



Office of the
Chief Electoral Officer
of Canada

2020–21

Departmental Results Report



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Chief Electoral Officer of Canada

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From the Chief Electoral Officer

I am pleased to present the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer's 2020–21 Departmental Results Report detailing the progress against commitments made in the agency's 2020–21 Departmental Plan. This report contains the results for the entire portfolio, that is, for both Elections Canada and the Commissioner of Canada Elections.

During the reporting period, Elections Canada focused its efforts on improving services for electors and political entities in preparation for the 44th general election; strengthening the security and integrity of elections; implementing changes in support of a strong regulatory framework; and auditing the financial returns of political entities from the 43rd general election.

In 2020–21, the agency, like all other organizations, was confronted with an unprecedented public health crisis, which continues to impact its operations and plans. As a result, the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer reviewed its procedures and internal capacity to prepare for the potential delivery of an accessible, safe, and secure election during the pandemic.

Following careful internal analysis, Elections Canada implemented a series of changes to the way we administer events in order to maintain the safety and integrity of the electoral process. These changes included:

- altering the agency's operations model at the polls and in offices to implement physical distancing and other public health recommendations;
- increasing the capacity and convenience of the vote-by-mail system to meet the potential increase in demand for this service; and
- expanding virtual training to limit the number of in-person interactions.

During the period, we also performed audits on a large number of financial returns from the 43rd general election from candidates, political parties, and third parties. The political financing audit program helps to ensure compliance with the requirements of the *Canada Elections Act*ⁱ and contributes significantly to the fairness and transparency of Canadian elections.

In January 2020, the [2020–28 Strategic Plan](#)ⁱⁱ was launched. This plan builds on our past successes, addresses contemporary perspectives, and articulates a vision of the future that includes a vibrant electoral democracy for all Canadians. It is the foundation of our commitment to improve how we deliver on our mandate.

While our immediate goal continues to be maintaining our readiness for electoral events, we look forward to the opportunities and challenges that will arise when we pursue our vision: an electoral democracy that serves all Canadians and that Canadians trust.



Stéphane Perrault
Chief Electoral Officer of Canada

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Results at a Glance

The Office of the Chief Electoral Officer is an independent, non-partisan agency that reports directly to Parliament and is comprised of two entities: Elections Canada and the Office of the Commissioner of Canada Elections.

Throughout 2020–21, the COVID-19 outbreak was an unprecedented challenge that resulted in the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer needing to navigate a broad range of interrelated issues, ranging from the need to introduce health and safety measures for electors to reorienting operations. As the 43rd general election resulted in a minority government, the agency's overarching focus was to finalize close-out activities and resume preparations to deliver the next general election that could have been called at any time.

As part of its ongoing readiness planning, the agency developed a new operational approach to delivering an election in the context of a pandemic. In response to the resulting [Special Report of the Chief Electoral Officer: Administering an Election during the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)ⁱⁱⁱ published on October 5, 2020, [Bill C-19, An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act \(COVID-19 response\)](#),^{iv} was introduced in Parliament. The bill proposed temporary rules for the administration of an election during the pandemic.

What Funds Were Used?

The agency's total actual spending for 2020–21 was \$208,830,161.

Who Was Involved?

The agency's total workforce (full-time equivalents) for 2020–21 was 956.

Key Results Achieved

- ▶ Elections Canada finalized its [2020–28 Strategic Plan](#),^v which guides the organization's activities over the next eight years as it pursues its vision: an electoral democracy that serves all Canadians and that Canadians trust. To achieve this vision and maximize the impact of its efforts, the agency focused on the following four commitments:
 - proactively listening to and engaging with Canadians and political entities to continually improve programs and services;
 - using and sharing information to enable a better understanding of the electoral process;
 - working collaboratively and leveraging expertise to enable a strong electoral democracy; and
 - investing in sound management to build a sustainable organization.
- ▶ As part of its mandate, Elections Canada must always be prepared to conduct a federal general election, by-election or referendum. Therefore, as the agency began wrap-up activities following the 43rd general election, which resulted in a minority government, it also began preparations to be ready for the next election that may be called at any time. Preparations for the 44th general election included refining the data, tools, processes, and systems used during the last election. Elections Canada also delivered two by-elections on October 26, 2020: Toronto Centre (Ontario) and York Centre (Ontario).

- ▶ On July 1, 2020, Elections Canada celebrated its 100th anniversary. To mark the occasion, the agency published a third edition of [A History of the Vote](#).^{vi} This publication presents an account of the struggles and reforms that have shaped Canada’s electoral system and provides a current chronology of the franchise and voting practices in Canada.

For more information on Election Canada’s plans, priorities and results achieved, see the “[Results: What We Achieved](#)” section of this report.

Results: What We Achieved

Electoral Administration and Oversight

The Office of the Chief Electoral Officer is the independent and non-partisan agency responsible for the electoral administration and oversight of federal elections and referendums. It is headed by the Chief Electoral Officer of Canada.

Description

The Office of the Chief Electoral Officer's core responsibility is to prepare for, deliver, and report on federal elections and referendums in accordance with the legislative framework, while ensuring integrity throughout the electoral process.

Results

In 2020–21, the agency continued to improve its services in order to enable Canadians to exercise their democratic rights to vote and to be a candidate in a fair, secure, and transparent electoral process.

Elections Canada remained focused on the initiatives needed to prepare for a federal general election, by-election, or referendum throughout the 2020–21 fiscal year. Maintaining readiness for these events is an integral part of the agency's mandate. At no time is this more essential than in the period following a general election that results in a minority government.

- ▶ Elections Canada began preparing for the delivery of the next event as soon as the 43rd general election ended. Notably, the following initiatives and deliverables were completed to ensure optimal operations if an election were called:
 - the creation of a General Election Pandemic Intelligence task force to support the health and safety of electors, election administrators, and election workers by ensuring that plans were informed by local health advice and took local health conditions and requirements into account;
 - the establishment of specific guidelines for pandemic voting activities at polling places and service centres;
 - updated training programs for election administrators and election workers;
 - adjusted voting procedures for vulnerable voters such as those in long- and short-term care institutions, Indigenous communities, and COVID-19 quarantine centres; and
 - the procurement of personal protective equipment.

The completion of these tasks enabled the agency to reach a level of electoral readiness that would have allowed voters to exercise their right to vote and to run for office safely if an election had occurred in 2020–21.

- ▶ Elections Canada also reviewed and refined its polling station operations and staffing models to make sure it would be able to meet the needs of Canadians across the country if an election were called during the pandemic. Anticipating that a larger number of electors will want to vote by mail, the agency improved its systems and processes to serve mail-voting electors and made plans to add capacity to its local offices. The agency established business requirements and developed, tested, and implemented an enhanced [Online Voter Registration Service](#),^{vii} which allows electors to register online to receive vote-by-mail ballots. The online registration service was also enhanced with an easy-to-use geo-locator service so that electors with non-standard addresses may identify their

place of residence on a map in order to complete their registration. In addition, Elections Canada made social distancing possible and facilitated recruitment efforts for returning officers by developing a new service model that deployed a single election officer per polling station to serve voters.

- ▶ The agency’s mandate includes making sure that all eligible electors have the information they need to register and vote. Elections Canada thus developed the next iteration of its national advertising Voter Information Campaign. The campaign included a general election website, messages given on the agency’s social media channels, and shareable digital information products and videos. These communications were further supported by a new framework to address inaccurate and misleading information about the federal electoral process. Together, these elements worked to position the agency as the official source of information on registration and voting in a general election. They also included information on the health and safety measures in place to vote safely. The campaign would have ensured that electors had access to all the facts they needed about when, where, and the ways to register and vote, if a general election had been called in 2020–21.
- ▶ Elections Canada proposed amendments to the [Federal Elections Fees Tariff of the Canada Elections Act](#).^{viii} The tariff sets the fees, costs, allowances, and expenses to be paid to election administrators and election workers to ensure they are compensated fairly. The amendments were needed to address issues in three areas: aligning the tariff with the recent changes to the [Canada Elections Act](#)^{ix} brought about by the [Elections Modernization Act](#);^x addressing the gaps between the growing job demands, the challenging working conditions in which they are to be met and the compensation levels available; and making a number of technical amendments, such as renumbering to improve clarity, reflecting current drafting norms, and addressing inconsistencies in terminology. The revised tariff was approved by the Administrator in Council on February 22, 2021, and published in the [Canada Gazette](#)^{xi} on March 3, 2021.
- ▶ The agency continued to maintain the National Register of Electors (NROE) by collaborating with various electoral management bodies and other key partners. To uphold Canadians’ trust in the electoral process, Elections Canada strives to have elector information that is as current and accurate as possible in advance of an election. In 2020–21, the NROE achieved a coverage¹ of 95.9% and an accuracy² of 91.9%.
- ▶ To further improve the accuracy of the information in the NROE, Elections Canada continued to collaborate with other government departments. Collaboration with Statistics Canada enabled Elections Canada to develop independent and improved quality indicators for different demographic groups in the coverage and accuracy of addresses. Additionally, a new agreement with the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation allowed Elections Canada to receive residential addresses based on recent housing developments across Canada.
- ▶ To simplify the process to include youth in the NROE when they turn 18, and enable youth to pre-register, the agency continued to implement the Register of Future Electors

¹ Coverage is the proportion of eligible electors (Canadian citizens aged 18 and over) who are registered to vote.

² Accuracy is the proportion of registered electors who are listed at their current address.

(ROFE). Pre-registration aims to increase the accuracy and coverage in the NROE of Canadians in the 18–34 age group, where the gap between the estimated number of electors and that of registered electors is the largest. The introduction of a new question³ on the 2020 Canada Revenue Agency T1 tax return resulted in a significant increase in the amount of pre-registrations.

In addition to these preparations, Elections Canada successfully delivered two by-elections on October 26, 2020: Toronto Centre (Ontario) and York Centre (Ontario). Conducting these by-elections gave the agency an opportunity to assess its adaptive pandemic measures. By implementing physical distancing and other public health guidelines at polling places and Elections Canada offices, the agency delivered both by-elections safely and securely.

The electoral process is protected by many safeguards to ensure the security and integrity of federal elections. Elections Canada paid close attention to its environment and continually adapted to new and emerging threats. The following initiative supported this work:

- ▶ Elections Canada maintained partnerships with lead security agencies to protect its digital assets and monitor the information environment for threats and incidents that could affect the administration of the election. Regular, as well as ad hoc, engagement meetings were held with other departments in response to incidents requiring federal agency support. Throughout 2020–21, Elections Canada remained well-positioned to anticipate, detect, and respond to emerging security concerns related to the administration of elections by strengthening the agency's cyber-security posture.

The agency also focused on the following initiatives and activities to maintain trust in the electoral process:

- ▶ To support transparency and fairness in the electoral process, the agency conducted its post-election audits on the financial returns of candidates, political parties, and third parties who participated in the 43rd general election. Due to delays relating to the pandemic, not all audits of candidate returns were completed by the original 12-month deadline established by the Chief Electoral Officer. However, by the end of February 2021, Elections Canada had completed 82% of the planned audits. The agency also implemented a risk-based audit approach for audits of campaign returns, depending on their associated risk level.
- ▶ Elections Canada continued to oversee the audit of poll officials, which is required at any general election or by-election. In 2020–21, the agency successfully supported the delivery of the [Independent audit report on the performance of the duties and functions of election officers – October 26, 2020 By-elections](#).^{xiii} This work included the establishment of new COVID-19 health measures for auditors.
- ▶ Due to the pandemic, Elections Canada worked to redesign and deliver a virtual training program for electoral district associations. Online training sessions were offered to financial agents and chief executive officers of electoral district associations, as part of

³ "As a Canadian citizen, do you authorize the Canada Revenue Agency to give your name, address, date of birth, and citizenship to Elections Canada to update the National Register Electors or, if you are aged 14 to 17, to update the Register of Future Electors? [...]
Your information in the Register of Future Electors will be included in the National Register of Electors once you turn 18 and your eligibility is confirmed. Information from the Register of Future Electors can be shared only with provincial and territorial electoral agencies that are allowed to collect future elector information. In addition, Elections Canada can use information in the Register of Future Electors to provide youth with educational information about the electoral process."

the agency's commitment to help political entities comply with the political financing regime of the *Canada Elections Act*.^{xiii}

- ▶ The agency completed a comprehensive [Retrospective Report on the 43rd General Election of October 21, 2019](#).^{xiv} The report evaluates the performance of specific election activities using information and data collected from various sources and reflects findings from the [Independent audit report on the performance of the duties and functions of election officers](#).^{xv}
- ▶ The agency also released a [Special Report of the Chief Electoral Officer: Administering an Election during the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)^{xvi} that proposed changes to the *Canada Elections Act*, should an election take place during the pandemic.
- ▶ Elections Canada continued to mobilize stakeholders with new education and information products shared with educators and used at conferences, professional development events, and [Inspire Democracy](#)^{xvii} workshops and conferences. The agency leveraged its existing learning website, [Elections and Democracy](#),^{xviii} to strengthen its digital offering for educators and students. A new digital learning hub was created with teacher- and student friendly information on the electoral process; adapted versions of seven educational resources for blended learning; and 14 new teacher how-to videos and an online search tool that highlighted hundreds of potential connections to provincial curricula. New lessons were launched including a [First Nations Peoples Case Study](#)^{xix} and a [Comparison of the American and Canadian Electoral Systems](#).^{xx} In total, 161 professional development and classroom demonstrations were delivered virtually.


To improve electoral management, Elections Canada collaborated with a network of stakeholder organizations and focused on the following:

- ▶ Continuing to adjust and implement the Inspire Democracy stakeholder mobilization program: Inspire Democracy's three toolkits were revised to help stakeholders reduce barriers to electoral participation among their communities and to reflect electoral participation in a pandemic context.
- ▶ Agency representatives participated in a number of international events and bilateral engagements with other electoral management bodies, including those from emerging democracies, and contributed to the dissemination of knowledge and expertise. These events and engagements included:
 - 14 international events focused on how election authorities were adapting their practice and delivering elections during the pandemic;
 - active engagement with the electoral commissions of Australia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom to discuss lessons learned from electoral events during the pandemic;
 - the New Zealand Elections Visitors Program;
 - the winter conference of the [National Association of State Election Directors](#)^{xxi} and the November 2020 Presidential Election Visitors Program, organized by the [International Foundation for Electoral Systems](#),^{xxii} and
 - four events organized by the [Réseau des compétences électorales francophones](#),^{xxiii} including two focused on gender equality in electoral administration.

By actively participating in these forums, Elections Canada remains on the leading-edge of trends and issues in election management.


Finally, the *Constitution Acts of Canada*^{xxiv} require that federal electoral districts be reviewed after each decennial (10-year) census to ensure the number of electoral districts and their boundaries reflect population shifts and growth. Given the upcoming 2021 census, Elections Canada began preparing for the redistribution of federal electoral districts under the *Electoral Boundaries Readjustment Act*.^{xxv} To support the work of the independent electoral boundaries commissions, which will largely take place in 2021–22, Elections Canada created and staffed temporary positions that will be dedicated to this initiative.

Results Achieved for Electoral Administration and Oversight

 Departmental Result	Departmental Result Indicator	Target	Actual Results ¹
	Percentage of electors included in the National Register of Electors	At least 94% by March 2020	2020–21: 96% 2019–20: 96% 2018–19: 94%
	Percentage of polling stations that meet Elections Canada's key accessibility criteria	100% by March 2020	2020–21: Not available ² 2019–20: 94% 2018–19: 97%
	Percentage of electors' residences that are within 6 kilometres of their assigned polling place on polling day	At least 95% by March 2020	2020–21: Not available ² 2019–20: 94% 2018–19: 93.6%
	Percentage of electors' residences that are within 12 kilometres of their assigned polling place on advance polling days	At least 95% by March 2020	2020–21: Not available ² 2019–20: 91% 2018–19: 94%
	Number of electors who attended the Inspire Democracy workshop on becoming a candidate	30 by March 2020	2020–21: 180 2019–20: Not available 2018–19: Not available
	Percentage of candidates who are satisfied with the services and products provided by Elections Canada	85% by March 2020	2020–21: Not available 2019–20: Not available 2018–19: Not available

Note 1: Unless otherwise stated, "Not available" indicates that the performance indicator was not in effect at that time, and therefore, historical data may not be available.

Note 2: Targets were based on general election survey results. By-elections are not comparable to general election results nor should they be compared to other by-election results.



Departmental Result	Departmental Result Indicator	Target	Actual Results ¹
Canadians receive electoral information and services that meet their needs	Percentage of electors who are aware of the main voting methods	At least 90% by March 2020	2020–21: 86% ² 2019–20: 91% 2018–19: 86% ⁵
	Percentage of electors who are satisfied with the information provided by Elections Canada	80% by March 2020	2020–21: Not available 2019–20: Not available 2018–19: Not available
	Percentage of Canadians who have a positive perception of the administration of elections	At least 95% of electors by March 2020	2020–21: 93% ² 2019–20: 91% 2018–19: 92% ²
		At least 85% of candidates by March 2020	2020–21: Not available ² 2019–20: 82% 2018–19: Not available ²
Canada maintains a fair, secure, and transparent electoral process free of undue influence	Number of security incidents with a demonstrable effect on the electoral process	0 by March 2020	2020–21: 0 2019–20: Not available 2018–19: Not available
	Election officers' level of compliance with procedures at the polls	A deviation under 2% for key controls; a deviation under 11% for secondary controls by March 2020	2020–21: Within tolerance 2019–20: Within tolerance 2018–19: Within tolerance
	Percentage of ineligible contributions that are returned to contributors or remitted to the Chief Electoral Officer at the request of Elections Canada	90% by March 2020	2020–21: Not available ³ 2019–20: Not available ⁴ 2018–19: Not available ⁵
	Percentage of financial returns (all entities except third parties) that Elections Canada posts online within 10 business days of filing	100% by March 2020	2020–21: Not available ⁶ 2019–20: 100% 2018–19: 83%
	Percentage of candidate returns for which the audit is completed within 12 months of the submission deadline	100% by March 2020	2020–21: 82% 2019–20: Not available 2018–19: Not available

Note 1: Unless otherwise stated, “Not available” indicates that the performance indicator was not in effect at that time, and therefore, historical data may not be available.

Note 2: Targets were based on general election survey results. By-elections are not comparable to general election results nor should they be compared to other by-election results.


Note 3: It is recommended that this indicator be modified in future corporate documents, as it is currently a control rather than a performance indicator.

Note 4: No contributions were required to be returned at the request of the Chief Electoral Officer in 2019–20.

Note 5: No contributions were required to be returned at the request of the Chief Electoral Officer in 2018–19.

Note 6: Changes to the processes and systems supporting this activity preclude the availability of this figure this year.

Budgetary Financial Resources (dollars) for Electoral Administration and Oversight


	2020–21 Main Estimates	2020–21 Planned spending ¹	2020–21 Total authorities available for use ²	2020–21 Actual spending (authorities used)	2020–21 Difference (Actual spending minus Planned spending)
	82,078,356	82,078,356	144,920,112	143,558,420	61,480,064

The difference of \$61.5 million is primarily a result of preparation costs for the 44th general election. Elections Canada did not include the incremental costs of election preparedness in its Main Estimates, as results of the 43rd general election (minority government) were not known at the time of submission.

Note 1: Planned spending is the amount the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer planned to spend in a given fiscal year, as set out in the Main Estimates and in the Departmental Plan for that year.

Note 2: Total authorities available for use refer to the authorities available for spending in a given fiscal year, including those granted after Main Estimates and adjustments for statutory spending.

Human Resources (full-time equivalents) for Electoral Administration and Oversight

	2020–21 Planned full-time equivalents	2020–21 Actual full-time equivalents	2020–21 Difference (Actual full-time equivalents minus Planned full-time equivalents)
	502	651	149

The difference of 149 full-time equivalents mainly results from the requirement to hire additional temporary employees to prepare for the 44th general election.

Financial, human resources and performance information for the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer's Program is available in the [GC InfoBase](#).^{xxvi}

Electoral Compliance and Enforcement

The Commissioner of Canada Elections is the independent officer responsible for ensuring compliance with, and enforcement of, the *Canada Elections Act*^{xxvii} and the *Referendum Act*.^{xxviii} The *Canada Elections Act* defines and regulates activities during the pre-writ and writ period and the Commissioner and his staff work to ensure that political entities, third-party organizations, stakeholder groups and other individuals engaged in the electoral process do so in compliance with the rules.

Description

Compliance and Enforcement activities under the *Canada Elections Act* and the *Referendum Act* are conducted by the Office of the Commissioner of Canada Elections (OCCE) in an independent, impartial and fair manner.

Results

In 2020–21, the Commissioner of Canada Elections contributed to the integrity of the electoral process by reviewing complaints and applying, as appropriate, compliance and enforcement measures to address instances of wrongdoing under the *Canada Elections Act*.

The Commissioner also received referrals from Elections Canada, including those involving the financial returns of candidates, registered parties, and third parties. As a result, his office reviewed all files, investigated as required, and took compliance or enforcement action as appropriate. Due to legislative timeframes, the work associated with these referrals is expected to continue beyond 2020–21.

In addition, the Commissioner of Canada Elections reviewed and, as required, investigated all complaints received regarding the 43rd general election. During the 2020–21 fiscal year, the Office closed 1,613 complaint files. These files were closed because:

- ▶ there was no contravention of the Act, or they were beyond the scope of the Commissioner's mandate;
- ▶ they were treated through the use of informal mechanisms such as caution or information letters; or,
- ▶ they were addressed through formal means, resulting in compliance or enforcement actions on the part of the OCCE.


Due to the complex nature of some complaints, some investigations remain ongoing.

The OCCE also finalized and published the *Policy for the Administrative Monetary Penalty Regime of the Commissioner of Canada Elections*.^{xxix} The policy enables administrative monetary penalties to ensure compliance with, and enforcement of, the *Canada Elections Act*. With this policy in place, the OCCE began issuing Notices of Violation⁴ towards the end of March 2020.

⁴ Notices of Violation are issued to persons or entities who are found to be in contravention of certain sections of the *Canada Elections Act*. Section 508.1 of the Act provides that any person or entity that:

- contravenes section 281.3, 281.4 or 281.5 (illegal voting) or a provision of any of Parts 16 (communications), 17 (third parties) and 18 (political financing) of the Act;
 - fails to comply with a requirement of the Chief Electoral Officer under any of Parts 16, 17 and 18 of the Act, with a provision of a compliance agreement or with a provision of an undertaking that has been accepted by the Commissioner;
- ...commits a violation and is liable to pay an administrative monetary penalty.

Results Achieved for Electoral Compliance and Enforcement

	Departmental Result	Departmental Result Indicator	Target	Actual Results
	Compliance and enforcement activities under the <i>Canada Elections Act</i> contribute to the integrity of the electoral process	Percentage of complaints resulting in compliance measures ¹	At least 100% by March 2021	2020–21: 100% ² 2019–20: 100% ³ 2018–19: 100% ⁴
		Percentage of complaints resulting in formal criminal enforcement measures ¹	At least 100% by March 2021	2020–21: 100% ² 2019–20: 100% ³ 2018–19: 100% ⁴


Note 1: “Complaints” signifies complaints or referrals for which there was evidence of an offence under the *Canada Elections Act* and where said measures were deemed to be the appropriate compliance and enforcement tools.

Note 2: For 2020–21, 100% signifies a combination of 123 (82%) caution letters sent, two (1.3%) compliance agreements entered into, three undertakings (2%), and 22 (14.7%) charges laid in the files where the measures were deemed to be the appropriate compliance and enforcement tools to address instances of wrongdoing under the *Canada Elections Act*.

Note 3: For 2019–20, 100% signifies a combination of 81 (83%) caution and information letters sent, 11 (11%) compliance agreements entered into, and six (6.1%) charges laid.

Note 4: For 2018–19, 100% signifies a combination of 164 (91%) caution letters sent, eight (4.4%) compliance agreements put in place, and eight (4.4%) charges laid.


Budgetary Financial Resources (dollars) for Electoral Compliance and Enforcement

	2020–21 Main Estimates	2020–21 Planned spending ¹	2020–21 Total authorities available for use ²	2020–21 Actual spending (authorities used)	2020–21 Difference (Actual spending minus Planned spending)
	7,413,185	7,413,185	7,934,332	7,770,484	357,299

Note 1: Planned spending is the amount the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer planned to spend in a given fiscal year, as set out in the Main Estimates and in the Departmental Plan for that year.

Note 2: Total authorities available for use refer to the authorities available for spending in a given fiscal year, including those granted after Main Estimates and adjustments for statutory spending.

Human Resources (full-time equivalents) for Electoral Compliance and Enforcement

	2020–21 Planned full-time equivalents	2020–21 Actual full-time equivalents	2020–21 Difference (Actual full-time equivalents minus Planned full-time equivalents)
	48	43	-5

Financial, human resources and performance information for the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer’s Program is available in the [GC InfoBase](#).^{xxx}

Internal Services

Description

Internal Services are those groups of related activities and resources that the federal government considers to be services in support of Programs and/or required to meet corporate obligations of an organization. Internal Services refers to the activities and resources of the 10 distinct services that support program delivery in the organization, regardless of the Internal Services delivery model in a department. These services are:

- ▶ Management and Oversight Services
- ▶ Communications Services
- ▶ Legal Services
- ▶ Human Resources Management Services
- ▶ Financial Management Services
- ▶ Information Management Services
- ▶ Information Technology Services
- ▶ Real Property Management Services
- ▶ Materiel Management Services
- ▶ Acquisition Management Services

Results

To support the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer in achieving its agency-level results, Internal Services provided essential support and oversight to election administrators and election workers. As the operational arm of the agency remained focused on preparing for the next general election and ensuring integrity in electoral democracy, Internal Services provided transparent, effective, and efficient activities to support electoral needs such as by:

- ▶ procuring and acquiring goods and services;
- ▶ supplying technology and telecommunications products and services;
- ▶ transforming existing facilities and securing new office spaces to promote the health and safety of employees working on-site;
- ▶ establishing budgets; and
- ▶ processing payments.

Internal Services played a key role in supporting IT-enabled projects. A proof of concept was undertaken to better understand the opportunities and challenges related to implementing a new solution for electronic financial returns that would facilitate reporting on expenses incurred during general elections and by-elections.


In addition to supporting the preparations for the next general election, Internal Services began providing the tools and resources to actualize commitments in the [2020–28 Strategic Plan](#).^{xxxi} The initiatives undertaken included:

- ▶ renewing the internal audit function;
- ▶ establishing an evaluation function;
- ▶ developing the Workforce Innovation Strategy; and
- ▶ developing the Digital Transformation Strategy, which outlines the business vision and digital principles intended to guide the transformation within the agency.

The Office of the Chief Electoral Officer also completed the migration of its financial systems to a modern and reliable Government of Canada solution. This work was performed collaboratively with the host of the standard solution, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada. Above and beyond the technical efforts required to perform the migration, this work included the review of existing data,

extensive training of financial management employees, and change management and awareness sessions for Elections Canada and the Office of Commissioner of Canada Elections users.

Planned Budgetary Financial Resources for Internal Services


	2020–21 Main Estimates	2020–21 Planned spending ¹	2020–21 Total authorities available for use ²	2020–21 Actual spending (authorities used)	2020–21 Difference (Actual spending minus Planned spending)
	44,188,889	44,188,889	58,228,280	57,501,257	13,312,368

The difference of \$13.3 million is primarily a result of preparation costs for the 44th general election, as well as investments in asset renewal projects such as the replacement of the financial systems being incurred sooner than planned and the informatic equipment required for employees teleworking due to the pandemic.

Note 1: Planned spending is the amount the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer planned to spend in a given fiscal year, as set out in the Main Estimates and in the Departmental Plan for that year.

Note 2: Total authorities available for use refer to the authorities available for spending in a given fiscal year, including those granted after Main Estimates and adjustments for statutory spending.

Planned Human Resources for Internal Services

	2020–21 Planned full-time equivalents	2020–21 Actual full-time equivalents	2020–21 Difference (Actual full-time equivalents minus Planned full-time equivalents)
	244	262	18

The difference of 18 full-time equivalents is mainly a result of the requirement to hire additional temporary employees to prepare for the 44th general election.

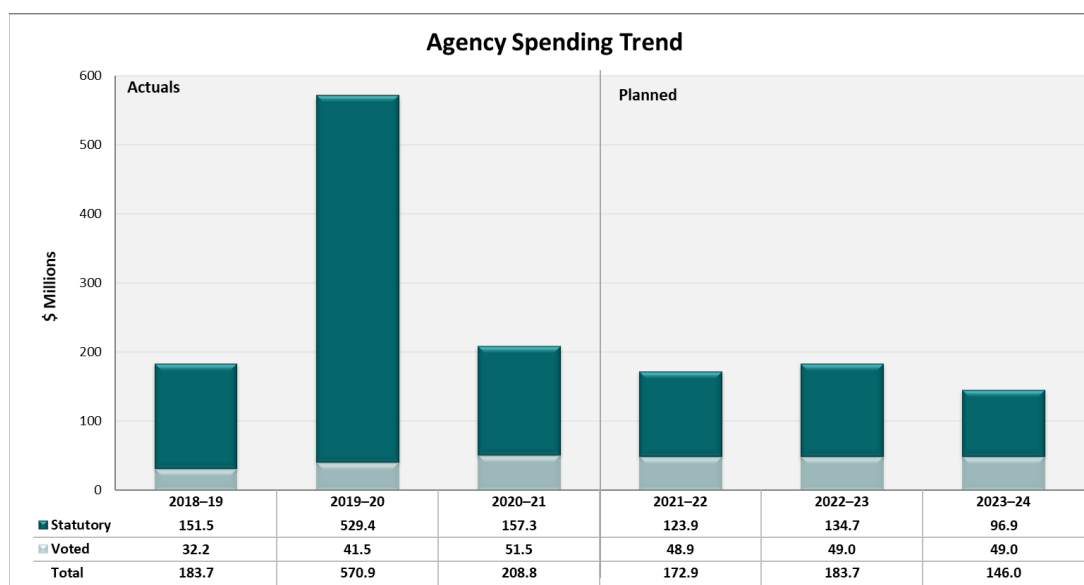
Financial, human resources, and performance information for the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer's Program Inventory is available in the [GC InfoBase](#).^{xxxii}

Analysis of Trends in Spending and Human Resources

Actual Expenditures

Departmental Spending Trend Graph

The following graph presents planned (voted and statutory) spending over time.



*Totals may not add up due to rounding

Budgetary Performance Summary for Core Responsibilities and Internal Services (dollars)

The following table shows actual, forecast and planned spending for each of Election Canada's core responsibilities and to Internal Services for the years relevant to the current planning year.

Core Responsibilities and Internal Services	2020–21 Main Estimates	2020–21 Planned spending ¹	2021–22 Planned spending ¹	2022–23 Planned spending ¹	2020–21 Total authorities available for use ²	2018–19 Actual spending (authorities used)	2019–20 Actual spending (authorities used)	2020–21 Actual spending (authorities used)
Electoral Administration and Oversight	82,078,356	82,078,356	112,848,442	120,161,578	144,920,112	120,907,167	515,137,124	143,558,420
Electoral Compliance and Enforcement	7,413,185	7,413,185	7,968,296	7,989,549	7,934,332	N/A	N/A	7,770,484
Subtotal	89,491,541	89,491,541	120,816,738	128,151,127	152,854,444	120,907,167	515,137,124	151,328,904
Internal Services	44,188,889	44,188,889	52,049,466	55,596,442	58,228,280	62,841,306	55,759,213	57,501,257
Total	133,680,430	133,680,430	172,866,204	183,747,569	211,082,724	183,748,473	570,896,337	208,830,161

Note 1: Planned spending is the amount the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer planned to spend in a given fiscal year, as set out in the Main Estimates and in the Departmental Plan for that year.

Note 2: Total authorities available for use refer to the authorities available for spending in a given fiscal year, including those granted after Main Estimates and adjustments for statutory spending.

The agency's spending pattern generally reflects the election cycle: spending increases in the fiscal year before a general election, peaks in the fiscal year of an election, and decreases sharply in the fiscal year following an election.

The agency increased its election readiness operations in 2018–19, as it prepared for the 43rd general election. Expenditures peaked in 2019–20, as the general election took place in the fall of 2019. Spending decreased in 2020–21, but did not return to the usual level due to the fact that the 43rd general election resulted in a minority government. The agency initiated earlier than planned the full preparations for the 44th general election in a pandemic context. These factors were not known at the time planned spending was established. During a minority government, the agency does not include the general election delivery in its planned spending due to the unknown timing of the election. Additionally, the decennial electoral boundaries redistribution began in 2020–21 and will conclude in 2023–24. These variations affect only the statutory portion of the funding.

Lastly, further to the adoption of Bill C-76 in December 2018, Elections Canada and the Office of the Commissioner of Canada Elections were administratively reintegrated in April 2019, while continuing to operate independently of each other as per their mandates. This reintegration is reflected in an increase in expenditures and full-time equivalents starting in 2019–20.

Note: The annual proportion of Internal Services expenditures over the agency's total spending varies significantly. This is due to the election cycle. Over the last four fiscal years, this proportion fluctuated between 10% and 34% annually but had an average of 20%.

Actual Human Resources

Human Resources Summary for Core Responsibilities and Internal Services

Core Responsibilities and Internal Services	2018–19 Actual FTEs	2019–20 Actual FTEs	2020–21 Planned FTEs	2020–21 Actual FTEs	2021–22 Planned FTEs	2022–23 Planned FTEs
Electoral Administration and Oversight	502	756	502	651	790	808
Electoral Compliance and Enforcement	N/A	N/A	48	43	44	44
Subtotal	502	756	550	694	834	852
Internal Services	216	239	244	262	281	286
Total	718	995	794	956	1,115	1,138

The fluctuation in full-time equivalents is a result of the election cycle and largely due to the reasons stated in the Budgetary Performance Summary, with the exception that there was significant one-time spending in 2020–21 for non-personnel election preparation activities. Personnel gradually hired in 2020–21 to achieve readiness in a minority government context and planned in 2021–22 and 2022–23 to maintain readiness explains the FTE increase in those two fiscal years.

Expenditures by Vote

For information on the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer's voted and statutory organizational expenditures, consult the [Public Accounts of Canada 2020–2021](#).^{xxxiii}

Government of Canada Spending and Activities

Information on the alignment of the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer's spending with the Government of Canada's spending and activities is available in [GC InfoBase](#).^{xxxiv}

Financial Statements and Financial Statements Highlights

Financial statements

The Office of the Chief Electoral Officer's audited financial statements for the year ended March 31, 2021, are available on the agency's [website](#).^{xxxv}

These financial statements have been prepared using Government of Canada accounting policies, which are based on Canadian public sector accounting standards. This method of accounting, known as the accrual basis of accounting, differs from the method used to present the figures in the previous sections; those figures are based on authorities voted by Parliament on a modified cash basis.

Financial statements highlights

Condensed Statement of Operations (unaudited) for the year ended March 31, 2021 (dollars)

Financial information	2020–21 Planned results*	2020–21 Actual results	2019–20 Actual results	Difference (2020–21 Actual results minus 2020–21 Planned results)	Difference (2020–21 Actual results minus 2019–20 Actual results)
Total expenses	144,306,392	206,238,974	580,510,349	61,932,582	(374,271,375)
Total revenues	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Net cost of operations before government funding and transfers	144,306,392	206,238,974	580,510,349	61,932,582	(374,271,375)

The net decrease in total expenses of \$374.3 million in 2020–21 compared with 2019–20 is mainly due to the conduct of the October 2019 general election, for which a significant proportion of expenses were incurred in 2019–20.

The difference of \$61.9 million is primarily a result of preparation costs for the 44th general election. Elections Canada did not include the incremental costs of election preparedness in its Main Estimates, as results of the 43rd general election (minority government) were not known at the time of submission.

Condensed Statement of Financial Position (unaudited) as of March 31, 2021 (dollars)

Financial information	2020–21	2019–20	Difference (2020–21 minus 2019–20)
Total net liabilities	45,212,613	78,570,843	(33,358,230)
Total net financial assets	36,010,425	71,917,436	(35,907,011)
Departmental net debt	(9,202,188)	(6,653,407)	(2,548,781)
Total non-financial assets	67,056,665	34,364,255	32,692,410
Departmental net financial position	57,854,477	27,710,848	30,143,629

The largest amounts in the net liabilities for 2020–21 include \$24.2 million in accounts payables and accrued liabilities, \$7.3 million in provisions for vacation leave and other benefits, and \$6.5 million for accrued salaries and benefits. The financial assets include \$30.6 million for the amount due from the Consolidated Revenue Fund and \$5.4 million in accounts receivables. The non-financial assets include \$3.9 million in prepaid expenditures, \$34.2 million in consumable supplies, and \$29 million in fixed assets.

Total net liabilities for 2020–21 amount to \$45.2 million, a decrease of \$33.4 million compared with 2019–20. This decrease is mainly explained by the year-end accrued liabilities required for the transfer payments. The decrease in total net financial assets is mainly due to the decrease in the amount due from the Consolidated Revenue Fund as a result of a decrease in the accrued liabilities. The increase of \$32.7 million in the non-financial assets is mainly due to an increase in prepaid expenditures and consumable supplies required to deliver an election during a pandemic.



Additional Information

Organizational Profile

Appropriate Minister:

The Honourable Dominic LeBlanc, PC, MP President of the Queen’s Privy Council for Canada

Institutional Head:

Stéphane Perrault, Chief Electoral Officer of Canada

Organization:

Office of the Chief Electoral Officer

Enabling instruments:

- ▶ *Canada Elections Act*, S.C. 2000, c. 9^{xxxvi}
- ▶ *Electoral Boundaries Readjustment Act*, R.S.C., 1985, c. E-3^{xxxvii}
- ▶ *Referendum Act*, S.C. 1992, c. 30^{xxxviii}

Year of incorporation/commencement:

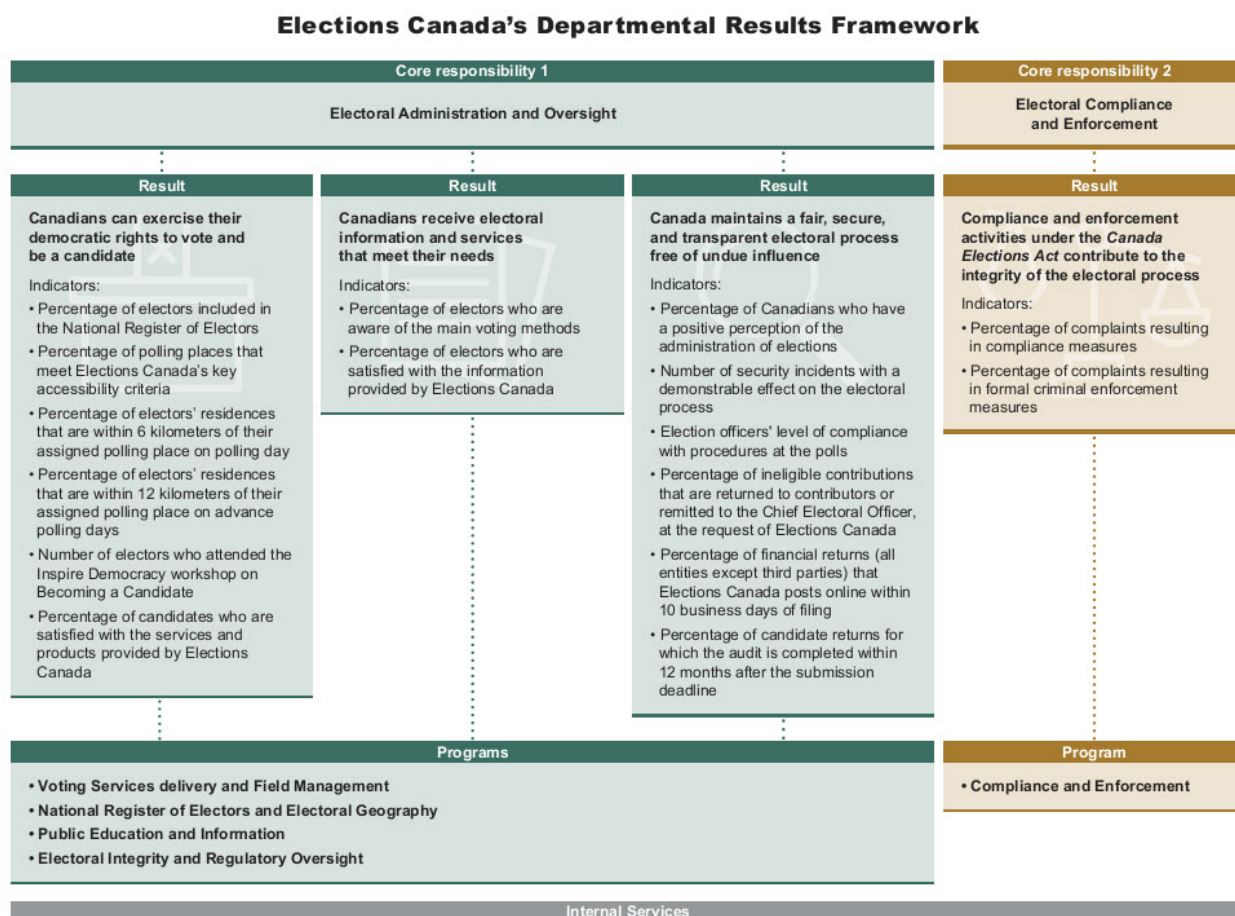
1920

Raison d’être, Mandate and Role: Who We Are and What We Do

Information on the agency’s raison d’être, mandate and role is available on [Elections Canada’s website](#).^{xxxix}

Reporting Framework

Elections Canada's Departmental Results Framework and Program Inventory of record for 2020–21 are shown below:



Supporting Information on the Program Inventory

Financial, human resources and performance information for the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer Program Inventory is available in [GC InfoBase](#).^{xi}

Supplementary Information Tables

The following supplementary information tables are available on [Elections Canada's website](#).^{xli}

- ▶ Reporting on Green Procurement
- ▶ Details on Transfer Payment Programs
- ▶ Gender-based Analysis Plus
- ▶ Response to Parliamentary Committees and External Audits
- ▶ New legislation
- ▶ Judicial decisions and proceedings

Federal Tax Expenditures

The tax system can be used to achieve public policy objectives through the application of special measures such as low tax rates, exemptions, deductions, deferrals and credits. The Department of Finance Canada publishes cost estimates and projections for these measures each year in the [Report on Federal Tax Expenditures](#).^{xliii} This report also provides detailed background information on tax expenditures, including descriptions, objectives, historical information and references to related federal spending programs as well as evaluations and GBA Plus of tax expenditures.



Organizational Contact Information

General enquiries

Address

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K1A 0M6

Telephone

1-800-463-6868 (toll-free in Canada and the United States)
001-800-514-6868 (toll-free in Mexico)
613-993-2975 (from anywhere in the world)

For people who are deaf or hard of hearing:

TTY 1-800-361-8935 (toll-free in Canada and the United States)

Fax

613-954-8584
1-888-524-1444 (toll-free in Canada and the United States)

Website

elections.ca

Email

info@elections.ca

Media information

Telephone

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819-939-1900
TTY 1-800-361-8935

Fax

613-954-8584

Appendix: Definitions

appropriation (crédit)

Any authority of Parliament to pay money out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund.

budgetary expenditures (dépenses budgétaires)

Operating and capital expenditures; transfer payments to other levels of government, organizations or individuals; and payments to Crown corporations.

core responsibility (responsabilité essentielle)

An enduring function or role performed by a department. The intentions of the department with respect to a core responsibility are reflected in one or more related departmental results that the department seeks to contribute to or influence.

Departmental Plan (plan ministériel)

A report on the plans and expected performance of an appropriated department over a 3-year period. Departmental Plans are usually tabled in Parliament each spring.

departmental priority (priorité)

A plan or project that a department has chosen to focus and report on during the planning period. Priorities represent the things that are most important or what must be done first to support the achievement of the desired departmental results.

departmental result (résultat ministériel)

A consequence or outcome that a department seeks to achieve. A departmental result is often outside departments' immediate control, but it should be influenced by program-level outcomes.

departmental result indicator (indicateur de résultat ministériel)

A quantitative measure of progress on a departmental result.

departmental results framework (cadre ministériel des résultats)

A framework that connects the department's core responsibilities to its departmental results and departmental result indicators.

Departmental Results Report (rapport sur les résultats ministériels)

A report on a department's actual accomplishments against the plans, priorities and expected results set out in the corresponding Departmental Plan.

experimentation (expérimentation)

The conducting of activities that seek to first explore, then test and compare the effects and impacts of policies and interventions in order to inform evidence-based decision-making, and improve outcomes for Canadians, by learning what works, for whom and in what circumstances. Experimentation is related to, but distinct from innovation (the trying of new things), because it involves a rigorous comparison of results. For example, using a new website to communicate with Canadians can be an innovation; systematically testing the new website against existing outreach tools or an old website to see which one leads to more engagement, is experimentation.

full-time equivalent (équivalent temps plein)

A measure of the extent to which an employee represents a full person-year charge against a departmental budget. For a particular position, the full-time equivalent figure is the ratio of number of hours the person actually works divided by the standard number of hours set out in the person's collective agreement.

gender-based analysis plus (GBA Plus) (analyse comparative entre les sexes plus [ACS Plus])

An analytical process used to assess how diverse groups of women, men and gender-diverse people experience policies, programs and services based on multiple factors including race ethnicity, religion, age, and mental or physical disability.

government-wide priorities (priorités pangouvernementales)

For the purpose of the 2019–20 Departmental Results Report, those high-level themes outlining the government's agenda in the 2019 Speech from the Throne, namely: Fighting climate change; Strengthening the Middle Class; Walking the road of reconciliation; Keeping Canadians safe and healthy; and Positioning Canada for success in an uncertain world.

horizontal initiative (initiative horizontale)

An initiative where two or more federal organizations are given funding to pursue a shared outcome, often linked to a government priority.

non-budgetary expenditures (dépenses non budgétaires)

Net outlays and receipts related to loans, investments and advances, which change the composition of the financial assets of the Government of Canada.

performance (rendement)

What an organization did with its resources to achieve its results, how well those results compare to what the organization intended to achieve, and how well lessons learned have been identified.

performance indicator (indicateur de rendement)

A qualitative or quantitative means of measuring an output or outcome, with the intention of gauging the performance of an organization, program, policy or initiative respecting expected results.

performance reporting (production de rapports sur le rendement)

The process of communicating evidence-based performance information. Performance reporting supports decision making, accountability and transparency.

plan (plan)

The articulation of strategic choices, which provides information on how an organization intends to achieve its priorities and associated results. Generally, a plan will explain the logic behind the strategies chosen and tend to focus on actions that lead to the expected result.

planned spending (dépenses prévues)

For Departmental Plans and Departmental Results Reports, planned spending refers to those amounts presented in Main Estimates.

A department is expected to be aware of the authorities that it has sought and received. The determination of planned spending is a departmental responsibility, and departments must be able to defend the expenditure and accrual numbers presented in their Departmental Plans and Departmental Results Reports.



program (programme)

Individual or groups of services, activities or combinations thereof that are managed together within the department and focus on a specific set of outputs, outcomes or service levels.

program inventory (répertoire des programmes)

Identifies all the department's programs and describes how resources are organized to contribute to the department's core responsibilities and results.

result (résultat)

A consequence attributed, in part, to an organization, policy, program or initiative. Results are not within the control of a single organization, policy, program or initiative; instead they are within the area of the organization's influence.

statutory expenditures (dépenses législatives)

Expenditures that Parliament has approved through legislation other than appropriation acts. The legislation sets out the purpose of the expenditures and the terms and conditions under which they may be made.

target (cible)

A measurable performance or success level that an organization, program or initiative plans to achieve within a specified time period. Targets can be either quantitative or qualitative.

voted expenditures (dépenses votées)

Expenditures that Parliament approves annually through an appropriation act. The vote wording becomes the governing conditions under which these expenditures may be made.



Endnotes

- i *Canada Elections Act*,
<https://laws.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/e-2.01/index.html>
- ii 2020–28 Strategic Plan,
<https://www.elections.ca/content.aspx?section=abo&dir=stra&document=index&lang=e>
- iii Special Report of the Chief Electoral Officer: Administering an Election during the COVID-19 Pandemic,
<https://www.elections.ca/content.aspx?section=res&dir=rep/oth/sprep&document=index&lang=e>
- iv Bill C-19, *An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act (COVID-19 response)*,
https://lop.parl.ca/sites/PublicWebsite/default/en_CA/ResearchPublications/LegislativeSummaries/432C19E
- v 2020–28 Strategic Plan,
<https://www.elections.ca/content.aspx?section=abo&dir=stra&document=index&lang=e>
- vi A History of the Vote,
https://www.elections.ca/res/his/WEB_EC%2091135%20History%20of%20the%20Vote_Third%20edition_EN.pdf
- vii Online Voter Registration Service,
<https://ereg.elections.ca/CWelcome.aspx?lang=e>
- viii Federal Elections Fees Tariff of the *Canada Elections Act*,
<https://laws.justice.gc.ca/eng/regulations/SOR-2021-22/index.html>
- ix *Canada Elections Act*,
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- x Elections Modernization Act
https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/AnnualStatutes/2018_31/page-1.html
- xi Canada Gazette,
<https://www.gazette.gc.ca/accueil-home-eng.html>
- xii Independent audit report on the performance of the duties and functions of election officers – October 26, 2020 By-elections
https://www.elections.ca/content.aspx?section=res&dir=rep/off/audit_oct2620&document=index&lang=e
- xiii *Canada Elections Act*,
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- xiv Retrospective Report on the 43rd General Election,
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- xv Independent audit report on the performance of the duties and functions of election officers
<https://www.elections.ca/content.aspx?section=res&dir=rec/eval/pes2019/ege&document=ex-au-index&lang=e>

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- xvi Special Report of the Chief Electoral Officer: Administering an Election during the COVID-19 Pandemic,
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- xviii Elections and Democracy,
<https://electionsanddemocracy.ca/>
- xix Case Study: First Nations Peoples,
<https://electionsanddemocracy.ca/voting-rights-through-time-0/case-study-first-nations-peoples>
- xx Comparing Electoral Systems: Canada and the United States,
<https://electionsanddemocracy.ca/your-classroom/comparing-electoral-systems-canada-and-united-states>
- xxi National Association of State Election Directors,
<https://www.nased.org/>
- xxii International Foundation for Electoral Systems,
<https://www.ifes.org/>
- xxiii Réseau des compétences électorales francophones,
<https://www.electionsquebec.qc.ca/francais/experts-electoraux/recef.php>
- xxiv *Constitution Acts of Canada*,
<https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/const/page-2.html#docCont>
- xxv *Electoral Boundaries Readjustment Act*,
<https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/E-3/>
- xxvi GC InfoBase,
<https://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/ems-sgd/edb-bdd/index-eng.html>
- xxvii *Canada Elections Act*,
<https://laws.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/e-2.01/index.html>
- xxviii *Referendum Act*,
<https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/r-4.7/index.html>
- xxix Policy for the Administrative Monetary Penalty Regime of the Commissioner of Canada Elections,
<https://cef-cce.ca/content.asp?section=amp&dir=pol&document=index&lang=e>
- xxx GC InfoBase,
<https://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/ems-sgd/edb-bdd/index-eng.html>
- xxxi 2020–28 Strategic Plan,
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- xxxii GC InfoBase,
<https://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/ems-sgd/edb-bdd/index-eng.html>

- xxxiii Public Accounts of Canada,
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- xxxiv GC InfoBase,
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- xxxv Financial statements,
<https://www.elections.ca/content.aspx?section=res&dir=rep/dpr/drr2020&document=financial&lang=e>
- xxxvi *Canada Elections Act*, S.C. 2000, c. 9,
<https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/E-2.01/>
- xxxvii Electoral Boundaries Readjustment Act, R.S.C., 1985, c. E-3,
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- xxxviii *Referendum Act*, S.C. 1992, c. 30,
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- xxxix Information on the agency's raison d'être, mandate and role,
<https://www.elections.ca/content.aspx?section=res&dir=rep/rpp/dp2021&document=rais&lang=e>
- xl GC InfoBase,
<https://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/ems-sgd/edb-bdd/index-eng.html>
- xli Supplementary Information Tables,
<https://www.elections.ca/content.aspx?section=res&dir=rep/rpp&document=index&lang=e>
- xlii Report on Federal Tax Expenditures,
<https://www.canada.ca/en/department-finance/services/publications/federal-tax-expenditures.html>

