



CONSULTATION REPORT

Impacts of RTO on equity-deserving groups

August 2023



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Introduction



Introduction

Background

When the COVID-19 pandemic began in March 2020, many workplaces around the world pivoted to telework and hybrid work models—the Canadian federal public sector included. This kicked off a new evolution in the workplace – with changes that are here to stay.

Come the summer of 2022, the Treasury Board Secretariat launched a nationwide return-to-office (RTO) effort, much of it without meaningful consultations with its employees or the unions. While some departments showed flexibility in the rollout of their RTO plans, others were reluctant, ill-equipped, or lacking support and guidance to accommodate their employees or to come-up with arrangements that worked for everyone. Lack of clarity and consistency of those plans were common feedback from CAPE members.

MEMBER RESOLUTION 2022

After the 2022 Annual General Meeting, CAPE members approved a member resolution that mandates CAPE to engage members of equity-deserving groups on the impact of RTO and explore mitigation measures through a vigorous campaign.

The resolution stated:

Be it resolved that CAPE initiates a vigorous campaign—rooted in engagement with its equity-deserving members—to explore ways to minimize the impacts of return-to-office policies in undermining union and employer policies around equity.

Consultations

CAPE hosted and facilitated two consultation sessions on June 28 and July 10, 2023, held online using Zoom from 5:30 pm to 7:30 pm. In total, approximately 120 members participated in both sessions.

The consultation sessions included multiple opportunities for members to share their thoughts and ask questions, as well as providing information on the current situation of telework.

Each sessions began with instructions on how to use the technology, access assistance and or accessibility accommodations, a land acknowledgement, followed by a reading of CAPE’s anti-harassment statement and identifying the anti-harassment officer for the session. CAPE participants included CAPE’s President, policy expert, and their Anti-harassment Officer.

The audience for this work is CAPE members generally, including both Anglophones and Francophones, and specifically members who self-identified as belonging to Indigenous groups or equity-deserving groups. Equity-deserving groups included women, persons with disabilities, Black and other racialized members, and 2SLGBTQI+. All members were invited to attend the second consultation session.



Methodology

In-Session Polling

As part of the consultation sessions, a short online poll was designed to collect members' quantitative data—whether they were a member of an equity-deserving group, their own gender, ethnicity and language preferences, the level of importance for members to have the flexibility to work up to full-time remotely, and their overall feelings towards their current work model. The survey was offered online, in both official languages.

Consultation Questions

The main engagement activity invited members to participate in discussions surrounding the federal government's return-to-office policies and its impacts on equity-deserving groups. Questions were designed to be respectful for equity-deserving groups, using a Gender-Based Analysis Plus lens, and to be inclusive and understanding for all.

Members were asked to join breakout session to discuss the 5–6 consultation questions. The breakout sessions were organized by language, and accessibility accommodations were provided. Members were asked to discuss the questions as a group. After the first consultation session, member feedback suggested a question be included for all employees, not just those within an equity-deserving group. This question was added to the second consultation session and follow-up form. Members were given approximately 30 minutes to discuss the impacts, share their answers within the form, and present back their thoughts and insights to the entire group.

Post-Consultation Follow-up

Satisfaction survey

After participating in the session, all members who RSVP'd were sent a follow-up survey to capture their thoughts and opinions on the session. This short online survey was offered in both languages and conducted confidentially.

Follow-up form – (RSVP Survey)

A feedback form was also sent to all members who registered, whether or not they were able to attend. Results from this online form were consolidated with the insights collected in the consultation sessions and reported together.



Methodology

RSVP Insights

CAPE sent an email invitation to all registered members inviting them to participate in the consultation sessions. On the RSVP form, a handful of questions were posed to members to determine their current working model and their general opinions on the benefits of working remotely.

EMAIL Responses

CAPE members were provided an email address within the invitation to register. Members used this email address to share thoughts and comments on the consultation session and other insights. Relevant insights were consolidated within the consultation session question “Please share any additional thoughts or feedback.”

Additional Methodology Information

Confidentiality

Within all activities, members were able to participate and share their thoughts, suggestions, insights, and feeling in a confidential manner. Throughout member interactions, personal identifying information—such as name, email address, job role, etc. were neither collected nor reported. Member names were not captured when they participated or shared back in the session, and not reported within the following report.

Bilingualism

In all instances the communications, materials, and forms were presented to CAPE members in both official languages. Throughout the project members were given the choice to participate in English or French and respond in the language of their choice.

Accessibility

CAPE members were also offered the ability to access accommodations, as needed and requested. Accommodations included closed captioning, simultaneous interpretation, online forms in HTML to facilitate use with screen readers, and an accessibility breakout room for anyone requesting additional support to help them understand and/or complete the survey.



Executive Summary



Polling – general summary

CONSULTATION POLLING

8 in 10 participants self-identified as either an Indigenous person or a member of an equity-deserving group. Amongst them, slightly less than two-thirds identify themselves as women and one-third as a person with a disability.

Overall, 60% of participants live in Ontario and 72% of them are women.

9 in 10 participants feel that working remotely is an extremely important aspect in general and especially for equity-deserving groups. Slightly more than one-third of participants considered leaving their current position due to their department's RTO policy and 2 in 10 believe that remote work is necessary as it removes barriers to advancement for regional employees. It also gives flexibility, control and comfort to disabled employees.

Breakout session, return to office,
email comments

8 in 10 participants feel that remote working has made the public service a more equitable workplace, and that it has helped to remedy negative equity impacts in the public service. A quarter of participants feel remote working helps achieve work-life balance, provides flexibility to women with young children, allows partners to contribute more equally to household work when both work from home, offers workers more family time, and provides opportunities to those who live outside of the National Capital Region.

3 in 10 participants indicated that in-person work is important for team bonding; without it, they are left feeling disconnected from the people they work with. The same participants felt that in-person conditions can be good depending on the manager.

Slightly less than half of participants felt that, if the federal government designs a return-to-office plan, it should consider remote work requests on a case-by-case basis. 2 in 10 participants feel equity-groups will be negatively impacted due to a long commute and financial burden of cost to travel and stay in the National Capital Region. A similar percentage of participants felt that the mental health of disabled workers will be affected due to the return to office mandate as they may have to struggle again for accommodation.

REGISTRATION POLLING RESULTS

Participants indicated their department at registration. The top three departments listed were Employment and Social Development Canada (58), Indigenous Services Canada (48), and Health Canada (42). Slightly less than two-thirds of participants are currently working two days in the office and three days remotely.

26% of participants feel working remotely majorly increases their productivity as participants have adequate time to sleep, eat healthier foods, spend time with family, and equity-deserving groups can stay in their communities.



Snapshot

The following is a high-level summary of the insights collected within the in-session polling.

85% Identify themselves as a member of an equity-deserving group

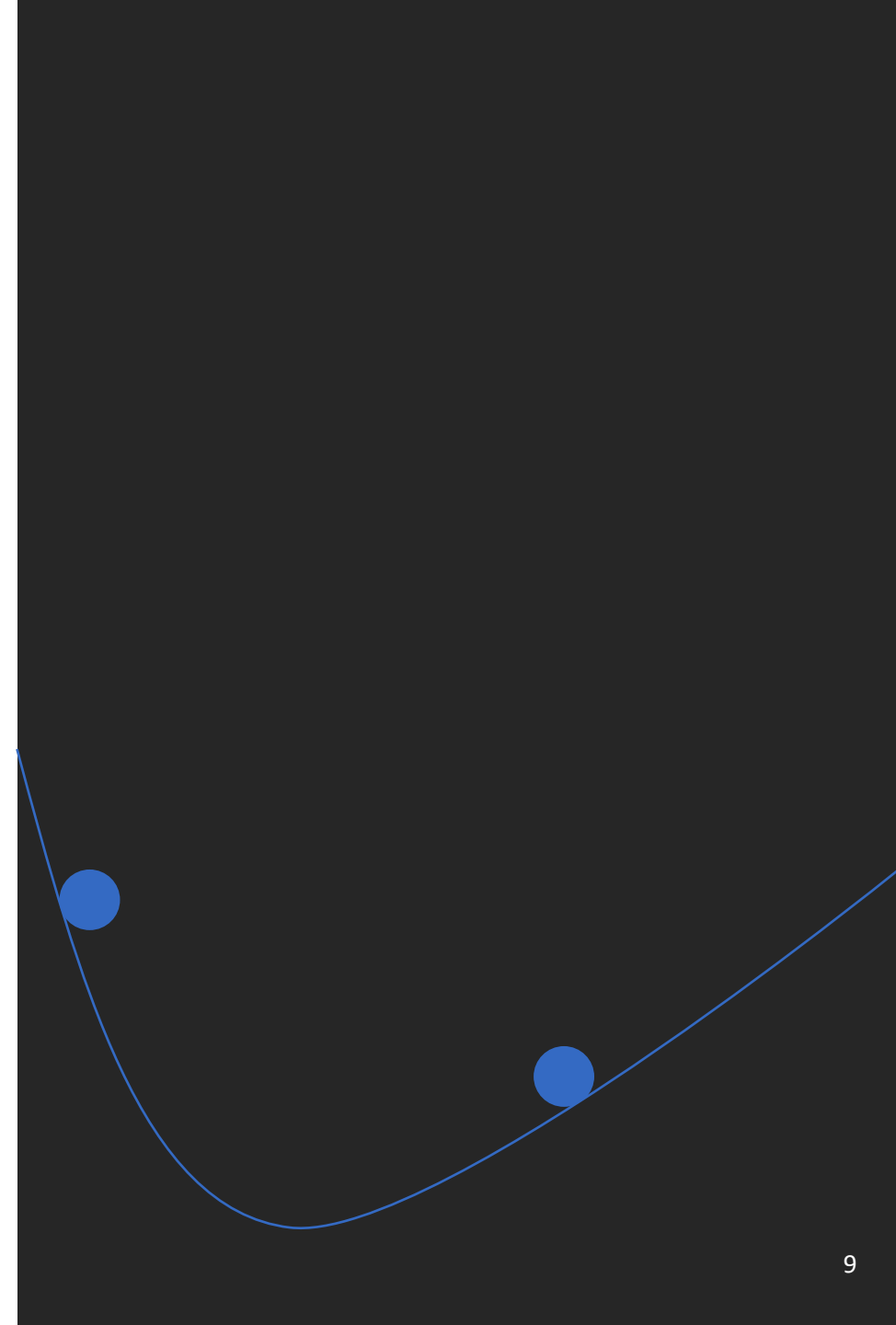
93% Feel it is extremely important to have flexibility to work up to full-time remotely

94% Feel that it is extremely important for equity-deserving group members to have flexibility to work up to full-time remotely

38% Considering leaving current position for another position that allows them to choose their preferred work model

26% Have considered leaving their current public service position for another position outside of public service, one that allows them to choose their preferred work model

9% Members who are happy with their current work model





Top Themes

Work-life balance & Productivity

Members mentioned that remote working will benefit parents of young children and other caregivers and will promote shared responsibilities within the household. Flexibility, time to improve physical and mental health, healthy eating, and more family time are some of the other benefits of remote working highlighted by participants.

Avoids commuting cost, time, resettlement

Rising inflation – particularly transit, parking and gas prices – create significant financial pressures for workers. Resettlement and housing costs for those moving to or living in the National Capital Region due to their jobs add to the financial burden faced by members and their families. Further, members indicated that the RTO mandate works against the government's climate change initiative as travelling increases workers' carbon footprints and pollution.

Regional communities and other Indigenous communities find it difficult to commute long distances to offices far from their communities where they can practice their traditions.

OPPORTUNITIES TO FOCUS AND REDUCE STRESS

Members believe that remote working offers them the comfort level to work efficiently. Specifically, the quiet and calm of working from home offers greater comfort for those with mental and physical health conditions such as high stress levels, sensitivities (light, sound, and

noise), ADHD, and social anxiety. These workers note that when working from home they can work without interruptions, avoid distractions from colleagues, and do not experience social pressure to talk.

Flexibility for equity-deserving groups, including members with disabilities

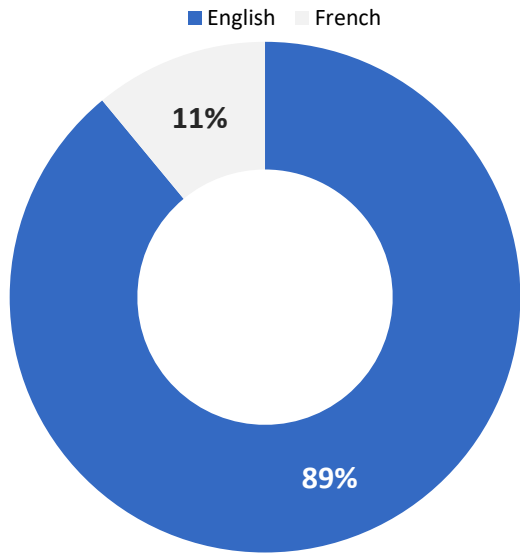
Members with disabilities often experience difficulties related to commuting, adjusting ergonomically in office space, managing symptoms, and receiving the flexibility to take breaks as needed and work at their own pace. Moreover, they face bias and sometimes harassment. Not all managers are equal in terms of providing reasonable accommodations. Similar biases are faced by gender-diverse members who may face ignorance, discrimination and a lack of affirming facilities, such as gender-neutral washrooms.

Opportunities for better representation of talent across the country

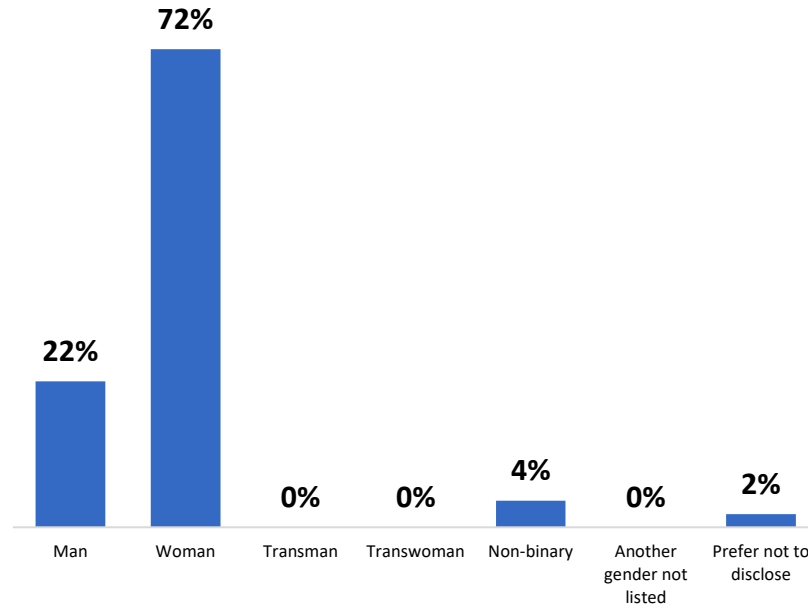
Remote working can also contribute to hiring and retaining regional talent as opportunities could be expanded beyond the National Capital Region. This is particularly important for Indigenous workers who are trying to maintain and strengthen their connections to their communities and their land.

In-Session Polling

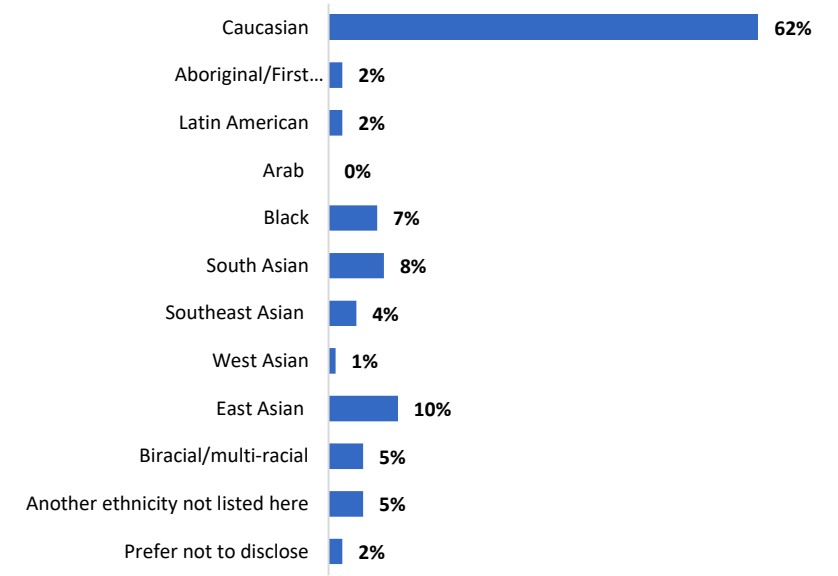
Language



How do you identify your gender?

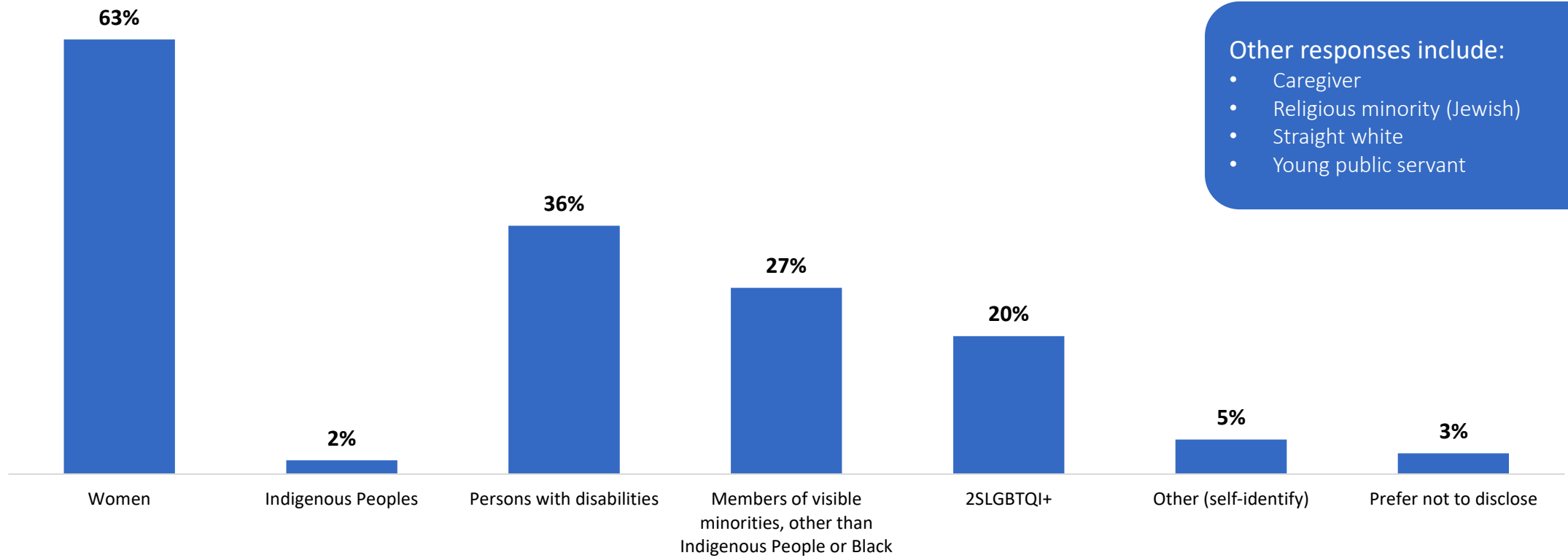


Which do you believe best describes your ethnicity?



In-Session Polling

Which of the following groups do you identify as a member?



Other responses include:

- Caregiver
- Religious minority (Jewish)
- Straight white
- Young public servant

In-Session Polling

Members were asked to share the reason for their scores **when asked about the importance of flexibility for equity-deserving groups.**

19%	Remote work and avoids barriers to opportunities, bias, discrimination, harassment/racism faced by equity-deserving groups, avoid gender bias
16%	Disabled employees will feel safe. Those living far from the office will have same opportunities for professional growth
14%	Difficult for employees with disabilities/logistically easier, avoids focus on disability, bias, harassment
12%	Remote work offers more productivity, flexibility, comfort, safety and control
10%	Work-life balance/ women/mothers, caretakers need more time with young children/family responsibilities
10%	Greater diversity, inclusion of regional talent of people from other geographies, Indigenous talent
10%	Offers mental health, lifestyle, reducing anxiety, and wellbeing, psychological safety



“Flexibility to work with employees' preferred methods/location should be the basis in any work environment.”

“Workplace shouldn't pose any barriers for equity-seeking members to deliver their work.”

“Every single aspect of working remotely is superior to working onsite in every single respect.”

“Women with small children as well as single parents face challenges related to school/daycare drop-off and pickup time.”

“Workplaces are cramped, noisy, distracting environments, and commute takes up extra time/energy.”

In-Session Polling

Members were asked to what extent does the ability to work remotely support equity and diversity in the public service.

19%	Greater flexibility for disabled employees/do not have to disclose disability/mobility, safety, security/discrimination, harassment, office-spaces are not equitable for all
16%	Benefit to Indigenous communities/diverse backgrounds, equity-seeking groups, as they can stay closer to community
17%	More opportunity for those staying outside the capital, more diverse talent
13%	Change to practice equality within households, flexibility for mothers/families with young children, caregivers
13%	Remote working provided work-life balance, more flexibility, more community time
10%	Increased representation of employees
5%	Flexibility for those with mental health conditions, high stress levels, social anxiety, sensitivities (light, sound, noise), microaggression



“The ‘one size fits all’ approach is not good, as it ignores systemic barriers.”

“If you want to find talented Indigenous employees then we must be allowed to work remotely.”

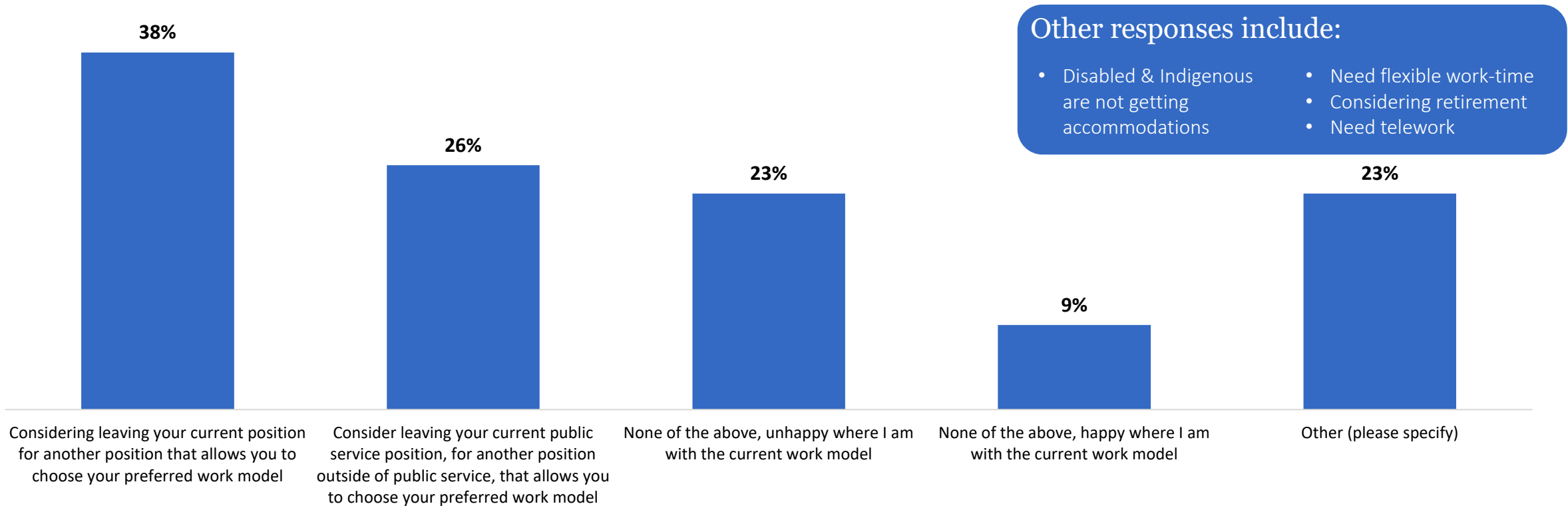
“It is essential that the Government of Canada meet its commitments to hire, retain and support Canadians with disabilities”

“I thrived while WFH over the past few years, I was even recently promoted; without remote work, I would be on leave”

“Mothers need to balance their work with raising their children and it is much easier to do that when they can work remotely”

In-Session Polling

Considering the current return to work model, which of the following best describes your current situation



In-Session Polling

Members were asked to share any final thoughts, comments, or feedback on the ability for equity-deserving members to have the flexibility to work up to full-time remotely.

18%	Greater flexibility for disabled employees/do not have to disclose disability/no harassment or discrimination
12%	Provides time to stay fit/healthy, maintain medication times, family time, social time, caregivers and mothers can take care of parents/young ones/school kids
9%	Due to remote work all Canadians can access government jobs, talent from all geographies get opportunity, can grow professionally, talented Indigenous employees can work, while maintaining their traditions
9%	RTO should be a choice and not a mandate, should be considered case-by-case basis—it promotes retention of talent, work satisfaction
8%	More productive work, more peaceful and uninterrupted work/no disturbance by colleagues, avoids distractions
6%	Environment-friendly, beneficial for the environment too, reduces travel, contribution to traffic



“Working remotely removes many barriers—safety, security, mobility—the list is endless, so it is 100% linked to supporting equity and diversity.”

“Working remotely reduces opportunities to discriminate and be discriminated against (e.g., it's harder to be racist when you don't know people's race).”

“Easier to have a public service that sufficiently represents Canadian demographics (can hire from all areas of the country).”

“Creates an equitable space, increases productivity, saves money.”

“The full-time, 40-hour workweek is already not working for most women with small children, due to unequal domestic burdens.”



Consultation Questions

As part of the consultation sessions, members were broken into small groups to discuss questions about their experiences, opinions, and suggestions for the return-to-work flexibility for equity-deserving groups, and all Canadians.

In the June 28th session, members were asked five questions; six questions were posed to the July 10th session members. In addition to the session, all members were sent a follow-up email after the session, giving them an opportunity to also answer the questions, and share final thoughts and suggestions. The questions were presented and available to be answered in both French or English.

Responses were collected confidentially and did not collect any personal identifying information from members. In total almost 300 responses were collected between session participants and CAPE members participated individually. Responses from each source were combined, reporting all answers to each question together.



Snapshot

The following is a high-level summary of the insights collected from answers to the consultation questions.

82% Agree that remote working has made the public service a more equitable workplace

80% Agree that remote working has helped to remedy negative equity impacts in the public service

Top themes include:

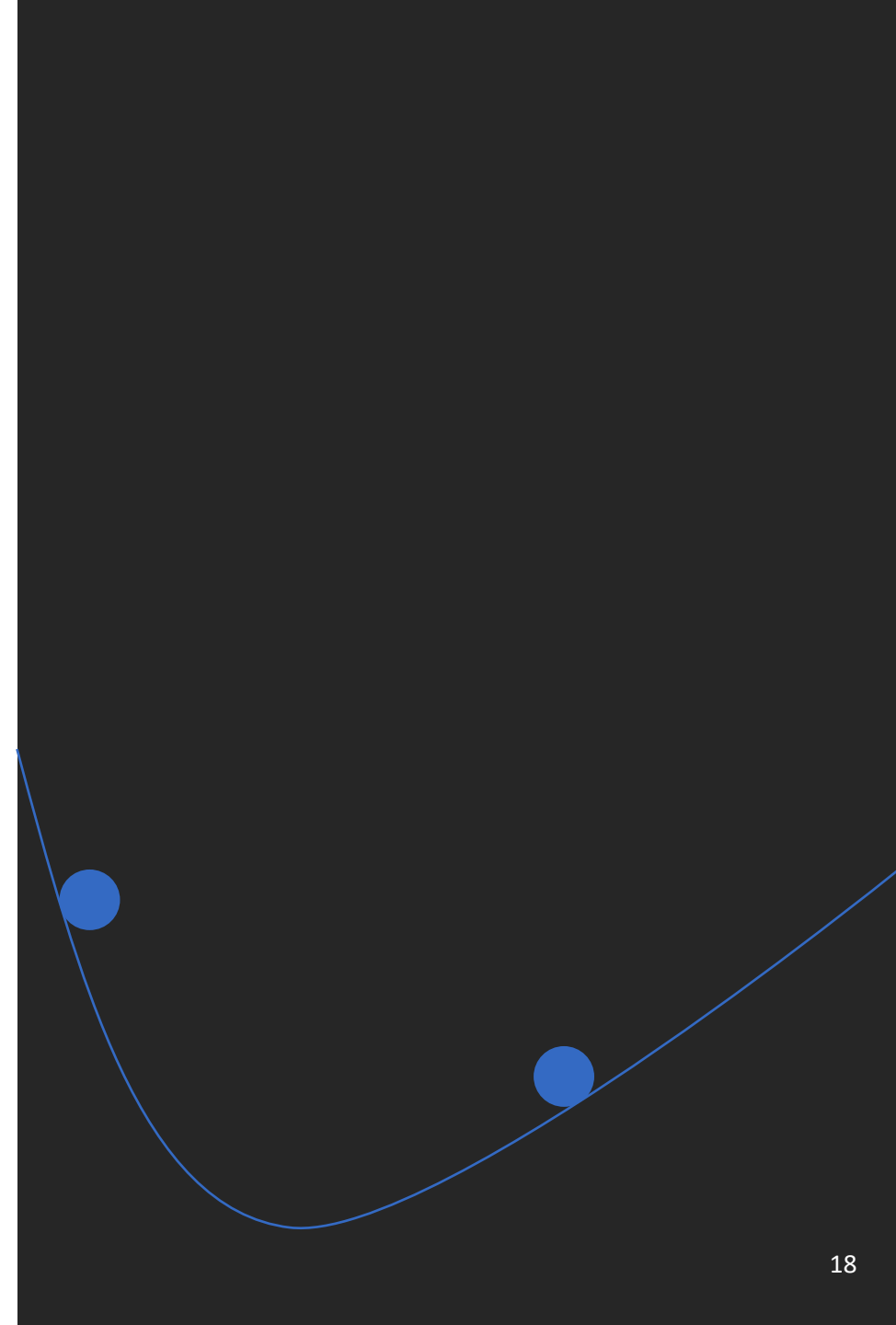
Remote working has a positive impact on mothers, parents, caregivers, and families

Remote working has a positive impact on employee hiring – employees would not need to live in the National Capital Region

Remote working helps keep Indigenous employees within their communities

Remote working helps minimize opportunities for bias and harassment to occur for equity-deserving and disabled employees

There are savings, both in time and money, for working remotely – this includes reducing commuting, living costs for specific cities, etc.



Consultation Questions

In the session conducted on June 28th, members were asked five questions about topics like equity-impacts in public service, mandatory return-to-office policies and sentiments around it, and how can the government design a better return-to-work policy. In 2nd session on July 10th there was one more question added to the previous five, to gauge their final thoughts and arguments. Those who didn't get a chance to share their thoughts were sent a follow-up email after the sessions to capture their responses for all the six questions along with any additional final thoughts and suggestions.

Questions	June 28 th Session	July 10 th Session	Follow- up Form	Email to CAPE email
1 Has remote working made the public service a more equitable workplace? Please provide examples.	✓	✓	✓	
2 Has remote working helped to remedy negative equity impacts in the public service? Please provide examples.	✓	✓	✓	
3 What are the equity impacts of the federal government's return-to-office policies, positive and/or negative? Please provide examples.	✓	✓	✓	
4 What are the equity impacts of mandatory return-to-office policies? Please provide examples.	✓	✓	✓	
5 How could the federal government design a return-to-office policy that does not negatively impact equity-deserving groups? Please provide examples.	✓	✓	✓	
6 Please share any final thoughts, suggestions, or arguments regarding the environmental, economic, and social aspects of the federal government's return-to-office policy, as it impacts federal government employees and all Canadians.		✓	✓	
7 Please share any additional thoughts or feedback.			✓	✓

Findings

DIVERSE REPRESENTATION OF EMPLOYEES

Hurdles. Employees living outside of the National Capital Region do not have the same opportunities for employment and advancement. It is particularly difficult for Indigenous employees and other racialized and equity-deserving members to stay within their communities and build a career in the public sector.

Expectation. Remote working will allow better representation of talent from across the country. Workers will be able to grow professionally and have access to more advancement opportunities. Also, Indigenous employees can practice their traditions within their communities.

WORK-LIFE BALANCE, NO COMMUTE TIME

Hurdles. Commuting eats away at employees' free time, making it more difficult to balance work and family responsibilities. Parents of young children and caregivers struggle to find the work life balance, reducing or removing commuting time could make a significant difference in time earned.

Expectation. Removing the commute provides employees with extra time to spend with children, maintain healthy habits, provide care and engage in their communities. When a couple both work remotely, there can be a more equal distribution of household chores and caregiving duties.

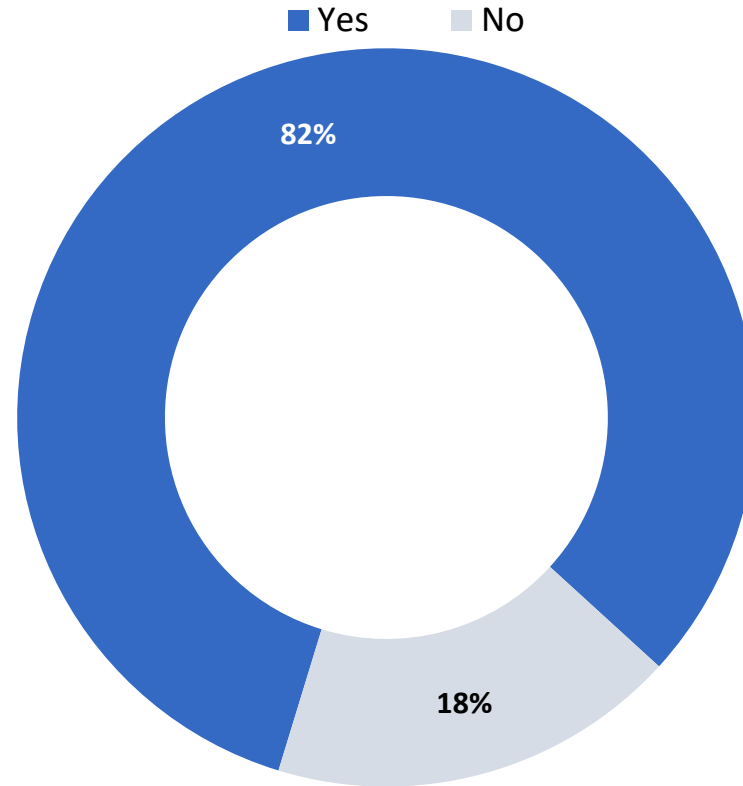
MENTAL HEALTH AND SUPPORT FOR DISABLED EMPLOYEES

Hurdles. Disturbance from colleagues, sensitivities (noise, lights, crowded places) etc., and the physical challenge of getting to the office can all pose problems for workers with disabilities. It is also often difficult for these workers to commute due to physical barriers along their route and ergonomic challenges in the office.

Expectation. Telework can reduce distractions and barriers in the work environment. Employees may be accommodated more easily as they have more control over their work setting, can minimize discomfort, and can avoid distractions.

Consultation Questions

1. Has remote working made the public service a more equitable workplace?



Consultation Questions

1. Has remote working made the public service a more equitable workplace?

The following insights are from those who felt public service has become a more equitable workplace.

26%	Flexibility for mothers, parents, caregivers and families
25%	More opportunity to live outside of a capital city, flexibility to live elsewhere, flexibility to hire talent from elsewhere
18%	Benefit for those from Indigenous communities/diverse backgrounds, equity-seeking groups, as they can stay closer to community
13%	Flexibility for those with mental health conditions and high stress levels, social anxiety, sensitivities (light, sound, noise)
12%	Lesser harassment, bias, and microaggression for equity-deserving groups/gender-diverse community
10%	Saves time and money in commuting
9%	Remote working provided work-life balance, more flexibility



“Yes, better representation across the country, better representation from those who are less able to commute into the downtown National Capital Region.”

“You can live in your own community. Good for those with disabilities, diversity, etc.”

“Access through the virtual platforms, while reducing the risk of harassment, including micro aggression and discrimination.”

“Yes, saving commuting time helps with self-care, caregiving, childcare and saving money.”

“It puts everyone in the same perspective, and with camera off, one can't be judged by its skin colour, its looks or gender.”

Consultation Questions

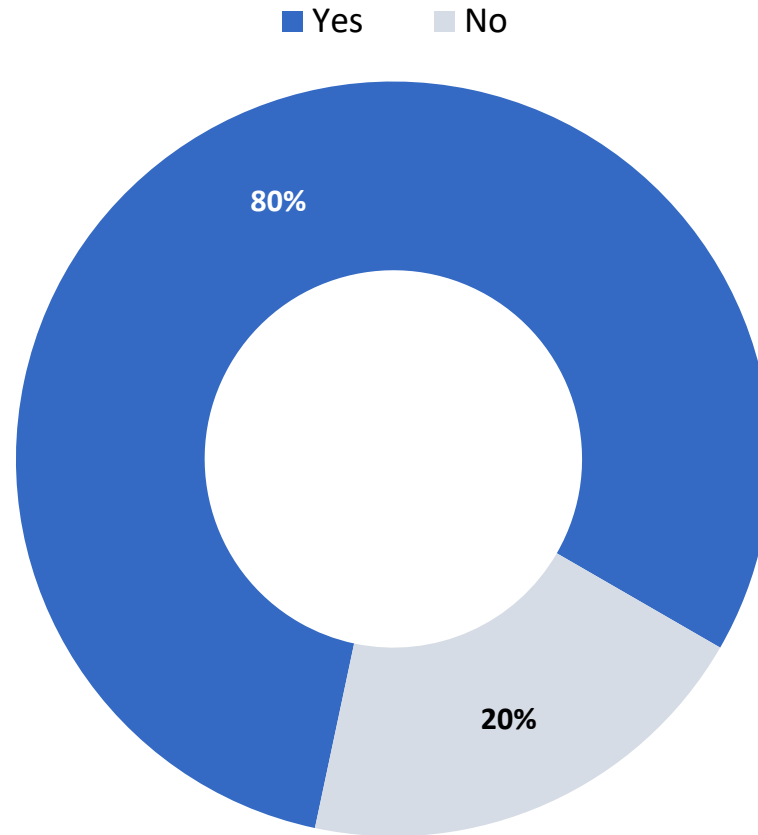
1. Has remote working made the public service a more equitable workplace? Please provide examples.

The following insights are from the CAPE members who felt public service has not become a more equitable workplace.

- *It has made it more difficult for new employees to become fully integrated into the workplace and to gain recognition.*
- *Being in the same office and sharing common spaces like kitchens and break rooms makes a huge difference in connecting with others.*
- *It is hard to get facetime with decision makers/leaders and mentoring from team members.*
- *Because it is even worse in a virtual environment where you are not heard if you cannot get control of a microphone.*
- *There is an expectation of being available all the time. Boundaries, privacy, availability are not respected.*
- *Not at all. The inconsistencies between department rules make it so that you are working in sometimes excellent conditions and sometimes okay or terrible conditions.*
- *It is 92% male. I have very frequently been the only woman in meetings (both in-person and virtual). I can barely speak.*
- *I was travelling for a conference last month, and unable to answer an e-mail, my director pulled me aside upon my return and said, "Just because I send you on travel is not an excuse to ignore your work."*
- *In some instances, I feel that some people are offered more flexible options than others and even some take advantage by not following the rules.*
- *We Indigenous people that work at CIRNAC/ISC are still being harassed at home through its services. It is disheartening that we're still being harassed at home, even though we're not in the office.*
- *Those who began working with the government while working from home during the pandemic will miss out on those opportunities.*

Consultation Questions

2. Has remote working helped to remedy negative equity impacts in the public service?



Consultation Questions

2. Has remote working helped to remedy negative equity impacts in the public service? **Please provide examples.**

23%	More opportunity for those staying outside the capital, talent from all geographies get opportunity
20%	Lesser harassment, bias, and microaggression for equity-deserving groups/gender-diverse community
19%	Flexibility for mothers/families with young children/flexibility for caregivers
16%	Greater flexibility for disabled employees/do not have to disclose disability
15%	Flexibility for those with mental health conditions and high stress levels, social anxiety, sensitivities (light, sound, noise)
13%	Benefit for those from Indigenous communities/diverse backgrounds, equity-seeking groups, as they can stay closer to community



“People with physical mobility issues or medical accommodations can get to work easily—people who live far away from the office.”

“Remote working has decreased the frequency that I have heard and experienced anti-Indigenous racism.”

“Working from home, you are as accessible as anyone else but in a safe environment.”

“It made it easy to have discussions with supervisors on issues and made it possible for everyone to participate in learning activities.”

“Helped me balance my family responsibilities, especially since I work in a region where I have to keep work hours unusual for my time zone.”



Consultation Questions

2. Has remote working helped to remedy negative equity impacts in the public service? **Please provide examples.**

The following insights are from the respondents who felt remote work **has not helped to remedy** negative equity in the public service. Members felt there have been impacts to their team, a reduction in boundaries, and issues with visibility.

- *It has created unfairness/imbalance between colleagues—with some people working remotely in other cities since we don't have physical offices.*
- *Remote working can also create increased stress because of reduced boundaries, which isn't often talked about in the RTO narrative.*
- *Women have disappeared from our workplace, and no one has noticed or don't seem to care.*
- *I see a lot less opportunities now then before when everyone could telework, so that means I am missing out on opportunities.*
- *It is common that promotional acting opportunities are available to those who are present in workspaces.*
- *All I know is that the majority of those who are annoyed that some government employees get to work from home are the ones who are not allowed to themselves.*
- *A lot of jealousy and projection happening. But this is why we need to make sure that those who are working from home are actually working.*
- *Without people coming into the office everyday, I believe the issue of under-representation is becoming invisible. My male management team couldn't care LESS that there are no women working for them.*
- *There's a sense of disconnection when the team isn't together in the office.*
- *I believe working from home will exacerbate negative equity impacts in the public service. It will do so primarily by limiting certain groups' access to the professional development opportunities that are available when most colleagues are working in the office together.*

Consultation Questions

3. What are the equity impacts of the federal government’s return-to-office policies, positive and/or negative? Please provide examples.

29% Flexibility for mothers, parents, caregivers, and families

22% More opportunity to live outside of a capital city, flexibility to live elsewhere, flexibility to hire talent from elsewhere

21% Flexibility for those with mental health conditions and high stress levels, social anxiety, sensitivities (light, sound, noise)

19% Greater flexibility for disabled employees/do not have to disclose disability

14% Less harassment, bias, and microaggression for minorities, equity-deserving groups/gender-diverse community

13% Saves time and money in commuting

7% Remote working provided work-life balance, more flexibility



“Still waiting on basic accommodations, which have aggravated previous injury. I have had to change and increase treatments for ADHD.”

“Those living further, those with children or pets, or those that are making less have felt these changes more unequally.”

“I have a visual impairment and migraine issues and its much easier for me to work from home.”

“Impact is hurting the work-life balance that was created as a result of remote working due to eliminating the need for long commute.”

“People who are outgoing and have had decades of their lives consumed by work and commuting have regained their social circle.”

Consultation Questions

4. What are the equity impacts of mandatory return-to-office policies? Please provide examples.

28%	Flexibility for mothers, parents, caregivers and families
27%	More opportunity to live outside of the National Capital Region, flexibility to live elsewhere, flexibility to hire talent from elsewhere
22%	Saves time and money in commuting, housing costs, shifting to a new place
19%	Flexibility for those with mental health conditions and high stress levels, social anxiety, sensitivities (light, sound, noise)
10%	Less harassment, bias and microaggression for minorities, equity-deserving groups/gender-diverse community
9%	Benefit for equity-deserving group/Indigenous communities/diverse backgrounds, equity-seeking groups, as they can stay closer to community
6%	Greater flexibility for disabled employees/do not have to disclose disability



“Strongly biased towards those already living in or near downtown Ottawa/Gatineau and who have no physical limitations.”

“Removal of the inclusive benefits attained for employees with diversity deserving needs.”

“Return to office policies have created ergonomically incorrect spaces, unhealthy environments with lack of fresh air, old carpet.”

“Increase in CO2 emissions, and additional financial burdens due to commuting costs.”

“Those with learning disabilities and issues focusing have a much harder time in a shared space.”

Consultation Questions

5. How could the federal government design a return-to-office policy that does not negatively impact equity-deserving groups? Please provide examples.

43%	Case-by-case basis, as per job-role, open options, customized policies as per departments
13%	Allowing WFH as long as employees are productive, telework should be promoted
11%	Regional workers/Indigenous people don't want to leave the communities, better representation
8%	Number of office-days should be reduced, 2 days maximum, good hybrid balance, optional for all and not mandatory
8%	Allow more and better accommodations for disabled employees
7%	Exempt equity-deserving groups from mandatory RTO
7%	Better communication/direction of policies



“With a disability, I find it a challenge to go in all day and walk through the parking lot etc.”

“Allow departments and agencies to determine RTO policies that work best for the kinds of work that they do.”

“Allow for greater exemptions for relocation for members of 2SLGBTQ+ community.”

“Provide more flexibility for managers to negotiate number of days in the office, or remote agreements, with their employees.”

“Would allow people with disabilities, people of color, and people from more remote areas of the country to work and thrive.”

Consultation Questions

6. Please share any final thoughts, suggestions, or arguments regarding the environmental, economic, and social aspects of the federal government's return-to-office policy, as it impacts federal government employees and all Canadians.

27%	Remote working provided work-life balance, more flexibility, healthier lifestyle
26%	Saves cost of commuting, renting a house in national capital region, saves time and money in commuting, housing costs, shifting to a new place
15%	RTO policies are against the government's climate change objectives, it is against environment
15%	More opportunity to live outside of a capital city, flexibility to live elsewhere, flexibility to hire talent from elsewhere
10%	Fewer accommodations needed for equity-deserving groups
10%	Hiring and retention of talent due to WFH
5%	More productivity from WFH, less stress, pressure, social anxiety,



“The policy needs to be tailored to individual, not individuals tailored to the RTO policy.”

“Travelling costs and damage to the environment and mental condition is very negative.”

“Remote work creates less carbon footprint, can cause isolation issues for some but also make family situations stronger.”

“Represent all Canadians, the public service needs to reflect all Canadians, not just those who live in the national capital region.”

Consultation Questions

7. Please share any additional thoughts or feedback.

Members were given one final opportunity to share additional thoughts or feedback. This question also took in the insight shared with CAPE through member correspondence. Members felt that there are positive impacts for working remotely for those within equity-deserving groups with respect to mental health. Staying close to communities is paramount, as it also allows hires to not need to be in a capital city. Members report being more productive while working from home.

24%	Provide accommodations for equity-deserving groups, unethical rule mental health concerns for disabled people, do not have to disclose disability
15%	Regional employees can stay with their families, communities, Indigenous employees can stay with their communities
14%	Saves cost of commuting, renting a house in National Capital Region, saves time and money in commuting, housing costs, shifting to a new place
11%	More productivity from remote work, less stress, pressure, social anxiety
8%	RTO policies are against the government's climate change objectives, it is against environment
6%	Those staying outside the capital should get more opportunities so there can be a better representation of employees across the country.
5%	Government employees should be able to live and work anywhere



“The civil service is discriminating against anyone who has a young family and is seeking to climb.”

“The ability to work remotely means that employees are able to contribute to more communities and regions of Canada.”

“RTO has been a nightmare for transportation, finances, healthy workplace existence, and has hit families quite hard.”

“The majority of the public service is disappointed in the government's approach to back to work.”

“Negative impact on employee mental health/wellness and stress levels, forcing employees to lose 2+ or so hours to their day for commuting and polluting.”



Snapshot

The following is a high-level summary of the insights collected within member RSVP follow-up survey.

878 RSVPs received

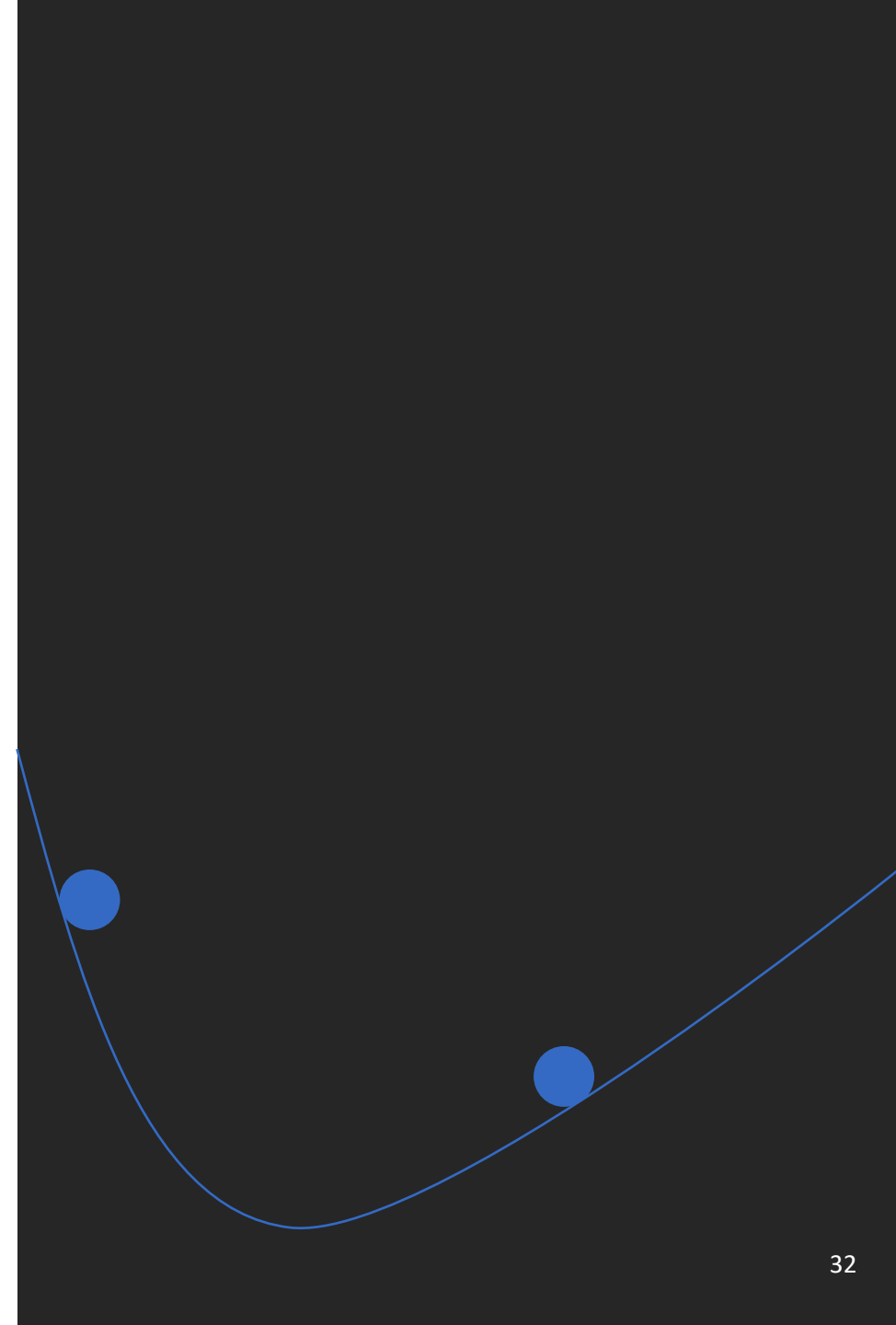
80% Of respondents were interested in attending the consultation sessions virtually

72% Currently working with a flexible working model (mix between office/remote)

60% Currently working two days in the office, three days remotely

27% Currently working remotely full time (five days remotely, full time remotely, teleworking job)

26% Members feel the major benefit of working remotely is that it provides more time to balance work and life, to exercise, eat well, sleep more, and stay healthy



RSVP Insights

Members were asked about the benefits of remote working.

26%	Provides more time to balance work and life, to exercise, eat well, sleep more, stay healthy
16%	Beneficial for equity-deserving groups' mental health, avoids stress, social anxiety, avoid workplace bias, discrimination, ignorance
12%	Benefits workers with disabilities to work flexibly, avoid biases, ergonomically comfortable, can take medications on time
10%	Increased productivity, promoted to higher position, RTO should be case-by-case basis, majority of teammates do not come the same day
8%	Flexible for caregivers, parents,
7%	Less sensitivity (light, sounds, crowd), peaceful working atmosphere, job satisfaction, less absenteeism
7%	Time to connect socially with friends, family etc.—regional workers/Indigenous people don't want leave the communities
6%	Saves time, energy and money in travelling, increases take-home pay, good for environment



“Greater work-life balance (less personal time spent commuting), reduced stress, greater take-home pay, fewer interruptions in the workday.”

“Flexibility for child-care. Flexibility for quality of life. Flexibility for living closer to key (non-national captioned) stakeholders.”

“I am able to save money. Much, much better work life balance.”

“Allow me to pickup and drop-off kids safely from school and activities and to participate in in home therapy sessions.”

“Increased work life balance, increased productivity, increased energy.”