indigenous electors)
- new Canadians (50% versus 42% of other Canadians)
- electors aged 18 to 24 years (64% versus 40% of those aged 25 and older)
- youth attending school (61% versus 51% of those working full time and 49% of NEET youth)

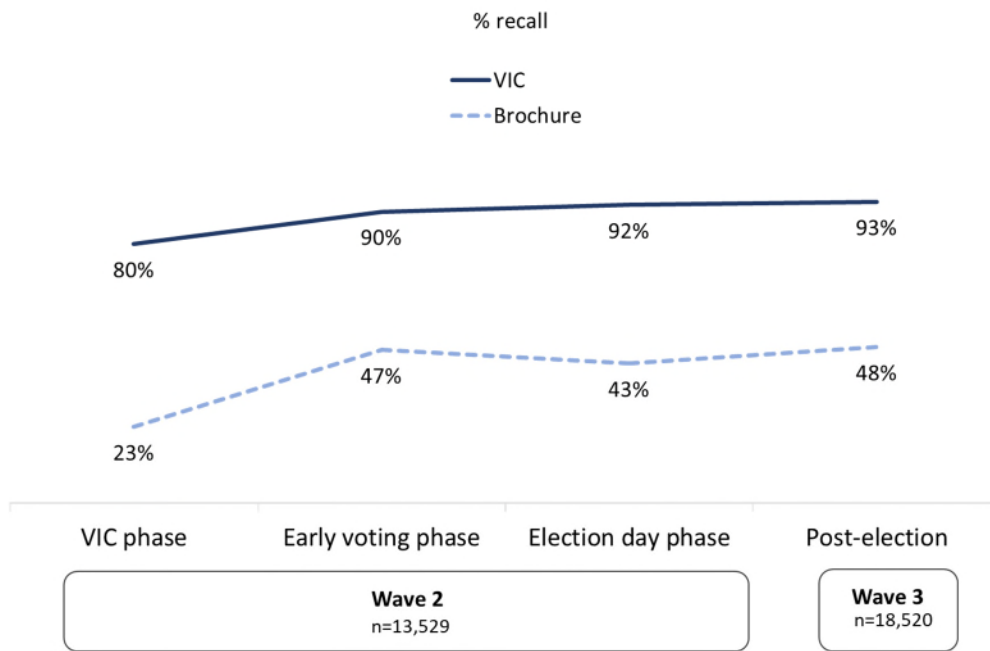
⁴ Among post-election respondents, recall of the slogan was higher among those who had also responded to the election period survey (47%) compared to those who did not (29%). The increase in recall post-election may therefore in part be due to respondents having recalled the slogan from being asked the question in the previous survey.

The vast majority recalled receiving a VIC and half recalled receiving the *Guide to the federal election*

A VIC was mailed to each registered elector beginning in the last week of September. A week after sending the VICs, Elections Canada also mailed a brochure titled *Guide to the federal election* to every household in Canada.

Post-election, approximately nine in 10 (93%) of those aware of the federal election said they received a VIC in the mail addressed to them personally telling them where and when to vote, compared to 80% who reported receiving a VIC during the VIC phase of the election period and the initial deliveries of the VIC.⁵ The same pattern is reflected in electors’ recall of the brochure: 48% recalled receiving the brochure by the post-election survey, up from 23% who recalled the brochure during the VIC phase of the election period survey.

Figure 8: Recall of VIC and brochure



Q. During the campaign, did you receive a voter information card addressed to you personally and telling you where and when to vote?
 Q. During the campaign, did you receive a brochure in the mail describing how to register and vote in the upcoming federal election? The brochure was titled “Guide to the Federal Election.” Base: those aware of the election. [WAVE 2, WAVE 3]

New Canadians (57%) were significantly more likely than other Canadians (48%) to say they remembered receiving the brochure. Electors between the ages of 18 and 24 years (38%) were less likely to recall the brochure compared to electors aged 25 and older (49%).

⁵ As a test, half of those who completed the survey online were presented with an image of a VIC and half were not. This had negligible impact on recall (94% among those who were presented the image versus 93% of those who did not).

5. Aided Recall of Specific EC Advertising

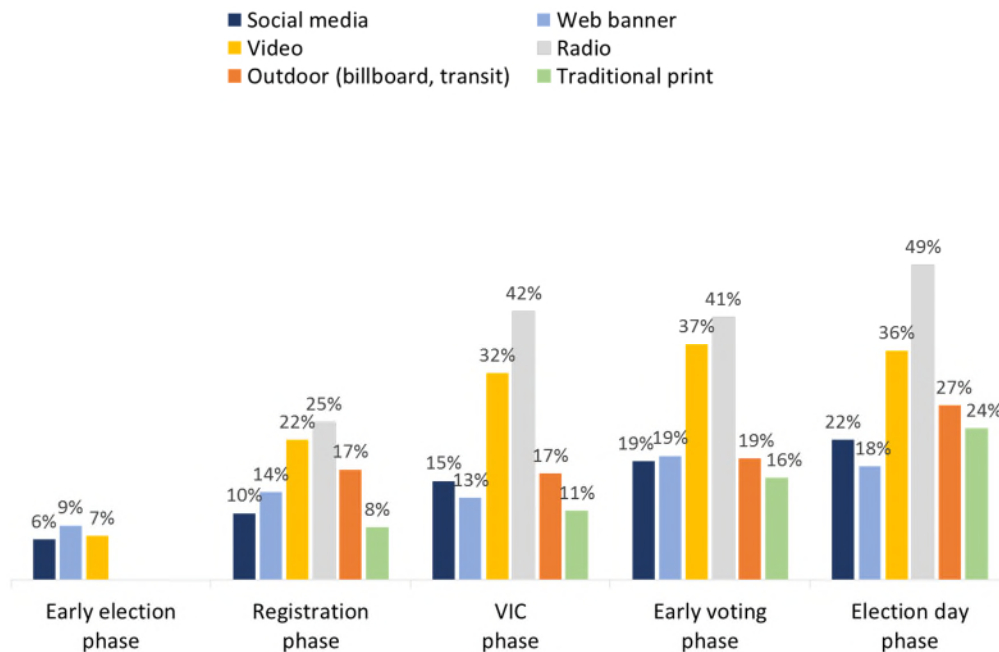
This section of the report presents aided recall of specific Elections Canada advertising pieces selected as representative of the range of ad designs, formats, and messages used in each phase of the voter information campaign.

At each phase of the election period survey, online respondents were presented with an image, video, or audio clip for as many as three ads selected from the current phase of the voter information campaign. Respondents were then asked whether they had seen or heard these specific ads during the election. Ads in one format could be placed on different platforms at different times of the campaign. In particular, video ads presented in the early election phase of the survey were online-only ads from the pre-election advertising phase of the voter information campaign. In all other phases, videos represented ads that aired on television.⁶

Aided recall was highest for specific radio ads, followed by video ads

Aided recall of ads in all formats generally increased with each phase of the voter information campaign. Aided recall of radio ads was higher than other formats: Between one-quarter and one-half of surveyed electors recalled a radio ad about registration (25%), the VIC (42%), early voting options (41%), and election day (49%). This pattern is similar to the 2015 ERP Evaluation, when aided recall in all survey phases was higher for radio ads than for other formats, and was highest in the election day phase (38%).

Figure 9: Aided recall of specific ads by format and phase



Q. Have you seen or heard this ad in the past few weeks? [Marketing filter applied.] [WAVE 2]

⁶ With the exception of those who responded to the early election survey, each respondent was presented three ads: one image of an online web banner or social media ad; one image of a print or outdoor ad; and one 15-second video or radio ad. Those who responded to the early election survey were shown two ads only: one online ad and one video.

Video ads had the second highest levels of aided recall overall, with 7% of electors recalling a video ad early in the election, 22% a registration ad, 32% a VIC ad, 37% an early voting options ad, and 36% an election day ad.

Across the election period survey, noteworthy subgroup variations included:

- Aided recall of **radio** ads was higher among Indigenous electors (42% versus 37% of non-Indigenous electors) and electors aged 55 and older (39% versus 35% of those aged 18 to 54); and lower among 18- to 24-year-olds (33% versus 38% of those aged 25 and older).
- Aided recall of **video** ads was higher among electors aged 55 and older (30% versus 22% of those aged 18 to 54 years).
- Aided recall of **outdoor** billboard and public transit ads was higher among:
 - Indigenous electors (26% versus 19% of non-Indigenous electors)
 - new Canadians (22% versus 19% of other Canadians)
 - 18- to 24-year-olds (27% versus 19% of Canadians aged 25 and older)
 - youth attending school (27% versus 19% of youth working full-time and 11% of NEET youth)
- Aided recall of **social media** ads was higher among:
 - Indigenous electors (19% versus 14% of non-Indigenous electors)
 - 18- to 24-year-olds (20% versus 13% of Canadians aged 25 and older)
 - youth attending school (21% versus 14% of youth working full-time and 9% of NEET youth)
- Aided recall of traditional **print** ads was higher among electors aged 55 and older (17% versus 11% of electors aged 18 to 54 years).

6. Evaluation of Specific Ads

This section of the report presents respondents' evaluation of Elections Canada's advertising based on the ads presented to respondents during the survey.⁷

“Get out and vote” perceived to be the main point of EC advertising or communications

All respondents were asked to select from a list what they thought was the main point electors were intended to get from the ads they were shown. The list included a mix of specific messages taken from the ads, alongside more general messages that represent commonly volunteered responses from previous surveys of electors.

Similar to unaided recall, general messages were mentioned most often across most phases of the voter information campaign, namely “get out and vote” (with results ranging from 41% to 54%), and “it’s important to vote” (41% to 53%). Compared to unaided recall, respondents more often identified specific ad messages when aided by the presentation of specific ads. In particular, messages found in ads across all phases were identified more often all throughout the election period survey, including: “the federal election is on October 21” (ranging from 31% to 54%), the campaign slogan “It’s our vote” (25% to 33%), and “the Elections Canada website has official information” (24% to 29%).

Figure 10: Perception of main ad message

Messages	Early election phase	Registration phase	VIC phase	Early voting phase	Election day phase
Get out and vote	50%	41%	48%	54%	54%
It's important to vote	48%	41%	49%	53%	49%
Federal election is scheduled in the fall/on October 21	31%	37%	53%	54%	49%
It is easy to vote	35%	30%	37%	47%	41%
VIC tells you when and where to vote	21%	17%	46%	35%	28%
There are ways to vote early	16%	15%	29%	50%	27%
It's our vote	29%	25%	32%	33%	26%
The Elections Canada website has official information	24%	28%	29%	28%	26%
You need to be registered to vote	30%	40%	39%	28%	23%
You need to prove your identity and address to vote	13%	16%	25%	23%	20%
Check or update your registration	26%	39%	36%	24%	19%
Check the mail for your voter information card	23%	16%	43%	27%	19%
Who is eligible to vote	14%	17%	20%	19%	19%
Other	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	1%
Don't know/don't remember	11%	6%	6%	5%	5%

Q. What do you think is the main point these ads are trying to get across? Base: n=12,989; those aware of the election. [WAVE 2]

Messages associated with specific phases of the voter information campaign were identified more often as the main point of ads presented during those phases:

⁷ All respondents were asked to evaluate the ads, including those who said they did not recall having seen or heard any of the ads they were presented in the survey.

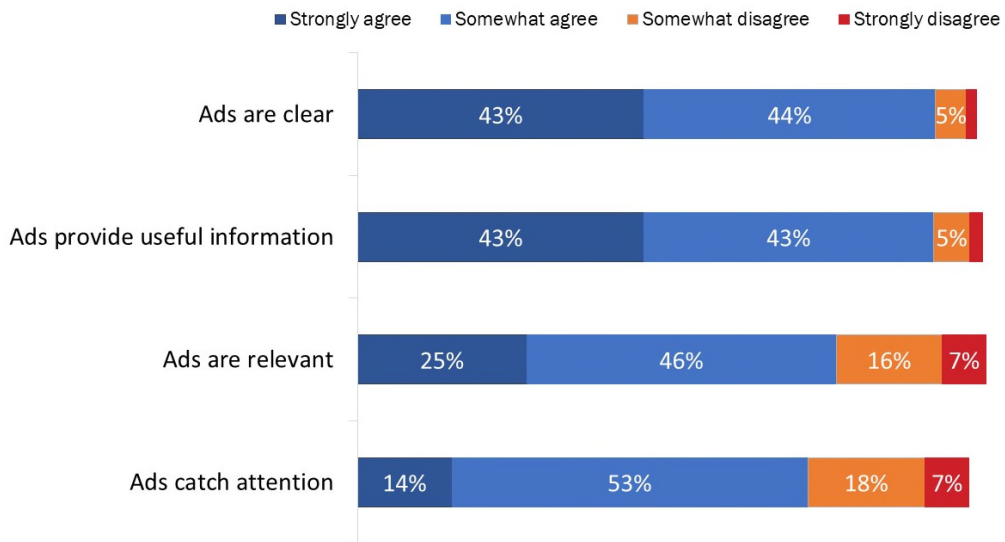
- Mentions of registration messages were highest at the registration phase: “you need to be registered to vote” (40%) and “check or update your registration” (39%).
- Mentions of messages about the VIC peaked during the VIC phase: “VIC tells you when and where to vote” (46%) and “check the mail for your VIC” (43%).
- Mentions of messages about the early voting options peaked during the early voting phase: “there are ways to vote early” (50%).

Ads received generally positive reviews

Election period respondents were asked to evaluate the ads they were presented in the survey against four measures. The vast majority of respondents somewhat or strongly agreed that the presented ads were clear (87%) and provided useful information (86%). Fewer than one in 10 (7%) disagreed that the ads were clear and provided useful information.

Smaller majorities agreed that the ads were relevant (71%) and attention-catching (67%). For both measures, respondents were more likely to agree somewhat rather than strongly, while one in four disagreed that the ads were relevant (23%) or attention-catching (25%).

Figure 11: Ad evaluation overall



*Values of 2% or less are not labelled.

Q. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about these ads? Base: n=22,273; all respondents. [Marketing filter applied.] DK/NR: 6%-9%. [WAVE 2]

The following subgroup differences are noteworthy:

- Indigenous electors were less likely than non-Indigenous electors to agree that the ads are clear (82% versus 87%), provide useful information (81% versus 86%), are relevant personally (69% versus 72%), and are attention-catching (62% versus 67%).
- New Canadians were more likely than other Canadians to agree that the ads are attention-catching (71% versus 67%) and personally relevant (76% versus 71%).

- Canadians 18 to 24 years of age were more likely than Canadians aged 25 and older to agree that the ads are clear (90% versus 86%), provide useful information (89% versus 86%), and are relevant to them personally (82% versus 71%).
- 18- to 34-year-olds attending school were more likely than youth working full-time to agree that the ads provide useful information (89% versus 86%), are personally relevant (81% versus 76%), and are attention-catching (69% versus 63%).

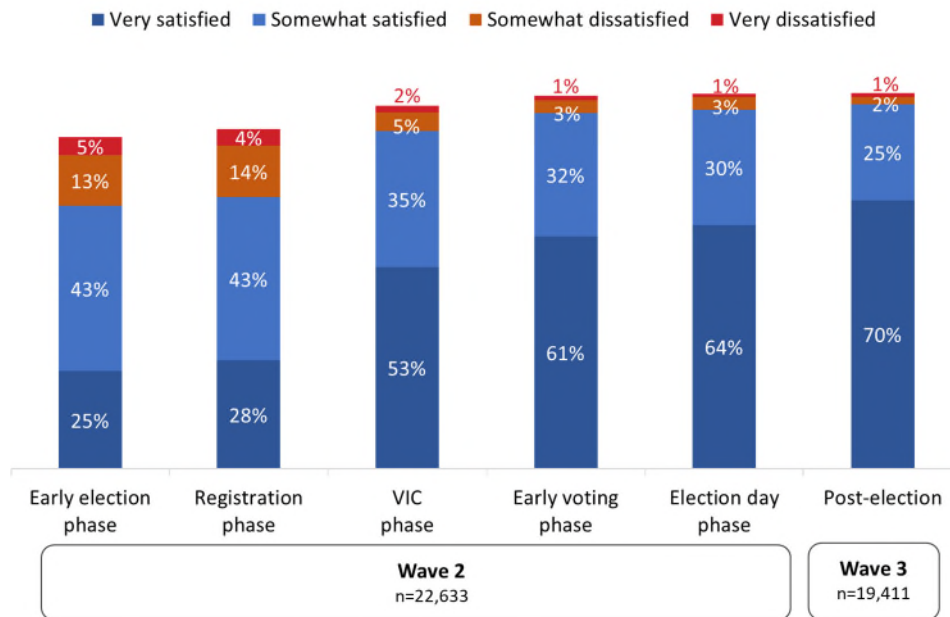
7. Satisfaction with Electoral Information

This section reports how satisfied respondents were with the electoral information provided by Elections Canada for the 43rd GE and how informed they felt they were about where, when, and the ways to vote over the course of the voter information campaign.

Electors' satisfaction with EC information on voting increased over the campaign

Satisfaction with the information electors received from Elections Canada on the voting process increased over the course of the voter information campaign, from 68% who were satisfied (25% very satisfied) during the early election phase of the election period survey up to 95% who were satisfied (70% very satisfied) with the information they received on the voting process by the post-election survey. This outcome is consistent with the results of the 2015 ERP Evaluation (95% were satisfied in the post-election survey).⁸

Figure 12: Satisfaction with information on the voting process



Q. Overall, how satisfied are you with the information you have received from Elections Canada on the voting process [Wave 2: meaning where, when, and the ways to vote in the federal election]? [WAVE 2, WAVE 3]

In the post-election survey, the likelihood of being very satisfied with the information received about the voting process was lower among the following:

- electors with a severe/very severe (60%) or mild/moderate disability (67%) compared to those with no disability (73%)
- Indigenous electors (59%) compared to non-Indigenous electors (70%)

⁸ The 2015 ERP Evaluation used a 0 to 10 point scale to measure satisfaction with information and how informed electors felt they were about the voting process. The results were originally reported based on the proportion of responses ranging from 8 to 10 on that scale. The results for these measures cited in this report do not appear in the original report from 2015: instead, the proportions in this report have been calculated from the original data using a score of 5 to 10, having been found to be comparable with the top 2 points of the 4-point satisfaction scale used in the 2019 NES (i.e. representing “somewhat satisfied” or higher).

- Canadians aged 18 to 24 (59%) compared to those 25 and older (71%)
- NEET youth (56%) and youth attending school (60%) compared to youth working full-time (63%)
- electors who voted at a poll on campus (52%) and by mail (59%) compared to those who voted on election day (72%), a local EC office (76%), or an advance poll (76%)

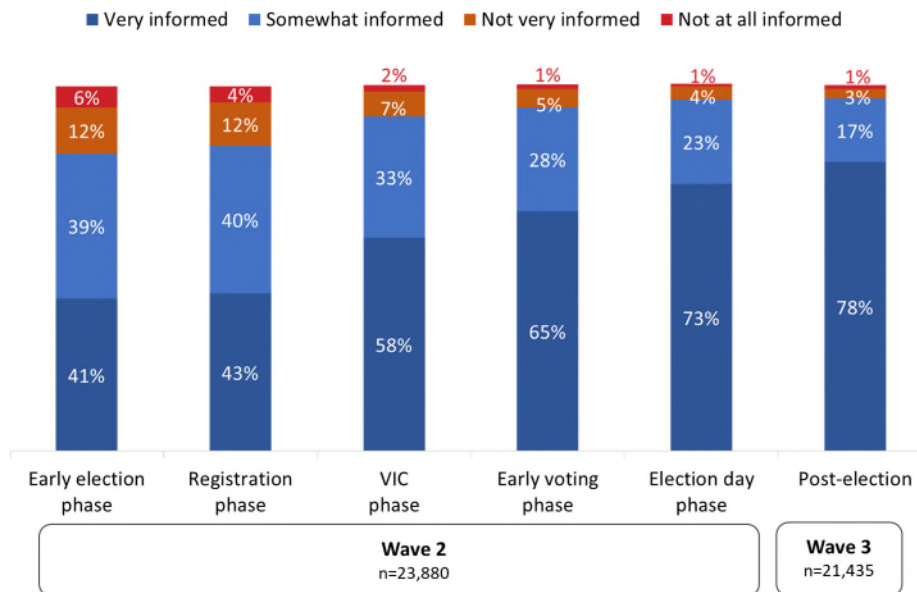
The likelihood of being very satisfied with the information received was higher among:

- electors aged 55 or older (79% versus 64% of those aged 18 to 54)
- those who recalled, unaided, seeing an EC ad (77% versus 58% of those who did not)
- those who received a VIC (73% versus 35% of those who did not)
- those who said they voted in the 2019 GE (73% versus 35% of non-voters)

Most felt at least somewhat informed in terms of where to vote

Over the course of the voter information campaign, electors increasingly reported that they felt informed about where to vote in the election. Early in the election period, most (81%) electors said they felt at least somewhat informed, including 41% who felt very informed. By the post-election survey, 96% of electors reported feeling informed, including 78% who said very informed. The 96% who felt informed about where to vote represents a slight increase from the 94% who felt informed in the post-election survey of the 2015 ERP Evaluation.⁹

Figure 13: How informed electors felt about where to vote



Q. Overall, how well informed do you feel about voting in the federal election in terms of where to vote? [DK/NR: 1%.]
 [WAVE 2, WAVE 3]

Post-election, the likelihood of respondents saying they felt very informed about where to vote was lower among the following:

⁹ See Footnote 8.

- electors with a severe/very severe (68%) or mild/moderate (76%) disability compared to electors with no disability (80%)
- Indigenous electors (71%) compared to non-Indigenous electors (79%)
- new Canadians (69%) compared to other Canadians (79%)
- electors aged 18 to 24 (70%) compared to those aged 25 and older (79%)
- 18- to 34-year-olds attending school (71%) or working full-time (73%) compared to NEET youth (63%)

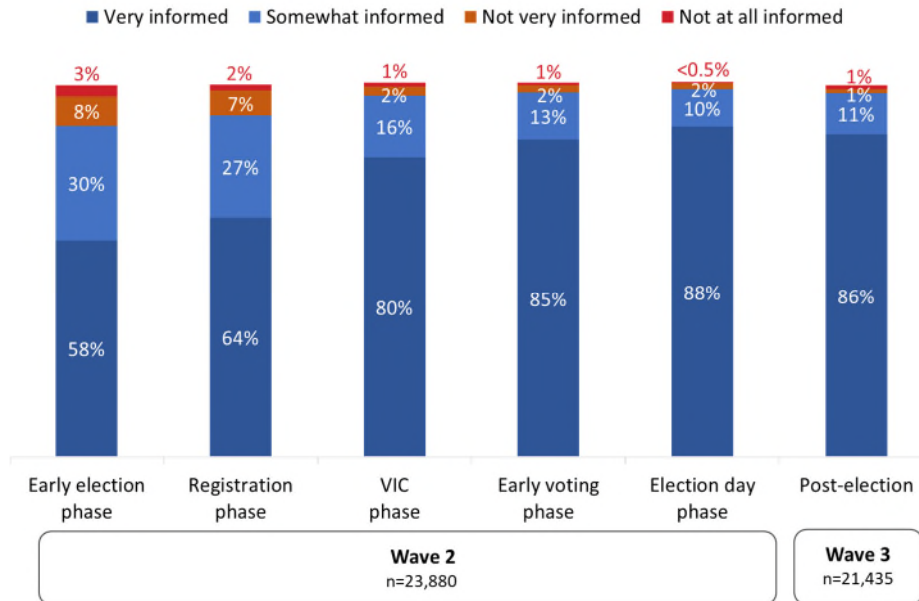
The likelihood of feeling very informed about where to vote was higher among:

- electors aged 55 or older (86% versus 73% of those aged 18 to 54)
- those who voted in the 2015 GE (82% versus 58% of those who were eligible but did not vote)
- those who recalled seeing an EC ad in the 2019 GE (83% versus 69% of those who did not)
- those who received a VIC (81% versus 42% of those who did not)
- those who voted in the 2019 GE (82% versus 46% of non-voters)
- those who voted at an advance poll (85%) compared to those who voted at a local EC office (82%), on election day (81%), or at a poll on campus (68%)

Strong majorities felt informed about when to vote

Throughout the election, strong majorities of electors felt at least somewhat informed about when to vote in the federal election, including half or more who felt very informed. The proportion of electors who felt informed steadily increased from a baseline of 88% early in the election period, including 58% who felt very informed, up to 98% who felt informed in the post-election survey, including 86% who felt very informed. The end result is similar to the 97% who felt informed in the post-election wave of the 2015 ERP Evaluation.¹⁰

Figure 14: How informed electors felt about when to vote



Q. Overall, how well informed do you feel about voting in the federal election in terms of when to vote? [DK/NR: 1% or less.] [WAVE 2, WAVE 3]

¹⁰ See Footnote 8.

In the post-election survey, the likelihood of saying they felt very informed about when to vote was lower among the following:

- electors with a severe/very severe disability (77%) compared to those with a mild/moderate disability (85%) or no disability (88%)
- Indigenous electors (81%) compared to non-Indigenous electors (87%)
- new Canadians (77%) compared to other Canadians (87%)
- electors aged 18 to 24 (82%) compared to those aged 25 and older (87%)

The likelihood of feeling very informed about when to vote was higher among:

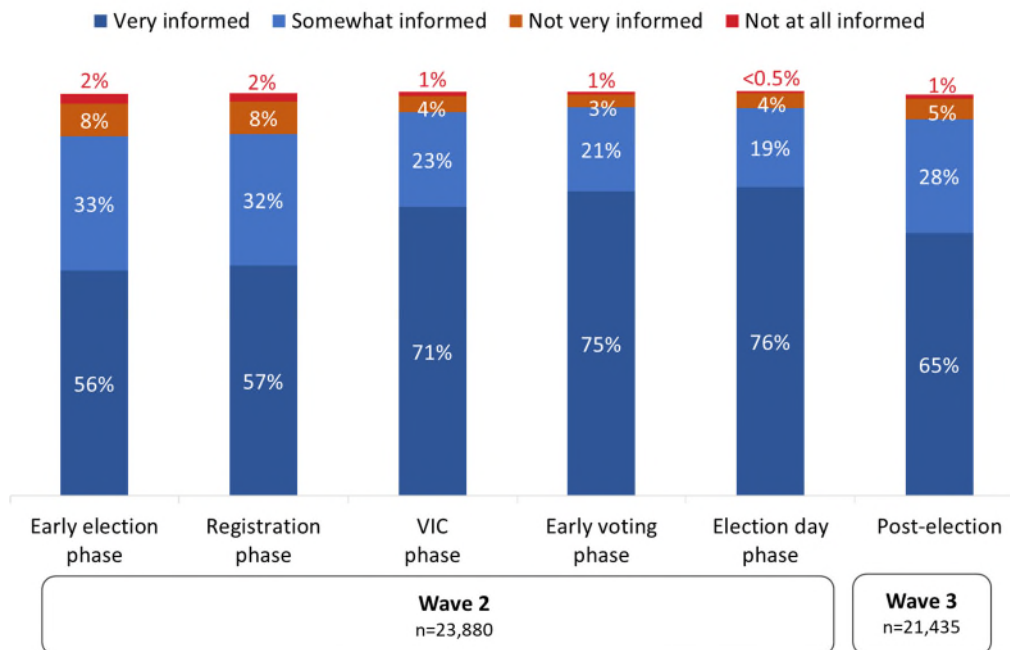
- electors aged 55 or older (92% versus 83% of those aged 18 to 54)
- those who voted in the 2015 GE (89% versus 70% of those who were eligible but did not vote)
- those who recalled seeing an EC ad in the 2019 GE (91% versus 79% of those who did not)
- those who received a VIC (89% versus 64% of those who did not)
- those who voted in the 2019 GE (89% versus 59% of non-voters)
- those who voted at an advance poll (91%), election day poll (89%), or a local EC office (88%) compared to those who voted at a poll on campus (77%)

Most electors also felt informed about the ways to vote

Most surveyed electors also felt somewhat or very informed about the ways to vote in the federal election. During the election period, the proportion of electors who felt very informed increased significantly between the registration (57%) and voter information card (71%) phases, followed by a smaller increase at the early voting (75%) and election day (76%) phases. This receded in the post-election survey to two-thirds (65%) of electors feeling very informed, while more than a quarter (28%) reported feeling somewhat informed about the ways to vote in the federal election. Overall, 93% of post-election respondents said they felt informed about the ways to vote in the end, the same as in 2015 (93% according to the post-election survey of the ERP Evaluation).¹¹

¹¹ See Footnote 8.

Figure 15: How informed electors felt about the ways to vote



Q. Overall, how well informed do you feel about voting in the federal election in terms of the ways to vote? [DK/NR: 1% or less.] [WAVE 2, WAVE 3]

Post-election, the likelihood of respondents saying they felt very informed about the ways to vote was lower among the following:

- electors with a severe/very severe (56%) or mild/moderate (62%) disability compared to electors with no disability (66%)
- Indigenous electors (57%) compared to non-Indigenous electors (65%)
- electors aged 18 to 24 (51%) compared to those 25 and older (66%)

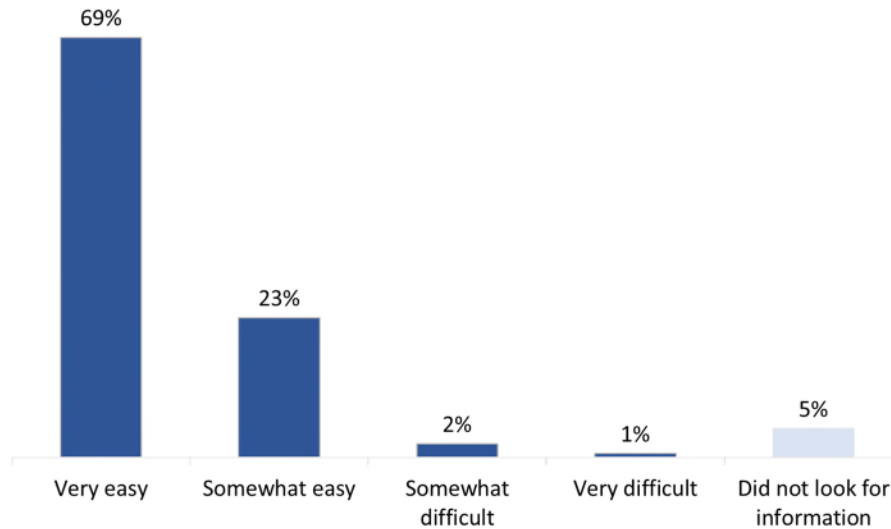
The likelihood of feeling very informed about the ways to vote was higher among:

- youth working full-time (58%) compared to youth attending school (52%) and NEET youth (49%)
- electors aged 55 or older (73% versus 59% of those aged 18 to 54)
- those who voted in the 2015 GE (68% versus 47% of those who were eligible but did not vote)
- those who recalled seeing an EC ad in the 2019 GE (70% versus 54% of those who did not)
- those who received a VIC (67% versus 39% of those who did not)
- those who voted in the 2019 GE (67% versus 39% of non-voters)
- those who voted at an advance poll (71%) or a local EC office (73%) compared to those who voted on election day (65%), by mail (58%) or at a poll on campus (54%)

Nine in 10 found it easy to find the information they needed on the voting process

In the post-election survey, nine in 10 (92%) electors said it was easy to find the information they needed on the voting process, including over two-thirds (69%) who said it was very easy. For the remainder, electors more often said they did not look for information (5%) rather than saying information was difficult to find (3%).

Figure 16: Ease of finding information on the voting process



Q. For this election, how easy or difficult was it to find the information you needed on the voting process, meaning where, when, and the ways to vote? [DK/NR: 1%.]

Base: n=19,364; all respondents. [WAVE 3]

The following groups were less likely to say it was very easy to find the information they needed on voting:

- electors with a severe/very severe (58%) or mild/moderate (64%) disability compared to electors with no disability (72%)
- Indigenous electors (61% compared to 69% of non-Indigenous electors)
- new Canadians (61% compared to 69% of other Canadians)
- electors aged 18 to 24 (58% compared to 70% of electors aged 25 and older)

The following groups were more likely to say it was very easy to find information on voting:

- youth working full-time (65%) compared to youth attending school (58%) and NEET youth (57%)
- electors who recalled EC advertising (75% compared to 58% of those who did not)
- electors who received a VIC (71% compared to 37% of those who did not)

8. Knowledge of and Interest in Employment Opportunities

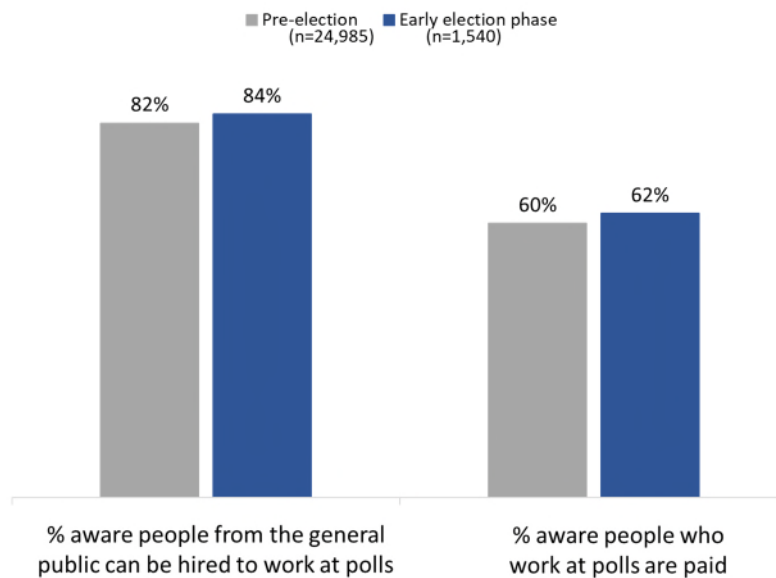
One of the messages in the earliest phases of the voter information campaign was that paid positions were available for working at the polls.

This section reports findings related to electors' awareness of and interest in employment opportunities in the pre-election survey (June) and during the early election phase of the election period survey (the first half of September).

More are aware people from the general public can work at polls than know these are paid positions

More than eight in 10 electors surveyed responded, correctly, that people from the general public can be hired to work at the polls during a federal election. Only six in 10, however, were aware that people who work at the polls during a federal election are paid. In both cases, there was little change (+2 percentage points) between electors' baseline knowledge in the pre-election survey and the early election phase of the election period survey, conducted following initial Elections Canada advertising about employment opportunities.

Figure 17: Knowledge of employment opportunities



Q. Is this true or false? In a federal election, people from the general public can be hired to work at the polls. [SPLIT SAMPLE]

Q. Is this true or false? In a federal election, the people who work at the polls are paid. [SPLIT SAMPLE] [WAVE 1, WAVE 2]

The following early election respondents were more likely to be aware that people from the **general public can be hired to work at the polls**:

- those who voted in the 2015 GE (87% versus 65% of those who did not but were eligible)
- those who completed university (87% versus 77% of those who completed high school or less)
- Canadians aged 55 to 74 (92%) compared to 81% of 35- to 54-year-olds, 79% of 25- to 34-year-olds, and 73% of 18- to 24-year-olds

In addition, the following early election respondents were more likely to be aware that people who work at the polls **are paid**:

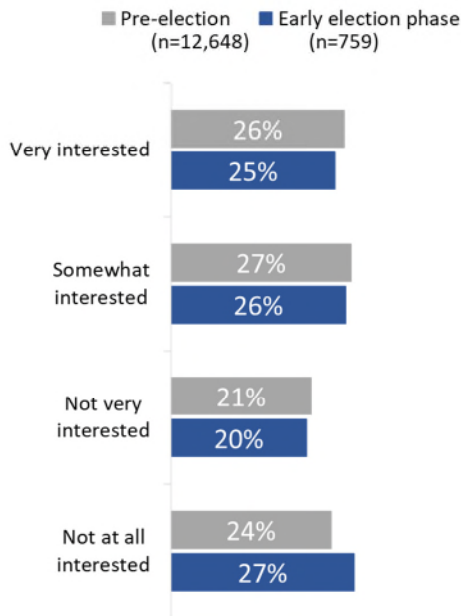
- those who voted in the 2015 GE (66% versus 45% of those who did not but were eligible)
- those who completed university (69% versus 59% of those who completed post-secondary or college and 55% of those who completed high school or less)
- Canadians aged 55 to 74 (76%) compared to 63% of 35- to 54-year-olds, 51% of 25- to 34-year-olds, and 38% of 18- to 24-year-olds

Approximately half would be interested in working at the polls during a federal election

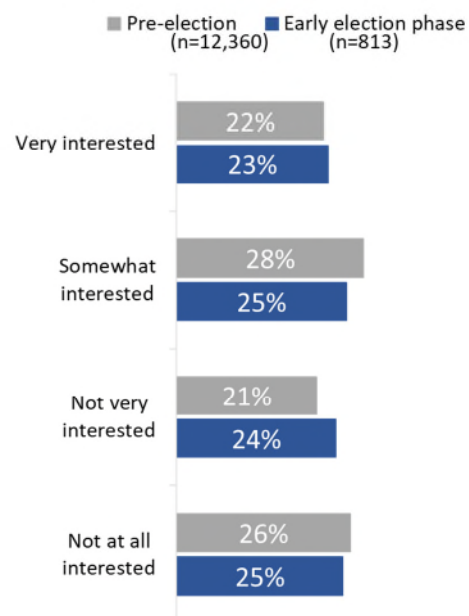
A split sample was used to compare electors’ interest in working at the polls during a federal election when framed as an opportunity for paid work versus an appeal to civic duty.¹² Similar proportions expressed at least some interest in this employment opportunity following either appeal (52% and 50% in the pre-election survey); those saying they would be very interested was slightly higher using the appeal to paid work (26%) compared to the appeal to civic duty (22%). Regardless of the appeal used, interest in working at the polls waned slightly (-1 or -2 percentage points) in the early election phase, closer to the reality of election day.

Figure 18: Interest in employment opportunities

Preamble: Elections Canada hires and pays local people to work at the polls in their area



Preamble: Elections Canada needs local people to work at the polls in their area; without them it would be impossible to hold elections



Q. How interested would you be in working at the polls in an election? Base: all respondents. [SPLIT SAMPLES] [WAVE 1, WAVE 2]

¹² Half of the respondents received the preamble *Election Canada hires and pays local people to work during federal elections* before the question, and the other half the preamble *Elections Canada needs local people to work at the polls in their area; without them it would be impossible to hold elections*.

Among early election respondents presented with the appeal to paid work, youth attending school (70%) compared to youth working full-time (46%) were more likely to express interest in the opportunity to work at the polls.

Among early election respondents presented with the appeal to civic duty, the following were more likely to be interested:

- those with a severe/very severe disability (64%) compared to electors with no disability (46%)
- those who voted in the 2015 GE (48%) compared to non-voters (33%)

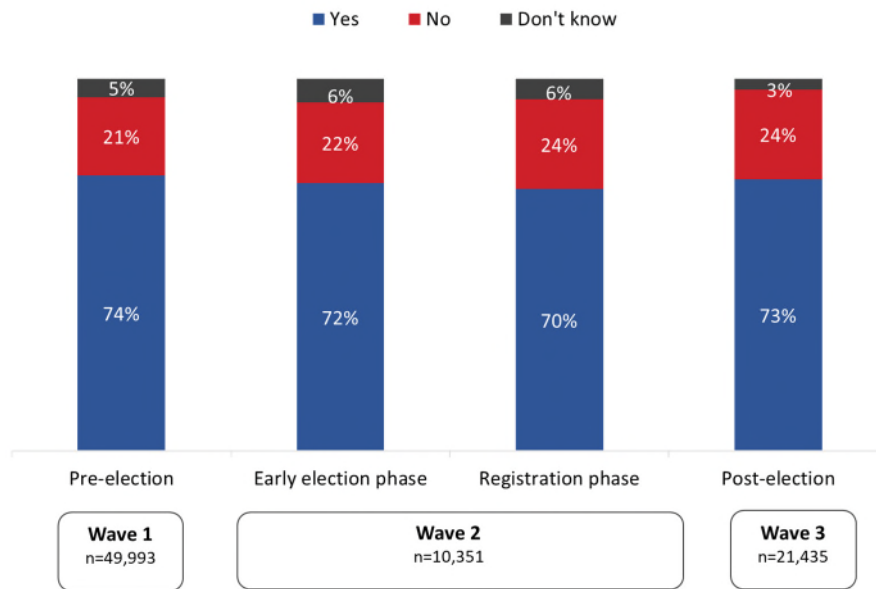
9. Knowledge of Voter Registration

This section reports findings related to electors' knowledge of voter registration requirements and their awareness of the different ways they can register, update, or check their registration information.

Majority of electors knew they needed to be registered on the list of electors to vote in an election

Throughout the study, at least seven in 10 electors claimed to know that they need to be registered on the list of electors to vote in a Canadian federal election. Knowledge fluctuated only slightly over the course of the election campaign, from 74% of electors in the pre-election survey to 72% during the early election phase, 70% during the registration phase in the election period, and 73% post-election. This outcome represents a slight decrease compared to the 76% who knew of the need to be registered to vote in the post-election wave of the 2015 ERP Evaluation; however, knowledge levels remained more consistent across the 2019 GE (a 1 percentage point decrease from baseline to post-election) compared to 2015 (a 4 percentage point decrease from its 80% baseline).

Figure 19: Knowledge of need to be registered to vote



Q. To the best of your knowledge, do you need to be registered on the list of electors to vote in a Canadian federal election? Base: all respondents. [WAVE 1-3]

Post-election, the following were more likely to know they need to be registered:

- new Canadians (81%) compared to other Canadians (73%)
- those who received a VIC (74% versus 65% of those who did not)
- electors from Quebec (92%) compared to all other regions of Canada (ranging from 65% to 69%). A possible explanation for this is that provincial elections in Quebec do not allow electors to register at the polls before voting on election day, while elections in all other jurisdictions allow for this in some form

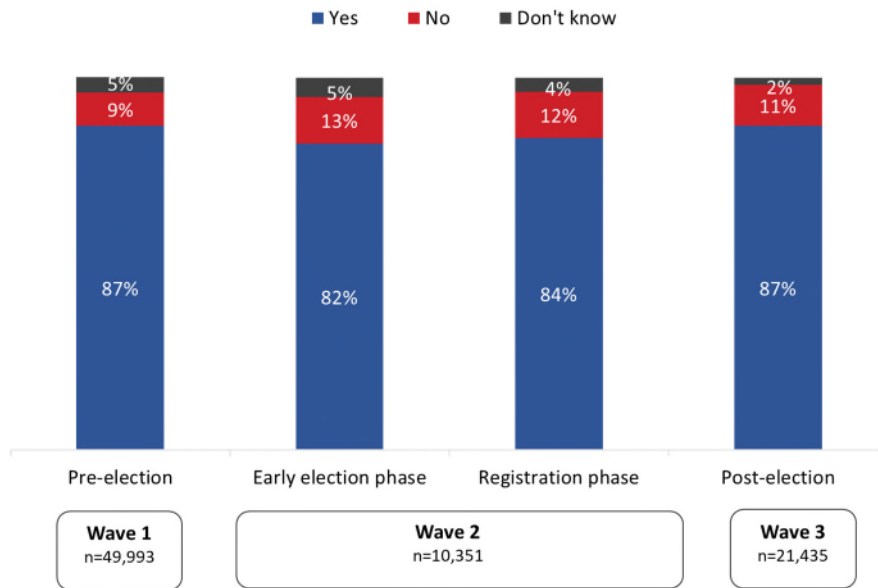
The following were less likely to know they need to be registered:

- those who voted in the 2015 GE (73% versus 77% of those who were eligible but did not vote)
- those who voted in the 2019 GE (73% versus 78% of non-voters)
- those who voted at a local EC office (62%) compared to those who voted at a poll on campus (72%), at an advance poll (73%), on election day (74%), or by mail (80%)

Most electors also knew they needed to update their voter registration information

Higher proportions of electors knew of the need to update their voter registration if their information changes. This remained effectively stable throughout the research period, from a baseline of 87% in the pre-election survey to 82% and 84% during the early election and registration phases of the election period, and back up to 87% following the October 21, 2019, election.

Figure 20: Knowledge of need to update registration



Q. To the best of your knowledge, do you need to update your voter registration if your information changes – for example, if you moved or changed your name? Base: all respondents. [WAVE 1-3]

Post-election, the following were more likely to know that electors need to update their voter registration when information changes:

- electors with a mild/moderate (87%) or no (87%) disability compared to those with a severe/very severe disability (84%)
- electors aged 25 and older (87%) compared to Canadians 18 to 24 years of age (91%)
- those who voted in the 2015 GE (87% versus 84% of non-voters)
- those who recalled seeing an EC ad in the 2019 GE (89% versus 86% of those who did not)
- those who received a VIC (87% versus 85% of those who did not)
- those who voted in the 2019 GE (88% versus 82% of non-voters)

Electors pointed to a variety of methods when asked how someone could register or update their voter registration information

Post-election, the top methods mentioned by electors when asked how someone could register or update their voter registration information were by contacting Elections Canada through its website (22%), at the polling station before voting (14%), and online in general (12%). The full range of responses is detailed in figure 21.

Overall, there was an increase from the election period survey to the post-election survey of electors identifying Elections Canada channels specifically: that is, those saying through the EC website (from 13% to 22%), at the polls before voting (9% to 14%), at a local EC office (6% to 8%), and by phoning EC (5% to 11%).

The proportion of electors who did not know how someone can register or update their voter information declined over the course of the election period, from 38% during the early election phase to 34% during the registration phase and 21% post-election. This represents an improvement from the post-election wave of the 2015 ERP Evaluation, when 32% said they did not know any of the ways to register or update their voter information.¹³

Figure 21: Unaided knowledge of ways to register/update information

Ways to register/update information	Wave 2 (n=4,588)*		Wave 3 (n=8,742)**
	Early election Phase	Registration Phase	Post-election
Contact Elections Canada through its website	13%	13%	22%
At the poll before voting	9%	10%	14%
Online/website (non-specific)	17%	22%	12%
Contact Elections Canada by phone	5%	5%	11%
Contact Elections Canada (general)	15%	14%	10%
At a local Elections Canada office	6%	6%	8%
On income tax form/checking box to register on tax forms	2%	1%	5%
Provide/bring valid government-issued ID	1%	<1%	4%
Government department/agency (non-specific)	1%	2%	3%
Use Elections Canada's online voter registration system	1%	1%	3%
Phone (non-specific)	4%	5%	2%
In-person (non-specific)	2%	2%	1%
Mail (non-specific)	1%	1%	1%
Contact Elections Canada by mail	<1%	<1%	1%
Look for information on VIC	<1%	<1%	1%
By voting in a federal election	--	--	1%
Other	3%	2%	11%
Don't know/no response	38%	34%	21%

Q. If someone needed to register to vote or update their voter registration information, how can they do so? [Multiple responses accepted.]

¹³ The result cited for 2015 is derived from the combined responses of unregistered electors who did not know any of the ways to register, plus registered electors who did not know any of the ways to update their voter information. In the original ERP Evaluation, these results were reported separately (62% did not know among unregistered electors, 30% among registered electors).

Base: those who knew they needed to be registered to vote and/or keep their voter registration information up-to-date. [WAVE 2, WAVE 3]

* Aside from DK/NR, results represent a random sample (n=1,189) of responses.

**Aside from DK/NR, results represent a random sample (n=1,617) of responses.

In the post-election survey, the following groups were more likely to say they did not know any of the ways to register or update their voter registration information:

- electors with a severe/very severe disability (28% did not know a way to register, compared to 23% of electors with a mild/moderate disability and 20% of those with no disability)
- Indigenous electors (26% compared to 21% of non-Indigenous electors)
- electors with a high school education or less (29% compared to 23% of electors with some post-secondary or college and 17% of those with a university degree or higher)

The following were less likely to say they did not know any of the ways to register:

- those who voted in the 2015 GE (19% versus 39% of those who were eligible but did not vote)
- those who recalled seeing an EC during the 2019 GE (16% versus 31% of those who did not)
- those who recalled receiving a VIC (21% versus 27% of those who did not)
- those who voted in the 2019 GE (19% versus 39% of non-voters)

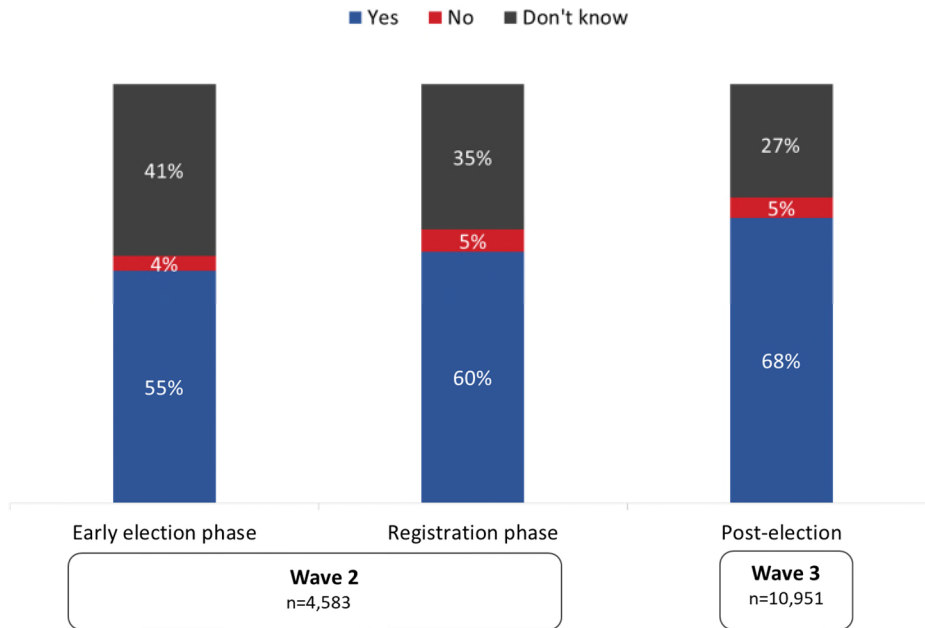
A majority were aware (when aided) that electors can use an online voter registration service to check/update/complete their voter registration

When asked directly, over two-thirds (68%) of post-election survey respondents had knowledge of Elections Canada's online voter registration service.¹⁴ This is a significant increase from the 2015 post-election Survey of Electors, when 51% had knowledge of the online voter registration service.¹⁵ Knowledge of online registration also increased significantly over the course of the election, measuring 60% in the registration phase versus 55% in the early election phase of the election period.

¹⁴ The results are based on a merger of split samples used to test awareness of online voter registration. Half the respondents were asked whether electors could use an "online voter registration service on Elections Canada's website," and the other half was asked whether electors could "check, update, or complete their voter registration on Elections Canada's website." While a majority of electors expressed awareness of this option regardless of the formulation of the question, the majority in the former formulation was 3 percentage points (57% versus 60%) lower in the election period survey and 4 percentage points (66% versus 70%) lower in the post-election survey.

¹⁵ The 2015 result was measured using the first formulation described in Footnote 14. The increase from 2019 to 2015 is still significant when comparing the exact same measures only (66% in 2019 versus 51% in 2015).

Figure 22: Aided knowledge of online registration



Q. To the best of your knowledge, [can electors use an online voter registration service on Elections Canada’s website to check, update, or complete their voter registration during the election?/is it possible for Canadian electors to check, update or complete their voter registration on Elections Canada’s website?] Base: those who knew they needed to be registered to vote and/or keep their voter registration information up-to-date. [WAVE 2, WAVE 3]

Among post-election survey respondents, 18- to 24-year-olds (79%) were more likely than Canadians aged 25 and older (67%) to be aware that electors can use an online voter registration service to check, update, or complete their registration.

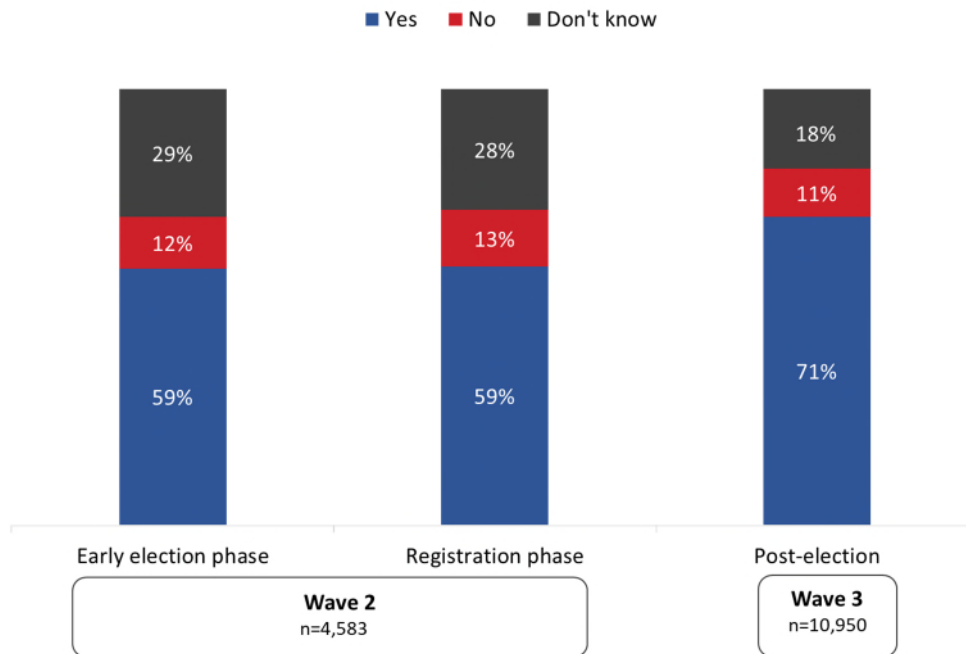
The following were less likely to be aware of the online voter registration service:

- those who did not vote in the 2015 GE (64% versus 68% of those who did vote)
- those who did not recall seeing an EC ad during the 2019 GE (62% versus 73% of those who did)
- those who did not vote in the 2019 GE (62% versus 69% of voters)
- those who voted on election day (68%) or at an advance poll (69%) compared to those who voted at a local EC office (77%) or on campus (78%)

Awareness of polling day registration increased to seven in 10 electors

In the early election and registration phases of the election period, six in 10 (59%) respondents said an elector can register at the polling place and then vote immediately after. Awareness of polling day registration was significantly higher following the October 21, 2019, election: seven in 10 (71%) respondents were aware that electors can register at the polling place on election day.

Figure 23: Aided knowledge of polling day registration



Q. If an elector is not registered on election day and wants to vote, can they register at the polling place and then vote immediately after?
Base: those who knew they needed to be registered to vote and keep their voter registration information up-to-date. [WAVE 2, WAVE 3]

Among post-election survey respondents, Indigenous electors were more likely to say an elector can register at the polling place and then vote immediately after (76%, compared to 71% of non-Indigenous electors).

The following were less likely to say an elector can register and vote immediately after:

- electors in Quebec (51%) compared to all other regions of Canada (ranging from 77% to 87%). This is significant considering that provincial elections in Quebec do not provide for polling day registration
- those who did not vote in the 2015 GE (58% versus 72% of those who did vote)
- those who did not recall seeing an EC ad during the 2019 GE (63% versus 75% of those who did)
- those who recalled receiving their VIC (71% versus 76% of those who did not)
- those who did not vote in the 2019 GE (56% versus 72% of voters)
- those who voted on election day (71%) compared to those who voted at a local EC office (86%) or at an advance poll (74%)

10. Registration Action During the Election

In the post-election survey, six in 10 (61%) respondents said they made sure they were registered to vote in the 43rd general election: 50% said they checked and made sure that they were already registered to vote with the correct information; 7% said they updated their registration information; 3% said they registered to vote.

Through each phase of the voter information campaign to the post-election survey, the proportion of electors who said they registered to vote during the election period remained consistent (2% to 3%).

The proportions of electors who updated their voter registration information were highest during the early election and registration phases (9% each), when voter information campaign messages were focused on registration.

The proportion of electors who checked that they were already registered increased throughout the voter information campaign: 41% in the early election phase of the election period, a considerable increase up to 69% in the VIC phase, and as high as 72% during the early voting phase. The timing of this increase suggests that the delivery of the VIC prompted electors to check their registration. This is supported by the finding that 57% of electors who made sure they registered to vote in the election said they did so by checking that the information on their VIC was correct.¹⁶

Figure 24: Registration actions

Registration actions	Early election phase	Wave 2 (n=13,733)				Wave 3 (n=21,403)
		Registration phase	VIC phase	Early voting phase	Election day phase	Post-election
Register to vote	2%	2%	2%	3%	3%	3%
Update registration information	9%	9%	6%	6%	7%	7%
Check that you were already registered	41%	43%	69%	72%	71%	50%
Did none of the above	48%	45%	22%	19%	18%	38%
Don't know	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%

Q. Have you checked/made sure you were registered to vote in this election?

Q. What, if anything, did you do to make sure you were registered to vote in this election? Did you...?

Base: those aware of the election. [WAVE 2, WAVE 2 + WAVE 3]

Post-election, the likelihood of checking to confirm one's registration was higher among those who recalled receiving their VIC (51% versus 31% of those who did not), as well as among those who recalled seeing an EC ad during the 2019 GE (55% versus 44% of those who did not).

¹⁶ This finding along with additional survey results on voter registration in the 2019 GE are reported in detail in the National Electors Study Report on Voter Experience.

11. Knowledge of Identification Requirements

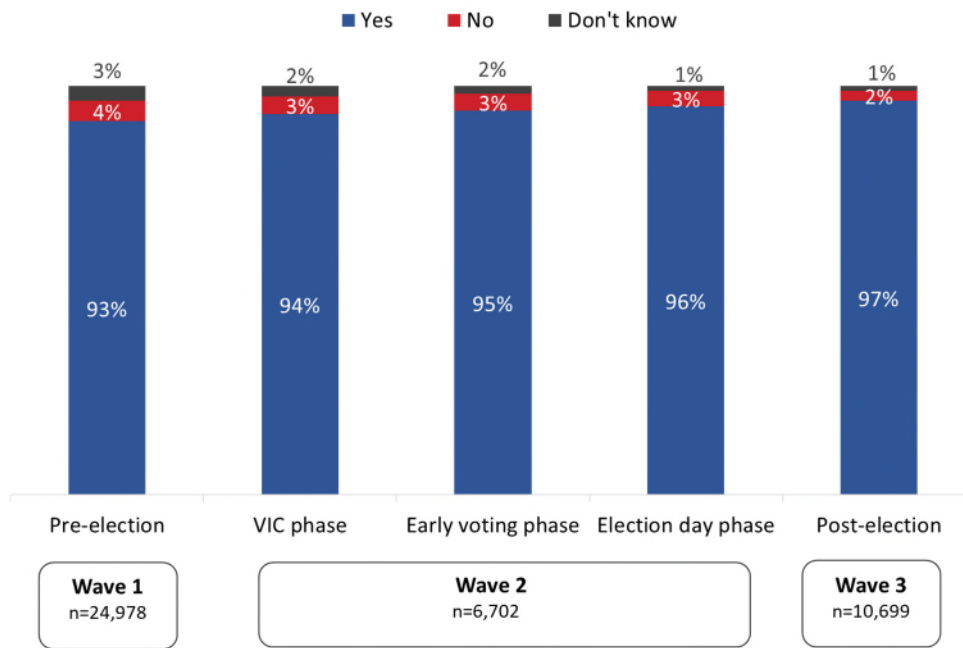
This section of the report presents the findings of two approaches used to measure aided knowledge of identification requirements for voting in a Canadian federal election, conducted using split samples.

Widespread awareness of need to provide a proof of identity and address when asked separately

The first approach used to measure knowledge of voter identification requirements involved asking respondents first whether they need to present proof of identity to vote, and then separately whether they need to present proof of address.

The vast majority (97%) of electors in the post-election survey said they were aware that voters have to present a proof of identity in order to vote in a Canadian federal election. This is the same as the result from the 2015 Survey of Electors (97%). The proportion of electors who were aware of the proof of identity requirement increased over the election period from a baseline of 93% pre-election.

Figure 25: Knowledge of proof of identity requirements [formulation 1]



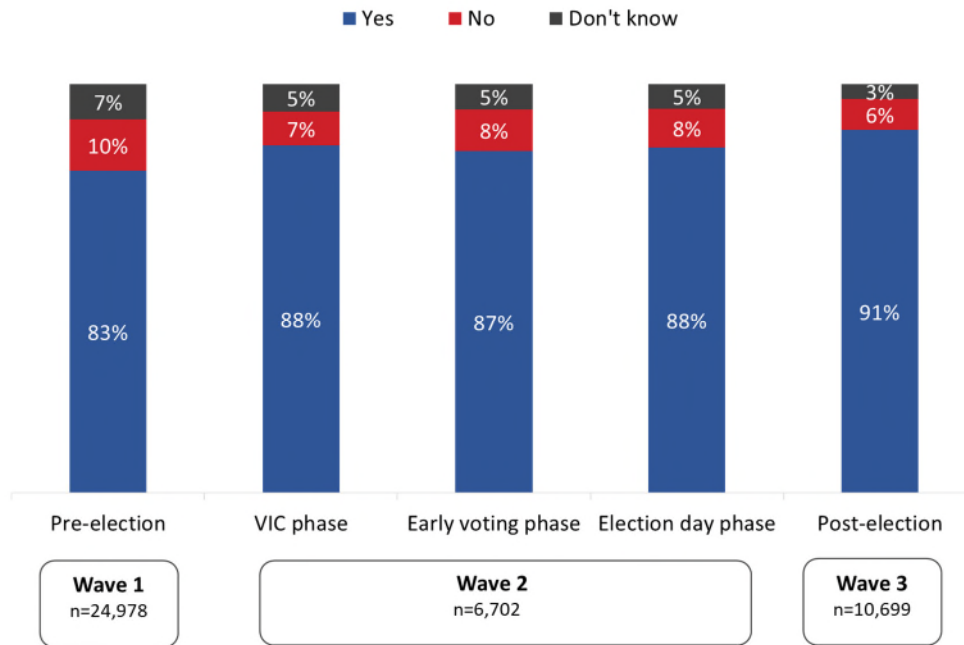
Q. To the best of your knowledge, do voters have to present a proof of identity in order to vote in a Canadian federal election?

Base: split samples of all respondents. [WAVE 1-3]

Among post-election survey respondents, Indigenous electors (95%) were less likely than non-Indigenous electors (97%) to say that electors have to present a proof of identity.

Electors' awareness of the need to provide a proof of address was slightly lower but still very high at 91% in the post-election survey – and a slight increase from the 2015 Survey of Electors (88%). Awareness of the need to provide proof of address in the 2019 GE generally increased throughout the research period, ending 8 percentage points higher than the baseline of 83% from the pre-election survey.

Figure 26: Knowledge of proof of residence [formulation 1]



Q. To the best of your knowledge, do voters have to present a proof of address in order to vote in a Canadian federal election? Base: split samples of all respondents. [WAVE 1-3]

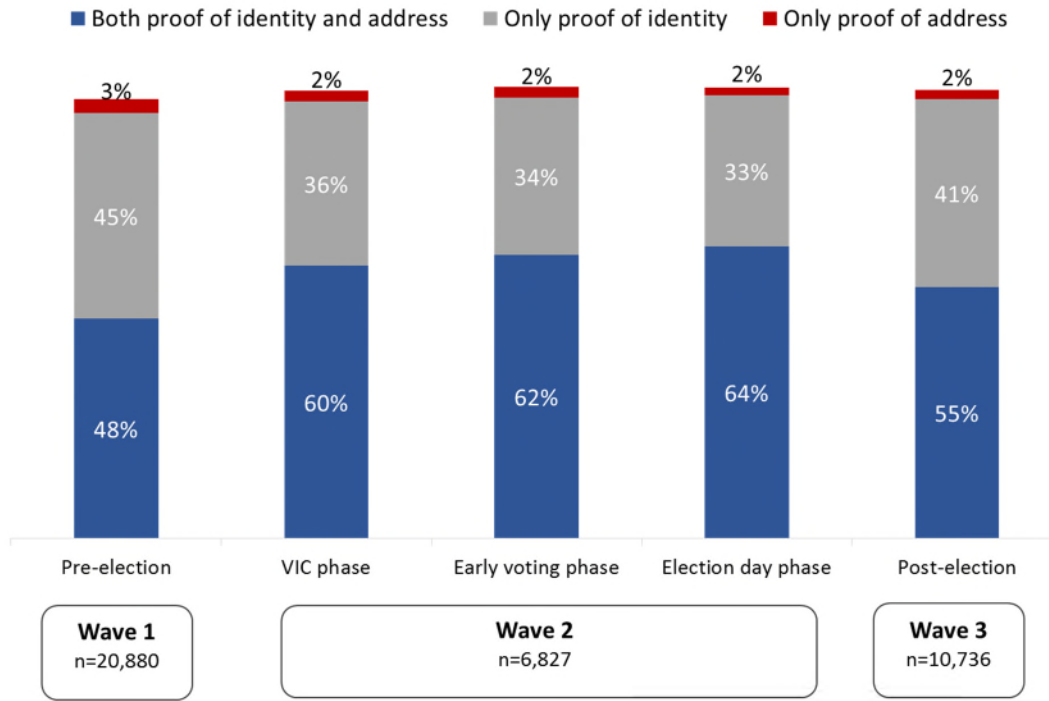
Post-election, Indigenous electors (87% compared to 91% of non-Indigenous electors) and new Canadians (85% compared to 91% of other Canadians) were less likely to report knowing that electors have to present a proof of address in order to vote in a Canadian federal election.

Knowledge of proof of address requirement lower when asked alongside proof of identity

The second approach used to measure knowledge of identification requirements involved asking a single question about whether electors need to provide proof of identity, proof of address, both, or neither in order to vote in a federal election. Compared to the first approach, this resulted in lower overall knowledge of the proof of address requirement in particular: In the post-election survey, just over one-half (55%) correctly responded that both a proof of identity and address are required. Another 41% thought that only a proof of identity was required (meaning 96% in total were aware of at least this requirement). In comparison, only 2% said that only a proof of address was required (meaning only 57% in total were aware of at least this requirement).

The proportion of those who knew both requirements increased from a pre-election baseline of 48% up to 60% during the VIC phase, before peaking at 64% in the election day phase of the election period. As the proportion for “both” increased, the proportion who said only proof of identity decreased (45% pre-election versus 33% in the election day phase). This suggests that awareness of the proof of address requirement in particular increased during the election period.

Figure 27: Knowledge of identification requirement [formulation 2]



Q. In order to vote at a federal election, must electors provide...? [DK/NR: ranged from 1% – 2%.] Base: split samples of all respondents. [WAVE 1-3]

Among post-election survey respondents, the following were more likely to say that both a proof of identity and address are required to vote in a federal election:

- electors with no disability (56% compared to 51% of electors with a severe/very severe disability)
- 18- to 24-year-olds (70% compared to 53% of Canadians aged 25 and older)

12. Knowledge of Voting Methods

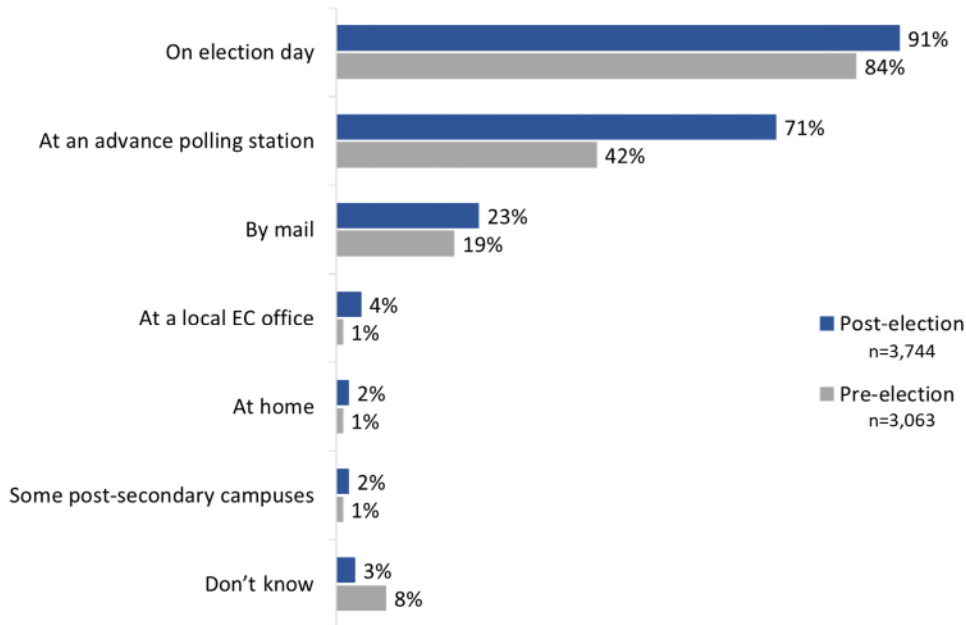
Electors' knowledge of the voting methods available in a federal election was measured in both an unaided and aided manner. The results are presented in this section.

Majorities know unaided that electors can vote at election day and advance polls

In the pre-election and post-election surveys, those who responded by telephone were asked, in an open-ended manner, to identify the current ways that electors can vote in a federal election. Resulting unaided knowledge of the main voting methods was high post-election and increased from the pre-election survey: nine in 10 (91%) post-election respondents said electors can vote in person at a polling station on election day (up from 84% pre-election); 71% mentioned that electors can vote at an advance polling station (up considerably from 42%). Another 23% identified the option to vote by mail (up from 19%).

Compared to results from the 2015 Survey of Electors, there was no change in knowledge of voting on election day (90% in 2015), but there were significant increases in electors' knowledge of the option to vote at an advance poll (64%) and by mail (13%).

Figure 28: Unaided knowledge of different ways to vote



Q. To the best of your knowledge, what are the current ways that electors can vote in a federal election? [Multiple responses accepted.] Base: all respondents. [WAVE 1, WAVE 3]

Among post-election survey respondents, the following were less likely to mention a polling station on election day and advance polls as ways to vote in a federal election:

- electors with a severe or very severe disability (83% mentioned election day polls and 56% advance polls compared to 92% and 73% of electors without a disability, respectively)
- Indigenous electors (81% and 52%, respectively, compared to 91% and 72% of non-Indigenous electors)
- new Canadians (81% and 57%, respectively, compared to 91% and 72% of other Canadians)

Most electors recognized the main early voting options when aided

In the pre-election, election period, and post-election surveys, those who responded online were asked to identify from a list the ways it is possible to vote besides at the polling station on election day. Post-election, nearly all (92%) electors knew it is possible to vote at an advance polling station, followed by 50% who identified voting at a local Elections Canada office and another 39% who identified voting by mail. Aided knowledge of each of these main early voting options increased over the course of the 2019 study, and during the early voting phase of the voter information campaign in particular, where awareness nearly matched post-election levels. These results are largely in line with results from the post-election wave of the 2015 ERP Evaluation, when 91% had knowledge of advance voting, 55% knew about voting at a local Elections Canada office, and 42% knew about voting by mail.

One in ten (10%) post-election respondents thought it was possible to vote online in the federal election, although this decreased from 14% in the pre-election survey. Another 5% thought it was possible to vote by telephone, with little variation across the study. These methods have been offered in some Canadian jurisdictions (provincial, territorial, or municipal elections), but are not available in federal elections.

Figure 29: Aided knowledge of different ways to vote

Ways to vote	Wave 1 n=46,930	Wave 2 n=9,365		Wave 3 n=17,691
	Pre-election	VIC phase	Early voting phase	Post-election
At an advance polling station	84%	89%	91%	92%
At a local EC office	34%	48%	49%	50%
By mail	31%	32%	35%	39%
Online (not available in a federal election)	14%	10%	9%	10%
By phone (not available in a federal election)	6%	5%	4%	5%
None of these ways	3%	1%	1%	1%
Don't know	7%	6%	5%	3%

Q. Besides voting in person at the polling station on election day, is it possible to vote in the following ways? [Multiple responses accepted]

Base: all respondents. [WAVE 1-3]

Among post-election respondents, the notable subgroup differences included:

- Electors with a severe/very severe disability were less likely than those with a mild/moderate disability or no disability to have mentioned advance polls (87% versus 92% and 93%, respectively) and by mail (36% versus 39% of those with no disability or a mild/moderate disability). Conversely, electors with a severe/very severe disability were more likely to have mentioned online as a way in which people can vote (14% versus 12% of electors with a mild/moderate disability and 9% of electors with no disability).
- Indigenous electors were less likely than non-Indigenous electors to have mentioned advance polls (87% versus 93%) and a local Elections Canada office (45% versus 50%).
- New Canadians were more likely than other Canadians to have said it is possible to vote online (14% versus 10%) and less likely than other Canadians to have mentioned advance polls (81% versus 93%).

- 18- to 24-year-olds were more likely than Canadians aged 25 and older to have said electors can vote the following ways: by mail (58% versus 37%), at an Elections Canada office (57% versus 49%), online (12% versus 10%), and by telephone (9% versus 5%).

13. Awareness and Perceptions of Elections Canada

This section presents results on electors’ awareness of and trust in Elections Canada as a source for electoral information during the 2019 GE.

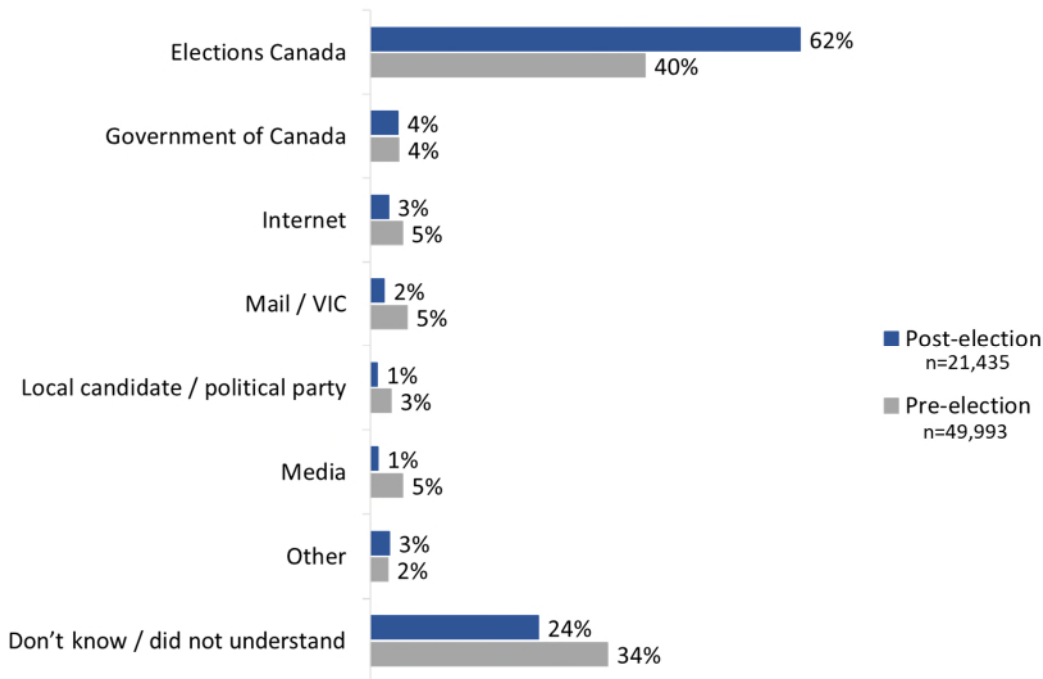
Top-of-mind awareness of EC as a source for electoral information increased during the campaign

When asked in an open-ended manner, approximately six in 10 (62%) post-election respondents identified Elections Canada as the organization that first comes to mind when they think about sources of information on when and where to vote or how to identify themselves at the polls. This represents a significant increase in Elections Canada as the top-of-mind source of electoral information from the pre-election baseline survey, when four in 10 (40%) said Elections Canada first comes to mind. It is also a significant increase from the 45% who first thought of Elections Canada in the post-election wave of the 2015 ERP Evaluation.

Notably, the proportion of electors who did not know or did not have a response to the question in 2019 decreased from a third (34%) down to a quarter (24%) in the post-election survey, which again is an improvement compared to just after the 2015 GE (when 36% did not know).

Other sources were mentioned by smaller proportions of respondents as represented in figure 30.

Figure 30: EC as top-of-mind organization for electoral information



Q. When you think about getting information about when and where to vote, or how to identify yourself at the polls, or any other information on the voting process, who or which organization first comes to mind? Base: all respondents. [WAVE 1, WAVE 3]

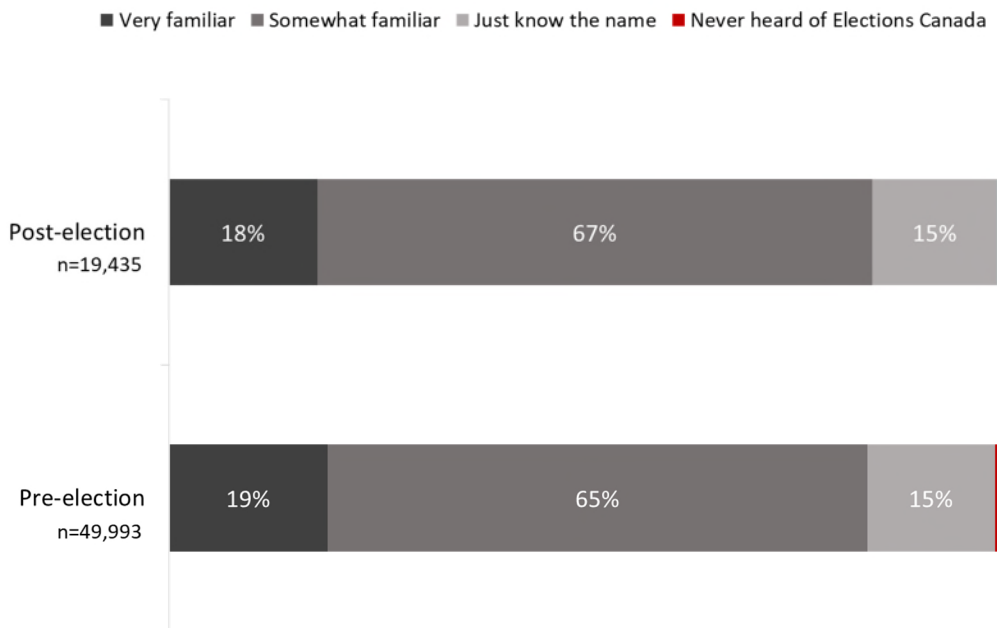
Post-election, top-of-mind recognition of Elections Canada as a source of electoral information was higher among:

- electors with no disability (65%) compared to those with a disability (59% of those with a mild/moderate disability and 48% of those with a severe/very severe disability)
- non-Indigenous electors (63%) compared to Indigenous electors (53%)
- youth attending school or those working full-time (62%) compared to NEET youth (54%)

Most electors are at least somewhat familiar with Elections Canada

The vast majority (85%) of electors in the post-election survey said they were at least somewhat familiar with Elections Canada, of which 18% said they were very familiar. Fifteen percent reported that they were just familiar with the name Elections Canada. Familiarity with Elections Canada remained virtually unchanged between the pre-election baseline survey and the post-election survey, as well as in comparison to the 2015 GE (86% were at least somewhat familiar by the end of the 2015 ERP Evaluation).

Figure 31: Familiarity with EC



Q. Overall, how familiar are you with Elections Canada? Base: all respondents. [WAVE 1, WAVE 3]

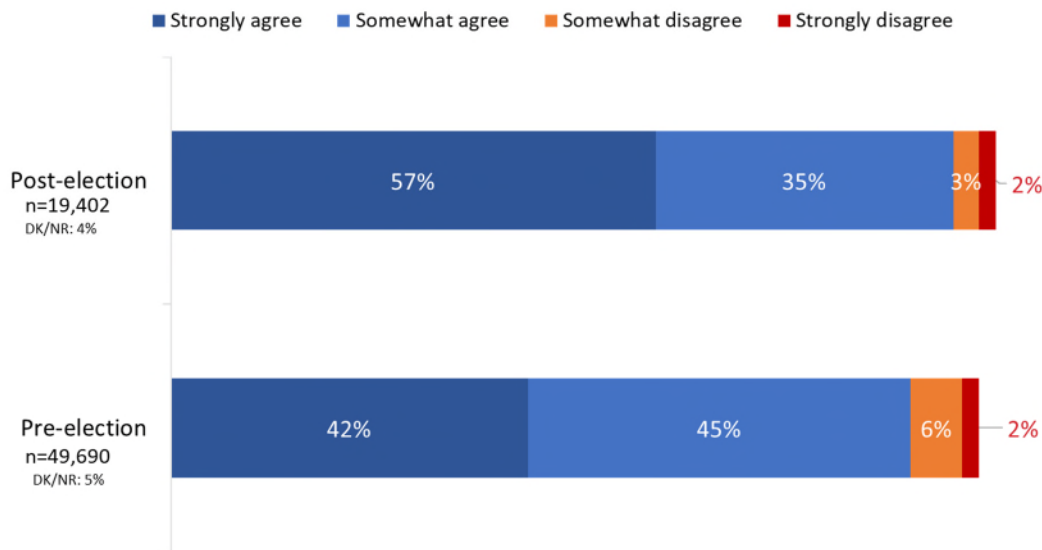
Post-election, the likelihood of being familiar with Elections Canada was higher among:

- electors with no disability (85%) compared to electors with a severe/very severe disability (81%)
- Indigenous electors (88%) compared to non-Indigenous electors (85%)
- 18- to 24-year-olds (87%) compared to Canadians aged 25 and older (84%)
- youth attending school (89%) compared to NEET youth (82%)

Widespread agreement that Elections Canada is the most trusted source of information about the electoral process

Nine in 10 (91%) electors in the post-election survey agreed with the view that Elections Canada is the most trusted source of information about the electoral process, including over half (57%) who strongly agreed. This represents a small increase in the proportion who agreed during the pre-election survey (up from 88%), and a significant increase in those who strongly agreed (up from 42%).¹⁷ Overall, the final results for the 2019 GE are similar to the post-election wave of the 2015 ERP Evaluation (91% agreed, 55% strongly agreed).¹⁸

Figure 32: Trust in EC as a source of information



Q. How strongly do you agree or disagree that Elections Canada is the most trusted source of information about the electoral process?

Base: all respondents. [WAVE 1, WAVE 3]

Post-election, the likelihood of strongly agreeing that Elections Canada is the most trusted source of information about the electoral process was lower among the following:

- electors with a severe/very severe (46%) or mild/moderate (54%) disability compared to those with no disability (59%)
- Indigenous electors (51%) compared to non-Indigenous electors (57%)
- NEET youth (45%) compared to youth attending school (60%) or working full-time (59%)

¹⁷ The results for this question are based on a merger of split samples used to test the impact of using a 4-point scale versus an 11-point (0 to 10) scale to measure the level of agreement: It proved possible to produce comparable distributions between the 4-point and 11-point scale results when scores of 9 to 10 on the 11-point scale represented strongly agree and 5 to 8 represented somewhat agree.

¹⁸ The 2015 ERP Evaluation used a 0 to 10 point scale to measure trust in EC as a source of electoral information. The results were originally reported based on the proportion of responses ranging from 8 to 10 on that scale (resulting in 70% agreed in the post-election survey). The 2015 results for this measure cited in this report do not appear in the original report from 2015: instead, the proportions in this report have been calculated from the original data into a 4-point scale using the method described at footnote 17.

Part 2: Qualitative Findings

This section of the report presents the results from the qualitative research on the Voter Information Campaign.

The results of qualitative research are directional in nature: they provide an indication of participants' views about the issues explored, but they cannot be generalized to the full population of members of the targeted audience segments.

1. Voting Experience and Impressions

Type of poll

With the exception of individuals specifically recruited as 'non-voters' (i.e. one group in Montreal and one in Halifax), nearly all participants said they voted in the most recent federal election. This included all participants specifically recruited as 'voters' (one group in each of Montreal, Halifax, and Vancouver), most individuals in each of the other groups (including both online groups), and all participants in the in-depth interviews.

Most participants who said they voted specified that they did so on election day. The remainder voted at advance polls. Groups tended to include at least one advance voter, and there were several advance voters among the in-depth interview participants. In three groups, however, at least half of the participants said they voted on an advance polling day. These groups included voters in Montreal, youth with post-secondary education in Montreal, and new Canadians in Vancouver.

Perceptions of the voting process

Based on their experience in the most recent federal election, nearly all participants who voted described the process of voting as "easy" or "very easy" or used expressions to that effect (e.g. "simple", "no problems", "straightforward"). Routinely given reasons to explain what made the process easy included:

- familiarity with the voting process (identified mainly by individuals recruited as 'voters')
- the polling place was easily accessible (e.g. close to home, easy to find, available parking)
- the voter information card (VIC) (e.g. the VIC identified their polling place and the hours of operation, having their VIC with them saved time at the polling place)
- the set-up and process at the polling place was well organized. For example:
 - there was clear signage at the polling place (where to enter, where to go)
 - staff was efficient (staff knew what they were doing, participants were greeted at the door and directed to a booth)
 - the polling place was well staffed, so there was little to no waiting or no line-ups
 - the voting booths were organized alphabetically
 - the actual voting process was clearly explained

Relatively few participants who voted identified a difficulty with the process; those who did sometimes qualified the difficulty as minor or small. Participants who identified a difficulty or some degree of difficulty with the voting process most often pointed to the inconvenience of long lines at the polling place or having to wait a while to vote. Participants occasionally attributed this to lack of organization or limited

staff at their polling place, but it was most often attributed to the number of people showing up to vote at approximately the same time.

Beyond this, the only difficulties identified with any frequency related to the VIC. Examples included:

- not receiving one's VIC and therefore not knowing where to vote
- not receiving one's VIC and having to register at the polling place
- the VIC being sent to an old address (identified by some students)

Difficulties identified infrequently or by individual participants included:

- difficulty finding the polling place
- lack of organization or direction at the polling place
- insufficient personnel or staff at the polling place
- polling place not opening on time

Reasons for voting in advance polls

Participants who voted on an advance polling day most often said that they had done so for convenience, usually to avoid potential delays or waiting times on voting day—but sometimes, in their words, “just to get it done.” Some explained that they had voted in advance because they would not be able to vote on the official election date. Specific reasons for not being able to vote on election day included working, being out of town, and having a surgery scheduled for election day. Finally, a few participants who voted on an advance polling day said that they had not planned to do so but noticed an advance polling place and decided to take the opportunity to cast their vote.

Reasons for not voting

Participants who did not vote in the federal election tended to regard the voting process as easy. No one identified the difficulty of the process as a reason for not voting, or as playing any role in their decision to not vote.

Reasons for not voting in the most recent federal election tended to fall into one of two categories: inability to vote due to everyday life reasons and decisions not to vote due to political reasons. Everyday life reasons included working or being at work, being in the process of moving, and being out of the country. Political reasons included cynicism about politics, inability to decide who to vote for, and lack of interest in politics. Other self-ascribed reasons for not voting included laziness, lack of motivation, and voting not being a priority.

Information sought about where, when, and the ways to vote

One or more participants in most groups, as well as a few participants in the in-depth interviews, said that they had looked for some information about where, when, and the ways to vote. Participants most likely to say that they had looked for information included: new Canadians in Toronto, Montreal, and Vancouver; youth with post-secondary education in Montreal; and participants with a mobility limitation (online group). Only in two groups did none of the participants say that they had looked for information: non-voters in Halifax; and youth not in education, employment, or training in Winnipeg.

Routinely sought types of information included: information about voting locations and voting hours, information about acceptable pieces of identification or ID requirements, and information about early voting options. Some participants with a mobility limitation (online group) were looking specifically for accessibility-related information (location of access doors in polling places, wheelchair accessibility, and parking).

Other types of information sought included how to register or verify whether one was registered to vote, how to update address information, whether one must have one's VIC to vote, about voting by mail, and the name of one's electoral district. Some participants in the online focus groups and in the in-depth interviews sought information about specific candidates, but not about how, where, or when to vote.

To the extent that there was any pattern or consistency as to when participants sought the information they wanted or needed, it tended to revolve around the VIC. More specifically, a number of participants said that they had looked for information in one of the following situations:

- *When they received their VIC:* Some participants looked for information when they received their VIC, knowing that the information they wanted would be there. This included information about where to vote (polling places), when to vote (opening and closing times of polling places), accessibility, and advance polling dates.
- *When they did **not** receive their VIC:* Some participants said that they looked for information once they realized that they had not received their VIC. This included the kind of information identified in the previous bullet, but also information about ID requirements for voting, whether one could vote without a VIC, whether one was registered to vote, and how to register a new address.
- *When they had misplaced their VIC:* Some participants said they looked for information when they had misplaced or could not locate their VIC after receiving it in the mail. This was information available on the VIC that they wanted to remind themselves about, usually the location of their polling place and advance polling dates.

Beyond this, participants tended to specify timeframes in relation to election day to explain when they had looked for information (e.g. a few weeks before the election, a few days before the election, on election day). Some participants could not recall or specify when they had looked for the information they wanted.

Sources of information

Participants had routinely sought information they wanted or needed on their VIC, on Elections Canada's website, or through a Google search. As noted above, some participants had wanted information that they knew was available on their VIC. As a result, they waited until they received their VIC rather than actively seeking out the information in question.

Some used the Elections Canada website to find out whether they were registered to vote, how to register a change of address, and what pieces of ID were acceptable. Others used Google and Google Maps to find information about their polling place (e.g. distance, directions, parking, accessibility). Some said that they had found the information they wanted in the Elections Canada *Guide to the federal election* booklet, and a few said that they had sought information through social media (for example, by asking friends or acquaintances). Nearly all said that they were able to get the information they wanted.

2. Media Consumption

Sources of information about politics and current events

Participants collectively identified various sources they typically use to get information about current events and politics. Routinely identified sources included:

- Conventional news media/sources: long-standing or well established news providers. This includes television and online news networks and channels, such as CBC/Radio Canada, Global News, CTV, TVA, Bloomberg, as well as digital or hard-copy newspapers such as the *Globe and Mail*, the *National Post*, and *La Presse*. Participants who typically use such sources said they do so out of habit, because they are trusted news sources, and because online/digital versions of these sources are available 24/7.
- News aggregators: news sources that bring together news stories from other sources, such as MSN, Apple News, and Google News. Participants who typically use such news aggregators explained that they tend to use them because they provide news from multiple sources and provide good coverage.
- Social media: Many participants, particularly youth, said they access news through social media, mainly out of convenience (e.g. there is quick and easy access, no need to search for news stories, or information is tailored to their interests). Some said they like it because they can see what is trending or what people are talking about, and then pursue the topic or issue if it interests them.
- Radio: A number of participants, primarily older individuals, said they often get news over the radio either out of habit or because they are often in their vehicles.

Some said they prefer local sources for their news (e.g. CP24 in Toronto) because they are primarily interested in local news, while a few said that they follow 'alternative' news outlets explaining that they do not trust 'conventional' media sources because of the latter's biases.

Likelihood of noticing ads

Participants identified various places where they are most likely to notice ads, but the most frequently identified one was social media. Indeed, many participants in most groups identified social media as the place or one of the places where they are most likely to notice ads. At least a few participants in most groups identified other places that they are most likely to notice ads. These include television, radio, and outdoors (billboards, bus shelters, or public transit). Participants were least likely to identify newspapers and magazines as places where they are most likely to notice ads.

Awareness of Elections Canada on social media

Only a few participants said that they follow Elections Canada on social media. Indeed, most participants said that they were unaware that Elections Canada provides news and information on voting and employment opportunities through social media. Those who do follow Elections Canada on social media said that they do so for potential updates related to elections and also for potential employment opportunities. A few followed Elections Canada social media accounts only during the election period and unfollowed the accounts afterward.

There was limited interest among most participants in following Elections Canada on social media, mainly because they saw no need to do so. Participants routinely explained that elections usually take place every four years and that this would be the only time they might interact with Elections Canada (something they could do through the agency's website if they needed to). Those who did express some interest said that they would do so in the lead-up to an election, to receive any updates related to elections, and to see about any employment opportunities, including employment opportunities during elections.

3. Review of the Voter Information Campaign Materials

This section reports on participant feedback related to ads that were part of a national multimedia information campaign conducted by Elections Canada during the recent federal election to provide Canadians information on when, where, and the ways to register and vote. The ads appeared on television, radio, in print, on social media, and as banner ads on the Internet.

3.1: Overview

A) Procedure for reviewing ads

Participants reviewed ads from each of the four phases of the campaign. Each phase focused on a specific theme: registration, the VIC, early voting options, and election day. Participants reviewed three ads from each phase of the campaign, for a total of 12 ads.¹⁹ After the presentation of each set of ads, participants were asked specific questions. The process was then repeated for each successive set of ads.

The ads that were presented to participants ran in various media, including television, radio, print, social media, and the web. The table below identifies the media of ads participants reviewed for each of the four phases of the campaign:

Information Campaign Phase	TV	Radio	Print	Social media (animated)	Social media (static)	Web (banner)
Registration	X			X	X	
VIC		X	X			
Early voting	X		X		X	X
Election day		X		X		X

B) Presentation of findings

Feedback from participants is presented under two main headings below: assessment of ads by medium, where the feedback relates primarily to the vehicle for the ad (television, radio, print, social media, or web); and assessment of ads by phase, which includes the perceived main message of the ads, the perceived target audience, and action taken or that could be taken as a result of exposure to the ads.

3.2: Assessment of Ads by Medium

Overall, participants were most likely to react positively to television and radio ads, which were routinely identifying them as the ads they liked most in the phases of the information campaign they appeared in (registration and early voting phases in the case of television ads; VIC and election day phases in the case of radio ads).

For the social media ads, the animated versions tended to elicit distinct and opposing (positive versus negative) reactions, while the static versions tended to elicit reactions ranging from neutral to mildly negative. Banner ads elicited mixed reactions (ranging from positive, to neutral, to negative). Print ads

¹⁹ Ads were presented to participants in the in-person focus groups on a monitor. Participants in the online focus groups and in-depth telephone interviews accessed the ads on their computers through a link.

tended to elicit reactions ranging from neutral to negative, though reaction to the information content tended to be positive.

A) Television ads

Participants were shown two television ads, one dealing with registration and the other dealing with early voting options. The ads were actor-based and accompanied by a voiceover and mainly acoustic background music. The target audience for these ads were the general population of electors, including Indigenous electors and members of ethnic communities.

At least a few participants in nearly every group and some in-depth interview participants said that they recalled seeing one of the TV ads during the election period. Nearly everyone who recalled seeing one of the ads also recalled watching it in its entirety at least the first time they saw it.

Key finding:

- The stories of the TV ads made them relatable and easy to understand. The pre-registration TV ad was considered more effective than the early voting TV ad, in that the story and its message were more immediately clear.

A.1: Overall impressions

Participants across all groups and all in-depth interview participants tended to react positively to the television ads, and participants frequently ranked them as their favourite ads in the registration and early voting phases of the campaign. As part of their overall impressions, participants routinely described the television ads as clear and easy to understand, though this was more likely to be the case for the registration version than for the early voting version.

A.2: Perceived strengths and weaknesses

Routinely identified strengths or positive features of the television ads included:

- the ads were story-like or had a narrative flow
- the ads depicted real people, making them easy to relate to
- the style of presentation was upbeat or positive
- the background music was pleasant or catchy
- the voiceover was good or the announcer's voice was clear and easy to follow
- the ads depicted or showed the diversity of Canada's population (though a few new Canadians in Montreal felt that this was more evident in the early voting version than in the registration version)
- the ads depicted and targeted young people
- the message was clear, simple, and to the point

Some said that they liked the television ads because they found it easier to understand ads that combined visual depictions and audio commentary (a voiceover). Others said that they liked the television ads because they personally preferred explanations or messages accompanied by visual depictions.

Negative feedback on the television ads was relatively limited and tended to focus on the early voting version, which was sometimes described as confusing or unclear. Specifically, it was noted that understanding the ad required a moment's reflection: it was not immediately clear that the various

scenarios (someone in an airport, a medical professional, someone renovating their home) depicted being away from home or being too busy to vote on election day, until that was expressed through the voiceover. There was a sense that someone who is not focused completely on the ad from beginning to end could be momentarily confused about its meaning (wondering, for example, whether it was a travel ad, a medical ad, or an ad about home renovation). For this reason, a few new Canadians in Montreal identified the early voting television ad as the one they liked least among the ads for this phase of the campaign.²⁰ Some Indigenous participants in Winnipeg felt that the voiceover in the television ads was delivered too quickly.

B) Radio ads

Participants heard two radio ads, one dealing with the VIC and the other dealing with election day. The ads included female and male voiceovers accompanied by background music in the same style as the TV ads. The target audience for these radio ads were the general population of electors, including Indigenous electors and members of ethnic communities.

At least a few participants in most groups and some in-depth interview participants said that they recalled hearing one of the radio ads during the election period. Among new Canadians in Toronto, a few said that they recalled hearing a radio ad in Hindi or Punjabi.

Key finding:

- The radio ads were clear and easy to understand, mainly as a result of captivating voiceovers that delivered short, to-the-point messages.

B.1: Overall impressions

Participants across all groups reacted positively to the radio ads. As was the case with the TV ads, the radio versions were frequently ranked as participants' favourite ads in the VIC and election day phases of the campaign. As part of their overall impressions, participants were nearly unanimous in describing the radio ads as clear and easy to understand. Indeed, some of the strengths participants associated with these ads were features that helped facilitate understanding.

B.2: Perceived strengths and weaknesses

Routinely identified strengths or positive features of the radio ads included:

- the message was short, clear, and to the point or concise
- the announcers' voices were very good (described as "clear," "pleasant," "calm," "soothing and "positive"). As a result, the ads were captivating (they attracted and held attention), and easy to understand
- the female and male voices complemented one another well
- the background music was attractive or pleasant

Other strengths included the impression that the pacing of the ads was not too slow or too fast, the impression that the background music and the announcer's voice complemented one another, and the fact that the election day version specified that voters could register at the polling place on the day of the

²⁰ This was the only group in which any participants identified a television ad as the one they liked least.

election, seen by some as important information. Some participants said that they liked or preferred the radio ads because they were habitual radio listeners.

Negative feedback on the radio ads was limited and tended to focus on the announcers' voices. Specifically, some Indigenous participants in Winnipeg described the announcers' voices as too monotone, while a few youth participants in Vancouver described the announcers' voices as stereotypical (for example, similar to voiceovers in pharmaceutical ads), rendering the ads boring or not memorable. A few Indigenous participants in Winnipeg also described the pace of the radio ads as too quick. Beyond this, the only criticism was that the election day version of the ad did not mention the need to bring appropriate identification when voting.

C) Social media ads

Participants were shown four social media ads (two animated and two static). The animated ads included graphic icons on bright colour backgrounds with upbeat background music, and dealt with the registration and election day phases of the campaign. The static ads were of a design similar to the TV and print ads, using photos and information in text format. One static ad dealt with the registration phase and the other dealt with the early voting phase. The social media ads reviewed by participants targeted the following audiences: the general population, youth, Indigenous electors, new Canadians, and recent movers; the animated versions in particular targeted younger electors.

At least a few participants in most groups and in-depth interview participants recalled seeing one of the ads related to the registration and early voting phases, but few recalled seeing the election day social media ad.

Key finding:

- The style of the animated social media ads made them attention-grabbing and appealing to younger voters. The static social media ads provided clear but limited information, and were not generally viewed as memorable.

C.1: Overall impressions

The animated social media ads usually elicited distinct and opposing (positive versus negative) reactions. A number of participants ranked the animated social media version as their favourite ad in the registration or election day phases of the campaign, while others ranked it as the ad they liked least in these phases of the campaign. Participants often suggested that the ads appeared to be designed for a younger audience /millennials. While many indicated that this was a positive feature, some described the approach as too faddish in its attempt to appeal to youth. That said, most youth participants said that the ads resonated with them. Otherwise, most participants described the animated social media ads as clear and easy to understand, although some felt that they included features that interfered with understanding.

The static social media ads elicited more lukewarm responses from participants, with impressions tending to range from neutral/indifferent to mildly negative. A number of participants suggested that they would be unlikely to notice these ads if they came across them, because there was nothing attention-grabbing or memorable in them. That said, the ads were routinely described as clear and easy to understand. Participants were more likely to identify one of the static social media ads as the one they liked least rather than the one they liked most.

C.2: Perceived strengths and weaknesses

Routinely identified strengths or positive features of the animated social media ads included:

- they were attention-grabbing, captivating and, as a result, memorable
- they attempted to target youth/younger voters
- the background music and colours complemented one another well and gave a positive or upbeat dimension to the message
- the colours or colour combinations were vivid/attractive
- the ads were short/quick but informative (particularly the election day ad)

A few participants with hearing problems said that they liked the animated ads because the information was provided through a script (visually as opposed to by audio).

Underlying most negative criticism of the animated ads was an impression that they were too animated. Apart from the youth category, participants across groups often described the animated ads in the following ways:

- They were too “in your face.”
- The music was too booming.
- They were too noisy.
- The approach was too jarring.
- The pace was too fast (especially in the election day ad).

Some added that these stylistic features (vivid colours, fast pace, background music) distracted from the main point, which was to inform them about the election.

Beyond this, negative criticism of the animated social media ads was relatively limited. Some participants said that these ads did not resonate with them because they were impersonal (as there were no people in them), while others said that they lacked a narrative or story-like dimension. A few youth participants criticized the registration version of the ad as being too long.

As noted above, the static social media ads elicited more lukewarm reactions from participants, with feedback tending to be more negative than positive. Perceived strengths or things participants liked about them included the impression that they were simple, straightforward, and clear, and that the colour combination in the early voting version was attractive and attention-grabbing. Some also liked the inclusion of the ‘learn more’ button in the registration version.

Negative reactions to the static versions included the impression that the information provided was limited or insufficient, that they were not memorable or attention-grabbing, and that the pictures were not particularly relevant (especially in the early voting version).

D) Web banner ads

Participants were shown two web banner ads, one dealing with the VIC and the other dealing with election day. The banner ad for the VIC phase of the campaign was a multi-frame ad (including eight successive frames), while the election day version was a static ad. The ads targeted the general population of electors, including youth, Indigenous electors, new Canadians, and recent movers.

Recall of either of these ads was limited, with some participants adding that they would be unlikely to notice or pay attention to them if they did appear on their computer screen.

Key finding:

- The web banner ads were clear and easy to understand, and the animated VIC version was described as including detailed and important information, but neither this version nor the static election day version of the banner ads was considered attention-grabbing.

D.1: Overall impressions

Neither the animated VIC version nor the static election day version of the banner ads tended to resonate strongly with participants. They typically elicited mixed reactions ranging from positive, to neutral, to negative. Participants were more likely to react positively to the animated VIC version than to the static election day version, but both versions were routinely described as clear and easy to understand. Some added that, while the information in the election day ad was clear and easy to understand, it was also quite limited. The multi-frame ad was as likely to be identified as the most-liked or least-liked ad in the VIC phase of the campaign. No one identified the single-frame banner ad as their favourite in the election day phase of the campaign, though some identified it as their least liked version.

D.2: Perceived strengths and weaknesses

Routinely identified strengths of the VIC banner ad included:

- it provided detailed and important information
- the large font size and contrast between text and background made the information easy to read
- the frames changed at a good pace, giving time to read and process the information
- the information was provided in a logical, sequential way that was easy to follow
- the ad included an image of the VIC
- the final frame included contact information (phone number and website)

The most frequent negative criticisms of the VIC version were that it moved too slowly, was too long, or contained too many frames. As a result, it did not retain the viewer's attention. Some described the slow-moving frames as a distracting or annoying feature rather than an attention-grabbing or attention-retaining one. Some also criticized the overall look or design of the ad, describing it as having an "unprofessional" or "unofficial" look and feel. Finally, some participants provided mixed reactions, observing that they liked the information in the ad but were neutral or indifferent to the style or design.

Feedback on the election day version of the banner ad was relatively limited, with many reacting indifferently or neutrally to it. Positive feedback focused on its simplicity (for example, that it served as a good basic reminder) and a few said that they liked the colour combination. Many more, however, reacted negatively to the colour or colour combination, especially the black background, which was described by some as ugly ("moche" in French). Others said that, beyond serving as a reminder of the election date, the ad provided no real information or call to action.

E) Print ads

Participants were shown two print ads, one dealing with the VIC and the other dealing with early voting. The ads included images of actors similar to the visuals found in the TV and static social media ads. The ads targeted an older demographic within the general population of electors and including Indigenous electors and members of ethnic communities.

Very few participants recalled seeing either of the print ads.

Key finding:

- The print ads tested well in terms of content: they were clear and easy to understand and, especially in the case of the early voting version, provided important details. On the other hand, the ads were viewed as boring or unattractive in terms of presentation.

E.1: Overall impressions

Overall, print ads tended to elicit reactions ranging from neutral to negative, though reaction to the information they provided tended to be positive, with participants routinely describing it as clear and easy to understand. Despite positive reactions to the content, participants across most groups identified one of the print ads as the one they liked least in the early voting and/or VIC phases of the campaign, while only a few identified either as their favourite. Neutral or indifferent reaction was sometimes linked to participants saying that they do not habitually engage with print media; so, such ads would be unlikely to resonate with them. In particular, some young people who participated in the focus groups mentioned that they rarely or never engage with print media.

E.2: Perceived strengths and weaknesses

The most frequently identified strength or positive features of the print ads were the details provided and the information's clarity. For example, perceived strengths of the early voting print ad included identification of specific options for voting before election day and specific dates for advance polls. Some participants who described themselves as newspaper readers also said that they liked the ads because they could re-read the information and save it for future reference if necessary.

Other perceived strengths or positive features included:

- the contact information included in the early voting ad
- the on-page layout or display of information made it easy to read
- the individual portrayed in the VIC version (assumed to be an Indigenous woman)

Routinely identified weaknesses or criticisms of the print ads included:

- the black and white style/design was bland, boring, drab, or unattractive
- there was no contact information in the VIC version
- the font size in the VIC version was too small and the text was too cramped
- the picture in the early voting version was meaningless or irrelevant (some added that it was a single frame copied and pasted from the TV version)
- the mailbox depicted in the VIC version was outdated

3.3: Assessment of Ads by Phase

As noted above, some feedback elicited from participants can be more appropriately linked to the ad phase than the specific medium.

Overall, participants had no difficulty identifying a main message or perceived target audience for the ads in the various phases of the ad campaign, suggesting that both were relatively straightforward or even self-evident. Perhaps not surprisingly, there was often overlap of perceived messages and target audiences across phases of the campaign. While few participants took any action in response to the ads they had seen or heard, they had no difficulty identifying types of action that someone could take as a result of seeing or hearing an ad from a particular phase of the campaign.

A) Registration

A.1: Perceived message

Participants routinely suggested that the main message in the set of ads from the registration period focused on the importance of being registered to vote, including variations on the following:

- Make sure you are registered to vote/check your registration information.
- Make sure your personal information is up to date.
- Voting is important, so make sure you can do so.

According to some participants, the main message in this set of ads was a reminder to vote or exercise their right to vote, while a few others suggested that the main message was that voting is easy.

A.2: Perceived target audience

Participants across all audiences regularly identified the target audience for this set of ads as one or more of the following: first-time voters, young voters, new Canadians, and Canadians who had recently turned 18. One additional group identified less often but still relatively frequently was people who had recently moved. The only other perceived target audience identified with any frequency was everyone or voters in general. Some suggested that the target audience was people uncertain about whether they would vote.

A.3: Action taken/potential action

Only a few participants said that they had personally taken any action as a result of seeing an ad during this phase of the campaign. This included checking the information on one's VIC, checking to see whether one was registered to vote, checking to see how to register, and looking for general information on voting. When it came to action that could be taken as a result of these ads, the following were identified:

- contacting Elections Canada to see whether one was registered or to confirm their registration
- contacting Elections Canada to register
- making sure one's information was updated, especially if one had recently moved
- reminding friends or relatives who had recently moved to check whether they were registered or whether their information was up to date
- reminding one's children studying out of town to check whether they were registered or whether their information was up to date

Most participants did not take any action as a result of seeing an ad, because they did not need to or already had the information.

B) Voter information card

B.1: Perceived message

Participants consistently suggested that the main message in the set of ads related to the VIC focused on the significance of the card, with specific messages routinely including:

- Be on the lookout for your VIC, or make sure you receive it.
- Verify the information on your VIC when you receive it.
- Make sure that the information on your VIC is correct or up to date.
- Contact Elections Canada if you do not receive a VIC or if the information on it is incorrect.

B.2: Perceived target audience

While participants most often suggested that the ads in this phase of the campaign targeted everyone or all voters, it was also routinely suggested across all groups and by in-depth interview participants that the ads targeted or were particularly important to first-time voters, young voters, new Canadians, and people who had recently moved.

B.3: Action taken/potential action

Only a few participants said that they had personally taken any action as a result of seeing or hearing an ad during this phase of the campaign. This included being on the lookout for their VIC and checking the information on their VIC. A number of participants with voting experience indicated that they were attentive to the receipt of their VIC or that they checked the information on it when they received it. This is something they did habitually during elections and not as a result of seeing or hearing an ad.

When it came to actions that could be taken as a result of these ads, the most frequently identified was to check the personal information on one's VIC to make sure that it was correct and to have it corrected if necessary.²¹ Other types of action frequently identified included being on the lookout for one's VIC, verifying the polling place location, and contacting Elections Canada if one did not receive a VIC.

C) Early voting options

C.1: Perceived message

Participants routinely suggested that the main message in this set of ads was the availability of early voting options (that is, before election day). Variations on this theme included:

- You can vote before election day.
- There is no excuse not to vote.
- Everyone has the opportunity to vote.
- Make sure you vote.

²¹ It was noted that it is not clear what course of action to pursue if the VIC includes incorrect information because one does not need one's VIC in order to vote.

A few participants suggested that the main message was a reminder to make a plan to vote early if one could not vote on election day.

C.2: Perceived target audience

Participants across all audiences regularly identified the target audience for this set of ads as one or more of the following:

- people with busy lifestyles or schedules
- people who do not work regular hours or 9 to 5
- people unable to vote on election day
- people who would be out of town on election day

Some felt that the ads during this phase targeted all potential voters, and some also identified people who travel a lot and people who work in the medical profession as targeted by these ads.²²

C.3: Action taken/potential action

Only a few participants said that they had personally taken any action as a result of seeing or hearing an ad during this phase of the campaign. These individuals confirmed the dates and locations for early voting. When it came to action that could be taken as a result of these ads, participants identified: planning ahead to make sure one can vote if one cannot do so on election day; checking one's schedule or making a plan to make sure one can vote on election day or before; and checking the dates, times, and locations of advance polls.

²² The TV version of the ad specifically depicted people from both these groups.

D) Election day

D.1: Perceived message

Participants suggested that the main messages in this set of ads were to remind people of the date of the election and/or to remind them to vote. A few suggested that the main message was a call to be organized so as to be able to vote on election day.

D.2: Perceived target audience

There was virtual unanimity that the target audience for this set of ads was everyone (all eligible voters). A few suggested that the ads targeted young voters because voter turnout among younger people tends to be lower.

D.3: Action taken/potential action

No one took any action as a result of seeing or hearing any of these ads. Actions that could be taken included noting the election date, reminding others (e.g. friends) of the date, making a plan to vote, and actually voting.

4. Perceptions of Elections Canada Guide

This section reports on participants' impressions of Election Canada's *Guide to the federal election* booklet. Participants were asked to read the guide, and then asked for their impressions of it.

Recall of having received the guide by mail during the election period

Recall of having received the guide in the mail was uneven, though in most focus groups fewer than half recalled receiving it. Groups in which half or more of the participants recalled receiving it included non-voters in Halifax, participants with a visual impairment in Toronto, and voters in Montreal. On the other hand, groups in which none of the participants recalled receiving it included voters in Halifax; youth with post-secondary education in Montreal; and Indigenous participants and youth not in education, employment, or training in Winnipeg. Most voters in Vancouver, as well as several of the in-depth interview participants, were unsure whether they had received it.

Participants who recalled receiving the guide said that they either read it, scanned it, or ignored it or put it in recycling. Some who did the latter explained that they are habitual or experienced voters and did not need any information on voting. When probed, a number of participants who said they did not recall receiving the guide admitted the possibility that they did receive it but may have consigned it immediately to recycling.

Impressions of the guide

While recollection of having received the guide was uneven, overall impressions of the guide tended to be positive or very positive, and those who were not positive were neutral rather than negative. Participants across all groups described the guide using terms such as "comprehensive," "informative," "detailed," "attention-grabbing," and "useful." Asked what they liked most about the guide, participants tended to identify the following characteristics:

- It was clear.
- It was concise or short.
- The information was useful or necessary, and provided answers to important questions.
- The information was well organized.
- The use of bulleted text and headings made it easy to read or follow.
- The voter's checklist included in the booklet was useful.

They also said that they liked the following features:

- the options to prove identity and address
- the picture of the VIC
- the inclusion of accessibility information
- the use of graphics and the balance between graphics and text
- the inclusion of phone numbers (including TTY) and website address
- the use or combination of colours

The font size and use of bolded text were identified by many as positive features but mainly by participants with a visual impairment, who emphasized that this made the guide easier to read. Some new Canadians said that they liked the cover of the booklet because it showed the diversity of the Canadian population.

Negative feedback on the guide was relatively limited; it came primarily from youth participants and tended to focus on the cover page and the amount of text or the length of the booklet. Youth participants, particularly in Montreal and Winnipeg, tended to perceive the cover page as “dated” and “drab” in terms of style, with a few also observing that there was too much white space on the cover page. Some youth participants also differed from most other participants in viewing the booklet as text-heavy or too long.

Perceived target audience

When asked who they thought the guide was designed for (the target audience), participants most often identified everyone or all Canadian voters, followed by new or first-time voters, youth and young voters, and new Canadians. Other perceived target audiences were identified infrequently: seniors, people who do not watch television, persons with a disability or accessibility issues, people with attention deficit disorder, people who do not vote, and people who think voting is difficult.

Missing information

There was near-unanimity that the guide included all the information someone would need in order to vote. Only a small number of participants suggested gaps in the information, such as:

- where to look for the location of one’s polling place
- deadlines, such as for voting by mail
- the main political parties in Canada
- where or how to check whether one’s address is up to date in Elections Canada’s records
- the complete URL address for Elections Canada
- versions of the guide in different languages

Indigenous participants in Winnipeg perceived a lack of availability of the guide in other languages. When asked specifically whether they knew that the guide was in fact available in other languages, none of the new Canadians or Indigenous participants said that they were aware of this. Only a couple of participants from the Toronto focus group of people with a visual impairment were aware that the guide was available in alternative formats such as braille, DAISY, and large print.

5. Overall Assessments of the Information Campaign

This section reports on participants' overall impressions of the information campaign.

Reactions to the information campaign by research audience

Overall impressions of the information campaign tended to be similar across audiences. To the extent that there were differences by audience, these tended to relate to how relevant participants thought the campaign was to themselves. Specifically:

- Youth participants emphasized the relevance of the campaign to themselves personally as speaking to their life circumstances (for example, they were new voters, not registered or not certain about being registered, and they tend to move periodically). They also felt that the campaign targeted their demographic through the depiction of young people in the ads, and by designing the animated social media ads to appeal to a younger audience. On the critical side, some youth commented generally that the visuals used in the campaign seemed a bit dated.
- New Canadians also emphasized the personal relevance of the campaign as speaking to their life circumstances (that is, they tend to be new voters, and not registered or uncertain about being registered), with some noting that the information made the voting process less intimidating for them. Members of this audience also saw themselves reflected in the ads through the depiction of the ethnically diverse character of the country. On the critical side, some new Canadians mentioned that some ads did not appear in different languages.
- Indigenous participants in Winnipeg were most likely to see the campaign as not relevant to them, citing an impression that the ads targeted middle-class Canadians.
- The groups of voters and non-voters were less likely to emphasize the relevance of the campaign to themselves personally. Some noted that the information was a good reminder of things voters need to keep in mind, but not as relevant to them (because, for example, they were not first-time voters, they had not moved recently, or they are not busy professionals). On the critical side, it was noted that the ads tended to focus on younger urban dwellers, as opposed to seniors and rural residents.

Overall impressions of the information campaign

Overall impressions of the information campaign were positive and sometimes very positive across all groups, with participants routinely describing it as a good effort, comprehensive, inclusive, well thought out, and informative. Asked more specifically what they liked about the campaign, participants identified the following:

- The information provided was important and answered specific questions voters might have.
- The information was provided clearly and concisely.
- The campaign covered the important or key media (television, print, radio, social media, and Internet).
- The campaign covered the key aspects and issues of the electoral process (registration, VIC, early voting, election day).
- The campaign raised awareness and was a good reminder of things voters needed to keep in mind about voting.
- The overall look and feel of the campaign was appealing (positive, upbeat) and attention-grabbing.

- The voiceovers included both male and female voices.
- The campaign was sensitive to the cultural diversity of Canada.
- The campaign targeted youth.
- The campaign made the voting process and experience less intimidating (mentioned specifically by new Canadians in Vancouver).

A few in-depth interview participants liked the overall campaign on the grounds that the variation and frequency of ads made it impossible for Canadians to not know about the voting process.

While participants reacted positively to the campaign in general, there were aspects or elements they criticized or felt were less well done, including the following:

- There was no actual encouragement to vote in the ads.
- The campaign seemed to focus on younger urban dwellers (as opposed to seniors and rural residents).
- The production value was uneven across media (notably, very good in the television ads but dated or unappealing in the print ads).
- Some ads dealing with specific phases of the campaign contained less information or detail than others.
- Basic contact information (such as the TTY number) should have appeared in all ads.
- The visuals in general were a bit dated (mentioned primarily by youth in Montreal).
- There was a lack of consistency or unity across the various media (that is, nothing tied them together).
- The campaign did not appear in other languages (mentioned by new Canadians in Montreal and Indigenous Canadians in Winnipeg).²³

Reaction to tagline and logo

Few participants commented on the campaign tagline or logo before being asked about them explicitly. Overall reactions to both tended to range from neutral or indifferent to positive. Most participants said they liked the tagline, describing it as inclusive (“rassembleur” in French), motivating or mobilizing, catchy, true (“it *is* our vote”), and conveying a sense of ownership of the vote. The exception was in Winnipeg, where most participants said that they did not like it. Negative feedback on the tagline (in Winnipeg and elsewhere) was based on the following objections: there was no encouragement to vote, there was nothing catchy or memorable in it, it did not make sense (it should be “It’s *your* vote”), it sounded antagonistic (“It’s our vote” sounds like “us vs. them”), and it did not place responsibility on Canadians to vote (saying “It’s *your* vote” would place more responsibility on Canadians).

While many participants said that they liked the logo, positive reactions tended to be moderate or lukewarm rather than strong, and most were neutral rather than positive or negative. The most frequently given reason explaining positive reactions was that the X mark is commonly associated with voting. Participants who disliked it said the X symbol has negative connotations, many adding that perhaps it should be a checkmark instead. Others said that they did not like it because of the style or font, describing it as “dated,” “nineties style,” and “childlike.”

²³ As noted earlier, while ads did appear in different languages, nearly all new Canadian and Indigenous participants were unaware of this.

Reaction to colours

Most participants reacted positively to the use of colours in the campaign, noting that the colours attracted or drew their attention. Specific colour combinations identified as standing out included red and white, yellow and blue, purple and yellow, and black and purple. Some who said they liked the colours described them as “Easter-like shades.” On the other hand, some who said that the black and purple combination stood out also characterized the colour combination as depressing. Negative reaction to the colours came primarily from participants in Montreal. While such reaction was limited, it was based on the impression that too many colours were used, with no consistency or logic to the combinations, and that the colours were too conventional. Some participants focused specifically on the animated social media ads, noting that the combination of colours and music distracted them instead of attracting their attention.

Perceived relevance of campaign

Most participants felt that the information campaign was at least somewhat relevant to them. Reasons included the diversity of media used in the campaign (that is, an attempt to reach people who use different types of media), the diversity among Canadians displayed in the ads (emphasized especially by new Canadians), the sense of being specifically targeted (because, for example, they had recently moved, they were voting for the first time, or they were uncertain about being registered), and the impression that, even if they were familiar with the information provided, the ads were a good reminder to everyone about important things to know and were therefore relevant to all citizens.

On the other hand, some participants said that they did not see themselves in the ads or did not see the campaign as relevant to them. This was especially the case among Indigenous Canadian participants in Winnipeg, where it was suggested that the ads targeted middle-class Canadians. Others suggested that the ads were not relevant to them because they were not first-time voters, they had not moved recently, the ads did not speak to their lifestyle (because, for example, they were not busy professionals), or because they already knew this information.

Missing information

There was near-unanimity among participants that the materials presented through the information campaign gave them an understanding of when and where to vote and the ways to register and vote. Asked specifically whether the information met their needs, participants with a visual impairment in Toronto said yes; the only suggestion to better meet voter needs was to implement online voting.

Few participants identified a need for more information. Those who did focused on the following things, none of which was identified by more than a few participants:

- information about the voting rights of expats
- deadlines for registering for a specific election (if any)²⁴
- date by which a VIC should be received by mail in advance of an election
- what to do if one receives someone else’s VIC

²⁴ In response to this, another participant observed that the radio ad for election day stated that registration could take place on election day at the polling place.

- what constitutes an error on a VIC that should be reported (such as a misspelled name)
- information that students have the option to vote at their university
- most common types of identification to use when voting
- what to do (if anything) if one plans to vote on election day but then on that day one is suddenly ill and cannot vote

Additional ways Elections Canada should be communicating with Canadians

Asked if there are other ways that Elections Canada should be communicating such information to Canadians, the only way identified with any frequency was through an app. Other suggestions, identified by individuals or no more than a few participants, included:

- telephone (for seniors in particular)
- texting
- through opinion leaders and social media influencers
- community outreach
- email²⁵
- more social media ads

²⁵ Whenever the suggestion to communicate by email was made, it elicited more opposition than support from other participants.

Appendix

1. Profile of Survey Respondents (Quantitative Research)

	Weighted base	Wave 1 n=49,993	Wave 2 n=23,880	Wave 3 n=21,435
Province/territory				
Newfoundland and Labrador		1%	2%	1%
Prince Edward Island		1%	1%	1%
Nova Scotia		3%	3%	3%
New Brunswick		2%	2%	2%
Quebec		24%	23%	24%
Ontario		39%	38%	37%
Manitoba		3%	4%	3%
Saskatchewan		3%	3%	3%
Alberta		11%	11%	11%
British Columbia		13%	14%	14%
Nunavut		<0.5%	<0.5%	<0.5%
Northwest Territories		<0.5%	<0.5%	<0.5%
Yukon		<0.5%	<0.5%	<0.5%
Indigenous				
First Nations		2%	2%	2%
Métis		2%	2%	2%
Inuit		<0.5%	<0.5%	<0.5%
Non-Indigenous		97%	96%	96%
Gender				
Female		52%	51%	51%
Male		46%	48%	48%
Non-binary/transgender		1%	1%	1%
Prefer not to answer		1%	1%	1%
Language spoken at home				
English		75%	77%	76%
French		21%	19%	20%
Other		3%	3%	3%
Prefer not to answer		1%	<0.5%	<0.5%
Marital status				
Married		45%	45%	45%
Living common-law		14%	14%	13%
Widowed		4%	3%	4%
Separated		3%	3%	3%
Divorced		8%	7%	7%
Single, never married		25%	27%	28%
Prefer not to answer		1%	1%	1%

43rd General Election: National Electors Study
Report on the Voter Information Campaign and Elector Awareness

	Wave 1 n=49,993	Wave 2 n=23,880	Wave 3 n=21,435
Weighted Base			
Education			
Some elementary	<0.5%	<0.5%	<0.5%
Completed elementary	<0.5%	<0.5%	<0.5%
Some high school	4%	3%	3%
Completed high school	12%	10%	13%
Some community college/vocational/trade school/CEGEP	10%	9%	8%
Completed community college/vocational/trade school/CEGEP	19%	19%	20%
Some university	10%	11%	10%
Completed university	28%	29%	29%
Post-graduate university/professional school	16%	17%	15%
Other	<0.5%	<0.5%	<0.5%
Don't know	<0.5%	<0.5%	<0.5%
Prefer not to answer	1%	1%	<0.5%
Level of functional disability			
No disability	68%	69%	69%
Mild disability	16%	16%	16%
Moderate disability	8%	8%	8%
Severe disability	6%	6%	5%
Very severe disability	2%	2%	2%
Refused	<0.5%	--	--
Age			
18 to 24	10%	10%	10%
25 to 34	16%	17%	17%
35 to 54	33%	33%	33%
55 to 74	36%	36%	36%
75+	4%	4%	5%
Youth			
Youth 18–34 attending school	8%	8%	9%
Youth 18–34 working full-time and not attending school	13%	14%	13%
NEET youth	2%	1%	2%
All other youth	3%	4%	3%
New Canadians			
Immigrants who became citizens <i>before</i> the 2015 GE	14%	13%	13%
Immigrants who became citizens <i>after</i> the 2015 GE	2%	2%	2%
Non-immigrants	84%	85%	85%

2. Voter Journey (Qualitative Research)

This appendix reports participant feedback related to the steps they took to vote (for those who voted) or would take if they had voted (for those who did not). This feedback was elicited through an exercise involving the same participants, but is separate from the evaluation of the Voter Information Campaign.

Participants were presented with a sheet listing various steps a person could take to prepare for and cast their vote. They were asked to take a moment to think of the steps they had taken (if they voted) or would have taken (if they did not vote) leading up to voting in the most recent federal election, and then order them by what they would do first, second, third, and so on. Participants were instructed to add any missing steps and to ignore any steps that did not apply to them.²⁶ The list included the following steps:

- make sure I'm registered to vote
- decide to vote
- watch for my VIC in the mail
- find out about candidates
- go to the polling place to cast my vote
- make sure I have the proper ID to vote
- make a concrete plan to vote
- watch the leaders' debate(s)
- decide who to vote for

Sequencing of steps

While no step went unselected by an entire group, some steps were identified more often than others. Excluding the final step of casting one's vote, the steps identified most often included deciding who to vote for, finding out about candidates, watching for their VIC in the mail, and deciding to vote. The steps identified least often included watching the leaders' debate(s), making sure that one is registered to vote, and making a concrete plan to vote.

Asked specifically which step they listed first (or would do first, in the case of online participants), most of the participants identified deciding to vote as their first step. This preference was distantly followed by watching for the VIC, making sure they are registered to vote, and finding out about candidates.

Given the potential combinations and permutations, the sequencing of steps varied widely, and no dominant pattern emerged. That said, steps most often appearing among the first three were: making sure one is registered to vote, deciding to vote, and watching for the VIC. In the sequencing of these three steps, the order that emerged most often was: 1) deciding to vote, 2) making sure one is registered to vote, and 3) watching for the VIC. The only other patterns to emerge with any frequency among the first three steps were the following: 1) deciding to vote, 2) finding out about candidates, and 3) watching the leaders' debate(s); and 1) deciding to vote, 2) finding out about candidates, and 3) deciding who to vote for.

Most difficult/challenging step

²⁶ Participants in the online focus groups were asked to identify all the steps they took or would take but were not asked to order them chronologically.

Voters were asked which step was most difficult or challenging; non-voters were asked which step they anticipated would be most difficult or challenging. In response, the only step identified with any frequency was deciding who to vote for. For some participants, choosing one candidate to vote for was difficult due to the number of factors that could weigh into the decision. Some participants also found it challenging to find or assess what information about the parties and candidates was factual.

Small numbers of participants identified other steps as difficult: finding out about candidates, making a concrete plan to vote, and going to the polling place to vote. The last was mentioned by a few participants with mobility issues in the online group.