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PENSIONS, VALUES AND THE ROLE OF THE STATE

IMAGINING THE DEFINING ISSUE OF THE 42ND ELECTION

FEBRUARY 21, 2014

Introduction

Now that we've all had a chance to pick through the entrails of a fairly low-key federal budget, let's ask the questions: What does it tell us about the next election? How do we place this budget within the evolving political landscape? What does this fiscal plan reveal about broader changes to our society and democracy? Finally, how does this connect to what we believe to be the most fundamental political challenge of our age – the diminution of the middle class and the collapse of the ethic of progress? In a nutshell, Canadians (and Americans) no longer feel that upward mobility is the inevitable reward of effort and skill. There is pervasive sense that stagnation is turning to decline and that the future is very dark for the coming generations.

Apart from the glaring disconnect between public outlook on the economy and the cheerful economic narrative of the government, how can this rather unremarkable budget – politically workmanlike yet numbingly banal in terms of economic policy – shed light on these big-picture questions? What do major claw-backs to health coverage for retired public servants and reining in 'out of control' sick leave benefits for current public servants really tell us? Beyond outraged public service unions – now unified in an unprecedented common front – who else really cares? Will octogenarian federal pensioners really evoke much sympathy from an inattentive and hunkered-down citizenry?

While it may be seen as stretching the evidence, the simple fact is that the agenda of Prime Minister Stephen Harper's government is no longer about an incremental, gradual shift away from a progressive state to a model of minimal government embodied by neo-conservative Reaganism or Thatcherism. The attendant supply side monetarism and the bumper sticker simplicity of "lower taxes + less government = prosperity for all" has clearly been inspirational to the current government. The public may now see trickle-down economics as a cruel hoax, but it still seems to be the theory informing the current government's approach to the economy.

But is this merely rhetorical flourish, or an abandoned principle for the current government? Also, to what extent is this reworking of the role of the state a reflection of the values and preferences of the citizenry?

Stephen Harper has led nothing less than a profound transformation of the federal government. The current size of the federal is now down to 14 per cent of GDP. This is the lowest level seen in over 50 years and the current budget makes it clear that this is a work in progress. As Eugene

Lang notes in his recent column in the Toronto Star,¹ that same ratio stands at 19 per cent in the U.S. and 21 per cent in Australia. The drop has been dramatic and coupled with continued emphasis on the importance of fiscal discipline and dealing with government waste.

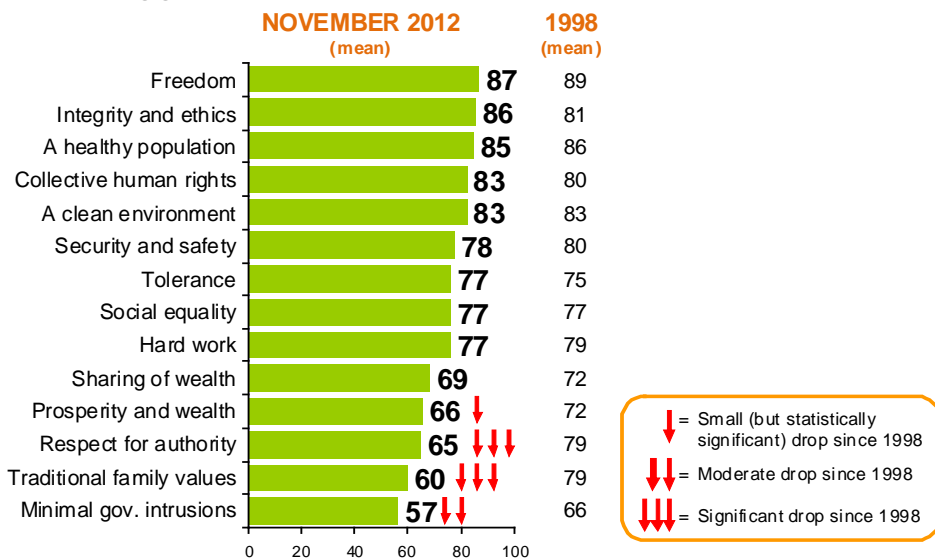
Is this emphasis on ratcheting back the role of the state mirroring shifts in public attitudes? Is it transforming Canadian core values?

Canadians Shifting Right? Whither 'Statism'

The chart below shows the positioning of various values and how they have changed over the past 15 years. It suggests Canadians' values have stayed fairly stable, which should come as no surprise.

Most important goals and values

Q. If you were to direct Canadian society, how important would you say each of the following goals and values should be?



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BASE: Canadians; November 20-29, 2012 (n=1,181)

Source: "Looking Backward, Looking Forward: Part 4", January 4, 2013.

Full results available at: <http://goo.gl/rycX9T>

What is notable is that what change has occurred is focused in the realm of small-c conservative values. Ironically, as our government has shifted right, the public have shifted away from conservative values. This is especially true of younger Canadians – a fact that goes a long way in explaining the paradox of a government and an electorate going in different directions.

¹ Eugene Lang, "Stephen Harper's Historic Tax-Cutting Legacy", Toronto Star, December 27, 2013. Available online at: <http://goo.gl/ShuvGS>

Let's consider one specific value – 'statism', a term coined by Seymour Martin Lipset to describe what he saw as one of the most important and enduring value differences between Canadians and Americans. Minimal government – clearly favoured by the Conservative party – is at the *bottom* of the tested values list. And the meagre emphasis on "minimal government" as a core value has declined further over the past 15 years.

In Europe and the United Kingdom, commentators have noted that while the younger generation is the most socially progressive, it is less collectivist and statist.² It would appear this trend is not occurring here in Canada, where younger citizens are much more likely to rate minimal government lower today than in 1998 (those the under the age of 25 give "minimal government intrusions" a mean rating of 42, compared to 62 in 1998). At 42 on a scale to 100, this means that the value of minimal government has virtually no relevance to younger Canada. The only place it continues to resonate is in older, conservative Canada and the Langevin building.

Size of Government

We updated our tracking on whether Canadians would prefer a larger government with higher taxes and more services or a smaller government with lower taxes and fewer services. The chart below shows an important trend line. Many have claimed that the recent political success of the right reveals a "blueing" of Canadian attitudes. The time series data, however, continue to show that Canadians are *less* likely to prefer smaller government than they were in the past.

They still want government to play a positive role – not to retract, but to cost less. This probably reflects the continuing belief that government is wasteful rather than any new belief that government is less important. Not surprisingly, ideology matters here. And attitudes seem to be polarizing. As we would expect, self-declared conservatives are more supportive of cuts to taxes and government than liberals. However, there is no evidence of a fundamental shift in Canadian attitudes on the importance of government.

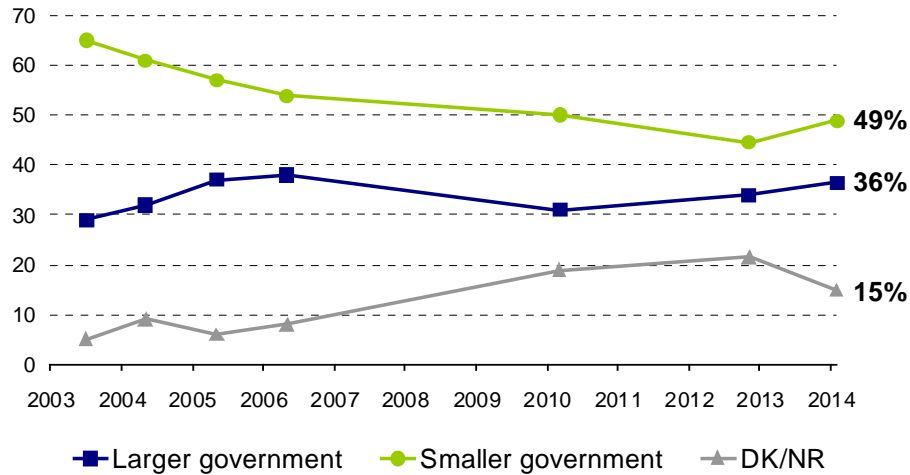
We also find significant variations in attitudes to taxation and role of government depending on age, gender and, to a lesser extent, region and locale. By far the biggest effects are linked to political ideology and party choice. These differences become clearest when we are talking about the issue of taxation as it connects to the size and role of the state. Conservatives clearly lean towards smaller government; support for reducing government is twice as high among them as it is among NDP and Liberal supporters. This parallels similar if even deeper difference in the United States where the mantra for the Republicans and the Tea Party movement in particular is summed up with bumper sticker simplicity: "Less taxes, smaller government".

² The Economist, "Generation Boris", June 1, 2013. Available online at: <http://goo.gl/RcWCV>



Preferred size of government

Q. Generally speaking, which of the following would you say that you favour: 1) a larger government with higher taxes and more services; or 2) a smaller government with lower taxes and fewer services?



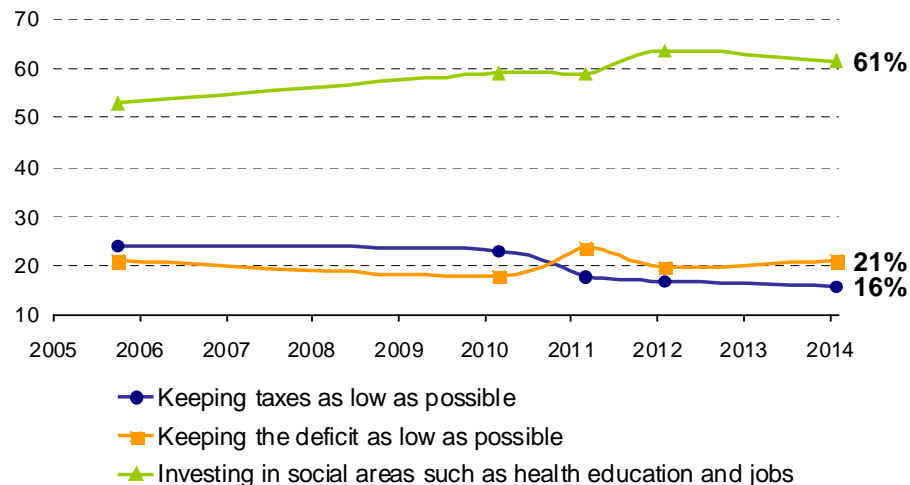
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BASE: Canadians; most recent data point January 22-27, 2014 (n=1,501)

Let's consider another look at the question of smaller government versus more investment. Here we see a very different result but the same trend line with favour for smaller government falling somewhat (which mirrors the pattern on the last indicator and the values change test).

Fiscal or investment priorities?

Q. The federal government faces major challenges in dealing with its finances. The country also has major ongoing investment needs. Which of the following 3 priorities should be the most important principle for dealing with these challenges?



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BASE: Canadians; most recent data point January 22-27, 2014 (n=1,501)

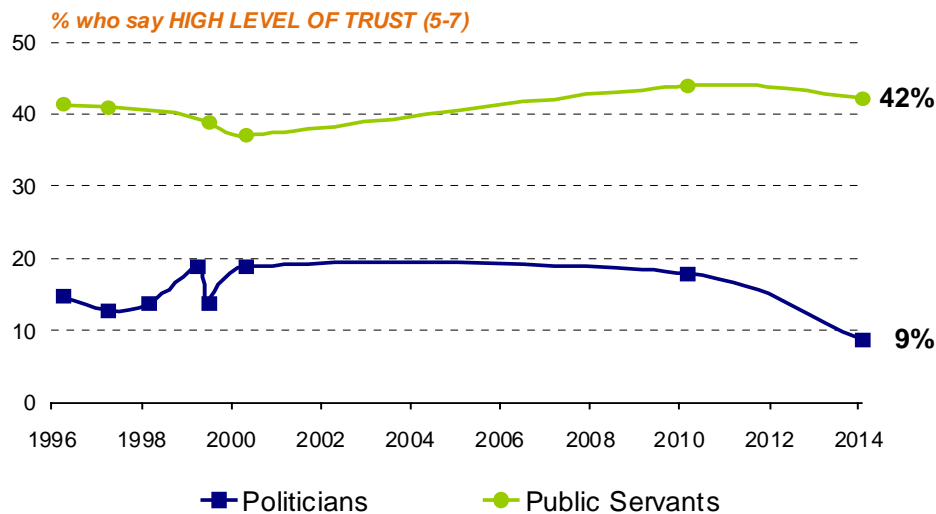
Once again, we see a very large gap between support for tax relief and lower deficit versus support for social investment. The concentration of support for smaller government among the unified Conservative base seems to at least electorally offset the greater support for a more active state and the trend lines showing increasing resistance to the lower government/less taxes prescription for economic and societal well being.

Shifting the Target to Current and Retired Federal Public Servants

One of the most important sources of fuelling the balanced budget and imminent election year surplus is claw-backs to public servants both current and former.³ Whatever the fairness of this sort of targeting, it may well be politically effective since there is not a lot of sympathy for “poor” public servants. In fact, of all of the areas that the government can put central in the next campaign, this may be the one where they have the highest ground, particularly with their available constituency. This political advantage may, however, become less apparent when arrayed against broader issues of trust and the debate about the role of government in the future.

Trust in politicians and public servants

Q. How much trust do you have in each of the following?



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BASE: Canadians; most recent data point January 22-27, 2014 (n=1,501)

We know that trust in government has declined dramatically over the past several years but do the public differentiate their trust in politicians and public servants? The figure above shows that

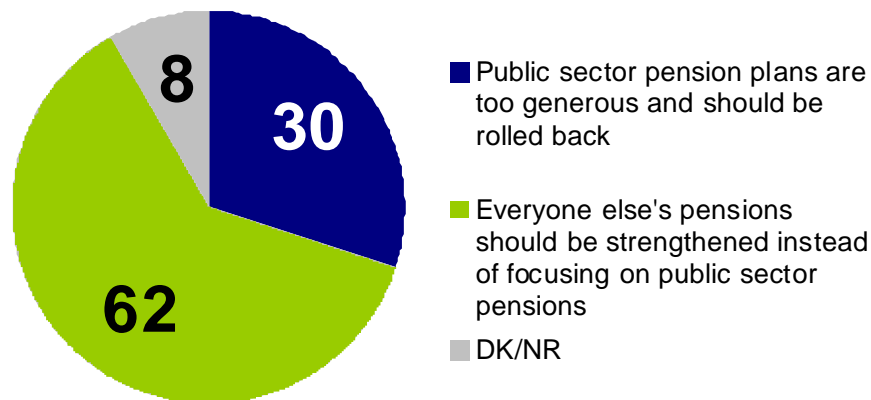
³ Kathryn May, “Public Service Retirees Ramp Up Campaign Against Proposed Changes to Benefits”, Ottawa Citizen, November 14, 2013. Available online at: <http://goo.gl/sCHxFA>

they do indeed make dramatic differentiation. While trust in public servants is only moderately positive, trust in politicians is virtually extinct. In our most recent poll, trust in politicians has dropped into single digits for the first time.

It is interesting to see that despite the tepid enthusiasm for the plight of public servants, there are some interesting areas of push-back that do not seem to be about simple self-interest. As the chart below shows, the number of Canadians who think the federal government's priority should be improving pension benefits for everyone is more than double the number who want public service pensions clawed back.

Public sector pensions

Q. Some people say that public sector pension plans are far too generous and that they need to be seriously rolled back. Others say that while some changes should be made to public sector pensions plans, the more urgent priority is to improve pensions for the majority of Canadians who have little or no pension coverage. Which of the following statements comes closest to your own point of view?



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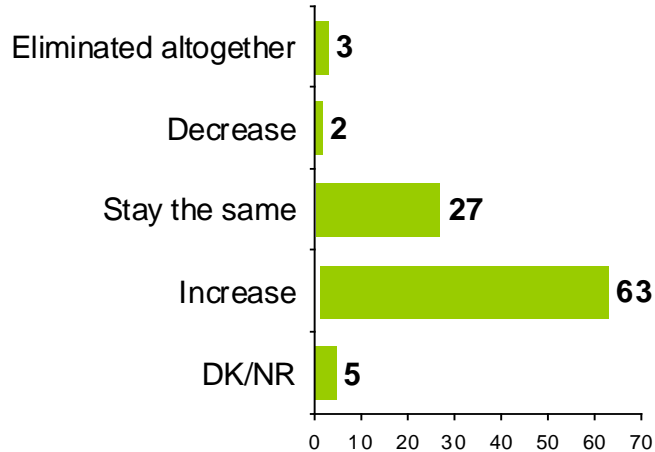
BASE: Canadians; January 22-27, 2014 (n=1,501)

Noting the generalized anxiety about a darkening economic future, it is also instructive to compare the government's position on the more basic question of the Canadian Pension Plan (CPP). Many – including the Government of Ontario – have called for increases to CPP premiums to forestall against an affordability crisis for Canada's rapidly aging workforce. The ruling Conservatives have staked out the austerity position arguing for holding premiums constant. Although about a quarter support this position, this minority is dwarfed by the large majority who favour increases to the plan. Once again, we see the familiar divide over whether government should be taking a larger or smaller role in economic and social investment – reflected in sharp differences among Conservative supporters and everyone else.



Support for increasing CPP premiums

Q. The Canadian Pension Plan provides a monthly benefit to retired Canadians and nearly everyone who works in Canada is required to contribute to it. There has been a lot of talk lately as to whether governments should enhance the Canadian Pension Plan in order to make it keep pace with retirement living costs. Do you believe that premiums and benefits should increase, stay the same, decrease, or be eliminated altogether?



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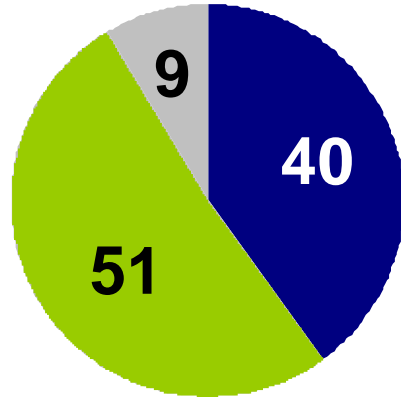
BASE: Canadians; January 22-27, 2014 (n=1,501)

We see a similar divide on the question of whether recent efforts at austerity are necessary or damaging. While a slight majority are offside with the austerity position, the 40 points lined up with the government look really attractive compared to their current position in the polls. The austerity position is favoured by the majority of the Conservatives' available constituency and 'stop the gravy train' politics remains a powerful hook for candidates on the right. At a time when the government's cheerful economic narrative is ringing hollow with most Canadians, a campaign focused on the bogeyman of federal waste and abuse seems more plausible.



Impact of government cuts

Q. Lately, the federal government has made significant cuts to public services. Which of the following statements comes closest to your own point of view?



- These cuts are necessary to reduce government waste and rein in out-of-control government spending
- These cuts have taken us to the point where the overall health of Canadian society is being seriously damaged
- DK/NR

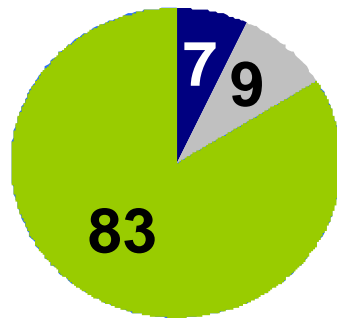
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BASE: Canadians; January 22-27, 2014 (n=1,501)

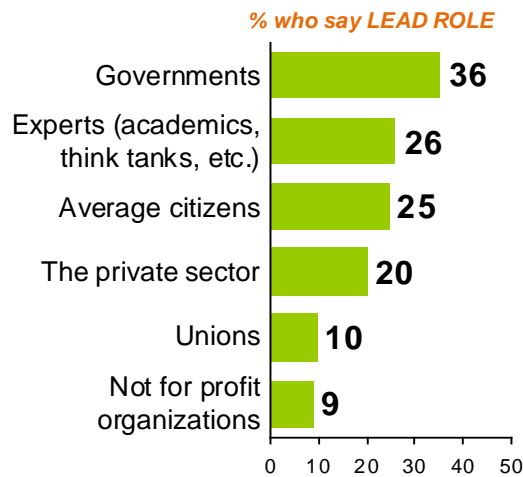
Perceived need for new blueprint

Q. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements: "Canada needs a clearer plan or blueprint to restore a growing and optimistic middle class."

Q. What would be the most appropriate role for each of the following groups in creating a blueprint to restore a growing and optimistic middle class?



- Disagree (1-3)
- Neither (4)
- Agree (5-7)



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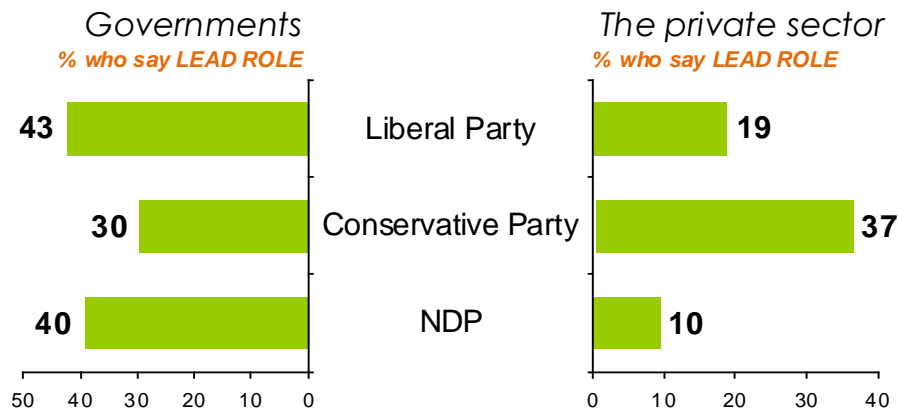
BASE: Canadians; January 22-27, 2014 (n=1,501)

Virtually everyone agrees that a top priority for the country is to kick-start a moribund middle class. This will be a defining issue for the 41st election and the area where there will be vivid differences across the offering of the different parties. We believe that the issue of the role of the federal government in planning and delivering solutions and buffers to middle class angst will determine be critical to sorting out the eventual winner. Beyond the consensus that we need a new blueprint, there is considerable disagreement about what that plan should look like and who should shape and execute it.

We can see that most Canadians favour a number of authors with government leading the attack. It is notable that experts and evidence are seen as critical as well (not a central belief of the current government). Average citizens also seen as important for a citizenry frustrated with the apparent failure of other actors to solve this problem in the public interest. The private sector is also seen as having a significant role to play with unions and the not-for-profit sector also as part of the mix (albeit in a much less prominent way).

Preferred leader in creating national blueprint

Q. What would be the most appropriate role for each of the following groups in creating a blueprint to restore a growing and optimistic middle class?



Copyright 2014. No reproduction without permission. **BASE:** Those who say Canada needs national blueprint, January 22-27, 2014 (n=1,501)

Of course, how you see that labour being divided depends very much on which party you support. Conservatives see the private sector as best-equipped to lead the blueprint. Supporters of other parties want to see government in the driver's seat. For Liberal supporters, government is the clear choice to lead – even more so than among NDP supporters. NDP supporters see a relatively trivial role for the private sector, while the Liberals see the private sector having a much more important – albeit subordinate – role.

This hints broadly at potentially vivid different approaches across the three main contenders for power in an election that will be all about saving the middle class and at the same time all about the role (or non-role) of the federal state in producing middle class renewal.



Detailed Tables:

Preferred Size of Government					
<i>Q. Generally speaking, which of the following would you say that you favour?</i>					
	A larger government with higher taxes and more services	A smaller government with lower taxes and fewer services	DK/NR	Sample Size	Margin of Error (+/-)
NATIONALLY	36.4%	48.8%	14.8%	1501	2.5
REGION					
British Columbia	43.5%	38.0%	18.6%	202	6.9
Alberta	30.0%	55.0%	14.9%	158	7.8
Saskatchewan	26.9%	53.7%	19.4%	45	14.6
Manitoba	48.1%	36.1%	15.8%	54	13.3
Ontario	37.6%	48.6%	13.8%	576	4.1
Quebec	32.8%	53.4%	13.8%	349	5.3
Atlantic Canada	34.8%	51.9%	13.3%	112	9.3
GENDER					
Male	37.2%	52.6%	10.2%	782	3.5
Female	35.7%	45.1%	19.2%	719	3.7
AGE					
<25	63.6%	25.6%	10.8%	42	15.1
25-44	38.8%	48.6%	12.7%	518	4.3
45-64	30.5%	53.7%	15.7%	586	4.1
65+	30.6%	55.5%	14.0%	296	5.7
EDUCATION					
High school or less	32.7%	49.0%	18.3%	377	5.1
College or CEGEP	29.6%	57.9%	12.5%	554	4.2
University or higher	47.8%	39.0%	13.3%	563	4.1
COUNTRY OF BIRTH					
Canada	35.8%	49.4%	14.8%	1321	2.7
Other	41.5%	45.0%	13.5%	166	7.6
CURRENT VOTE INTENTION					
Liberal Party	47.2%	38.2%	14.5%	450	4.6
Conservative Party	10.0%	82.2%	7.7%	394	4.9
NDP	61.2%	23.4%	15.3%	315	5.5
Green Party	36.0%	43.5%	20.5%	80	11.0
Bloc Quebecois	47.3%	40.3%	12.5%	57	13.0



Fiscal or Investment Priorities

Q. The federal government faces major challenges in dealing with its finances. The country also has major ongoing investment needs. Which of the following 3 priorities should be the most important principle for dealing with these challenges?

	Investing in social areas such as health, education, and jobs	Keeping taxes as low as possible	Keeping the deficit as low as possible	DK/NR	Sample Size	Margin of Error (+/-)
NATIONALLY	61.4%	15.6%	21.0%	2.0%	1501	2.5
REGION						
British Columbia	70.5%	10.3%	17.5%	1.8%	202	6.9
Alberta	55.1%	15.8%	27.5%	1.7%	158	7.8
Saskatchewan	63.4%	10.9%	21.2%	4.5%	45	14.6
Manitoba	70.2%	11.4%	18.4%	0.0%	54	13.3
Ontario	62.1%	17.0%	19.3%	1.6%	576	4.1
Quebec	58.4%	17.6%	22.4%	1.6%	349	5.3
Atlantic Canada	53.8%	14.6%	25.3%	6.3%	112	9.3
GENDER						
Male	57.1%	17.1%	24.1%	1.7%	782	3.5
Female	65.4%	14.1%	18.1%	2.4%	719	3.7
AGE						
<25	73.1%	11.9%	15.0%	0.0%	42	15.1
25-44	61.5%	18.0%	18.8%	1.7%	518	4.3
45-64	58.1%	15.8%	22.4%	3.7%	586	4.1
65+	60.8%	12.2%	26.1%	0.8%	296	5.7
EDUCATION						
High school or less	64.2%	13.8%	19.7%	2.3%	377	5.1
College or CEGEP	56.0%	19.6%	22.0%	2.4%	554	4.2
University or higher	63.2%	13.7%	21.9%	1.2%	563	4.1
COUNTRY OF BIRTH						
Canada	61.0%	15.3%	21.6%	2.1%	1321	2.7
Other	63.9%	17.2%	17.3%	1.7%	166	7.6
CURRENT VOTE INTENTION						
Liberal Party	71.4%	9.6%	16.4%	2.5%	450	4.6
Conservative Party	31.0%	29.5%	38.4%	1.1%	394	4.9
NDP	83.3%	5.8%	10.1%	0.8%	315	5.5
Green Party	70.7%	9.7%	17.5%	2.1%	80	11.0
Bloc Quebecois	58.8%	24.0%	14.4%	2.8%	57	13.0



Trust in Politicians

Q. How much trust do you have in each of the following?

Politicians

	Low level (1-2)	Moderate (3-5)	High level (6-7)	DK/NR	Sample Size	Margin of Error (+/-)
NATIONALLY	51.1%	45.9%	2.9%	0.1%	1501	2.5
REGION						
British Columbia	51.0%	48.2%	0.8%	0.0%	202	6.9
Alberta	55.5%	40.6%	3.9%	0.0%	158	7.8
Saskatchewan	28.5%	66.6%	3.1%	1.9%	45	14.6
Manitoba	48.6%	48.0%	3.3%	0.0%	54	13.3
Ontario	52.7%	44.6%	2.7%	0.0%	576	4.1
Quebec	51.4%	44.8%	3.7%	0.0%	349	5.3
Atlantic Canada	44.0%	50.8%	4.5%	0.7%	112	9.3
GENDER						
Male	48.4%	48.2%	3.3%	0.0%	782	3.5
Female	53.6%	43.6%	2.6%	0.2%	719	3.7
AGE						
<25	43.2%	52.4%	4.4%	0.0%	42	15.1
25-44	50.2%	46.6%	3.0%	0.2%	518	4.3
45-64	54.6%	41.6%	3.6%	0.2%	586	4.1
65+	48.0%	50.7%	1.3%	0.0%	296	5.7
EDUCATION						
High school or less	50.2%	45.7%	4.0%	0.0%	377	5.1
College or CEGEP	56.0%	41.3%	2.6%	0.2%	554	4.2
University or higher	46.6%	51.2%	2.0%	0.2%	563	4.1
COUNTRY OF BIRTH						
Canada	50.4%	46.5%	3.0%	0.1%	1321	2.7
Other	55.5%	42.4%	2.2%	0.0%	166	7.6
CURRENT VOTE INTENTION						
Liberal Party	49.7%	47.6%	2.6%	0.0%	450	4.6
Conservative Party	41.1%	53.5%	5.2%	0.2%	394	4.9
NDP	52.6%	46.0%	1.5%	0.0%	315	5.5
Green Party	73.7%	24.4%	1.9%	0.0%	80	11.0
Bloc Quebecois	47.3%	47.3%	5.4%	0.0%	57	13.0



Trust in Public Servants

Q. How much trust do you have in each of the following?

Public Servants

	Low level (1-2)	Moderate (3-5)	High level (6-7)	DK/NR	Sample Size	Margin of Error (+/-)
NATIONALLY	14.8%	65.9%	18.4%	0.9%	1501	2.5
REGION						
British Columbia	9.7%	69.1%	21.2%	0.0%	202	6.9
Alberta	18.7%	63.5%	12.8%	5.0%	158	7.8
Saskatchewan	11.7%	69.4%	18.9%	0.0%	45	14.6
Manitoba	0.0%	71.8%	24.1%	4.1%	54	13.3
Ontario	15.0%	64.0%	20.6%	0.4%	576	4.1
Quebec	19.8%	65.2%	14.7%	0.2%	349	5.3
Atlantic Canada	8.2%	72.0%	19.0%	0.7%	112	9.3
GENDER						
Male	17.2%	64.0%	18.6%	0.3%	782	3.5
Female	12.5%	67.7%	18.2%	1.6%	719	3.7
AGE						
<25	8.3%	58.7%	28.6%	4.4%	42	15.1
25-44	12.4%	65.6%	21.0%	1.0%	518	4.3
45-64	16.8%	65.5%	17.5%	0.2%	586	4.1
65+	17.3%	71.6%	10.7%	0.4%	296	5.7
EDUCATION						
High school or less	17.7%	67.0%	13.5%	1.7%	377	5.1
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Liberal Party	9.8%	66.8%	23.0%	0.4%	450	4.6
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Green Party	12.7%	70.2%	17.0%	0.0%	80	11.0
Bloc Quebecois	22.0%	63.0%	13.6%	1.4%	57	13.0

Views on Public Sector Pensions

Q. Some people say that public sector pension plans are far too generous and that they need to be seriously rolled back. Others say that while some changes should be made to public sector pensions plans, the more urgent priority is to improve pensions for the majority of Canadians who have little or no pension coverage. Which of the following statements comes closest to your own point of view?

	Public sector pension plans are too generous and should be rolled back	Everyone else's pensions should be strengthened instead of focusing on public sector pensions	DK/NR	Sample Size	Margin of Error (+/-)
NATIONALLY	29.9%	61.8%	8.3%	1501	2.5
REGION					
British Columbia	32.9%	57.3%	9.8%	202	6.9
Alberta	37.5%	52.1%	10.5%	158	7.8
Saskatchewan	37.5%	44.6%	17.9%	45	14.6
Manitoba	18.5%	66.5%	15.0%	54	13.3
Ontario	29.5%	65.1%	5.4%	576	4.1
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Female	25.3%	64.7%	10.0%	719	3.7
AGE					
<25	17.2%	72.6%	10.2%	42	15.1
25-44	30.2%	60.3%	9.5%	518	4.3
45-64	30.7%	62.9%	6.5%	586	4.1
65+	35.0%	57.5%	7.5%	296	5.7
EDUCATION					
High school or less	32.2%	58.3%	9.5%	377	5.1
College or CEGEP	29.1%	63.0%	8.0%	554	4.2
University or higher	28.0%	64.9%	7.2%	563	4.1
COUNTRY OF BIRTH					
Canada	30.1%	61.3%	8.6%	1321	2.7
Other	28.9%	65.3%	5.8%	166	7.6
CURRENT VOTE INTENTION					
Liberal Party	23.1%	70.1%	6.8%	450	4.6
Conservative Party	53.3%	41.8%	4.9%	394	4.9
NDP	15.4%	76.0%	8.6%	315	5.5
Green Party	29.5%	59.4%	11.1%	80	11.0
Bloc Quebecois	23.5%	72.0%	4.5%	57	13.0



Support for Increasing CPP Premiums

Q. The Canadian Pension Plan provides a monthly benefit to retired Canadians and nearly everyone who works in Canada is required to contribute to it. There has been a lot of talk lately as to whether governments should enhance the Canadian Pension Plan in order to make it keep pace with retirement living costs. Do you believe that premiums and benefits should increase, stay the same, decrease, or be eliminated altogether?

	Eliminated altogether	Decrease	Stay the same	Increase	DK/NR	Sample Size	Margin of Error (+/-)
NATIONALLY	3.1%	1.8%	27.1%	63.1%	4.9%	1501	2.5
REGION							
British Columbia	7.1%	3.5%	23.9%	59.5%	6.0%	202	6.9
Alberta	5.0%	2.9%	30.2%	59.3%	2.6%	158	7.8
Saskatchewan	1.6%	0.0%	31.0%	62.5%	4.9%	45	14.6
Manitoba	1.2%	0.0%	29.1%	59.0%	10.7%	54	13.3
Ontario	2.4%	1.4%	26.0%	65.9%	4.3%	576	4.1
Quebec	1.6%	1.2%	29.7%	62.2%	5.2%	349	5.3
Atlantic Canada	2.2%	3.1%	22.1%	66.5%	6.2%	112	9.3
GENDER							
Male	2.9%	2.5%	27.1%	62.5%	5.0%	782	3.5
Female	3.2%	1.2%	27.0%	63.8%	4.8%	719	3.7
AGE							
<25	7.6%	4.8%	20.9%	56.1%	10.6%	42	15.1
25-44	4.3%	2.2%	30.3%	57.1%	6.1%	518	4.3
45-64	2.2%	1.7%	26.1%	67.4%	2.6%	586	4.1
65+	0.0%	0.0%	27.4%	69.4%	3.2%	296	5.7
EDUCATION							
High school or less	2.4%	1.3%	25.3%	67.1%	3.9%	377	5.1
College or CEGEP	4.6%	2.1%	25.7%	62.5%	5.1%	554	4.2
University or higher	2.3%	2.2%	31.0%	58.5%	6.0%	563	4.1
Country of Birth							
Canada	2.8%	1.6%	27.5%	62.9%	5.2%	1321	2.7
Other	5.1%	3.7%	23.4%	64.8%	3.0%	166	7.6
CURRENT VOTE INTENTION							
Liberal Party	1.4%	1.0%	28.1%	64.0%	5.5%	450	4.6
Conservative Party	4.7%	5.2%	38.9%	47.9%	3.3%	394	4.9
NDP	0.5%	0.8%	18.2%	74.3%	6.3%	315	5.5
Green Party	9.7%	0.8%	16.1%	69.2%	4.1%	80	11.0
Bloc Quebecois	0.0%	0.0%	25.8%	70.4%	3.8%	57	13.0



Impact of Government Cuts

Q. Lately, the federal government has made significant cuts to public services. Which of the following statements comes closest to your own point of view?

	These cuts are necessary to reduce government waste and rein in out-of-control government spending	These cuts have taken us to the point where the overall health of Canadian society is being seriously damaged	DK/NR	Sample Size	Margin of Error (+/-)
NATIONALLY	39.9%	51.4%	8.7%	1501	2.5
REGION					
British Columbia	26.4%	60.7%	12.9%	202	6.9
Alberta	47.6%	47.3%	5.1%	158	7.8
Saskatchewan	49.6%	36.7%	13.7%	45	14.6
Manitoba	33.7%	60.0%	6.3%	54	13.3
Ontario	40.0%	53.2%	6.7%	576	4.1
Quebec	44.9%	44.9%	10.2%	349	5.3
Atlantic Canada	36.6%	53.5%	9.9%	112	9.3
GENDER					
Male	45.1%	47.4%	7.5%	782	3.5
Female	34.9%	55.3%	9.8%	719	3.7
AGE					
<25	30.6%	55.1%	14.3%	42	15.1
25-44	41.2%	50.5%	8.2%	518	4.3
45-64	41.7%	50.1%	8.2%	586	4.1
65+	40.7%	52.9%	6.4%	296	5.7
EDUCATION					
High school or less	41.0%	49.0%	10.0%	377	5.1
College or CEGEP	42.7%	49.4%	7.9%	554	4.2
University or higher	35.8%	56.5%	7.7%	563	4.1
COUNTRY OF BIRTH					
Canada	40.1%	51.0%	8.9%	1321	2.7
Other	38.8%	55.3%	5.9%	166	7.6
CURRENT VOTE INTENTION					
Liberal Party	26.3%	66.6%	7.1%	450	4.6
Conservative Party	80.5%	15.8%	3.8%	394	4.9
NDP	17.6%	72.8%	9.5%	315	5.5
Green Party	24.8%	59.8%	15.4%	80	11.0
Bloc Quebecois	45.6%	43.0%	11.4%	57	13.0



Perceived Need for New Blueprint

Q. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements:

Canada needs a clearer plan or blueprint to restore a growing and optimistic middle class.

	Disagree (1-3)	Neither (4)	Agree (5-7)	DK/NR	Sample Size	Margin of Error (+/-)
NATIONALLY	6.9%	8.9%	82.9%	1.3%	1501	2.5
REGION						
British Columbia	8.3%	5.9%	85.0%	0.8%	202	6.9
Alberta	9.5%	12.1%	76.4%	2.0%	158	7.8
Saskatchewan	3.8%	19.0%	69.9%	7.3%	45	14.6
Manitoba	7.6%	11.9%	79.2%	1.4%	54	13.3
Ontario	6.5%	8.1%	85.0%	0.5%	576	4.1
Quebec	5.2%	9.0%	84.6%	1.2%	349	5.3
Atlantic Canada	8.3%	8.8%	80.1%	2.9%	112	9.3
GENDER						
Male	6.6%	9.6%	83.2%	0.6%	782	3.5
Female	7.2%	8.2%	82.7%	2.0%	719	3.7
AGE						
<25	12.4%	9.9%	77.7%	0.0%	42	15.1
25-44	7.8%	9.2%	82.1%	0.9%	518	4.3
45-64	5.2%	8.4%	85.0%	1.5%	586	4.1
65+	5.1%	8.9%	84.3%	1.7%	296	5.7
EDUCATION						
High school or less	6.2%	9.8%	82.4%	1.6%	377	5.1
College or CEGEP	7.1%	6.8%	84.9%	1.2%	554	4.2
University or higher	7.3%	9.9%	81.9%	0.9%	563	4.1
COUNTRY OF BIRTH						
Canada	6.7%	8.8%	83.1%	1.4%	1321	2.7
Other	7.8%	10.2%	81.6%	0.5%	166	7.6
CURRENT VOTE INTENTION						
Liberal Party	5.4%	5.8%	87.8%	1.1%	450	4.6
Conservative Party	9.4%	11.8%	77.6%	1.2%	394	4.9
NDP	7.4%	6.8%	85.0%	0.9%	315	5.5
Green Party	3.5%	11.0%	85.6%	0.0%	80	11.0
Bloc Quebecois	4.3%	9.6%	84.1%	2.0%	57	13.0



Preferred Role of Governments

Q. [IF AGREE] What would be the most appropriate role for each of the following groups in creating a blueprint to restore a growing and optimistic middle class?

Governments

	Lead role	Senior partner	Junior partner	No role	DK/NR	Sample Size	Margin of Error (+/-)
NATIONALLY	35.5%	34.3%	21.6%	6.5%	2.1%	1256	2.8
REGION							
British Columbia	31.3%	35.7%	23.8%	8.2%	1.0%	173	7.5
Alberta	32.0%	27.0%	33.6%	5.6%	1.8%	119	9.0
Saskatchewan	35.7%	41.3%	11.5%	6.0%	5.5%	32	17.3
Manitoba	28.3%	47.4%	20.6%	3.8%	0.0%	42	15.1
Ontario	38.3%	36.7%	17.0%	5.7%	2.3%	493	4.4
Quebec	36.5%	29.4%	24.2%	8.2%	1.7%	303	5.6
Atlantic Canada	33.7%	36.0%	20.6%	5.1%	4.7%	91	10.3
GENDER							
Male	38.3%	34.3%	21.2%	5.8%	0.4%	661	3.8
Female	32.9%	34.3%	22.0%	7.2%	3.7%	595	4.0
AGE							
<25	37.2%	31.6%	16.2%	15.1%	0.0%	32	17.3
25-44	39.5%	32.3%	20.7%	4.9%	2.6%	428	4.7
45-64	32.7%	36.9%	22.6%	5.0%	2.8%	500	4.4
65+	34.0%	33.8%	24.7%	7.0%	0.5%	249	6.2
EDUCATION							
High school or less	34.0%	32.1%	22.7%	8.7%	2.5%	313	5.5
College or CEGEP	35.4%	32.2%	22.8%	7.5%	2.1%	468	4.5
University or higher	37.0%	39.3%	19.2%	2.9%	1.6%	471	4.5
Country of Birth							
Canada	34.3%	35.1%	22.0%	6.4%	2.2%	1102	3.0
Other	45.4%	26.8%	18.9%	7.9%	1.1%	142	8.2
CURRENT VOTE INTENTION							
Liberal Party	42.9%	32.0%	17.4%	4.7%	3.0%	395	4.9
Conservative Party	30.2%	39.0%	24.2%	6.0%	0.6%	307	5.6
NDP	40.1%	36.5%	18.6%	3.5%	1.2%	275	5.9
Green Party	16.5%	42.2%	28.8%	12.4%	0.0%	71	11.6
Bloc Quebecois	35.5%	20.1%	26.3%	16.5%	1.7%	48	14.1



Preferred Role of Experts

Q. [IF AGREE] What would be the most appropriate role for each of the following groups in creating a blueprint to restore a growing and optimistic middle class?

Experts, including academics, consultants, and think tanks

	Lead role	Senior partner	Junior partner	No role	DK/NR	Sample Size	Margin of Error (+/-)
NATIONALLY	26.3%	38.1%	28.3%	5.4%	1.9%	1256	2.8
REGION							
British Columbia	28.4%	34.9%	32.3%	3.4%	1.0%	173	7.5
Alberta	23.9%	39.8%	26.7%	6.5%	3.0%	119	9.0
Saskatchewan	22.4%	45.0%	27.1%	0.0%	5.5%	32	17.3
Manitoba	35.6%	19.3%	38.7%	6.4%	0.0%	42	15.1
Ontario	26.1%	40.8%	24.9%	6.3%	1.9%	493	4.4
Quebec	25.2%	37.0%	31.8%	4.4%	1.6%	303	5.6
Atlantic Canada	27.2%	37.0%	24.6%	8.0%	3.2%	91	10.3
GENDER							
Male	26.7%	36.2%	30.2%	6.0%	0.9%	661	3.8
Female	26.0%	39.9%	26.4%	4.8%	3.0%	595	4.0
AGE							
<25	40.9%	33.6%	22.5%	3.0%	0.0%	32	17.3
25-44	25.1%	35.1%	30.0%	7.5%	2.1%	428	4.7
45-64	24.5%	38.8%	29.6%	4.8%	2.3%	500	4.4
65+	23.9%	43.7%	26.3%	4.6%	1.5%	249	6.2
EDUCATION							
High school or less	27.8%	35.9%	29.1%	5.1%	2.1%	313	5.5
College or CEGEP	25.0%	35.2%	30.1%	7.6%	2.1%	468	4.5
University or higher	26.0%	43.4%	25.5%	3.5%	1.6%	471	4.5
Country of Birth							
Canada	25.5%	37.6%	29.0%	5.9%	2.1%	1102	3.0
Other	33.6%	41.8%	22.3%	1.1%	1.1%	142	8.2
CURRENT VOTE INTENTION							
Liberal Party	31.8%	44.5%	19.8%	1.9%	2.1%	395	4.9
Conservative Party	16.3%	35.3%	36.4%	10.0%	2.0%	307	5.6
NDP	26.7%	39.4%	30.2%	2.9%	0.9%	275	5.9
Green Party	39.1%	29.9%	23.6%	7.3%	0.0%	71	11.6
Bloc Quebecois	23.7%	35.3%	37.9%	1.4%	1.7%	48	14.1



Preferred Role of Average Citizens

Q. [IF AGREE] What would be the most appropriate role for each of the following groups in creating a blueprint to restore a growing and optimistic middle class?

Average citizens

	Lead role	Senior partner	Junior partner	No role	DK/NR	Sample Size	Margin of Error (+/-)
NATIONALLY	24.9%	38.7%	31.6%	2.9%	1.9%	1256	2.8
REGION							
British Columbia	30.6%	36.1%	28.4%	3.3%	1.7%	173	7.5
Alberta	33.0%	42.8%	20.7%	1.7%	1.8%	119	9.0
Saskatchewan	49.8%	35.6%	6.3%	2.8%	5.5%	32	17.3
Manitoba	27.5%	43.6%	28.9%	0.0%	0.0%	42	15.1
Ontario	25.0%	40.1%	30.4%	2.9%	1.6%	493	4.4
Quebec	16.7%	38.4%	38.5%	4.3%	2.2%	303	5.6
Atlantic Canada	19.7%	29.7%	46.7%	0.7%	3.2%	91	10.3
GENDER							
Male	23.7%	39.7%	33.0%	2.9%	0.6%	661	3.8
Female	26.0%	37.8%	30.1%	2.9%	3.2%	595	4.0
AGE							
<25	25.7%	38.3%	33.5%	2.6%	0.0%	32	17.3
25-44	25.1%	36.3%	33.1%	3.0%	2.5%	428	4.7
45-64	25.2%	39.9%	29.0%	3.1%	2.7%	500	4.4
65+	23.2%	39.7%	33.6%	3.2%	0.4%	249	6.2
EDUCATION							
High school or less	29.5%	36.4%	29.9%	2.8%	1.4%	313	5.5
College or CEGEP	24.5%	40.4%	29.7%	3.0%	2.3%	468	4.5
University or higher	19.4%	39.9%	35.6%	3.0%	2.2%	471	4.5
Country of Birth							
Canada	25.1%	38.8%	31.6%	2.4%	2.0%	1102	3.0
Other	22.4%	36.6%	32.5%	7.3%	1.1%	142	8.2
CURRENT VOTE INTENTION							
Liberal Party	21.0%	41.1%	31.9%	3.2%	2.7%	395	4.9
Conservative Party	23.2%	38.8%	34.3%	2.8%	0.8%	307	5.6
NDP	26.5%	39.6%	28.6%	3.1%	2.1%	275	5.9
Green Party	33.3%	38.9%	26.3%	1.5%	0.0%	71	11.6
Bloc Quebecois	13.4%	30.8%	51.8%	2.4%	1.7%	48	14.1



Preferred Role of The Private Sector

Q. [IF AGREE] What would be the most appropriate role for each of the following groups in creating a blueprint to restore a growing and optimistic middle class?

The private sector

	Lead role	Senior partner	Junior partner	No role	DK/NR	Sample Size	Margin of Error (+/-)
NATIONALLY	20.3%	39.0%	31.7%	6.0%	3.0%	1256	2.8
REGION							
British Columbia	12.7%	42.9%	35.2%	8.1%	1.0%	173	7.5
Alberta	22.5%	39.2%	23.8%	6.8%	7.7%	119	9.0
Saskatchewan	34.9%	33.8%	21.2%	4.5%	5.5%	32	17.3
Manitoba	23.0%	54.1%	20.8%	2.1%	0.0%	42	15.1
Ontario	19.3%	40.1%	31.8%	6.2%	2.6%	493	4.4
Quebec	23.5%	31.5%	36.5%	5.8%	2.7%	303	5.6
Atlantic Canada	20.9%	46.1%	26.8%	2.2%	4.1%	91	10.3
GENDER							
Male	24.4%	39.6%	27.9%	6.7%	1.3%	661	3.8
Female	16.4%	38.4%	35.3%	5.2%	4.6%	595	4.0
AGE							
<25	6.1%	32.6%	43.8%	11.9%	5.6%	32	17.3
25-44	19.0%	34.2%	36.0%	7.7%	3.1%	428	4.7
45-64	23.3%	41.5%	28.3%	4.0%	2.9%	500	4.4
65+	25.2%	46.1%	23.6%	3.9%	1.2%	249	6.2
EDUCATION							
High school or less	23.7%	34.4%	32.0%	5.4%	4.6%	313	5.5
College or CEGEP	18.8%	38.6%	33.3%	7.1%	2.1%	468	4.5
University or higher	17.9%	44.8%	29.7%	5.5%	2.1%	471	4.5
Country of Birth							
Canada	20.9%	39.4%	31.1%	5.6%	3.1%	1102	3.0
Other	16.9%	36.3%	36.7%	7.2%	2.8%	142	8.2
CURRENT VOTE INTENTION							
Liberal Party	19.2%	44.8%	30.2%	2.6%	3.2%	395	4.9
Conservative Party	36.7%	42.7%	17.6%	1.8%	1.1%	307	5.6
NDP	9.7%	31.0%	44.6%	12.4%	2.2%	275	5.9
Green Party	14.3%	33.9%	46.6%	4.0%	1.2%	71	11.6
Bloc Quebecois	11.4%	38.9%	41.3%	6.7%	1.7%	48	14.1



Preferred Role of Unions

Q. [IF AGREE] What would be the most appropriate role for each of the following groups in creating a blueprint to restore a growing and optimistic middle class?

Unions

	Lead role	Senior partner	Junior partner	No role	DK/NR	Sample Size	Margin of Error (+/-)
NATIONALLY	9.9%	23.4%	40.5%	23.3%	2.8%	1256	2.8
REGION							
British Columbia	12.7%	32.0%	32.6%	20.6%	2.0%	173	7.5
Alberta	13.6%	28.5%	26.0%	28.8%	3.0%	119	9.0
Saskatchewan	8.0%	15.4%	48.0%	23.1%	5.5%	32	17.3
Manitoba	10.6%	23.5%	39.6%	21.8%	4.5%	42	15.1
Ontario	9.6%	22.1%	45.7%	20.8%	1.8%	493	4.4
Quebec	9.2%	17.1%	43.7%	26.2%	3.9%	303	5.6
Atlantic Canada	4.3%	29.7%	34.1%	27.3%	4.7%	91	10.3
GENDER							
Male	10.6%	24.2%	38.2%	26.0%	1.0%	661	3.8
Female	9.3%	22.6%	42.7%	20.7%	4.6%	595	4.0
AGE							
<25	21.7%	28.2%	30.3%	19.8%	0.0%	32	17.3
25-44	8.7%	22.8%	39.7%	25.1%	3.7%	428	4.7
45-64	9.7%	23.9%	42.0%	21.7%	2.7%	500	4.4
65+	6.6%	21.2%	43.4%	26.3%	2.4%	249	6.2
EDUCATION							
High school or less	11.1%	20.0%	38.9%	26.4%	3.6%	313	5.5
College or CEGEP	11.0%	21.2%	40.1%	25.0%	2.7%	468	4.5
University or higher	7.5%	29.7%	42.8%	18.0%	2.0%	471	4.5
Country of Birth							
Canada	9.8%	24.2%	39.6%	23.5%	2.9%	1102	3.0
Other	10.7%	17.4%	47.7%	21.9%	2.2%	142	8.2
CURRENT VOTE INTENTION							
Liberal Party	11.7%	25.0%	43.4%	16.0%	3.9%	395	4.9
Conservative Party	2.5%	11.7%	40.4%	44.4%	1.1%	307	5.6
NDP	17.5%	33.5%	36.4%	10.3%	2.3%	275	5.9
Green Party	4.9%	23.8%	48.3%	23.0%	0.0%	71	11.6
Bloc Quebecois	11.4%	29.7%	35.0%	20.6%	3.3%	48	14.1



Preferred Role of Not For Profit Organizations

Q. [IF AGREE] What would be the most appropriate role for each of the following groups in creating a blueprint to restore a growing and optimistic middle class?

Not for profit organizations

	Lead role	Senior partner	Junior partner	No role	DK/NR	Sample Size	Margin of Error (+/-)
NATIONALLY	9.1%	26.9%	42.6%	17.6%	3.8%	1256	2.8
REGION							
British Columbia	13.1%	25.3%	42.9%	15.7%	3.1%	173	7.5
Alberta	10.2%	24.2%	38.2%	24.5%	2.9%	119	9.0
Saskatchewan	7.4%	13.2%	51.8%	17.8%	9.8%	32	17.3
Manitoba	12.9%	35.0%	37.8%	9.8%	4.5%	42	15.1
Ontario	8.6%	28.8%	42.0%	17.3%	3.3%	493	4.4
Quebec	6.9%	26.1%	45.8%	17.2%	3.9%	303	5.6
Atlantic Canada	8.9%	26.6%	38.9%	18.2%	7.4%	91	10.3
GENDER							
Male	9.2%	25.2%	43.3%	20.9%	1.4%	661	3.8
Female	9.0%	28.6%	41.9%	14.4%	6.2%	595	4.0
AGE							
<25	9.7%	28.0%	46.6%	13.5%	2.1%	32	17.3
25-44	8.5%	26.2%	45.1%	16.8%	3.4%	428	4.7
45-64	8.6%	27.4%	42.7%	17.2%	4.1%	500	4.4
65+	9.9%	25.2%	36.9%	22.9%	5.1%	249	6.2
EDUCATION							
High school or less	10.4%	26.1%	40.0%	19.5%	4.0%	313	5.5
College or CEGEP	8.3%	27.6%	41.0%	18.9%	4.2%	468	4.5
University or higher	8.2%	27.5%	47.1%	13.9%	3.4%	471	4.5
Country of Birth							
Canada	8.7%	27.0%	43.7%	17.1%	3.6%	1102	3.0
Other	12.1%	26.4%	32.9%	22.4%	6.2%	142	8.2
CURRENT VOTE INTENTION							
Liberal Party	6.9%	30.5%	44.0%	15.0%	3.6%	395	4.9
Conservative Party	4.4%	19.0%	41.1%	31.1%	4.4%	307	5.6
NDP	10.8%	32.0%	41.7%	12.4%	3.1%	275	5.9
Green Party	24.3%	30.3%	37.5%	7.9%	0.0%	71	11.6
Bloc Quebecois	11.8%	25.9%	53.6%	7.1%	1.7%	48	14.1

Methodology

This study was conducted using EKOS' unique, hybrid online/telephone research panel, *Prob/t*. Our panel offers exhaustive coverage of the Canadian population (i.e., Internet, phone, cell phone), random recruitment (in other words, participants are recruited randomly, they do not opt themselves into our panel), and equal probability sampling. All respondents to our panel are recruited by telephone using random digit dialling and are confirmed by live interviewers. Unlike opt-in online panels, *Prob/t* supports margin of error estimates. We believe this to be the only probability-based online panel in Canada.

The field dates for this survey are January 22-27, 2014. In total, 1,501 Canadians aged 18 and over responded to the survey. Of these cases, 1,277 were collected online, while 224 were collected by computer assisted telephone interviews (CATI). The margin of error associated with the total sample is +/-2.5 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 by age, gender, region, and educational attainment to ensure the sample's composition reflects that of the actual population of Canada according to Census data.