

# Inclusion, contribution and opportunities for employees with disabilities at Statistics Canada



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Delivering insight through data for a better Canada

# Overview

- Introduction
- Inclusion of persons with disabilities at Statistics Canada
- Modernization initiative
- Employment Equity and Diversity Action Plan
- Public Service Accessibility Strategy
- Conclusion

## About me

- I joined Statistics Canada in 1989, became a manager in 1997, and assistant director in 2000.
- An assistant deputy minister asked me to become Champion for Persons with Disabilities in the spring of 2002.
- I had no experience in employment equity. I chose to tackle this subject like all my other projects.
- I am a manager who believes in teamwork, in achieving results and in the importance of human resources.

# About Statistics Canada

- Founded in 1918 (Dominion Bureau of Statistics)
- Approximately 5,000 employees (excluding census employees and interviewers). Most employees are in Ottawa, but we have other offices throughout Canada.
- Our Champion for Diversity and Employment Equity: the Chief Statistician!

## About Statistics Canada (cont.)

- Many employees spend their entire career with the agency
  - Skills development and career assignment programs are offered to employees
  - All our employee satisfaction results are above the federal public service average
- 5.6% of employees reported having some sort of disability

# Integrating people with disabilities at Statistics Canada – Legislation, policies

- Regulated by federal legislation, including
  - the *Employment Equity Act* (access to employment for persons with disabilities)
  - the *Canadian Human Rights Act* (disability-based discrimination)
  - Bill C-81 (*An Act to ensure a barrier-free Canada*)
- Various Treasury Board Secretariat policies (employment equity, duty to accommodate persons with disabilities, etc.)

# Integrating people with disabilities at Statistics Canada – Corporate level

- Human Resources Branch (advice and guidance – employment equity and accommodations)
- Integrity and Respect Initiative (designated champion and employee “ambassadors”)
- Corporate Support Services (facilities management) that work together with the building manager (Brookfield – BGIS)
- Labour–Management Health and Safety Committee

# Integrating people with disabilities at Statistics Canada – Employee-led initiatives

- Persons with Disabilities Committee
  - Champion, co-chairs and volunteers
  - Employee events, raising awareness of collective issues (e.g., software accessibility)
- Diversity Committee (co-chairs and champions from the various diversity networks)



# Statistics Canada's Modernization Initiative

*The vision:  
A data-driven society and economy*

1. User-centric service delivery
2. Leading-edge methods and data integration
3. Statistical capacity building and leadership
4. Sharing and collaboration
5. **Modern workforce and flexible workplace**

# Modernization: Modern workforce and flexible workplace

## ***Objective:***

*Have the talent and environment required to fulfill our current business needs and be open and nimble to continue to position ourselves for the future.*

# Modernization: Modern workforce and flexible workplace (cont.)

## Examples of measures

- Less stringent telework rules
- Flexible work set-up, for example:
  - Space organized based on the level of collaboration required by employees' duties (focused work, collaborative work, impromptu or unofficial meetings, official meetings)
  - Opening up offices
  - More collaborative workspaces

## Modernization: Opportunities that foster diversity

- Fewer travel-related obstacles (e.g., mobility, work–life balance)
- Virtual team work (no need to live in the National Capital Region to work there)
- More recruitment options and more diversified candidate pools (targeted student recruitment programs, placements for newcomers to Canada, etc.)

# Modernization: The human aspect



***What challenges do you associate with these images?***

# 2019/2020 Employment Equity and Diversity Action Plan

100

- ✓ Effective workforce analysis
  - Quarterly statistics by designated group and employment group
  - Recruitment and promotion rates
  - Analysis of the drop-off rate in selection processes

# 2019/2020 Employment Equity and Diversity Action Plan (cont.)

100

- ✓ Eliminating and preventing representation gaps
  - Raising the awareness of recruitment managers
  - Representative evaluation committees (list of voluntary employees)

## 2019/2020 Employment Equity and Diversity Action Plan (cont.)

- ✓ A workplace where all employees feel included
  - Champions and diversity networks (awareness-raising events, common issues – inclusion, accessibility, etc.)
  - Mandatory employee training (diversity awareness) and tools for managers (upcoming)



# Action plan: Success indicators

**Quantitative aspect: Eliminating and preventing representation gaps**

**Measurement tool: Administrative data**

## Action plan: Success indicators (cont.)

- EE representation is evenly distributed across all fields.
- Staffing advisors and hiring managers know how to use EE statistics to support recruitment and hiring decisions.
- Staffing objectives are in place and hiring rates exceed separation rates (departures) for EE designated groups.
- Promotion rates are aligned with or exceed representation at the agency.

## Action plan: Success indicators (cont.)

**Cultural aspect: A workplace where all employees feel included**

**Measurement tool: Employee survey**

## Action plan: Success indicators (cont.)

- Measures are taken to prevent and address harassment and discrimination.
- Employees and management are aware of their roles regarding diversity.
- Employees feel that they can be themselves at work.
- Measures are taken to address employee concerns with exclusion.

## Examples of awareness activities

“Mental Illness in the Workplace: A Success Story”  
(May 2019)

- Testimonial from members of a team that created an emotionally healthy environment for an employee with an anxiety disorder

## Examples of awareness activities (cont.)

### Panel discussion on caregivers (December 2018)

- Raising awareness about the complex reality of parents or caregivers assisting loved ones in need of care, based on the real-life experience of employees

## Examples of awareness activities (cont.)

### Human Library (October 2015)

- The concept consisted in finding a few people who had one or more visible and/or invisible disabilities (the “books”) and who were willing to talk to employees (the “readers”) about themselves and their challenges in order to raise awareness about their reality.

## Discussion

*How do you think an employer can create an environment that is conducive to this type of employee-driven initiative?*



# Accessibility strategy for the Public Service of Canada

- Announced on May 27, 2019, led by the Treasury Board Secretariat
  - Deputy Minister Designate: Yazmine Laroche
  - New Office of Public Service Accessibility
  - Appointment of champions in each department/agency

## **Guiding principle: “Nothing without us”**

Persons with disabilities are involved in all stages of design and implementation

# Accessibility strategy for the Public Service of Canada (cont.)

## Concrete measures

- Hire **5,000** new persons with disabilities by 2025 and launch a new **work placement** program
- Launch an accessibility **audit** for a portion of government buildings
- Invest \$13.7 million over five years to identify, remove and prevent **technological barriers**
- Establish a **centralized enabling workplace fund** to facilitate workplace adjustments

# Accessibility strategy for the Public Service of Canada (cont.)

## Desired outcome / success indicators in 2021

- The public service is on course to meet the 2025 **target** of **7%** of its employees who reported having a disability
- Higher **promotion rates** and lower **separation rates** of persons with disabilities
- All **new constructions and renovations** are accessible and take into account comments from persons with disabilities

# Accessibility strategy for the Public Service of Canada (cont.)

## Desired outcome / success indicators in 2021 (cont.)

- All new key **systems**, both internal and external, are accessible
- Transparent consultation and feedback mechanisms are in place to address the **concerns** of clients with disabilities
- All departments will have the capacity to meet or exceed the requirements of the proposed *Accessible Canada Act*

## Discussion

*What do you think are the success factors of such a large-scale strategy?*

## Conclusion

- Organizations must offer a fair, inclusive and positive work environment
- Everyone must raise awareness, express their needs and have a constructive attitude
- Awareness → Openness → Results
- Thought processes, actions and strategies must be based on the existing organizational culture
  - Existing mechanisms
  - Global approach

# Thank you!

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