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Working Group on Public Service Productivity

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About the Working Group

The Working Group on Public Service Productivity was appointed by the President of the Treasury Board of Canada in the autumn of 2024 to “examine productivity in Canada’s federal public service and inform the government’s economic plan.” ¹

The working group was supported by a secretariat at the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat. This overview of the working group’s activities has been produced by the working group’s secretariat.

The working group held its first meeting in December 2024 under the previous government, met regularly throughout the winter and spring of 2025, and corresponded over the summer of 2025 as it finalized its recommendations. Members were briefed by and held discussions with federal officials on a range of issues related to public service productivity and brought their own experiences and expertise to bear in working meetings.

The working group met with officials from the following federal organizations:

- Employment and Social Development Canada
- Privy Council Office
- Shared Services Canada
- Statistics Canada
- Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat

The following is a description of issues the working group explored.

Issues explored by the Working Group

▼ In this section

- Improving the measurement of public service productivity.
- Supporting a productive public service workforce
- Optimizing the use of technology, including artificial intelligence
- Reviewing government programming and spending from a productivity perspective
- Improving internal structures, processes and rules

Improving the measurement of public service productivity

Improving productivity in the federal public service requires an understanding of current levels of productivity in federal organizations, as well as methods for tracking increases and decreases in public service productivity over time. The working group discussed the measurement of public service productivity, including:

- challenges related to measuring productivity in the public sector
- international best practices, including the public service productivity measurements developed by the United Kingdom's Office of National Statistics, which apply a direct output approach where possible
- opportunities for developing productivity metrics for services provided to individuals, including through an expanded *State of Service* report

Supporting a productive public service workforce

The foundation of public service productivity is a skilled, engaged and productive federal workforce. The working group looked at how to best position the workforce to enhance productivity. For example, it examined the importance of:

- the role of culture in supporting a high-performing and innovative public service
- leadership in building a collaborative and healthy organization
- fostering a culture of rigorous performance management
- ensuring that the public service has the skills it needs to serve Canadians now and in the future
- ensuring an equitable and psychologically safe working environment, including for those from historically marginalized groups
- ensuring that employees with disabilities can access the accommodations they need so that they can make their best contribution to Canada

- developing a more permeable public service to enable a better exchange of talent and ideas with the private, academic and non-profit sectors

Optimizing the use of technology, including artificial intelligence

Technological development is a key driver of individual and organizational productivity. The role of technology in improving productivity is especially pertinent today, when new technologies such as generative artificial intelligence (AI) hold the potential for increasing productivity significantly. The working group explored how technology could be used to improve public service productivity and looked at factors including:

- the importance of ongoing investment in technology to support increased productivity, including during periods of fiscal restraint
- the revolutionary opportunity AI offers to improve productivity
- potential impacts of AI on the public service workforce
- improving government-wide management of information technology, including addressing longstanding technical debt so that the government can fully capture the benefits of new technology such as AI
- challenges related to sharing data within and between federal departments, and the problems this poses in fully leveraging tools such as AI
- investing in small-to-medium-sized technology projects across the public service

Reviewing government programming and spending from a productivity perspective

The periodic spending reviews carried out by governments, as well as evaluations of the effectiveness of government programming, could serve as tools for investigating and improving public service productivity. The

working group considered how spending reviews and program evaluations could support a more effective and efficient use of public resources by, for example:

- assessing which programs are essential to fulfilling the federal government's mandate and aligned with its priorities, and which program areas the federal government can exit
- incorporating productivity assessments of government programs into federal spending reviews
- strengthening program evaluation in government to support productivity assessments of federal programs and services

Improving internal structures, processes and rules

An organization's structures, processes and rules can support or impede productivity. The working group examined how the public service's internal structures, processes and rules could be reformed to lower barriers to productivity and enhance organizational effectiveness, including by:

- streamlining the Cabinet and Treasury Board decision-making process so that implementation factors play a stronger role in the decision-making process
- strengthening the management of the public service and supporting efforts to reform it
- reducing administrative burden posed by Treasury Board and departmental policies
- introducing more discipline into the federal budget process

Conclusion

A productive federal public service is foundational to our system of government and public trust in government institutions. The working group found that much could be done to improve public service productivity and developed 19 recommendations for the government to consider. While

acknowledging current efforts to reduce spending on government operations and their impact on productivity, the group stressed that lasting gains require continued investment in data, technology, workforce management, and efficient structures and processes.

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Improve the measurement of public service productivity

▼ In this section

- [Productivity measurements for Canada's public sector](#)

- Productivity measurements for federal services to individuals

Accurate and transparent measurement of public service productivity is essential to improving outcomes for Canadians. Without reliable data, it is difficult to assess the effectiveness and efficiency of government services or identify areas for improvement. These recommendations aim to address the fact that Canada lacks a robust framework for measuring productivity in the public sector, which would enable evidence-based decision-making and support greater accountability and efficiency. Improved data will make it possible to benchmark current performance levels and assess whether government actions to increase productivity are leading to desired results.

Productivity measurements for Canada's public sector

Recommendation 1: Statistics Canada should explore, test and report publicly on the development of a productivity measurement program for the public sector in Canada that uses a direct output approach.

Productivity measurements for federal services to individuals

Recommendation 2: Building on the recent *State of Service* report, federal departments and agencies that provide direct services to Canadians should work with Statistics Canada to develop productivity metrics for those services. For quality control, the Treasury Board, with support from Statistics Canada, should review and approve these metrics.

Support a productive public service workforce

▼ In this section

- Culture

- Leadership
- Performance
- Training and skills
- Diversity, equity and inclusion
- A more permeable public service

A high-performing public service depends on a workforce that is skilled, motivated, and supported by a strong organizational culture. These recommendations emphasize the importance of fostering a culture that values productivity, innovation, training and leadership development, and rigorous performance management. Together, these measures aim to create an environment where public servants can thrive and deliver better results for Canadians.

Culture

Recommendation 3: The government needs to foster a proud and distinctive organizational culture that supports a high-performing and innovative public service and discourages risk aversion and conformism.

Actions to support this could include:

- embedding public service values into recruitment and onboarding processes
- channelling the intrinsic motivation of public servants by aligning the contributions of individuals and teams with the missions of their organizations and the wider government
- supporting public servants when well-intentioned and prudent risk-taking and innovation result in failure
- creating innovation “sandboxes,” exempt from usual administrative policies, in which new ideas can be explored and scaled quickly
- creating intake channels for public servants of all levels to propose new ideas

Leadership

Recommendation 4: Leadership is about having the right person in the right place with the right mandate. The government should support effective leadership of the public service by:

- preparing officials for senior leadership roles through management training, including for “soft” skills that support a collaborative and healthy organization
- opening pathways to senior leadership for external candidates (for more on this, see recommendation 9 on a more permeable public service)
- increasing leadership stability by:
 - bolstering the deputy-head talent pool through effective succession planning
 - taking an approach to deputy-head appointments that considers the organizational needs of individual departments and agencies, as well as government priorities

Performance

Recommendation 5: The government should support public service excellence through a culture of rigorous performance management.

Supporting actions could include:

- clear corrective action for poor performance by individuals at all levels
- requiring rigorous performance reviews before the end of a one-year probationary period for both newly hired and newly promoted public servants
- reporting the number of public servants who have been dismissed, as well as the number of public servants identified as underperformers, in the Annual Report on the Public Service
- providing managers with performance management training, as well as with clear guidelines on performance management

- recognizing that poor performance can be a result of systemic factors (for example, insufficient training, lack of direction and managerial support), ensuring that measures are in place to deal with these factors
- recognizing the potential for biases and higher rates of disciplinary action among certain groups, ensuring that performance management processes are timely and appropriately documented

Training and skills

Recommendation 6: The government should determine how to best acquire or develop—or both—the skills the public service needs to serve Canadians now and in the future. This should include ensuring that the suite of mandatory training requirements for public servants is not solely focused on compliance with rules but also that it includes training to support upskilling across the public service.

Diversity, equity and inclusion

Recommendation 7: The government should continue with actions taken in recent years to ensure an equitable and psychologically safe work environment for all employees, including those from historically marginalized groups, to ensure that all employees can produce their best work in service of Canada.

Recommendation 8: The government should build upon the significant progress it has made in hiring employees with disabilities by putting in place measures to unlock their ability to contribute, such as:

- making use of the Government of Canada Workplace Accessibility Passport mandatory across all federal departments and agencies
- developing service standards (for example, not more than 30 days and an average of a week) for responding to accommodation requests

A more permeable public service

Recommendation 9: To enable a free flow of ideas and to diversify management styles and policy perspectives, the government should:

- bring in the best talent from the private, academic and non-profit sectors
- strengthen dialogue between the government and other sectors
- encourage public servants to gain experience outside of the federal public sector

Actions to support this could include:

- encouraging the creation of external advisory committees for federal departments and agencies, made up of academics and other relevant external actors (such as private sector and non-profit sector practitioners), to support dialogue between public servants and external experts and practitioners
- supporting external Interchange Canada ¹ participants, as well as mid- and late-career recruits to the public service, through improved onboarding and training to help them navigate the unique public sector working environment
- displaying greater openness to new ideas and new ways of doing things proposed by external Interchange Canada participants as well as mid- and late-career recruits to the public service
- increasing promotion of the Interchange Canada program, within government and without, through presentations, job fairs, advertising campaigns, and so on
- including experience outside the federal public service as an asset qualification in all job postings for senior executive roles in the public service

Deploy the power of technology,

including artificial intelligence

▼ In this section

- [Technology](#)
- [Artificial intelligence](#)
- [Investing in small-to-medium size technology initiatives](#)

Technology, particularly artificial intelligence (AI), holds transformative potential for enhancing public service productivity. Strategic investments in digital tools, data management and AI training can streamline operations, improve service delivery and enable smarter decision-making. These recommendations underscore the need for a proactive and responsible approach to technology adoption, ensuring that the public service remains effective and future-ready.

Technology

Recommendation 10: Enhancing productivity requires investment, especially now when new technologies are emerging that can provide significant benefits. Even in times of fiscal restraint, the government should make it a priority to invest in technology and associated training to support productivity and a world-class public service.

Artificial intelligence

Recommendation 11: To responsibly accelerate the use of AI and exploit its productivity-enhancing benefits, the government should:

- invest in AI-supported technologies
- improve the way it manages data
- actively manage risks posed by generative AI, such as bias and hallucination
- ensure that managers and employees have access to AI-related training

Recommendation 12: The government should appoint an external working group made up of individuals with public service experience and experts in AI, human resources and labour relations to advise the government on how to proactively respond to the impacts of AI on its workforce, including potential workforce reallocations or reductions.

Investing in small-to-medium size technology initiatives

Recommendation 13: The government should mobilize the innovative power of public servants at the working level by establishing an investment fund (or funds) to support small-to-medium-size projects with high prospective benefits in terms of enhancing productivity, and manageable costs and risks. These investment projects should be supported by business cases with rigorous cost-benefit analysis and a clear articulation of expected investment returns, as well as ex-post public evaluation reports detailing actual investment returns.

Review government programming and spending from a productivity perspective

To ensure that public funds are used effectively, government programs must be regularly assessed for their efficiency, effectiveness and alignment with federal responsibilities and government priorities. These recommendations point to the need for a systematic review process that incorporates productivity metrics and value-for-money assessments. Strengthening evaluation practices will help the government make informed choices, eliminate redundancies and deliver better outcomes within fiscal constraints.

Recommendation 14: Productivity assessments can support government spending reviews. When reviewing spending and programming, the government should apply a three-step process that:

1. sorts programs according to whether they align with core federal responsibilities, as well as with government priorities; examines whether there is duplication of efforts, programs and services within the federal government; and assesses whether the federal government is the ideal or appropriate organization to deliver the programming in question
2. reviews remaining programs for effectiveness and efficiency (in other words, looks at whether the program can be delivered at lower cost or achieve better outcomes), including through the application of an “AI lens”
3. assesses whether the remaining programs, after the productivity measures identified in the second step are accounted for, meet an overall affordability envelope

Recommendation 15: To support assessment of the productivity of government programs and services, the government should review how it uses its evaluation function by:

- reviewing the extent to which evaluation is being used to support decision-making
- reviewing the appropriate level of flexibility that should be granted to departments and agencies regarding evaluations under the *Policy on Results*
- ensuring that all government spending (including tax expenditures that are substitutes or close substitutes for spending) is subject to government policies on evaluation, to better support productivity assessments of all government activities
- ensuring that all programs have articulated clear intermediate and ultimate desired outcomes against which program effectiveness can be evaluated
- requiring all evaluations of program spending to include a value-for-money assessment
- establishing an independent organization that would exercise a leadership function for evaluation in the public service

Improve internal structures, processes and rules

▼ In this section

- Re-orienting the Cabinet and Treasury Board decision-making process
- Strengthening management and leading ongoing reform of the public service
- Streamlining internal rules
- Increasing budget process discipline

Streamlining internal decision-making processes is essential to reducing administrative burden and enhancing organizational agility. By re-orienting the Cabinet and Treasury Board decision-making process, strengthening public service management, supporting ongoing reform, simplifying rules and introducing greater discipline into the budget process, the government can improve coordination, reduce inefficiencies and better support strategic priorities. These recommendations aim to create a more responsive and results-oriented public administration.

Re-orienting the Cabinet and Treasury Board decision-making process

Recommendation 16: To make the best use of ministers' time and lower the burden on departments, the government should strengthen the Treasury Board's ability to serve as its management board by focusing Treasury Board time on significant, complex and strategic-level items. This may require raising delegated authorities for ministers, deputy ministers, the President of Treasury Board and the Secretary of the Treasury Board to reduce the volume of items brought to Treasury Board for decision.

The government should also re-sequence the Cabinet decision-making process by stress-testing the implementation assumptions of budget and policy proposals at the Treasury Board before they receive consideration by Cabinet and the Minister of Finance. This re-sequencing would re-balance the Cabinet decision-making process from its current emphasis on policy direction to a process that better integrates policy, costing and implementation considerations.

Strengthening management and leading ongoing reform of the public service

Recommendation 17: There should be a senior official whose full-time function is overseeing the general management and ongoing reform of the public service. This official could be based at the Privy Council Office or the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat.

Streamlining internal rules

Recommendation 18: To ensure that resources are appropriately focused on delivering services to Canadians, all existing Treasury Board and departmental policies should be reviewed with the aim of supporting productivity and reducing administrative burden. Any new policies should undergo an administrative burden check through a cost-benefit analysis.

Increasing budget process discipline

Recommendation 19: The government should introduce greater discipline and longer-term planning into the budget process by:

- planning spending that supports core operations on a longer horizon
- considerably limiting budget proposal intakes outside of the annual budget process
- reducing the number of supplementary estimates to one, if the government is successful in significantly reducing the number of off-

cycle funding announcements, as proposed above

- reviewing each “sunsetting program” to ensure its continued relevance; relevant programs should receive permanent funding and those that are no longer relevant should be discontinued
- minimizing or eliminating the use of “sunsetting programs” in the future

Footnotes

- 1 In Budget 2025, the government announced that the Interchange Canada program will be rebranded as the Build Canada Exchange.
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Working Group on Public Service Productivity: Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat response to the recommendations of the Working Group

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Introduction

The Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat (TBS) appreciates the work undertaken by the Working Group on Public Service Productivity and acknowledges the scope and breadth of the challenge put before it.

In the 2025 [Speech from the Throne](#) and the Prime Minister's May 2025 [Mandate Letter](#), the government recognized the importance of improving the productivity of the federal public service to achieve better results for Canadians. In [Budget 2025](#), the government made improving public service productivity a central part of its plans to spend less on government operations so that it can invest more in Canadians and the Canadian economy:

To achieve this goal, the Government must become much more productive by rightsizing, cutting red tape and wasteful spending, and adopting AI at scale. Canada's new government will balance Canada's operating budget within three years by making responsible, pragmatic choices—shifting the composition of spending toward capital investments that will grow the economy and prosperity for Canadians.

¹

TBS has carefully considered the working group's recommendations in relation to the government's priorities and its mission-driven approach to serving Canadians. The recommendations cover a range of issues that affect public service productivity. For its response, TBS has divided the working group's recommendations into the following categories:

- Recommendations that align with current government actions
- Recommendations that align with measures proposed in Budget 2025
- Recommendations that could inform future work by the Cabinet Committee on Government Transformation
- Recommendations that are not being considered at this time due to other government priorities

Recommendations that align with current government actions

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- [The public service workforce and workplace](#)
- [Technology, including artificial intelligence, in the public service](#)

The public service workforce and workplace

The working group has made constructive and thought-provoking recommendations related to organizational culture; leadership; and inclusion, diversity, equity and accessibility in the public service. Recognizing that there is much work to be done to develop and maintain a diverse, inclusive, safe and rewarding public service for all employees, TBS is committed to working with employees and bargaining agents to support a skilled and productive workforce and a safe, healthy and inclusive workplace. Current efforts include:

- supporting a diverse and inclusive public service through, for example, the [*Call to Action on Anti-Racism, Equity, and Inclusion in the Federal Public Service*](#)
- facilitating recruitment, retention and career advancement for persons with disabilities through, for example, the [*Accessibility Strategy for the Public Service of Canada*](#) and the [*Government of Canada Workplace Accessibility Passport*](#)
- increasing transparency and accountability related to misconduct and wrongdoing in the public service by publishing departmental reports on these issues, for example, reports from [*Global Affairs Canada*](#) and the [*central agencies*](#)

Maintaining the progress that has been made will be important as the public service enters a period of transition. During its recent period of growth, the public service became younger and more diverse. In Budget 2025, the government committed to protecting diversity in its workforce and to ensuring a strong, younger generation of public servants as the public service undergoes workforce adjustment and attrition to return to a more sustainable size. Meeting these commitments will help the public service continue to provide effective services, remain representative of the population it serves, and support the next generation of public servants.

Technology, including artificial intelligence, in the public service

The working group made several recommendations related to technology and accelerating the use of artificial intelligence (AI). The government is acting to ensure that the public service has the tools and digital talent it needs to serve Canadians. Working group recommendations in this area align with many government initiatives that are underway now, including:

- the *AI Strategy for the Federal Public Service 2025–2027*, which will focus on making progress in four key priority areas:
 - establishing an AI Centre of Expertise to support and help coordinate government-wide AI efforts
 - ensuring that AI systems are secure and used responsibly
 - providing training and talent development pathways
 - building trust through openness and transparency in how AI is used
- developing a consistent approach to measuring the productivity impacts of AI use cases across the Government of Canada, ensuring that future investments can be assessed transparently and deployed effectively
- the Government of Canada's memorandum of understanding with Cohere Inc., which includes exploring opportunities to deploy AI technologies across the government to enhance public service operations

- the Government of Canada Digital Talent Strategy.

Recommendations that align with measures proposed in Budget 2025

▼ In this section

- Reviewing government programming and spending
- Modernizing Canada's budgeting approach
- Streamlining administrative policies and reducing reporting burden
- Attracting private sector expertise to the public service
- Improving productivity through technology, including artificial intelligence

Several working group recommendations align with measures proposed in Budget 2025.

Reviewing government programming and spending

The Government's Comprehensive Expenditure Review informed Budget 2025 and aligns with recommendations made by the working group related to spending and program reviews, including the need for government to review federal programming to ensure that it aligns with core federal responsibilities, does not duplicate efforts elsewhere, and is efficient and effective.

Budget 2025 also announced that government would be adopting "a regular, predictable review schedule to ensure continuous optimization of resources" that focuses on horizontal themes, such as consolidating the administration of programs and fostering AI implementation and scale-up in the public service. In Budget 2025, the government also committed to reporting in Budget 2026 on the results of its efforts to further restrain growth in operating spending.

Modernizing Canada's budgeting approach

Working group recommendations related to improving the federal budget process align with the government's recently announced plans to modernize Canada's budgeting approach, including by transitioning to a fall budgeting cycle that will support effective financial planning for federal departments and agencies.

Streamlining administrative policies and reducing reporting burden

The working group's recommendation to review the public service's administrative policies with the aim of supporting productivity and reducing administrative burden aligns with the government's plan, announced in Budget 2025, to introduce targeted amendments to legislation in order to increase government efficiency and operational effectiveness.

These include amendments that would:

- streamline low-risk internal processes
- modernize outdated requirements
- eliminate unnecessary and burdensome reporting requirements
- remove unnecessary barriers to agile regulation-making
- align legislative and regulatory authorities across government
- provide for the delegation of certain matters where appropriate

The legislative amendments will build on work already underway on administrative policies, such as Treasury Board policies, to minimize administrative burden for departments.

Attracting private sector expertise to the public service

Budget 2025 announced that the federal government's Interchange Canada program will be rebranded as the Build Canada Exchange, with an ambitious, immediate-term goal of integrating 50 external leaders in

technology, finance, science and other sectors into the public service. This announcement aligns with the working group’s call for a more “permeable” federal public service “to enable a free flow of ideas and to diversify management styles and policy perspectives.”

Improving productivity through technology, including artificial intelligence

The working group recognizes that “[t]echnology, particularly artificial intelligence, holds transformative potential for enhancing public service productivity.” Several of its recommendations involve harnessing the power of AI and other technologies to improve productivity.

Budget 2025 announced the government’s intent to establish an Office of Digital Transformation that will proactively identify, implement and scale technology solutions across the federal government. The office will leverage expertise from internal sources and from the private sector to hasten AI adoption.

Budget 2025 also announced the government’s plans to partner with leading Canadian AI companies to develop a made-in-Canada AI tool that can be deployed across the federal government.

Recommendations that could inform future work by the Cabinet Committee on Government Transformation

The government has established a Cabinet committee on Government Transformation to “coordinat[e] efforts to realize more effective and efficient government services and processes and to improve service delivery for Canadians.” Several working group recommendations could inform

future work by this committee, such as recommendations related to upskilling, performance management, and ongoing investment in technology (including AI) to increase efficiency and effectiveness.

Recommendations not being considered at this time because of other government priorities

Some working group recommendations, while of interest, do not readily align with government priorities, so are not being actively considered at this time. These include recommendations related to the following:

- measuring productivity across Canada’s public sector
- establishing an independent organization to exercise a leadership function for evaluation in the public service
- re-sequencing the Cabinet decision-making process
- appointing a senior official whose full-time function would be to oversee the general management and ongoing reform of the public service

Conclusion

TBS would like to thank the working group for its dedication and its contributions to improving Canada’s federal public service. TBS will continue working to improve the productivity of the public service to ensure it remains efficient and effective in the important work it performs for all Canadians.

Footnotes

¹ Government of Canada, *Canada Strong: Budget 2025* (November 2025), p. 205.



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The Terms of Reference of the Working Group on Public Service Productivity.

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Context

A healthy economy depends on strong productivity, which leads to faster growth, more jobs and higher wages. Over the past decades, Canada has been facing a steady decline in productivity growth. Meanwhile, the public sector in Canada has continued to expand, and according to the International Monetary Fund (IMF), now accounts for nearly 40% of Canada's GDP (taking into account all levels of government). Given the significant proportion of the Canadian workforce and economic output attributable to the public sector, it is important to consider the role the public sector can play in reversing Canada's productivity decline.

Productivity in the public sector context is challenging to measure given that inputs and outputs for business lines in the federal public service vary significantly. For example, it is easier to measure the efficiency of a call centre than to measure the efficiency of a team responsible for developing proposals for new programs.

There are many factors that make a study of productivity in the federal public service timely:

- the current fiscal environment and the need to inform decision-making about the management of the public service;
- the lack of data and understanding around the current state of productivity in the federal public service;
- the emergence of new potentially productivity-enhancing technologies, such as artificial intelligence;
- increasing expectations from citizens in terms of program and service delivery and accessibility; and
- increasing complexity of government programs, many of which are supported by outdated IT systems requiring significant manual intervention.

Mandate

The mandate of the working group is to examine productivity in Canada's federal public service and inform the government's economic plan. The working group will examine the delivery of services to Canadians and the role of technology in helping address barriers to achieve greater efficiencies for Canadians and businesses. The working group will assess options to advance the public service's ability to be innovative, flexible and efficient in delivering services for Canadians. The working group will present findings and make recommendations to the President of the Treasury Board.

The working group is expected to have fulfilled their mandate by March 31, 2025. If needed, however, the government may decide to extend or renew the working group's mandate, which would be communicated to members by the President of the Treasury Board.

Scope of work: priority areas

The working group will assess the current state of productivity in the federal public service, building on the work that has been done in Canada and other countries.

This could include:

1. examining how productivity is measured in other countries and whether similar methodologies can be usefully applied to the Canadian context;
2. exploring areas where the federal public service could create meaningful productivity gains in services, such as information-based services;
3. identifying opportunities to collaborate with other levels of government within Canada;
4. investigating how current rules, processes and culture affect productivity in the federal public service;
5. identifying opportunities to address impediments to productivity in the federal public service, including:

- a. potential changes to legislation, policies or regulatory requirements that inhibit productivity;
 - b. ways to promote innovation and experimentation to decrease costs and/or improve service offerings;
 - c. incentives to improve productivity; and
 - d. opportunities to increase the capacity of internal services and enabling functions to efficiently support organizations in achieving their outcomes;
6. seeking opportunities to improve service delivery and enhance productivity in the federal public service by better integrating digital technologies and by adopting emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence, while considering challenges inherent to the adoption of these technologies (such as privacy considerations).

The working group may examine other areas that fall within its mandate and members' areas of expertise that can be achieved within the timelines (e.g., recommendations on how to improve functional capabilities in key areas such as digital technology, internal processes, and talent management).

To advance its work, the working group can consult externally and extend special invitations to bring additional perspectives to working group meetings. This will be important when considering how to best capture learnings from other jurisdictions and across the federal public service.

The focus of this working group is the public service of Canada, but findings and recommendations could be applicable to a broader context, such as the federal public sector (including federal Crown corporations) or the Canadian public sector (including other levels of government and public institutions such as hospitals and universities).

Deliverables

The working group will provide advice and recommendations to the President of the Treasury Board, through a final report. The report will provide the working group's observations of the current status of productivity in the Federal Public Service, the factors affecting public service productivity and priorities for action.

The deadline for the Working Group's recommendations was initially set for March 31, 2025. The deadline was extended to allow the Working Group to complete its work.

Operating structure

The working group will be composed of up to 9 members. The working group will undertake its work through a series of meetings throughout winter 2025. It will be supported by a secretariat, housed within the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat.

- The President of the Treasury Board and the Secretary of the Treasury Board will **Co-Chair**.
- **Members** will share advice based on their skills, experience and expertise. Members will be chosen on an individual basis and not as organizational representatives. Members will come from academia, labour associations, business/industry associations, and former public servants.
- The **secretariat** will support the co-chairs and working group members by:
 - managing meeting organization and logistics;
 - preparing meeting summaries and background materials;
 - liaising with departments with expertise related to the work as required; and
 - supporting research and assisting with report writing.

Working Group Members

▶ **Benoît Robidoux** | Former Senior Associate Deputy Minister, Employment and Social Development Canada

▶ **Laura Dawson** | Executive Director, Future Borders Coalition

▶ **Neil Yeates** | Former Deputy Minister, Citizenship and Immigration Canada

▶ **Shingai Manjengwa** | Senior Director, Education and Development, Talent & Ecosystem, Mila

▶ **Trevor Tombe** | Professor, Department of Economics, University of Calgary

▶ **Wendy R. Carroll, PhD, CPHR** | Associate Professor, Department of Management, Sobey School of Business, Saint Mary's University

Meetings

The working group is expected to meet at least six times starting in December 2024 until the end of its mandate, with additional ad hoc meetings, as necessary.

Compensation, travel and accommodation

Working group members will participate on a pro bono basis without remuneration. Eligible travel and related expenses for members will be reimbursed in accordance with the [National Joint Council Travel Directive](#) if and when in-person meetings are required, in accordance with the terms of the Letter of Agreement for Participation in the Working Group on Public Service Productivity.

Transparency

Recognizing the importance of keeping the public informed about the working group's purpose, membership and activities, the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat will publish these terms of reference and working group members' names. Furthermore, findings and recommendations made by the committee will be published on the Canada.ca website.

Confidentiality

Information received through the working group will be treated as confidential and will not be disclosed.

Conflict of interest

Recognizing the importance of offering advice and recommendations that are independent and made in good faith, members are expected to take all necessary steps to avoid real, apparent or potential conflicts of interest between their private, professional or business interests and their participation in the working group, in accordance with the terms of the agreement.

Changes to the terms of reference

The Government of Canada, through the President and Secretary of the Treasury Board, may amend these terms of reference at any time with notification of any such changes to the members of the working group.

Date modified: 2025-12-12