



**FINAL REPORT**

**Survey of Electors  
on Communications with Electors**

**Prepared for Elections Canada**

**March 2013**

**Ce rapport est aussi disponible en français sur demande.**

*Phoenix SPI is a 'Gold Seal Certified' Corporate Member of the MRIA*







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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On behalf of Elections Canada, Phoenix Strategic Perspectives Inc. conducted a random digit dialing (RDD) telephone survey with 1,011 eligible electors from among the general population. Based on a sample of this size, the overall results can be considered accurate to within  $\pm 3.4\%$ , 19 times out of 20 (adjusted for sample stratification). The fieldwork was conducted from November 21 to December 2, 2012.

The objective of the survey was to assess electors' opinions and attitudes on various issues related to communications with electors. The results will increase the agency's knowledge about the opinions and attitudes of Canadians on such communications practices. Additionally, they will be used to assist in the production of the Chief Electoral Officer's report on the complaints received about automated telephone calls and live calls during and after the 41st federal general election.

### Attitudes & Preferences on Communications Practices

Electors are receptive to being contacted by political parties and candidates during a federal election. Close to three out of four respondents (74%) think it is appropriate for political parties and candidates to call electors to inform them about their positions or platforms. Below this, 69% think it is appropriate for parties or candidates to contact them to encourage them to vote, and 64% to provide them with information on where and when to vote. Respondents were least likely to consider it appropriate for parties or candidates to contact electors during a federal election for the purpose of seeking a donation, with slightly more than one third (35%) indicating that this is an appropriate reason for calling electors.

Looking at the different methods of communication, it is important to note that the telephone is the least preferred way by which Canadian electors believe that political parties and candidates should try to contact them (11%). In contrast, the most appropriate ways to communicate with electors are found to be by regular mail (37%), by e-mail or other electronic means (27%) and by in-person contact, such as door-to-door canvassing (22%).

When it comes to the preferred time of day to be contacted, the greatest single proportion (40%) mentioned that it would be in the evening (5:00 p.m. to just before 9:00 p.m.). Relatively few (12%) expressed a preference for the morning (9:00 a.m. to just before 12:00 p.m.). The remaining respondents were fairly evenly divided, with 20% saying that the afternoon (12:00 p.m. to just before 5:00 p.m.) would be preferable, and 22% having no preference at all.

### Protection of Personal Information & Privacy

Nearly four in five respondents (78%) agreed that electors contacted by a party or candidate should have the right to "opt out" of any further contact by that party or candidate. Furthermore, the majority of electors surveyed (69%) disagreed with the view that it is important that federal political parties be able to collect personal information on electors. The right to privacy and the protection of personal information are clearly important to electors, and almost one third (32%) think that parties and candidates in Canada do *not* use personal information appropriately to communicate with electors. Not surprisingly, then, in the trade-off between preserving an elector's privacy and the need for political parties and candidates to be able to communicate with electors, nearly two thirds of respondents think that privacy should always (53%) or mostly (13%) prevail.



Conversely, 15% feel that the needs of parties and candidates to communicate with electors should always or mostly prevail.

Finally, underscoring these preferences and opinions is electors' position on the regulation of communications practices during a federal election. Almost two thirds (65%) think that political parties and candidates should be regulated by privacy laws when it comes to how and when they can communicate with electors during a federal election. Conversely, 31% hold the view that parties and candidates should be self-regulated.

### **Experience & Views Regarding Contact by Elections Canada, Political Parties & Candidates**

Ten percent of electors claimed to have received a phone call from Elections Canada during the last federal election informing them about where and when to vote. This may be perceived as a contradiction, since Elections Canada does not call electors on a proactive basis, or as an indication of possible misuse of Elections Canada's name and identity. Among those 98 respondents who reported having received such calls, 13 mentioned that they had not voted at the 41<sup>st</sup> federal general election. This proportion of non-voters is similar to that of the overall survey population. That said, readers should be reminded to exercise caution in the interpretation of such low-occurrence, self-reported results.

More than half of the electors surveyed (58%) were contacted by one or more political parties or candidates during the last federal general election. Several contact methods were routinely used: mail (66%), a live phone call (62%), or an automated call (58%). Roughly one third (34%) received a visit from a party representative or candidate. Relatively few—just 12%—received an e-mail.

Canvassing and polling were the top reasons for contacting electors. Forty-nine percent said they were contacted to discuss policy or to persuade them to vote for a party or candidate, while 40% reported that a party or candidate contacted them to determine their voting intentions.

A few electors (6%) also stated that they received a phone call from political parties or candidates telling them that their voting location had changed. Among those 39 respondents, 6 of them reported that they had not voted at the 41<sup>st</sup> general election. This proportion of non-voters is similar to that of the overall survey population. Caution should once again be exercised when interpreting these low frequency results, based on these individual cases.

Fully 69% of electors with whom parties or candidates communicated during the last federal general election had at least a moderately positive reaction. Notably, 12% characterized their reaction as *very positive*.

### **Sources of Information Used by Electors**

Electors were most likely to point to television as their main source of information on political parties and candidates during an election. In all, 41% identified television as their main source. Newspapers (22%) and the Internet or blogs (19%) followed at a distance. When asked to focus on information about the electoral process itself, Elections Canada was the top source, by far. Nearly half (48%) pointed to Elections Canada's brochure, householder, leaflet or reminder card and 7% mentioned Elections Canada's website.

Taken together, this means 55% would turn to Elections Canada as their main source of information on the electoral process.

Few electors (7%) reported having needed to make an additional effort to find out when or where to vote during the last federal election. Those who did were most likely to have contacted Elections Canada or asked their friends or family.

### **Awareness of Complaints about Telephone Calls**

Canadians were asked whether they were aware that Elections Canada received complaints about automated and live telephone calls during and after the last federal general election. Most Canadians (58%) were aware of these complaints, while 42% were not. Awareness of these complaints, however, does not correlate with lower levels of trust in federal election results or reduced likelihood to think that Elections Canada ran the election fairly. Additionally, those who were aware of the complaints were more likely than those who were not to have high levels of confidence in Elections Canada (84% vs. 73%), federal political parties (84% vs. 73%), and the judiciary (67% vs. 51%).

It appears as though Canadians who are aware of the complaints received by Elections Canada are generally those Canadians who are more broadly interested and engaged in politics. These Canadians also tend to be those with relatively high levels of trust and confidence in the system. Overall, they also tend to favour protecting personal privacy in a tradeoff against the need for political parties to communicate with electors and think that political parties should be regulated by privacy laws.

### **Trust & Confidence in Institutions Involved in Electoral Process**

The perception that the last federal general election was conducted by Elections Canada in a fair manner was widespread. In total, 85% think that Elections Canada ran the election in a fair manner, with 43% saying it was run *very* fairly. As well, the large majority (85%) expressed high levels of trust in the accuracy of the federal election results in Canada. When it comes to confidence in the various institutions involved in the electoral process, Elections Canada was the most trusted—80% said they had quite a lot or a great deal of confidence in the agency. Following at a distance was the judiciary or legal system (60%) and local candidates (57%). Respondents were least likely to have confidence in federal political parties, with 56% saying they have not very much or no confidence at all in these institutions. To contextualize these views, the majority of electors surveyed claimed to be somewhat interested (50%) or very interested (26%) in politics.

### **Use of Technologies in Relation to Political Issues**

Focusing on electors' use of technology, Internet users are more likely to use a computer than a mobile device when accessing the Internet. Specifically, 72% said they use a laptop computer and 65% a desktop computer to access the Internet. In contrast, fewer than half (43%) use a smart phone, such as an iPhone or BlackBerry, and 29% a tablet, such as an iPad. Six in ten (60%) respondents indicated that they use more than one of these methods to access the Internet.

When it comes to online activities, 68% use the Internet as a source of information about political issues. Much smaller proportions use YouTube to post or watch videos related to political issues (25%) or use the Internet to post articles or comments on such issues (20%). More than one quarter of Internet users (28%) do none of these online activities. Additionally, 55% of those who use the Internet as a source of information about political



issues think that the information they obtain online is just as reliable as the information provided through mainstream media. The remaining respondents were evenly divided in their assessments: 22% said online information is more reliable, and 22% feel it is less reliable.

Most electors who use the Internet are somewhat concerned (46%) or very concerned (39%) about the impact of technologies or applications on their ability to protect their personal privacy.

## Conclusions

The survey results suggest that electors are generally receptive to being contacted by political parties and candidates during federal elections. However, they do have clear preferences regarding how, when and for what reasons parties and candidates communicate with them. Few electors want to be contacted by phone or in the morning. Furthermore, mail, e-mail and in-person contact are all preferable to phone as a means of communication. Imparting information or encouraging one to vote are generally viewed by electors as appropriate reasons for contacting them during a federal election. The majority said that soliciting donations is *not* an appropriate reason for parties or candidates to call during a federal election. As well, electors are more apt to favour formal regulation of communications practices than self-regulation on the part of parties and candidates.

When it comes to collecting personal information, Canadians support an approach that places their right to privacy above all else. They strongly believe that their personal privacy takes priority over the need for parties and candidates to be able to communicate with electors. This is likely due, at least in part, to the fact that fewer than one third believe parties and candidates use personal information appropriately to communicate with electors. Not surprisingly, Canadians tend to think it is *not* important that parties be able to collect personal information on the electorate, and that electors should have the right to “opt out” of further contact by a party or candidate. While electors are amenable to being contacted during federal elections, they want these communications regulated under privacy laws in order to protect their privacy.

Changing topics, confidence in Canada’s electoral system and the institutions involved in the electoral process remains high. Despite the ongoing media coverage of allegations of wrongdoing in the 41st general election, most electors think Elections Canada ran the last federal general election in a fair manner. Although the fairness rating is down slightly compared to tracking prior to the so-called “robocalls” investigation, it is still holding strong, with 85% of electors saying the election was fairly run.

Underscoring this positive impression, electors continue to have high levels of trust in the accuracy of federal election results and confidence in Elections Canada as the administrator of federal elections. While confidence in the other institutions and actors involved in the electoral process was somewhat lower, majorities of electors are nevertheless confident in the judiciary or legal system, local candidates and Canada’s federal political parties. Perceptions of electoral fairness, trust in federal election results and confidence in Elections Canada thus appear to have not suffered in the wake of the publicity surrounding the robocalls investigation.

The main source that electors use for information about political parties and candidates is television, followed by newspapers and the Internet. On the other hand, when it comes to the electoral process itself, such as when and where to vote, electors mostly get their information from Elections Canada’s voter information card and the reminder brochure.



Relatively few Canadians mention using the Elections Canada website as their main source of information.

When it comes to politics generally, many electors who have access are using the Internet as a source of information. However, the numbers using the Internet to engage in some manner of political debate, either by posting articles or comments on the Web, or using YouTube to post or watch videos related to political issues, are much smaller. That said, these numbers can be expected to grow in the coming years because those engaged in these online political activities are far more likely to be younger—under 35 years old. The Internet, and social media in particular, will become increasingly important public spaces, ones that are used both as sources of information and as a means to communicate about political issues.





## INTRODUCTION

Phoenix Strategic Perspectives Inc. (Phoenix) was commissioned by Elections Canada to conduct a survey of electors on communications practices towards Canadian electors.

### Background and Objectives

Elections Canada is an independent, non-partisan agency that reports directly to Parliament. The Agency is mandated to conduct federal general elections, by-elections and referendums, administer the political financing provisions of the *Canada Elections Act* (CEA), monitor compliance, and enforce electoral legislation.

During and after the 41<sup>st</sup> federal general election, Elections Canada received numerous complaints about automated telephone calls and live calls. The complaints alleged that callers falsely claiming to be from Elections Canada reported changes to polling places, when in fact there were no such changes, or that electors felt harassed by calls falsely purporting to be from a particular candidate or party, either because of the time or recurrence of the calls, or because of their tone. This issue has garnered considerable media attention.

At an appearance before a parliamentary committee last March, the Chief Electoral Officer committed to table a report on the allegations of wrongdoing before the end of March 2013.

The Agency decided to take this opportunity to address a wide range of issues dealing with communications with electors in the context of federal elections. The objective of the survey was to assess electors' opinions and attitudes on various issues related to communications with electors. More specifically, surveyed electors were consulted on the following issues:

- The practices of political parties and candidates in communicating with electors, including their preferences on being contacted by political parties and candidates.
- The protection of personal information.
- The sources of information used by electors to obtain knowledge about political parties and candidates, as well as the electoral process during an election.
- The level of trust in the institutions and entities involved in the electoral process.
- The use of technologies.

The results obtained from this survey will increase the Agency's knowledge about the opinions and attitudes of Canadians on communication practices with electors. Additionally, the findings will be used to assist in the production of the Chief Electoral Officer's report on the complaints about automated telephone calls and live calls during and after the 41<sup>st</sup> federal general election.

### Research Design

A random digit dial (RDD) telephone survey was conducted with 1,011 eligible electors from among the general population. Eligible electors are Canadian citizens, at least 18 years of age at the time of the survey. Based on a sample of this size, the overall results are accurate to within  $\pm 3.4\%$ , 19 times out of 20 (adjusted for sample stratification). The margin of error is greater for results pertaining to subgroups of the total sample.



The following specifications applied to the survey:

- The sample frame included both landline and cellphone households. The sample was created in order to ensure representativeness at the regional level. The geographic distribution of the interviews was disproportionate in order to improve the accuracy of regional results. The regional stratification was as follows:

Area	Target Number of Interviews	Actual Number of Interviews
Atlantic Provinces	150	150
Quebec	200	203
Ontario	250	252
Prairies	250	253
British Columbia	150	153
<b>Canada</b>	<b>1,000</b>	<b>1,011</b>

- A pre-test was conducted in advance: 16 interviews in English, 12 in French.
- All interviewing was conducted in the respondent's official language of choice.
- Interviews averaged 12.4 minutes in length.
- The fieldwork was conducted November 21<sup>st</sup> through December 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2012.

The following table presents information about the final call dispositions for this survey, as well as calculation of the response rate (using MRIA's Empirical formula):

Final Call Disposition Table			
	Total Sample	Landline Sample	Cell Sample
<b>Total Numbers Attempted</b>	<b>25,036</b>	<b>13,823</b>	<b>11,213</b>
<b>Out-of-scope - Invalid</b>	<b>8,075</b>	<b>3,568</b>	<b>4,507</b>
<b>Unresolved (U)</b>	<b>11,485</b>	<b>6,003</b>	<b>5,482</b>
<i>No answer/Answering machine</i>	11,485	6,003	5,482
<b>In-scope - Non-responding (IS)</b>	<b>642</b>	<b>550</b>	<b>92</b>
<i>Language barrier</i>	170	129	41
<i>Incapable of completing (ill/deceased)</i>	108	97	11
<i>Callback (Respondent not available)</i>	364	324	40
<i>Refusal</i>	3,663	2,771	892
<i>Termination</i>	65	58	7
<b>In-scope - Responding units (R)</b>	<b>1,106</b>	<b>873</b>	<b>233</b>
<i>Completed Interview</i>	1,011	810	201
<i>NQ - Quota Full - Gender</i>	59	50	9
<i>NQ - Age</i>	23	0	23
<i>NQ - Not a Citizen</i>	13	13	0
<b>Refusal Rate</b>	<b>77.12</b>	<b>76.42</b>	<b>79.42</b>
<b>Response Rate</b>	<b>6.52</b>	<b>8.51</b>	<b>3.47</b>

The MRIA response rate formula is as follows:  $[R=R/(U+IS+R)]$ . This means that the response rate is calculated as the number of responding units [R] divided by the number of unresolved [U] numbers plus in-scope [IS] non-responding households and individuals plus responding units [R].



### Note to Readers

- For editorial purposes, the terms 'electors' and 'respondents' are used to denote survey participants.
- All results in the report are expressed as percentages, unless otherwise noted.
- In some specific cases where the sample size is noticeably small, the total unweighted number is presented instead of percentages.
- Throughout the report, percentages may not always add to 100% due to rounding.
- The number of respondents changes throughout the report because questions were often asked of sub-samples of the survey population. Accordingly, readers should be aware of this and exercise caution when interpreting results based on smaller numbers of respondents.
- At times, the number of respondents who answered certain questions or answered in a certain way is provided. The following method is used to denote this: 'n=100', which means the number of respondents, in this instance, is 100.
- Socio-demographic differences are identified in the report. The text describing these differences throughout the report is put in a shaded box for easy identification. When reporting subgroup variations, only differences that are significant at the 95% confidence level, indicative of a pattern, and/or pertaining to a subgroup sample size of more than n=30 are discussed in the report.
- Where relevant, the results are compared to that of the May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2011, federal general election, as a reference point.

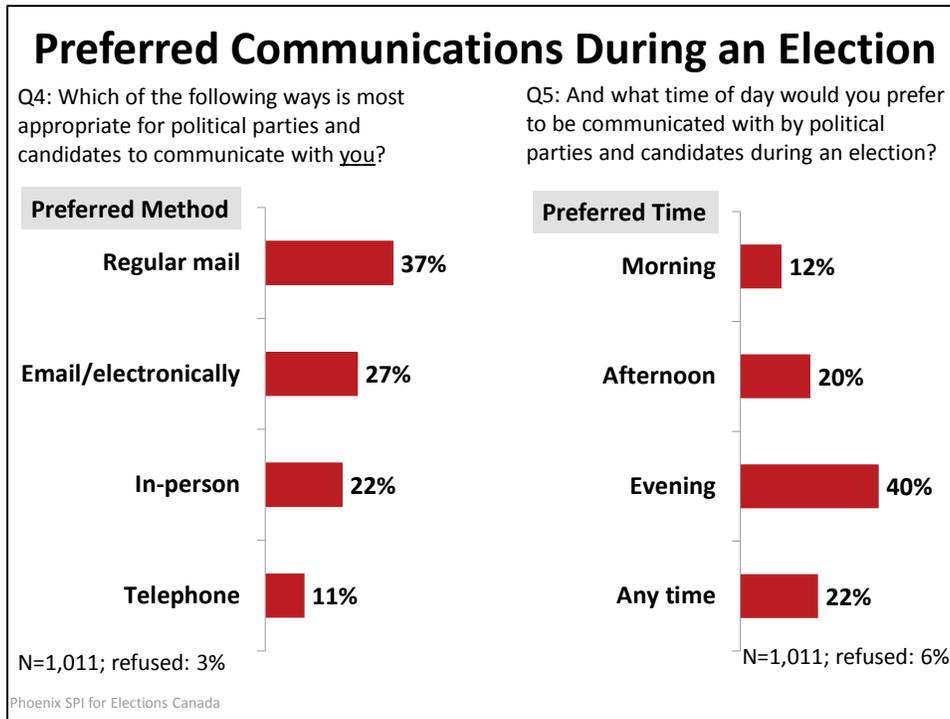


**ATTITUDES AND PREFERENCES ON COMMUNICATIONS PRACTICES**

This section reports on electors’ attitudes and preferences on the communications practices of political parties and candidates.

**Least Appropriate Way to Communicate with Electors is by Telephone**

Slightly more than one in ten (11%) surveyed electors pointed to the usage of telephone as the most appropriate way for political parties and candidates to communicate with them. In contrast, thirty-seven percent identified regular mail, followed by email or other electronic means (27%) and in-person contact (22%), such as door-to-door canvassing.



Turning to time of day, 40% said they would prefer to be communicated with by parties and candidates in the evening (5:00 pm to just before 9:00 pm), 20% in the afternoon (12:00 pm to just before 5:00 pm), and 12% in the morning (9:00 am to just before 12:00 pm). Approximately one in five (22%) expressed no preference—any time of the day would be acceptable.

**Socio-demographic differences regarding preferred method of communications:**

The likelihood of preferring email and other means of electronic communication decreases as age increased, from 42% of 18-24 year olds to 15% of those who are 55 or more. Older Canadians, conversely, were the most likely to prefer regular mail: 44% compared to 28% of those under 35.

Compared with Canadians who had less formal education, those who completed university were more likely to prefer email (33% vs. 16% of Canadians with high school or less). This trend was reversed for communications through regular mail and telephone. Those who had completed university were least likely to prefer regular mail (32%) and



telephone (7%), followed by those with college or some university education (36% regular mail; 12% telephone), and finally those with high school education or less (44% regular mail; 17% telephone).

Additionally, the likelihood of preferring email contact was highest amongst students (58% vs. 15-30% of others), men (30% vs. 23% of women), and electors from cell phone-only households (48% vs. 21-25% with landlines).

Regionally, Ontarians were the most likely to prefer to be contacted through regular mail (44% vs. 30-38% elsewhere). Atlantic Canadians and those living in the Prairies were more likely to prefer in-person contact (34-35% vs. 16-22% elsewhere). Quebecers were the most apt to express a preference for telephone (18% vs. 8-11% elsewhere).

**Socio-demographic differences regarding time of communications:**

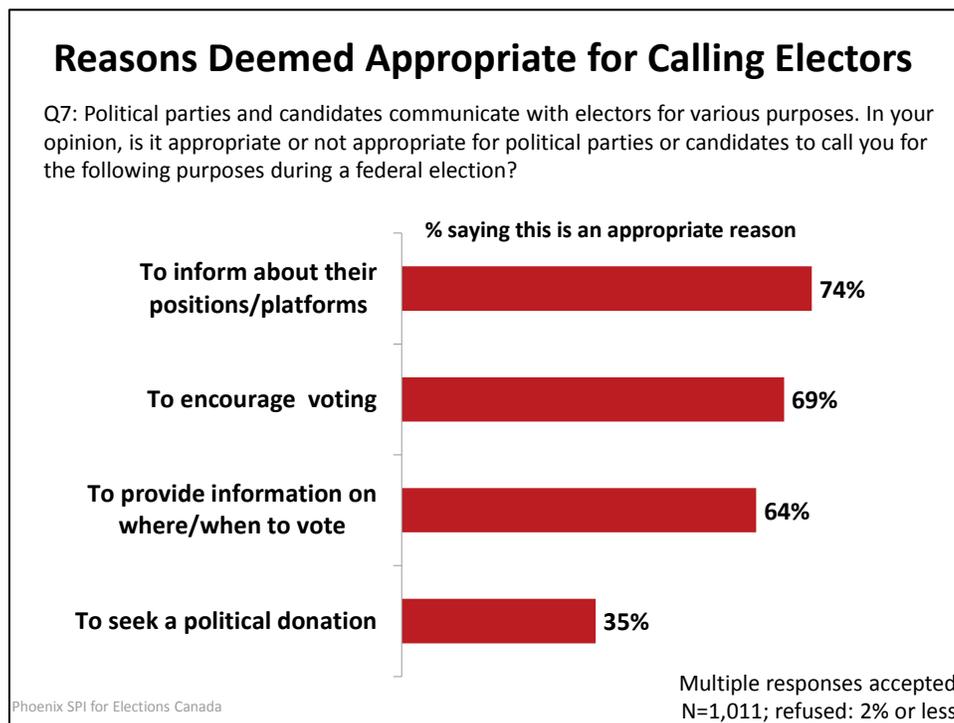
The likelihood of preferring to be contacted in the evening was highest amongst:

- Canadians aged 25-54 (50-54% vs. 23% aged 55+ and 39% of 18-24 year olds).
- Men (45% vs. 35% of women).
- Internet users (43% vs. 23% of non-users).
- Cell phone-only households (50% vs. 21-44% of others).



## Appropriateness of Reasons for Calling Electors

Electors are generally receptive to being called by political parties and candidates during a federal election. Topping the list of purposes deemed appropriate, is to inform them about their positions or platforms. Nearly three-quarters (74%) of respondents said that this is an appropriate reason for contacting electors. Following this, 69% think it is appropriate for political parties or candidates to contact them to encourage them to vote and 64% to provide them with information on where and when to vote.



Respondents were least likely to consider it appropriate for parties or candidates to contact them during a federal election for the purpose of seeking a donation. Thirty-five percent said that this is an appropriate reason to contact them. Conversely, nearly two thirds (64%) felt it is not appropriate.

More than half (55%) indicated that three to four of these reasons were appropriate, while, 11% of electors surveyed said that none of these reasons was appropriate for contacting them during an election.

## Socio-demographic Differences

Electors' likelihood of finding it appropriate to be contacted to be informed about parties' or candidates' positions or platforms was highest amongst:

- Those with higher levels of formal education: it was highest amongst those who had completed university (78% vs. 76% with college or some university education and 67% with high school education or less).
- Students (89% vs. 58-75% of others).
- Internet users (75% vs. 66% of non-users).
- Members of dual (cell phone and landline) and cell phone-only households (73-77% vs. 65% of landline-only users).

**Socio-demographic Differences (Cont'd.)**

Electors' likelihood of thinking it appropriate to be contacted by parties or candidates to encourage them to vote was highest amongst Anglophones (72% vs. 58% of Francophones), cell phone-only users (76% vs. 71% of dual users and 58% of landline-only users), and those who identify with a particular federal political party (76% vs. 65% who do not).

Electors' likelihood of finding it appropriate to contact them to provide information on where and when to vote was highest amongst:

- Residents of the Prairies and Ontario (67-68% vs. 57-62% elsewhere).
- Younger Canadians: those aged 18-24 (84%) were the most likely to find it appropriate, followed by those 25-34 (68%), those 35-54 (64%), and finally those 55 and over (56%).
- Students (91% vs. 58-77% of others).
- Cell phone-only households (73% vs. 55-65% of others). It was lowest amongst landline-only households.

Electors' likelihood of finding it appropriate to be contacted by political parties and candidates seeking a political donation was highest amongst:

- Residents of the Prairies and Ontario (38-42% vs. 26-32% elsewhere).
- Those with higher levels of formal education: it was highest amongst those who had completed university (42% vs. 34% with college or some university education and 28% with high school education or less).
- Students (58% vs. 32-34% of others).
- Men (39% vs. 31% of women).
- Anglophones (39% vs. 31% of Francophones).
- Internet users (37% vs. 23% of non-users).
- Members of dual (cell phone and landline) and cell phone-only households (37-38% vs. 22% of landline-only users).
- Those who identify with a federal political party (47% vs. 27% who do not).





## PROTECTION OF PERSONAL INFORMATION AND PRIVACY

This section examines electors' attitudes toward the protection of their personal information and privacy.

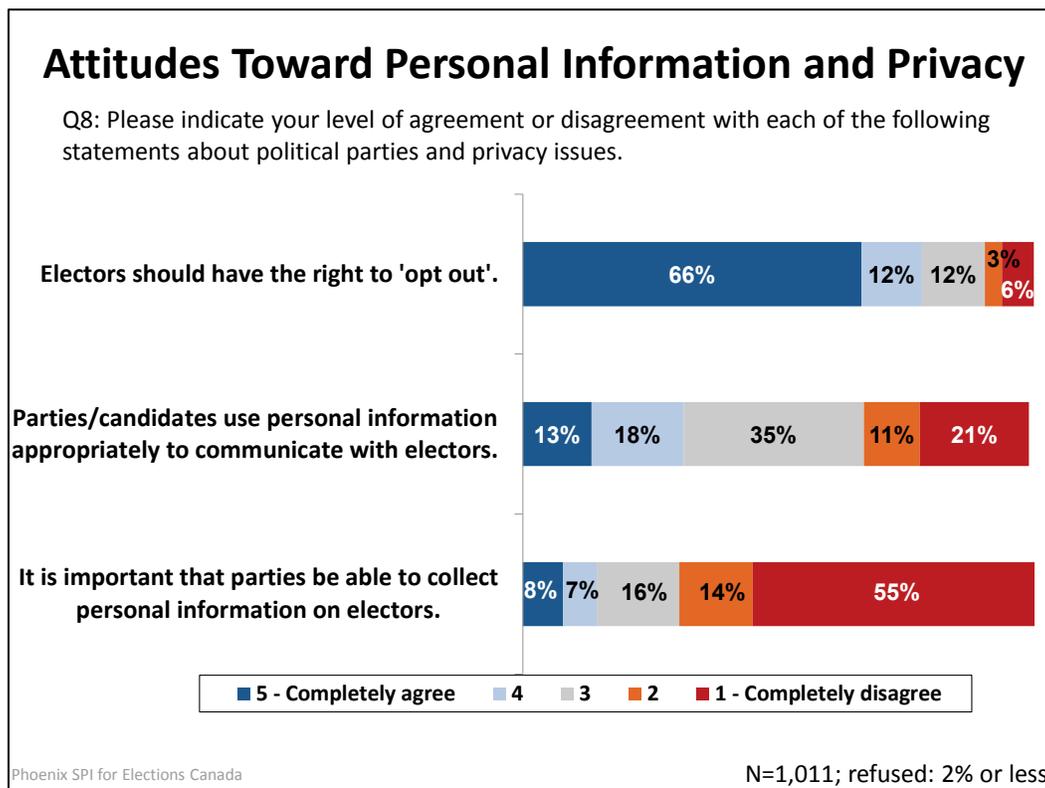
### Mixed Views Vis-à-vis Personal Information Collection and Privacy

Electors were asked to rate their level of agreement or disagreement with several statements about political parties and privacy issues. Statements included the following:

- *Electors who are contacted by a political party or candidate should have the right to 'opt out' of any further contact by that party or candidate.*
- *It is important that federal political parties be able to collect personal information on electors.*
- *In Canada, federal political parties and candidates use personal information appropriately to communicate with electors.*

Majority views emerged on the issues of privacy and the collection of personal information. Respondents were most likely to agree that electors who are contacted by a party or candidate should have the right to 'opt out' of any further contact by that party or candidate. Fully 78% agreed that this should be the case, with 66% saying they completely agree. Fewer than one in ten (9%) disagreed about the right to 'opt out'. Twelve percent were undecided.

Views were far less definitive when it came to how personal information is used. In fact, respondents were fairly evenly distributed across the 5-point scale, with 31% agreeing and 33% disagreeing that parties and candidates in Canada use personal information appropriately to communicate with electors. The rest (35%) were ambivalent, neither agreeing nor disagreeing with the statement.





More than two thirds of respondents somewhat disagreed (14%) or completely disagreed (55%) with the view that it is important that federal political parties be able to collect personal information on electors. Just 15% agreed that this is important; the rest (16%) were neutral.

### **Socio-demographic Differences**

The likelihood of agreeing that electors who are contacted by a political party or candidate should have the right to 'opt out' of any further contact by that party was highest amongst:

- Canadians under the age of 55 (79-81% vs. 71% aged 55 and over).
- Canadians with higher levels of formal education: it was lowest amongst those with high school education or less (65%), followed by those with college or some university education (79%), and finally those who had completed university (85%).
- Students (88%) and the employed (82% vs. 68-73% of others).
- Internet users (81% vs. 56% of non-users).
- Canadians who have registered their phone numbers in the "Do Not Call List" (81% vs. 76% for those who have not registered their phone number).

Members of households with both a landline and a cell phone or cell phone-only households (80-82% vs. 60% with a landline only).

The likelihood of disagreeing that it is important that federal political parties be able to collect personal information on electors was highest amongst:

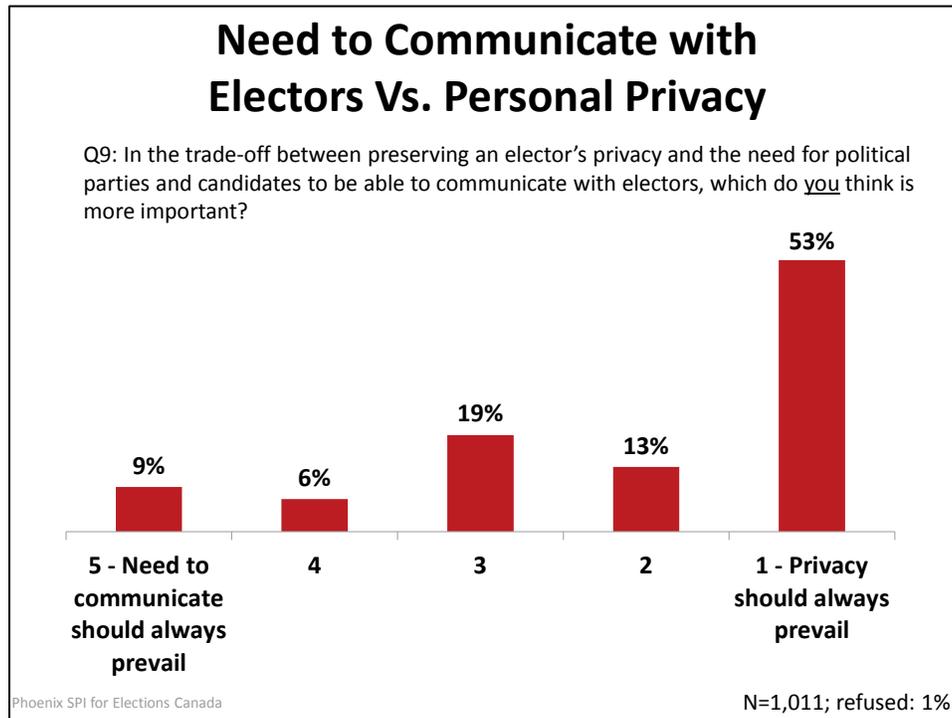
- Canadians 35 and over (72-75% vs. 46-60% of younger Canadians).
- University graduates (73% vs. 65-67% with less formal education).
- Non-students (70-73% vs. 40% of students).

The likelihood of disagreeing that federal political parties and candidates use personal information appropriately to communicate with electors was highest amongst:

- Canadians 55+ and older (46% vs. 28% or less of younger electors).
- Those with high school education or less (37% vs. 27-32% of others).
- Those who are retired or otherwise not in the workforce (41% compared to those who are employed at 31%).
- Francophones (40% vs. 30% of Anglophones).
- Internet non-users (40% vs. 30% of Internet users).
- Members of landline-only households (44% vs. 20-30% of others).

## Preserving Privacy Trumps Need to Communicate with Electors

In the trade-off between preserving an elector's privacy and the need for political parties and candidates to be able to communicate with electors, nearly two thirds of respondents think that privacy should always (53%) or mostly (13%) prevail. Conversely, 15% feel that the needs of parties and candidates to communicate with electors should always or mostly prevail. The rest (19%) were uncertain, placing themselves at the mid-point of the 5-point scale.



Looking further into the interrelation within subject matters between these two previous questions, we find that respondents who favour persevering an elector's privacy were less likely to think it important that federal parties and candidates be able to collect personal information on electors (9% vs. 32%) and that they use the personal information they collect appropriately to communicate with electors (25% vs. 48%). Those who favoured the need for political parties and candidates to communicate with electors, conversely, were more likely to find a range of purposes for being contacted by political parties and candidates to be appropriate (26% vs. 18% found all purposes asked about appropriate).

### Socio-demographic Differences

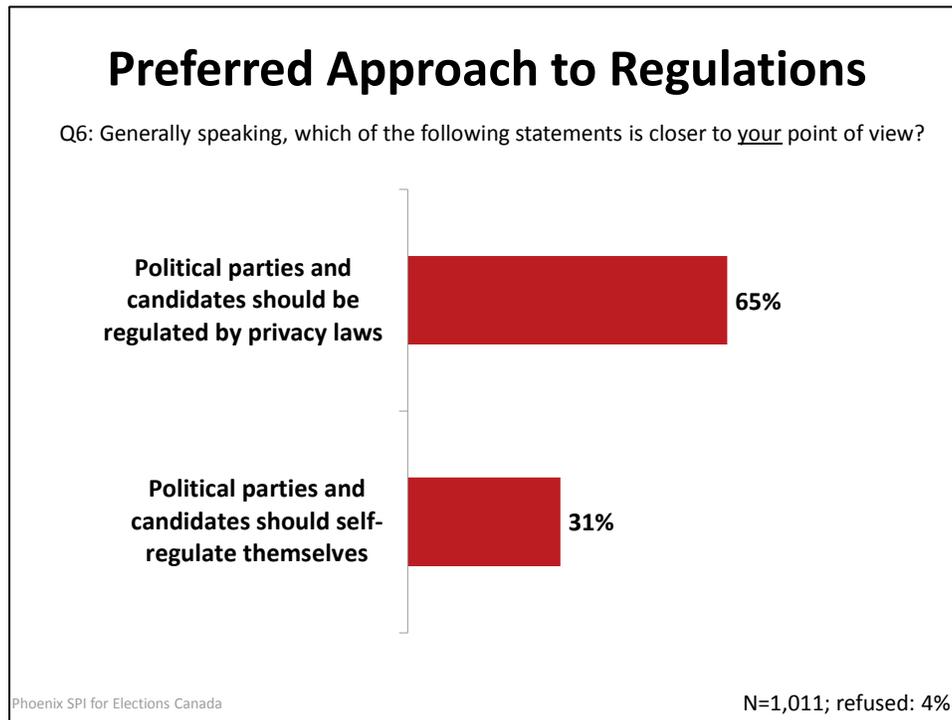
The likelihood of favouring privacy over the needs of political parties and candidates to communicate with electors was highest amongst older Canadians (70% of those aged 55 and over; 66% of those aged 35-54; 62% of those aged 25-34; 53% of those aged 18-24) and Francophones (76% vs. 62% of Anglophones).

The likelihood of favouring the needs of political parties and candidates to communicate with electors was highest amongst those with high school education or less (21% vs. 11-15% of those with higher levels of formal education) and those who do not use the Internet (22% vs. 14% of Internet users).



## Clear Preference for Regulation by Privacy Laws

Almost two thirds of surveyed electors (65%) think that political parties and candidates should be regulated by privacy laws when it comes to how and when they can communicate with electors during a federal election. Approximately three in ten (31%) hold the opposing view. These respondents feel that parties and candidates should self-regulate themselves when it comes to communicating with electors during a federal election.



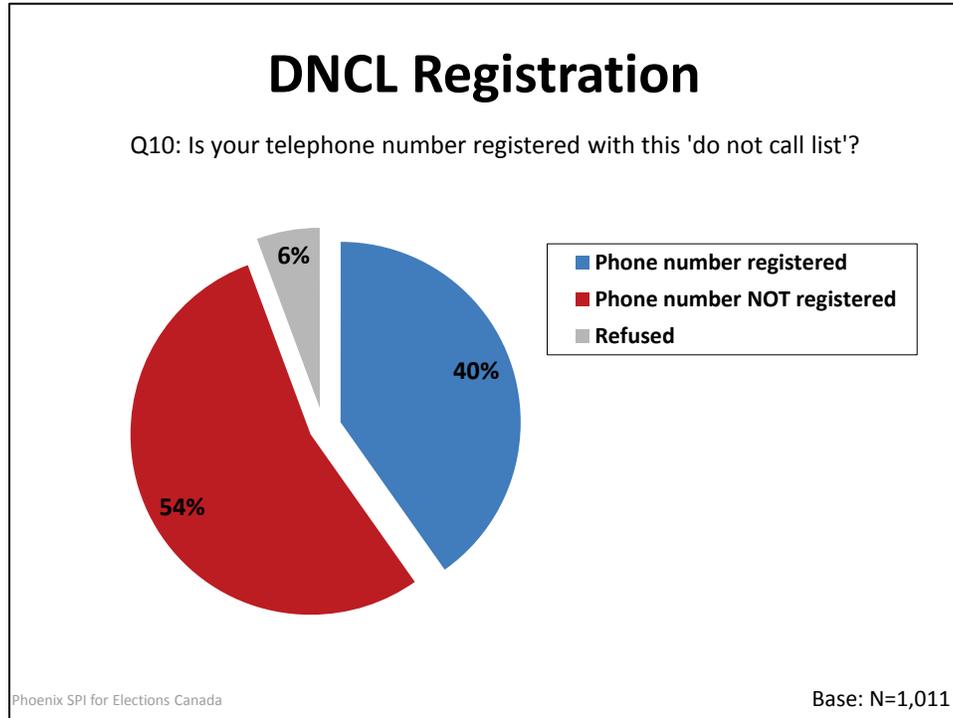
## Socio-demographic Differences

The likelihood of thinking that political parties and candidates should be regulated by privacy laws was highest amongst:

- Canadians aged 25-54 (70-73% vs. 51-61% of others).
- Canadians with a university degree (73% vs. 58-61% of others).
- Employed Canadians (70% vs. 54-58% of others).
- Internet users (68% vs. 43% of non-users).

### Strong Minority of Electors Registered Telephone Number with DNCL

Four in ten surveyed electors said that their telephone number is registered with the 'do not call list' so that they do not receive calls from telemarketing companies. The majority—54%—have not registered their phone number (6% declined to provide a response).



#### Socio-demographic Differences

The likelihood of having one's telephone number registered with the 'do not call list' was highest amongst:

- Residents of Ontario (53% vs. 30-41% elsewhere).
- Canadians aged 35 and over (45-48% vs. 11-36% of younger Canadians).
- University graduates (50% vs. 34-35% with lower levels of formal education).
- Those who are retired or otherwise not in the workforce (47%).
- Anglophones (43% vs. 31% of Francophones).
- Internet users (43% vs. 31% of non-users).
- Dual landline and cell phone households (46% vs. 22-31% of others). It was lowest amongst cell phone-only households.

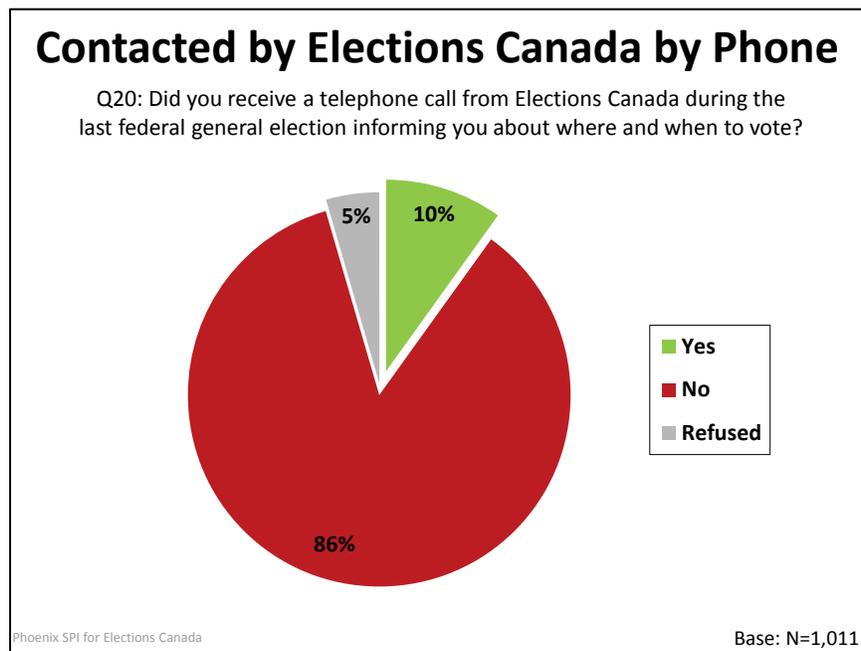


## EXPERIENCE AND VIEWS REGARDING CONTACT BY ELECTIONS CANADA, PARTIES & CANDIDATES

This section focuses on electors' experience and attitudes towards being contacted by Elections Canada, political parties or candidates during the last federal general election.

### Ten Percent Think They Received a Phone Call from Elections Canada

The large majority of electors (86%) reported that they had not received a telephone call from Elections Canada during the last federal general election informing them about where and when to vote. Conversely, 10% claim that they received such a telephone call (5% could not recall or declined to respond).



Considering that Elections Canada does **not** make any calls on a pro-active basis<sup>1</sup>, these results could provide some indication of electors having received calls from persons impersonating Elections Canada. It is possible, however, that some respondents may have been confused about the source of the call. That said, if these self-reported claims do not stem from confusion<sup>2</sup>, then these results could be interpreted as a sign of possible misusage of Elections Canada's name and identity.

Considering the low frequencies involved for those who report having received a phone call from Elections Canada informing them about where and when to vote (n=98), caution must be exercised when interpreting those results. Any extrapolation from such self-reported low occurrences would result in overestimation.

<sup>1</sup> Elections Canada does not have electors' telephone numbers in the National Register of Electors and they are not present on the list of electors. That said, a few individuals might have asked Elections Canada to contact them by request for various purposes during the election period.

<sup>2</sup> It must be acknowledged that these self-reported claims relate to an experience that occurred more than a year ago. As such, it is possible that a portion of these respondents may have made an error in recovering this somewhat distant memory.



Having said that, it can be noted that among those electors who mentioned having received such a phone call from Elections Canada, 13 respondents stated that they had not voted at the 41<sup>st</sup> general election. This corresponds to a self-reported turnout rate of 87%, which is similar to this survey's turnout rate for the overall population (82%).

### **Socio-demographic Differences**

The likelihood of thinking that respondents received a telephone call from Elections Canada during the last federal general election was higher among those from the Prairies (14%) and Ontario (11%) compared to residents of Quebec (5%).

Additionally, the likelihood of claiming to have received a call was higher amongst those who had been contacted by a political party or candidate (12% vs. 6% who had not) and those with positive reactions to this contact (14% vs. 8% with negative reactions).

### **More than Half Contacted During Last GE; Mail & Phone Top Methods of Contact**

Close to three out of five of the electors surveyed (58%) were contacted by one or more political parties or candidates during the last federal general election. Several methods were routinely used to contact these electors.

### **Socio-demographic Differences**

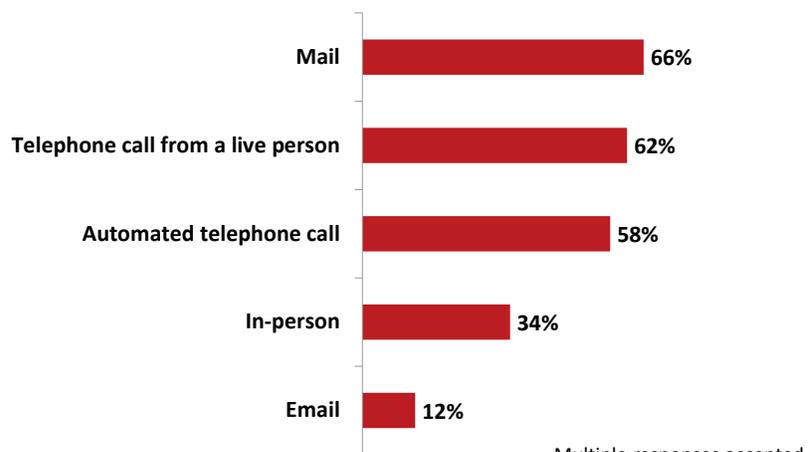
The likelihood of having been contacted by one or more political parties or candidates during the last federal general election was highest amongst:

- Canadians aged 35 and over (64-65% vs. 28-53% of others). It was lowest amongst youth aged 18-24 (28%).
- Those who had completed university (68% vs. 50-53% with lower levels of formal education).
- Those who are retired or otherwise not in the workforce (64%) and the employed (58%).
- Anglophones (63% vs. 40% of Francophones).
- Members of households with both a landline telephone and a cell phone (62% vs. 31-57% of others). It was lowest amongst cell phone-only households (31%).
- Those who identify with a particular federal political party (69% vs. 51% who do not).

Among those electors contacted (n=623) during the last federal general election, 66% report having received mail from a party or candidate, 62% a phone call from a live person, and 58% a phone call with a recorded message. Roughly one third (34%) received a visit from a party representative or candidate (i.e., door-to-door campaigning). Relatively few (12%) of those contacted during the last general election received an email from a party or candidate.

## Contact Method Used During Last GE

Q13: In which of the following ways were you contacted?



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Multiple responses accepted  
Base: those contacted; n=623

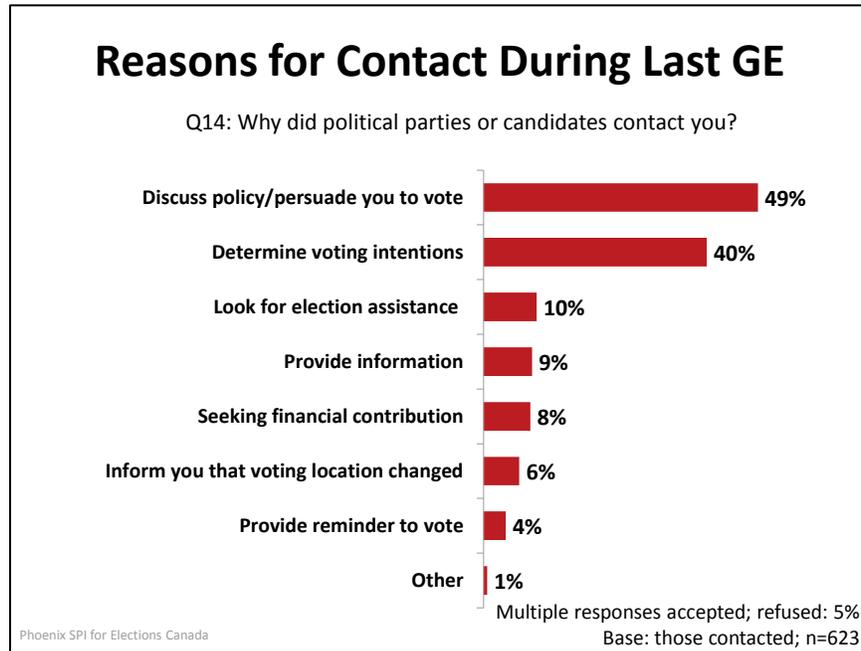
### Socio-demographic Differences

Canadians with college or at least some university education were more likely to claim having been contacted by mail than those who had received less formal education (68-71% vs. 54%). These groups were also more likely to report having been contacted through an automated phone call (61-66% vs. 38%). Anglophones were more likely than Francophones to say they were contacted by mail (69% vs. 44%), an automated phone call (61% vs. 41%), and in-person (39% vs. 12%). Conversely, Francophones were more likely to have been contacted by a telephone call with a live person (72% vs. 60%).

Compared to landline-only households, cell phone-only households were more likely to say they were contacted by mail (81% vs. 54%). Conversely, landline-only households were more likely to have received a live telephone call compared to cell-only households (71% vs. 27%). Dual landline-cell phone users were most apt to have received an automated telephone call (64% vs. 42% or less of others).

### Persuasion and Determining Voting Intent—Top Reasons for Contacting Electors

Electors were most likely to have been contacted by political parties or candidates for the purpose of persuading them to vote or determining their voting intentions. By a very wide margin, these were the top two reasons for which electors said they were contacted during the last federal general election. Almost half (49%) were contacted to discuss policy or to persuade them to vote for a party or candidate, while 40% said a party or candidate contacted them to determine their voting intentions. All other reasons were identified by 10% or fewer and can be seen in the accompanying graph.



A few electors (6%) indicated having received a phone call from a political party or a candidate informing them that their voting location was changed (n=39). These results may provide some indication of improper telecommunications with electors in the 41<sup>st</sup> general election. Among those respondents, 6 electors reported that they had not voted in the 41<sup>st</sup> general election. This self-reported turnout rate is similar to the overall population (85% vs. 82%). That said, caution must be exercised when interpreting these results. Extrapolation from such low-occurrence, self-reported incidences would result in overestimation.

#### Socio-demographic Differences

Anglophones were more likely than Francophones to have been contacted to discuss policy/persuade them to vote for a candidate or party (52% vs. 33%). Francophones, on the other hand, were more likely than Anglophones to have been contacted to determine their voting intentions (51% vs. 38%).

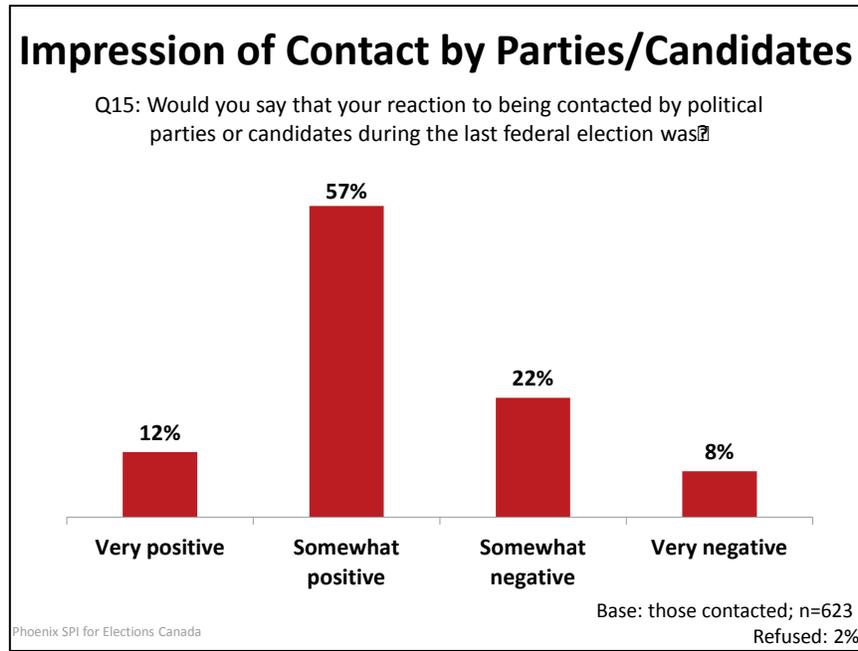
Turning to age, the likelihood of having been contacted to determine voting intentions increased with age and was highest among those 55+ (46%).

Landline-only households were the least likely to have been contacted to discuss policy/persuade them to vote for a candidate or party (40% vs. 51-53% of others).

Finally, electors with negative reactions to having been contacted were more likely than those with positive reactions to have been contacted to determine their voting intentions (48% vs. 36%).

### Moderately Positive Impressions of Contact Experience

More than two thirds of electors contacted by political parties or candidates during the last federal general election had at least a moderately positive reaction. Specifically, 12% characterized their reaction to being contacted as very positive and 57% as somewhat positive. Of the rest, 22% said their reaction was somewhat negative and 8% that it was very negative.



### Socio-demographic Differences

The likelihood of having a positive reaction was highest amongst:

- Younger Canadians: it was highest amongst 18-24 year olds (92%) and lowest amongst those 55 and over (63%).
- Students (92% vs. 66-68% of others).
- Cell phone-only households (89% vs. 57% of landline-only households and 70% of dual service households).

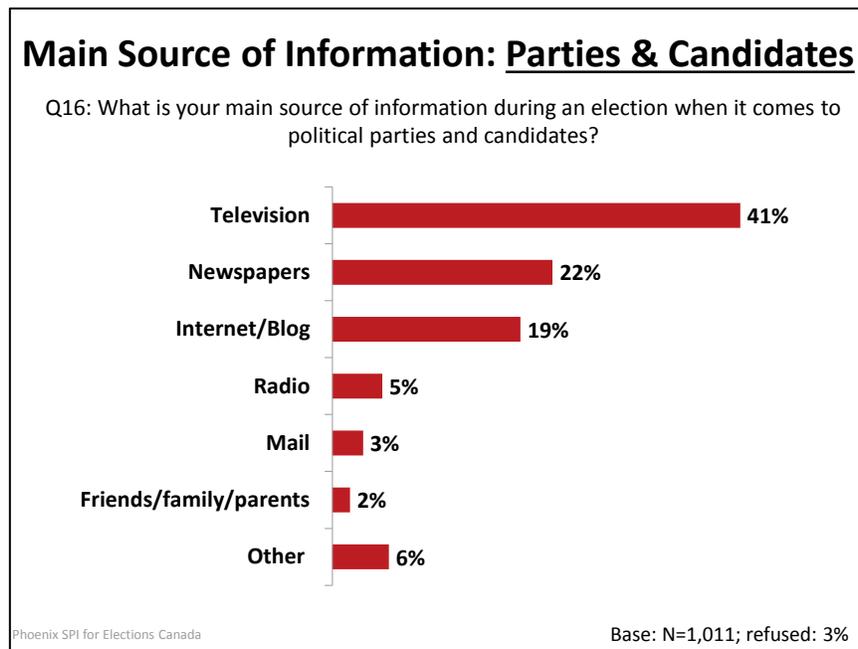


## SOURCES OF INFORMATION USED BY ELECTORS

This section explores the sources through which electors receive information during federal general elections.

### TV—Top Source of Information on Parties and Candidates

Electors were most likely to point to the television as their main source of information during an election when it comes to political parties and candidates. In all, 41% identified TV as their main source. Newspapers (22%) and the Internet or blogs (19%) followed at a distance. Few of the electors surveyed said they rely on radio (5%), regular mail (3%), or friends, family or parents (2%) as sources of information during an election.



In the 'other' category (6%) are social media, brochures and flyers, signage, posters and billboards, personal/door-to-door contact, public debates and open forums, as well as telephone.

### Socio-demographic Differences

The likelihood of citing newspapers increased with age, from 9% of youth to 34% of those 55+. This relationship was reversed when it came to the Internet and blogs: it was highest amongst those aged 18-24 (36%) and lowest amongst those 55+ (6%). Additionally, the likelihood of citing television was lower amongst those under 35 than amongst those over 35 (29-31% vs. 43-45%).

The likelihood of citing newspapers and the Internet/blogs increased with formal education, from those with high school or less (12% newspapers; 9% Internet/blogs) to those with a university degree (27% newspapers; 28% Internet/blogs).

Those who are retired or otherwise not in the workforce were most likely to cite television (47% vs. 30-40% of others) and newspapers (30% vs. 9-19% of others) and least apt to cite the Internet or blogs (7% vs. 17-31%).

**Socio-demographic Differences (Cont'd.)**

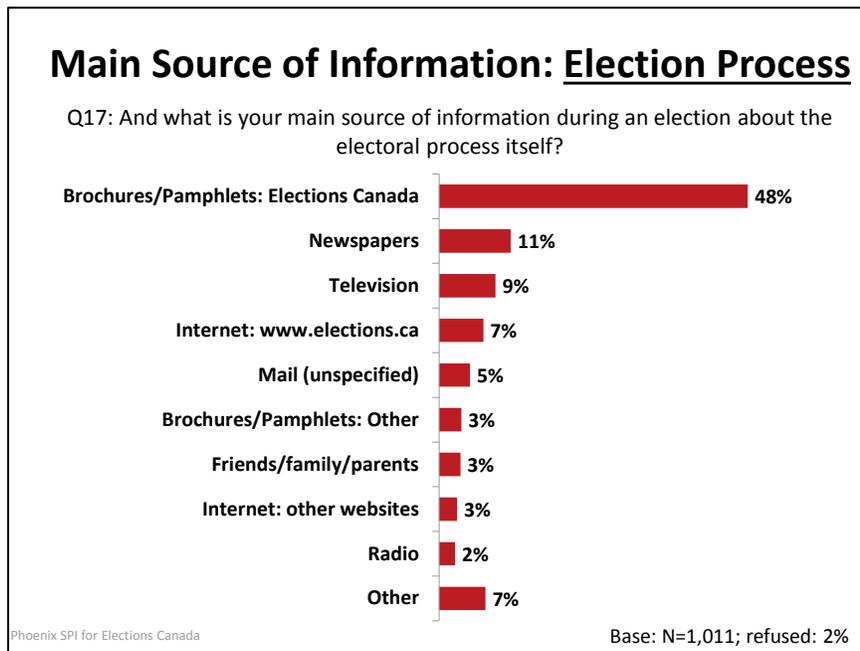
Men were more likely than women to cite the Internet or blogs (22% vs. 16%).

Members of cell phone-only households were the least likely to cite television (32% vs. 40-48% of others) and newspapers (11% vs. 22-24% of others), and most likely to cite the Internet/blogs (43% vs. 7-18% of others).

**Elections Canada—Top Source of Information on Election Process**

When asked to focus on information about the electoral process itself, Elections Canada was the top source, by far. Nearly half (48%) pointed to Elections Canada's brochure, householder/reminder card or leaflet and 7% to Elections Canada's website. Together, then, 55% of respondents identified Elections Canada as their main source of information during an election about the electoral process itself, such as where, when and how to vote.

As the graph below depicts, a variety of other information sources were identified, but each by only small numbers of respondents.

**Socio-demographic Differences**

The likelihood of citing the Elections Canada brochure was highest amongst:

- Francophones (60%).
- University graduates (56%).
- Older Canadians (54%).
- Those who are retired or otherwise not in the workforce (54%).
- Women (51%).
- Members of dual service households (50%).



**Few Needed to Take Action to Find Out Where to Vote**

Only 7% of respondents needed to make an additional effort to find out when or where to vote during the last federal general election.

Among those who took some action (n=64<sup>3</sup>), most of these electors (41%) contacted Elections Canada in one way or another. They visited the Elections Canada website, called Elections Canada directly, consulted Elections Canada’s various written materials, or visited an Elections Canada office, while slightly less than one in four (24%) asked their friends or family and 6% contacted a political party or candidate.

**Action(s) Taken to Find out Where to Vote**

Q19: What action did you need to take to find out when or where to vote?

Actions	%	Actions	%
Asked family/friends	24%	Contacted party/candidate	6%
Visited EC website	21%	Saw it in media	3%
Looked online/ Google search	12%	Contacted local government	2%
Called EC	10%	Visited EC office	2%
Consulted EC written materials	8%	Other	5%

Multiple responses accepted; refused: 1%  
Base: those who took action; n=64

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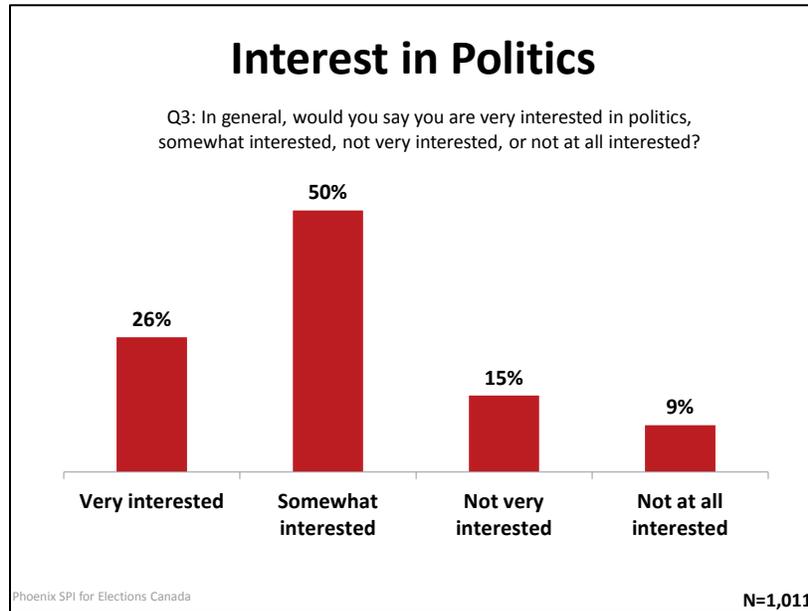
<sup>3</sup> Caution should be exercised when interpreting these results due to the small sample size.

## INTEREST IN POLITICS AND AWARENESS OF COMPLAINTS ABOUT TELEPHONE CALLS

This section explores respondents' interest in politics and their awareness of complaints.

### Most Report Some Interest in Politics

Roughly three quarters (76%) of electors said they have at least some interest in politics. Exactly half claimed to be somewhat interested and 26% very interested. Conversely, 15% have little interest in politics, with 9% having no interest in it at all.



These results are identical to those reported in 2008 following the 40<sup>th</sup> federal general election, and only slightly lower than was reported in 2011 following the 41<sup>st</sup> general election (81% vs. 76% in 2012). It is worth noting, however, that the target audiences are not identical. This study included all eligible electors, while the surveys following the 40<sup>th</sup> and 41<sup>st</sup> federal general elections included only eligible electors at the time of the general election.

Canadians with high levels of political interest tend not only to be more politically engaged than Canadians with less political interest, but also tend to regard the political and electoral system more favourably. In terms of engagement, they are more likely than those with less interest in politics to report having voted in the last federal election (90% vs. 59%), to identify with a federal political party (48% vs. 14%), and to use the Internet for a variety of political-related purposes (9% vs. 3% use it for all three purposes asked about).

In terms of their perspectives, Canadians who are more interested in politics are more likely than those with less political interest to have positive reactions to being contacted by political parties and candidates (73% vs. 48%), have higher levels of trust in federal election results (87% vs. 76%), think federal political parties and candidates use personal information appropriately (34% vs. 23%), be favourable toward being contacted by political parties and candidates for various purposes (24% vs. 14% find all four purposes asked about appropriate), have confidence in the institutions involved in the electoral

system (30% vs. 21% have confidence in all institutions asked about), and think Elections Canada ran the election fairly (87% vs. 79%).

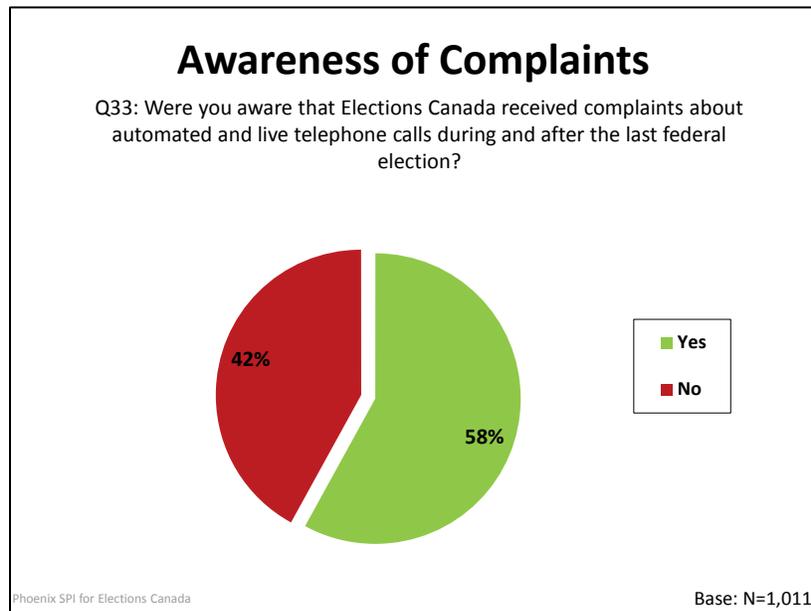
### Socio-demographic Differences

The likelihood of being very or somewhat interested in politics increased with age, from 58% of youth aged 18-24 to 87% of those aged 55 and over. Interest also increased with formal education, from 63% of those with an high school education or less to 87% of university graduates.

Political interest was higher amongst Internet users (78% vs. 69% of non-users) and Canadians from households with both a cell phone and a landline (81%). Conversely, it was lower amongst cell phone-only households (54%).

### Awareness of Complaints about Telephone Calls

Canadians were also asked whether they were aware that Elections Canada received complaints about automated and live telephone calls during and after the last federal general election. Most Canadians (58%) were aware of these complaints, while 42% were not.



The extent to which awareness of the complaints received by Elections Canada and the circumstances surrounding those complaints has had an *impact* on Canadians' confidence in the electoral process and various players in that process cannot be determined here. However, it can be said that awareness of these complaints does not correlate with lower levels of trust in federal election results or reduced likelihood to think that Elections Canada ran the election fairly (in fact, those who were aware of the complaints were more likely than those not aware to think Elections Canada ran the election *very* fairly (48% vs. 36%), though no more or less likely to think they ran it fairly in general). Additionally, those who were aware of the complaints were more likely than those who were not to have high levels of confidence in Elections Canada (84% vs. 73%), federal political parties (84% vs. 73%), and the judiciary (67% vs. 51%).

It appears as though Canadians who are aware of the complaints received by Elections Canada are generally those Canadians who are more broadly interested and engaged in politics. These Canadians also tend to be those with relatively high levels of trust and confidence in the system. Overall, they also tend to favour protecting personal privacy in a tradeoff against the need for political parties to communicate with electors and think that political parties should be regulated by privacy laws.

### **Socio-demographic Differences**

The likelihood of being aware of such complaints increased with age and formal education. Youth aged 18-24 were the least likely to be aware of these complaints (22%), followed by those aged 25-34 (57%), those 35-54 (63%), and was highest amongst those 55 and over (64%). It was also lowest amongst those with high school education or less (47%), followed by those with college or some university education (51%), and was highest amongst those who had completed university (72%).

Additionally, the likelihood of being aware of such complaints was highest amongst the following demographic subgroups:

- Those who are retired or otherwise not in the workforce and the employed (59-61% vs. 35-41% of students and the unemployed).
- Men (62% vs. 54% of women).
- Anglophones (62% vs. 54% of Francophones).
- Internet users (60% vs. 48% of non-users).
- Members of households with both a landline and a cell phone (63% vs. 43-49% of others). It was lowest amongst cell phone-only households (43%).

### **Attitudinal and Experiential Differences**

In terms of the relationship between Canadians' awareness of these complaints and their other attitudes and experiences, the likelihood of being aware of these complaints was highest amongst:

- Those with higher levels of political interest (64% vs. 36% with lower levels).
- Those who think political parties and candidates should be regulated by privacy laws (62% vs. 51% who think they should self-regulate).
- Those who favour the protection of privacy in a tradeoff against the need for political parties to communicate with electors (61% vs. 49% who favour the need for communication).
- Those who report having voted in the last federal general election (66% vs. 47% who did not).
- Those with very high levels of trust in federal election results (67% vs. 52-53% of others).
- Those who identify with a particular federal political party (72% vs. 49% who do not).

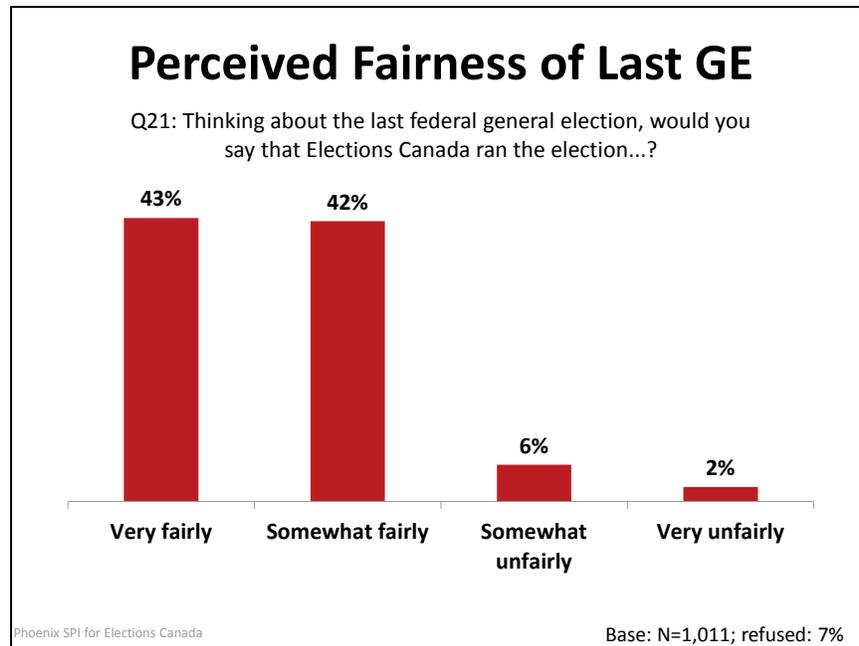


## TRUST & CONFIDENCE IN INSTITUTIONS INVOLVED IN ELECTORAL PROCESS

This section reports on electors' trust and confidence in the various institutions involved in the electoral process in Canada.

### Most View Conduct of Election as Fair

The perception that the last federal general election was conducted by Elections Canada in a fair manner was widespread. In total, 85% felt that Elections Canada ran the election in a fair manner, with 43% saying it was run *very* fairly. Only 8% felt that the election was not conducted fairly. Seven percent were unsure or did not venture an opinion.



Compared to the results from the last federal general election, slightly fewer respondents felt that Elections Canada ran the election in a fair manner (90% in 2011 vs. 85% in this study). Once again, it is worth noting that the target audiences are not identical. This study included all eligible electors, while in 2011, this question was asked only of eligible electors aware of the election.

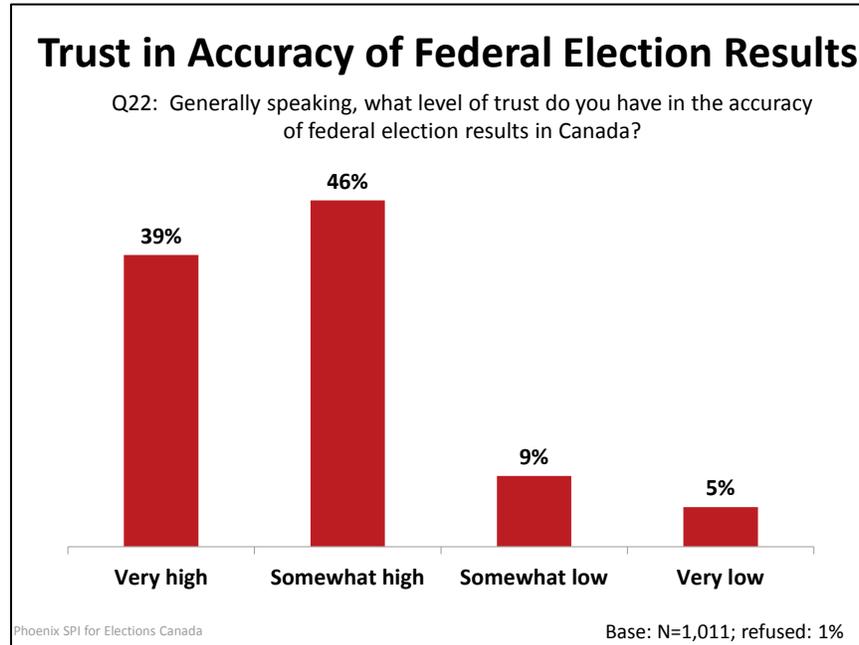
### Socio-demographic Differences

The likelihood of thinking that Elections Canada ran the election very fairly was highest amongst:

- Residents of the Prairies (52%).
- Those who had completed university (48%).
- Anglophones (48%).
- Men (47%).
- Dual landline and cell phone households (47%).
- The employed and those who are retired or otherwise not in the workforce (44% vs. 22-30% of the unemployed and students).

## High Levels of Trust in Election Results

The large majority (85%) expressed high levels of trust in the accuracy of the federal election results in Canada. Electors, however, were more apt to characterize their level of trust as *somewhat* (46%) rather than *very* (39%) high. Relatively few (14%) said their trust is somewhat (9%) or very low (5%).



These results are virtually identical to those from the survey following the 41<sup>st</sup> federal general election in 2011: 85% vs. 87% in 2011.

### Socio-demographic Differences

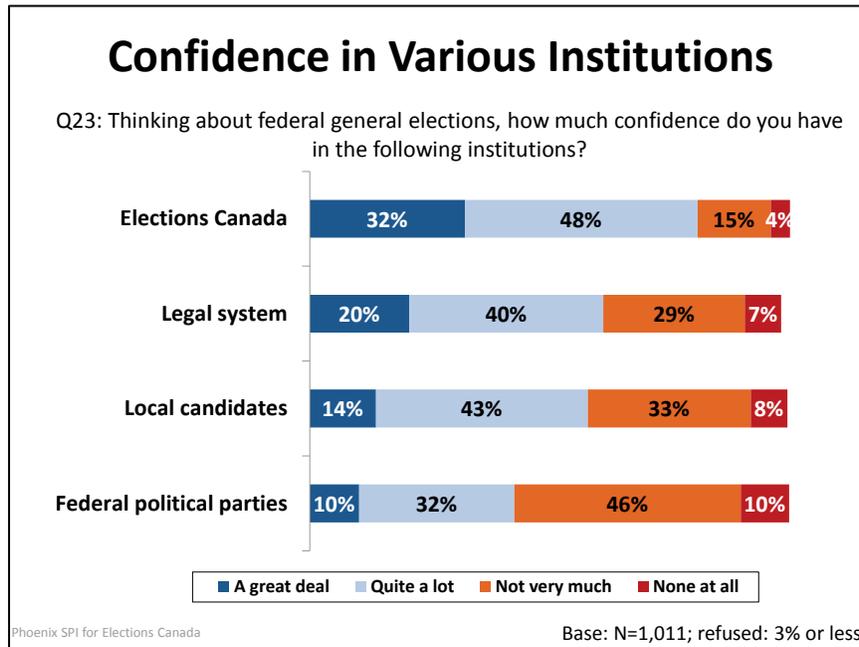
The likelihood of having somewhat or very high levels of trust was highest amongst:

- Students (96%).
- University-educated electors (91%).
- Dual landline and cell phone households (89%).
- Internet users (87%).

Atlantic Canadians were less likely than those living elsewhere to have high levels of trust in federal election results (72% vs. 80-89%).

### Mixed Level of Confidence in Various Institutions

When thinking about federal general elections, electors are most likely to have confidence in Elections Canada. Fully 80% said they had quite a lot (48%) or a great deal (32%) of confidence in the Agency. Following at a distance was the judiciary or legal system (60%) and local candidates in federal elections (57%). Respondents were least likely to have confidence in federal political parties, with more than half (56%) saying they have not very much or no confidence at all in these institutions.



Looking at the results another way, 12% of respondents have limited or no confidence in *any* of the institutions involved in the electoral process. In other words, these electors did not attribute ‘quite a lot’ or ‘a great deal’ of confidence to any of these institutions. At the other end of the spectrum, only 28% of respondents have quite a lot or a great deal of confidence in *all* four of these institutions. On average, the electors surveyed expressed confidence in two of the four institutions.

### Socio-demographic Differences

The likelihood of having a great deal or quite a lot of confidence in all four institutions was highest amongst:

- Francophones (37%).
- Those who are neutral or who favour the need for political parties to communicate with electors in a tradeoff with the protection of personal privacy (34% vs. 24% who favour privacy).
- Those with positive reactions to having been contacted by a political party or candidate during the last federal general election (32%).
- Those who had completed university (31%).
- Dual landline and cell phone households (30%).
- Those with higher levels of political interest (30%).



### Socio-demographic Differences (Cont'd.)

- Those who claimed to vote in the last federal general election (30%).
- Internet users (29%).

Finally, the likelihood of having confidence in all four of these institutions increased with levels of trust in federal election results, from 5% of those with low levels of trust to 39% of those with high levels of trust.

The likelihood of having high levels of confidence in Elections Canada (i.e. a great deal or quite a lot) was highest amongst:

- University graduates (89%).
- Those aged 35-54 (87%).
- Francophones (85%).
- Dual landline and cell phone households (84%).
- Internet users (82%).

Additionally, the likelihood of having very high levels of confidence was highest amongst men (39% vs. 25% of women), those who think political parties and candidates should self-regulate (38% vs. 29% who think they should be regulated by privacy laws), and those with positive reactions to having been contacted by a political party or candidate during the last federal general election (36% vs. 25% with negative reactions).

In terms of the other institutions:

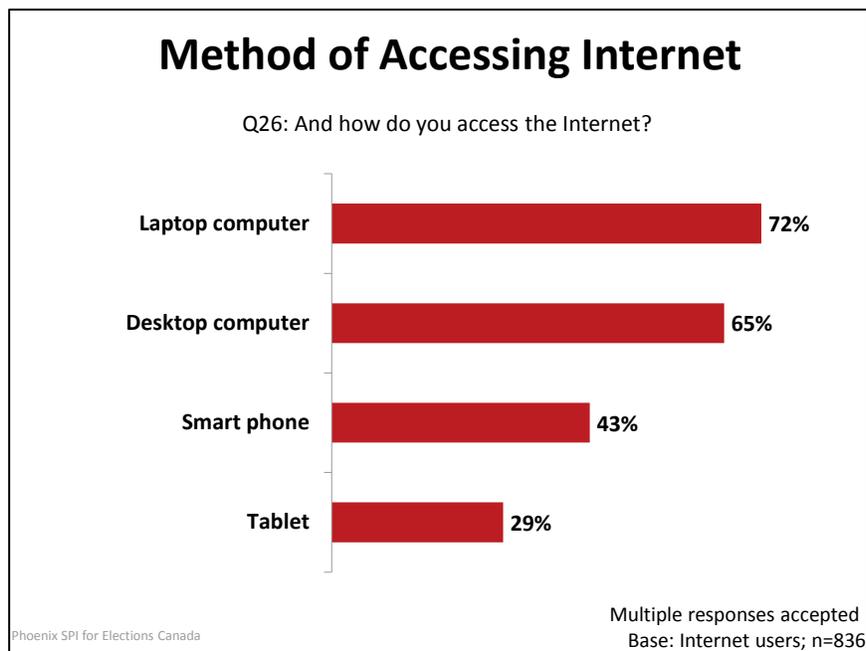
- The likelihood of having high levels of confidence in federal political parties was highest amongst students (63%), Francophones (49%), and university graduates (46%).
- The likelihood of having high levels of confidence in local candidates in federal elections was highest amongst students (89%), Francophones (73%), university graduates (63%), and Internet users (59%).
- The likelihood of having high levels of confidence in the judiciary or legal system was highest amongst students (76%), university graduates (72%), Francophones (67%), dual landline and cell phone households (65%), and Internet users (63%).

## USE OF TECHNOLOGIES IN RELATION TO POLITICAL ISSUES

This section reports on electors' use of technology in relation to political issues. Questions were asked only of Internet users (86%; n=836).

### Electors More Apt to Use Computers than Mobile Devices to Access Internet

Internet users are more likely to use a computer than a mobile device when accessing the Internet. Specifically, 72% said they use a laptop computer and 65% a desktop computer to access the Internet. In contrast, fewer than half (43%) use a smart phone, such as an iPhone or BlackBerry, and 29% a tablet, such as an iPad. Six in ten (60%) respondents use more than one of these methods to access the Internet.



### Socio-demographic Differences

Older Canadians (those 55 and over) were less likely than younger Canadians to use a laptop computer (61% vs. 74-79%), a smart phone (17% vs. 43-68%), and a tablet (17% vs. 25-36%). Youth aged 18-24 were the least likely to use a desktop computer (51% vs. 66-70% of others) and most likely to use a smart phone (68% vs. 17-64% of others). Tablet use was most likely amongst those aged 25-54 (33-36% vs. 17-25% of others).

Men were more likely than women to use a smart phone (47% vs. 39%) and a tablet (33% vs. 24%).

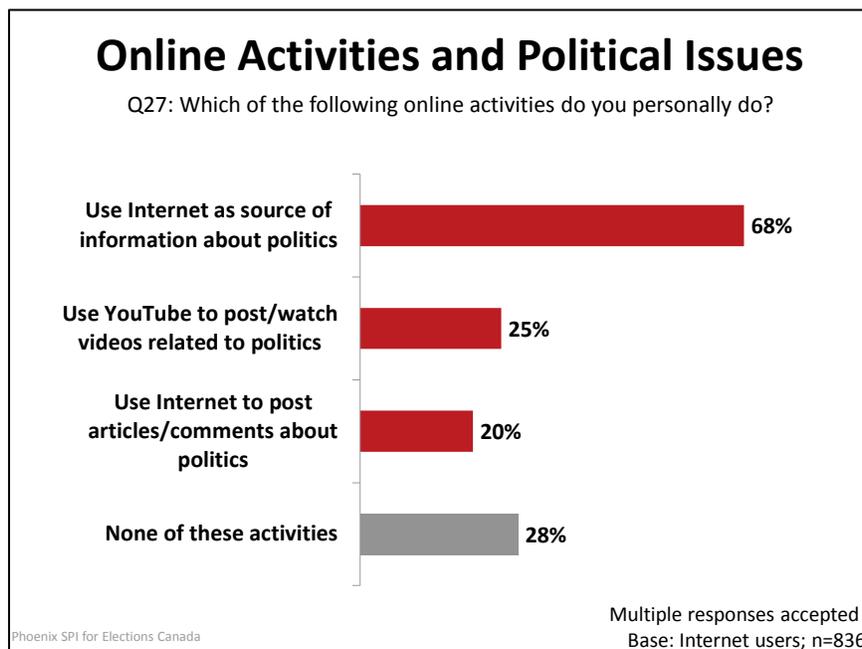
Not surprisingly, members of cell phone-only households were the most likely to use a smart phone (75% vs. 12-43% of others). Members of households with both a landline and a cell phone were the most likely to use a laptop (75% vs. 57-68% of others) and a tablet (12-28% of others).

The likelihood of using all four media increased with level of formal education.



## Internet Most Likely to be Used as a Source of Political Information

Turning to online activities, approximately two thirds (68%) said they use the Internet as a source of information about political issues. Relatively few are using YouTube to post or watch videos related to political issues (25%) or posting articles or comments on the Internet about political issues (20%). Notably, more than one quarter (28%) of Internet users do none of these online activities and exactly one third (33%) personally engage in more than one of these online activities.



## Socio-demographic Differences

The likelihood of using the Internet as a source of information about political issues was highest amongst:

- University graduates (81%).
- Students (83%) and those employed (73%).
- Those aged 25-34 (80%).
- Cell phone-only households (79%).

The likelihood of using YouTube to post or watch videos related to political issues was highest amongst students (60%), youth (51% compared to 17% of those 55+), and cell phone-only households (43%).

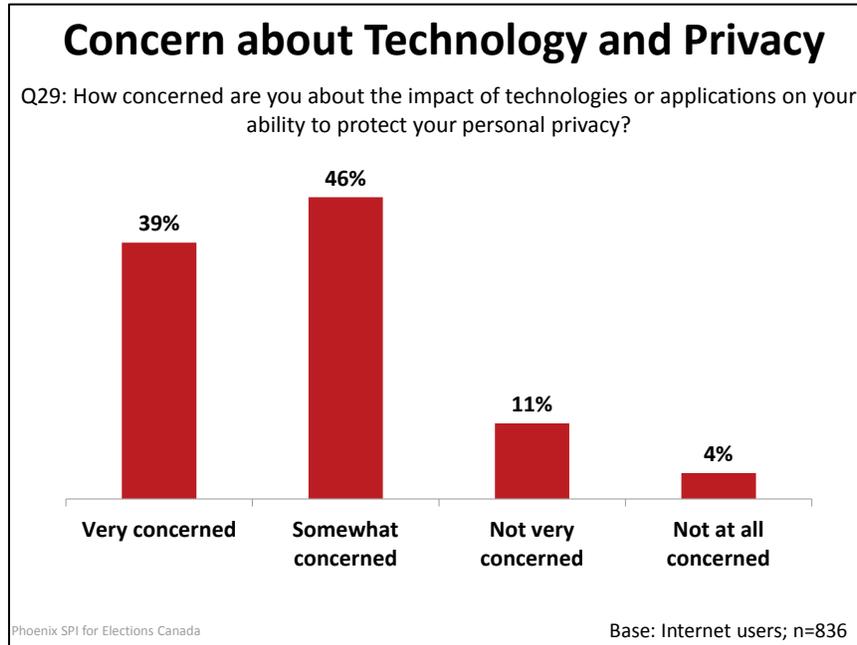
The likelihood of posting articles or comments on the Internet about political issues was highest amongst students (44%), 25-34 year olds (30%), Francophones (26%), and those with at least some post-secondary education (22%).

Finally, the likelihood of doing *none* of these activities was highest amongst:

- Canadians aged 55 and over (39% vs. 17-28% of younger Canadians).
- Those with high school education or less (47% vs. 16-29% of others).
- The unemployed (59% vs. 14-39% of others).
- Members of landline-only households (45% vs. 16-27% of others).

### Most at Least Somewhat Concerned about Technology and Privacy

More than four in five are somewhat (46%) or very (39%) concerned about the impact of technologies or applications on their ability to protect their personal privacy. Conversely, 15% are not very (11%) or not at all (4%) concerned about technology and privacy.



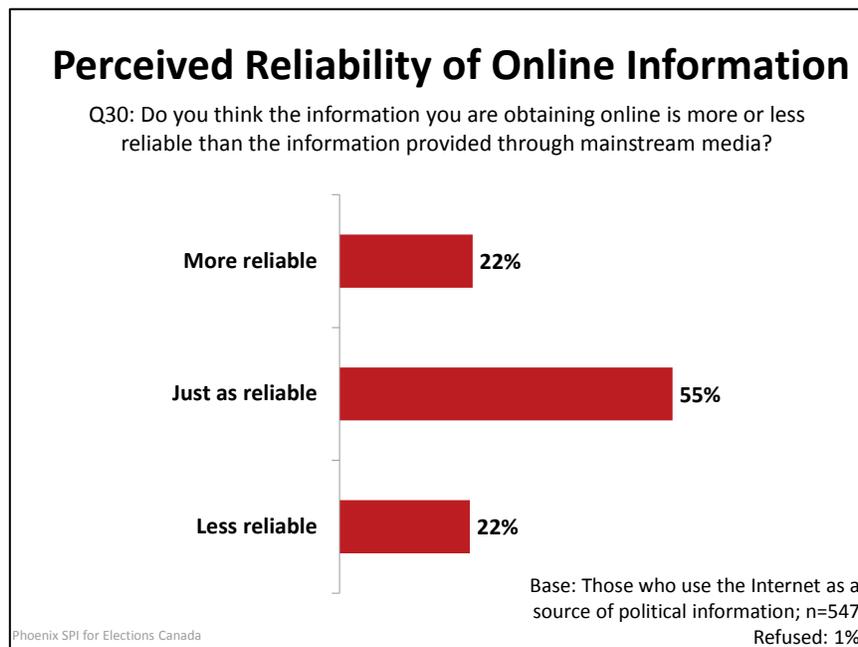
### Socio-demographic Differences

The likelihood of being very or somewhat concerned about the impact of technologies or applications on their ability to protect their personal privacy was highest amongst those aged 55 and over (90%), those who are retired or otherwise not in the workforce (90%), as well as those with high school education or less or a university degree (88% each).



## Majority Think Online Information is as Reliable as Mainstream Media Information

Respondents who said they use the Internet as a source of information about political issues (n=547) were asked to compare the reliability of that information with information provided through mainstream media. A slight majority (55%) think that the information they obtain online is just as reliable as the information provided through mainstream media. The rest were evenly divided in their assessments: 22% said online information is more reliable and 22% feel it is less reliable.



### Socio-demographic Differences

The likelihood of thinking information obtained online is more reliable than the information provided through mainstream media was highest amongst:

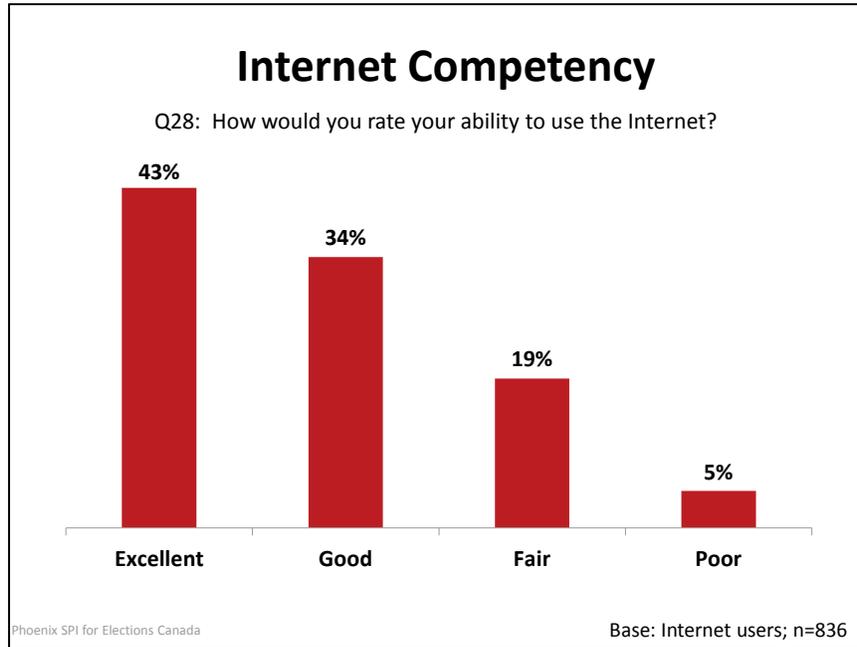
- Canadians under 35 (31-34% vs. 16-28% of older Canadians).
- Those with college or some university education (29% vs. 18-19% of others).
- Students (41% vs. 16-24% of others).
- Men (27% vs. 17% of women).
- Members of cell phone-only households (43% vs. 17-29%).

The likelihood of thinking it is just as reliable was highest amongst:

- Canadians over 35 (59-62% vs. 38-51% of younger Canadians).
- Those who have completed university (62% vs. 48-52% of others).
- Francophones (68% vs. 52% of Anglophones).
- Dual landline-cell service households (60% vs. 33-51% of others).

## High Level of Self-Assessed Internet Competency

Nearly four in five Internet users rated their ability to use the Internet as good (34%) or excellent (43%). Conversely, 24% described their ability as fair (19%) to poor (5%).



### Socio-demographic Differences

The likelihood of rating their ability to use the Internet as either excellent or good was highest amongst:

- Canadians under 35 (89-90% vs. 62-77% of older Canadians).
- Those with higher levels of formal education: it was highest amongst those who had completed university (86%), and those with college or some university education (76%), and lowest amongst those with high school education or less (64%).
- Students (94%), followed by the employed (83% vs. 50-60% of others).
- Anglophones (79% vs. 67% of Francophones).
- Members of cell phone-only households (85% vs. 54-79% of others). It was lowest amongst landline-only households (54%).



## ANNEX 1 - ATTITUDINAL AND EXPERIENTIAL SUBGROUP DIFFERENCES

What follows in this section is a summary discussion of attitudinal and experiential subgroup variations.

### Political Interest

Canadians with high levels of political interest tend not only to be more politically engaged than Canadians with less political interest, but also tend to regard the political and electoral system more favourably. In terms of engagement, they are more likely than those with less interest in politics to report having voted in the last federal election (90% vs. 59%), to identify with a federal political party (48% vs. 14%), and to use the Internet for a variety of political-related purposes (9% vs. 3% use it for all three purposes asked about). They are also more likely to be aware of the complaints received by Elections Canada during and after the last federal general election (64% vs. 36%).

In terms of their perspectives, Canadians who are more interested in politics are more likely than those with less political interest to have positive reactions to being contacted by political parties and candidates (73% vs. 48%), have higher levels of trust in federal election results (87% vs. 76%), think federal political parties and candidates use personal information appropriately (34% vs. 23%), be favourable toward being contacted by political parties and candidates for various purposes (24% vs. 14% find all four purposes asked about appropriate), have confidence in the institutions involved in the electoral system (30% vs. 21% have confidence in all institutions asked about), and think Elections Canada ran the election fairly (87% vs. 79%).

### The Tradeoff between Personal Privacy and Communication with Electors

In the tradeoff between preserving an elector's privacy and the need for political parties and candidates to be able to communicate with electors, those who favoured the former were less likely to think it important that federal parties and candidates be able to collect personal information on electors (9% vs. 32%) and that they use the personal information they collect appropriately to communicate with electors (25% vs. 48%). They were also more likely to have voted (85% vs. 79%) and to be concerned about the impact of technologies or applications on their ability to protect their personal information (87% vs. 81%).

Those who favoured the need for political parties and candidates to communicate with electors, conversely, were more likely to find a range of purposes for being contacted by political parties and candidates to be appropriate (26% vs. 18% found all purposes asked about appropriate), to have positive reactions to being contacted by political parties and candidates (73% vs. 65%), and to have confidence in a range of institutions involved in the electoral process (34% vs. 24% had confidence in all four institutions asked about).

### Perspectives on Regulating Political Parties and Candidates under Privacy Law

There is a correlation between thinking that political parties and candidates should be regulated by privacy laws when it comes to communications practices and more broadly favouring privacy in a tradeoff against the needs of political parties to communicate with electors. Seventy one percent of those who favoured privacy protection also favoured regulation, compared with 57% who favoured the needs of political parties to communicate with electors. Those who think political parties and candidates should be regulated were also more likely than those who think they should self-regulate themselves

to have been contacted by a political party or candidate in the last federal general election (62% vs. 38%). They were similarly more likely to have had a negative reaction to this contact (33% vs. 20%).

The likelihood of thinking that political parties and candidates should be regulated by privacy laws was higher amongst those with only somewhat high or low levels of trust in election results as opposed to very high levels (65-68% vs. 60%). It was also higher amongst those who were aware of the complaints received by Elections Canada during and after the last federal general election than amongst those who were not aware (70% vs. 58%).

Additionally, those who think political parties should be regulated were more likely than those who think they should self-regulate to:

- Be contacted through email or other electronic means (30% vs. 22%).
- Object to being contacted for a political donation (68% vs. 56%).
- Think that federal political parties and candidates do not use information appropriately to communicate with electors (35% vs. 24%).
- Think that electors who are contacted by a political party or candidate should have the right to 'opt out' of any further contact by that party (81% vs. 72%).
- Have their telephone number registered with the national 'do not call list' (45% vs. 32%).
- Have lower levels of confidence in federal political parties (60% vs. 48%).
- Have lower levels of confidence in local candidates in federal elections (44% vs. 35%).
- Use the Internet (90% vs. 79%).

### **Positive vs. Negative Reactions to being Contacted by Parties and Candidates**

Of those who were contacted by a political party or candidate during the last federal general election, Canadians who had positive reactions to this contact were more likely than those who had negative reactions to be interested in politics (86% vs. 69%), to consider various purposes for such contact to be appropriate (29% vs. 9% found all purposes asked about to be appropriate), to have high levels of trust in federal election results (91% vs. 76%), to have confidence in various institutions involved in the electoral process (32% vs. 16% had confidence in all four institutions asked about), and to think Elections Canada ran the election fairly (92% vs. 81%). They were also more likely to prefer to be contacted by political parties or candidates during the evening (42% vs. 25%).

Conversely, those with negative reactions were more likely than those with positive ones to think political parties and candidates should be regulated by privacy laws (76% vs. 66%), consider it unimportant that parties and candidates be able to collect the personal information of electors (80% vs. 65%), and think that they do not use this information appropriately (48% vs. 26%). They are more likely to favour electoral privacy in a tradeoff against the need for parties and candidates to communicate with electors (73% vs. 62%) and are more likely to be concerned about how technologies and applications affect their ability to protect their privacy (93% vs. 86%).



**ANNEX 2 - SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION**

This section provides a detailed breakdown of survey respondents by the following socio-demographic characteristics: region, age, gender, education, employment status, language, awareness of complaints related to the last federal general election, and voter status. All data are weighted and the base for each table is the full survey sample (N=1,011).

<b>Region</b>	
Atlantic	7%
Quebec	25%
Ontario	37%
Prairies	17%
British Columbia	13%

<b>Age</b>	
18-24	11%
25-34	16%
35-54	35%
55+	34%
Refused	4%

<b>Gender</b>	
Male	48%
Female	52%

<b>Education</b>	
Some elementary	1%
Completed elementary	1%
Some high school	6%
Completed high school	19%
Community college/vocational/trade school/commercial/CEGEP	26%
Some university	8%
Completed university	26%
Post-graduate university/professional school (e.g. law school, medical school)	11%
Other	<1%

<b>Employment Status</b>	
Working full-time	46%
Working part-time	11%
Self-employed	2%
Unemployed, but looking for work	4%
Student	5%
Retired	25%
Other	5%
Refused	1%



<b>Language</b>	
English	78%
French	22%

<b>Awareness of Complaints</b>	
<i>Q33. Were you aware that Elections Canada received complaints about automated and live telephone calls during and after the last federal general election?</i>	
Yes	58%
No	42%
Refused	<1%

<b>Voter Status</b>	
<i>Q11: Did you vote in the last federal general election?</i>	
Yes	83%
No	17%
Refused	<1%