



# TOP OF MIND

Answering the Call,  
Adapting to Change.



**2022  
PART 2:  
SURVEY RESPONSES**

**SENIOR EXECUTIVE  
VIEWS**

PRESENTED BY



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## FOREWORD

Good governance matters. Liberal democratic societies rely on the effective relationship between those elected to represent their communities and a select few professional non-partisan civil servants to ensure that day-to-day delivery of services to citizens is reliable, predictable, and reasonably managed. Civil servants also support effective decision-making for those democratically chosen to govern.

Be they municipal, provincial, or federal senior leaders, these civil servants are all distinguished by a “calling to serve.” They have a sense of duty to their communities and a sense of responsibility to help make things better. They put collective interest over personal interest. Usually well educated, they work and live in professional and social circles where the lines between their private selves and public service lives are often part of the same fishbowl. Their opinions and views on matters of state are purposely put aside to provide the best institutional advice to decision makers in the public interest. Often institutional advice is privileged information protected by access to information statutes like and national security legislation.

There are few “safe” spaces or designated fora where senior leaders can exchange unvarnished views on governance, public administration and the changing expectations society has for government. The COVID-19 pandemic has also eliminated the rare opportunities that did exist on the edges of in-person intergovernmental meetings and conferences.

One year after the lockdown, the *Institute on Governance (IOG)*, with the generous support of the *Brian Mulroney Institute of Government (the Mulroney Institute)*, undertook *Top of Mind*, a two-part study engaging senior public service leadership across Canada to gain insights through their eyes as vanguards of public institutions.

Their views reveal that public servants and their work are not immune or sheltered from the same forces shaping civil society. Indeed, those same forces are presenting both opportunities and challenges in both their work and its impact in our communities.

Despite the challenges of the pandemic and the increased complexity of growing social polarization, each participant demonstrated a strong sense of fidelity, duty, responsibility, and pride in their organizations.

The world was turned upside down virtually overnight with the global shutdown to battle COVID-19. Nevertheless, Canadians continued to receive critical services for health, safety, mobility, and access to markets for basic needs. These leaders were instrumental in “keeping us going” during a time of crisis. This report looks at what they have to say about the experience and what they see on the horizon.

Thank you to the *Mulroney Institute* for their generous support and to the dedicated team at the *IOG* who saw this project through.

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 PUBLIC SERVICE MATTERS

The impact of the public sector in Canada is substantial. The overall public sector—including all three levels of government—represents roughly 40 per cent of Canada's GDP and an estimated 20 per cent of its workforce. It supports citizens in areas as diverse as education, health, social services, infrastructure, immigration, environment and climate change, security and defence, resource and economic development, and the administration of justice. Many of these areas are of shared interest between jurisdictions.

Historically, responsible liberal democratic societies have relied on the effective relationship between those elected to represent citizens and a professional non-partisan public service to ensure that the delivery of programs and services to the population is reliable, predictable, and reasonably managed. The public service also supports effective decision-making structures and processes required by those democratically chosen to form governments.

The public sector today is both driving and being driven by change of unprecedented proportions, and its leaders must adapt, innovate, and transform government organizations and services at a quickening pace. Major shifts in citizen expectations, adverse social issues, economic uncertainties, the nature of work, the role of governments, and evolving technology and information, to name a few, will challenge democratic governments and the delivery of services to citizens for years to come. Public service leaders and executives are on the front line. As vanguards of the public interest and trust, they possess unique knowledge, perspectives, and insights into the forces shaping society. There is a need to give voice to, and share learnings from, the experience of senior public service leaders regarding today's issues and future challenges.



1 Based on pre-pandemic numbers. Sources include: 1] "Changing the Game: Public Sector Productivity in Canada", Canada's Public Policy Forum, 2014; 2] "Canada Year Book - Government", Statistics Canada 2011, Pub 11-402-x, <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/11-402-x/2011000/chap/gov-gouv/gov-gouv-eng.htm> (accessed Jan 2021)



## 1.2 THE *TOP OF MIND* INITIATIVE

In the spring of 2021, the *Institute on Governance (IOG)*, with the support of the *Brian Mulroney Institute of Government (the Mulroney Institute)*, launched the *Top of Mind* initiative, a national consultation with Canadian public sector leaders and senior executives from the federal, provincial, territorial, and municipal governments. The initiative solicited frank and candid analysis of the key challenges, valuable lessons and anticipated future trends facing Canada and its public institutions, as seen through the eyes of senior public sector leaders.

The essential objective of the *Top of Mind* research initiative is to provide public service leaders and other interested parties with a compendium and analysis of their colleagues' perspectives and thus serve as a catalyst to share insights, lessons, and potential solutions. By so doing, *Top of Mind* strives to better our understanding of the evolving role of the public sector and its leaders, and to facilitate further progress in public service governance, administration, and leadership.

*Top of Mind* research was conducted primarily through consultations with over 40 influential public sector leaders, as well as an online survey of senior public service executives. Both were conducted in the spring and summer of 2021. This report documents the results, findings, and conclusions of the online survey.

## 2. SENIOR EXECUTIVE VIEWS

### 2.1 PUBLIC SECTOR SURVEY

Through its Top of Mind initiative, the IOG sought the views of senior executives through an online survey. This survey is unique from a combination of important perspectives:

- It deals with matters and issues critical to the effective governance and leadership of our public institutions and of the consequence for Canadians.
- It reflects the views of participants from all three orders of government — federal, provincial, and territorial, and municipal.
- It focuses exclusively on the views of senior executives. This includes deputy ministers (DMs), associate deputy ministers (ADMs), and director generals (DGs, or equivalent) in the federal/provincial/territorial public services, and municipal chief administration officers (CAOs) and their direct reports (or equivalents).

As such, this survey provides detailed information on the various issues faced by today's senior executives and public service organizations within the context of the growing challenges and complexities of Canadian society.

This section highlights the survey's main findings and results, presented in four broad objectives and topics: Society and Governments, Public Sector Governance, Public Service Challenges and Solutions, and Leadership. The full survey results (both quantitative results and participants' written comments) and supporting methodology are documented in the Annex to this document.

The survey results represent a range of views on the issues examined, reflecting the fact that it includes participants from all three levels of government. It also echoes the complexity and diversity of public policy areas, operations, and challenges. In order to better appreciate this diversity, the survey presented participants with the opportunity to provide written comments or add other sub-elements to some of the survey questions. The majority of the comments received are included in the Annex (Subsection B.3), and selected examples are reproduced in the following sections where appropriate (i.e., box inserts).

## 2.2 KEY RESULTS AND FINDINGS

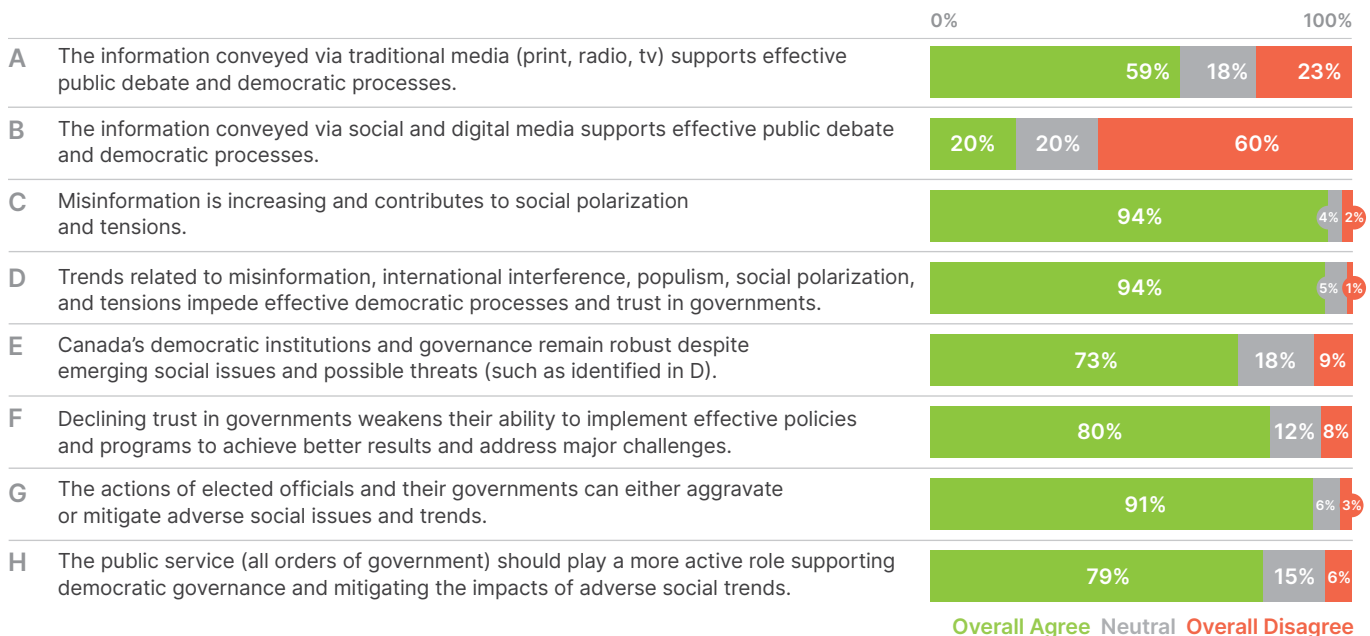
### A. CANADIAN SOCIETY AND GOVERNMENTS

Canadian society is evolving rapidly, and accordingly, governments must contend with evermore complex and far-reaching issues. The survey asked executives their views about current social issues and trends faced by governments and their institutions. The responses from the majority depict a worrisome social environment and the important role that governments and senior executives can play in responding to issues and building trust in governments (Exhibit 1).

- While a clear majority of respondents (59 per cent) agreed that traditional media supports effective public debate and democratic processes, a similar percentage (60 per cent) indicated social and digital media do not.
- Executives surveyed were almost unanimous (94 per cent) that misinformation is increasing and contributing to adverse social trends such as polarization. As well, they agree (94 per cent) that adverse social trends (media misinformation, polarization and tensions, international interference, etc.) inhibit democracy and trust in governments. Despite these challenges, about three quarters of executives (73 per cent) consider that Canadian democratic institutions remain robust.
- A clear majority (81 per cent) are of the view that declining trust weakens their governments’ ability to implement good public policies and programs or deal with important challenges.
- When it comes to tackling problems, executives believe (91 per cent) the actions of governments and elected officials are key and can either aggravate or mitigate adverse issues. Executives also felt (79 per cent) the public service should be more active in mitigating the effects of deleterious social trends.

#### EXHIBIT 1: SOCIAL ISSUES AND TRENDS IMPACTING GOVERNMENTS

**Survey Question 1:** As a senior public service executive, indicate the extent you agree or disagree with the following statements:<sup>1</sup>



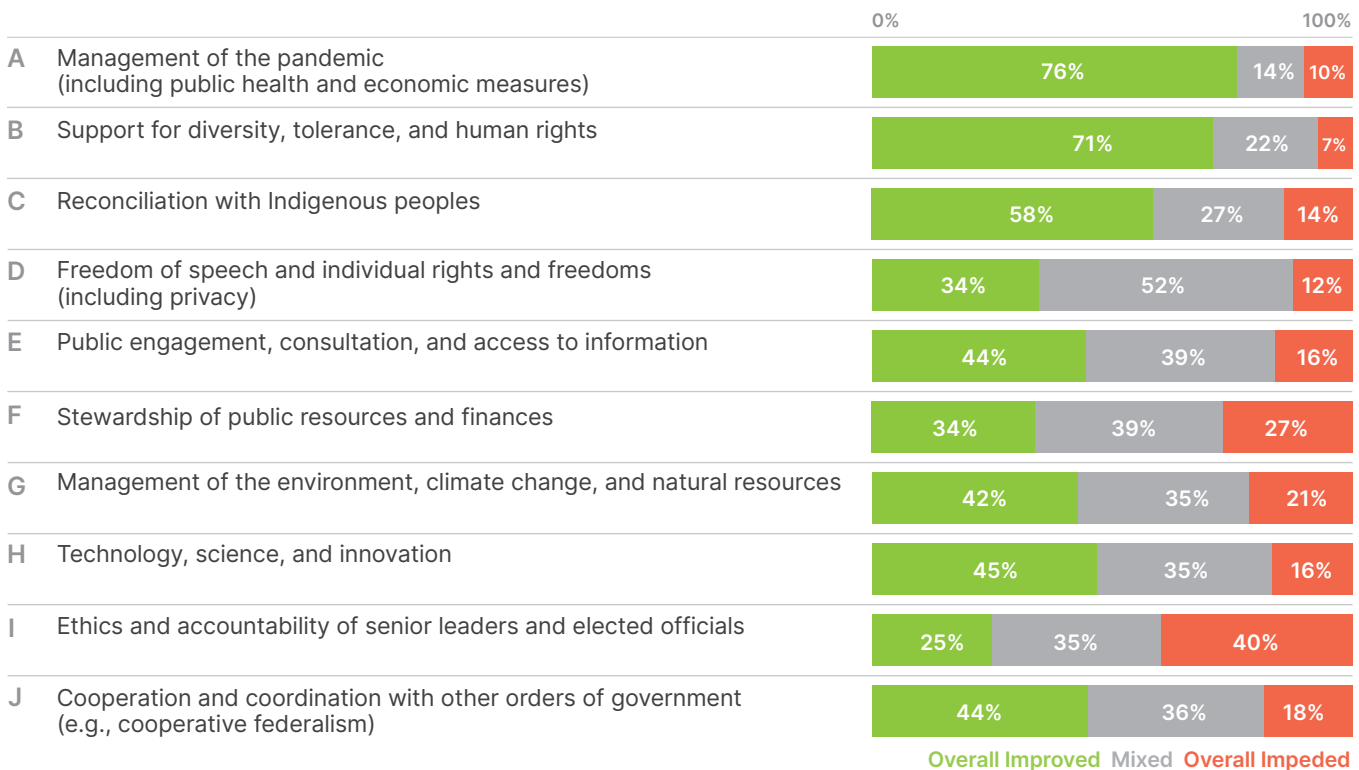
<sup>1</sup> Note: Some responses categories have been regrouped for presentation purposes. See Annex B. for unabridged results.

Following this last point, executives were asked if their government’s policies and recent actions helped improve or impeded social cohesions and trust in governments (Exhibit 2).

- A majority of executives surveyed thought that policies and actions in the following areas had positive effects:
  - Management of the pandemic (76 per cent);
  - Support for diversity, tolerance, and human rights generally (71 per cent); and
  - Reconciliation with Indigenous peoples (58 per cent).
- In the first two areas noted above (management of the pandemic and support for diversity), executives from the west and northern regions were notably less positive than their counterparts from central and eastern Canada.
- It is striking that more respondents considered that the ethics and accountability of senior leaders and elected officials had impeded cohesion and trust, compared to those who held the opposite view (40 per cent vs. 25 per cent). On this issue, more federal executives reported that trust and cohesion were impeded than their provincial/territorial and municipal counterparts.
- In most of the other areas identified, overall results were less decisive (items D to J). Generally, there were no big differences between executives who held positive views and those who reported there were mixed or no effects. In one instance, a small majority (52 per cent) indicated that the support for freedom of speech and for individual rights and freedoms had either no or mixed effects.
- With respect to actions in the broad area of the environment, climate change, and natural resources (Item G), more respondents from the west and north felt there were either no or mixed effects (43 per cent) or that trust and cohesion were impeded (33 per cent), than those from other regions who generally held more positive views.

**EXHIBIT 2: GOVERNMENT POLICIES AND ACTIONS IMPACTING COHESION AND TRUST**

**Survey Question 2:** Overall, have your government’s policies and actions in the following key areas helped improve or impede social cohesion and trust in governments?<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> Note: Some response categories have been regrouped and “N/A or Don’t Know” category excluded. See Annex B.

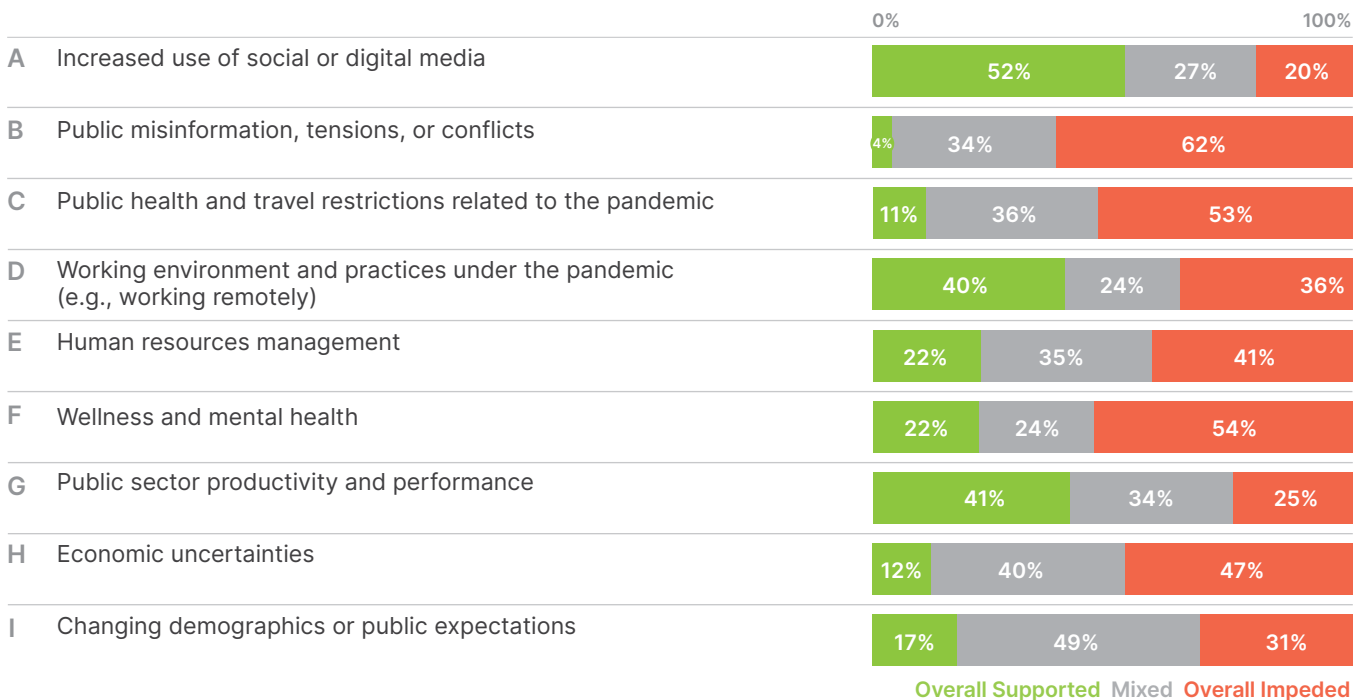


As well, the survey explored what major issues or trends could affect their organizations’ delivery of programs, services, and results for its citizens (Exhibit 3).

- The dominant views of executives were that the following issues or factors represented impediments to effective delivery and results:
  - Public misinformation, tensions, or conflicts (62 per cent),
  - Wellness and mental health (54 per cent),
  - Public health and travel restrictions under the pandemic (53 per cent),
  - Economic uncertainties (47 per cent vs. 12 per cent who reported the opposite), and
  - Human resources management (41 per cent vs. 22 per cent for the opposite).
- Executives from the west, north and east regions were more definite that HR management issues impeded program delivery and results, whereas those from the central region (mostly federal executives) were more neutral.
- Despite concerns with social and digital media’s impact on public debate (Exhibit 1), senior executives (mostly in provincial and federal governments) believe that the use of these media supported program delivery and results (52 per cent).
- Similarly, more executives assessed trends in public sector productivity and performance as positive (41 per cent vs. 25 per cent impeded). These positive views were more predominant in eastern and central Canada. In two areas, opinions were more diverse and did not point to a predominant view one way or the other: “Working environment and practices under the pandemic” and “Changing demographics and public expectations.”

**EXHIBIT 3: IMPACT OF ISSUES ON ABILITY OF GOVERNMENTS TO ACHIEVE DESIRED RESULTS**

**Survey Question 3:** How and to what extent have recent issues or trends in the following areas affected the ability of your organization to effectively deliver pro-grams and services and achieve results?<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> Note: Some response categories have been regrouped and “N/A or Don’t Know” category excluded. See Annex B.

In light of the diversity of survey participants, the results present a wide range of views on most of the issues and questions examined. The selected comments presented (insert) further illustrate this diversity and complement the quantitative results presented.

## CANADIAN SOCIETY AND GOVERNMENTS SELECTED COMMENTS

*«Il y a un risque de gouverner selon les tendances des média sociaux qui représentent souvent une frange minoritaire de la population. À gouverner pour rallier tous les groupes minoritaires, il y a risque de fracture sociale.»*

*“Canadians don’t know how government and democracy works. They don’t know how Ottawa works. This makes them feel like they are on the outside, and as a result, they are more susceptible to the echo-chamber polemics of social media channels. Why are Canadians so ignorant of how decisions get made and their role as citizens?”*

*“For instance, social and digital media can support effective debate and social democratic processes depending on what type of media you follow. The issue is that there seems to be far more fringe elements on these platforms than on the traditional platforms/media.”*

*“Trust and integrity are fundamental but eroding. Relativism and the unchallenged rewriting of history are cancerous but unchecked”.*

*“Response to the pandemic increased trust and faith in the Government of Canada.”*

*“There is a reckoning underway to come to terms with racism and oppression against Indigenous and other racialized individuals. Sparked by a number of public events (e.g., George Floyd), my organization is seized with reconciliation, atonement, and learning.”*

*“Given what is happening in the US and other countries as they move towards an oligarchy or dictatorships, Canada as a country is emerging as a democratic world leader as this pandemic has been handled at all levels of government in a democratic way whereby the health of Canadians is placed well ahead of political priorities”*

*“Diversity and inclusion expectations are extremely high, as are obligations to support mental health. Pressures on senior leaders and managers is escalating to an unreasonable level.”*

*“Social media has been an effective media for delivering and making Canadian more aware of the issues Indigenous people face in Canada.”*

## B. PUBLIC SECTOR GOVERNANCE

As society evolves and new issues emerge, government challenges become more complex, “wicked” problems become more prevalent, and citizens become more demanding. As a result, the sound governance of public institutions matters even more. In the survey, good public sector governance was positioned as ensuring effective strategic direction, coordination, oversight, and accountability within and across different governmental organizations.

Survey participants were asked to identify which major area or issues presented the most important challenge to effective governance for their respective organizations (Exhibit 4).

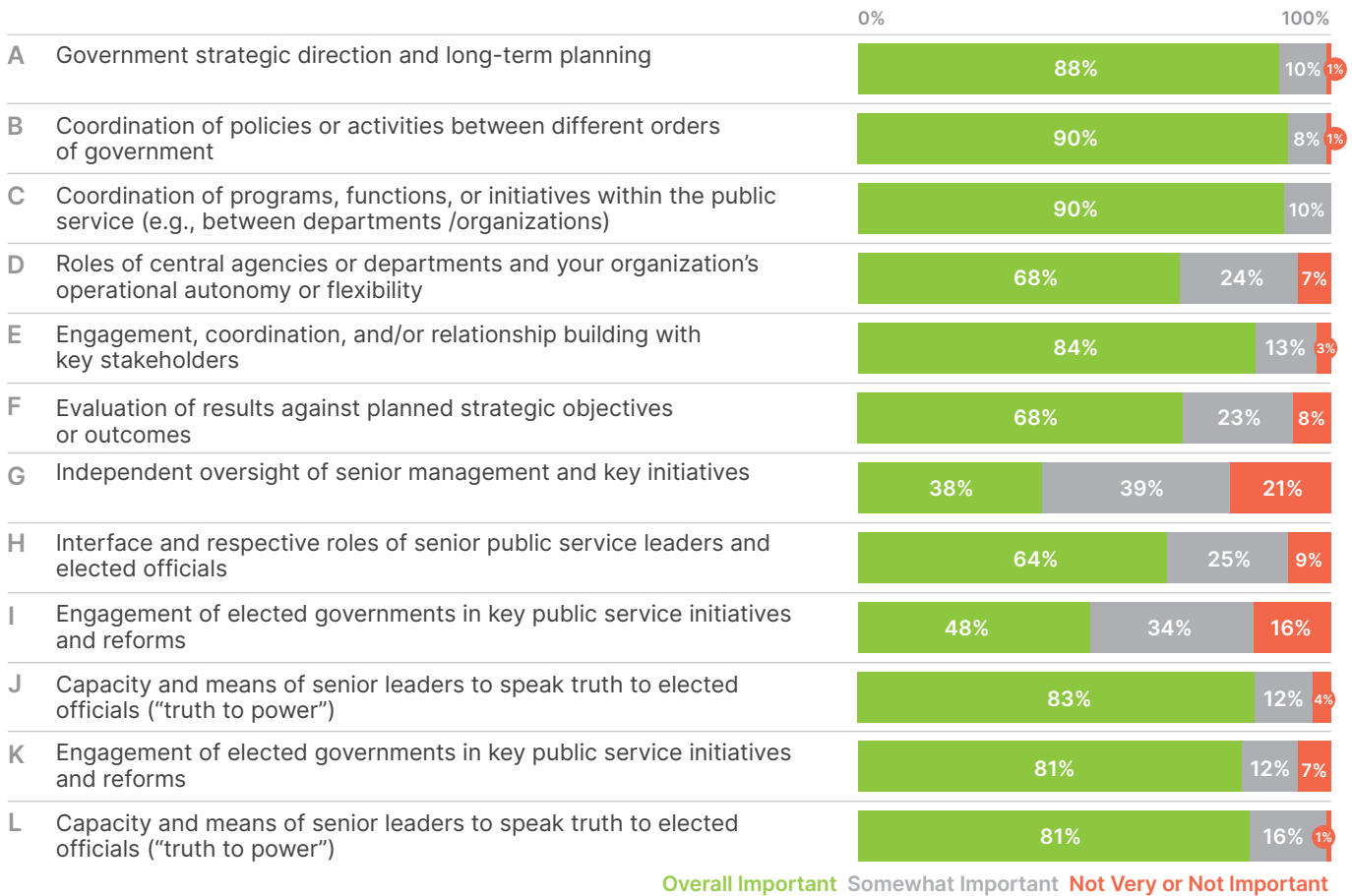
- When it comes to governance, many factors are considered vital. Executives surveyed overwhelmingly (> 80 per cent) identified a number of challenging areas where more effective governance would be important:
  - Coordination of programs, functions, or initiatives within the public service (e.g., between government departments or organizations; 90 per cent);
  - Coordination of policies or activities between different orders of government (90 per cent)
  - Government strategic direction and long-term planning (88 per cent)
  - Capacity and means of senior leaders to speak truth to elected officials—“truth to power” (83 per cent)
  - Available “safe spaces” for senior leaders to critically explore thorny issues and policies (81 per cent)
  - Appointment of senior leaders to ensure public service capacity, expertise, and stability (81 per cent)
- Other challenge areas that were assessed as important by a majority of executives (60–70 per cent) include the following:
  - Evaluation of results against planned strategic objectives or outcomes,
  - Roles of central agencies or departments and your organization’s operational autonomy or flexibility, and
  - Interface and respective roles of senior public service leaders and elected officials.

On average, executives judged the following two governance challenges as either important or somewhat important: “Independent oversight of senior management and key initiatives” and “Engagement of elected governments in key public service initiatives and reforms.” A small but notable number of executives viewed these as not very important (15–20 per cent). As well, federal executives considered the engagement of elected governments much less important than their provincial, territorial, and municipal counterparts.

1 Note: Some response categories have been regrouped and “N/A or Don’t Know” category excluded. See Annex B.

**EXHIBIT 4: AREAS OR ISSUES THAT REPRESENT GOVERNANCE CHALLENGES**

**Survey Question 5:** From the perspective of your organization to what extent do the following areas or issues reflect important challenges that would require more effective governance?<sup>1</sup>



The selected comments presented (insert on following page) reflect a wide range of executive concerns and are quite consistent with findings from the consultations with senior leaders.

<sup>1</sup> Note: Some response categories have been regrouped and the "N/A or Don't Know" category excluded. See Annex B.

## PUBLIC SECTOR GOVERNANCE SELECTED COMMENTS

*“Budget/Treasury Board processes are out of step with pace of governance in twenty-first century and need for efficiency in program and service delivery while still ensuring accountability.”*

*«Le fédéralisme coopératif est une vue de l'esprit, que le Fédéral ne met pas en pratique.»*

*“Increasing polarization and incivility amongst elected officials.”*

*“Federal/provincial jurisdictional conflicts—role of “levels” of governments in increasing the complexity of problems and potential solutions.”*

*«Capacité des élus à comprendre les problèmes complexes. L'agenda politique personnel de certains hauts fonctionnaires (certains hauts fonctionnaires ont plus à cœur leur bien—avancement de carrière—que le bien commun).»*

*“Too many concurrent priorities and social change initiatives, while ignoring the day job.”*

*“Decentralized government can lead to better policy-making.”*

*“Incapacity of centre to make timely, effective decisions.”*

*«Il y a actuellement une surenchère en ce qui concerne l'évaluation des résultats vs la planification, qui détourne les efforts de la réalisation des changements attendus. Pire, elle induit la production d'une planification allégée, gage de succès lors de ces*

*évaluations. La raison derrière cela étant les difficultés à disposer des ressources requises pour réaliser les changements, notamment en ressources humaines ...»*

*“Senior leaders bicker, and the public sees that, it decreases public confidence.”*

*“The conversation is possibly different with respect to policy, but when it comes to effective program and service delivery, most federal departments and agencies have TOO MUCH governance and oversight. Everyone seems to need to be seen at every table and feel heard, and there are way too many tables”*

*“Senior managers need to be challenged.”*

*“Political staffers have too much influence and direct connections between ministers and deputy ministers are less frequent than never before. ”*

*“The Westminster construct of the public service must remain strong and intact. The divide between the political component and the public service component must remain and the senior ranks of the PS must be able to give clear advice and guidance to ministers and their staff.”*

*“Cabinet processes are broken; decision-making is ad hoc and topsy-turvy, causing greater chaos in the public service and significantly increasing workload without delivering more meaningful results.”*

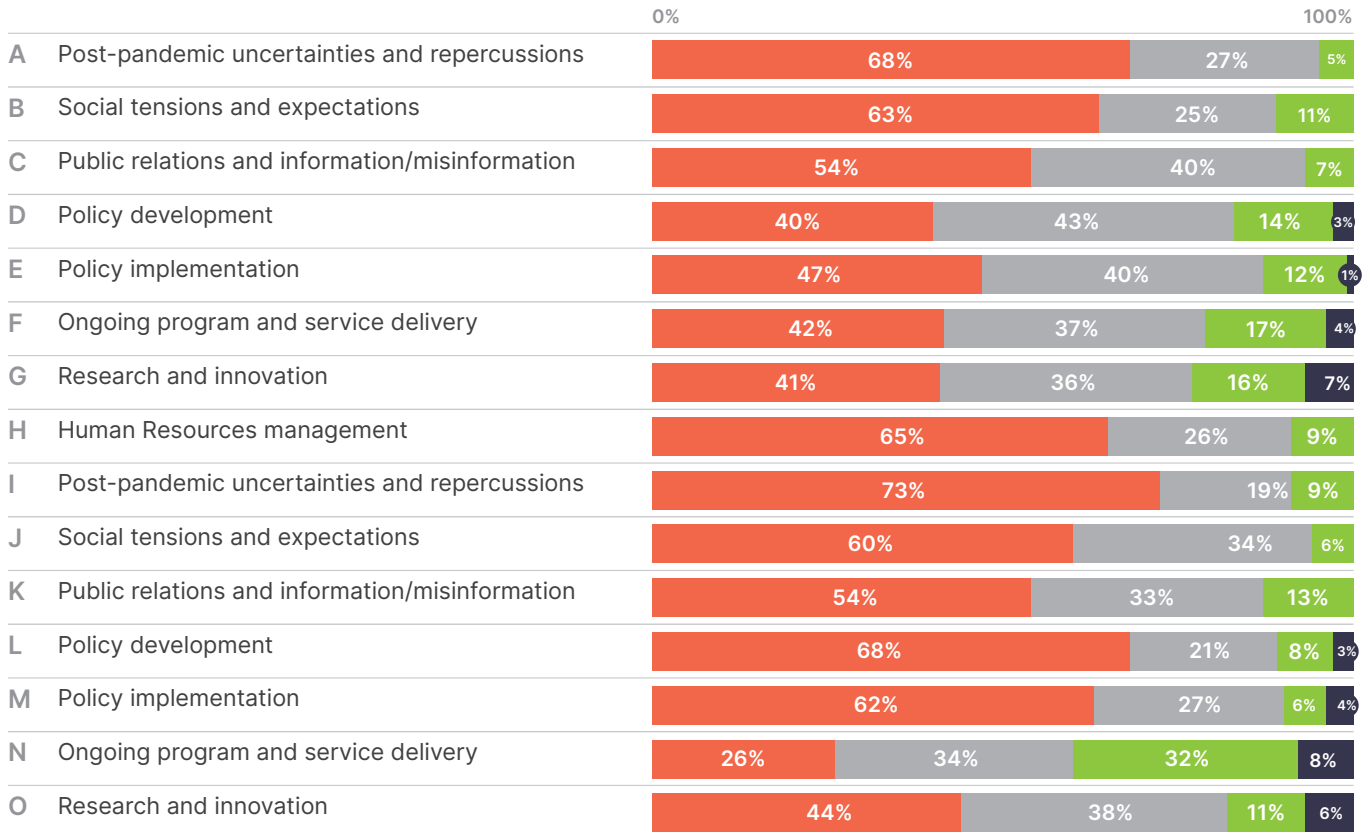
## C. PUBLIC SERVICE – CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS

The survey explored what the greatest expected challenges for public sector organizations over the next three years are (Exhibit 5).

- A solid majority of executives surveyed identified the most important challenges facing their organizations as follows:
  - Fiscal and financial management (73 per cent),
  - Reconciliation with Indigenous peoples (68 per cent\*),
  - Post-pandemic repercussions and uncertainties (68 per cent\*),
  - Human resources management (65 per cent\*),
  - Social tensions and expectations (63 per cent),
  - Security issues, including cyber security (63 per cent\*), and
  - Changing work environment (60 per cent\*).
- *The asterisks (\*) above identify those areas in which federal executives reported being significantly more challenged than their counterparts. Also noteworthy, public service heads and deputy heads expected “changing work environments” to be less challenging than subordinate executives.*
- Other issues were identified as not as crucial, which most executives assessed as either challenging or somewhat challenging. This second group included the following:
  - Public relations and information/misinformation,
  - Diversity and inclusion,
  - Policy implementation and policy development,
  - Governance issues,
  - Ongoing program and service delivery, and
  - Research and Innovation.
- Deputy heads found “Public relations and information” and “Policy development” less challenging than their colleagues. Similarly, executives at the director general or director level expect tougher challenges with “Ongoing programs and delivery” and “Research and innovation.”
- A number of executives considered “International tensions or conflicts” not very or not important (32 per cent). This is understandable given that, depending on their respective mandates, international issues do not affect all public sector organizations in a similar manner. This also reflects the overall diversity of the public sector and its various organizations and, by extension, that of the survey participants.

**EXHIBIT 5: AREAS OF EXPECTED CHALLENGES OVER THE NEXT THREE YEARS**

**Survey Question 7:** To what extent do you expect your organization to face important challenges over the next three years with respect to the following areas?<sup>1</sup>



Overall Challenging Somewhat Challenging Not Challenging N/A or Don't Know

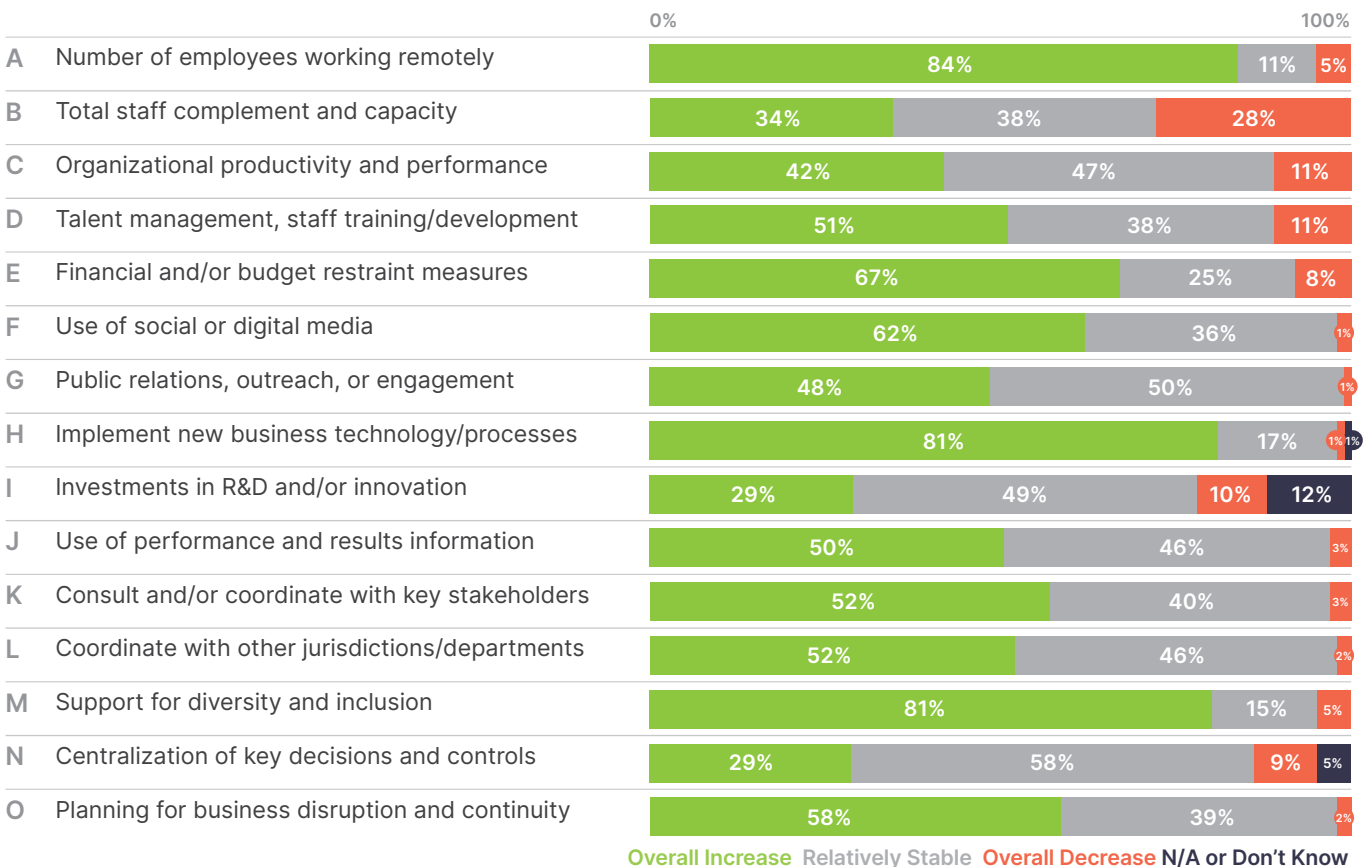
<sup>1</sup> Note: Some response categories have been regrouped, and % labels of less than 1% not shown. See Annex B.

Public sector diversity also appeared to be a factor in the next survey question focused on public sector changes. Executives were queried as to whether their organizations expected to face increases or decreases in a number of areas (Exhibit 6). While their answers were overall more varied, highpoints are noted in the next paragraphs.

- Predominantly, executives expect increases in the following:
  - Number of employees working remotely (84 per cent\*)
  - New business technologies or processes (81 per cent)
  - Support for diversity and inclusion (81 per cent\*)
  - Financial and/or budget restraint measures (67 per cent)
  - Use of social or digital media (62 per cent)
  - Planning for business disruption and continuity (58 per cent)
  - Consultation or coordination with key stakeholders (57 per cent\*)
  - Coordination with other jurisdictions or departments (52 per cent)
  - Talent management, training, and development (51 per cent)

**EXHIBIT 6: AREAS OF EXPECTED CHANGES FOR ORGANIZATIONS OVER THE NEXT THREE YEARS**

**Survey Question 8:** What changes (increases or decreases) is your organization likely to face or adopt over the next three years in the following areas:<sup>1</sup>





- On average, more federal executives anticipate increases than their counterparts to “Number of employees working remotely,” “Support for diversity and inclusion,” and “Consultation with stakeholders” (i.e., items with asterisks in prior list). While all felt “employees working remotely” would increase, deputy heads much less so.
- What is most telling, there were no areas identified through the survey where more than a third of executives expect decreases. However, a high number of executives anticipate stability (neither increase nor decrease) with respect to the following:
  - Centralization of key decisions and controls (58 per cent);
  - Public relations, outreach, or engagement (50 per cent);
  - Investments in R&D and/or innovation (49 per cent); and
  - Organizational productivity and performance (47 per cent).
- Survey participants could voluntarily identify as being part of a visible minority. More visible minority executives (50 per cent) expect the “Use of social and digital media” to remain stable, rather than increase. Those executives also expect an increase in “Support for diversity and inclusion” but by a much smaller majority than non-minorities (57 per cent vs. 84 per cent).

## PUBLIC SERVICE CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS SELECTED COMMENTS

*«Le principal défi de la fonction publique est définitivement son incapacité grandissante à se positionner comme un employeur d'intérêt. Une reconnaissance publique famélique (manque de confiance envers les élus, attitude méprisante à l'égard des « fonctionnaires » en raison tant de commentaires déplacés de la part des élus qui font porter à la fonction publique le poids de leurs échecs ou incohérences plutôt que de l'assumer, qu'en raison d'un historique peu reluisant au plan de la performance de certains fonctionnaires) et des conditions de travail figées et de moins en moins concurrentielles »*

*“Recruiting and retaining qualified staff is the biggest challenge, which was an issue pre-COVID and has been exasperated with COVID. Reconciliation continues to be a very challenging issue—government doesn't know what to do so hiring practices, accommodations, and jiggling programs that overcompensate puts further strain on the system. The third challenge is the fiscal reality that politicians refuse to accept, they are not willing to say no to anything. Not sustainable”*

*“#1. Digitization to decrease in-person services and speed up processes; #2. Recruitment and retention strategies for dwindling human resources and share these measures with other sectors (i.e., health care, LTC); #3. planning for business disruption and continuity—plans in place ”*

*“Security, Technology, Human Resources.”*

*“Relevance; Diversity and Inclusion, Post Pandemic Operations”*

*“Three most important challenges: Addressing Systemic Racism/Reconciliation; Digital issues (online harms, ransomware, evidence gathering, etc.); Resources (financial and human)—combination of heavy pressures and potential fiscal restraint. No clear plan for addressing them.”*

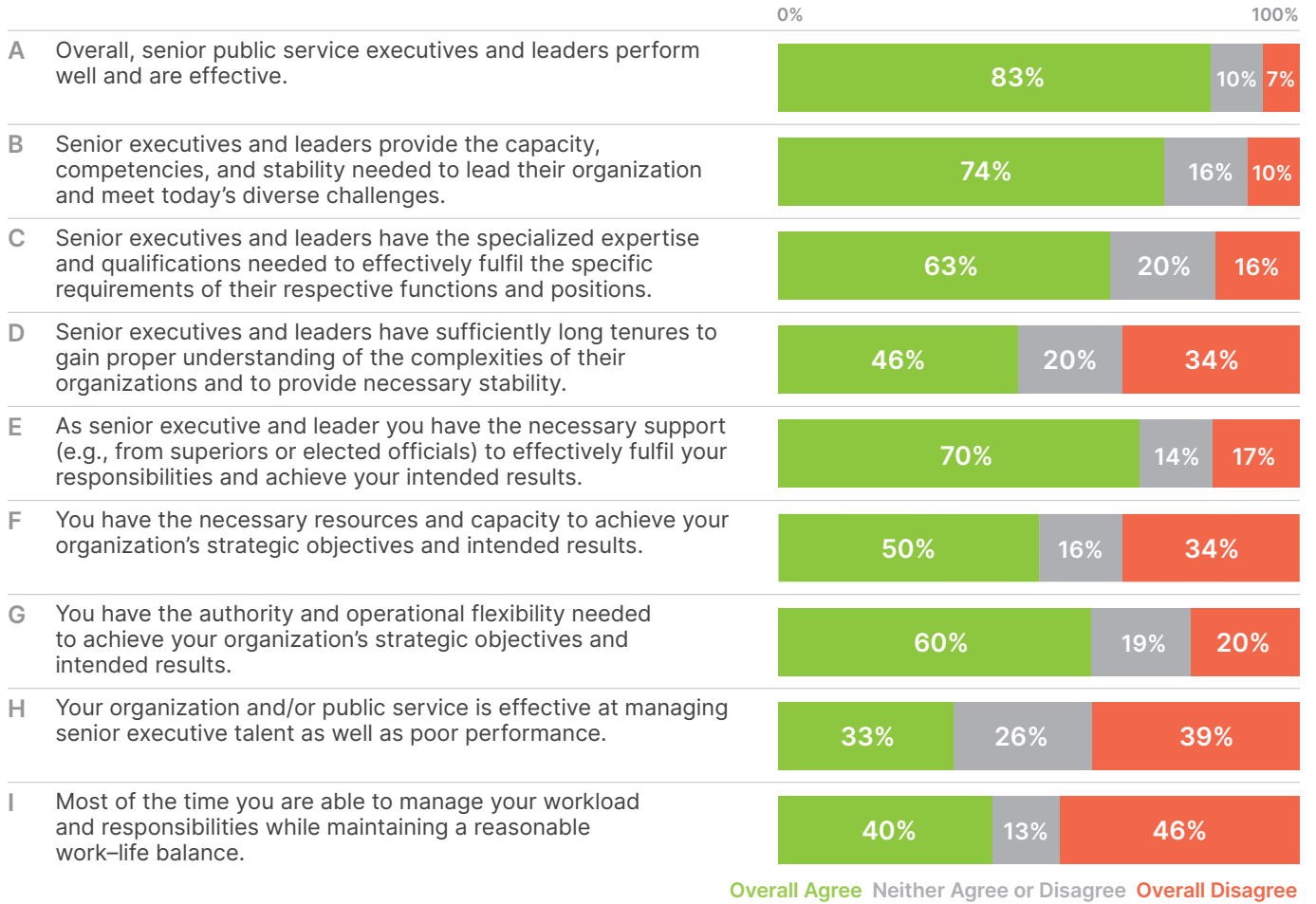
## D. LEADERSHIP AND ADVICE

The last section of the survey dealt with public service leadership. The survey focused on two issues: the current state of leadership within the public service (Exhibit 7) and the most important factors needed to ensure future executives have the required competencies and are effective (Exhibit 8).

- Overall, executives were confident regarding their colleagues' performance and capabilities. A majority agreed that senior executives and leaders do the following:
  - Perform well and are effective (83 per cent);
  - Provide the capacity, competencies, and stability needed by their organizations (74 per cent);
  - Have the needed support from their bosses or elected officials (70 per cent);
  - Have the specialized expertise and qualifications needed by their positions (63 per cent); and
  - Have the authority and operational flexibility needed to get results (60 per cent).
- A much smaller portion of executives identified as visible minorities agreed that leaders perform well (57 per cent vs. 86 per cent for non-minorities). Also, provincial executives were less in agreement with the need for specialized expertise.
- Most executives said they had the necessary resources and capacity to achieve their organizations' results (50 per cent) and had sufficiently long tenures to properly understand the complexities of their organizations and to provide stability (46 per cent). However, a third (34 per cent) of executives still disagreed that tenures were appropriate.
- Marginally more executives did not agree with two key issues: that they were able to maintain a reasonable work-life balance (46 per cent vs. 41 per cent agreed) and that their organization or public service was effective at managing executive talent and poor performance (39 per cent vs. 33 per cent agreed).

**EXHIBIT 7: STATE OF LEADERSHIP WITHIN THE PUBLIC SERVICE**

**Survey Question 10:** Please indicate the extent you agree or disagree with the following statements pertaining to the current state of leadership of your government’s public service:<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> Note: Some response categories have been regrouped and the “N/A or Don’t Know” category excluded. See Annex B.

Survey participants were asked how to ensure future executives and leaders have the necessary competencies and qualifications and are prepared to assume more senior positions (Exhibit 8).

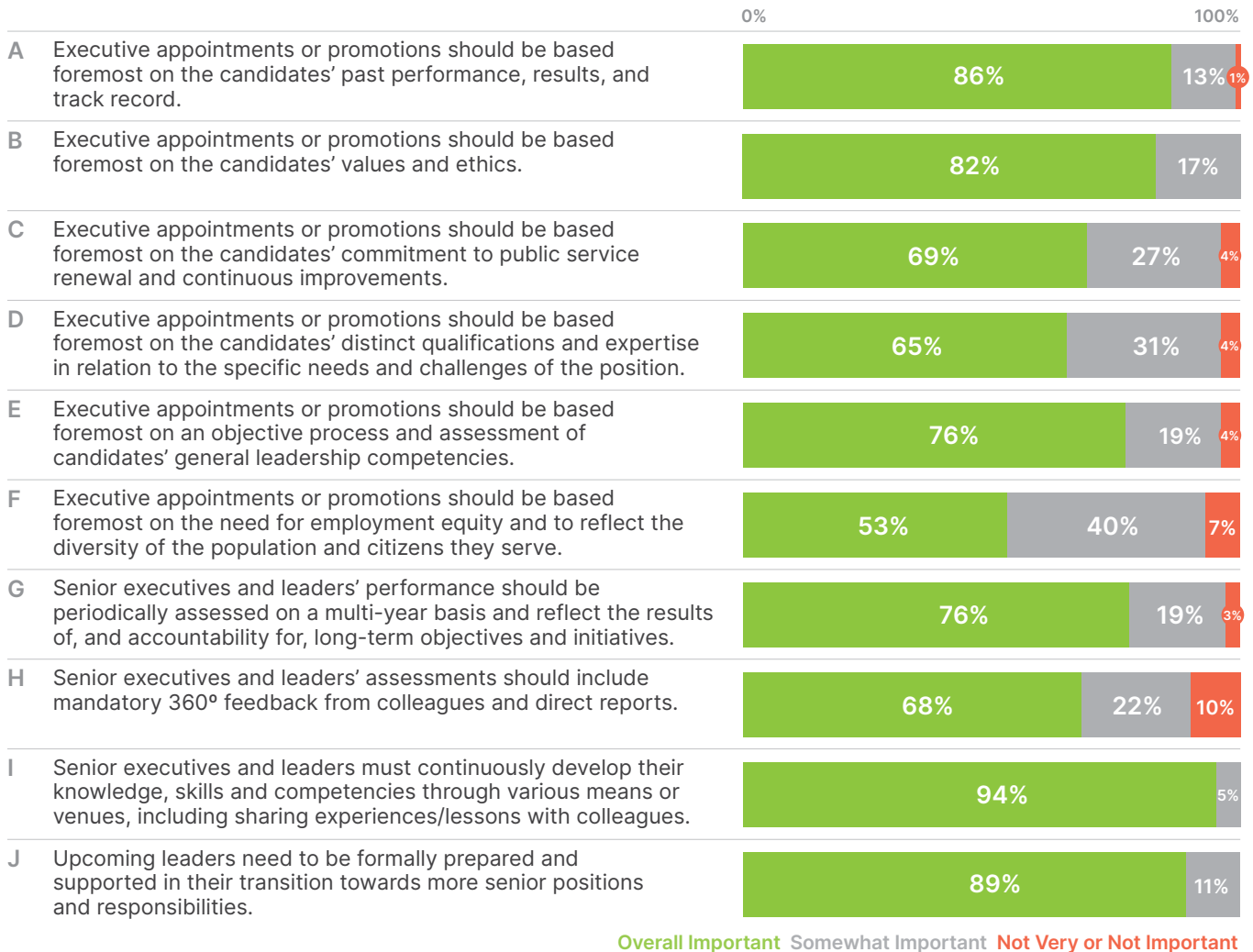
- Most executives found all of the predefined appointment criteria were essential. In order of strongest consensus, senior appointments or promotions should be based on the following:
  - Past performance, results, and track record (86 per cent);
  - Candidates' values and ethics (82 per cent);
  - An objective assessment of general leadership competencies (76 per cent);
  - A commitment to public service renewal and improvements (69 per cent);
  - The distinct qualifications and expertise of the specific position (65 per cent); and
  - The need for employment equity and to reflect the diversity of the population (53 per cent Important, 40 per cent Somewhat Important).
- Executives also agreed that a number of HR and talent management considerations were important, namely the following:
  - Executives must continuously develop their knowledge, skills, and competencies and share lessons with colleagues (94 per cent).
  - Executives need to be prepared and supported in their transition towards more senior positions (89 per cent).
  - Performance should be assessed periodically on a multi-year basis and reflect long-term objectives and initiatives (76 per cent).
  - Performance assessments should include mandatory 360° feedback from colleagues and direct reports (68 per cent).

Finally, the survey offered executives the opportunity to provide advice to senior colleagues and elected officials. A number of insightful comments are replicated here, and a more complete record is provided under Annex B. Most revolved around needed improvements in the following broad areas:

- Political interface and acumen
- Strategic and long-term planning
- HR and talent management (skills, appointments, tenures)
- Coordination and collaboration across jurisdictions
- Focus on implementation and results
- Productivity and performance
- Communications, change management

**EXHIBIT 8: SENIOR PUBLIC SECTOR EXECUTIVES COMPETENCIES AND QUALIFICATIONS**

**Survey Question 11:** What are the most important factors/considerations to ensure senior public sector executives and leaders will have the necessary competencies and qualifications and will be well-prepared to assume more senior responsibilities?<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> Note: Some responses have been regrouped, the "N/A or Don't Know," and responses of less than 1 per cent are not shown. See Annex B.

## PUBLIC SERVICE LEADERSHIP AND ADVICE SELECTED COMMENTS

*"Hoping for more cross-government solutions in the future and "all of government" approaches to social problems and issues vs. finger-pointing, blaming, and forced ownership of problems that happens now."*

*"Shuffle of ADM and DM-level personnel affecting the relationships with stakeholders"*

*"We urgently need a shift in the senior public service from valuing policy discussion to valuing ability to effectively implement in a fiscally responsible and timely manner. We put too much value on people who talk as opposed to those who get things done for Canadians."*

*«Politico-administratif : la capacité à arrimer les ambitions politiques (volonté de changement, enjeux politiques court terme) à celles de la fonction publique (cohérence d'action étatique, enjeux à long terme) est cruciale. »*

*"Training can only go so far. Compassion, self-confidence, open-mindedness, and the ability to motivate are harder to teach."*

*"Interface with political leaders (there is great naiveté about how to be relevant to a GC agenda and position the institution's role and needs)."*

*"360° should be mandatory for all senior execs; too many toxic leaders climbing the ranks while abusive to people at lower levels."*

*"I am uncomfortable answering any of these questions because my position, in my view, limits my ability to discuss policy issues that could be interpreted as partisan."*

*«Au niveau fédéral : reconnaître les compétences des provinces et limiter les intrusions et dédoublements. ... Au niveau des haut-dirigeants: (1) nomination : privilégier la compétence, réduire les nominations partisans ... (2) Enjeux : favoriser la collaboration interministérielle, favoriser l'autonomie et l'imputabilité des ministères vs organismes centraux.»*

*"Leaders need to learn to focus on the needs of their organization and their teams, especially as the culture has shifted to a culture of the individual expression in social media. I am concerned that the 'me' is taking precedence over the 'we.'"*

*"Elected officials need to establish longer term directions that are actually achievable (provide support for resources). "*

*"There is a very small pool of qualified candidates when it comes to senior managers and a large number of retiring senior managers, which poses a challenge; equity and diversity, though important, should not be the priority to fill those gaps at this point. "*

*"Pay close attention to the views of frontline workers. They can be the source of innovation."*

*"Decentralize, let leaders lead while making them truly accountable for their decisions. And stop thinking leaders are interchangeable and that shuffling them around is a good thing, a deep knowledge of a department-sector-industry matters to develop good policy and programs and staying long enough to be accountable for your decisions should be mandatory."*

*"A particular frustration I have is the distance that elected officials often have between themselves and their public service officials. Too much seems to be done through political staff, who take on the role as quasi-ministers."*

## 2.3 CONCLUDING REMARKS

There are some broader observations that flow from the overall survey results. The views expressed by the executives were in many instances diverse and did not always lead to a clear majority opinion. As previously indicated, this is consistent with the survey's broad base of participants, cutting across different levels of governments, regions, and types of public organizations.

Nonetheless, there are also sufficient common threads and prevailing views to be able to draw an overarching narrative on the state and challenges of the public service—as perceived by a majority of survey participants. This narrative is also largely consistent with the perspectives gathered from consultations with prominent public sector leaders.

The survey depicts both the unparalleled daunting environment facing the broader public sector (all three orders of government), and the sector's crucial work solving a growing array of complex issues and ensuring Canadians' health, safety, and prosperity. The narrative evolves around the following:

- Canada faces growing adverse social trends, such as social tensions, polarization, and conflicts, spurred in part by increasing media misinformation. While Canadian democratic institutions are healthy, these adverse trends can nonetheless impede trust in public institutions and governments, as well as their ability to implement good public policies and programs.
- Through their actions, elected officials and governments can either aggravate or mitigate negative social issues and trends. Most senior executives think the public service could do more to support democratic governance and mitigate adverse trends. Recent government policies and actions with respect to the pandemic, support for diversity, inclusion, and reconciliation have improved social cohesion and trust. However, many feel the ethics and accountability of elected officials and senior leaders were harmful.
- In addition to misinformation, social tensions and conflicts, other factors hinder the ability of the public sector to effectively deliver programs and services and get results. Most noted were public health and travel restrictions (pandemic), wellness and mental health issues, economic uncertainties, and concerns over the management of human resources.
- Despite the various issues, many executives viewed positively the productivity and performance of the public sector. Views were more mixed, however, as to the overall efficacy of the pandemic's remote working practices and settings.

- Within this daunting context, executives confirmed the vital importance of sound public governance and agreed on the major hurdles to good governance. The most widely acknowledged hurdles are the following:
  - Coordination of programs, functions, or initiatives within governments;
  - Coordination of policies or activities between governments;
  - Government strategic direction and long-term planning;
  - Capacity and means of senior leaders to speak truth to elected officials;
  - Ability and means for senior leaders to critically explore thorny issues and policies; and
  - Appointment of leaders to ensure senior capacity, expertise, and stability.
- Executives considered the future of the public service by first identifying the important challenges of the next three years. These challenges are the following:
  - Fiscal and financial management,
  - Reconciliation with Indigenous peoples,
  - Post-pandemic repercussions and uncertainties,
  - Human resources management,
  - Social tensions and expectations,
  - Security issues including cyber security, and
  - Changing work environment.
- Second, executives identified what future changes their organizations were likely to face or adopt within the next three years. They expect increases in many areas, namely the following:
  - Number of employees working remotely;
  - New business technologies or processes;
  - Support for diversity and inclusion;
  - Financial and/or budget restraint measures;
  - Use of social or digital media;
  - Planning for business disruption and continuity;
  - Consultation or coordination with key stakeholders;
  - Coordination with other jurisdictions or departments; and
  - Talent management, training, and development.

It is also meaningful that most executives did not expect decreases in any areas.



Overall, the survey depicts the public sector today as struggling against most exacting circumstances. While executives did recognize areas of successes and causes for optimism—such as related to the pandemic and the resiliency of Canadian democratic institutions—the world they face combines an increasingly polarized society, questions of trust in governments, unprecedented crises and complexities, and the growing need to govern and collaborate across diverse jurisdictions and disparate stakeholder interests. All the while, executives are hampered by looming fiscal restraints, economic uncertainties of historic proportions, and ever-divergent political priorities.

The participants' written comments served to complement and help interpret the survey's quantitative results and provide additional insights. What is most conspicuous is the mainly critical tone reflected through most of the comments submitted, which largely mirrors the gravity of the survey's main findings. Some commented on the excessive pressures, numerous concurrent (and conflicting) priorities and unreasonable workload taking its toll on the executive cadre

Despite the many challenges, the executives surveyed were most positive about their own performance. The majority reported that their colleagues are effective, and provide needed capacity and stability to their organizations; they have support from their superiors and the flexibility required to get results; and they bring the necessary expertise and qualifications to their positions.

However, a sizable number of respondents also report being unable to maintain a reasonable work-life balance; and others do not feel their organization is effective at managing executive talent and poor performance.

As mentioned, the survey results reflect the diversity of its participants and opinions and not what otherwise could be seen as likely contradictions. The challenges and circumstances faced by senior public service executives are different and varied and represent a range of situations. Nonetheless, as results have amply demonstrated, there is also much common ground and value in exploring common lessons and solutions.

# ANNEX: SURVEY METHODOLOGY AND DETAILED RESULTS

## B.1 INTRODUCTION

As part of its *Top of Mind* initiative, the *IOG* conducted a bilingual and confidential survey of public sector senior executives across the three levels of government. This Annex provides further details on this survey, including the English version of the survey's introduction, questions, and detailed results, including selected participants' comments, as well as a summary of the survey's approach and methodology.

### SURVEY INTRODUCTION



Institute on  
Governance Institut sur  
la gouvernance

#### *Top of Mind - Survey of Senior Public Sector Executives*

#### INTRODUCTION

##### CONTEXT AND PURPOSE

*Top of Mind*, an initiative of the Institute on Governance (IOG), is pleased to invite you to participate in this unique survey of Canadian senior executives in the federal, provincial, territorial and municipal governments. We seek your candid views and insights on the key challenges, valuable lessons and anticipated future trends facing Canada and its public institutions. The IOG is conducting this initiative with the support of the Brian Mulroney Institute of Government.

Today, public sector leaders face increasing uncertainties, information overload, mounting expectations and challenges of seismic proportion and complexity. They are on the front-line supporting governments and democratic institutions, and must innovate, adapt and transform public organizations, policies and programs at unprecedented speed. Senior public sector executives are the vanguards of the public interest and possess unique knowledge and perspectives on the challenges and forces shaping society. There are immense benefits to be gained by giving voice to, and sharing insights and lessons from, experienced executives regarding today's issues and future challenges.

*Top of Mind* will include research from this survey, selected interviews and data from other sources. The results will be published in both official languages and circulated country-wide this fall.

##### THE INSTITUTE

The IOG ([www.iog.ca](http://www.iog.ca)) is a not-for-profit organisation that for the past 30 years has been advancing better understanding and practice of good governance in Canada, with federal, provincial, municipal and Indigenous governments, not-for-profit organizations, as well as in 35 other countries.

##### CONFIDENTIALITY

This survey is conducted on a voluntary basis, and all answers will be treated anonymously. The survey utilizes an approved software, which hosts its data on Canadian servers, and individual IP or email addresses will not be tracked. All findings and results will only be presented or shared in aggregate and no individual respondent or small group will be identified.

Toby Fyfe  
President, the Institute on Governance  
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## B.2 SURVEY RESULTS

The following tables present the detailed survey's results, as well as the original wording (unabridged) of the survey questions, answer choices, and related text. Selected examples of participants' written comments and replies are provided in a subsequent section.

**Question 1:** To what extent do recent social issues and trends impact Canadian democracy and governments? As a senior public service executive, indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements (n=174):

Key Statements	Strongly Agree	Mostly Agree	Neither Agree / Disagree	Mostly Disagree	Strongly Disagree
A] Information conveyed via traditional media (print, radio, tv) supports effective public debate and democratic processes.	8.1%	51.2%	17.8%	20.1%	2.9%
B] Information conveyed via social and digital media supports effective public debate and democratic processes.	0.6%	19.6%	19.5%	48.3%	12.1%
C] Misinformation is increasing and contributes to social polarization and tensions.	54.0%	40.2%	3.5%	1.2%	1.2%
D] Trends related to misinformation, international interference, populism, social polarization, and tensions impede effective democratic processes and trust in governments.	49.4%	44.3%	5.2%	1.2%	0.0%
E] Canada's democratic institutions and governance remain robust despite emerging social issues and possible threats (such as identified in D]).	9.2%	63.8%	17.9%	8.1%	1.2%
F] Declining trust in governments weakens their ability to implement effective policies and programs to achieve better results and address major challenges.	22.4%	58.1%	12.1%	7.5%	0.0%
G] Actions of elected officials and their governments can either aggravate or mitigate adverse social issues and trends.	47.7%	43.1%	6.3%	2.9%	0.0%
H] The public service—at all orders of government—should play a more active role supporting democratic governance and mitigating the impacts of adverse social trends.	29.9%	48.9%	14.9%	5.8%	0.6%

**Question 2:** Overall, have your government's policies and actions, in the following key areas, helped improve or impede social cohesion and trust in governments? (n=174)

Key Areas of Govt Policy or Action	Greatly Improved	Somewhat Improved	Mixed or No Effect	Somewhat Impeded	Greatly Impeded	N/A or Don't Know
A] Management of the pandemic (including public health and economic measures)	28.70%	47.10%	13.80%	9.20%	0.60%	0.60%
B] Support for diversity, tolerance, and human rights	9.80%	60.90%	21.80%	5.80%	1.20%	1.20%
C] Reconciliation with Indigenous peoples	9.20%	48.30%	27.00%	10.90%	2.90%	2.90%
D] Freedom of speech and individual rights and freedoms (including privacy)	1.70%	32.20%	51.70%	10.30%	1.20%	1.20%
E] Public engagement, consultation, and access to information	8.10%	36.20%	38.50%	14.40%	1.20%	1.20%
F] Stewardship of public resources and finances	5.80%	28.20%	38.50%	22.40%	4.60%	4.60%
G] Management of the environment, climate change, and natural resources	2.30%	39.70%	35.10%	17.80%	3.50%	3.50%
H] Technology, science, and innovation	5.20%	40.20%	35.10%	12.60%	2.90%	2.90%
I] Ethics and accountability of senior leaders and elected officials	4.00%	20.70%	34.50%	30.50%	9.80%	9.80%
J] Cooperation and coordination with other orders of government (e.g., cooperative federalism)	4.00%	40.20%	35.60%	14.90%	3.50%	3.50%

**Question 3:** How and to what extent have recent issues or trends in the following broad areas affected the ability of your organization (e.g., department, ministry, city) to effectively deliver its programs and services and achieve desired results for its citizens? (n=174)

Recent Issues or Trends	Greatly Impeded	Somewhat Impeded	Mixed or No Effect	Somewhat Supported	Greatly Supported	N/A or Don't Know
A] Increased use of social or digital media	0.60%	19.50%	27.00%	41.40%	10.30%	1.20%
B] Public misinformation, tensions, or conflicts	9.80%	51.70%	33.90%	2.90%	0.60%	1.20%
C] Public health and travel restrictions related to the pandemic	12.10%	40.80%	35.60%	7.50%	3.50%	0.60%
D] Working environment and practices under the pandemic (e.g., working remotely)	3.50%	32.20%	24.10%	25.30%	14.90%	0.00%
E] Human resources management	6.90%	34.50%	34.50%	17.20%	4.60%	2.30%
F] Wellness and mental health	12.60%	41.40%	24.10%	16.10%	5.80%	0.00%
G] Public sector productivity and performance	2.90%	21.80%	33.90%	33.30%	7.50%	0.60%
H] Economic uncertainties	7.50%	39.10%	39.70%	11.50%	0.00%	2.30%
I] Changing demographics and/or public expectations	2.30%	28.20%	49.40%	14.40%	2.30%	3.50%
J] Cooperation and coordination with other orders of government (e.g., cooperative federalism)	4.00%	40.20%	35.60%	14.90%	3.50%	3.50%

**Question 5:** From the perspective of your organization (department, ministry, city), to what extent do the following areas or issues reflect important challenges that would require more effective governance? (n=155)

Key Areas of Importance	Very Important	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Very or Not Important	N/A or Don't Know
A] Government strategic direction and long-term planning	40.00%	48.40%	9.70%	1.30%	0.70%
B] Coordination of policies or activities between different orders of government	40.00%	49.70%	8.40%	1.30%	0.70%
C] Coordination of programs, functions, or initiatives within the public service (i.e., between departments or organizations)	46.50%	43.20%	9.70%	0.00%	0.70%
D] Roles of central agencies or departments and your organization's operational autonomy or flexibility	32.90%	34.80%	24.50%	6.50%	1.30%
E] Engagement, coordination, and/or relationship building with key stakeholders	41.90%	41.90%	12.90%	2.60%	0.70%
F] Evaluation of results against planned strategic objectives or outcomes	23.90%	44.50%	23.20%	7.70%	0.70%
G] Independent oversight of senior management and key initiatives	7.70%	30.30%	38.70%	20.70%	2.60%
H] Interface and respective roles of senior public service leaders and elected officials	16.80%	47.10%	25.20%	9.00%	1.90%
I] Engagement of elected governments in key public service initiatives and reforms	12.30%	36.10%	34.20%	15.50%	1.90%
J] Capacity and means of senior leaders to speak truth to elected officials ("truth to power")	47.70%	35.50%	11.60%	3.90%	1.30%
K] Available "safe spaces" for senior leaders to critically explore thorny issues and policies	45.80%	34.80%	12.30%	6.50%	0.70%
L] Appointment of senior leaders to ensure public service capacity, expertise, and stability	42.60%	38.10%	15.50%	1.30%	2.60%

**Question 7:** To what extent do you expect your organization (department, ministry, city) to face important challenges over the next three years with respect to the following areas? (n=151)

Key Areas of Challenge	Very Challenging	Challenging	Somewhat Challenging	Not Very Or Not Challenging	N/A or Don't Know
A] Post-pandemic uncertainties and repercussions	31.10%	36.40%	27.20%	4.60%	0.70%
B] Social tensions and expectations	20.70%	42.70%	25.30%	10.70%	0.70%
C] Public relations and information/ misinformation	9.90%	43.70%	39.10%	6.60%	0.70%
D] Policy development	10.60%	29.80%	43.10%	13.90%	2.70%
E] Policy implementation	12.60%	34.40%	39.70%	11.90%	1.30%
F] Ongoing program and service delivery	11.30%	30.50%	37.10%	17.20%	4.00%
G] Research and innovation	6.00%	35.10%	36.40%	15.90%	6.60%
H] HR management (e.g., capacity, staffing/ retention, compensation)	39.10%	25.80%	25.80%	8.60%	0.70%
I] Fiscal and financial management (e.g., fiscal restraints, funding, new pressures)	42.40%	30.50%	18.50%	8.60%	0.00%
J] Changing work environment	17.20%	42.40%	34.40%	6.00%	0.00%
K] Diversity and inclusion	17.20%	36.40%	32.50%	13.30%	0.70%
L] Reconciliation	33.10%	35.10%	21.20%	8.00%	2.70%
M] Security issues including cybersecurity	19.30%	43.30%	27.30%	6.00%	4.00%
N] International tensions or conflicts	2.70%	23.50%	33.60%	32.20%	8.10%
O] Governance related issues (e.g., per question 5)	9.90%	33.80%	38.40%	11.30%	6.60%

**Question 8:** Please indicate what changes (increases or decreases) you expect your organization (department, ministry, city) is likely to either face or adopt over the next three years in the following areas (n= 151):

Key Areas of Change	Increase Greatly	Increase Somewhat	Relatively Stable	Decrease Somewhat	Decrease Greatly	N/A or Don't Know
A] Number of employees working remotely	52.30%	31.10%	11.30%	3.30%	2.00%	0.00%
B] Total staff complement and capacity	7.30%	27.20%	37.80%	21.20%	6.60%	0.00%
C] Organizational productivity and performance	4.60%	37.10%	47.00%	9.90%	1.30%	0.00%
D] Talent management and staff training and development	8.00%	43.10%	37.80%	8.00%	2.70%	0.70%
E] Financial and/or budget restraint measures	29.80%	37.10%	25.20%	4.60%	3.30%	0.00%
F] Use of social or digital media	8.00%	54.30%	35.80%	1.30%	0.70%	0.00%
G] Public relations, outreach, or engagement measures	8.00%	39.70%	50.30%	0.70%	0.70%	0.70%
H] Implementation of new business technologies or processes	21.20%	59.60%	16.60%	0.70%	0.70%	1.30%
I] Investments in R&D and/or innovation	1.30%	27.80%	49.00%	8.60%	1.30%	11.90%
J] Use of performance and results information	7.30%	42.40%	46.40%	2.70%	0.70%	0.70%
K] Consultation and/or coordination with key stakeholders or partners	18.50%	38.40%	40.40%	2.00%	0.70%	0.00%
L] Coordination with other jurisdictions or departments	13.90%	37.80%	46.40%	1.30%	0.70%	0.00%
M] Support for diversity and inclusion	24.50%	56.30%	14.60%	4.60%	0.00%	0.00%
N] Centralization of key decisions and controls	7.30%	21.20%	57.60%	8.00%	1.30%	4.60%
O] Planning for business disruption and continuity	10.60%	47.70%	39.10%	2.00%	0.00%	0.70%



**Question 10:** Please indicate the extent you agree or disagree with the following statements related to the current state of leadership of your government's or city's public service (n=148):

Statements on Leadership	Strongly Agree	Mostly Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Mostly Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A or Don't Know
A] Overall, senior public service executives and leaders perform well and are effective.	17.60%	65.50%	9.50%	4.70%	2.70%	0.00%
B] Senior executives and leaders provide the capacity, competencies, and stability needed to lead their organization and meet today's diverse challenges.	12.20%	62.20%	15.50%	6.80%	3.40%	0.00%
C] Senior executives and leaders have the specialized expertise and qualifications needed to effectively fulfil the specific requirements of their respective functions and positions.	10.80%	52.00%	19.60%	11.50%	4.10%	2.00%
D] Senior executives and leaders have sufficiently long tenures to gain proper understanding of the complexities of their organizations and to provide necessary stability.	10.80%	35.10%	20.30%	26.40%	7.40%	0.00%
E] As a senior executive and leader, you have the necessary support (e.g., from your superiors or elected officials) to effectively fulfil your responsibilities and attain your organization's intended results.	21.60%	48.00%	13.50%	12.20%	4.70%	0.00%
F] You have the necessary resources and capacity to achieve your organization's strategic objectives and intended results.	8.10%	41.90%	16.20%	23.70%	10.10%	0.00%
G] You have the authority and operational flexibility needed to achieve your organization's strategic objectives and intended results.	16.90%	43.20%	18.90%	14.90%	6.10%	0.00%
H] Your organization and/or public service is effective at managing senior executive talent, as well as poor performance.	3.40%	29.70%	26.40%	28.40%	10.80%	1.40%
I] Most of the time you are able to manage your workload and responsibilities while maintaining a reasonable work-life balance.	8.10%	32.40%	12.80%	25.00%	21.00%	0.70%

**Question 11:** What are the most important factors or considerations to ensure tomorrow's senior public sector executives and leaders will have the necessary competencies and qualifications and will be well-prepared to assume more senior responsibilities? (n=148)

Leadership Factors	Very Important	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Very or Not Important	N/A or Don't Know
A] Appointments or promotions of executives should be based foremost on the candidates' past performance, results, and track record.	35.10%	50.70%	12.80%	1.40%	0.00%
B] Appointments or promotions of executives should be based foremost on the candidates' values and ethics.	33.80%	48.70%	16.90%	0.70%	0.00%
C] Appointments or promotions of executives should be based foremost on the candidates' commitment to public service renewal and continuous improvements.	22.30%	46.60%	27.00%	4.10%	0.00%
D] Appointments or promotions of executives should be based foremost on the candidates' distinct qualifications and expertise in relation to the specific needs and challenges of the position.	23.70%	41.20%	31.10%	4.10%	0.00%
E] Appointments or promotions of executives should be based foremost on an objective process and assessment of candidates' general leadership competencies.	31.80%	44.60%	18.90%	4.10%	0.70%
F] Appointments or promotions of executives should be based foremost on the need for employment equity and to reflect the diversity of the population and citizens they serve.	9.50%	43.90%	39.90%	6.80%	0.00%
G] Senior executives and leaders' performance should be periodically assessed on a multi-year basis and reflect the results of, and accountability for, long-term objectives and initiatives.	26.40%	50.00%	18.90%	3.40%	1.40%
H] Senior executives and leaders' assessments should include mandatory 360° feedback from colleagues and direct reports.	30.40%	37.80%	21.60%	9.50%	0.70%
I] Senior executives and leaders must continuously develop their knowledge, skills, and competencies through various means and venues, including through sharing experiences and lessons with colleagues.	44.60%	49.30%	5.40%	0.70%	0.00%
J] Upcoming leaders need to be formally prepared and supported in their transition towards more senior positions and responsibilities.	46.60%	41.90%	10.80%	0.70%	0.00%

## B.3 SURVEY DEMOGRAPHICS

In addition to the main questions presented in the previous section, the survey queried participants on their principal characteristics and demographics. The results of the survey's demographic questions are summarized in the following table.

### Questions 14 to 20: Key Demographic Information

Demographic Questions	Values	Percentages
<b>Question 14:</b> For which order of government do you work?	Federal	62.6%
	Provincial or Territorial	31.3%
	Municipality or Regional Municipality	6.1%
<b>Question 15:</b> In what region of Canada do you work?	Atlantic (NB, NS, PEI, NFL-LAB)	11.6%
	Central (QC, ON)	67.0%
	Prairies (MB, SK, AB)	9.5%
	Pacific (BC)	4.8%
	North (YK, NWT, NV)	8.2%
<b>Question 16:</b> What is your executive level or position within your organization?	Head of the public service (Federal or Prov./ Terr.)	0.7%
	Deputy Head or Deputy Minister (accountable to elected official/minister)	8.2%
	Assistant Deputy Head or Minister (or position reporting to Deputy Head, Deputy Minister)	36.7%
	City Director or Other Manager reporting to the CAO	6.8%
	Director General, Director or equivalent	44.9%
	Other, please specify	2.7%
<b>Question 17:</b> How long have you been in your current position?	Less than 2 years	32.7%
	2 to 5 years	45.6%
	5 to 10 years	15.0%
	More than 10 years	6.8%

Demographic Questions	Values	Percentages
<b>Question 18:</b> What is/are the major area(s) or function(s) that best describe the organization you are responsible for? (select more than one if applicable)	Overall Public Service or City Coordination, Cabinet Support	4.8%
	Finance or Treasury	11.6%
	Science, Innovation, or Research	13.7%
	Economic Development, Tourism	11.0%
	International, Intergovernmental or Indigenous Affairs	9.6%
	Employment and/or Social Development	11.0%
	Health and/or Social Services	12.3%
	Education, Training, and Development	4.8%
	Transportation	3.4%
	Infrastructure and Planning	10.3%
	Environment and Climate Change (incl. waste management)	11.6%
	Agriculture, Fisheries and Natural Resources	13.0%
	Immigration, Citizenship	2.1%
	Security, Public Safety or Defence (incl. intelligence)	6.2%
	Heritage, Culture, Arts and Entertainment	6.9%
	Other Services or Program Delivered to Citizens	11.6%
Internal Government/City Services	6.9%	
Other, please specify	13.0%	
<b>Question 19:</b> What is your gender?	Female	45.9%
	Male	54.1%
	Other	0.0%
<b>Question 20:</b> Do you identify as a visible minority?	Yes	9.7%
	No	90.3%

## B.4 PARTICIPANTS SELECTED COMMENTS

A number of the survey questions allowed participants to add elements to most questions predetermined sub-elements, such as key issues or areas of interest. As well, five questions provide participants the opportunity to offer optional written comments on the topics being examined. This section provides the majority of the written responses (unabridged) received from participants, under each of the survey's related questions. A small portion of responses were excluded, where these were repetitive or ambiguous.

Survey Participants – Selected Written Comments
<b>Question 1.H]:</b> To what extent are recent social issues and trends impacting Canadian democracy and governments? As a senior public service executive, indicate the extent you agree or disagree with the following statements. – Other key issues, please specify
Inability of the three orders of government to work effectively together.
La culture bureaucratique de la Fonction publique doit être révisée et mise au diapason de la réalité actuelle si elle veut jouer un rôle plus actif.
Il y a un risque de gouverner selon les tendances des médias sociaux qui représentent souvent une frange minoritaire de la population. À gouverner pour rallier tous les groupes minoritaires, il y a risque de fracture sociale.
Clear strategic mandates with multi-year deliverables from all orders of government are key.
Elected officials becoming more and more involved in day operations of the public service.
Canadians don't know how government and democracy works. They don't know how Ottawa works. This makes them feel like they are on the outside, and as a result, they are more susceptible to the echo chamber polemics of social media channels. Why are Canadians so ignorant of how decisions get made, and their role as citizens?
These questions do not lend themselves well to a multiple-choice answer as no additional context can be added. For instance, social and digital media can support effective debate and social democratic processes depending on what type of media you follow. The issue is that there seems to be far more fringe elements on these platforms than on the traditional platforms/media.
The trust gap between elected officials and public servants around managing media and social media dialogue about public policy issues.
Trust and integrity are fundamental but eroding. Relativism and the unchallenged re-writing of history are cancerous but unchecked.
Better education and engagement of young people regarding misinformation and how it can undermine democracy.
Canadians need to understand the role of the public service in order for public servant intervention to carry any weight.

### Survey Participants – Selected Written Comments

**Question 2.K]:** Overall, have your government's policies and actions, in the following key areas, helped improve or impede social cohesion and trust in governments? – Other, please specify (improve/impede)

Le fédéralisme coopératif est une vue de l'esprit, que le Fédéral ne met pas en pratique

[A]: santé publique: Fortement amélioré, économique: fortement entravé.

[F]: vision court terme sans planification structurante, dette.

[G et H]: aucune vision long terme incluant investissement en R&D et en infrastructure, manque de concertation F/P/T.

[I]: Éthique parfaite. Imputabilité sur les résultats = nulle. Les fonctionnaires de haut niveau restent en poste 1 ou 2 ans et ne sont pas imputables de l'absence de résultats.

Housing and homelessness issues in Atlantic Canada, specifically New Brunswick, have not been maximally assisted by federal programming.

I am uncomfortable answering any of these questions because my position, in my view, limits my ability to discuss policy issues that could be interpreted as partisan.

Reporting and corporate overhead siphoning off huge capacity have greatly impeded cohesion and trust in government—the reverse of their intended effect.

Response to the pandemic increased trust and faith in the GOC [Government of Canada].

**Question 3.J]:** How and to what extent have recent issues or trends, in the following broad areas, affected the ability of your organization (e.g., department, ministry, city) to effectively deliver its programs and services and achieve desired results for its citizens? – Other, please specify (impedes/supports)

[E]: les contraintes liées à l'embauche sont une entrave majeure.

Transformation to digital supports

**Question 4:** Please provide any comments, precisions, or suggestions regarding recent social events and issues that impacted your government and if/how your organization has successfully adapted to them.

La réduction des GES est au cœur de la mission de mon organisation. L'appui de la population envers la réduction des GES est indéniable. L'appui aux mesures de réduction des GES l'est moins (impact économique via la réduction du PIB, l'augmentation des dépenses des ménages, la perte d'emploi, le changement des habitudes de vie). La population ne comprend pas les impacts d'une réduction des GES et nous, comme gouvernement, n'expliquons pas bien le chemin que nous devons prendre pour éliminer les GES. C'est peut-être parce que le chemin n'est pas clair pour les décideurs. Les décideurs politiques cherchent une solution simple à mettre en œuvre et simple à expliquer pour un problème complexe.

I don't think the government is adapting. The adaptation is required of residents and is eroding confidence. Having said that we require more of the public service, social media, and the instant information dispersion is requiring we work faster and deliver more. Public service is not getting better, we are just talking about it more.

COVID-19 reminded many Canadians that they have a federal government, and that when times are tough, it is there to protect and assist them. As difficult as this pandemic period has been, most leaders I work with, as well as myself and my team, feel a renewed sense of purpose and meaning in public service. And yet, despite the obvious heroic effort involved in establishing financial assistance programs, obtaining, and distributing vaccine, and implementing health protocols nationwide, all in the name of keeping Canadians alive, there is still distrust and anger towards the federal government in many areas of the country. Now is the time to invest in a comprehensive national program in civics, at the middle school and high school levels. We need some-thing for adults too. We have been leaving this to school boards and provinces for too long. Canadians are frighteningly ignorant of what it takes to govern and administer programs and services across a country. They also need better insight into how decisions get made and why. This is something tangible we can do to countervail social media, which is not going anywhere.

<b>Survey Participants – Selected Written Comments</b>
<b>Question 4:</b> Please provide any comments, precisions, or suggestions regarding recent social events and issues that impacted your government and if/how your organization has successfully adapted to them.
Current hiring practices have dramatically decrease productivity and has negatively impacted moral. Hiring practices have been by hiring via contracts with no accountability to the taxpayer and is based on who you know.
My organization has, in my view, done a stellar job of responding to the challenges of remote work and the pandemic. Leadership has been transparent at all times and staff have risen to the challenges admirably.
There is a reckoning underway to come to terms with racism and oppression against Indigenous and other racialized individuals. Sparked by a number of public events (e.g., George Floyd), my organization is seized with reconciliation, atonement, and learning.
Not having great IT infrastructure has impacted the ability to work remotely for some areas of government. Data intensive workers needed better connectivity.
Given what is happening in the US and other countries as they move towards an oligarchy or dictatorships, Canada as a country is emerging as a democratic world leader as this pandemic has been handled at all levels of government in a democratic way whereby the health of Canadians is placed well ahead of political priorities.
Iqaluit is unique as our policies are guided by the land claim; this enshrines diversity and reconciliation. However, the implementation of policy is imprecise and challenging, which leaves major gaps.
Other levels of government unwilling or unable to effectively advance crown duty to consult with Indigenous peoples impairing ability to advance infrastructure
Youth programming completely impacted. Very few programs fit health restrictions. Over the year, youth mental health has become of grave concern. No options available. Part of reasons: poverty, overcrowded housing, all support resources maxed.
Adoption of remote work and regionalization of NCR-centric positions; (this is positive). Diversity and inclusion expectations are extremely high, as are obligations to support mental health. Pressures on senior leaders and managers is escalating to an unreasonable level.
Social media has been an effective media for delivering and making Canadians more aware of the issues Indigenous people face in Canada.
<b>Question 5.M]:</b> From the perspective of your organization (department, ministry, city), to what extent do the following areas or issues reflect important challenges that would require more effective governance? – Other major governance issue, please specify
Budget/TB processes are out of step with pace of governance in twenty-first century and need for efficiency in program and service delivery while still ensuring accountability.
Capacité des élus à comprendre les problèmes complexes. L'agenda politique personnel de certains hauts fonctionnaires (certains hauts fonctionnaires ont plus à cœur leur bien - avancement de carrière -que le bien commun)
Increasing polarization and incivility amongst elected officials.
Current hiring practices by using contracts does not support growth within Nunavut.
Federal/provincial jurisdictional conflicts—role of “levels” of governments in increasing the complexity of problems and potential solutions.
Role of political staff in decision-making.

### Survey Participants – Selected Written Comments

**Question 5.M]:** From the perspective of your organization (department, ministry, city), to what extent do the following areas or issues reflect important challenges that would require more effective governance? – Other major governance issue, please specify

Commitment and expertise to transform to digital government services.

Shared services—governance to address the lack of ability to influence.

Too any concurrent priorities and social change initiatives, while ignoring the day job.

Decentralized government can lead to better policy-making.

Incapacity of centre to make timely, effective decisions.

**Question 6:** Please provide your views on what your organization’s foremost governance challenges are and any related solutions or lessons.

Il y a actuellement une surenchère en ce qui concerne l'évaluation des résultats vs la planification, qui détourne les efforts de la réalisation des changements attendus. Pire, elle induit la production d'une planification allégée, gage de succès lors de ces évaluations. La raison derrière cela étant les difficultés à disposer des ressources requises pour réaliser les changements, notamment en ressources humaines. L'autonomie accordée aux ministères par les organismes centraux demeure sous optimale, en raison d'une structure d'imputabilité déficiente des hauts dirigeants des ministères et d'une propension au contrôle à tout prix de la part des organismes centraux. La multiplication des intrusions fédérales dans les champs de compétences des provinces crée des situations de dédoublements importants entre des initiatives de même nature (ex. programmes d'infrastructures). Pire, les interventions fédérales ont souvent pour conséquence de favoriser le financement d'initiatives ou de projets incohérents avec les politiques provinciales (puisque les décisions fédérales sont prises sans prendre en considération les priorités des provinces).

Tel que décrit précédemment, la volonté de progression de carrière des hauts fonctionnaires limite la durée de leur mandat et leur imputabilité vis-à-vis des obligations de résultat. L'imputabilité est beaucoup plus sur les dépenses que sur les résultats. Ce manque de résultat résulte souvent en un contrôle excessif des moyens pour arriver aux résultats; ce qui n'est pas gage d'augmentation des résultats. Il y a de moins en moins d'autonomie laissée aux gestionnaires sur les moyens d'arriver aux résultats; ce qui tue l'engagement et l'esprit d'initiative.

Senior leaders bicker, and the public sees that, it decreases public confidence.

Burdensome reporting requirements and lack of coordination in policy and program work.

Selection of senior leaders needs to be a competitive process, not an appointment. Often seniors' leaders are "appointed" based on their relationships and networks and not their competencies, knowledge, and experience.

The conversation is possibly different with respect to policy, but when it comes to effective program and service delivery, most federal departments and agencies have TOO MUCH governance and oversight. Everyone seems to need to be seen at every table and feel heard, and there are way too many tables. The implementation of nine COVID measures at CRA [Canada Revenue Agency], all within weeks of being requested from the centre, are an example of what can be accomplished without governance. Executives should be rewarded for delivering effectively with as little governance as necessary, not punished for not spending months taking their plans to countless committees that typically contribute, in my experience, very little.

Senior managers need to be challenged.

Political staffers have too much influence and direct connections between ministers and deputy ministers are less frequent than never before.



<b>Survey Participants – Selected Written Comments</b>
<b>Question 6:</b> Please provide your views on what your organization's foremost governance challenges are and any related solutions or lessons.
Addressing systemic barriers/issues (i.e., racism, discrimination) internally and externally to public service recruitment, retention, promotion.
The Westminster construct of the public service must remain strong and intact. The divide between the political component and the public service component must remain, and the senior ranks of the PS must be able to give clear advice and guidance to ministers and their staff.
When many things are worthy of declaring as crises, the whole of government has to pull together rather than dilute core funding. Once you create something new, it becomes legacy, and when in multiple crises, foundation cracks. It takes working against silos; it takes full cohesion and holistic views administrative and operational.
I want to point out that the wording of the question "category" is tricky. Most of my answers are "Not important" because I do not believe the issues require more effective governance—not that the issues are unimportant.
Cabinet processes are broken; decision-making is ad-hoc and topsy-turvy, causing greater chaos in the public service and significantly increasing workload without delivering more meaningful results. Last minute decisions put extreme pressure on public servants to prepare ministers for Cabinet, legislative agenda, funding decisions, etc., etc.
<b>Question 7.P]:</b> To what extent do you expect your organization (e.g., department, ministry, city) to face important challenges over the next three years with respect to the following areas? – Other, please specify
Contract workers are not dedicated in developing policy that is for the better of Nunavut.
Technological developments (e.g., automation).
Ever-increasing digital environment.
<b>Question 8.P]:</b> Please indicate what changes (increases or decreases) you expect your organization (department, ministry, city) is likely to either face or adopt over the next three years in the following areas: – Other key change (increase/decrease)
Decrease in staffing development due to staff hiring process. Contract workers
Increased use of data analytics for risk-based planning and decision-making.
Expectation of digital access to services by Canadians.
Planning for another pandemic.

### Survey Participants – Selected Written Comments

**Question 9:** Please provide your perspectives on what the most important challenges will be (e.g., top three) for your organization, and how you plan to address them.

Le principal défi de la fonction publique est définitivement son incapacité grandissante à se positionner comme un employeur d'intérêt. Une reconnaissance publique famélique (manque de confiance envers les élus, attitude méprisante à l'égard des « fonctionnaires » en raison tant de commentaires déplacés de la part des élus qui font porter à la fonction publique le poids de leurs échecs ou incohérences plutôt que de l'assumer, qu'en raison d'un historique peu reluisant au plan de la performance de certains fonctionnaires) et des conditions de travail figées et de moins en moins concurrentielles (salaires en deçà de la moyenne, structure salariale de valorisant pas la performance, concept périmé de la permanence d'emploi dans un contexte de rareté de main-d'œuvre) font en sorte que l'État est de moins en moins les candidats. On le perçoit nettement actuellement dans les difficultés éprouvées pour l'embauche dans les secteurs soumis à une forte concurrence (informatique, ingénieurs, personnel de soutien, comptables et auditeurs, gestion) et il est aisé d'anticiper que cela s'étendra bientôt aux autres corps d'emploi. L'État attire toujours les personnes les plus motivées ou passionnées par le service public, mais ce nombre de purs et durs est insuffisant pour assurer le comblement de la majorité des postes dont a besoin la fonction publique.

Recruiting and retaining qualified staff is the biggest challenge, which was an issue pre-COVID and has been exasperated with COVID. Reconciliation continues to be a very challenging issue—government doesn't know what to do, so hiring practices, accommodations, and jiggling programs that overcompensate puts further strain on the system. The third challenge is the fiscal reality that politicians refuse to accept: they are not willing to say no to anything. Not sustainable.

1. Digitization to decrease in-person services and speed up processes;

2. Recruitment and retention strategies for dwindling human resources and share these measures with other sectors, i.e., health care, LTC (long-term care)

3. Planning for business disruption and continuity—plans in place.

Security, technology, human resources.

Relevance, diversity and inclusion, post-pandemic operations.

Being in a unique jurisdiction, critical infrastructure is deficient, particularly in information technology. We survive off of anecdotal information too much. E-databases require huge investment but takes so much workforce because everything in our jurisdiction needs a critical lens and adaptation to our unique environment. We also survive on non-local hires.

Three most important challenges: addressing systemic racism/reconciliation, digital issues (online harms, ransomware, evidence gathering, etc.), resources (financial and human)—combination of heavy pressures and potential fiscal restraint. No clear plan for addressing them.

### Survey Participants – Selected Written Comments

**Question 10.P]:** Please indicate the extent you agree or disagree with the following statements pertaining to the current state of leadership of your government's or city's public service: – Other key consideration, please specify

Hoping for more cross-government solutions in the future and “all of government” approaches to social problems and issues vs. finger-pointing, blaming, and forced ownership of problems that happens now.

The senior leadership cadre is not diverse; and therefore, there are not the range of perspectives and experiences to effectively understand and develop strategies to confront emerging issues like social cohesion.

Shuffle of ADM- and DM-level personnel affecting the relationships with stakeholders.

Working with remote oversight can be a challenge at times.

We urgently need a shift in the senior public service from valuing policy discussion to valuing ability to effectively implement in a fiscally responsible and timely manner. We put too much value on people who talk as opposed to those who get things done for Canadians.

**Question 11.K]:** What are the most important factors or considerations to ensure tomorrow's senior public sector executives and leaders will have the necessary competencies and qualifications and will be well prepared to assume more senior responsibilities? – Other key consideration, please specify

I've met many dedicated and innovative individuals in the public service. Not sure how you find and promote leaders who know how to support true innovators.

Need also to consider potential... not just past experience.

Creating spaces and opportunities for executive mentorship, in particular, in Indigenous communities, is critical.

The performance management process is broken and does not promote collaboration.

I dispute item E. I do not believe assessments of leadership competencies can ever be “objective.”

Talent management from within.

**Question 12:** What are the top three competencies or skills for which training should be provided to executives in your organization?

Politico-administratif : la capacité à arrimer les ambitions politiques (volonté de changement, enjeux politiques court terme) à celles de la fonction publique (cohérence d'action étatique, enjeux à long terme) est cruciale. Un haut dirigeant qui ne parvient pas à réaliser cet arrimage expose à placer son organisation dans une situation où elle s'avérerait à la fois incapable de donner suite aux volontés politiques et en conflit de sens pour ses employés (ce qui engendre inévitablement un désengagement des employés, une perte de sens et une perte de productivité). Créateur de sens et d'innovation: s'assurer que les changements introduits sont compris et que tous (employés, citoyens, etc.) y adhèrent est crucial pour une évolution couronnée de succès. Cela se réalise lorsque ceux-ci font sens. L'innovation est la clé de voûte de l'évolution et sans elle, l'État lui-même serait condamné à échouer dans la réalisation de sa mission. Assurer la performance : les ressources étant limitées, il est essentiel qu'un haut dirigeant soit en mesure d'assurer la performance de son organisation. Celle-ci se mesure à plusieurs facteurs (compétences des personnes, agilité organisationnelle, capacité d'innover, climat de travail, moyens financiers, capacité à concevoir et construire, etc.).

With information overload and the growth of social media platforms, leaders today need to be able to filter information quickly and set strategic direction and priorities. They need solid grounding to stay focused on objectives and not react to whims and trends. Leaders need better people management skills as we move to virtual environments and lose the personal touch and mentors.

Leadership mobilisant, vision stratégique, gestion axée résultats.

### Survey Participants – Selected Written Comments

**Question 12:** What are the top three competencies or skills for which training should be provided to executives in your organization?

Systems thinking—putting it all together is very important problem-solving—so many challenges that require thinking through and creative solutions, emotional intelligence—social awareness and using that as a skill to manage themselves and the people they are leading while taking care of themselves is very important in a leader.

Managing change and innovation, supporting regulatory reform, digital.

I am astonished on a daily basis at how digitally illiterate most public service executives are. This is particularly problematic in program and service delivery functions. In 2021, you should not be in a program function if you do not know how to leverage digital channels to deliver efficiently and effectively to Canadians.

Contract workers take on senior roles and are promoted based on who they know and not based on past work.

Training can only go so far. Compassion, self-confidence, open-mindedness, and the ability to motivate are harder to teach.

Written communication—writing for the audience.

Technical competency is high, but the ability to effectively manage human resource issues, including performance and training, is lacking. Secondly, the ability to think corporately and understand how to build strategic partnerships within an organization. Thirdly, training to understand the corporate side of the organization and how any manager, irrespective of his position in the organization, has a role within the overall structure.

Managing complex change management (in a virtual reality), understanding, and acknowledging Indigenous peoples through the lens of reconciliation.

Strategic decision-making, innovation, and creativity and ethics.

Project management, negotiation, board/governance management.

1) Change management

2) Human resource (talent) development, management, and retention

3) Long-term strategic planning

HR management; financial management; policy development.

Political acumen, developing people (succession planning), and public engagement.

Core competencies such as judgement and collaboration are important factors.

Briefing up, inclusive leadership, mobilizing people.

Interface with political leaders (there is great naiveté about how to be relevant to a GC agenda and position the institution's role and needs), change management, leaning processes.

People management, strategic and critical thinking, client service orientation.

Change management, mobilizing people, promoting innovation.

Leadership and the use of emotional intelligence, how to shift organizational culture, and meeting the challenge of a remote working public service.

A bit granular, but I think a particularly important skill worthy of training is in managing workload in the sense of targeting requests for work to appropriate timelines and products (e.g., often a few pages to summarize a particular issue would do, but many detailed briefs are prepared).

<b>Survey Participants – Selected Written Comments</b>
<b>Question 12:</b> What are the top three competencies or skills for which training should be provided to executives in your organization?
Training, mentorship, and all those good things are important, but in my experience, the problem is me (and my other leaders) have such massive workloads and spans of control that finding opportunities for continuous development just aren't there. Also, 360s are not always the best tool in all situations to get assessments on how one is doing—leaders need excellent feedback in the first couple of years especially, and 360s aren't all that useful until a good four or five years in the saddle. I support assessments but as worded could not support because of the mention of 360.
Speaking truth to power, managing crisis, results orientation.
The key today is the adoption/development of soft skills. Inclusion, sincerity, humanism...
Delivering results in a civil and inclusive manner.
360 should be mandatory for all senior execs; too many toxic leaders climbing the ranks while abusive to people at lower levels.
<b>Question 13:</b> Final Comments and Advice – Please provide your overarching advice to your senior colleagues or elected officials, as to how the public sector can be best positioned to serve Canadians and meet future challenges.
Au niveau fédéral : reconnaître les compétences des provinces et limiter les intrusions et dédoublements. Accepter la logique des transferts en bloc. Au niveau des haut-dirigeants (sous-ministres et sous-ministres adjoints) :
(1) nomination : privilégier la compétence, réduire les nominations partisans, favoriser la présence de femmes (briser le plafond de verre actuel);
(2) Enjeux: favoriser la collaboration interministérielle, favoriser l'autonomie et l'imputabilité des ministères vs organismes centraux.
État-employeur : reconnaître que l'État québécois est non-concurrentiel comme employeur et poser des gestes concrets pour modifier son positionnement sur le marché de la main-d'œuvre. Reconnaître la performance et favoriser une gestion dynamique des employés.
Leaders need to learn to focus on the needs of their organization and their teams, especially as the culture has shifted to a culture of the individual expression in social media. I am concerned that the "me" is taking precedence over the "we."
Être en mesure de prendre des décisions plus rapidement avec une approche "lean" et avec un contrôle indépendant. Pouvoir avoir la flexibilité nécessaire pour la rétention et l'embauche du personnel.
There is a need to ensure the public understands clearly what services are being delivered and how they are to be delivered for their dollar. Staff should clearly understand their roles and responsibilities towards achieving the deliverables. Elected officials need to establish longer term directions (strategic) that are actually achievable (provide the support for resources). The agency must always work towards continuous process improvement by establishing key performance metrics that are clearly understood and evaluated against.

### Survey Participants – Selected Written Comments

**Question 13:** Final Comments and Advice – Please provide your overarching advice to your senior colleagues or elected officials, as to how the public sector can be best positioned to serve Canadians and meet future challenges.

There is a very small pool of qualified candidates when it comes to senior managers and a large number of retiring senior managers which poses a challenge, equity, and diversity though important should not be the priority to fill those gaps at this point. Equity and inclusion need to be a priority for entry-level positions as well as throughout government so that we are providing opportunities to build leaders not inserting people as leaders and hoping the success they've had at their previous jobs will carry over. That is what is happening now.

Support a cohesive public service that is diverse and competent to deal with short- and long-term needs of the economic, environment, and social needs of Canada.

Make digital acumen and skills mandatory for program delivery, recruit aggressively, and aggressively reduce the governance bloat that is rampant across the system. We also need to take another look at performance rewards for executives AND staff. The public service needs to stay competitive, especially if the new virtual workplace enables more hiring from urban centres across Canada.

Pay close attention to the views of frontline workers. They can be the source of innovation.

Bring changes faster. COVID brought much needed changes in the government!

An important part of the role of any senior executive is succession planning, and in particular, playing an active role in supporting employees from diverse backgrounds. Secondly, a focus on how to manage employees in a hybrid work environment to create and maintain a high-performance culture. Thirdly, a focus on creating organizations that are inclusive of all Canadian society.

The pandemic has clearly demonstrated the importance of the public service in all orders of government to the health and well-being of Canadians and the overall standard of living. Canada is emerging as a world leader and the next steps are in addressing environmental degradation and the embracing and ensuring diversity and equality of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, and physical and mental challenges.

Decentralize, let leaders lead while making them truly accountable for their decisions. And stop thinking leaders are interchangeable and that shuffling them around is a good thing; a deep knowledge of a department/sector/industry matters to develop good policy and programs and staying long enough to be accountable for your decisions should be mandatory.

Know your people, whether they are in house or out. Then, use your critical and strategic thinking to determine needs of all those players, do your staff have the tools, do you see the full picture of your various clients/stakeholders/partners. Utilize the leaders at all levels to inspire your people. Keep courage of conviction strong, remain ethical and values-based.

Avoid age limitations on workforce tenure and support remote working flexibility at all levels of the public service. The pandemic highlighted that as a public service, with the technology and supports in place, we can provide and, in many cases, exceed service expectations.

A particular frustration I have is the distance that elected officials often have between themselves and their public service officials. Too much seems to be done through political staff, who take on the role as quasi-ministers because the department does not even on significant files have direct interaction with the elected official.

Government needs to require more goals and measurables, to assess effectiveness of programs, staff, and management.

**Survey Participants – Selected Written Comments**

**Question 13:** Final Comments and Advice – Please provide your overarching advice to your senior colleagues or elected officials, as to how the public sector can be best positioned to serve Canadians and meet future challenges.

To the extent possible planning cycles need to be de-coupled from electoral ones. Good public policy should be based on longer-term planning that allows for time to engage taxpayers, design effective programs, evaluate and adjust them but we tend to fall back on four-year program horizons (at most) that sap officials' energy and public confidence in government. Nowhere is this more evident than in engagement with Indigenous groups who take a multi-generational view that "we" simply can't seem to comprehend or adapt ourselves to.

Focus on results, hire the best, fire the worst, train those who are committed, treat public servants with respect, provide clear direction, don't punish risks that didn't work, reward results and innovation.

Let's try to ensure that the level of misinformation is managed in a way that ensures people are able to develop the skills to discern the misinformation themselves—education is the key!

## B.5 SURVEY METHODOLOGY AND ANALYSIS

### APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY SUMMARY

A number of activities were undertaken to ensure the control and quality of the survey's different steps and information, including survey design, translation, collection, review, and analysis. The most significant are briefly outlined in this subsection.

- The survey design was elaborated with the assistance of senior executives at the IOG and vetted through an iterative process. The survey utilized a well-known survey software that hosts its data on Canadian servers. The final formatted survey was field tested prior to its launch.
- The survey's potential participants were selected from publicly available directories of public service employees from the federal government, all provincial and territorial governments, and 23 selected municipal governments, including all capital and major cities. The selection was randomized to the extent possible considering the size of the different directories and the selection criteria. The selection criteria focused exclusively on senior public service executives, which included the following:
  - Heads of their respective public services or jurisdictions (e.g., Cabinet secretaries, chief administrative officers);
  - Deputy heads, deputy ministers or similar senior public officials essentially reporting to elected officials (such as a minister);
  - Assistant deputy heads or assistant deputy ministers, or similar position reporting to either the head of a jurisdiction or a deputy head;
  - City directors or similar positions reporting to a chief administrative officer or head of a municipal administration; and
  - Director generals or directors reporting to an assistant deputy head.

Essentially the survey targeted senior executives that were generally not more than three levels below an elected official.

- Through the IOG's consultation with senior public sector leaders, a significant number of leaders, across all three orders of government, were advised in advance of the planned survey. The survey was launched in late June and closed in late August 2021. Survey invitations were sent to approximately 2,300 senior executives across all three orders of government.
- The survey sample is essentially "volunteer-based," since participants basically self-select by choosing to respond. As a result, the sample cannot be considered fully random because of a likely element of volunteer-bias.<sup>2</sup> Therefore, a statistical confidence or credibility interval cannot be properly established for such a sample, and caution is needed not to improperly infer conclusions about the entire population of senior executives. Unless otherwise noted, the report's section on survey results refers to executives as the respondents to the survey.
- The survey was conducted on a volunteer and confidential basis, and the survey questionnaire was offered in both French and English and took an average of 16 minutes to complete. In total, 174 executives responded to the survey.

2 See, for example, Statistics Canada, "3.2.3 Non-probability sampling," n.d., <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/edu/power-pouvoir/ch13/nonprob/5214898-eng.htm>



Before conducting analyses of the survey results, all responses were reviewed individually to ensure there were no inappropriate or spurious responses. The survey results were compiled anonymously through the survey software and analysed using a standard statistical software. The answers to various questions were reclassified (i.e., rescaled), to allow for the analyses to yield more significant results across a smaller number of more distinctly different values and for the corresponding exhibits to be more easily interpreted. The following table provides a summary of the reclassifications done for statistical analysis purposes.

**Exhibit 9:** Summary of Survey Regroupings for Analysis

Survey Questions	Questions' Initial Scales (Original Values)	Simplified Scales For Analysis (Regrouped Values)
Question 1 A] to H]	1 Strongly Agree; 2 Mostly Agree; 3 Neither Agree nor Disagree; 4 Mostly Disagree; 5 Strongly Disagree	1-2 Overall Agree. 3 Neither agree/ Disagree. 4-5 Overall Disagree
Question 2 A] to J]	1 Greatly Improved; 2 Somewhat Improved; 3 Mixed or No Effect; 4 Somewhat Impeded; 5 Greatly Impeded; 6 N/A or Don't Know	1-2 Overall Improved; 3 Mixed or No Effect; 4-5 Overall Impeded; 6 N/A or Don't Know
Question 3 A] to I]	1 Greatly Impeded; 2 Somewhat Impeded; 3 Mixed or No Effect; 4 Somewhat Supported; 5 Greatly Supported; 6 N/A or Don't Know	1-2 Overall Impeded; 3 Mixed or No Effect; 4-5 Overall Supported; 6 N/A or Don't Know
Question 5 A] to L]	1 Very Important; 2 Important; 3 Somewhat Important; 4 Not Very or Not Important; 5 N/A or Don't Know	1-2 Overall Important; 3 Somewhat Important; 4 Not Very or Not Important; 5 N/A Don't Know
Question 7 A] to O]	1 Very Challenging; 2 Challenging; 3 Somewhat Challenging; 4 Not Very or Not Challenging; 5 N/A or Don't Know	1-2 Overall Challenging; 3 Somewhat Challenging; 4 Not Very or Not Challenging. 5 N/A or Don't Know
Question 8 A] to O]	1 Increase Greatly; 2 Increase Somewhat; 3 Relatively Stable; 4 Decrease Somewhat; 5 Decrease Greatly; 6 N/A or Don't Know	1-2 Overall Increase; 3 Relatively Stable; 4-5 Overall Disagree; 6 N/A or Don't Know
Question 10 A] to I]	1 Strongly Agree; 2 Mostly Agree; 3 Neither Agree or Disagree; 4 Mostly Disagree; 5 Strongly Disagree; 6 N/A or Don't Know	1-2 Overall Agree; 3 Neither Agree or Disagree; 4-5 Overall Disagree; 6 N/A or Don't Know
Question 11 A] to J]	1 Very Important; 2 Important; 3 Somewhat Important; 4 Neither Very or Not Important; 5 N/A or Don't Know	1-2 Overall Important; 3 Somewhat Important; 4 Neither Very or Not Important; 5 N/A or Don't Know

A similar approach was used to regroup some of the demographic data, in order to facilitate analysis and ensure each group was sufficiently significant. The resulting demographic groups are presented as part of the subsequent table summarizing the statistical analysis (Exhibit 10).

## STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

The statistical analyses performed on the survey results were of two types. First, in order to determine if respondents' different demographic characteristics had significant impacts or relationships with the results reported, one-way ANOVA tests were performed. Second, in order to determine if and how the results of different survey questions were related to one another, Pearson correlation analysis was also performed. The conclusions of these analyses are presented in the following paragraphs.

## ANOVA RESULTS

A statistical package was used to help conduct one-way variance analyses (ANOVA) and compare key demographic characteristics (questions 14 to 17, and 20) against all main survey questions (questions 1 to 3, 5, 7, 8, 10, and 11). All the survey questions were tested using the rescaled responses described above.

ANOVA tests whether there is a statistically significant variance or difference in the means of two or more groups, based on a 95 per cent significance level ( $\text{sig.} < 0.05$ ).<sup>3,4</sup> The following table (Exhibit 10), organized by the survey's demographic groups, outlines the results of those analyses. The table presents the demographic groups or factors (independent variables) that have a significant relation or influence on the results of the survey questions and subcomponents (dependent variables), along with a brief description of the nature of the differences in mean results.

The most significant or meaningful findings from this statistical analysis have been reported in a separate report on key findings.

3 The ANOVA null hypothesis is that there are no statistically significant differences between the means of the demographic groups being tested (independent variables) with respect to the survey's subquestion results (dependent variables). Where "sig" is  $< 0.05$ , the hypothesis is rejected as there is sufficient evidence to suggest that the means are different.

4 Levene's test for homogeneity of variances (significance 95 per cent) was first used to determine whether equal variances were a valid assumption for the demographic groups. In the few instances where the homogeneity test failed and given that the demographic groups' sizes are significantly unequal, then the ANOVA significance level (sig) can be underestimated, and the null hypothesis falsely rejected. In these few instances, we ensured that the ANOVA significance level was appreciably smaller than 0.05, thus minimizing this risk.

**Exhibit 10:** Summary of ANOVA Results

Demographic Groups	Survey Questions (Q) Impacted by Demographics	AnovaSig. < .05	Nature of Significant Differences in Groups' Mean (Average) Results
<b>Q14 - Orders of Government:</b>  Federal ( <b>Fed.</b> )  Provinces & Territoires ( <b>Prov.</b> )  Municipalities ( <b>Mun.</b> )	<b>Q2: Policies/actions in key areas improved or impeded social cohesion and trust in govt:</b>		
	C] Reconciliation with Indigenous peoples	0.006	Fed. & Mun. executives reported more improved than Prov. counterparts.
	G] Environment, climate change, and natural resources	0.005	Fed, & Mun execs. reported improved and Prov. exec. reported mixed or neutral effects.
	I] Ethics and accountability of senior leaders and elected officials"	0.000	Overall Fed. execs. reported impeded, Prov were neutral and Mun reported improved.
	<b>Q3: Extent issues/trends impeded or supported program and service delivery:</b>		
	A] Increased use of social or digital media	0.011	Overall Fed. and Prov. execs reported some support; Mun. execs indicated impeded.
	E] Human resources management	0.018	On average Prov. and Mun. execs reported impeded, Fed. execs overall mostly neutral.
	<b>Q5: Extent areas or issues reflect important challenges requiring better governance:</b>		
	I] Engagement of elected governments in key public service initiatives and reforms	0.001	Overall, Fed. execs considered issue less important than Prov. and Mun. counterparts.
	<b>Q7: Extent your organization will face important challenges within three years in these areas:</b>		
	A] Post-pandemic uncertainties and repercussions	0.003	Fed. execs reported issue more challenging than Prov. and Mun. counterparts.
	J] Changing work environment	0.000	Fed. execs reported issue more challenging than Prov. and Mun. counterparts.
	K] Diversity and inclusion	0.000	Overall Prov. executives less challenged by issue than Fed. and Mun. executives.
	L] Reconciliation	*0.049	Fed. execs reported being more challenged by reconciliation than Prov. and Mun. execs.
	M] Security issues including cybersecurity	0.000	Fed. and Mun. executives more challenged by security issues than Prov.
N] International tensions or conflicts	0.008	Overall Fed. execs were somewhat challenged, Prov. and Mun execs were less so.	

Demographic Groups	Survey Questions (Q) Impacted by Demographics	AnovaSig. < .05	Nature of Significant Differences in Groups' Mean (Average) Results
<b>Q14 - Orders of Government:</b>  Federal ( <b>Fed.</b> ) Provinces & Territoires ( <b>Prov.</b> ) Municipalities ( <b>Mun.</b> )	<b>Q8: Changes (increase/decrease) your organization will face or adopt within three years:</b>		
	A] Number of employees working remotely	0.000	More Fed. and Mun. executives anticipate increases than Provincial executives.
	B] Total staff complement and capacity	0.001	Fed. and Mun. execs anticipate increase or stable; Prov. exec noted stable or decrease.
	D] Talent management and staff training and development	0.004	Mun. execs expect more increases than Prov. and Fed. executives.
	K] Consultation and/or coordination with key stakeholders or partners	0.020	Overall, Fed. execs expect slightly more increases than Prov. and Mun. executives.
	M] Support for diversity and inclusion	0.015	Overall, Fed. and Mun executives anticipate more increased support than Prov. exec.
	O] Planning for business disruption and continuity	0.022	Mun. executives expect more increase in planning than Prov. or Fed. executives.
	<b>Q10: Extent you agree/disagree with following statement on leadership:</b>		
C] Executives and leaders have the expertise and qualifications to effectively fulfil the requirements of their positions.	0.021	On average, Fed. and Mun executives were more in agreement that Prov. executives.	
<b>Q15 - Regions of Canada:</b> East ( <b>E</b> ) Central ( <b>C</b> )West & North ( <b>W&amp;N</b> )	<b>Q2: Policies/actions in key areas improved or impeded social cohesion and trust in government:</b>		
	A] Management of the pandemic (incl. public health and economic measures)	0.000	On average, execs in W&N reported less improved than in E and C Canada.
	B] Support for diversity, tolerance, and human rights	*0.033	On average, execs in W&N reported less improved than in E and C Canada.
	G] Management of the environment, climate change and natural resources	0.003	Overall, execs in W&N reported impeded or no effect, execs in E & C reported improved.
	H] Technology, science, and innovation	0.025	Execs in W&N reported varied effects while E and C Canada execs reported improved.
	I] Ethics and accountability of senior leaders and elected officials	0.018	Overall, execs in C and W&N reported impeded, E Canada execs reported improved.
	J] Cooperation and coordination with other orders of government	0.045	Execs in E reported more improved than in C Canada; W&N reported improved or neutral.

Demographic Groups	Survey Questions (Q) Impacted by Demographics	AnovaSig. < .05	Nature of Significant Differences in Groups' Mean (Average) Results
<b>Q15 - Regions of Canada:</b>  East (E)  Central (C)  West & North (W&N)	<b>Q3: Extent issues/trends impeded or supported program and service delivery:</b>		
	E] Human resources management	0.006	Most execs in W&N and E Canada reported impeded; C execs were neutral on average.
	G] Public sector productivity and performance	0.022	Overall, W&N execs noted mixed effects or impeded, most in E and C noted supported.
	<b>Q5: Extent areas or issues reflect important challenges requiring better governance:</b>		
	A] Government strategic direction and long-term planning	0.001	Overall, execs from all regions reported important, but the prairies a bit less so.
	<b>Q7: Extent your organization will face important challenges within three years in these areas:</b>		
	A] Post-pandemic uncertainties and repercussions	0.020	On average, executives in C Canada expect it to be more challenging than E or W&N
	H] HR management (e.g., capacity, staffing/retention, compensation)	*0.031	Overall, executives in C Canada expect it to be more challenging than E or W&N execs.
	J] Changing work environment	0.001	C and W&N execs expect it to be more challenging, E execs only somewhat challenging.
	K] Diversity and inclusion	0.000	Most C execs reported challenging, W&N not as challenging, E somewhat or not very.
	M] Security issues including cybersecurity	0.008	Overall, while all regions expect it to be challenging, C execs the most and E the least.
	<b>Q8: Changes (increase/decrease) your organization will face or adopt within three years:</b>		
	A] Number of employees working remotely	0.000	Overall, while all regions expect it to be challenging, C execs the most and E the least.
	B] Total staff complement and capacity	0.048	W&N responses varied, most C execs reported increase-stable, E stable-decrease.
	E] Financial and/or budget restraint measures	0.041	Most C execs expect increase, W&N a bit less so, E execs expect increase or stable.
K] Consultation and/or coordination with key stakeholders or partners	0.016	C and E regions mostly expect increases, but most W&N execs expect it to be stable.	

Demographic Groups	Survey Questions (Q) Impacted by Demographics	AnovaSig. < .05	Nature of Significant Differences in Groups' Mean (Average) Results
<b>Q15 - Regions of Canada:</b>  East (E)  Central (C)  West & North (W&N)	<b>Q10: Extent you agree/disagree with following statement on leadership:</b>		
	B] Execs and leaders have the capacity, competencies and stability needed to lead their organization and meet challenges.	0.024	While most execs in all regions agree, W&N region execs agree by a smaller margin.
	C] Executives and leaders have the expertise and qualifications to effectively fulfill the requirements of their positions.	0.000	Most execs in E and C regions agree, W&N have more diverse views – mostly agree or neither agree/disagree
<b>Q16 - Position in Organization:</b>  Head of a Public Service or Municipality; Deputy Head or Deputy Minister (H&DH)  Assistant Deputy Head or Assistant Deputy Minister (ADH)  City Director or Manager reporting to the CAO; Director General, Director or equivalent (DG)	<b>Q1: Recent issues/trends impacting democracy and governments—agree or disagree:</b>		
	H] The PS (all orders of govt) should be more active to support democratic governance and mitigate adverse social trends.	*0.042	While overall all three groups agreed, more DGs agreed, and less H&DH agreed.
	<b>Q7: Extent your organization will face important challenges within three years in these areas:</b>		
	C Public relations and information/ misinformation	0.028	Overall, H&DHs expect area somewhat challenging; ADHs and DGs noted challenging.
	D] Policy development	0.045	Overall, ADHs and DGs expect area to be challenging, H&DHs somewhat challenging
	F] Ongoing program and service delivery	0.021	On average, DGs expect it to be challenging, ADHs and H&DHs somewhat
	G] Research and innovation	0.047	More DGs expect it to be challenging, while H&DHs and ADHs somewhat challenging
	J] Changing work environment	0.018	Most ADHs and DGs expect it to be challenging, while H&DHs only somewhat.
	<b>Q8: Changes (increase/decrease) your organization will face or adopt within three years:</b>		
	A] Number of employees working remotely	0.016	Overall, all three groups expect an increase, but more DGs and less H&DH noted increase.
	C] Organizational productivity and performance	0.036	Overall, more H&DHs and DGs expect increase, more ADHs expect remain stable.
	J] Use of performance and results information	*0.032	Overall, H&DHs expect an increase while more ADHs and DGs expect remain stable.
	N] Centralization of key decisions and controls	0.037	Overall, H&DH expect increases and execs in the other groups expect to remain stable.

Demographic Groups	Survey Questions (Q) Impacted by Demographics	AnovaSig. < .05	Nature of Significant Differences in Groups' Mean (Average) Results
<b>Q17 - Time in Current Position</b>	<i>Note: There are no statistically significant relationships between the time spent by respondents in their current positions and the results of the survey's main questions</i>	<i>sig. &gt; 0.05 for all questions</i>	
Q20 - Executives self-identified as Visible Minority:  Yes (Minorities)  No (non-minorities)	<b>Q1: Recent issues/trends impacting democracy and governments—agree or disagree:</b>		
	C] Misinformation increasing and contributes to social polarization and tensions.	*0.041	Overall, both groups clearly agree, but minorities by a smaller % (Yes 86%, No 96%).
	D] Adverse social trends impede effective democratic processes and trust in govts.	0.015	Overall, both groups clearly agree, but minorities by a smaller % (Yes 79%, No 97%).
	<b>Q5: Extent areas or issues reflect important challenges requiring better governance:</b>		
	D] Roles of central agencies or departments, and your organization's autonomy/flexibility.	*0.049	Both groups noted issue as important, minorities by a larger margin (Yes 93%, No 66%).
	F] Evaluation of results against planned. strategic objectives or outcomes.	*0.041	Both groups noted issue as important, minorities by a larger margin (Yes 93%, No 65%).
	G] Independent oversight of senior management and key initiatives.	0.037	Exec part of minority noted issue important (64%), non-min. noted somewhat important.
	<b>Q8: Changes (increase/decrease) your organization will face or adopt within three years:</b>		
	F] Use of social or digital media	0.005	50% of minorities expect use will be stable, 64% of non-minorities expect an increase.
	M] Support for diversity and inclusion	0.001	Both groups expect increase, minorities by a much smaller margin (Yes 57%, No 84%).
	<b>Q10: Extent you agree/disagree with following statement on leadership:</b>		
	A] Overall, senior executives and leaders perform well and are effective.	0.007	Most execs in both groups agree, minorities by a smaller margin (Yes 57%, No 86%).
F] You have resources/capacity to achieve your strategic objectives and results	0.049	50% of minority execs disagree while 53% of non-minority agree; Results were varied.	
<b>Note:</b> Results for items with asterisk (*) are less reliable as the homogeneity condition failed			

## CORRELATION RESULTS

Correlation coefficients were calculated comparing all subquestions for the survey's main questions (1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 8, 10, and 11). The strength of the association was considered weak for coefficients whose absolute value was between 0.1 and 0.3, medium if between 0.3 and 0.6, and robust if above 0.6. There were three robust correlations identified, which were both significant (95 per cent significance) and positive. These were between the following:

- Questions 7.D and 7.E,  
Senior leaders normally assessed their organization's challenges related to policy development and to policy implementation in the same way;
- Questions 10.A and 10.B,  
Senior executives and leaders' performance and effectiveness were assessed similarly as to whether they provide the capacity, competencies, and stability to lead their organization and meet today's diverse challenges; and
- Questions 10B. and 10.C,  
Whether executives and leaders have the capacity, competencies, and stability to lead their organizations, was strongly correlated to whether they also have the specialized expertise and qualifications needed to effectively fulfil the specific requirements of their functions and positions.



## **ANALYTICAL SUMMARY**

A summary integrating both reports has been developed entitled *Top of Mind: Insights, Issues, and Opportunities for Good Governance in Canada*.

## CONCLUSION: A PATH FORWARD

As stated at the start, good governance matters. Whether it's responding to a public health, economic, environmental, or public safety crisis, the ability of our elected leaders to make good choices and ensure continued essential public services are delivered requires a professional non-partisan public service equipped, organized, and inspired to help the country and its communities respond to an uncertain future.

The *Top of Mind* project was the first of its kind. Undertaken in the midst of a pandemic senior public service leaders revealed both tremendous pride in the innovation and service to Canadians achieved by their teams at its start and growing concern regarding whether their institution is sufficiently equipped to face the challenges post-pandemic.

The *IOG* is committed to thought leadership in supporting public sector leaders being equipped with the knowledge, skills, and technological solutions to deliver good governance programs and services to Canadians.

*Top of Mind: Insights, Issues and Opportunities for Good Governance in Canada* summary report is a timely contribution to a national conversation on the intergovernmental workings of Canada, the role of government, and the senior public service leadership within it.

With the continued support of the *Mulroney Institute*, we look forward to a year of dialogue and debate over the future of the public service and its critical role in meeting and overcoming the great public policy and administration challenges of our time. Trust in liberal democracy is in decline to tackle the challenges of the twenty-first century. It's hoped this work contributes to a much needed conversation to modernize our public institution.





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