



Employment and  
Social Development Canada

Emploi et  
Développement social Canada

# Services for Seniors/Retirement Advertising Campaign Evaluation ACET methodological report

**Prepared for the Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC)**

**Supplier:** EKOS RESEARCH ASSOCIATES INC.

**Contract Number:** CW2372521

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Canada

# **Services for Seniors/Retirement Advertising Campaign Evaluation**

## ***ACET methodological report***

**Prepared for the Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC)**

**Supplier: EKOS RESEARCH ASSOCIATES INC.**

**Date: July 2025**

This public opinion research report presents the methodology for an online survey conducted by EKOS Research Associates Inc. on behalf of Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC).

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# SUMMARY

## A. Campaign Background

Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) is developing a Services for Seniors campaign to increase awareness and knowledge of Government of Canada retirement programs and resources among Canadians 50 to 65 years old thinking about retirement, which will include information on the Canada Pension Plan (CPP).

This campaign will support the 2023 Fall Economic Statement and its key pillar: focusing on making life more affordable for Canadians through enhancements to Old Age Security, the Canada Pension Plan, and the Guaranteed Income Supplement. It will also support ESDC's 2024-2025 Departmental Plan in assisting Canadians in maintaining an income for retirement and providing financial benefits to survivors, people with disabilities, and their families.

Because the advertising exceeded \$1 million, public opinion research is required by Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat's (TBS) Directive on the Management of Communications and Federal Identity, using the Advertising Campaign Evaluation Tool (ACET) issued by the Communications and Consultations Secretariat of the Privy Council Office (PCO), with additional validating and benchmarking questions following the ACET instrument. Data collection to evaluate the campaign supports the Government of Canada's goal of effectively gauging Canadians' awareness and knowledge of its initiatives and determining the effectiveness of the campaign.

The research included a baseline evaluation, using the standardized ACET online survey, with the primary audience to assess pre-campaign awareness of the subject matter, including:

- Aided and unaided awareness of general Government of Canada advertising, along with advertising related to the campaign topic; and
- Aided and unaided awareness of the subject matter

The advertising campaign and associated research were suspended during the 2025 Canadian federal election and therefore a post-campaign ACET was not conducted.

## **B. Methodology**

A bilingual baseline national online survey was conducted in advance of the campaign. The survey included 2,057 Canadians between 50 and 65 years of age and was conducted between January 15<sup>th</sup> and January 26<sup>th</sup>, 2025. The survey instrument used the Advertising Campaign Evaluation Tool (ACET) issued by the Communications and Consultations Secretariat of the Privy Council Office (PCO), along with additional campaign-specific questions testing impact on perceptions and behaviour targeted through the campaign. The sample included randomly selected respondents from all provinces and territories in Canada.

The survey sample relied on EKOS' *Probit* panel, which is assembled using a random digit dial process for sampling from a blended land-line cellphone frame and provides full coverage of Canadians with telephone access. The distribution of the recruitment process is meant to mirror the actual population in Canada (as defined by Statistics Canada). As such, our more than 135,000-member panel can be considered representative of the general public in Canada (meaning that the incidence of a given target population within our panel very closely resembles the public at large) and margins of error can be applied.

Appendix A provides the details of the methodology for the survey. The questionnaire is found in Appendix B.

## **C. Contract Value**

The value of the contract is \$99,468.25 (including HST). This includes the quantitative component of the project, the Advertising Evaluation Tool (ACET), covered by this methodology report, and the creative testing research reported under a separate cover. The total for the ACET is \$42,634.90 including tax, while the creative testing total is \$56,833.35 including tax.

## D. Political Neutrality Certification

I hereby certify as Senior Officer of EKOS Research Associates Inc. that the deliverables fully comply with the Government of Canada political neutrality requirements outlined in the Policy on Communications and Federal Identity and the Directive on the Management of Communications and Federal Identity. Specifically, the deliverables do not include information on electoral voting intentions, political party preferences, standings with the electorate, or ratings of the performance of a political party or its leaders.

Signed by:



Susan Galley (Vice President)



# APPENDICES

## A. Baseline ACET Detailed Methodology

The Advertising Campaign Evaluation Tool (ACET) consisted of a baseline survey issued by the Communications and Consultations Secretariat of the Privy Council Office (PCO). All Government of Canada advertising campaigns that have a total media buy of over \$1 million are evaluated using the ACET. The average time it took respondents to complete the survey was 7.5 minutes. Prior to its launch, the baseline survey was pre-tested on January 9<sup>th</sup> with 39 respondents (24 in English, 15 in French). A pretest was conducted to ensure there were no issues with the programming logic, to verify if the flow of questions made sense, to check if any questions, terms, or response categories were not clear to respondents, and to ensure there were no technical issues. Since significant changes were made following the results of the pretest, the pretest cases were not included in the final sample.

Respondents to the online survey were 50 to 65 years old and randomly selected from EKOS' Probit panel, as described below. The survey sample included all provinces and territories in Canada, and participants were able to complete the survey in English or French. An accessible link for those using a mobile phone or screen reading technology was also available. EKOS' Probit panel is assembled using a random digit dial process for sampling from a blended land-line cell-phone frame and provides full coverage of Canadians with telephone access. The distribution of the recruitment process is meant to mirror the actual population in Canada (as defined by Statistics Canada). As such, our more than 135,000-member panel can be considered representative of the general public in Canada (meaning that the incidence of a given target population within our panel very closely resembles the public at large) and margins of error can be applied. All households/individuals in the Probit panel are contacted by telephone and the nature of the panel is explained in greater detail (as are EKOS' privacy policies) and demographic information is collected. At this time, the online/off-line as well as landline/cell phone status is ascertained to determine the method of completing surveys (i.e., online, telephone, or mail). This variable of 'type of telephone service' (cell phone only, landline only or both) collected at the time of screening is used to determine cell phone only sample. As with any random digit dialling sample, Probit panel cases are considered to be a probability-based sample.

The total number of completed cases in the sample was 2,057 and fieldwork was conducted between January 15<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>, 2025. The associated margin of error is up to plus or minus 2.16%,

at a .95 confidence interval (i.e., 19 times out of 20) in each sample. The unweighted regional distribution is as follows:

**Table 1: Regional Distribution of Sample**

<b>Province/Region</b>	<b>Number of Completed Cases</b>
British Columbia & Yukon	288
Alberta & Northwest Territories	248
Manitoba & Saskatchewan & Nunavut	149
Ontario	791
Quebec	419
Atlantic	162
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,057</b>

Survey data collection adhered to the [Standards for the Conduct of Government of Canada Public Opinion Research—Online Surveys](#), as well as all applicable industry standards. EKOS informed respondents of their rights under the *Privacy Act* and the *Access to Information Act* and ensured that those rights were protected throughout the research process. This included: informing respondents of the purpose of the research; identifying both the sponsoring department and the research supplier; informing respondents that their participation in the study is voluntary, and that the information provided would be administered according to the requirements of the *Privacy Act*.

Once the survey data was collected the database was reviewed for data quality and coding of open-ended questions was completed. Survey results were weighted based on Statistics Canada 2021 census data<sup>1</sup> according to age, gender, and region to ensure the sample was representative of the general public, aged 50 to 65 years of age. The tables below compare the unweighted and weighted distributions of these demographic characteristics.

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<sup>1</sup> Based on 2021 census data from Statistics Canada (<https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2021/dp-pd/prof/index.cfm?Lang=E>)

**Table 2: Unweighted and Weighted Sample Characteristics**

<b>Unweighted and Weighted Sample by Region</b>		
<b>Region</b>	<b>Unweighted Sample</b>	<b>Weighted Sample</b>
Atlantic	162	152
Quebec	419	477
Ontario	791	799
Manitoba / Saskatchewan / Nunavut	149	126
Alberta / Northwest Territories	248	221
British Columbia / Yukon	288	283

<b>Unweighted and Weighted Sample by Age</b>		
<b>Age</b>	<b>Unweighted Sample</b>	<b>Weighted Sample</b>
50 to 54	612	613
55 to 65	1,445	1,444

<b>Unweighted and Weighted Sample by Gender</b>		
<b>Gender</b>	<b>Unweighted Sample</b>	<b>Weighted Sample</b>
Male	1,004	992
Female	1,021	1,033
Gender Diverse	9	9

Data tables were created to isolate results for major subgroups to be used in the analysis (e.g., results for each age segment, gender, region, education, and household income). Other subgroups include mother tongue, respondents born in Canada, family with children, employment, recalled seeing an ad from the Government of Canada (in general and for older Canadians and/or seniors), disability identity, ethnicity, and indigenous identity.

### **Response Rates and Non-Response Bias**

The response rate for the survey was 39.8%, using the formula recommended by the Government of Canada:  $\text{Response Rate} = R / (U + IS + R)$ .

A total of 6,223 email invitations were sent, of which 112 were returned as undeliverable, for a resulting valid sample of 6,111. A total of 2,057 valid cases completed the survey and combined with another 588 respondents who were screened out of the survey as ineligible<sup>2</sup>, as the responding numerator in the calculation of the response rate.

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<sup>2</sup> Those under 50 or over 65, or work for an advertising agency, graphic design firm, media, market research, a political party, government or public relations company.

**Table 3: Response Rates**

	<b>Number of Contacts</b>
<b>Total Invited</b>	6,223
Invalid	588
Unresolved (U)	3,168
In-scope non-responding (IS)	224
Responding units (R)	2,243
<b>Response Rate (R/(U+IS+R))</b>	39.8%

A comparison of the unweighted sample with 2021 Census figures from Statistics Canada suggests that there are similar sources of systematic sample bias in the survey, following patterns typically found in most general public surveys. There is a somewhat more educated sample than found in the population with 27% reporting university degrees in the baseline survey, compared with 23% in the population. There is also an under representation of Canadians born outside of Canada in each survey (12% in the baseline survey versus 22%). As previously described, the sample was weighted by age, gender, and region.

# B. Pre-Campaign Baseline ACET Questionnaire

## WINTRO

Thank you for taking a few minutes to complete this survey on current issues that matter to Canadians. Si vous préférez répondre à ce sondage en français, veuillez cliquer sur [français](#).

**Your participation is voluntary and your responses will be kept entirely confidential.** The survey takes about 8 minutes to complete.

[Click here](#) if you wish to verify the authenticity of this survey by entering project code 20230929-EK424. To view our privacy policy, [click here](#).

If you require any technical assistance, please contact [online@ekos.com](mailto:online@ekos.com).

## QORG [1,7]

Do you or any member of your household currently work in any of the following organizations?

SELECT ALL THAT APPLY

- A marketing research firm 1
- A magazine or newspaper 2
- An advertising agency or graphic design firm 3
- A political party 4
- A radio or television station 5
- A public relations company 6
- The federal or provincial government 7
- None of these organizations 98

## QGENDR

What is your gender?

- Male 1
- Female 2
- Gender diverse 3
- Prefer not to answer 99

## QAGEX

In what year were you born?

- Year: 77
- Prefer not to say 9999

## CALCQAGEX

### *Calculate age*

Terminate if under 50 and over 65	1	->THNK2
Continue if between 50 and 65 years old	98	

## QAGEY

If... QAGEX = 9999

In which of the following age categories do you belong?

SELECT ONE ONLY

Less than 50 years old	1	->THNK2
50 to 54 years old	2	
55 to 65 years old	3	
More than 65 years old	4	->THNK2
Prefer not to say	99	->THNK2

## QPROV

In which province or territory do you live?

SELECT ONE ONLY

Alberta	2
British Columbia	1
Manitoba	4
New Brunswick	7
Newfoundland and Labrador	10
Northwest Territories	12
Nova Scotia	8
Nunavut	13
Ontario	5
Prince Edward Island	9
Quebec	6
Saskatchewan	3
Yukon	11
Prefer not to say	99

## Q1

Over the past three weeks, have you seen, read or heard any advertising from the Government of Canada?

Yes	1
No	2

**Q3 [1,3]**

Think about the most recent Government of Canada ad that comes to mind. What do you remember about this ad?

Please specify: 77

**T1A**

Over the past three weeks, have you seen, read or heard any Government of Canada advertising about **retirement planning**?

Yes 1

No 2

**T1B [1,12]**

Where have you seen, read or heard this ad about **retirement planning**?

SELECT ALL THAT APPLY

Television 1

Radio 2

Digital radio (such as Spotify) 3

Search engine marketing (such as Google or Bing) 4

Web article on news websites 5

YouTube 6

Web banners on news websites 7

Other, specify: 77

Don't know / not sure 99 X

**T1C [1,3]**

What do you remember about this ad?

Please specify: 77

**RQ1 [1,3]**

Do you know where to find Government of Canada information on retirement planning and pensions?

Yes 1

No 2

Don't know / not sure 99

**RQ2**

If RQ = 1

Where would you go to find Government of Canada information on retirement planning and pensions?

Specify:	77
Don't know / not sure	99

**RQ3 [1,7]**

Which of the following would you use to find information on retirement planning and pensions:

SELECT ALL THAT APPLY

Government of Canada websites	1
Provincial Government websites	2
General internet search	3
In-person Service Canada	4
Government of Canada toll-free 1 800 O-Canada	5
Government of Canada Facebook page	6
Friend or family member	7
None of these	8
Don't know / not sure	99

**RQ4**

Are you aware of Government of Canada programs, tools and resources related to retirement planning and pensions?

Yes	1
No	2
Don't remember / Not sure	99

**RQ5**

If RQ4 = 1

Which programs, tools and resources are you aware of?

Please specify:	77
Don't know / not sure	99

**RQ6 [1,10]**

Still thinking about Government of Canada information related to retirement planning and pensions, which of the following programs, tools and resources are you aware of?

SELECT ALL THAT APPLY

<b>Programs</b>	51	N
QPROV not = 6		
Canada Pension Plan (CPP)	1	
QPROV = 6		
Quebec Pension Plan (QPP)	2	
QPROV not = 6		
Canada Pension Plan disability benefits	3	
QPROV = 6		
Disability pension under the Québec Pension Plan	4	
QPROV not = 6		
Canada Pension Plan post-retirement benefit	5	
QPROV = 6		
Québec Retirement Pension Supplement (RPS)	6	
Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS)	7	
Old Age Security (OAS)	8	
<b>Tools</b>	52	N
Benefits Finder	9	
Budget Planner	10	
Canadian Retirement Income Calculator	11	
My Service Canada Account (MSCA)	12	
Retirement Hub website	13	
None of the above	98	X
Don't know / not sure	99	X

**RQ7**

Please select the statement that best reflects your situation:

I am already retired	1
I plan to retire in the future	2
I never plan to retire	3
Don't know / not sure	99

**RQ8**

If RQ7 = 1

At what age did you retire?

[number box]	777	>
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**RQ9**

If RQ7 = 1

How confident are you that you have enough income from all sources to live comfortably in retirement? Please respond on a scale from 0 to 10, where 0 means not at all confident and 10 means completely confident.

Not at all confident 0	11
1	1
2	2
3	3
4	4
5	5
6	6
7	7
8	8
9	9
Completely confident 10	10

**RQ10**

If RQ7 = 2

At the age when you plan to retire, how confident are you that you will have enough income from all sources to live comfortably in retirement? Please respond on a scale from 0 to 10, where 0 means not at all confident and 10 means completely confident.

Not at all confident 0	11
1	1
2	2
3	3
4	4
5	5
6	6
7	7
8	8
9	9
Completely confident 10	10

**PRERQ11**

If RQ7 = 2

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements when thinking about your retirement planning.

**RQ11A**

If RQ7 = 2

I try to take every opportunity to improve prospects for my retirement savings.

Strongly disagree	1
2	2
3	3
4	4
Strongly agree	5
Don't know / not sure	99

**RQ11B**

If RQ7 = 2

I feel prepared for retirement.

Strongly disagree	1
2	2
3	3
4	4
Strongly agree	5
Don't know / not sure	99

**RQ11C**

If RQ7 = 2

I feel unprepared for retirement.

Strongly disagree	1
2	2
3	3
4	4
Strongly agree	5
Don't know / not sure	99

**RQ11D**

If RQ7 = 2

Whether or not I retire with enough money to live comfortably is beyond my control.

Strongly disagree 1	1
2	2
3	3
4	4
Strongly agree 5	5
Don't know / not sure	99

**RQ11E**

If RQ7 = 2

I am not currently thinking about saving for my retirement.

Strongly disagree 1	1
2	2
3	3
4	4
Strongly agree 5	5
Don't know / not sure	99

**RQ12A**

If RQ7 = 2

<[QPROV not = 6]Are you aware that your monthly Canada Pension Plan (CPP) payments could increase with every month you delay starting them? For example, you could more than double your monthly CPP amount if you delay your retirement pension from age 60 to age 70.[ELSE]Are you aware that your monthly QPP payments could increase with every month you delay starting them? For example, you could more than double your monthly QPP amount if you delay your retirement pension from age 60 to age 70.>

Yes	1
No	2

**RQ12B**

If RQ7 = 2

<[QPROV not = 6]Knowing that your monthly CPP payments could increase with every month you delay starting them, do you feel more confident, less confident, or about the same about having enough income to live comfortably in retirement?[ELSE]Does knowing your monthly QPP payments could increase with every month you delay starting them, do you feel more confident, less confident, or about the same about having enough income to live comfortably in retirement?>

More confident	1
About the same	2
Less confident	3
Don't know / not sure	99

**RQ13A**

If RQ7 = 2

Canadians who qualify can start collecting their Old Age Security (OAS) pension as early as age 65. But did you know that if you delay starting your OAS payments to age 70, your monthly payments could go up significantly?

Yes	1
No	2

**RQ13B**

If RQ7 = 2

Knowing that your monthly OAS payments could go up if you delay starting until age 70, do you feel more confident, less confident, or about the same about having enough income to live comfortably in retirement?

More confident	1
About the same	2
Less confident	3
Don't know / not sure	99

**D1**

Which of the following categories best describes your current employment status? Are you...

SELECT ONE ONLY

Working full-time (30 or more hours per week)	1
Working part-time (less than 30 hours per week)	2
Self-employed	3
Unemployed, but looking for work	4
Student attending school full-time	5
Retired	6
Not in the workforce (Full-time homemaker or unemployed but not looking for work)	7
Other employment status	77
Prefer not to answer	99

**D2**

What is the highest level of formal education that you have completed?

SELECT ONE ONLY

Grade 8 or less	1
Some high school	2
High school diploma or equivalent	3
Registered Apprenticeship or other trades certificate or diploma	4
College, CEGEP or other non-university certificate or diploma	5
University certificate or diploma below bachelor's level	6
Bachelor's degree	7
Postgraduate degree above bachelor's level	8
Prefer not to answer	99

**D3**

Are there any children under the age of 18 currently living in your household?

Yes	1
No	2
Prefer not to say	99

**D4**

Which of the following categories best describes your total annual household income, including income from all household members, before taxes are deducted?

SELECT ONE ONLY

Under \$20,000	1
Between \$20,000 and \$40,000	2
Between \$40,000 and \$60,000	3
Between \$60,000 and \$80,000	4
Between \$80,000 and \$100,000	5
Between \$100,000 and \$150,000	6
Between \$150,000 and \$200,000	7
\$200,000 and above	8
Prefer not to answer	99

**D5**

Where were you born?

Born in Canada	1
Born outside Canada (Specify the country):	2

**D6**

In what year did you first move to Canada?

Year:	77
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**D7 [1,2]**

What is the language you first learned at home and still understand?

SELECT UP TO TWO

English	1
French	2
Other language, specify:	77
Prefer not to answer	99

**D8A**

Do you self-identify as a person with a disability? A person with a disability is a person who has a long-term or recurring impairment (such as vision, hearing, mobility, flexibility, dexterity, pain, learning, developmental, memory or mental health-related) which limits their daily activities inside or outside the home (such as at school, work, or in the community in general).

Yes	1
No	2
Don't know	98
Prefer not to say	99

**D8B [1,10]**

**If D8A = 1**

How would you describe your disability?

Select all that apply.

Sight/vision also known as visual impairment (includes being blind or visually impaired even when wearing glasses or contact lenses)	1
Hearing also known as D/deaf or hard of hearing (includes tinnitus)	2
Mobility – that affects your ability to walk or move (includes being in a wheelchair etc.)	3
Flexibility or dexterity affects a person's ability to move their joints (includes severe arthritis, paralysis, loss of a limb)	4
Pain also known as chronic pain syndrome or disability (Pain that continues over a long period of time and disrupts your life.)	5
Learning also known as learning disabilities, (can include Dyslexia, Aphasia, Hyperactivity, Dyscalculia, dysgraphia, ADHD, etc.)	6
Developmental also known as intellectual disabilities (can include Down syndrome, autism, Asperger syndrome, etc.)	7
Memory also known as a memory disability that affects your ability to remember information (can include dementia, Alzheimer's etc.)	8
Mental health-related – also known as mental illness (can include depression, schizophrenia, bipolar, borderline, obsessive-compulsive (OCD) etc.)	9
Other disabilities (please describe):	77
Prefer not to answer	99

**D9**

What is the size of the community where you currently live?

City with a population of over one million	1
City with a population of between 100,000 and one million	2
City/town with a population of between 30,000 and 99,999	3
Town with a population between 1,000 and 29,999	4
Rural area with a population of less than 1,000	5
Prefer not to answer	99

**D10 [1,3]**

Are you First Nations, Inuit or Métis?

Select all that apply.

Yes, First Nations (North American Indian)	1
Yes, Métis	2
Yes, Inuk (Inuit)	3
No, not First Nations, Métis or Inuk (Inuit)	4
Prefer not to answer	99

**THNK**

That concludes the survey. This survey was conducted on behalf of Employment and Social Development Canada.

In the coming months the report will be available from Library and Archives Canada.

We thank you very much for taking the time to answer this survey, it is greatly appreciated. Your answers have been saved and you may now close your browser window.

**THNK2**

***Screened-out***

Unfortunately, based on your responses you are ineligible to participate in this survey. Thank you for your time!