



PHOTO CREDIT: SPLASH OF RAIN ON PEXELS

►► Is the federal public service too big? An analysis of public service employment trends: 2015-24

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►► Introduction

Prime Minister Carney has [promised](#) to transform the Government of Canada, acknowledging that “the federal government has been spending too much” and declaring that “we need to be efficient and effective in all that we spend, while empowering a world-class, tech-enabled public service.” To that end, the Prime Minister is launching “a comprehensive review of government spending to increase the government’s productivity” adding that “as part of our review we will ensure that the size of the federal public service meets the needs of Canadians.” Implicit in the Prime Minister’s undertaking is a belief that the public service has become too big, although he has committed to “capping, not cutting, public service employment.”

The purpose of this paper is to provide context for the Prime Minister’s objective to transform government, in part by ensuring that the size of the federal public service meets the needs of Canadians.

Since Justin Trudeau became Prime Minister in 2015 more than 110,000 (net) new employees have been added to the public service, an increase of 43% in nine years, bringing total [headcount](#) to just under 368,000 as of 2024.¹ While these figures raise headline questions regarding the size of the public service, they need to be interpreted in light of the policy objectives of the government of the day as well as factors affecting the efficiency with which the government’s agenda is implemented. The appropriate size of the federal public service can only be assessed in this context.

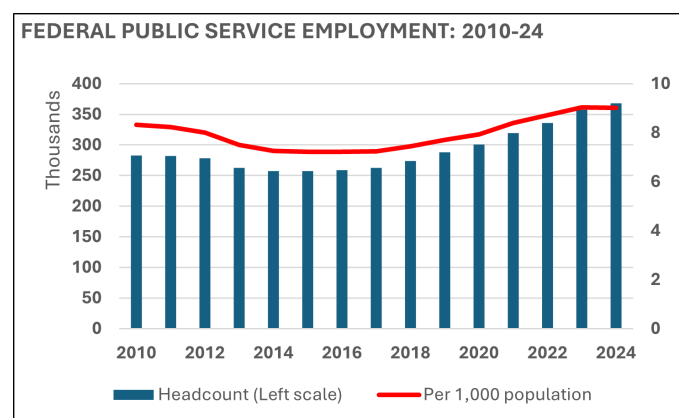
To that end, this paper addresses the following questions:

- 1. What factors have been driving the rapid growth of the public service since 2015?**
- 2. Is the federal public service too big and, if so, according to what criteria?**

► Growth of the federal public service in context

In 1993 the federal public service numbered 240,500. By 1998, following the fiscal retrenchment initiated in the 1995 budget, headcount had fallen 22% to 187,000. But by the beginning of the Harper government in 2006, employment had recovered to 250,000 and continued to increase to 283,000 in 2010. By the end of the Harper regime in 2015, following a period of relative austerity, employment had declined by 26,000 (9.2%) to 257,000. But by March 31, 2024, it had [rebounded strongly](#) to 367,772.¹ (See table at the end of the paper for headcount by department: 2015-24.)

Can the recent growth be considered excessive? Or did the Trudeau government simply restore public service strength from an unsustainably depleted level at the end of the Harper regime? To put these numbers in context: between 2015 and 2024, while the federal public service grew 43%, [Canada's population](#) increased by less than 15% implying that the number of federal public servants per 1,000 population increased from 7.2 to 9.0. The 43% growth of the federal public service significantly outpaced the 18.5% (real) [growth of the economy](#); the 15.5% growth of [total employment](#); and the 25.5% growth of [employment in the entire public sector](#), comprising all orders of government.



There is no reason to expect the growth of the civil service to match, much less exceed, population growth. Other things being equal, we would hope that increased productivity—e.g., through investment in information technology, better work processes, and management training—would bring public service growth below that of the population, particularly as so much specialized and urgent work is being outsourced to consultants. Clearly, the robust public service growth over the last nine years calls out for explanation and justification.

► Principal factors driving public service growth

The 43% growth since 2015 appears due to some combination of the following four factors.

- **The ambition and philosophy of the Trudeau government:** The government came into office at a time when the neoliberal

paradigm—holding that “markets know best”—was being widely questioned in the western democracies in the face of growing income inequality and the severe recession of 2008-09. It was seen as time to bring government back, and particularly the social agenda of government. In the Trudeau government’s case this coincided with a major cultural revolution—the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion movement—which in Canada has been amplified by an historic commitment to Indigenous reconciliation. Every federal department and agency has committed to promoting DEI and reconciliation in hiring practices and human resources management. The combined effect of all the foregoing trends put strong upward pressure on staffing to accommodate the new priorities.

- **The COVID pandemic:** This external shock—analogue in many ways to a declaration of war—required a large and rapid mobilization of government effort to implement extraordinary financial assistance, new public health capacity, extra border security, and many other adaptations to the unprecedented circumstances. Between FY 2018-19 and 2020-21 [federal program spending](#) increased by \$301 billion (93%). Partly to cope, public service headcount increased by 17% between 2018 and 2021. While program spending had come down 24% by FY 2023-24, the size of the public service has continued to grow—up 15% between 2021 and 2024 for reasons that will be addressed later.
- **High-profile service disruption/degradation:** Any significant degradation of critical public-facing services creates a strong political incentive to fix the problem, pronto—e.g., the problems in border services and passport issuance as travel rebounded after the pandemic. This means hiring people, often temporarily. But while occasional service fiascos attract a lot of media attention, they appear to be relatively small contributors to overall headcount growth. The big drivers of staff growth are associated with the introduction or expansion of programs that require complex eligibility assessment and other labour-intensive administrative features.
- **Political and bureaucratic incentives:** In a letter to the Clerk of the Privy Council in late 2023, the outgoing Chief Information Officer, Catherine Luelo, [observed](#) that departments “have not met an idea they don’t like,” and are always creating new standalone programs—e.g., to implement about 700 commitments in ministers’ mandate letters.² Meanwhile, the incentives to kill existing programs are much weaker. Obviously, every program develops a constituency of beneficiaries, including the bureaucrats who manage the program and even the external consultants who are called on periodically to evaluate it! Thus there is an inbuilt tendency for the program portfolio, and its public service cadre, to grow cumulatively and become more and more complex and fragmented. Moreover, a belief in the mystical power of information technology encourages politicians to call for programs whose design and complex eligibility features put increasing pressure on stressed legacy IT systems and require new hires, and a growing army of consultants, to fill the gaps.

More generally, the labour relations environment in the heavily unionized public service, and the quasi-tenured position of more senior members, also serve to promote cumulative headcount growth—i.e., easier to hire than to fire.

Running counter to these growth drivers are two principal factors that constrain the otherwise untrammelled expansion of the public service.

- **Fiscal discipline:** Because there is always resistance to taxes, the fiscal constraint on public service headcount is potentially powerful. The Trudeau government was fortunate that extremely low interest rates (prior to the recent inflation) and a moderate ratio of federal debt to GDP, permitted the government to run relatively large deficits without generating much concern in either financial markets or the general public. Consequently, there was relatively little fiscal constraint on public service growth until recently.
- **Productivity—doing more with less:** If the government is able to provide its services more efficiently it can fulfill its various missions with fewer public servants than would otherwise be necessary. Growing labour productivity (output per employee) can be achieved in both the private and public sectors through investment in technology and capital equipment; better management practices; creative problem-solving; and through recruitment and training of motivated people. Unfortunately, productivity of the public service is inherently difficult to measure because the value of its “output” is rarely determined in the market of dollars and cents, or in any readily measurable amount other than program spending, which is far too blunt a metric. That’s why the incentive to improve productivity must come from political leadership that transmits the mission to senior bureaucrats and on down through the ranks. The problem is that the motivation may be weak in view of the relatively low political profile of the public service and the risk of high-profile screw-ups when new (potentially) productivity-enhancing technology is introduced.

Both the Harper and Trudeau governments stated a commitment to more efficient delivery of both internal and external services. For example, the headcount of Shared Services Canada—the government’s internal IT services organization—has grown rapidly as has spending on IT out-sourcing, although sometimes with disastrous consequences—e.g., [Phoenix](#), [ArriveCan](#). More effort is nevertheless required including to increase the professional competence of internal IT hires, admittedly a challenge given various bureaucratic constraints, particularly regarding compensation.

In view of the obvious importance of attracting, training, and retaining top-notch people, it is odd that the two agencies ostensibly responsible internally for management training (Canada School of Public Service), and for quality recruitment and career development (Public Service Commission)⁴ have languished, at least in terms of staff complement and budget.³

▶▶ Assessing whether the federal public service is too big?

The answer is partly related to one’s view of the role of government—do we want government and the public service to do more or to do less? Nevertheless, looking at the growth of headcount since 2015 there are some objective reasons to suspect that the size of the public service is now greater than needed to implement the policy and program objectives of the Trudeau government.

- The fiscal constraint on the growth of the public service was of little concern during the period of exceptionally low interest rates on public borrowing.
- Headcount continued to increase strongly in the aftermath of the pandemic build-up—increasing 5.1% in 2022 and 6.3% in 2023. (But as explained later, some of this growth was needed to clean up effects of COVID spending, and is planned to be temporary.)
- By 2024, the number of federal public servants per 1,000 population had reached the highest ratio (9.0) in at least the past 40 years during which governments of various ideological stripes have held power.

The foregoing bullet points provide circumstantial evidence that the federal public service has grown by more than necessary to deliver the government’s overall program. But the more fundamental question is whether the productivity of the public service—average output per employee—is meeting reasonable benchmarks.

▶▶ The challenge of increasing government productivity

The Harper government sought to increase productivity by cutting headcount in the expectation that this would motivate innovation in work practices sufficient to maintain service levels. Unfortunately, for the most part, this didn’t happen. Instead, the result was generally reduced program integrity—e.g., a significant rise in immigration processing backlogs—which required headcount growth, early in the Trudeau government, to correct.

The onset of COVID, and the associated spike in program spending in 2019-2021, caused a dramatic increase in apparent public service productivity. The COVID-emergency payments were made largely with existing staff and procedures, causing spending per employee to peak. But in the aftermath, very large numbers of new employees had to be hired to clean up distortions created by the COVID spending measures—e.g., to determine EI entitlements in the context of [CERB payments](#). Thus as spending plummeted post-COVID, headcount actually increased causing “productivity”—crudely measured as total program spending per employee—to crater.

While it is likely that political leadership has accorded too little priority to increasing the efficiency of government operations—doing the same or more with less—we may still ask:

- (i) Was the Trudeau era growth in headcount due primarily to a lack of adequate bureaucratic control, bred of fiscal complacency? or
- (ii) Was the growth driven largely by the government's adoption of overly complex rules regarding program implementation, all in the context of inadequate technological systems?

If the answer to either question is “Yes” then we can conclude that the public service is too big—i.e., it is bigger than necessary to deliver what the government of the day seeks to accomplish. But the implications for solution are quite different. The remedy for (i) is the traditional nostrum of finance ministries everywhere—conduct expenditure and program reviews, identify the fat and activities of low priority, and wield the fiscal scalpel (or the chainsaw). That was the Harper government's approach but the cuts were not sustainable because the anticipated productivity gains did not materialize.

In Trudeau's case, question (ii) appears to be the more relevant, although fiscal complacency was certainly in the mix as well. The Trudeau government increased spending dramatically, quite apart from COVID, in several social policy domains. Most of these programs came with elaborate qualification criteria and were therefore labour-intensive to implement. As the examples in the text box illustrate, the government's particular spending and regulatory choices, which had a heavy bias to those that are labour-intensive, have been major drivers of the rapid headcount growth.

To implement the government's political and legislative agenda as efficiently as possible involves, as a practical matter, some combination of (a) simplifying program criteria, eligibility rules, and internal compliance procedures, and (b) becoming more sophisticated and proficient in the use of technology to automate delivery processes. Solution component (a) will often involve a trade-off between requiring complex eligibility criteria in order to tightly target spending versus simpler criteria that are cheaper to implement but result in some “wasted” spending beyond the target purpose. The main way to mitigate the trade-off—i.e., to have tightly-targeted programs that can be administered without excessive headcount requirements—is to invest heavily in sophisticated information technology and in hiring and training for its efficient use. Nevertheless, as the EI example in the text box illustrates, some rules are impossible to automate even with state-of-the-art technology so a trade-off is sometimes unavoidable. We may hope that AI will eventually permit such trade-offs to be minimized or even eliminated.

There are other situations where the problem could be avoided altogether. For example, when the government was deciding how to deliver its new dental benefits program it could have chosen to delegate the back-office processes to the Provinces that already had systems in place to handle the benefit delivery at low incremental cost. But the government chose not to, and added to its own headcount and cost instead.

How Program Design Complexity Increases Staffing Requirements

(The following is based on an interview with a senior official with direct knowledge of the issues)

Canada has probably the most complex rule sets in the world that govern the delivery of transfers to individuals—famously around EI. Here is just one example. If you are laid off, you cannot collect EI during any period you are receiving severance pay from your company. Although this sounds straightforward, it turns out there are some 130 types of payments individuals might receive upon departing a company. You are allowed to receive most of these while still eligible for EI. The catch is that most companies don't track the precise type. The EI system requires a human to call the company to identify the precise type of payment. Several hundred (full-time-equivalent) employees are occupied with the task. But when the CERB was introduced, the surge in EI applicants made it infeasible to make all the calls to determine eligibility. So the rule was temporarily suspended and claims were processed in hours, not weeks. But when the crisis ended, the rule was reinstated on the fiscally-motivated ground that EI payments had to be administered in strict adherence to the severance eligibility rule despite the degradation of service and increase of headcount this implied. The rules around immigration provide many other instances of extreme complexity. For example, there are five separate refugee systems with different rules for different groups—Ukrainians, Afghanis, Syrians, etc. The rules are so complex that there is no option but to deploy significant human resources to manage. The government made the rules in multiple areas extremely complex and has done so with full awareness of the implications for the added staffing requirements.

Finally; multiple financial tracking and reporting systems, usually in response to some boondoggle, appear to be significant generators of head count. Redundant, overbearing compliance mechanisms, ostensibly to ensure taxpayers' money is being spent as intended, end up imposing significant (if unquantified) costs on both the users and deliverers of programs. Because accountability imposes costs as well as benefits, attention is needed to ensure the latter exceeds the former.

►► Bringing technology to the rescue

The fundamental solution to lagging productivity—and to right-sizing the public service—is to become more proficient in the use of technology to automate program delivery processes.

To that end [Prime Minister Carney has said](#) his government will “leverage technology to improve the automation of routine tasks and inquiries from the public and reduce the need for additional hiring... and will consider where AI can be leveraged to enhance productivity in government.”

Clearly, this is the right sentiment, but easier said than done. Experience has shown that the introduction of information technology in large public bureaucracies is a fraught process where failures are expensive and politically embarrassing. So, there is an incentive to try to play it safe and hope that legacy systems can hold up. But the answer is not to shy away, but rather to double down on the commitment to efficiency and to invest in developing far greater internal expertise to guide and complement the still necessary use of external consultants.

Successive governments have talked a good game, but there is a very long way to go. As documented by the [Auditor General in a 2023 Report on Modernizing Information Technology Systems](#): “It has been more than 24 years since the government first identified aging systems as a significant issue and...still does not have a strategy to drive modernization. Only 38% of the government’s approximately 7,500 information technology applications were considered healthy...about one-third out of the 1,480 applications designated as mission-critical...were still considered in poor health...Many aging systems are currently being maintained on old and outdated infrastructure, which is costly, resource intensive, and unsustainable.”

Among the many factors that have contributed to this sorry state of affairs, Michael Wernick, a former Clerk of the Privy Council, [observed](#) that the government has never resolved how technology should be managed. Should it be a single service with common standards, interoperability and cybersecurity? Or would it better function as a loose federation of 300 departments and agencies where deputy heads and managers exercise autonomy?

It is well beyond the scope of this paper to suggest what specifically the government needs to do to finally resolve its decades-long digital technology conundrum, a challenge that can only become more urgent with the emergence of powerful artificial intelligence. Within the new Carney government that responsibility will presumably fall to Joel Lightbound, as Minister of Government Transformation with the collaboration of Evan Solomon, the inaugural Minister of Artificial Intelligence and Digital Innovation. Fortunately, there will be no shortage of advice from those with long experience in the way government works, as well as those with deep understanding of what is required to implement digital technology in large organizations.

► Conclusion

Is the federal public service too big? When considering the question, we should set aside opinions related to the role of government in society—should it play a bigger or smaller role?

That is a political decision, although with obvious implications for the size of the public service. But political ideology aside, there remains the technocratic challenge of achieving the program of the government of the day as efficiently as possible. To the extent that headcount exceeds what is needed to accomplish the task, one can conclude that the public service is too big.



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There are two separate dimensions, which I would label *Tactical* and *Strategic*, regarding the right size of the public service:

- **The Tactical dimension:** Given the program design and technology implementation already in place, are there more public servants than reasonably needed to execute the government’s program?
- **The Strategic dimension:** Have the government’s choices regarding program design and technology implementation necessitated a larger public service than would otherwise be needed to execute the government’s program?

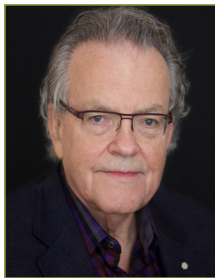
Along the Tactical dimension, there is an inherent tendency of large public bureaucracies to overstaff, subject to countervailing fiscal pressure. That pressure, until very recently, has not been a potent constraint so it would be expected that headcount has inflated cumulatively. On top of that, the COVID emergency likely led to some hiring that is now being unwound more slowly than strictly necessary.

Along the Strategic dimension, it is clear that the government’s decisions—e.g., requiring increasingly complex program criteria and eligibility rules, and the failure to upgrade or even maintain information technology—have required a lot of hiring just to cope. The findings of the Auditor General regarding the state of the government’s digital capacity and the experience of senior managers provide the compelling evidence.

It’s not possible to quantify with any precision the magnitude of the Tactical and Strategic effects on the size of the public service. Nevertheless, I would conclude that the federal public service has in fact become too big based primarily on the following evidence:

- The number of federal public servants per 1,000 population has climbed steadily to the highest level in at least 40 years.
- For most of the period since 2015 (until COVID), thanks to sustained low interest rates, there was relatively little fiscal motivation to counter the inherent bureaucratic tendency to increase headcount cumulatively.
- Government programs have become subject to increasingly complex rules but without adequate investment in the information technology needed for efficient administration. Headcount has had to be increased to plug the gap.

It is therefore both welcome and timely that Prime Minister Carney has [committed](#) to comprehensively review federal spending in order to increase the government's productivity, and to ensure that the size of the federal public service meets the needs of Canadians. Our economy is in the throes of a productivity slump bordering on crisis. Every sector is being challenged to up its game. The federal government can be no exception.



Peter Nicholson has served in numerous posts in government, business, and higher education. His public service career included positions as Clifford Clark Visiting Economist in Finance Canada; Deputy Chief of Staff, Policy in the Office of the Prime Minister; and Special Advisor to the Secretary-general of the OECD. Dr. Nicholson's business career included senior executive positions with Scotiabank and BCE Inc. He retired in 2010 as founding president of the Council of Canadian Academies,

an organization that conducts expert panel studies of scientific issues related to public policy. He is currently the Chair of the Board of the Canadian Climate Institute. Dr. Nicholson is a Member of the Order of Canada and the Order of Nova Scotia and is the recipient of six honorary degrees.

►► Endnotes

1 On May 23, 2025, the Treasury Board announced that the population of the federal public service was [357,965 at March 31, 2025](#), a decrease of 9,807 or 2.65% from a year earlier, marking the first decline of headcount in 10 years. The largest reductions were in the Canada Revenue Agency (6,656 or 11.3%) and Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship (1,944 or 14.9%).

2 The source for all employment data in this paper is the [Treasury Board Secretariat employment database](#). Here, the "public service" consists of employees of federal departments and agencies listed in the various schedules of the Financial Administration Act. The data exclude political staff, (non-civilian) members of the Canadian Forces and RCMP, as well as employees of more than 30 Crown Corporations such as Canada Post, the CBC, the Bank of Canada, etc. The detailed employment data cover the period from March 31, 2010 through March 31, 2024—reported here on a calendar-year basis—and are broken down by departments and agencies. The referenced employment numbers are lower than those encompassed in the Personal Expenditure Analysis of the Parliamentary Budget Office which includes the non-civilian members of the Canadian Forces and RCMP. The PBO headcount in 2021-22 (413,000) is about 80,000 greater than the number in the Treasury Board Secretariat's database.

3 Prime Minister Carney, in a departure from Trudeau's practice, has provided [shorter mandate letters](#) focused on the government's top seven overall priorities.

4 The headcount of the Public Service Commission increased 21% to 892 between 2015 and 2024 while staffing at the School of Public Service grew by only 5% to 679. This is to be compared with growth of 43% for the entire public service.

5 Prime Minister Carney [has said](#) that the government's review of government spending will include "significantly reducing reliance on external consultants, while improving the capacity of the public service to hire expertise in-house."

People who are passionate about public policy know that the Province of Saskatchewan has pioneered some of Canada's major policy innovations. The two distinguished public servants after whom the school is named, Albert W. Johnson and Thomas K. Shoyama, used their practical and theoretical knowledge to challenge existing policies and practices, as well as to explore new policies and organizational forms. Earning the label, "the Greatest Generation," they and their colleagues became part of a group of modernizers who saw government as a positive catalyst of change in post-war Canada. They created a legacy of achievement in public administration and professionalism in public service that remains a continuing inspiration for public servants in Saskatchewan and across the country. The Johnson Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy is proud to carry on the tradition by educating students interested in and devoted to advancing public value.

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HEADCOUNT OF THE FEDERAL PUBLIC SERVICE BY DEPARTMENT & AGENCY AND PRINCIPAL AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY: 2015-24

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024		CHANGE 2015-24	
PRINCIPAL CENTRAL AGENCIES												PERCENT	NUMBER
TREASURY BOARD SECRETARIAT	1,761	1,728	1,841	1,954	2,125	2,276	2,355	2,378	2,555	2,501		42%	740
PRIVY COUNCIL OFFICE	727	712	799	1,006	1,075	1,011	1,076	1,130	1,212	1,288		77%	561
FINANCE	743	735	747	788	802	833	853	875	908	942		27%	199
TOTAL	3,231	3,175	3,387	3,748	4,002	4,120	4,284	4,383	4,675	4,731		46%	1,500
													-
SOUND PUBLIC MANAGEMENT													-
PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION	738	741	780	809	889	955	878	899	975	892		21%	154
AUDITOR GENERAL	571	588	617	603	601	639	749	655	793	836		46%	265
SCHOOL OF PUBLIC SERVICE	646	648	610	599	620	668	647	707	742	679		5%	33
TOTAL	1,955	1,977	2,007	2,011	2,110	2,262	2,274	2,261	2,510	2,407		23%	452
													-
INTERNAL SERVICES													-
SERVICES AND PROCUREMENT	12,092	12,061	12,894	13,988	15,721	16,892	17,085	17,178	18,114	18,961		57%	6,869
SHARED SERVICES	5,236	5,157	5,257	5,816	6,528	7,185	7,553	7,948	8,879	9,502		81%	4,266
STATISTICS CANADA	6,532	7,418	6,984	6,714	6,890	6,906	8,568	8,682	7,951	7,229		11%	697
TOTAL	23,860	24,636	25,135	26,518	29,139	30,983	33,206	33,808	34,944	35,692		50%	11,832
													-
CANADA REVENUE AGENCY	40,059	39,484	40,223	42,152	43,908	45,019	47,426	54,933	59,019	59,155		48%	19,096
GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT													
NATIONAL DEFENCE	22,611	22,954	23,178	24,024	25,278	26,047	26,422	26,399	27,356	28,740		27%	6,129
VETERANS AFFAIRS	3,174	3,413	2,809	2,800	3,159	3,321	3,799	3,566	3,651	3,792		19%	618
GLOBAL AFFAIRS	5,973	5,890	6,061	6,354	6,561	6,860	6,994	7,112	7,460	7,439		25%	1,466
TOTAL	31,758	32,257	32,048	33,178	34,998	36,228	37,215	37,077	38,467	39,971		26%	8,213
IMMIGRATION													
IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES & CITIZENSHIP	6,385	6,587	6,465	6,993	7,864	8,496	8,991	10,248	12,258	13,092		105%	6,707
IMMIGRATION AND REFUGEE BOARD	954	973	1,031	1,087	1,413	1,742	1,993	2,114	2,304	2,579		170%	1,625
TOTAL	7,339	7,560	7,496	8,080	9,277	10,238	10,984	12,362	14,562	15,671		114%	8,332
													-
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT													-
INNOVATION, SCIENCE & ECONOMIC DEVEL.	4,742	4,776	4,947	5,146	5,459	5,516	5,700	6,094	6,331	6,531		38%	1,789
NATIONAL RESEARCH COUNCIL	3,618	3,780	3,864	3,871	4,058	4,215	4,380	4,301	4,423	4,519		25%	901
REGIONAL AGENCIES	1,525	1,539	1,503	1,511	1,544	1,636	1,805	1,916	1,953	2,014		32%	489
RESEARCH GRANTING COUNCILS	1,059	1,063	1,115	1,127	1,221	1,291	1,383	1,397	1,498	1,519		43%	460
SPACE AGENCY	600	616	655	647	692	686	744	789	885	948		58%	348
TOTAL	11,544	11,774	12,084	12,302	12,974	13,344	14,012	14,497	15,090	15,531		35%	3,987
NATURAL RESOURCES													-
FISHERIES & OCEANS	9,858	9,901	10,230	11,138	11,911	12,654	13,526	13,537	14,526	14,716		49%	4,858
ENVIRONMENT & CLIMATE CHANGE	6,595	6,475	6,601	6,836	7,276	7,550	7,616	7,840	8,411	8,901		35%	2,306
AGRICULTURE & AGRI-FOOD	5,194	5,167	5,234	5,277	5,292	5,531	5,495	5,638	5,677	5,774		11%	580
NATURAL RESOURCES	4,149	4,191	4,264	4,358	4,551	4,574	4,685	4,737	5,302	5,751		39%	1,602
IMPACT ASSESSMENT AGENCY	229	258	289	278	330	438	460	432	452	535		134%	306
CANADA ENERGY REGULATOR	447	469	456	477	479	503	553	556	572	573		28%	126
TOTAL	26,472	26,461	27,074	28,364	29,839	31,250	32,335	32,740	34,940	36,250		37%	9,778

HEADCOUNT OF THE FEDERAL PUBLIC SERVICE BY DEPARTMENT & AGENCY AND PRINCIPAL AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY: 2015-24

TRANSPORT & INFRASTRUCTURE													
INFRASTRUCTURE CANADA	354	351	329	401	514	617	700	1,043	1,350	1,506		325%	1,152
TRANSPORT CANADA	5,205	5,154	4,782	5,362	5,683	5,877	6,339	6,063	6,366	6,714		29%	1,509
TOTAL	5,559	5,505	5,111	5,763	6,197	6,494	7,039	7,106	7,716	8,220		48%	2,661
SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT													
EMPLOYMENT & SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT	21,707	22,312	23,729	24,739	25,160	27,115	32,697	35,609	38,983	39,089		80%	17,382
HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION	204	205	191	206	199	242	252	279	297	300		47%	96
WOMEN & GENDER EQUALITY	92	91	99	121	181	264	329	390	468	443		382%	351
TOTAL	22,003	22,608	24,019	25,066	25,540	27,621	33,278	36,278	39,748	39,832		81%	17,829
INDIGENOUS PORTFOLIO	4,684	4,582	4,708	4,931	5,087	5,418	8,742	9,122	9,926	10,725		129%	6,041
CULTURE & HERITAGE													
PARKS CANADA	3,394	3,886	3,976	4,202	4,356	4,519	4,666	4,702	4,811	4,929		45%	1,535
CANADIAN HERITAGE	1,773	1,762	1,759	1,841	1,862	1,889	1,935	2,062	1,975	1,929		9%	156
LIBRARY & ARCHIVES	1,026	938	930	927	981	1,000	926	842	1,013	1,173		14%	147
NATIONAL FILM BOARD	394	389	371	399	392	388	389	379	383	388		-2%	-6
CANADIAN RADIO & TELECOM. COMMISSION	462	450	462	455	493	534	541	546	564	639		38%	177
COMMISSIONER OF OFFICIAL LANGUAGES	172	164	155	164	174	173	177	178	167	178		3%	6
TOTAL	7,221	7,589	7,653	7,988	8,258	8,503	8,634	8,709	8,913	9,236		28%	2,015
HEALTH PORTFOLIO													
HEALTH CANADA	9,079	9,189	9,327	9,739	10,794	11,223	9,204	9,886	10,003	10,187		12%	1,108
FOOD INSPECTION AGENCY	6,009	5,946	6,180	6,249	6,247	6,042	6,539	6,603	6,929	6,833		14%	824
PUBLIC HEALTH AGENCY	2,186	2,223	2,234	2,159	2,379	2,340	3,281	4,254	4,211	4,251		94%	2,065
TOTAL	17,274	17,358	17,741	18,147	19,420	19,605	19,024	20,743	21,143	21,271		23%	3,997
JUSTICE PORTFOLIO													

HEADCOUNT OF THE FEDERAL PUBLIC SERVICE BY DEPARTMENT & AGENCY AND PRINCIPAL AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY: 2015-24													
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE	4,476	4,461	4,461	4,532	4,659	4,844	4,972	5,070	5,378	5,637		26%	1,161
FEDERAL JUDGES	1,144	1,141	1,128	1,165	1,198	1,204	1,209	1,190	1,183	1,185		4%	41
PROSECUTION SERVICE	968	970	990	1,005	991	1,035	1,082	1,118	1,173	1,177		22%	209
TOTAL	6,588	6,572	6,579	6,702	6,848	7,083	7,263	7,378	7,734	7,999		21%	1,411
PUBLIC SAFETY & SECURITY													
PUBLIC SAFETY CANADA	978	1,125	1,149	1,205	1,329	1,269	1,256	1,381	1,622	1,695		73%	717
CORRECTIONAL SERVICE	17,639	17,172	17,109	17,146	17,482	17,818	17,904	17,925	18,527	18,990		8%	1,351
BORDER SERVICES AGENCY	14,113	14,171	13,707	14,013	14,469	14,971	15,224	15,441	16,520	17,226		22%	3,113
FINANCIAL TRANSACTIONS ANALYSIS CENTRE	355	374	378	372	361	376	401	523	545	556		57%	201
COMMUNICATIONS SECURITY ESTABLISHMENT	2,168	2,162	2,209	2,361	2,549	2,752	2,974	3,018	3,161	3,490		61%	1,322
RCMP (CIVILIAN STAFF)	6,437	6,571	6,801	7,240	7,564	8,022	8,436	8,690	9,386	10,309		60%	3,872
SUPERINTENDENT OF FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS	700	667	688	721	769	848	903	942	1,139	1,323		89%	623
FINANCIAL CONSUMER AGENCY	84	94	99	115	128	147	161	196	216	231		175%	147
TOTAL	42,474	42,336	42,140	43,173	44,651	46,203	47,259	48,116	51,116	53,820		27%	11,346
TOTAL OF THE ABOVE	252,021	253,874	257,405	268,123	282,248	294,371	312,975	329,513	350,503	360,511		43%	108,490

SOURCE: TREASURY BOARD SECRETARIAT. ALLOCATION OF DEPARTMENTS/AGENCIES TO FUNCTIONAL AREAS WAS DONE BY THE AUTHOR. SOME SMALLER UNITS HAVE BEEN OMITTED.