



## FINAL REPORT

### *Public Opinion Survey following the March 19<sup>th</sup>, 2012 By-election in Toronto-Danforth (Ontario)*

Prepared for Elections Canada

July 2012

Ce rapport est aussi disponible en français sur demande.

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







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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On behalf of Elections Canada, Phoenix SPI conducted a random digit dialling (RDD) telephone survey with 750 Canadians eligible to vote in the March 19<sup>th</sup>, 2012 by-election in the Toronto-Danforth federal electoral district. Based on a sample of this size, the overall results are accurate to within  $\pm 3.6\%$ , 19 times out of 20. The fieldwork was conducted April 10<sup>th</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup>, 2012.

The purpose of the survey was to evaluate electors' opinions, experience, attitudes and knowledge of the agency's services and various aspects of the electoral process. Where relevant, the findings from this survey will be compared with the results from the most recent federal general election (May 02, 2011), as a reference point. The results will be used to assist in evaluating and refining Elections Canada's programs and services to the electorate, and to provide information that will help inform the Chief Electoral Officer's recommendations to Parliament.

### Awareness of the By-election

Almost all eligible voters (96%) claimed to have been aware of the by-election that took place in their riding on March 19<sup>th</sup>, 2012. This result is similar to that of the 2011 general election (98%). In terms of how they heard about the by-election, respondents pointed most often to the mainstream media. Heading the list in this regard is television (45%) and newspapers (41%), followed by radio (26%). In addition, almost one-third pointed to candidate or party election signs (28%) or signage in general (4%).

### Voter Information

Eligible voters aware of the by-election were asked to identify where they obtained information<sup>1</sup> on voting procedures for this by-election. Elections Canada materials, by a considerable margin, were mentioned most often. Similar to the result from the most recent general election, 70% identified the Voter Information Card, while 14% mentioned a flyer received from Elections Canada and 2% said they obtained information directly from Elections Canada.

Recall of by-election advertising by Elections Canada was modest, with 31% of eligible voters aware of the by-election having noticed an advertisement about the voting process, compared to 40% in the 2011 general election. Those who recalled an Elections Canada ad were most likely to have noticed it in newspapers (43%). Following this, 16% said they saw an ad on television<sup>2</sup>, 14% heard it on the radio, and 10% cited the Elections Canada flyer. All those who recalled advertisement were asked to identify what it talked about. The aspects of the ad most likely to be mentioned were the election date (24%), the reminder to vote (16%), and the voter identification requirements (11%).

Few electors (3%) said they contacted Elections Canada during the campaign. Moreover, the need for additional information about the by-election was limited. Almost nine in ten (88%) said that they needed no additional information, while a few respondents (from 1% to 2%) said they would have benefitted from more information on ID requirements, the dates of the advanced polls, the candidates, the option to vote by mail and voting locations.

<sup>1</sup> Refers to when and where to vote and how to prove their identity and address before voting.

<sup>2</sup> It should be noted that Elections Canada did not produce any television ads for the by-election.



## **Registration and Voter Information Card**

Approximately nine in ten (92%) electors said they recalled receiving a Voter Information Card that was addressed to them and told them where and when to vote. This percentage is consistent with the result from the 2011 general election (91%). Among those who recalled receiving the Voter Information Card, all but two respondents said that their address was correct, and 98% said their name was correct.

In terms of recall of the content of the Voter Information Card, 30% said it contained information about the advance polls. Beyond this, 16% recalled the card having the polling station number on it and 15% recalled information about voters needing personal identification to vote. The single greatest proportion, 39%, could not recall any specific type of information from the Voter Information Card. Those who did **not** recall receiving a Voter Information Card were most likely to have done nothing to find out if they were registered to vote (n=26).

Almost nine in ten respondents (88%) who went to vote reported having brought their Voter Identification Card with them to the polling station. This represents a slightly higher percentage than in the 2011 general election (83%).

## **Voting in the By-elections**

Four in five respondents (80%) reported having voted in the March 19<sup>th</sup> by-election, while 87% also mentioned having voted at the 2011 general election. Consistent with this previous general election, the main reasons offered for voting in the by-election was the sense that it was a duty (45%) and by habit (25%).

Everyday life issues (66%) were the most common reasons for not voting (e.g. being busy, travelling, injury, illness). Following this, 35% identified political issues to explain why they did not vote (e.g. lack of interest/apathy, perceived futility of voting, issues related to political parties), while 5% cited issues related to the electoral process itself (e.g. lack of information on voting process, problems with access, registration problems). These results are fairly consistent with the previous general election.

Non-voters were asked to identify what could be done, if anything, to encourage them to vote in the next federal election. The top suggestion, mentioned by 25% (n= 24), was the ability to vote online. On this subject, when asked directly, more than two out of three non-voters (68%) also said they would have voted had it been possible to do so over the Internet using the Elections Canada Web site.

## **Voter Participation**

Four in five who said they voted in the by-election reported having voted at a polling station on election day. Another 17% reported having used advance polls, and 2% said they voted at a local Elections Canada office. Virtually unchanged from the 2011 general election, almost everyone said that casting their vote was very (89%) or somewhat (9%) easy. In addition, close to half (44%) knew that it was possible to vote by mail at any time during a federal election.

## **Voter Identification**

Awareness of the voter identification requirements was widespread. Similarly to the 2011 general election, 96% said they were aware that voters must present proof of identity in order to vote at federal elections. Fewer, 92%, said they were aware that voters must



present proof of address in order to vote at federal elections, compared to 89% in the 2011 general election.

Among those aware of the voter identification requirements, the top sources of information about these requirements were taken from prior knowledge and/or experience in previous elections (56%) and the Voter Information Card (40%). Virtually everyone (99%) who voted at polling stations<sup>3</sup> said they had the required identification documents. In terms of the types of documents voters brought to prove their identity and address, the large majority (79%) said they used their driver's licence. More than nine in ten (94%) by-election voters surveyed said it was very or somewhat easy to meet the identification requirements.

### **Voter Experience and Related Issues**

Most voters said that when they went to vote, they did so from home (85%). Significantly fewer (12%) went to vote from work and even fewer (3%) from another location. Almost everyone felt that the distance to the polling station was convenient for them (98%), and had no difficulty reaching it (99%).

Almost everyone (99%) said that the waiting time for voting was reasonable, and was satisfied with the language in which they were served. As well, 99% were satisfied with the services provided by Elections Canada staff when they voted (88% were *very* satisfied). Overall, these results are consistent with the 2011 general election.

### **Accessibility**

The vast majority of voters (92%) described the building where they voted as very accessible, with nearly all the rest (6%) describing it as somewhat accessible. Almost all voters surveyed (98%) felt that there were enough signs *inside* the building to help them find their way to the room where the vote took place. Slightly fewer (89%) said that there were enough directional signs *outside* of the building to help them find the entrance to the polling station. As a measure of reference, the perceptions of the adequacy of directional signs inside the building is similar to that of the 2011 general election (95%), while the directional signs outside the building are higher (82%).

Approximately half of the voters surveyed (52%) did not remember seeing any signs indicating that the polling station had level access for wheelchairs. Conversely, nearly four in ten (37%) remembered seeing them (11% were unsure). Of those who remembered these signs, 92% indicated that they were at least somewhat visible, with 66% rating them as highly visible. Very few (4%) felt the signs were not very visible.

### **Fairness**

The perception that the by-election was conducted by Elections Canada in a fair manner was widespread. Fully 89% felt that Elections Canada ran the by-election fairly, with three-quarters (75%) saying *very* fairly. This represent a higher proportion of electors who felt the election was run *very* fairly when compared with the results from the 2011 general election (65%).

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<sup>3</sup> The term "polling station" includes polling stations on ordinary polling day and advance polling days. Voting at local Elections Canada offices and by mail involves different identification requirements.



## **Conclusions and Implications**

Awareness of the by-election was very high, with mainstream media identified as the main source. Most claimed to have voted in the March 19<sup>th</sup> by-election, and the minority who did not were most likely to have pointed to everyday life issues to explain why they did not cast a vote. The results suggest that online voting might help to accommodate non-voters, with more than two-thirds saying they would have voted had it been possible to do so online.

With respect to the actual voting experience, results are very positive and consistent with the findings of the most recent general election. Almost everyone felt that the distance to the polling station was convenient, that it was easy to cast their vote and meet the voter identification requirements, that the waiting time for voting was reasonable, and that the by-election was conducted fairly. Likewise, everyone was satisfied with the language in which they were served at the polling station, as well as the services provided by Elections Canada staff. Attesting to service delivery consistency, satisfaction levels with Elections Canada staff are virtually the same as in the 2011 general election.

Finally, in terms of Elections Canada communications, the survey results are largely positive. Almost everyone who recalled receiving the Voter Information Card said that the name and address on it were correct. Almost everyone knew about the voter identification requirements before going to vote (in large part due to Elections Canada information materials). That being said, the advertising recall was modest, suggesting a need for Elections Canada to reconsider how it packages and delivers elections information.



## INTRODUCTION

Phoenix Strategic Perspectives Inc. was commissioned by Elections Canada to conduct a survey of electors eligible to vote in the March 19<sup>th</sup>, 2012 by-election.

### Background and Objectives

Elections Canada, an independent, non-partisan agency that reports directly to Parliament, is responsible for monitoring and conducting federal elections in Canada. As part of its evaluation program, the agency wanted to conduct a survey of electors in the Toronto-Danforth (Ontario) electoral district in which a by-election was held on March 19<sup>th</sup>, 2012. The purpose of the survey was to evaluate electors' opinions, experience, attitudes and knowledge of the agency's services and various aspects of the electoral process.

More specifically, surveyed Canadians were consulted on the following issues:

- Participation and attitudes underlying voting and non-voting
- Convenience (voting location, accessibility, signage, distance, time, etc.)
- Satisfaction with registration and voting, including services at the polls
- Attitudes towards, and experience with voter identification requirements
- Level of penetration of the various communication products and the level of retention of the information conveyed through the products.

The results will be used to assist in evaluating and refining Elections Canada's programs and services to the electorate, and to provide information that will help inform the Chief Electoral Officer's recommendations to Parliament.

### Research Design

A telephone survey was conducted with 750 eligible electors. Eligible electors were Canadian citizens, at least 18 years of age on March 19<sup>th</sup>, 2012, who were residents of the Toronto-Danforth federal electoral district from February 15<sup>th</sup>, 2012, the first day of revision, until March 19<sup>th</sup>, 2012, election day. Based on a sample of this size, the overall results are accurate to within  $\pm 3.6\%$ , 19 times out of 20. The margin of error is greater for results pertaining to subgroups of the total sample.

The following specifications applied to the survey:

- The fieldwork was conducted April 10<sup>th</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup>, 2012.
- All interviewing was conducted in the respondent's official language of choice.
- Interviews averaged 14 minutes in length.
- Elections Canada provided a questionnaire based on what had been used for previous by-elections. Phoenix made minor changes in consultation with Elections Canada.
- The survey was registered with the Marketing Research and Intelligence Association's (MRIA) National Survey Registration System.
- The survey was conducted in accordance with the standards set out by the MRIA, as well as applicable federal legislation, including the *Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act* (PIPEDA), Canada's private sector privacy law.



For a more complete overview of the methodology used in this research, please refer to the methodology note included under separate cover.

### Note to Readers

- For editorial purposes, the terms ‘electors,’ ‘eligible voters,’ and ‘respondents’ are used interchangeably to denote survey participants. The term ‘voters’ denotes survey participants who reported having voted.
- All results in the report are expressed as percentages, unless otherwise noted.
- In some specific cases where the sample size is noticeably small, the total unweighted number is presented instead of percentages
- Throughout the report, percentages may not always add to 100% due to rounding.
- The number of respondents changes throughout the report because questions were often asked of sub-samples of the survey population. Accordingly, readers should be aware of this and exercise caution when interpreting results based on smaller numbers of respondents.
- At times, the number of respondents who answered certain questions or answered in a certain way is provided. The following method is used to denote this: ‘n=100’, which means the number of respondents, in this instance, is 100.
- Demographic and other subgroup differences are identified in the report. The text describing these differences throughout the report is put in a shaded box for easy identification. When reporting sub-group variations, only differences that are significant at the 95% confidence level, indicative of a pattern, and/or pertaining to a sub-group sample size of more than n=30 are discussed in the report.
- Where relevant, the results are compared to that of the May 02, 2011, general election, as a reference point.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> It must be noted that the results from the 2011 general election reflect the opinion of electors across Canada, while the results from the by-election only reflect the opinion of electors within the electoral district of Toronto-Danforth.



## AWARENESS OF THE BY-ELECTION

This section reports on eligible voters' awareness.

### Widespread Awareness of By-election

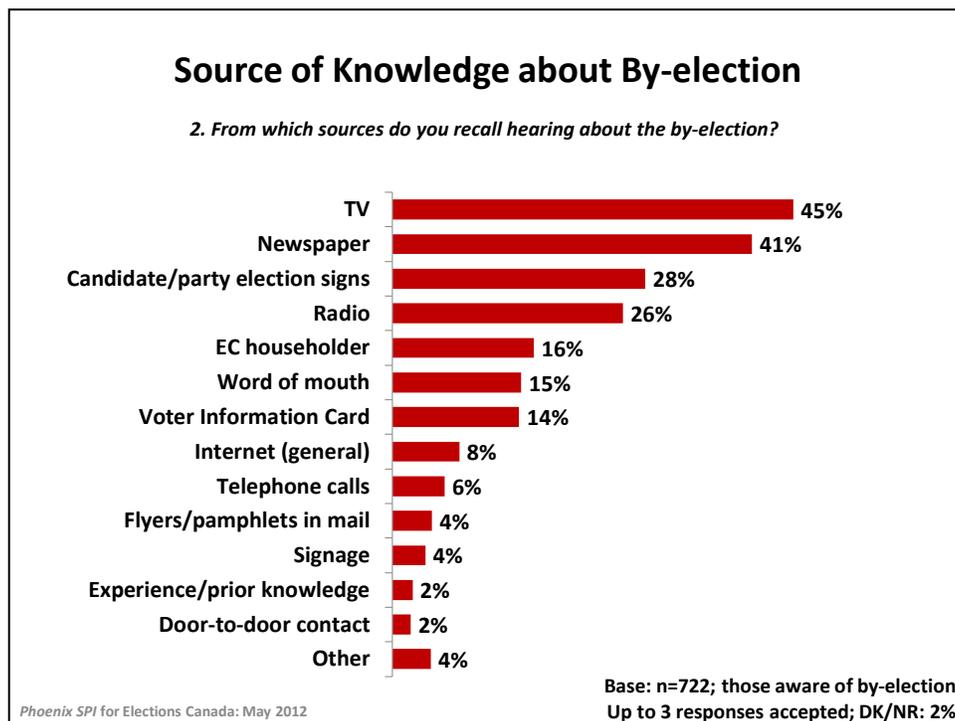
Almost all eligible voters (96%) claimed to have been aware of the by-election that took place in their riding on March 19<sup>th</sup>, 2012, consistent with the awareness of the 2011 general election (98%).

### Sociodemographic differences

Eligible voters born in Canada were more apt to have been aware of the by-election (98% vs. 91% of electors born outside of Canada). Conversely, those with high school or less were less likely to have known about the by-election than those with a university degree (91% vs. 97%). The likelihood of being aware of the by-election increased with household income, from 90% of those with household incomes below \$40,000 to 99% of those earning \$100,000+ per year.

### Mainstream Media – Top Sources for Learning about By-election

In terms of how they heard about the March 19<sup>th</sup> by-election, respondents pointed most often to the mainstream media. Heading the list in this regard are television (45%) and newspapers (41%), followed at a distance by radio (26%). In addition, almost one-third pointed to signs of one kind or another, either candidate or party election signs (28%) or signage in general (4%).





All other sources were identified by far fewer eligible voters. These include the Elections Canada flyer/householder (i.e. the brochure/reminder card) (16%), word of mouth (15%), and the Voter Information Card (14%). Relatively small numbers (8% or fewer) learned about the by-election through the Internet (8%), telephone calls (6%), unspecified flyers or pamphlets (4%), as well as from their own experience and/or prior knowledge (2%) or door-to-door contact (2%).

#### **Sociodemographic differences**

Newspapers were more likely to be identified by older electors (47% of those 45 years and older), as well as those at home full-time (50% compared to people who are employed at 41%). Electors with household incomes of less than \$40,000 were less apt to have learned about the by-election via a newspaper. The likelihood of having heard about the by-election on the radio was higher among older electors (28% of 45-64 year olds and 27% of those 65+), those with a university degree (32%), and those with household incomes of \$100,000 or more (32%).

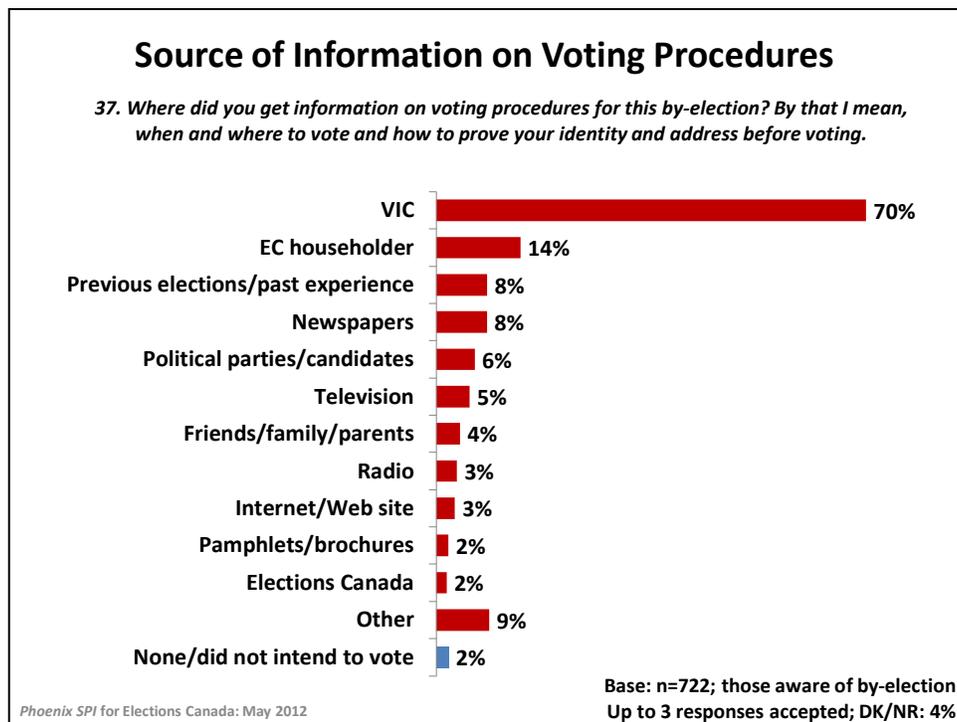


## VOTER INFORMATION

This section explores issues related to the various communication channels Elections Canada used to carry out information to the electorate.

### Main Sources of Information on Voting Procedures – VIC, Elections Canada Flyer

Eligible voters aware of the by-election were asked to identify where they obtained information on voting procedures<sup>5</sup> for this by-election. By a considerable margin, Elections Canada materials were mentioned most often. In total, 70% identified the Voter Information Card, while 14% mentioned a flyer received from Elections Canada and 2% said they obtained information directly from Elections Canada. As a point of reference, the result from the 2011 general election showed that 66% obtained their information from the Voter Information Card, 8% from the flyers or brochures from Elections Canada and 3% from a direct contact with the agency.



Following this, respondents were most likely to identify the media: newspapers (8%), television (5%), radio (3%), as well as the Internet/Web sites (3%). Other sources mentioned include previous experience (8%), political parties and/or candidates (6%), family and friends (4%), and pamphlets and/or brochures (2%). A host of other sources of information was identified by very small numbers (1% or less).

<sup>5</sup> Refers to when and where to vote and how to prove their identity and address before voting.



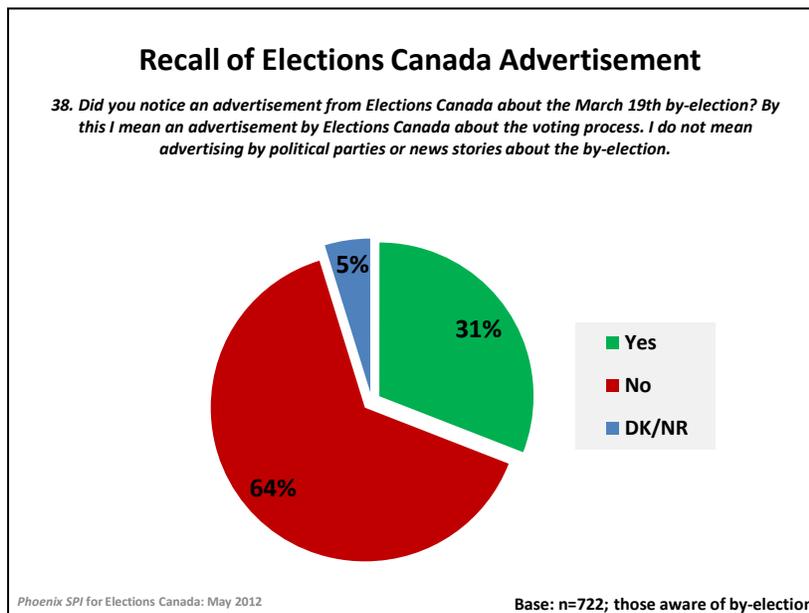
**Sociodemographic differences**

The likelihood of getting information on voting procedures for the by-election from their Voter Information Card was highest among respondents with higher household incomes: 77% for those between \$60,000 and \$100,000, and 80% for those beyond \$100,000.

Those who were more likely to have obtained their information on voting procedure from the Voter Information Card also include employed electors (76%), electors between 25-44 year olds (75%) and 45-64 year olds (74%), electors born in Canada (74%), those without a disability (72%) and electors who completed their post-secondary schooling: college (70%) and university (75%).

**Modest Recall of Elections Canada Advertisement**

Nearly one-third (31%) of eligible voters aware of the by-election (n=722) noticed an advertisement from Elections Canada about the voting process, compared to 40% in the 2011 general election. Conversely, 64% could not recall such an ad.



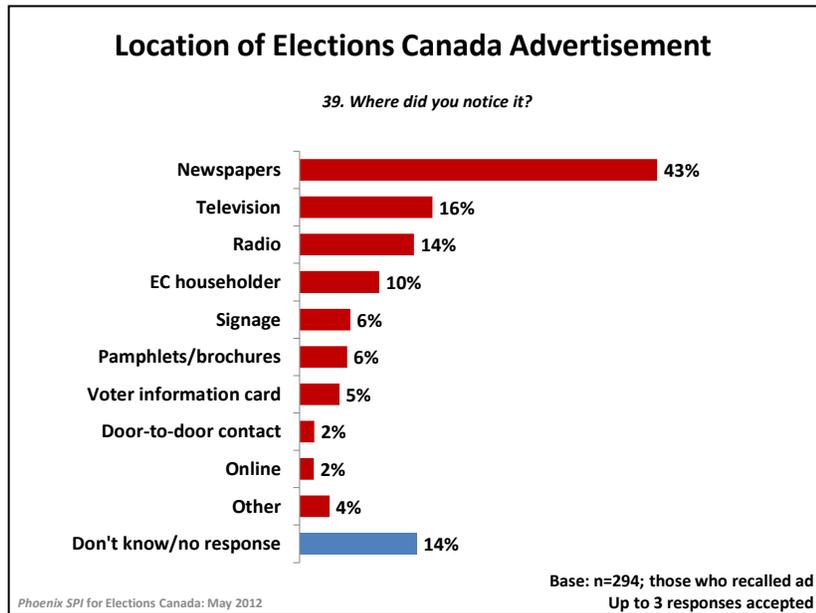
**Sociodemographic differences**

The likelihood of noticing the Elections Canada advertisement increased with age, from 5% of 18-24 year olds to 42% of electors 65 and older. In addition, recall was higher among electors at home full-time (40%), as well as those who are employed (31%) compared to unemployed electors (29%) and students (7%).



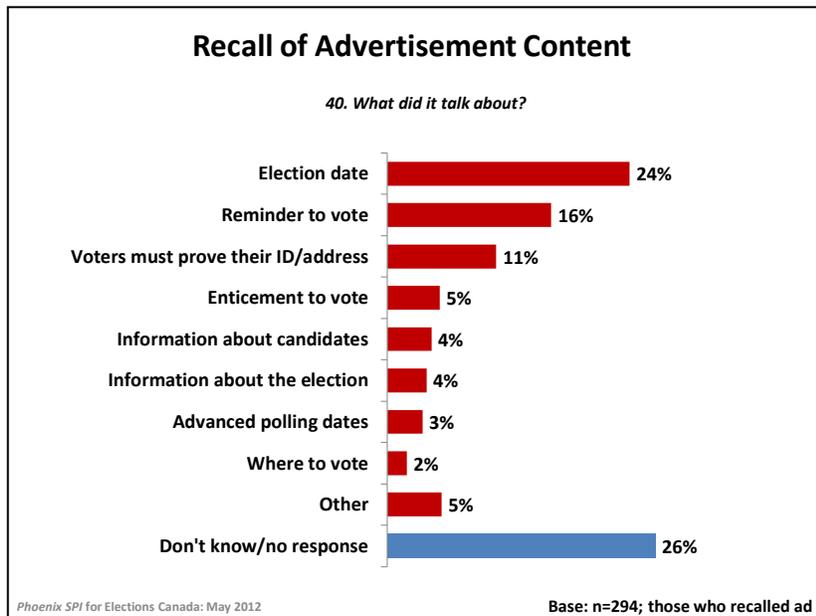
### Advertisement Recall in Newspaper was the Most Noticed

Those who recalled an Elections Canada advertisement about the March 19<sup>th</sup> by-election (n=294) were most likely to have noticed it in newspapers (43%). Another 16% said they saw one on television<sup>6</sup>, 14% heard one on the radio, and 10% cited the Elections Canada flyer. All other sources were mentioned with much smaller frequencies.



### Content Recall – Mainly Election Date, Reminder and ID Requirements

Respondents who recalled seeing or hearing an Elections Canada advertisement (n=294) were asked if they remembered what it talked about. The single largest proportion (26%) said they could not recall anything specific. Those who could, most often identified the election date (24%), a reminder to vote (16%), and the voter identification requirements (11%). As the related graph shows, several other items were mentioned by small numbers.



### Very Few Contacted Elections Canada

Among those who were aware of the by-election (n=722), 3% said they contacted Elections Canada for any reason during the campaign. Eligible voters who contacted Elections Canada (n=22) reported having received the information they needed, either

<sup>6</sup> It should be noted that Elections Canada did not produce any television ads for the by-election.



fully (n=19) or in part (n=1). Two respondents said they did not receive the information they needed.

**Limited Need for Additional Information**

Respondents aware of the by-election (n=722) were asked whether there was any additional information about the voting process that they did not have and that would have been useful for them to know before going to vote. Fully 88% said that they needed no additional information.

In terms of the type of additional information that would have been useful, the following items were mentioned (each by 1-2% of respondents): information about needing to show identification, the dates of the advanced polls, information on candidates, as well as information on voting by mail and on where to vote.



## REGISTRATION AND THE VOTER INFORMATION CARD

This section explores issues related to voter registration and the Voter Information Card.

### Voter Information Card Widely Recalled and Accurate

Over nine in ten electors (92%) said they recalled receiving a Voter Information Card that was addressed to them and that told them where and when to vote. Conversely, 8% did not recall receiving the card. This recall percentage is virtually identical to the 2011 general election (91%).

#### Sociodemographic differences

The likelihood of recalling the Voter Information Card increased with age, from 64% of respondents under 25 to 96% of those 65 and older. In addition, recall was higher among electors with household incomes between \$40,000 and \$60,000 (98%), those without a disability (93% vs. 82% of those with a disability), those at home full-time (96%) or employed (94%) compared to students (70%), as well as respondents with a university degree (93% vs. 87% of those with high school or less).

Respondents who recalled receiving the Voter Information Card (n=681) were asked whether their name and address were correct on the card. All electors but two (100%, rounded) reported that their address was correct, and 98% said their name was correct. These results are consistent with the 2011 general election.

The small number of respondents (n=14) who reported errors in their name or address were asked whether they did anything to make corrections on their Voter Information Card. In response, six respondents said they took action to correct the information.

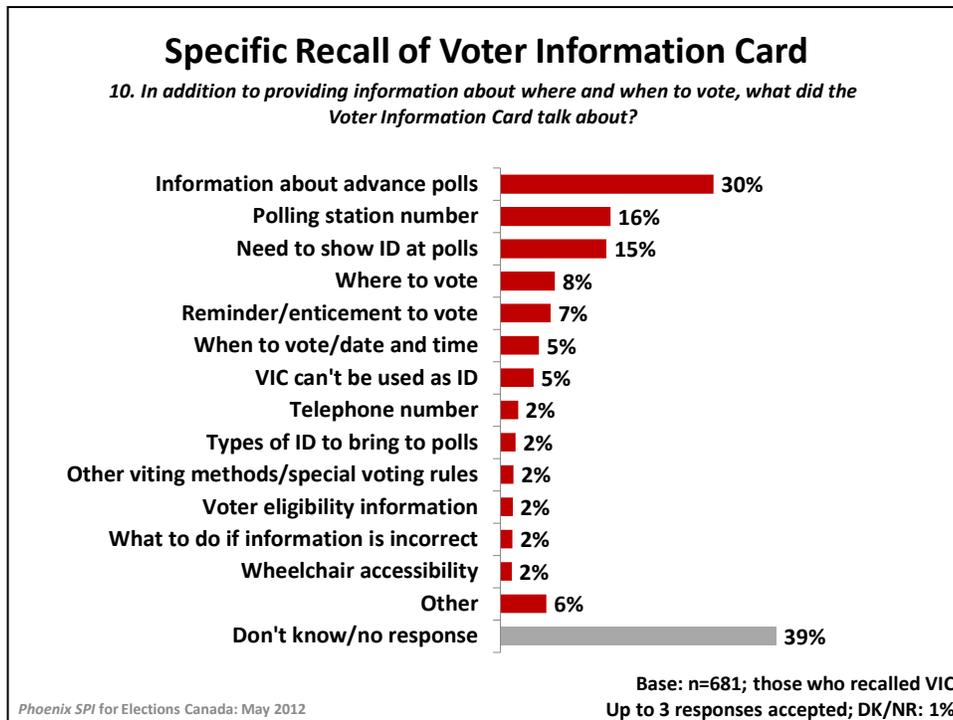
### Information Recalled from Voter Information Card

Electors who remembered receiving the Voter Information Card (n=681) were asked if they recalled any information it contained beyond where and when to vote. The single greatest proportion, nearly four in ten (39%), could not recall any specific information.

In terms of content recall, 30% said the Voter Information Card contained information about the advance polls. Another 16% recalled the polling station number and 15% recalled information about voters needing personal identification to vote. Also mentioned with some frequency were information about where to vote (8%), a reminder or encouragement to vote (7%), when to vote (date and time) (5%), and that the Voter Information Card cannot be used to meet the identity requirements (5%).

#### Sociodemographic differences

Respondents with a university degree (35%), those with a household income between \$60,000 and \$100,000 (35%), and women (34%) were more likely to recall that the Voter Information Card contained information about the advance polls.



Among those who did *not* recall receiving a Voter Information Card (n=41), most were likely to have done nothing to find out if they were registered to vote (n=26). Of those who did take action, most either called Elections Canada's 1-800 telephone number (n=5) or said they found out whether they were registered at the polling station or a local Elections Canada office (n=5).

### Most Brought Voter Information Card to Polls

In every federal election, electors are invited to bring their Voter Information Card to the polling station in order to facilitate the voting process. For this by-election, almost nine in ten respondents (88%) who went to vote reported having brought their Voter Identification Card with them to the polling station (compared to 83% in the 2011 general election).

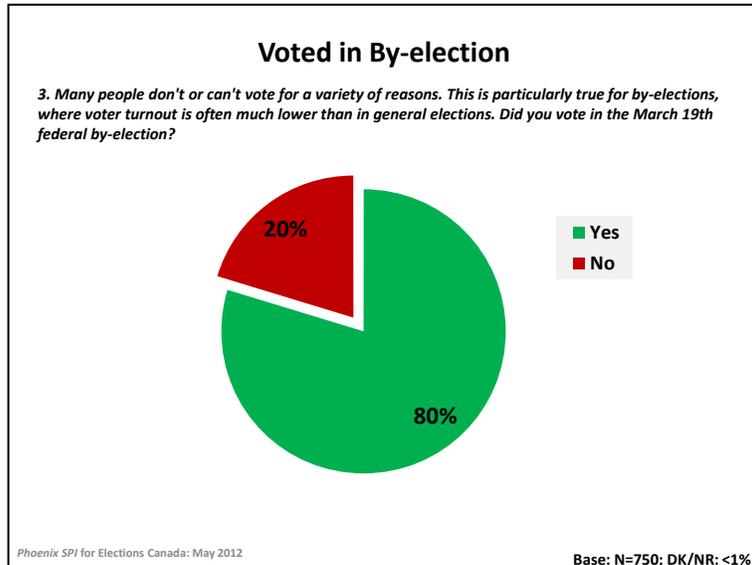


## VOTING IN THE BY-ELECTION

This section explores issues related to voting in the March 19<sup>th</sup>, 2012 by-election.

### Large Majority Claim to Have Voted in By-election

Four in five (80%) respondents claimed that they voted in the March 19<sup>th</sup> by-election.<sup>7</sup> Conversely, one in five (20%) said they did not.

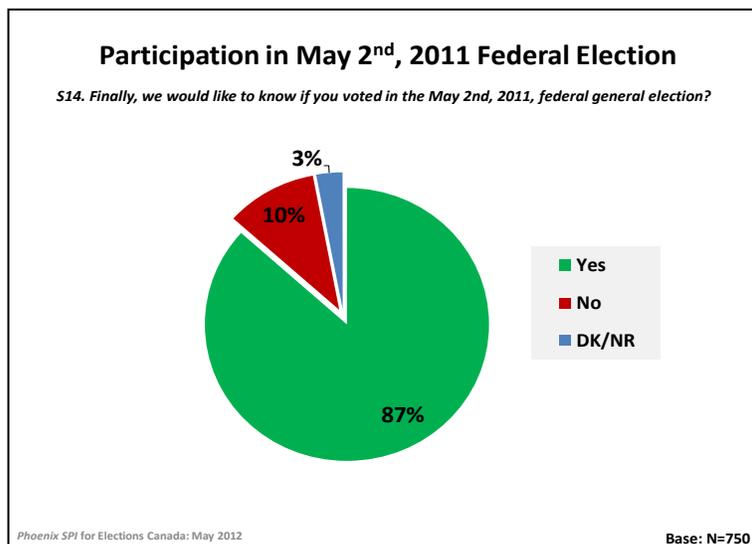


### Sociodemographic differences

The likelihood of having voted in the by-election increased with age, from 56% of 18-24 year olds to 85% of those 65 and older. In addition, the following were more apt to say that they have voted in the by-election: electors born in Canada (83% vs. 72% of those born outside Canada), those with a university degree (83% vs. 73% of college-educated electors), and respondents with household incomes of \$100,000 or more (84% vs. 70% of those earning less than \$40,000 per year).

### Higher Percentage Reported Voting in 2011

Electors were also asked if they had voted in the previous 2011 general election. A comparison of both electoral events, taken from the same sample of electors in Toronto-Danforth, shows that the self-reported voter turn-out for the 2011 general election (87%) is higher than that of this by-election (80%).

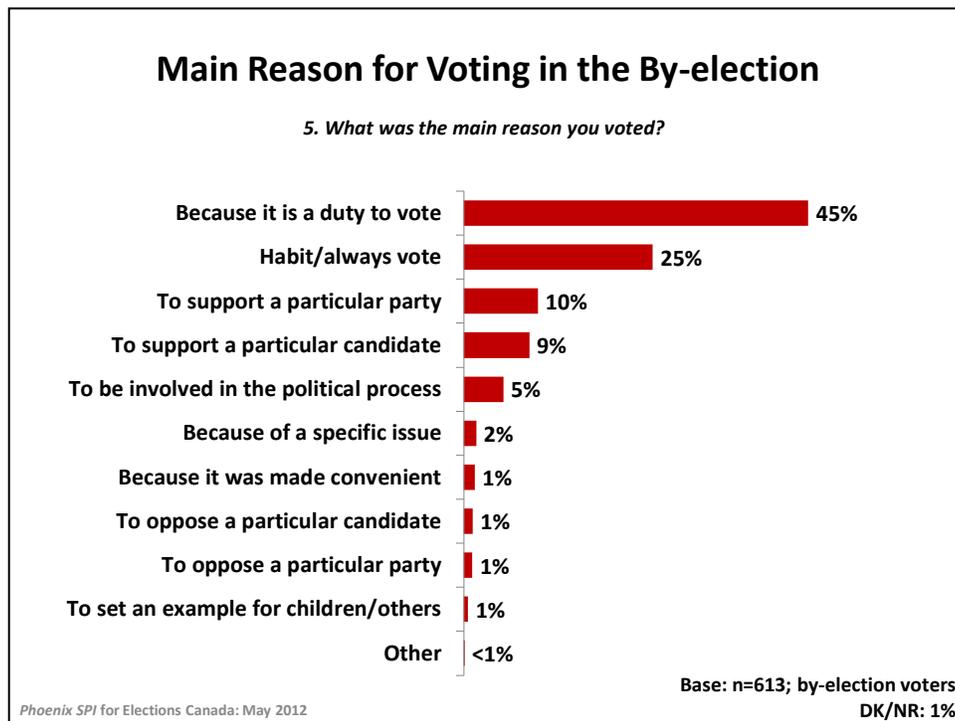


<sup>7</sup> Official voter turn-out in the by-election was 43%. When interpreting these results, therefore, it is important to keep in mind that 1) non-voters are more likely to refuse answering surveys about elections, and 2) social desirability may lead to over-reporting of voting behaviour.



### Duty, Followed by Habit – Main Reason for Voting

Respondents who said they voted in the by-election (n=613) were asked to identify the main reason why they voted. Non-political reasons were most often cited, including the duty to vote (45%) and the habit of voting (25%). Other reasons were more political in nature, such as supporting a particular party (10%) or candidate (9%), or to be involved in the political process (5%)

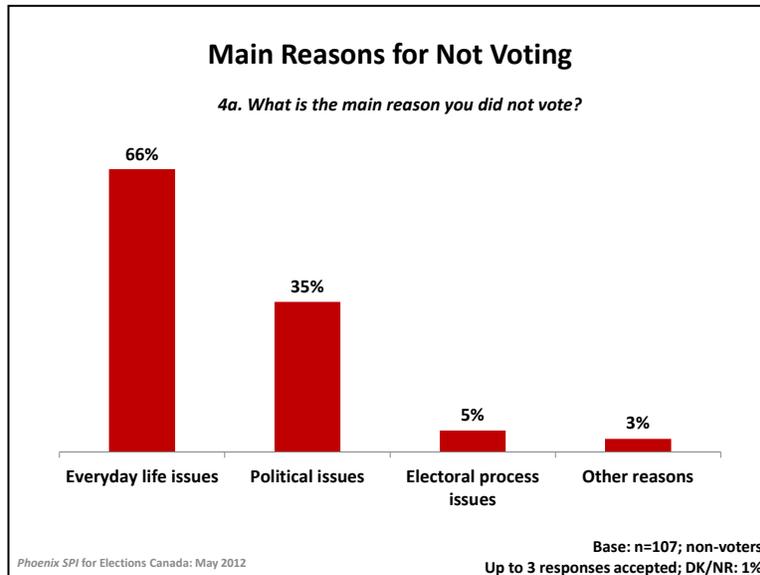


### Sociodemographic differences

Electors with household incomes of \$100,000+ were more likely to vote out of duty (49% vs. 29% of respondents who have annual household incomes between \$40,000 and \$60,000 and 38% of those earning less than \$40,000). For their part, respondents born in Canada were more likely than those born outside of Canada to have voted out of habit (27% vs. 18%).

**Daily Life Issues – Main Reasons for *Not* Voting**

A majority of the respondents who said they were unable to vote in the by-election (n=107) pointed to everyday life issues (66%) to explain why they did not vote. In fact, these reasons were cited almost twice as often as any other types of reasons.



Following this, 35% identified political issues, and 5% cited issues related to the electoral process itself (3% pointed to some other reason).<sup>8</sup> Generally speaking, these results are somewhat similar to that of the 2011 general election.

Issues grouped in each of the three main summary categories are as follows:

Everyday Life Issues <sup>9</sup>	
Too busy	19%
Travelling	18%
Health/injury/illness	11%
Family obligations	8%
Work	7%
In the process of moving/changing address	6%
Lack of information	5%
Forgot to vote	4%
Transportation issues	1%
Political Issues	
Lack of interest/apathy	13%
Related to candidates/undecided on who to vote for	11%
Meaninglessness of vote	8%
Related to political parties	3%
Cynicism	3%

<sup>8</sup> Percentages in the graph exceed 100% because respondents were able to provide multiple responses.

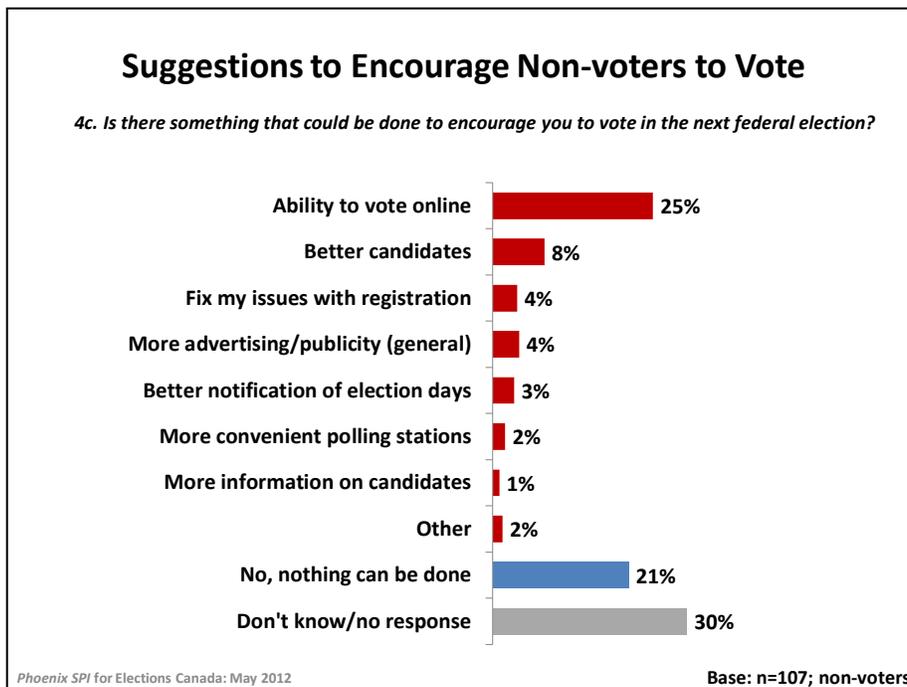
<sup>9</sup> The percentages for the various items may not sum to the totals in the previous graph for each summary category for the following reasons: 1) rounding; 2) the inclusion of issues identified by very small numbers (<1%), and; 3) respondents who identified more than one issue within a summary category are only counted once when the aggregate results are presented.



<b>Political Issues (Cont'd.)</b>	
Lack of competition / Didn't think that it would make an impact	1%
Related to politicians (in general)	<1%
Related to government	<1%
<b>Electoral Process Issues</b>	
Lack of information on voting process (e.g. when/where to vote)	2%
Problems with access to the polls	2%
Registration problems	1%
No documents to prove identification when voting	<1%
Polling station too far away from home	<1%

### Suggestions to Encourage Non-Voters to Vote

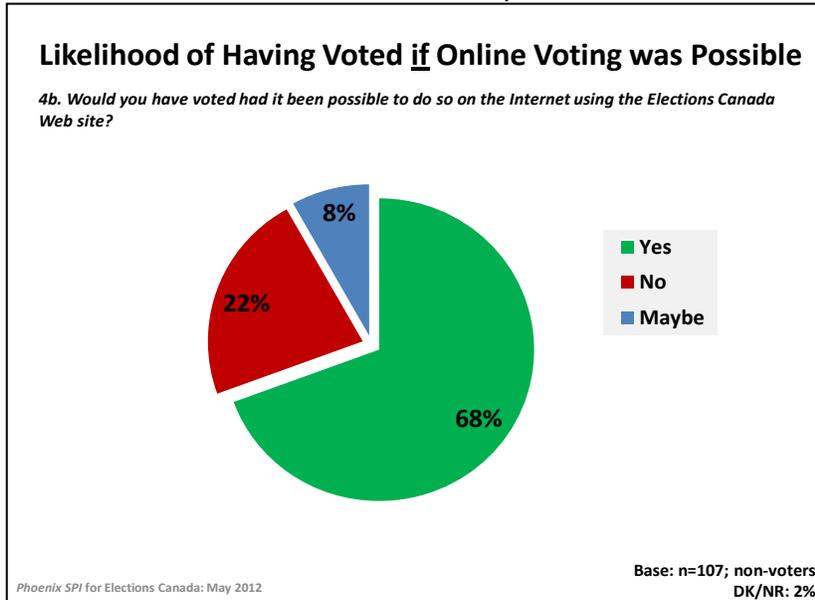
Respondents who did *not* vote in the by-election (n=107) were also asked to identify what, if anything, could be done to encourage them to vote in the next federal election. In response, 30% did not offer any suggestions, while 21% said that nothing could be done to encourage non-voters to vote. Among those who did offer substantive feedback, the top suggestion, mentioned by 25% of respondents, was the ability to vote online. On that subject, it must be reminded that this suggestion is based on the opinion of 24 respondents. As a reference point, this suggestion was mentioned by 14% of Canadian electors in the 2011 general election (n=69). All other suggestions were mentioned by less than one in ten electors.





### Most Non-Voters Claimed They Would Have Voted Online

When non-voters were asked directly if they would have voted on the Internet using the Elections Canada Web site, if it would have been possible to do so, more than two-thirds (68%) would in this manner.







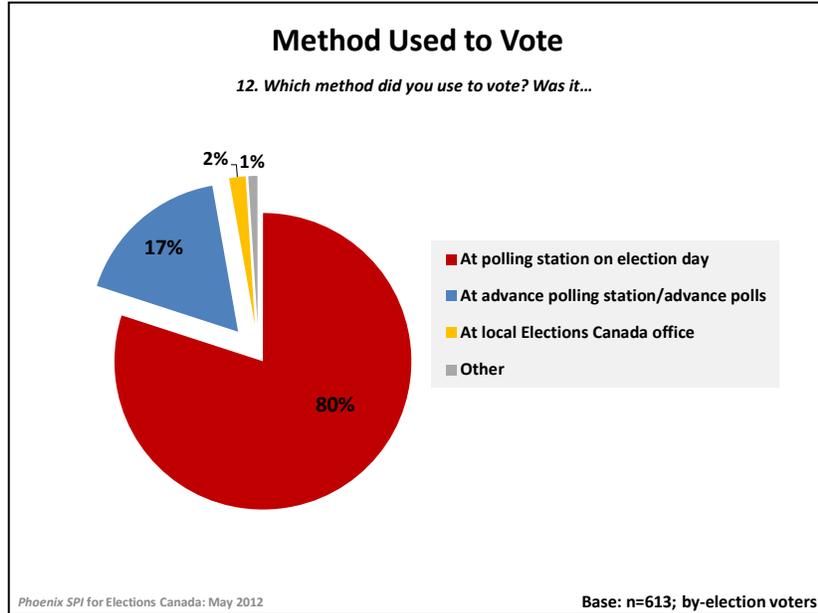
## VOTER PARTICIPATION

This section presents respondent feedback on issues related to voter participation.

### Most Voted on Election Day at Polling Station

The large majority (80%) of respondents who said they voted in the by-election reported having voted at a polling station on election day. Another 17% reported having used advance polls, and 2% claimed to have voted at a local Elections Canada office.

These results are identical to those of the 2011 federal general election.



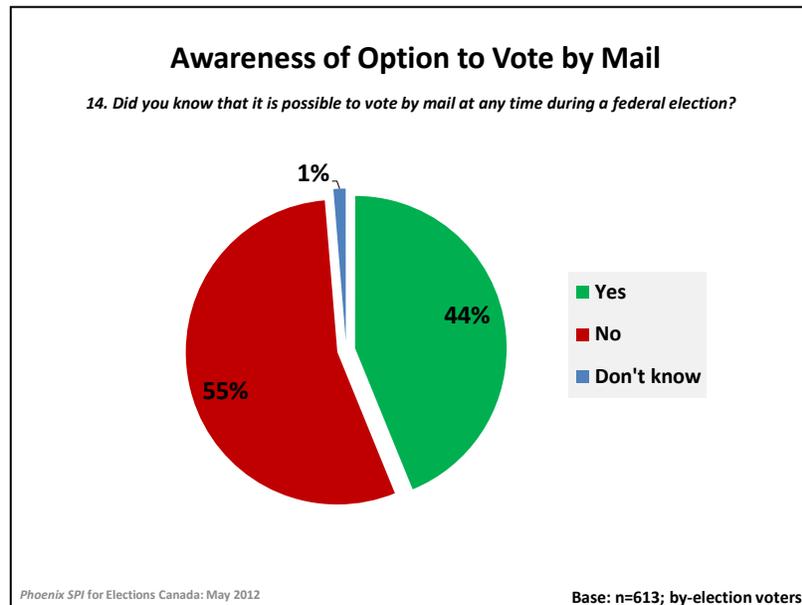
### Sociodemographic differences

The following sub-groups were more likely to have voted at the polling station on election day: college-educated respondents (90%), electors under 25 years (93%), and students (96%).

### Close to Half Knew It was Possible to Vote by Mail

Slightly more than four in ten (44%) knew that it was possible to vote by mail at any time during a federal election. The majority (55%) did not.

Awareness of the option to vote by mail was virtually identical to that reported in the last general election (43%).



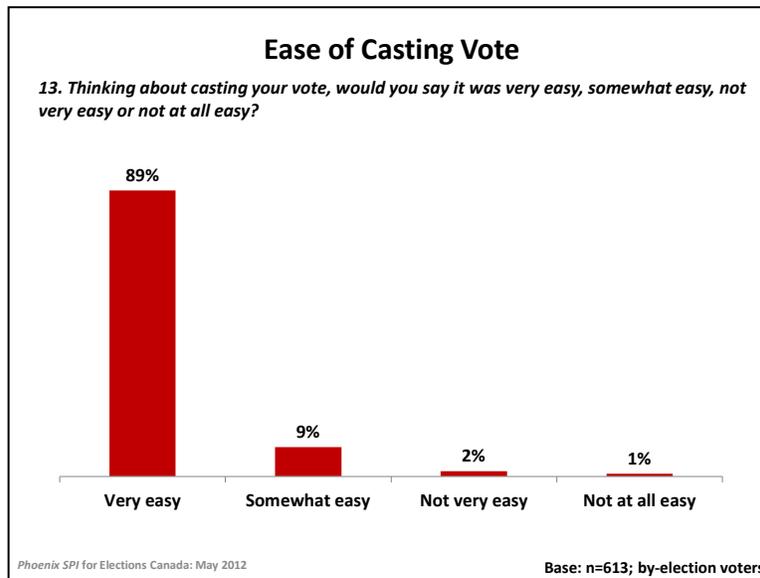


**Sociodemographic differences**

The likelihood of knowing that it is possible to vote by mail was higher among students (59%).

**Voting Considered Easy**

Very few voters found the process of casting a vote to be difficult. Instead, almost everyone said that casting their vote was very (89%) or somewhat (9%) easy. Still, 3% felt that voting was not easy. Overall, these percentages are similar to the result from the 2011 general election, when most voters said that casting their vote had been a very (92%) or somewhat (7%) easy process.



**Sociodemographic differences**

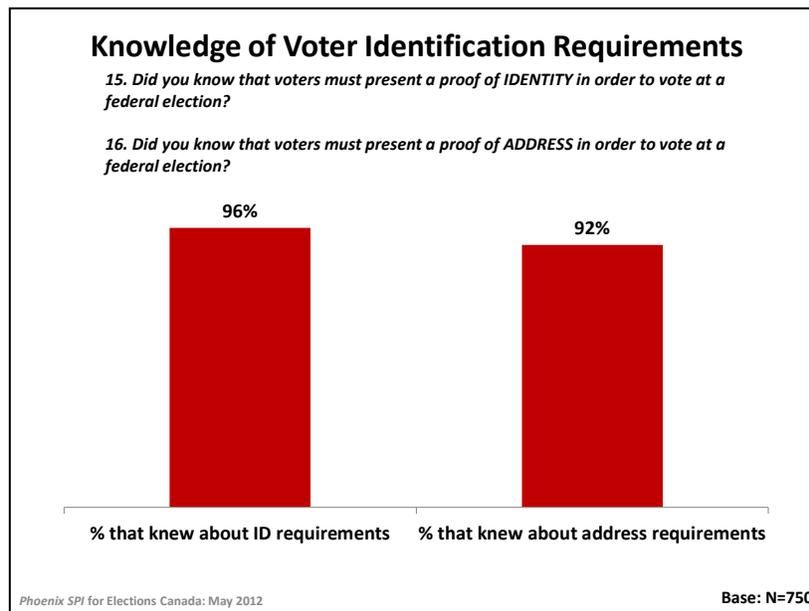
Students (82%), electors with a college education (81%) and those with household incomes of under \$40,000 (80%) were less likely to feel that it was very easy to cast their vote.

## VOTER IDENTIFICATION

This section reports on issues related to voter identification requirements associated with voting.

### Widespread Awareness of Voter Identification Requirements

Most respondents claimed to have been aware of the voter identification requirements. Fully 96% said they were aware that voters must present proof of identity in order to vote at federal elections (compared to 97% in the 2011 general election). Fewer, 92%, said they were aware that voters must present proof of address in order to vote at federal elections (compared to 89% in the 2011 general election).



### Sociodemographic differences

Electors born in Canada were more likely to know that voters must present proof of identity (99% vs. 90% of those born outside of Canada) and of address (94% vs. 88%). Compared to respondents from lower income households, those reporting household incomes of \$100,000+ were more likely to know about the requirement to provide proof of address (96% vs. 88%). The likelihood of knowing about the identity requirements was higher among electors who had completed some university (100%).

### Experience, VIC – Top Sources of Information about ID Requirements

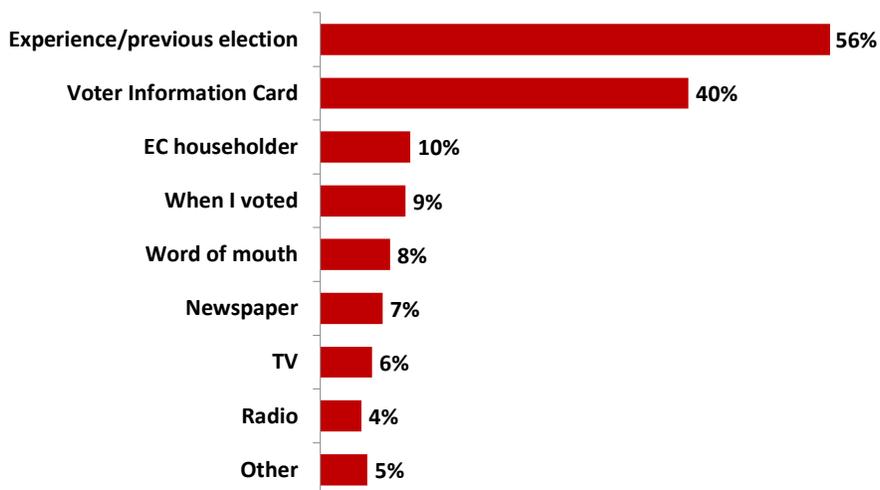
All those aware of the voter identification requirements (n=727) were asked to identify how they heard about these requirements. Fully 56% cited their experience and/or the previous election and exactly four in ten pointed to the Voter Information Card.

Elections Canada's own communications efforts accounted for, at least in part, the awareness of approximately half of respondents who had heard about the voter identification requirements (i.e. 40% pointed to the VIC and 10% the flyer from Elections Canada). All other sources were identified by small numbers.



## Sources of Information about Voter ID Requirements

17. From what sources do you recall hearing about these requirements?



Phoenix SPI for Elections Canada: May 2012

Base: n=727; those aware of ID requirements  
Up to 3 responses accepted; DK/NR: 4%

### Sociodemographic differences

The likelihood of pointing to experience and/or previous elections was higher among electors born in Canada (60% vs. 48% of those born outside of Canada) and respondents with household incomes of \$100,000 or more (61% vs. 45% of those with household incomes of less than \$40,000 per year). University graduates (44% vs. 30% of respondents with a high school education or less) and 25-44 year olds (44% vs. 33% of those 65 or older) were more likely to have heard about the voter identification requirements from the Voter Information Card.

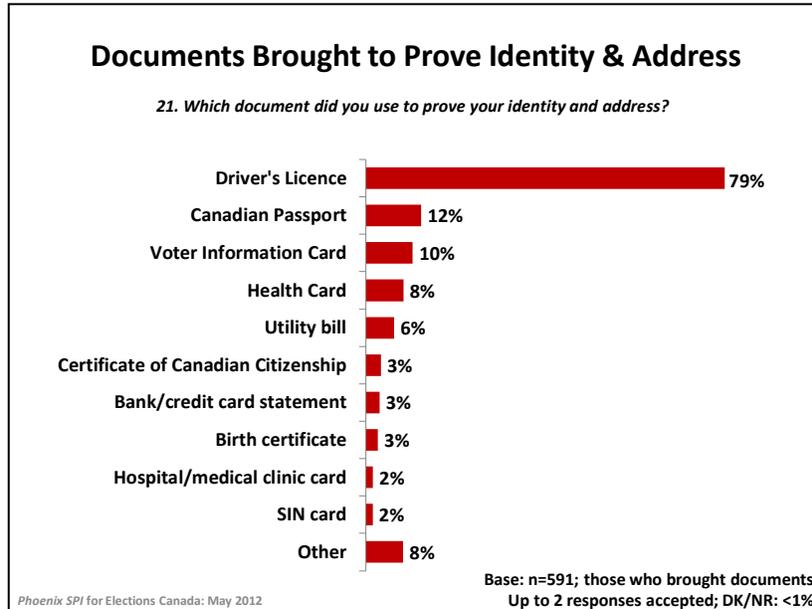
### Virtually Everyone Had the Required Identification Documents

Virtually everyone (99%) who voted at polling stations<sup>10</sup> said they had the required identification documents with them when they voted. The very small number of voters who said they were missing piece(s) of identification (n=9) said they were missing a document with their address or with their photo. In terms of what they did, most went home to find the missing documents and returned to vote (n=4), swore an oath and voted (n=2) or had someone verify their identity (n=2).

<sup>10</sup> In this section, the term "polling station" includes polling stations on ordinary polling day and advance polling days. Voting at local Elections Canada offices and by mail involves different identification requirements.

## Driver's License – Main ID Used for Voting

In terms of the types of documents that voters showed to prove their identity and address, the large majority (79%) mentioned the driver's licence (compared to 90% in the 2011 general election). Other documents follow with much smaller frequencies: 12% used their Canadian passport, 8% their health card, and 6% a utility bill. Relatively consistent with 2011, the Voter Information Card (10%) was also reported to have been used by some electors in order to meet the identity requirements<sup>11</sup>. As shown in the following graph, all other documents were used by very small proportion of voters.



## Sociodemographic differences

The following sub-groups were more likely to use their driver's licence: 25-44 year olds (85%) and 45-64 year olds (83%), those who are employed (84%), university graduates (89%), electors with household incomes of \$100,000 or more (91%), and men (85%).

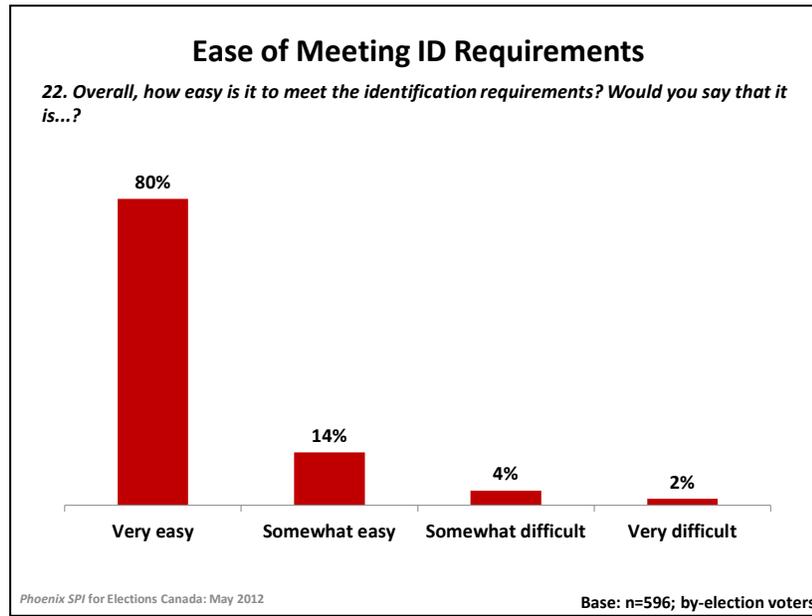
<sup>11</sup> The Voter Information Card is not a valid piece of identification for voting. That being said, most electors presented their Voter Information Card in addition to a valid piece of identification, accounting for all but three (n=3) of the 56 respondents who said they used their Voter Identification Card to meet the identification requirements.



## Widespread Agreement that it was Easy to Meet Voter ID Requirements

The vast majority of voters surveyed said it was very (80%) or somewhat (14%) easy to meet the identification requirements. Only 6% found this to be difficult.

These results are similar to that of the 2011 general elections, when 97% reported that the requirements were easy to meet.



### Sociodemographic differences

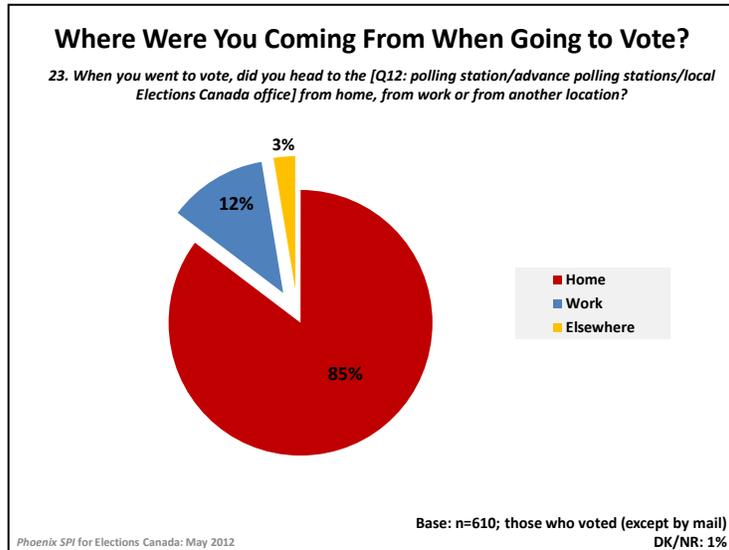
Electors under 25 (100%), men (97%), and those who were employed at the time of the by-election (96%) were more likely to say it was easy to meet the identification requirements.

## VOTER EXPERIENCE

This section explores issues related to voter experience at the polls.<sup>12</sup>

### Most Left Home to Vote

Most respondents said that when they went to vote, they did so from home (85%). Twelve percent went to vote from work and 3% from another location.



### Sociodemographic differences

As one would expect, the likelihood of coming from home to vote was higher among electors 65 and over (95%), as well as those who are unemployed (98%) and who stay at home full-time (95%). In addition, electors with a disability (94%) and those with a household income under \$40,000 (90%) were more likely to have gone to vote from their home.

### Convenient Distance, Polling Stations Easy to Find

Almost everyone felt that the distance to the polling station was convenient for them (98%), and had no difficulty reaching it (99%). The very small number who did have difficulty finding the polling station (n=3) pointed to the physical accessibility of the building and the address being hard to find.

### Experience at Polling Station

Everyone surveyed was served in English and was satisfied with the language in which they were served at the polling station.<sup>13</sup> Almost all the voters surveyed (99%) said that the waiting time for voting was reasonable. Only two percent of voters needed special assistance to cast their ballot. Voters who needed assistance (n=9) were most likely to

<sup>12</sup> The questions in this module were asked of all respondents who went to vote at a polling station on election day or on advance polling days.

<sup>13</sup> Regarding satisfaction, only two respondents were not satisfied (due to rounding, the table on the next page reports the percentage as 100).



seek assistance from staff at the polling station (n=5). Two respondents used a template to mark their ballot and one sought help from a friend or family member.

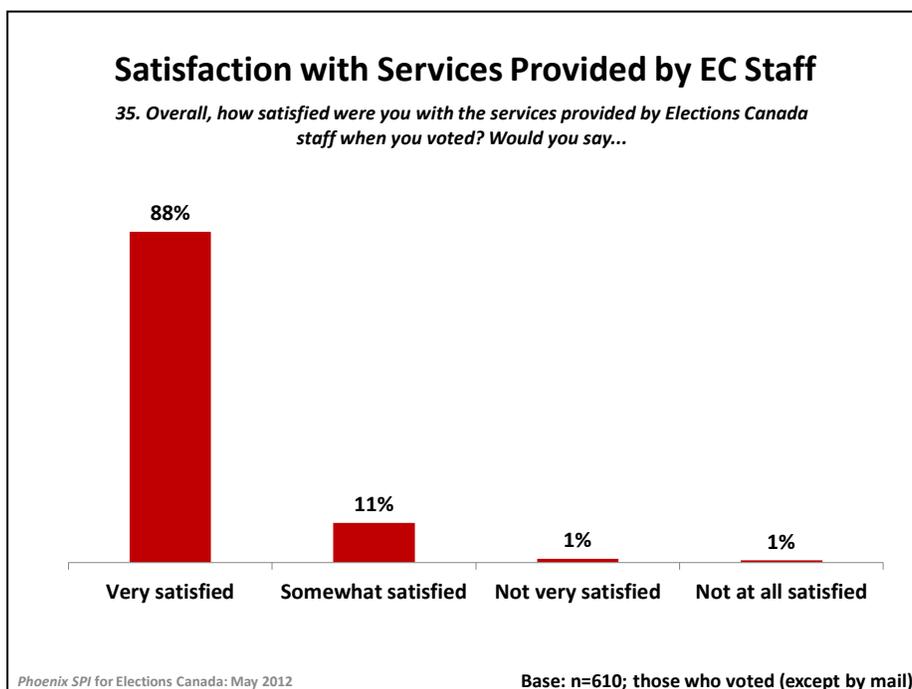
### Experience at Polling Station

	%
<b>31. Did you bring your Voter Information Card with you to the polling station?</b>	
Yes	88%
No	10%
DK/NR	2%
<b>32. In which language were you served?</b>	
English	100%
<b>32a. Were you satisfied or not with the language in which you were served?</b>	
Yes, satisfied	100%
<b>33. Would you say that the waiting time for voting was reasonable?</b>	
Yes	99%
No	1%
<b>34. Did you need special assistance to cast your ballot?</b>	
Yes	2%
No	98%

Phoenix SPI for Elections Canada: May 2012 Base: 610; those who voted (except by mail)

### High Level of Satisfaction with Elections Canada Staff

Satisfaction was strong and widespread with the services provided by Elections Canada staff. Fully 99% were satisfied with this, with 88% reporting having been very satisfied. Satisfaction with Elections Canada staff at polling stations is virtually unchanged from 2011 (87% were very satisfied, while 11% were somewhat satisfied).



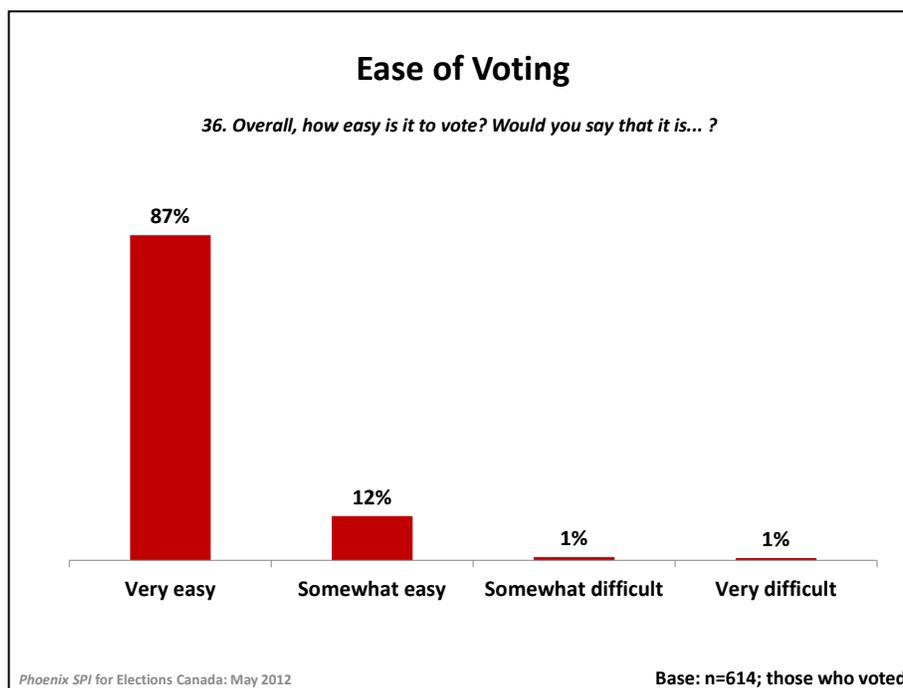


### Sociodemographic differences

Compared to electors under 25 years, all of which were satisfied with the services provided by Elections Canada staff, respondents aged 65+ (96%) were slightly less likely to be satisfied with the services.

### Voting Considered Easy

There was a virtual consensus that it was easy to vote, with 87% viewing this as *very easy*, and almost all the rest finding it *somewhat easy* (12%). These results are similar to those of the 2011 general elections, when 92% said that it was *very easy* and 7% *somewhat easy*.





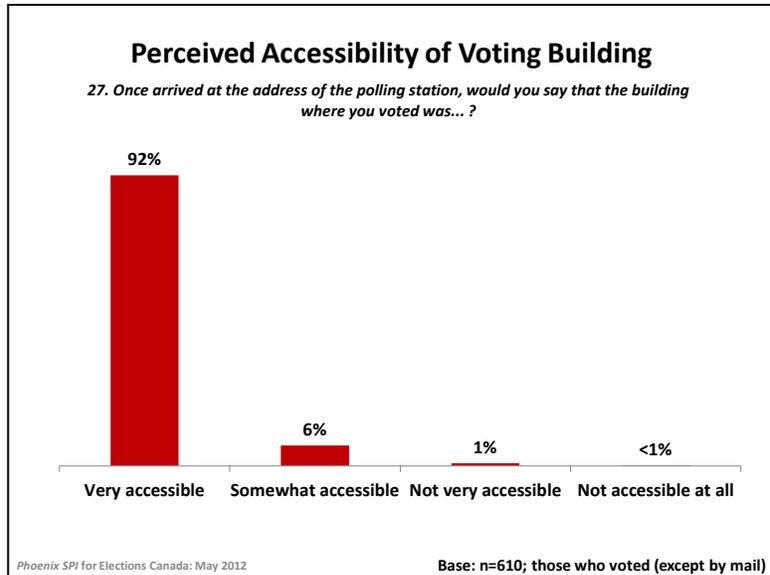


## ACCESSIBILITY

This section explores issues surrounding the accessibility of polling sites.

### Nearly All Found Voting Location Accessible

The vast majority of voters (92%) described the building where they voted as very accessible, with nearly all the rest (6%) describing it as somewhat accessible. This is similar to the 2011 general election when 90% of voters said the building was very accessible and 8% somewhat accessible. The six respondents who described the building where they voted as not very or not at all accessible pointed to physical accessibility and insufficient parking to explain why they felt this way.



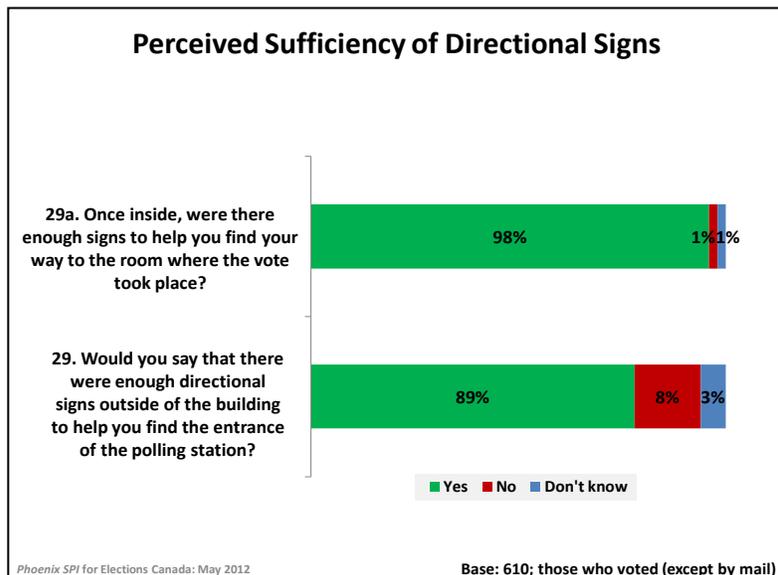
### Sociodemographic differences

Electors with a disability (90%) were less likely than those without a disability (99%) to say that the building where they voted was either very or somewhat accessible.

### Most Feel There Were Enough Directional Signage

Almost all voters surveyed (98%) felt that there were enough signs *inside* the building to help them find their way to the room where the vote took place. Slightly fewer, 89%, said that there were enough directional signs *outside* of the building to help them find the entrance to the polling station.

As a measure of reference, the perceptions of the adequacy of the directional signs *inside* the building are consistent with the most recent general election





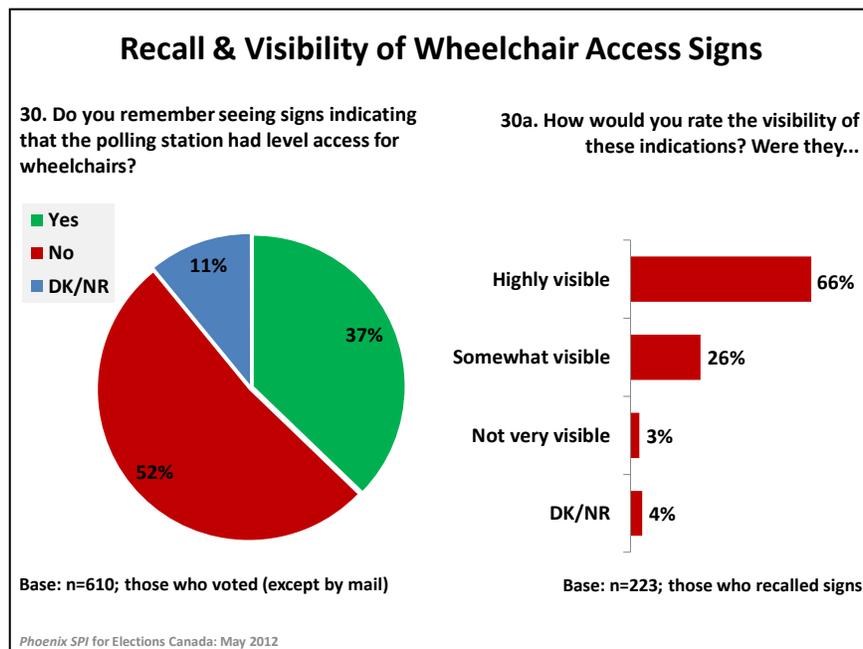
(95%). However, concerning the directional signs *outside* the building, the result from the by-election the presents a higher percentage than that of the 2011 general election (82%).

**Sociodemographic differences**

Electors with a disability did not differ in a statistically significant manner from those without a disability in their perceptions of the sufficiency of directional signs either inside or outside of polling sites.

**Half Did *Not* Notice Signs for Wheelchair Access**

Slightly more than half of the voters surveyed (52%) did *not* remember seeing signs indicating that the polling station had level access for wheelchairs. A few respondents were unsure (11%). Conversely, nearly four in ten (37%) remembered having seen such signs. This result is slightly superior to that of the 2011 general election, where 33% remembered having seen the wheelchair access signs.



Of those who remembered such signs, 92% described them as at least somewhat visible, with 66% as highly visible. Very few (4%) felt they were not very visible.

**Sociodemographic differences**

Electors with a disability (52%) were more likely than others (36%) to remember seeing signs indicating that the polling station had level access for wheelchairs. When it comes to the visibility of these signs, there were no statistically significant differences between the perceptions of electors with a disability and others. However, the likelihood of describing them as highly visible increased with age, from 25% of those under 25 years to 88% of electors aged 65 and over.

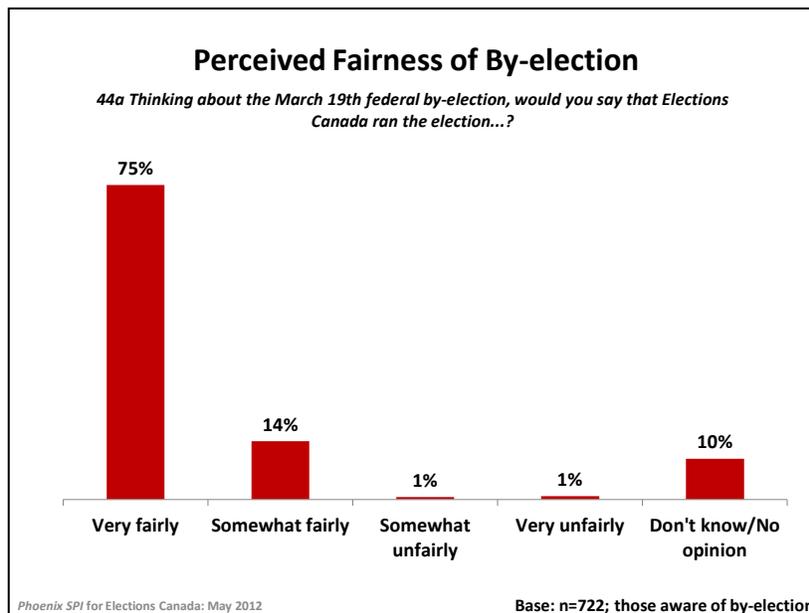


## FAIRNESS

This section explores the perceived fairness of Elections Canada in conducting the by-election.

### Most View Conduct of By-election as Fair

The perception that the March 19<sup>th</sup> by-election was conducted by Elections Canada in a fair manner was widespread. Fully 89% of respondents felt that Elections Canada ran the by-election fairly, with three-quarters (75%) saying *very fairly* (compared to 65% in the 2011 general election). A small proportion of respondents (2%) felt that the by-election was not conducted fairly, while 10% were unsure or did not venture an opinion.



### Sociodemographic differences

The following were most apt to think the by-election was conducted *very fairly*: electors born in Canada (77%), those who are employed (79%), those who completed some post-secondary education (87%) or attained a university degree (77%), as well as electors with household incomes of \$100,000 or more (82%).



**ANNEX 1 - SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION**

This section provides detailed breakdown of survey respondents by the following socio-demographic characteristics: age, gender, education, employment status, household income, ethnic background, country of birth, disability status, and type of dwelling (at the time of the election). All interviews were conducted in English.

<b>Age</b>	
<b>Base</b>	<b>750</b>
18-24	9%
25-44	42%
45-64	31%
65+	14%
Refused	4%

<b>Gender</b>	
<b>Base</b>	<b>750</b>
Male	48%
Female	52%

<b>Education</b>	
<b>Base</b>	<b>750</b>
Some elementary	<1%
Completed elementary	1%
Some high school	4%
Completed high school	9%
Community college/vocational/trade school/commercial/CEGEP	16%
Some university	7%
Completed university	33%
Post-graduate university/professional school	26%
Some college	1%
Refused	2%

<b>Employment Status</b>	
<b>Base</b>	<b>750</b>
Working full-time	43%
Working part-time	9%
Unemployed or looking for a job	5%
Self-employed	14%
Stay at home full-time	4%
Student	8%
Retired	15%
Disability pension	1%
Refused	2%



<b>Household Income</b>	
<b>Base</b>	<b>750</b>
Under \$20,000	7%
\$20,000 to just under \$40,000	10%
\$40,000 to just under \$60,000	10%
\$60,000 to just under \$80,000	10%
\$80,000 to just under \$100,000	11%
\$100,000 and over	33%
Refused	19%

<b>Ethnic Background</b>	
<b>Base</b>	<b>750</b>
White/Caucasian	79%
Chinese	5%
South Asian/East Indian	3%
Black (Africa, Caribbean)	2%
Filipino	1%
West Asian/North	1%
Aboriginal Canadian	1%
Latin American	1%
Other	2%
Refused/don't know	6%

<b>Country of Birth</b>	
<b>Base</b>	<b>750</b>
Canada	73%
Outside Canada	25%
Refused	2%

<b>Disability Status</b>	
<b>Base</b>	<b>750</b>
Yes	8%
No	91%
Refused	1%

<b>Type of Dwelling</b>	
<b>Base</b>	<b>750</b>
House	72%
Townhouse	5%
Condominium	4%
Apartment	17%
Long term care centre	<1%
Refused	1%