
Evaluation Services Directorate
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List of acronyms and abbreviations

CA	Contribution Agreement
ECP	Exchanges Canada Program
ESD	Evaluation Services Directorate
EWG	Evaluation Working Group
EXCOM	Executive Committee
GBA PLUS	Gender-based Analysis Plus
GCIMS	Grants and Contributions Information Management System
G&C	Grants and Contributions
NHS	National Household Survey
O&M	Operations and Maintenance
PIP	Performance Information Profile
PMERS	Performance Measurement, Evaluation and Risk Strategy
SWSE	Summer Work / Student Exchange
T&C	Terms and Conditions
YEC	Youth Exchanges Canada
YFC	Youth Forums Canada

Executive summary

Program Description

Exchanges Canada Program (ECP) was launched in April 2000 with the goal to strengthen the sense of national belonging and identity among youth in Canada. The program provides financial support to not-for-profit organizations that provide a range of initiatives that allow youth across the country to learn about Canada, to create linkages with each other and to better appreciate the diversity and shared aspects of the Canadian reality. ECP has two main components: Youth Forums Canada (YFC) and Youth Exchanges Canada (YEC). Summer Work / Student Exchange (SWSE) is a YEC subcomponent.

Evaluation Approach and Methodology

The evaluation covered the years 2014-15 to 2018-19 and examined questions of relevance, effectiveness, and efficiency. The evaluation used a mixed methods approach that included review and analysis of literature, documents, and administrative data, as well as key informant interviews.

Findings

Relevance

ECP continues to demonstrate relevance in many ways. The program objectives and activities are aligned with PCH's strategic outcome. ECP supports key government priorities on reconciliation, diversity and inclusion, and official languages. ECP is mostly complementary of other programming for youth in Canada. While ECP program components may resemble other federal initiatives, including within PCH, they are differentiated by objectives, target population or activities. Key features that set it apart from other programming are its focus on promoting knowledge of Canada and a sense of belonging to the country and its ability to support travel costs of youth.

Effectiveness

ECP continues to meet its immediate expected outcome by providing a wide variety of exchange experiences to 64,663 youth from across Canada through 106 projects.

ECP achieved most of its intermediate outcomes by recruiting participants representing the diversity of the Canadian youth population. To ensure equitable participation, ECP provided funding to organizations to reduce barriers and recruit participants. However, the recruitment of visible minority, Ontario youth and young men remained a challenge since the previous evaluation. Issues with self-identification may have affected the data on program reach to underrepresented groups.

The program contributed to the achievement of its three ultimate outcomes: improving knowledge and understanding of Canada; being connected and creating new linkages among youth participants; enhancing appreciation of the diversity; and sharing aspects of the Canadian experience.

ECP has good performance measurement data and approaches that support decision-making. Areas that need to be improved include the logic model's sequence of expected results as well as the number and type of some indicators, particularly those supporting Gender-based Analysis (GBA) Plus.

Efficiency

ECP management made efforts to improve administrative efficiency over the evaluation period. Key achievements include the implementation of multi-year funding arrangements, new timelines for contribution agreements, and digitization of data collection.

Just over \$98 million was spent over the five years by the program, including \$90.7 million in grants and contributions and \$7.4 million in operating costs. Overall, the difference between the total actual and planned expenditures for the program was \$14,685, representing a difference of only 0.01%. Since the previous evaluation of ECP, its administrative cost ratio decreased from 8.9% to 8.2%. Travel represents the largest contribution of the program followed by the participants' wages included in SWSE subcomponent. SWSE had the highest average contribution per participant among the three components due to participants' wages and the duration of exchanges.

Looking Forward

Given delays in completing this evaluation due to the global COVID-19 pandemic, the report provides a summary of findings of a preliminary literature review on questions related to the changing needs of youth, including related to the pandemic and virtual exchanges. Ensuring that the program considers and adapts to current and emerging needs and preferences of youth will guarantee its continued relevance and achievement of results into the future.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1:

The evaluation recommends that the Assistant Deputy Minister, Community and Identity Sector, takes any supplemental measures required to better understand the changing needs and preferences among youth, including the influence of virtual innovation, to further improve the program and to ensure its ongoing relevance to youth across Canada.

Recommendation 2:

The evaluation recommends that the Assistant Deputy Minister, Community and Identity Sector, examine and implement any needed measures to further reduce barriers and improve program participation among diverse groups.

Recommendation 3:

The evaluation recommends that the Assistant Deputy Minister, Community and Identity Sector, review expected program outcomes to ensure that performance data continues to support decision-making, evaluation and reporting, without placing undue administrative burden on the beneficiaries or the program

1. Introduction

This report presents the findings of the evaluation of the Department of Canadian Heritage's (PCH) Exchanges Canada Program (ECP). The evaluation was conducted in accordance with the requirements of the *Financial Administration Act* and Treasury Board 2016 Policy on Results. It was also undertaken in accordance with the 2019-20 to 2023-24 Departmental Evaluation Plan.

The evaluation covered the period of 2014-15 through 2018-19 and assessed the relevance, effectiveness and efficiency of ECP. The report is divided into six main sections: the introduction, the program profile, the approach and methodology for the evaluation, the evaluation findings, the main conclusions, and the recommendations and the management responses and action plan.

The finalization of this evaluation report was delayed due to circumstances related to the global COVID-19 pandemic. Based on discussions with program management, the evaluation team added further analysis in a section titled, Looking Forward, to better frame current realities and ensure the recommendations are relevant in light of changes that occurred as a result of the pandemic.

2. Program profile

ECP was launched in April 2000 with the overall goal to strengthen the sense of national belonging and identity among youth in Canada. The program provides financial support to not-for-profit organizations by covering most travel costs among others, to provide a range of initiatives that allow young Canadians across the country to learn about Canada, to create linkages with each other and to better appreciate the diversity and shared aspects of the Canadian reality.

ECP has two components: Youth Exchanges Canada (YEC) and Youth Forums Canada (YFC).

- 1. Youth Exchanges Canada (YEC)** provides funding to coordinate exchange activities from various areas of the country by non-governmental youth organizations for groups of 10 to 30 youth between the ages of 12 and 17. The participants are paired based on age and interests and play an active role in planning the exchange with peers, communicating regularly, conducting research into their communities, and participating in fundraising activities.
 - **Summer Work / Student Exchange (SWSE)** is a subcomponent of YEC which offers six-week summer work opportunities for 16- and 17-year-old youth. During exchanges in host communities, student participants stay with host families and work in their second official language.
- 2. Youth Forums Canada (YFC)** funds organizations that support young Canadians, generally between the ages of 14 and 25, to attend forums across Canada, workshops, or conferences on issues that meet their interests and the objectives of ECP.

2.1. Objectives and outcomes

ECP's objectives are to:

- Contribute to increased knowledge and understanding of Canada among youth, by enabling them to learn first-hand about the history, geography, industry, institutions, cultures, communities, languages and other facets of their country.
- Help young Canadians connect to one another and create linkages across the country and between groups, thereby helping to strengthen the fabric of Canadian society.
- Develop Canadian identity and a sense of national belonging among youth by enhancing their appreciation of both the diversity and the shared aspects of the Canadian experience.

A Performance Information Profile (PIP) was developed in 2017 and updated in 2018 and 2019. The PIP includes the Program's Logic Model, which reflects the activities, outputs and outcomes of the Program. The expected outcomes according to the PIP are shown in Table 1 and ECP logic model is found in Appendix A.

The key activities of the Program are managing the funding process, providing young Canadians with information on exchanges and undertaking targeted promotion. The outputs of these activities are grants and contribution agreements with organizations in support of youth exchanges and forums as well as information about youth exchanges.

Table 1: Program expected outcomes

Immediate outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Young people have access to a wide variety of exchange experiences, including those related to official languages.
Intermediate outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Young people from across Canada participate in youth exchanges.• Exchange participants reflect the diversity of the Canadian youth population.
Ultimate outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Young participants enhance their knowledge and understanding of Canada.• Young participants connect and create linkages with one another.• Young participants enhance their appreciation of the diversity and shared aspects of the Canadian experience.

2.2. Program Management and Governance

The primary target population for ECP is Canadian youth between the ages of 12 and 25 (Table 2). ECP also benefits, either directly or indirectly, communities, parents, teachers and group leaders.

Table 2: Target population, stakeholders and delivery partners

Target population	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Canadian youth between the ages of 12 and 25.
Key stakeholders and delivery partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Schools and youth-serving organizations and other groups wishing to organize youth exchanges and forums.• YEC is delivered through four pan-Canadian not-for-profit organizations with a proven network of youth contacts: Experiences Canada, YMCA of Greater Toronto, 4-H Canada and Canada Sports Friendship Exchange Program.• SWSE is delivered through the YMCA of Greater Toronto.• YFC is delivered by a number of not-for-profit organizations.

ECP is managed by the Youth Participation Directorate within Canadian Heritage’s Community Building and Youth Branch under the Community and Identity Sector in the National Capital Region. The Program is delivered through grants and contributions agreements with funding recipients.

To achieve expected results, PCH analyzes and recommends funding requests and negotiates and oversees approved contribution agreements. PCH works with program recipients to ensure strong stewardship including financial and activity reporting and performance monitoring.

Over the five-year period of this evaluation, ECP’s total expenditures were \$98.2 million (Table 3). The programming distributed \$90.7 million to organizations through grants and contributions (Gs&Cs). The total program operations expenditure was \$7.4 million. The numbers presented in Table 3 have been rounded, which explains any minor discrepancies in totals.

Table 3: ECP Financial resources 2014-15 to 2018-19 (in millions of dollars \$)

Fiscal Year	Operations Expenditures	Grants and Contributions	Total for the Program
2014-15 Planned	1.4	17.8	19.2
2014-15 Actual	1.5	17.7	19.2
2015-16 Planned	1.6	17.8	19.4
2015-16 Actual	1.4	17.9	19.3
2016-17 Planned	1.6	17.8	19.4
2016-17 Actual	1.4	18.3	19.7
2017-18 Planned	1.9	17.8	19.7
2017-18 Actual	1.6	18.4	20.0
2018-19 Planned	2.4 ¹	18.2	20.5
2018-19 Actual	1.6	18.4	20.0
Total Planned	8.8	89.3	98.2
Total Actual	7.4	90.7	98.2

Source: PCH Financial Management Branch

To deliver the programming, PCH employed between 12 to 15.6 full-time equivalents (FTEs) annually during the period under evaluation (Table 4).

Table 4: ECP resources (full-time equivalents), 2014-15 to 2018-19

Resources	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Planned	12	14.8	12.9	15.6	14.5
Actual	14.7	13.3	13	13.4	13.3

Source: PCH Financial Management Branch

¹ The reference levels are calibrated as part of the Annual Reference Level Update exercise through a departmental reallocation process.

3. Evaluation approach and methodology

This section outlines the evaluation approach and methodology including scope, calibration, evaluation questions, data collection methods, limitations and mitigation strategies.

3.1. Scope and quality control

The evaluation of ECP was led by PCH's Evaluation Services Directorate and was conducted pursuant to Treasury Board Secretariat's 2016 Policy on Results and the *Financial Administration Act*. The evaluation was undertaken in accordance with the Departmental Evaluation Plan 2019-20 to 2023-24 and covered the five-year period from 2014-15 to 2018-19.

The project team consulted with the director of the Youth Participation Directorate, and the Director General of the Community Building and Youth Branch to determine specific information needs and to refine the evaluation scope. As a result, the evaluation questions and methodology included attention on the diversity and equity in the recruitment of participants, the impact of the program on Canadian youth, the current needs of youth, and funding to carry out activities.

The quality of the evaluation was further supported by having a senior evaluation analyst lead the project with oversight and review at different levels. There was good collaboration with the program throughout the project to validate data and provide advice as needed. The draft evaluation report was reviewed by senior level ESD and program staff.

3.2. Calibration

The present evaluation was calibrated to build upon evidence from previous evaluations and to focus on issues raised by program management. ECP's objectives and related outcomes have remained consistent since the Program's inception in 2000. The program has been evaluated every five years providing a wealth of background and research material for this current evaluation. Given long-term positive findings related to questions of ECP relevance, the evaluation reduced efforts in this area and focused on program alignment with departmental and emerging federal priorities. Issues of equity were explored in greater detail.

3.3. Evaluation questions

The evaluation focused on specific questions of continued program relevance, effectiveness, and efficiency (Table 5).

Table 5: Evaluation questions by core issues

Core Issues	Evaluation questions
Relevance	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. To what extent are ECP objectives aligned with priorities and strategic outcomes of Canadian Heritage?2. To what extent does the ECP program (duplication or complementarity) occupy a unique space for existing federal youth programs/initiatives?
Effectiveness	<ol style="list-style-type: none">3. Did the ECP achieve its expected short-term, medium term and long-term outcomes?4. To what extent does the ECP identify systemic barriers and serve designated undersubscribed groups to ensure equitable participation in program?
Efficiency	<ol style="list-style-type: none">5. To what extent was the ECP delivered efficiently?

3.4. Data collection methods

The methodology for this evaluation was selected considering the evaluation questions and calibration. It is based on a combination of qualitative and quantitative data collection methods with both primary and secondary sources of information to allow for the triangulation of evidence.

The evaluation methodology incorporated four lines of evidence:

- **Document review:** A review of over 150 program documents and files provided the background and contextual information needed to understand program operations. Documents included terms and conditions, PIPs, previous audit and evaluation reports, contribution agreements with recipients and financial reports.
- **Literature review:** The team leveraged and added to literature reviews completed by the PCH Policy Research Group (PRG) and from previous evaluations of ECP. As part of this work, topics covered in previous evaluations relating to issues of the present evaluation were updated.
- **Key Informant Interviews:** The evaluation included 19 key informant interviews. These primarily focused on issues raised in the planning phase, given senior management information needs and noted interview limitations in previous evaluations.

- **Administrative data review:** A review of quantitative and qualitative information on ECP activities and results included final project reports, survey results and financial and performance measurement information. This data contributed to the gender-based analysis as well as to assessment of questions related to relevance and performance.

3.5. Limitations and mitigation strategies

The evaluation faced certain challenges and identified mitigation strategies (Table 6).

Table 6: Limitations and mitigation strategies

Limitations	Mitigation Strategies
The ability of the ESD and the program to respect timelines outlined in the Policy on Results and the FAA was compromised due to the 2019 federal election, the COVID-19 pandemic and related resourcing issues.	Revised timelines were negotiated with the program as well as through the PCH five-year evaluation plan, 2019-20 to 2023-24. A consultant was hired to focus on a looking forward analysis to present best practices of organizations working with youth since the pandemic, among others.
ECP internal documentation and files on performance measurement were not always clear especially for the rationale behind some target calculations and some data collection.	Supplementary working group sessions were held to clarify data and identify solutions for any gaps.
Reaching previous participants was a challenge given permission to follow up immediately after the exchange was not explicit in the participation agreement or post-participation survey.	Funded organizations were consulted to obtain guidance on how to contact past participants. Evaluators consulted PCH Access to Information and Privacy Services to ensure privacy was respected.

4. Findings

4.1. Relevance

Evaluation questions: To what extent are the ECP objectives aligned with priorities and strategic outcomes of Canadian Heritage? To what extent does the ECP program occupy a unique space for existing federal youth programs/ initiatives?

ECP objectives and activities are aligned with PCH's strategic outcome. ECP supports key government priorities on reconciliation, diversity and inclusion, and official languages. The program contributed to the Official Languages Roadmap by providing an immersive experience in participants' second official language. ECP aims to contribute positively to young Canadians sharing, expressing, and appreciating their Canadian identity.

Overall, ECP is complementary of other programming for youth. Key features of ECP are its focus on promoting knowledge of, and sense of belonging to, Canada combined with resources to support travel for youth to achieve these objectives. While ECP program components may resemble other federal initiatives, including within PCH, they are differentiated by objectives, target population or activities.

Alignment with the PCH Strategic Outcome

Overall, ECP is aligned with the Canadian Heritage outcome that Canadians share, express and appreciate their Canadian identity. Program activities focus on promoting knowledge of Canada, national identity, and intercultural awareness among youth.

Funded exchange and forum projects involve travel beyond the participants' immediate community. For many of the youngest participants, this experience is their first time travelling without their families. These opportunities provide youth with a means to learn about Canada from an experiential perspective, including about the country's diversity, geography, social practices, and economics.

SWSE program provides opportunities for youth to have immersive experiences both in their second official language and in different aspects of Canadian culture. Participants are paired so they have the experience of acting both as hosts and as guests in new communities. The homestay aspect includes the youth's immediate circle and community, maximizing program reach and potential to improve knowledge and the expression and sharing of a Canadian identity beyond youth participants.

Document review indicated that projects allowed participants from all provinces and territories to share and reflect on their Canadian identity. Those exchanges and forums contributed to the youth's better understanding and appreciation of their own identity. Moreover, literature shows that youth participation in exchange and forum activities can also have a positive effect on the long-term community engagement and mobility. Given ECP focuses on exchanges across the country, participants

broaden their horizons beyond their communities allowing them to develop a sense of belonging to Canada through social experiences and learning new aspects of Canadian culture.

Contribution to emerging priorities of PCH

ECP supports a number of Government of Canada priorities including diversity, inclusion, reconciliation and official languages. The evaluation confirms that the program makes efforts to reach diverse youth from different communities, regions, cultures, ethnicities, languages, and sexual orientation. Program activities focus on providing different experiences which promote culture, official languages, citizen participation, sport and initiatives related to Indigenous cultures. For example, ECP also contributed to the Official Languages Roadmap.

Furthermore, programming for youth has taken on a renewed focus at the federal level with the Prime Minister himself taking on the role of Minister of Youth in 2015, followed by the establishment of the federal Youth Secretariat and Canada's first Youth Policy. ECP contributes to some of the youth-identified priorities outlined in Canada's Youth Policy², including through forums and other activities that include focus on leadership, wellness, employment, truth and reconciliation and environment.

Complementary to other programs

From an examination of other federal programs, it was found that ECP complements rather than duplicates other initiatives. While other federal programs provide some similar activities and supports, they are differentiated by their objectives, target population or activities. YFC stands out from other programs by its objectives, which focus on creating links among young Canadians, developing knowledge about Canada and increasing their sense of belonging to the country.

In comparing YEC to other federal programs, some were deemed to target similar people and goals, but with slightly different mechanisms. Regarding SWSE, an analysis of other federal programs found that a few were similar in target, means, and objectives (see Appendix B). However, this appears appropriate with some literature suggesting that there may be a higher probability of success in using a variety of strategies across the federal government to increase the sense of belonging to Canada among the youth.

² <https://www.canada.ca/en/youth/programs/policy.html>

4.2. Effectiveness

Evaluation question: Did the ECP achieve its expected short-term, medium term and long-term outcomes? To what extent does the ECP identify systemic barriers and serve designated undersubscribed groups to ensure equitable participation in the Program?

ECP met immediate outcomes by providing a wide variety of exchange experiences to 64,663 youth from across Canada through 106 projects.

ECP achieved most of its intermediate outcomes with participants representing the diversity of the Canadian youth population. To ensure equitable participation, ECP provided funding to organizations to reduce barriers to participation. It also set targets for organizations to recruit diverse participants. However, the recruitment of visible minority, Ontario youth and young men remained a challenge since the previous evaluation. Issues with self-identification may have affected the data on program reach to underrepresented groups.

The programming contributed to the achievement of its three ultimate outcomes: improving knowledge and understanding of Canada; being connected and creating new linkages among youth participants; enhancing appreciation of the diversity and sharing aspects of the Canadian experience.

Overall, ECP has good performance measurement data and approaches to support decision-making. Areas that need to be improved include the logic model's sequence of expected results, as well as the number and type of some indicators, particularly those supporting Gender-based Analysis (GBA) Plus.

Young people had access to a wide variety of exchange experiences, including exchanges related to official languages

ECP achieved its immediate expected outcome of offering a wide variety of exchange and forum experiences to participants across Canada, including those related to official languages. During the evaluation period, 64,663 youth participated in a variety of exchange experiences with an average of 12,933 participants per year (Table 7). YEC accounted for almost half of the participants 31,320 (48%) and its subcomponent SWSE accounted for an additional 3,655 or 6% of participants. YFC projects accounted for approximately 29,688 (46%) of participants. Overall, the number of participants decreased from 12,908 to 11,978 between 2014-15 and 2018-19. Program staff suggested the decrease in participation was mostly due to higher travel costs overall, and wage increases for SWSE participants.

Table 7: ECP number and percentage of participants by component, 2014-15 to 2018-19

Fiscal Year	SWSE Participants	SWSE %	YEC Participants	YEC %	YFC Participants	YFC %	Total Participants	Total %
2014-15	785	6	6,141	48	5,982	46	12,908	100
2015-16	769	6	6,476	51	5,371	43	12,616	100
2016-17	738	6	6,800	51	5,714	43	13,252	100
2017-18	703	5	6,247	45	6,959	50	13,909	100
2018-19	660	6	5,656	47	5,662	47	11,978	100
Total	3,655	6	31,320	48	29,688	46	64,663	100

Source: ECP Participants by group 2014-15, 2015-16, 2016-17, 2017-18, 2018-19.

During the five years of the evaluation, the program funded between 16 and 24 organizations annually (Table 8). In turn, these organizations implemented a total of 106 projects, between 18 and 26 projects each year. The number of organizations and projects funded increased year-over-year. Moreover, the program achieved or surpassed its performance targets, for the number of organizations and projects funded and the percentage of official language exchanges. An average 57% of projects focused on official language exchanges over the evaluation period, surpassing the requirement of 30%.

Table 8: ECP number of organizations and projects funded, 2014-15 to 2018-19

Fiscal year	Number of organizations funded (Target: 16)	Number of projects funded (Target: 18)	Percentage of Exchanges related to Official languages (Target: 30%)
2014-15	17	18	57
2015-16	16	18	59
2016-17	19	21	59
2017-18	20	23	53
2018-19	24	26	58

Source: Performance measurement and evaluation data list 2014-15, 2015-16, 2016-17, 2017-18, 2018-19.

Internal key informants and program documents confirmed that the program supported a wide variety of exchange experiences. Participants had opportunities to discover new things about their own region and community as well as those of their hosts. YEC featured pre-exchange activities where participants worked together to create plans for their experiences to meet their needs and preferences. During the exchanges, participants were part of the home, school, and community life of their hosts, including participating in outdoor activities, visiting local museums, and experiencing other unique features of the communities.

YFC program documents show that forum themes and activities included a variety of subjects, such as career options, economic and environmental issues, gender and sexuality, and mental wellness. Many forums also provided opportunities to visit community and government institutions, to witness important civic events such as attending question period in parliament, and to commemorate significant occasions, such as pride parades. Past participants indicated that such activities helped them discover and better understand important parts of Canadian civic and cultural life.

Two-way exchanges provided participants with exposure to and immersion in their second official language, especially through SWSE, a subcomponent of YEC. Also, many forum experiences were offered in both official languages, supporting second official language exposure and proficiency of participants.

Young people from across Canada participated in youth exchanges

Over the period of evaluation, ECP achieved to a great extent its expected intermediate outcome that "young people from across Canada participate in youth exchanges." Project contribution agreements require a proportional distribution of young people among the different provinces and territories. In accordance with this objective, the program sets targets based on the 2011 National Household Survey (NHS) for each component of the program.

Table 9 shows that targets were surpassed in terms of the representation of youth from all provinces and territories, with some exceptions. Quebec and Ontario rates of participation were lower and British Columbia exceeded targets each year. Although the representation of young participants from Ontario has improved since the 2016 evaluation, this province had the largest gap between its target and the achieved percentage of participants from 2014-15 to 2018-19. Some key informants indicated that since more forums take place in Ontario, it makes sense that they attract youth from other provinces.

Table 9: Percentage of ECP participants by provinces and territories, 2014-15 to 2018-19

Provinces and territories	2014-15 (%)	2015-16 (%)	2016-17 (%)	2017-18 (%)	2018-19 (%)	Average (%)	Target (%)
NL	3.8	3.8	3.4	3.4	3.5	3.5	1.4
PEI	2.3	2.3	1.9	2.2	2.3	2.2	0.4
NS	4.8	5.3	4.8	4.8	3.8	4.7	2.6
NB	4.8	4.7	4.8	5.2	3.6	4.6	2.1
QC	20.9	19.8	21	20.1	20.2	20.4	22.1
ON	17.7	16	18	18	16.6	17.3	39.8
MB	7	5	6.2	5.3	5.3	5.7	4
SK	5.1	4.9	3.9	5.2	5.4	4.9	3.3
AB	12.1	12.7	11.5	11.7	12.4	12.1	11.2
BC	18.2	22.8	21.5	20.1	23.3	21.2	12.7
YK	1.1	0.7	0.9	1	0.6	0.9	0.1
NT	0.8	0.9	0.4	1.4	1.2	0.9	0.1
NU	1.5	1.3	1.5	1.7	1.6	1.5	0.1

Source: EC Participants by group 2014-15, 2015-16, 2016-17, 2017-18, 2018-19.

Regarding youth participation in different components of the program, the YFC participants were proportionally representative of all provinces and territories, except for Ontario and Quebec. During the evaluation period, youth from all provinces and territories participated in YFC, most notably from British Columbia (23% or 6,819), Alberta (15% or 4,588) and Ontario (12% or 3,703).

For YEC, excluding SWSE, targets for the representativity of youth participants from Canadian provinces and territories were met during the evaluation period, with the following exceptions: Alberta (2014-15 to 2018-19), Ontario (2014-15 to 2018-19), Saskatchewan (2016-17 and 2018-19), and New Brunswick (2018-19). Some organizations explained that they sometimes had difficulty recruiting participants from across Canada due to distance and lack of promotion. Over this period, YEC was particularly popular among youth from Quebec (27% or 8,480 participants), Ontario (21% or 6,666) and British Columbia (20% or 6,368 participants).

For SWSE, only three provinces were proportionately represented for some of the years under evaluation: Prince Edward Island (2014-15, 2015-16 and 2018-19), Quebec (2014-15 to 2018-19) and British Columbia (2016-17 to 2018-19). While 50% or 1,831 participants were from Quebec, 23% or 832 participants were from Ontario and 13% or 480 participants were from British Columbia. The location and the concentration of official language minority communities in certain provinces could have an impact on the representation of provinces.

Exchanges participants reflect the diversity of the Canadian youth population

The evaluation shows that participants of ECP reflected the diversity of the Canadian population (Table 10). Using data from the NHS 2011, the program sets different targets for YEC and for YFC organizations to recruit participants from five different subgroups that reflect the diversity of the Canadian youth population: Indigenous, rural, youth with disabilities, visible minorities, and, in the case of YEC and SWSE, youth from low-income families³

Table 10: ECP percentage diversity targets for subgroups

Subgroups	YEC and SWSE (%)	YFC (%)
Indigenous	6.7	5.8
Rural	20.4	17.1
Low-income	15.1	N/A
Youth with Disabilities	3.9	3.7
Visible Minority	22.6	21.9

Source: EC Participants by group (2014-15, 2015-16, 2016-17, 2017-18, 2018-19)

Program staff explained that YEC-funded organizations are able to better report the number of youth participants from low-income households, because exchange facilitators have closer relationships with youth.

Contribution agreements outline a proportional distribution of youth participants for these five categories for ECP projects. While it is not expected that every project can perfectly match the distribution proportions set out in their contribution agreement, the program strives to reflect this distribution in its overall numbers. The program recognizes that some recipient organizations excel in attracting participants from certain regions or sub-populations. For example, the Canadian 4-H Council is an organization with strong rural roots, and always exceeds its rural targets.

Table 11 shows that ECP participation met targets for most subgroup categories. Improving representation of participants who are visible minorities has remained a challenge since the previous evaluation, although there were consistent increases over the 5-year period. While young people living in rural areas represented the highest proportion of participants every year among the under-represented groups, the proportion of this group decreased over the evaluation period. The percentage of youth with disability was at its highest in 2016-17 with 16.8% and fell to only 5.4% in 2018-19. There was also a slight increase in the participation of Indigenous youth over the period from 9.8% to 11.8%. The proportion of low-income young people remained stable.

³ Income information is not collected for YFC as it is for YEC, since YEC offers additional funding to support the participation of youth from low-income households.

Table 11: ECP Percentage of subgroups participants, 2014-15 to 2018-19

Subgroups participants	2014-15 (%)	2015-16 (%)	2016-17 (%)	2017-18 (%)	2018-19 (%)	Average (%)	Target (%)
Indigenous	9.8	9.8	9.4	10.3	11.8	10.2	6.7
Rural	36.1	37.3	34.9	35.9	32.6	35.4	20.4
Youth with disability	11.1	14.8	16.8	16.2	5.4	12.9	3.9
Visible minorities	14.5	15.3	16.1	17.8	17.8	16.3	22.6
Low income	22.2	20.4	19.8	21.6	22.3	21.3	15.1

Source: EC Participants by group (2014-15, 2015-16, 2016-17, 2017-18, 2018-19)

Representation of subgroups is different for each component and subcomponent:

- YEC met its targets, except for the visible minority group and the low-income group in 2015-16, 2017-18 and 2018-19.
- YFC met its targets, except for the visible minority group for all years.
- The SWSE subcomponent missed all targets for under-subscribed groups except for visible minority youth in 2016-17 and 2017-18.

As reported in previous evaluations of the program, ECP attracted a larger proportion of female participants (62%) than males (38%) (Table 12). This over-representation was particularly noticeable among SWSE participants (71% female) and YFC participants (67% female).

Table 12: ECP number and percentage of participants by gender, 2014-15 to 2018-19

Gender identity	ECP	ECP %	SWSE	SWSE %	YEC	YEC %	YFC	YFC %
Female	40,092	62	2,608	71	17,812	57	19,672	67
Male	24,102	38	1,043	29	13,394	43	9,665	33
Other	62	0	4	0	3	0	55	0
Total	64,256	100	3,655	100	31,209	100	29,392	100

Source: EC Participants by group (2014-15, 2015-16, 2016-17, 2017-18, 2018-19)

Notes: the 'other' category was not included until 2017-18; some participants did not indicate their gender identity each year.

Most organizations reported having strategies for recruiting diverse participants, including connecting with other organizations and using social media. However, these approaches are not always sufficient to

achieve goals. Some representatives of funded organizations explained that, for instance, it is difficult to recruit diverse participants from some smaller provinces or territories. In addition, challenges related to self-identification remains impacting data collection and reporting. In some instances, young persons do not self-identify as a visible minority or as living with a disability because of perception or stigma. Participants may also belong to more than one underrepresented group at a time, resulting in data that does not clearly show the intersectionality in demographics.

ECP initiatives to prioritize and reduce systemic barriers

ECP made efforts to reduce systemic barriers of under-represented groups. As mentioned previously, the program sets targets for participation of young people from under-represented groups to promote proportionately representation of the Canadian population. The program also provides funding to cover costs of special measures used to reduce barriers to participation and to help organizations achieve the diversity targets.

Examples of such special measures funding includes hiring a sign language interpreter, providing accommodations to address specific needs, or providing financial support to participants from low-income families. For SWSE, they use the “special measures” expense category to provide financial assistance for alternate hosting⁴. The program recruited a high percentage of “non-hosting” youth whose circumstances at home make it difficult to access reciprocal exchange opportunities. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the organizations to identify and to reduce the barriers for the participation.

There is evidence from document review and key informants suggesting that the program may need to consider funding different or additional recipients to improve representation. For example, funding organizations that serve under-represented groups, such as Black youth or new immigrants, may be an option for better reaching diversity objectives.

Young participants enhance their knowledge and understanding of Canada

ECP positively contributed to participants improving their knowledge and understanding of Canada. Analysis of post-participation surveys found that, on average, most parents (94%), organizers (95%) and participants (85%) agreed that ECP participants improved their knowledge about Canada (Table 13). Program targets were either exceeded or were within acceptable program thresholds. The survey results also demonstrate that parents (73%), organizers (80%) and participants (71%) mostly agreed that ECP participants improved their awareness of Canada’s official languages (Table 14).

⁴ An alternate host is someone who hosts on behalf of another family, so that a youth who is not able to offer a reciprocal homestay can still participate in the exchange.

Table 13: Survey results - improved knowledge of Canada

Respondents	2014-15 (%)	2015-16 (%)	2016-17 (%)	2017-18 (%)	2018-19 (%)	Target (%)
Participant	84	87	85	84	87	83
Parent	92	95	95	95	92	91
Organizer	98	98	97	91	91	95

Source: Post-questionnaire results 2014-15, 2015-16, 2016-17, 2017-18, 2018-19.

Table 14: Survey results - improved awareness of Canada's other official language

Respondents	2014-15 (%)	2015-16 (%)	2016-17 (%)	2017-18 (%)	2018-19 (%)	Target (%)
Participant	74	73	71	70	69	70
Parent	77	78	71	69	72	70
Organizer	82	83	81	80	74	75

Source: Post-questionnaire results 2014-15, 2015-16, 2016-17, 2017-18, 2018-19.

An analysis of organizations' final activity reports also provides evidence that ECP contributed to enhanced knowledge of Canada and official languages among participants. Participants had the chance to meet other youth and to be exposed to different languages and cultures. Participants visited and learned about new regions, communities, historical and cultural sites, and political institutions. Interviews with funded organizations and past participants identified that forums and exchanges were effective ways for youth to enhance their knowledge and comprehension of Canada.

The evaluation notes that this ultimate result related to improving knowledge of participants, while relevant to the program's objectives, corresponds more to an immediate outcome. Immediate outcomes are often at the level of increase in awareness or knowledge among a target population, while ultimate expected outcomes focus on contribution to longer term and societal levels, such as a sense of belonging to Canada or sense of pride among youth.

Young participants connect and create linkages with one another

ECP positively contributed to the development of new connections among youth participants. Data from post-participation surveys shows that 93% of participants, 95% of parents and 99% of organizers agreed that participation in the program created new ties with people from other communities (Table 15). All targets were met or surpassed. Furthermore, written comments provided through the surveys showed that new friendships and linkages were often highlights of exchange or forum experiences for youth.

Table 15: Survey results - developing connections among youth participants

Respondents	2014-15 (%)	2015-16 (%)	2016-17 (%)	2017-18 (%)	2018-19 (%)	Target (%)
Participant	94	94	94	93	91	80
Parent	95	96	96	96	93	90
Organizer	100	100	100	99	95	95

Source: post-questionnaire results 2014-15, 2015-16, 2016-17, 2017-18, 2018-19.

Interviews with past participants and organizers confirmed that exchanges or forum experiences allowed youth to create new connections and linkages with other participants. For instance, many Canadian Hard of Hearing Association participants noted that this forum gave them their first opportunity to meet other hard-of-hearing individual, which helped them feel an increased sense of belonging. Some mentioned that they had kept in touch, at least for a few years, with friends they had made during the programming. Interviews indicate that ECP puts emphasis on interactive activities and free time for the participants. Representatives of funded organizations mentioned how exchange and forum experiences allow youth to connect and learn from others.

Enhanced appreciation of the diversity and shared aspects of the Canadian experience

The evaluation finds that ECP contributes to the achievement of its ultimate outcome that “young participants enhance their appreciation of the diversity and shared aspects of the Canadian experience” during the evaluation period. The Program post-participation survey results were strong with an average of 85% of participants, 93% of parents and 96% of organizers agreeing that the program led to better understanding of what Canadians have in common (Table 16). The survey results also show that an average of 90% of participants, 95% of parents and 97% of organizers reported greater appreciation of the diversity of Canada (Table 17). Results targets were mostly attained throughout the evaluation period.

Table 16: Survey results - young participants have a better understanding of what Canadians have in common

Respondents	2014-15 (%)	2015-16 (%)	2016-17 (%)	2017-18 (%)	2018-19 (%)	Target (%)
Participant	87	87	84	84	82	80
Parent	93	96	93	94	91	90
Organizer	98	99	97	95	90	95

Source: post-questionnaire results 2014-15, 2015-16, 2016-17, 2017-16, 2018-19.

Table 17: Survey results - young participants have a greater appreciation of Canada’s diversity

Respondents	2014-15 (%)	2015-16 (%)	2016-17 (%)	2017-18 (%)	2018-19 (%)	Target (%)
Participant	91	91	90	90	87	85
Parent	95	97	96	96	92	90
Organizer	99	100	98	97	92	95

Source: post-questionnaire results 2014-15, 2015-16, 2016-17, 2017-16, 2018-19.

Evidence from program documentation shows that ECP activities allowed youth to share personal experiences with each other. For example, project final reports provided evidence, including stories, about how participants had the chance to observe similarities as well as differences between local communities and cultures, family life, geography, economy, and language. One testimonial was: “the forum was without a doubt a lifesaver. In my community I am the only gay person, and to meet others like me was a truly validating experience, I had no idea that my community (LGBTQ2+) gave so much to Canada, and I am so proud to be a gay-Canadian.”

All participants and organizers interviewed for the evaluation indicated that their participation in program activities allowed them to learn about the differences and commonalities they had with participants from other provinces, including diverse ways of life and cultures.

Some gaps in performance measurement, including for GBA Plus

The data collected by the organizations and reported to the program are relevant for management decision-making. The program identifies expected outcomes and indicators. Funding organizations collect participant feedback on activities and demographic information that is useful in many ways for program reporting and decision-making.

The evaluation identified opportunities for improvement in the program’s performance measurement. The logic model includes expected outcomes that may not reflect accurate timing in terms of achievement (see Table 1 in section 2.2). For example, participant representation outcomes could be better considered at output or immediate levels rather than as intermediate. The ultimate outcomes of enhanced knowledge may be better placed at the immediate level. This does not suggest the outcomes are not appropriate for the programming overall, but that it can interfere with program logic that activities result in increased knowledge and connections among youth that should contribute to feelings of identity and belonging to Canada at broader levels.

Most program performance indicators focus on the representativeness of participants rather than other expected outcomes. As the indicators do not align well with all expected outcomes as per the program’s logic model, they do not allow for the collection of consistent information across projects related to the roles of delivery organizations and results. A key area for performance measurement, particularly given government priorities, is ensuring adequate data on diversity and inclusion. For ECP, diversity and

inclusion measures during the evaluation period were limited to defined groups and ratio targets, based on definitions defined by Statistics Canada.

4.3. Efficiency

Evaluation question: To what extent was the ECP delivered efficiently?

Just over \$98 million was spent over the five years by ECP, including \$90.7 million in grants and contributions and \$7.4 million in operating costs. Overall, the planned expenditures remained close to plan. However, actual expenditures on grants were consistently lower than planned due to their funding limits of \$50,000. The program has improved its efficiency as its administrative cost ratio decreased from the previous evaluation, from 8.9% to 8.2%.

Travel represents the largest contribution of the program followed by participants' wages included in the SWSE component. SWSE had the highest average contribution per participant among the three components due to participants' wages and the duration of exchanges.

ECP management made efforts to improve administrative efficiency by implementing multi-year funding arrangements, a new timeline for contribution agreements for YEC, and digitization of data collection.

Program spending

More than \$98 million was spent by the program over five years, including \$90.7 million in Gs&Cs and \$7.4 million in operations. The administrative cost ratio⁵ remained relatively constant across the five years averaging 8.2% compared to 8.9% for the previous evaluation. Tables 18 and 19 provide a picture of planned and actual ECP spending over the five-year period.

⁵ The administrative cost ratio: total operations expenditure/total grants and contributions

Table 18: ECP Planned Expenditures⁶ (\$), 2014-15 to 2018-19

Resources	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	Total
Salary	945,922	1,113,002	1,113,851	1,415,957	1,736,571	6,325,303
Employee Benefits	156,078	186,984	191,583	186,861	263,959	985,465
Operations and Management	297,225	316,006	266,933	299,678	353,013	1,532,855
Total Operations Expenditures	1,399,225	1,615,992	1,572,367	1,902,496	2,353,543	8,843,623
Grants	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	500,000
Contributions	17,686,359	17,686,359	17,686,359	17,686,359	18,086,359	88,831,795
Total Grants and Contributions	17,786,359	17,786,359	17,786,359	17,786,359	18,186,359	89,331,795
Total	19,185,584	19,402,351	19,358,726	19,688,855	20,539,902	98,175,418

Source: PCH Financial Management Branch

Table 19: ECP Actual Expenditures (\$), 2014-15 to 2018-19

Resources	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	Total
Salary	1,188,459	1,104,845	1,066,255	1,204,407	1,234,477	5,798,443
Employee Benefits	189,603	169,871	158,356	164,621	172,900	855,351
Operations and Management	123,337	104,964	136,766	215,294	211,291	791,652
Total Operations Expenditures	1,501,399	1,379,680	1,361,377	1,584,322	1,618,668	7,445,447
Grants	20,000	20,000	20,000	40,000	50,000	150,000
Contributions	17,689,072	17,882,378	18,309,465	18,368,651	18,345,090	90,594,656
Total Grants and Contributions	17,709,072	17,902,378	18,329,465	18,408,651	18,395,090	90,744,656
Total	19,210,471	19,282,058	19,690,842	19,992,973	\$20,013,758	98,190,103

Source: PCH Financial Management Branch

⁶ The reference levels are calibrated as part of the Annual Reference Level Update exercise through a departmental reallocation process.

Overall, actual expenditures for the program were aligned with plans. On an annual basis, the difference between planned and actual total expenditures for the program varied between 0.1% to 2.6%. During the evaluation period, the difference between the total actual and total planned expenditures was \$14,685, representing a difference of only 0.01%.

While G&C expenditures remained close to planned amounts over the period under evaluation, grant expenditures were consistently lower than planned and expenditures on contributions were consistently higher. From 2014-15 to 2018-19, actual grants were 70% lower than planned amounts, resulting in a surplus of \$350,000 for this category. Meanwhile, actual contributions were 2% higher than planned, which resulted in a deficit of \$1,762,861 for this category. The differences between these planned and actual expenditures are related to grant funding limits of \$50,000. To fund organizations above \$50,000, ECP converts grants to contributions. Appendix C provides details on planned versus actual expenditures.

ECP Travel expenditures

Throughout the evaluation period, the number of funded projects and total amounts of Gs&Cs increased, while the number of participants fluctuated from a high of 13,909 in 2017-18 to a low of 11,978 in 2018-19 (Table 20). In many ways, this data reflects the changing costs of travel as it is the most important cost element of ECP. According to program key informants, approximately 80% of funding goes to this single cost. Travel costs increased every year due to inflation and other factors, having an important impact on program expenditures.

Table 20: ECP G&C by participants and projects, 2014-15 to 2018-19

G&C	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Number of funded projects	18	18	21	23	26
Number of participants	12,908	12,616	13,252	13,909	11,978
Actual Grants and Contributions	17,709,072	17,902,378	18,329,465	18,408,651	18,395,090

Source: PCH Financial Management Branch

ECP contribution per participant per component

Analysis by ECP component (Table 21) shows the average contribution per participant was highest for SWSE (\$6,901) compared to YEC (\$1,279) and to YFC (\$816). SWSE contributions are higher as they include wages for participants for a period of six weeks. Moreover, there was a consistent increase in contribution per participant for SWSE, along with a progressive decrease in the number of participants, from 758 to 660 over the period.

YEC contributions involve two return trips as paired youth travel to exchange communities, totalling two weeks of trip activities. In contrast, forums required each participant to travel to a single destination, attend a 3-to-5-day event, and then return home.

Table 21: Contributions average cost (\$) per participant and component, 2014-15 to 2018-19

ECP Components	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	Average
YEC Contribution	\$1,275	\$1,236	\$1,196	\$1,301	\$1,389	\$1,279
YEC Participants	6,141	6,476	6,800	6,247	5,656	6,264
SWSE Contribution	\$6,472	\$6,607	\$6,884	\$7,227	\$7,313	\$6,901
SWSE Participants	785	769	738	703	660	731
YFC Contribution	\$632	\$890	\$894	\$747	\$915	\$816
YFC Participants	5,982	5,371	5,714	6,959	5,662	5,937

Source: ECP Participants by group, 2014-15, 2015-16, 2016-17, 2017-18, 2018-19.

Improvements made in efficiency

During the evaluation period, the program implemented several delivery changes, including in response to a 2016 evaluation recommendation that called for streamlining of funding applications, assessment processes and for digitizing data collection from stakeholders.

ECP staff and management interviewed indicated that multi-year funding agreements were put in place to reduce ECP administrative burden and provide funded organizations with more stability. Interviews with organizations confirmed that the new funding model was a positive change and the stability helped them secure matched funding from private sector corporations.

The timelines for YEC contribution agreements were shifted so they would expire and renew in the same cycle, allowing a better coordination of negotiations and intake. Internal interviewees noted that changes to online onboarding reduced paperwork and facilitated application and reporting for organizations.

In 2019, the program digitalized post-participation surveys to replace a paper-based process. While too early to fully assess the results of this change, ECP program staff indicated that they expected the change would reduce the administrative burden and cost. However, an unintended consequence of this change noted by some interviewed funded organizations was that they would no longer see the full results of the surveys with administration done directly through Canadian Heritage. Moreover, since

implementation of online post-participation survey the youth response rate decreases slightly over 72% to 63% over the period of evaluation.

5. Conclusions

The evaluation confirms the relevance of the program. ECP is well aligned with federal government priorities and to the mandate of PCH. ECP positively contributes to PCH's strategic outcome that young Canadians share, express and appreciate their Canadian identity. Further, ECP supported many current and emergent priorities of government including reconciliation, diversity and inclusion, and official languages.

ECP is complementary to other programming for youth. Key program features that set it apart are its focus on promoting knowledge of, and a sense of belonging to, Canada and its resources to support travel. While ECP program components may resemble other federal initiatives, including within PCH, they are differentiated by objectives, and either target population or activities.

ECP met its immediate outcome by providing a wide variety of exchange and forum experiences to participants, including exposure to both official languages. At the intermediate expected outcome level, ECP participants reflected the Canadian youth population in many ways. The program met or exceeded most of its recruitment targets for provinces and territories except Ontario and Quebec. Young men were under-represented compared to women. SWSE has faced some gaps in achieving recruitment targets that support diversity and inclusion. It was noted that the generalize challenge of self-identification for visible minority and its impact on data collection remains.

ECP contributed to the achievement of three ultimate expected outcomes related to improving knowledge and understanding of Canada, creating new linkages among youth participants, and enhancing appreciation of the diversity and shared aspects of the Canadian experience.

The program has implemented performance measurement practices to ensure the availability of data for reporting and decision-making. There were some gaps in the program logic model and indicators. While the program has data to support diversity and inclusion, there are opportunities for further improvement.

The evaluation finds evidence of program efficiency. The program spent a total of \$98.2 million over the five years, with \$90.7 million in Gs&Cs and \$7.4 million in operating costs. Travel represents the largest cost element of the program followed by the participants' wages included in SWSE component. SWSE had the highest average contribution per participant of the three components due to wages and the longer duration of exchanges. Its administrative cost ratio decreased from the previous evaluation, from 8.9% to 8.2%.

Overall, the planned expenditures remained close to plan. The difference between the total actual and planned expenditures was only \$14,685, representing a difference of 0.01%. Actual expenditures on

grants were consistently lower than planned and actual expenditures on contributions were consistently higher.

ECP management made efforts to improve administrative efficiency over the period by implementing multi-year funding arrangements, new timelines for contribution agreements, and digitization of data collection.

6. Looking forward

Given delays in completing this evaluation due to the global COVID-19 pandemic, the evaluation team recognized that any recommendations must consider the changing context and needs of youth in addition to the results and conclusions from the five-year period. This section provides a summary of the findings of a literature review related to sociological changes among Canadian youth in recent years (including during the pandemic) and the real and potential impacts of these changes on the program. It offers some consideration of alternative means for delivering exchange activities.

Social changes among youth over time

ECP aims to enable young Canadians to learn about Canada, to connect with each other and to gain a greater appreciation of the diversity and shared aspects of the Canadian experience and ultimately to strengthen their sense of belonging to Canada and Canadian identity. This has been the core of the program since its creation in the early 2000s, yet much of the world has changed.

The 2021 State of Youth report⁷ identifies six areas of concern and interest for youth: truth and reconciliation, environment and climate action, health and wellness, leadership and impact, employment, as well as innovation, skills and learning.⁸ These domains also reflect the concerns measured by Statistics Canada in 2018⁹ and are an evolution from the salient areas of two decades ago.¹⁰ Recent elements of this evolving landscape are associated with the pandemic¹¹ but others are more deeply rooted such as a lack of a sense of belonging.¹²

⁷ <https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/campaigns/state-youth/report.html#a7b>

⁸ <https://www.canada.ca/en/youth/programs/policy.html>

⁹ Finding a full time job, social exclusion, cyberbullying, mental health challenges and addiction, and higher risk of being obese. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/11-631-x/11-631-x2018001-eng.htm>

¹⁰ Brake, M. (1990) Comparative Youth Culture, *The Sociology of Youth Cultures and Youth Subcultures in America, Britain and Canada*, Routledge; Chen, X., Raby, R. & Albanese, P. (2017) *The Sociology of Childhood and Youth in Canada*, Canadian Scholars.

¹¹ For example, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/kitchener-waterloo/waterloo-region-youth-planning-council-survey-1.5709821>

¹² Painter, C.V. (2013) *Sense of belonging: literature review*. Citizenship and Immigration Canada; <https://en.ccunesco.ca/idealab/a-sense-of-belonging>; <https://www.newswire.ca/news-releases/two-thirds-of-children-and-youth-in-canada-feel-like-they-don-t-belong-899542849.html>

Moreover, UNICEF Canada observed that many young people do not enjoy high levels of support from family, friends, social groups, or school. Looking at the digital evolution, the report concluded that it does not explain the trends towards lower well-being among young Canadians and that it is more directly associated with rising income inequality. Other studies have shown that a sense of belonging can also develop through sports¹³ and in nature¹⁴, but these activities may be less relevant to some youth. Finally, survey data from 2021 suggest that the definition of country is different among youth, articulating it in more pragmatic terms than older generations¹⁵, and may be a concept becoming foreign to youth.

The value of working for the common good and the belief that individuals can make a difference are ingrained in the attitudes of young Canadians,¹⁶ but they also tend to look for alternative values and plans from previous generations.¹⁷ Pragmatic and realistic, young people get involved in their society in a more punctual and distant manner than previous generations¹⁸. They are less inclined to adopt the main principles of organizations, as it was the case with the previous generation, but rather favour alternative approaches that are consistent with their personal values¹⁹.

Youth would be carriers of a more individualized mode of engagement where it seems important to act here and now in local context by adopting individualized actions²⁰. The principle of “think globally and act locally” resonates with them. Canadian youth live in a technological environment that was completely unforeseeable in the early 2000s.²¹ Technological context shape the life experience and perspectives of each successive generation as they open opportunities that did not exist before. Since technology develops at an accelerated rate, generations or cohorts defined by technology are becoming shorter and shorter, and demand even more rapid adaptation to remain in sync with them.²²

¹³ VitalSigns (2015) *Sport & Belonging*.

¹⁴ Nature Canada (2021) *How Nature Supports a Sense of Belonging and Well-being*, <https://naturecanada.ca/discover-nature/lifestyle/i-belong-here-how-nature-supports-a-sense-of-belonging-and-wellbeing/>

¹⁵ <https://angusreid.org/young-leaders-restructure-society/>

¹⁶ Idem.

¹⁷ <https://globalnews.ca/news/8360411/gen-z-canada-future-youth-leaders/>

¹⁸ Quéniart et Jacques, 2004

¹⁹ Ion, 2012

²⁰ Quéniart et Jacques, 2008; Ogien et Laugier, 2014

²¹ Marvin, R. (2019) The Most Iconic Tech Innovations of the 2010s, *PC Magazine*. <https://www.pcmag.com/news/the-most-iconic-tech-innovations-of-the-2010s>; Wardynski, D.J. (2019) Technology and Society: How Technology Changed Our Lives, *Brainspire*. <https://www.brainspire.com/blog/technology-and-society-how-technology-changed-our-lives>.

²² Samuel, A. (2019) The Importance of Technological Change in Shaping Generational Perspectives, *JSTOR*. <https://daily.jstor.org/the-importance-of-technological-change-in-shaping-generational-perspectives/>

ECP during the pandemic

The global COVID-19 pandemic has broad society disruptions, including for ECP. Pandemic-related travel restrictions have suspended ECP's central mechanism of achieving program objectives by providing support for travel expenses. A return to post-pandemic life should see the gradual resumption of travel, but the travel industry is expected to have undergone a significant restructuring which will inevitably pose challenges to ECP's activities going forward.

The pandemic hit all government program areas in March 2020, just before the start of the 2020-21 fiscal year. In 2020-21, about one-third of the ECP planned funding was decommissioned because of the inability of the recipients to deliver on funded activities due to health and safety restrictions related to the pandemic. Some activities were redesigned to avoid travel and to focus on virtual meetings and remote work. However, some large recipients were unable to adjust to this new context. For example, Historica Canada ended its Encounters with Canada program²³ due to the impacts of the pandemic combined with the financial difficulty in maintaining the aging Terry Fox Center, which had previously received an annual contribution of \$3.6 million. The Foundation for the Study of Processes of Government in Canada had to cancel its Forum for Young Canadians initiative, which received \$400,000. Both recipients operated under YFC. In total, ECP budgeted \$13.2 million for 2021-22 and had to decommit \$5.8 million (44%).

ECP proposed temporary changes to its Terms and Conditions to increase the flexibility in the use of funds by recipients to continue to deliver exchanges in light of the COVID-19 pandemic and resulting restrictions, which were approved in February 2021. The key change was to allow for the consideration of alternative means for delivering exchanges, including but not limited to virtual exchanges and remote work, and the inclusion of associated costs.

Virtual exchanges

The previous evaluation (2016) examined the possibility of virtual exchanges and concluded that "While they may have some benefits, they are unlikely to achieve the same anticipated outcomes as physical exchanges. Virtual exchanges may be a beneficial complement to the physical exchange activities being undertaken but are not a replacement." The evaluation highlighted the significance of in-person experiences while recognizing that virtual communication is part of the lives of youth and are a useful addition for civic engagement and connection both before and after an exchange. Virtual communication was seen as a facilitator supporting in-person events which were considered to make ECP a unique and particularly transformative experience for participants.

²³ Historica Canada (2021). https://www.historicacanada.ca/sites/default/files/PDF/Closure_GEN_FR_EN.pdf

Notwithstanding a recent COVID-related opening to alternative mechanisms, existing program delivery mostly entails travelling and an in-person stay in a province other than the province of residence of the participant. One key alternative approach is to use virtual exchanges.

Virtual exchanges can enable educational activities in which constructive communication and interaction takes place between individuals who are geographically separated and/or from different cultural backgrounds, with the support of facilitators.²⁴ It could allow an increasing number of participants to have a meaningful intercultural experience and foster the development of digital competence such as online communication and collaboration. Virtual exchanges could also facilitate participation of some groups for whom travelling is difficult, facilitate a better representation of diversity, and likely reduce costs. Virtual exchanges also create a context where communication can take place over the long term – weeks or months instead of days – and where participants have more of an opportunity to build insights on their own situation and how to share them with others. Research demonstrates that “online exchanges to supplement existing friendships report improvements in the quality and closeness of their relationships.”²⁵

While virtual exchanges are well adapted to a public health context where the multiplication of encounters is frowned upon, it also carries some risks such as more easily derailed communication, less informal conversations, technology issues, depersonalized experiences, cyberbullying, and management of personal information. Moreover, there is a growing body of research that documents the relationship between depression and digital media.²⁶ This emphasizes the importance of providing adequate training to educators, multiple modes for participants to communicate, norms and expectations in communicating virtually with cross-cultural peers to carry out a successful virtual exchange.²⁷

Overall, previous evaluations have validated the in-person model’s unique qualities by facilitating connections between participants with different backgrounds and learning about different aspects of Canadian culture. However, the unexpected implications of COVID-19 worldwide pandemic and travel restrictions have made exploring alternative development options a necessity. Moreover, given travel has always been the unique and central eligible expense, reframing delivery on program objectives becomes a priority. Online interactions have become commonplace and increasingly form an important part of daily life. In particular, the pandemic has exacerbated these trends, changing how youth relate to one another.

Virtual exchanges and its impacts on youth could do studies in more depth to determine how applicable and effective they would be to integrate to ECP context to help Canadian youth connect and build relationships in online spaces in addition to in-person exchanges.

²⁴ Helm, F. (2018) *Emerging identities in virtual exchange*. Research-publishing.net.

²⁵ Hoge, E., Bickham, D. & Cantor, J. (2017). Digital media, anxiety, and depression in Children. *Pediatrics*, 76-80.

²⁶ *Ibid*

²⁷ Stevens Initiative, 2019.

7. Recommendations, management responses and action plan

In identifying strategic recommendations, the evaluation considered the findings and conclusions as well as the analysis provided in the Looking Forward section. Three recommendations are identified to address areas that need further attention to ensure continued relevance and performance of the ECP.

Recommendation 1
<p>The evaluation recommends that the Assistant Deputy Minister, Community and Identity Sector, takes any supplemental measures required to better understand the changing needs and preferences among youth, including the influence of virtual innovation, to further improve the program and to ensure its ongoing relevance to youth across Canada.</p>
Management response
<p>The Assistant Deputy Minister, Community and Identity Sector, understands the importance of ensuring the Exchanges Canada Program remains relevant and engaging to youth. The Program will expand its research related to Canadian youth and youth programming to identify opportunities to further improve its understanding of how youth wish to engage and connect with one another.</p> <p>As part of its good management practices, the Program regularly analyzes data and performance results to ensure it adapts to the constantly evolving environment. For this purpose, the Program engages with youth and funded youth-serving organizations throughout the delivery of the projects to better understand the needs and preferences among youth. Further, in 2021, the Program modified its terms and conditions for a two-year period to help organizations adjust to the public health measures in place during the pandemic, and to allow for virtual activities and other required flexibilities to deliver program activities. This action enabled the Program to collect additional information on the impact of program delivery in a virtual environment.</p>

Table 22: Recommendation 1 – action plan

Action Plan Item	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsible
1.1. To supplement the Program’s current data analysis, an environmental scan will be conducted to document social changes and trends that impact youth and their preferences, as well as those of youth-serving organizations, to ensure that the Program remains relevant to youth across Canada.	1.1.1. Environmental Scan	April 2022	Director, Youth Participation Directorate

Action Plan Item	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsible
1.2. Analyze the findings of the environmental scan.	1.2.1. Summary of main findings and recommendations for next steps	June 2022	Director, Youth Participation Directorate
1.3. Continue to engage with departmental colleagues and determine, in collaboration with them and through youth engagement, what, if any, further adjustments to programming are required to ensure that the Program remains relevant to Canadian youth.	1.3.1. Records of discussion/decision regarding consultations, conclusions and/or options	May 2023	Director, Youth Participation Directorate
1.4. Make recommendation regarding programming to senior management.	1.4.1. Briefing Note	October 2023	Director, Youth Participation Directorate
Full implementation date: October 2023			

Recommendation 2
The evaluation recommends that the Assistant Deputy Minister, Community and Identity Sector, examine and implement any needed measures to further reduce barriers and improve program participation among diverse groups.
Management response
The Assistant Deputy Minister agrees with the recommendation and was pleased to note that the evaluation of the Exchanges Canada Program confirmed that the Program met or exceeded its diversity targets with the exception of one subgroup. Since the last evaluation, the Program has consulted with stakeholders and added diversity targets to funding recipients' contribution agreements. The Program will carry on monitoring results and will continue to take action to increase diversity among youth participants, more particularly for the one under-represented group.
The Assistant Deputy Minister, Community and Identity Sector, acknowledges the importance of programming that is open to and inclusive of diverse communities as well as the priority the

Government of Canada places on Diversity and Inclusion. To further increase the participation of youth from diverse backgrounds and lived experiences, the Program will take into consideration the findings of new research and analyses to identify additional measures that can be implemented to help reduce barriers to youth participation and self-identification.

Table 23: Recommendation 2 – action plan

Action Plan Item	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsible
2.1. Building upon the work of the past five years and good participant representation, conduct an environmental scan to address the gap in the one area of concern, and target barriers to participation and recruitment of diverse or under-represented youth.	2.1.1. Environmental Scan	April 2022	Director, Youth Participation Directorate
2.2. Conduct a Gender-based Analysis Plus study to better identify factors that may influence youth participation and to further reduce barriers.	2.2.1. GBA Plus Study	April 2023	Director, Youth Participation Directorate
2.3. Consider the results of the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Review being conducted by the Department.	2.3.1. EDI Review Report	September 2023	Director, Youth Participation Directorate
2.4. Consider the findings of the environmental scan, the Gender-based Analysis Plus study and the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Review to determine the measures that can be implemented to further reduce barriers to participation and continue to meet / increase the representation of diverse groups in funded activities.	2.4.1. Summary of main findings and recommendations for next steps.	January 2024	Director, Youth Participation Directorate
2.5. Review data collection strategy.	2.5.1. Records of discussion/decision regarding consultations,	January 2025	Director, Youth Participation Directorate

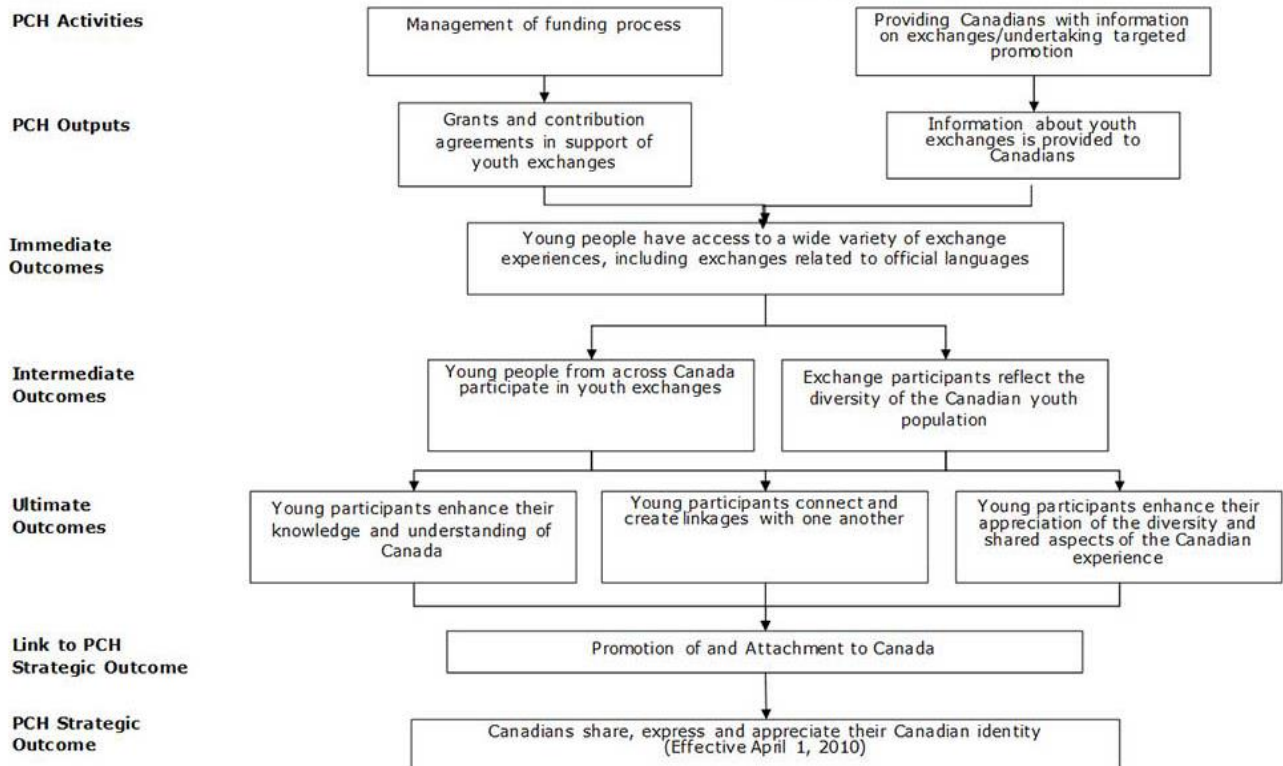
Action Plan Item	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsible
	conclusions and/or options		
2.6. Make recommendation regarding programming to senior management to further improve the diversity and inclusion of participants and seek policy authority if required.	2.6.1. Briefing Note	May 2025	Director, Youth Participation Directorate
Full implementation date: May 2025			

Recommendation 3
The evaluation recommends that the Assistant Deputy Minister, Community and Identity Sector, review expected program outcomes to ensure that performance data continues to support decision-making, evaluation and reporting, without placing undue administrative burden on the beneficiaries or the program.
Management response
<p>We agree with the recommendation on how important good and reliable performance data is to supporting program decision-making. The constantly evolving environment as well as the findings from the research and analysis the Program will continue to conduct over the coming years will likely require adjustments to the Program’s performance measurement strategy.</p> <p>The Assistant Deputy Minister, Community and Identity Sector, recognizes the benefits of a logic model and related performance measurement strategy and tools that support program decision-making, reporting and evaluation. The Program will continue to review its performance strategy to ensure it continues to be well aligned with the Departmental Results Framework.</p>

Table 24: Recommendation 3 – action plan

Action Plan Item	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsible
3.1. Review the Program logic model, in consultation with PCH’s Strategic Planning Directorate and Evaluation Services Directorate and adjust if necessary.	3.1.1. Logic Model	May 2025	Director, Youth Participation Directorate
3.2. Pursue the review of Program data collection tools and methodologies, in collaboration with PCH’s Strategic Planning Directorate, Public Opinion Research Group and Evaluation Services Directorate, to ensure they continue to capture performance results for reporting requirements of the Program without placing undue burden on the recipients or the Program.	3.2.1. Records of discussion/decision regarding consultations, conclusions and/or options	May 2025	Director, Youth Participation Directorate
3.3. Make recommendations regarding program outcomes to senior management.	3.3.1. Briefing Note	June 2025	Director, Youth Participation Directorate
3.4. If required, update the Program’s Terms and Conditions.	3.4.1 Terms and Conditions	December 2025	Director, Youth Participation Directorate
3.5. If required, update the Program’s Performance Information Profile.	3.5.1. Performance Information Profile	December 2025	Director, Youth Participation Directorate
Full implementation date: December 2025			

Appendix A: Logic Model



Appendix B: Tables

Table 1: Program Comparison

Program	Target group	Objectives	Delivery	Complementarity
Summer Work Student Exchange (PCH)	Students aged 16 to 17.	Work experience, official languages, attachment to Canada.	This six week, summer work program for students finds jobs for participants in communities in another province.	-
Young Canada Works (Internship programs) (PCH)	Unemployed or underemployed college or university graduates.	Work experience: improve their skills through a career-related experience; establish contacts and expand their career options by working in Canada or abroad.	4- to 12-month internships with organizations that have a heritage mandate or a paid internships in Canada that meet the labour market needs in linguistic duality and where workforce shortages are anticipated in official-language minority communities.	Limited
Young Canada Works (Job programs) (PCH)	Students from high school to university.	Work experience: acquire valuable work experience and skills; explore and discover new regions within Canada; and earn an income.	6- to 16-week job opportunities for students; in organizations with a heritage mandate or in organizations that conduct activities in both official languages.	Yes
First Nations and Inuit Summer Work Experience Program (ISC)	First Nations and Inuit secondary and post-secondary students aged 15 to 30.	Work experience: to acquire skills, prepare for full-time employment and earn income to support education.	Summer jobs.	Limited
International Aboriginal Youth Internships (GAC)	Indigenous Canadian youth aged 18 to 35 with a high school diploma	Work experience: to gain professional experience abroad in the field of international development; to acquire skills that will prepare them for employment or their studies.	Internships lasting a minimum of three months.	Limited

Program	Target group	Objectives	Delivery	Complementarity
International Youth Internship Program (GAC)	Post-secondary to university – 19 to 30-year-old.	Work experience: to gain professional experience abroad in the field of international development; to acquire skills that will prepare them for employment or their studies.	Internships lasting a minimum of six months.	Limited
Canadian Conservation Institute internship programs (PCH)	Postgraduate youth.	Work experience: to provide a bridge between academic studies and professional practice as a means of ensuring that the heritage community has access to fully trained workers in the fields covered by CCI.	Twelvemonth postgraduate internships.	No
Odyssey (PCH)	English-speaking citizens or permanent residents of all ages.	Work experience: earn paid work experience in a classroom setting; discover whether the field of education is right for you; experience francophone culture and way of life in New Brunswick or Quebec; develop new skills and improve your French-speaking skills.	Nine-month-language assistantship in New Brunswick or Quebec.	No
Volunteer Cooperation Program (GAC)	Professionals and experts, young leaders, retired or semi-retired professionals.	Lending time and expertise to help communities in developing countries.	Two weeks to one-year volunteer placements.	No
Federal Student Work Experience Program (PSC)	Full-time students; specific subgroups.	Work experience: to get valuable and meaningful experience working for the top student employer in Canada.	Full-time and part-time work opportunities in a wide variety of fields.	No

Program	Target group	Objectives	Delivery	Complementarity
Science Horizons Youth Internship Program (ECCC)	Student from university, college and polytechnic graduates.	Work experience: to help young Canadian graduates gain work experience; to supports green jobs for youth and to contribute to Canada's green economic growth in environmental and clean technology sectors.	Wage subsidies to eligible employers across Canada to hire recent university, college and polytechnic graduates for internships in the environmental science, technology, engineering and mathematics sectors.	No
Youth Ambassadors (Parks Canada)	Post-secondary students and limited to 6 individuals.	Leadership experience: to share Parks Canada's stories and places to encourage and inspire young Canadians to get outside, learn, experience, and appreciate Canada's rich natural and cultural heritage.	Variety of local and virtual initiatives to promote Parks Canada values.	No
Canada Summer Jobs (ESDC)	Youth aged 15 to 30.	Work experience.	Six to fifteen-week summer jobs.	Yes
Youth Exchange Canada (YEC) (PCH)	Youth aged 12 to 17.	To learn a second language, develop cultural awareness, break down social barriers and develop leadership skills.	Groups of youth from different parts of the country are paired according to their ages, interests and from another province or territory, then take turns staying in each other's homes for at least five days.	-
Destination Clic (PCH)	Francophone youth outside Quebec in 8th and 9th grade and enrolled in a French-language school.	Cultural immersion: to nurture a sense of belonging to and identity with their francophone community at home and abroad; to connect with others like them and make friends from across Canada; to immerse themselves in a new and vibrant francophone culture; and to boost their self-confidence and build new skills.	Three-week summer program: virtual sessions were offered in 2021.	Limited

Program	Target group	Objectives	Delivery	Complementarity
Explore (PCH)	Student aged 13 and over.	Cultural immersion. Learning French; Experiencing francophone culture and way of life; Connecting with others from across Canada and making friends; Travelling to another part of the country; Opportunities to continue learning French in a professional context with the Languages at Work program.	French-immersion program; some 32 days for those 16 or older; 3 weeks for those 13-15; virtual sessions are offered.	Yes
Canada History Fund (PCH)	No specific target groups but students reached via teachers.	Civics: to improve knowledge about Canada's history, civics and public policy.	The Fund supports the production of learning materials, the organization of learning activities and the creation or maintenance of networks.	Limited
Youth Take Charge (PCH)	Youth from 7 to 30 years old.	Civics: to strengthen youth attachment to Canada through engagement.	Support to youth-led projects that include activities in one or more of four thematic areas: Arts and culture; Civic engagement and youth service; Economic activities; History and heritage.	Yes
Youth Forums Canada (YFC) (PCH)	Youth from 14 to 25 years old.	Civics: to contribute to increased knowledge and understanding of Canada among Canadian youth; to help young Canadians connect to one another and create linkages, across the country and between groups, thereby helping to strengthen the fabric of Canadian society.	Forum for young people that offers activities such as workshops, thematic events or other experiences, be at least three full days in duration.	-
Canada World Youth (GAC)	Canadians from 18 to 35 years old.	Leadership experience through volunteering.	Variety of international opportunities, from a 10-day forum to 6-month internships.	Limited

Program	Target group	Objectives	Delivery	Complementarity
Canada Service Corps (ESDC)	Youth from 15 to 30 years old.	Civics: to promote civic engagement through access to meaningful volunteer service placements that help them gain essential life skills and experience.	Volunteer service placements focussed on local action on federal priorities to improve the social, economic, and environmental well-being of communities across the country.	No
Cadet Program (Canadian Armed Forces)	Youth from 12 to 18 years old.	Leadership experience: to help youth transition into adulthood, from good citizenship, leadership, and a focus on physical fitness.	Weekly meetings; summer activities. Cadets can participate in Common Training activities that are open to all three elements: biathlon, marksmanship, music.	No

Appendix C: Expenditures

ECP Difference between actual and planned expenditures, 2014-15 to 2018-19

Ressources	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	Total
Salary	(242,537)	8,157	47,596	211,550	502,094	526,860
Employee Benefits	(33,525)	17,113	33,227	22,240	91,059	130,114
Operations and Management	173,888	211,042	130,167	84,384	141,722	741,203
Total Operations Expenditures	(102,174)	236,312	210,990	318,174	734,875	1,398,177
Grants	80,000	80,000	80,000	60,000	50,000	350,000
Contributions	(2,713)	(196,019)	(623,106)	(682,292)	(258,731)	(1,762,861)
Total Grants and Contributions	77,287	(116,019)	(543,106)	(622,292)	(208,731)	(1,412,861)
Total for the Program	(24,887)	120,293	(332,116)	(304,118)	526,144	(14,685)

Source: PCH Financial Management Branch

ECP Planned to actual Expenditure's ratio (%), 2014-15 to 2018-19

Ressources	2014-15 %	2015-16 %	2016-17 %	2017-18 %	2018-19 %	Total %
Salary	(26)	1	4	15	29	8

Employee Benefits	(21)	9	17	12	35	13
Operations and Management	59	67	49	28	40	48
Total Operations Expenditures	(7)	15	13	17	31	16
Grants	80	80	80	60	50	70
Contributions	0	(1)	(4)	(4)	(1)	(2)
Total Grants and Contributions	0	(1)	(3)	(3)	(1)	(2)
Total for the Program	0	1	(2)	(2)	3	0

Source: PCH Financial Management Branch

Appendix D: Evaluation framework

Relevance: Question 1. To what extent are the ECP objectives aligned with priorities and strategic outcomes of Canadian Heritage?

Indicators	Methods of data collection
1.1 Evidence of ECP alignment with the PCH Strategic Outcome that “Canadians share, express and appreciate their Canadian Identity”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document review • Literature review • Key informant interviews
1.2 Evidence of ECP contribution to PCH emerging priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document review • Literature review • Key informant interviews • Administrative data review

Relevance: Question 2. To what extent does the ECP program occupy a unique space for existing federal youth programs/ initiatives?

Indicators	Methods of data collection
2.1 Evidence of coordination with other federal departments and initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document review • Key informant interviews • Administrative data review

Effectiveness: Question 3. Did the ECP achieve its expected short-term, medium term and long-term outcomes?

Indicators	Methods of data collection
3.1 Evidence of achievement of the Immediate Outcome: Young people have access to a wide variety of exchange experiences, including related to exchanges to official languages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document review • Key informant interviews • Administrative data review
3.2 Evidence of achievement of Intermediate Outcome 1: Young people from across Canada participate in youth exchanges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document review • Key informant interviews • Administrative data review
3.3 Evidence of achievement of Intermediate Outcome 2: Exchanges participants reflect the diversity of the Canadian youth population	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document review • Key informant interviews • Administrative data review
3.4 Evidence of achievement of Ultimate Outcome 1: Young participants enhance their knowledge and understanding of Canada	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document review • Key informant interviews • Administrative data review

Indicators	Methods of data collection
3.5 Evidence of achievement of Ultimate Outcome 2: Young participants connect and create linkages with one another	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document review • Key informant interviews • Administrative data review
3.6 Evidence of achievement of Ultimate Outcome 3: Young participants enhance their appreciation of the diversity and shared aspects of the Canadian experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document review • Key informant interviews • Administrative data review

Effectiveness: Question 4. To what extent does the ECP identify systemic barriers and serve designated undersubscribed groups to ensure equitable participation in the Program?

Indicators	Methods of data collection
4.1 Evidence of rationale for participant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document review • Literature review • Key informant interviews • Administrative data review
4.2 Evidence of managerial strategy to prioritize and reduce systemic barriers of under-represented groups to achieve targets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document review • Key informant interviews • Administrative data review
4.3 Evidence of collected data adequacy on which to base decision-making for equity and GBA Plus issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document review • Key informant interviews • Administrative data review
4.4 Evidence of performance measurement data used to inform program management decision-making affecting results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document review • Key informant interviews • Administrative data review

Efficiency: Question 5: To what extent was the ECP delivered efficiently?

Indicators	Methods of data collection
5.1 Evidence of assessment of program administration and changes to make delivery more efficient	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document review • Key informant interviews • Administrative data review
5.2 Actual versus planned expenditures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administrative data review • Document review
5.3 Administrative costs ratio	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administrative data review • Document review
5.4 Ratio of contribution per exchange and per participant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document review • Administrative data review

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