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2024 Public Opinion Research on Accessibility

Report

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Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) 2024 public opinion research on accessibility

Final Report

Prepared for Employment and Social Development Canada by Environics Research

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November 2024

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Executive summary

A. Background, research purpose, and objectives

The *Accessible Canada Act* (ACA) came into force in July 2019. This Act was designed to identify, remove, and prevent barriers to accessibility for all persons in Canada, especially persons with disabilities.

To measure progress under the ACA over time, and to continue collecting information about current barriers faced by persons with disabilities, Employment and Social Development Canada (ESCD) is carrying out three cycles of public opinion research (POR). POR compliments other accessibility data collection efforts. It focuses on the general public's level of awareness and understanding of the ACA, while also exploring their experiences with barriers to accessibility. This research report covers the third cycle of this research program. The research explored six of the ACA priority areas (leaving out only procurement), as well as attitudinal barriers across all priority areas.

B. Methodology

1. Quantitative Data Collection

Environics Research conducted quantitative data collection from May 27 to July 23, 2024. A total of 1,826 respondents participated in the survey, through either an online panel or open link survey. The target audience included both persons without disabilities (639 respondents) and those who identified as having one or more of the 10 disability types set out in the Disability Screening Questionnaire (DSQ) (1,187 respondents).

1) An online panel survey with a representative sample of 1,497 adult Canadians was conducted from May 27 to June 12, 2024. As the online survey uses an opt-in panel, this is a non-probability sample, and no margin of sampling error is calculated. The regional distribution of surveys is described below.

Table 1 – Distribution of online panel respondents

Regional distribution	Total	BC/YK	AB/NWT	MB/SK/NU	ON	QC	ATL
# of completed surveys	1,497	195	155	190	443	304	210
% of completed surveys	100%	13%	10%	13%	30%	20%	14%

2) Additionally, a link to the same survey was provided to ESDC to share more widely for additional completes, for example with various organizations supporting, led by, or run by persons with disabilities. This part of the study was conducted from June 3 to July 23, 2024. Throughout this report this is referred to as the open link survey. Respondents were not screened out (that is, no quotas were set):

Table 2 – Distribution of open link respondents

Regional distribution	Total	BC/YK	AB/NWT	MB/SK/NU	ON	QC	ATL
# of completed surveys	329	17	12	13	170	56	61
% of completed surveys	100%	5%	4%	4%	52%	17%	19%

The open link survey was offered to ensure persons with different types and severities of disabilities were included in the survey. This strategy was successful: almost half (45%) of the open link respondents have four or more disabilities or conditions, and one-quarter (23%) describe their disability as severe. Data from the two modes, the panel and open link survey, were combined, however, this presented some challenges in interpreting the results. For example, half of the open link survey responses were from people located in Ontario. This regional skew has a notable impact on analysis because persons with disabilities who responded via the open link tend to have *more* disabilities and more *severe* conditions. This report therefore does not discuss regional differences, as Ontario was an outlier.

Table 3 – Selected differences of persons with disabilities between panel survey vs. open link survey respondents

Measures	**Panel Survey n=878**	**Open Link Survey n=309**
Visibility of disability		
Visible	17%	12%
Non-visible	83%	88%
Severity of disability		
Mild	55%	19%
Moderate	37%	**58%**
Severe	8%	**23%**
Number of disabilities		
One	**49%**	12%
Two to three	33%	**42%**
Four or more	17%	**45%**
Self-identification as a person with a disability		
Yes, I am a person with a disability	19%	**84%**
No, I am not a person with a disability	79%	14%

For more information regarding the differences between the open link and panel respondents, see Appendix A Quantitative Methodology.

2. Qualitative Data Collection

Environics Research conducted a series of 10 online focus groups and 12 in-depth interviews (IDIs) between August 12 and September 24, 2024, to capture the lived experience of persons with disabilities and the extent to which they encounter barriers in communication, programs and services,

and the built environment at federally regulated organizations and/or spaces, including Government of Canada offices.

In total, there were 65 focus group participants and 12 interview participants. The groups lasted approximately 90 minutes and consisted of between six and eight participants (out of eight people recruited for each group). Interviews lasted between 30 to 60 minutes. All focus groups participants and interviewees were provided a $125 honorarium to encourage participation and thank them for their time commitment.

The online focus groups were conducted using the Zoom platform. Pairs of sessions were held with persons with both visible and non-visible disabilities in the following regions: Ontario, Atlantic Canada, Western Canada, and Quebec. Two additional sessions were conducted with a mix of persons with visible and non-visible disabilities from Ontario and Western Canada and from Quebec. The three Quebec sessions were conducted in French and the other seven sessions were conducted in English.

The in-depth interviews were conducted with persons with disabilities from across Canada – four in French and eight in English. IDIs were conducted with persons with disabilities who prefer to be interviewed individually due to the nature of their disability.

The qualitative research participants were recruited by a variety of methods: some were recruited through the quantitative survey by indicating that they would be willing to be paid participants in follow-up research and provided their contact information. The remainder of the participants came from our qualitative recruiters' database of individuals who had expressed an interest to take part in qualitative research – many of whom are persons living with a variety of disabilities.

The participants in the focus groups and interviews had a wide variety of types of disabilities as detailed in Appendix B (Table 35). The total number of types of disabilities represented in the groups exceeds the total number of participants because some participants reported having multiple disabilities.

A more in-depth description of the methodologies used for this research can be found in Appendices A and B.

Nature of qualitative research: Qualitative research provides insight into the range of opinions held within a population, rather than the weights of the opinions held, as would be measured in a quantitative study. The results of this type of research should be viewed as indicative rather than projectable to the population.

3. About this report

This report presents an executive summary of key findings, followed by detailed analyses of the survey data and the focus group results. Provided under a separate cover are two detailed sets of banner tables presenting the results for all questions by population segments as defined by region and demographics. One set contains the results of persons who identified as having one of the ten disability categories identified, and the other set is of persons who did not indicate having one of these. These tables are referenced by the survey question in the detailed analysis.

In this report, quantitative results are expressed as percentages unless otherwise noted. Results may not add to 100% due to rounding or multiple responses. Net results cited in the text may not exactly match individual results shown in the tables due to rounding.

4. Terminology notes

Quantitative terminology notes:

- *The term "women" is used for anyone who identified as female in the gender question, and "men" for who identified as male.*
- *The term "persons with disabilities" refers to those who indicated they have at least one disability or long-term condition. "Disability" means anything - whether it is physical, mental, intellectual or any other limitation - that limits someone from taking part in society. Disabilities can be permanent, temporary or may vary over time. Those who did not indicate this are referred to as "persons without disabilities."*
- *"2SLGBTQ+" refers to two-spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/ questioning.*
- *A visible disability* was defined as one where *people can see that you have it*. *A non-visible disability* was defined as one that *other people may not be able to tell by looking at you* (that you have a disability).
- *The term "not working" refers to those who are not working (full-time, part-time or self-employed) or retired. It includes those who are unemployed and looking for work, students attending school full time, and others not in the workforce such as full-time homemakers and those not looking for work.*

Qualitative terminology notes:

- *The term "most" is used to describe 55% of participants or more.*
- *The terms "many" or "some" are used to describe 25-54% of participants.*
- *The term "a few" is used to describe 10-24% of participants.*

The following are the types of disabilities or conditions covered in the survey and the descriptions provided to the respondents.

a) Seeing / Vision: Difficulty with seeing clearly, even when using glasses or contact lenses (This includes being a blind or legally blind person)

b) Hearing: Difficulty with hearing clearly, even when using hearing aids or cochlear implants. (This includes being a Deaf or hard of hearing person or having tinnitus)

c) Mobility: i) Difficulty moving around, even when using an aid such as a cane

ii) Difficulty with walking on a flat surface for 15 minutes without resting

iii) Difficulty with walking up or down a flight of stairs (about 12 steps) without

	resting
d) Flexibility:	i) Difficulty with bending down and picking up an object from the floor
	ii) Difficulty with reaching in any direction, for example, above your head
e) Dexterity:	Difficulty with using your fingers to grasp small objects, like a pencil or scissors
f) Pain:	i) Pain due to a condition that has lasted (or is expected to last) for 6 months or more
	ii) Pain that is always present
	iii) Periods of pain that recur from time to time
g) Learning:	Any condition that makes it hard in general for you to learn. (Examples are learning disabilities such as dyslexia, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, dyscalculia)
h) Developmental:	A developmental disability or disorder. (Examples include Down syndrome and being on the autism spectrum)
i) Memory:	Difficulty with ongoing memory problems or periods of confusion, not counting occasional forgetfulness. (Note: These difficulties are often associated with diseases such as Alzheimer's and other kinds of dementia, or may be the result of a brain injury)
j) Mental Health:	A mental health-related condition that has lasted or is expected to last for six months or more. (Examples are anxiety, depression, bipolar disorder, substance abuse, anorexia)

C. Contract value

The contract value was $174,952.25 (including HST).

D. Use of findings of the research

This research will be used to complement other measurement work undertaken at ESDC to understand the impact that the *Accessible Canada Act* and other Government of Canada initiatives that aim to remove barriers to accessibility have on the lives of persons with disabilities over time. ESDC's measurement work is detailed in the Federal Data and Measurement Strategy for Accessibility 2022 to 2027, which aims to provide Canadians with comprehensive information and long-term data on barriers to accessibility.

E. Key findings – quantitative phase

The research confirms that persons with disabilities are considerably more likely than their non-disabled counterparts to experience barriers to accessibility when attempting to deal with federally

regulated organizations. Further, the prevalence of experiencing these barriers is higher among those with multiple or more severe disabilities or conditions.

The prevalence of encountering barriers is also higher among several notable subgroups of the persons with disabilities population: women; Indigenous, racialized and 2SLGBTQ+ persons; those active in the workforce; and those reporting they have developmental, memory or learning disabilities. Note that all of those subgroups are present in higher proportions among open link respondents than in the panel survey.

1. Prevalence and types of disabilities

Persons with disabilities largely do not self-identify as such. Just over one-third (36%) of people who later indicate having at least one of ten types of disabilities or long-term conditions self-identify as a person with a disability initially; almost two-thirds (62%) do not.

The most frequently mentioned disability or condition is pain, cited by 62 percent of those who indicate at least one disability type. The second most cited are mental health-related conditions (41%), followed by flexibility (30%), mobility (25%), and learning (22%). The least mentioned disabilities or conditions are memory (12%) and developmental (8%).

The majority (60%) of persons with disabilities report having more than one type of disability or condition; with one-quarter (24%) having four or more disabilities. Mobility, flexibility, and dexterity tend to be connected to each other and are also linked to chronic pain. Learning, development, and memory disabilities or conditions are connected to each other, and are also linked to mental health.

The majority of persons with disabilities (84%) report their disability is non-visible; a minority (16%) say they have a visible disability. The majority of persons with at least one of the ten disability types say their disability, or combination of disabilities, is mild (45%) or moderate (42%); a minority (12%) say it is severe. Stating that their disability is severe is highest among those with memory (28%), dexterity (28%), mobility (26%) or developmental (26%) disabilities or conditions, while prevalence of mild disabilities is highest among those reporting vision (44%) or pain (41%) disabilities.

2. Prevalence of experiencing barriers to accessibility among persons with and without disabilities

One-quarter (24%) of persons with disabilities are at least somewhat familiar with the ACA, compared to 15 percent who do not have a disability. Awareness of the ACA is considerably higher among those taking the survey via the open link than those in the panel survey.

Four in ten (39%) persons with disabilities and over one in ten (14%) persons without disabilities report experiencing at least one **employment-related barrier** in the past 12 months. The most reported employment-related barriers are related to being treated fairly (20% persons with disabilities/7% without), being promoted or advancing at their jobs (20%/7%), or having access to supports or accommodations (20%/4%).

Of a list of eight potential barriers encountered with buildings and public spaces (the "**built environment**"), over a third (36%) of persons with disabilities have experienced at least one such barrier in the past 12 months, compared to eight percent of those without a disability. The most

frequently reported barriers within the built environment reported by those who have a disability include too many visual or audible distractions (17%) followed by a lack of seating (14%).

Two in ten (20%) of persons with disabilities experienced a barrier while involved in at least one of the six modes of **transportation** in the past 12 months vs. five percent (5%) of persons without disabilities. One in ten (11%) persons with disabilities experienced a barrier when using municipal public transit; ten percent (10%) experienced a barrier when travelling by air. Smaller proportions faced barriers to accessibility while using taxis and ridesharing (7%), Via Rail/interprovincial trains (5%), ferries (3%) and buses that cross borders (2%). Those who faced a barrier regarding a mode of transportation were asked which of seven types they experienced. The most common transportation-related barriers experienced by persons with disabilities include the following: floor plans inside of airports, stations, or terminals (38%); not knowing what supports were available to them (35%); and not having helpful staff to aid them (34%). Three in ten (30%) also indicate issues with entrances and exits.

Almost three in ten (28%) persons with disabilities, and eight (8%) percent of persons without disabilities, experienced at least one **information and communication technologies (ICT)**-related barrier in the past 12 months. The most common of these is a barrier when using a cell phone or connecting to a wireless/Wi-Fi service in Canada (16%), followed by watching television, a streaming service or an online video (13%). One in ten persons with disabilities experienced either a barrier to using a federally regulated organization's website (10%) or a self-service technology (9%).

Concerning **communication needs**, both persons with and without disabilities were asked if they ever needed materials such as books, letters, forms, online content, and other communication materials to be available in accessible formats or languages. One in ten (11%) of those identifying as having at least one disability or condition say they do require this, compared to one percent of those without a disability. Among persons with disabilities needing any accessible materials or formats, the most commonly required are plain language/easy to read text (55%), closed captioning (47%), large print (47%), and text-to-speech (38%).

Just over one-third (36%) of persons with disabilities say they have experienced at least one of seven **communication-related barriers (other than ICT)**, compared to seven percent (7%) of those without disabilities. Among persons with disabilities, the most identified barriers to communication (other than ICT) are documents or websites with text that is confusing (24%), and people not speaking slowly and clearly (23%). Just over one in ten (13%) have experienced an issue with not being able to adjust web sites, and one in ten (10%) have seen documents not being provided in screen reader formats or having small fonts and/or low contrast colours.

Three in ten persons with disabilities (31%) experienced at least one of four **barriers to accessing programs and services** provided by federally regulated organizations in the past 12 months. This is four times what persons without disabilities experienced in the same time period (7%). The most notable barrier is documents not being in plain language (26% of persons with disabilities), followed by not being given enough time or help to complete a form or application (15%).

About one in ten (11%) persons with disabilities indicate they have needed **other services and supports** when accessing services or programs from federally regulated organizations in the past 12 months, compared to one percent of persons without disabilities. About one-quarter (23%) of those who indicated needing other assistance cite general supports for physical or visual disabilities, two in

ten (19%) needed various workplace accommodations, and 14 percent required compassionate staff or colleagues to help them.

The term "**attitudinal barrier**" is not well known. This was described to respondents as follows, "Sometimes persons with disabilities are treated badly or differently because of ideas, beliefs, misconceptions – or attitudes – that other people have about disability. This is called an 'attitudinal barrier.'" Around one-quarter (26%) of persons with a disability had heard of this, compared to just under one in ten (9%) of those without a disability. Once defined, three in ten (29%) persons with disabilities experienced at least one such barrier, compared to six percent (6%) without a disability. The most common of these are people not being flexible about their accommodation needs (17%) or being judged or treated rudely or disrespectfully by people due to their disability (16%). One in ten each report not being spoken to directly or not at eye level (10%) or being pointed out or humiliated for behaviours they cannot control (10%).

F. Key findings – qualitative phase

1. General views on accessibility and barriers

Accessibility was usually associated with equitable access to the same resources and opportunities as everyone else. Words such as "freedom," "equity" and "justice" were often mentioned. Some participants specifically mentioned "universal design" – a concept in which an environment can be accessed and used to its full potential by all people.

Persons with disabilities experience both physical and non-physical barriers to accessibility in their day-to-day lives, and this often depends on the nature of their disability. When asked for examples of barriers they have experienced, they identified a variety of physical and attitudinal barriers. Many spoke of the need for greater empathy and understanding regarding non-visible disabilities.

Participants with mental health, memory, and learning related disabilities sometimes struggled to identify how the barriers they experienced may have been linked to their disability. Often the barriers they experience are not physical, but attitudinal, making them more difficult to articulate.

Views were mixed on whether accessibility in general for persons with disabilities has been improving or deteriorating. Technology has led to some improvements in terms of accessibility, but many felt that the improvements may have plateaued in recent years. Some comments were made about organizations claiming to support accommodations for persons with disabilities but making these accommodations difficult to access by not taking action to provide accommodations in a timely manner, and by having significant requirements for those seeking accommodations to prove that they need them. Some noted that there is less patience for accommodating persons with disabilities, particularly those with disabilities that are non-visible.

2. Communication-related barriers (other than ICT)

Most participants reported that they had not experienced specific communication-related barriers, but there were suggestions for enhanced awareness, understanding, and training on the part of customer service representatives. Respondents with mental health or learning disabilities faced challenges when

interacting with customer service representatives such as sensing frustration from their lack of understanding when they ask the representatives to repeat themselves or provide further details.

Some participants noted too much text in online forms and websites can be overstimulating, and that some forms cannot be read using text-to-speech software. When in airports or train stations, these participants reported experiencing challenges in reading the signage, and in banks they describe difficulty reading small text on bank machines.

The concept of plain language materials seems to be largely understood, but many participants have yet to see it in practice.

Communication-related barriers could be reduced by offering a choice of communication methods and providing more solutions-oriented customer service that takes into consideration the range of disabilities that exist, including both visible and non-visible.

3. Barriers to accessing programs and services

Most participants reported limited experience accessing federal government programs – those who did mentioned the disability tax credit, Canada Pension Plan, and Canada Pension Plan Disability benefit. Some participants felt these benefits were inadequate but did not identify specific barriers to accessing them.

Most frequently reported barriers related to dealing with bureaucracy and complicated application processes, although these were not identified as barriers related to their disability. While not a barrier on its own, the processes can be more challenging to navigate if a person has a disability. Further, requirements to prove disability in order to access benefits can be onerous.

It was noted that more needs to be done to teach customer service representatives about non-visible disabilities, such as mental health and learning disabilities, including how they may provide the required accommodations such as speaking slowly and ensuring the customer understands, or showing empathy for non-visible disabilities. Some participants with mobility and pain related disabilities commented on the challenge of standing in line for long periods of time when having to access programs in person.

4. Barriers in the built environment

Barriers in the built environment were often noted at airports and train stations and, to a lesser extent, at government offices. Due to a rise in online services, participants had reported less need to physically access banks and government institutions.

Participants identified outdoor barriers as complicated or unclear signs or letters that are too small, long distances to entry points and a low number of available accessible parking spaces. Some noted poor infrastructure such as narrow or poorly designed entrances, uneven stairs, and inconvenient ramp placements.

Indoor barriers were also reported and several noted that many federal buildings are very old and were not built with accessibility in mind. Challenges related to waiting areas were frequently

mentioned such as limited number of chairs, which can be uncomfortable or painful for those with physical disabilities who must stand or sit for long periods. For others, long waits in crowded spaces can lead to significant stress, particularly for those with mental health concerns. Indoor lighting was sometimes mentioned both for being too bright for those with epilepsy or chronic migraines and for not being bright enough for those with vision disabilities.

Suggestions were made to consult with persons with disabilities when designing buildings. Universal design was frequently mentioned.

5. Attitudinal barriers

Attitudinal barriers experienced included being misunderstood, doubted, and judged, often leading to frustration, marginalization, and constantly having to justify or prove their disability or condition. Some shared negative experiences where service providers can be condescending or failed to acknowledge their needs.

Those with non-visible disabilities reported being judged as lazy or dishonest or trying to pretend to have a disability. Participants expressed that there is a lot of stigma around mental health disabilities, learning disabilities, and developmental disabilities that feed into these attitudinal barriers. The lack of patience and empathy was noted, with a call for better training of service providers to be aware of the range of disabilities that exist.

6. Additional comments – improving accessibility

When participants were asked for some final comments, three main themes emerged. Firstly, the concept of universal design was reiterated as a way of addressing barriers to accessibility in the context of the built environment. Secondly, a greater variety of communication options could be made available such as special phone lines or option to communicate by text. Finally, there is a call for increased training for service staff – particularly in understanding the range of visible and non-visible disabilities that exist, the various accommodations that can be made, and being empathetic and understanding toward everyone.

G. Political neutrality statement and contact information

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

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I. Background

The *Accessible Canada Act (ACA)* came into force in July 2019 with the express purpose of benefiting all persons in Canada, particularly persons with disabilities through the proactive identification, removal, and prevention of barriers to accessibility.

As part of its efforts to measure progress in the identification and removal of barriers to accessibility under the ACA over time, and to continue collecting information about current attitudinal barriers faced by persons with disabilities, Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) has been funded to carry out three cycles of public opinion research (POR). POR compliments other accessibility data collection efforts as it specifically focuses on the general public's level of awareness and understanding of the ACA while also probing their experience of barriers to accessibility.

The ACA priority areas explored in the research are as follows:

- Employment
- Built environment (indoor and outdoor public spaces)Transportation (airlines, rail, road, and marine transportation providers that cross provincial or international borders)
- Information and communication technologies
- Communication (other than information and communication technologies)
- Design and delivery of programs and services

Procurement is a seventh ACA priority area but is not covered in this research as it is not applicable to individual members of the public.

This project includes both quantitative and qualitative research. The guiding research questions were as follows:

1. How well are persons without disabilities aware of accessibility and/or the goal of the ACA to identify, remove, or prevent barriers to accessibility, compared to persons with disabilities?
2. How and to what extent do persons without disabilities experience barriers to accessibility, compared to persons with disabilities?
3. What types of, and to what extent do, barriers across six of the seven priority areas hinder the full participation of persons with disabilities in society (note: procurement is not included)?
4. How do persons with disabilities and without disabilities perceive attitudinal barriers and negative perceptions of persons with disabilities?

The quantitative research objectives include the following:

- Measure general awareness and understanding of the ACA, and its implementation;
- Assess the potential impact of the implementation of the ACA in removing barriers to accessibility across six of the seven priority areas;

- Intersectional analysis to identify specific barriers to accessibility that persons with disabilities face within/across six of the seven priority areas; and
- Measure the impact of attitudinal barriers faced by persons with disabilities.

The qualitative research objectives include the following items:

- Capture the lived experience of persons with disabilities who encounter barriers identified in the priority areas for which significant data gaps exist; and;
- Better characterize the needs of the disability community with respect to addressing the barriers faced.

Use of findings of the research. This research will be used to complement other measurement work undertaken at ESDC to understand the impact that the ACA and other Government of Canada initiatives that aim to advance accessibility have on the lives of persons with disabilities over time. ESDC's measurement work is detailed in the Federal Data and Measurement Strategy for Accessibility 2022 to 2027, which aims to provide Canadians with comprehensive information and long-term data on barriers to accessibility.

II. Detailed findings – quantitative phase

A. Prevalence and types of disabilities

1. Self-identification as a person with a disability

Just over one-third of people who later say they have at least one of ten types of disabilities or long-term conditions self-identify as a person with a disability initially.

Survey respondents were first asked if they identify as a person with a disability. In the panel survey (which targeted persons with disabilities as a quota), 12 percent identify in this way, while 86 percent either say they are not a person with a disability, or say they are answering on behalf of someone else who does have a disability. The proportion of those self-identifying as a person with a disability is higher among those invited to take part in the survey via the open link, which was distributed by the department to persons with disabilities and organizations who represent and support persons with disabilities: 79 percent.

All respondents in the "persons with a disability" segment qualified having at least one disability or long-term condition. However, only just over one-third (36%) self-identify as being a person with a disability, while almost two-thirds (62%) did not prior to be being probed about the disability types individually.

Table 4 – Self-identifying as a person with a disability

Q4. Do you identify as a person with a disability, or are you responding on behalf of someone who has a disability?	**Panel Survey n=1,497**	**Open Link Survey n=329**	**Persons with a disability n=1,187**	**Persons without a disability n=639**
Yes, I am a person with a disability	12%	79%	36%	1%
Net: No	*86%*	*19%*	*62%*	*95%*
No, I am not a person with a disability	81%	16%	57%	92%
No, but I am responding on behalf of a person with a disability	5%	2%	5%	3%
Prefer not to answer	3%	2%	2%	4%

Self-identifying as a person with a disability *prior* to seeing the categories of disability is higher among the following segments of persons who subsequently identify as having at least one of the ten disabilities or long-term conditions:

- Those who say their disability is severe (83% vs. 51% who say it is moderate and 10% who say it is mild.)
- Those who indicate having a developmental (76%), learning (71%) or memory (65%) disability vs. 42% to 60% of others.
- Those who say they have four or more of the ten disabilities (69% vs. 42% who have two to three disabilities, and 10% who have one disability).

- 2SLGBTQ+ (65%) and Indigenous people (51% vs. 33% racialized and 32% who are not in an equity-deserving group).
- Age 18 to 34 (54% vs. 41% age 35 to 64 and 21% age 65 and over).
- Those who indicate they have a visible disability (47% vs. 35% who say it is non-visible).
- Women (43% vs. 26% among men).

2. Types of disabilities/long-term conditions experienced

The most commonly identified disabilities and/or long-term conditions experienced are those that relate to pain and mental health.

All respondents, whether or not they identify as someone with a disability, were shown a series of disability and long-term condition types (one at a time) and asked if they experience them or not. Respondents were shown both the name of the disability or condition and the description, along with any examples or clarifications.

The following are the types of disabilities or conditions covered in the survey and the descriptions provided to the respondents.

a) Seeing / Vision:	Difficulty with seeing clearly, even when using glasses or contact lenses (This includes being a blind or legally blind person)
b) Hearing:	Difficulty with hearing clearly, even when using hearing aids or cochlear implants. (This includes being a Deaf or hard of hearing person or having tinnitus)
c) Mobility:	i) Difficulty moving around, even when using an aid such as a cane
	ii) Difficulty with walking on a flat surface for 15 minutes without resting
	iii) Difficulty with walking up or down a flight of stairs (about 12 steps) without resting
d) Flexibility:	i) Difficulty with bending down and picking up an object from the floor
	ii) Difficulty with reaching in any direction, for example, above your head
e) Dexterity:	Difficulty with using your fingers to grasp small objects, like a pencil or scissors
f) Pain:	i) Pain due to a condition that has lasted (or is expected to last) for 6 months or more
	ii) Pain that is always present
	iii) Periods of pain that recur from time to time
g) Learning:	Any condition that makes it hard in general for you to learn. (Examples are

learning disabilities such as dyslexia, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, dyscalculia)

h) Developmental: A developmental disability or disorder. (Examples include Down syndrome and being on the autism spectrum)

i) Memory: Difficulty with ongoing memory problems or periods of confusion, not counting occasional forgetfulness. (Note: These difficulties are often associated with diseases such as Alzheimer's and other kinds of dementia, or may be the result of a brain injury)

j) Mental Health: A mental health-related condition that has lasted or is expected to last for six months or more. (Examples are anxiety, depression, bipolar disorder, substance abuse, anorexia)

If someone said they experience one or more of the listed disabilities or long-term conditions, they were screened into the "persons with disabilities" segment; if they did not indicate at least one disability they were screened into the "persons without disabilities" segment. Note that, with a few exceptions, both groups were asked the same questions in this survey. For example, persons without disabilities were not asked follow-up questions on the severity or visibility of the disability or condition, because they do not have one.

The most frequently mentioned disability or condition is pain, cited by 62 percent of those who indicate at least one disability type. The second most cited are mental health-related conditions (41%), followed by flexibility (30%), mobility (25%), and learning (22%). The least mentioned disabilities or conditions are memory (12%) and developmental (8%).

The proportion of people citing pain as a disability or condition they experience is similar for both the panel survey (61%) and the open link survey (64%), and several other conditions (flexibility, mobility, seeing/vision, hearing) also have reasonably similar proportions between the two data collection types. However, the open link survey respondents are more likely than those in the panel survey to report having mental health (70% vs. 31%), learning (55% vs. 11%), dexterity (21% vs. 11%), memory (23% vs. 9%) and developmental (24% vs. 3%) disability or long-term condition.

Table 5 – Types of disabilities experienced
Base: Those identifying as having a disability (n=1,187)

Q6. Do you experience any of the following disabilities or long-term conditions?	Persons with a disability n=1,187	Panel Survey n=878	Open Link Survey n=309
Pain	62%	61%	64%
Mental Health	41%	31%	70%
Flexibility	30%	29%	31%
Mobility	25%	24%	29%
Learning	22%	11%	55%
Seeing/Vision	20%	19%	21%
Hearing	17%	17%	19%
Dexterity	14%	11%	21%
Memory	12%	9%	23%
Developmental	8%	3%	24%

The following are some notable subgroup differences in the types of disability or long-term condition experienced:

- People with a *visible* disability are more likely than those with a *non-visible* disability to say they have the following types of disabilities: pain (71% vs. 60%), flexibility (58% vs. 25%), mobility (57% vs. 20%), seeing (28% vs. 18%), hearing (21% vs. 16%) and dexterity (26% vs. 11%).
- A person with a disability, requiring someone to respond on their behalf, are the most likely to indicate having a developmental (29% vs. 7%-9% of others) or learning disability (38% vs. 19%-24%).
- Saying they have *any* of the disabilities covered in the survey is highest among people whose disability (or combination of disabilities) is severe. The exception is seeing/vision disabilities, which is similar regardless of how severe people say this is (19% with mild disabilities, 19% moderate and 24% severe).
- Those identifying as women are more likely than men to indicate they experience several conditions: pain (64% vs. 58%), mental health (51% vs. 25%), learning (28% vs. 14%), memory (15% vs. 8%), and developmental (10% vs. 4%). Men are more likely than women to report having disabilities related to flexibility (34% vs. 26%) or hearing (21% vs. 14%).
- Reporting having the following disabilities/conditions increases as age increases: pain (from 45% aged 18 to 34 up to 71% aged 65 and over), flexibility (from 19% up to 35%), mobility (from 14% up to 34%), and hearing (from 10% up to 24%).
- The following disabilities/conditions are more prevalent among younger people and decrease as age increases: mental health (from 72% aged 18 to 34 down to 12% aged 65+), learning (from 46% down to 5%), and developmental (from 2% down to 1%). Learning (5%)

and memory disabilities are reported least by those age 65 and over, compared to younger people.

- Flexibility (42%) and mobility (40%) disabilities are highest among those who are in lower income households (under $40,000). Three disabilities that were reportedly higher among those with high school or less education – are flexibility 47%, mobility 40%, dexterity 20%.
- The prevalence of reported mental health-related disabilities or conditions is highest among those who are two-spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning (2SLGBTQ+) (77%) and increases as level of education increases (from 29% with less than college/CEGEP, up to 52% of persons with disabilities with a post graduate degree).The following table presents what disabilities or long-term conditions are most likely to be experienced together. Barriers associated with mobility, flexibility, and dexterity tend to be connected to each other and are also linked to chronic pain. Learning, development, and memory issues are connected to each other, and are also linked to mental health-related disabilities or conditions.

Table 6 – Types of disabilities experienced
Base: Those identifying as having a disability (n=1,187)

Q6. Do you experience any of the following disabilities or long-term conditions?	**Seeing/ vision n=235**	**Hearing n=205**	**Mobility n=301**	**Flexibility n=355**	**Dexterity n=162**
Pain	58%	63%	**81%**	**81%**	**78%**
Mental Health	40%	34%	38%	38%	46%
Flexibility	38%	40%	**68%**	**100%**	**59%**
Mobility	33%	34%	**100%**	**57%**	**59%**
Learning	26%	24%	26%	24%	35%
Seeing/Vision	100%	28%	26%	25%	32%
Hearing	24%	100%	23%	23%	22%
Dexterity	22%	18%	32%	27%	100%
Memory	19%	18%	21%	19%	23%
Developmental	10%	9%	11%	9%	18%
Q6. Do you experience any of the following disabilities or long-term conditions?	**Pain n=735**	**Learning n=266**	**Develop-mental n=100**	**Memory n=148**	**Mental health n=485**
Pain	100%	60%	68%	72%	54%
Mental Health	36%	**70%**	**77%**	**63%**	100%
Flexibility	39%	32%	32%	45%	28%
Mobility	33%	29%	33%	42%	24%
Learning	22%	**100%**	**82%**	**59%**	39%
Seeing/Vision	19%	23%	23%	30%	19%
Hearing	18%	18%	19%	25%	14%
Dexterity	17%	21%	29%	26%	15%
Memory	15%	**33%**	**40%**	**100%**	19%
Developmental	9%	**31%**	**100%**	**27%**	16%

3. Number of disabilities experienced

Six in ten report having more than one of the ten types of disabilities.

The majority (60%) of persons with disabilities report having more than one type of disability or condition; with one-quarter (24%) having four or more disabilities.

The proportion indicating more than one disability type is considerably higher among those who were invited to take part in the survey via the open link; almost nine in ten (88%) experience more than one type of disability, compared to half (51%) of those from the panel survey. Just under half (45%) in the open link survey report having four or more, compared to 17 percent in the panel survey.

Table 7 – Number of disabilities
Base: Those identifying as having a disability (n=1,187)

Q6. Do you experience any of the following disability or long-term condition?	**Persons with a disability n=1,187**	**Panel Survey n=878**	**Open Link Survey n=309**
One disability	40%	49%	12%
Net: more than one disability	60%	51%	88%
Two to three disabilities	36%	33%	42%
Four or more disabilities	24%	17%	45%

Persons with the following disability types are the most likely to say they experience only *one type of disability* compared to other disability types:

- Pain (26%).
- Mental Health (24%).
- Vision (20%).
- Hearing (20%).

Persons with pain are also the most likely to experience *two or three disabilities* compared to other disability types (38%).

Persons with the following disability types are the most likely to experience *four or more disabilities compared to other disability types*:

- Memory (73%).
- Developmental (71%).
- Dexterity (69%).
- Mobility (60%).

The presence of *more than one disability* is higher among the following subgroups:

- Those whose disability is severe (88%) or moderate (76%), compared to those whose disability is mild (38%).
- Those who indicate their disability is visible (78% vs. 57% whose disability is non-visible).

- Those who are 2SLGBTQ+ (77%) and Indigenous (73%) persons (compared to 59% racialized and 58% who do not indicate any of these identities).
- Those under 35 (65%) or between 45 and 64 (65%), compared to those 35 to 64 years old (56%) or 65+ (55%).
- Women (63% vs. 55% of men).
- Those who did the survey in English (62% vs. 51% of French respondents).

4. Primary disability

Pain is the primary disability of three in ten, followed by mental health.

Respondents were asked what they consider to be their primary disability or condition, defined as "the one that causes you the most difficulty in taking part in society." This question was asked to anyone who indicated that they experience two or more disabilities or conditions. The table below also includes the responses given by those who indicated only one type, as that is their primary disability. Pain (31%) and mental health (23%) remain the most common primary disabilities.

Table 8 – Primary disability
Base: Those identifying as having a disability (n=1,187)

Q6b. Please indicate what you consider to be your "primary" disability or long-term condition. This is the one that causes you the most difficulty in taking part in society.	**Persons with a disability n=1,187**	**Panel Survey n=878**	**Open Link Survey n=309**
Pain	31%	35%	18%
Mental Health	23%	20%	30%
Mobility	11%	12%	10%
Hearing	9%	9%	6%
Seeing/Vision	7%	9%	3%
Learning	7%	3%	18%
Flexibility	6%	8%	1%
Developmental	3%	1%	10%
Dexterity	2%	2%	2%
Memory	2%	1%	2%

Half (50%) of people who report having pain indicate it is their primary condition. Prevalence of having pain as the primary disability increases along with an increase in age (from 16% among those aged 18 to 34, up to 37% of those aged 65 and over), and is somewhat higher among the following groups:

- Manitoba/Saskatchewan (41%) and Quebec (38%).
- French speakers (41% vs, 29% of English speakers).
- Those reporting only one disability (41%).

- Those indicating they have mild (39%) or moderate (26%) disabilities (vs. 17% with more severe impacts).
- Retired persons (38%).

Reports of a mental health disability as the primary disability is highest among younger people and decreases as age increases (from 40% among those aged 18 to 34, down to 6% of those aged 65 and over). Over half of people who have a mental health disability (55%) indicate this is their primary condition. Indicating mental health as the primary disability is higher among the following groups:

- 2SLGBTQ+ persons (37%).
- Those indicating their disability is severe (31%) or moderate (26% vs. 6% with mild conditions).
- Those with learning (30%), developmental (22%) or memory disabilities or conditions (24%).
- Open link survey respondents (30%).
- Women (28% vs. 15% of men).
- Those with a bachelor's degree or higher (26%).
- Those with non-visible disabilities (26% vs. 6% with visible disabilities).
- Those living in urban centers (25% vs. 19% in smaller communities).

5. Visibility of disability

Sixteen percent of people who have at least one of ten disability types indicate their disability is visible.

The vast majority of people with at least one disability (84%) report that it is non-visible. Sixteen percent say they have a visible disability. These proportions are generally similar for the online panel survey and those responding to the open link invitation.

Table 9 – If disability is visible or non-visible
Base: Those identifying as having a disability (n=1,157)

Q5. Is your disability visible, meaning people can see that you have it, or non-visible, meaning other people may not be able to tell by looking at you?	**Persons with a disability n=1,157**	**Panel Survey n=848**	**Open Link Survey n=309**
Non-visible	84%	83%	88%
Visible	16%	17%	12%

The following table presents the proportions reporting visible and non-visible disabilities by disability type (note many respondents report having more than one type of disability). People are most likely to say their disability is *visible* when they have a mobility disability (35% visible), followed by flexibility (30%) and dexterity (29%). People are most likely to say their disability is *non-visible* when they experience the following: mental health (90%), developmental (87%), learning (87%), or memory (84%) disabilities.

Table 10 – If disability is visible or non-visible – by disability type
Base: Those identifying as having a disability (n=1,157)

Q5. Is your disability visible, meaning people can see that you have it, or non-visible, meaning other people may not be able to tell by looking at you?	**Seeing/ vision n=230**	**Hearing n=197**	**Mobility n=297**	**Flexibility n=347**	**Dexterity n=156**
Visible	22%	19%	35%	30%	29%
Non-visible	78%	81%	65%	70%	71%
Q5. Is your disability visible, meaning people can see that you have it, or non-visible, meaning other people may not be able to tell by looking at you?	**Pain n=714**	**Learning n=266**	**Develop-mental n=100**	**Memory n=146**	**Mental health n=477**
Visible	18%	13%	13%	16%	10%
Non-visible	82%	87%	87%	84%	90%

While there are no notable differences in reporting a visible disability by region, there are socioeconomic differences. Reporting a visible disability is higher among those with lower levels of education (19% with less than a university degree vs. 13% with a bachelor's degree or higher). Having visible disability is also higher among with household incomes under $100,000 (20% vs. 10% with higher incomes), and those who work only part time (23%) or who are retired (21%) or not working (20% vs. 11% working full time).

Having a disability that is visible is higher among the following subgroups:

- Those reporting their disability (or combination of disabilities) is severe (27% vs. 18% who say it is moderate and 11% who say it is mild).
- Those with four or more disabilities (24% vs. 18% with two to three and 9% with one).
- Those age 45 and over (21% age 65+ and 17% age 45 to 64 vs. 9% under age 45).
- Men (20% vs. 12% of women).

Reports of a non-visible disability are higher among younger people (91% age 18 to 44) and decreases with age (83% aged 45 to 64, down to 79% aged 65 and over). Reports of non-visible disabilities is higher among the following subgroups:

- Those with one disability (91% vs. 82% with two or three and 76% with four or more).
- Those with household incomes of $100,000 or more (90% vs. 80% with lower incomes).
- Those reporting their disability (or combination of disabilities) is mild (89%) or moderate (82% vs. 73% who say it is severe).
- Women (88% vs. 80% of men).

6. Severity of disabilities

Just over one in ten persons with disabilities rate their disability, or combined disabilities, as being severe, and another four in ten describe them as moderate.

The majority of persons with at least one of the ten disability types say their disability, or combination of disabilities, is mild (45%) or moderate (42%); a minority (12%) say it is severe. Those surveyed via the open link invitation were more likely to report moderate (58%) or severe (23%) conditions than those who were part of the online panel.

Table 11 – If disabilities are mild, moderate or severe
Base: Those identifying as having a disability (n=1,187)

Q7. Thinking of your disabilities or conditions as a whole, how severe would you say they are?	**Persons with a disability n=1,187**	**Panel Survey n=878**	**Open Link Survey n=309**
Mild	45%	55%	19%
Moderate	42%	37%	58%
Severe	12%	8%	23%

Reports of a severe disability is similar across the country. Stating their disability is severe is highest among those with memory (28%), dexterity (28%), mobility (26%), or developmental (26%) disabilities or conditions, while stating their disability is mild is highest among those reporting vision (44%) or pain (41%) disabilities.

Table 12 – If disability is mild, moderate, or severe – by disability type
Base: Those identifying as having a disability (n=1,187)

Q7. Thinking of your disabilities or conditions as a whole, how severe would you say they are?	**Seeing/ vision n=235**	**Hearing n=205**	**Mobility n=301**	**Flexibility n=355**	**Dexterity n=156**
Mild	44%	32%	19%	28%	25%
Moderate	41%	51%	55%	50%	46%
Severe	15%	17%	26%	22%	28%
Q7. Thinking of your disabilities or conditions as a whole, how severe would you say they are?	**Pain n=735**	**Learning n=266**	**Develop-mental n=100**	**Memory n=148**	**Mental health n=485**
Mild	41%	22%	17%	25%	30%
Moderate	45%	55%	57%	47%	52%
Severe	15%	23%	26%	28%	18%

Reports of *severe* disabilities or conditions are higher among the following subgroups:

- Those with four or more disabilities or conditions (30% vs. 9% with two to three and 4% with one).
- Those not in the work force, including retired people (29% vs. 11% working either full or part time).
- Those with visible disabilities (21% vs. 11% with non-visible disabilities).
- Women (14% vs. 9% of men).
- Those under age 65 (14% vs. 7% age 65+).

Reports of a *moderate* disability or condition are higher among the following subgroups:

- Those responding via the open link (58% vs. 37% of panel respondents).
- Those age 18 to 34 (54% vs. 41% aged 35 and over).
- Those with two or more disabilities (53% vs. 26% with one disability).
- Those very/somewhat familiar (52%) or not very familiar with the ACA (47% vs. 36% not at all familiar).

Reports of *mild* disability or condition are higher among the following subgroups:

- Those with one disability or conditions (70% vs. 39% with two to three and 14% with four or more).
- Those responding via the panel (55% vs. 19% of open link survey respondents).
- Those aged 65 and over (54% vs. 42% under age 65).
- Men (52% vs. 42% of women).
- Those with non-visible disabilities (47% vs. 31% with visible disabilities).

B. Prevalence of experiencing barriers to accessibility among persons with and without disabilities

The survey asked both persons with and without disabilities if they are familiar with the ACA and if they experience various barriers to accessibility in the priority areas set out in the ACA. The results are reported in this section.

1. Familiarity with the ACA

One-quarter of persons with disabilities are at least somewhat familiar with the ACA, which is significantly higher than among those who do not have a disability.

Overall, familiarity with the ACA among all respondents in both segments was 21%. The survey asked level of familiarity with the ACA. One-quarter (24%) of persons with disabilities are at least somewhat familiar with the ACA, compared to 15 percent who do not have a disability. However, the majority of both groups are not familiar with the ACA (76% with a disability and 85% without are not familiar with it).

Table 13 – Familiarity with the ACA

Q8. How familiar are you with the Government of Canada's Accessible Canada Act (ACA) that became law in 2019?	**Persons with a disability n=1,187**	**Persons without a disability n=639**
Net: familiar	**24%**	**15%**
Very familiar	9%	2%
Somewhat familiar	15%	13%
Net: not familiar	**76%**	**85%**
Not very familiar	20%	31%
Not at all familiar	55%	54%

Among both persons with and without disabilities, awareness of the ACA is fairly consistent across the country. Awareness decreases as age increases, from 38 percent among those aged 18 to 34, down to 8% among those 65 and over. Awareness is also higher among those with higher levels of education.

Among persons with disabilities, familiarity with the ACA is highest among the following:

- Those responding via the open link survey (67% vs. 10% in the panel survey).
- Those with developmental (55%) and learning (48%) disabilities.
- Those with severe disabilities (46% vs. 30% with moderate and 13% with mild).
- 2SLGBTQ+ persons (46%).
- Those with four or more disabilities (41% vs. 26% with two or three, and 13% with one).

- Those working (33% vs. 14% of those not working and 7% who are retired).
- Women (31% vs. 14% of men).
- Urban residents (27% vs. 21% in small cities or towns and 13% in rural areas).

As mentioned above, overall familiarity with the ACA is lower among persons without disabilities (15%) than those with disabilities (24%). The following subgroups of persons without disabilities are the most familiar with it:

- English-speaking respondents (17% vs. 6% of those who completed the survey in French).
- Those working (16% vs. 4% for those not working).
- Those with education above a high school diploma (16% vs. 6% with high-school or less).

2. ACA barriers experienced

Persons with disabilities are more than twice as likely as those without disabilities to experience at least one barrier to accessibility among the six types of ACA priority areas covered in the survey. Employment barriers are the most commonly experienced barriers, by both those with and without disabilities.

The majority of the survey questions asked respondents to indicate if they have experienced six specific types of barriers to accessibility in the past 12 months. Before being asked about these barriers, respondents were presented with the following text:

> *The purpose of the* Accessible Canada Act *is to identify, remove and prevent barriers in federally regulated organizations.*
>
> *A "barrier" is anything that could limit a person from fully taking part in society. It might be physical, a building, a problem with technology, a government policy, or someone's attitude.*
>
> *"Federally regulated organizations" include banks, courier and mail services, ferries, airlines, interprovincial rail and bus travel, radio and television stations, Internet service companies, and First Nations band councils. The Act also covers all services and programs offered by the Government of Canada.*
>
> *We would like you to think about these types of organizations when answering the survey questions.*
>
> *In this survey we will ask you about barriers you may or may not experience, in the following key areas:*

- *Employment.*
- *buildings and public spaces.*
- *transportation (airlines, rail, road, and marine transportation providers that cross provincial or international borders).*
- *information and communication technologies (ICT).*
- *communication (other than information and communication technologies (ICT)).*
- *design and delivery of programs and services.*

The following table is a summary of the types of barriers experienced by both persons with disabilities and those without disabilities. Just over six in ten (62%) persons with disabilities report experiencing at least one of the six types of barriers, compared to one-quarter (26%) of persons without disabilities.

Note that each of the six barrier types is explored in more detail in the rest of this section of the report.

Looking at the results of all of the questions regarding barriers to accessibility, employment barriers are the most reported, by both those with disabilities (39%) and those without (14%). For persons

with disabilities, over one-third each report having experienced barriers regarding the built environment (36%) and communication (not ICT) (36%), and around three in ten each experienced barriers related to programs and services (31%) or ICT (28%). Transportation barriers are the least reported barriers by both groups (20% persons with disabilities, 5% persons without disabilities).

Table 14 – Barriers experienced across ACA priority areas

ACA priority area barrier experienced	Persons with a disability n=1,187	Persons without a disability n=639
Net: Any type of barrier	**62%**	**26%**
Employment	39%	14%
Built environment	36%	8%
Communication (not ICT)	36%	7%
Design and delivery of programs and services	31%	6%
Information and communication technologies (ICT)	28%	8%
Transportation	20%	5%
None of the above	**38%**	**74%**

The subgroups of persons with disabilities most likely to experience barriers of multiple kinds are as follows:

- Women (69% experiencing at least one of the types of barriers vs. 51% of men).
- Younger people (age 18 to 34) (74%, decreases as age increases to 46% age 65 and over).
- Those with higher levels of education (71% with a post graduate degree).
- Those working full-time (71%).
- Those who are 2SLGBTQ+ (81%), Indigenous (78%) or racialized (69% vs. 57% who are in none of these groups).
- Those taking part in the survey via the open link invitation (95% vs 50% who took part in the panel survey).
- Those with severe (85%) or moderate disabilities (71% vs. 46% with mild disabilities).
- Those with developmental (94%), learning (90%), memory (85%) or dexterity (80%) disabilities or conditions.
- Those with four or more (86%) or two to three disabilities (64% vs. 44% with one disability).

For more detailed information and notable subgroup differences, please see the barriers to accessibility by specific priority area that follow.

Subgroups of persons without disabilities are generally similar in the kind and number of barriers to accessibility they encounter, although they experience these to a lesser extent.

3. Employment-related barriers

Persons with disabilities are two to five times more likely than persons without disabilities to report experiencing specific work-related barriers.

The first ACA priority area covered in the survey is employment-related barriers. Respondents were asked to indicate if they have experienced each of the eight specific employment barriers presented. Four in ten (39%) persons with disabilities and over one in ten (14%) persons without disabilities report experiencing at least one employment-related barrier in the past 12 months.

The most reported employment-related barriers are related to being treated fairly (20% persons with disabilities vs. 7% without), moving up (20% vs. 7%), or having access to supports or accommodations (20% vs. 4%). These are closely followed by not getting the chance to use education skills or work experience (19% vs. 6%). One in ten (11%) persons with disabilities report having experienced a barrier related to being hired due to their disability in the past 12 months.

Table 15 – Employment barriers experienced – % saying Yes

Q9. Over the past 12 months, have you experienced a barrier to any of the following?	Persons with a disability n=1,187	Persons without a disability n=639
Net: Any employment barrier	**39%**	**14%**
Being treated fairly by managers or co-workers	20%	7%
Moving up (like a promotion)	20%	7%
Having access to supports or workplace accommodation	20%	4%
Getting the chance to use your education, skills, or work experience	19%	6%
Finding work you have the skills for	16%	6%
Accessible training opportunities that meet your need	16%	3%
Getting an interview for a job you wanted	14%	6%
Being hired due to a disability or long-term condition	11%	2%
None of the above	**61%**	**86%**

Experiencing all types of employment-related barriers is higher among younger people with disabilities aged 18 to 44, then begins to decrease and is lowest among those age 65 and over, who are also more likely to be retired. Women are more likely than men to experience barriers to being treated fairly by managers and co-workers, moving up, having access to supports, or getting accessible training opportunities.

Other subgroups of the persons with disabilities population who are most likely to experience multiple employment-related barriers are:

- Those with a post-graduate level education (50% experiencing at least one employment-related barrier).
- Women (45% vs. 28% of men).
- Open link survey respondents (79% vs 24% who responded as part of the panel survey).

- Those with severe disabilities (65%), and those with four or more disabilities (66%).
- Those with developmental (86%), learning (79%) and memory (67%) disabilities.
- Persons with disabilities who are 2SLGBTQ+ (63%), Indigenous (54%), or racialized (50% vs. 32% of others).

Following are some key findings regarding the employment-related barriers that were reported as being experienced by two in ten persons with disabilities each:

Being treated fairly by managers or co-workers

- Those with developmental (55%), learning (47%) or memory (41%) disabilities.
- Those taking part in the survey via the open link (45% vs. 12% of panel respondents).
- Those very or somewhat familiar with the ACA (41% vs. 20% not very and 11% not at all familiar).
- Those with severe disabilities (39% vs. 26% with moderate disabilities and 10% whose disabilities are mild).
- Those with four or more disabilities (38% vs. 18% with two or three and 11% with one disability).
- Those who are 2SLGBTQ+ (34% compared to 16% to 29% of others).
- Women (25% vs. 13% of men).

Moving up (like a promotion)

- Those with developmental (53%), learning (46%) or memory (42%) disabilities.
- Those taking part in the survey via the open link (47% vs. 11% of panel respondents).
- Those with severe disabilities (40% vs. 25% with moderate disabilities and 10% whose disabilities are mild).
- Those with four or more disabilities (38% vs. 20% with two or three and 8% with one disability).
- Those who are 2SLGBTQ+ (37%).
- Those with a post-graduate degree (27% vs. 12% to 21% of others).
- Women (23% vs. 15% of men).

Having access to supports or workplace accommodation

- Those with developmental (59%), learning (52%) or memory (41%) disabilities.
- Those taking part in the survey via the open link (55% vs. 8% of panel respondents).
- Those very or somewhat familiar with the ACA (45% vs. 23% not very and 7% not at all familiar).
- Those with severe disabilities (44% vs. 26% with moderate disabilities and 7% whose disabilities are mild).
- Those who are 2SLGBTQ+ (40%).
- Those with four or more disabilities (40% vs. 20% with two or three and 7% with one disability).
- Those with a post-graduate degree (29% vs. 11% to 23% of others).

Getting the chance to use your *education, skills, or work experience*

- Those with developmental (46%), learning (44%) or memory (42%) disabilities.
- Those taking part in the survey via the open link (41% vs. 12% of panel respondents).
- Those with four or more disabilities (38% vs. 17% with two or three and 10% with one disability).
- Those with severe disabilities (35% vs. 25% whose disabilities are moderate and 9% whose disabilities are mild).
- Indigenous (32%), 2SLGBTQ+ (31%) or racialized (24% vs. 16% who are none of these).
- Aged 18 to 34 (32% vs, 23% aged 35 to 64 and 6% aged 65 and over).
- Those with post-graduate degrees (26% vs. 14% to 19% with less education).

4. Barriers in the built environment

Over one-third of persons with disabilities have experienced at least one barrier relating to the built environment when dealing with a federally regulated organization, compared to under one in ten of those without a disability.

Respondents were next asked about barriers encountered when accessing buildings and public spaces (the "built environment") in any federally regulated organization. They were shown a list of eight potential barriers and could also identify other ones. Over a third (36%) of persons with disabilities have experienced at least one barrier related to the built environment in the past 12 months, compared to eight percent of those without a disability.

The most frequently reported barriers mentioned by those who have a disability include too many visual or audible distractions (17%), followed by a lack of seating (14%). Other barriers mentioned by one in ten (11%), are a lack of designated private spaces, issues with doors (no automated doors or lack of easy to open levers), and lack of accommodation in the form of cutaways, ramps, handrails, or accessible parking.

Table 16 – Barriers in the built environment experienced – % experiencing each

Q10. Over the past 12 months, have you experienced any of the following barriers while dealing with any federally regulated organizations?	Persons with a disability n=1,187	Persons without a disability n=639
Net: Any built environment barrier	**36%**	**8%**
Too many visual or audible distractions	17%	1%
No seating/being forced to stand while waiting for service	14%	3%
No designated private space for resting/medication	11%	2%
Not having automatic doors/easy to open door levers	11%	3%
Lack of accommodations e.g. curb cutaways, ramps, handrails, accessible parking, or motion- or time- activated sinks or toilets	11%	2%
Not having emergency plans for persons with disabilities	6%	1%
Hallways/doorways/washrooms not wide enough/not accessible	5%	1%
Lack of visual or audible features	4%	1%
Other	8%	1%
None of the above	**64%**	**92%**

Experiencing barriers in the built environment is higher among the following subgroups of persons with disabilities:

- Open link survey respondents (75% experiencing at least one built environment barrier vs. 23% who took part in the panel survey).
- Women (44% vs. 25% of men).

- Younger people (59% age 18 to 34 decreasing as age increases down to 21% age 65 and over).
- Those working full time (46% vs. 9% go 48% of others).
- Those living in urban locations (40% vs. 33% in small cities or towns, and 22% in rural communities).
- 2SLGBTQ+ (65%), Indigenous (61%) and racialized (46%) persons with disabilities (vs. 29% not in any of these groups).

Following are key statistics regarding the built environment-related barriers reported as being experienced by at least one in ten persons with disabilities:

Too many visual or audible distractions

- Those taking part in the survey via the open link (46% vs. 6% of panel respondents).
- Those with developmental (59%), learning (45%) or memory (41%) disabilities.
- Those who are 2SLGBTQ+ (39%).
- Those very or somewhat familiar with the ACA (36% vs. 21% not very familiar and 6% not at all familiar).
- Those with four or more disabilities (34% vs. 17% with two or three and 5% with one disability).
- Those working full time (26% vs. 15% working part time and 8% not working).
- Those with post-graduate (26%) or bachelor's degrees (20% vs. 9% to 13% with less education).
- Those with moderate or severe disabilities (25% vs. 8% whose disabilities are mild).
- Those living in urban centres (19% vs. 9% in rural areas and 13% in small cities or towns).
- Those with non-visible disabilities (18% vs. 11% with visible disabilities).

No seating/being forced to stand while waiting for service

- Those with four or more disabilities (26% vs. 12% with two or three and 7% with one disability).
- Those with severe (22%) or moderate disabilities (17% vs. 9% whose disabilities are mild).
- Those taking part in the survey via the open link (21% vs. 11% of panel respondents).

No designated private space for resting/medication

- Those with developmental (32%) or learning (27%) disabilities.
- Those taking part in the survey via the open link (28% vs. 5% of panel respondents).
- Those with four or more disabilities (26% vs. 10% with two or three and 4% with one disability).
- Those who are 2SLGBTQ+ (26%).
- Those very or somewhat familiar with the ACA (25% vs. 11% not very familiar and 5% not at all familiar).
- Those with post-graduate (18%) or bachelor's degrees (14% vs. 7% to 9% with less education).
- Those working full time (17% vs. 8% working part time and 6% not working).
- Those with sever (18%) or moderate disabilities (15% vs. 5% whose disabilities are mild).

Not having automatic doors/easy to open door levers

- Those with four or more disabilities (28% vs. 10% with two or three and 2% with one disability).
- Those taking part in the survey via the open link (25% vs. 6% of panel respondents).
- Those with severe (22%) or moderate disabilities (15% vs. 5% whose disabilities are mild).
- Those with post-graduate (15%) or bachelor's degrees (14% vs. 6% to 9% with less education).
- Those working full time (15% vs. 9% working part time and 8% not working).
- Those living in urban centres (13% vs. 4% in rural areas and 9% in small cities or towns).

Lack of accommodations e.g. curb cutaways, ramps, handrails, accessible parking, or motion - or time- activated sinks or toilets

- Those taking part in the survey via the open link (25% vs. 6% of panel respondents).
- Those with four or more disabilities (24% vs. 10% with two or three and 4% with one disability).
- Those very or somewhat familiar with the ACA (23% vs. 11% not very familiar and 5% not at all familiar).
- Those with severe (23%) or moderate disabilities (14% vs. 5% whose disabilities are mild).
- Those with post-graduate or bachelor's degrees (14% vs. 6% to 11% those with less education).

5. Transportation-related barriers

Twenty percent of persons with disabilities have experienced at least one barrier to accessibility when using a mode of transportation in the past 12 months, compared to five percent without disabilities. The most common transportation-related barriers include inaccessible floor plans, not knowing about accessibility options, not having staff to help, and issues with entrances and exits.

The ACA covers transportation via airlines in Canada, as well as rail, road, and marine transportation providers that cross provincial or international borders. Respondents were shown a list of six modes of transportation (municipal public transit, travelling by air, taxis and ridesharing, via rail and interprovincial trains, ferries, and buses that cross provincial boarders) and asked to indicate if they experienced barriers in using each in the past 12 months, or not.

a) Mode of transportation where barriers were experienced

Two in ten (20%) persons with disabilities experienced a barrier to accessibility when using at least one mode of transportation, compared to five percent of persons without disabilities. One in ten (11%) persons with disabilities experienced a barrier when using municipal public transit (which is not covered by the ACA but was asked as a comparison) and ten percent experienced a barrier when travelling by air. Smaller proportions of persons with disabilities report barriers to accessibility while using other modes of transportation taxis and ridesharing (7%), Via Rail/interprovincial trains (5%), ferries (3%) and buses that cross borders (2%).

Table 17 – Situations in which transportation barriers were experienced – % saying Yes

Q11. Over the past 12 months, have you experienced barriers in the following situations?	Persons with a disability n=1,187	Persons without a disability n=639
Net: Any transportation barrier	**20%**	**5%**
Municipal public transit	11%	3%
Travelling by air	10%	2%
Taxis and ridesharing	7%	1%
Via Rail/interprovincial trains	5%	1%
Ferries	3%	1%
Buses that cross borders	2%	1%
None of the above	**80%**	**95%**

Reports of experiencing a barrier in a mode of transportation is more common among persons with disabilities who are:

- Younger (35% age 18 to 34 experiencing at least one transportation barrier, decreasing as age increases to 14% of those age 65 and older).
- Women (23% vs. 14% of men).
- Those who are Indigenous (37%), 2SLGBTQ+ (34%) or racialized (30% vs. 15% who are not in any of these groups).

Barriers to accessibility related to transportation are also more prevalent among those with visible disabilities, those who consider their disabilities to be moderate or severe, and those with four or more disabilities.

There are few statistical differences in experiencing various barriers related to the mode of transportation by most types of disabilities. Experiencing barriers while using municipal transit (30%) or travelling by air (26%) are higher among those with developmental disabilities. Experiencing a few of these is *lower* among those with hearing, pain, or mental health disabilities:

- Using taxis and ridesharing: 8% pain, 9% hearing.
- Using VIA Rail or interprovincial trains: 4% pain.
- Using ferries: 3% hearing, 4% pain, 4% mental health.
- Buses that cross borders: 2% pain, 3% mental health.

Other notable differences among persons with disabilities are noted below:

- Women are more likely than men to report experiencing a barrier to accessibility when using municipal transit (13% vs. 7%) or when traveling by air (12% vs. 7%).
- Those completing the survey via the open link are more likely than panel members to indicate accessibility issues when travelling by municipal transit (27% vs. 6%), by air (21% vs. 6%), using taxis/ridesharing (12% vs. 5%), or using VIA or interprovincial trains (9% vs. 3%).

b) Types of transportation-related barriers experienced

Those who experienced at least one transportation-related barrier in the past 12 months were asked to indicate what that was, from a list of seven options. They could also volunteer other experiences with barriers to accessibility that were not otherwise listed.

The most common transportation-related barriers experienced by persons with disabilities include: floor plans inside of airports, stations, or terminals (38%); not knowing what supports were available to them (35%); and not having helpful staff to aid them (34%). Three in ten (30%) also indicate issues with entrances and exits.

The very small number of persons without disabilities who experienced transportation-related barriers in the past 12 months had similar specific issues, but to a lesser degree in all cases.

Table 18 – Transportation-related barriers experienced
Base: those indicating they experienced a barrier in at least one transportation situation

Q11b. You said you experienced a barrier while travelling. Which of the following barriers did you experience?	**Persons with a disability n=234**	**Persons without a disability n=31* (note: small base)**
Floor plans inside an airport, station, or terminal	38%	23%
Not knowing about accessibility options or supports	35%	29%
Not having staff to help you	34%	29%
Entrances or exits (e.g. narrow steps, no ramps)	30%	23%
Lighting or sound levels (e.g. too bright, too noisy)	27%	10%
Washrooms (e.g. not accessible, out of order)	26%	10%
Discrimination, poor treatment, or harassment from staff	24%	13%
Other barriers	18%	23%

* *Note: the small number of persons without disabilities who experienced transportation barriers is too small for subgroup analysis.*

The specific barriers experienced by persons with disabilities during travel are generally similar across subgroups. Those most likely to report experiencing all of these barriers are those with four or more disabilities. There are some other notable differences, indicated below.

Younger persons with disabilities are more likely to report a barrier regarding lighting or sound levels (45% among those aged 18 to 34, decreasing as age increases – 12% of those aged 65+) or to have experienced discrimination, poor treatment, or harassment from staff (28% to 32% for those under 65, compared to just 4% for those 65+).

Prevalence of experiences of barriers related to floor plans inside an airport, station or terminal was higher among those with mobility (53%) and flexibility (50%) disabilities, and this is also the case for issues with entrances and exits (49% mobility, 48% flexibility). Having issues with lighting or sound levels is highest among those with developmental disabilities (51%).

6. Information and communication technology (ICT)-related barriers

Close to three in ten persons with disabilities have experienced at least one barrier when using information and communication technologies in the past 12 months, compared to eight percent of those without disabilities.

The ACA covers information and communication technologies (ICT), which consists of the things Canadians use to communicate and do business in the digital world. The list of ICT includes cellular phones, web sites, online banking, smartphones and tablets, automated teller machines, computers and other hardware, assistive technologies like screen readers, and more. Respondents were shown a list of four ICT situations and asked if they have experienced a barrier to using each in the past 12 months. Almost three in ten (28%) persons with disabilities, and eight percent of persons without disabilities, experienced at least one barrier when using ICT in the past 12 months.

The most common ICT-related barriers among persons with disabilities concern using a cell phone or connecting to a wireless/Wi-Fi service in Canada (16%), followed by watching television, a streaming service, or an online video (13%). One in ten persons with disabilities experienced either a barrier to using a federally regulated organization's website (10%) or a self-service technology (9%).

Table 19 – ICT-related barrier situations experienced – % saying Yes

Q12. Over the past 12 months, have you experienced any barriers in the following situations?	Persons with a disability n=1,187	Persons without a disability n=639
Net: Any ICT barrier	**28%**	**8%**
Using a cell phone or connecting to a wireless service or Wi-Fi in Canada	16%	6%
Watching TV, a streaming service like Netflix or Crave, or a video on the Internet like on YouTube	13%	3%
Using the website of any federally regulated organization	10%	1%
Using self-service technology in any federally regulated space	9%	2%
None of the above	**72%**	**92%**

Reports of any of the listed barriers with using ICT in the past 12 months is higher among younger persons with disabilities and decreases as age increases. These barriers are also reported more by open link respondents, women, those with moderate or severe disabilities or with four or more disabilities, and those who are Indigenous, racialized and 2SLGBTQ+. ICT-related barriers are also more common among those with developmental, memory-related and learning disabilities.

Following are specifically notable differences for the four ICT-related barriers covered:

Barriers to using a cell phone or connecting to a wireless service or Wi-Fi in Canada

- Those with memory disabilities (31%).
- Those with four or more disabilities (29% vs. 14% with two or three and 1% with one).
- Indigenous (29%) or racialized (25%) persons with disabilities.
- Rural residents (27% vs. 15% in urban locations and 17% in small cities or towns).
- Aged 18 to 34 (25% vs. 7% to 17% of others).
- Those with severe (25%) or moderate (18%) disabilities (vs. 12% with mild).
- Open link respondents (24% vs. 14% of panel respondents).
- Those with visible disabilities (22% vs. 16% with non-visible disabilities).
- Women (18% vs. 14% of men).

Barriers to watching TV, a streaming service like Netflix or Crave, or a video on the Internet like on YouTube

- Those with developmental (36%), memory (28%), learning (27%) or hearing (27%) disabilities.
- Open link respondents (29% vs. 7% of panel respondents).
- Those with four or more disabilities (27% vs. 11% with two or three and 6% with one).
- Very/somewhat familiar with the ACA (27% vs. 9% with less or no familiarity).
- Those with severe (26%) or moderate (16%) disabilities (vs. 6% with mild).
- 2SLGBTQ (25%), Indigenous (24%) or racialized (21%) persons with disabilities.
- Those working (16%) vs. those self-employed (3%), or not working (6%).
- Women (15% vs. 8% of men).

Barriers to using the website of any federally regulated organization

- Those with developmental (29%), memory (25%) or learning (23%) disabilities.
- Open link respondents (24% vs. 5% of panel respondents).
- Those who are very/somewhat familiar with the ACA (23% vs. 6% with less or no familiarity).
- Those with four or more disabilities (21% vs. 9% with two or three and 3% with one).
- Those who are Indigenous (20%), 2SLGBTQ (19%), or racialized (18%) persons with disabilities.
- Those with severe (19%) or moderate (12%) disabilities (vs. 5% with mild).
- Those working (12%) vs. those self-employed (3%), or not working (8%).
- Women (12% vs. 6% of men).

Barriers to using self-service technology in any federally regulated space

- Those with developmental (23%) disabilities.
- Those with four or more disabilities (19% vs. 8% with two or three and 3% with one).
- Those with visible disabilities (18% vs. 7% with non-visible disabilities).
- Those with severe (18%) or moderate (10%) disabilities (vs. 5% with mild).
- Those who are very/somewhat familiar with the ACA (17% vs. 6% with less or no familiarity).
- Open link respondents (16% vs. 6% of panel respondents).
- Women (10% vs. 6% of men).

7. Communication needs

One in ten persons with a disability need materials to be available in accessible formats or languages. The most common requirement is for plain language, followed by closed captioning and large print.

a) Accessible formats or languages

Both persons with and without disabilities were asked if they ever need materials like books, letters, forms, online content, and other communications materials to be available in accessible formats or languages. One in ten (11%) of those identifying as having at least one disability or long-term condition say they do require this, compared to one percent of those without a disability.

Table 20 – Communications needs

Q13. Thinking about things like books, letters, forms, posters, online content, or other communications materials, do you ever need these materials to be available in accessible formats or languages?	**Persons with a disability n=1,187**	**Persons without a disability n=639**
Need accessible formats	11%	1%*
Do not need accessible formats	89%	99%

* *Note: the small number of persons without disabilities who experienced transportation barriers is too small for subgroup analysis.*

Persons with disabilities who are most likely to need accessible formats are:

- Those with developmental (38%), memory (32%) and learning (28%) disabilities.
- Open link survey respondents (30% vs. 5% of panel respondents).
- Those with severe disabilities (29% vs. 13% with moderate and 5% with mild disabilities).
- Indigenous (27%), 2SLGBTQ+ (23%) and racialized (16%) persons (vs. 8% of others).
- Those with four or more disabilities (26% vs. 10% with two or three and 4% with one).
- Those very or somewhat familiar with the ACA (24% vs. 7% with less or no familiarity).
- Younger people (22% aged 18 to 34 decreasing with age to 6% of those aged 65 and older).
- Women (14% vs. 6% of men).

b) Preferred types of accessible formats or languages

Among persons with disabilities needing accessible materials or formats, the most commonly required are plain language/easy to read text (55%), closed captioning (47%), large print (47%), and text-to-speech (38%).

Table 21 – Types of accessible formats or languages needed

Q14. Which of the following accessible formats or languages do you need? BASE: Those needing accessible materials or languages	**Persons with a disability n=135**
Plain language/easy to read	55%
Closed captioning	47%
Large print	47%
Text-to-speech	38%
Audio versions	27%
E-books	25%
ASL/LSQ	3%
Braille	1%
Other	16%

The types of specific accessible formats required are similar across demographic subgroups. It is notable that requiring closed captioning is highest among persons with developmental (68%), hearing (63%), and learning (62%) disabilities. Requiring large print is highest among those with mobility (63%) and vision (61%) disabilities.

8. Communication-related barriers, other than ICT

In the past 12 months, around one-quarter of persons with disabilities have encountered confusing text on websites or documents of federally regulated organizations, or people not speaking slowly or clearly.

Respondents were asked about experiencing any communication-related barriers, other than ICT, while dealing with federally regulated organizations, with seven types being shown. Just over one-third (36%) of persons with disabilities say they have experienced at least one of these barriers, compared to seven percent of those without disabilities.

Among persons with disabilities, one of the most identified barriers related to communication is documents or websites with text that is confusing (24%). The other top mention is people not speaking slowly and clearly (23%). Following this, just over one in ten (13%) persons with disabilities have experienced an issue with not being able to adjust web sites, and one in ten (10%) have seen documents not being accessible for a screen reader or having small fonts and/or low contrast colours. Just under one in ten say they have encountered online images without alternative text or people not describing images (9%), or not being provided with alternate formats of documents (8%).

Table 22 –Communication-related barriers – % saying Yes

Q15. Over the past 12 months, have you experienced any of the following while dealing with any federally regulated organization?	**Persons with a disability n=1,187**	**Persons without a disability n=639**
Net: Any barriers to other communications	**36%**	**7%**
Documents or websites with text that is confusing	24%	4%
People not speaking slowly and clearly	23%	4%
Not being able to adjust what web sites look like to better meet your needs	13%	2%
Documents not being provided in formats usable by screen readers/small fonts/low contrast colours	10%	2%
No alternative text for images in official documents online/people not describing images	9%	1%
Not being provided with alternate formats of documents	8%	1%
Not being provided with sign language interpreters	2%	1%
None of the above	**64%**	**93%**

Experiencing each of these barriers is higher among those with developmental, learning and memory disabilities. Below are some other cases where the kinds of communication barriers experienced vary based on type of disability:

- Just under half (44%) of persons with a hearing disability have experienced barriers due to people not speaking slowly and clearly.
- Persons with dexterity disabilities are among the most likely to report not being able to adjust what web sites look like (25%).

- Documents having small fonts, low contrast colours or not being provided in screen reader formats is reported by 22 percent of those with vision disabilities.

The prevalence of other communication-related barriers is higher among the following subgroups of persons with disabilities:

- Open link survey respondents
- Women
- Those aged 18 to 34
- Those with moderate or severe disabilities
- Those with multiple disabilities, especially those with four or more.

The following are notable subgroup differences for the communication barriers experienced by at least 10 percent of persons with disabilities overall.

Documents or websites with text that is confusing

- Open link survey respondents (51% vs. 14% of panel respondents).
- Those with four or more disabilities (43% vs. 26% with two or three and 10% with one).
- Those aged 18 to 34 (41%, decreasing as age increases, down to 16% age 65 and over).
- Those very or somewhat familiar with the ACA (41% vs. 38% not very and 15% not at all familiar).
- Those with severe disabilities (38% vs. 38% with moderate and 16% with mild disabilities).
- Women (28% vs. 17% of men).

People not speaking slowly and clearly

- Those with four or more disabilities (45% vs. 20% with two or three and 11% with one).
- Open link survey respondents (45% vs. 15% of panel respondents).
- Those with severe disabilities (42% vs. 27% with moderate and 14% with mild disabilities).
- Those very or somewhat familiar with the ACA (37% vs. 24% not very and 16% not at all familiar).
- Those aged 18 to 34 (31% compared to 21% to 25% of older people).
- Women (27% vs. 18% of men).

Not being able to adjust what web sites look like to better meet your needs

- Open link survey respondents (29% vs. 7% of panel respondents).
- Those with four or more disabilities (28% vs. 12% with two or three and 4% with one).

- Those aged 18 to 34 (28%, decreasing as age increases, down to 6% age 65 and over).
- Those very or somewhat familiar with the ACA (27% vs. 11% not very and 7% not at all familiar).
- Those with severe disabilities (23% vs. 16% with moderate and 6% with mild disabilities).
- Women (16% vs. 8% of men).

Documents not being provided in formats usable by screen readers/small fonts/low contrast colours

- Open link survey respondents (26% vs. 4% of panel respondents).
- Those with four or more disabilities (25% vs. 9% with two or three and 2% with one).
- Those with severe disabilities (24% vs. 13% with moderate and 4% with mild disabilities).
- Those very or somewhat familiar with the ACA (24% vs. 9% not very and 4% not at all familiar).
- Those aged 18 to 34 (16% decreasing as age increases, down to 5% age 65 and over).
- Women (12% vs. 7% of men).

9. Barriers to accessing programs and services

Three in ten persons with disabilities experience at least one of four barriers to accessing the programs and services provided by federally regulated organizations; the most commonly indicated is documents not being in plain language.

The ACA applies to federally regulated organizations, including all federal government departments, agencies, and Crown corporations, addressing the reduction or elimination of barriers in the design and delivery of policies, programs, practices, and services. Respondents were shown a list of four possible barriers to accessing the programs and services of federally regulated entities and asked to indicate whether or not they experienced each in the past 12 months.

Three in ten persons with disabilities (31%) experienced at least one of the four program and service-related barriers. This is four times what persons without disabilities experienced in the same time period (7%). The most notable barrier is documents not being in plain language, which one-quarter (26%) of persons with disabilities have faced – five times more than persons without disabilities (5%). The next most frequently experienced barrier is not being given enough time or help to complete a form or application (15% persons with disabilities, 2% persons without disabilities). Much smaller proportions report a barrier to using an assistive device (8%) or not being given accommodation for a service animal (2%).

Table 23 – Barriers to accessing programs and services – % saying Yes

Q16. Over the past 12 months, have you experienced any of the following while dealing with any federally regulated organization?	**Persons with a disability n=1,187**	**Persons without a disability n=639**
Net: Any barriers to programs and services	**31%**	**7%**
Documents not being in plain language	26%	5%
Not being given enough time or help to complete a form or application	15%	2%
A barrier to using an assistive device (e.g. voice recognition software, mobility aids)	8%	1%
Not being given accommodation for a service animal	2%	1%
None of the above	**69%**	**93%**

The subgroups of persons with disabilities listed below are most likely to experience these types of barriers:

- Open link survey respondents (65%, experiencing at least one barrier to accessing programs and services vs. 19% responding in the panel survey).
- Women (36% vs. 23% of men).
- Those age 18 to 34 (54%, decreasing as age increases to 20% of those aged 65 and over).
- 2SLGBTQ+ persons (52%), Indigenous (51%) or racialized (37% vs. 26% not in any of these groups).

- Those with severe (50%) disabilities or with four or more disabilities (56%).
- Those with developmental (72%), learning (62%) and memory (56%) disabilities.

The following are notable subgroup differences for barriers with programs and services experienced by at least 10 percent of persons with disabilities overall:

Documents not being in plain language

- Those with developmental (60%), learning (52%) and memory (45%) disabilities.
- Open link survey respondents (55% vs. 16% panel).
- Those with multiple disabilities, notably those having four or more (46% vs. 28% two to three and 12% with one).
- Those age 18 to 34 (44%, decreasing as age increases, down to 18% aged 65+).
- 2SLGBTQ+ persons (45%).
- Those with severe disabilities (40% vs. 3% moderate and 18% mild).
- Women (31% vs. 19% of men).

Not being given enough time or help to complete a form or application

- Those with developmental (54%), memory (39%) and learning (39%) disabilities.
- Open link survey respondents (34% vs. 8% panel).
- Those with four or more disabilities (35% vs. 13% with two or three, and 4% with one disability).
- Those with severe disabilities (33% vs. 17% moderate and 7% mild).
- Indigenous (32%) and 2SLGBTQ+ persons (25%).
- Those age 18 to 34 (29%, decreasing as age increases, down to 6% aged 65+).
- Women (18% vs. 10% of men).

10. Other supports needed to access programs and services

One in ten persons with disabilities indicate they have needed other services or supports; the most common need are for physical or visual disabilities, workplace accommodations and personal aid.

a) Need for other services or supports

Both persons with and without disabilities were asked if they have needed any other services or supports when accessing programs or services from federally regulated organizations in the past 12 months. About one in ten (11%) persons with disabilities say they do, compared to one percent of persons without disabilities. If respondents indicated needing other supports, they were asked to describe these.

Table 24 – If other services or supports are needed

Q17. In the past 12 months, have you needed any other services or supports when you were accessing services or programs from federally regulated organizations?	**Persons with a disability n=1,187**	**Persons without a disability n=639**
Yes, have needed other services or supports	11%	1%*
No, have not needed other services or supports	89%	99%

Having needed presence of other services or supports from federally regulated organizations in the past 12 months is higher among the following subgroups of persons with disabilities:

- Those with developmental (34%), memory (31%) and learning (27%) disabilities; it is also somewhat higher among those with hearing disabilities (20%).
- Open link survey respondents (28% vs. 5% panel).
- Those with severe disabilities (28% vs. 12% moderate and 5% mild).
- Those very/somewhat familiar with the ACA (24% vs. 12% not at all familiar and 55% not at all familiar).
- Those with four or more disabilities (23% vs. 10% with two or three, and 4% with one disability).
- Those age 18 to 34 (19%, decreasing as age increases, down to 6% aged 65+).
- Women (14% vs. 6% of men).

b) Types of other services or supports needed

About one-quarter (23%) of those who indicated needing other supports cite general supports for physical or visual disabilities. Two in ten (19%) mention needing various workplace accommodations, and 14 percent say they needed compassionate staff or colleagues to help them. Just under one in ten mentions either help to complete forms (8%) or needing access to a "real person" when seeking information or service (7%). Fewer than one in ten mention other needs.

Table 25 – Other service or support needs

Q18. Please describe what other support you need? BASE: Those needing additional services or supports	**Persons with a disability n=130**
Need support with physical/visual disabilities	23%
Workplace accommodations (furniture, lighting etc.)	19%
Compassionate staff/colleagues to help with needs	14%
Additional help to complete forms when at any government service office	8%
Help with language/availability of translation	8%
Access to real person when navigating for information/service	7%
Easier to understand documents	5%
Help/advice on how to correctly file taxes	5%
Assistance with required medication/healthcare	4%
Step-by-step information/written explanations of problem solving process to be followed in person	3%
Access to benefits/pensionable time/grants	2%
Contact through text/email/not phone only	2%
Other mentions	11%
Nothing needed/not sure	12%

11. Attitudinal barriers

Awareness of the term "attitudinal barrier" is low. One-quarter of persons with disabilities and one in ten persons without disabilities have heard of it. Three in ten persons with disabilities experienced at least one attitudinal barrier in the past 12 months, most often lack of flexibility or people being judgemental or rude about their disability.

Both persons with and without disabilities were shown a brief text:

> *Sometimes persons with disabilities are treated badly or differently because of ideas, beliefs, misconceptions – or attitudes – that other people have about disability. This is called an "attitudinal barrier."*

a) Awareness of the term "attitudinal barrier"

Respondents were then asked if they had previously heard the term "attitudinal barrier." The results show the term "attitudinal barrier" is not well known, to either those with or without a disability: around one-quarter (26%) of persons with a disability had heard of this, compared to just under one in ten (9%) of those without a disability.

Table 26 – Awareness of the term "attitudinal barrier"

Q19. Before today, had you heard of the term "attitudinal barrier"?	**Persons with a disability n=1,187**	**Persons without a disability n=639**
Yes, have heard the term	26%	9%
No, have not heard the term	74%	91%

Among persons with disabilities, awareness of the term "attitudinal barrier" is highest among those with incomes over $80K (29% to 34%) and higher levels of education (29% among those with a bachelor's degree, and 45% among those with a post-graduate degree or higher) and who work full time (34%). It is also significantly higher among women (32%), younger people (40% of those aged 18 to 34, decreasing as age increases, down to 15% of those 65+), those responding to the survey by open link (62% vs. 13% in the panel survey), those who identify as 2SLGBTQ+ (48%) and those who are very or somewhat familiar with the ACA (64%). Awareness is also higher among those with severe disabilities (43%), those with four or more disabilities (45%), and those with disabilities that are developmental (57%), learning (47%), memory (43%), dexterity (38%), or mental health related (38%).

b) Experiences with attitudinal barriers

Respondents were asked to indicate whether or not they experienced each of seven attitudinal barriers in the past 12 months. Three in ten (29%) persons with disabilities experienced at least one such barrier, compared to six percent without a disability.

The main attitudinal barriers experienced by persons with disabilities is people not being flexible about how they need to be accommodated (17%) or being judged by people for their disability or being treated rudely or disrespectfully (16%). One in ten each report being pointed out or humiliated for behaviours they cannot control (10%), or not being spoken to directly or not at eye level (10%) Four percent or fewer experienced other attitudinal barriers.

Table 27 – Attitudinal barriers experienced – % experiencing each

Q20. Over the past 12 months, have you experienced any of the following attitudinal barriers while interacting with any federally regulated organization?	**Persons with a disability n=1,187**	**Persons without a disability n=639**
Net: Any attitudinal barrier	**29%**	**6%**
People not being flexible about how you need to be accommodated	17%	2%
People judging you or being rude or disrespectful about a disability	16%	1%
Being pointed out/humiliated for behaviours you cannot control	10%	1%
People not speaking directly to you or not at your eye level	10%	2%
People touching you or handling your assistive devices without permission	4%	1%
Not allowing caregivers/attendants to attend meetings/appointments with you	3%	1%
Not allowing service animals, or inappropriate touching/feeding of service animals	2%	1%
Another attitudinal barrier	2%	1%
None of the above	**71%**	**94%**

The following are notable subgroup differences for the attitudinal barriers experienced by at least 10 percent of persons with disabilities overall:

People not being flexible about how you need to be accommodated

- Those with developmental (55%), learning (44%), or memory (40%) disabilities.
- Open link survey respondents (52% vs. 5% panel).
- Those very or somewhat familiar with the ACA (41% vs. 21% not very familiar and 5% not at all familiar).
- 2SLGBTQ+ (38%), Indigenous (27%) and racialized (23%) persons.
- Those with four or more disabilities (38% vs. 17% with two or three and 5% with one disability).
- Younger people (38% aged 18 to 34, decreasing as age increases, down to 5% aged 65 or more).
- Those who rate their disabilities as severe (36% vs. 23% moderate and 7% mild).
- Those with post-graduate degrees (31% vs. 10% to 19% with less education).
- Those working full time (27% vs. 17% working part time and 4% to 8% of others).
- Women (23% vs. 8% of men).
- Those living in urban centres (20% vs. 14% in smaller communities).

People judging you or being rude or disrespectful about a disability

- Those with developmental (51%), learning (41%), or memory (39%) disabilities.
- Open link survey respondents (48% vs. 5% panel).
- Those with severe disabilities (38% vs. 22% moderate and 5% mild).
- Those very or somewhat familiar with the ACA (37% vs. 18% not very familiar and 6% not at all familiar).
- Those with four or more disabilities (37% vs. 15% with two or three and 4% with one disability)
- 2SLGBTQ+ persons (31%).
- Younger people (28% aged 18 to 34, decreasing as age increases, down to 4% aged 65 or more).
- Those with post-graduate degrees (25% vs. 9% to 19% with less education).
- Those working full time (24% vs. 17% working part time and 3% to 12% of others).
- Women (21% vs. 8% of men).

Being pointed out/humiliated for behaviours you cannot control

- Those with developmental (39%), learning (28%), or memory (25%) disabilities.
- Open link survey respondents (29% vs. 4% panel).
- Those who rate their disabilities as severe (24% vs. 12% moderate and 5% mild).
- Younger people (24% aged 18 to 34, decreasing as age increases, down to 1% aged 65 or more).
- 2SLGBTQ+ (24%), Indigenous (24%) and racialized (14%) persons.
- Those very or somewhat familiar with the ACA (23% vs. 12% not very familiar and 4% not at all familiar).
- Those with four or more disabilities (23% vs. 9% with two or three and 3% with one disability).
- Those with post-graduate degrees (18% vs. 5% to 11% with less education).
- Those working full time (15% vs. 11% working part time and 1% to 6% of others).
- Women (12% vs. 6% of men).

People not speaking directly to you or not at your eye level

- Those with four or more disabilities (26% vs. 7% with two or three and 4% with one disability)
- Those with severe disabilities (24% vs. 11% moderate and 6% mild).
- Open link survey respondents (18% vs. 7% panel).
- Those very or somewhat familiar with the ACA (18% vs. 9% not very familiar and 7% not at all familiar).
- Women (12% vs. 7% of men).

III. Detailed findings – qualitative phase

A. General views on accessibility

1. Understanding of accessibility and examples of barriers

Participants often associated "accessibility" with equitable access to the same resources and opportunities as everyone else. Persons with disabilities reported to have experienced both physical and non-physical barriers in their day-to-day lives.

Participants were asked to describe their personal interpretations of the term 'accessibility.' Most shared words with common themes of inclusion and ease of use, as well as concepts of independence and equity. Many participants associated accessibility with the absence of barriers that may hinder participation in everyday life. Participants recognized that accessibility could mean more than just physical accessibility, often mentioning barriers to accessibility for those with non-visible disabilities. Words such as "freedom," "equity" and "justice" were often mentioned. Some specifically mentioned "universal design."

> *To be able to access what I need to access – whether it's being able to drive my car, go to grocery store, go clothes shopping – to be able to do that stuff, to me that's freedom. – Focus group participant, Ontario, Visible Disability*

> *That I can use facilities and buildings and technology, printed materials the same way as anyone else – and not have barriers and that my issues have been taken into account. – In-depth interview participant, Western, Non-visible Disability*

> *Accessibility means justice because disability cuts across every other form of human difference. – Focus group participant, Ontario, Visible Disability*

> *Being able to do what you want to do when you want to do it. – Focus group participant, Atlantic, Non-visible Disability*

> *A place that everyone can use – not limited to the able bodied, easy to use. – In-depth interview participant, Western, Non-visible Disability*

When asked for examples of barriers they have encountered due to their disability, participants identified a variety of physical, attitudinal, and financial challenges.

Physical barriers experienced by participants include difficulty with heavy doors, non-functional accessible entrances, oversized steps, and uneven sidewalks. Some mentioned challenges navigating streets and sidewalks with accessibility devices, or limited availability of parking for persons with disabilities. Others experience challenges navigating public spaces or buildings where there is inadequate signage or complex layouts. Participants highlighted barriers in public transportation, including inaccessible bus stops and the discomfort of standing while waiting.

> *Sidewalks are all bent and broken and impossible with a walker or cane or wheelchair, bathrooms are too small and inaccessible. Everything is too fast these days – no*

understanding that I need more time, I get flustered. – In-depth interview participant, Western, Non-visible disability

With a power wheelchair, it's interesting navigating the city sidewalks, restaurants, pavement getting in and out of parking lots can be interesting. – Focus groups participant, Atlantic, Visible disability

When I used to work downtown, bus usage was a no-go, although walking at times can be painful, it's the standing… after about ten minutes all I want to do is sit because my lower back muscles are so sore. So as for as waiting for transportation, that was a no-go. – Focus groups participant, Atlantic, Visible disability

Participants believe there to be a lack of understanding about the lived experiences of individuals with disabilities. As an example, one participant shared that people often assume that because they are wearing glasses, they are able to fully see. Often, the assumption that those with less visible disabilities are able-bodied leads to further marginalization. There is a strong desire for greater empathy and understanding regarding non-visible disabilities. Some feel that societal attitudes and stigma (i.e., attitudinal barriers) contribute to a lack of acknowledgment of their needs.

People don't understand that so many disabilities are invisible, and they don't show consideration. – Focus group participant, Western, Non-visible disability

Attitudes… A lot of attitudes are still old, where you're not intelligent, you can't do this, you can't do that, you shouldn't be working… So, you need to remove those attitudes. – Focus group participant, Western, Invisible disability

Basically, being able to get around and do things because it's very hard to explain to people functioning with one arm… I have very limited strength in the one I do have… [You] ask people for help… but they look at you and you don't look like you have a disability. – Focus group participant, Western, Invisible disability

You actually can't judge someone's disability. – Focus group participant, Ontario, Invisible disability

It was noted that working from home often provides greater accessibility, yet some employers deny requests for accommodations to work from home. A few felt there is a misunderstanding of disabilities and misperceptions regarding what should qualify as a disability, or a level of severity that one must meet to be considered for accommodations. Participants also revealed that the severity of a disability could vary from one day to another, adding to challenges, frustrations, and misunderstandings.

If you're going to decline someone something important like this, there should at least be a discussion to find out why you think you need this [accommodation], why your doctor thinks you need this… I think that the policy of bums in seats is more important than the well-being of employees. – Focus group participant, Ontario, Invisible disability

Attitudes – refusal to accept there is a disability and accommodate. – In-depth interview participant, Ontario, Non-visible disability

I get migraines, and so the lighting within my workplace, as an example, can trigger those migraines. So just trying to get that accommodated in the workplaces of today can be really complicated... so it can be a barrier for me just to be able to have a healthy day at work. – Focus group participant, Atlantic, Invisible disability

Participants expressed that the stress of navigating processes that seem straightforward can be overwhelming, particularly when dealing with forms for disability benefits or unemployment. The added mental load during periods of illness can lead to feelings of frustration. Further, participants noted a sense of isolation when advocating for themselves and feeling like a burden to those around them when they are dependent on others.

ADHD can make communication more difficult – I get stressed and lose my temper… It's good that everything is online – I don't need to explain myself. In-depth interview, Western, Non-visible disability

I suppose mentally as well – when I had to do paperwork for CPP. Even accessing the website… it seems basic and straightforward, but when you're in a place of stress, it's overwhelming. Even just unemployment benefits it's all quite overwhelming. – In-depth interview, Ontario, Non-visible disability

Participants pointed out that financial constraints add to these challenges, making access to necessary accommodations even more difficult.

Disability is so linked to poverty – everything is so expensive and we can barely make ends meet. We can't wait in line at food banks. – In-depth interview, Western, Non-visible disability

2. Perceptions of improvement or deterioration

Improvements that have been made in recent years seem to have plateaued, with many believing there is still more to be done to address the needs of persons with disabilities, particularly non-visible.

Participants were asked whether they felt there have been improvements or deterioration when it comes to persons with disabilities being able to access their day-to-day activities. Participants were also asked whether they felt that the number of barriers to accessibility they faced was declining or increasing. There was a range of opinions – while many expressed that accessibility conditions have deteriorated, the consensus was that progress has been made in recent years, though it appears to have stalled. Improvements were attributed to heightened awareness and a socio-political focus on enhancing accessibility. As well, some participants felt that the increasing focus on accessibility was performative and that while lip service was paid to accessibility, actual conditions did not improve. Much of the progress has been concentrated on physical barriers and the needs of those with visible disabilities, leaving gaps in support for those with non-visible disabilities.

There were some improvements but it's slowing down. There's been a loss of momentum – issues we thought were dealt with are still there. – Focus group participant, Atlantic, Non-visible disability

[We have the] legislation of the Accessibility Act, there is a lot more lip service being paid but the actions aren't really happening. – Focus group participant, Ontario, Non-visible disability

B. Communication-related barriers (other than ICT)

1. Barriers experienced

Few participants reported to have experienced specific communication-related barriers.

Participants were asked to describe communication-related barriers they had encountered when interacting with staff in federally regulated organizations and in the Government of Canada. Communication-related barriers were less widespread. Overall, participants noted that if something is already burdensome or complicated for the general population, such as filling out a form or waiting for long periods, it is often exacerbated for persons living with disabilities.

Being able to write is better – then I can refer and it's less stressful. – Focus group participant, Atlantic Canada, Non-visible disability

A big barrier at a bank is having a panic attack over having to organize my things – I can't multi-task – lack of places to sit in line. My disability is invisible and so people don't know to give me time – lack of patience. Mostly on the phone but it's a challenge – its great as long as I can use speaker phone since my hands don't work. Online is better gives me more time. – In-depth interview participant, Western, Non-visible disability

Communication-related barriers were most commonly experienced over the phone. For example, participants noted frustration when customer service representatives continued to use their script rather than adapting based on the conversation or personal needs. Some participants reported facing challenges when needing representatives to repeat themselves or explain details further, and sensed frustration due to their lack of understanding. These were largely challenges for those who experience hearing, mental health or learning disabilities.

I forget a lot because of the meds I'm on… talking to someone and they don't understand that I might not remember or be able to comprehend. – Focus group participant, Atlantic Canada, Visible disability

As a hard of hearing person – you want someone to be pleasant, but then they are too soft spoken, and I can't hear them. – Focus group participant, Atlantic Canada, Non-visible disability

When it comes to online forms or websites, participants noted too much text that can be overstimulating or forms that cannot be read using a voice-over.

The way government websites are set up is not conducive to a disability – everything is text. – Focus group participant, Ontario, Non-visible disability

When in airports or train stations, participants described challenges in reading the signage, opening heavy doors; and in banks they describe difficulty reading small text on bank machines.

For myself, it's doors. Because for my hands, doors are too heavy, I have a problem with the dexterity of my hands. So, I've experienced … they flip the switch [to open the door] but unless you're physically, unless they physically see that you have a disability, the doors don't open. – Focus group participant, Ontario, Non-visible disability

Using bank machines… because of the arthritis in my fingers. My fingers are as slim or there's not enough space between the buttons so it makes it difficult. There's no alternative for that. – Focus group participant, Ontario, Non-visible disability

Signage in airports is poor and you end up walking way more than you ought to. – Atlantic, Non-visible disability

Poor complicated signage in airports that are not friendly to people with disabilities. – Atlantic, Non-visible disability

2. Plain language materials from the Government of Canada

The concept of plain language materials seemed to be largely understood, but many have yet to see it in practice.

Participants were asked if they had heard the term 'plain language materials,' their definition of the term and their experience with the materials themselves. After initial responses, they were provided with a definition: plain language is supposed to be communication that someone can understand the first time they read or hear it.

Awareness of plain language materials varied – many could assume the meaning behind the term and others had heard of it or seen it used in practice. In French, no one had heard of the term and very few had experience with it.

Having it sort of put in a way that is easy to understand by the average person. – Focus group participant, Atlantic, Non-visible disability

It's about speaking to people in the simplest language possible, so it makes sense to everyone. Plain language makes it accessible to everyone. But government is very wordy so it's hard to turn people onto this. – Focus group participant, Ontario, Non-visible disability

It was noted by one participant that content from the government is often easier to read in English than it is in French. There was still concern that some communication contained a lot of jargon, but some participants recognized the efforts being made.

It's easy to understand – less government jargon… They are making a good effort now in government. – Focus group participant, Atlantic Canada, Non-visible disability

I've heard of it in theory – not sure if I've encountered it. – In-depth interview participant, Western, Non-visible disability

3. How barriers could be reduced

Communication-related barriers could be reduced by offering a choice of communication methods and providing more solutions-oriented customer service that takes into consideration the range of disabilities that exist.

When asked how communication-related barriers could be reduced, the most common response was to allow multiple modes of communication because one person's accommodation may not be accessible to another. For example, some appreciate online rather than face-to-face, while others prefer the opposite, and for varying reasons; and while some prefer to communicate verbally, others appreciate being able to write down their thoughts and read responses.

> *If there was an option to express verbally and they could put it down for you. It's real... it's a barrier if you can't express it into words. We have the technology... could be a form that is speak to type. – Focus group participant, Ontario, Non-visible disability*

> *Offer electronic or digital version as well as print versions of documents. – In-depth interview, Western, Non-visible disability*

Many participants suggested increased training for customer service representatives to better understand and accommodate the full range of disabilities – particularly non-physical disabilities. There was also a suggestion made to offer the option to self-identify as someone with a disability requiring unique support so they can be directed to a representative with further training in these areas.

> *And they're just showing a video. Did you watch it? Yep, and that's it. They don't learn anything. They don't take the time to learn it. – Focus group participant, Ontario, Visible disability*

> *Be more flexible and be willing to think outside the box. – In-depth interview, Western, Visible disability*

Other suggestions included easier to navigate websites with less text, fewer 'click' requirements, easy to find definitions and acronyms, and allowing staff to help persons with disabilities with personal forms.

> *It should be easier to find definitions and acronyms. Need websites that are easier to navigate. – Focus group participant, Atlantic, Non-visible disability*

> *Have a home page where you can apply for everything so there aren't as many clicks and limits how much searching you need to do. – Focus group participant, Western, Non-visible disability*

4. Communication about emergencies

Communication with instructions specific to persons with disabilities would make emergency notifications more helpful.

Participants had little to say about communication regarding emergencies. One concern is a lack of information specific to persons with disabilities in the emergency communication and too many words in emergency alerts that make it hard to find key information.

> *They don't tell persons with disabilities what to do... It generalizes in one category of what to do… It should have total separate information or added-on information for persons with disabilities. – Focus group participant, Ontario, Visible disability*

C. Barriers to accessing programs and services

1. Government services and programs accessed and barriers experienced

A key challenge was understanding the eligibility criteria for programs and services and the general sense that processes at the federal level are typically complicated; Bureaucracy was viewed as the main barrier to accessing programs.

Participants had little experience accessing federal government programs – the most common programs and services accessed were the disability tax credit, Canada Pension Plan, and Canada Pension Plan Disability benefit. Those who accessed these programs and services expressed similar sentiments to the broader consensus that more needs to be done to teach customer service representatives about non-visible disabilities. Further, many commented on the challenge of standing in line for long periods of time, which can be burdensome for anyone, but which is particularly challenging if one has a physical disability that can cause pain. Others noted the burden placed on persons with disabilities to 'prove' their disability when first receiving services or applying for programs and again when renewing.

> *It's hard to find out what I'm entitled to. – Focus group participant, Atlantic, Non-visible disability*

> *Yes, I have taken training programs, applied for CPP and disability tax credit – many people don't know what they are entitled to. It's not simple but I figured it out – I downloaded the forms and did what I had to do… No one in government ever goes out of their way for me. There is a lot of political correctness – but they know nothing about dealing with people with hidden disabilities. – In-depth interview participant, Western, Non-visible*

> *There's been a few times… places where I've been standing for so long in a line that I've actually had to lean over to brace myself. And I've had number of times the individuals actually correct you by saying, 'Excuse me would you stand up straight. We don't want you leaning on the counter. And again, it's so demeaning. – Focus group participant, Ontario, Visible disability*

Participants felt burdened by the type of proof required – it is often a challenge to make an appointment with a doctor and ask them for the proper forms. The bureaucracy and amount of

paperwork required was a cause for frustration among many, leading to further stress. Participants noted they were not always aware of the benefits they were entitled to, such as the Disability Tax Credit (DTC), indicating a lack of awareness of services. They reported the challenges they face when they require help in filling out a form, but Government of Canada employees are not permitted to help by completing a form for an individual (due to privacy restrictions). Others noted that they had outsourced support in applying for specific services, often an additional cost. Participants mentioned that asking for help from people close to them with these types of forms or to assist them in accessing services adds to the challenge of feeling like a burden.

> *I had to pay someone to help me [with disability tax credit]! There is a lot of stigma and it's hard for them to address people with multiple disabilities. Some disabilities count for more than others… Guidance on filling out the forms is not there. – Focus group participant, Atlantic, Non-visible disability*

> *You have trouble getting out of your house, but you have to spend all day going around for documents. – Focus group participant, Quebec, Non-visible disability [Translated]*

D. Barriers in the built environment

1. Barriers encountered within outdoor spaces

Outdoor barriers were reported to present less common problems but many people mentioned challenges they encountered with signage and entryways.

Participants were asked to describe any barriers or obstacles they face in the built environment when accessing federally regulated places. Outdoor barriers include unclear or difficult to see signage, with many noting signage is complicated or letters that are too small.

> *Yes, hard to navigate because the signage can be poor. – In-depth interview, Western, Non-visible*

Others mentioned long distances to entry points and a low number of available accessible parking spaces.

> *Walking that far...from the gate to airplane, it's a lot of walking. I think they have a few mobility vehicles but for the number of people who would need them. – Ontario, Non-visible disability*

> *Sometimes ramps are way out of the way… and why is that? – Ontario, Non-visible disability*

Some noted poor infrastructure such as narrow or poorly designed entrances, uneven stairs, and inconvenient ramp placements. Obstacles like cobblestone streets and other uneven surfaces also pose difficulties for those with physical disabilities or who are using mobility aids. Few mentioned lighting or other safety issues.

> *I'm okay with stairways as long as they are well marked to show the edge of the steps – those are usually well marked. I don't have good depth perception. Can't always see*

differences of height. Sidewalks can be a nightmare because the drop to the street can vary and the edge is not always well marked. – In-depth interview, Western, Non-visible

Some entryways into some buildings like banks are small, confined, as one door opens the other door opens, not enough room. – Focus group participant, Ontario, Non-visible

Signage in airports is poor and you end up walking way more than you ought to. – Atlantic Canada, Non-visible disability

2. Barriers encountered with indoors spaces

Indoor barriers were largely physical and noted by persons with both visible and non-visible disabilities.

Participants shared their experiences with various barriers encountered indoors at federally regulated organizations and Government of Canada buildings. The age of these buildings is thought to contribute to accessibility issues.

It's very hard here in our city again, because of the accessibility issues of old buildings. – Focus group participant, Atlantic, Visible disability

Here in Winnipeg most of them are downtown. So, they're, you know, big old buildings, but the doors themselves, for anybody, you know whether you have sight issues, whether you're holding a cane, etc. If they don't have that accessible button, you're really struggling to get in. – Focus group participant, Western, Invisible disability

Challenges related to waiting areas were frequently mentioned. Many individuals noted the limited number of chairs in waiting rooms, which can be uncomfortable or painful or those with physical disabilities who must stand or sit for long periods. For others, long waits in crowded spaces can lead to significant stress, particularly for those with mental health concerns. Environmental sensitivity also makes it hard for some to remain in waiting areas for extended times due to their sensitivities and reactions to things like foods, smells, chemicals, or other environmental agents. Lighting emerged as another barrier, especially for individuals with chronic migraines.

I just remember like passport offices just being sensory nightmares and very unclear where to go. – Focus group participant, Canada-wide, Visible & Non-visible disability

Other common barriers included a lack of accessible washrooms, malfunctioning or broken elevators or escalators, heavy doors, and poor signage or lack of on-screen displays to communicate important messages. Some find it challenging to be in noisy environments for long periods. Lastly, it was also noted that some of the service desks are far away from the entrance, adding to accessibility challenges.

I guess all I would say elevators… in many areas either elevators are not working. – Focus group participant, Ontario, Visible disability

You have to go into a big, long hallway and you turn and you open up the doors and you're in the room but you have to walk halfway across the room to get to the desk. Well, that's

good for some people but I won't know why that desk wouldn't be closer to the door. – Focus group participant, Ontario, Visible disability

Other barriers mentioned included glass doors or partitions that can be difficult to distinguish for individuals with visual impairments, lack of on-screen displays to communicate important messages, which are otherwise delivered only verbally (e.g. gate change in airports, messages on trains), stair steps that are not clearly marked can be challenging for individuals with visual impairments. Also, when service providers talk from behind glass partitions (e.g. COVID-19 protection) without facing forward and clearly enunciating, it can present challenges for people with hearing impairments.

Waiting is more challenging for anxiety, incontinence, and needing a companion. If it's an indetermined wait time, it is a huge barrier. Ability to make appointments would be better. – Focus group participant, Ontario, Non-visible disability

3. How barriers could be reduced

Suggestions to reduce the presence of barriers related to enabling people to access and navigate buildings and services on their own through accommodation.

Participants were asked how barriers could be reduced for persons with disabilities when accessing federally regulated buildings. Suggestions related to addressing the physical challenges – for example, making signage clearer, larger, and more accessible and ensuring entryways are easy to access and functioning properly. Suggestions were also made to consult with persons with disabilities when designing buildings. Universal design – a concept in which an environment can be accessed and used to its full potential by all people – was frequently mentioned. In sum, participants describe wanting to be able navigate buildings in the same way people without disabilities do.

[Universal design]… Where the design is purposefully made accessible, so that you don't have to ask for special treatment or accommodation, because your needs are already met. – Focus group participant, Ontario, Invisible disability

One important thing to do is to consult with those who can be impacted. – Focus group participant, Ontario, Invisible disability

So, you go in the door and then you have to go up half a dozen stairs to the office, but then you go down half a dozen stairs from the entry way to the bathrooms. – Focus group participant, Atlantic, Visible disability

Other specific suggestions included quiet rooms or spaces in places like airports, as well as installing patterns on windows to enhance visibility, screens in airports and train stations with messages that are typically communicated orally, and textured and brightly coloured strip at the edge of stairs to distinguish them.

Make sure that spaces are well lit, surfaces are even and/or well-marked and make signage at eye level and big enough. – In-depth interview participant, Western, Non-visible disability

[They] should be aware that they should have a variety of seating, some with arms, some without. For different things like that. Also, quiet spaces that people can retreat to if need be. – Focus group participant, Atlantic, Invisible disability

E. Attitudinal barriers

1. Understanding of attitudinal barriers

Generally, participants understood the concept of attitudinal barriers and often described their own experiences organically earlier in the conversation.

Participants were asked to share their awareness of what is meant by 'attitudinal barriers' in relation to accessibility. Most were familiar with what attitudinal barriers meant. This initial question was followed by a definition of attitudinal barriers before continuing the conversation: barriers to accessibility that are caused by the attitudes of the people you may interact with.

There was a broad understanding of attitudinal barriers. Participants frequently brought up attitudinal barriers earlier in the discussion as a key challenge they face. While not everyone had experienced attitudinal barriers in public, they were aware of the concept and how it can alienate persons with disabilities, particularly those with non-visible disabilities.

Even the folks, when you call in, if you need something explained to you in a different way, or repeated, there is a lack of patience and those soft skills to have that empathy, that everybody is not the same. – Focus group participant, Atlantic, Non-visible disability

I have never personally experienced any of this – but I always need to explain and advocate for myself. – In-depth interview participant, Western, Non-visible disability

I have an invisible barrier and people don't believe that I have a disability and I need more time to do things. Even when you try to be helpful they look at you like you're the enemy. – In-depth interview participant, Western, Non-visible disability

People misunderstanding what I'm trying to say or thinking I'm a troublemaker. – In-depth interview participant, Western, Non-visible disability

There is a perception that what typical people experience is the only thing that matters and if people are different they should be excluded. – In-depth interview participant, Ontario, Non-visible disability

2. Attitudinal barriers experienced

Many reported to have experienced attitudinal barriers and find it burdensome to self-advocate to be treated with respect.

Attitudinal barriers experienced by participants included being misunderstood, doubted, and judged, often leading to frustration and marginalization. Responses indicate a need for respect for persons with disabilities without having to constantly justify their conditions. A significant issue was scepticism surrounding non-visible disabilities, wherein participants feel judged as lazy or dishonest when they discuss barriers they have experienced. Participants mentioned experiencing disrespect when

requesting accommodations, and the need to 'prove' their disability to others in order to access supports. Some shared negative experiences where service providers can be condescending or fail to acknowledge their needs. A lack of patience and empathy was noted, with a call for better training of service providers to be aware of the range of disabilities that exist. Participants often find themselves having to explain or justify their need for an accommodation and feel embarrassed or humiliated having to share their challenges in a public space. They expressed a desire to preserve their independence as much as possible, encouraging others to ask for ways they can help.

No barriers – sometimes I have to explain myself more than I'd like to. People ask too many questions. – In-depth interview participant, Ontario, Visible disability

I had some questions, and they thought I was being a jerk. They did not understand that I needed help and were very short and impatient. – In-depth interview participant, Western, Non-visible

I'm always having to explain and I'm ashamed… People are rushed and feel inflexible. – In-depth interview participant, Western, Non-visible

Totally – all these things have happened to me – I am like a non-person. You are frustrated by the conditions you live plus you are stigmatized for having a disability. – In-depth interview participant, Western, Non-visible

People don't think I have a disability so judge me for using disability parking space. – Focus group participant, Atlantic Canada, Visible disability

Complaining that it costs too much to make things accessible… Seeing it as an imposition. – Focus group participant, Atlantic Canada, Non-visible disability

People thinking you're jumping the line and there may not appear that there is anything physically wrong. I shouldn't have to explain my disability. – Focus group participant, Ontario, Visible disability

3. Additional comments – improving accessibility

Recommendations relate to universal design, offering multiple modes of communication, and training for frontline staff.

Participants shared final comments related to the discussion. Three main themes emerged. First, the concept of universal design was reiterated – universal design creates spaces that accommodate everyone's needs without the need for special treatment. Second, there is a need for a variety of communications options to be made available. Speaking with people with a range of disabilities highlighted the idea that an accommodation for one could act as a barrier for another – for example, someone with social anxiety or ADHD may benefit from written communication where they can be in their own space and take their time, but only having a written option available will create a barrier for someone who is unable to read the text or use a computer with ease. Finally, there is a call for increased training for service staff – particularly in understanding the range of visible and non-visible disabilities that exist, the various accommodations that can be made, and being empathetic and understanding toward everyone.

Universal design – purposefully designed spaces so that you don't have to be treated special or provide accommodation because needs are already met. – Focus group participant, Ontario, Non-visible disability

This might already be being done, I'm not sure, but a little bit of training to remind people that, especially the first point of contact in the office, a reminder that not every disability is obvious… maybe some more reminders that not every disability has got a big neon flashing sign. – Focus group participant, Atlantic, Non-visible disability

I don't think it's only training in terms of how you can help people with disabilities, but the reciprocation in terms of the manner in which you talk to people, as I've said a few times. Don't demean us. – Focus group participant, Ontario, Visible disability

My main concern is people need to get educated, and I know when somebody gets a job… They may watch a video and they put a check mark beside it, but they don't understand it. Needs to be more intense training [on dealing with persons with disabilities]. – Focus group participant, Ontario, Visible disability

Alternative ways of communication or more options to communicate with federal services. – Focus group participant, Atlantic, Non-visible disability

They either phone call or they send you mail. I know I have a problem with the phone calls. It might be due to privacy or safety reasons that they don't text or email, but I do prefer those options. Not only for anxiety, but also for memory reasons. – Focus group participant, Atlantic, Non-visible disability

Appendix A: Quantitative methodology

1. Methodology

Environics conducted an online panel survey with a representative sample of 1,497 adult Canadians, some of whom identify as having one or more of the 10 disability types set out in the Disability Screening Questionnaire (DSQ).

The following are the types of disabilities or conditions covered in the survey and the descriptions provided to the respondents.

a) Seeing / Vision:	Difficulty with seeing clearly, even when using glasses or contact lenses (This includes being a blind or legally blind person)
b) Hearing:	Difficulty with hearing clearly, even when using hearing aids or cochlear implants. (This includes being a Deaf or hard of hearing person or having tinnitus)
c) Mobility:	i) Difficulty moving around, even when using an aid such as a cane
	ii) Difficulty with walking on a flat surface for 15 minutes without resting
	iii) Difficulty with walking up or down a flight of stairs (about 12 steps) without resting
d) Flexibility:	i) Difficulty with bending down and picking up an object from the floor
	ii) Difficulty with reaching in any direction, for example, above your head
e) Dexterity:	Difficulty with using your fingers to grasp small objects, like a pencil or scissors
f) Pain:	i) Pain due to a condition that has lasted (or is expected to last) for 6 months or more
	ii) Pain that is always present
	iii) Periods of pain that recur from time to time
g) Learning:	Any condition that makes it hard in general for you to learn. (Examples are learning disabilities such as dyslexia, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, dyscalculia)
h) Developmental:	A developmental disability or disorder. (Examples include Down syndrome and being on the autism spectrum)
i) Memory:	Difficulty with ongoing memory problems or periods of confusion, not counting occasional forgetfulness. (Note: These difficulties are often associated with diseases such as Alzheimer's and other kinds of dementia, or may be the result of a brain injury)

j) Mental Health: A mental health-related condition that has lasted or is expected to last for six months or more. (Examples are anxiety, depression, bipolar disorder, substance abuse, anorexia)

The panel survey was conducted May 30 – June 17, 2024. *As the online survey uses an opt-in panel, this is a non-probability sample, and no margin of sampling error is calculated.*

An open link version of the same survey was conducted from June 3 to July 23, 2024, and achieved 329 completions. As this survey was limited to promotion via specific organizations this was an attempted census of those invited, and no margin of sampling error is calculated.

2. Questionnaire design

The questionnaire was designed by Environics and ESDC representatives, and incorporated variations of previously used questions to identify the types of disabilities and barriers to accessibility.

The English version of the final study questionnaire is included in Appendix E. The online questionnaire averaged 8.5 minutes to complete for the online panel and 9.5 minutes for the open link respondents.

3. Sample design

The **online panel survey** targeted adult Canadians (18 years of age or older). The sample was stratified by region to allow for meaningful coverage of lower population areas:

Table 28 – Distribution of online panel respondents

Regional distribution	Total	BC/YK	AB/NWT	MB/SK/NU	ON	QC	ATL
# of completed surveys	1,497	195	155	190	443	304	210
% of completed surveys	100%	13%	10%	13%	30%	20%	14%

The **open link online survey** link was provided by ESDC to various organizations supporting persons with disabilities. All completed surveys were retained:

Table 29 – Distribution of open link respondents

Regional distribution	Total	BC/YK	AB/NWT	MB/SK/NU	ON	QC	ATL
# of completed surveys	329	17	12	13	170	56	61
% of completed surveys	100%	5%	4%	4%	52%	17%	19%

The responses of persons with disabilities identified in both survey versions were combined into one set of data tables; those without disabilities were combined into another set of data tables. *Note: if someone identified as responding on behalf of a person with disabilities but did not indicate what that person's disability is, their responses were included in the tables of those without disabilities.*

4. Pre-test

A soft launch of the online panel survey was conducted from May 24- 28, and 60 completions were reviewed (38 English, 22 French) with an average completion time of 15 minutes. Just over half in the pretest indicated having at least one of the 10 identified disability types, as these were being targeted

to ensure inclusion. Only minor changes were required as a result of this review (one question was moved) and the full field proceeded. The pre-test interviews were kept in the data set.

5. Fieldwork and quality control

The online survey was conducted by Environics. All respondents were offered the opportunity to complete the survey in their official language of choice. All research work was conducted in accordance with the standards established by federal government Public Opinion Research (POR) requirements, as well as applicable federal legislation (Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act, or PIPEDA).

Data analysts programmed the questionnaire into an online survey platform and then performed thorough testing to ensure accuracy in set-up and data collection. This validation ensured the data entry process conformed to the survey's basic logic. The interview system handles invitations, quotas, and questionnaire completion (skip patterns, branching and valid ranges).

6. Weighting decision

ESDC and Environics examined various approaches to weighting the data and made the decision to not weight either the persons with disabilities or persons without disabilities data. This decision was made to avoid skewing the data as neither group has completely understood characteristics and both differ from the general population in notable ways, specifically by age and gender. Notably, as the open link was not distributed in a proportional manner but through selected organizations, the exact universe of the population receiving the link is unknown and therefore it was not possible to weight the data.

7. Differences between online panel and open link samples

The open link completion option was offered to ensure persons with different types and severities of disabilities were included in the survey. This was successful: almost half (45%) of the open link respondents have four or more disabilities or conditions, and one-quarter (23%) describe their disability as severe. At the request of ESDC the two modes were combined, however, this presented some challenges in interpreting the results. For example, half of the open link survey responses were from people located in Ontario. This regional skew has a notable impact on analysis because persons with disabilities who responded via the open link tend to have more disabilities, more severe conditions, and greater ACA awareness. This report therefore does not discuss regional differences, since Ontario became an outlier.

However, it should be noted that neither ESDC nor Environics had any control over how the open link was distributed by organizations to their communities. As there were no quotas (all responses were accepted provided the respondent was an adult) and because the regional, age and gender distribution of those invited is not known, there are notable differences between the respondents to the two completion options. One basic difference to note is that the open link respondents are known to, and may have been receiving help from, various organizations working with persons with disabilities. This means they may be more familiar with advocacy against barriers to accessibility, and with the services to which persons with disabilities are entitled. As a group they are more likely to self-identify as a person with a disability, and are more familiar with the ACA, both by considerable margins.

At the request of ESDC the two modes were combined, however, this has presented some challenges in interpreting the results. For example, half of the open link survey responses were from people located in Ontario. This regional skew has a notable impact on analysis because persons with disabilities who responded via the open link tend to have more disabilities, more severe conditions, and greater ACA awareness. This report therefore does not discuss regional differences, since Ontario became an outlier. There are other important differences to note between the open link and panel respondents, outlined in the table below.

Table 30 – Differences in key measures of persons with disabilities between panel survey vs. open link survey respondents

Measures	**Panel Survey n=878**	**Open Link Survey n=309**
Visibility of disability		
Visible	17%	12%
Non-visible	83%	88%
Severity of disability		
Mild	55%	19%
Moderate	37%	**58%**
Severe	8%	**23%**
Number of disabilities		
One	**49%**	12%
Two to three	33%	**42%**
Four or more	17%	**45%**
Self-identification as a person with a disability		
Yes, I am a person with a disability	19%	**84%**
No, I am not a person with a disability	79%	14%
Familiarity with the ACA		
Net: familiar	10%	**67%**
Net: not familiar	**90%**	33%
Disability type		
Pain	61%	64%
Mental Health	31%	**70%**
Flexibility	29%	31%
Mobility	24%	29%
Learning	11%	**55%**
Seeing/Vision	19%	21%
Hearing	17%	19%
Dexterity	11%	**21%**
Memory	9%	**23%**
Developmental	3%	**24%**

Measures	Panel Survey n=878	Open Link Survey n=309
Identity		
Indigenous	3%	4%
Racialized	17%	13%
2SLGBTQ+	2%	**26%**
None of these	75%	61%

8. Respondent characteristics

The following tables show the characteristics of the persons with disabilities and persons without disabilities who responded to the survey.

Table 31 – Characteristics of survey respondents

Respondent characteristics	Persons with a disability n=1,187	Persons without a disability n=639
Age		
18-24	1%	1%
25-34	10%	13%
35-44	21%	23%
45-54	21%	29%
55-64	18%	19%
65 and older	29%	16%
Gender		
Female	55%	46%
Male	43%	53%
Non-binary	1%	-
Two-spirit	<1%	-
Other gender identity	<1%	-
Prefer not to answer	1%	1%
Identity		
Indigenous	3%	2%
Racialized	16%	25%
2SLGBTQ+	11%	5%
None of these	71%	70%
Community size (population)		
City over 1 million	29%	29%
City 100,000 to under 1 million	33%	36%
City/town 30,000 to under 100-000	14%	10%
Town 1,000 to under 30,000	13%	13%
Household income		
$40,000 or less	13%	7%
$40,000 to just under $60,000	10%	10%
$60,000 to just under $80,000	13%	10%
$80,000 to just under $100,000	14%	15%
$100,000 to just under $150,000	19%	21%
$150,000 and over	17%	21%
Prefer not to say	15%	16%
Language of interview		
English	86%	75%
French	14%	25%

Respondent characteristics	Persons with a disability n=1,187	Persons without a disability n=639
Region		
British Columbia/Yukon	12%	11%
Alberta/Northwest Territories	10%	8%
Manitoba/Saskatchewan/Nunavut	11%	11%
Ontario	34%	34%
Quebec	16%	27%
Atlantic	18%	9%
Employment		
Working full-time	52%	63%
Working part-time	6%	6%
Self-employed	3%	4%
Retired	29%	19%
Net: not working	6%	4%
Unemployed/looking	2%	1%
Student	1%	1%
Not in workforce	3%	2%
Other	3%	1%
Prefer not to answer	1%	3%
Level of education		
HS or less	15%	13%
Apprentice/Trades	5%	4%
Uni below bachelor	7%	4%
College/CEGEP	23%	23%
Bachelor's degree	29%	33%
Post-grad	20%	18%

9. Completion results

The completion results for the online panel survey are presented in the following table.

As there is no way to determine how many invitations were sent to the open link survey, there is no disposition for that methodology.

Table 32 – Panel survey contact disposition

Disposition		N
Total invitations	(c)	43,884
Total completes	(d)	1,497
Qualified breakoffs	(e)	2,326
Disqualified	(f)	144
Not responded	(g)	38,721
Quota filled	(h)	1,196
Contact rate = (d+e+f+h)/c		11.77%
Participation rate = (d+f+h)/c		6.46%

10. Non-response bias analysis

The table below presents a profile of the final sample, compared to the actual population of Canada (2021 Census information). The proportion of people aged 55+ interviewed is somewhat higher in the persons with disabilities population than that in the population, while persons without disabilities skew younger. The final sample under-represents those with high school or less education, which is also a typical pattern for surveys in Canada (e.g., those with more education are more likely to be members of online panels and to respond to surveys in general).

Table 33 – Sample profile

Sample type	Persons with a disability %	Persons without a disability %	Canada (2021 Census) %
Gender (18+)			
Male	43%	53%	49%
Female	55%	46%	51%
Age			
18-34	11%	13%	27%
35-54	42%	51%	32%
55+	47%	35%	41%
Education level α			
High school diploma or less	15%	14%	35%
Trades/college/post sec no degree	35%	32%	36%
University degree	50%	54%	29%

* Data are unweighted and percentaged on those giving a response to each demographic question

α Actual Census categories differ from those used in this survey and have been recalculated to correspond. Statistics Canada figures for education are for Canadians aged 25 to 64 years.

Appendix B: Qualitative methodology

1. Methodology

Environics Research conducted a series of 10 online focus groups and 12 in-depth interviews between August 12 and September 23, 2024, to capture the lived experience of persons with disabilities and the extent to which they encounter barriers in communication, programs and services, and the built environment at federally regulated organizations and/or spaces, including Government of Canada offices.

2. Discussion guide design

Environics Research conducted a series of 10 online focus groups and 12 in-depth interviews between August 12 and September 23, 2024, to capture the lived experience of persons with disabilities and the extent to which they encounter barriers in communication, programs and services, and the built environment at federally regulated organizations and/or spaces, including Government of Canada offices.

3. Group and interview composition

The online focus groups were conducted using the Zoom platform. Pairs of sessions were held with persons with both visible and non-visible disabilities in the following regions: Ontario (August 12), Atlantic Canada (August 13), Western Canada (August 14) and Quebec (August 15). Two additional sessions were conducted with a mix of persons with visible and non-visible disabilities from Ontario and Western Canada (September 23) and from Quebec (September 24). The three Quebec sessions were conducted in French and the other seven sessions were conducted in English.

Additionally, a series of in-depth interviews were conducted with 12 persons with disabilities from across Canada – four in French and eight in English. IDIs were conducted with persons with disabilities who prefer to be interviewed individually due to the nature of their disability. The qualitative research participants were recruited by a variety of methods: Some were recruited through the quantitative survey by indicating that they would be willing to be paid participants in follow-up research and provided their contact information. The remainder of the participants came from our qualitative recruiters' database of individuals who have expressed a willingness to take part in qualitative research – many of whom are persons living with a variety of disabilities.

Table 34 - Group location and composition

Location (Language of groups)	Date	Time
Ontario (English)	Monday, August 12	5pm EST – Group #1 7pm EST – Group #2
Atlantic provinces (NL, NS, NB, PEI) (English)	Tuesday, August 13	4pm EST (5pm AST)– Group #3 6pm EST (7pm AST) – Group #4
Western provinces (MB, SK, AB, BC) (English)	Wednesday, August 14	6pm EST (5pm CST/4pm MST/3pm PST) – Group #5 8pm EST (7pm CST/6pm MST3pm PST) – Group #6
Quebec (French)	Thursday, August 15	5pm EST – Group #7 7pm EST – Group #8
Ontario and Western provinces (English)	Monday, September 23	7pm EST (4pm PST) – Group #9
Quebec (French)	Tuesday, September 24	5 pm EST – Group #10

In total, there were 65 focus group participants and 12 interview participants. The groups lasted approximately 90 minutes and consisted of between six and eight participants (out of eight people recruited for each group). Interviews lasted between 30 to 60 minutes. All participants and interviewees were provided a $125 honorarium to encourage participation and thank them for their time commitment.

The participants in the focus groups and interviews had a wide variety of types of disabilities as described in the table below. The total number of types of disabilities represented in the groups exceeds the total number of participants because some participants reported having multiple disabilities.

Table 35 - Focus group and interview participants by disability type

Disability Type	Focus Group participants	Interviewees	Total
Pain	44	7	51
Mental health-related	38	6	44
Mobility	28	2	30
Learning	24	4	28
Flexibility or dexterity	23	4	27
Sight or vision	10	2	12
Developmental	10	1	11
Hearing	5	5	10
Memory	7	0	7

4. Recruitment

Environics developed the recruitment screener and provided it to ESDC for review prior to its deployment. The recruitment was carried out by Environics' qualitative partner CRC Research, which is one of Canada's most well established and respected qualitative research recruiting operations. Participants were recruited through a variety of methods: Some were recruited through the quantitative survey by indicating that they would be willing to be paid participants in follow-up research and provided their contact information. The remainder of the participants came from our CRC's database of individuals who have expressed a willingness to take part in qualitative research – many of whom are persons living with a variety of disabilities. All recruiting was conducted by telephone and by e-mail by CRC's professional team of experienced and trained qualitative research recruiters.

Participants were contacted by phone and e-mail and screened to ensure they were invited to the appropriate session. Groups were composed so that there was representation across a range of the ten disabilities identified in Statistic Canada's Long Disability Screening Questionnaire (DSQ): Seeing, hearing; mobility, flexibility, dexterity; pain, learning, developmental, memory, and mental health related. Participants were also screened to ensure groups included a mix of age, gender, disability type, and racial and Indigenous origins. Normal focus group exclusions were in place (marketing research, media and employment in the federal government, and recent related focus group attendance).

All groups were video- and audio-recorded for use in subsequent analysis by the research team – during the recruitment process and at the session sign-in, participants provided consent to such recording and were given privacy and confidentially assurances.

5. Moderation

Three senior researchers were used to moderate all sessions, as follows:

- Derek Leebosh, Vice President, Environics, moderated five English sessions.
- France Mercier, Senior Associate, Environics, moderated the French sessions.
- Alanna Sawatzky, Senior Research Associate, Environics, moderated two English sessions.

All qualitative research work was conducted in accordance with professional standards and applicable government legislation (e.g., PIPEDA).

6. Statement of limitations

Qualitative research provides insight into the range of opinions held within a population, rather than the weights of the opinions held, as would be measured in a quantitative study. The results of this type of research should be viewed as indicative rather than projectable.

Appendix C: Moderation guide

July 31, 2024

Environics Research Group Limited
Focus Groups with Persons with Disabilities on Barriers to Access
Employment and Social Development Canada
In-depth interview Guide – FINAL
PN12071

Section	Timing (max 60 mins)
Section 1: Introduction to procedures	5 minutes
Section 2: Warm-up – General questions on accessibility	10 minutes
Section 3: Exploring barriers across priority areas: - Communication (Other than ICT) - Design and Delivery of Programs and Services - The Built Environment	30 minutes
Section 4: Attitudinal barriers	10 minutes
Section 5: Wrap-up	5 minutes

1.0 Introduction to procedures (5 minutes)

Hello, my name is [NAME] I work for Environics Research, a public opinion research company and I'll be conducting this interview. This is one of a series of focus groups and interviews we are conducting on behalf of Employment and Social Development Canada. Please note that I don't work for the Government of Canada and therefore I don't represent them or any of their policies.

As you know from the questions we asked when we invited you to this session, we are going to explore the experiences and opinions of people who have a disability or a long-term condition that may cause them to experience barriers to accessibility. We will focus particularly on barriers in such areas as built environment, communications, and accessing Government of Canada programs and services.

I would also like to mention that I am not an expert on accessibility issues. I am here to learn from you about your experiences. If I make any mistakes in terminology, please understand that it is not intentional, and no offence is intended. Please feel free to correct me in any such instances and I will be happy to incorporate your feedback going forward.

The interview should last no more than an hour and you will receive the cash incentive we promised you in the next few days.

I want to inform you that we are recording this session to help me write my report. The recording will only be used internally to analyse the research and will not be released to anyone else. **MODERATOR TO PRESS "RECORD" ON ZOOM SCREEN**

Please note that what you say here today will remain confidential and anonymous and will not be linked to you by name in any reporting we do on this project.

Let's start with introductions. Could you tell me your name, where you are joining us from and a bit about yourself such as what you like to do with your time, either for work or leisure. Also, since you identify as a person with a disability or long-term condition, could you tell me about that, but only share what you are comfortable sharing.

2.0 Warm-up – General questions on accessibility (10 minutes)

Since the focus of our discussion today will be on accessibility and barriers to access for persons with disabilities, I want to start by exploring what these words mean to you.

First of all, what does the word "accessibility" mean to you? For instance, when you are told that something or some place is "accessible," what does this mean? What would be two words that come to mind?

PROBE: Why did you choose those words? Can you give any examples from your own experiences?

Is being "accessible" just about something or somewhere being physically accessible or can it mean other things as well?

People sometimes talk about something being a "barrier to accessibility." What does that mean to you? **PROBE:** What would be examples of **barriers** – either based on your own personal experience or that of a family member or friend who has a disability or long-term condition?

In general, do you think things are getting better, getting worse or staying about the same when it comes to persons with disabilities being able to access their day-to-day activities and having fewer barriers? **PROBE:** Why do you say that?

3.0 Exploring barriers across priority areas (30 minutes).

We are now going focus on barriers to accessibility that may exist specifically when people interact with "federally regulated organizations" such as banks, courier and mail services, ferries, airlines, interprovincial rail and bus travel, national parks, radio and television stations, Internet service companies, First Nations band councils, as well as interacting with the Government of Canada and its products and services.

We will look at different types of daily activities and explore whether you face any barriers to accessibility within areas such as communications, built environments and accessing programs and what you would need to participate fully in these areas of society.

A. Communications (other than information and communication technology) (10 minutes)

Let's start off with the types of barriers to accessibility persons with disabilities may experience communicating with staff in federally regulated organizations and in the Government of Canada. We will start with discussing barriers you may have experienced with employees in federally regulated organizations (such as banks, post-office, etc.). We will then turn to communication (understanding and being understood) when communicating with federal government employees. Communication can

take place face-to-face, on the phone, through written materials, and using technology like email, chat features on cellular phones or computers and so on.

What would be examples of barriers you experience when you communicate with federally regulated organizations or businesses and their staff, if any? For example, when you interact with people at your bank, the post office, Via Rail, airlines, ferries, or with staff about internet, TV access or service.

Now I want you to think about your interactions with the Government of Canada and people that work there, such as staff at the CRA regarding your taxes, staff at national parks, or front-line staff at Service Canada counters that are there to answer your questions or help you fill out a form, What communications-related barriers have you experienced there, if any?

What about when it comes to the availability or access to alternative or accessible formats necessary for communicating with the Government of Canada and its staff? The Government of Canada offers many programs and services. Have you had problems accessing or applying for programs or services because a federal government agency or department did not offer adequate alternative or accessible formats or accessible forms of communication? If yes, please tell me more about this.

Sometimes federal government agencies and departments provide what are called “plain language materials.” Have you ever heard that term before? What do you think it means?

There are different definitions of “plain language”. It is supposed to be communication that someone can understand the first time they read or hear it. Do you think most materials from federal government agencies or departments are easily understood?

Are “plain language” materials ever provided in a manner that can easily be understood?

Thinking about how you communicate with government agencies and departments – how could that experience be improved in terms of reducing barriers to communication in the future?

The federal government also communicates about emergencies to Canadians, including those with disabilities. Emergencies include such things as natural disasters, health crises, national safety emergencies etc.. Sometimes federally-regulated businesses (e.g. banks, airlines, VIA Rail, national parks, national beaches, telephone/Internet service providers etc.) also communicate about emergencies.

Do you have any feedback on how well federal organizations and federal businesses communicate emergencies? What have your experiences been like?

How do you feel this could be improved for people with disabilities?

B. **Design and Delivery of Programs and Services (10 minutes)**

Let's move on to possible barriers to accessibility when it comes to programs and services provided by the federal government and federally regulated organizations. These could include, for instance, income support (such as the Canada Pension Plan Disability Benefits or CPPD), tax credits (such as the disability tax credit, employment insurance, education, or training programs etc.

Within the past year, have you accessed any type of program or service provided by the federal government or by a federally-regulated organizations? If yes, what were they?

How well did the employee(s) you dealt with meet your accessibility needs?

Did you encounter any particular barriers to accessing the program or service? **IF YES:** What were they?

Did you provide feedback or share a complaint with the program or service provider about the lack of accessibility?

What was missing or how could that situation have been avoided?

Was the issue resolved? If so, how?

IF NEEDED: Do you believe the service or program provider was trained properly to provide accessible programs and services? Would they have benefited from additional training, resources, skills, etc.?

Are you aware of any plans to remove accessibility barriers for these types of programs and services? What have you heard?

C. **The Built Environment (10 minutes)**

Let's move on to barriers to accessibility you may experience when you access or try to access federally regulated places.

Let's start by talking about barriers in outdoor spaces. What barriers (or obstacles) have you encountered to entrances and exits of federal organizations like airports, train stations, post offices, banks, or government offices, if any?

> **PROBE**: What about barriers to getting from parking lots to buildings? Was their accessible parking? Were there rest places (benches) between the parking lot and the building?
>
> What about the sidewalks leading to and from buildings (e.g. were their curb-cuts or were they free of debris)?
>
> Was there sufficient lighting to find your way?

What about accessing outdoor federally regulated spaces like national parks, including trails in these parks and national beaches. Do you ever encounter any barriers in these places? If yes, what would be some examples?

Now let's talk about indoor spaces, such as at a Service Canada office. Have you encountered any barriers when it comes the "built environment" in indoor spaces? This could be things like interior doors, stairs, tables, chairs, lighting, accessible washrooms, auditory signals, signage, tactile flooring etc.

How could the problems associated with those barriers be addressed to better meet your accessibility needs?

When you think of all the different federally regulated indoor and outdoor spaces you might use in a typical year, how well do their spaces and "supports meet your needs in terms of being accessible to you?

4.0 Attitudinal barriers (10 minutes)

People sometimes also talk about "attitudinal barriers" to access. What do you think this refers to?
EXPLAIN IF NECESSARY: This would mean barriers to access that are caused by the attitudes of the people you may interact with.

What would be examples of attitudinal barriers you may have experienced – particularly in federal government or federally regulated environments? You can think about attitudinal barriers more broadly now. In a workplace, a Service Canada centre, etc.

PROBE IF NECESSARY:

- People being rude or disrespectful about your disability
- People not speaking directly to you
- People being inflexible about how you need to be accommodated
  (for example refusing to extend deadlines, insisting activities take place in inaccessible places)
- Being pointed out or humiliated for behaviours you cannot control
  (for example fidgeting, having to get up and walk, looking away when speaking to someone, etc.)
- Not allowing caregivers or attendants to attend meetings or appointments with you

5.0 Wrap-up (5 minutes)

Before I let you go, is there any other topic related to accessing products and services for people with disabilities that you feel we should have discussed or would be important for me to understand?

On behalf of Employment and Social Development Canada, I would like to thank you for taking part in this interview. The cash incentive we promised you will be sent electronically in the coming week. The report on this project will be available on the Library and Archives Canada website early in 2025.

Thank you – have a nice day/evening!

Appendix D: Recruitment screener

Recruitment screener
(POR 135-23)

July 23, 2024

Environics Research Group Limited

Focus Groups/IDIs with Persons with a Disability

Employment and Social Development Canada / Accessible Canada Directorate

PN12071

Recruitment for Focus Group Discussion / Individual Interviews

Respondent Name: _____

Home #: _____

Business #: _____

Group #: _____

Recruiter: _____

GROUP 1 (English) Ontario – Persons with a nonvisible disability Monday, August 12 5pm EST	**GROUP 2 (English)** Ontario – Persons with a visible disability Monday, August 12 7pm EST	**GROUP 3 (English)** Atlantic Canada – Persons with a nonvisible disability Tuesday, August 13 4pm EST/5pm AST	**GROUP 4 (English)** Atlantic Canada – Persons with a visible disability Tuesday, August 13 6pm EST/7pm AST
GROUP 5 (English) Western provinces/ territories – Persons with a nonvisible disability Wednesday, August 14 6pm EST 5pm CST/4pm MST/3pm PST	**GROUP 6 (English)** Western provinces/ territories – Persons with a visible disability Wednesday, August 14 8pm EST 7pm CST/6pm MST/5pm PST	**GROUP 7 (French)** Quebec – People with a nonvisible disability Thursday, August 15 5pm EST	**GROUP 8 (French)** Quebec – People with a visible disability Thursday, August 15 7pm EST
GROUP 9 (English) Canada-wide – Persons with a nonvisible disability Monday, September 23 7pm EST 6pm CST/5pm MST/4pm PST	**GROUP 10 (French)** Quebec – Persons with a nonvisible disability Tuesday, September 24 5pm EST		

Overview of focus group discussion approach:

Total of ten (10) groups, as follows:

- Seven (7) groups in English with two (2) in each of Atlantic Canada (NL/NS/NB/PEI); Ontario; and Western Canada/Territories (MB/SK/AB/BC/Territories) and one (1) across multiple regions;
- Three (3) groups in French in Quebec; and

All participants must be 18+ and identify as having a one or more of the ten disability types or long-term conditions or be a proxy (who could be a full-time caregiver to someone with a disability) identified in Statistic Canada's Long Disability Screening Questionnaire: seeing, hearing; mobility, flexibility, dexterity; pain, learning, developmental, memory, and mental health related. Half of the sessions will be with persons who self-identify as having a disability that they view as nonvisible to others. The other half will be with persons who self-identify as having a disability that is visible to others.

NB: Some participants will have already completed an online survey on barriers to accessibility and indicated that they would be willing to take part in follow-up research. This opt-in does not guarantee participation and they will still have to be screened in.

Need representation across a range of the ten disabilities identified in Statistic Canada's Long Disability Screening Questionnaire (DSQ): Seeing, hearing; mobility, flexibility, dexterity; pain, learning, developmental, memory, and mental health related.

- Mix of ages, genders, and disability types
- Mix of racial and indigenous origins
- Incentive: $125 per participant (for both the focus groups and for individual interviewees)
- Eight (8) recruited per group
- Online group discussions last up to 90 minutes; IDIs last up to 60 minutes

Overview of individual interview approach:

Up to 12 60-minute one-on-one in-depth interviews (IDIs) (at least eight to be in English and at least to four be in French) to be conducted with participants who request it or are unable to participate in a group discussion. These will be used to address specific situations where participation in a focus group is challenging for any of the following reasons:

- A rural or remote location where an Internet connection makes participation in an online focus group challenging.
- The nature of the participant's disabilit(ies) makes a one-on-one interview more practical, or it is the only way they can participate.
- Individuals with certain types of disabilities that are underrepresented in the focus groups (perhaps because they are very low prevalence) and the flexible nature of one-on-one interviews can increase the representation of these individuals in the qualitative research.

Recruitment Screener:

Hello/Bonjour, my name is _____ from CRC Research, a partner of Environics Research, working on the research project on behalf of the Government of Canada.

IF FROM LIST OF OPT-IN ONLINE SURVEY RESPONDENTS: You recently completed an online survey and indicated that you were interested in being a paid participant in some follow-up research on barriers to accessibility related to the survey. I am calling you about that.

ASK ALL: We are conducting a series of online video-conference focus group discussions among persons with disabilities to learn about barriers to accessibility that may affect the inclusion of persons with disabilities in society.

Would you like to continue this discussion in English or French? / Voulez-vous continuer cette conversation en français ou en anglais? [*NB: Anglophones from Quebec may join one of the Atlantic/Ontario/West sessions and Francophones from outside Quebec may join the Quebec session.]*

Does this sound like something you would be interested in?

Yes 1 **CONTINUE**

No 2 **THANK/ASK FOR SOMEONE ELSE OR TERMINATE IF NO ONE QUALIFIES**

REPEAT THE INTRODUCTION

This study is a research project, not an attempt to sell or market anything. The purpose of the research is to explore the opinions and experiences of persons with disabilities in Canada when it comes to barriers to accessibility they may or may not face. Your participation in the research is completely voluntary, confidential, and your decision to participate will not affect any dealings you may have with the Government of Canada.

The format will be a video-conference call discussion using the Zoom platform led by a research professional from Environics that will involve you and some other People with Disabilities.

NOTE TO RECRUITER, IF PARTICIPANT EXPRESSES ANY HESITATION, YOU MAY SAY: If you feel that there is any reason it would be difficult for you to take part in an online group discussion, we could also accommodate you in an individual one-on-one online or phone interview.

NB: If you are a full-time caregiver to someone with a disability who would not be able to take part in the research on their own, you may ask to participate as a proxy – or alongside on behalf of that person. NB: Being a "proxy" means an individual can consent to share the information on behalf of the selected respondent. The individual is asked to confirm that they have consulted with the respondent.

May I have your permission to ask you or someone else in your household some further questions to see if you/they fit in our study? This will take about 5 minutes.

Yes 1 **CONTINUE**

No 2 **THANK/DISCONTINUE**

The session will last a maximum of 1.5 hours and you will receive $125 as thanks for participating in the session.

A recording of the session will be produced for research purposes. The recording will be used only by the research professionals to assist in preparing a report on the research findings and will be destroyed once the report is completed. All information collected, used, and/or disclosed will be used for the research purposes of

this study only and administered as per the requirements of the *Privacy Act*. Environics Research has a privacy policy which can be consulted at https://environicsresearch.com/privacy-policy/ **NB: This link can be e-mailed or texted to the participant, if requested.**

[INTERVIEWER NOTE: IF ASKED ABOUT PRIVACY LAWS, SAY: "The information collected through the research is subject to the provisions of the Privacy Act, legislation of the Government of Canada, and to the provisions of relevant provincial privacy legislation. Environics is a member of the Canadian Research Insights Council (CRIC) and adheres to all its standards; if you want to confirm the legitimacy of this project, it is registered with the CRIC with the number 20240312-EN229 **NB: This info can be e-mailed or texted to the participant, if requested.**

NB: If a participant asks for information on the research company conducting the research they can be told: Environics Research is located at 366 Adelaide St. West, Suite 101, Toronto, Ontario and can be reached at 416-920-9010 or [info@environics.ca]. **NB: This info can be e-mailed or texted to the participant, if requested.**

1. **As I mentioned earlier, this study will focus on the opinions and experiences of persons with a disability when it comes to the barriers to accessibility they may face. Do you identify as a person with a disability or long term condition that limits your daily activities in any way? (IF NECESSARY READ: "Disability means any impairment whether permanent, temporary or episodic in nature, or evident or not, that, in interaction with a barrier, hinders a person's full and equal participation in society.")**

   NOTE TO RECRUITER: Long-term condition refers to a condition lasting more than 6 month which interferes with activities of daily living.

   NOTE TO RECRUITER: This could include someone who is a full-time caregiver to someone with a severe disability who would not be able to take part in the research on their own – in which case they could participate as a proxy e on behalf of that person.

Yes, self	ASK Q. 2
Yes, caregiver	ASK Q. 2*
No	TERMINATE**
Don't know	ASK Q. 2
Prefer not to answer	TERMINATE

***IF A FULL-TIME CAREGIVER EXPLAIN THAT THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS ARE WITH REGARD TO THE PERSON WITH THE DISABILITY THAT THEY CARE FOR – NOT ABOUT THEMSELVES**

****AT ALL TERMINATIONS EXPLAIN "I'M SORRY BUT WE CAN'T INCLUDE YOU IN THIS STUDY. WE ARE TRYING TO BALANCE OUT PARTICIPANTS WITH A VARIETY OF DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS."**

2. **Statistics Canada identifies ten disability types. These disabilities could be permanent, temporary, or episodic – meaning they can fluctuate over time. Please answer YES or NO to if you have any of the following disabilities or long-term conditions lasting more than six months: READ LIST, CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY, ASK PARTICIPANT TO SPECIFY THEIR DISABILITY**

   Sight or vision – (includes being blind or visually impaired even when wearing glasses or contact lenses)
   (SPECIFY)_____

   Hearing* – also known as Deaf or hard of hearing (affects a person's ability to hear – even when using devices like hearing aids or cochlear implants, also includes tinnitus)
   (SPECIFY)_____

   Mobility – that affects your ability to move around, even when using an aid such as a cane
   (SPECIFY)_____

   Flexibility or dexterity – types of physical disability (affects a person's ability to move their joints. Dexterity affects a person's ability to do tasks, especially with their hands.)
   (SPECIFY)_____

   Pain – (affects a person's ability to function due to a long-term condition that has lasted or is expected to last for 6 months or more.)
   (SPECIFY)_____

   Learning – also known as learning disabilities (can include Dyslexia, Aphasia, Hyperactivity, Dyscalculia, dysgraphia, ADHD, etc.)
   (SPECIFY)_____

   Developmental – also known as intellectual disabilities (can include Autism Spectrum)
   (SPECIFY)_____

   Memory – also known as a memory disability that affects your ability to remember information .
   (can include dementia, Alzheimer's etc.)
   (SPECIFY)_____

   Mental health-related – also known as mental illness (anxiety disorder, depression, bipolar disorder, substance abuse, anorexia as well as other conditions.)
   (SPECIFY)_____

IF NO TO ALL, THANK AND TERMINATE

IF YES TO 2B AND you are Deaf or Hard of Hearing ASK: We will also be conducting a session with those who are Deaf or hard of hearing who prefer to communicate using American Sign Language (ASL). Would you prefer to take part in that session? (*NB: French screener would reference Quebec Sign Language, known in French as Langue des signes québécoise or Langue des signes du Québec (LSQ)*)

Yes

No

3. **Would you describe your primary disability or main condition as something that is visible or non-visible to other people? Visible, meaning people can see you have it, or non-visible, meaning it may not be immediately apparent? (NB: Examples of non-visible disabilities could include cognitive disabilities, speech or hearing impediments, etc.)**

   Nonvisible – **GROUPS 1, 3, 5 or 7**

   Visible – **GROUPS 2, 4, 6 or 8**

   Depends, varies – **TREAT AS VISIBLE**

4. **At what age did you acquire your primary disability?**

   From birth

   Since age_____

5. **This research project is mainly being conducted through a series of group online videoconference focus groups on Zoom. If the nature of your disability would make it challenging for you to take part in a group video-conference, we could arrange to interview or chat with you individually. Are you able to take part in a group discussion or would you prefer to be interviewed individually?**

   Group focus group

   Prefer one-on-one interview **MAXIMUM 12**

6. **How would you describe your current employment status? Are you…?**

   Working Full Time (30 hrs. +)

   Working Part Time (under 30 hrs.)

   Self-employed

   On leave from work **GET MIX**

   Unemployed and looking for work

   Full time Student

   Retired

   Not in the workforce (e.g., fulltime homemaker, unemployed and not looking for work)

   Other, please specify: _____

IF WORKING FULL, SELF-EMPLOYED, OR PART-TIME, ASK:

What sort of work do you currently do?

_____

7. **How do you identify your gender?**

   NB: Gender refers to your current gender, which may be different from the sex you were assigned at birth. It may also be different from what is shown on legal documents.

   Male 1

   Female 2 **GET MIX**

   Non-binary 3

   Other gender identity (SPECIFY)_____ 4

8. **We are recruiting participants of various ages. Could you please tell me the age category you are in? READ**

   Under 18 **TERMINATE**

   18-24 years of age 1

   25-34 years of age 2

   35-44 years of age 3 **GET MIX**

   45-54 years of age 4

   55-64 years of age 5

   65+ years of age 6

9. **Could you please tell me the last level of education you completed.**

   Some High School only 1

   Completed High School 2

   Trade School certificate 3 **GET MIX**

   Some Post secondary 4

   Completed Post secondary 5

   Graduate degree 6

10. **We want to make sure we speak to a diversity of people. Do you identify as indigenous or as a member of a racialized group? IF YES, PLEASE SPECIFY**

NB: Try to recruit <u>at least</u> some participants to each group who are racialized (i.e., Black, Chinese, East Asian, South Asian, Arab, Latin American etc.) or Indigenous. If participant wants clarification "a racialized person in

Canada is someone (other than an indigenous person) who is non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour, regardless of place of birth".

11. **Participants in group discussions or interviews are asked to voice their opinions and thoughts. Could you please tell me how comfortable you are in voicing your opinions in front of others? Are you... (read list)**

Very comfortable	1- **MINIMUM 5 PER GROUP**
Fairly comfortable	2
Not very comfortable	3 – **ASK IF WILLING TO DO A ONE-ON-ONE INTERVIEW**
Not at all comfortable	4 – **ASK IF WILLING TO DO A ONE-ON-ONE INTERVIEW**

12. **Have you ever attended a focus group or a one-to-one discussion? Please consider only those that have provided payment of some kind.**

Yes	1 **MAXIMUM 5 PER GROUP**
No	2 **(SKIP TO Q.14)**

IF YES ASK:

13. **What was the subject matter of the discussion you took part in?**

(SPECIFY)_____ **TERMINATE IF RELATED TO ACCESS FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES**

ASK ALL (NB: IF PERSON IS DOING A ONE ON ONE INTERVIEW, REFER TO INTERVIEW RATHER THAN VIDEOCONFERENCE OR FOCUS GROUP)

14. **This [focus group/interview] will require you to join a videoconference on the Zoom platform using a desktop or laptop computer or a tablet or a smartphone. You will need stable high speed internet access in a private and quiet location to take part in the study. We cannot provide this technology for you. Will you be able to access the Internet for a [1.5-hour audio-visual discussion/one hour interview] using a desktop or laptop computer, tablet, or smartphone?**

Yes	**CONTINUE**
No	**TERMINATE**

IF NEEDED: If you would typically need the help or support of someone else for this type of activity, they are welcomed to join you. Note that only you would receive the $125 incentive. (RECRUITER NOTE: If participant is a "proxy" for a person with a disability who cannot participate themselves, they can share opinions and information on behalf of the person with a disability if they confirm that they

have consulted with the respondent. The $125 incentive should still go to the person with the disability.

15. **The [focus group/interview] will take place using a video-conference platform called Zoom. If you are not already a user, Zoom may request you to install some software at the site https://zoom.us/download . You can delete it after the [focus group/interview] if you wish.**

    How experienced and comfortable are you with using Zoom videoconferencing?

Very comfortable	1- **CONTINUE**
Fairly comfortable	2 – **CONTINUE**
Not very comfortable	3 – **SEE BELOW**
Not at all comfortable	4 – **SEE BELOW**

    IF NOT VERY OR NOT AT ALL COMFORTABLE WITH USING ZOOM VIDEO-CONFERENCING, ASK IF WILLING TO BE INTERVIEWED BY PHONE OR IF THERE IS ANY OTHER WAY WE CAN ACCOMMODATE THEM. ALSO NOTE THAT TURNING ON VIDEO IS NOT MANDATORY AND THEY MAY PARTICIPATE BY AUDIO ONLY AND THEY CAN ALSO DIAL INTO ZOOM THROUGH A 1-800 NUMBER, IF NEEDED

16. **Do you have a disability that may require specific accommodations? (NOTE TO RECRUITER e.g., someone with hearing impairment can take part in an interview using the chat feature, CART and sign language interpretation may also be provided etc.)**

Yes, require accommodation/individual interview (SPECIFY)_____	**CONTINUE**
No, no other accommodation required	**CONTINUE**

17. **I would like to invite you to attend a [focus group session where you will exchange your opinions in a moderated discussion with other participants/interview or online chat where you will share your opinions with a researcher].**

    The session/interview will be recorded and members of the research team may also observe the session/interview, but your participation will be confidential. If you attend the session/interview, you will receive $125 to thank you for your time. It will be sent to you via an e-transfer. NB: If someone cannot accept an online money transfer we can mail a cheque. Do you consent to take part in the [focus group/interview]? By agreeing to participate you are giving your consent to these procedures.

Yes	**CONTINUE**
No	**TERMINATE**

18. **We will contact you again before the date of the session to confirm your attendance. Note that this invitation is to you personally and you cannot have anyone else substitute for you. Do you consent to this?**

Yes	**CONTINUE**
No	**TERMINATE**

19. **The [group session will last at most an hour and a half (i.e., 90-minutes)/interview will last at most one hour], but we are asking that all participants/interviewees log into the Zoom online meeting 5 minutes prior to the start of the session. Are you able to log-in about 5 minutes prior to the start time?**

Yes	**CONTINUE**
No	**TERMINATE**

Could you please confirm your email address so I can send you login details for the Zoom web conference application?

Email address: _____

PLEASE RE-READ THE FULL ADDRESS BACK TO CONFIRM CORRECT SPELLING.

(NB: We will send the links to you early next week)

PLEASE ENSURE PARTICIPANTS ARE TOLD THE TIME OF SESSION IN THEIR TIME ZONE

SEE TIMES AND DATES ON PAGE 1

INTERVIEWERS:	Tell respondent that it is a small group and if you need to cancel for any reason, please allow 48 hours notice to allow the research team the ability to offer their place to another participant. Make sure they know we feel their opinions are valuable and we are serious about learning about their experience
NOTE:	**PLEASE TELL ALL RESPONDENTS THAT THEY WILL RECEIVE A CONFIRMATION CALL AND/OR E-MAIL THE DAY PRIOR TO THE SESSION. IF FOR SOME REASON THEY HAVE NOT HEARD FROM US THEY SHOULD CONTACT US AT _____. IF THEIR NAME [or the name of proxy] IS NOT ON THE ATTENDANCE FORM, THEY WILL NOT BE ADMITTED TO THE GROUP. IF A RESPONDENT HAS ANY OTHER QUESTIONS ABOUT THE RESEARCH, THEY SHOULD ALSO CONTACT US AT THIS NUMBER.**

Appendix E: Instructions for Organizations

2024 Public Opinion Survey on Barriers to Accessibility – Instructions for Organizations and Letter to Respondents

About the survey:

As part of its efforts to measure progress in the identification and removal of barriers to access under the *Accessible Canada Act* (ACA), and to continue collecting information about current barriers faced by persons with disabilities, the Accessible Canada Directorate (ACD) within Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) is carrying out public opinion research (POR) with the support of Environics Research.

The quantitative aspect of the POR involves the collection of information from both Canadians with and without disabilities via an electronic survey. This survey has been designed to collect information about barriers Canadians with disabilities might face in accessing employment, transportation, communication, information and communication technologies, buildings and public spaces, and federal programs and services.

How organizations can help:

We would very much appreciate it if you would distribute the attached invitation and survey link to your members. The survey is available in both English and French and will be open until DATE (TBD).

- The results of this survey will be used to support the identification and removal of barriers to accessibility with the goal of making Canadian society more inclusive for persons with disabilities
- The survey is available in both English and French.
- We are hoping to get a broad range of answers from persons with a wide range of disabilities and with varying degrees of severity.
- Participation in the survey is anonymous and will not affect your relationship with the Government of Canada or the services they provide to you.

Sample letter to potential respondents:

Hello! We need your help!

Environics Research is conducting research on barriers to accessibility on behalf of the Government of Canada. We would be very grateful if you could help by filling out the online survey using the link below.

This survey seeks to collect information about barriers you may have faced in accessing employment, transportation, communication, information and communication technologies, buildings and public spaces, and federal program and services.

The survey is voluntary and all responses will be kept completely anonymous. This survey follows the rules of the Privacy Act (justice.gc.ca), the Access to Information Act (justice.gc.ca) and other laws that protect your information.
We would appreciate it if you could complete the survey by DATE.

The survey should take about 15 minutes to fill out and you can connect to it using the following URL:

INSERT SURVEY LINK

Please note that once you start the survey, there is no way to save your partially completed response. If you close your browser, you may have to start again from the beginning. Please take your time in completing the survey as there is no way to go back and change your answers.

The Government of Canada lead for this survey will be hosting American Sign Language (ASL) and Langues des signes québécoise (LSQ) sessions to support participants in completing the survey. These sessions will be held the morning of DATE and the afternoon of DATE. Please confirm your participation for the session of your choice to accessible.canada.directorate-direction.canada.accessible@hrsdc-rhdcc.gc.ca by DATE to receive a link for the session. There will be no record of participants for these sessions and the survey you will be completing remains anonymous.

Many thanks,

(ORGANIZATION CONTACT)

Appendix F: Survey questionnaire

Environics Research Group May 2024

Employment and Social Development Canada

2024-25 Public Opinion Research on Accessibility

Final Survey Questionnaire

NOTE TO PROGRAMMER – FULL ACCESSIBILITY FOR THIS SURVEY, ALSO NEED ASSISTANCE CONTACT INFO ON EACH PAGE
ALSO: DO NOT DISQUALIFY PEOPLE USING THE OPEN LINK FOR REGION, AGE OR GENDER QUOTAS, ONLY IF UNDERAGE

SHOW HEADINGS AND QUESTION NUMBERS IN THIS SURVEY

Canada wordmark with alt text

Public opinion survey on barriers to accessibility

Section A: Introduction

Thank you for your interest in our questionnaire / Merci de l'intérêt que vous portez à ce questionnaire.

Please select your preferred language for completing the survey / SVP choisissez votre langue préférée pour remplir le sondage.

01- English / Anglais
02- Français / French

Welcome to this survey. It is conducted by Environics Research, an independent research company, for the Government of Canada. The survey will take about 15 minutes to fill out.

This survey is about barriers some Canadians might have accessing certain things: employment, transportation, communication, Information and communication technology, buildings and public spaces, and federal program and services.

You do not have to have a disability to do this survey.

The survey is voluntary and confidential, and your responses will be kept completely anonymous. This survey follows the rules of the Privacy Act (justice.gc.ca), the Access to Information Act (justice.gc.ca) and other laws that protect your information. Environics' privacy policy is here: https://environics.ca/about-us/privacy-policy/

This study has been registered with the Canadian Research Insights Council's Research Verification Service. If you would like to check out the details of this research, you can visit CRIC's website www.canadianresearchinsightscouncil.ca. Please enter project code 20240312-EN229.

Section B: Instructions:

1. Please consider the questions and your answers carefully.
2. On each screen, after selecting your answer, click on the "Continue" button at the bottom of the screen to move forward in the questionnaire.
3. If you leave the survey before completing it, you can return to the survey URL later to the page where you left off. Your answers up to that point in the survey will be saved.
4. If you have any question about the survey, please contact the Government of Canada's Accessible Canada Directorate at accessible.canada.directorate-direction.canada.accessible@hrsdc-rhdcc.gc.ca, or for technical help email Environics at onlineresearch@environics.ca

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Section C: About you

Q1. In which province or territory do you live right now?
Please choose one answer

01 – Newfoundland and Labrador
02 – Prince Edward Island
03 – Nova Scotia
04 – New Brunswick
05 – Quebec
06 – Ontario
07 – Manitoba
08 – Saskatchewan
09 – Alberta
10 – British Columbia
11 – Yukon
12 – Northwest Territories
13 – Nunavut
14 – Live outside of Canada – **THANK AND TERMINATE**

Q2. In what year were you born?
_____ **(18 AND OVER CONTINUE)**
99 – Prefer not to answer

Q2b ASK IF 99 AT Q2: Would you be willing to indicate your age range?

01 – 18 to 24

02 – 25 to 34

03 – 35 to 44

04 – 45 to 54

05 – 55 to 64

06 – 65 or older

99 – Prefer not to answer

Q3. How do you identify your gender?

SHOW: Gender refers to your current gender, which may be different from the sex you were assigned at birth. It may also be different from what is shown on legal documents.

01 – Female

02 – Male

03 – Non-binary

04 – Two-spirit

05 – Other gender identity

99 – Prefer not to answer

Q4. Do you identify as a person with a disability, or are you responding on behalf of someone who has a disability?

"Disability" means anything – whether it is physical, mental, intellectual or any other limitation – that limits someone from taking part in society. Disabilities can be permanent, temporary or may vary over time.

Please choose one answer

01 – Yes, I am a person with a disability

02 – No, I am not a person with a disability

03 – No, but I am responding on behalf of a person with a disability

99 – Prefer not to answer

SHOW TO ALL: The following section is about difficulties you may have doing certain activities. Please only include difficulties or long-term conditions that have lasted or are expected to last for six months or more. Your answers will be kept strictly confidential.

ASK ALL

Q6. Do you experience any of the following disabilities or long-term conditions?
Please choose either "yes" or "no" for each option listed:

01 – No, I never experience this

02 – Yes, I experience this

SHOW ONE CATEGORY AT A TIME, ALLOW RESPONSE FOR EACH ITEM IN A CATEGORY

a) Seeing / Vision:	Difficulty with seeing clearly, even when using glasses or contact lenses (This includes being a blind or legally blind person)
b) Hearing	Difficulty with hearing clearly, even when using hearing aids or cochlear implants. (This includes being a Deaf or hard of hearing person or having tinnitus)
c) Mobility:	i) Difficulty moving around, even when using an aid such as a cane
	ii) Difficulty with walking on a flat surface for 15 minutes without resting
	iii) Difficulty with walking up or down a flight of stairs (about 12 steps) without resting
d) Flexibility	i) Difficulty with bending down and picking up an object from the floor
	ii) Difficulty with reaching in any direction, for example, above your head
e) Dexterity	Difficulty with using your fingers to grasp small objects, like a pencil or scissors
f) Pain	i) Pain due to a condition that has lasted (or is expected to last) for 6 months or more
	ii) Pain that is always present
	iii) Periods of pain that recur from time to time
g) Learning	Any condition that makes it hard in general for you to learn (Examples are learning disabilities such as dyslexia, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, dyscalculia)
h) Developmental	A developmental disability or disorder. (Examples include Down syndrome and being on the autism spectrum)
i) Memory	Difficulty with ongoing memory problems or periods of confusion, not counting occasional forgetfulness. **(Note: These difficulties are often associated with diseases such as Alzheimer's and other kinds of dementia, or may be the result of a brain injury)**
j) Mental Health:	A mental health-related condition that has lasted or is expected to last for six months or more (Examples are anxiety, depression, bipolar disorder, substance abuse, anorexia)

IF YES TO ANY IN Q6 – SCREEN INTO DISABILITY SEGMENT

Q6B [ASK IF MORE THAN ONE YES AT Q6) You said you have the following disabilities or long-term conditions. Please indicate what you consider to be your "primary" disability or long-term condition. This is the one that causes you the most difficulty in taking part in society.

Please choose only one

SHOW LIST OF YES RESPONSES SELECTED AT Q6

Q7. **[IF YES TO ANY IN Q6 ASK]** Thinking of your disabilities or conditions as a whole, how severe would you say they are?
Please choose one answer

01 – Mild

02 – Moderate

03 – Severe

Q5. **[IF YES TO ANY IN Q6 ASK]** Is your disability visible, meaning people can see that you have it, or non-visible, meaning other people may not be able to tell by looking at you?
Please choose one answer

01 – Visible

02 – Non-visible

Main survey questions

Section A: Introduction

Q8. How familiar are you with the Government of Canada's *Accessible Canada Act* (ACA) that became law in 2019?
Please choose one answer

01 – Not at all familiar

02 – Not very familiar

03 – Somewhat familiar

04 – Very familiar

SHOW TO RESPONDENTS: SCREEN 1): The purpose of the *Accessible Canada Act* is to identify, remove and prevent barriers in federally regulated organizations.

A "barrier" is anything that could limit a person from fully taking part in society. It might be physical, a building, a problem with technology, a government policy, or someone's attitude.

"Federally regulated organizations" include banks, courier and mail services, ferries, airlines, interprovincial rail and bus travel, radio and television stations, Internet service companies, and First Nations band councils. The Act also covers all services and programs offered by the Government of Canada.

We would like you to think about these types of organizations when answering the survey questions.

SHOW TO RESPONDENTS: SCREEN 2): In this survey we will ask you about barriers you may or may not experience, in the following key areas:

- *employment*
- *buildings and public spaces*
- *transportation (airlines, rail, road, and marine transportation providers that cross provincial or international borders)*
- *information and communication technologies*
- *communication (other than information and communication technologies)*
- *design and delivery of programs and services.*

Section B: Different types of barriers

A. Barriers related to employment

Q9. Over the past 12 months, have you experienced a barrier to any of the following?
Please choose "yes" or "no" for each option listed -:

01 – Yes, I have experienced a barrier

02 – No, I have not experienced a barrier

a) Getting an interview for a job you wanted

b) Being hired due to a disability or long-term condition

c) Finding work you have the skills for

d) Getting the chance to use your education, skills, or work experience

e) Accessible training opportunities that meet your need

f) Moving up (like a promotion)

g) Having access to supports or workplace accommodation

h) Being treated fairly by managers or co-workers

B. Barriers related to getting around in buildings and public spaces

Q10. Over the past 12 months, have you experienced any of the following barriers while dealing with any federally regulated organization?

REMINDER: "Federally regulated organizations" include banks, ferries, airlines, interprovincial rail and bus travel, radio and television stations, courier and mail services, Internet service companies, and First Nations band councils. It also includes all Government of Canada buildings and public spaces, such as national parks.

Please check all that apply

RANDOMIZE 01-08

01 – Hallways, doorways, and washrooms not being wide enough, or not accessible for wheelchairs or other assistive devices

02 – Lack of accommodations such as curb cutaways, ramps, handrails, accessible parking or motion- or time-activated sinks or toilets

03 – Not having a designated private space for resting or taking medication (like a bench or quiet room)

04 – Not having emergency plans for persons with disabilities

05 – Not having automatic doors or easy to open door levers in public buildings

06 – Not providing seating or being forced to stand while waiting for service

07 – Presence of too many visual or audible distractions (for example flashing lights, lights too bright or dim, background music or other background noise)

08 – Lack of visual or audible features. For example, Braille wayfinding signs, or audible or visual signs such as visual fire alarms

97 – Other barrier (Please specify _____) **[CODE IF NUMBERS WARRANT]**

99 – None of the above **[SINGLE MENTION]**

C. Barriers related to transportation

Q11. Over the past 12 months, have you experienced barriers in the following situations?
Please choose "yes" or "no" for each option listed:

01 – Yes, I have experienced a barrier

02 – No, I have not experienced a barrier

a) *Using municipal public transit*
(Like city buses, subways etc.)

b) *Using taxis and ridesharing (like Uber)*

c) *Using ferries*

d) *Using VIA Rail or interprovincial trains*
(at the train station or on the train, or in using facilities, equipment, communication, or services)

e) *Travelling by air*
(at the airport, on the airplane, or in using facilities, equipment, communication, or services)

f) *Buses that cross borders, for example between provinces and territories or to the United States*
(at the bus stations, on the bus, or in using facilities, equipment, communication, or services)

Q11b) **[IF ANY YES TO Q11 A-F ASK]** You said you experienced a barrier while travelling. Which of the following barriers did you experience?

Please check all that apply

RANDOMIZE 01-07

01 – Not knowing about accessibility options or supports

02 – Not having staff to help you

03 – Entrances or exits
(for example narrow steps or doorways, hard to open doors, no ramps)

04 – Floor plans inside an airport, station, or terminal
(for example a confusing layout, narrow hallways or stairs, not enough elevators, lack of signs)

05 – Lighting or sound levels
(for example, too bright or flickering, too noisy

06 – Washrooms
(For example, no accessible washrooms, washrooms too far away or out of order

07 – Discrimination, poor treatment, or harassment from staff
(for example, staff talking down to you, not letting you ask questions)

97 – Other barrier (Please specify _____) **[CODE IF NUMBERS WARRANT]**

D. Barriers related to information and communication technologies (ICT)

Q12 Over the past 12 months have you experienced any barriers in the following situations?
Please choose "yes" or "no" for each option listed:

REMINDER: "Federally regulated organizations" include banks, ferries, airlines, interprovincial rail and bus travel, radio and television stations, courier and mail services, Internet service companies, and First Nations band councils. It also includes all Government of Canada buildings and public spaces, such as national parks.

01 – Yes, I have experienced a barrier

02 – No, I have not experienced a barrier

a) *Using the website of any federally regulated organization*
(for example, no alternate text or would not work with an accessibility device, or it used small fonts or low contrast colours)

b) *Using a cellphone or connecting to a wireless service or Wi-Fi in Canada*

c) *Using self-service technology in any federally regulated space*
(for example, while using an ATM, a self-service checkout, or an information kiosk.)

d) *Watching TV, a streaming service like Netflix or Crave, or a video on the Internet like on YouTube*
(for example, poor closed captioning, no described video, or sign-language programming)

E. Barriers related to other forms of communication (excluding information and communication technologies)

Q13. Thinking about things like books, letters, forms, posters, online content, or other communications materials, do you ever need these materials to be available in accessible formats or languages?
Please choose one answer

01 – Yes, I need accessible formats

02 – No, I do not need accessible formats**SKIP TO Q15**

Q14. **[ASK IF YES TO Q13]** Which of the following accessible formats or languages do you need?
Select all that apply

01 – Large print
02 – E-books
03 – Braille
04 – Closed captioning
05 – Plain language that is easy to read
06 – Text-to-speech
07 – Audio versions
08 – American Sign Language (ASL) or Langue des signes du Québec (LSQ)
97 – Other (Please specify _____) [CODE IF NUMBERS WARRANT]

Q15 Over the past 12 months, have you experienced any of the following barriers while dealing with any federally regulated organization?

REMINDER: "Federally regulated organizations" include banks, ferries, airlines, interprovincial rail and bus travel, radio and television stations, courier and mail services, Internet service companies, and First Nations band councils. It also includes all Government of Canada buildings and public spaces, such as national parks.

Please choose "yes" or "no" for each option listed:

01 – Yes, I have experienced this barrier dealing with a federally regulated organization
02 – No, I have not experienced this barrier dealing with a federally regulated organization

a) *People not speaking slowly and clearly*

b) *Not being provided with alternate formats of documents even when requested in advance (such as CART captions, printed versions of videos or audiovisual versions of printed material)*

c) *Not being provided with sign language interpreters, even when this was requested in advance.*

d) *Documents not being provided in formats usable by screen readers or that use small fonts or low contrast colours.*

e) *No alternative text for images in official documents online, or people not describing images they show in a presentation.*

f) *Not being able to adjust what web sites look like to better meet your needs (e.g. turning off time-out functions, making fonts bigger, etc.).*

g) *Documents or websites with text that is confusing*

F. Barriers related to the design and delivery of programs and services

Q16. Over the past 12 months, have you experienced any of the following while dealing with any federally regulated organization?

REMINDER: "Federally regulated organizations" include banks, ferries, airlines, interprovincial rail and bus travel, radio and television stations, courier and mail services, Internet service companies, and First Nations band councils. It also includes all Government of Canada buildings and public spaces, such as national parks.

Please choose "yes" or "no" for each option listed:

01 – Yes, I have experienced this barrier dealing with a federally regulated organization

02 – No, I have not experienced this barrier dealing with a federally regulated organization

a) Documents not being in plain language

b) Not being given enough time or help to complete a form or application

c) Not being given accommodation for a service animal, such as a guide dog, therapy animal, or other service animal

d) A barrier to using an assistive device
(such as voice recognition software, text to audio, mobility aids; hearing aids; computer-electronic assistive devices, devices that have been changed to make them easier to use, etc.)

Q17. In the past 12 months, have you needed any other services or supports when you were accessing services or programs from federally regulated organizations?

01 – Yes

02 – No SKIP TO PREAMBLE BEFORE Q. 19

Q18. **[IF YES TO Q17, ASK]** Please describe what other support you need:

Please type your answer

OPEN ENDED

G. Barriers related to attitudes

Sometimes persons with disabilities are treated badly or differently because of ideas, beliefs, misconceptions – or attitudes – that other people have about disability. This is called an "attitudinal barrier."

Q19. Before today, had you heard of the term "attitudinal barrier"?

01 – Yes

02 – No

Q20. Over the past 12 months, have you experienced any of the following attitudinal barriers while interacting with any federally regulated organization?

REMINDER: "Federally regulated organizations" include banks, ferries, airlines, interprovincial rail and bus travel, radio and television stations, courier and mail services, Internet service companies, and First Nations band councils. It also includes all Government of Canada buildings and public spaces, such as national parks.

Please check all that apply

RANDOMIZE 01-07

01 – People judging you or being rude or disrespectful about a disability

02 – People touching you or handling your assistive devices without permission

03 – People not speaking directly to you or not at your eye level

04 – People not being flexible about how you need to be accommodated
(for example refusing to extend deadlines, insisting activities take place in inaccessible places)

05 – Not allowing service animals, or inappropriate touching or feeding of service animals

06 – Being pointed out or humiliated for behaviours you cannot control
(for example fidgeting, having to get up and walk, looking away when speaking to someone, etc.)

07 – Not allowing caregivers or attendants to attend meetings or appointments with you

97 – Other attitudinal barrier (Please specify _____) **[CODE IF NUMBERS WARRANT]**

99 – None of the above **[SINGLE MENTION]**

Section C: More about you

Finally, a few questions about you to help us analyze the results of this survey. All of the information you provide will be kept confidential. It is only used to help us better understand the responses of different types of people.

Q21. What is the highest level of formal education that you have completed?

Please choose one response

01 – Less than a high school diploma or equivalent

02 – High school diploma or equivalent

03 – Registered Apprenticeship or other trades certificate or diploma

04 – College, CEGEP or other non-university certificate or diploma

05 – University certificate or diploma below bachelor's level

06 – Bachelor's degree

07 – Post-graduate degree above bachelor's level

99 – Prefer not to answer

Q22. Which of the following categories best describes your current employment status?
Please choose one response

01 – Working full time, that is, 30 or more hours per week
02 – Working part time, that is, less than 30 hours per week
03 – Self-employed
04 – Unemployed, but looking for work
05 – A student attending school full-time
06 – Retired
07 – Not in the workforce (full time homemaker, not looking for work)
08 – Other
99 – Prefer not to answer

Q23. Which of the following best describes you? Are you…?
01 – First Nations
02 – Inuk
03 – Métis
04 – A non-Indigenous person **[SINGLE MENTION]**
99 – Prefer not to answer **[SINGLE MENTION]**

IF 01, 02 OR 03 SKIP TO Q25

Q24. Which of the following best describes how you identify?

06 – Arab
04 – Black
03 – Chinese
05 – Filipino
07 – Latin American
10 – Korean
11 – Japanese
02 – South Asian (e.g., East Indian, Pakistani, Sri Lankan)
08 – Southeast Asian (e.g., Vietnamese, Cambodian, Laotian, Thai)
09 – West Asian (e.g., Iranian, Afghan)
01 – White
97– Other group (Please specify _____) **[DO NOT CODE]**
99 – Prefer not to answer **[SINGLE MENTION]**

Q25. While the list below may be limited, please select the option that best describes you.

We are asking this question to better understand how Canada's various population groups are affected by accessibility problems.

Please choose one response

01 – Heterosexual (straight)
02 – Lesbian or Gay
03 – Bisexual or Pansexual
97 – Other (Please specify _____) **[DO NOT CODE]**
99 – Prefer not to answer

Q26. Which of the following categories best describes your total household income? That is, the total income of all persons in your household combined, before taxes.

Please choose one response

01 – Under $20,000
02 – $20,000 to just under $40,000
03 – $40,000 to just under $60,000
04 – $60,000 to just under $80,000
05 – $80,000 to just under $100,000
06 – $100,000 to just under $150,000
07 – $150,000 and over
99 – Prefer not to answer

Q27. What is the size of the community where you currently live?

Please choose one response

01 – City with a population of over one million
02 – City with a population of between 100,000 and one million
03 – City/town with a population of between 30,000 and 99,999
04 – Town with a population between 1,000 and 29,999
05 – Rural area with a population of less than 1,000
99 – Prefer not to answer

ASK ALL WHO HAVE A DISABILITY IN Q6:

Q28. Environics will be doing some online group discussions and interviews for the Government of Canada on accessibility issues in the coming months. Would you be interested in taking part in this follow-up research as a paid participant?

Yes	**CONTINUE**
No	**THANK AND TERMINATE**

Please provide your contact information. You may be contacted by Environics to see if you qualify for the follow up research.

Your name _____
Your e-mail address _____
Your phone number _____

SHOW:

This survey was conducted on behalf of Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) and a report of its findings will be available on Library and Archives Canada once the project reporting is completed. Thank you very much for your participation.

SHOW:

For more information you can go to the ESDC Canada web site at
https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/accessible-canada.html

ONLINE ENG/FRE END PAGE MESSAGES SHOWN TO RESPONDENTS

[SHOW TO ALL RESPONDENTS WHO **DO NOT QUALIFY**] We're sorry. You do not meet the qualifications for this survey. We sincerely thank you and appreciate your time, dedication, and continued participation in our online surveys.
[SHOW TO ALL RESPONDENTS WHO RECEIVE **QUOTA FULL**] Unfortunately the quota has been reached for your demographic and/or region. We sincerely thank you and appreciate your time, dedication, and continued participation in our online surveys.