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Statistics Canada: Road to Accessibility, 2024 Progress Report

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Statistics Canada: Road to Accessibility, 2024 Progress Report

General

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- **Feedback Form on our website:** [Accessibility Feedback form](#)
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Introduction

The [Accessible Canada Act](#) (ACA) aims to create a barrier-free Canada by 2040 by identifying barriers and preventing the creation of new ones. Statistics Canada published its first accessibility action plan, [Statistics Canada: Road to Accessibility, 2023-2025](#), in December 2022. Even before the publication of the plan, our agency has been committed to accessibility and has made great progress in becoming more accessible.

Accessibility is everyone's responsibility. Over the course of the past year, this has become evident as teams and individuals across the agency have contributed to the progress. The 2024 Progress Report on the Accessibility Action Plan for Statistics Canada is an important milestone. This report highlights 121 accomplishments from September 2023 to September 2024 as part of our journey to becoming an accessibility confident organization.

Accomplishments by the numbers (September 2023 to September 2024)

Please note all information on Performance Indicators can be found in [Annex A](#).

- 214 employees and managers within the Operations and Integration Division (OID) participated in the performance management objectives related to accessibility pilot project.
 - A learning code was created for all accessibility-related training, which is now in use by the entire department, to track training progress. OID's learning code metrics reported:
 - 772.5 hours spent by OID employees increasing their knowledge in accessibility.
 - 98% completion rate for the 3 courses from the Canada School of Public Service (CSPS) for OID employees (INC 115, INC 121, and COR 115).
- 10+ presentations to StatCan Persons with Disabilities Committee (PwDC), on multiple topics including progress on the Accessibility Plan,

progress on Culture, Built Environment Accessibility, Duty to Accommodate and Official Feedback.

- 831 employees took the Canada School of Public Service COR 120: Inclusive Hiring Practices for a Diverse Workforce training.
- 595 employees took the Canada School of Public Service INC115: Addressing Disability Inclusion and Barriers to Accessibility training.
- 452 employees took the Canada School of Public Service INC121: Becoming an Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Ally and Agent for Change training.
- 30+ Presentations to all-staffs, field debriefs, and divisions on accessible presentations and documents which increased awareness on the needs for accessible documentation and has led to significant continued engagement.
- 1 Workshop and 1 presentation delivered to IT staff on Accessible Product Development.
- 15 Accessibility Feedback instances received from September 2023 to September 2024.
- 330 attendees to the Panel on Strength in Diversity hosted by Carleton University's Canadian Accessibility Network and StatCan in March 2024.
- 213 average views per month of the centralized site for accessibility-related information and reports in English (85 average views per month in French).
- 489 workplace accommodation requests were processed in fiscal year 2023-2024.
- 33 average processing time (in days) for all Duty to Accommodate requests from beginning to end.
- 8 accessibility evaluations initiated for Regional Offices.
- 100% of priority repairs (repairs that pose immediate danger) on 8 temporary spaces (swing space floors) were completed.
- 8 new Accessible Floors made available.
- 5 new sign Language videos published, (in both American Sign Language (ASL) and in Langue de signes du Quebec (LSQ)).
- 13,100 page views housing ASL/LSQ videos.
 - 5,254 plays of these videos with an average completion rate of 16%.
 - Video with the most views (3,050) was the Canadian Survey on Disability: 2017-2022.
 - Video with the most plays (2,030) is the First Nations people, Métis, and Inuit in Canada.

- Video with the highest completion rate (37%) is the Portrait of Canadian families.
- 3,767 page views housing the 2024 Census-Test accessibility resources (FAQ's, ASL/LSQ videos, audio, braille, Daisy, and E-text products)
- 92 full digital service accessibility reviews conducted (63 External Services, 29 internal services).

Accomplishments by priority areas and the barriers they address

Culture

An accessible culture within StatCan is accessibility-confident and disability-inclusive. Focus and commitment are put on educating all employees and managers to empower and inform them on accessibility. Accessibility standards and best practices are emphasized, and employees feel confident and safe in speaking out on barriers to accessibility and potential solutions.

Accomplishments

Addressing the lack of awareness

1. Promoted accessibility and inclusion for the Disability Employment Awareness Month (DEAM):
 - Launched the second Accessibility and Inclusion Leadership Challenge for all StatCan employees.
 - Promoted training on accessibility available to all public servants.
 - Presented tools and progress on accessibility to all StatCan field debriefs.
 - Hosted consultative and informational sessions for StatCan employees.
2. Promoted the International Day of Persons with Disabilities through a message from the co-champions of Persons with Disabilities to all StatCan employees which included a [release of data from the Canadian Survey on Disability](#) (in the following formats audio, close captioning, ASL, LSQ).

3. Co-organized a panel discussion titled "[Empowering Journeys: Embracing Accessibility for Collective Success](#)" with Carleton University's Canadian Accessibility Network (CAN).
4. Co-organized two events (one in English, one in French) titled "Diversity within Disability" with LiveWorkPlay.
5. Launched a series of internal articles on StatCan employees with disabilities' lived experiences for the National Accessibility Awareness Week (NAAW). This initiative was met with such interest that it has continued throughout the summer.
6. Presented tools for accessibility (on accessible documents, inclusive meetings, sign language services, etc.) and [Statistics Canada: Road to Accessibility, 2023 Progress Report](#) to:
 - The Persons with Disabilities Committee
 - StatCan's Community of Practice on Disability and Accessibility Research
 - StatCan's Agriculture Division
 - Various teams and employee networks across StatCan.
7. Developed training and awareness sessions that were offered to StatCan employees on:
 - Accessibility Presentations and Documents
 - Neurodiversity in the Workplace
 - Government of Canada (GC) Workplace Accessibility Passport
 - Screen-reader usage in Workplace Communications
8. Piloted performance management objectives related to accessibility within the Operations and Integration Division (OID) of StatCan.
9. Updated our Accessibility Page on the Internal Communications Network (ICN) throughout the year.
10. Provided continuous advice and guidance on accessibility to employees and management across StatCan and the public service.
11. Continued to develop neurodiversity inclusion strategies with the Federal Infinity Network.
12. Enterprise Statistics Division (ESD) and Centre for Social Data Processing (CSDP) selected accessibility champions responsible for identifying and promoting accessibility initiatives.

Addressing the lack of inclusion and feedback

13. Promoted and managed StatCan's centralized anonymous feedback process which received feedback from StatCan employees, external StatCan users, and all Canadians.

- Reviewed and updated the feedback procedure and increased the reporting requirements related to feedback processing.
 - Presented a detailed assessment at the quarterly Accessibility debriefs to the Assistant Chief Statistician (ACS).
14. Updated the Employee Exit Survey to gather more information about inclusion and accessibility barriers.
 15. Various divisions adopted accessible font standards for their default emails which include an increase font size and a sans serif font.

Addressing the lack of internal collaboration

16. Collaborated with accessibility pillar leads to update our Performance Measurement Framework to measure StatCan's progress on accessibility.
17. Met quarterly with the Accessibility Leadership Taskforce (ALT) to ensure the progress of accessibility files (See [Governance](#) section for more details).
18. Met with teams across StatCan to discuss accessibility strategies and best practices.
19. Hosted interdepartmental network meetings to share best practices across the public service. These are informal discussions that are open to all accessibility practitioners and allies across the public service.
20. Launched a working group on the Transportation Pillar component of the [Accessible Canada Act](#) (ACA) to discuss new considerations.
21. Partnered with the Office of Public Service Accessibility (OPSA) to present StatCan's best practices for measuring accessibility progress.
22. Participated in government-wide meetings to stay up to date on accessibility matters including:
 - The GC Workplace Accessibility Passport
 - The Interdepartmental Accessibility Community of Practice (IACOP)
 - The Interdepartmental Accessible Information and Communications Technologies (ICT) Working Group
 - The Agents of Change for Accessible Procurement
23. Participated in the Carleton University's Canadian Accessibility Network to stay up to date on accessibility matters in institutions across Canada, including ableism, disability confidence, accommodations best practices, and more.
24. Updated the Terms of Reference for StatCan's Accessibility Leadership Taskforce (ALT) to clarify each stakeholder's role.

25. Met regularly with the Persons with Disabilities Champions to coordinate feedback responses, awareness events, and accessibility barriers assessments.
26. Held regular Friday learning sessions to share knowledge and skills on accessibility best practices in various areas across StatCan.

Workplace accommodation

Workplace accommodation at StatCan means that accommodation is made on a confidential, case-by-case basis and employees are supplied with the functional tools and working conditions they need to maximize their potential.

Accomplishments

Addressing the lack of procedural knowledge

27. Updated Internal Communication Network (ICN) resources to support employees and managers to use the [Government of Canada \(GC\) Workplace Accessibility Passport](#):
 - Included links to the GCpedia Page for the Passport orientation guide, implementation guide, conversation starters for employees, conversation guide for managers, and frequently asked questions.
 - Included an awareness video to explain the need for the Passport.

Addressing the delays in getting accommodations

28. Collaborated with key stakeholders to document the wait time that each step of the Duty to Accommodate (DTA) process takes to complete a case request.
29. Collaborated with partners to find efficiencies to reduce the average wait time (currently an average of 33 days) and build a more proactive approach to responding to the requirements of our DTA clients.
30. Developed in-house systems to allow Directors to track requests within their own division in addition to enabling the DTA team (for the DTA requests) and Labour Relations advisors (for exemption requests) to maintain a line of sight on active and closed requests.
31. StatCan began *implementation partner* activities in the Better Accommodation Project led by the Deputy Minister Champion for Federal Employees with Disabilities.
 - Launched in September 2024, this one-year initiative will drive change in accommodations for federal employees with disabilities across the public service.

- StatCan is committed to improving the accommodation process for persons with disabilities within our department and working with other partners to test solutions, share best practices, and learn together, while remaining committed to the “Nothing About Us Without Us” principle.
- Activities completed this year include:
 - Implemented a Better Accommodation Project Tiger Team (a team of specialists and experts assembled to work towards a specific goal) to support the project.
 - Identified promising solutions to test in 2025.
 - Prepared the strategy to share progress in 2025.

Priority areas under the *Accessible Canada Act*

Employment

Accessible employment at StatCan means that employees with disabilities and those experiencing barriers are supported throughout their employee journey. From recruitment and hiring to onboarding and career progression, all employees are supported to reach their full potential.

Accomplishments

Addressing the lack of knowledge or understanding of accessibility and inclusive hiring practices

Identified and started removing accessibility barriers in hiring practices including:

32. Conducted an analysis of the drop off rate in recruitment processes for fields with lower Employment Equity group representation.
 - This process looked at the selection process (e.g., number of applicants, how they self-declare, the steps/stages at which they dropped off).
33. Provided resources and training to HR advisors on how to develop an inclusive job advertisement.
34. Improved the inclusivity of EC-07 job posters which resulted in a higher number of applications from candidates who self-declared as persons with disabilities and members of other Employment Equity groups.

35. Included standardized paragraphs with accessibility information for EC-07, PE, and CR job posters with information about self-declaration and the GC Workplace Accessibility Passport.
36. Collaborated with Carleton University on recruitment initiatives:
 - Receiving referrals of students available for employment.
 - Hiring four through their job fair for persons with disabilities.

Addressing stigma and attitudinal barriers

37. Developed training on how to identify and mitigate bias and barriers in hiring practices and delivered to hiring managers across StatCan.
38. Expanded area of selection of the agency's Sponsorship Program to include persons with disabilities.
39. Launched a self-identification promotional campaign for new government employees joining from the Statistical Survey Operations (SSO).

Addressing inflexible and complex staffing tools and processes

40. Improved the accessibility of the onboarding process.
41. Assessed and modified staffing templates and communications products sent to candidates to ensure accessibility and plain language.
42. Launched a working group meeting series for employment specialists (in fields like onboarding, sponsorship, employee development, health, and wellness) to collaborate and share knowledge on accessibility.
43. Collaborated with the Public Service Commission's accommodation team to discuss accessibility barriers in language testing.
44. Prioritized access to language training for employees who self-identified as persons with disabilities.
45. Enabled neuropsychological evaluations to ensure the official languages training accommodations can properly be designed and implemented for employees with learning disabilities.

Built environment

An accessible built environment at StatCan is one where workspaces and the work environment are accessible for all. From the spaces in employees' homes to those owned or leased by StatCan, all environments used by employees will be accessible by design.

Accomplishments

Addressing the lack of consultation with persons with disabilities and those experiencing barriers

46. Implemented the accessibility recommendations from the Engaging DisAbility Survey and Employment Systems Review and resolved all accessibility issues on every swing space floor.
47. Met regularly with the Persons with Disabilities Committee (PwDC) to discuss facilities and get feedback on new initiatives (including the PSPC designs for the R.H. Coats building) to prevent accessibility barriers.
48. Worked with Public Services and Procurement Canada (PSPC) on accessibility issues with Archibus (digital office reservation tool) following feedback received from the PwDC.
49. Conducted consultation with Floor Safety Officers to meet the accessibility requirements for the physical procedures and the written emergency procedures. Presented the results to the PwDC.
50. Met bi-weekly with PSPC to ensure that facilities renovations met the accessibility codes.

Addressing that accessibility is not a key requirement in construction

51. Completed a full review of the R.H. Coats building for accessibility. Met regularly with the PwDC and issues raised by StatCan employees were brought to PSPC which included Archibus.
52. Met monthly with BGIS in Ottawa to bring forward concerns and accessibility needs.

Contributing to the desired state of enhancing accessibility of the workplace and employee workspaces

53. Hired a consultant to review StatCan floor plans in the National Capital Region and posted them on the Internal Communication Network (ICN) in an accessible format.
54. Increased awareness of Archibus features on the ICN including where to access all floor plans.
55. Updated the Fire Safety Procedures on the ICN to be accessible.
56. Put in place a private accessible wellness room for milk extraction for nursing mothers.
57. Repaired the wheelchair lift in the Health Sciences Branch and Facilities immediately after it was reported.

58. Added additional lending libraries in National Capital region and Western region (equipped with items such as footrests, laptop and monitor risers, anti-fatigue mats, etc.).

Information and communication technologies

Accessible information and communication technologies at StatCan (often called ICT) means that Information Technologies (IT) products are usable and accessible for everyone. Whether it is software development, infrastructure support, platform operations, service request fulfillment, IT asset management, cloud environments or offsite support, these all need to be accessible.

Accomplishments

Addressing knowledge gaps within the IT team

59. Assigned the Canada School of Public Service's [Roadmap to Digital Accessibility](#) as mandatory accessibility training for all IT employees.
60. Participated in the Interdepartmental Accessible ICT Working Group.
61. Hosted a 'byte size' learning session on accessible presentations with the Centre of Expertise on Accessibility and the Accessibility secretariat, with over 50 people in attendance.
62. Analyzed the usage of GCDocs (StatCan's information management system) accessibility features like the Smart View interface.
63. Centre of Expertise in Accessibility collaborated with teams across StatCan to provide advice on accessible usage of PowerBI.

Addressing accessibility considerations

64. Started the creation process for an automated accessibility testing tool which aims to establish the baseline data on the accessibility level of new web applications and websites.
 - It will be able to track metrics on the number of web applications that have undergone automated accessibility testing.
65. Created IT Accessibility Advisory Board for governance and guidance on Accessibility by Design development.
 - Established a collaborative relationship between the IT Field's Enterprise Architecture Review Board (EARB), Methodology Field, Dissemination Field, and Corporate Field.
 - Operationalized an IT Governance Board which includes all relevant parties within StatCan where the Centre of Expertise on

Accessibility (CEA) and the Accessibility Secretariat will offer their expertise on a case-by-case basis.

- Accessibility was added as one of the key principles of review.

Addressing unavailable tools

66. Created an IT Self-Serve Portal and Feedback Mechanism on BMC Helix (StatCan's new service request management portal).

Communications, other than information and communication technologies

Accessible communication at StatCan means information that is provided, sent, or received is clear, direct, and easy to understand and meets the needs of employees and Canadians.

Accomplishments

Addressing gaps in accessible communications

67. Updated the Official Statistics Canada PowerPoint template on the ICN to meet accessibility requirements after consultations with the Accessibility Champion.
68. Ensured that meetings were barrier free for employees in the Centre for Income and Socioeconomic Wellbeing Statistics by having sign language interpretation at many of their meetings.
69. Ensured the Statistical Information Service (SIS) national webinars to external participants were accessible which included closed captioning and detailed instructions.
70. The Advance Release Submission Accessible form has been developed in English and in French. It was shared on-demand, and its availability was announced through internal communications to all employees.

Addressing the lack of emphasis on the accessible design of communications

71. Two storytelling training sessions delivered by the Official Release team touched on accessibility best practices for official releases.
72. Office of Privacy Management and Information Coordination (OPMIC) approved the use of the accessible GC Forms platform (fully compliant with WCAG 2.1 standards and fully bilingual) for the Engagement and Data Services Division (EDSD). Both GC Forms and accessible written submission options were used for post questionnaire design focus group sessions.

73. Promoted plain language training for communications employees in English and in French. Implemented plain language requirements and accessibility formatting in every step of the material development strategy.
 - This strategy focused on the development of concise messaging in simplified plain language, streamlining messaging across materials and products for consistency, and centralizing content for easy access.
 - This strategy created efficiencies in the material development, reduced burden on reviewers and provided clear, concise, consistent, and useful information to users.
74. Organized a screen reader demonstration run by a user with lived experience to increase awareness amongst communications employees.
75. Developed alternate formats for the census test questions which included Braille, audio, sign language video, and larger print.
76. Census Communications met with Video Relay Service (VRS) Canada to include VRS services in all census test messaging products.
77. Created a new accessibility event form within the Finance Branch to build into the Enterprise Power BI (A data visualization and business intelligence tool) Portal.

Procurement of goods services and facilities

The accessible procurement of goods, services, and facilities at StatCan means to centralize purchases, including computer software and hardware and a variety of external professional services, while prioritizing accessibility.

Accomplishments

Addressing GC centralized programs and policies

78. Stayed up to date with standards and best practices for accessible procurement using the Accessible Procurement Centre of Expertise website.
79. Implemented new accessible procurement directives at the StatCan Library.
80. Ensured that accessibility criteria were added to the Request for Proposal (RFP) for the open-sourced online training application. Ensured that the winning bidder met all accessibility requirements.
81. IT, Dissemination, and Procurement collaborated on adding accessibility considerations to requests for proposals and statements of work.

Addressing the lack of consultation

82. Consulted with the Duty to Accommodate (DTA) team to improve and streamline the process of procuring accessible equipment.
83. Consulted with the PSPC Centre of Expertise to include an accessibility evaluation criterion for the acquisition of a new training platform to ensure proper accessibility compliance from the supplier.
84. Shared the R and Python training project with Persons with Disabilities Committee to ensure it will meet their accessibility and analytical needs.
85. Centre of Expertise in Accessibility and the Equity, Learning and Development Division collaborated on accessible procurement solutions for a future Learning Management System.

Addressing insufficient knowledge

86. StatCan's procurement team attended all training offered by the Accessible Procurement team at PSPC.
87. Nominated an Accessibility Champion within the procurement team who will be the lead for special projects and be a key resource for the procurement file.
88. Joined the Accessible Procurement Community of Practice to share knowledge and acquire best practices across the Government of Canada.

Design and delivery of programs and services

The accessible design and delivery of programs and services at StatCan means that surveys, programs, and services are inclusive and accessible by design to meet the needs of Canadians and employees.

Accomplishments

Addressing the reactive approach

89. Produced Braille content for the 2024 Census Test; the content was vetted by lived experience experts from the Centre for Expertise in Accessibility (CEA).
90. Offered Video Relay Services (VRS) for the Census test and the Labour Force Survey (LFS), as well as in-person sign language interpretation for the LFS.
91. Added alt-text generation to the Census workflow in collaboration with the data science division and the Artificial Intelligence science group.
92. Assessed the accessibility issues, in question types that have historically been contentious (like hidden related fields, auto-

populating responses if navigating with keyboard or screen readers), in collaboration with the Census team and Health Canada for the Canadian Community Health Survey and Harmonized Content.

93. Collaborated with Operations and Integration Division (OID) and CEA to share and update accessibility best practices.
94. Introduced a briefing process for digital platforms and products that are not fully accessible.
95. Worked with internal clients to support multiple data releases with sign language videos.
96. Updated the new Consumer Price Index Calculator to ensure it met accessibility requirements and included invisible text for screen reader users.
97. Health Statistics Branch ensured that the 2024 Health Data User Conference was accessible to create an inclusive environment where everyone can fully engage with all the activities.
98. IT, Dissemination, and Procurement collaborated on adding accessibility considerations to requests for proposals and statements of work.
99. Collaborated within internal divisions to ensure that questionnaires are evaluated early in the development process to attain 100% accessibility in all new survey questionnaires.

Addressing the inaccessible tools

100. Collaborated with procurement specialists on including additional accessibility details in the procurement documentation. Added accessibility considerations to Requests for Proposals (RFP) and Statements of Work (SOW).
101. Hired three new accessibility reviewers to maintain and increase capacity to review tools.
102. Field 3 and Field 7 collaborated on numerous (30+) presentations to all-staffs, field debriefs, and divisions on accessible presentations and documents which increased awareness on available accessible documentation and has led to significant continued engagement.

Addressing the lack of a centralized approach addressing accessibility needs

103. Presented the services offered by the CEA to managers and employees across StatCan on accessible documentation, accessible presentation materials, and accessible IT product development.
104. Gave demonstrations of screen readers in use to subject matter expertise areas.

105. Collaborated with the Harmonized Content team to make questions used across multiple surveys more accessible.
106. The community of practice on Disability and Accessibility Research met regularly throughout the year to share research insights and spread expert-level knowledge, prevented duplication of effort, and created opportunities for closer collaboration. This group brought together a cross-functional group of subject matter experts, analysts, HR advisors and researchers within StatCan, who have the responsibility, experience, and interest in collecting, acquiring, and analyzing data, and sharing insights on the topic of disability and accessibility.
107. To ensure that meetings are barrier free for employees the Centre for Income and Socioeconomic Well-being Statistics had sign language interpretation at many of their meetings.
108. Developed a process for recurring business surveys to apply accessibility findings to multiple surveys while slowly reviewing all products over a longer time. StatCan has over 150 business surveys and limited accessibility testing capacity.

New Barrier: Addressing insufficient knowledge

StatCan released the following analysis of results from the Canadian Survey on Disability (CSD) this year to support Canadians in increasing their knowledge in accessibility:

109. [A demographic, employment and income profile of persons with disabilities aged 15 years and over in Canada, 2022](#)
110. [Changes in workplace accommodations among employed Canadians with disabilities, 2017 to 2022](#)
111. [A profile of 2SLGBTQ+ persons with disabilities, 2022](#)
112. [Accessibility In Canada: Results from the 2022 Canadian Survey on Disability](#)
113. [Vacations for persons with disabilities could still include everyday barriers to accessibility](#)

Other releases on disability and accessibility included:

114. [Household food insecurity among persons with disabilities in Canada: Findings from the 2021 Canadian Income Survey](#)
115. [Survey Series on Accessibility](#)
116. [Print material accessibility in Canada, 2023](#)

Additionally, the following releases included with Sign Language videos:

117. [Introduction to the Survey Series on Accessibility, American Sign Language](#)

118. [Canadian Survey on Disability: From 2017 to 2022 in American Sign Language](#)
119. [Results from the Survey on Accessible Print Material in American Sign Language](#)
120. [Results from the 2022 Canadian Survey on Disability, American Sign Language](#)

Transportation

No transportation barriers in StatCan policies, practices, programs, and services, were identified at the time of publication for the 2023-2025 Accessibility Action Plan, [Statistics Canada: Road to Accessibility, 2023-2025](#). StatCan regularly monitors this area through our feedback mechanism, to ensure prevention and removal of barriers.

In 2023-2024, upon receipt of the recommendations from the Canadian Human Rights Commission (CHRC) audit exercise, StatCan began to develop a Transportation Pillar. Part of this work has involved developing an interdepartmental Working Group to understand what transportation considerations can be reported on in the future. The Accessibility Secretariat will add a section in the 2026-2029 Accessibility action plan to address emerging barriers.

121. Created an accessible version of the international travel status security form in consultation with the Accessibility Secretariat.

Consultation

This section covers consultations conducted from September 2023 to September 2024. For more information about consultations conducted to inform the development of the 2023-2025 Accessibility Action Plan, please read the [Consultation section in Statistics Canada: Road to Accessibility, 2023-2025](#).

The consultation of employees continues to be a critical element in the implementation of Statistics Canada: Road to Accessibility. Consultations were led by various areas to advance in the actions accomplished above.

Persons with Disability Committee

The Persons with Disability Committee (PwDC) is an active employee committee and a key partner in the implementation of the StatCan action

plan. This committee's creation predates 1989. It has a long history of identifying priorities, providing constructive advice, and suggesting action-oriented solutions to StatCan management.

The Accessibility Secretariat was a regular participant in committee meetings, providing general updates and participating in Questions and Answer periods on subjects such as:

- StatCan's accessibility progress and accomplishments both internally and externally.
- Feedback to Treasury Board Secretariat's Office of Public Service Accessibility (OPSA) on the GC Workplace Accessibility Passport.
- Volunteer opportunities to support for a career fair.
- Training on removing biases towards persons with disabilities (unconscious biases in the workplace).
- Software suggestions to check for tone in written documents to support neurodivergent employees.
- Progress on high-level goals for the accessibility action plan.
- Requests to review the Fire and Safety protocols.
- Promotion of the feedback process.
- Upcoming events such as Disability Employee Awareness Month (DEAM), International Day of Persons with Disability (IDPD) and National AccessAbility Week (NAAW).

The Facilities and Future of Work Project continued to regularly present and receive feedback on construction updates, construction sites, and building closures. The team also informed the committee about new return to work policies and heard the concerns of persons with disabilities.

This year there was an increase of groups and individuals (including the accessibility champions) offering updates related to accessibility at the PwDC which included:

- A presentation on the new onboarding process
- Expressed concerns about the accessibility of new software (such as R/Python, BMC helix, etc.)
- Highlights from the Assistive Technology Conference hosted by the California State University
- Updates on added content related to the most recent release of the Canadian Survey on Disability (CSD)

Employee Wellness Survey (EWS)

The 2023 Employee Wellness Survey (EWS) was collected from November 6, 2023, to January 12, 2024. All StatCan employees were invited to participate. The response rate was 50.8%.

Our EWS results revealed that autonomy is the most important driver of the four psychological health profiles at StatCan. Person-job fit, role clarity, and work-life interference also emerged as major influences on psychological health.

In evaluating the results there was a significant difference between persons without and persons with a disability on the psychological health profiles. Compared to persons without a disability, persons with a disability had a slightly lower proportion of “Thriving”¹ and a markedly higher proportion of “Struggling”².

The Accessibility Secretariat further analyzed the data by disaggregating it into 3 groups: *persons without a disability*, *persons with a physical disability* (those that select at least one type a disability in the list) and *other disabilities* (like mental health and neurodiversity). This review allowed us to conclude that employees who self-identify as having *other disabilities* struggle more, in comparison to employees who self-identify with another disability category. In addition, the struggle is significantly higher than for persons without a disability.

Bargaining agents feedback

The Accessibility Secretariat consulted with bargaining agents representing StatCan employees to gather information about the accessibility barriers that employees have/are experiencing and have communicated with their bargaining agents about this past year.

- Accessibility barriers noted by union representatives included:

¹ **Thriving:** Thriving employees almost always feel engaged at work, and they feel effective and good at their job almost every day. They almost never feel exhausted from their work or doubt its meaning or significance.

² **Struggling:** Struggling employees rarely feel engaged at work and only feel effective and good at their job a few times a month. They feel exhausted from their work more than once a week and doubt its meaning or significance a few times a week.

- Limited access to full time telework for employee equity deserving groups.
- Ongoing barriers for members who are requesting medical and family obligation accommodations for full time telework arrangements.
- Employment barriers for career advancement disproportionately impact groups that remain underrepresented in senior level EC and EX positions.
- Additional feedback from bargaining agents' representatives:
 - The Accessibility Secretariat was commended for: developing and implementing good training and awareness presentations; organizing and coordinating many events and panel discussions; presenting various tools, good practices, and standards for accessibility; and measuring their progress with good indicators as outlined in the draft 2024 Statistics Canada Progress Report.
 - Expressed interest in obtaining additional information on neurodiversity including training and awareness presentations, as well as on performance management objectives related to accessibility as noted in the draft progress report.

Information sessions

In the Fall of 2023, the Accessibility Secretariat held several English and French information sessions open to all employees and included a consultative component. To ensure continued engagement and increase the accessibility confidence of the agency, these sessions covered the framework of [Consultation section in Statistics Canada: Road to Accessibility, 2023-2025](#) (StatCan Accessibility Plan), accomplishments to date, how-to submit feedback and tools that can be used to make everyday work more accessible. Participants were provided with an opportunity to ask questions and share their comments.

Feedback received

At StatCan, a [feedback page](#) is made available for individuals internal and external to StatCan. It was developed and published alongside the action plan per the [Accessible Canada Act](#) (ACA) requirements. This page includes

all relevant information to submit feedback, including the ACA definition for “barriers.” Throughout the year, the feedback process was promoted in presentations and communications across StatCan. Additionally, pillar leads were provided with their roles, responsibilities and clear expectations related to the feedback process.

In this section, a summary of the feedback received between September 2023 to September 2024 is provided. The following is an overview of the feedback in numbers:

- 15 official feedback was received at StatCan.
- 5 were from the anonymous feedback form.
- 6 were submitted to the secretariat via email.
 - o 3 of those emails were based on in-person meetings which were then turned into feedback for the record.
- 2 came from Canadians external to StatCan.

Feedback themes

Accessibility concerns and dangers around the external construction sites

Most of the feedback received were about the barriers faced by employees when accessing their workplace during construction. The Ottawa offices at Tunney’s Pasture have been under renovation for the past year and insufficient or inappropriate access signalling were prepared to meet the needs of employees. As a result, the built environment team conducted an audit of the facilities to assess accessibility barriers. During this audit, they were accompanied by an Accessibility Secretariat representative and the Persons with Disabilities Champion. A list of barriers was identified, a plan was presented and put in place to address them. These barriers included:

- Pathways blocked by construction gates or signage.
- Insufficient safety indicators for partially blocked pathways.
- Improperly closed and indicated accessible ramps.
- Insufficient information and signage for accessible detours around construction areas.

Accessibility concerns around the internal renovation of the Tunney’s Pasture offices

The Accessibility Secretariat has received a high volume of informal feedback on accessibility concerns regarding Archibus, the digital office reservation

tool. The ongoing renovations and ever-changing office environment made the office reservation tool difficult to use.

The “hotel” style booking of offices has made it more difficult for some employees to select offices that fulfill their accessibility needs. The Duty to Accommodate (DTA) team has seen an increase of requests for accommodations in the office. They have been working with the built environment team to minimize the impact of the numerous moves during the renovation.

Accessible communication

Following the release of our first annual progress report, the Accessibility Secretariat received multiple requests for alternative formats. As the alternative format document was proactively prepared, the team quickly fulfilled those requests.

The communications team, with the help of the Accessibility Secretariat, have made great progress in raising awareness on how to make documents accessible. Which has translated into the increased identification of inaccessible documents and strengthening our commitment toward inclusion.

The Accessibility Secretariat has also received recurring feedback on the usage of PDF documents which are not accessible. The communications team is working with all relevant document owners to transform PDFs into accessible word documents. These documents can come from many different parties, so work has started to promote the accessible alternatives that StatCan has to offer.

Lastly, StatCan developed and ran an awareness initiative throughout the year to ensure that all PowerPoint presentations use an accessible format and the PowerPoint Live function.

Implementing feedback

Over the 2023 to 2024 reporting period, the Accessibility Secretariat received 15 official feedback. It is expected the feedback will increase over time. The team will continue to promote the feedback process to de-stigmatize accessibility and to ensure all employees, clients, and stakeholders are aware that their input is valued.

Concerted efforts were made to update the internal feedback processes to meet the requirements with efficiency. The focus was on refining the recording and follow-up processes for feedback to ensure timely responses. As the accessibility initiative matures, this process will continue to be refined.

The Accessibility Secretariat will continue to collaborate with partners across StatCan to make sure that the feedback process is used to identify, eliminate, and prevent accessibility barriers. The team will use the lessons learned to improve accessibility for all employees.

Lessons learned and a look ahead to year 3

The second year of the implementation of the StatCan Accessibility Action Plan continued to offer opportunities to learn and grow. As the agency moves into the next year and the preparation of the new Accessibility plan begins, StatCan will continue to progress on its [2023-2025 Accessibility Action Plan](#) commitments to remove and prevent barriers. The agency now has one more year of experience, insight and lessons learned. While there is pride in the accomplishments listed earlier in this report, the agency has acquired valuable lessons in the areas of funding, governance, measurement, and reporting. The team will use the lessons learned in the consultation on and creation of the 2026-2029 Accessibility Action Plan.

Funding

For a relatively new program like accessibility, extra efforts were required to ensure stakeholders, and the investment board understood the importance of this work. These efforts set the groundwork, led to StatCan prioritizing accessibility and allocating investment funding to this agency wide file.

In the 2023-2024 Year, StatCan's Accessibility Program funded several accessibility initiatives, including:

- Expanded the Centre of Expertise on Accessibility (CEA), who test our products for accessibility; it is to be noted that StatCan has the Government of Canada's largest web presence.
- Increased the number of staff on the Accessibility Secretariat.

- Expanded the Duty to Accommodate Team who have dealt with triple the number of requests compared to pre-pandemic times due to changes to the return to office policies.
- Allocated one full-time communication advisor to work with the Accessibility Secretariat and to promote accessibility within StatCan.
- Made funding available for specific accessible hardware and software purchases.
- Funded external and internal consultations for the beginning of 2025 in preparation for the next accessibility plan.

Governance

StatCan continued to leverage the Accessibility Leadership Taskforce (ALT), the governing body responsible for overseeing the implementation and operational accessibility requirements. Its members include:

- Chaired by the Director of Equity, Learning and Development Division;
- Director-level area leads representing the eight ACA and StatCan priority areas;
- The Persons with Disabilities Champion.

Collaboration and commitment from across StatCan have been key drivers to attaining accessibility goals.

Measurement

StatCan was one of the first organizations to publish measurement indicators for accessibility. As the accessibility landscape continues to evolve across the public service and accessibility progress continues to be implemented, the Accessibility Secretariat adopts a continuous improvement approach to the accessibility action plan and indicators to ensure their feasibility and effectiveness. This year concerted efforts have been made to update the measurement framework. It is an excellent start and continues to evolve. Baseline data has been established and data has started to be tracked. This measurement framework enables the agency to concretely measure the accessibility progress and remain accountable.

Ownership

As the agency moves towards full accessibility, there are challenges when it comes to the ownership of inaccessible products, documents, and policies. Some inaccessible items are spread across the entirety of the public service and remain difficult to transform into accessible items.

StatCan is working with the appropriate Government of Canada document owners to modify them and stop the use of inaccessible PDFs.

Until accessible documents can be provided to all, StatCan is making sure that accessible workarounds and employee support is offered for the remaining required inaccessible items.

Reporting

In addition to the annual progress report, to ensure accessibility accountability, monthly financial updates and quarterly accomplishment reports are produced. The monthly updates communicate progress, challenges, and accomplishments to the investment board and senior management. The quarterly reports provide updates to the Assistant Chief Statistician responsible for accessibility and the Accessibility Leadership Taskforce. These updates also enhance collaboration between priority areas.

Lastly, this annual progress report compiles the quarterly accomplishment reports complimented by additional actions carried out organically across StatCan throughout the reporting period. This document truly highlights how StatCan answers the call to identify, remove, and eliminate accessibility barriers. These structures help StatCan honour its commitment towards inclusivity and accessibility by design and by default.

Annex A: Performance indicator framework

StatCan has updated the list of indicators that it is using to measure progress. This includes using internal data, data from the [Canada School of the Public Service](#) (CSPS), and the results from the [Public Service Employee Survey](#) (PSES). Part of the evaluation includes using human resources data counting those that do and do not self-identify as a person with disability to monitor differences between the two groups.

While StatCan is trying its best to capture data from past years, some indicator results listed below will serve as a baseline for future years. It is important to note that some indicators (or parts of existing indicators) are still in the process of being developed and will not be reported until data can be produced.

Culture

- Number of employees that have completed the training: [Addressing Disability Inclusion and Barriers to Accessibility](#) (INC115) (Source: CSPS)
 - 595 employees have completed the training: Addressing Disability Inclusion and Barriers to Accessibility (INC115)
- Number of employees in supervising position that have completed the training: [Inclusive Hiring Practices for a Diverse Workforce](#) (COR120) (Source: CSPS)
 - 831 employees in supervising position have completed the training: Inclusive Hiring Practices for a Diverse Workforce (COR120)
- Number of employees that have completed the training: [Becoming an Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Ally and Agent for Change](#) (INC121) (Source: CSPS)
 - 452 employees have completed the training: Becoming an Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Ally and Agent for Change (INC121)

- Percentage of employees who identify as having a disability who gave the most positive or least negative answers when describing the psychological health of their workplace (Source: Public Service Employee Survey – PSES)
 - 54% of persons with disabilities (PwD) in 2022-2023 agreed/somewhat agreed that their “workplace [is] psychologically healthy” compared to 62% in 2020-2021. In comparison, 68% of Persons without Disabilities (PwoD) agreed with this statement in 2022-2023 and 76% in 2020-2021.

- Percentage of employees who identify as having a disability who gave the most positive or least negative answers with the statement: “The people I work with value my ideas and opinions.” (Source: PSES)
 - 84% of PwD in 2022-2023 agreed/somewhat agreed that “The people I work with value my ideas and opinions” compared to 83% in 2020-2021. In comparison, 89% of PwoD agreed with this statement in 2022-2023 and 2020-2021.

- Percentage of employees who identify as having a disability who gave the least positive or most negative answers related to “accessibility or accommodation issues which had adversely affected their career progress in the federal public service” (Source: PSES)
 - 18 % of PwD in 2022-2023 to a large extend/to a very large extend believed that “accessibility or accommodation issues had adversely affected their career progress in the federal public service” compared to 14 % in 2020-2021. In comparison, 3% of PwoD agreed with this statement in 2022-2023, 2% in 2020-2021.

- Percentage of people who identify as having a disability who gave the most positive or least negative answers to the statement: “Overall, my department or agency treats me with respect.” (Source: PSES)
 - 68% of PwD in 2022-2023 agreed/somewhat agreed that “my department or agency treats me with respect” compared to 79% in 2020-2021. In comparison, 81% of PwoD who agreed with this statement in 2022-2023, 91% in 2020-2021.

Workplace accommodation

- Percentage of employees that identify as having a disability who gave the most positive or least negative answers to the statement: “I would

feel comfortable requesting workplace accommodation measures from my immediate supervisor.” (Source: PSES)

- 79% of PwD in 2022-2023 agreed/somewhat agreed that they “would feel comfortable requesting workplace accommodation measures from my immediate supervisor” compared to 75% in 2020-2021. In comparison, 87% of PwoD agreed with this statement in 2022-2023, 87% in 2020-2021.
- Percentage of employees who identify as having a disability who gave the most positive or least negative answers to the statement: “I am satisfied with the workplace accommodation measures that were implemented.” (Source: PSES)
 - 73% of PwD in 2022-2023 agreed/somewhat agreed that they were “satisfied with the workplace accommodation measures that were implemented” compared to 84% in 2020-2021. In comparison, 92% of PWOD agreed with this statement in 2022-2023, 88% in 2020-2021.
- Average number days for an employee to receive an accommodation. (Source: Duty to Accommodate Team tracking data)
 - 33 days on average to receive an accommodation in 2023-2024. In comparison, it took 54 days on average to receive an accommodation in 2020-2021, and 43 days on average in 2022-2023. That said, tracking methodology has changed so this is not completely comparable.

Employment

- Percentage of employees who identify as having a disability who gave the most positive or least negative answers to the statement: “I get the training I need to do my job.” (Source: PSES)
 - 58% of PwD in 2022-2023 agreed/somewhat agreed that they “get the training I need to do my job” compared to 66% in 2020-2021. In comparison, 67% of PwoD who agreed with this statement in 2022-2023, 72% in 2020-2021.
- Percentage of employees who identify as having a disability who gave the most positive or least negative answers to the statement: “Overall, I feel valued at work.” (Source: PSES)
 - 68% of PwD in 2022-2023 agreed/somewhat agreed that they “feel valued at work” compared to 66% in 2020-2021. In

comparison, 76% of PwD agreed with this statement in 2022-2023, 79% in 2020-2021.

- Percentage of employees who identify as having a disability who gave the most positive or least negative answers to the statement: "In my work unit, every individual is accepted as an equal member of the team." (Source: PSES)
 - 84% of PwD in 2022-2023 agreed/somewhat agreed that "In my work unit, every individual is accepted as an equal member of the team" compared to 79% in 2020-2021. In comparison, 88% of PwD agreed with this statement in 2022-2023, 86% in 2020-2021.
- Percentage of employees who identify as having a disability who gave the most positive or least negative answers to the statement: "I believe I have opportunities for promotion within my department or agency, given my education, skills and experience." (Source: PSES)
 - 54% of PwD in 2022-2023 agreed/somewhat agreed that they "believe they have opportunities for promotion within my department or agency, given my education, skills and experience" compared to 47% in 2020-2021. In comparison, 62% of PwD agreed with this statement in 2022-2023, 64% in 2020-2021.

Built environment

- Percentage of employees who identify as having a disability who gave the most positive or least negative answers to the statement: "My physical environment (e.g., office, workspace) is suitable for my job requirements." (Source: PSES)
 - 52% of PwD in 2022-2023 agreed/somewhat agreed that "My physical environment (e.g., office, workspace) is suitable for my job requirements" compared to 74% in 2020-2021. In comparison, 61% of PwD agreed with this statement in 2022-2023, 77% in 2020-2021.

Information and communication technologies

Data is currently unavailable for the following indicators:

- Number of products tested using automated accessibility testing.
- Number of IT staff who have completed the following courses:

- [Addressing Disability Inclusion and Barriers to Accessibility](#) (INC115)
- [Disability Management and Workplace Wellness](#) (INC 120)
- Percentage or number of projects approved by Enterprise Architecture Review Board (EARB) during reporting period which included detailed accessibility plans and considerations.
- Number of BMC Helix requests under the “Accessible IT request” category that have been fulfilled.

Communication, other than information and communication technologies

- Number of promotional pieces done on the use of accessible communication tools to StatCan employees. (Source: Communications administrative data)
 - 9 promotional pieces completed on the use of accessible communication tools to StatCan employees in 2023-2024.
- Number of demonstrations and trainings on accessibility standards and best practices for all employees. (Source: Communications administrative data)
 - 1 awareness session or demonstration completed on plain language training in 2023-2024.

Procurement of goods, services, and facilities

- Percentage of procurement employees who have completed mandatory accessibility purchase training. (Source: Procurement administrative data)
 - 100% of procurement employees have completed mandatory accessibility purchase training.
- Percentage of the sample of contracts managed and evaluated by StatCan that meet and can be validated against accessibility requirements and standards. (Source: Procurement administrative data)
 - 100% of the randomly selected contracts managed and evaluated by StatCan met and could be validated against accessibility requirements and standards.

Design and delivery of programs and services

- Number of accessibility reviews conducted on public facing programs and services (Source: Dissemination monthly tracking):

- 2020-2021: 98
- 2021-2022: 146
- 2022-2023: 136
- 2023-2024: 63
- Number of accessibility reviews conducted on internal and departmental facing programs and services (Source: Dissemination monthly tracking):
 - 2021-2022: 21
 - 2022-2023: 23
 - 2023-2024: 29
- Number of page views of ASL/LSQ videos published in the fiscal year (Source: StatCan Adobe Analytics):
 - 2021-2022: 6,822
 - 2022-2023: 15,134
 - 2023-2024: 13,100
- Number of videos played to completion for ASL/LSQ videos published in the fiscal year (Source: StatCan Adobe Analytics):
 - 2021-2022: 4,037
 - 2022-2023: 6,599
 - 2023-2024: 5,254