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Audit on Access in the Pre-Assessment Process

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Executive summary

The Public Service Commission of Canada (PSC) is an independent agency reporting to Parliament, mandated to uphold the integrity of the public service staffing system and to safeguard a merit-based, non-partisan and professional public service. The PSC is also committed to fostering a public service that is representative of Canada's diversity. To fulfill its accountability to Parliament for overseeing the integrity of the public service staffing system, the PSC conducts audits and other oversight activities to examine and report on risks across the system.

About the audit

This audit was undertaken to examine the pre-assessment process (job application and Public Service Resourcing System screening stages) for external appointment processes to determine if barriers exist that could be associated with lower application shares of equity-seeking groups. [1]

The audit had 3 objectives:

1. To determine the extent to which potential barriers exist in the pre-assessment process, including their frequency and relation to the application shares of employment equity groups.
2. To determine the representation of employment equity groups throughout the pre-assessment process (job application and Public Service Resourcing System screening stages).
3. To identify systems and practices at the PSC and within departments and agencies to reduce potential barriers disadvantaging people belonging to employment equity groups in the job application and Public Service Resourcing System screening stages.

Main findings

The audit found that there is a wide variability in the presence of potential barriers in job advertisements. The occurrence of potential barriers ranged between 1% and 72% of the job advertisements reviewed. By categorizing the 14 potential barriers into 3 main groups (nature of work barriers, job qualification barriers and structural barriers), we found that nature of work and job qualification barriers were more strongly associated with lower application shares of employment equity groups compared to structural barriers.

We also found that the relationship between the presence of barriers and application shares may vary for employment equity groups and visible minority sub-groups. We found that women may be faced with more barriers than other employment equity groups. When looking into intersectionality [2], the analysis revealed that women within employment equity groups, particularly women with disabilities and Indigenous women,

may encounter more barriers than men within these groups. When examining visible minority sub-groups, we found that Black people may face more barriers than other visible minority sub-groups.

Consistent with the findings from the _Audit of Employment Equity Representation in Recruitment_ (2021), the Public Service Resourcing System screening stage did not reduce overall representation for employment equity groups and visible minority sub-groups. However, further analysis of the intersectionality among employment equity groups and visible minority sub-groups revealed representation issues. The audit results showed that Indigenous people with disabilities and members of visible minorities [3] with disabilities experienced decreased representation following the Public Service Resourcing System screening stage. Similarly, 3 intersections among employment equity groups and visible minority sub-groups experienced decreased representation following the Public Service Resourcing System screening stage.

The audit found that the PSC has established mechanisms, systems and practices to reduce potential barriers disadvantaging people belonging to employment equity groups. Guidance and tools were developed to support the implementation of subsection 36(2) of the _Public Service Employment Act_. While these resources mainly focused on the assessment stage, they also provided guidance for the pre-assessment stage. The implementation of the _Public Service Employment Act_ amendments has resulted in an increase in guidance sources and tools that reference the mitigation of barriers and that are published across various information-sharing platforms. The audit found that the information may not be aligned across documents and may not be easily accessible to human resources professionals and hiring managers. The audit further revealed that some departments and agencies were not equipped to mitigate barriers within the pre-assessment process.

This audit emphasizes the importance of removing or mitigating barriers in the pre-assessment phase of appointment processes, enabling all candidates to demonstrate their full potential. It is important to note that what may be a barrier for one individual might not be for another, as each person's background and experiences influence how they interact with policies, practices and their environment. Hiring managers must consider the diverse experiences within employment equity groups, acknowledging that barriers manifest differently across individuals.

Because certain elements identified as barriers in this audit may be intrinsically linked to the nature of the work for some positions, they must be included in the job advertisement (for example, bona fide occupational requirements). However, it is essential for deputy heads to ensure that human resources professionals and hiring managers are thoughtful and deliberate in developing job advertisements and avoid the reflex of simply reusing previous ones. It is important to ensure that the qualifications listed in the job advertisement are directly tied to the job itself, as misalignment can create unintended barriers for certain groups. Deputy heads should review these audit findings in the context of their department or agency and create strategies to foster a barrier-free application process for all Canadians.

Based on the audit findings, the following 2 recommendations were identified:

Recommendation 1: Deputy heads should implement measures to monitor for the presence of barriers in job advertisements and take remedial action where required, to address any deficiencies (for example, removing travel or overtime requirements where they are not actually required for a particular position).

Examples:

- implement a review mechanism to determine whether barriers exist in job advertisements (for example, use a checklist to ensure all aspects of the advertisement are inclusive)
- review a sample of staffing files to assess for barriers in job advertisements as part of the ongoing monitoring of the staffing system
- review the monitoring of the staffing framework to ensure that appropriate actions are taken to identify and mitigate barriers in future job advertisements

Recommendation 2: The PSC should ensure that existing guidance and tools related to the pre-assessment process are updated and aligned across guidance documents, to provide targeted support to departments and agencies on reducing barriers within the pre-assessment process.

Introduction

1. The Public Service Commission of Canada (PSC) is an independent agency reporting to Parliament, mandated to uphold the integrity of the public service staffing system and safeguard a merit-based, non-partisan, professional public service. As well, the PSC is committed to fostering a public service that is representative of Canada's diversity. To fulfill its accountability to Parliament for overseeing the integrity of the public service staffing system, the PSC conducts audits and other oversight activities to examine and report on risks across the system.

2. The PSC's enabling legislation, the *Public Service Employment Act*, was amended in June 2021 to strengthen diversity and inclusion. The preamble of the act now includes an explicit commitment by the Government of Canada to an inclusive public service that reflects the diversity of Canada's population. Additionally, subsection 17(2) of the

Public Service Employment Act was introduced to provide explicit audit authorities related to identifying and mitigating biases and barriers in appointment processes that disadvantage equity-seeking groups.

3. On July 1, 2023, subsection 36(2) of the *Public Service Employment Act* came into force with the aim to address biases and barriers in assessment methods that disadvantage people belonging to equity-seeking groups. It required that an evaluation be conducted to identify whether the assessment method, and the way it will be applied, includes or creates biases or barriers that disadvantage people belonging to equity-seeking groups. If a bias or barrier is identified, reasonable efforts must be made to remove it or to mitigate its impact. While this amendment focuses specifically on the assessment phase of the appointment process, the focus of this audit is the pre-assessment phase of the appointment process, more specifically the job application stage and Public Service Resourcing System screening stage for external appointments.

Pre-assessment process for external appointments

4. The PSC's Appointment Framework sets the expectation for a non-partisan and representative workforce of diverse individuals reflecting the range of backgrounds and skills of Canadians. It includes requirements for deputy heads to respect employment equity obligations and for sub-delegated managers to consider employment equity objectives in hiring as well as designing appointment processes that do not create systemic barriers.

5. The pre-assessment process includes 2 key parts of the external appointment process: the job application and Public Service Resourcing

System screening stages. Further steps in the appointment process such as organizational screening, assessment and appointment are excluded from the scope of this audit.

6. The Public Service Resourcing System is the PSC's automated, web-based staffing system supporting the GC Jobs website. An applicant can apply for a job online by selecting the application link in the job advertisement on the GC Jobs website. It is at the job application stage that applicants can voluntarily self-declare as belonging to 1 or more of the 4 designated employment equity groups (including visible minority sub-groups).

7. After candidates apply on the GC Jobs website, hiring managers may choose to pre-screen applications based on candidates' responses to a number of questions. This process is automated in the Public Service Resourcing System, and screening results are based on candidates' self-reporting on how they meet the identified qualifications.

8. In fiscal year 2022 to 2023, approximately 50% of all advertised staffing processes were externally advertised indeterminate or term positions.

Focus of the audit

9. The pre-assessment process serves as a gateway for applicants seeking public service employment. A fair and inclusive pre-assessment process is essential to fostering a workforce that is representative of Canada's diverse population and enhancing accessibility to public service jobs for all Canadians. At this stage, any barriers that might disadvantage employment equity groups can have an impact on their access to the assessment phase of appointment processes. Identifying and addressing these issues will help to ensure that the recruitment

process supports the Government of Canada's commitment to a diverse public service.

10. During the planning of this audit, we consulted key employment equity networks. They shared their concerns and identified potential barriers that may exist for certain employment equity groups during the pre-assessment process.

11. This audit was undertaken to examine the pre-assessment process (job application and Public Service Resourcing System screening stages) for external appointment processes. The audit includes an examination of the structure and content of job advertisements and the inclusivity of merit criteria and screening questions to determine if barriers exist that could be associated with lower application shares of employment equity groups. Audit results identify areas where barriers may exist for individuals and where changes may enhance accessibility to public service jobs for all Canadians.

12. The 2021 amendments to the *Public Service Employment Act* introduced a definition for equity-seeking groups, which comprises groups of people who are disadvantaged on the basis of one or more of the 13 prohibited grounds of discrimination identified in the *Canadian Human Rights Act.* Equity-seeking groups include, in addition to a number of other groups, the 4 designated employment equity groups under the *Employment Equity Act*: women, Aboriginal peoples [4], persons with disabilities and members of visible minorities. Given the scope of the audit and limitations in available data for other equity-seeking groups, the audit focused on the representation of the 4 designated employment equity groups. Where sufficient data existed to draw meaningful conclusions, the representation of certain visible minority sub-groups was also examined.

Audit objectives and approach

13. The audit had 3 objectives and areas of review:

- Objective 1: To determine the extent to which potential barriers exist in the pre-assessment process, including their frequency and relation to the application shares of employment equity groups

  - We conducted a system-wide review of 1 816 external advertised job advertisements that closed between April 1, 2022, and March 31, 2023, for the presence of 14 potential barriers
  - We combined the results of a gap analysis and logistic regression analysis to determine the relationships between application share and the presence of a potential barrier

    - Regression analysis is a tool used to predict relationships between variables; however, it cannot establish causality

- Objective 2: To determine the representation of employment equity groups throughout the pre-assessment process (job application and Public Service Resourcing System screening stages)

  - We conducted a system-wide data analysis of 1 203 886 job applications to external advertised appointment processes that closed between April 1, 2018, and March 31, 2023

    - We analyzed the gaps in application shares for employment equity groups and visible minority sub-groups between the application step and screened-in stages over the 5-year period

- Objective 3: To identify systems and practices at the PSC and within departments and agencies to reduce potential barriers

disadvantaging people belonging to employment equity groups in the job application and Public Service Resourcing System screening stages

- We collected organizational information by:

  - leveraging documentation on organizational measures collected from departments and agencies that participated in the _Audit of Employment Equity Representation in Acting Appointments_
  - issuing a survey to heads of human resources
  - manually reviewing sample files for barriers in job advertisements

14. More information on the audit's scope and methodology can be found in Annex A of this report.

Frequency of potential barriers appearing in job advertisements

15. To determine how often potential barriers appeared in job advertisements, the audit team assessed the occurrence of 14 potential barriers, which were selected based on consultations with employment equity networks and documentation review. The potential barriers were divided into 3 main categories: nature of work, job qualification and structural barriers. The nature of work barriers related to the operational requirements of the job, while job qualifications barriers related to the way qualifications were presented in the job advertisement. Structural barriers were associated with the job application process, unrelated to the candidate's qualifications.

List of potential barriers assessed

Nature of work: Potential barriers related to the operational requirements of the job.

- Willingness to work overtime*
- Willingness to travel*
- Willingness to work shifts or be on-call*

Job qualifications: Potential barriers in the way qualifications are presented in the job advertisement.

- Requiring recent, significant or continuous experience**
- Requirement for knowledge that can be learned on the job**
- Use of government jargon in the advertisement when the position is posted externally**
- Experience requirements specific to having previous government experience**
- Education, knowledge, experience, certification or other requirements exceeding qualification standards**

Structural: Potential barriers associated with the job application process, unrelated to the qualifications of the candidate.

- Number of Public Service Resourcing System screening questions*
- Period of time that a job advertisement is open*
- Length of job advertisements (number of characters)*
- Requiring applicants to apply online using the Public Service Resourcing System without indicating that accommodation measures are available for the application process**
- Requesting, at the application stage, contact information of an immediate supervisor to act as a reference*

- Requirement for a cover letter[*]

* Population: 1 816 in-scope job advertisements assessed

** Sample: 202 job advertisements assessed

16. The audit team used automated and manual methodologies to review job advertisements for the 14 potential barriers. An automated assessment methodology was applied to the population of 1 816 job advertisements within the audit scope. A manual assessment methodology was applied to a sample of 202 job advertisements.

17. We found wide variability in the presence of potential barriers in job advertisements reviewed, with the occurrence of potential barriers ranging between 1% and 72% of the job advertisements reviewed. Figure 1 illustrates the 5 most frequently and 3 least frequently occurring potential barriers in job advertisements. The frequencies of occurrence of all 14 potential barriers can be found in Annex B of this report.

Figure 1: Most and least frequently occurring potential barriers in job advertisements
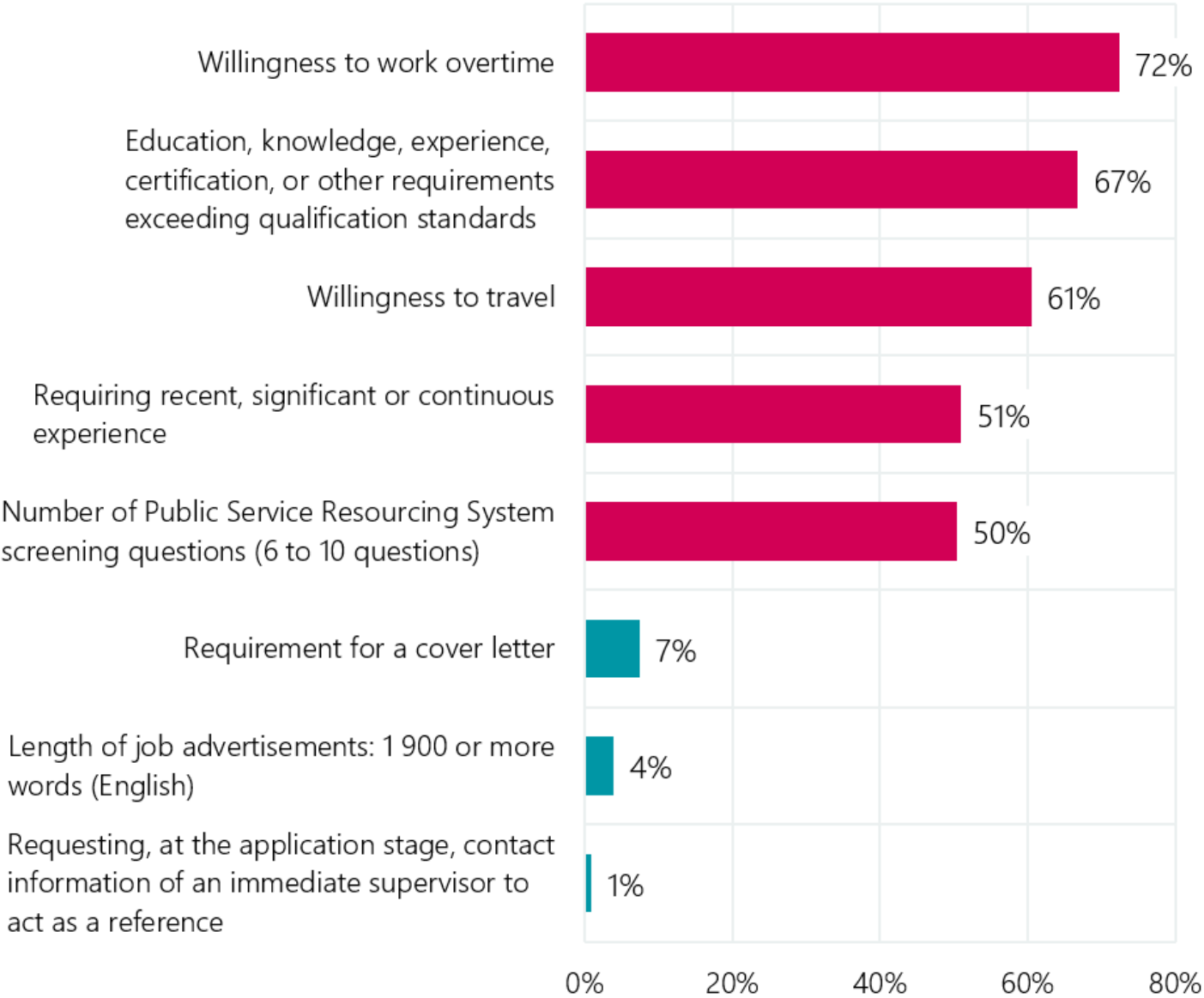
▼ Figure 1: Most and least frequently occurring potential barriers in job advertisements – Text version

Figure 1: Most and least frequently occurring potential barriers in job advertisements

Most and least frequently occurring potential barriers in job advertisements	Frequency
Willingness to work overtime	72%

Most and least frequently occurring potential barriers in job advertisements	Frequency
Education, knowledge, experience, certification or other requirements exceeding qualification standards	67%
Willingness to travel	61%
Requiring recent, significant or continuous experience	51%
Number of Public Service Resourcing System screening questions (6 to 10 questions)	50%
Requirement for a cover letter	7%
Length of job advertisements: 1 900 or more words (English)	4%
Requesting, at the application stage, contact information of an immediate supervisor to act as a reference	1%

18. Frequency alone cannot determine if a requirement is a barrier, as it only shows how often a potential barrier occurs. The next section of this report presents the results of additional analysis undertaken to assess whether the presence of each potential barrier was associated with lower application shares of employment equity groups.

Relationships between barriers and application shares of employment equity groups

19. The audit combined the results of a gap analysis and a logistic regression model to isolate the relationships between each barrier and application shares of employment equity groups, and to determine their statistical significance. Gaps in representation ranging from 0% to -2% were considered too small to draw meaningful conclusions.

20. The audit identified the barriers that appeared in over 50% of assessed job advertisements or were associated with decreases in application shares for 2 or more employment equity groups. These conditions were selected to highlight barriers that have a potential widespread impact, are most likely to affect a larger number of individuals and have a disproportionate impact on employment equity groups.

21. We found that 11 out of 14 potential barriers examined had a negative and significant association with at least 1 of the 4 employment equity groups. We also found that potential barriers relating to the nature of the work as well as job qualifications were among those most frequently occurring in job advertisements and had a negative association with employment equity groups.

22. These 3 potential barriers were not associated with lower application shares of employment equity groups:

    - period of time that a job advertisement is open
    - experience requirements specific to having previous government experience
    - Requesting, at the application stage, contact information of an immediate supervisor to act as a reference

23. Table 1 shows the 7 barriers that were most strongly associated with lower application shares of employment equity groups. For a visualization on the relationships between each barrier and application shares of employment equity groups, please refer to Annex C of this report.

Table 1: Top 7 barriers most strongly associated with lower application shares of employment equity groups

Barriers that met the conditions	Frequency	Employment equity groups with lower application shares	Category
Willingness to work overtime	72%	3	Nature of work
Willingness to travel	61%	3	Nature of work
Requiring recent, significant or continuous experience	51%	3	Job qualifications
Education, knowledge, experience, certification or other requirements exceeding qualification standards	67%	1	Job qualifications
Willingness to work shifts or be on-call	13%	4	Nature of work

Barriers that met the conditions	Frequency	Employment equity groups with lower application shares	Category
Number of Public Service Resourcing System screening questions (6 to 10 questions)	50%	1	Structural
Length of job advertisements: 1 900 or more words (French)	13%	3	Structural
Length of job advertisements: 1 900 or more words (English)	4%	4	Structural

24. Addressing these barriers is essential to fostering a hiring process that is both barrier-free and more accessible for all Canadians, as barriers may disproportionately impact employment equity groups and limit their access to job opportunities. In some cases, job requirements related to the nature of work, such as overtime, travel or shift work can be considered both barriers and bona fide occupational requirements when they are essential for the effective and safe performance of the job. For example, healthcare workers may need to work shifts to ensure continuous care, or field engineers may be required to travel frequently to different project sites to ensure that operations run smoothly and safely. These requirements are necessary for the role, but they can also unintentionally create significant barriers for members of employment equity groups, such as individuals with

caregiving responsibilities or mobility challenges, limiting their ability to apply for or succeed in the job.

25. Employers should carefully assess whether all listed requirements are truly essential or if they could be adjusted to make the position more accessible to a wider representation of individuals. It is important to ensure that the qualifications listed in the job advertisement are directly tied to the job, as misalignment can create unintended barriers for certain groups.

A **bona fide occupational requirement** is a standard or practice that is established by the employer specifically for the performance of the job. It must be adopted in an honest and good faith belief that it is necessary for the fulfillment of that legitimate work-related purpose. To show that the practice or standard is reasonably necessary, it must be demonstrated that it is impossible to accommodate the needs of an individual doing that specific job without causing undue hardship on the employer who would have to make those accommodations, considering health, safety and costs.

To identify a bona fide occupational requirement, managers should follow a 3-step process established by the Supreme Court of Canada. (*Meiorin* and *Grismer* cases, 1999)

Potential strategies to mitigate barriers in job advertisements

This section provides additional details on the top 7 barriers in job advertisements and mitigation strategies. In addition to these barriers, it is crucial to also understand and mitigate other barriers such as the use of government jargon in advertisements, the requirement for knowledge

that can be learned on the job, requiring online application with no mention of accommodation, lengthy job advertisements, the requirement for a cover letter, and an excessive number of screening questions. Barriers can disproportionately impact employment equity groups by creating unnecessary obstacles that may deter qualified candidates from applying. For instance, government jargon can be confusing and exclusionary, while rigid application processes and lengthy advertisements can be overwhelming. By staying aware and proactive in identifying and addressing potential barriers, departments and agencies can ensure that all candidates have a fair opportunity to succeed.

Willingness to work overtime, to travel and to work shifts or be on-call

Overtime, travel and willingness to work shifts or be on-call are requirements that may constitute a barrier for certain employment equity groups, as they may disproportionately affect individuals with caregiving responsibilities, disabilities or other personal constraints. These requirements can limit the pool of applicants, especially for those who might otherwise be qualified but face challenges with flexibility. While operational requirements may be necessary due to the nature of the work, hiring managers should reflect on whether they are necessary for the job, and if so, be precise about expectations so that potential candidates can make an informed decision. Hiring managers could also consider removing these requirements if they are not essential for the role.

Requiring recent, significant or continuous experience

Using restrictive experience criteria, such as requiring a specific number of years in a role, can exclude qualified candidates, especially those who face career gaps due to family or medical leave. These criteria may also be interpreted in various ways, causing some candidates to self-screen out even if they have extensive experience. Hiring managers should clearly define the experience required and its relevance to the job. Consulting a diverse range of stakeholders when creating screening criteria can help ensure inclusivity and prevent unintentional exclusion of qualified candidates.

Education, knowledge, experience, certification or other requirements exceeding qualification standards

Education may not be accessible to everyone, and many individuals gain valuable skills through non-traditional pathways. While formal education may be necessary for certain technical roles, raising education requirements without a clear job-related purpose can create barriers. Hiring managers should ensure that qualifications are directly relevant to the job and avoid setting education requirements for reasons like volume management. Additionally, they can clearly communicate to candidates the acceptable combination of education, training and experience that meets the minimum qualifications for the role.

Too many screening questions

Excessive screening questions can lead to candidate fatigue and frustration, causing qualified individuals to withdraw their application or submit incomplete responses. This issue can also result in inconsistent assessments from board members, further hindering the fairness of the recruitment process. Hiring managers should streamline screening

questions, focusing on key requirements and ensuring that each question is clear, relevant, and allows candidates to provide complete responses.
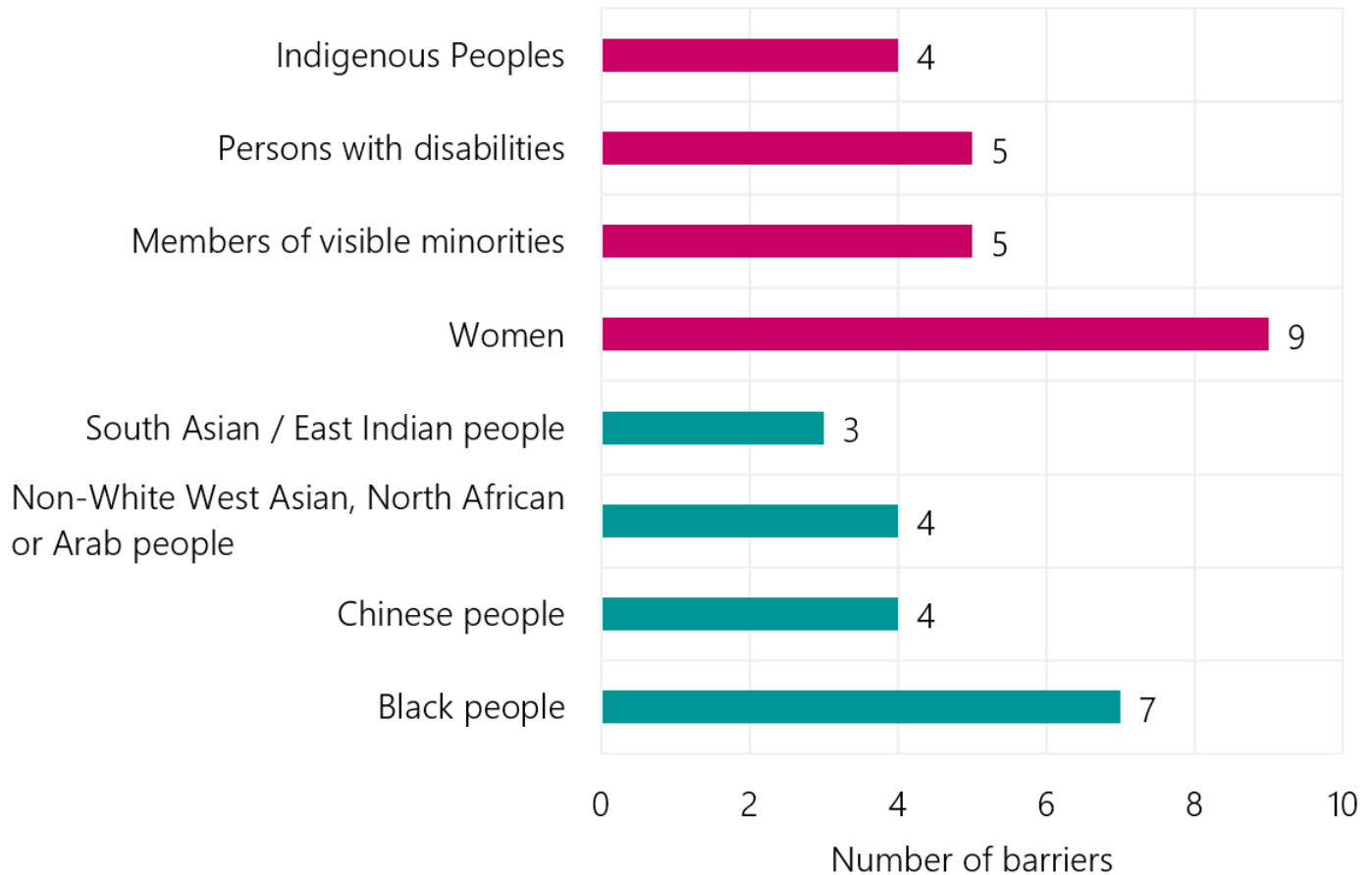
Length of job advertisements

Lengthy job advertisements with excessive or irrelevant information can discourage qualified candidates from applying, as they may find the process overwhelming or unclear. Hiring managers should ensure that job advertisements are clear, concise, and focused on the key qualifications and responsibilities required for the role. Additionally, testing the advertisement with individuals from diverse backgrounds, including current job incumbents, can help ensure the content is easy to understand and accessible to a wide range of applicants.

Relationships between barriers and application shares by employment equity group

26. When looking at the relationships between barriers and the application shares of each employment equity group, we found that women may be faced with more barriers than other employment equity groups, as 9 out of 14 potential barriers had a negative relationship with their application shares.

27. When conducting a similar analysis for the 4 largest visible minority sub-groups, we found that Black people may be faced with more barriers than other visible minority sub-groups, as 7 out of 14 potential barriers had a negative relationship with their application shares.

28. Figure 2 shows the number of barriers associated with lower application share for each employment equity group and visible

minority sub-group. For more information, please refer to <u>Annex D</u> of this report.

Figure 2: Number of barriers associated with lower application share of each employment equity group and visible minority sub-group

Figure showing number of barriers:
- Indigenous Peoples: 4
- Persons with disabilities: 5
- Members of visible minorities: 5
- Women: 9
- South Asian / East Indian people: 3
- Non-White West Asian, North African or Arab people: 4
- Chinese people: 4
- Black people: 7

X-axis: Number of barriers (0 to 10)

▼ Figure 2: Number of barriers associated with lower application share of each employment equity group and visible minority sub-group – Text version

Figure 2: Number of barriers associated with lower application share of each employment equity group and visible minority sub-group

Employment equity group and visible minority sub-group	Number of barriers
Indigenous Peoples	4
Persons with disabilities	5
Members of visible minorities	5
Women	9
South Asian / East Indian people	3
Non-white West Asian, North African or Arab people	4
Chinese people	4
Black people	7

Intersectionality

29. The audit examined the intersectionality between women and other employment equity groups to determine the relationship between barriers and application shares for those belonging to more than one group. Looking at intersectionality allows us to capture the unique experience of specific groups, such as Indigenous women, women who are members of visible minorities and women with disabilities. Our analysis on intersectionality found that women within employment equity groups, particularly those with disabilities and Indigenous women, may encounter more barriers than men within these groups.

Representation of employment equity groups throughout the pre-assessment process

30. The pre-assessment process is comprised of the job application and the Public Service Resourcing System automated screening stages through the GC Jobs website.

31. The Public Service Resourcing System is an automated, web-based staffing system supporting the GC Jobs website. It is at the job application stage that applicants can voluntarily self-declare as belonging to 1 or more of the 4 designated employment equity groups (including visible minority sub-groups). Once applications are received through the GC Jobs website, hiring managers may choose to automatically pre-screen applications based on applicants' responses to a number of questions. Only the "Yes" or "No" fields are used by the automated function.

32. After submitting their application, candidates may advance through the Public Service Resourcing System automated screening stage and be screened in. Alternatively, those who do not possess the job requirements may self-screen and decide not to apply based on the job advertisement.

33. The audit examined employment equity group representation throughout the pre-assessment process for advertised external processes between April 1, 2018, and March 31, 2023, by comparing the share of applicants from each employment equity group with the share that made it through the Public Service Resourcing System automated screening stage.

34. The analysis indicated that the Public Service Resourcing System screening stage did not reduce overall representation for employment equity groups and visible minority sub-groups.

35. However, further analysis of the intersectionality among employment equity groups and visible minority sub-groups revealed representation issues. The audit results showed that the following people experienced a decrease in representation following the Public Service Resourcing System screening stage.

- Intersections among employment equity groups

  - Indigenous people with disabilities
  - Members of visible minorities with disabilities

- Intersections among employment equity groups and visible minority sub-groups

  - South Asian / East Indian people with disabilities
  - Black people with disabilities
  - Chinese people with disabilities

36. For more information on the representation of employment equity groups, visible minority sub-groups and intersections following Public Service Resourcing System screening, please refer to Annex E of this report.

Mechanisms at the Public Service Commission of Canada and within departments and agencies to reduce barriers

37. The audit examined systems and practices developed by the PSC to reduce potential barriers in pre-assessment. To examine organizational mechanisms, the audit leveraged documentation on organizational measures collected from participating departments and agencies of the _Audit of Employment Equity Representation in Acting Appointments_, issued a survey to heads of human resources, and used information collected from the manual review of sample files for barriers in job advertisements.

Mechanisms implemented by the Public Service Commission of Canada

38. The audit found that the PSC had mechanisms including inclusive hiring guidance, tools, workshops and training to reduce potential barriers in the overall staffing process (including the pre-assessment process), thereby enhancing accessibility to public service jobs for all Canadians.

39. With the coming into force of the _Public Service Employment Act_ amendments in July 2023, new guidance and tools were published across various information-sharing platforms to support the implementation of those amendments, referencing the mitigation of barriers as well as inclusive hiring practices in staffing processes. Examples include the _Guide to Mitigating Biases and Barriers in_

Assessment and the <u>Tool for Mitigating Biases and Barriers in Assessment</u> (accessible only on the Government of Canada network).

40. While new guidance and tools were established in support of the *Public Service Employment Act* amendments, some existing mechanisms were not updated to reflect the current staffing environment. With the increasing number of guidance sources and tools referencing the mitigation of barriers as well as inclusive hiring practices in staffing processes that are published across various information-sharing platforms, information may not be easily accessible and aligned across documents. Better alignment across documents would increase accessibility and user-friendliness for human resources professionals and hiring managers.

Mechanisms within departments and agencies

41. We found that some systems and practices were established within departments and agencies to reduce potential barriers disadvantaging people belonging to employment equity groups at the job application and Public Service Resourcing System screening stages.

42. Based on documentation on organizational measures collected from participating departments and agencies by the <u>*Audit of Employment Equity Representation in Acting Appointments*</u> as of March 31, 2021, 5 out of 14 departments and agencies had already begun to consider removing potential barriers in the pre-assessment process before the coming into force of any legislative requirements relating to barriers.

43. The audit survey conducted in December 2020 revealed that 75% of departments and agencies indicated that they have practices, guidance and tools to reduce barriers in the pre-assessment process, with 47% of the departments and agencies using PSC tools and resources. Some examples of other practices implemented by departments and

agencies included involving employment equity group members in developing practices, and having a centre of expertise or a diversity and inclusion committee to review recruitment tools.

44. The audit survey also found that 92% of the departments and agencies indicated having implemented mandatory diversity and inclusion-related training before granting staffing authorities. As encouraged by the PSC through a letter to heads of human resources in July 2021, the survey indicated that 75% of the departments and agencies made the Canada School of Public Service course "Inclusive Hiring Practices for a Diverse Workforce (COR120)" a prerequisite for sub-delegation.

45. While the majority of departments and agencies had mechanisms in place, the audit survey found that 31% reported that they were not equipped to mitigate barriers within the job advertisement, merit criteria and screening questions.

46. The manual examination of job advertisements also identified practices that support and encourage employment equity groups to apply to selection processes. Our analysis found that 49% of the job advertisements highlighted a commitment to supporting a diverse and inclusive workforce beyond the standardized wording provided by the Public Service Resourcing System.

Conclusion

47. Identifying barriers in the pre-assessment process facilitates focus on areas where changes may be required to remove barriers encountered by certain groups of applicants during appointment processes.

48. The audit results showed that barriers in the job application stage of the appointment process have a negative association with the share of applications of employment equity groups. We found that the nature of

the work barriers (willingness to work overtime, to travel, and to work shifts or be on-call) as well as job qualification barriers (requiring recent, significant or continuous experience; and education, knowledge, experience, certification or other requirements exceeding qualification standards) were more strongly associated with lower application shares of employment equity groups compared to structural barriers.

49. The analysis also revealed that the Public Service Resourcing System screening stage did not reduce overall representation for employment equity groups and visible minority sub-groups. However, further analysis of the intersectionality among employment equity groups and visible minority sub-groups revealed representation issues. The audit results showed that Indigenous people with disabilities and members of visible minorities with disabilities experienced a decreased share in representation following the Public Service Resourcing System screening stage.

50. Additionally, the following intersections among employment equity groups and visible minority sub-groups also experienced a decreased share in representation following the Public Service Resourcing System screening stage:

   - South Asian / East Indian people with disabilities
   - Black people with disabilities
   - Chinese people with disabilities

51. Lastly, the audit found that the PSC has established mechanisms including inclusive hiring guidance, tools, workshops and training to reduce potential barriers in the overall staffing process, including the pre-assessment process. However, some departments and agencies reported that they were not equipped to mitigate barriers within the pre-assessment process. Further, with the increasing number of

guidance sources and tools that reference the mitigation of barriers as well as inclusive hiring practices in staffing processes and that are published across various information-sharing platforms, information may not be easily accessible and aligned across documents.

52. The audit findings highlight the importance of removing or mitigating the impact of barriers that disadvantage people belonging to any employment equity group, to enable candidates to realize their full potential in the staffing process. It is important to recognize that what may be a barrier for one individual might not be for another, as each person's background and experiences influence how they interact with policies, practices and their environment. Hiring managers must consider the diverse experiences within employment equity groups, acknowledging that barriers manifest differently across individuals. By addressing these barriers, the PSC aims to promote a more equitable and accessible hiring environment for all Canadians.

53. Certain elements identified as barriers in this audit may be intrinsically linked to the nature of the work for some positions and, for this reason, must be included in the job advertisement (for example, bona fide occupational requirements). However, it is essential for deputy heads to ensure that human resources professionals and hiring managers are thoughtful and deliberate in the development of the job advertisements, rather than simply reusing job advertisements from previous processes. Deputy heads should review these audit findings in the context of their department or agency and create strategies to foster a barrier-free application process for all Canadians.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1: Deputy heads should implement measures to monitor for the presence of barriers in job advertisements and take remedial action where required, to address any deficiencies (for example, removing travel or overtime requirements where they are not actually required for a particular position).

Examples:

- implement a review mechanism to determine whether barriers exist in job advertisements (for example, use a checklist to ensure all aspects of the advertisement are inclusive)
- review a sample of staffing files to assess for barriers in job advertisements as part of the ongoing monitoring of the staffing system
- review the monitoring of the staffing framework to ensure that appropriate actions are taken to identify and mitigate barriers in future job advertisements

Recommendation 2: The PSC should ensure that existing guidance and tools related to the pre-assessment process are updated and aligned across guidance documents, to provide targeted support to departments and agencies on reducing barriers within the pre-assessment process.

Moving forward: the Public Service Commission of Canada's response

With the release of the audit, PSC staffing support advisors will engage departments and agencies to communicate results and collaborate on developing strategies to review job advertisements for potential barriers to employment.

We will review PSC guidance and tools on how to detect and mitigate biases and barriers in the pre-assessment phase of staffing, to ensure they are aligned and consistent. To address feedback from departments and agencies on the need for centralized and easily accessible guidance, we are working to promptly update and integrate our online guidance and tools, currently found on our public service hiring guides and Guides and Tools – Appointment Framework web pages.

Annex A: About the audit

Audit objectives

The objectives of this audit were:

1. To determine the extent to which potential barriers exist in the pre-assessment process, including their frequency and relation to the application shares of employment equity groups.
2. To determine the representation of employment equity groups for which data is available throughout the pre-assessment process (job application and Public Service Resourcing System screening stages).
3. To identify systems and practices at the PSC and within departments and agencies to reduce potential barriers disadvantaging people belonging to employment equity groups in the job application and Public Service Resourcing System screening stages.

Scope and methodology

The audit included:

- a system-wide review of external advertised job advertisements that closed between April 1, 2022, and March 31, 2023

- a data analysis to determine system-wide representation of the job application and Public Service Resourcing System screened-in shares of employment equity groups to external advertised appointment processes that closed between April 1, 2018, and March 31, 2023
- a review of systems and practices at the PSC and within departments and agencies to reduce potential barriers in the pre-assessment process

Data

- The datasets used for objectives 1 and 2 were derived from the Public Service Resourcing System and job advertisements for indeterminate and term positions posted on the GC Jobs website
- Due to limitations on the availability of data for equity-seeking groups, data analysis and representation focused on people belonging to employment equity groups including women, Indigenous Peoples, persons with disabilities, and members of visible minorities, and the 4 largest visible minority sub-groups, which included Black people; Chinese people; non-white West Asian, North African or Arab people; and South Asian / East Indian people
- Data on employment equity status was drawn from voluntary self-declaration of employment equity membership provided by individuals as part of their Public Service Resourcing System applications
- The audit analysis is based on application share, which is the proportion of job applications submitted by individuals from each employment equity group, relative to the total number of job applications received

Audit methodology for objective 1

Audit methodology for objective 1 included a review of 1 816 job advertisements and Public Service Resourcing System screening questions for external advertised selection processes that closed between April 1, 2022, and March 31, 2023.

To determine how often each of the 14 potential barriers appeared in job advertisements, we analyzed the presence of 8 potential barriers using an automated review methodology for the population of 1 816 job advertisements. For the remaining 6 potential barriers, we applied a manual review methodology to a stratified sample of 202 job advertisements. For more information on the list of potential barriers assessed, please refer to the section on Audit objectives and approach of this report.

To determine the relationships between each barrier and application shares of employment equity groups, we conducted a gap analysis to determine whether there was a percentage change decrease in the application share of employment equity groups when each potential barrier was present in the job advertisements. We also applied a logistic regression model to isolate the relationships between each barrier and application shares and to measure statistical significance. We combined these 2 analyses to identify where the results of the regression analysis supported the findings of the gap analysis. The audit team considered percentage change between 0 and -2% as too small to draw meaningful conclusions.

Sampling of the 202 selection processes

The target population included 1 816 external advertised processes for indeterminate and term positions that closed between April 1, 2022, and March 31, 2023, from 66 federal departments and agencies subject to

the *Public Service Employment Act.*

The audit sample included 202 external advertised processes from 42 departments and agencies. The sample was stratified by occupational category for the audit to gain exposure to a variety of positions within the public service. The sample size of each stratum was proportional to the number of external advertisements across each occupational category within the public service open during the targeted period.

However, a minimum of 10 job advertisements were selected from each occupational category below to ensure sufficient observations for reporting purposes:

- Administrative and Foreign Service
- Administrative Support
- Executives
- Operational
- Scientific & Professional
- Technical

Due to the design of the sample, the audit is unable to report on results at the organizational level. The audit sample was designed to provide system-wide results only.

Out of scope

The audit did not examine potential barriers within qualification standards and conditions of employment, as these are within Treasury Board's jurisdiction, outside the authority of the PSC.

The audit scope also excluded any review of the functionality of the Public Service Resourcing System, as this is outside the purview of departments and agencies and hiring managers.

Audit methodology for objective 2

Audit methodology for objective 2 included system-wide data analysis to determine the representation of employment equity groups and intersectionality throughout the job application and Public Service Resourcing System screening stages. We conducted a system-wide data analysis of 1 203 886 job applications to external advertised appointment processes that closed over a period of 5 years, between April 1, 2018, and March 31, 2023, in all federal departments and agencies subject to the *Public Service Employment Act*.

We examined the average share gap and the average percentage change for each of the 4 employment equity groups and the 4 largest visible minority sub-groups between the application and screened-in stages over the 5-year period. The audit team considered average percentage change between 0 and -2% as too small to draw meaningful conclusions.

Audit methodology for objective 3

Audit methodology for objective 3 included a review of systems and practices at the PSC and within departments and agencies to reduce potential barriers disadvantaging people belonging to employment equity groups in the job application and Public Service Resourcing System screening stages.

To minimize audit burden in the staffing system, the audit did not have participating departments and agencies. We collected organizational information by leveraging documentation on organizational measures collected from participating departments and agencies of the *Audit of Employment Equity Representation in Acting Appointments*, by issuing a survey to heads of human resources, and by manually reviewing sample files conducted for objective 1 of the audit.

Leveraging organizational measures collected from departments and agencies participating in the *Audit of Employment Equity Representation in Acting Appointments*

To reduce the burden to the staffing system, the audit team leveraged documentation collected from 14 participating departments and agencies as part of the *Audit of Employment Equity Representation in Acting Appointments*. Departments and agencies were asked to provide any documentation relating to organizational measures promoting access to appointments for employment equity groups, in effect between April 1, 2020, and March 31, 2021. The audit team assessed whether any of the organizational measures included systems and practices related to reducing potential barriers disadvantaging people belonging to employment equity groups within the pre-assessment process.

Survey to heads of human resources

The audit team issued a survey to heads of human resources from November 7, 2022, to December 12, 2022, to collect information on whether systems and practices have been established within departments and agencies to reduce potential barriers at the pre-assessment stage. Systems and practices were defined as any plans, policies, programs, processes, practices, controls, communications, checklists, reports, actions or governance the department or agency has put in place to reduce potential barriers at the job application and Public Service Resourcing System screening stages. The survey had a response rate of 80% (59 of 74 departments and agencies surveyed).

Manual review of job advertisements

The manual review of 202 job advertisements as part of objective 1 included a qualitative review that identified practices that support and encourage employment equity groups to apply to selection processes.

Annex B: Frequency of 14 potential barriers appearing in job advertisements

Frequency of 14 potential barriers appearing in job advertisements

Potential barriers	Frequency of occurrence	Category
Willingness to work overtime	72%	Nature of work
Education, knowledge, experience, certification or other requirements exceeding qualification standards	67%	Job qualifications
Willingness to travel	61%	Nature of work
Requiring recent, significant or continuous experience	51%	Job qualifications
Number of Public Service Resourcing System screening questions (6 to 10 questions)	50%	Structural
Experience requirements specific to having previous government experience	31%	Job qualifications

Potential barriers	Frequency of occurrence	Category
Number of Public Service Resourcing System screening questions (11 or more questions)	28%	Structural
Use of government jargon in the advertisement when the position is posted externally	27%	Job qualifications
Requirement for knowledge that can be learned on the job	24%	Job qualifications
Requiring applicants to apply online using the Public Service Resourcing System without indicating that accommodation measures are available for the application process	19%	Structural
Willingness to work shifts or be on-call	13%	Nature of work
Length of job advertisements: 1 900 or more words (French)	13%	Structural
Period of time that a job advertisement is open: 1 to 7 days	10%	Structural
Requirement for a cover letter	7%	Structural
Length of job advertisements: 1 900 or more words (English)	4%	Structural
Requesting, at the application stage, contact information of an immediate supervisor to act as a reference	1%	Structural

Annex C: Relationships between each barrier and application shares of employment equity groups

The audit team determined the relationship between each barrier and application shares of employment equity groups by combining the frequency of occurrence of the potential barrier with the number of employment equity groups with lower application shares. Barriers are ranked based on the product of these 2 variables.

Figure 3: Relationships between frequency of barriers and number of employment equity groups with negative relation
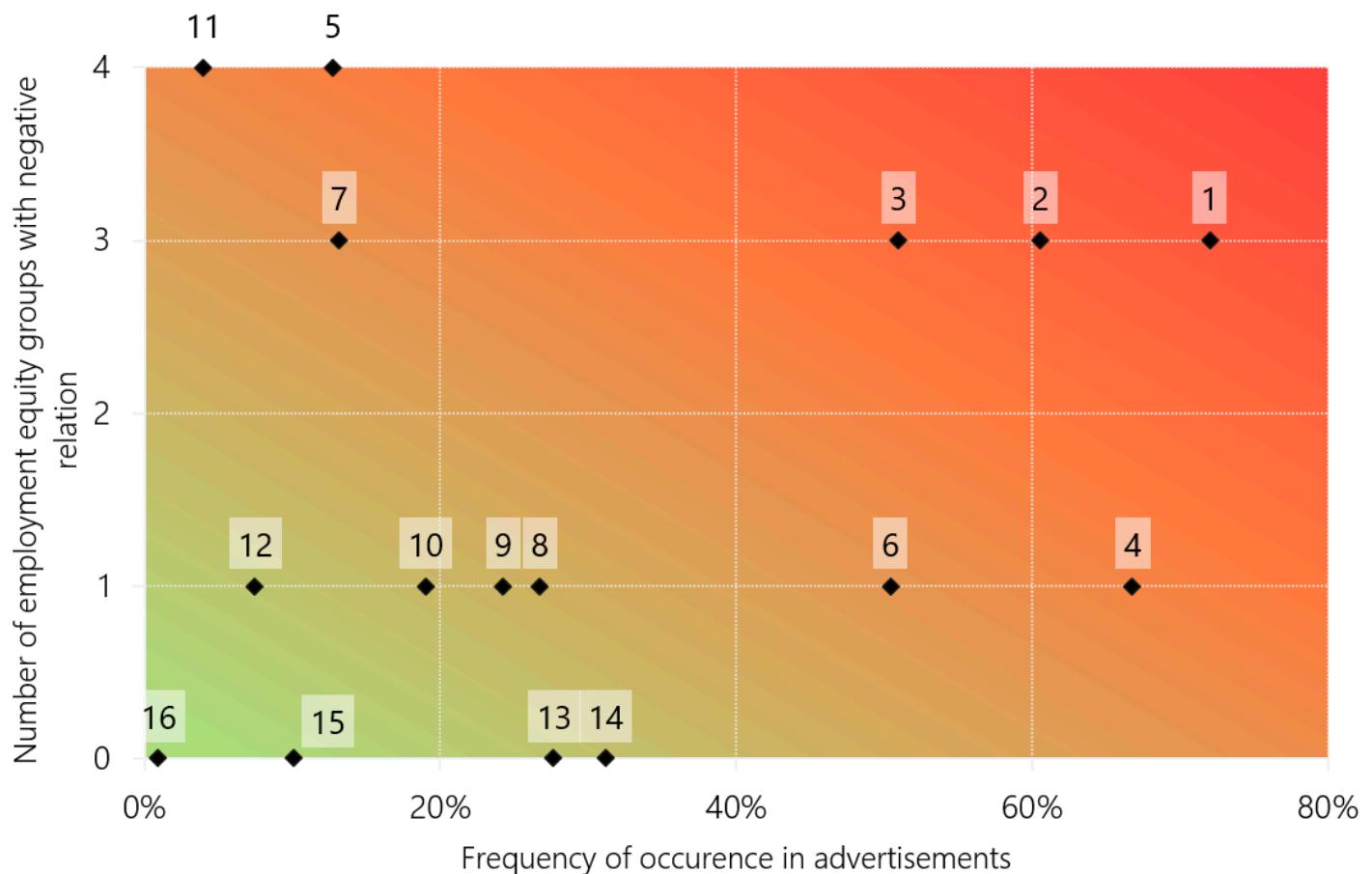
▼ Figure 3: Relationships between frequency of barriers and number of employment equity groups with negative relation – Text version

Figure 3: Relationships between frequency of barriers and number of employment equity groups with negative relation

Label	Barriers	Frequency	Number of employment equity groups with substantiated negative relation	Frequency multiplied by the number of groups identified
1	Willingness to work overtime	72%	3	2.16
2	Willingness to travel	61%	3	1.82
3	Requiring recent, significant or continuous experience	51%	3	1.53

Label	Barriers	Frequency	Number of employment equity groups with substantiated negative relation	Frequency multiplied by the number of groups identified
4	Education, knowledge, experience, certification or other requirements exceeding qualification standards	67%	1	0.67
5	Willingness to work shifts or be on-call	13%	4	0.51
6	Number of Public Service Resourcing System screening questions (6 to 10 questions)	50%	1	0.50
7	Length of job advertisements: 1 900 or more words (French)	13%	3	0.39

Label	Barriers	Frequency	Number of employment equity groups with substantiated negative relation	Frequency multiplied by the number of groups identified
8	Use of government jargon in the advertisement when the position is posted externally	27%	1	0.27
9	Requirement for knowledge that can be learned on the job	24%	1	0.24
10	Requiring applicants to apply online using the Public Service Resourcing System without indicating that accommodation measures are available for the application process	19%	1	0.19

Label	Barriers	Frequency	Number of employment equity groups with substantiated negative relation	Frequency multiplied by the number of groups identified
11	Length of job advertisements: 1 900 or more words (English)	4%	4	0.16
12	Requirement for a cover letter	7%	1	0.07
13	Number of Public Service Resourcing System screening questions (11 or more questions)	28%	0	0
14	Experience requirements specific to having previous government experience	31%	0	0
15	Period of time that a job advertisement is open: 1 to 7 days	10%	0	0

Label	Barriers	Frequency	Number of employment equity groups with substantiated negative relation	Frequency multiplied by the number of groups identified
16	Requesting, at the application stage, contact information of an immediate supervisor to act as a reference	1%	0	0

Annex D: Barriers associated with lower application shares of each employment equity group

The percentage change represents the difference in application share when a barrier is present in the advertisement compared to when it is absent, expressed as a percentage of the submission share. A percentage change between 0 and -2% was considered too small to draw meaningful conclusions.

Women

Barriers associated with lower application shares of women	Percentage change
1. Willingness to work shifts or be on-call	
○ On a regular basis	-31.11%
○ On a frequent and extensive basis	-7.45%
2. Length of job advertisements: 1 900 or more words	
○ English	-28.65%
○ French	-15.52%
3. Willingness to travel	
○ Occasionally / Not defined	-7.17%
○ On a regular basis	-26.21%
○ On a frequent and extensive basis	-28.36%
4. Education, knowledge, experience, certification or other requirements exceeding qualification standards	-11.10%
5. Willingness to work overtime	
○ Occasionally / Not defined	-10.88%
6. Requiring recent, significant or continuous experience	-7.46%

Barriers associated with lower application shares of women	Percentage change
7. Requirement for a cover letter	-4.34%
8. Number of Public Service Resourcing System screening questions (6 to 10 questions)	-3.14%
9. Use of government jargon in the advertisement when the position is posted externally	-2.58%

Persons with disabilities

Barriers associated with lower application shares of persons with disabilities	Percentage change
1. Willingness to work shifts or be on-call	
○ Occasionally / Not defined	-26.07%
○ On a regular basis	-44.00%
○ On a frequent and extensive basis	-9.48%
2. Length of job advertisements: 1 900 or more words	
○ English	-32.70%
○ French	-16.35%
3. Willingness to travel	

Barriers associated with lower application shares of persons with disabilities	Percentage change
○ Occasionally / Not defined	-5.30%
○ On a regular basis	-28.13%
○ On a frequent and extensive basis	-19.29%
4. Willingness to work overtime	
○ Occasionally / Not defined	-20.00%
5. Requiring recent, significant or continuous experience	-13.22%

Members of visible minorities

Barriers associated with lower application shares of visible minorities	Percentage change
1. Requiring applicants to apply online using the Public Service Resourcing System without indicating that accommodation measures are available for the application process	-22.25%
2. Willingness to work shifts or be on-call	
○ Occasionally / Not defined	-8.85%
○ On a regular basis	-16.06%

Barriers associated with lower application shares of visible minorities	Percentage change
○ On a frequent and extensive basis	-15.67%
3. Willingness to travel	
○ Occasionally / Not defined	-4.53%
○ On a regular basis	-9.05%
4. Length of job advertisements: 1 900 or more words (English)	-5.68%
5. Requirement for knowledge that can be learned on the job	-5.50%

Indigenous Peoples

Barriers associated with lower application shares of Indigenous Peoples	Percentage change
1. Length of job advertisements: 1 900 or more words	
○ English	-26.46%
○ French	-12.06%
2. Willingness to work shifts or be on-call	
○ Occasionally / Not defined	-22.10%

Barriers associated with lower application shares of Indigenous Peoples	Percentage change
○ On a regular basis	-23.60%
3. Requiring recent, significant or continuous experience	-3.46%
4. Willingness to work overtime	
○ Occasionally/Not defined	-3.45%

Black people

Barriers associated with lower application shares of Black people	Percentage change
1. Willingness to travel	
○ Occasionally / Not defined	-10.57%
○ On a regular basis	-27.99%
2. Requiring applicants to apply online using the Public Service Resourcing System without indicating that accommodation measures are available for the application process	-27.07%
3. Willingness to work shifts or be on-call	
○ On a regular basis	-23.93%

Barriers associated with lower application shares of Black people	Percentage change
○ On a frequent and extensive basis	-24.82%
4. Length of job advertisements: 1 900 or more words	
○ English	-18.65%
○ French	-9.10%
5. Requirement for knowledge that can be learned on the job	**-**13.26%
6. Number of Public Service Resourcing System screening questions	
○ 6 to 10 questions	-4.91%
○ 11 or more questions	-4.55%
7. Willingness to work overtime	
○ Occasionally / Not defined	-2.01%

Chinese people

Barriers associated with lower application shares of Chinese people	Percentage change
1. Willingness to work shifts or be on-call	

Barriers associated with lower application shares of Chinese people	Percentage change
○ Occasionally / Not defined	-38.63%
○ On a regular basis	-29.83%
○ On a frequent and extensive basis	-29.58%
2. Willingness to work overtime	
○ On a frequent and extensive basis	-23.54%
3. Willingness to travel	
○ On a regular basis	-7.97%
4. Requirement for knowledge that can be learned on the job	**-**4.46%

Non-white West Asian, North African or Arab people

Barriers associated with lower application shares of Non-white West Asian, North African or Arab people	Percentage change
1. Willingness to work shifts or be on-call	
○ Occasionally / Not defined	-3.37%
○ On a regular basis	-37.64%
○ On a frequent and extensive basis	-17.42%

Barriers associated with lower application shares of Non-white West Asian, North African or Arab people	Percentage change
2. Willingness to travel	
○ On a regular basis	-24.17%
○ On a frequent and extensive basis	-32.10%
3. Length of job advertisements: 1 900 or more words	
○ English	-22.40%
○ French	-8.06%
4. Willingness to work overtime	
○ Occasionally / Not defined	-9.65%

South Asian / East Indian people

Barriers associated with lower application shares of South Asian / East Indian people	Percentage change
1. Willingness to work shifts or be on-call	
○ Occasionally / Not defined	-27.04%
2. Requirement for knowledge that can be learned on the job	-6.55%
3. Willingness to work overtime	

Barriers associated with lower application shares of South Asian / East Indian people	Percentage change
○ On a frequent and extensive basis	-4.55%

Annex E: Average percentage change of applications submitted and screened in for each employment equity group, visible minority group and intersection

The analysis indicates that the Public Service Resourcing System screening stage did not reduce overall representation for employment equity groups and visible minority sub-groups. However, further analysis of the intersectionality among employment equity groups and visible minority sub-groups revealed representation issues.

Figure 4: Average percentage change of applications submitted and screened in for employment equity groups between April 1, 2018, and March 31, 2023

▼ Figure 4: Average percentage change of applications submitted and screened in for employment equity groups between April 1, 2018, and March 31, 2023 – Text version

Figure 4: Average percentage change of applications submitted and screened in for employment equity groups between April 1, 2018, and March 31, 2023
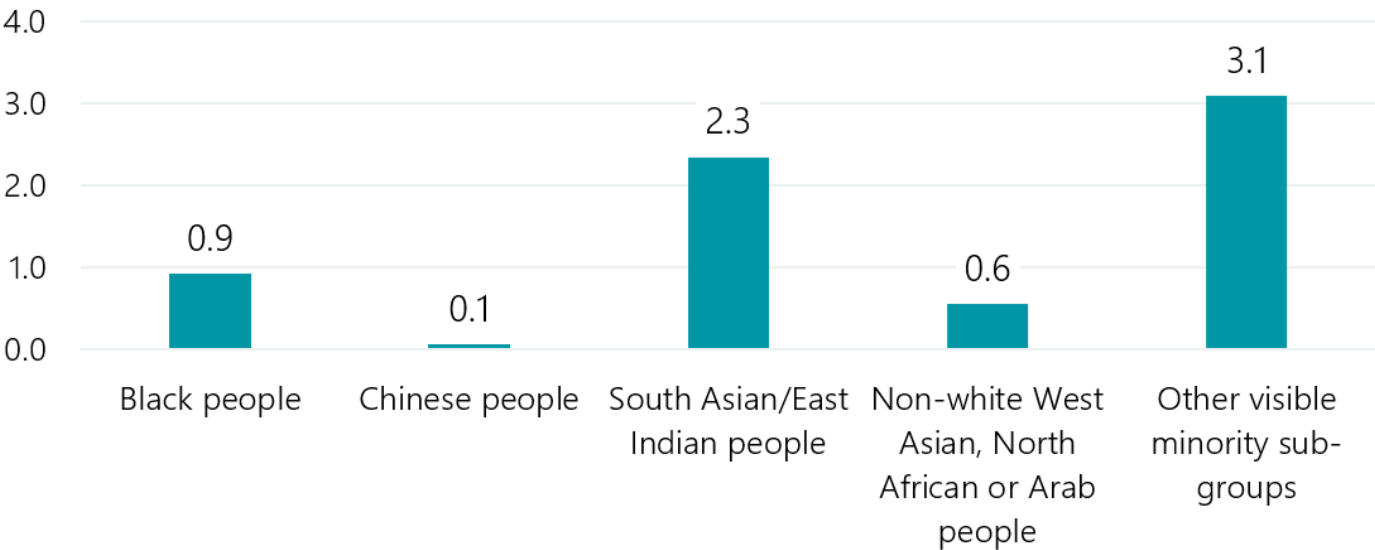
Employment equity groups	Average percentage change of applications submitted and screened in for employment equity groups between April 1, 2018, and March 31, 2023
Women	0.5%
Members of visible minorities	1.5%
Indigenous Peoples	3.2%
Persons with disabilities	1.4%

Figure 5: Average percentage change of applications submitted and screened in for visible minority sub-groups between April 1, 2018, and March 31, 2023

▼ Figure 5: Average percentage change of applications submitted and screened in for visible minority sub-groups between April 1, 2018, and March 31, 2023 – Text version

Figure 5: Average percentage change of applications submitted and screened in for visible minority sub-groups between April 1, 2018, and March 31, 2023
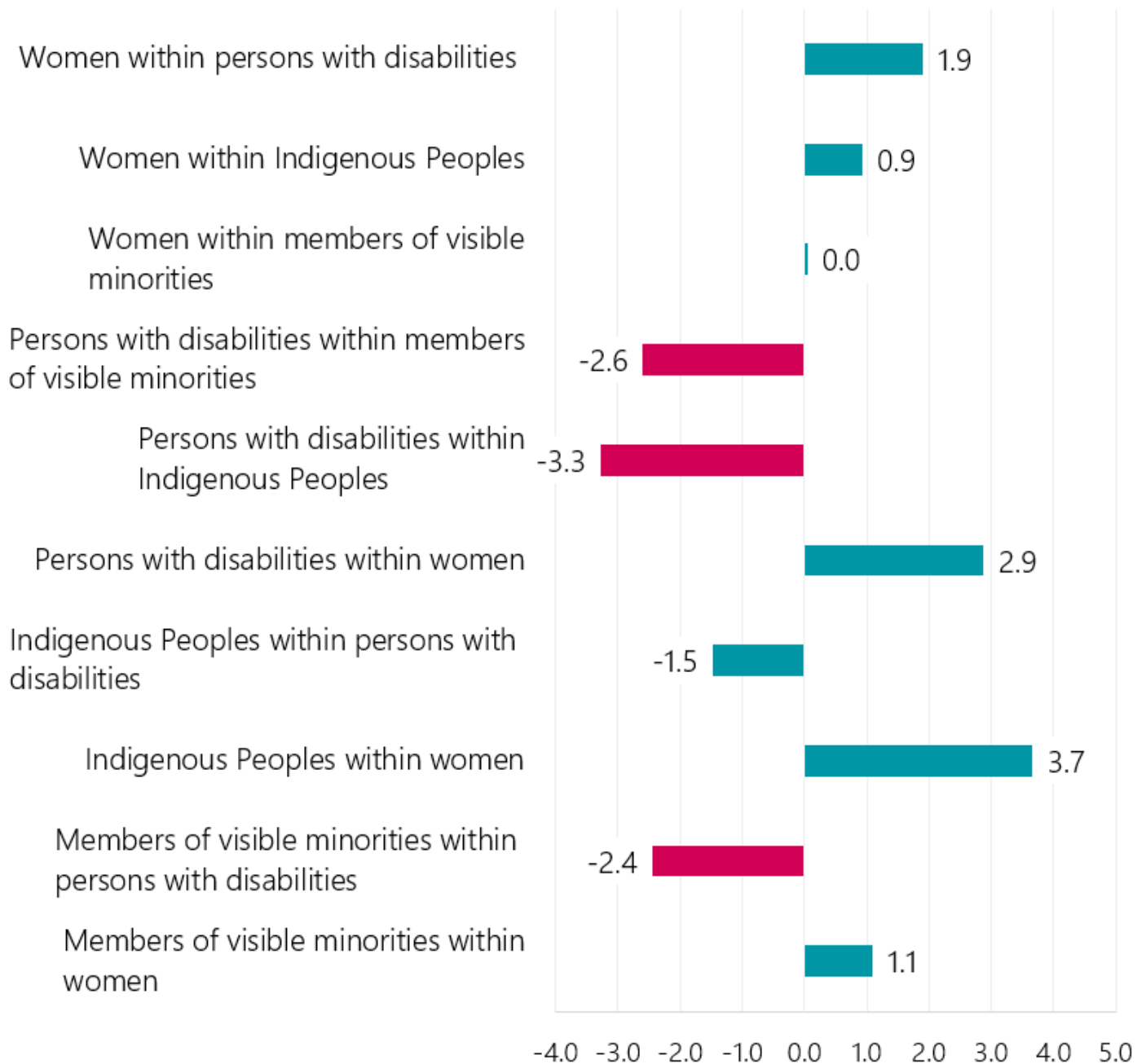
Visible minority sub-groups	Average percentage change of applications submitted and screened in for visible minority sub-groups between April 1, 2018, and March 31, 2023
Black people	0.9%
Chinese people	0.1%
South Asian / East Indian people	2.3%

Visible minority sub-groups	Average percentage change of applications submitted and screened in for visible minority sub-groups between April 1, 2018, and March 31, 2023
Non-white West Asian, North African or Arab people	0.6%
Other visible minority sub-groups	3.1%

Figure 6: Average percentage change of applications submitted and screened in for employment equity group intersections between April 1, 2018, and March 31, 2023 * [5]

Women within persons with disabilities — 1.9

Women within Indigenous Peoples — 0.9

Women within members of visible minorities — 0.0

Persons with disabilities within members of visible minorities — -2.6

Persons with disabilities within Indigenous Peoples — -3.3

Persons with disabilities within women — 2.9

Indigenous Peoples within persons with disabilities — -1.5

Indigenous Peoples within women — 3.7

Members of visible minorities within persons with disabilities — -2.4

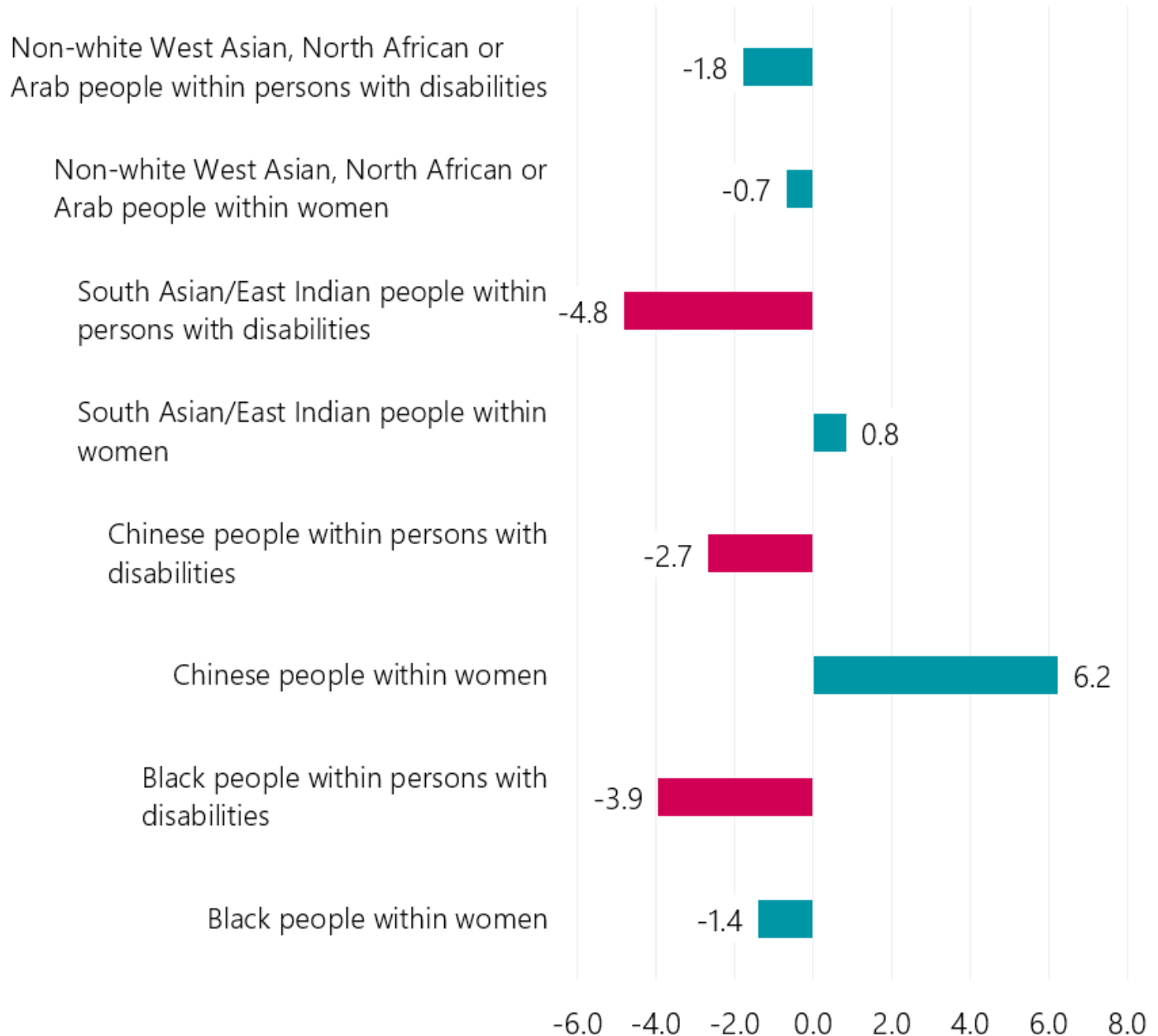Members of visible minorities within women — 1.1

▼ Figure 6: Average percentage change of applications submitted and screened in for employment equity group intersections between April 1, 2018, and March 31, 2023 – Text version

Employment equity group intersections	Average percentage change of applications submitted and screened in for employment equity group intersections between April 1, 2018, and March 31, 2023
Women within persons with disabilities	1.9%
Women within Indigenous Peoples	0.9%
Women within members of visible minorities	0%
Persons with disabilities within members of visible minorities	-2.6%
Persons with disabilities within Indigenous Peoples	-3.3%
Persons with disabilities within women	2.9%
Indigenous Peoples within persons with disabilities	-1.5%
Indigenous Peoples within women	3.7%
Members of visible minorities within persons with disabilities	-2.4%
Members of visible minorities within women	1.1%

*An average percentage change between 0 and -2% was considered too small to draw meaningful conclusions.

Figure 7: Average percentage change of applications submitted and screened in for visible minority sub-groups within each employment equity group between April 1, 2018, and March 31, 2023 * [6]

▼ Figure 7: Average percentage change of applications submitted and screened in for visible minority sub-groups within each employment

equity group between April 1, 2018, and March 31, 2023 – Text version

Visible minority sub-groups within each employment equity group	Average percentage change of applications submitted and screened in for visible minority sub-groups within each employment equity group between April 1, 2018, and March 31, 2023
Non-White West Asian, North African or Arab people within persons with disabilities	-1.8%
Non-White West Asian, North African or Arab people within women	-0.7%
South Asian / East Indian people within persons with disabilities	-4.8%
South Asian / East Indian people within women	0.8%
Chinese people within persons with disabilities	-2.7%
Chinese people within women	6.2%
Black people within persons with disabilities	-3.9%

Visible minority sub-groups within each employment equity group	Average percentage change of applications submitted and screened in for visible minority sub-groups within each employment equity group between April 1, 2018, and March 31, 2023
Black people within women	-1.4%

*An average percentage change between 0 and -2% was considered too small to draw meaningful conclusions.

Footnotes

1   The *Public Service Employment Act* provides explicit audit authorities related to identifying and mitigating biases and barriers in appointment processes that disadvantage equity-seeking groups. Equity-seeking groups include, in addition to a number of other groups, the 4 designated employment equity groups under the *Employment Equity Act*: women, Aboriginal peoples (referred to in this audit as Indigenous Peoples), persons with disabilities and members of visible minorities. Given the scope of the audit and limitations in available data for other equity-seeking groups, the audit focused on the representation of the 4 designated employment equity groups.

2   The intersectionality is the impact of belonging to 2 or more employment equity groups (for example, women who are members of visible minorities).

3   "Members of visible minorities" is the term that appears in the *Employment Equity Act* and the *Employment Equity Regulations*. The term refers to people commonly known as members of racialized groups or racialized peoples or as persons of colour. For more information, please refer to the Government of Canada's *Guide on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Terminology*.

4   The terms "Indigenous Peoples," "Indigenous people" and "Indigenous person" align with international usage and have replaced the legislative term "Aboriginal peoples" that appears in the *Employment Equity Act* and the *Employment Equity Regulations*. The definition has not changed.

5   The average percentage change is based on the average percentage point gap (which calculates the difference between the 5-year average screened-in share [%] and the 5-year average submitted share [%]) and calculates that percentage of average change from the average submitted share.

6   The average percentage change is based on the average percentage point gap (which calculates the difference between the 5-year average screened-in share [%] and the 5-year average submitted share [%]) and calculates that percentage of average change from the average submitted share.

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