



Office of the
Chief Electoral Officer
of Canada

Report on the 42nd General Election of October 19, 2015

February 3, 2016

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Le directeur général des élections • The Chief Electoral Officer

February 3, 2016

The Honourable Geoff Regan, M.P.
Speaker of the House of Commons
Centre Block
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0A6

Dear Mr. Speaker:

I have the honour to provide my report following the 42nd general election, held on October 19, 2015. I have prepared the report in accordance with subsection 534(1) of the *Canada Elections Act*, S.C. 2000, c. 9. Under section 536 of the Act, the Speaker shall submit this report to the House of Commons without delay.

The official voting results will be published in the coming months, in accordance with section 533 of the Act.

Yours truly,

Marc Mayrand
Chief Electoral Officer

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Foreword

I am pleased to present Elections Canada's first report on the 42nd general election. It provides a factual narrative of the conduct of the event, and paints a portrait of its size and complexity. It also identifies particular issues to be discussed in more detail in a second, retrospective report to Parliament in June 2016.

This election was historic from several perspectives: it was the first fixed-date federal election, with the longest election period in more than 140 years; we saw a 74 percent increase in advance voting; and some three million more Canadians voted than in the 2011 election, resulting in the highest voter turnout in more than 20 years. Early indications point to increased voting among groups who typically vote less than the general population, such as Aboriginal people and young Canadians. Across all communications channels, Canadians increased their engagement with Elections Canada significantly over the last election.

General elections are one of the country's largest civic exercises. In this election, under the new electoral boundaries, 338 local offices and 148 satellite offices were opened across Canada and equipped with election materials, supplies and technology. Some 285,000 temporary election workers were hired and trained to staff over 67,000 polling stations in 15,500 polling places.

In running federal elections, we strive to ensure that every Canadian who wishes to vote has an opportunity to do so, that Canadians are assured of election rules and procedures being followed, and that safeguards for fair and reliable elections are in place.

With a majority government and a fixed election date since 2011, the agency was able to focus on improving services while staying ready to conduct by-elections. For the 2015 election, we offered online voter registration, launched a comprehensive advertising and outreach campaign, renewed our approach to training election workers, and collaborated with the disability community to make polling places more accessible. We also acted on legislation passed in June 2014, which included changes to voter identification rules and introduced a registry of opinions, guidelines and interpretations on the application of the *Canada Elections Act* to political entities.

While the conduct of the 2015 election was generally a success, it was apparent that a system anchored in the 19th century is no longer suited to meet Canadians' expectations. Electors want more accessible and convenient election services, whether in person or online, and real-time digital information. For the next general election, we would like to provide Canadians with a streamlined voting experience – one that takes advantage of technology to improve how they are served at polling places and elsewhere.

As the agency wraps up the 42nd general election, we will finalize our assessments based on post-election research and receive the first independent audit of poll worker performance. I intend to present a retrospective that examines the experience of voters, political parties, candidates and poll workers, as well as to make recommendations for enabling legislative changes.

In closing, I would like to recognize and thank the more than 285,000 election workers, returning officers and field liaison officers who took time from their personal and professional lives to ensure that their fellow citizens could exercise their democratic right to vote. Their dedication and resourcefulness were a key ingredient in the successful conduct of the 42nd general election.

Marc Mayrand
Chief Electoral Officer of Canada

1. Context: Toward the 42nd General Election

Experience shows that elections do not close with polling day; a full portrait of their successes and shortcomings can take time to emerge. After the 2011 election, standard activities such as judicial recounts and the auditing of political entities' financial returns took place. There was also an in-depth investigation into deceptive telecommunications and a contested election that led to an independent review of poll workers' compliance with voting procedures.

The Chief Electoral Officer submitted three reports to Parliament following the 2011 election that guided preparations for 2015:

- *Report of the Chief Electoral Officer of Canada on the 41st General Election of May 2, 2011:* It presented a detailed picture of the event, from the issue of the writs to the release of official results and final wrap-up.
- *Report on the Evaluations of the 41st General Election of May 2, 2011:* It assessed the conduct of the election and noted challenges to be addressed.
- *Preventing Deceptive Communications with Electors – Recommendations from the Chief Electoral Officer Following the 41st General Election:* It examined preventive and enforcement measures that should be taken to deal with deceptive communications.

A number of environmental factors influenced the agency's planning for the 42nd general election – most notably, a rapidly evolving legislative framework and pressure from Canadians to provide more flexible services. The main factors that influenced planning and administration are described below. Further details are in section 2 of this report.

Fixed election date

Elections Canada delivered four general elections within an eight-year period (from 2004 to 2011). Although the agency implemented some service improvements over that time, its efforts were mainly focused on being ready to conduct a general election.

The election of a majority government in 2011 and a fixed date of October 2015 for the next general election provided Elections Canada with more opportunity to improve election services and its communications campaign, engage a wider variety of stakeholders as it designed changes, develop a new training approach for election workers, and invest in information technology infrastructure and security for the 2015 election and beyond.

Redistribution of federal electoral districts

As required by law, after the 2011 Census, the distribution of seats in the House of Commons was amended and electoral boundaries were reviewed by 10 independent commissions to reflect population changes and movement. This redistribution exercise created 30 new federal electoral districts, increasing the number of seats in the House of Commons from 308 to 338. It also changed the boundaries of almost all ridings.

To implement the revised set of electoral districts, Elections Canada appointed and trained 140 new returning officers, developed maps that subdivided the 338 electoral districts into approximately 65,000 polling divisions, registered new electoral district associations, and adjusted the lists of electors to align with the boundaries. The agency also made plans to ensure that Canadians and political entities would be informed of changes to electoral districts and polling locations.

Legislation

Since the 2011 election, significant amendments to the *Canada Elections Act*, as well as many other proposed amendments, required the agency's attention.

Bill C-23, which was adopted on June 19, 2014, made several key changes that needed to be implemented for the general election, including:

- stricter voter identification requirements
- the move of the Commissioner of Canada Elections from Elections Canada to the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions
- a fourth advance voting day
- a new requirement for an independent audit of poll worker performance following an election
- new reporting obligations on measures taken to improve the lists of electors
- a new responsibility for issuing written opinions, guidelines and interpretation notes on the application of the *Canada Elections Act* to political entities, including a consultative process with the Commissioner of Canada Elections and members of the Advisory Committee of Political Parties
- changes to political financing rules, including a new regime governing loans to political entities and an increase in spending limits

As a consequence, among other tasks, the agency revamped its entire suite of election worker forms, guidebooks, manuals and training materials. It also rewrote its suite of political financing manuals for political entities and modified its reporting forms and software to adjust to the new rules. It realigned some of its priorities for administrative improvements starting in the winter of 2014 to focus on implementing the new provisions. In line with legislative direction, the agency cancelled its plans to allow electors to use their voter information card to prove their address. It also set aside its recommendations on a broader review of compliance and enforcement measures under the *Canada Elections Act*.

Litigation

Two constitutional challenges in the lead-up to the election caused some uncertainty about the applicable rules for voters.

In May 2014, the Ontario Superior Court of Justice struck down the provisions of the *Canada Elections Act* that prohibited Canadians living abroad for more than five years or not intending to return to Canada to reside from voting by special ballot. As a result of the decision and in the absence of a stay, Elections Canada adjusted its information materials and forms, stopped requiring a declaration of the electors' intent to return to reside in Canada and approved applications from

Canadians who had been living outside the country for more than five years in the International Register of Electors. However, on July 20, 2015, the Ontario Court of Appeal reversed the lower court decision, reinstating the previous rules. These changes impacted Canadians living abroad and election workers alike, requiring Elections Canada to communicate with affected electors and respond to more enquiries.

A separate court case involved a constitutional challenge to amendments to the *Canada Elections Act* introduced by Bill C-23, including voter identification requirements. As part of this challenge, in July 2015, the Council of Canadians filed an injunction to prevent the application of one provision in particular, prohibiting the Chief Electoral Officer from authorizing the voter information card as a form of identification on election day. The application for an injunction was dismissed on July 17 and leave to appeal was dismissed on August 5, three days after the issue of the writs. As a result, the voter information card was not authorized as a piece of identification for the 42nd general election. Nevertheless, the possibility of an injunction being granted required the agency to develop last-minute contingency plans for a revised voter information card, communications material and poll worker instructions to allow for its use.

Integrity

After the 2011 general election, allegations of fraudulent robocalls as well as administrative irregularities at the polls in Etobicoke Centre (Ontario) highlighted election integrity issues.

In response to the robocalls incident, the agency submitted a report to Parliament examining preventive, compliance and enforcement measures that could be taken to deal with deceptive communications and recommended legislative changes. It commissioned an independent review of election officers' non-compliance with procedures at the polls and published the resulting report, which included the reviewer's recommendations and the agency's action plan. Administrative measures to safeguard integrity for the 2015 election became a high priority.

The agency also set up an office to improve compliance with voting procedures and respond to incidents that could jeopardize the integrity of the election or Canadians' access to voting. Some changes were made at polling places to achieve a more efficient workflow, relieve pressure on poll workers and improve procedural compliance. Central poll supervisors, hired in greater numbers, became responsible for monitoring the process at their polling place. More registration officers were also hired to reduce pressure on the deputy returning officers and to minimize record-keeping errors. All forms and manuals for poll workers were redesigned, training modules were modernized and election officers were sensitized to the importance of being diligent in their work.

As required by legislative changes, the agency laid the groundwork for an independent audit of poll worker performance. It consulted internal and external auditors, parliamentarians and political parties to prepare the audit terms before holding a competitive procurement process. The audit will report on whether a sample of poll workers properly exercised their powers and functions at polling places, and on the degree to which controls such as manuals and training helped with compliance. The audit's conclusions, along with the agency's response, will be discussed in Elections Canada's retrospective report.

Information technology infrastructure

During the period of successive minority governments from 2004 to 2011, Elections Canada did not introduce major technological changes.

After 2011, in response to Canadians' needs for modern and more convenient election services, the agency invested in its information technology infrastructure and made some investments in modernizing its systems. By early 2015, Elections Canada had implemented a number of upgrades and changes to benefit electors and field workers. The technology allowed for improved online services and streamed election night results. It also enabled local offices to update the central voters list electronically.

To make this possible, the capacity of the agency's data centres was expanded to support new systems and anticipated increases in transaction volumes. Additional measures were taken to improve information technology security. New agreements were established with solution and service providers to supply field offices with equipment and telecommunications services. Quality assurance was managed through extensive testing and simulation exercises at headquarters and select field offices.

Stakeholder engagement

Leading up to the election, Elections Canada worked closely with its stakeholders so that changes made to procedures at the polls would meet the needs of electors and political participants.

The agency worked with organizations representing its outreach target groups¹ as it made accessibility improvements and redesigned its communications and outreach campaign. It also worked with the following advisory groups on administrative improvements, challenges in implementing the recent legislation and general preparations for the election:

- the Advisory Committee of Political Parties, which is a forum for registered political parties to share information with and provide advice to the Chief Electoral Officer
- the Elections Canada Advisory Board, which was established in 2013 to provide advice to the Chief Electoral Officer on matters relating to Canada's electoral system
- the Advisory Group for Disability Issues, which was launched in February 2014 to set priorities and identify key activities to remove barriers to voting for persons with disabilities

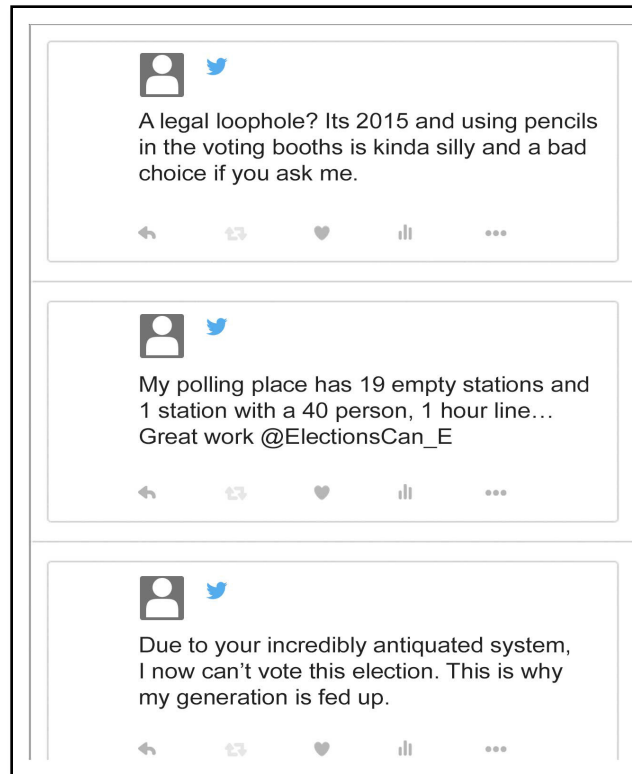
¹ For the 42nd general election, outreach target groups were Aboriginal electors, electors with disabilities, electors from ethnocultural groups, electors who are homeless, seniors living in long-term care facilities, youth and students.

Canadians' expectations

Increasingly, Canadians expect more accessible and convenient election services that take advantage of technology and self-service options. Bringing the electoral system into the 21st century is crucial. At the same time, what it means for an election to be accessible is different for everyone. To ensure that all Canadians have an equal opportunity to vote, Elections Canada must understand their expectations and offer services that meet their diverse needs.

For the 42nd general election, the agency made administrative changes to offer more convenient services. These included an online voter registration service, an online form for applying to vote by special ballot, web forms for enquiries and complaints, registration and voting opportunities on campuses and at other locations, and a multimedia communications and outreach campaign with a full suite of digital products and social media accounts to provide real-time digital information.

The agency views accessibility as an ongoing and long-term process to provide inclusive, universal and flexible services that benefit everyone. Much of its efforts in recent years have focused on reducing barriers for people with disabilities. Working with the disability community, Elections Canada set new accessibility criteria for polling places, developed its voter information products in more accessible formats, and trained election workers to assist electors with varying abilities.



Select tweets on Canadians' expectations.

Service in both official languages is another key expectation. In response to a report from the Commissioner of Official Languages, Elections Canada took extra steps to offer bilingual services in local offices and polling places. As part of election worker recruitment, returning officers contacted official-language minority organizations in their electoral district to seek applicants. If too few bilingual workers were found, returning officers pinpointed neighbourhoods with higher numbers of minority-language speakers so they could assign these workers where they were most needed.

2. The 42nd General Election

2.1. Launching the Election



Chief Electoral Officer Marc Mayrand signs the writs for the 42nd general election (credit: J. Larocque).

Issue of the writs

On August 2, 2015, the Governor General dissolved the 41st Parliament at the request of the Prime Minister, and writs were issued for elections in all 338 federal electoral districts.

The date for the 42nd general election was set by proclamation of the Governor General as October 19. Advance polls were held one week before election day (October 9 to 12, on Thanksgiving weekend). The election period lasted 78 days.

The call of the election superseded three by-elections that were to be held on October 19 in the electoral districts of Ottawa West–Nepean, Peterborough and Sudbury (Ontario).

Local Elections Canada offices

In all, returning officers opened 338 returning offices, as well as 148 satellite offices in 87 of the geographically largest electoral districts. The last returning office was opened and fully operational on August 18, and the last satellite office on August 19.

Some offices were delayed in opening because the election was called well in advance of the usual 36-day election calendar and on a long weekend in much of Canada. As a result, some returning officers and landlords were not immediately available, and rental agreements with landlords and equipment suppliers needed to be renegotiated. Elections Canada and returning officers had to step up measures to enlist staff to operate the offices.

At the start of the election, local offices were open to the public on weekdays during regular business hours. After Labour Day, hours expanded to include evenings and weekends. This service model helped to reduce staffing pressures over the long election calendar.

Election staff

Recruiting and training competent election workers continue to be challenges for Elections Canada and returning officers. Many refinements and improvements have been made over the last several elections, including those described below for this election. The audit of poll worker performance will determine the degree to which these new measures assisted the poll workers in performing their functions at polling places. The audit's conclusions, along with the agency's response, will be discussed in Elections Canada's retrospective report.

Recruitment

Approximately 285,000 people were hired to fill approximately 329,000 election worker positions. In many cases, workers filled more than one position. By comparison, in the 41st general election, 229,000 people were hired to fill 235,900 positions. Table 1 in the Appendix lists the positions occupied by election staff for the 42nd general election.

The increase from the 41st general election is mainly due to staffing 30 new electoral districts, improving voting operations by allowing for a central poll supervisor at all polling locations, introducing community relations officers focused on accessibility, and hiring information officers for all polling locations that did not have an automatic door opener.²

To fill the positions, returning officers turned first to the names of potential workers provided by the candidates of the registered political parties as prescribed by the *Canada Elections Act*. Poll workers were also recruited through job posters displayed in libraries, community centres and shopping malls. Returning officers reached out to community groups and local organizations to promote employment on voting days. Targeted digital ads were also posted on employment-related websites.

A total of 243,934 applications were submitted through the Elections Canada website, compared with 130,427 applications during the 41st general election. This was the second general election in which Canadians could apply online.

As in previous elections, the Chief Electoral Officer authorized returning officers to appoint additional poll workers to accommodate absences and last-minute resignations, and to hire 16- and 17-year-olds to fill some positions. Approximately the same number of workers in this age group were hired during the 42nd general election as in the 41st general election (28,000). However, in the 42nd general election, this represented only 8.5 percent of the total electoral workforce across Canada, compared to 11 percent in the 41st general election.

Training

Elections Canada redesigned its election worker training program using adult learning principles and a combination of classroom training, online modules and experiential learning to improve consistency and learner retention.

The agency also invested in more instruction for training officers than in past elections. New tools to facilitate self-training included a reference guide, orientation video and scripted course notes. A new online Learning Management Portal was put in place to deliver webcasts, self-training materials and resources to training officers and key office personnel. It was also a portal for receiving feedback and providing status updates on training progress.

New content was developed to communicate key values (e.g. non-partisanship, accessibility, service in official languages and privacy). Training included participatory exercises about the new identification requirements and voter registration to reinforce those important rules and procedures.

² As explained in section 2.4, in polling locations without automatic door openers, staff were at the doors to assist voters during voting hours.

To support the curriculum, a variety of resources were used for the first time, including task-based guidebooks written in plain language, visual job aids, and a multitude of videos to reinforce learning points. Many of these materials were used in classroom training and also made available on Elections Canada's website.

Working with political entities

Registration of political parties and nomination of candidates

For the 42nd general election, 23 political parties ran candidates (18 parties were registered as of the issuance of the writs, and 5 were registered afterward). This compares to a total of 18 parties in the 41st general election.

Candidate nominations closed at 2:00 p.m., local time, on September 28. The total number of confirmed candidates was 1,792, compared with 1,587 in the 41st general election. There were 536 female candidates or 29.9 percent of the total, compared with 452 or 28.5 percent in the 41st general election. Of the 304 (out of 308) sitting members of the House of Commons at the dissolution of Parliament, 247 sought re-election and 57 did not.

In total, eight candidates withdrew their nomination after the completion of the confirmation process but before the statutory deadline.

Resources and information sessions

In spring 2015, under new legislative requirements, Elections Canada began to issue written opinions, guidelines and interpretation notes (OGIs) on the application of the *Canada Elections Act* to political entities. A total of 11 OGIs were finalized for the 42nd general election on such topics as the use of member of Parliament resources outside an election period, election advertising on the Internet, and candidate and leader debates. A fully revised *Political Financing Handbook for Candidates and Official Agents* was also issued.

Over 550 official agents participated in "Getting Started" training sessions in 11 cities from July 24 to August 23. Topics included starting the campaign, contributions, loans, transfers and electoral campaign expenses.

Returning officers met with confirmed candidates or their representatives between September 30 and October 2. Some of the most common topics discussed were the new electoral boundaries, new advance voting procedures, voter identification for students at Elections Canada offices on campuses, polling locations and guidelines for candidates and their representatives at the polls.

In addition, candidates were provided with updated electronic filing software that could be used to issue contribution receipts and prepare the electoral campaign return. It was included in the kit they received after their nomination and is also available on Elections Canada's website.

After the election, "Closing the Campaign" sessions took place with official agents from October 30 to November 21 in 13 cities. Topics included electoral campaign financing, reporting requirements and deadlines, and closing the campaign. In all, there were 785 participants, compared with 299 for the 41st general election.

Election expenses limits

The *Canada Elections Act* sets separate limits on the election expenses of candidates and registered political parties. The election expenses limit for candidates is based on several factors, including the number of names appearing on either the preliminary or the revised lists of electors for an electoral district, whichever yields the higher limit. The election expenses limit for political parties is based partly on the number of names on the lists of electors for all electoral districts in which the party has endorsed a candidate, and partly on the number of candidates it endorsed. The calculated expense limits are also adjusted for inflation and, as a result of recent amendments to the *Canada Elections Act*, for the duration of the election period if it exceeds 37 days. (This increase for the duration of the election also applies to third parties, as discussed below.) This recent legislative change resulted in significantly higher expense limits for all political participants.

The election expense limits for candidates ranged from \$169,928.60 in Egmont (Prince Edward Island) to \$279,227.99 in Kootenay–Columbia (British Columbia). The average expense limit for candidates was \$218,837.62, compared with \$91,879.64 for the 41st general election.

The election expenses limit for political parties ranged from \$119,542.99 for a party that endorsed a candidate in a single electoral district to \$54,936,320.15 for a party that endorsed a candidate in all 338 electoral districts. Limits were significantly higher for this election because of the longer election calendar.

Table 2 in the Appendix lists each party's number of confirmed candidates and final expenses limit.

Broadcasting time for political entities

The Broadcasting Arbitrator allocates paid and free broadcasting time to parties in accordance with the *Canada Elections Act* and arbitrates disputes between political parties and broadcasters concerning the application of the Act. The Broadcasting Arbitrator also issues guidelines concerning the entitlement to and allocation of broadcasting time under the Act, and the procedures for booking broadcasting time by registered and eligible parties, as well as the obligations of broadcasters during a general election.

During a general election, the *Canada Elections Act* requires every broadcaster in Canada to make at least 390 minutes of broadcasting time available for purchase by registered and eligible parties. The time must be provided during prime time at the lowest rate that would be charged to any other purchaser for equivalent time.

On June 23, 2015, the Broadcasting Arbitrator issued his latest order on the allocation of paid broadcasting time. This allocation was in effect for the 42nd general election.

As well, the *Canada Elections Act* requires all network operators that provided free broadcasting time in the previous general election to provide as much free broadcasting time to registered and eligible parties during the election that follows. Free broadcasting time must be provided to parties in the same proportion as the allocation of paid broadcasting time. There are now only three network operators in Canada – CBC/Radio-Canada, TVA and V Télé – and only one broadcasts in English.

See Table 3 in the Appendix for details on the paid and free broadcasting time that network operators were required to provide to parties in the 42nd general election.

Third party election advertising

The *Canada Elections Act* requires any third party conducting election advertising during an election to identify itself in the advertisement and to indicate that it has authorized the advertising. Third parties that incur election advertising expenses of \$500 or more must register with Elections Canada. They must also produce an election advertising report within four months after election day, itemizing their election advertising expenses as well as all contributions and loans received for election advertising purposes in the period beginning six months before the issue of the writs and ending on election day.

The *Canada Elections Act* sets limits on the amount a third party may incur in election advertising expenses. For the 42nd general election, the total election advertising expenses limit was \$439,411 for a national campaign and \$8,788 per electoral district. In the 41st general election, the limits amounted to \$188,250 for a national campaign and \$3,765 per electoral district. Limits were higher for this election because of the longer election calendar.

For the 42nd general election, 114 third parties registered with Elections Canada, compared with 55 for the 41st general election.

2.2. Voter Registration Services

When electors are registered before voting days, they receive a voter information card that tells them when and where to cast their ballot, and the voting process is simplified. For the 42nd general election, Elections Canada made significant efforts to reduce the number of electors who needed to register at their polling place on election day. It took measures to improve the quality of the National Register of Electors before the election, and offered electors more ways to register or update their address once the election was called. In the end, some 777,000 electors registered at their polling place on October 19, representing 5.8 percent of the votes cast on that day.

The National Register of Electors

Since 1997, Elections Canada has maintained the National Register of Electors, a database of Canadians who are eligible to vote in federal elections. When an election is called, the Register is used to produce the preliminary lists of electors, which are shared with returning officers, political parties and candidates. It is regularly updated between and during elections, mainly using administrative data received through agreements with federal, provincial and territorial agencies.

Coverage, accuracy and currency

The quality of the Register is important for electors, who receive a voter information card if they are registered at their current address. It is also of great importance to the political entities that wish to engage electors. Quality estimates are measured in terms of coverage, accuracy and currency:

- Coverage is the proportion of eligible electors who are registered, historically varying between 91 and 94 percent.

- Accuracy³ is the proportion of registered electors who are listed at their current address, historically varying between 88 and 92 percent. These electors are correctly registered and can vote without taking extra steps.
- Currency is the proportion of eligible electors who are registered at their current address, historically varying between 81 and 86 percent.

During an election, any electors who are not listed in the Register or who are listed at the wrong address must take steps to register or update their registration during the revision period (see below), or must register at their polling place before voting. This group represents between 15 and 19 percent of all eligible electors. The ultimate goal of Elections Canada's voter registration services is to reduce this number for election day. (See the table of quality indicators on page 24.)

Initiatives to improve the quality of the Register

Administrative updates of elector information

Elections Canada receives data from federal, provincial and territorial agencies such as the Canada Revenue Agency, Citizenship and Immigration Canada, driver's licence bureaus and vital statistics registrars for updating the Register. More than 3 million records are added or updated each year.

In 2014, Elections Canada signed an agreement with Manitoba to receive its driver's licence data. Between April 2014 and August 2015, the currency of the federal voters lists for Manitoba increased from 76.8 to 83.7 percent.

Before the election and in August 2015, Elections Canada scheduled its data exchanges in a way that maximized their impact on the accuracy of the lists. By early September 2015, currency had reached an estimated 84.7 percent, with some 948,000 elector records added or updated in August.

Reaching out to potential voters

From its data sources, Elections Canada regularly receives information on potential electors who have not yet consented to be added to the Register or confirmed their citizenship. A large proportion are young adults who have recently turned 18. Reaching out to them with convenient ways to register is vital to the coverage of the voters lists over the long term. Between 2011 and 2015, Elections Canada sent some 1.76 million letters to potential voters, inviting them to confirm their information and register. Response rates varied between 6 and 21 percent. On September 18, a mailing sent to some 52,000 unregistered 18-year-olds invited them to register using the online voter registration service, and some 21 percent of recipients did so.

The online voter registration service was launched in 2012 with the vision of offering new electors a convenient way to register. However, until early 2015, this service was unavailable to electors who had not already explicitly consented to be added to the Register (particularly young Canadians) because the *Canada Elections Act* required their written consent. In December 2014, electronic signatures became legally valid for voter registration transactions. Starting in spring 2015, the agency encouraged civil society groups to promote the online service through digital communications or in-person events. The service's rate of usage grew exponentially after the call of the election in August 2015.

³ Accuracy of the electoral lists is derived by dividing the currency estimates by the coverage estimates. It summarizes the proportion of registered electors listed at their current residential address.

New electoral boundaries and thematic mapping

Following the 2013 redistribution of electoral districts, Elections Canada redesigned some 65,000 polling divisions and reassigned all addresses in Canada to their corresponding polling division. The polling divisions were developed using smaller “census blocks” of population data from the 2011 Census, which made them easier to modify later. This approach also allowed Elections Canada to map socio-demographic attributes of the population, such as official language use. Returning officers were provided with custom mapping software (GeoExplore 2.0) that graphically represented this demographic data, which was useful in identifying the most important areas for targeted revision and deployment of bilingual workers.

In the year leading up to the election, some returning officers in areas known to have addressing inaccuracies or inconsistencies were invited to review their electoral lists in an effort to improve their quality.

Revision period

The revision period in each electoral district ran from August 17 until October 13, 2015. The purpose of revision is to update the preliminary lists of electors for use at advance polls and on election day.

When the writs were issued on August 2, there were 25,300,686 electors on the preliminary lists, representing 92.7 percent of the estimated 26,734,000 eligible electors across Canada. An estimated 90.9 percent of registered electors were listed at their current address. Elections Canada provided the preliminary lists to registered political parties that requested them, and returning officers provided the lists to candidates for their respective electoral district.

Over the course of the revision period, some 1.75 million Canadians were added to the voters lists or had their information updated (in 2011, this number was 750,000). Of the 1.75 million revisions, 948,000 resulted from data supplied by Elections Canada's partners (compared to 210,000 in 2011), 503,000 were completed by local offices (about the same as in 2011) and the remaining 301,000 were completed online (compared to none in 2011). In total, there was a 127 percent increase in revisions in 2015 compared to 2011.

Local office services

As in previous elections, local Elections Canada offices offered registration services in person or over the phone. Returning officers also sent revising agents to verify the accuracy of the voters lists in high density, highly mobile or new residential neighbourhoods (a process known as targeted revision). Some 503,000 electors' information was added to or updated on the list using local office services, a volume comparable to 2011.

Online Voter Registration Service

In addition to local office services, online voter registration was available throughout the election and played a decisive role in improving the coverage and accuracy of the voters lists. For the first time during a general election, electors could check whether they were registered, update their address or complete their registration online. More than 1.7 million Canadians checked whether they were registered to vote.

Online transactions accounted for 301,000 (or 37 percent) of all voters list updates during the revision period. This included some 107,000 new registrants, of whom about 55 percent were aged 18 to 24 and 30 percent aged 25 to 44, resulting in increased coverage of the voters lists. Transactions also included 193,000 changes of address, resulting in increased accuracy of the lists. An additional 14,000 Canadians made other corrections to their elector information.

Once the revision period was over, electors who still needed to register were able to print a registration certificate for faster service at the polls on election day. Some 77,000 electors requested this certificate online.

In introducing online voter registration, Elections Canada recognized that it would be a complementary way to register rather than a universal solution, and that it would take several election cycles before Canadians became aware of and comfortable with the system. The large number of Canadians, particularly those aged 18 to 44, who used the service is encouraging. As with any new online service, there were some limitations, which meant that electors with certain address types could not use it. As well, some new electors (those for whom Elections Canada had not received any information from federal, provincial or territorial agencies) were not able to use it to register for the first time. However, as in previous elections, the options of registering by mail, at a local office or at the polls remained open to all electors.

42nd General Election

Online Voter Registration Service

ONLINE TRANSACTIONS

301,000 OR **37%**
of voters list updates during
the revision period



70%

of online voter registration
service users were under
45 years old



OVER 1.7 million

Canadians checked whether they were registered to vote

208,000

address updates
or corrections were
submitted online,
improving the quality
of the national voters list



20%
18-24
years old



55%
25-44
years old

107,000

new registrations were
submitted online, helping
to increase registration
before election day



55%
18-24
years old



30%
25-44
years old

77,000

electors who needed to register on election day requested
a registration certificate online for faster service at the polls

Infographic on the Online Voter Registration Service for the 42nd general election.

Election day registration and the final lists of electors

For the 2015 election, 777,000 electors registered at their polling place on election day. This is a modest decrease in the rate of election day registration from 2011, dropping from 6.2 to 5.8 percent of all election day voters. While Elections Canada had been aiming to reduce this rate to 4 percent or lower, the decrease still represents a healthy trend. Further analysis of the data will be presented in the retrospective report.

In all, the final lists of electors included some 26,044,131 names,⁴ representing a net increase of some 743,000 over the preliminary lists. More importantly, 2.5 million revisions were processed in drawing up the lists during this election, when election day registrations are factored in (see details in Table 5 of the Appendix). This compares favourably with 1.5 million revisions for the 2011 election. The result was a surge in the currency of the voters lists for 2015, from 84.2 percent in early August to 88.3 percent on the final lists.

Federal voters list quality indicators ¹ in the last two general elections (GEs)					
List	Eligible electors ³	Electors on list	Coverage (%)	Accuracy (%)	Currency (%)
42nd GE final lists of electors ²	26,808,942	26,044,131	94.5	93.5	88.3
42nd GE preliminary lists of electors	26,733,752	25,300,745	92.7	90.9	84.2
41st GE final lists of electors	25,337,728	24,257,592	93.5	91.4	85.5
41st GE preliminary lists of electors	25,299,113	23,933,743	92.6	90.2	83.5

¹ Quality estimates are adjusted to account for deceased electors, duplicates and non-Canadian citizens. They are also subject to sampling errors. Coverage and currency for the 42nd GE final lists are respectively accurate at $\pm 0.1\%$ and $\pm 0.5\%$, 19 times out of 20.

² Quality estimates of the 42nd GE final lists are preliminary.

³ Based on counts from Statistics Canada (2011 Census of Population and estimates from the 2011 National Household Survey, adjusted for census net undercoverage and demographic growth).

⁴ As of January 2016. Final lists and official voting results will be available in February 2016.

2.3. Voting Services

In delivering voting services, Elections Canada wanted to ensure that electors in any circumstances had access to the voting process. The four ways to vote were:

- by mail
- at an Elections Canada office
- at advance polls
- on election day

An important part of ensuring access was selecting suitable locations for polling places and local offices. The agency continued to remove barriers to voting by choosing locations that met its new accessibility criteria, while still considering proximity and familiarity of the location to electors.

Voting by mail or at an Elections Canada office (by special ballot)

Under the Special Voting Rules, electors who would like an alternative to voting at advance polls or on election day in their electoral district can vote by mail or at any Elections Canada office. The rules also apply to Canadian Forces electors, Canadians temporarily residing outside the country, and incarcerated electors in federal or provincial correctional facilities or in youth detention centres.

For the first time, electors could apply online for a special ballot voting kit using a secure form. In past elections, they could only submit the application and required documents by mail, by fax or in person.

In all, approximately 619,000 electors voted by special ballot, a 117 percent increase from the 41st general election. Most pronounced was special ballot voting by electors residing in Canada who voted outside their electoral district, which was up 341 percent from the last election. Table 7 in the Appendix provides a breakdown of special ballot voting by category.

Pilot Project at Select Campuses, Friendship Centres and YMCAs

For the first time, returning officers opened 71 satellite offices at select campuses, Friendship Centres and YMCAs to provide information, registration and voting services to students, youth, Aboriginal electors and the general public. Sites were selected using criteria that Elections Canada developed with stakeholder groups, while also taking into account regional representation.

Offices were open to the public from October 5 to 8, generally for 10 hours a day, and served electors no matter where they lived in Canada. More than 70,000 electors voted at these locations, almost 80 percent of whom voted from outside their electoral district. Of the three location types, campuses had the highest voter turnout.

The pilot project met with challenges in a few areas:

special ballot applications were processed with limited automation; there were difficulties in finding and leasing sites that met accessibility and security criteria; and election workers had to be hired and trained in a short time. Despite the challenges, the agency received positive feedback from electors who used these sites, stakeholder organizations and the media.



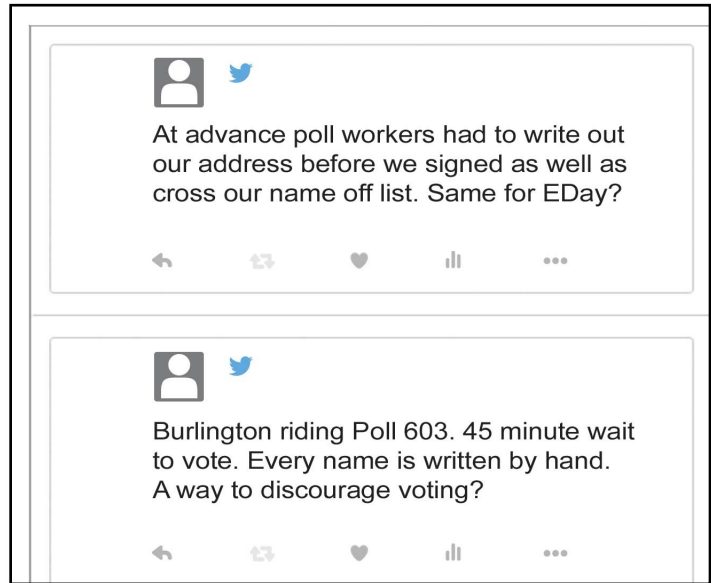
Students line up to register and cast their ballot at a temporary Elections Canada office on campus (credit: J. Larocque).

A pilot project was also established for on-demand special ballot voting in hospitals. Normally, election workers visit each patient in acute care hospitals to help them vote by special ballot on the 8th, 7th and 6th days before election day. To minimize patient disruptions, the agency piloted an on-demand service model in 97 hospitals, where patients could contact Elections Canada to schedule a visit. The selection of the sites for the pilot included a cross-representation of all provinces and territories, urban and rural centres, and sites of various sizes. Feedback on the new model was positive. In all, approximately 22,000 electors voted through the pilot project and regular special ballot initiatives in a total of 764 acute care hospitals.

Voting at advance polls

Changes to the *Canada Elections Act* added a fourth day of advance polls on the Sunday. For the 42nd general election, a total of 4,946 advance polls were set up from October 9 to 12, on Thanksgiving weekend. This represents an increase of 240 polls (5.1 percent) from the 41st general election.

The upward trend of Canadians voting at advance polls continued in the 42nd general election. A total of 3,677,217 electors cast votes at advance polls, representing 20.8 percent of all electors who voted during the election. This is a 74 percent increase over the 41st general election, in which 2,111,542 electors cast votes at advance polls.



Select tweets on voting at advance polls.

Elections Canada planned for higher turnout at advance polls in light of the upward trend and the extra voting day; however, turnout exceeded the agency's projections in several areas. As a result, long lineups formed at many advance polling stations, especially in the hours following their opening at noon.

Contrary to appearances, advance polls do not operate like election day polls. They require more paperwork for both electors and election workers. For example, voters must take the extra step of writing their name and address in a register and signing it. Each advance poll also serves a potential of 6,000 electors, as opposed to about 350 at an election day poll. This means that the average distance from an elector's home to their polling place is much greater for advance polls than on election day. None of these features were new in 2015, but Canadians' expectations in terms of efficiency and convenience have evolved well beyond what current advance voting operations can offer.

Managing Higher Turnout at the Polls

A number of measures allowed returning officers to deal with unexpected turnout. For example, under recent legislative changes, they were able to hire extra poll workers when circumstances warranted it. The Chief Electoral Officer also responded, in exceptional circumstances and when contingency plans had been exhausted, through adaptations of the *Canada Elections Act*. In some cases, he granted permission for returning officers to deploy a second ballot box, and a second team of deputy returning officer and poll clerk, for some advance polling stations. At best, these measures mitigated a difficult situation for election workers and modestly improved service in some areas. In the longer term, significant changes to how advance polling stations operate will be needed to close the gap between Canadians' expectations and the services offered.

Voting on election day

On election day, returning officers set up 66,026 stationary polls, representing an increase of 1,549 (2.4 percent) from the 41st general election. These polls were located in 15,578 polling places, an increase of 318 (2.1 percent) from the 41st general election.

In addition, 1,885 mobile polls were set up in 5,167 establishments; this represents an increase of 216 polls (13 percent) compared to the 41st general election.

Casting a ballot at a polling station on election day remained the choice of the vast majority of electors during the 42nd general election: a total of 13,415,964 electors voted this way, representing 75.7 percent of electors who voted.

Of the 67,911 polling stations on election day, 12 polling stations (from six electoral districts) experienced interruptions or opening delays of more than an hour, affecting service to 3,867 registered electors.

Issues at the polls

Electors experienced two types of difficulties at some polls. The agency began administrative reviews, to be further discussed in the retrospective report, on the following:

- Polling stations running low on ballots – For some polling divisions – particularly in First Nations communities, where turnout was exceptionally high compared to the last election – the returning officer had to reallocate ballots from other polling divisions to deal with shortages at advance and ordinary polls. In addition, the Chief Electoral Officer adapted the *Canada Elections Act* to allow some deputy returning officers to photocopy blank ballots when they were running out. The agency is aware of one situation in Alberta (Siksika First Nation) where voting was interrupted for about 20 minutes while more ballots reached the site.
- Smudged or pre-marked ballots – During advance and ordinary polls, across all 72,857 polling stations in the country, Elections Canada received about 70 complaints of smudged or pre-marked ballots. Of these complaints, 28 contained sufficient information for the agency to locate the poll and conduct a review. The 28 cases were spread across 28 different polls in 26 electoral districts. Preliminary indications suggest that while printing errors may have resulted in streaks and marks on some ballots, procedures were in place to keep those ballots from being used. Of the reviewed complaints, none were found to relate to printing errors. In the small number of cases where there were marks from a pen or pencil, it is plausible that deputy returning officers caused them in error by: (a) holding a pen while folding or issuing ballots, resulting in light, random scribbles; or (b) improperly handling a spoiled ballot so that it was issued to the next elector. Based on observations to date, there is no indication that ballots were pre-marked intentionally.

Generally, election workers experienced difficult working conditions at polls. The *Canada Elections Act* prescribes how polls are staffed during an election. A deputy returning officer or poll clerk cannot be replaced by other election workers while the polls are open, which may limit breaks. In some cases, especially where there were lineups, workers faced 14-hour days. Despite their good intentions and strong will to serve their fellow citizens, they faced emotional and physical pressures. Difficult working conditions have been a source of concern for the Chief Electoral Officer, and he has raised this issue previously in reports to Parliament.

New Voter Identification Requirements

Voter identification requirements in the *Canada Elections Act* were amended in 2014. The voter information card was prohibited as a piece of identification, and electors could no longer be vouched for if they had no identification.

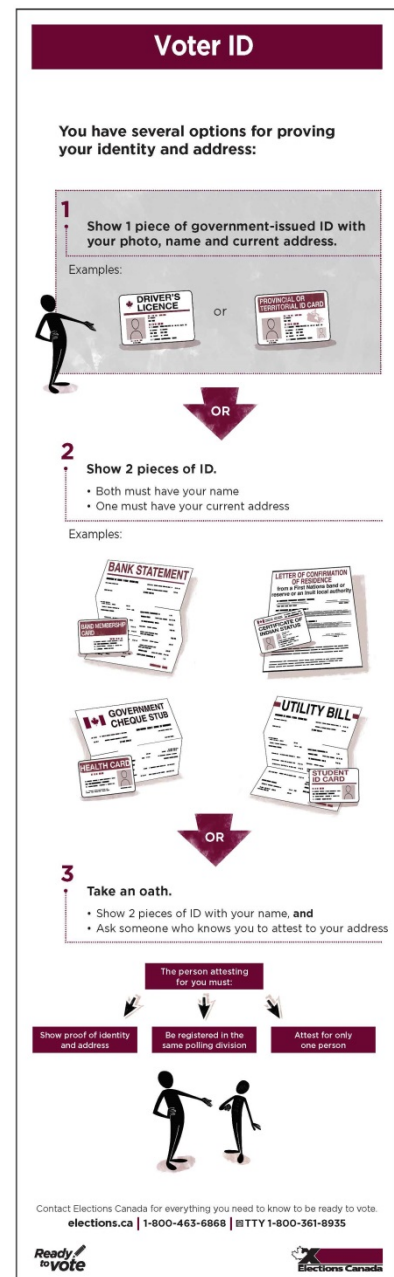
For the 42nd general election, electors had three options to prove their identity and address:

1. Show one piece of government-issued identification with their photo, name and address, such as a driver's licence, or provincial or territorial identification card.
2. Show two pieces of identification, at least one with their current address, from the list of authorized pieces of identification.
3. Take an oath, show two pieces of identification with their name, and have another elector attest to their address.

Elections Canada authorized several new pieces of identification for this election, including electronic statements and invoices either printed or shown on a mobile device. Based on feedback from Aboriginal stakeholders, it also authorized identification issued by First Nations bands, Métis organizations and Inuit local authorities.

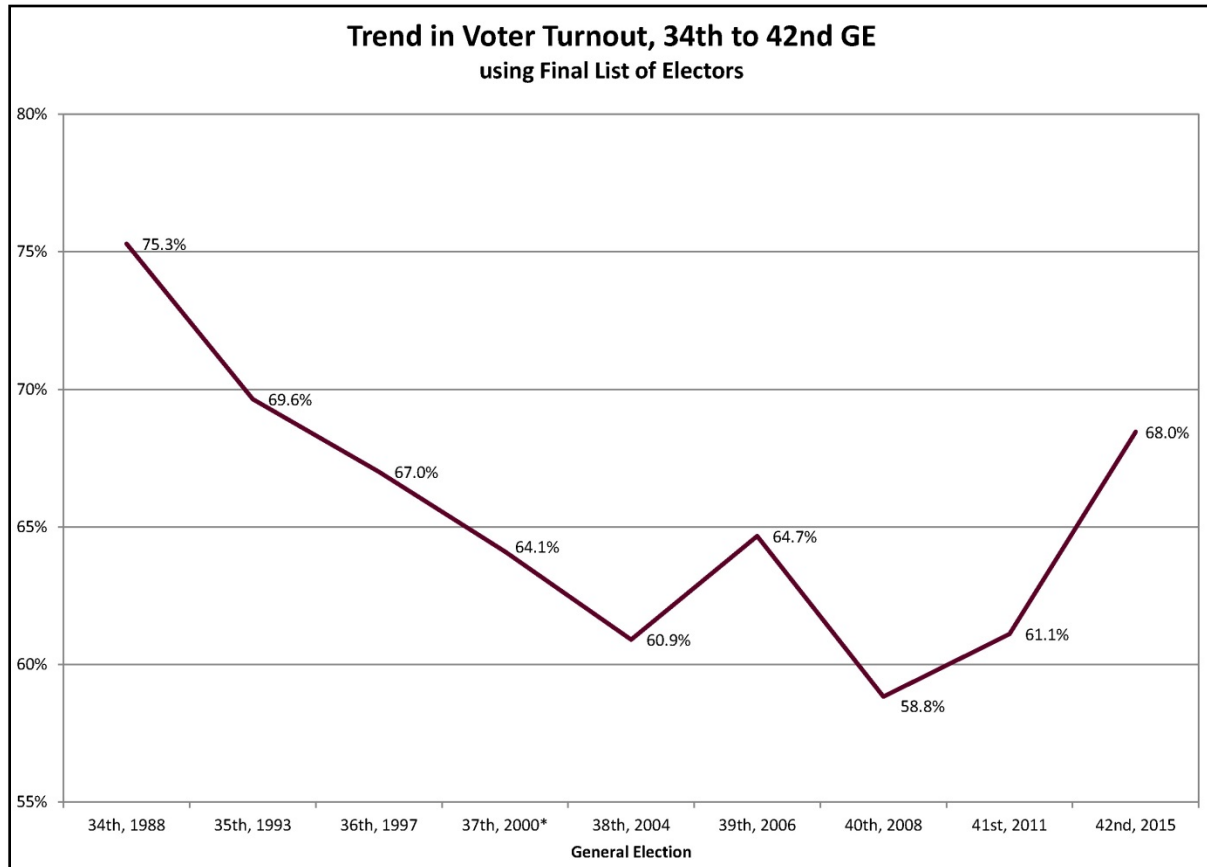
Post-election studies will examine the impact and application of the voter identification requirements in this election, and details will be included in the retrospective report.

The Voter ID infographic was a shareable tool on the elections.ca website.



Voter turnout

Voter turnout was at its highest in 20 years, with 68.0 percent of registered electors voting. This compares with 61.1 percent in the 41st general election. Table 8 in the Appendix shows the validated results.



*The turnout in 2000 was adjusted from 61.2 percent following the normal maintenance of the National Register of Electors to remove duplicate entries and names of deceased electors.

2.4. Concluding the Election

Official results

A total of 338 candidates were elected to the House of Commons in this election. Of these, 122 were members in the 41st Parliament. Women accounted for 88 of the elected candidates, setting a new record.

The following table lists the distribution of seats in the House of Commons, by political affiliation, before and after the election.

Number of seats in the House of Commons by political affiliation				
Political affiliation	After the 41st general election (May 2, 2011)	At the dissolution of Parliament (August 2, 2015)	After the 42nd general election (October 19, 2015)	Change from dissolution of Parliament
Liberal Party of Canada	34	36	184	+148
Conservative Party of Canada	166	159	99	-60
New Democratic Party	103	95	44	-51
Bloc Québécois	4	2	10	+8
Green Party of Canada	1	2	1	-1
Independent / No affiliation	0	8	0	-8
Forces et Démocratie	0	2	0	-2
Vacant	0	4	0	-4
Total	308	308	338	

Validation of results

After the 42nd general election, 258 electoral districts had completed the validation of results by October 21. Five electoral districts completed the validation more than 7 days after polling day, and 12 electoral districts required their validation dates to be postponed because ballot boxes took longer than expected to arrive at the office of the returning officer. The last validation was completed in Nunavut on November 9.

Recounts

Judicial recounts took place in six electoral districts: Edmonton Mill Woods, Barrie–Springwater–Oro-Medonte, Montmagny–L'Islet–Kamouraska–Rivière-du-Loup, Regina–Lewvan, Hochelaga and Desnethé–Missinippi–Churchill River. In all six cases, the second-place candidate made an application for the recount, which was granted by a judge. One application for a recount was presented by a candidate in the Longueuil–Saint-Hubert electoral district, but the judge denied the application.

There were no automatic judicial recounts requested by returning officers, as the difference between the number of votes cast for the first- and second-place candidates was more than one one-thousandth of the total votes cast in each of the 338 electoral districts.

In the case of Regina–Lewvan, the judge terminated the judicial recount after two days at the request of the candidate who applied for the recount.

In all five completed recounts, the difference between the vote totals of the first- and second-place candidates changed without any consequence to the final result. It changed by 13 votes in Edmonton Mill Woods, by 22 votes in Barrie–Springwater–Oro-Medonte, by 3 votes in Montmagny–L'Islet–Kamouraska–Rivière-du-Loup, by 41 votes in Hochelaga and by 11 votes in Desnethé–Missinippi–Churchill River.

The media applied to attend the recount in Edmonton Mill Woods, Montmagny–L'Islet–Kamouraska–Rivière-du-Loup and Barrie–Springwater–Oro-Medonte. The judge granted the requests, with some restrictions for the last two cases. The media was not present at the other recounts.

For the judicial recount results, see Table 9 in the Appendix.

Contested elections

As of December 4, 2015, one candidate had contested an election. On November 23, an application to contest an election was submitted to the Superior Court of Québec for the electoral district of Salaberry–Suroît. The candidate argued mainly that the last electoral boundaries readjustment process was unconstitutional and illegal, and that this affected the results of the election in Salaberry–Suroît. The candidate is asking the court to annul the election in that electoral district.

Enquiries and complaints from Canadians

In all, Elections Canada received 1,353,700 calls during the 2015 general election. Of those callers, about 160,000 used the self-service options in Elections Canada's automated voice response system to obtain information without the assistance of a call agent. National call centre agents answered 254,500 calls, local offices across the country took another 916,200 calls, and agents supporting voting by special ballot handled 17,500 calls.

The agency proactively asked electors to provide their feedback on all aspects of their voting experience. New online feedback forms were made available on Elections Canada's website and promoted through all its communications channels, particularly on social media. From August 2 to November 6, Elections Canada received some 40,600 written communications, of which about 11,000 were complaints. As of January 4, 7,700 of those complaints had been closed and 3,300 remained open.

Concerns raised by Canadians about the voting experience will be further analyzed and used to improve the process.

The majority of complaints related to voter experience at the polls, including the service provided by poll workers, the location of polling places, long lineups (especially at advance polls) and the voting process itself. Less common were complaints about the administration of the election, including complaints about poll worker employment; voter registration (including online registration); the list of electors; and the activities of political entities (i.e. parties and candidates), mostly related to campaigning and campaign signs.

Some election workers also filed complaints over delays in receiving payment. As of December 16, 2015, nearly all election workers had been paid. There were some delays where manual intervention or confirmation with returning officers or workers was required.

Elections Canada will thoroughly analyze complaints to identify trends, areas for improvement in service delivery and possible recommendations moving forward, which will be discussed in the retrospective report.

Report on accessibility

In February 2014, Elections Canada launched an Advisory Group for Disability Issues to provide advice on initiatives for the 2015 general election. The group also helped to identify the best ways to inform people with disabilities of when, where and the ways to register and vote. The Advisory Group's work built on consultations held in 2011–2012 with several organizations representing people with disabilities. These organizations also assisted Elections Canada by sharing election information with their networks during this election.

In its effort to continually improve access for electors with disabilities, Elections Canada invested significant effort to identify accessible polling places. It used 35 criteria, 15 of which were mandatory. The criteria were developed in consultation with the disability community. The accessibility of polling places was published on the voter information card and, for the first time, more detailed information on the accessibility of polling places was available on Elections Canada's website. For the 2015 election, 96 percent of polling places met all 15 mandatory criteria (which includes level access), while 1.7 percent provided level access, but did not meet the other 14 criteria and could not be modified. These efforts were complemented with improved training for election workers and modernized accessibility feedback mechanisms for electors and workers alike.

Your riding: Votre circonscription: Leeds–Grenville	
Election day Monday, October 19, 9:30 a.m. – 9:30 p.m. Oxford-on-Rideau Public School 50 Water Street Oxford Mills	Poll no. Bureau n° 138
This site meets 15 accessibility criteria. Visit elections.ca for details.	Ce lieu répond à 15 critères d'accessibilité. Visitez elections.ca pour obtenir des détails.
Advance voting days October 9, 10, 11 and 12, noon – 8:00 p.m. North Grenville Municipal Centre 285 Country 44 Road Kemptville	Poll no. Bureau n° 610
Wheelchair accessible. Call 1-866-241-7765 to ensure this site meets your needs.	Accessible aux fauteuils roulants. Appelez au 1-866-241-7765 pour vérifier ce lieu.
Other ways to vote <ul style="list-style-type: none">Go to any Elections Canada office by 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, October 13, orVote by mail. Deadlines apply. Visit elections.ca or call us.	Autres façons de voter <ul style="list-style-type: none">Allez à n'importe quel bureau d'Élections Canada avant 18 h, le mardi 13 octobre, ouVotez par la poste. Il y a des dates limites. Visitez elections.ca ou appelez-nous.
Accessibility / Accessibilité If you need a language or sign language interpreter, or other assistance, call us before 6:00 p.m. on Thursday, October 15. Find more information on accessibility at elections.ca . Si vous avez besoin d'un interprète gestuel ou linguistique ou d'un autre service, appelez-nous avant 18 h, le jeudi 15 octobre. Pour plus d'information sur l'accessibilité, allez à elections.ca .	
Elections Canada / Élections Canada Open 7 days a week / Ouvert 7 jours sur 7 TD Canada Trust Building B-133 King Street West Brockville ON K6V 6Z1 TD Canada Trust Building B-133, rue King Ouest Brockville ON K6V 6Z1 1-866-241-7765 TTY / ATS 1-800-361-8935	

Voter information cards gave electors information about their polling places' level of accessibility.

Elections Canada further committed to using polling locations that had an automatic door opener or, where the location did not have such a device, having a staff person at the door during voting hours. Table 10 in the Appendix lists the number of polling locations with automatic door openers.

An accessibility feedback form allowed electors to communicate any accessibility challenges they encountered during the election. Forms were available in hard copy at polling locations and local Elections Canada offices, and online on Elections Canada's website.

As of November 6, 2015, a total of 3,085 accessibility complaints were received, compared with 1,872 in the 41st general election. As with general complaints, the agency proactively asked electors to provide their feedback on any accessibility concerns. The breakdown of complaints is noted in the table below.

Summary of accessibility complaints*		
Accessibility category	Number of complaints	Percentage of total complaints (%)
Parking	701	23
Exterior pathway	331	11
Level access entrances	316	10
Exterior building lighting	118	4
Signage	436	14
Protruding obstacles	112	4
Doors	243	8
Door thresholds	140	4
Hallways	192	6
Location of voting room	433	14
Interior lighting	63	2
Total	3,085	

*As of November 6, 2015.

Election Observation by the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe

In early August 2015, Global Affairs Canada extended an invitation on behalf of the Chief Electoral Officer to the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe to observe the 42nd general election in accordance with the Government of Canada's international commitments. The Organisation works on the political, economic, environmental and human aspects of security. It had last observed a Canadian general election in 2006.

The Organisation sent an independent, six-person election assessment mission to Canada from October 6 to October 22, with the primary objective of assessing the electoral process as a whole. It organized meetings with many Canadian interlocutors, including the Chief Electoral Officer and other officials, to discuss a range of election topics such as operations (including voter registration, advance polls and special ballots), outreach and accessibility (including for women and minorities), the legal framework, complaints and the transmission of results. Elections Canada in turn provided additional information on the electoral system and authorized the mission to observe the conduct of the vote at polling stations, as permitted under the *Canada Elections Act*.

The election assessment mission will issue a recommendations report in early 2016.

Estimated cost of the election

Many factors influence the cost of elections. For the 42nd general election, the preliminary estimated cost is \$443.0 million, approximately \$17.04 for each registered elector. This compares to \$11.94 for the 41st general election. The increase is mainly due to the longer election calendar, an increase of 30 electoral districts following the last redistribution, a fourth day of advance polls, an increased number of election workers due to higher voter turnout, higher pay rates and allowances for election workers, added election worker positions (as discussed in section 2.1), new information technology equipment and telecommunications services for field offices, and inflation. The impact of the longer election calendar on reimbursements to political entities is still unknown as election returns have yet to be filed with Elections Canada.

While spending related to a general election spans several fiscal years, the majority of the costs for the 42nd general election are being incurred in 2015–2016. The following table provides the cost breakdown of the last two general elections.

Cost of general elections (estimated costs as at December 2015)

Activity	41st General Election ¹ 36-day calendar 308 electoral districts (May 2011) Actuals (\$ millions)	42nd General Election 78-day calendar 338 electoral districts (October 2015) Preliminary estimate (\$ millions)
Conducting the election – includes fees and allowances to returning officers and election workers; and cost of printing ballots and lists of electors, leasing local Elections Canada offices and polling places, shipping election material, running local and national communications campaign, hiring temporary staff, and deploying IT infrastructure and telecommunications	182.8	311.4 ²
Preparing for the election – includes activities conducted in the electoral districts and Elections Canada's offices in Gatineau such as recruiting and training returning officers and their key staff, replenishing election material and supplies, conducting local office readiness checks, and procuring IT infrastructure for returning officers; 2015 general election costs also include implementation of the new electoral boundaries	46.5	64.9 ³
Subtotal	229.3	376.3
Reimbursement of election expenses to candidates and political parties (The 42nd general election estimates have not been adjusted for a longer election period.)	60.4	66.7 ⁴
Total (\$ millions)	289.7	443.0²
Cost per elector (dollars)	11.94	17.04

¹ Actual costs for the 41st general election have been redistributed between the activities to be comparable to those of the 42nd general election.

² The cost increase between these elections is mainly due to an additional 30 electoral districts, a fourth day of advance polls, a longer election period, increased pay rates, an increased number of workers, new IT systems and equipment, and inflation.

³ The cost increase is mainly due to the implementation of the new electoral boundaries and new IT systems and equipment, a longer readiness period compared to the last minority government, and inflation. Starting with the 42nd general election, for reporting purposes, the cost to maintain the National Register of Electors is no longer included in the cost of general elections as it is part of Elections Canada's ongoing operations.

⁴ The \$66.7 million partial reimbursement of election expenses to eligible candidates and eligible political parties, as well as subsidies to candidates' auditors, is a preliminary estimate based only on past election results. The estimates have not been adjusted for a longer election period, in which spending limits were adjusted proportionally to the campaign's length by amendments to the *Canada Elections Act*, as election returns for this election have yet to be filed with Elections Canada. Candidates' official agents must submit audited returns of their election expenses and contributions within four months of election day (by February 19, 2016), while a registered political party must submit an audited report on its election expenses within eight months of election day (by June 19, 2016).

3. Communications and Outreach Campaign

Elections Canada launched a comprehensive communications and outreach campaign to inform Canadians about the 2015 election and position the agency as the trusted source of voting information. Using plain language and more visual elements than in the past, the campaign focused on getting important messages out to Canadians at the right time during the election calendar so they would be ready to vote. It delivered messages about voter registration, the four ways to vote and identification requirements.

The “Ready to Vote” campaign was designed to connect with Canadians at large, the majority of whom are registered to vote at their current address. It was also important to reach target groups who are known to face barriers to voting. People in these groups are less likely to be registered and receive a voter information card (VIC); are generally less aware of the electoral process and ways to vote; and, in many cases, do not have the necessary identification. For the 42nd general election, these outreach target groups were Aboriginal electors, electors with disabilities, electors from ethnocultural groups, electors who are homeless, seniors living in long-term care facilities, youth and students.

A number of other considerations were taken into account when developing the campaign, including:

- Importance of having electors register before election day – Elections Canada aimed to encourage more electors to register in advance. Registered electors receive a VIC that tells them when and where to vote. An up-to-date list of electors also makes the voting process smoother for both voters and poll workers. The campaign used outreach, social media and advertising to promote the online voter registration service in the months before the election, particularly targeting first-time voters and electors who had recently moved.
- Changes to voter identification requirements – With new restrictions on voter identification and public debate about these changes, Elections Canada needed to clarify the requirements in its communication products. For many electors, the attestation process that replaced vouching and the exclusion of the VIC as a piece of identification made it more difficult to prove their address. The campaign placed an emphasis on reaching out to affected groups.
- Numerous sources of voting information during an election – Post-election surveys from 2011 confirm that Elections Canada is the most trusted source of information on registration and voting. However, the agency shares the stage with media, political parties, candidates, civic groups and electors themselves. The campaign made it easy for people and organizations to share Elections Canada’s digital and print products so they could spread accurate information.

A wide variety of products, formats and channels maximized the campaign’s reach. These included outreach programs; digital communications, including social media accounts and an election-specific website; a multimedia advertising campaign; direct mail; news media; a public enquiries service; and civic education for pre-voters.

42nd General Election Electoral Reminder Program



Multimedia, universally
branded communication
campaign



Reaching multiple
audiences



Rolled out in
electoral phases

**Ready
to vote**



elections.ca
4 million visits on election day



Shareable Tools
Infographics, videos, suite of
downloadable information products



Advertising
TV, radio, print, out of home and digital



**Outreach and
Stakeholder Engagement**
Partnered with **59** organizations
reaching out to their communities



25.3 million
Voter Information Cards
sent to registered electors



1,201
**Community
Relations Officers**
working with youth, seniors, Aboriginal,
homeless and ethnocultural communities



15.2 million
Information Brochures
sent to households across Canada



Media Relations
4,955 calls answered
33 news releases and media advisories
808 interviews



Social Media
17.7 million TWITTER impressions
13.1 million FACEBOOK reach
700,000 YOUTUBE views



Public Enquiries
1.4 million calls
40,600 written enquiries or complaints



Infographic on the Electoral Reminder Program for the 42nd general election.

Outreach Programs

Elections Canada used national and local programs to provide information on registration and voting to its outreach target groups.

At the national level, the agency worked with organizations representing these groups to distribute voter information products, expand the reach of the agency's social media messages, promote online voter registration and monitor outcomes. Starting in spring 2015, a total of 59 organizations helped to distribute more than 11 million hard-copy information products and held 105 events to inform target groups on when, where and the ways to register and vote. Social media connections expanded the distribution of this information to an estimated 1.5 million electors. These organizations included Apathy Is Boring, Samara, CNIB, People First of Canada, Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, Native Women's Association of Canada and the Assembly of First Nations. The complete list of organizations can be found on Elections Canada's website.

Elections Canada collaborated with Samara Canada on its Vote PopUp program for 2015. With the downloadable Vote PopUp kit, community groups could recreate a polling place to foster interest in the election and demystify the voting process for first-time voters. Elections Canada provided ballot boxes, posters and voter information products to support the program. Over 300 community groups were involved in Vote PopUp activities in varied locations such as a homeless shelter in Calgary, a settlement agency in Toronto, a mobile library in Ottawa and a farmers' market in Vancouver.

At the local level, community relations officers delivered information to outreach target groups. They set up kiosks, made presentations, hosted discussion groups, distributed information products, and liaised with administrators of relevant organizations or facilities. Returning officers hired a total of 1,201 community relations officers for the 42nd general election, compared with 863 for the 41st general election, including 233 community relations officers to reach electors with disabilities.



Infographic on Samara Canada's election activities.

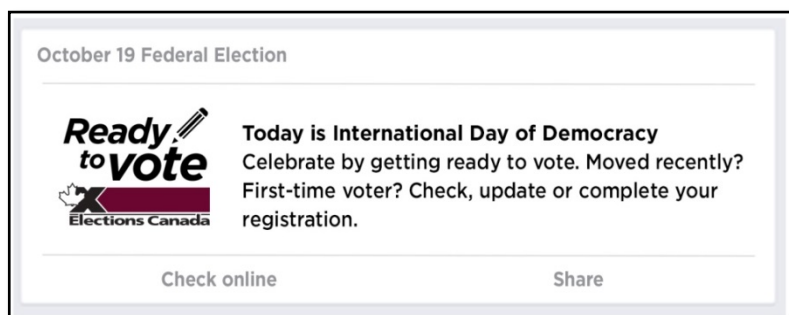
As part of outreach to Aboriginal communities, Elders and youth worked at polling places on election day to help explain the voting process, answer general questions and provide interpretation services. In total, 285 Aboriginal Elders and youth were hired for the 42nd general election, compared with 303 for the 41st general election.

Table 4 in the Appendix lists the number of community relations officers and Aboriginal Elders and youth hired for the 40th, 41st and 42nd general elections.

Digital Communications

Social media

This was the first time the agency used social media to provide electors with information about registration and voting. Its Twitter, Facebook and YouTube channels, launched in advance of the election, made it easier for Elections Canada and its followers to share digital voter information products. Twitter and Facebook were vehicles to respond to questions from the public, point them to specific information on the website, or refer them to the toll-free phone number or online complaints form.

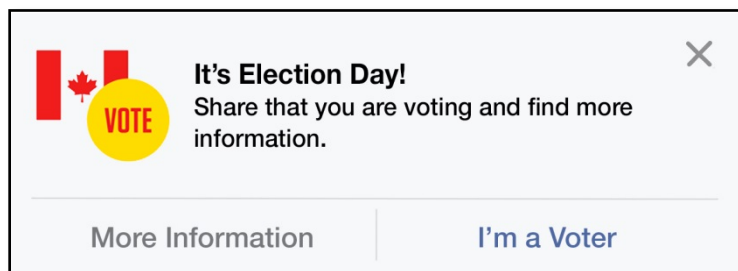


Facebook message posted on the International Day of Democracy.

On September 15, the International Day of Democracy, Elections Canada partnered with Facebook for a voter registration blitz as part of Canada's Democracy Week. Some 44,400 users successfully confirmed their information through the online voter registration service – the most transactions in a single

day since the system's launch in 2014. As well, 1,328 users added themselves to lists of electors and 5,310 updated their address.

On election day, Facebook users could click on "I'm a Voter" in their news feeds and have it appear as a message in their friends' feeds. Some 12,422,158 users were reached in this way, and 814,373



Facebook message posted on election day.

people shared that they were voters. Users could also click a button for more information and be directed to the elections.ca website; over 150,000 people clicked on the button.

received messages in their news feed). The agency's Twitter messages earned 17.7 million impressions. Its videos on YouTube were viewed 700,000 times.

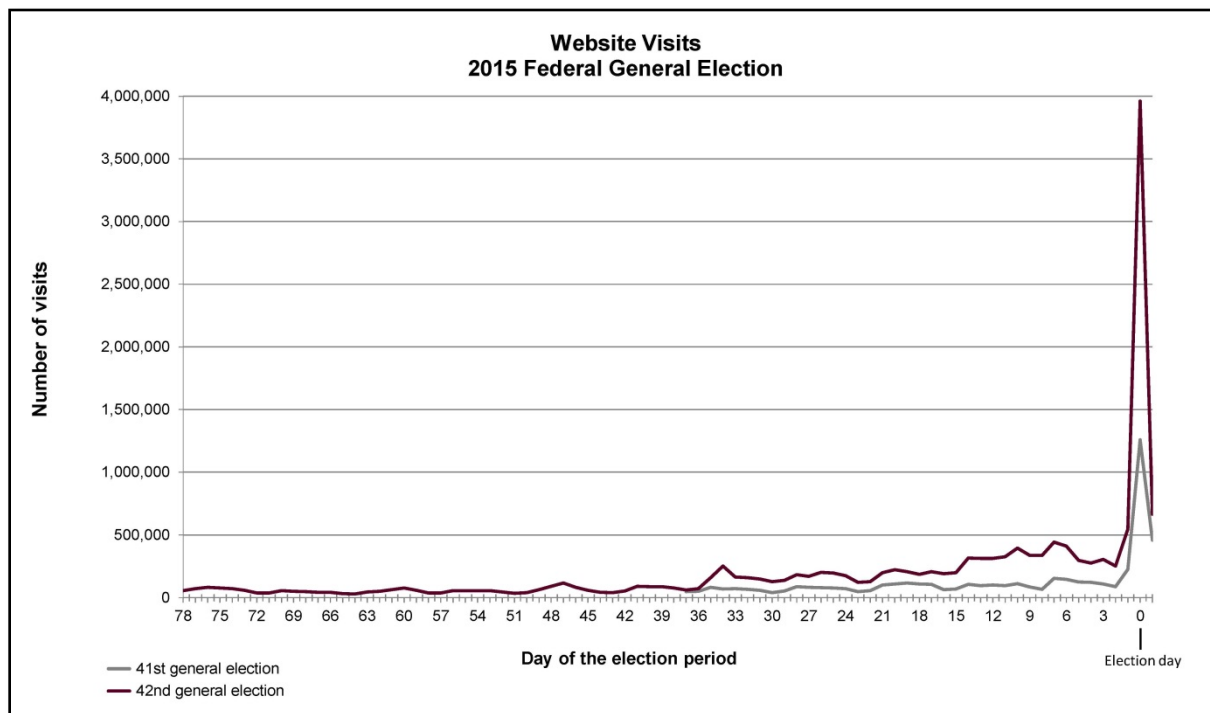
Elections Canada's Facebook posts reached 13.1 million users (based on the number of people who

Elections.ca

The agency launched a new election-specific website in early August 2015 to put voter services front and centre – namely, the online voter registration service and the voter information service. The latter showed electors when and where they could vote based on their address, and provided information on the accessibility of their polling place.

From the home page, electors could learn about the ways to vote, identification requirements, and voting as a student or for the first time. They could access shareable voter information products, such as videos and infographics that made it easier for electors and groups to spread the word about voting. Two key documents were published online in 31 heritage and 12 Aboriginal languages: the voter identification requirements and a voter's guide.

The elections.ca website received a record 16 million visits during the election period, with 4 million visits on election day. Typically, visits to the website double from one general election to the next; however, the number of visits tripled in 2015 compared to the 2011 general election. On advance voting days and election day, mobile users accounted for 50 to 61 percent of visits. Live election results were published starting at 7:00 p.m. (Eastern Time) on October 19, with over 560,000 visits that night.



Elections Canada partnered with Google to make sure that people searching for voting information were directed to elections.ca as the authoritative source. Beginning in September, up-to-date information about when and ways to register and vote appeared directly on Google.ca when users searched for that information. This was supported with promotional days for voter registration on September 20 and for election day on October 19 on Google sites, including an election day Google Doodle and YouTube Yoodle.

Multimedia Advertising

The multimedia advertising campaign was delivered in phases that followed the important dates, themes and activities in the election calendar:

- Phase 1 – Registration (September 1 to October 1)
- Phase 2 – Receipt of voter information cards (October 2 to 6)
- Phase 3 – Advance polls (October 7 to 12)
- Phase 4 – Election day (October 13 to 19)

The campaign had an ongoing presence in mainstream, digital and specialty media. English and French mainstream ads were in 96 daily newspapers and 612 community newspapers, and carried on 708 radio and 63 TV stations. Ads also ran on 502 websites and in specialty media.

Students and youth were targeted with ads on 489 campus digital screens, 19,187 buses serving downtown and campus areas, and 2,317 Tim Horton's TV screens. Ads played on youth-oriented radio stations and during popular TV shows;

they appeared on frequently visited websites and social media.



Print ad for Phase 3 – Advance polls.

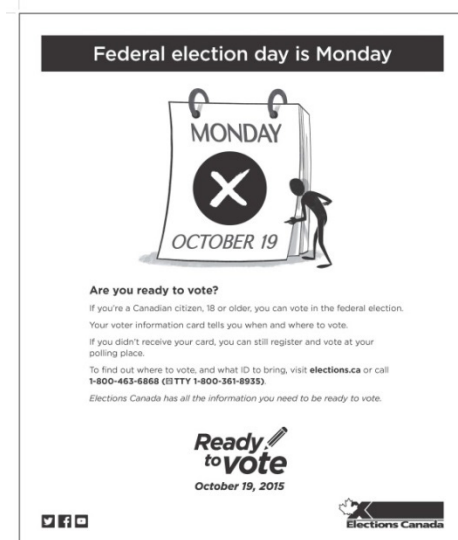
To help reach Aboriginal electors, ads ran in 47 print publications, on 102 radio stations, 4 TV networks and 6 websites. Print, radio and TV ads also appeared in Inuktitut in the North.

Ethnocultural audiences were

reached through 100 print publications (30 languages), 62 radio stations (31 languages), 19 TV stations (26 languages) and 374 websites (12 languages).



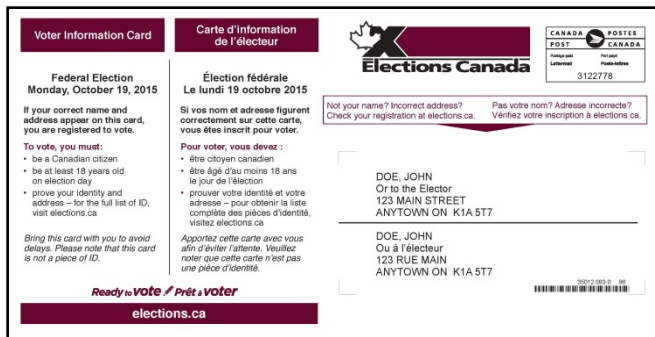
Print ad for Phase 1 – Registration.



Print ad for Phase 4 – Election day.

The advertising encouraged electors to check their registration; advised them to consult their VIC for when and where to vote; informed them of advance voting options at polling places and local offices; and promoted election day, reminding electors to bring identification and advising them that they could still register when they went to vote.

Direct Mail



Voter information card.

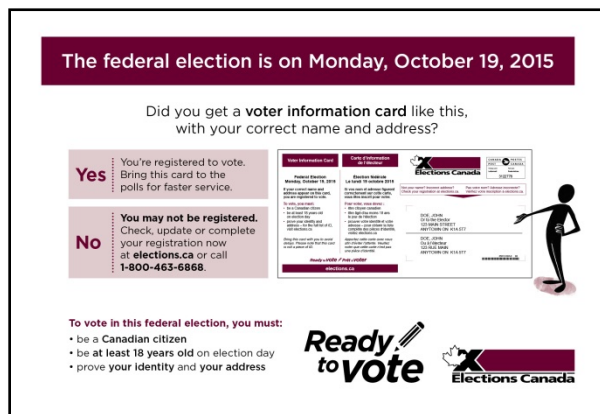
local Elections Canada office. The agency mailed 25.3 million VICs by September 25 to electors whose names appeared on the preliminary lists of electors. It subsequently mailed about 300,000 revised VICs to advise electors of changes to polling place information and about 715,000 VICs to electors who were newly registered or had updated their name or address.

As in past elections, a VIC was mailed to all registered electors. It provided them with personalized information on when and where to vote, the accessibility of their polling places, and how to contact their



Rolls of blank, uncut voter information cards (credit: J. Larocque).

A week after sending the VIC, Elections Canada distributed a general information brochure to every household that provided residents with information about voter eligibility, registration, identification requirements (including the list of accepted identification) and the ways to vote. It prompted electors to contact Elections Canada if they had not received a VIC or received one with errors. The agency distributed nearly 15.2 million bilingual brochures to households across the country and 20,000 trilingual (English, French and Inuktitut) brochures to households in Nunavut.



Information brochure.

News Media

Elections Canada used its network of 14 national and regional media advisors as well as its permanent media relations advisors to keep in direct contact with the Canadian media and get information to electors. From the start of the election to the end of judicial recounts, this team responded to 4,955 calls from journalists.

The vast majority of questions – some 4,640 – concerned routine matters of election administration, such as candidate nominations, ways to vote, identification requirements, advance polls, voter turnout and judicial recounts. Specific to this election were questions about the effect of revised electoral district boundaries and legislative changes in 2014, online registration (with a particular emphasis on VIC-related issues), and voting options for Canadians living abroad.



News conference with the Chief Electoral Officer, September 14, 2015 (credit: N. Babin-Dufresne).

Elections Canada also initiated calls to the media to provide information on the electoral process. It issued 33 news releases and advisories.

Public Enquiries Services

While local Elections Canada offices were equipped to answer many public enquiries, electors could also contact the agency's national office directly.

The most common way electors accessed the national public enquiries service was through its toll-free telephone number. Callers were connected to an automated voice response system with self-service menus, available 24 hours a day throughout the election period. Those who wished to speak to an agent were connected to a national call centre agent, their local Elections Canada office or a call agent for special ballot voting. Agents answered phones from August 2 to September 7 on weekdays between 9:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. (Eastern Time), with reduced weekend hours, and from September 8 to October 19 between 7:00 a.m. and midnight (Eastern Time) seven days a week.

To handle the high call volumes, Elections Canada retained a private sector partner and renewed an agreement with the Government of Canada's Enquiry Centre. In addition, the Canada Revenue Agency supplied 60 call centre agents on several days during the election, including on election day. Electors could also contact Elections Canada through its website. Online forms made it easy to ask a question, send a compliment or suggestion, file a complaint, or provide feedback on the accessibility of polling places. Other options for contacting the agency were by fax or teletypewriter (TTY).

Civic Education for Pre-voters



A student participates in the 2015 Student Vote program (credit: CIVIX).

As part of its ongoing civic education programming, Elections Canada contracted CIVIX to run the Student Vote parallel election program. From October 13 to 16, elementary and high school students took on the roles of election officers and voted for federal candidates running in their local riding. The vote followed a series of lessons and activities on government, candidates, parties and issues, as well as discussion with family and friends. More than half of all schools in Canada participated, with a record 922,000 students casting a ballot across all 338 ridings.

Conclusion

For the 42nd general election, Elections Canada focused on new initiatives for improving the conduct of the election and on building the foundation for new technologies and online services. The agency is encouraged by the high level of voter engagement.

As next steps, the agency will conduct comprehensive post-election assessments and surveys, and will review the experience of electors, candidates and poll workers to identify lessons learned and areas for improvement. These and other conclusions will be published in a more detailed, retrospective report of the election, along with recommendations for enabling legislative changes to modernize Canada's electoral framework.

Elections Canada looks forward to working with parliamentarians as it prepares for the next general election and seeks to modernize the voting experience for Canadians.

Appendix: Tables

Table 1 – Number of workers hired

Position group	Positions filled* (41st)	Standby or additional (41st)	Active in the election (41st)	Positions filled* (42nd)	Standby or additional (42nd)	Active in the election (42nd)
Additional assistant returning officer (AARO)	128	0	128	171	0	171
Assistant automation coordinator	321	0	321	358	0	358
Assistant returning officer	308	0	308	338	0	338
Automation coordinator	316	0	316	361	0	361
Central poll supervisor	16,541	372	16,149	20,349	798	19,551
Community relations officer	863	0	863	1,201	0	1,201
Deputy returning officer (DRO)	79,049	5,374	73,675	110,847	21,348	89,499
Financial officer	358	0	358	399	0	399
Hospital liaison officer	98	0	98	78	0	78
Information officer	18,801	205	18,596	36,330	1,390	34,940
Interpreter – Aboriginal Elder and Youth Program	303	0	303	285	0	285
Interpreter, language	38	0	38	25	0	25
Inventory clerk (electoral material coordinator)	733	0	733	852	0	852
Judicial recount clerk (support staff at a recount)	202	0	202	0	0	0
Office clerk	8,280	0	8,280	5,502	0	5,502
Office coordinator	522	0	522	587	0	587
Office messenger	774	0	774	1,217	0	1,217
Poll clerk	74,803	365	74,438	98,276	19,225	79,051
Receptionist	1,223	0	1,223	1,678	0	1,678
Recruitment officer	701	0	701	526	0	526
Registration officer	17,551	754	16,797	31,031	1,627	29,404
Returning officer	308	0	308	338	0	338

Table 1 – Number of workers hired (cont.)

Position group	Positions filled* (41st)	Standby or additional (41st)	Active in the election (41st)	Positions filled* (42nd)	Standby or additional (42nd)	Active in the election (42nd)
Revising agent	8,535	0	8,535	8,141	0	8,141
Revision centre clerk	1,152	0	1,152	1,658	0	1,658
Revision supervisor	436	0	436	472	0	472
Special ballot coordinator (SBC)	2,058	0	2,058	2,420	0	2,420
Special messenger	461	0	461	524	0	524
Support staff for office of AARO	58	0	58	252	0	252
Training officer	705	0	705	814	0	814
Witness – validation of results	241	0	241	225	0	225
Assistant recruitment officer	0	0	0	570	0	570
Safety officer	0	0	0	182	0	182
Specific authorizations	0	0	0	1,825	0	1,825
Special Voting Rules Expansion (SVRE) – AARO	0	0	0	76	0	76
SVRE – DRO	0	0	0	45	0	45
SVRE – Information officer	0	0	0	99	0	99
SVRE – Poll clerk	0	0	0	42	0	42
SVRE – Revising agent	0	0	0	117	0	117
SVRE – Safety officer	0	0	0	41	0	41
SVRE – SBC	0	0	0	923	0	923
Total	235,867	7,090	228,777	328,951	44,388	284,563

*With the exception of the positions of returning officer and assistant returning officer, all figures indicate the total number of specific positions filled by election workers during the election period. In some cases, more than one individual was hired to perform a given task – for example, because of staff changes or job sharing. In addition, some workers filled more than one position.

Data as of December 24, 2015.

Table 2 – Confirmed candidates and final registered party election expenses limits

Political affiliation	Confirmed candidates	Final election expenses limit
Conservative Party of Canada	338	\$54,936,320.15
Liberal Party of Canada	338	\$54,936,320.15
New Democratic Party	338	\$54,936,320.15
Green Party of Canada	336	\$54,893,641.14
Bloc Québécois	78	\$13,701,142.80
Libertarian Party of Canada	72	\$12,124,700.22
Marxist-Leninist Party of Canada	70	\$11,912,050.15
Christian Heritage Party of Canada	30	\$4,898,239.42
Rhinoceros Party	27	\$4,491,400.13
Communist Party of Canada	26	\$4,329,275.03
Forces et Démocratie	17	\$2,974,588.03
Animal Alliance Environment Voters Party of Canada	8	\$1,395,378.69
Marijuana Party	8	\$1,373,115.51
Progressive Canadian Party	8	\$1,348,602.29
Pirate Party of Canada	5	\$857,647.34
Democratic Advancement Party of Canada	4	\$653,870.27
Canadian Action Party	3	\$519,188.75
Alliance of the North	1	\$187,385.42
United Party of Canada	1	\$181,305.03
Seniors Party of Canada	1	\$173,730.38
Party for Accountability, Competency and Transparency	1	\$159,274.38
The Bridge Party of Canada	1	\$157,183.71
Canada Party	1	\$119,542.99
Independent	74	
No affiliation	6	
Total	1,792	\$281,260,222.13

Table 3 – Allocation of broadcasting time

Political party	Paid time (min:sec)	Free time* (min:sec)		
		CBC-TV	CBC Radio One	TVA
		SRC-TV	SRC Première chaîne	V Télé
Conservative Party of Canada	107:00	58:30	33:00	17:00
New Democratic Party	78:30	43:00	24:00	12:30
Liberal Party of Canada	45:30	25:00	14:00	7:30
Green Party of Canada	20:30	11:00	6:30	3:30
Bloc Québécois	16:30	9:00	5:00	3:00
Marxist-Leninist Party of Canada	9:30	5:00	3:00	1:30
Christian Heritage Party of Canada	8:30	4:30	2:30	1:30
Libertarian Party of Canada	8:00	4:30	2:30	1:30
Animal Alliance Environment Voters Party of Canada	7:30	4:00	2:30	1:00
Canadian Action Party	7:30	4:00	2:30	1:00
Communist Party of Canada	7:30	4:00	2:30	1:00
Pirate Party of Canada	7:30	4:00	2:00	1:00
Progressive Canadian Party	7:30	4:00	2:00	1:00
Rhinoceros Party	7:30	4:00	2:00	1:00
Marijuana Party	7:00	4:00	2:00	1:00
Party for Accountability, Competency and Transparency	7:00	4:00	2:00	1:00
United Party of Canada	7:00	4:00	2:00	1:00
The Bridge Party of Canada	6:00	3:30	2:00	1:00
Canada Party	6:00	3:30	2:00	1:00
Democratic Advancement Party of Canada	6:00	3:30	2:00	1:00
Forces et Démocratie	6:00	3:30	2:00	1:00
Seniors Party of Canada	6:00	3:30	2:00	1:00
Total (rounded)	390:00	214:00	120:00	62:00

*In the case of the CBC and SRC television and radio stations, the number of minutes shown applies to each station, English and French.

Source: Broadcasting Guidelines for the 42nd General Election, issued August 3, 2015.

Table 4 – Community relations officers, and Aboriginal Elders and youth hired for the 40th, 41st and 42nd general elections

Program	Number of participants		
	40th general election	41st general election	42nd general election
Youth	200	230	230
Ethnocultural	143	129	132
Aboriginal	154	164	169
Homeless	32	40	117
Seniors	N/A	300	314
Accessibility	N/A	N/A	233
Total	529	863	1,201
Aboriginal Elder and Youth Program			
Elders	168	163	151
Youth	181	140	134
Total	349	303	285

Table 5 – Voter registration statistics for the 42nd general election

Province or territory	Electors on preliminary lists	Electors added ¹	Inter-ED address changes ²	Moves within ED ³	Other corrections ⁴	Electors removed ⁵	SVR Group 1 update ⁶	Electors on final lists ⁷
Canada	25,300,686	878,399	901,027	750,602	821,545	1,071,483	39,525	26,044,131
Newfoundland and Labrador	411,871	12,650	10,518	21,011	15,104	12,552	426	422,895
Prince Edward Island	108,943	5,959	3,776	4,348	9,086	4,458	119	114,330
Nova Scotia	723,544	25,851	25,810	28,276	58,509	30,176	1,303	746,221
New Brunswick	587,823	15,881	15,427	20,856	31,455	19,884	786	599,980
Quebec	6,340,616	101,230	214,013	215,007	214,574	255,297	8,169	6,408,054
Ontario	9,449,381	350,794	299,787	191,968	263,676	381,524	13,968	9,730,457
Manitoba	856,940	40,739	36,047	39,668	33,328	43,408	2,385	892,615
Saskatchewan	749,003	37,360	29,049	37,435	23,521	34,742	2,371	782,980
Alberta	2,732,899	135,839	136,609	100,547	67,522	151,682	4,302	2,857,610
British Columbia	3,267,483	146,648	127,213	85,754	102,460	134,810	5,268	3,411,107
Yukon	25,264	1,797	1,034	2,188	1,318	1,137	93	27,050
Northwest Territories	28,795	1,695	1,031	2,175	639	1,276	145	30,388
Nunavut	18,124	1,956	713	1,369	353	537	190	20,444

¹ Electors who did not appear on any lists of electors at the beginning of the election and were added during the election.

² ED = electoral district. Electors who appeared on the lists of electors of one ED at the beginning of the election but changed their address during the election because of a move to another ED.

³ Electors who appeared on the lists of electors of one ED at the beginning of the election and changed their address during the election because of a move to another polling division in the same ED. These figures also include administrative changes the returning officer made to elector records during the election.

⁴ Electors who appeared on a list of electors and requested a correction to an error in their name or mailing address during the election.

⁵ Electors who appeared on a list of electors but were removed because of one of the following: the elector was deceased, the elector requested to be removed, the elector was no longer resident at that address or the elector was not qualified to be on the list (for example, less than 18 years old or a non-citizen). Figures also reflect elector records removed as a result of electors moving to another ED during the election and other duplicates removed during the election, including those removed during the preparation of the final lists of electors.

⁶ SVR = Special Voting Rules. This column indicates the increase in the number of Group 1 electors registered under the SVR (Canadian electors temporarily residing outside Canada, Canadian Forces electors and incarcerated electors) during the election.

⁷ The total number of electors on the final lists is the sum of electors on the preliminary voters lists, electors added, inter-ED address updates and SVR Group 1 updates, minus removed records.

Table 6 – Number of polling stations		
Type of polling station	41st general election	42nd general election
Ordinary	66,146	67,911
Stationary	64,477	66,026
Mobile	1,669	1,885
Advance	4,706	4,946
Total	70,852	72,857

Table 7 – Special Voting Rules ballots for the 41st and 42nd general elections

	Election	Electors on the lists	Valid ballots	Rejected ballots	Total ballots cast	Voter turnout (%)	Ballots received late
Group 1	41st						
Canadian Forces		65,198	26,116	551	26,667	40.9	451
Incarcerated		43,159	15,670	1,537	17,207	39.9	12
International		10,733	6,069	263	6,332	59.0	822
Subtotal		119,090	47,855	2,351	50,206	42.2	1,285
	42nd						
Canadian Forces		64,049	28,431	816	29,247	45.7	291
Incarcerated		44,296	20,673	1,689	22,362	50.5	0
International		15,603	10,707	294	11,001	70.5	994
Subtotal		123,948	59,811	2,799	62,610	50.5	1,285
Group 2	41st						
Local		207,981	203,990	2,059	206,050	99.1	N/A*
National		36,323	27,510	1,269	28,778	79.2	1,625
Subtotal		244,304	231,500	3,328	234,828	96.1	1,625
	42nd						
Local		N/A*	425,175	4,066	429,241	N/A*	N/A*
National		140,191	122,163	4,787	126,950	90.6	3,104
Subtotal		N/A*	547,338	8,853	556,191	N/A*	N/A*
Grand total	41st	363,394	279,355	5,679	285,034	78.4	2,910
	42nd	N/A*	607,149	11,652	618,801	N/A*	4,389

*The number of electors on the list and special ballots received late is not available for local electors.

Table 8 – Voter turnout for the 41st and 42nd general elections

Province or territory	41st general election, 2011			42nd general election, 2015			Increase or decrease (-) from the 41st general election		
	Electors on final lists	Ballots cast	Voter turnout (%)	Electors on final lists	Ballots cast	Voter turnout (%)	Electors on final lists	Ballots cast	Voter turnout (%)
Canada	24,257,592	14,823,408	61.1	26,044,131	17,711,983	68.0	1,786,539	2,888,575	6.9
Newfoundland and Labrador	414,779	218,166	52.6	422,895	257,389	60.9	8,116	39,223	8.3
Prince Edward Island	108,456	79,511	73.3	114,330	87,868	76.9	5,874	8,357	3.6
Nova Scotia	733,094	454,266	62.0	746,221	526,069	70.5	13,127	71,803	8.5
New Brunswick	592,818	392,208	66.2	599,980	444,459	74.1	7,162	52,251	7.9
Quebec	6,130,307	3,853,120	62.9	6,408,054	4,303,758	67.2	277,747	450,638	4.3
Ontario	9,033,266	5,556,608	61.5	9,730,457	6,572,378	67.5	697,191	1,015,770	6.0
Manitoba	831,041	493,340	59.4	892,615	603,240	67.6	61,574	109,900	8.2
Saskatchewan	723,814	456,501	63.1	782,980	553,792	70.7	59,166	97,291	7.6
Alberta	2,509,390	1,400,674	55.8	2,857,610	1,937,228	67.8	348,220	536,554	12.0
British Columbia	3,109,917	1,879,304	60.4	3,411,107	2,374,317	69.9	301,190	495,013	9.2
Yukon	24,341	16,124	66.2	27,050	20,385	75.4	2,709	4,261	9.2
Northwest Territories	29,020	15,655	53.9	30,388	19,077	62.8	1,368	3,422	8.9
Nunavut	17,349	7,931	45.7	20,444	12,023	58.8	3,095	4,092	13.1

Table 9 – Judicial recounts

Electoral district	Candidate's name (political affiliation)	Number of votes cast	Candidate's name (political affiliation)	Number of votes cast	Valid votes cast in electoral district	Variance* (number of votes)	Variance* (%)	Type of situation
Edmonton Mill Woods	Amarjeet Sohi (Liberal)	20,423	Tim Uppal (Conservative)	20,331	49,517	92	0.19	Requested
Barrie–Springwater–Oro-Medonte	Alex Nuttal (Conservative)	21,091	Brian Tamblyn (Liberal)	21,005	50,535	86	0.17	Requested
Montmagny–L'Islet–Kamouraska–Rivière-du-Loup	Bernard Généreux (Conservative)	14,274	Marie-Josée Normand (Liberal)	14,002	49,243	272	0.55	Requested
Hochelaga	Marjolaine Boutin-Sweet (NDP-New Democratic Party)	16,034	Marwah Rizqy (Liberal)	15,534	51,904	500	0.96	Requested
Desnethé–Missinippi–Churchill River	Georgina Jolibois (NDP-New Democratic Party)	10,319	Lawrence Joseph (Liberal)	10,237	30,213	82	0.27	Requested

*Variance refers to the difference between the number of votes cast for the two leading candidates.

Table 10 – Number of polling locations with automatic door openers

Province or territory	Number of locations used	Number of locations with automatic door opener	Locations with automatic door opener provided (%)
Newfoundland and Labrador	535	59	11
Prince Edward Island	132	43	33
Nova Scotia	789	165	21
New Brunswick	510	88	17
Quebec	3,102	1,060	34
Ontario	6,592	4,227	64
Manitoba	779	259	33
Saskatchewan	780	172	22
Alberta	1,390	525	38
British Columbia	1,476	455	31
Yukon	27	16	59
Northwest Territories	44	8	18
Nunavut	29	1	3
Total	16,185	7,078	44

Table 11 – Adaptations of the *Canada Elections Act* during the 42nd general election pursuant to subsection 17(1)

The Chief Electoral Officer may, for the sole purpose of enabling electors to exercise their right to vote or enabling the counting of votes, adapt the *Canada Elections Act* (the Act) under subsection 17(1) to address an emergency, an unusual or unforeseen circumstance, or an error. These adaptations are only applicable for the period of the election during which they are made and for the 30 days after polling day.

Statutory provision	Explanatory notes
Section 95	<p>Purpose: Extended the deadline for sending notices of confirmation of registration in the electoral district of Northwest Territories.</p> <p>Explanation: Section 95 of the Act provides that each returning officer must send, not later than the 24th day before polling day, a notice of confirmation of registration to electors whose names appear on the preliminary lists of electors. Due to the fact that polling places must be identified before these notices can be sent to electors and that the holding of municipal elections in the Northwest Territories on the same day as federal polling day made it difficult to identify satisfactory polling places for the federal election, an adaptation to postpone this deadline was necessary. The adaptation provided that, despite section 95, the deadline for the returning officer to send the notices of confirmation of registration was extended to the 19th day before polling day in the electoral district of Northwest Territories.</p>
Section 120	<p>Purpose: Allowed the establishment of a second polling station for a polling division in the electoral district of Timmins–James Bay (Ontario).</p> <p>Explanation: In the Ontario electoral district of Timmins–James Bay, polling division 03 was affected by flooding. Some residents of the polling division were evacuated to and temporarily resided in the town of Kapuskasing, while others remained in the affected community. The polling station for polling division 03 was open to serve the electors who remained, and the adaptation permitted a second polling station to be opened in Kapuskasing to allow the evacuated electors from polling division 03 to vote. The adaptation also directed the returning officer to report the results of polling division 03 by adding together the results from the statements of the vote from the first and second polling stations.</p>
Section 120	<p>Purpose: Allowed the establishment of polling stations for polling divisions of the electoral district of Churchill–Keewatinook Aski (Manitoba) outside that electoral district.</p> <p>Explanation: In the Manitoba electoral district of Churchill–Keewatinook Aski, polling divisions 081 and 088 were affected by flooding. Electors from these polling divisions were evacuated to and temporarily resided in Winnipeg, and they were unable to easily travel back to their respective communities from Winnipeg to exercise their right to vote. The adaptation permitted the returning officer to establish separate polling stations for polling divisions 081 and 088 in the electoral district of Winnipeg Centre to allow the evacuated electors temporarily residing in Winnipeg to vote.</p>
Section 122	<p>Purpose: Allowed returning officers who could not locate suitable premises for a polling station within a polling division to establish a polling station for that division in an adjacent electoral district.</p> <p>Explanation: Section 122 of the Act permits a returning officer who is unable to secure suitable premises for a polling station within a polling division to locate the polling station in an adjacent polling division within the same electoral district. However, in the Saskatchewan electoral district of Desnethé–Missinippi–Churchill River, the New Brunswick electoral districts of Fundy Royal and Tobique–Mactaquac, and the Newfoundland and Labrador electoral district of St. John's East, suitable premises could not be found in the same district, but could be found in an adjacent electoral district. The adaptation permitted the relevant returning officers to use these alternative premises.</p>

Section 151	<p>Purpose: Permitted the use of photocopied ballots at advance and ordinary polling stations where necessary.</p> <p>Explanation: Due to the fact that advance or regular polling stations had the potential to run out of ballots printed pursuant to section 116 of the Act because of higher than expected voter turnout in this election, and that deputy returning officers risked being unable to replenish those ballots before the close of advance or regular polls, an adaptation was made to permit the use of photocopied ballots. The adaptation provided that an elector given a photocopy of a ballot would vote in the same way as any other elector under section 151 of the Act and that the photocopied ballot would be treated, for the purposes of the Act, as an ordinary ballot.</p>
Section 168	<p>Purpose: Allowed the establishment of a second polling station for advance polling district 604 in the electoral district of Toronto–St. Paul’s (Ontario).</p> <p>Explanation: In the Ontario electoral district of Toronto–St. Paul’s, the original location of the polling station for advance polling district 604 was changed, but notices of confirmation of registration indicating the change were not sent to all concerned electors. To avoid confusion for electors about where to vote, the adaptation permitted the establishment of a second polling station for advance polling district 604 in the electoral district of Toronto–St. Paul’s at the exact location where the original polling station was to be established. The adaptation also directed the returning officer to report the results of advance polling district 604 by adding together the results from the statements of the vote from the first and second polling stations.</p>
Section 168	<p>Purpose: Allowed the establishment of a second polling station for an advance polling district in case of a high volume of electors.</p> <p>Explanation: Section 168 of the Act does not permit the establishment of a second polling station for an advance polling district. Due to high voter turnout at advance polls in this election, which resulted in significant wait times at several polling stations, an adaptation was made to enable returning officers to establish a second polling station for an advance polling district, if necessary, with the permission of the Chief Electoral Officer. The adaptation also directed returning officers to report the results of the advance polling district by adding together the results from the statements of the vote from both polling stations.</p>
Section 289	<p>Purpose: Permitted the counting of advance poll ballots before the close of polls on polling day.</p> <p>Explanation: Subsections 289(3) and 289(1) of the Act mention that no person may proceed with a count of the votes cast at an advance poll before the close of polling stations on polling day. Due to the fact that results from the count risked being delayed by the unusually high number of votes cast at advance polls in this election and by an insufficient number of available election workers, an adaptation was made. The adaptation provided that, if 500 or more votes were cast at an advance polling station, the returning officer could authorize the count of these votes to begin two hours before the close of polling stations on polling day.</p>

Table 12 – Adaptations of the *Canada Elections Act* pursuant to section 179 that were made and/or used during the 42nd general election

The Chief Electoral Officer may, for the purpose of adapting any provision of the Special Voting Rules in Part 11 (sections 177 to 282) of the *Canada Elections Act* (the Act), issue instructions to execute the intent of those sections in a particular circumstance. In general, adaptations by instruction address issues with the Special Voting Rules process that are not contemplated by the Act, or fill gaps in the Act that would prevent electors who are otherwise qualified to vote from casting their ballot. These adaptations can be made applicable for the purposes of a particular election only, or can be made to continue to apply for future elections until rescinded by the Chief Electoral Officer.

Statutory provision	Explanatory notes
Section 190 (Adaptation made at a previous election)	<p>Purpose: Authorized the Special Voting Rules administrator to extend the voting period for Canadian Forces electors who were performing military duties.</p> <p>Explanation: A number of Canadian Forces electors would not have been able to exercise their right to vote during the voting period set out in the Act because of their military duties. The Act had to be adapted to allow these electors to vote.</p>
Section 221 (New adaptation – for the purposes of the 42nd general election only)	<p>Purpose: Permitted the sending of special ballots to certain non-resident electors who indicated their intention to return to Canada to reside or provided proof of the application of an exception to the five-year limit after the original deadline established by the Chief Electoral Officer.</p> <p>Explanation: Section 221 of the Act states that an elector may vote by special ballot if his or her application for registration and special ballot is received in Ottawa by 6:00 p.m. on the 6th day before polling day and his or her name is entered in the international register. The adaptation instructed the Special Voting Rules administrator, despite section 221, to a) reinstate in the international register, without receiving new completed applications, the names of certain non-resident electors who had been deleted, and b) to send them a special ballot voting kit. These electors indicated their intention to return to Canada to reside or provided proof of the application of an exception to the five-year limit after the deadline of September 12, 2015, established in a letter signed by the Chief Electoral Officer (as a consequence of which their names were deleted from the international register), but before the deadline set for registration in the international register (6:00 p.m. ET on the 6th day before polling day – October 13, 2015).</p>
Section 227 (New adaptation – for the purposes of the 42nd general election only)	<p>Purpose: Delayed the sending of special ballots to certain non-resident electors whose names were in the international register but who had not indicated an intention to return to Canada to reside or provided proof of the application of an exception to the five-year limit.</p> <p>Explanation: Subsection 227(1) of the Act requires that the Chief Electoral Officer send special ballot voting kits to electors whose names are entered in the international register after the issue of the writs for an election. The adaptation instructed the Special Voting Rules administrator, despite subsection 227(1), to not send special ballots to non-resident electors who had not indicated an intention to return to Canada to reside or provided proof of the application of an exception to the five-year limit, unless and until the information or proof required in a letter that the Chief Electoral Officer sent on July 31, 2015, was received from the elector. The Chief Electoral Officer's letter was necessary because of an Ontario Court of Appeal ruling given just before the start of the election. On May 2, 2014, the Ontario Superior Court of Justice ruled that the provisions of the Act requiring electors outside Canada to demonstrate an intention to return to Canada to reside and applying the five-year limit were of no force and effect. As a result, the Chief Electoral Officer stopped asking non-resident electors if they intended to return to Canada to reside and if they had lived outside Canada for five consecutive years or more. On July 20, 2015, the Ontario Court of Appeal reversed the Superior Court decision, thereby reinstating the requirement for an intention to return to Canada to reside and the five-year limit.</p>

Section 237 (Adaptation made at a previous election)	<p>Purpose: Allowed a second special ballot voting kit to be issued by the returning officer, with the prior approval of the Special Voting Rules administrator, to an elector who did not receive his or her special ballot voting kit by mail and who provided a statement signed under oath to that effect.</p> <p>Explanation: The Act does not allow for a second special ballot voting kit to be issued to an elector by the returning officer. The adaptation was required in order to allow the elector to exercise his or her right to vote by special ballot.</p>
Section 242 (New adaptation)	<p>Purpose: Allowed electors to be given a new special ballot to vote again, if they wished it, in cases where they had improperly marked their special ballot because of erroneous information from an election officer.</p> <p>Explanation: Some electors voting by special ballot were given erroneous information that caused them to improperly mark their ballots. There is no provision in the Act allowing for an outer envelope to be set aside and for an elector to be given a new special ballot in cases where the elector has improperly marked his or her special ballot because of erroneous information from an election officer. The adaptation permitted electors to request a new special ballot on which they could write the name of the candidate of their choice. It provided for the outer envelope containing the improperly marked special ballot to be set aside unopened.</p>
Section 251 (New adaptation – for the purposes of the 42nd general election only)	<p>Purpose: Allowed some incarcerated electors in the electoral district of Thunder Bay–Rainy River (Ontario) to vote after they were unable to do so on account of errors made by a liaison officer.</p> <p>Explanation: The liaison officer in the Thunder Bay Correctional Centre in the Ontario electoral district of Thunder Bay–Rainy River required electors in that institution who wished to complete an application for registration and special ballot to first send him a written request to complete the application. The Act does not contain such a requirement. As a consequence of this error, some electors were not permitted to vote because the liaison officer had not received their request by polling day in that establishment (October 9, 2015). The adaptation instructed the returning officer in the electoral district of Thunder Bay–Rainy River to administer a second vote on October 16, 2015, in that correctional centre for electors who were not permitted to vote on October 9, 2015.</p>
Section 252 (Adaptation made at a previous election)	<p>Purpose: Permitted special ballot officers to set aside special ballots cast by incarcerated electors, and to omit their names from the list of electors, if the incarcerated electors specified the correctional institution as their place of ordinary residence.</p> <p>Explanation: Incarcerated electors who vote using the Special Voting Rules are required to vote in the electoral district of their place of ordinary residence. The Act directs how that place of ordinary residence is to be determined. It cannot be the correctional institution in which the elector is imprisoned. Nevertheless, on the application for registration and special ballot, some incarcerated electors indicated the correctional institution as their place of ordinary residence. The special ballot envelopes had to be set aside to avoid having the ballot counted in the wrong electoral district. The Act contained no provision by which this could be done.</p>

Section 267 (New adaptation)	<p>Purpose: Allowed Canadian Forces electors who voted before the prescribed voting period because of a deputy returning officer's error to have their ballot set aside and to vote again during that period.</p> <p>Explanation: Holding a vote in a Canadian Forces unit before the prescribed voting period may cause the unit's electors to vote without the complete and final list of confirmed candidates. As such, ballots cast early by these electors risk being voided if their chosen candidate is not confirmed or resigns before the closing date for nominations. Section 267 of the Act does not provide for special ballot officers to set aside an outer envelope containing a special ballot when a Canadian Forces elector has voted outside the voting period. This adaptation gives the Special Voting Rules administrator the power to set aside special ballots of Canadian Forces electors who cast their vote early because of a deputy returning officer's error, for the purpose of allowing these electors to vote again during the voting period.</p>
Section 267 (Adaptation made at a previous election)	<p>Purpose: Allowed national electors who had been registered by election officials to vote by special ballot in the wrong electoral district to have their original special ballot set aside and to vote again.</p> <p>Explanation: The adaptation permitted special ballot envelopes of national electors who were registered and who voted in the wrong electoral district to be set aside unopened, and permitted these electors to vote again. Without the adaptation, the special ballot envelopes would have been set aside unopened, but the electors would not have been permitted to vote again.</p>
Sections 246, 247 (Adaptation made at a previous election)	<p>Purpose: Extended the statutory process for voting under the Special Voting Rules in provincial correctional institutions to federal correctional institutions.</p> <p>Explanation: Because the Act formerly prohibited voting by incarcerated electors in federal institutions, it does not describe a process whereby such electors can vote. Since the 2002 decision of the Supreme Court of Canada in <i>Sauvé</i> struck down the prohibition, the Act has had to be adapted in every federal election to extend the statutory process for voting in provincial correctional institutions to federal correctional institutions.</p>
Section 277 (New adaptation – for the purposes of the 42nd general election only)	<p>Purpose: Allowed electors in the electoral district of Notre-Dame-de-Grace-Westmount (Quebec) whose applications for registration and special ballot had been misplaced to have their special ballots counted.</p> <p>Explanation: In the Quebec electoral district of Notre-Dame-de-Grâce–Westmount, the applications for registration and special ballot of three electors were misplaced by the returning officer. As a result, those electors' ballots could not be counted pursuant to the verification and counting process in sections 276 and 278 of the Act, which provide that the elector's information on the outer envelope should correspond with the information on his or her application for registration and special ballot. The adaptation instructed the returning officer in that electoral district, and the deputy returning officers and poll clerks in that office, to not set aside the ballots where an application for registration and special ballot had been misplaced. It instructed them instead to compare the electors' information on the outer envelopes to the information about them in the <i>Record of Special Ballots Issued to Electors Voting in Their Electoral District</i>, so that their special ballots could be counted.</p>

Section 277 (New adaptation – for the purposes of the 42nd general election only)	<p>Purpose: Allowed electors in the electoral districts of Delta (British Columbia) and Northwest Territories who did not complete applications for registration and special ballot before a special ballot was issued to them to have their ballots counted.</p> <p>Explanation: In the electoral districts of Delta (British Columbia) and Northwest Territories, some election officers erroneously did not require some electors to complete an application for registration and special ballot before issuing them a special ballot. As a result, those electors' ballots could not be counted pursuant to the verification and counting process in sections 276 and 278 of the Act, which provide that the elector's information on the outer envelope should correspond with the information on his or her application for registration and special ballot. The adaptation instructed the returning officer for the electoral district of Delta, the person acting in the place of the returning officer for the electoral district of Northwest Territories, and the deputy returning officers and poll clerks in those offices, to not set aside a ballot where the elector's application was not completed due to erroneous instructions given by an election officer. It instructed them instead to compare the electors' information on the outer envelopes to the information about them in the <i>Record of Special Ballots Issued to Electors Voting in Their Electoral District</i>, so that their special ballots could be counted.</p>
Section 277 (New adaptation)	<p>Purpose: Allowed electors who did not place the inner envelope in an outer envelope, or the special ballot in an inner envelope and an outer envelope, to be given a new special ballot to vote again.</p> <p>Explanation: Section 277 of the Act does not provide for the deputy returning officer to set aside an inner envelope that is not contained in an outer envelope, or to set aside a special ballot that is not contained in an inner and an outer envelope. The adaptation permitted the setting aside of the special ballot in the above-mentioned circumstances so that, if the identity of the elector could be ascertained, he or she could be given a new special ballot to vote. Without the adaptation, the special ballots would not have counted, but the electors would not have been permitted to vote again.</p>
Section 277 (Adaptation made at a previous election)	<p>Purpose: Allowed local electors who had been registered by election officials to vote as local electors by special ballot in the wrong electoral district to have their original special ballots set aside and to vote again.</p> <p>Explanation: The adaptation permitted the special ballot envelopes of local electors who were registered and voted in the wrong electoral district to be set aside unopened and permitted these electors to vote again. Without the adaptation, the special ballot envelopes would have been set aside unopened, but the electors would not have been permitted to vote again.</p>