



## Appearance of the Chief Electoral Officer before the Foreign Interference Commission

### Fact Sheet

#### ***Election Information for New Canadians and Ethnocultural Communities***

##### **Key Messages**

- Elections Canada (EC) offers essential election information in 33 heritage and 16 Indigenous languages and communicates with new Canadians and ethnocultural communities through targeted advertising, spreading the word through its network of national and regional organizations and Community Relations Officers on the ground.
- In an effort to prevent electors from being intimidated or influenced to vote a certain way, Elections Canada has added new web content about safeguards in the election process. These include messages reinforcing the secrecy of the vote, that it is illegal to take pictures of a marked ballot, and that ballots with 'unique' markings, or in which there is any elector identifier, will be rejected. These messages will also be shared widely through additional communication channels for the 45<sup>th</sup> general election (GE).
- Foreign interference can sometimes take the form of false or inaccurate information about the electoral process that is spread on purpose. Elections Canada is piloting education initiatives in multiple languages to help strengthen the resilience of electors in ethnocultural communities and new Canadians against false information, and to bolster their overall understanding of the electoral process.

##### **Facts**

##### **Communication Products:**

- EC currently offers the undated *Guide to the Federal Election* and the *Voter Identification Tear-Off Sheet*, in 33 heritage and 16 Indigenous languages on its website. The Voter Information Campaign also includes television, radio, print, social and digital ads targeting these communities in multiple heritage languages.
- EC has added new easily accessible web content that provides information around election-related files that could impact trust, such as safeguards present in the electoral process and foreign interference. New Canadians and ethnocultural communities, who may be targeted by campaigns to influence their votes, are a key target audience.
- EC has begun issuing periodic safeguards messaging on social media channels and will be deploying a campaign for the 45<sup>th</sup> general election (boosted social media posts during the pre-writ and writ period), that will include messages reinforcing that the vote is secret. The campaign will include footage from a 2023 by-election (emphasis on showing real people and the tangible safeguards embedded in the process).



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- Also during the 45<sup>th</sup> GE, a media guide will provide Mandarin, Cantonese, and Punjabi (Canada's three most common non-official languages) language media with information on subjects beyond what is typically available in translated products like the Guide to Federal Elections (examples: election security; National Register of Electors; political financing safeguards).
- A new distribution list for Elections Canada's news releases has already been developed to include Indigenous and ethnocultural media outlets. EC will continue to identify opportunities for targeted outreach to cultural, Indigenous, and local media outlets.

#### **Civic Education:**

- EC is developing two videos about electoral integrity and safeguards (the first video will be available fall 2024, and the second will be available winter 2025). One video will be for students that focuses on visible safeguards in the electoral process, and the other for an older student audience and teachers that focuses on behind the scenes or regulatory aspects that are not as visible, such as the political financing regime.
- EC has also created and shared communication products for teachers and students around electoral integrity including:
  - a. Blog post for teachers: Teaching about Electoral Integrity
  - b. Student-facing FAQ: How des Elections Canada keep our elections secure?
  - c. Regular social media posts about electoral integrity (Facebook and X) on EC's dedicated channels for teachers (@DemocracyCA).
- EC has hired two new Regional Education Coordinators who will work with regional school boards and community organizations to deliver workshops and professional learning to teachers (including delivering classroom demonstrations). One is based in Markham, Ontario and speaks English and Cantonese (started in January). One is based in Surrey, British Columbia, and speaks English, French and Punjabi (started in March). Both have been delivering classroom demonstrations and growing their networks with community groups and school boards.

#### **Outreach/Consultation Services and Stakeholder Mobilization (CSSM):**

- Safeguards and integrity messages have been included in key outreach activities and various communications products, such as the Inspire Democracy Stakeholder Toolkits, for GE45. This includes messages about protecting voters' privacy and the secrecy of the vote, maintaining security at the polls, as well as safeguards for counting votes and reporting results.
- EC has expanded its network of stakeholder organizations that work with new electors to focus not only on new Canadians, but to include some settlement organizations that focus



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on future Canadians, permanent residents, etc.. There are now 40 organizations representing these audiences in the network, five of which are under contract with Elections Canada .

- A number of these organizations are also participating in electoral safeguards education initiatives. They are committed to sharing key messaging about the measures EC has in place, including keeping the vote secret.
- EC has also hired a new Regional Outreach Coordinator who will deliver Inspire Democracy workshops and enhance its stakeholder network in the Edmonton area. This employee started in Spring 2024 with workshops rolling out by fall 2024.