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Research on the state of the economy - Fall 2022

Final Report

Prepared for Finance Canada

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Research on the state of the economy - Fall 2022 - Final report

Prepared for Finance Canada by Environics Research

November 2022

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Executive summary

Background and objectives

Finance Canada commissioned Environics Research Group to conduct qualitative and quantitative public opinion research among Canadians in the fall of 2022. The research objectives are to explore Canadians' overall concerns and perceptions about the current state of the Canadian economy and emerging issues, and their expectations about the role of the Government of Canada in the economy and in other measure intended to improve quality of life for Canadians. Specifically, this report analyses current attitudes among Canadians toward such topics as:

- The state of the economy;
- Inflation and the cost of living;
- Financial stressors;
- Fiscal issues such as the deficit and taxation;
- Housing supply and affordability;
- Priorities for the Fall Economic Statement

Methodology

Qualitative Data Collection

Environics Research conducted a series of 10 online focus groups in September and October 2022 to assess Canadians' attitudes toward the current state of the economy. The online focus groups were conducted using the Zoom platform; and a pair of sessions, one for higher income and the other for lower income participants, were conducted in each of the following regions: Ontario (September 29), Prairies (October 3), B.C. (October 4), Quebec (October 5) and Atlantic Canada (October 6). The two Quebec sessions were conducted in French and the other eight sessions were conducted in English.

Participants were 18 years of age or over, and included range of age, education, and backgrounds. The groups lasted approximately 90 minutes and consisted of between six and eight participants (out of 8 people recruited for each group). Participants were provided a \$100 honorarium to encourage participation and thank them for their time commitment.

Statement of limitations: Qualitative research provides insight into the range of opinions held within a population, rather than the weights of the opinions held, as would be measured in a quantitative study. The results of this type of research should be viewed as indicative rather than projectable to the population.

Quantitative Data Collection

Environics conducted an online survey with a representative sample of 2,007 adult Canadians, conducted from September 23-October 4, 2022. *As the online survey uses an opt-in panel, this is a non-probability sample, and no margin of sampling error is calculated.* The regional distribution of surveys is described below.

Regional distribution	Total	ВС/ҮК	AB/NWT	SK	MB/NU	ON	QC	ATL
# of completed interviews	2,106	330	283	117	124	625	420	207
% of completed interviews	100%	16%	13%	6%	6%	30%	20%	10%

This report presents an executive summary of key findings, followed by detailed analyses of the focus group data and the survey data. Provided under a separate cover is a detailed set of "banner tables" presenting the results for all questions by population segments as defined by region and demographics. These tables are referenced by the survey question in the detailed analysis.

In this report, quantitative results are expressed as percentages unless otherwise noted. Results may not add to 100% due to rounding or multiple responses. Net results cited in the text may not exactly match individual results shown in the tables due to rounding.

Contract value

The contract value was \$279,189.10 (HST included).

Use of findings of the research. By gauging and analysing the opinions of Canadians, the Government of Canada gains insights into important policy areas related to the mandate of the department and related services. The information gained through this public opinion research will be shared throughout Finance Canada to assist it when establishing priorities, developing policies, and planning programs and services.

Key findings - focus group phase

A. Perceptions of Canada's economy

Most focus group participants expressed pessimism and concern about the Canadian economy. The most common top-of-mind issues among Canadians are inflation, rising interest rates, and housing affordability – the uniting theme being the rising cost of living. Canadians are experiencing sticker-shock when it comes to the cost of day-to-day items and most expected prices for such staples as groceries and gasoline to keep rising and become increasingly unaffordable.

When asked to provide one word to describe the state of the Canadian economy, the words used tended to convey these sentiments of uncertainty and pessimism, and included "scary," "struggling," "challenging," and "expensive". Other words used less frequently included "uncertain," "uneasy," "inflation," "recession," "survival," "disappointing," "weak," "unpromising," and "stressed". Some words that were more neutral or positive included "okay," "depends," "predictable," "flat," and "recovering".

Attitudes toward the economy were quite consistent by region and income level, with participants feeling uncertain and unhopeful about Canada's current economic state and concerned about what the future will look like. Most felt that the economy may not recover from current challenges for another couple of years. The majority of focus group participants are anticipating a slow economic upturn, with many saying it will be at least a few years before we see any sort of relief when it comes to inflation and interest rates. There was a mentality of having to "ride it out", of things getting worse before they gets better. There was some vestigial optimism about the economy improving post-pandemic lockdowns, but this sentiment was fading compared with how people felt earlier in the year.

B. Inflation/cost of living concerns

When asked for examples of things that have become harder to afford, groceries were most commonly mentioned, followed by gasoline and utilities. Several people reported that they found ways to manage in the face of rising prices. Participants spoke of using coupons, eating out less, changing eating habits, and buying in bulk. Other ways to manage rising costs of living include driving less and being efficient with trips, buying used instead of new, less discretionary spending in general, acquiring additional jobs, delaying purchases, and accumulating debt.

Focus group participants largely understood that the causes of the current inflation are multifactorial and commonly cited pandemic-related supply chain issues and scarcity of goods. This was followed by corporate greed and the idea that companies are trying to recuperate their losses from COVID-19, using inflation as an excuse to increase their prices. Many also believe inflation is at least partly driven by global affairs such as the war in Ukraine and the economic situation in other countries. Some felt inflation had been caused by too much government spending during the pandemic and a perception that the Bank of Canada had printed too much money.

Many participants expressed concerns about the impact of rising interest rates, and they were often confused about how higher rates - a measure that was seen to cause people's day to day expenses to increases – could also be a way of reducing inflation and making life more affordable.

C. Affordability measures

Participants were asked how the federal government could make day-to-day life more affordable. Many found it challenging to come up with ideas for how the federal government could do this. Some suggested lowering income or sales taxes, reducing or eliminating the carbon tax, grants for lower income families, a price cap on essential goods, and investment in affordable housing.

There was little awareness of new federal government initiatives announced that could make life more affordable. When prompted, many recalled the dental program for low income families, some had also heard of the increased GST rebate. Very few knew of the housing credit. Many middle and higher income participants assumed that what measures there were likely did not apply to them as they were above low income thresholds.

D. Housing concerns

Housing affordability is a key concern and was brought up in general economy, interest rates, and affordability discussions. Housing-related concerns were raised very frequently by participants in all regions. Housing is no longer primarily a big city or an Ontario and BC concern. It is now a huge issue in all parts of the country. Many cited how during the pandemic housing prices and rents had surged in smaller communities as well.

When asked what their biggest housing related concern, the overwhelming response was cost/affordability. Several were concerned with future generations and young people being able to own a home, and many were concerned that they themselves would never be in a position to own a home, writing home ownership off as a reality given the current costs and future uncertainty. Participants also expressed concern about the availability of housing, rising interest rates, and maintenance. Those with lower incomes tended to focus on immediate issues around housing affordability, such as being able to afford rent, being able to afford to live anywhere if forced to move and feeling priced out of their community.

Those with higher incomes often already owned their homes, so their anxieties tended to focus more on whether their children would ever be able to afford to live anywhere – either as an owner or renter, and the rising costs of mortgages. Some also worried about where they might live when they retired and wanted to downsize.

E. Deficit and debt concerns

Most participants were vaguely aware of Canada's deficit and debt. Overall, most were not very concerned with either and did not feel they were affected personally by the national debt. They were much more concerned about their personal debts as opposed to the government's. Most found Canada's deficit understandable and unavoidable, especially given necessary spending during the pandemic. Participants were often relieved to know that Canada's debt and deficit compared favourably with those of other G7 countries.

Some who were concerned about the deficit and debt worried about how they could impact future generations. Even among those who agreed that the government at times needs to run a deficit, there was a consensus that there needed to be some sort of plan to eventually get the deficit under control. Some felt that the government needed to better control its spending, especially when it comes to spending outside of Canada on foreign aid. There was no desire for any drastic action to quickly eliminate the deficit.

F. Fall priorities

Participants felt that the Fall Economic Statement should acknowledge that Canadians are struggling and should focus on affordability. They wanted to hear increased transparency and hope for the future. When asked for specific initiatives they would like included some mentioned such things as cutting taxes, implementing a guaranteed national income, more investments in the future of the young people, student debt relief and better job opportunities, support for lower- and middle-income families, and social programming to help those in need.

Opinions were split on whether the Fall Economic Statement should focus on short-term or medium- to longterm priorities. Although most felt the Economic Statement should focus on a longer-term economic strategy, many felt a shorter-term focus was necessary in order to address the acute affordability issues facing Canadians to create stability following the pandemic.

Key findings – quantitative phase

A. Assessment of the economy

When rating the current state of the Canadian economy, two in ten (21%) say it is good (score of 7 to 10), over three in ten (34%) are neutral (score of 5 or 6), and over four in in ten (43%) say it is bad (score of 1 to 4).

Minorities of Canadians in all regions continue to rate their provincial economy positively; pluralities in most locations rate it as negative, with the exception Quebec, which is divided between rating their provincial economy as negative or neutral. Half of Atlantic Canadians rate their province's economy as negative.

Eight in ten Canadians (79%, up from 69% in February/March) have a negative perception of the current cost of groceries. Three-quarters (77%) have a negative impression of the current price of gasoline, and almost six in ten (58%) give a negative rating to the cost of utilities.

Over four in ten (43%, up from 31% earlier in the year) indicate inflation/rising prices/cost of living is the most concerning economic issue. Housing affordability is a distant second, at just over one in ten (13%). Seven percent now specifically mention rising interest rates.

B. Government action

A plurality of 37 percent of Canadians believe it will take one to two years for the current period of high inflation to get under control. Two in ten think it will take a year or less, one-quarter think it will take more than two years, and six percent feel this is a permanent situation.

Most Canadians believe that the policies of the federal government can have a major impact on the inflation rate – just under six in ten (57%) say this is closest to their view. Around one-quarter (23%) think inflation is largely driven by global factors and that government policies have little impact on it. A significant 20 percent do not know.

When asked to rate the importance of 12 issues for the federal government to consider when making budget decisions, the most important are related to bringing the cost of living (88%) and inflation (84%) under control, making the cost of living more affordable (88%), and improving the health care system (87%).

C. Financial well-being

Half (50%, up from 43%) Canadians give a positive rating (score of 7-10) to their own personal financial situation; three in ten (30%) give a neutral rating, and two in ten (20%) are negative to some extent.

The rising cost of living is once again the most stressful of the items rated, with over four in ten saying it is a major source of stress (82% at least moderate, up from 73% in February/March 2022), and three-quarters (75%) are stressed to some extent by the quality of the healthcare system. Seven in ten (71%) are concerned about the cost of groceries. Canadians are least stressed by terrorism (34%), their ability to pay monthly bills (33%), lack of career advancement (32%) or job security (29%).

Three in ten parents (31%) say it is a major source of stress whether their kids will be able to afford a place to live when they are older, and one-quarter (26%) say this about the quality of the environment when their kids are older.

Over one third of Canadians (36%) are now at least somewhat *less* confident that they can manage paying their bills and buying the things they need, compared to this time last year. Just over one in ten are at least somewhat more confident and half are just as confident.

When Canadians are asked about the one expense, they have that makes it the most challenging for them to make ends meet, one-quarter each cite groceries (24%) or housing (24%) costs. Fewer than one in ten say gasoline (8%) or utilities (7%) are the expenses they find most challenging to meet. Three in ten say they have no difficulties paying their expenses currently.

Three in ten (29%, down somewhat from 34% earlier in the year) are extremely or somewhat worried about personal or family job loss.

D. Taxes and fiscal policy

Majorities agree (score 7 to 10) with most statements about the federal government's approach to fiscal issues, but agreement is highest that the federal government should have a plan to gradually reduce the national debt (71%).Two-thirds (66%) agree they should provide more permanent health care funding to provinces, even if adds to the deficit.

There is minority agreement with three new statements added this wave: that the federal government is trying to support Canadians in difficult economic times (43%), that the federal government understands the economic issues Canadians are facing (35%) and that the federal government should provide more financial aid to help Ukraine defend itself from Russia, even if it adds to the deficit (32%).

Three-quarters think big corporations (77%, up seven percentage points since February/March) and the top one percent of income earners (74%) should be paying more tax. Seven in ten (70%) now think financial institutions should be paying more, up from six in ten earlier in the year. As previously, about half think small businesses (51%) and middle-income earners (51%) are paying the right amount of tax, and six in ten (59%) think lower income earners should be paying less.

E. Housing

Over eight in ten (83%) Canadians agree (score 7 to 10) it is very difficult for people to buy a house in the current economic climate, and seven in ten (71%) agree the federal government has a responsibility to address the lack of affordable housing in the country. One-quarter (25%) agree it would be easy to find somewhere to live that is both affordable and in a safe neighbourhood, if someone was buying a house today.

Three-quarters (77%) of homeowners agree it was extremely important they own a home, and just over half (53%) agree the cost of living in their home is affordable. Just over half of renters (53%) agree it is extremely important they be able to own a home in the future, and four in ten (39%) agree the rent they pay is affordable.

As was the case in February/March of this year, the top priority for the federal government related to housing is increasing the availability of affordable housing (76%) followed by continued supports for first time buyers (74%). Seven in ten feel each of four other housing policies are priorities: increasing transparency in real estate transactions (71%), cracking down on large landlords buying up housing (71%), extending the temporary ban on foreign ownership of homes (71%) and making mortgage payments more affordable (69%).

Political neutrality statement and contact information

I hereby certify as senior officer of Environics that the deliverables fully comply with the Government of Canada political neutrality requirements outlined in the Communications Policy of the Government of Canada, and Procedures for Planning and Contracting Public Opinion Research. Specifically, the deliverables do not include information on electoral voting intentions, political party preferences, standings with the electorate, or ratings of the performance of a political party or its leaders.

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Introduction

Finance Canada commissioned Environics Research Group to conduct qualitative and quantitative public opinion research among Canadians in the fall of 2022. The primary objective of the research was to explore current attitudes among Canadians toward such topics as:

- The state of the economy;
- Inflation and the cost of living;
- Financial stressors;
- Fiscal issues such as the deficit and taxation;
- Housing supply and affordability;
- Priorities for the Fall Economic Statement

The research objectives are to explore Canadians' overall concerns and perceptions about the current state of the Canadian economy and emerging issues, and their expectations about the role of the Government of Canada in the economy and in other measure intended to improve quality of life for Canadians.

Background

The Department of Finance requires research to obtain information on the public environment into which the Government's actions will be communicated. It is important for the Department of Finance Canada to conduct public opinion research to provide a clear and current sense of the evolution of the public mood toward the state of the economy, sense of personal economic well-being and Government actions in the economic sphere, in order to remain current on the public environment into which Government actions will be communicated.

I. Detailed findings – qualitative phase

A. Perceptions of Canada's economy

Word association and general assessment

To begin each session, participants were asked to share one word that they felt best described the current state of the Canadian economy. The words participants provided were typically conveyed feelings of uncertainty and negativity, and often included words like "scary," "struggling," "challenging," and "expensive". Other words used less frequently included "uncertain," "uneasy," "inflation," "recession," "survival," "disappointing," "weak," "unpromising," and "stressed". Some words that were more neutral or positive included "okay," "depends," "predictable," "flat," and "recovering". Words used to describe the economy were fairly consistent across regions. There was, however, slight differences between income levels, with middle- to higher-income participants more often using neutral or less pessimistic words to describe the Canadian economy.

Overall attitudes toward the state of the Canadian economy were quite consistent by region and income level, with participants feeling uncertain and unhopeful about the current state of the national economy now and concerned about what the future will look like. The general sentiment was that everything seemed to be becoming less affordable, and participants were anxious about various aspects of their financial lives. For young people, the concerns were about whether they can afford to move out on their own and whether home ownership would ever be in their future. Older generations are worried about retirement and about their own children being able to afford a home or build financial security. Participants at every income level and region were concerned with immediate needs such as groceries and gas and some have had to make significant changes in their spending habits or resort to using credit cards and food banks.

Specific concerns

When participants were asked about specific economic concerns, responses were consistent: the most top-ofmind issues among Canadians overall are inflation, rising interest rates, and housing affordability – the theme being the rising cost of living. There were very few differences between the various groups, with all showing concern for these key economic issues. Ontario and Atlantic group participants did mention wages more commonly, and the fact that salaries are stagnant and not keeping up with the rate of inflation. Inflation was the key topic that emerged most frequently. Canadians are experiencing sticker-shock when it comes to the cost of day-to-day items and most expected prices for such staples as groceries and gasoline to keep rising and become increasingly unaffordable. The specific economic concerns raised by participants were almost always at the personal micro-economic level and it was rare that any of them raised economic concerns that were more at the macro level such as productivity or economic growth or sustainability.

It was notable that one thing participants rarely expressed any concerns about was unemployment. The consensus was that there were many jobs available where they lived. The problem was identified more as the lack of jobs paying living wages and with benefits. It was noted that people could always find jobs paying close to the minimum wage but that it was impossible to make a living on a job like that. Instead of expressing concerns about unemployment some participants spoke about the issue of labour shortages. There was a perception that many jobs were going unfilled because wages were too low or because the work was undesirable. Participants in the Atlantic sessions in particular noted seeing an inordinate amount of job advertisements by both large and small businesses. This was seen as a struggle for businesses who are trying to recuperate after pandemic losses but are unable to find staff. Other noted many people are underemployed, unable to find jobs that match their

skillsets. Some felt that during the pandemic many people with lower level jobs had collected the CERB and no longer wanted to go back to jobs with low wages and deplorable working conditions.

In previous waves of qualitative research on the state of the economy, other issues and concerns were often raised. For example, participants in British Columbia in particular would often mention environmental issues and climate change even in the context of a discussion about the state of the economy. In this round of focus groups, these issues were almost never raised spontaneously.

Future of the economy

There was a sense of pessimism about the future of the economy, at least in the short term. The majority of participants are anticipating a slow economic upturn, with many saying it will be at least a few years before we see any sort of relief when it comes to inflation and interest rates. There was a mentality of having to "ride it out", of things getting worse before they gets better, and the state of the economy being beyond ours or the government's control. A minority of participants expressed some optimism that things would improve as a result of the perceived end of the pandemic and of lockdowns having ended, but this optimistic scenario was less prevalent that last winter.

The role of the federal government in the state of the economy was rarely mentioned spontaneously as there was a perception that so many of the economic challenges we face are caused by external factors such as the post-pandemic "hangover" and the impact of war in Ukraine and rising energy costs. Uncertainty around the world including post-pandemic recovery and the war were also causing anxiety among participants. It was also clear that many participants were anxious about the impact of world events such as the war in Ukraine and how that could cause unpredictable disruptions to the world and Canadian economies.

When asked how they determine whether or not the economy is doing well, participants listed personal factors, media reports, and economic indicators. Middle- and higher-income participants typically mentioned economic factors more broadly (e.g., employment, inflation, new housing starts), while lower-income participants focused mostly on immediate and personal factors. Consistently, participants relied on anecdotal evidence from friends and family members and equated a good economy with others' ability to live comfortably. There was very clearly a perceived direct link between the cost of living and how the Canadian economy is doing overall.

B. Inflation and the cost of living

Specific concerns

As noted above, inflation and the cost of living were leading top-of-mind concerns among participants in all regions and all income levels. It was noted that wages have not kept up with rising prices, and that life was becoming less and less affordable on many levels. The inflation rate has increasingly become the main indicator for how the economy is doing. Most participants reported having both read news stories about rising inflation and also experienced it personally at the grocery store or at the gas pump. The reaction to the spike in food prices was often one of shock. While people have seen fluctuations in gas prices over the years, this was seen as a new phenomenon. It has been many years since most people had last experienced any significant inflation and for younger participants this was the first time they had seen prices for core commodities like food suddenly go up so much.

When asked for examples of things that have become harder to afford, groceries were most commonly mentioned, as well as the rising cost of gasoline and of utilities such as heating and electricity. Participants

routinely exchanged anecdotes about the sticker shock they were experiencing at the grocery store over such products as eggs, meat or produce. Many also spoke of how much more expensive it had become to eat out even in fast food restaurants. The cost of gasoline was also frequently discussed, though as noted most people have seen the price of gas up and down in the past so it did not shock people the way the recent rise in food prices has. The rising cost of housing was also mentioned occasionally in this context – though usually when people talk about rising prices, they are thinking of it more in a retail environment and housing is seen as a separate issue.

Adaptations to inflation

Several people reported that they found ways to manage in the face of rising prices. Participants spoke of using coupons, eating out less, changing eating habits, and buying in bulk. Other ways to manage rising costs of living include driving less and being efficient with trips, buying used instead of new, less discretionary spending in general, acquiring additional jobs, delaying purchases, and accumulating debt. Higher income participants were less likely to state they had accumulated any debt in order to make ends meet> some lower income participants had resorted to using credit cards. Any large purchases or renovations have also largely been put off due to cost of materials.

Lower-income participants mentioned having to make lifestyle changes in response to the rising cost of living such as driving less and being selective about what they buy in the grocery store. Middle- and higher-income participants, while still showing concern about the rise of the cost of living, were more likely to have had to cut out luxury and entertainment items as opposed to basic necessities. Middle- and higher-income participants were also more concerned with rising interest rates due to mortgages, loans, and investments. While some higher-income participants elaborated on how they were personally struggling economically, most were describing the state of the economy more from what they were reading about as opposed to what they were directly experiencing. Although middle- and higher-income participants had many concerns about the economy, some noted that inflation and the cost of living was more of an inconvenience for them as opposed to causing them genuine hardship impacting those in higher income brackets less than those with lower incomes.

Causes of inflation

The inflation we are experiencing was seen to be very much a global issue, and not so much as a "made-in-Canada" issue. Most participants understood that rising inflation was happening in many other countries, such as the U.S. and various European countries. As such, there was a belief that inflation is multifactorial. Many participants attributed inflation to post-pandemic supply chain issues and scarcity of goods. Pandemic measures (i.e., lockdowns) caused labour shifts in many production industries that in the end reduced the supply of many goods. This was followed by corporate greed and the "post-COVID hangover".

Many also felt that the current inflation was driven by global issues, such as the war in Ukraine and high inflation in other countries that was causing imported good to get more expensive. Some participants shared the idea that many retailers were likely trying to recuperate their losses from COVID-19, using inflation as an excuse to increase their prices. This sentiment was quite common among participants of all income levels and across regions, though it was notable that lower income participants were often the likely to blame inflation on corporate greed and price gouging and profiteering. For the most part, participants felt that inflation is out of the government's control. As noted, the most commonly held belief is that supply chain issues and corporate greed are causing the rise in prices. However, some participants, often in the higher income sessions, also felt that inflation was caused by government overspending during and in the wake of the Covid pandemic. They

often spoke of the government and the Bank of Canada having printed too much money and led to a situation where too much money was chasing too few goods.

Government remedies

When asked if the government could do anything about inflation, there were often only vague responses. It was clear that while people were unsure of what the government could do the reduce the actual rate of inflation, there might be things the government could do to help Canadian with the cost of living. The most common specific suggestions were related to lowering income and/or sales taxes or of eliminating or reducing the carbon tax. Others wanted to see more grants for lower income families and investment into affordable housing.

It was also notable that in most sessions at least a couple of participants also wondered if it was possible for the government to impose price controls on some essentials such as groceries or do some investigation as to whether there was price gouging and profiteering happening and whether profit margins were getting out of hand. Some also mentioned that the federal government should reduce foreign aid and other forms of assistance to other countries and focus instead on what is happening to Canadians at this time.

Interest rates

Many participants also expressed concerns about the impact of rising interest rates, and they were often confused about how higher rates - a measure that was seen to cause people's day to day expenses to increases – could also be a way of reducing inflation and making life more affordable. There was a general understanding that interest rates are set by the Bank of Canada, and that increasing interest rates has historically been used to cool inflation, but some were confused about how this was supposed to work. It was clear that some participants did not understand that difference between interest rates and the inflation rate. While most participants understood that the Bank of Canada was at least theoretically independent of the elected government, several voiced suspicions that behind the scenes the government was influencing monetary policy.

Lower income participants were often less personally affected by rising interest rates since many of them were not homeowners and did not have mortgages to pay. However, some mentioned having to pay higher interest on credit card and other forms of debt and they recognized the potential ripple effect of higher interest rates on other day-to-day costs. Middle- and higher-income earners were more worried about the impact of interest rates as many were homeowners facing mortgage renewals. They felt they were getting squeezed both by the higher mortgage payments due to higher interest rates coupled with seeing their investments take a hit from the recent declines in the stock markets in reaction to inflation and higher interest rates.

C. Affordability measures

Suggestions for government

Participants were asked about whether there was anything the federal government could do make day-to-day life more affordable. As noted above in the discussion about what the federal government could do about inflation, people often voiced uncertainty about what specifically could be done. While many struggled to come up with specific suggestions, some again mention cutting taxes and in particular the carbon tax or made suggestions related to regulated prices of goods and putting a cap on things like profit margins for corporations and housing costs. Some mentioned housing specific measures such as caps on rents or more affordable housing These responses were very similar to those above, as participants strongly linked inflation to overall cost of living and affordability.

Awareness of current initiatives

There was relatively low spontaneous awareness of federal government initiatives recently announced that could make life more affordable. The odd participant mentioned having heard something about dental care or the GST rebate and some mentioned pandemic era programs such as the CERB. Several participants also mentioned the federal government's childcare agreements with the provinces.

When prompted, some participants had heard of the recently announced program to cover dental costs for low and middle income families though this program had not yet been implemented. A few had also heard of the recent doubling of the GST rebate. Very few had heard of the housing credit. Reaction to these measures was generally quite positive with the dental program being particularly well-received.

Several of the higher income participants noted that these initiatives did not apply to them, either because one had to have children requiring dental work or because one needed to have an income low enough to qualify for the GST rebate. Some were under the impression that the low income thresholds were so low that it was almost impossible to qualify for these measures, making them difficult to access for many who are still in need despite having higher incomes. Some noted that that everybody is struggling, not just lower-income earners. Middle-income earners are facing the same wage freezes and price increases but may not qualify for the measures being put forth by government.

D. Housing

Housing-related concerns were raised very frequently by participants in all regions. The nature of the concerns varied slightly income group. Those with lower incomes tended to focus on immediate issues around housing affordability, such as being able to afford rent, being able to afford to live anywhere if forced to move and feeling priced out of their community. The lower-income participants were often resigned to the fact that buying a house would be out of reach for them and were also anxious about the cost of rent and the ability to keep up should rents increase. This was a concern irrespective of where participants were located. It was noted, though, that housing in the Atlantic regions is continuing to rise and people are noticing less affordable housing and have seen encampments, which is unprecedented in that area. This drove the point home how unaffordable housing is at this time.

Those with higher incomes often already owned their homes, so their anxieties tended to focus more on whether their children would ever be able to get into the market and be able to afford to live anywhere – either as an owner or renter. Some also worried about where they might live when they retired and wanted to downsize. In general, though, the theme of housing affordability was present across all regions and income levels.

There was an overarching concern in all sessions that affordable housing was now in very short supply. This was accompanied by a belief that the government should do something to increase availability of affordable housing. Themes that emerged when discussing what the government could do to support affordability of housing were related to curbing foreign investment/home ownership, providing further support for first time home buyers, and increasing availability of affordable housing, including rentals. Many understood again that the federal government has limited control over housing policy compared to the provincial and municipal levels of government, but they still wanted to see some action in this area and as noted above several participants did offer suggestions for ways the federal government could help address the housing crisis.

E. Deficit/debt concerns

Most participants were only vaguely aware of Canada's deficit and debt and was little sense of urgency or anxiety about the deficit – at least not in the short term. Many were under the impression that it is normal for governments to run a deficit and that this was something that all government do. It was sometimes noted that the debt and deficit are just "numbers" and that it's hard to see how they affect the average person directly. Most found Canada's deficit understandable and unavoidable, especially given necessary spending during the pandemic.

There were some participants who when prompted found the deficit/debt situation in Canada to be more of a matter of concern. Their key worry was about how Canada's current debt would impact future generations. Even among those who understood the government at times needs to run a deficit, it was the consensus that Canada needs to control its spending, especially when it comes to spending outside of Canada. Again, it was believed that the focus of the government should be supporting Canadians through these times rather than turning its attention outward.

The fact that Canada has the lowest debt of all the G7 countries surprised many participants, and many also found it comforting to know that other countries were "worse off" than Canada. It also validated their relative lack of concern for the broader economic issues of deficit and debt.

Despite the relative lack of concern about the deficit and debt, participants still wanted to see some signal from the federal government that it took the debt seriously and was not completely oblivious to it. They would like to know that the government has a plan and targets to eventually balance the budget and start reducing the debt.

F. Fall priorities

Desired content for Fall Economic Statement

There was a range of opinions when it came to advice for the Minister of Finance in the context of the upcoming Fall Economic Statement. Notably, lower-income participants want government to focus on and be aware of the "average Canadian". Advice for the minister tended to lean towards support for those in need, immediate action, and demonstrating understanding of what Canadians are going through. Middle- and higher-income participants had higher level advice that focused more on fiscal policy and a plan for the future. Participants also mentioned various areas into which they hope to see government investments as part of the economic plan. The consensus was that money should stay in Canada; there were several participants who noted Canada should not be sending money to other countries while Canadians are struggling at home. All groups expressed the desire for the minister to be transparent, honest, and to show an interest in providing meaningful relief for Canadians.

Participants felt that the Fall Economic Statement should acknowledge that Canadians are struggling and should focus on affordability. When asked about fall priorities, people wanted increased transparency and hope for the future. Specific priorities included implementing a guaranteed national income, more investments in the future of the young people, student debt relief and better job opportunities, support for lower- and middle-income families, and social programming to help those in need. Many people are feeling lost and uncertain about their futures and are hoping that the government can show them a plan that supports them and helps them feel more financially stable now and in the future. Participants also advised focusing on the "good news" that Canada has the lowest debt of all the G7 countries; showing Canadians how we are doing overall was perceived as a way to provide comfort and hope to citizens.

Short-term vs longer term focus

Opinions were split on whether the Fall Economic Statement should focus on short-term or medium- to longterm priorities. Most felt the Economic Statement should focus on a longer-term economic strategy, but many felt a shorter-term focus was necessary in order to address the acute affordability issues facing Canadians and create stability following the pandemic before looking too far into the future. The groups clearly demonstrated a broader concern for the future, not just for participants but for generations to come. The plan needs to consider the long term in order to provide hope and certainty in Canadians' future and their children's' future, but a solid recovery plan that will provide a reprieve from the current stresses of unaffordability is also something people are hoping to see in the statement.

II. Detailed findings – quantitative phase

A. Assessments of the economy

Current state of the Canadian economy

Over four in ten Canadians have a negative view of the current state of the national economy, up slightly from March; positive perceptions have also dropped.

Several questions were asked related to current economic well-being. Respondents were asked to use a scale from 1 (terrible) to 10 (excellent) to rate each factor.

When asked to rate the current state of the Canadian economy, two in ten (21%, down six percentage points from February/March 2022) gave a score indicating it is good (score of 7 to 10), over three in ten (34%) are neutral (score of 5 or 6), and over four in in ten (43%) say it is bad (score of 1 to 4). Being negative about the This is very consistent with the qualitative research, which also showed most people had concerns about the current state of the Canadian economy and felt it had deteriorated in recent months.

Q1a Using a scale from 1 to 10, where 1 is terrible and 10 is excellent, how would you rate the following: The current state of the Canadian economy	Positive perception (7-10)	Neutral (5-6)	Negative perception (1-4)	Not sure
Fall 2022 (n=2,106)	21%	34%	43%	1%
Feb/Mar 2022 (n=2,007)	27%	34%	38%	1%

Current state of economy

Responses are generally similar across most subgroups of the population, with some exceptions. Positive sentiment about the national economy (scoring 7-10) remains higher in Quebec (32%) than in the rest of Canada (18%). Men continue to be more likely to be positive than women (26% vs. 26%), but in this wave being positive increases as age increases (18% age 18-34, up to 23% age 55+), the reverse pattern to February/March 2022. Again, those with a university degree are the most positive, but less so than in Feb/March (25% vs. 32%). Being positive is highest among those who say their own personal financial situation is good (33%, down from 46% earlier in the year).

Current state of provincial economy

Residents of the Atlantic provinces, Ontario and B.C. have the most negative perceptions of their provincial economies; Quebecers and Albertans are more divided

As in February/March 2022, minorities of Canadians in all regions rate their provincial economy positively. Pluralities in most locations rate it as negative, with the exception of Quebec, which is divided; a slim plurality rate it as neutral (36%) and three in ten each rate it as positive or negative. Just over half of Atlantic Canadians and just under half of Ontarians rate their province's economy as negative. Since February/March negativity has notably grown in British Columbia (45%, up from 27%) and Ontario (46%, up from 34%).

Q1b Using a scale from 1 to 10, where is terrible and 10 is excellent, how would you rate the following: the current state of the [PROVINCE] economy	/ Positive	Neutral (5-6)	Negative perception (1-4)	Negative perception Feb/March 2022
Atlantic (n=207)	16%	27%	52%	47%
Quebec (n=420)	31%	36%	30%	34%
Ontario (n=625)	16%	35%	46%	34%
Manitoba/Saskatchewan (n=240)	20%	36%	42%	43%
Alberta (n=283)	28%	32%	38%	43%
British Columbia (n=330)	22%	30%	45%	27%

Current state of the provincial economy

Feeling the provincial economy is performing well is the minority, but somewhat higher among, men (28% vs. 17% of women), those age 55 and over (26%, versus 19% of younger Canadians, those with household incomes of \$100,000 or more (26%, vs. 16% with incomes under \$40,000), homeowners (24% vs. 17% of others), and those who think who give positive ratings to either the Canadian economy (72%) or their personal financial situation (35%).

Current price of groceries

Eight in ten give a negative rating to the current price of groceries and this sentiment has grown.

Eight in ten Canadians (79%) now express a negative view of the current cost of groceries, up ten percentage points from earlier this year. Fewer than one in ten (6%) are positive to some extent (down eight points).

Current price of groceries

Q1d Using a scale from 1 to 10, where 1 is terrible and 10 is excellent, how would you rate the following: the current price of groceries?	Positive perception (7-10)	Neutral (5-6)	Negative perception (1-4)	Not sure
Fall 2022 (n=2,106)	6%	14%	79%	1%
Feb/Mar 2022 (n=2,007)	14%	17%	69%	1%

Majorities across all subgroups rate the price of groceries negatively. In this wave a majority in all regions is negative about the cost of groceries, but this is lower in Quebec (71%) than elsewhere (80% to 87%). A negative rating is also higher among the following:

- Women (83% vs. 76% of men)
- Age 35 and over (81%, vs. 75% age 18 to 34)
- Those whose own personal financial situation is poor (96%, vs. 83% fair and 72% good)
- Those who rate the Canadian economy as poor (95%, vs. 78% fair and 52% good).

Current price of gasoline and utilities

Three-quarters give a negative rating to the current price of gasoline, and almost six in ten are negative about the cost of utilities

Asked for the first time in this wave, three-quarters of Canadians (77%) have a negative impression of the current price of gasoline, and almost six in ten (58%) give a negative rating to the cost of utilities. Only small proportions are positive about these economic indicators.

Q1e-f Using a scale from 1 to 10, where 1 is terrible and 10 is excellent, how would you rate the following:	Positive perception (7-10)	Neutral (5-6)	Negative perception (1-4)	Not sure
The current cost of utilities (e.g., home heating/electricity)	12%	26%	58%	3%
The current price of gasoline	6%	15%	77%	2%

Current price of groceries

Majorities across most of the country and all subgroups rate the *price of gasoline* negatively, but this ranges from lows of 70 percent in Quebec and 74 percent in Ontario to a high of 91 percent in B.C. There are few notable differences by most demographic sub-groups, but negative perceptions are highest among Indigenous people (87%) and those with a disability (84%), compared to those who do not identify as being in an equity-seeking group (76%). As with other measures, negative perceptions are more pronounced among those who think their personal financial situation is poor (84%), or that the state of the Canadian economy is poor (79%).

Regarding the current *cost of utilities*, majorities across most of the country are negative with the exception being Quebec (45% negative), ranging up to a high of 71 percent in Alberta. A negative rating is also higher among the following:

- Women (64% vs. 53% of men)
- Household incomes under \$40,000 (68%, vs. 54% to 58% of others)
- Those with a disability and Indigenous people (68%, vs. 56% to 60% in other equity-seeking groups and 57% not in equity-seeking groups)
- Those whose own personal financial situation is poor (84%, vs. 64% fair and 46% good)
- Those who rate the Canadian economy as poor (79%, vs. 52% fair and 28% good).

Main source of economic concern

Inflation, rising prices and the cost of living continues to be the main source of concern when it comes to the Canadian economy.

Canadians were shown a list of 12 issues and asked which one they are *most* concerned about (respondents could also write in a different concern). It is clear that rising prices and the cost of living is by far the top issue of concern. Over four in ten (43%) indicate inflation/rising prices/cost of living is the most concerning economic issue, up from 31 percent in February/March. Housing affordability remains a distant second, at just over one in ten (13%, up from eight percent). Fewer identify each of a number of other issues as being most concerning to them. It is notable that seven percent now specifically cite rising interest rates.

 Q8. Thinking about the Canadian economy which specific issue are you most concerned about? (Feb/March: Apart from the pandemic) *=issue was shown to respondents 	Total online (n=2,106)	Feb/March (n=2,007)
Inflation/rising prices/cost of living*	43%	31%
Housing affordability* (Feb/March: Housing)	13%	8%
Rising interest rates*	7%	n/a
Taxes*	7%	2%
Deficit/national debt*	5%	5%
Labour shortage*	5%	n/a
Retirement*	4%	n/a
Supply chains*	3%	n/a
Slow economic growth*	3%	n/a
Transitioning to a net zero economy*	2%	n/a
Unemployment/jobs*	2%	4%
Business competitiveness*	1%	n/a
Other mentions (1% or fewer each)	14%	14%
Not stated	9%	9%

Most concerning economic issues

As was the case earlier in the year, results are generally similar across the country and among most subgroups, with some notable differences.

Inflation/rising prices/cost of living is higher among the following:

- Women (49% vs. 38% of men)
- Household incomes under \$80,0000 (48%, vs. 40% with higher incomes)
- Those not planning on buying a home in the next year (45%, vs. 34%)
- Personal finances fair or poor (49% vs. 39% good personal finances)
- Canadian economy fair or poor (47% vs. 32% good personal finances)

Housing affordability is higher among the following:

- B.C./Yukon (15%) and Ontario (18%)
- Age 18 to 34 (24% vs. 13% 35-54 and 7% 55+)
- Major urban (16%) and urban centres (16%, vs. 9% town and 7% rural)
- Renters (28%) and others (24%, vs. 6% of homeowners)
- Those planning to buy a home in the next year (24%, vs. 11% of others)

B. Government action

How long current inflation in Canada will last

A close to four in ten plurality feel it will take one to two years for inflation in Canada to get under control

A plurality of 37 percent of Canadians believe it will take one to two years for the current period of high inflation to get under control. Two in ten think it will take a year or less, one-quarter think it will take more than two years, and six percent feel this is a permanent situation. One in seven do not know.

Q10 When do you think the current period of high inflation in Canada will get under control? Will it be?	Total online (n=2,106)
In the next 6 months	3%
6 months to a year from now	16%
One to two years from now	37%
More than two years from now	23%
Never	6%
Don't know	15%

When inflation in Canada will get under control

Results are generally similar and across most subgroups, with a few notable differences:

- Women are more likely than men to say they do not know when inflation will be controlled (20% vs. 11%)
- Pessimism increases as age increases, with those aged 55 and over being more likely than those aged 18 to 34 to say it will be one to two years from now (41% vs. 34%). Younger Canadians are the most likely to say they do not know (29%, vs. 15% aged 35-54 and 12% aged 55+)
- Thinking inflation will be controlled one to two years from now is highest among those with household incomes of \$150,000 or more (48%); those with household incomes of under \$40,000 are the most likely to think inflation will never be controlled (12%, vs. 3% to 5% of others).
- Thinking inflation will take one to two years to control is highest among those with a university degree (41%).

- Thinking inflation will require more than two years to be controlled is highest among those in rural communities (31%).
- Thinking inflation will take two years or less is higher among those whose personal financial situation is good; those whose situation is only fair, or poor are more pessimistic. This same pattern is seen for those who think the Canadian economy is good or only fair/poor.

If government policies impact inflation

Close to six in ten somewhat or strongly feel federal government policies can have a major impact on the inflation rate

A majority of Canadians believe to some degree that the policies of the federal government can, in fact, have a major impact on the inflation rate – just under six in ten (57%) say this is closest to their view, though it should be noted that 32 percent only somewhat agree with this sentiment, indicating some ambivalence. Around one-quarter (23%) think the inflation rate is largely the result of global forces and that federal government policies have little impact on it. Two in ten (20%) are unsure.

Q9 Here are two statements about inflation in Canada. Which is conview?	loser to your own	Total online (n=2,106)
	Net:	57%
The policies of the federal government can have a major impact on the inflation rate	Strongly	25%
	Somewhat	32%
	Net:	23%
The inflation rate is mainly determined by world conditions and federal government policies have little impact on it	Somewhat	17%
	Strongly	6%
Don't know		20%

If government policies impact inflation

Strongly or somewhat believing that federal government policies can have a major impact on inflation is the dominant position across the country and most subgroups, but somewhat higher among the following:

- Alberta/NWT (65%, vs. 50% to 61% elsewhere)
- Men (60%, vs. 54% of women)
- Those planning to buy a home in the next year (61% vs. 56% not planning)
- Those who think the state of the Canadian economy is poor (62%, vs. 53% who think it is fair or good)

Strongly or somewhat believing that inflation is mainly determined by world conditions is a minority view, but higher among those with household incomes of \$150,000 or more (29%), those 55 years of age and over (29%) and those with university degrees (26%).

Importance of issues in making budget decisions

Addressing the rising cost of living, making the cost of living more affordable and improving health care are top issues for the federal government to consider for budget decisions

Canadians were asked to rate the importance of 12 issues (from a list of 13) for the federal government to consider when making budget decisions. The most important are related to bringing the cost of living (88%) and inflation (84%) under control, making the cost of living more affordable (88%), as well as improving the health care system (87%). Eight in ten also rank as important fostering an economy that works for everyone (79%), and around three-quarters indicate this for making housing more affordable (77%), ensuring the wealthiest pay their fair share (75%), addressing mental health (74%) and making communities safer (73%). Two-thirds rate other issues as being important. In general, the issues also covered in February/March 2022 are rated consistently with the previous results.

Q7 How important is it for the Government of Canada to keep the following issues in mind when making Budget decisions? Please rank each on a 1 to 10 scale, where 1 means it is not at all important and 10 means it is very important.	Important (7-10)	Neutral (5-6)	Not important (1-4)	Not sure	Feb/ March Impor- tant (7-10)
Addressing the rising cost of living	88%	9%	2%	1%	n/a
Making the cost of living more affordable (n=1,054)	88%	8%	2%	2%	84%
Improving the health care system	87%	9%	2%	1%	n/a
Bringing inflation under control (n=1,052)	84%	12%	2%	2%	80%
Fostering an economy that works for everyone	79%	15%	4%	3%	n/a
Making housing more affordable	77%	16%	5%	2%	77%
Ensuring the wealthiest Canadians pay their fair share	75%	14%	8%	3%	78%
Addressing mental health	74%	17%	6%	2%	73%
Making communities safer	73%	19%	6%	2%	71%
Helping Canadians save for retirement	68%	22%	8%	2%	n/a
Fighting climate change	65%	17%	15%	2%	66%
Helping Canadians get a good job	65%	25%	8%	2%	70%
Keeping the country's debt and deficit as low as possible	65%	22%	11%	3%	n/a

Importance of issues in making budget decisions

There are just a few regional differences in budget items to prioritize. Quebecers are the most likely to indicate addressing mental health (81%), fighting climate change (77%) or supporting Ukraine (54%) should be important priorities. That the government should prioritize ensuring the wealthiest pay their fair share (65%) or addressing mental health (61%) are lower in Alberta than elsewhere.

Thinking most of these is important is somewhat higher among women and those age 55 or more. Those who think the Canadian economy is good are the most likely to rate as important fighting climate change, helping Canadians get a good job, making communities safer, and supporting Ukraine.

C. Personal well-being

Current state of your own personal financial situation

Half of Canadians are positive about their own personal financial situation, up from March.

Half (50%) Canadians give a positive rating (score of 7-10) to their own personal financial situation; three in ten (30%) give a neutral rating, and two in ten (20%) are negative to some extent. Being positive has increased seven percentage points since February/March of this year.

Q1c Using a scale from 1 to 10, where 1 is terrible and 10 is excellent, how would you rate the following: the current state of your own personal financial situation	Positive perception (7-10)	Neutral (5-6)	Negative perception (1-4)	Not sure
Fall 2022 (n=2,106)	50%	30%	20%	1%
Feb/March (n=2,007)	43%	29%	26%	1%

Current state of your own personal financial situation

Reporting a positive personal financial status ranges from a low of 41 percent in the Atlantic to a high of 60 percent in Quebec; and increases along with an increase in household income, from a low of 28 percent under \$40,000 to a high of 71 percent (up 10 points) for those \$150,000 or more. It is higher among the following groups:

- Men (53% vs, 47% of women)
- Age 55 and over (57%)
- University graduates (53%)
- Full time workers (49%) and retired Canadians (61%)
- Homeowners (56%)
- Those with no children under 18 at home (52%, vs. 42% who do)
- Those who think the Canadian economy is good (78%)

Top economic stressors for Canadian households

The rising cost of living remains the top economic stressor for Canadian households, followed by quality of the healthcare system and the cost of groceries. Despite this, most are not worried about being able to pay their monthly bills.

Canadians were asked to indicate how much of a stress several things are for them and their household. To reduce respondent burden respondents were asked to rate 11 of 22 items, and all respondents were asked about saving enough money to buy a home, rising interest rates, and paying down their personal debts. The rising cost of living is once again the most stressful of the items rated, with over four in ten saying it is a major source of stress (82% at least moderate, up from 73% in February/March 2022). Seven in ten are stressed about the cost of groceries, a new item for this wave.

2. How much of a stress is each of the following are for you and your household. Is each a major, moderate or minor source of stress, or is it not a source of stress at all?	Net: major/ moderate	Major source	Moderate source	Minor source	Not a source	Feb/ March: Major
The rising cost of living (n=1,052)	82%	42%	39%	15%	3%	73%
Quality of the healthcare system (n=1,052)	75%	37%	37%	20%	6%	51%
The cost of groceries (n=1,054)	71%	34%	38%	24%	5%	n/a
The global economy (n=1,054)	64%	20%	44%	30%	7%	47%
The Canadian economy (n=1052)	63%	18%	44%	31%	7%	49%
Rising interest rates (n=2,106)	60%	25%	34%	25%	15%	n/a
Being financially secure in retirement (n=1,052)	58%	25%	33%	26%	16%	49%
Climate change (n=1,054)	58%	20%	36%	31%	13%	44%
Middle class falling further behind top 1% (n=1,052)	57%	21%	36%	29%	13%	45%
The cost of heating and electricity (n=1,052)	57%	19%	39%	32%	11%	n/a
The quality of the environment (n=1,052)	56%	23%	34%	28%	14%	46%
The health of you and your family (n=1,054)	56%	18%	38%	32%	13%	44%
Saving enough money to retire (n=1,054)	54%	24%	30%	23%	23%	46%
Crime (n=1,054)	53%	19%	34%	34%	13%	37%
The performance of the stock market (n=1,054)	51%	16%	35%	30%	19%	29%
The size of the federal deficit (n=1,052)	51%	16%	34%	32%	18%	40%
The mental health of you/your family (n=1,052)	48%	16%	32%	32%	20%	39%
Income inequality in Canada (n=1,054)	44%	16%	27%	33%	24%	35%
The spread of COVID in Canada (n=1,054)	40%	12%	28%	38%	22%	51%
Paying down your personal debts (n=2,106)	37%	16%	22%	27%	36%	n/a
Saving enough money to buy a home (n=2,106)	36%	18%	18%	17%	47%	32%
Terrorism (n=1,052)	34%	12%	22%	36%	31%	32%
Your ability to pay bills end of month (n=1,054)	33%	11%	22%	31%	35%	31%
Lack of career advancement opportunities (n=1,052)	32%	11%	21%	21%	47%	28%
Job security (n=1,054)	29%	11%	18%	28%	43%	26%

Extent to which economic issues are sources of concern for Canadians

Concerns about most things related to finances and health are generally up from in the spring. Concern about the quality of the healthcare system has increased (from 51% to 75% at least moderately concerned), and personal mental health concerns are also up (48%, up from 39%). Likewise, concern about the Canadian and global economies also increased over the summer, as are concerns about the stock market. However, concern about the spread of COVID is down (to 40% from 51%).

Concerns are lower than four in ten for several things, including paying down personal debts (37%), terrorism (34%) and job security (29%). Around one-third (36%) express major or moderate concern about saving enough money to buy a home, but this is notably higher among those planning to buy in the coming year (72%) than those who are not (29%).

The proportions saying each of these is a major source of stress are generally similar across the country and subgroups of the population, with a few notable differences. Those in Quebec are the most concerned about climate change (64%) and quality of the environment (62%). There are differences in concerns by age, with younger Canadians (those under age 55) being more concerned than their older counterparts about rising interest rates, being financially secure in retirement, saving enough to retire or to buy a home, mental health, income inequality, paying down personal debts and ability to pay monthly bills. Older Canadians (aged 55 and over) are more concerned than younger ones about terrorism, the spread of COVID, the federal deficit, the stock market, crime, climate change and the healthcare system.

Women continue to be more likely than men to find a number of things a major source of stress; the exceptions, about which concern are similar by gender, are the global economy, personal and family health, crime, stock market performance, the federal deficit, the spread of COVID, saving money to buy a home, ability to pay monthly bills and job security.

Those who think their own personal financial situation or the Canadian economy in general are in a poor state, are the most likely to find most things to be major stressors.

Top economic stressors for Canadian parents

Parents are most stressed about whether their kids will be able to afford a place to live when they are older.

Canadians who indicated they have a child under age 18 in the home were asked to rate seven addition potential stresses. Between one-third and six in ten are at least moderately stressed by these. Three in ten say it is a major source of stress whether their kids will be able to afford a place to live when they are older, and one-quarter say this about the quality of the environment when their kids are older. Two in ten or fewer are very stressed about the impact of other factors on their children.

3. Please tell me how much of a stress each of the following things are for you and your household. Is each a major, moderate or minor source of stress, or is it not a source of stress at all?	Major source	Moderate source	Minor source	Not a source	Does not apply/ dk	Feb/ March Major source
Whether your kids will be able to afford a place to live when they are older	31%	29%	24%	11%	5%	n/a
The quality of the environment when your kids are older	26%	32%	27%	11%	4%	19%
The impact of Canada's national debt on your kids when they are older	21%	32%	27%	13%	7%	n/a
Paying for your kids' education	20%	35%	23%	16%	7%	18%
If your kids will get jobs out of school	18%	28%	27%	20%	8%	16%
Your kids' ability to pay off future student loans	17%	28%	26%	18%	11%	n/a
Finding affordable childcare spaces	16%	17%	13%	17%	37%	15%

Extent to which economic issues are sources of concern for Canadian parents (n=551)

Major or moderate concern about most of these stressors tend to be lower in Manitoba and Quebec than elsewhere. Women are more concerned than men about whether their kids will be able to afford a place to live when they are older (66% vs. 55%) or their kids' ability to pay off future student loans (51% vs. 38%), but other concerns are similar by gender.

Identifying as major stresses paying for education and finding affordable childcare is more likely for parents with lower incomes (\$40,000 or less), those whose personal financial situation is poor, and those who think the Canadian economy is poor.

Confidence in managing bills compared to last year

Over one third of Canadians are less confident than they were last year that they can manage their bills and buy what they need

In a new question this wave, Canadians were asked how confident they are that they can manage paying their bills and buying the things they need, compared to this time last year. A minority of just over one in ten (14%) indicate they are at least somewhat more confident, half (50%) are just as confident, and about one-third (36%) are somewhat less (25%) or much less (10%) confident than they were last year.

Q4 Compared to this time last year how confident are you that you can manage paying your bills and buying the things you need? Are you?	Total online (n=2,007)
Net: More confident	14%
Much more confident	5%
Somewhat more confident	8%
Just as confident	50%
Net: Less confident	36%
Somewhat less confident	25%
Much less confident	10%
Don't know	1%

Confidence in managing bills compared to last year

Those most likely to now feel *less* confident than last year about their ability to manage paying their bills include the following:

- Women (40% vs. 31% of men)
- Those with annual household incomes under \$80,000 (43%)
- Those with high school educations or less (42%)
- Those who are not employed (49%)
- Renters (41%)
- Those with children under 18 (40%)
- This in Canada outside of Quebec (38% vs 26% in Quebec)

Most challenging expense

Canadians are most challenged to pay for groceries and housing; three in ten have no difficulties making ends meet

In a new question this wave, Canadians were asked what is the one expense they have that makes it the most challenging for them to make ends meet. They were shown four potential responses and could write in something else, or say they have no difficulty. They could select only one response.

One-quarter each say groceries (24%), or housing costs (24%) are their most challenging expenses. Fewer than one in ten indicate other expenses such as gasoline (8%) or utilities (7%) as being their most difficult to meet. Three in ten say they have no difficulties paying their expenses currently.

Q5. What is the one expense you have in your life that makes it the most challenging for you to make ends meet?	Total (n=2,106)
Groceries/food	24%
Housing costs (e.g., rent, mortgage)	24%
Gasoline	8%
Utilities (e.g., heating, hydro)	7%
Something else	4%
None, I have no difficulty making ends meet	29%
Don't know	3%

Most challenging expenses (2% or more mentions)

Responses are generally similar across the country and most subgroups. Below are some notable findings.

- Saying groceries/food ranges from a low of 18 percent in Manitoba to a high of 29% in Quebec. It is higher among women (27% vs. 21% of men) and those with household incomes under \$40,000 (36%). It is also higher among those with children under age 18 at home (29% vs 23%) and those whose personal financial situation is poor (31%) or fair (28%, vs. 19% good).
- Housing costs as the most challenging event ranges from 15% in Quebec to 30% in Ontario; it is higher among those aged 18 to 34 (37%) and decreases as age increases (to 13% age 55+). It is higher among those with a university degree (28%) and those living in cities with over one million people (31%). It is also higher among those whose personal financial situation is poor (37%) or fair (30%, vs. 16% good). Housing also is more likely to be a challenging expense for those who are planning to buy a home in the next year (39%, vs. 21% not planning to do so).
- *Gasoline* as the most challenging expense ranges from 5 percent in Quebec to 17 percent in B.C.
- Having no difficulty making ends meet is highest in Quebec (41%, vs. 22% to 29% elsewhere) and among men (32% vs 27% women) and those with university degrees (34%); it increases as age increases (from 20% age 18-34 up to 39% age 55+) and as household income increases (from 16% under \$40,000 up to 43% \$150,000 and over).

Level of worry about being laid off/losing job

Three in ten Canadians are at least somewhat worried about personal or household job loss, down from March.

Three in ten (29%) of Canadians are extremely or somewhat worried about personal or family job loss, down somewhat from one-third (34%) earlier in the year; two-thirds (67%) are not very or not at all worried, with four in ten of these being not at all worried, up six points. It is clear that job loss is less and less of a concern for Canadians and the proportion saying they are not worried at all has increased six points in the last few months.

Q6. To what extent are you worried about you or anyone in your household losing their job or being laid off?	Extremely worried	Somewhat worried	Not very worried	Not at all worried	Not sure
Fall 2022 (n=2,106)	8%	22%	26%	41%	3%
Feb/March (n=2,007)	12%	23%	26%	35%	4%

Level of worry about being laid off/losing job

Response patterns are generally similar across subgroups of the population. Being concerned is higher among those with lower household incomes and decreases as income increases. Net concern (extremely or somewhat worried) is a minority but higher among the following groups:

- Those in Ontario and B.C. (33%)
- Canadians under age 55 (37% vs. 18% age 55 and over)
- Those in major urban centres (33%, vs. 25% in towns and rural areas)
- Those whose language at home is neither English nor French (48%)
- Those with children under 18 at home (43% vs. 25%)
- Those planning to buy a home this year (48% vs. 26%)
- Those whose personal financial situation is poor (50%, vs. 34% fair and 18% good)
- Racialized Canadians (38%) and recent immigrants (68%).

D. Taxes and fiscal policy

Agreement with statements about fiscal issues

Canadians would like the country's budget to eventually be balanced, but do not want this to be rushed at the expense of health care or essential services, or by requiring taxes to be higher.

Canadians were asked to rate their level of agreement with ten statements about the federal government's approach to fiscal issues. As was the case earlier in the year, Canadians would like the national debt to be reduced, but they still want more permanent healthcare funding for the provinces, and they do not want a balanced budget at the expense of essential services or funded by higher taxes.

Majorities of from 52 percent to 71 percent agree (score 7 to 10) with most statements, but agreement is highest that the federal government should have a plan to gradually reduce the national debt (75%, similar to 71% in February/March), and two-thirds also agree the federal government should provide more permanent health care funding to provinces, even if adds to deficit (66%) or that if the federal government tries to balance the budget too quickly it would mean either cuts to essential services or higher taxes on people like them (64%).

There is minority agreement with three new statements: that the federal government is trying to support Canadians in difficult economic times (43%) or understands the economic issues Canadians are facing (35%), and that Canada should provide more financial aid to help Ukraine (32%).

Q14 Please tell me to what extent you agree or disagree with each of the following statements using a 10-point scale, where "10" means you strongly agree, "1" means you strongly disagree?	Agree (7-10)	Neutral (5-6)	Disagree (1-4)	Not sure	Feb/March Agree (7-10)
I think the federal government should have a plan to gradually reduce the national debt	71%	19%	2%	5%	75%
Fed. gov't should provide more permanent health care funding to provinces, even if adds to deficit	66%	21%	7%	6%	67%
I worry that if the federal government quickly tries to balance the budget it would mean either cuts to essential services or higher taxes on people like me	64%	19%	9%	8%	66%
I don't expect the federal gov't to balance its budget until economy has completely recovered from pandemic	59%	19%	14%	9%	67%
If the federal government restores the budget to balance or a surplus, it will have a positive impact on the economy	56%	21%	9%	14%	64%
The federal government should focus on restraining future government spending	56%	24%	4%	7%	63%
I think the federal government should return to a balanced budget as soon as possible	52%	25%	14%	8%	59%
The federal government is trying to support Canadians in difficult economic times	43%	25%	26%	6%	n/a
The federal government understands the economic issues Canadians are facing	35%	23%	36%	5%	n/a
The federal government should provide more financial aid to help Ukraine defend itself from Russia, even if it adds to the deficit	32%	26%	36%	7%	n/a

Agreement with statements about fiscal issues

Agreement with statements is fairly similar by region and most subgroups. Agreement tends to increase along with an increase in age. Agreement is similar by gender, although women are more likely than men to agree more permanent health care funding should be provided and that they worry that if the federal government quickly tries to balance the budget it would mean either cuts to essential services or higher taxes on people like them; men are more likely than women to agree balancing the budget will have a positive impact on the economy, and that they should return to balance as soon as possible.

Whether groups are paying the right amount of tax

Canadians increasingly think big corporations, the top 1%, and financial institutions should be paying more tax

Canadians were asked if, in their opinion, six groups are currently paying the proper amount in taxes, or if they should be paying more or less. It is notable that there is a consistent increase in the extent to which people think the wealthiest groups should pay more tax. Three-quarters think big corporations (77%, up seven percentage points in February/March) and the top one percent of income earners (74%, up five points) should be paying more tax. Seven in ten (70%) now think financial institutions should be paying more, up 11 points from earlier in the year. As previously, about half think small businesses and middle-income earners are paying the right amount of tax, and six in ten think lower income earners should be paying less.

Q11 In your opinion, are each of the following groups currently paying the proper amount of taxes, or should they be paying more tax, or less tax, than they are now?	Should be paying more tax	Currently paying proper amount of tax	Should be paying less tax	Don't know	Feb/March Should be paying more tax
Big corporations	77%	14%	2%	7%	70%
The top one percent of income earners	74%	15%	3%	8%	69%
Financial institutions	70%	16%	2%	12%	59%
Small businesses	5%	51%	32%	12%	6%
Lower-income earners	4%	30%	59%	7%	5%
Middle-income earners	2%	51%	39%	7%	6%

If groups are paying the right amount of tax

That *big corporations* and the *top one percent of income earners* should be paying more in tax is the dominant view across the country and all subgroups. That big corporations should pay more is higher among women and renters. Wanting *financial institutions* to pay more take is a majority across most groups but is higher among those age 55 and over and renters.

Feeling that *lower-income earners* should pay less in tax is also a dominant view nationally, although higher among women, those with low to middle household incomes (68% under \$80,000), those age 55 and over, renters, those who think the Canadian economy is poor, and those identifying as having a disability. It is also higher among those who think their own personal financial situation is poor (62%) and decreases as perception of situation improves (down to 55% who think their situation is good).

Wanting *middle-income earners* to pay less in tax is a minority view across the country and most subgroups, but higher among those age 35 to 54, those working full time, those with children under age 18, those in a poor or fair personal financial state, and those who think the economy of the country is poor.

That *small businesses* should be paying less tax is generally similar across subgroups, but highest among those in rural areas and those who think the economy of the country is poor. It is lower in Quebec (22%) than elsewhere (34% to 41%).

E. Housing

Housing affordability

Over eight in ten agree it is very difficult to buy a home in the current economy and seven in ten agree the federal government has a responsibility to address this

Canadians were asked their level of agreement with a number of statements regarding home ownership. Just over eight in ten (83%) continue to agree (score 7 to 10) it is very difficult for people to buy a house in the current economic climate, and seven in ten (71%) agree the federal government has a responsibility to address the lack of affordable housing in the country. One-quarter (25%) agree it would be easy to find somewhere to live that is both affordable and in a safe neighbourhood, if someone was buying a house today. These are all statistically similar results to earlier in the year.

As in February/March, three-quarters (77%) of homeowners (n=1,396) agree it was extremely important they own a home, rather than rent, and just over half (53%) agree the cost of living in their home is affordable on their current household income.

Renters (n=549) were asked two specific questions, again with similar results to earlier in the year: just over half (53%) agree it is extremely important they be able to own a home in the future, and four in ten (39%) agree the rent they pay is affordable on their current household income.

Q12 Using a scale from 1 to 10, where 1 is strongly disagree and 10 is strongly agree, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?	Agree (7-10)	Neutral (5-6)	Disagree (1-4)	Not sure	Feb/March Agree (7-10)
It is very difficult for people to buy a house today, in the current economic climate.	83%	10%	5%	2%	81%
It was extremely important that you own a home, rather than rent. BASE: Owners (n=1,396)	77%	14%	7%	2%	76%
The federal government has a responsibility to address the lack of affordable housing in Canada.	71%	17%	8%	3%	72%
The costs of living in your home (including mortgage payments and property taxes) are affordable on your current household income. BASE: Owners (n=1,396)	53%	23%	22%	2%	54%
It is extremely important you be able to own a home in the future. BASE: Renters (n=549)	53%	19%	24%	4%	49%
The rent you pay is affordable on your current household income. BASE: Renters (n=549)	39%	25%	35%	1%	39%
If you needed to buy a home today, it would be easy to find somewhere to live that is both safe and affordable.	25%	19%	52%	5%	28%

Agreement with statements about housing affordability

For the most part response to these statements does not vary significantly by subgroup. Significant differences are noted below:

- It is very difficult for people to buy a house today, in the current economic climate: Agreement is very high in all subgroups, but somewhat lower in Alberta and Atlantic Canada and among those in rural areas.
- The federal government has a responsibility to address the lack of affordable housing in Canada: Agreement is higher among women, younger people, renters, and racialized Canadians.
- Costs of living in your home are affordable on current household income: Agreement is higher among Ontarians, those 55 years of age and older, those with higher incomes and university graduates. Agreements is lower among those with lower incomes and among those in British Columbia.
- If you needed to buy a home today, it would be easy to find somewhere to live that is both safe and affordable: Agreement is higher among those in Alberta and Quebec, men, homeowners, those 55 years of age and over and those with household incomes \$150,000 or more.
- It is extremely important that you own a home rather than rent: Agreement is very high across in all subgroups particularly among those in Quebec and those living in rural areas.

Federal government housing policies

Majorities think each of a range of housing policies should be government priorities with the highest priority given to policies that offer direct assistance to Canadians or crack down on speculators and developers. Putting pressure on municipalities is seen as less of a priority.

Canadians were shown a series of 14 housing-related issues and asked to indicate the extent to which each should be a priority area for the federal government. As in Feb/March, the top priority identified by Canadians is increasing the availability of affordable housing (76%), and three-quarters (74%) indicate continued supports for first time buyers is important. Seven in ten feel each of four other housing policies are priorities: increasing transparency in real estate transactions (71%), cracking down on large landlords buying up housing (71%), extending the temporary ban on foreign ownership of homes (71%) and making mortgage payments more affordable (69%).

Other policies that majorities of Canadians feel should be high priorities for the federal government include making down payments more achievable (67%), Requiring developers to ensure that at least twenty percent of new housing is affordable for lower income families (64%), working with municipalities to speed up the approval of new housing developments (63%), a ban on people buying and owning multiple homes that aren't being used to provide needed rental supply (59%), continued investment in cooperative housing (58%) and increasing down payment requirements for investors (54%).

The lowest priority policies are those requiring municipalities to change their zoning rules to allow for denser communities (42%) as well as reducing federal funding to municipalities who do not increase the number of homes over the previous year (37%).

Q13A To address the issue of housing affordability, to what extent do you think each of the following should be a priority area for the federal government? Please use a scale from 1 to 10, where 1 is not at all a priority and 10 is an extremely high priority.	Priority (7-10)	Neutral (5-6)	Not a priority (1-4)	Not sure	Feb/ March Priority (7-10)
Increasing the availability of affordable housing	76%	15%	6%	3%	76%
Continued (Fall: supports/Feb-Mar: incentives) for first- time home buyers	74%	17%	2%	4%	71%
Increasing transparency (Fall: and consumer protection) in real estate transactions, like banning blind bidding)	71%	15%	2%	9%	71%
Cracking down on large landlords buying up housing, reducing supply for individuals	71%	16%	8%	6%	72%
Extending the temporary ban on foreign ownership of residential property	70%	14%	9%	7%	n/a
Making monthly mortgage payments more affordable for middle-/lower-income Canadians	69%	18%	9%	5%	70%
Making down-payments more (Fall: achievable/Feb-Mar: possible) for people	67%	21%	7%	5%	69%
Requiring developers to ensure that at least twenty percent of new housing is affordable for lower income families	64%	20%	11%	6%	70%
Working with municipalities to speed up the approval of new housing developments	63%	21%	4%	6%	68%
A ban on people buying and owning multiple homes that aren't being used to provide needed rental supply	59%	18%	16%	7%	n/a
Continued investment in co-operative housing	58%	24%	9%	9%	66%
Increasing down payment requirements for investors	54%	21%	12%	12%	61%
Requiring municipalities to change their zoning rules to allow for denser communities	42%	27%	21%	10%	n/a
Reducing federal funding to municipalities who do not increase # of homes over previous year	37%	26%	21%	16%	n/a

Priorities for housing affordability policies

There are few significant differences by sub-group in the extent to which Canadians feel that each of these policies should be prioritized. There is some tendency for residents of British Columbia and Ontario, renters, those 55 years of age and over and those with lower incomes to put a higher priority on most of these items, while residents of Alberta, homeowners and those with higher incomes tend to rate most of these as somewhat less of a priority.

Those with lower incomes and renters tend to place a higher priority on measures aimed at people with lower incomes such as requiring developers to ensure that at least 20 percent of new housing is affordable to low income families and continued investment in cooperative housing.

Appendix A: Qualitative methodology

Environics Research conducted a series of 10 online focus groups in September and October 2022 to assess Canadians' attitudes toward the current state of the economy, with a particular focus on attitudes toward such issues as the cost of living, housing, and priorities for the federal government looking ahead to the Fall Economic Statement.

Group composition

The online focus groups were conducted using the Zoom platform; and a pair of sessions were conducted in each of the following regions: Ontario (September 29), Prairies (October 3), B.C. (October 4), Quebec (October 5) and Atlantic Canada (October 6). The two Quebec sessions were conducted in French and the other eight sessions were conducted in English.

Location (Language of groups)	Date	Time
Ontario (English)	Thursday, September 29	5pm EST – Group #1 7pm EST – Group #2
Atlantic provinces (NL, NS, NB, PEI) (English)	Thursday, October 6	4pm EST (5pm AST)– Group #3 6pm EST (7pm AST) – Group #4
Prairie provinces (MB, SK, AB) (English)	Monday, October 3	6pm EST (5pm CST/4pm MST) – Group #5 8pm EST (7pm CST/6pm MST) – Group #6
B.C./Territories (English)	Tuesday, October 4	7pm EST (4pm PST) – Group #7 9pm EST (6pm PST) – Group #8
Quebec (French)	Wednesday, October 5	5pm EST – Group #9 7pm EST – Group #10

NB: Participants in groups 1, 3, 5, 7 and 9 were lower income. Participants in groups 2, 4, 6, 8 and 10 were higher income.

Participants were 18 years of age or over; and included range of age, education, and backgrounds. The groups lasted approximately 90 minutes and consisted of between six and eight participants (out of eight people recruited for each group). Participants were offered a \$100 honorarium to encourage participation and thank them for their time commitment. Each evening, one session was conducted with Canadians with lower incomes and one session was conducted with those with higher incomes.

Recruitment

Environics developed the recruitment screener and provided it to Finance Canada for review prior to its deployment. The recruitment was carried out by Environics' qualitative partner Trend Research, which is one of Canada's most well established and respected qualitative research recruiting operations. All recruiting was conducted by telephone and by e-mail by Trend's professional team of experienced and trained qualitative research recruiters. Trend maintains a panel of prospective qualitative research participants across Canada. The panel is composed of people who have taken part in quantitative surveys and agreed to be contacted to be potential paid participants in qualitative research projects, as well as people who are recruited to the panel through social media promotion. Participants were contacted randomly by phone and e-mail and screened to ensure they were invited to the appropriate session. Participants were also screened to ensure the groups

included a mix of gender, education, and age, and that they would be comfortable voicing their opinions in front of others. Normal focus group exclusions were in place (marketing research, media and employment in the federal government, and recent related focus group attendance). Participants were offered a \$100 honorarium to encourage participation and thank them for their time commitment.

All groups were video- and audio-recorded for use in subsequent analysis by the research team – during the recruitment process and at the session sign-in, participants provided consent to such recording and were given privacy and confidentially assurances.

Moderation

Two senior researchers were used to moderate all sessions, as follows:

- Derek Leebosh, Vice President, Environics, moderated all English sessions.
- France Mercier, Senior Associate, moderated both French sessions.

All qualitative research work was conducted in accordance with professional standards and applicable government legislation (e.g., PIPEDA).

Statement of limitations

Qualitative research provides insight into the range of opinions held within a population, rather than the weights of the opinions held, as would be measured in a quantitative study. The results of this type of research should be viewed as indicative rather than projectable.

Appendix B: Quantitative methodology

Background and research objectives

Finance Canada identified a need for qualitative research to examine Canadians' overall concerns and perceptions about the current state of the Canadian economy, emerging issues, and their expectations about the role of the Government of Canada in the economy and in other issues related to quality of life in Canada.

Use of research: By gauging and analysing the opinions of Canadians, the Government of Canada gains insights into important policy areas related to the mandate of the department and related services. The information gained through this public opinion research will be shared throughout Finance Canada to assist it when establishing priorities, developing policies, and planning programs and services.

Methodology

Environics conducted an online survey with a representative sample of 2,007 adult Canadians, conducted from September 23-October 4, 2022. As the online survey uses an opt-in panel, this is a non-probability sample, and no margin of sampling error is calculated.

Questionnaire design

The questionnaire was designed by Environics and Finance Canada representatives, and incorporated tracking questions from previous economic surveys as appropriate. The English version of the final study questionnaire is included in Appendix E. The online questionnaire averaged 16 minutes to complete.

Sample design and weighting

The online survey targeted adult Canadians (18 years of age or older). The sample was stratified by region to allow for meaningful coverage of lower population areas: The survey data were weighted to the national adult population (region, age, and gender).

Regional distribution	Total	ВС/ҮК	AB/NWT	SK	MB/NU	ON	QC	ATL
# of completed	2,106	330	283	117	124	625	420	207
interviews	2,100	550	205	11/	124	025	420	207
% of completed	100%	16%	13%	6%	6%	30%	20%	10%
interviews	100%	10%	1570	070	070	50%	2070	1070

Pre-test

A soft launch of the online survey was conducted on September 26, and 67 completions were reviewed (29 English, 38 French). No changes were required as a result of this review and the full field proceeded. The pretest interviews were kept in the data set.

Fieldwork and quality control

The online survey was conducted by Environics. All respondents were offered the opportunity to complete the survey in their official language of choice. All research work was conducted in accordance with the standards

established by federal government Public Opinion Research (POR) requirements, as well as applicable federal legislation (Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act, or PIPEDA).

Data analysts programmed the questionnaire into an online survey platform and then performed thorough testing to ensure accuracy in set-up and data collection. This validation ensured the data entry process conformed to the survey's basic logic. The interview system handles invitations, quotas, and questionnaire completion (skip patterns, branching and valid ranges).

Completion results

The completion results for the online survey are presented in the following table.

Disposition		Ν
Total invitations	(c)	34,170
Total completes	(d)	2,106
Qualified breakoffs	(e)	323
Disqualified	(f)	252
Not responded	(g)	30,001
Quota filled	(h)	1,488
Contact rate = (d+e+f+h)/c		12.20%
Participation rate = (d+f+h)/c		11.26%

Contact disposition

Non-response bias analysis

The table below presents a profile of the final sample, compared to the actual population of Canada (2016 Census information). The proportion of people aged 55+ interviewed is lower than that in the population; this was corrected by age weighting. The final sample somewhat under-represents those with high school or less education, which is also a typical pattern for surveys in Canada (e.g., those with more education are more likely to be members of online panels and to respond to surveys).

Sample profile

Sample type	Online Sample* %	Canada (2016 Census) %
Gender (18+)		
Male	50%	49
Female	49%	51
Age		
18-34	27	27
35-54	46	34
55+	27	39
Education level $^{\alpha}$		
High school diploma or less	15	35
Trades/college/post sec no degree	33	36
University degree	52	29

* Data are unweighted and percentaged on those giving a response to each demographic question

^a Actual Census categories differ from those used in this survey and have been recalculated to correspond. Statistics Canada figures for education are for Canadians aged 25 to 64 years.

Appendix C: Moderation guide

September 26, 2022

Environics Research Focus Groups on Canada's Economy Finance Canada – Discussion Agenda PN11601

1. Introduction to Procedures (10 minutes)

Hello everyone, my name is [NAME] and I work for Environics Research, a public opinion research company. Welcome to this online focus group. I will be moderating the session. This is one of a series of online focus groups we are conducting on behalf of the Government of Canada with people from across the country. The session should last no more than 90 minutes.

We want to hear your opinions so please feel free to agree or disagree with one another. I want to inform you that we are recording this session to help me write my report. The recording will only be used internally to analyze the research and will not be released to anyone else. MODERATOR TO PRESS "RECORD" ON ZOOM SCREEN

There are also some observers from the research team and from the Government of Canada who are observing the session and taking notes while muted. I would also like to remind you that anything you say here will remain confidential and anonymous and any comments you make will not be linked to you by name in any reporting we do on this project.

For the most part we will be video chatting, but I will also be sharing my screen to show you some things and we will also use the "chat" function from time to time when I ask you to react to things in writing. I will type "hello" in the chat – can everyone see that and respond "Hi" to "everyone" just to make sure that the "chat" feature works for everyone?

I also want to say that if you feel you didn't have a chance to express your opinion on anything during the session, you can feel free to comment in writing in the "chat." Chat with "everyone" unless you feel you need to send me a private message.

Before we get started, I just wanted to also say that if you think there may be a lot of noise at your end (i.e., kids, dog barking etc.) please click the "mute" button and just "unmute" when you want to say something. You will get the cash compensation gift we promised you electronically in the next week or two.

Let's go around the imaginary table and introduce ourselves. Tell us your name and tell us briefly a bit about yourself such as where you are calling from, what sort of work you do or if you are in school and how you would describe the composition of your household (family, pets etc.).

2. Canada's economy (15 minutes)

I want to focus a bit more on economic issues and the state of the Canadian economy. I will type a question in the CHAT again: "What one word would you use to describe how the Canadian economy is doing these days?"

In other words, if someone from another country asked you how the economy was these days in Canada, what would you say?

Why did you pick that word?

What specific economic issues are you most concerned about in terms of how it affects you personally?

PROBE: Affordability and the cost of living? Housing costs? Labour shortages? Unemployment? Debt and deficits? Shortages/supply chain?

How do you think the Canadian economy will be in coming year? Do you think things will get better or worse next year or the same? Why? Why not?

How would you know if the economy was getting better or worse? What are the signs?

PROBE: Is it from statistics like the growth rate, unemployment rate, or inflation rate? Or is it more based on what you personally experience like the cost of rent/housing or the price of gasoline or of groceries?

3. Inflation/cost of living concerns (15 minutes)

We talked earlier about the cost of living and rising prices which we refer to as "inflation". What are examples of things that have become harder to afford in your own day-to-day life, if any?

PROBE IF NOT MENTIONED: Food? Gasoline? Housing? Mortgage? Utilities (heating/electricity)?

If you are finding things harder to afford these days, how are you managing or dealing with it?

PROBE IF NOT MENTIONED: Going into debt? Doing without some things? Putting off purchase decisions? Borrowing from friends and family? Relying on money saved during the pandemic?

What do you think is causing prices to go up these days?

PROBE: Pandemic? Supply chains? Global factors (i.e., the war in Ukraine)? Government spending? Price gouging/profiteering by retailers?

Can the federal government do anything about inflation? If so, what?

How long do you think we will have this high inflation? **PROBE**: Has it peaked? Will it level off? Will it get worse?

Who do you think is responsible for determining interest rates in Canada. Some people say the Bank of Canada needs to keep raising interest rates in order to try to slow down the rate of inflation.

Interest rates have already gone up several points. How has this affected you, if at all?

If interest rates keep going up, how might it impact you personally, if at all?

4. Affordability measures (10 minutes)

We talked about what, if anything, the federal government could do to bring down inflation, but what about the larger issue of affordability? Are there things the federal government could do to make your life more affordable?

Has anyone heard of anything new that the federal government has announced that could make life more affordable?

PROBE: Dental care for low and middle income people? Higher GST rebate? \$500 housing benefit?

5. Housing (10 minutes)

Let's talk more specifically about housing. Please respond in the CHAT "What is your biggest specific worry when it comes to housing?"

Could you each elaborate on why this is your main housing concern and also tell me how housing issues affect you (i.e., do you own or rent? Are you planning to buy or move soon?)

Do you think housing concerns are getting any better or worse these days? Are homes getting any more affordable? What about rents?

Has anyone heard of any steps the Government of Canada is taking to try to deal with housing issues? What have you heard?

As you may know, housing is largely a provincial responsibility and municipalities control zoning. What do you think the federal government could do about housing or is this out of their control?

6. Deficit/debt concerns (10 minutes)

What have you heard about the deficit at the federal level and/or the national debt?

How do you feel about the federal government having a deficit? Is this a big concern?

Is it an inevitable result of the costs of the pandemic?

Do you expect big deficits for a long time to come after the pandemic, or do you think they will eventually shrink?

What should the Government of Canada do with regard to the deficit?

PROBE: Take drastic action to cut spending and balance the budget as soon as possible? Take a more long-term approach? What is a reasonable timeframe?

Is it ok to run modest deficits, if the debt continues to fall as a share of the economy over time?

Canada actually has the lowest debt and the lowest deficit as a percentage of GDP of any of the countries in the G7 (the US, UK, France, Germany, Japan, Italy, and Canada). Did any of you know this? What is your reaction? Are you surprised?

Does knowing this change your view or level of concern about Canada's debt and deficit? How so?

Some people say the federal government needs to provide more permanent long-term funding to the provinces for health care, even if this would add to the deficit. What do you think?

7. Fall priorities (10 minutes)

As you may know, every Fall the Minister of Finance announces a Fall Economic Statement where they make projections on things like the deficit, inflation, unemployment and where the economy is headed and announce some new policies.

Please type in the CHAT "If you could give one piece of advice to the Minister of Finance on the upcoming Fall Economic Statement, what would it be?"

Why did you say that?

Should the government's focus in the Fall Economic Statement be on addressing short-term economic challenges (i.e., over the next 6-12 months) or on laying out a plan for medium-to-long-term priorities to lead to long term prosperity for Canadians?

Looking ahead to the next five years, what do you think the federal government's major economic priorities should be?

PROBE IF NOT MENTIONED: Addressing labour shortages, investing in greener industries, strengthening our supply chains, deficit reduction, stronger social programs?

8. Wrap up (5 minutes)

We have covered many topics today and really appreciate you taking the time and energy to come down here and give your opinion. Your input is very important and insightful. Before we leave today, I wanted to ask you whether you have any last thoughts that you want to give the Government of Canada about today's topics.

THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING!

Appendix D: Recruitment screener

September 8-2022

Environics Research Group Limited Focus Groups on Canada's Economy Winter 2022 Finance Canada PN11601 Recruitment for Group Discussion

Respondent Name:

Home #:

Business #:

Group #:

Recruiter:

GROUP 1	GROUP 2	GROUP 3	GROUP 4
Ontario – Lower income	Ontario – Higher income	Atlantic – Lower income	Atlantic – Higher income
Thursday, September 19	Thursday, September 19	Thursday, October 6	Thursday, October 6
5:00 pm EST	7:00 pm EST	4:00 pm EST (5 pm AST)	6:00 pm EST (7 pm AST)
GROUP 5	GROUP 6	GROUP 7	GROUP 8
Prairies – Lower income	Prairies – Higher income	B.C. – Lower income	B.C. – Higher income
Monday, October 3	Monday, October 3	Tuesday, October 4	Tuesday, October 4
6:00 pm EST (5 pm CST/4	8:00 pm EST (7pm CST/6	7:00 pm EST (4 pm PST)	9:00 pm EST (6 pm PST)
pm MST)	pm MST)		
GROUP 9	GROUP 10		
Quebec (FR) – Lower	Quebec (FR) – Higher		
income	income		
Wednesday, October 5	Wednesday, October 5		
5:00 pm EST	7:00 pm EST		

Eight recruits per session. \$100 incentive. Note income breaks. Groups 3 and 4 need a mix from the four Atlantic provinces and Groups 5 and 6 need a mix from the three prairie provinces.

"High income" is defined as anyone with a personal annual income of over \$80,000 or anyone in a household with multiple incomes with an annual household income of over \$120,000. For groups 3 and 4 in Atlantic, a personal income of over \$60,000 or a household income of over \$100,000 also counts as "high income".

Hello/Bonjour, my name is ______ from Trend Research, a partner of Environics Research. We are conducting a series of online video-conference focus group discussions among people in your region on behalf of the Government of Canada exploring issues around the current state of the Canadian economy. Would you like to continue this discussion in English? / Voulez-vous continuer cette conversation en français?

This study is a research project, not an attempt to sell or market anything. Your participation in the research is completely voluntary, confidential and your decision to participate or not will not affect any dealings you may have with the government.

The format will be a video-conference call discussion using the Zoom platform led by a research professional from Environics that will involve you and some other people from your region. May we have your permission to ask you or someone else in your household some further question to see if you/they fit in our study? This will take about 5 minutes.

Yes 1 CONTINUE

No 2 THANK/DISCONTINUE

The session will last a maximum of 1.5 hours and you will receive a cash gift of \$100 as a thanks for attending the session.

A recording of the session will be produced for research purposes. The recording will be used only by the research professional to assist in preparing a report on the research findings and will be destroyed once the report is completed. All information collected, used and/or disclosed will be used for research purposes only and administered as per the requirements of the Privacy Act. Environics Research has a privacy policy which can be consulted at https://environicsresearch.com/privacy-policy/

[INTERVIEWER NOTE: IF ASKED ABOUT PRIVACY LAWS, SAY: "The information collected through the research is subject to the provisions of the Privacy Act, legislation of the Government of Canada, and to the provisions of relevant provincial privacy legislation.]

Environics is a member of the Canadian Research Insights Council (CRIC) and adheres to all its standards; the project is registered with the CRIC with the number 20220922-EN412.

NB: If a participant asks for information on the research company conducting the research they can be told: Environics Research is located at 33 Bloor Street East, Suite 900, Toronto Ontario and can be reached at 416-920-9010.

Yes 1 CONTINUE

No 2 THANK/DISCONTINUE

1. Are you or is any member of your household or your immediate family employed in:

Туре	No	Yes
A market research, communications or public relations firm, or an advertising agency		
Media (Radio, Television, Newspapers, Magazines, etc.)		
A federal or provincial government department or agency		
A political party		

IF YES TO ANY OF THE ABOVE – THANK AND TERMINATE

2. INDICATE:

Male 1	50/50 split
--------	-------------

Female 2

3. How many people, including yourself, live in your household and have an income?

One, just me	ASK Q. 4, THEN SKIP TO Q6
Two	SKIP TO Q. 5
Three	SKIP TO Q. 5
Four or more	SKIP TO Q. 5

IF ONLY ONE PERSON IN HOUSEHOLD WITH AN INCOME ASK:

4. Which of the following categories best corresponds to your <u>total</u> personal annual income, before taxes, for 2021?

READ

01 - Under \$30,000	GROUPS 1, 3, 5, 7, 9
02 - \$30,000 to \$60,000	GROUPS 1, 3, 5, 7, 9
03 - \$60,000 to \$80,000	GROUPS 1, 4, 5, 7, 9* (NB: Atlantic LI cut-off is lower)
04 - \$80,000 to \$100,000	GROUPS 2, 4, 6, 8, 10
05 - \$100,000 to \$150,000	GROUPS 2, 4, 6, 8, 10
06 - \$150,000 and over	GROUPS 2, 4, 6, 8, 10
99 - REFUSE/DK/NA	TERMINATE

ASK ALL FROM HOUSEHOLDS WITH MORE THAN ONE PERSON WITH AN INCOME

5. Which of the following categories best corresponds to the <u>total</u> annual income, before taxes, of <u>all members</u> of your household, for 2021? READ

01 - Under \$30,000	GROUPS 1, 3, 5, 7, 9
02 - \$30,000 to \$60,000	GROUPS 1, 3, 5, 7, 9
03 - \$60,000 to \$80,000	GROUPS 1, 3, 5, 7, 9
04 - \$80,000 to \$100,000	GROUPS 1, 4, 5, 7, 9 (NB: Atlantic LI cut-off is lower)
05 - \$100,000 to \$150,000	GROUPS 2, 4, 6, 8, 10
06 - \$150,000 and over	GROUPS 2, 4, 6, 8, 10
99 - REFUSE/DK/NA	TERMINATE

ASK ALL

6. We have been asked to speak to participants from all different ages. So that we may do this accurately, may I have your exact age please? ______. WRITE IN GET MIX

Under 18	TERMINATE
18-24 years of age	1
25-34 years of age	2
35-44 years of age	3
45-54 years of age	4
55-64 years of age	5
65-74 years of age	6
75 years or more	TERMINATE

7. Could you please tell me what is the last level of education that you completed? GET MIX

Some High School only.	1
Completed High School	2
Trade School certificate	3
Some Post secondary	4
Completed Post secondary	5
Graduate degree	6

8. Are you working (CHECK QUOTAS)?

Full Time (35 hrs. +)	4 minimum ASK Q. 9 AND 10
Part Time (under 35 hrs.)	2 maximum ASK Q. 9 AND 10
Homemaker	1 maximum
Student	1 maximum
Retired	2 maximum
Unemployed	1 maximum

ASK Q.9 AND Q.10 OF THOSE WHO WORK

9. Do you have an employer or are you self-employed?

Have employer.	1
Self-employed	2

10. What is your current occupation?

Type of Job

Type of Company

IF MARRIED ASK: WHAT IS YOUR SPOUSE'S OCCUPATION?

Type of Job

Type of Company

TERMINATE IF OCCUPATION RELATES TO EXCLUSIONS IN Q. 1

ASK ALL

11. What is your ethnic background?

IN ONTARIO AND B.C. Recruit <u>at least</u> three per group who are of non-European descent or who are other visible minorities (i.e., Chinese, or South Asian, but could include aboriginal people or Afro-Canadians as well). In other locations, there is no minimum, but it would still be desirable to have some.

12. Participants in group discussions are asked to voice their opinions and thoughts, how comfortable are you in voicing your opinions in front of others? Are you... (read list)

Very comfortable	1- MINIMUM 5 PER GROUP
Fairly comfortable	2
Not very comfortable	3 TERMINATE
Very uncomfortable	4 TERMINATE

13. Have you <u>ever</u> attended a focus group or a one-to-one discussion for which you have received a sum of money, here or elsewhere?

Yes 1 MAXIMUM 5 PER GROUP

No 2 (SKIP TO Q.17)

IF YES ASK:

14. When did you last attend one of these discussions?

(TERMINATE IF IN THE PAST 6 MONTHS)

15. How many focus groups or one-to-one discussions have you attended in the past 5 years?

(SPECIFY)

IF 5 OR MORE, TERMINATE

16. What were the topics of the focus groups or one-to-one discussions have you attended in the past 5 years?

(SPECIFY)

IF "ECONOMY" OR "FINANCE," TERMINATE

- ASK ALL
- 17. This focus group will require participants to join a videoconference using the Zoom platform using a desktop or laptop computer or a tablet. You will need internet access in a private and quiet location to take part in the study. We cannot provide this technology for you. Will you be able to access the Internet for a 1.5-hour audio-visual discussion using a desktop or laptop computer or tablet?

Yes 1 CONTINUE

No 2 TERMINATE

NOTE: A MOBILE PHONE WILL NOT WORK FOR THIS EXERCISE

18. The focus group will take place using a video-conference platform called Zoom. If you are not already a user, Zoom may request you to install some software at the site https://zoom.us/download . You can delete it after the focus group if you wish. How experienced and comfortable are you with using Zoom videoconferencing?

Yes 1 CONTINUE

No 2 TERMINATE

19. Sometimes participants in the online focus group are also asked to type their responses to questions in the "chat" function. Are you still able to participate? If you need glasses to read or a hearing aid, please remember to have them handy.

Yes 1 CONTINUE

No 2 TERMINATE

20. I would like to invite you to attend the focus group session where you will exchange your opinions in a moderated discussion with other participants. The session will be recorded, and some other members of the research team may also observe the session, but your participation will be confidential. If you attend the session, you will receive \$100 to thank you for your time. It will be sent to you electronically. Do you consent to take part in the focus group? By agreeing to participate you are giving your consent to these procedures.

Yes 1 CONTINUE

No 2 TERMINATE

21. We will contact you again before the date of the session to confirm your attendance. Note that this invitation is to you personally and you cannot have anyone else to substitute for you. Do you consent to this?

Yes 1 CONTINUE

No 2 TERMINATE

22. The session is about an hour and a half (i.e., 90-minutes), but we are asking that all participants log into the Zoom online meeting 5 minutes prior to the start of the session. Are you able to log-in about 5 minutes prior to the start time?

Yes 1 CONTINUE

No 2 TERMINATE

Could you please confirm your email address so I can send you login details for the Zoom web conference application?

Email address: _____

PLEASE RE-READ THE FULL ADDRESS BACK TO CONFIRM CORRECT SPELLING. (NB: We will send the links to you early next week)

PLEASE ENSURE PARTICIPANTS ARE TOLD THE TIME OF SESSION IN THEIR TIME ZONE

SEE TIMES AND DATES ON PAGE 1

INTERVIEWERS: Tell respondent that it is a small group and anyone who does not show or cancels at the last minute will compromise the project. Make sure they know we feel their opinions are valuable and we are serious about finding out what they have to offer.

NOTE: PLEASE TELL ALL RESPONDENTS THAT THEY WILL RECEIVE A CONFIRMATION CALL THE DAY PRIOR TO THE SESSION. IF FOR SOME REASON THEY HAVE NOT HEARD FROM US THEY SHOULD CONTACT US AT ______. IF THEIR NAME IS NOT ON THE ATTENDANCE FORM THEY WILL NOT BE ADMITTED TO THE GROUP. IF A RESPONDENT HAS ANY OTHER QUESTIONS ABOUT THE RESEARCH, THEY SHOULD ALSO CONTACT US AT THIS NUMBER.

Appendix E: Survey questionnaire

September 16, 2022

Finance Canada – Attitudes towards the Economy - Online Survey (Fall 2022) Environics Research – PN11601

Please select your preferred language for completing the survey / Veuillez choisir la langue dans laquelle vous souhaitez répondre au sondage.

- 1 English
- 2 Français

The information collected through the research is subject to the provisions of the <u>Privacy Act</u>, legislation of the Government of Canada, and to the provisions of relevant provincial privacy legislation. Programming note: link is to <u>https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/P-21/</u>

Introduction

Environics Research, an independent research company, is conducting this survey on attitudes towards the economy on behalf of the Government of Canada. Your decision to participate will not affect any relationship you have with the Government of Canada or the services they provide you. To view the Environics privacy policy, click here.

Your participation is voluntary and confidential, and your answers will remain anonymous. The survey will take about 12 minutes to complete and is registered with the Canadian Research Insights Council's Research Verification Service. Click here [https://www.canadianresearchinsightscouncil.ca/rvs/home/] if you want to verify the legitimacy of the survey. The verification number is 20220922-EN412.

The survey is best completed on a computer or a tablet. If you are completing this survey on a smart phone, please turn the device to landscape (horizontal/sideways) mode so that all questions display correctly.

Please click on >> to continue.

A. Which province or territory do you currently live in?

DROP DOWN LIST

Newfoundland and Labrador	1
Prince Edward Island	2
Nova Scotia	3
New Brunswick	4
Quebec	5
Ontario	6
Manitoba	7
Saskatchewan	8
Alberta	9
British Columbia	10
Yukon	11
Northwest Territories	12
Nunavut	13

NEW

B. What is the size of the community where you live? Is it a ...?

City with a population of over one million	1
City with a population of between 100,000 and one million	2
City/town with a population of between 30,000 and 99,999	3
Town with a population between 5,000 and 29,999	4
Town with a population of less than 5,000/a rural area	5

C. What is your gender?

Female/Woman	1
Male/Man	2
Non-binary	3
Other (SPECIFY)	3
Prefer not to answer	99

D. In what year were you born?

(RECORD YEAR - XXXX)

9999 – Don't know/Refused

[IF RESPONDENT PREFERS NOT TO PROVIDE A PRECISE BIRTH YEAR, ASK:]

E. Would you be willing to tell me in which of the following age categories you belong?

18 to 34	1
35 to 44	2
45 to 54	3
55 to 64	4
OR 65 or older?	5

F. Are there any children under the age of 18 currently living in your household?

Yes	1
No	2
Prefer not to say	99

Winter 2022 Q8

G. Do you own or rent your home?

Own (includes if you have a mortgage)	1
Rent	2
Neither (living with parents, relatives, etc.)	3
Prefer not to say	9

NEW

H. Are you planning to purchase a new home in the coming year?

Yes	1
No	2
Prefer not to say	99

Assessments of economy

Let's start with some questions about the Canadian economy...

Winter 2022 Q1 – additional items added

1. Using a scale from 1 to 10, where 1 is terrible and 10 is excellent, how would you rate the following:

COLUMNS AND ROWS...RANDOMIZE ITEMS B TO D

- a) the current state of the Canadian economy
- b) the current state of the [PROVINCE/TERRITORY] economy
- c) the current state of your own personal financial situation
- d) the current price of groceries
- e) the current cost of utilities (e.g., home heating/electricity) [NEW]
- f) the current price of gasoline [NEW]

Terrible	1
	2
	3
	4
	5
	6
	7
	8
	9
Excellent	10
Not sure	99

Winter 2022 Q2 – new items added (NB: NOW SPLIT INTO Q2 AND Q3)

2. Please tell me how much of a stress each of the following things are for you and your household.

Is each a major, moderate or minor source of stress, or is it not a source of stress at all? COLUMNS AND ROWS...RANDOMIZE

- a. (SPLIT) Job security / Lack of opportunities for career advancement
- b. (SPLIT) Saving enough money to retire / Being financially secure in retirement
- c. (SPLIT) Your ability to pay all the bills at the end of the month / The rising cost of living
- d. (SPLIT) The quality of the environment / Climate change
- e. (SPLIT) The health of you and your family / The quality of the healthcare system
- f. (SPLIT) Crime / Terrorism
- g. (SPLIT) The global economy / The Canadian economy
- h. (SPLIT) The performance of the stock market / The size of the federal deficit
- i. (SPLIT) Income inequality in Canada / The middle class falling further behind the top 1%
- j. (SPLIT) The spread of COVID in Canada / The mental health of you and your family
- k. Saving enough money to buy a home
- I. Rising interest rates (NEW)
- m. (SPLIT) The cost of groceries / The cost of heating and electricity (NEW)
- n. Paying down your personal debts (NEW)

Major source of stress	1
Moderate source of stress	2
Minor source of stress	3
Not a source of stress	4
Does not apply	5
Don't Know	9

ASK Q3 ONLY OF THOSE WITH KIDS UNDER 18 IN Q.F

3. Please tell me how much of a stress each of the following things are for you and your household.

Is each a major, moderate or minor source of stress, or is it not a source of stress at all? COLUMNS AND ROWS...RANDOMIZE

- g) If your kids will get jobs out of school
- h) Paying for your kids' education
- i) Finding affordable childcare spaces
- j) The quality of the environment when your kids are older
- k) Whether your kids will be able to afford a place to live when they are older (NEW)
- I) The impact of Canada's national debt on your kids when they are older (NEW)
- m) Your kids' ability to pay off future student loans (NEW)

Major source of stress	1
Moderate source of stress	2
Minor source of stress	3
Not a source of stress	4
Does not apply	5
Don't Know	9

NEW

4. Compared to this time last year how confident are you that you can manage paying your bills and buying the things you need? Are you...?

Much more confident	1
Somewhat more confident	2
Just as confident	3
Somewhat less confident	4
Much less confident	5
Don't Know	9

NEW

5. What is the one expense you have in your life that makes it the most challenging for you to make ends meet?

Gasoline	1
Groceries/food	2
Utilities (e.g., heating, hydro)	3
Housing costs (e.g., rent, mortgage)	4
Something else (SPECIFY)	5
None, I have no difficulty making ends meet	6
Don't know	9

Winter 2022 Q12

6. To what extent are you worried about you or anyone in your household losing their job or being laid off? Are you ...?

Winter 2022 Q3 - new items added

7. How important is it for the Government of Canada to keep the following issues in mind when making Budget decisions? Please rank each on a 1 to 10 scale, where 1 means it is not at all important and 10 means it is very important.

RANDOMIZE...COLUMNS AND ROWS

- a) Helping Canadians get a good job
- b) Making communities safer
- c) Ensuring the wealthiest Canadians pay their fair share
- d) Fighting climate change
- e) Making housing more affordable
- f) (SPLIT SAMPLE: ½) Making the cost of living more affordable / (SPLIT SAMPLE: ½) Bringing inflation under control
- g) Addressing mental health
- h) Helping Canadians save for retirement (NEW)
- i) Keeping the country's debt and deficit as low as possible (NEW)
- j) Improving the health care system (NEW)
- k) Fostering an economy that works for everyone
- I) Addressing the rising cost of living (NEW)
- m) Providing aid to Ukraine to help defend itself from Russia (NEW)

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
99

Winter 2022 Q4 (SLIGHTLY MODIFIED)

8. Thinking about the Canadian economy, which specific issue are you most concerned about?

Unemployment/jobs	1
Taxes	2
Deficit/national debt	3
Slow economic growth	4
Inflation/rising prices/cost of living	5
Transitioning to a net-zero economy	6
Housing affordability	7
Supply chains	8
Business competitiveness	9
Labour shortage	10
Rising interest rates	11
Retirement	12
Other (SPECIFY)	
Don't know	99

RANDOMIZE...ALLOW ONE RESPONSE

NEW

9. Here are two statements about inflation in Canada. Which is closer to your own view? FOUR POINT HORIZONTAL SCALE BETWEEN THE TWO VIEWS

The policies of the federal government can have a major impact on the inflation rate	1	Strongly
	2	Somewhat
	3	Somewhat
The inflation rate is mainly determined by world conditions and		
federal government policies have little impact on it	4	Strongly
Don't know	9	

NEW

10. When do you think the current period of high inflation in Canada will get under control? Will it be...?

In the next 6 months	1
6 months to a year from now	2
One to two years from now	3
More than two years from now	4
Never	5
Don't know	9

Tax system and incentives

Winter 2022 Q7

11. In your opinion, are each of the following groups currently paying the proper amount of taxes, or should they be paying more tax, or less tax, than they are now?

COLUMNS AND ROWS...RANDOMIZE

- a) Big corporations
- o. Small businesses
- p. The top one percent of income earners
- q. Middle-income earners
- r. Lower-income earners
- s. Financial institutions

Should be paying less tax	1
Are currently paying the proper amount of tax	2
Should be paying more tax	3
Don't know	9

Affordable housing and helping first-time homeowners

Winter 2022 Q9 - modifications

12. Using a scale from 1 to 10, where 1 is strongly disagree and 10 is strongly agree, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

COLUMNS AND ROWS...RANDOMIZE

- a) If you needed to buy a home today, it would be easy to find somewhere to live that is both safe and affordable. **SLIGHTLY MODIFIED**
- b) **IF RENTER ASK:** The rent you pay is affordable on your current household income.
- c) **IF OWNER ASK:** The costs of living in your home (including mortgage payments and property taxes) are affordable on your current household income.
- d) It is very difficult for people to buy a house today, in the current economic climate.
- e) The federal government has a responsibility to address the lack of affordable housing in Canada.

1

- f) IF OWNER ASK: It was extremely important that you own a home, rather than rent.
- g) IF RENTER ASK: It is extremely important you be able to own a home in the future.

Strongly disagree

	2
	3
	4
	5
	6
	7
	8
	9
Strongly agree	10
Don't know	99

Winter 2022 Q10 – slight modifications

13. To address the issue of *housing affordability*, to what extent do you think each of the following should be a priority area for the federal government? Please use a scale from 1 to 10, where 1 is not at all a priority and 10 is an extremely high priority.

COLUMNS AND ROWS...RANDOMIZE

- a) Making monthly mortgage payments more affordable for middle- and lower-income Canadians
- b) Increasing the availability of affordable housing.
- c) Continued investment in co-operative housing
- d) Continued supports for first-time home buyers (MODIFIED)
- e) Requiring developers to ensure that at least twenty percent of new housing is affordable for lower income families
- f) Increasing transparency and consumer protection in real estate transactions, like banning blind bidding (MODIFIED)
- g) Working with municipalities to speed up the approval of new housing developments
- h) Cracking down on large landlords who are buying up housing, reducing supply for individuals
- i) Increasing down payment requirements for investors
- j) Making down-payments more achievable for people (MODIFIED)
- k) A ban on people buying and owning multiple homes that aren't being used to provide needed rental supply (NEW)
- I) Extending the temporary ban on foreign ownership of residential property [NEW]
- m) Reducing federal funding to municipalities who do not increase the number of homes in their jurisdiction over the previous year [NEW]
- n) Requiring municipalities to change their zoning rules to allow for denser communities [NEW]

1

Not a priority

	2
	3
	4
	5
	6
	7
	8
	9
An extremely high priority	10
Don't know	99

Fiscal issues

Winter 2022 Q11 - new items

14. Please tell me to what extent you agree or disagree with each of the following statements using a 10-point scale, where "10" means you strongly agree, "1" means you strongly disagree?

COLUMNS AND ROWS...RANDOMIZE

- a) The federal government should provide more permanent health care funding to the provinces, even if that adds to the deficit
- b) I don't expect the federal government to balance its budget until the economy has completely recovered from the pandemic
- c) If the federal government restores the budget to balance or a surplus, it will have a positive impact on the economy
- d) I think the federal government should return to a balanced budget as soon as possible
- e) I worry that if the federal government quickly tries to balance the budget it would mean either cuts to essential services or higher taxes on people like me
- f) I think the federal government should have a plan to gradually reduce the national debt
- g) The federal government should focus on restraining future government spending
- h) The federal government is trying to support Canadians in difficult economic times (NEW)
- i) The federal government understands the economic issues Canadians are facing (NEW)
- j) The federal government should provide more financial aid to help Ukraine defend itself from Russia, even if it adds to the deficit (NEW)

Strongly disagree	1
	2
	3
	4
	5
	6
	7
	8
	9
Strongly agree	10
Don't know	99

Demographics

And now a few final questions for demographic purposes.

I. What is the highest level of formal education that you have completed?

Grade 8 or less	1
Some high school	2
High School diploma or equivalent	3
Registered Apprenticeship or other trades certificate or diploma	4
College, CEGEP or other non-university certificate or diploma	5
University certificate or diploma below Bachelor's level	6
Bachelor's degree	7
Post graduate degree above bachelor's level	8
Prefer not to answer	9

J. What language do you speak most often at home?

English	1
French	2
Another language	3
Prefer not to answer	9

K. Which of the following categories best describes your current employment status? Are you...

Working full-time, that is, 35 or more hours per week	1
Working part-time, that is, less than 35 hours per week	2
Self-employed	3
Unemployed, and looking for work	4
Unemployed, and NOT looking for work	5
A student attending school full-time	6
Retired	7
Full-time homemaker	8
Prefer not to answer	9

L. Which of the following categories best describes your total household income? That is, the total income of all persons in your household combined, before taxes

Under \$20,000	1
\$20,000 to just under \$40,000	2
\$40,000 to just under \$60,000	3
\$60,000 to just under \$80,000	4
\$80,000 to just under \$100,000	5
\$100,000 to just under \$150,000	6
\$150,000 and above	7
Prefer not to answer	

M. Do you identify as any of the following? COLUMNS AND ROWS

- a) An Indigenous person (First Nations, Inuit, or Métis)
- t. A racialized person
- u. An LGBTQ2+ person
- v. A person with a disability
- w. Immigrated to Canada within the last 5 years

Yes	1
No	2
Prefer not to answer	9

This survey was conducted on behalf of the Department of Finance Canada and is registered under the Federal Access to Information Act. Thank you very much for your participation.

Ν.	RECORD:	Language of survey	
	English		1
	French		2