

BUDGET CREATES BARELY A RIPPLE

MOST CANADIANS RATE IT NEITHER GOOD NOR BAD

[Ottawa – March 11, 2010] - Eighty percent of Canadians say they recall hearing about last week's federal budget, but for a majority of them, it was a giant yawn.

Half of those who did remember hearing about it rated the budget as neither good nor bad. Among those who had a definite opinion, slightly more gave the budget a bad review, though the tilt was hardly dramatic.

EKOS Research Associates conducted the poll for exclusive release by the CBC program *Power and Politics*. Interviews ran from budget day, March 4, through March 9.

Although most Canadians of every political stripe said the budget was neither good nor bad, among Conservatives who did take a stronger view, most were positive. Not surprisingly, the opposite was true of most supporters of opposition parties who had strong feelings.

"There is some indication that views of the budget were polarized along party lines," said EKOS President Frank Graves, "but that polarization was already in place on many issues before last week. It is more likely that Canadians looked at the budget through their already polarized lenses than that it influenced political opinions strongly one way or another."

The survey also asked Canadians how the budget might affect them and their families. Nearly two-thirds felt they would experience no change. Among the minority who did feel they would be affected, though, there was a fear of negative consequences by a margin of roughly two-to-one.

In a poll released by EKOS earlier today, it was revealed that party support barely budged in the days after the budget.

"In tough economic times, the presentation of the budget can be a perilous moment for the government politically," said Graves. "Sometimes the government's objective may be that the budget will soon be forgotten – the newspapers filled with budget coverage will soon be used to wrap fish or line budgie cages. Politically, it looks like the government has the fish wrapped and the cages lined."

HIGHLIGHTS

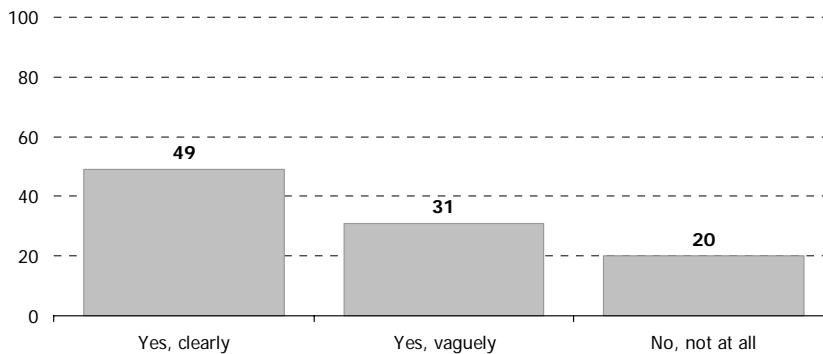
- **Awareness of budget:**
 - ☒ **49% clearly aware**
 - ☒ **31% vaguely aware**
 - ☒ **20% not at all aware**
- **Budget approval rating:**
 - ☒ **29% bad**
 - ☒ **21% good**
 - ☒ **51% neither**
- **Perceived impact of budget:**
 - ☒ **24% worse off**
 - ☒ **12% better off**
 - ☒ **64% no change**

Please note that the methodology is provided at the end of this document.

Top Line Results:

Awareness of the budget

Q. The government of Canada tabled its annual budget on March 4, 2010. Would you say that you clearly recall, vaguely recall, or do not recall hearing about it?

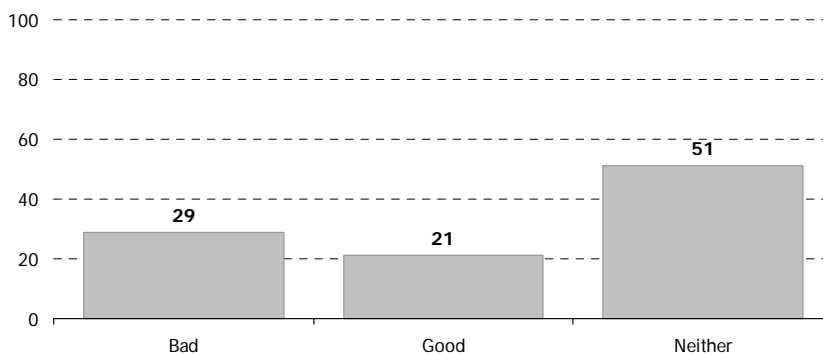


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BASE: Canadians; March 4-9 (n=2015)

Budget approval rating

Q. Overall, how would you rate this budget?



Higher among:
 NDP (39%), GP (39%),
 BQ (38%), LPC (36%),
 University educated
 (33%), Ages 25-44 (33%)

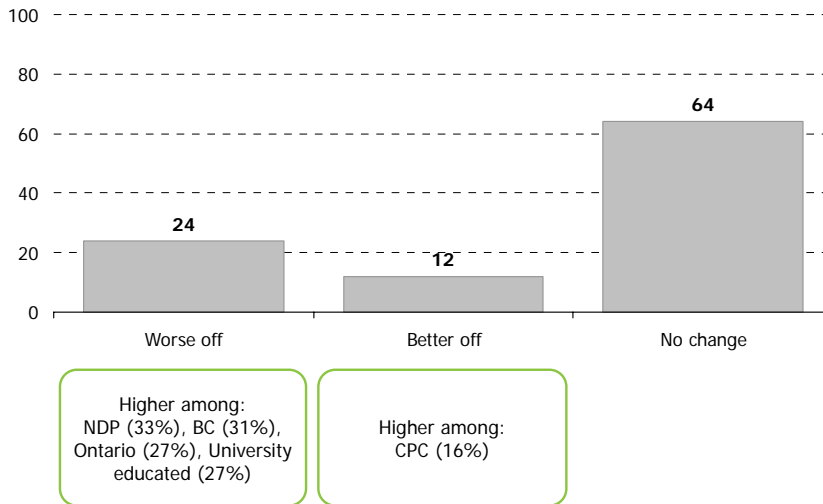
Higher among:
 CPC (42%), Alberta
 (32%), Prairies (31%),
 Seniors (30%), Men
 (25%)

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BASE: Those aware of the budget; March 4-9 (n=1635)

Perceived impact of the budget

Q. What do you think will be the OVERALL impact of this budget for you and your family?



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BASE: Those aware of the budget; March 4-9 (n=1635)

Detailed Tables:

Awareness of Budget

Q. The government of Canada tabled its annual budget on March 4, 2010. Would you say that you clearly recall, vaguely recall, or do not recall hearing about it?

	Yes, clearly recall	Yes, vaguely recall	No, do not recall	Sample Size	Margin of Error (+/-)
NATIONALLY	49%	31%	20%	2015	2.2
REGION					
British Columbia	52%	25%	24%	238	6.4
Alberta	51%	23%	27%	215	6.7
Saskatchewan/Manitoba	63%	23%	14%	110	9.3
Ontario	58%	25%	17%	745	3.6
Quebec	31%	48%	21%	505	4.4
Atlantic Canada	50%	28%	22%	202	6.9
GENDER					
Male	54%	29%	17%	1008	3.1
Female	45%	33%	23%	1007	3.1
AGE					
<25	18%	36%	46%	186	7.2
25-44	41%	38%	22%	617	4.0
45-64	61%	27%	12%	773	3.5
65+	63%	22%	15%	439	4.7
EDUCATION					
High school or less	36%	37%	27%	600	4.0
College or CEGEP	46%	33%	21%	641	3.9
University or higher	62%	25%	14%	774	3.5
CURRENT VOTE INTENTION					
Conservative Party of Canada	60%	26%	14%	579	4.1
Liberal Party of Canada	54%	27%	19%	526	4.3
NDP	49%	29%	22%	278	5.9
Green Party	40%	33%	27%	190	7.1
Bloc Quebecois	33%	52%	15%	155	7.9
Undecided	42%	37%	21%	41	15.3

Budget Approval Rating

Q. Overall, how would you rate this budget? Please use a 5-point scale where 1 means terrible, 5 means excellent and 3 means neither good nor bad.

	Bad (1-2)	Neither (3)	Good (4-5)	Sample Size	Margin of Error (+/-)
NATIONALLY	28%	50%	21%	1635	2.4
REGION					
British Columbia	30%	45%	24%	186	7.2
Alberta	19%	49%	32%	161	7.7
Saskatchewan/Manitoba	24%	46%	31%	94	10.1
Ontario	31%	49%	21%	627	3.9
Quebec	30%	56%	14%	407	4.9
Atlantic Canada	27%	54%	19%	160	7.8
GENDER					
Male	28%	47%	25%	847	3.4
Female	29%	54%	18%	788	3.5
AGE					
<25	25%	51%	23%	99	9.9
25-44	33%	51%	16%	481	4.5
45-64	29%	50%	21%	681	3.8
65+	21%	50%	30%	374	5.1
EDUCATION					
High school or less	26%	55%	19%	446	4.6
College or CEGEP	25%	53%	22%	514	4.3
University or higher	33%	46%	21%	675	3.8
CURRENT VOTE INTENTION					
Conservative Party of Canada	12%	47%	42%	503	4.4
Liberal Party of Canada	35%	51%	14%	433	4.7
NDP	39%	49%	12%	220	6.6
Green Party	39%	50%	11%	142	8.2
Bloc Quebecois	38%	55%	7%	132	8.5
Undecided	51%	39%	10%	32	17.3

Perceived Impact of Budget

Q. What do you think will be the OVERALL impact of this budget for you and your family. Please respond using a 5-point scale where 1 means much worse off, 5 means much better off and the mid-point 3 means no change.

	Worse off (1-2)	No change (3)	Better off (4-5)	Sample Size	Margin of Error (+/-)
NATIONALLY	24%	64%	12%	1635	2.4
REGION					
British Columbia	31%	59%	10%	186	7.2
Alberta	22%	69%	9%	161	7.7
Saskatchewan/Manitoba	23%	63%	14%	94	10.1
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Methodology:

EKOS' weekly tracking polls are conducted using Interactive Voice Recognition (IVR) technology, which allows respondents to enter their preferences by punching the keypad on their phone, rather than telling them to an operator.

In an effort to reduce the coverage bias of landline only RDD, we created a dual land-line/cell phone RDD sampling frame for this research. As a result, we are able to reach those with both a landline and cell phone, as well as cell phone only households and landline only households. This dual frame yields a near perfect unweighted distribution on age group and gender, something almost never seen with traditional landline RDD sample or interviewer-administered surveys.

The field dates for this survey are March 4 – March 9, 2010.¹ In total, a random sample of 2,015 Canadians aged 18 and over responded to the survey. The margin of error associated with the total sample is +/-2.2 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.

Please note that the margin of error increases when the results are sub-divided (i.e., error margins for sub-groups such as region, sex, age, education). All the data have been statistically weighted to ensure the samples composition reflects that of the actual population of Canada according to Census data.

¹ Please note that these dates are not inclusive of the weekends, as we do not survey on Saturday or Sunday.