

**Canadian  
Intergovernmental  
Conference Secretariat**

**2022–23**

Departmental Plan

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The Honourable Dominic LeBlanc, P.C., Q.C., M.P.

Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs,  
Infrastructure and Communities

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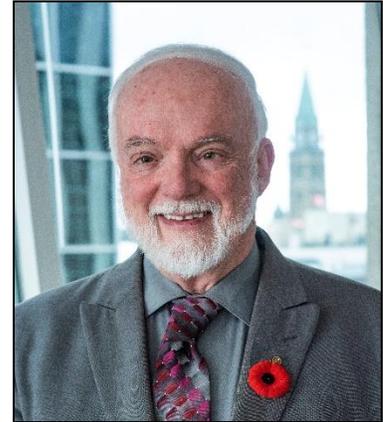
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## From the Institutional Head

As Secretary of the Canadian Intergovernmental Conference Secretariat (CICS), I am pleased to present the Agency’s 2022-23 Departmental Plan. This plan provides parliamentarians and Canadians with information on our mandate and objectives for the upcoming year.



Through its sole program, the Secretariat provides professional administrative and technical support services required for the planning and conduct of federal-provincial-territorial and provincial-territorial conferences of First Ministers, Ministers and Deputy Ministers across Canada. Along with the added benefits of confidentiality, impartiality and expertise in service delivery, CICS facilitates the holding of such multilateral meetings, which continue to be a key component of Canadian federalism.

In 2021, the Government of Canada has renewed its commitment to Canadians to maintain strong partnerships with the provinces, territories and Indigenous Peoples. Now more than ever, effective and timely communication, made possible by regular multilateral meetings, is essential for coordination, consultation and collaboration among all levels of government.

CICS will continue to broaden its expertise in 2022-23, focussing on videoconferencing and adding to the current technology options, while setting new standards for the future of hybrid conferencing, once in-person conferences can safely resume. The Secretariat’s ongoing ability to realign and retool in response to the ever-changing context of the COVID-19 pandemic demonstrates once again the organization’s flexibility, resilience and adaptability.

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André M. McArdle  
Secretary  
Canadian Intergovernmental Conference Secretariat



## Plans at a glance

The Canadian Intergovernmental Conference Secretariat (CICS) is fully committed to delivering quality, cost-effective conference services to federal, provincial and territorial governments. Our impartiality, commitment to official languages and expertise in service delivery make us the conference service provider of choice for senior-level intergovernmental conferences. Through 2022-23, CICS will continue to focus on collaboration and partnerships with federal, provincial and territorial governments to implement national commitments and priorities that depend on these strong relationships.

CICS will also continue to strengthen its relationships with other stakeholders, including meeting organizers in client governments and permanent secretariats that support intergovernmental relations. The Secretariat will keep its clients updated on new services and tools that will enable the organization to continue responding to governments' needs, but also to proactively guide and advise clients in new areas and directions to ensure the effective and efficient planning and delivery of senior-level intergovernmental meetings. This will be especially important in light of the upcoming return to in-person conferences and the expected rise of the “hybrid” conferences, which refers to in-person meetings requiring videoconference equipment to link-in remote participants or presenters.

There is no doubt that the dramatic increase in the total number of conferences served in 2020-21 compared to the previous year (219 versus 119) was an exceptional situation resulting largely from the impact that COVID-19 had on intergovernmental activity. In many client sectors, federal, provincial and territorial jurisdictions met on a regular basis to confer on the impacts of the pandemic and bring effective solutions as the situation evolved.

However, the level of activity has remained high in 2021-22 with 113 conferences served during the first 3 quarters of the fiscal year. This represents an appreciable 68% of the meetings served during the same period in 2020-21, in spite of a lull in activity during the 3 months around the federal election. The 113 conferences served also amounted to a 22% increase in activity over the 7-year average for the same 9-month period, pre-COVID.

Looking ahead, the level of activity and ongoing innovation generated by videoconferencing is expected to remain high in 2022-23, not just as a virtual meeting format but also as an essential element of anticipated “hybrid” conferences.

Through 2022-23, the Secretariat’s initiatives will focus on remaining agile, maintaining our capacity to respond to high demand, and supporting the following four priorities: 1) Build and maintain a strong workforce; 2) Review business practices and efficiencies; 3) Expand marketing and outreach strategy; and 4) Explore and implement new technologies. Highlighted below are a few of our key initiatives planned for 2022-23:

**Recruit and retain a talented and diverse workforce**

The Agency’s greatest asset has always been its employees. As a micro-agency, the successful delivery of its mandate relies heavily on staff’s experience, skills, knowledge and innovative ideas. In 2022-23, emphasis will be placed on recruiting and retaining a talented and diverse workforce through innovative and inclusive recruitment strategies and tools, and promoting diversity, and accessible learning and development opportunities. By fostering a healthy, inclusive and stimulating work environment, CICS seeks to create a workplace conducive to career development and job satisfaction. This initiative supports our priority to “Build and maintain a strong workforce”.

**Implement upgraded conference planning guides and services  
to ensure ongoing service relevance and usefulness**

In 2022-23, recently revamped client surveys for both planners and conference delegates, as well as new guidance and information material intended for clients who organize intergovernmental meetings, will all be put into full use with the anticipated return to in-person conferences. Analysis of the results will be an even more critical and timely source of information to determine service improvements and measure success in achieving our overall objective of service excellence and responsiveness. This will include the tracking of progress against the objectives of CICS’ Modernization Action Plan which continues to be a focal point to maintain the Secretariat’s reputation as the lead organization in support of senior-level intergovernmental conferences in Canada. In relation to the sustained interest in videoconferencing, CICS will make available to its clients the necessary technical support (see below) as well as an expanded slate of administrative services. These initiatives support our priority to “Review business practices and efficiencies.”

**Conduct multiple knowledge exchange forums with  
federal, provincial and territorial meeting organizers**

In 2022-23, CICS plans to conduct semi-annual knowledge exchange forums with meeting organizers whose need for timely and innovative event management solutions continues to grow, as witnessed during the 2 forums held in 2021-22. Special emphasis will continue to be on the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, including technical and administrative services in support of virtual conferencing with remote interpretation, which will include not only videoconferences but also in-person conferences which are expected to resume mostly in a “hybrid” format.

The Secretariat will continue its efforts to connect with private and public sector service providers to broaden our knowledge of industry trends and best practices. This initiative supports our priority to “Expand marketing and outreach strategy.”

**Ensure leading-edge technical capabilities and other innovative solutions to facilitate videoconferencing now and in the long-term**

In spite of all its negative impacts, the COVID-19 pandemic is the catalyst that will have resulted in many client sectors acknowledging the advantages – health-related, financial and logistical – of videoconferencing, a meeting format that is expected to remain popular even once the COVID-19 situation has stabilized. CICS will continue to test and implement platforms and other innovative technical solutions in support of virtual meetings and to link a significantly greater number of remote participants to in-person meetings when these resume. This initiative supports our priority to “Explore and implement new technologies.”

For more information on the Canadian Intergovernmental Conference Secretariat’s plans, see the “Core responsibilities: planned results and resources, and key risks” section of this plan.



## Core responsibilities: planned results and resources, and key risks

This section contains information on the department’s planned results and resources for each of its core responsibilities. It also contains information on key risks related to achieving those results.

### **Intergovernmental Conference Services**

#### **Description**

The Canadian Intergovernmental Conference Secretariat provides expert planning, archival services, and impartial administrative support for federal-provincial-territorial and provincial-territorial conferences of First Ministers, Ministers and Deputy Ministers, throughout Canada.

#### **Planning highlights**

The Conference Services program delivers the Agency’s core responsibility and, consequently, conducts the professional, innovative and successful delivery of services to senior-level intergovernmental meetings. With the federal government’s strong focus on collaboration and partnerships with provinces, territories and Indigenous partners, as well as the ongoing effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, the number of intergovernmental meetings is expected to be about the same as in 2021-22 due to a sustained emphasis on videoconferencing even once the COVID-19 situation stabilizes and in-person meetings resume, mostly in a “hybrid” format. This reality continues to offer an excellent opportunity for CICS to strengthen its relationships with federal, provincial and territorial conference delegates as well as other stakeholders. The latter include meeting organizers in chair and/or host governments and in permanent secretariats that support intergovernmental relations in sectors of activity that will be of key importance over the next year and beyond.

An ongoing priority will be to ensure our Agency’s capacity to respond to a sustained, high demand for its broader range of services while ensuring that those services remain relevant, forward-looking and of the highest quality. In view of the ongoing interest in videoconferencing (as a meeting format in itself and also as an essential element of a “hybrid” approach to most future in-person meetings), there is a definite expectation and opportunity for the organization to lead the way, to advise, guide and encourage its clients to adopt new and innovative approaches. This will be achieved by implementing various services and technologies (including cloud-based platforms) to better support meetings with simultaneous interpretation. All this will help to ensure the success of senior-level intergovernmental meetings, and will help maintain strong, open and collaborative relationships between the federal, provincial and territorial governments as well as Indigenous partners.

This expanded leadership role for CICS will be enabled and fulfilled largely through the implementation of leading-edge technologies and methods, as identified in the Modernization Action Plan that CICS developed in 2018.

This Plan continues to be at the forefront of the Secretariat’s work to lead, innovate and excel. The broad elements of this document, as well as the changing technical and administrative requirements related to the growing interest in videoconferencing, as witnessed in 2020 and again in 2021, are integrated in the activities and actions that will be undertaken or expanded in support of the following 5 key initiatives, which are designed to advance the Agency’s core responsibility:

1. Remain attuned to, and in step with the expanding needs of intergovernmental clients and other stakeholders. Activities in this area will aim to:

- Maintain recognition among governments of CICS as the key conference service provider for senior-level intergovernmental meetings. To do so, the organization will continue expanding its methods and networks to ensure that it remains at the forefront of evolving event management technologies and processes. This will be particularly important in support of a sustained number of virtual meetings but also (when they resume) in-person conferences where there will be significantly greater demand for remote participation, all in the context of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and its aftermath including the evolving health and safety requirements.
- Fully implement new client guidance and information material completed and launched in 2020-21 and conduct knowledge exchange forums with federal, provincial and territorial meeting organizers, in order that CICS remains a hub for sharing timely and innovative event management solutions for the benefit of its clients.
- Following the successful migration of the Secretariat’s Conference Management Software (CMS) to a more powerful and effective platform in 2021-22, upgrade CMS to move it beyond a mostly internal work tool and introduce outward-facing elements that are more client-focussed.

2. CICS will continue to encourage the use of new formats and technologies in conference service delivery, including those that will:

- Support/facilitate videoconferencing for all its technical, financial and logistical advantages. This will be achieved through: (1) enhanced videoconferencing capabilities including the implementation of new platforms as well as new features of the current platform of choice; (2) expansion of a value-added suite of services (beyond technology) in support of virtual and “hybrid” meetings including any related media events such as press conferences; and (3) the refinement of recently developed guides

and best practices intended for organizers and participants. This will be performed with a view to help support the government’s desire to achieve results in serving and improving the lives of all Canadians, as well as to maintain professional and respectful relationships with journalists to ensure that Canadians are well informed.

- Support the government’s objective to advance Canadians’ interests and aspirations while continuing to strive for greater inclusiveness, openness, agility and transparency.

3. CICS will continue to rely on new or upgraded tools developed in 2020-21 to gauge client satisfaction and collect feedback, while also strengthening relationships with provinces and territories at a strategic level:

- Client surveys of both conference planners and delegates will remain a primary source of information to determine service improvements and measure success in achieving our overall objective of service excellence and responsiveness. A target satisfaction rate of at least 90% will remain as the goal for these surveys.
- Engaging provinces and territories at a strategic level, through their intergovernmental offices, will remain a priority to share information, gather intelligence and feedback, and obtain reaction to new ideas and initiative.

4. CICS aims to be an agile department, where internal processes and work tools are continuously reviewed and improved through environmental scans as well as staff surveys and feedback. The Secretariat will continue to use internal committees and employees input for program decision-making, taking full advantage of our staff’s experience, skills, knowledge and innovative ideas.

5. Considerable effort will be expended to review and refine training and development strategies for conference service delivery to ensure that our people, internal processes, and technologies are aligned to respond to the current environment, future demands, and the changing needs of clients while constantly strengthening CICS’ client service mindset. Those training and development strategies will also focus on the importance of mental health, diversity and inclusion and increase awareness of unconscious bias, discrimination and racism in CICS practices. This initiative will continue to be of critical importance in 2022-23 in view of the ongoing COVID-19 situation and its major impacts on the conduct of intergovernmental relations and, as a result, on CICS’ operations and services.

All of the above initiatives are aligned with the four organizational priorities of the Secretariat: 1) Build and maintain a strong workforce; 2) Review business practices and efficiencies; 3) Expand marketing and outreach strategy; and 4) Explore and implement new technologies.

### **Gender-based analysis plus**

CICS does not work directly with the public; it works in close collaboration with its clients which are other federal, provincial and territorial government departments. Decisions concerning the location, content, and participants of such meetings are all factors beyond the control of the Secretariat. As a micro-agency, there are many unique constraints in terms of financial and human resource capabilities and capacities. CICS strives to create awareness and encouragement of learning opportunities with the goal of increasing labour force participation rates.

### **United Nations' (UN) 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the UN Sustainable Development Goals**

The Secretariat will take action to combat climate change and its impacts (SDG 13), more specifically, target 13.3 (improve education, awareness-raising and human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning) essentially by promoting and supporting the Government of Canada Green Procurement Initiative.

### **Experimentation**

CICS has not planned any experimentation activities, but will continue to promote and facilitate innovation. Experimentation is related to, but distinct from innovation (the trying of new things), because it involves a rigorous comparison of results. As a micro-agency, the Secretariat lacks the human and financial resources that would be necessary to support a full-scale and valid experiment.

### **Key risk(s)**

#### *Human Resource Management*

There is a risk that the organization will be unable to sustain an adequate workforce with the appropriate competencies due to a large turnover of staff, due to retirements & departures, provincial-territorial secondment rotations and peak period staffing. Potential impacts would include staff shortage, errors, client dissatisfaction, and loss of corporate knowledge and confidence in the organization. This has been identified as a key risk since 2018-19, because in a micro-agency, the departure of even one employee has an impact on the organization as a whole. This risk has been amplified in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and the role that videoconferencing has and will continue to play in relation to virtual and hybrid conferences.

As a result, the Agency and its employees may be facing higher workloads as well as a requirement for new skills and work processes in a rapidly evolving work environment. Employees may also be impacted by illness at any time, increasing the probability that the organization would experience capacity issues.

In 2021-22, CICS successfully mitigated this risk through the implementation of its most current Human Resources Plan and Succession Plan for key positions. Focus on succession planning over the next year remains essential as CICS is forecasting retirements and other departures from critical positions in the short to mid-term. CICS will continue to implement staffing strategies to ensure the continued staffing of key positions, including career development opportunities, staffing pools, and temporary staffing actions to ensure prompt staffing at peak intervals. CICS will also continue to promote job rotations, as the lean nature of a micro-agency emphasizes the need for an agile and multi-skilled workforce.

### Planned results for Intergovernmental Conference Services

The following table shows, for Intergovernmental Conference Services, the planned results, the result indicators, the targets and the target dates for 2022-23, and the actual results for the three most recent fiscal years for which actual results are available.

Departmental result	Departmental result indicator	Target	Date to achieve target	2018–19 actual result	2019–20 actual result	2020–21 actual result
R1: Facilitate productive federal provincial territorial and provincial territorial discussions through centralized planning and professionally supported conferences	Conference organizer satisfaction rate <sup>1</sup>	> 90%	March 31, 2023	92.6%	96.8%	91.8%
	Conference participant satisfaction rate <sup>2</sup>	> 90%	March 31, 2023	93%	94.8%	88%
R2: Continuous innovation in process and service delivery to meet evolving client needs	Usage rate of key technologies and service delivery innovations by clients <sup>3</sup>	> 75%	March 31, 2023	83%	83%	80%

The financial, human resources and performance information for the Canadian Intergovernmental Conference Secretariat's program inventory is available on [GC InfoBase](#).<sup>i</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Proportion of respondents who provide a grade of 4 or 5 out of 5 to a series of interview questions

<sup>2</sup> Proportion of respondents who provide a grade of 4 or 5 out of 5 to a series of survey questions

<sup>3</sup> Percentage of innovative solutions being adopted by clients

### Planned budgetary spending for the Intergovernmental Conference Services

The following table shows, for Intergovernmental Conference Services, budgetary spending for 2022–23, as well as planned spending for that year and for each of the next two fiscal years.

2022–23 budgetary spending (as indicated in Main Estimates)	2022–23 planned spending	2023–24 planned spending	2024–25 planned spending
4,751,627	4,263,097	4,263,097	4,263,097

Financial, human resources and performance information for the Canadian Intergovernmental Conference Secretariat’s program inventory is available on [GC InfoBase](#).<sup>ii</sup>

### Planned human resources for Intergovernmental Conference Services

The following table shows, in full-time equivalents, the human resources the department will need to fulfill this core responsibility for 2022–23 and for each of the next two fiscal years.

2022–23 planned full-time equivalents	2023–24 planned full-time equivalents	2024–25 planned full-time equivalents
25	25	25

Financial, human resources and performance information for the Canadian Intergovernmental Conference Secretariat’s program inventory is available on [GC InfoBase](#).<sup>iii</sup>

## Internal services: planned results

### Description

Internal services are the services that are provided within a department so that it can meet its corporate obligations and deliver its programs. There are 10 categories of internal services:

- ▶ management and oversight services
- ▶ communications services
- ▶ legal services
- ▶ human resources management services
- ▶ financial management services
- ▶ information management services
- ▶ information technology services
- ▶ real property management services
- ▶ materiel management services
- ▶ acquisition management services

### Planning highlights

The Internal Services program is expected to support the Agency in meeting its mandate through sound management and careful stewardship of assets, financial and human resources, and information technology services. CICS aims to be an agile department with streamlined processes that are continuously reviewed and improved to meet current policy. Over the next fiscal year, CICS will adhere to the spirit of the new Procurement Strategy for Indigenous Business (PSIB), which will become effective in 2024-25, and additional practices to further integrate environmental performance considerations into its procurement decision-making process.

In 2022-23, Internal Services will continue to apply the utmost care and prudence in the handling of public resources, and will monitor and report on its internal control framework. CICS is committed to support openness and transparency in government. In 2022-23, internal controls will continue to be assessed, maintained and improved, as needed in order to ensure compliance with Treasury Board Policies, Directives and Guidance.

CICS will also continue on modernizing its end point equipment to provide better service to its staff and its external clients. Since CICS' aging infrastructure will need replacement in the coming years, the organization will proceed with the initial phases of migrating IT services to the cloud. The Government of Canada Cloud-First adoption Strategy represents a fundamental shift in the delivery of IT services. Cloud computing has the potential to provide a flexible means of delivering IT services.

Furthermore, the organization will continue to promote and encourage learning opportunities in order to foster a healthy workplace, promote mental health and wellbeing as well as a culture of continuous improvement and innovation. CICS will look at innovative ways to implement these opportunities to enhance employee engagement.

Finally, CICS will explore new inclusive and innovative staffing strategies to focus on services-oriented individuals that are capable, talented and high-performing and who embrace new ways of working and the use of new technologies to serve clients’ evolving needs. CICS is committed to building and maintaining an engaged and diverse workforce by devoting time and effort to retain employees and implement inclusive human resources practices. In response to the Clerk of the Privy Council’s Call to Action on Anti-Racism, Equity and Inclusion in the Federal Public Service, CICS will also continue to take practical actions that will form the basis for systemic change within the Agency in combatting racism and preventing all forms of discrimination and oppression.

#### Planned budgetary spending for Internal Services

The following table shows, for Internal Services, budgetary spending for 2022–23, as well as planned spending for that year and for each of the next two fiscal years.

2022–23 budgetary spending (as indicated in Main Estimates)	2022–23 planned spending	2023–24 planned spending	2024–25 planned spending
1,305,039	1,358,580	1,358,580	1,358,580

#### Planned human resources for internal services

The following table shows, in full-time equivalents, the human resources the department will need to carry out its Internal Services for 2022–23 and for each of the next two fiscal years.

2022–23 planned full-time equivalents	2023–24 planned full-time equivalents	2024–25 planned full-time equivalents
7	7	7

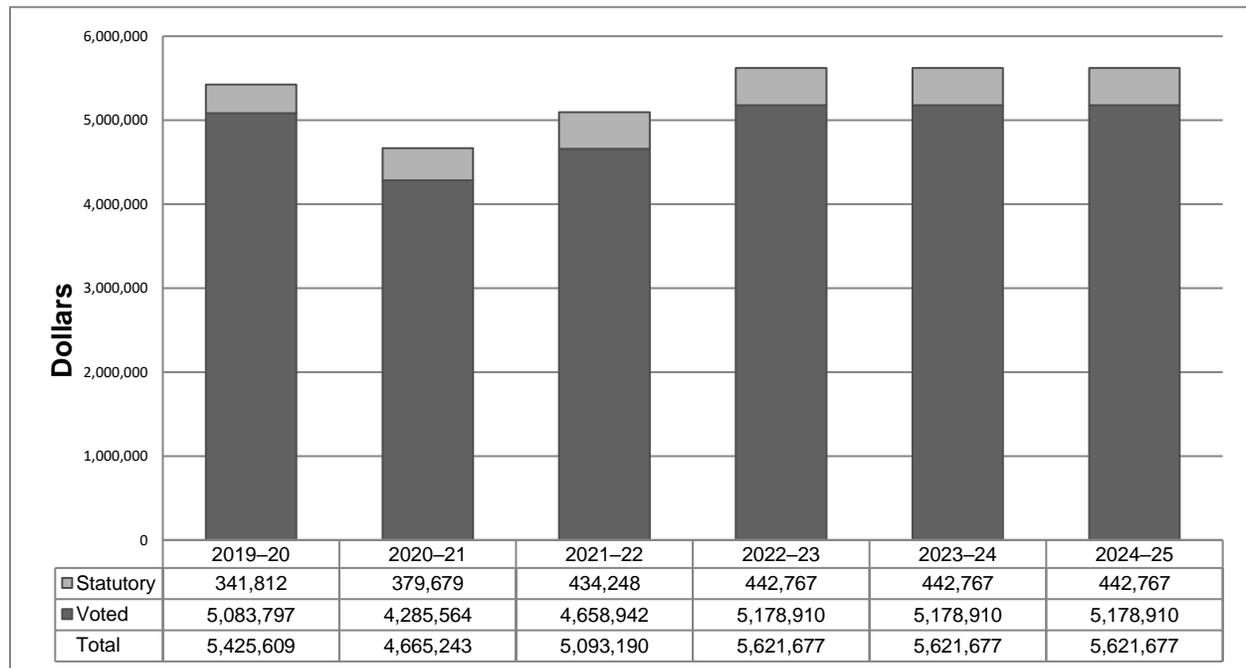
## Planned spending and human resources

This section provides an overview of the department’s planned spending and human resources for the next three fiscal years and compares planned spending for 2022–23 with actual spending for the current year and the previous year.

### Planned spending

Departmental spending 2019–20 to 2024–25

The following graph presents planned spending (voted and statutory expenditures) over time.



For detailed information see the “Budgetary planning summary for core responsibilities and Internal Services” section of this report.

## Budgetary planning summary for core responsibilities and internal services (dollars)

The following table shows information on spending for each of the Canadian Intergovernmental Conference Secretariat’s core responsibility and for its Internal Services for 2022–23 and other relevant fiscal years.

Core responsibilities and internal services	2019–20 actual expenditures	2020–21 actual expenditures	2021–22 forecast spending	2022–23 budgetary spending (as indicated in Main Estimates)	2022–23 planned spending	2023–24 planned spending	2024–25 planned spending
Intergovernmental Conference Services	4,125,601	3,369,649	3,860,666	4,751,627	4,263,097	4,263,097	4,263,097
Internal services	1,300,008	1,295,594	1,232,524	1,305,039	1,358,580	1,358,580	1,358,580
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,425,609</b>	<b>4,665,243</b>	<b>5,093,190</b>	<b>6,056,666</b>	<b>5,621,677</b>	<b>5,621,677</b>	<b>5,621,677</b>

It is important to note that CICS does not convene intergovernmental meetings. It is called upon to respond to decisions taken by governments to meet on key national or specific issues.

Decisions concerning the format and location of such meetings, their number in any given fiscal year, their timing and duration, are all factors beyond the control of the Secretariat. The level of CICS expenditures for each fiscal year is, however, directly affected by these factors. An event can consist of one or more conferences and is used to plan the budget for each of the conferences in terms of transportation and communication, rentals, translation and interpretation services.

The decreased spending in 2020-21, compared to 2019-20, was mainly due to the COVID-19 pandemic and a complete shift to virtual format conferences during the fiscal year.

The expenditures for 2021-22 are anticipated to be approximately \$400 thousand higher than in 2020-21 due to a partial return to in-person conferences and increased staffing. Travel restrictions and an attempt to minimize the spread of the virus, have led to most conferences continuing in a virtual format.

As of December 31, 2021, CICS provided its services to 113 conferences, the vast majority being virtual conferences. Only 3 in-person conferences took place due to the pandemic. The forecast from January 1 to March 31, 2022 shows 26 additional conferences, all videoconferences. However, as virtual conferences are often scheduled closer to the date of the event as compared to in-person conference, CICS anticipates serving more than 26 conferences for the remainder of the current fiscal year.

With the continued uncertainty surrounding the pandemic, CICS anticipates maintaining the same level of intergovernmental meetings in 2022-23 and for a significant portion of those meetings to continue to be delivered through videoconference. CICS does foresee an increase in the number of “hybrid” conferences, which will include both in-person and remote participants, which would lead to an increase in expenditures when compared to 2021-22. Ultimately, the evolution of the pandemic will determine the actual level and nature of conference activity in 2022-23, as it has since March 2020.

## Planned human resources

The following table shows information on human resources, in full-time equivalents (FTEs), for CICS’ core responsibility and for its Internal Services for 2022–23 and the other relevant years.

Human resources planning summary for core responsibilities and internal services

Core responsibilities and internal services	2019–20 actual full-time equivalents	2020–21 actual full-time equivalents	2021–22 forecast full-time equivalents	2022–23 planned full-time equivalents	2023–24 planned full-time equivalents	2024–25 planned full-time equivalents
Intergovernmental Conference Services	22	19	21	25	25	25
Internal services	8	8	8	7	7	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>32</b>

CICS human resources have decreased over the last two years due to unplanned departures. 2021-22 will see an increase in FTEs as a result of staffing vacant positions in the fourth quarter. As a proactive measure, the Secretariat has increased focus on its succession plan to address potential departures from key positions. CICS has also developed a career plan to retain current employees and has implemented innovative recruitment strategies. Due to this proactive approach and recent staffing, CICS is now forecasting an FTE increase for 2022-23.

## Estimates by vote

Information on the Canadian Intergovernmental Conference Secretariat’s organizational appropriations is available in the [2022–23 Main Estimates](#).<sup>iv</sup>

## Future-oriented condensed statement of operations

The future-oriented condensed statement of operations provides an overview of the Canadian Intergovernmental Conference Secretariat's operations for 2021–22 to 2022–23.

The forecast and planned amounts in this statement of operations were prepared on an accrual basis. The forecast and planned amounts presented in other sections of the Departmental Plan were prepared on an expenditure basis. Amounts may therefore differ.

A more [detailed future-oriented statement of operations](#)<sup>v</sup> and associated notes, including a reconciliation of the net cost of operations with the requested authorities, are available on the Canadian Intergovernmental Conference Secretariat's website.

Future-oriented condensed statement of operations for the year ending March 31, 2023 (dollars)

Financial information	2021–22 forecast results	2022–23 planned results	Difference (2022–23 planned results minus 2021–22 forecast results)
Total expenses	5,723,304	6,205,838	482,534
Total revenues	0	0	0
Net cost of operations before government funding and transfers	5,723,304	6,205,838	482,534

2021-22 forecast results are showing a reduction in expenses, on account of the COVID-19 pandemic, since CICS has mainly supported videoconferences and teleconferences as opposed to in-person meetings which are significantly more expensive. Total expenses are anticipated to approach pre-pandemic levels in 2022-23, with a return to in-person meetings.

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## Corporate information

### Organizational profile

**Appropriate minister(s):** The Honourable Dominic LeBlanc

**Institutional head:** André M. McArdle

**Ministerial portfolio:** Intergovernmental Affairs, Infrastructure and Communities

**Enabling instrument(s):** The Canadian Intergovernmental Conference Secretariat was established pursuant to an agreement reached at the May 1973 First Ministers' Conference and was designated a department of the federal government by an Order-in-Council dated November 29, 1973.

**Year of incorporation / commencement:** 1973

### Raison d'être, mandate and role: who we are and what we do

Information on [CICS' raison d'être, mandate and role](#)<sup>vi</sup> is available on The Canadian Intergovernmental Conference Secretariat's website.

For more information on the department's organizational mandate letter commitments, see the [Minister's mandate letter](#).<sup>vii</sup>

### Operating context

The average number of meetings served annually during the 5 years from 2015-16 to 2019-20 was 53% higher than for the 10 years prior to this. Coincidentally during the 5-year period just mentioned, we saw an increase in meetings held by teleconference, with the number of these virtual meetings reaching consistently in the 33-40% range as a proportion of the total number of conferences served each year. The COVID-19 pandemic brought even bigger changes in the number and format of the conferences served, with 219 meetings in 2020-21 (43% of which were videoconferences) and 113 meetings during the first 9 months of 2021-22 (89% of which were videoconferences). A return to in-person conferences is expected in 2022-23, with 16 such events scheduled so far.

As governments and senior officials change across Canada, it is important for CICS to maintain and renew its relationships with client governments to actively promote the organization and its services, as well as its neutrality. Communication efforts are continuing in order to sustain the number of intergovernmental conferences we serve while adapting to evolving meeting formats including the "hybrid" approach we expect our clients to adopt for most in-person conferences over the coming year.

CICS has remained at the forefront of providing conference support services through the modernization of our delivery model and the deployment of innovations (technical and administrative) to support the sustained number of videoconferences and the expected return to in-person meetings in the “new normal” brought about by COVID-19. The sustained reliance on virtual conferencing methods will also continue to allow all federal, provincial, territorial governments to reduce both travel time and costs associated with participation in intergovernmental conferences. The COVID-19 pandemic has forced a shift away from in-person meetings, resulting in higher client expectations in terms of turnaround times and videoconferencing technologies and support services. Updating CICS’ organizational structure and its personnel’s knowledge and competencies to reflect this new environment will continue to be a crucial exercise in driving the Secretariat to fulfill its need for specialized skills in relation to virtual conferencing. With the goal of increasing internal specialization, CICS is proud to continue offering a wide array of conference solutions that respond to these client needs.

Next year, a significant number of the Secretariat’s federal public servants will be eligible to retire. These retirements along with the usual provincial-territorial employee rotations will challenge CICS’ ability to meet demand for conference activity, and to sustain a knowledgeable workforce with the appropriate competencies. Having succession and transition plans in place for key positions –as well as developmental opportunities for those employees with the desire and ability to progress within the organization– will continue to be a critical strategic priority.

The attraction and retention of a diverse, talented and motivated workforce creates a unique challenge for a micro-agency such as CICS due to employees’ limited upward mobility within a small organization. The Agency continues to make use of the Federal Student Work Exchange Program and CO-OP Programs on a regular basis to encourage interest in a public service career. Sustained efforts will be exerted to maintain and improve employee retention by creating an environment conducive to career development and job satisfaction, but also by providing a safe and respectful space, where employees feel comfortable to raise issues of concern, and a work environment that is inclusive, accessible, obstacle-free and non-discriminatory.

## Reporting framework

The Canadian Intergovernmental Conference Secretariat’s approved departmental results framework and program inventory for 2022–23 are as follows.

Departmental Results Framework	<u>Core Responsibility 1: Intergovernmental Conference Services</u>		Internal Services
	<p>1.1 Departmental Result: Facilitate productive federal-provincial-territorial and provincial-territorial discussions through centralized planning and professionally supported conferences</p>	<p><u>1.1.1 Indicator:</u> Conference organizer satisfaction rate</p>	
	<p>1.2 Departmental Result: Continuous innovation in process and service delivery to meet evolving client needs</p>	<p><u>1.1.2 Indicator:</u> Conference participant satisfaction rate</p>	
<p><u>1.2.1 Indicator:</u> Usage rate of key technologies and service delivery innovations by clients</p>			
Program Inventory	<u>Program:</u> Conference Services		



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## Supporting information on the program inventory

Supporting information on planned expenditures, human resources, and results related to CICS' program inventory is available on [GC InfoBase](#).<sup>viii</sup>

## Supplementary information tables

The following supplementary information tables are available on the Canadian Intergovernmental Conference Secretariat's website:

- ▶ [United Nations 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals](#) <sup>ix</sup>
- ▶ [Departmental Sustainable Development Strategy](#) <sup>x</sup>
- ▶ [Gender-based analysis plus](#) <sup>xi</sup>

## Federal tax expenditures

The Canadian Intergovernmental Conference Secretariat's Departmental Plan does not include information on tax expenditures.

Tax expenditures are the responsibility of the Minister of Finance. The Department of Finance Canada publishes cost estimates and projections for government-wide tax expenditures each year in the [Report on Federal Tax Expenditures](#).<sup>xii</sup> This report provides detailed information on tax expenditures, including objectives, historical background and references to related federal spending programs, as well as evaluations, research papers and gender-based analysis plus.

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## Appendix: definitions

### **appropriation (crédit)**

Any authority of Parliament to pay money out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund.

### **budgetary expenditures (dépenses budgétaires)**

Operating and capital expenditures; transfer payments to other levels of government, organizations or individuals; and payments to Crown corporations.

### **core responsibility (responsabilité essentielle)**

An enduring function or role performed by a department. The intentions of the department with respect to a core responsibility are reflected in one or more related departmental results that the department seeks to contribute to or influence.

### **Departmental Plan (plan ministériel)**

A document that sets out a department's priorities, programs, expected results and associated resource requirements, covering a three-year period beginning with the year indicated in the title of the report. Departmental Plans are tabled in Parliament each spring.

### **departmental result (résultat ministériel)**

A change that a department seeks to influence. A departmental result is often outside departments' immediate control, but it should be influenced by program-level outcomes.

### **departmental result indicator (indicateur de résultat ministériel)**

A factor or variable that provides a valid and reliable means to measure or describe progress on a departmental result.

### **departmental results framework (cadre ministériel des résultats)**

A framework that consists of the department's core responsibilities, departmental results and departmental result indicators.

### **Departmental Results Report (rapport sur les résultats ministériels)**

A report on a department's actual performance in a fiscal year against its plans, priorities and expected results set out in its Departmental Plan for that year. Departmental Results Reports are usually tabled in Parliament each fall.

### **experimentation (expérimentation)**

The conducting of activities that explore, test and compare the effects and impacts of policies and interventions in order to inform decision-making and improve outcomes for Canadians. Experimentation is related to, but distinct from, innovation. Innovation is the trying of something new; experimentation involves a rigorous comparison of results. For example, introducing a new

mobile application to communicate with Canadians can be an innovation; systematically testing the new application and comparing it against an existing website or other tools to see which one reaches more people, is experimentation.

**full-time equivalent (équivalent temps plein)**

A measure of the extent to which an employee represents a full person-year charge against a departmental budget. Full-time equivalents are calculated as a ratio of assigned hours of work to scheduled hours of work. Scheduled hours of work are set out in collective agreements.

**gender-based analysis plus (GBA Plus) (analyse comparative entre les sexes plus [ACS Plus])**

An analytical tool used to support the development of responsive and inclusive policies, programs and other initiatives; and understand how factors such as sex, race, national and ethnic origin, Indigenous origin or identity, age, sexual orientation, socio-economic conditions, geography, culture and disability, impact experiences and outcomes, and can affect access to and experience of government programs.

**government-wide priorities (priorités pangouvernementales)**

For the purpose of the 2022-23 Departmental Plan, government-wide priorities are the high-level themes outlining the Government’s agenda in the 2021 Speech from the Throne: building a healthier today and tomorrow; growing a more resilient economy; bolder climate action; fighter harder for safer communities; standing up for diversity and inclusion; moving faster on the path to reconciliation and fighting for a secure, just, and equitable world.

**horizontal initiative (initiative horizontale)**

An initiative in which two or more federal organizations are given funding to pursue a shared outcome, often linked to a government priority.

**non-budgetary expenditures (dépenses non budgétaires)**

Net outlays and receipts related to loans, investments and advances, which change the composition of the financial assets of the Government of Canada.

**performance (rendement)**

What an organization did with its resources to achieve its results, how well those results compare to what the organization intended to achieve, and how well lessons learned have been identified.

**plan (plan)**

The articulation of strategic choices, which provides information on how an organization intends to achieve its priorities and associated results. Generally, a plan will explain the logic behind the strategies chosen and tend to focus on actions that lead up to the expected result.

**planned spending (dépenses prévues)**

For Departmental Plans and Departmental Results Reports, planned spending refers to those amounts presented in the Main Estimates.

A department is expected to be aware of the authorities that it has sought and received. The determination of planned spending is a departmental responsibility, and departments must be able to defend the expenditure and accrual numbers presented in their Departmental Plans and Departmental Results Reports.

**program (programme)**

Individual or groups of services, activities or combinations thereof that are managed together within a department and that focus on a specific set of outputs, outcomes or service levels.

**program inventory (répertoire des programmes)**

An inventory of a department's programs that describes how resources are organized to carry out the department's core responsibilities and achieve its planned results.

**result (résultat)**

An external consequence attributed, in part, to an organization, policy, program or initiative. Results are not within the control of a single organization, policy, program or initiative; instead, they are within the area of the organization's influence.

**statutory expenditures (dépenses législatives)**

Expenditures that Parliament has approved through legislation other than appropriation acts. The legislation sets out the purpose of the expenditures and the terms and conditions under which they may be made.

**target (cible)**

A measurable performance or success level that an organization, program or initiative plans to achieve within a specified time period. Targets can be either quantitative or qualitative.

**voted expenditures (dépenses votées)**

Expenditures that Parliament approves annually through an Appropriation Act. The vote wording becomes the governing conditions under which these expenditures may be made.

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## Endnotes

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- i. GC InfoBase, <https://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/ems-sgd/edb-bdd/index-eng.html#start>
- ii. GC InfoBase, <https://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/ems-sgd/edb-bdd/index-eng.html#start>
- iii. GC InfoBase, <https://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/ems-sgd/edb-bdd/index-eng.html#start>
- iv. 2022–23 Main Estimates, <https://www.canada.ca/en/treasury-board-secretariat/services/planned-government-spending/government-expenditure-plan-main-estimates.html>
- v. Future-oriented statement of operations, <https://scics.ca/en/publication/future-oriented-statement-of-operations-2022-23>
- vi. Raison d’être, mandate and role, <https://scics.ca/en/publication/raison-detre-mandate-and-role/>
- vii. Minister’s mandate letter, <http://pm.gc.ca/eng/mandate-letters>
- viii. GC InfoBase, <https://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/ems-sgd/edb-bdd/index-eng.html#start>
- ix. United Nations 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals, <https://scics.ca/en/publication/united-nations-2030-agenda-and-the-sustainable-development-goals>
- x. Departmental Sustainable Development Strategy, <https://scics.ca/en/publication/update-to-the-2020-23-departmental-sustainable-development-strategy>
- xi. Gender-based analysis plus, <https://scics.ca/en/publication/gender-based-analysis-plus-2022-23>
- xii. Report on Federal Tax Expenditures, <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-finance/services/publications/federal-tax-expenditures.html>
- xiii. CICS Website, [www.scics.ca](http://www.scics.ca)