

# **Voting on Campus**

## **Report on the Survey of Campus Administrators for the 43rd General Election**

Research Division

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## Acknowledgments

This research was undertaken by Elections Canada's Research division, on behalf of the Alternative Voting Methods and Operational Outreach (AVMOO) directorate within the Operations and Field Governance branch. The Research division led the research design and analysis, while an external research firm, Advanis Inc., managed the data collection.

Ongoing collaboration, consultation, and expertise-sharing between the Research division and the AVMOO team enabled the co-creation of the survey and report.

## Background and Objectives

During the 2019 general election, to help increase access to voting for youth, Elections Canada launched the Vote on Campus program. This program, which had been piloted in 2015, resulted in the establishment of 121 Vote on Campus offices on 109 post-secondary campuses at 99 post-secondary institutions and in 86 electoral districts across the country. These voting places were open for five consecutive days, from October 5 to 9, 2019. Anyone was able to cast their vote at one of these voting places, whether they were a student or not.

To support the development and evaluation of the Vote on Campus program, two surveys were designed: the Survey of Campus Electors and the Survey of Campus Administrators. This report pertains to the Survey of Campus Administrators; this is the first time that this survey has been conducted.

Campus administrators are individuals who helped set up a voting place at those post-secondary institutions that were participating in the Vote on Campus program during the 2019 general election. The Survey of Campus Administrators aimed to evaluate their experiences. The results of this survey may be used to inform future Elections Canada programs and services as they relate to campus administrators.

The survey included questions around the following themes:

- Role(s) in setting up the voting place (including where)
- Experiences setting up the voting place (level of difficulty)
- Timing of communications and set-up
- Satisfaction with Elections Canada staff and communications
- Likelihood of being involved in setting up a voting place in the future

## Methodology

The experiences of campus administrators were evaluated using an online survey, which took respondents an average of 3.8 minutes to complete.

To distribute the survey, an email list was produced of all campus administrators who had provided their contact information to an Elections Canada officer in the lead-up to the election. This list contained 106 email addresses for campus administrators at 94 post-secondary institutions participating in the Vote on Campus program. Survey invitations and reminders were sent by email to this list.

The survey was in field from October 30, 2019, until November 13, 2019. Of the 106 contacts who had received the email invitation to complete the survey, 43 respondents completed the survey, four respondents recorded that they had not set up a voting place on campus, one respondent began the survey but did not complete it and 58 respondents did not respond. This resulted in a response rate of 42%. Given the sample size, frequencies are reported throughout rather than percentages.

To read the full Methodological Report, containing details of the research sample, fieldwork, data management and other relevant information, click [here](#).

## Key Findings

- Overall, campus administrators were satisfied with their experience of hosting a voting place on campus. Nearly all the respondents (40) indicated that they were either very (27) or somewhat (13) satisfied with their experience. Only three respondents indicated that they were somewhat dissatisfied with their experience.
- Campus administrators reported undertaking multiple tasks to set up the voting place on campus. The most frequently selected tasks were communicating with a returning officer (40), ensuring that the physical space met Elections Canada's requirements (37) and securing lease agreements (30).
- While the majority of campus administrators (31) found it easy to set up the voting place on campus, there were 11 respondents who experienced difficulties. The most commonly reported were:
  - Securing lease agreement(s) for the voting place (4)
  - Finding a voting place that met Elections Canada's requirements (3)
  - Having communications issues with returning officers, Elections Canada headquarters or post-secondary staff (3)
- Despite some reported difficulties in setting up the voting place, all respondents (43) indicated that they were either very (37) or somewhat (6) likely to host a voting place in future federal elections.

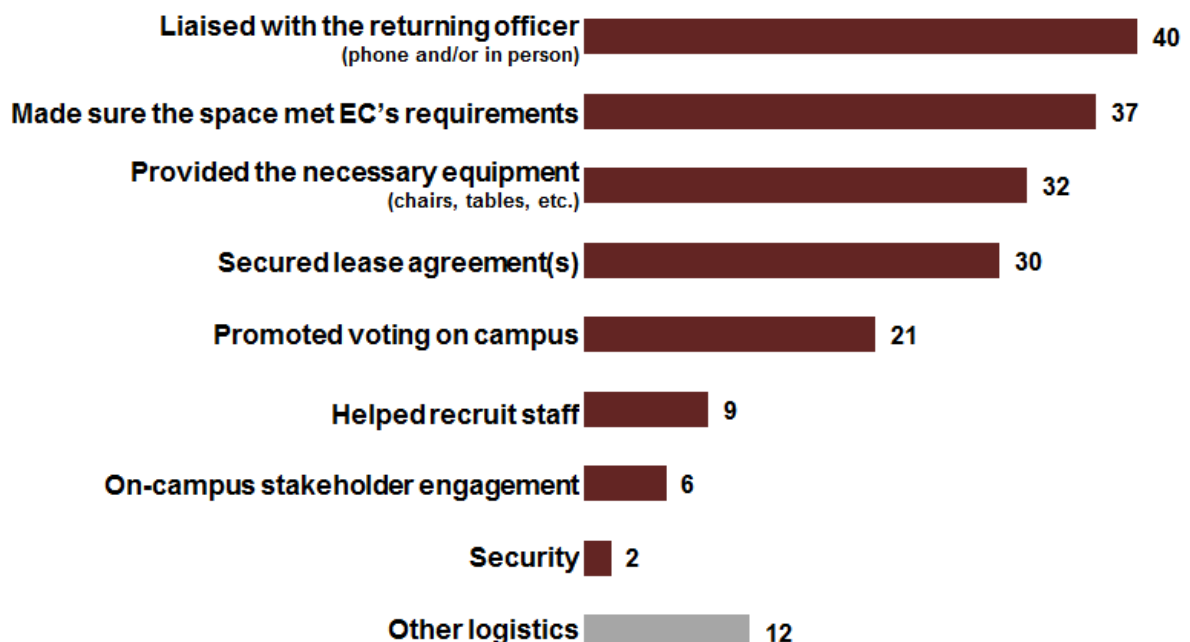
## Detailed Findings

### Experience Hosting the Voting Place on Campus

#### Setting up the voting place

Among the various tasks involved in setting up the voting place, respondents were asked to identify the roles they had played. The graph below describes the tasks carried out by campus administrators. Individuals were permitted to identify more than one role.

#### Tasks involved in setting up the voting place<sup>1</sup>



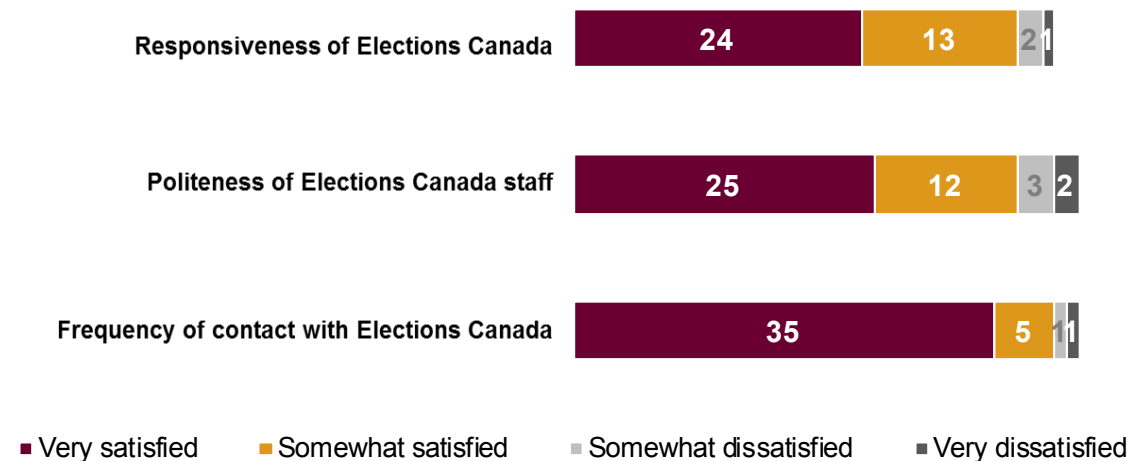
The most frequently selected task involved in setting up the voting place was communicating with a returning officer (40). There was also a focus on the logistical aspects of setting up the voting place, such as ensuring that the physical space met Elections Canada's requirements (37), securing lease agreements (30) and providing the necessary equipment (32). Less attention was placed on promoting voting on campus (21) and recruiting staff (9).

<sup>1</sup> This chart depicts results from Q3 and Q4 combined. Q3 accepted multiple responses, and Q4 was open-ended. Verbatim responses from Q4 were recoded into themes, where applicable.  
Q3. There are various tasks involved in organizing a voting place on campus. What role(s) did you play to help run the voting place? Base:  $n = 43$ ; all respondents.  
Q4. What other role(s) or task(s), if any, did you take on to help run the voting place? Base:  $n = 43$ ; all respondents.

## Satisfaction with Elections Canada contact

The majority of campus administrators indicated being satisfied with their experience with Elections Canada staff with regard to frequency of contact, politeness and responsiveness to their needs.

Satisfaction with setting up the voting place on campus, in terms of:<sup>2</sup>



Among the three areas of contact with Elections Canada, campus administrators most frequently indicated being satisfied (40) when referring to the frequency of contact, with 35 respondents being very satisfied and five respondents being somewhat satisfied. This compares with 37 respondents who were satisfied with the responsiveness of Elections Canada to their needs and 37 respondents who were satisfied with the politeness of Elections Canada staff.

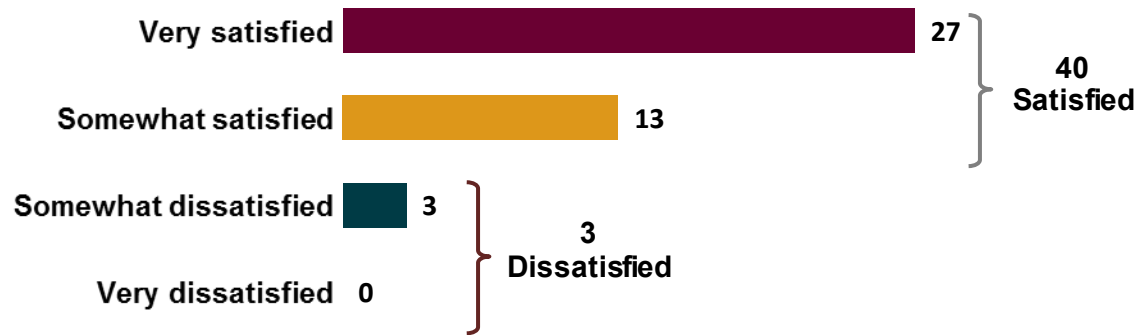
<sup>2</sup> Q9. When thinking about your experience setting up the voting place on campus, how satisfied are you with...  
Base:  $n = 43$ : all respondents.

1. The frequency of contact that you had with Elections Canada staff?
2. The politeness of the Elections Canada staff you were in contact with?
3. The responsiveness of Elections Canada to your needs?



### Overall satisfaction with hosting a voting place on campus<sup>3</sup>

In general, campus administrators were satisfied with their experience of hosting a voting place on campus. Nearly all respondents (40) indicated that they were either somewhat or very satisfied with their experience. Only three respondents indicated that they were somewhat dissatisfied with their experience.



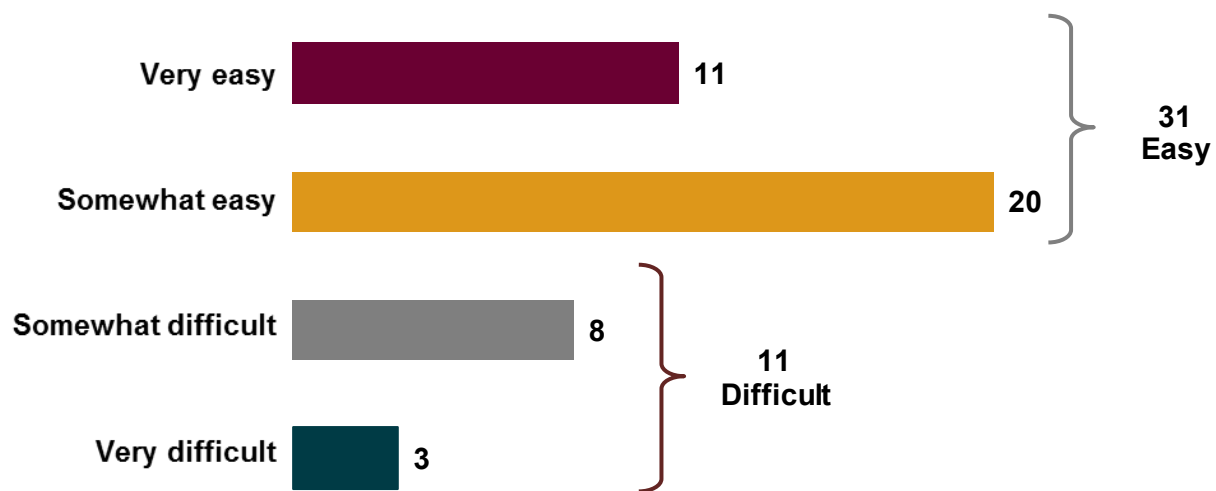
<sup>3</sup> Q10. Overall, how satisfied were you with your experience of helping to host a voting place on campus?  
Base:  $n = 43$ : all respondents.

## Challenges Encountered

### Ease or difficulty of setting up the voting place<sup>4</sup>

Overall, the majority of campus administrators (31) found it easy to set up the voting place on campus: 11 indicated that they found it very easy, and 20 indicated that it was somewhat easy.

A total of 11 respondents indicated that they found it difficult to set up the voting place on campus, while eight found it somewhat difficult, and three found it very difficult.



<sup>4</sup> Q5. Overall, how easy or difficult was it to set up the voting place on campus? Base:  $n = 43$ : all respondents.

## Difficulties encountered setting up the voting place

A total of 11 campus administrators indicated that they had experienced difficulties setting up the voting place.<sup>5</sup>

Difficulties encountered setting up the voting place	Frequency
Securing lease agreement(s)	4
Finding a suitable place that met Elections Canada's requirements	3
Communications issues	3
Lack of awareness	2
Long process, with too many disruptions	1
Delivering and picking up technological equipment from Canada Post	1

The two types of difficulties most frequently identified were securing a lease agreement (4) and finding a location to host the voting place that met Elections Canada's requirements (3).

The table above includes new categories that emerged when campus administrators gave verbal responses. Two of these categories were communications issues (3) and lack of awareness (2).

Communications issues included:

- Liaising with the returning officer by phone and/or in person
- Receiving guidance from Elections Canada in a timely manner
- Having difficulties communicating with post-secondary staff about Internet connectivity and difficulties understanding what was needed

Lack of awareness included:

- Being unaware of the need to promote voting on campus until a few days before opening the voting place
- Being unaware of the need to recruit student staff until a few days before opening the voting place

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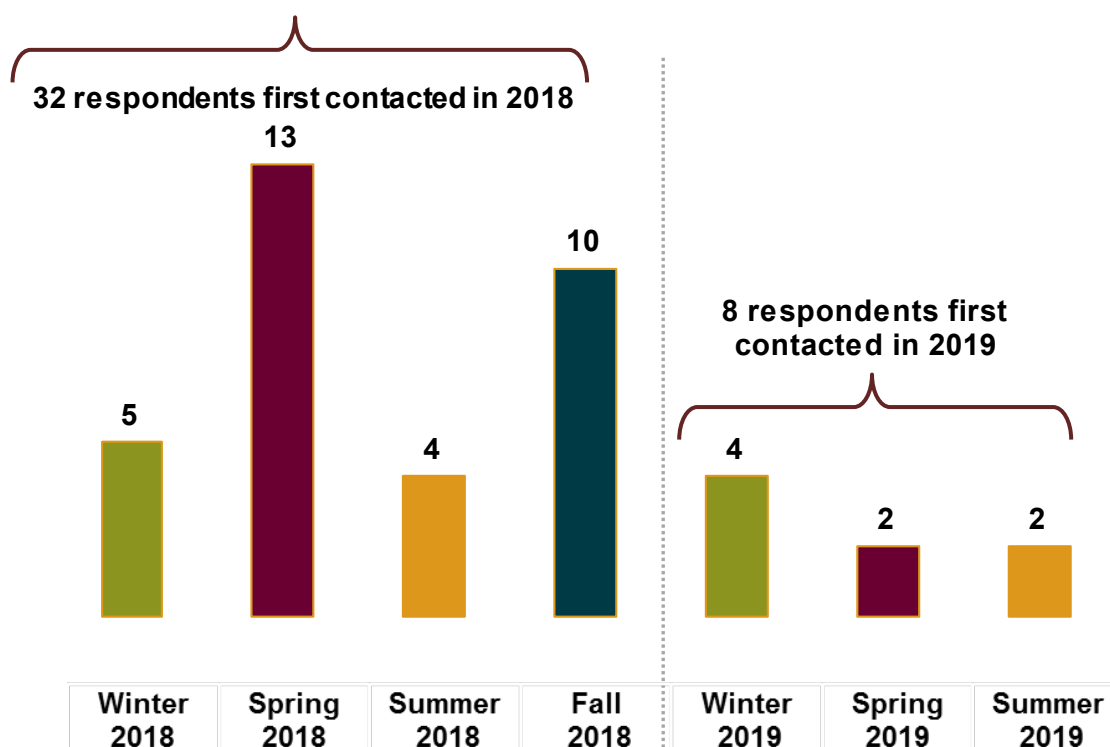
<sup>5</sup> Q6. What was difficult about setting up the voting place? Base:  $n = 11$ : all respondents who indicated experiencing difficulty setting up the voting place. Multiple responses accepted. The table above combines the results from the list of responses provided in Q6 in addition to recoded verbatim responses provided by respondents in the "Other" category.

## First contact by Elections Canada and satisfaction with preparation time

Overall, campus administrators were contacted by Elections Canada staff at least one year before the 2019 general election.

The majority of campus administrators (32) were contacted in 2018 by a staff member at Elections Canada about hosting a voting place on campus for 2019. Of those who were contacted, Elections Canada mostly reached out to campus administrators in the spring of 2018. Of the campus administrators who were first contacted by Elections Canada in 2019, only two were contacted in the summer of 2019 before the general election.

### Initial contact by Elections Canada<sup>6</sup>



When thinking about the timing of their first contact from Elections Canada, virtually all campus administrators (40) indicated that they had had enough time to properly set up the voting place on campus.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Q7. Approximately when were you first contacted by someone at Elections Canada about hosting a voting place? Base:  $n = 43$ : all respondents.

<sup>7</sup> In your opinion, did being contacted in <<Q7.text>> give you enough time to properly set up the voting place on campus? Base:  $n = 40$ : respondents who selected a response in Q7 aside from "DK/Other".

## Reflections on Hosting the Voting Place on Campus

### Likelihood of hosting a voting place on campus for future general elections<sup>8</sup>

If given the opportunity, all respondents (43) indicated that they would be likely to host a campus voting place in future federal elections, with 37 respondents being very likely and six respondents being somewhat likely.

### Importance of having a voting place available for students on campus<sup>9</sup>

When asked about the importance of having a voting place available to students on campus, all (43) campus administrators indicated that this was either very (38) or somewhat (5) important.

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<sup>8</sup> Q11. If given the opportunity, how likely would you be to host a campus voting place in future federal elections? Base:  $n = 43$ : all respondents.

<sup>9</sup> Q15. In your opinion, how important is it to have a voting place available to students on campus? Base:  $n = 43$ : all respondents.