



Ottawa Canada K1A 0J9

Yves Giroux  
Parliamentary Budget Officer

Subject: Information Request IR0691

Dear Yves Giroux:

I am pleased to respond to this information request and present the costs related to the implementation and maintenance of My Service Canada Account (MSCA), a secure online portal.

The information provided below on the various aspects and categories of costs is the result of collaborative work among several business lines within my Department, Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC), and with the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat. The implementation and development of MSCA would not have been possible without ongoing collaboration across ESDC, with Government of Canada (GC) departments and provincial partners.

ESDC is committed to delivering high quality services to Canadians. These include providing an easy, fast and convenient online access to the core GC services through technology that meets our clients' needs. MSCA, a key ESDC online portal, allows clients to access services at any time and on any device. My Department is dedicated to continuously innovating and evolving the service delivery model, building a seamless approach and enhancing digital service functionalities through MSCA.

MSCA is accessible through Canada.ca, the GC's official website. It enables clients to view and update their information online for services such as Employment Insurance, Canada Pension Plan, and Old Age Security. MSCA is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, from any device with an Internet connection. The MSCA portal enables the delivery of accessible, accurate and timely service for clients.

Clients' growing appetite for online information and services is reflected in their use of MSCA.

- In 2021–22, the online portal recorded over 38 million logins. Between April 2022 and February 2023, MSCA recorded about 29 million logins.
- In 2021–22, 28% of Employment Insurance clients used MSCA. This proportion grew to 36.6% the following year.

The number of MSCA users continues to grow, with over 700,000 new users registering for the service each year.

### **Implementation costs**

The core costs for implementing the MSCA online portal included the initial build of the platform and enhancements to it. Amounts for the initial system implementation costs in 2005 are unavailable and, consequently, we cannot report on savings realized from implementing the service digitally.

MSCA enhancement costs to date amount to \$9.1 million. Annual ongoing maintenance costs are \$3.25 million, which includes \$650,000 in salary and \$2.6 million in technical costs.

The costs to implement identity and access management measures to protect the personal information and privacy of MSCA users were \$650,000, and the ongoing costs are \$6.5 million annually.

### **Integration with provincial partners for sign-in**

ESDC takes the security and confidentiality of Canadians' personal information very seriously. The security and confidentiality of MSCA users' personal information are protected under our partnerships with provinces. Through a trusted digital identity program, users in Alberta and British Columbia can leverage their provincial digital ID to access MSCA.

My Department initially spent \$400,000 for each partnership with these provinces (\$800,000 in total), and it costs \$500,000 annually in salary to maintain them and advance new partnerships. In addition to the costs incurred by ESDC, TBS spent \$285,000 for providing policy and oversight for the integration with both Alberta and British Columbia, as well as undertaking the initial work to integrate with the Province of Québec. TBS significantly contributed to the development of agreements between ESDC, the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) and the provincial authorities. The Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat anticipates a one-time future cost of \$40,000 to complete integration with Quebec and \$100,000 for each provincial partner thereafter.

The establishment of provincial agreements resulted in cost savings of approximately \$200,000 for the Department for fiscal year 2022-23.

The onboarding of financial institutions as sign-in partners occurred approximately 15 years ago and, as such, data on initial costs are unavailable. There were no additional costs to expand this service.

### **Link with CRA's My Account**

CRA's My Account is an online portal that allows clients to view their personal income tax and benefit information.

Taking a whole-of-government approach to service delivery and aiming for improved client experience, my Department has placed great importance on creating and maintaining the link between ESDC's MSCA and CRA's My Account.

The cost for my Department to establish this link was \$889,000. The CRA has informed my officials that it will be submitting costs they incurred as part of their response to your request.

The expected value of implementing and maintaining MSCA did not include cost savings considerations. Consequently, we cannot report on savings realized from implementing the service digitally or any ongoing maintenance costs or savings realized from the digital services.

### **Cost savings**

Your information request makes several references to cost savings. As mentioned, MSCA was created to enable the digital delivery of services to clients. The expected value of implementing MSCA did not include cost savings considerations. As such, this information has not been tracked and we are unable to provide it.

### **Cost per manual application and cost per online application**

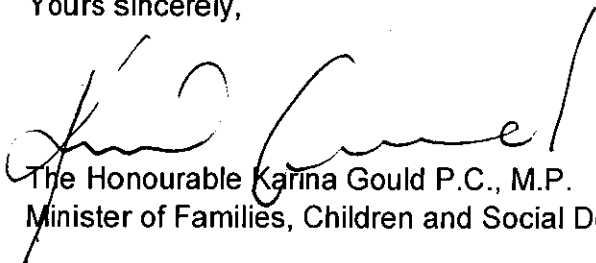
My Department does not collect data related to the cost per manual application and the cost per online application. Consequently, we cannot provide this data.

A summary table with all the cost details can be found in Annex 2, which is attached to this letter.

To summarize, the MSCA online portal is a key mechanism delivering high-quality digital services to clients. This versatile and multi-functional tool is a result of ongoing collaboration among GC departments and provincial partners. Implemented approximately 18 years ago as an innovative way to enable clients to easily access government services and benefits online, MSCA has proven its value for clients. Our vision is to continue enhancing and improving the portal to address the growing clientele and respond to clients' evolving needs and expectations from the services delivered online.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or require additional details.

Yours sincerely,



The Honourable Karina Gould P.C., M.P.  
Minister of Families, Children and Social Development

cc: The Honourable Mona Fortier,  
President, Treasury Board of Canada  
cc: Mr. Bob Hamilton,  
Commissioner of the Canada Revenue Agency

**Attachments:**

- Annex 1: Summary financial table for MSCA costs
- Annex 2: Reply Form