

# **Executive Summary, Survey of Electors Following the December 12, 2022, By-election in Mississauga–Lakeshore (Ontario)**

Elections Canada (EC) is an independent, non-partisan agency responsible for conducting Canadian federal general elections, by-elections, and referendums. Following the December 12, 2022, federal by-election in the electoral district of Mississauga–Lakeshore, Phoenix Strategic Perspectives Inc. (Phoenix SPI) conducted a survey of eligible electors on behalf of EC. Eligible electors were Canadian citizens, at least 18 years of age on polling day (December 12, 2022), who were residents of the electoral district (i.e. had an address of ordinary residence in the electoral district) from the first day of the by-election period until election day.

## **1. Research Purpose and Objectives**

The purpose of the survey was to obtain reliable survey data to evaluate electors' opinions, attitudes and knowledge of the agency's services and various aspects of their experience. The objectives were to measure electors' opinions on various election-related issues and to assist in evaluating and refining Elections Canada's programs and services to the electorate. The results will be used to assist in evaluating and refining Elections Canada's programs and services to the electorate. They may also be used to help develop the Chief Electoral Officer's reports to Parliament.

## **2. Summary of Key Findings**

### **Awareness of by-election and knowledge of the electoral process**

- Almost all respondents (97%) said they were aware of the December 12, 2022, federal by-election that took place in their riding of Mississauga–Lakeshore.
- Two-thirds (66%) of electors said they are aware that electors can register at the polling place and then vote immediately after. Additionally, six in 10 (58%) indicated they are aware that electors can check, update or complete voter registration on EC's website.
- The vast majority of respondents know that electors have to present a proof of identity (96%) and address (89%) in order to vote in a Canadian federal election.
- When asked to identify the current ways to vote in the by-election, respondents were aware of the main voting methods, with nearly all (92%) identifying voting in-person at a polling station on election day. Following this, 72% identified voting at advance polls and 62% identified voting by mail.

### **Voter information and registration**

- Over nine in 10 (94%) of those who were aware of the federal by-election said they received their voter information card (VIC). Nearly all electors who received a VIC reported it had the correct name (98%) and address (99%).
- Nearly two-thirds of those aware of the by-election (64%) recalled advertising from Elections Canada about where, when, and how to vote on at least one medium or format. Specifically, approximately one-quarter recalled advertising from EC on social media (24%) or on the radio or an audio platform (23%). Following this, approximately one in five recalled seeing or hearing advertising from EC when browsing or on a mobile application (22%) or in a local newspaper (20%).
- The vast majority of surveyed electors (95%) felt informed about when, where, and the ways to vote for the December 12, 2022, by-election, with 77% saying they felt very informed.
- Nearly one-quarter of electors aware of the by-election did something to make sure they were registered to vote: 18% checked to see if they were already registered, 3% said they registered to vote, and 2% updated their registration information.

## **Voter participation**

- Three-quarters (74%) of those who were aware of the by-election held on December 12, 2022, in their riding reported voting in it.<sup>[footnote 1](#)</sup>
- Among respondents who did not vote in the election, over half (57%) said they did not vote due to everyday life and health reasons. Slightly less than one-quarter (23%) did not vote due to political reasons and 6% did not vote due to electoral process-related reasons.
- A little more than half (54%) of electors who said they voted in the by-election reported doing so at a polling station on election day, while nearly four in 10 (39%) reported going to an advance polling station to vote. Very few reported voting at a local Elections Canada office (4%) or by mail (2%).

## **Polling place experience**

- Three-quarters (74%) of those who said they voted in person<sup>[footnote 2](#)</sup> reported doing so between noon and 8:30 p.m.
- Among those who voted in person, nearly nine in 10 (88%) said it took 10 minutes or less to travel to a polling station. For 58%, it took five minutes, and for 30% it took six to 10 minutes to travel to their polling station. Ninety-four percent said the distance to the polling station from their home was reasonable, with 76% saying it was very reasonable.
- There was widespread agreement among those who voted in person that the voting facilities were suitable (95%) and they felt safe during their visit (93%). This by-election was held at a time when COVID-19 health and safety measures were in place, including poll workers wearing masks, plexiglass barriers, hand sanitizer stations, and physical distancing markers.

- Nearly two-thirds (64%) of those who voted in the by-election said voting took them five minutes or less, with most of the rest saying it took them between six and 15 minutes (31%). Most (96%) said the time it took to vote was reasonable.

### **Voter identification**

- Ninety-one percent of those who received their VIC and voted in person brought it with them to the polling place, which would help facilitate their identification when voting.
- Virtually everyone who said they voted (99%) found it easy to meet the identification requirements, with 97% saying it was very easy.

### **Satisfaction with voting experience**

- There were a total of 40 candidates in the by-election, which required Elections Canada to use a modified large-format ballot paper with two columns of candidate names. This ballot design does not seem to have encumbered most voters: 84% of those who said they voted reported that it was easy to complete their ballot, including 63% who said it was very easy. Among those who found it difficult to complete the ballot, 95% said they had trouble completing the ballot because the list of candidates was too long, or it was difficult to find their choice of candidate on the list. Following this, 19% mentioned the ballot paper being too large to handle or difficult to fold.
- Almost all respondents (98%) who voted in the by-election were satisfied with the services provided by Elections Canada staff (with 87% saying they were very satisfied).
- The vast majority (95%) of those who voted also said that, overall, it was easy to vote, with 83% saying it was very easy.
- Ninety-five percent of those who voted were satisfied with their overall voting experience, with 79% saying they were very satisfied.

### **Fairness of the by-election and trust in the results**

- Eight in 10 respondents thought that Elections Canada ran the December 12, 2022, federal by-election fairly (including 68% who said they thought it was run very fairly).
- Nine in 10 said they had trust in the accuracy of the election results in their riding. Two-thirds (67%) expressed very high trust.

## **3. Methodology**

A 15-minute random digit dial (RDD) telephone survey was conducted with a sample of eligible electors. The data collection was conducted from December 13 to 22, 2022. An overlapping dual-frame (landline and cell phone) sample was used to minimize coverage error: 70% of numbers were landline and 30% were wireless. Those who declined to participate in the survey when contacted by telephone were offered the option of completing the survey through an online self-administered questionnaire. As a result,

391 completed surveys were conducted over the telephone and nine were completed online. Based on a sample of this size (n=400), the overall results would have a maximum margin of error of  $\pm 4.9\%$ , 19 times out of 20. Maximum margins of error for subsamples would be larger. For a more complete description of the methodology, refer to Annex 1.

#### 4. Political Neutrality Certification

I hereby certify as a Senior Officer of Phoenix SPI that the deliverables fully comply with the Government of Canada political neutrality requirements outlined in the *Communications Policy* of the Government of Canada and the *Procedures for Planning and Contracting Public Opinion Research*. Specifically, the deliverables do not contain any reference to electoral voting intentions, political party preferences, standings with the electorate, or ratings of the performance of a political party or its leader.



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#### 5. Contract Value

The contract value was \$45,750.22 (including HST).

### Footnotes

[Return to footnote 1](#) Self-reported voter turnout is historically overreported in public opinion surveys. In this survey, self-reported turnout was 74%, while the turnout rate for the by-election among registered electors was 27.8%. Two factors may be responsible for the overrepresentation of voters: 1) people who vote may be more likely than non-voters to participate in a study about voting (response bias), and 2) people who did not vote may report that they voted to present themselves in a more positive light (social desirability bias).

[Return to footnote 2](#) This includes voting at a polling station on election day, at an advance polling station, or at a local Elections Canada office.