

- Providing the Consular Bureau with direction to adapt to a changing environment; and
- Informing GAC of Canadians' attitudes and behaviours to international travel safety.

Results of this research will inform recommendations that will support government priorities while also benefitting Canadians. This research will allow GAC to develop an improved consular strategy that supports a better client experience for Canadians and safety for those abroad.

B. Methodology

This study was undertaken as a hybrid, qualitative-quantitative, research program. This mirrors the approach taken in 2007 and 2008, with some modifications in terms of defining the target audience for the research.

As a first phase, a series of 12 focus groups were conducted, each two hours in length, in five centers across Canada – Halifax, Toronto, Calgary, Montreal (in French) and Vancouver. Ten of the groups were conducted among the travelling public (2 in each center), defined as those aged 18 years and older who have travelled in the past two years and/or who plan to travel internationally within the next year. Groups were split by age, with one group undertaken among those aged 18 to 34 years and a second group in each location with those aged 35 and older. All groups comprised a mix of participants by gender, family composition, educational levels and household income. Care was also taken to ensure that the groups included participants having travelled to, or planning on travelling to, diverse destinations. In two of the five locations (Toronto and Montreal) an additional group was conducted with travel professionals (2 groups in total).

The reader should note that findings from qualitative research are not statistically reliable, and unlike national surveys, cannot be extrapolated to the broader target population with any degree of statistical validity. While participants are recruited in a manner that takes into account representation by key demographic characteristics, the groups cannot be positioned as representative of the broader travelling population. Nevertheless, focus groups are a highly effective research tool and remain a suitable methodology for the purpose and objectives of this research.

As the focus groups were being organized and completed, arrangements were also being made to conduct the quantitative phase of the research. This phase of the study involved face-to-face intercept interviews inside international departure areas at the Toronto, Vancouver and Montreal international airports. Interviewing was conducted on different days and times in each airport, depending on the blocks of time which were made available by each airport authority. A total of 846 interviews were completed with the travelling public between March 12 and April 2, 2018, and the average length of interview was approximately 15 minutes.

The survey was designed to target Canadians who were 18 years and older and who were travelling internationally. Additionally, soft quotas were established to ensure the sample included a cross-section by gender, age, and travel destination. Quotas were also put in place to ensure a sufficient number of responses from Francophones transiting through the Montreal Airport.

Readers should note that respondents to this survey are travelers flying by air to international destinations, based on soft quotas set and outlined above, and transiting through three specific airports (Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver). A convenience or availability sampling approach was utilized which is a common sampling technique employed to reach highly targeted or specific audiences such as international air travelers. This sampling method involves reaching respondents wherever they can most conveniently be found (i.e., airports). As such, the results are not statistically projectable to all Canadians traveling internationally.

More details on both the qualitative and quantitative methodologies can be found in the Objectives and Methodology section of this report. The research instruments, including the recruiting script, moderator's guide and the airport intercept survey, are contained in the Appendix.