

Employment and Social Development Canada

Recent Service
Achievements 



Employment and
Social Development Canada

Emploi et
Développement social Canada

Canada 

**Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) -
Recent Service Achievements**

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RECENT IMPROVEMENTS

Each day, the Government of Canada interacts with millions of Canadians by delivering important benefits and services, often at critical moments in their lives. Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) continues to make improvements to client service by:

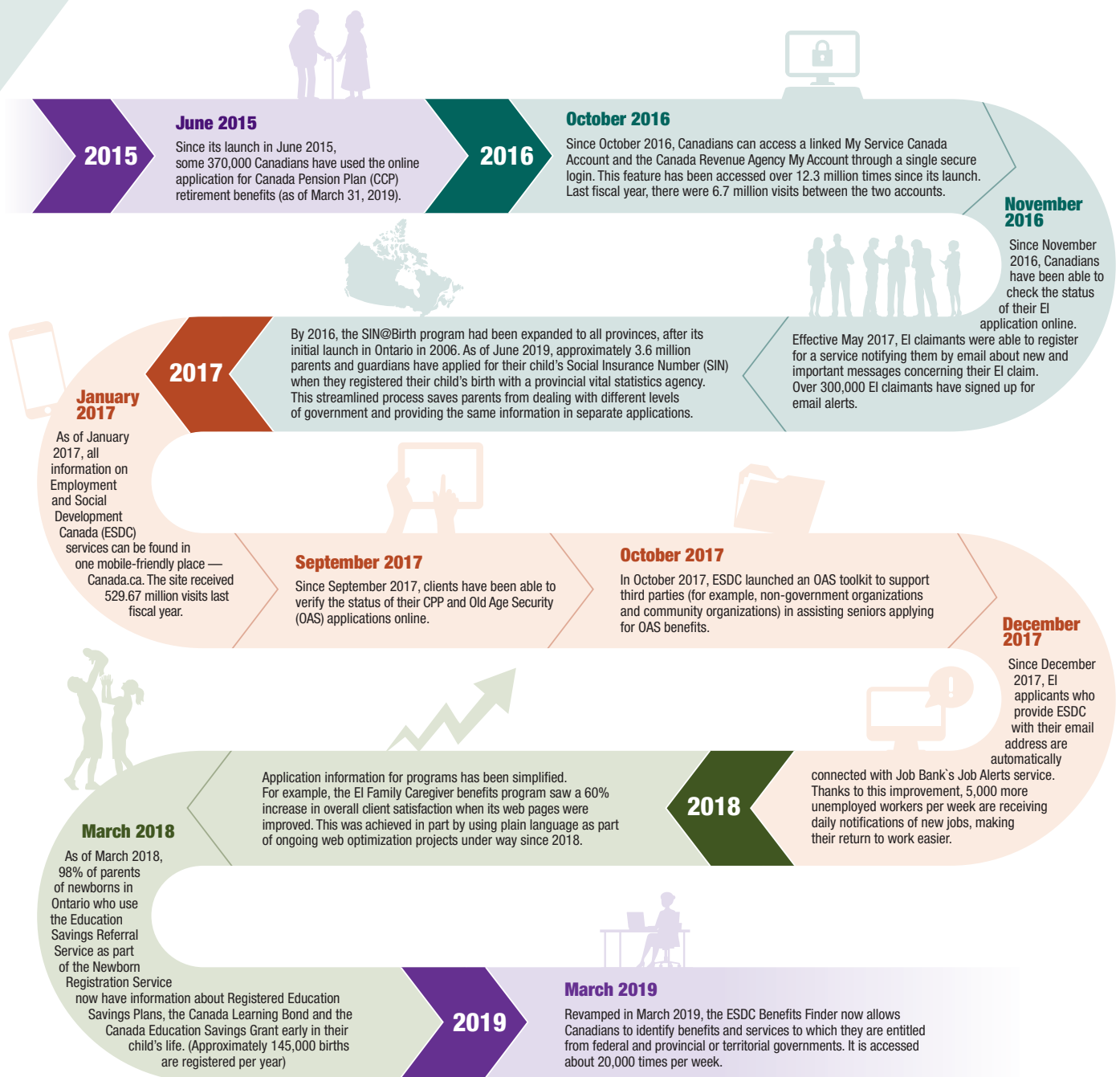
- providing easier access to benefits and services;
- reducing wait times for Employment Insurance (EI) call centres;
- continually improving digital service offerings;
- staying focused on serving Canadians; and
- delivering timely benefits.

DID YOU KNOW

A 2017–18 Client Experience Survey found that 86% of ESDC clients were satisfied with their service experience.

— Ipsos: 2017–18 Client Experience Survey

EXAMPLES OF SOME OF THE DEPARTMENT'S RECENT SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS





Easier Access to Benefits and Services

ESDC is better anticipating the needs of Canadians and undertaking important outreach efforts to help them more efficiently access the benefits and services to which they are entitled.

EXAMPLE 1

OAS and GIS automatic enrollment



ESDC is helping lift seniors out of poverty with the Old Age Security (OAS) pension and the Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS):

Automatic enrolment has eliminated the need for over half of eligible seniors to apply for the OAS pension. As of March 31, 2019, approximately 1.1 million seniors were automatically enrolled for the OAS pension.

In addition, since 2018, eligible seniors who are automatically enrolled for the OAS pension are also automatically enrolled for the GIS. Service Canada will assess their GIS entitlement year after year, provided that they file an income tax return.

Approximately 15,000 seniors are automatically enrolled each month for the OAS pension and are assessed for the GIS, without having to complete an application. Eligible seniors are enrolled a year in advance and after they turn 65 will begin receiving the OAS pension after they turn 65, as well as the GIS if they are entitled to it.

For those who cannot be automatically enrolled, since August 2018, eligible seniors can apply for OAS and GIS in a combined application, which simplifies the process. Applicants who apply in this way will also be assessed annually for GIS eligibility following filing of their tax returns.

"Automatic enrolment reduces the burden on many seniors by enabling them to receive their Old Age Security pension and Guaranteed Income Supplement at age 65 without ever having to apply for them. We continue our efforts to modernize the Old Age Security and Guaranteed Income Supplement services to meet the needs of Canadians."

— The Honourable Jean-Yves Duclos,
Minister of Families, Children
and Social Development



Example 2

CPP proactive enrollment



The Government of Canada committed \$7.8 million in Budget 2019 over two years to proactively enroll Canada Pension Plan (CPP)-eligible seniors who are age 70 or older in 2020 but have not yet applied to receive their retirement benefit.

A small but significant number of eligible seniors miss out on receiving their CPP retirement pension because they apply late or not at all. The proactive CPP enrolment initiative will prevent this by proactively enrolling these individuals for the pension at age 70, which could significantly improve their financial situation.

Example 3

Outreach to Indigenous communities



Though uptake of the Canada Child Benefit has been high for a number of years (estimated at 97% in 2017), there are pockets where uptake is not as high, such as on reserves.

Budget 2018 invested \$17.3 million over three years to support access to the Canada Child Benefit and other federal benefits, by bringing services directly to those who need it most through community outreach initiatives.

The **Canada Child Benefit (CCB)**

is a tax-free benefit that provides support to low- to middle-income families to help with the cost of raising children. Nearly 3.7 million families, including about 6.5 million children, received \$23.7 billion in the 2017–18 benefit year.

- In April 2018, ESDC and the Canada Revenue Agency began raising awareness of the CCB and its benefits to families through enhanced in-person outreach and communication activities, including with Indigenous communities.

Through the **Budget 2018**

Indigenous Outreach initiative,

776 communities were identified for outreach services. As of March 31, 2019, 669 remote, reserve and northern communities had been visited. There were 1,171 visits conducted and 11,018 service requests completed.

- ESDC also established urban Indigenous outreach pilots in six locations in 2018. These pilots will be used to inform the development of comprehensive service networks to streamline access to interventions and improve client outcomes.



Example 4

Expanded passport services



In May 2017, ESDC expanded passport services to additional Service Canada points of service, providing Canadians with more options when applying for or renewing a passport. In 2018–19, 2.91 million passports and travel documents were issued.

As of May 2019, 313 points of service assist Canadians in applying for passports by receiving applications and validating citizenship documents, like birth and citizenship certificates, and returning them to clients while they are in the office. The points of service accept payment and forward the application package for processing within 20 business days.

Thirty-four additional points of service provide Canadians with the above-noted services, with a processing time of 10 business days. Of these 34 sites, 27 of them offer urgent, same-day service and on-site passport printing capacity. Altogether, the expanded points of service provide Canadians with a more convenient and accessible passport service delivery experience.

Additional efforts to expand Service Canada's reach

Service Canada's Western and Territories Region has worked to expand the reach of its in-person network. Adding 131 new part-time scheduled outreach locations to 157 rural, remote and isolated communities resulted in approximately 300,000 additional Canadians living within 50km of a point of service in April 2019, with easier access to important benefits and services.



Reducing Wait Times for EI Call Centres

ESDC recognized that Canadians were experiencing challenges in accessing EI call centres for timely answers to their questions.

Only 38% of callers found the wait time to be reasonable.¹

Steps have been taken to improve call centre access.

Example

EI specialized call centres



The Government invested \$127.7 million in Budget 2018 over three years to further improve phone services for EI clients. This is in addition to Budget 2016 funding of \$73 million over two years to increase EI call centre agent capacity.

As a result, since 2015–16, following the on-boarding of new agents in 2016–17, we have:

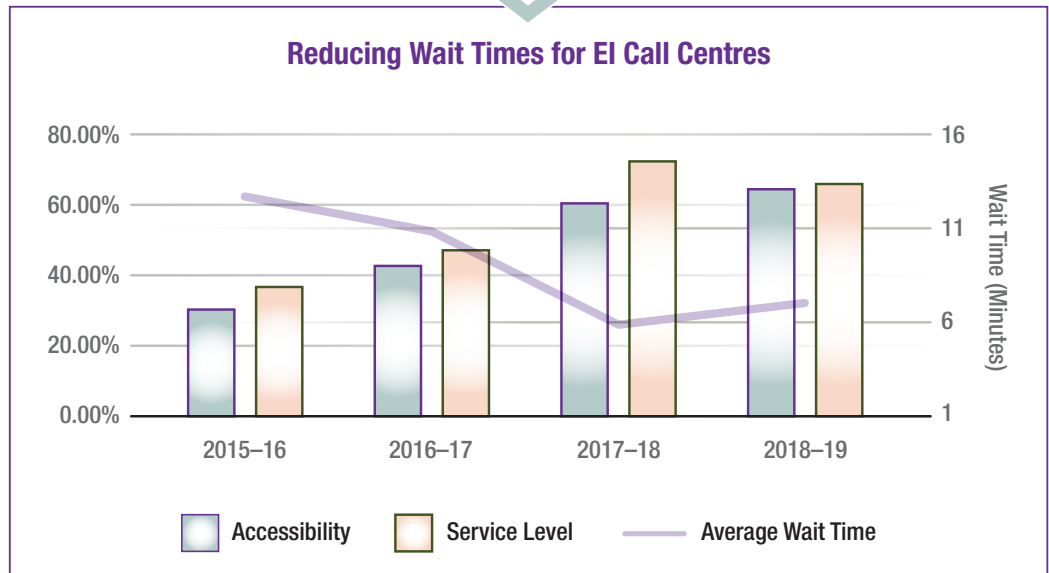
- increased our annual agent call handling capacity by 1.2 million calls, increasing to 4.6 million agent-answered calls;
- increased our agent accessibility from 31% to 66%; and
- reduced wait times to speak with an agent from 14 minutes to 7 minutes.

Latest commitments

Budget 2017 invested \$10.5 million in the modernization of Service Canada call centres. As a result, in October 2018 the Department migrated the Employer Contact Centre to a modern call centre phone and IT platform. The CPP and OAS call centres followed in May 2019.

The Government of Canada committed \$16.6 million, through Budget 2019, to support ESDC in continuing to make improvements in the migration of Service Canada's call centres, including the EI call centre. The migration to modern phone and IT platforms will help to ensure faster and better-quality service to Canadians.

¹ Phoenix Strategic Perspectives Inc.: Employment Insurance Service Quality Review Client Survey 2017





Improving Digital Services

Canadians increasingly expect a service experience on par with what they receive from the private sector. This includes a high-quality digital experience for those who want it.

Did you know?

In 2017, 70% of Service Canada clients reported that being able to complete steps online made the process easier.

— Ipsos: 2017–18 Client Experience Survey

Example 1

Job Bank mobile application

The Job Bank mobile app provides an easy and convenient way for Canadians to search for jobs while they are on the go.

Released in February 2018, the Job Bank app is available for both iOS and Android. As of May 31, 2019, the application had been installed over 200,000 times. The quality of the app is expressed in the following ratings:

Job Bank mobile app star rating

3.9 ★ App Store

3.7 ★ Google Play

Example 2

Canada Student Loans Program

Students are now benefitting from an easier, more convenient and secure online process.

Since April 2018, new full-time students can have their identity validated and submit their loan agreements online instead of at designated Canada Post outlets. To date, over 260,000—99% of new full-time students—have taken advantage of this new online service.

On June 10, 2019, further enhancements were made to the online portal to extend this service to part-time students, make the website mobile-friendly, and provide more self-service options to approximately 1.6 million students/borrowers who currently have a loan account, such as updating profile information and linking to their financial institution's website to make a payment.



Example 3

Video chat



ESDC is now offering video chat services in 32 in-person Service Canada Centres in an effort to reduce lineups and provide faster, more convenient services in person. Virtual workstations allow clients to speak face-to-face with a Citizen Service Officer who appears on screen to assist, but may be in a different part of Canada altogether.

Over 3,100 Canadians have now had this experience through successful pilot projects at Service Canada Centres in Brandon and Winnipeg, Manitoba; Kingston, Ontario; St. Leonard, Quebec; Fredericton, New Brunswick; and, as of October 2018, at the new Flagship Service Centre in Toronto—North York, Ontario.

The current client satisfaction rate is 93% for the video chat experience. By giving access to more people (in person and virtually), ESDC can provide Canadians with faster service without sacrificing quality.



Staying Focused on Serving Canadians

Example 1

Flagship Service Canada Centre



The Toronto North York Flagship Service Canada Centre, the first in Canada, sets a new standard for service and accessibility.

Opened on October 25, 2018, the Toronto North York Flagship is a testing ground for service-design thinking using high-tech and high-touch service delivery methodologies, and maximizing existing technologies and tools to meet individuals' needs. The Flagship was co-created with key stakeholders, including persons with disabilities, to ensure a responsive and inclusive service redesign.

Canadians with accessibility needs can now access service with the assistance of inclusive technologies such as Blindsquare beacons that help visually impaired clients to navigate to the entrance of the Flagship using the Blindsquare app on their smart phone. The Flagship also includes tactile flooring, integrated technologies in the public access workstations, such as screen reader software, a tactical map and much more. There is even a water bowl for service dogs. All of these measures make the Flagship the most accessible Service Canada Centre in Canada.

Example 2

Canada Pension Plan Disability Program Improvements



The Department is taking steps to transform the Canada Pension Plan Disability (CPP-D) program, including improving how it is delivered to the clients who depend on it. For example, ESDC developed new service standards with clients, which came into effect in October 2016:

- 95% of terminal illness decisions are to be made within 5 business days of receiving a complete application. In 2018–19, ESDC met this standard 91% of the time. Average processing time was 4 business days, below the commitment of 5 business days.
- 80% of grave condition decisions are to be made within 30 calendar days of receiving a complete application. In 2018–19, ESDC met this standard 84% of the time. Average processing time was 24 calendar days, well below the commitment of 30 business days.



In addition, the Department implemented an online CPP-D Toolkit on in March 2019, which was developed and tested in consultation with internal and external stakeholders.

Clients, third-party organizations, and medical health professionals now have easy access to an overview of the CPP-D benefit, the steps required to complete an application, an interactive flow chart that can be used to determine eligibility, and information about related benefits.



Delivering Timely Benefits

Changing demographics, economic shocks and events such as natural disasters put increasing pressure on our current delivery models. However, ESDC remains committed to providing the better and faster services that Canadians want and need.

Example

Processing times for EI, CPP, and OAS



The Department continues to be focused on providing timely access to EI benefits to help Canadians navigate a job loss or other life events. Budget 2016 invested \$19 million and Budget 2018 provided up to \$90 million over three years to meet the increased demand related to EI claims processing.

- ESDC's standard is to pay EI benefits or notify applicants that they are not eligible within 28 calendar days of filing. ESDC aims to meet this standard 80% of the time. The Department has consistently met or exceeded its service standard each of the last four fiscal years.

Given that the number of OAS benefit recipient has increased by approximately one-third over the past decade, the Government allocated \$14.9 million in Budget 2016 and \$122.3 million in Budget 2017 to increase the capacity to process OAS workload so that clients receive more timely access to benefits.

- ESDC's service standard is to pay OAS basic benefits within the first month of entitlement. ESDC aims to meet this standard 90% of the time, and in 2018–19, we achieved this 91% of the time.
- ESDC's service standard is to pay CPP retirement benefits within the first month of entitlement, with a target of achieving this 90% of the time. The Department has consistently met or exceeded this standard since 2014–15, reaching 96% in 2018–19.