



Award date: 2016-10-31

Contract # 35035-165058/001/CY

POR 061-16

POR@PCO-BCP.gc.ca



Privy Council Office Continuous Qualitative Data Collection of Canadians' Views – Wave 8 of Focus Groups

**FINAL REPORT
OCTOBER, 2017**

Ipsos Public Affairs
1 Nicholas Street, Suite 1400
Ottawa ON K1N 7B7
Tel: 613.241.5802
Fax: 613.248.7981
www.ipsos.ca

« Ce rapport est aussi disponible en français »



Table of Contents

1. Executive Summary	1
Background and Objectives	1
Overview of Methodology	2
Key Findings	2
2. Detailed Findings	6
Themes Addressed.....	6
Government Actions.....	6
Canada – United States Relations	6
Asylum Seekers.....	9
Climate Change.....	11
Local Challenges	12
Seniors Policies	14
Local Winnipeg Issues: Port of Churchill and Health Accord.....	15
Parents’ Policies.....	15
Disabilities	17
Official Apologies.....	19
3. Appendix.....	21
Appendix A. Detailed Research Methodology	21
Appendix B. Recruitment Guide	23
Appendix C. Discussion Guides	29



Political Neutrality Statement

I hereby certify as Senior Officer of Ipsos 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.



Mike Colledge
President
Ipsos Public Affairs

1. Executive Summary

Background and Objectives

The Privy Council Office (PCO) is the hub of non-partisan, public service support to the Prime Minister and Cabinet and its decision-making structures. Led by the Clerk of the Privy Council, PCO helps the Government implement its vision and respond effectively and quickly to issues facing the government and the country.

As an advisor to the Prime Minister, PCO brings together quality, objective policy advice and information to support the Prime Minister and Cabinet, including information on the priorities of Canadians. To this end, the Communications and Consultation Secretariat within PCO supports the Prime Minister’s Office in coordinating government communications and setting broad government communications themes and messages, in accordance with government priorities, as determined by the Prime Minister, Cabinet, Cabinet committees and the Clerk of the Privy Council. The Secretariat also works with PCO policy secretariats to advise and support Cabinet and its committees.

In fulfilling its mandate, PCO required an ongoing cycle of qualitative data collection to ensure that it has up-to-date representations of Canadians’ opinions on macro-level issues that are of interest to the government, such as their views on what should be the priorities of the government. Additionally, such research increases the Government of Canada’s understanding of emerging trends, and measures Canadians’ views on key national issues and policy initiatives.

Through the use of an ongoing cycle of focus groups, PCO is gaining a solid understanding of Canadians’ views as they relate to the most important issues facing the country; their perceptions of how the federal government can best address these issues; expectations of actions related to government priorities; and perspectives on how the government can most effectively convey its efforts in dealing with emerging issues. This research helps inform the development of communications messages, products and dissemination tactics to respond to priority issues. Additionally, the research allows the Government of Canada to develop and refine communications activities to meet the specific needs of Canadians with timely, up-to-date, easily understood information based on the current perceptions of Canadians in the requisite areas.

This eighth wave of ongoing qualitative research was meant to gather feedback from Canadians on select issues and policy areas that are important to the Government of Canada. The issues discussed during focus groups differed from one location to the next. Topics covered included:

- Government of Canada actions (in all locations)
- Canada-US Relations (in all locations)
- Asylum Seekers (in Quebec City and Brampton)
- Climate Change (in Quebec City and Brampton)
- Local Challenges (in Nanaimo and Brampton)
- Seniors Policies (in Quebec City only)
- Port of Churchill (in Winnipeg only)
- Parents Policies (in Winnipeg only)

- People with Disabilities (in Nanaimo only)
- Official Apologies (in Winnipeg only)

Overview of Methodology

This sixth wave of qualitative research was comprised of a series of eight focus groups with Canadians aged 20 years old and above, held between August 15th and 30th, 2017. All group discussions lasted approximately two hours and were conducted in the evening, with the first session in each city starting at 5:30pm and the second starting at 7:30pm. These sessions were held in the following locations:

- August 15th – Winnipeg, Man
- August 17th – Nanaimo, BC
- August 29th – Quebec City, QC
- August 30th – Brampton, ON

A total of 12 participants were recruited for each session to ensure that a minimum of eight to ten participants would attend. In total, 73 participants took part in the discussions. All participants received an honorarium of \$75 for attending the sessions at the focus group facilities. Groups were meant to be representative of select sub-groups of the Canadian population for each location. Participants in Winnipeg and Brampton were all parents with children under the age of 18 living at home. Participants in Quebec City were all aged 55 years and above as issues pertaining to elderly Canadians were discussed in more depth at this location. Finally, participants in Nanaimo were recruited to be representative of the local population aged 20 years and above.

The screening questionnaire helped ensure that participants included a good cross-section of the selected subgroups in each location, with good mixes of gender, ages, education and income levels, as well as household composition. Additional methodological details, including the detailed recruitment questionnaire, can be found in the appendix of this report.

This eighth wave of research is part of a continuous qualitative research project that will include a total of 144 focus groups to be held in multiple waves over the 2017 calendar year, with the option of renewing the cycle of research for two additional years. The contracted amount for this research project for calendar year 2017 is \$916,865.05, including HST.

Key Findings

Government Actions

At the start of each group, participants were asked to relate what they had seen, read or heard about the Government of Canada recently. Items spontaneously mentioned covered a broad range of issues:

- Asylum seekers/border security (in all locations)
- Legalization of Marijuana (in all locations)
- Canada- United States relations (in all locations)
- Free trade agreement negotiations (NAFTA)
- Softwood lumber negotiations
- Canada’s 150th Birthday celebrations
- Canada Child Benefit
- Infrastructure spending (Winnipeg only)
- Tax reform (Winnipeg only)

Canada-US Relations (in all locations)

Participants were given a list of issues and asked to select the three they felt were most important for the two countries to discuss. Most Quebec City participants approached this exercise with a clear focus on asylum seekers. Participants from other locations selected a broader array of key priorities, with trade and environmental issues more commonly selected as top priorities. Border security and anti-terrorism security were ranked as second-tier priorities.

Most participants across locations were aware that trade negotiations were taking place between Canada and the United States and believed that negotiations were triggered by the US President’s dissatisfaction over the terms of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). The negotiation process was a source of concern for most because of the tone used by the US administration, although most participants did not feel a great sense of alarm at this stage of the process. Most participants felt the approach taken by the Government of Canada in dealing with NAFTA negotiations was sound. They believed that a careful, measured approach that did not grab headlines was probably a good way to move forward.

Asylum Seekers (in Quebec City and Brampton)

The issue of asylum seekers crossing the Canada-US border was top-of-mind for nearly all participants in Quebec City and Brampton. Participants in Quebec City spontaneously added that this issue grabbed so much media attention, including on social media, that hardly anything else seemed to filter through. The issue of asylum seekers was viewed as an important, even urgent, matter in all Quebec City and Brampton groups.

A positive element raised by many when asked how the Government of Canada was handling the situation was that it appeared welcoming and that it seemed to treat asylum seekers with respect and dignity. Nevertheless, participants in Quebec City and Brampton expressed mainly negative views regarding how the Government of Canada has been handling the arrival of asylum seekers at the border. Negative impressions stemmed in large part from a lack of awareness and understanding regarding the role played by the government and the policies that were in place to deal with the unfolding situation.

Climate Change (in Quebec City and Brampton)

Participants in Quebec City and Brampton shared different views regarding what could be done locally to improve on current levels of greenhouse gas emissions. Those in Brampton were more likely to point to the importance of minimizing the impact of personal car usage through investments in better public transit, provision of more local jobs that did not require commuting, tougher rules against idling, as well as through additional investments in green energy sources. In Quebec City, the discussion centered mostly on the need to increase the proportion of electric cars on the road, with some also talking about better transit.

Views on imposing a price on carbon were mixed. Most participants agreed that policies to fight climate change through a reduction of greenhouse gas emissions were necessary, but opinions were mixed as to how this would be implemented and how effective it would be. It proved difficult for many to understand how the government could enforce carbon pricing because carbon was not instinctively viewed as a tangible good that could be measured, aside from increasing the price at the gas pump.

Local Challenges (in Nanaimo and Brampton)

When participants in Nanaimo and Brampton were asked if they could think of actions by the Government of Canada that have had a positive impact on the local community, Nanaimo participants mentioned the introduction of the Canada Child Benefit and marijuana legalization. In Brampton, participants mentioned the benefits brought about by an increased investment in apprenticeship programs and local infrastructure projects, starting with public transit.

A handout presenting a list of potential concerns for their community was given to participants so they could select up to three concerns that they felt were particularly important for their community. While a few issues came up in both cities, including an aging population, affordability of childcare options and retirement security, the most pressing ones in each location were different. Availability of jobs came up as a top priority for many in Brampton, while those in Nanaimo raised strong concerns with opioid addiction and overdoses. Participants in both cities, but more particularly in Nanaimo, also viewed cost of housing as a major concern for their community.

Seniors Policies (in Quebec City only)

Seniors in Quebec City completed a written exercise to identify which actions taken by the Government of Canada they felt were, or would be, most beneficial to seniors in their community. Measures chosen were mostly related to senior’s income, which participants deemed to be too low to allow for a decent living. The most important measure according to them was the introduction of a tax credit for caregivers. This was followed closely by the introduction of the Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS) for seniors with low income. On the negative side, many stated that the proposal to legalize marijuana and the raising of immigration levels were decisions that could hurt seniors in their community.

Port of Churchill and Health Accord (in Winnipeg only)

Most participants in Winnipeg had heard something about the Port of Churchill, with some noting that the port was recently sold to Omnitrac and had since been shut down. Most participants felt that the port was important to the province overall, mostly because of its economic impact on the local economy.

Participants in Winnipeg were also asked if they were familiar with the Health Accords signed between the federal and provincial governments. Most were aware of them and knew that Manitoba had not yet signed such an agreement. Some felt the Manitoba government was holding out for a deal that would bring stronger benefits to the province, while others were concerned about a perceived lack of healthcare services in the province and felt that it would be important for the Manitoba government to sign the agreement.

Parents Policies (in Winnipeg only)

Most Winnipeg parents agreed that childcare was the most stressful expense faced by parents overall, with the cost of tuition ranking a close second. Other expenses discussed were the cost of food, activities for children and caring for children with special needs. Participants were given a list of things the Government of Canada has done over the past year and asked to select those actions they felt could have the most positive impact on themselves and their families. Actions related to education and childcare costs were selected by many as the most important. One of the actions deemed most important by a number of participants was the enhancement of the Canada Student Loans Program. Another crucial action taken, according to participants, was the introduction of the Canada Child Benefit. Providing funding for Winnipeg buses and public transit infrastructure was also chosen as an important government action that benefited parents.

People with Disabilities (in Nanaimo only)

Participants in Nanaimo strongly felt that disabled Canadians faced numerous unique challenges that did not afflict those without a disability. They talked about the social stigma that often comes with being disabled, the lack of understanding and care. The financial challenges that came with being disabled were also raised as key issue and were seen to be often made worse by the difficulty in finding meaningful, permanent employment. Some also mentioned the overall lower quality of life and the lack of accessible services for people with disabilities.

On a list of possible actions that could be taken by the Government of Canada to assist people with disabilities, improving access to employment for people with disabilities was chosen as the most important. Participants found this to be essential because employment would greatly increase the quality of life of people with disabilities by building social relationships, hereby reducing the stigma and isolation they felt were faced by Canadians with disabilities.

Official Apologies (in Winnipeg only)

Most participants felt that official apologies from the Government of Canada were important. They were deemed especially important for those who were directly impacted, or who were part of communities who were victimized in the past. Participants agreed that while actions cannot be changed, apologies can help with the process of healing for the victims and is a sign that the government intends to make things right moving forward. To be effective and sincere, an apology should be accompanied by a form of assurance that the same issues or behaviours would not reappear in the future.

Participants in Winnipeg felt the criteria used to decide whether the Canadian Government should formally apologize should include whether the incident was the results of direct and willful action by the federal government, as well as whether this action had long term effects and was an important legal or moral issue for Canadians.

Note on Interpretation of Findings

Qualitative research is designed to reveal a rich range of opinions and interpretations rather than to measure what percentage of the target population holds a given opinion. These results must not be used to estimate the numeric proportion or number of individuals in the population who hold a particular opinion because they are not statistically projectable.

Focus group research on government priorities seeks to provide a deeper understanding of participants’ views, often complementing quantitative findings gathered through survey research. Discussions allow for deep probing on key issues that is not possible with quantitative research. This type of information is essential for the Privy Council Office in its role advising and supporting the Cabinet and its committees.

2. Detailed Findings

This section of the report presents the detailed findings from eight focus group discussions held in four different locations across Canada. The section is organized thematically in order to best reflect the varying discussions held from one location to the next. The moderator’s guide was adapted slightly from one location to the next in order to focus on various question areas. Each iteration of the moderator’s guide can be found in the Appendices.

Themes Addressed

Government Actions

Participants were asked to relate what they had seen, read or heard about the Government of Canada recently. Items spontaneously mentioned covered a broad range of issues and included:

- Asylum seekers/border security (in all locations) and automobile sectors raised as key issues
- Legalization of Marijuana (in all locations)
- Canada- United States relations (in all locations)
- Free trade agreement negotiations (NAFTA), with softwood lumber, dairy
- Canada’s 150th Birthday celebrations
- Canada Childcare Benefit
- Infrastructure spending (Winnipeg only)
- Tax reform (Winnipeg only)

Designated (prompted) topics discussed in the focus groups included:

- Canada-US Relations (in all locations)
- Asylum Seekers (in Quebec City and Brampton)
- Climate Change (in Quebec City and Brampton)
- Local Challenges (in Nanaimo and Brampton)
- Seniors Policies (in Quebec City only)
- Port of Churchill (in Winnipeg only)
- Parents Policies (in Winnipeg only)
- People with Disabilities (in Nanaimo only)
- Official Apologies (in Winnipeg only)

Canada – United States Relations

Participants in all locations were asked about Canada-US relations, although various aspects of this relationship were broached spontaneously by participants in all locations. In Winnipeg, Nanaimo and Brampton, the ongoing NAFTA renegotiations between Canada, the United States and Mexico

spontaneously came up as a crucial issue. While this was also important to Quebec City participants, they were more likely to focus on the flow of asylum seekers crossing into Canada from the United States. A few participants in Winnipeg mentioned the Northwest Area Water Supply project and concerns about a polluted water supply.

Canada-United States Issues Exercise

Participants were given a list of issues that could possibly be discussed between the Canadian and American governments and asked to select the three they felt were most important for the two countries to tackle. Issues covered were as follows: *the environment and climate change, the treatment of minority groups, immigration and refugees, oil pipelines, trade, anti-terrorism security, joint military operations overseas, reducing border delays and border security cooperation.*

Results of the exercise varied markedly across locations. Most Quebec City participants approached this exercise with a clear focus on the asylum seekers, in part because this issue had dominated the previous discussion on Government of Canada actions. Indeed, nearly all Quebec City participants selected immigrants and refugees, border security or safety and terrorism as their top priorities. Issues related to trade and the environment were left far behind. When asked to explain their choice of priorities, Quebec City participants reverted to their earlier statements regarding asylum seekers crossing the border and the need to urgently stem the flow of people. Participants from other locations selected a broader array of key priorities, with trade and environmental issues more commonly selected as top issues. Border security and anti-terrorism security were ranked as second-tier priorities, with other items on the list forming a third-tier of priorities.

Trade issues were selected by many as a priority because they believed a strong trading relationship with the United States is essential to the livelihood of Canadians and the vitality of the country’s economy. They felt that a lot of jobs were at stake in the renegotiation of NAFTA and thought this should be a top priority for the Canadian government. There was a sense of uneasiness among participants regarding the future of NAFTA. Many were concerned that the United States would try to pressure Canada into accepting a lesser deal by threatening to tear up the agreement.

Participants who selected the environment and climate change as a key priority would like to see the Canadian government hold firm on its international commitments despite the United States government’s ambivalence about the issue. They felt it was the responsibility of Canadians to help fight climate change and work with other countries, including the United States, to find solutions. A few felt that this issue may be a source of tension between the two countries, but it remained important to tackle it now rather than wait for the American government to take the lead.

Those who selected anti-terrorism security as a key priority raised concerns over the possibility of terrorist attacks in Canada and were hopeful that further collaboration with the United States could help make Canada more secure. They believed it was essential for Canada to be more vigilant based on recent terror attacks happening elsewhere in the world.

Participants who chose immigration and refugees were concerned about the recent influx of asylum seekers coming from the United States and wanted both countries to work together to stem the flow of

new arrivals. Some of those who selected this issue felt it was directly related to anti-terrorism security, as they believed that having a strong vetting system in place for new arrivals would help ensure national security. Others felt that this issue of immigration and refugees was directly related to the treatment of minority groups. They wanted Canada to help set the standards used around the world in terms of its treatment of both immigrants and refugees.

Finally, the few who selected the treatment of minority groups as a key priority for Canada – US discussions felt there were stark differences in approach in each country. They believed these differences could be seen not only in the opinions of citizens of each country but also in the positions taken by the governments of Canada and the United States. Canada was seen to be more open and more tolerant.

Focus on Trade

Most participants in all locations were aware that trade negotiations were taking place between Canada and the United States. When asked why discussions about NAFTA were currently taking place, almost all participants immediately mentioned that this was the initiative of President Donald Trump, who was seen to be dissatisfied with the terms of the agreement and to have made it a key element of his electoral platform.

While the negotiation process was a source of concern for most, most participants did not feel a great sense of trepidation at this stage of the process. They were concerned by some of the public declarations from the American administration but were hopeful that closed meetings would be more constructive. Most participants expressed confidence that the professionalism of the trade representatives in these meetings would ensure that all three countries would gain from the process. When asked what the ideal outcome would be for NAFTA negotiations, most participants said they would hope that all parties would come out better off than they were going in. They believed it was possible for all parties to gain from it and only a few regarded this as a zero-sum game where one side would win and the others would necessarily lose.

In general, participants felt the approach taken by the Government of Canada in dealing with NAFTA negotiations was good. They believed that a careful, measured approach that did not generate sensational headlines was probably a good way to move forward and this is what they saw from the Canadian government. While a few expressed a desire for Canada to be more forceful in its public pronouncements, most felt otherwise because they did not want to trigger an aggressive public response from the U.S. administration that could derail talks. Some participants mentioned that comments from the US President about the tough bargaining positions of Canada and Mexico suggested that the Canadian government was holding firm on its core demands during negotiations, something they appreciated.

Environmental Issues

Participants in all locations were asked about environmental issues and related agreements between Canada and the United States, regardless of whether they had selected them as a key priority in the preceding exercise. Opinions were mixed when asked if the United States and Canada should be setting joint targets for emissions and use of renewable energy. While nearly all agreed this was a good idea in

principle and wanted Canada to hold firm on its commitments, they also wondered if these joint targets would lead to concrete results, based on a sense that addressing climate change was not a US government priority.

In all cities participants were also provided with the following basic information on the tri-lateral deal between Canada, the United States and Mexico on reducing emissions and renewable energy: “Last year, Canada, the US, and Mexico agreed to a tri-lateral deal that set emission reduction targets and renewable energy targets. They also agreed to work together on clean tech development”. Nearly all agreed this deal was a good thing, though many once again raised doubts as to whether the United States, as well as Mexico, would make the necessary efforts to meet the agreed targets.

Asylum Seekers

The issue of asylum seekers crossing the Canada-US border was top-of-mind for nearly all participants in Quebec City and Brampton. It was raised immediately when a general question about what they had heard about or from the Government of Canada recently was asked at the start of the focus group discussions. Participants in Quebec City spontaneously added that this issue was so prominent in the media, including on social media, that it was eclipsing most other news. The issue of asylum seekers was viewed as an important, even urgent, matter in all Quebec City and Brampton groups, and particularly in Quebec.

Nearly all participants in Quebec City and many in Brampton also demonstrated a high degree of familiarity with recent developments. Most Quebec City participants explained that recent arrivals were in large part from Haiti, but had spent some time in the United States before making their way north to Canada. Many understood that they had arrived in the United States after a natural disaster in Haiti. They had also heard that asylum seekers were leaving the United States because of a change of policy in the United States, although this aspect was not clear to all. Some felt the US must have legitimate reasons to want them to leave, while others felt tougher US immigration rules was behind the migrants’ desire to leave in large numbers.

The origin of asylum seekers and the reasons for their sudden arrival in Canada were not as clear to some Brampton participants, yet they knew that Canada was facing an unprecedented influx at its southern border, mainly in the province of Quebec.

When asked where they had heard about asylum seekers and/or the government’s response to the situation, participants said they saw it on television mainly, but also stated that it was pervasive on other media as well, including radio, newspapers, internet and social media. Many said they had frequently discussed the issue with friends, family and co-workers, with some saying they were trying ignore it because they were tired of it. Their impression was that most coverage, including social media comments, was mostly negative.

Opinions on the Government’s Handling of the Situation

Participants felt that the main positive aspect of the Government of Canada’s response to the arrival of asylum seekers was that it seemed welcoming and that, from what they had heard, read or seen, asylum seekers were treated with respect, and in a dignified manner despite the difficult circumstances. However, there was a general sense that the situation did appear to be under control. This impression stemmed in large part from a self-admitted lack of awareness and understanding regarding the role played by the Canadian government and the policies that were in place to deal with the unfolding situation. Participants expressed a desire to more clearly see that this issue was a major priority for the government and that all was being done to contain the influx of asylum seekers and process them appropriately as they arrived.

Most felt that the Government’s response had not been very visible in comparison to the response of provincial and local authorities. However, a few participants in each city mentioned that they had heard, read or seen recent federal government statements addressed to asylum seekers to let them know that crossing the border did not entail automatic acceptance in Canada and that they should follow legal avenues to come in. Participants appreciated this message, but many felt it should have come earlier and could use stronger and clearer language. Participants in both locations expressed a desire to get more information from the Canadian government regarding the steps taken to control the situation, including the vetting process that asylum seekers had to go through and a sense of how many would ultimately have their claims accepted.

Another explanation for the negative feelings expressed was the lack of understanding of the reasons many asylum seekers were entering Canada illegally rather than through legal channels. Only a handful of participants overall had heard of the broad principles of the safe third-country agreement that applied to refugees coming from the United States. Without this specific knowledge, many assumed that illegal entry was easier and faster than legal entry. To them, this appeared as the only logical explanation. They felt that asylum seekers were probably short-circuiting the regular channels by entering illegally, which might give them an advantage compared to those who entered legally. Participants in Brampton were more likely to state that this was unfair to other immigrants or refugees who did not cross illegally and had to wait for years before being accepted or rejected. Those in Quebec City were more likely to believe that asylum seekers entering illegally were automatically accepted while those who tried to enter at an official border crossing may be turned back.

Also generating negative impressions were doubts as to whether or not the individuals crossing the border were actual refugees or economic migrants seeking a better life in Canada. Many in Quebec City and some in Brampton said they had heard that asylum seekers crossing illegally had been living in the United States for many years and were not fleeing a civil war the same way that Syrian refugees arriving in previous months had been. Some raised doubts about the extent of their financial distress as well. These reservations negatively affected participants’ perceptions regarding the legitimacy of these migrants’ requests for asylum in Canada.

Climate Change

A detailed discussion on the Government of Canada’s plan to fight climate change took place in Quebec City and Brampton. To start the discussion, participants were asked what could be done locally to improve on current levels of greenhouse gas emissions. Answers varied slightly from one city to the other. Those in Brampton were more likely to point to the importance of minimizing the impact of personal car usage through investments in better public transit, provision of more local jobs that did not require commuting, tougher rules against idling, as well as through additional investments in green energy sources, starting with solar and wind. In Quebec City, the discussion centered mostly on the need to increase the proportion of electric cars on the road, with some also talking about better transit. Participants in both cities also insisted on the importance for citizens to improve upon their current recycling practices.

Unprompted awareness of the Government of Canada’s plan to fight climate change was low, especially in Quebec City. Participants were then provided with some of the key features of the plan, namely:

- measures to encourage investments in the development of clean technologies;
- implementation of a carbon tax in provinces that have not yet put a price on carbon emissions, beginning in 2018; and
- revenues from a price on carbon would remain in the jurisdiction of origin and they will be able to use carbon-pricing revenues according to their needs, including to address impacts on vulnerable populations and sectors and to support climate change and clean growth goals.

After being prompted, some indicated they were aware of at least some of the components, most noticeably the plan to put a price on carbon. Views on this measure were mixed. On the one hand, most participants agreed that policies to fight climate change through a reduction of greenhouse gas emissions were necessary. Most agreed at the idea of placing a direct price on carbon to force individual and commercial consumers of carbon to change their habits.

However, opinions were mixed as to how this would be implemented and how effective it would be. It proved difficult for many to understand how the government could enforce carbon pricing because carbon was not instinctively viewed as a tangible good that could be measured, aside from a tax on gasoline. This created the impression that individuals may be disproportionately affected in relation to corporations who used carbon in many different ways. Some said they would like evidence that such pricing schemes worked before providing an opinion. A few felt that carbon pricing was simply another way for the government to tax individual Canadians.

Participants nearly all agreed that the money collected from carbon pricing should remain in the province where it was collected rather than being administered by the federal government. It was perceived as fair considering that residents of that province raised that money through their personal carbon purchases. Most participants also volunteered that any money collected through carbon pricing should be invested in technologies or programs that would help in the fight against climate change or provide other environmental benefits.

When prompted on other possible uses for the funds generated through carbon pricing, views were mixed. Nearly all participants reiterated the idea of using the money raised to fund green initiatives and innovations in clean technologies. Participants also mostly agreed with the idea of using the money to fund health care services in their province because it was perceived as a key priority for all residents. A few disagreed on the grounds that it was not related to the environment. Finally, views were mostly negative at the idea of using the money to provide tax rebates to all residents of the province. While a few felt it was fair since residents paid the tax, others felt this was inappropriate because it did nothing to help with climate change or the environment more broadly.

Views on government investments in clean technologies were mostly positive in both locations, especially in Quebec City. Participants felt that such investments would benefit the environment while possibly creating local jobs and fueling local expertise that could become highly valuable in the future. The latter point was somewhat less obvious to some Brampton participants at first.

An argument in favour of investments in clean technologies was then presented to participants to gauge their reaction: *“Some say clean technologies have the potential to create new opportunities in Canada’s resource sectors, increase the productivity and competitiveness of Canadian businesses, and create new employment opportunities, while also improving environmental performance.”* Once provided with this argument, nearly all participants felt that it made sense for the government to make such investments.

Local Challenges

Participants in Nanaimo and Brampton took part in a detailed discussion regarding the local challenges faced by people living in their communities. When asked if they could think of actions by the Government of Canada that have had a positive impact on the local community, Nanaimo participants mentioned the introduction of the Canada Child Benefit, which helped parents, as well as marijuana legalization. Many felt the latter policy was a good idea as it would improve the quality of marijuana sold in the community, as well as potentially having a positive economic impact. In Brampton, participants mentioned the benefits brought about by an increased investment in apprenticeship programs, as well as in local infrastructure projects, starting with public transit.

A handout presenting a list of potential concerns for their community was given to participants. From this list, they were asked to select up to three concerns that they felt were particularly important for their community. The list of options was as follows:

- A shrinking middle class
- Ability of local businesses and industries to succeed
- An aging population
- Availability of affordable childcare options
- Availability of broadband internet
- Availability of cell phone services
- Availability of healthcare services
- Availability of jobs
- Availability of public transit
- Availability of services
- Cost of housing
- Cost of post-secondary education
- Crime
- Homelessness

- Integrating immigrants into the community
- Level of Employment Insurance benefits for those who can’t find work
- Opioid addiction and overdoses
- Poverty
- Preserving a clean environment
- Quality of roads and bridges
- Retirement security
- Traffic congestion
- Transportation off the island (*in Nanaimo*)
- Young people leaving for opportunities elsewhere

Results varied markedly from one location to the next. While a few issues came up in both cities, including the cost of housing, an aging population, affordability of childcare options and retirement security, the most pressing ones in each location were different.

Availability of jobs was a top priority for many in Brampton, based on a sense that there was a dearth of local quality jobs and that most available jobs were temporary and/or did not provide good benefits. The absence of quality long-term employment was perceived as a big problem for local youth especially. Some made a direct link between this issue and the high cost of housing, saying that young people would not be able to afford decent housing in the future, let alone home-ownership, with the types of jobs that were currently available.

Opioid addiction and overdoses was a core concern for many in Nanaimo. Participants often described opioid use and overdoses as a mental and social issue that could potentially affect anyone, including those that use opioids as prescription medication as well as those who purchase it illegally. Reasons provided by participants for societal dependency on opiate drugs include the need for self-medicating, efforts by prescription drug companies to sell their products or becoming addicted to a drug originally given as a prescription. Nanaimo participants shared personal stories of people who suffered from addiction and were affected by the current crisis.

Participants in both cities, but more particularly in Nanaimo viewed cost of housing as a major concern for their community, starting with young people. Participants felt it was increasingly difficult to enter the housing market because of the high prices of houses and condos.

Issues like an aging population and retirement security were directly linked in the minds of those who raised them as key concerns. Those participants were worried that with a constantly growing proportion of seniors in their communities, the cost of maintaining programs for the elderly might become too expensive for the government. This included Old Age Security (OAS), the Canada Pension Plan (CPP) and other key programs such as basic healthcare.

A few participants in both cities mentioned that access to affordable child care was a key concern because they believed it was prohibitively expensive to send kids to daycare. This reality made it much harder for parents to return to work because of the hefty financial trade-off created by expensive daycare. A handful of participants in both locations also mentioned that they would like to see the costs of post-secondary education decrease to make it more accessible for those with lower incomes and to reduce the debt burden of graduates.

Seniors Policies

Seniors in Quebec City were provided with a list of recent actions taken by the Government of Canada and asked to choose which ones they felt would have the most positive impact on seniors living in their community. The list was as follows:

- Approved the Kinder Morgan and Line 3 pipelines
- Created a new Caregivers Tax Credit, making it easier for Canadians to take leave from work to care for a sick family member
- Cut taxes on the middle class and raised taxes on the wealthy
- Expanded EI benefits to parts of the country who have experienced significant job losses
- Increased immigration rates
- Increased the Guaranteed Income Supplement for low income seniors
- Introduced a national price on carbon pollution
- Introduced a plan to legalize marijuana
- Introduced the Canada Child Benefit
- Invested nearly \$3 billion a year in new skills training programs for Canadians
- Lowered the age you can receive Old Age Security from 67 to 65
- Provided funding for new buses and public transit infrastructure in Charlottetown
- Re-opened veterans’ offices which had been closed
- Signed the Paris Climate Change Agreement

Because participants felt that most seniors needed additional help, the most important action taken by the Government of Canada according to many was the introduction of a new tax credit for caregivers. This was seen as a great boost for all those taking care of seniors in the community, as well as seniors who benefitted from home care. Participant felt that caregivers were not given the consideration they deserved. They also agreed that the costs associated with taking care of a loved one at home involved significant sacrifices and thus warranted compensation in some way. Participants also shared multiple personal examples of individuals needing homecare, with some saying that it would soon be their turn to need the care of a loved one.

Participants also believed that most seniors struggled financially and thus another key measure identified by many was the increased value of the Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS) for seniors with low income. In the same vein, a few others also noted that lowering the age for receiving Old Age Security (OAS) from 67 to 65 was a good policy.

Aside from these positive measures, many participants felt that two other actions would have negative effects on seniors in the community: the legalization of marijuana and an increase in the immigration rate. They could not see the benefits of legalizing cannabis and simply felt it was wrong to do it. Quebec City participants’ views on immigration are described in more details in the section of this report pertaining to asylum seekers.

Local Winnipeg Issues: Port of Churchill and Health Accord

Discussions in Winnipeg opened with a focus on local issues, more specifically the Port of Churchill and the Health Accords signed between all other provinces and the federal government. Most participants had heard something about the Port of Churchill. Some participants noted that the port was recently sold to Omnitrac and has since been shut down due to repair funding disputes between the federal and provincial governments and Omnitrac.

Most participants felt the Port of Churchill was important to the province overall, mostly because its closure was seen to be having a negative impact on the local economy. Some mentioned the negative impact was likely greater for residents of Churchill, but that it affected others in the province as well. Participants were not sure if solving the current problem with the port was the responsibility of the Government of Canada or another level of government. However, some mentioned that there might be a social obligation to assist the people in the community and felt this should be a priority for the federal government.

Participants in Winnipeg were also asked if they were familiar with the Health Accords signed between the federal and provincial governments. Most participants were aware that such agreements had been signed by other provinces but that the Manitoba government had not yet reached an agreement with its Canadian counterpart. When asked about their thoughts about Manitoba being the only province who had not signed a health accord with the federal government, reactions were mixed. Some felt the Manitoba government was rightly proposing a deal that would bring stronger benefits to the province, based on a sense that the current proposition would entail cutbacks and provided insufficient funding for health services. On the other hand, some participants were concerned about the lack of healthcare services in the province and felt that, as the deal comes with additional funding, it would be important for the Manitoba government to sign the agreement. These participants felt that securing the funds made available with this deal was better than no agreement at all.

Most participants reacted positively upon being told that this deal with the federal government included additional funding dedicated to home care and mental health. Participants felt that mental health problems were probably underdiagnosed and that everyone could potentially be affected by it, either as an individual or through sick family members. Many also noted that mental health issues can become very serious if left untreated. In addition, mental health problems were seen to have a negative impact on the economy and on families who are often unable to get the support they need.

Parents’ Policies

Those in Winnipeg took part in a discussion regarding federal government policies and the effect they may have on parents like themselves, while also being asked to expand on the key challenges that they faced as parents. This portion of the groups opened with a discussion regarding which expenses parents found most stressful or the most difficult to manage. Most parents agreed that childcare was the most burdensome expense, with the cost of tuition ranking a close second. Childcare was a current or recent experience for many, while future tuition expenses were a source of worry for those who had not reached this stage yet, especially for those who remained saddled with student debt themselves. Other

expenses discussed were the cost of food, activities for children and caring for children with special needs.

Participants were then asked if they knew of federal government policies that were put in place to assist Canadian parents. Many participants readily mentioned that they were recipients of the Canada Child Benefit, with some among them noting that the age limit for obtaining the benefit had been raised in recent years. Opinions on the alignment of the benefit to income level were mixed. Some participants appreciated that lower income households had access to more government funding. However, others felt that this could discourage a return to work, since the benefit amount decreased as income increased, making it less of an offset against childcare costs.

Participants were then given a list of things the Government of Canada has done over the past year and asked to select those actions they felt could have the most positive impact on themselves and their families. The list presented was as follows:

- Signed the Paris Climate Change Agreement
- Created a Prime Minister’s Youth Council to advise the Prime Minister from a youth perspective
- Created new Caregivers Tax Credit, making it easier for Canadians to take leave from work to care for a sick family member
- Cut taxes on the middle class and raised taxes on the wealthy
- Enhanced the Canada Student Loans Program
- Expanded EI benefits to parts of the country who have experienced significant job losses
- Introduced a national price on carbon pollution
- Introduced a plan to legalize marijuana
- Increased non-repayable tuition grants for low and middle income students
- Introduced the Canada Child Benefit
- Invested \$165 million in a Youth Employment Strategy including Canada Summer Jobs
- Lengthened maximum parental leave time from 12 months to 18 months
- Provided funding for local infrastructure, including the Waverley Street Underpass
- Provided funding for Winnipeg buses and public transit infrastructure
- Provided funding to provinces to create new childcare spaces for low-income individuals

In keeping with their initial comments, choices related to education and childcare costs were selected by many as the most important actions taken by the Government of Canada. One of those actions deemed important by a number of participants was the enhancement of the Canada Student Loans Program. Those who selected it felt that even an undergraduate degree, was too often insufficient to secure the kind of stable and rewarding career needed to support a family in the long run. By increasing assistance for education, parents felt their children could obtain additional post-graduate education credentials which would help them have successful careers and in turn, support their own families.

Another crucial action taken, according to participants, was the introduction of the Canada Child Benefit. Parents who chose this measure as being crucial talked about the benefits it provided for low income families, stay at home parents and those who had multiple children. Participants felt it was helpful for paying the various costs associated with being a parent.

Providing funding for Winnipeg buses and public transit infrastructure was also chosen as an important government action that benefited parents. It was seen to be a good step forward to keep a clean environment. As parents, they shared a sense of responsibility for ensuring that their children would live in a world with clean water and air.

A few others mentioned that cutting taxes on the middle class and raising them for wealthier people was also a positive measure taken by the government. This option was selected as it was deemed to help those in the middle class repay their own education loans so they may better support their families and assist their own children in getting a solid education.

Finally, a few participants listed the increased non-repayable tuition grants for low and middle-income students as a key action taken by the government. They felt it was important for their children to further their education without incurring additional debt that could be a burden once they finished school. They believed that by being able to afford post-secondary education, their children would be able to secure well-paid and secure employment.

Once this exercise was completed, parents in Winnipeg were asked if they believed that any of the items on the list would negatively affect their family. A few participants selected the tax cuts for the middle class and the corresponding increased taxes for the wealthy because they perceived the latter as a penalty for those who had become financially successful by virtue of hard work.

Another issue of concern for some was the introduction of a plan to legalize marijuana. While they mostly agreed that it would reduce organized crime, they were worried about the effects of marijuana use on their own children, since legalization could provide easier access to cannabis. However, others felt that legalization may cause an initial spike in consumption, but that this would likely level over time. They also believed that teenagers already had access to marijuana and therefore, did not feel that legalizing the substance would increase usage.

When asked about any other actions the Government of Canada could take to support parents, participants suggested additional resources for parents with children who have mental health issues. They would also like to get more information on saving opportunities for their children’s education, as well as on improved nutrition and a more standardized education system across regions and for all members of society.

Disabilities

A discussion on disabilities issues was held with participants in Nanaimo. When asked what spontaneously came to mind when they thought of people with disabilities, participants mentioned disabilities relating to both mental and physical health. The distinction between disabilities that were visible and those that were ‘invisible’ was also raised by a few participants who believed this impacted the degree to which a person would get the help they needed and not become isolated.

Participants strongly felt that disabled Canadians faced numerous challenges that did not afflict those who did not have a disability. They talked about the social stigma that often comes with being disabled, as well as the lack of understanding and care. The financial challenges that too often afflicted disabled

individuals were also raised as key issues and were seen to often be made worse by the difficulty in finding meaningful, permanent employment. Some also mentioned the overall lower quality of life and the lack of accessible services for people with disabilities.

Discussion then flowed to spontaneous awareness of actions taken by the Government of Canada to help Canadians with disabilities. Some mentioned they had heard about increases in disability benefits, although many participants were not aware of this initiative. Some also noted that the Invictus Games in Toronto were a positive thing that deserved to be celebrated and helped raise awareness of the challenges faced by people with disabilities¹.

Participants were then asked to select which of the following actions that could be taken by the Government of Canada should be given the highest priority: *Improving building accessibility for people with disabilities; improving access to employment for people with disabilities; improving transportation options (including air, train, ferry and bus) for people with disabilities; and, improving government customer service for people with disabilities.*

Improving access to employment for people with disabilities was chosen as the most important action of the four by most participants. They found this to be essential because employment would greatly increase the quality of life of people with disabilities by building social relationships, hereby reducing the stigma and isolation they felt were faced by Canadians with disabilities. It was also seen to give those with disabilities the resources needed to have a more meaningful life, for doing what they wanted without depending on other people. When asked if anything was missing from the list, participants highlighted a need for additional mental health resources.

Opinions were divided regarding employers’ specific obligations when it came to hiring individuals with disabilities; however most believed that some form of encouragement for employers would be effective and may help take pressure of the social security system as individuals would require less government funding. When probed about who should finance accessible workplace initiatives, some respondents felt employers should be responsible for ensuring their workplaces were accessible, starting with large companies. Others felt this would put a financial strain on businesses, especially smaller ones, and were in support of government-funded initiatives.

Participants also shared differing viewpoints when asked if workplaces and businesses should be fined if they were not accessible. Most felt that not all spaces needed to be accessible and noted that this would be difficult for small businesses. Others suggested education programs, or tax credits for those that were accessible as an alternative incentive. Most preferred to discuss ways for the government to help businesses become more accessible rather than require them to do it. A few mentioned that moving forward this type of mandatory accessibility requirement should be put in place for new builds or renovations, but should not apply to spaces that were already built.

¹ The Invictus Games is an international sporting event for wounded, injured and sick servicemen and women. The 2017 Games took place in Toronto in September.

Participants shared very similar views when asked if they felt the Government of Canada should only provide funding for infrastructure projects such as new transit buses and platforms that were accessible. Most believed that this was an effective approach, but did not endorse the imposition of fines for organizations that do not make their buildings more accessible. While many felt it was reasonable to require complete accessibility for public spaces or public buildings, others believed that this could be very difficult for some businesses, especially smaller ones or those that were not making large profits.

Official Apologies

Winnipeg participants were asked to discuss past and future official apologies made by the Government of Canada. To launch the discussion, they were first provided with information on past and future apologies to take place by the government of Canada, including: the 2008 apology for the mistreatment of First Nations in the residential schools system; the 2016 apology for turning back the Komagata Maru, a ship full of Sikh, Muslim, and Hindu refugees fleeing persecution in India in 1914; and later this year, a planned apology by the Government of Canada for actions taken against LGBTQ2 Canadians in the army and public service from the 1950s to the 1990s.

Most participants felt these types of official apologies were important. They were deemed especially important for those who were directly impacted, or who were part of communities who were victimized in the past. Participants agreed that while actions cannot be changed, apologies can help with the process of healing for the victims and is a sign that the government intends to make things right moving forward. The latter point was seen as essential. They believed that to be effective and sincere, an apology should be accompanied by a form of assurance that the same issues or behaviours would not reoccur in the future.

Participants in Winnipeg felt the criteria used to decide whether the Canadian Government should formally apologize should include whether the incident was the results of direct and willful action by the federal government, as well we whether this action had with long term effects and was an important legal or moral issue for Canadians. When asked if too many high-profile apologies could diminish their significance, participants were concerned that apologies meant the government/society could forget about the mistreatment. Some participants in Winnipeg felt that apologies provided an opportunity for education on the issues. Overall participants were not concerned about the number of apologies diminishing their significance but rather felt the follow-up actions to the apology were a good indication as to whether the apology was meaningful.

A few participants expressed concerns over the cost of some apologies. They believed that apologies need not come with large expenses from the government. It did not seem fair to them that large sums of public money be spent on repairing actions that were taken many generations before theirs. They felt that the apology was important and should be accompanied by a clear willingness to make things better, but not necessarily involve payments. This was seen as especially important if the number of official apologies were to increase over time.

3. Appendix

Appendix A. Detailed Research Methodology

This wave of qualitative research is part of a continuous qualitative research project that will include a total of 144 focus groups to be held in multiple waves (up to 18 separate waves) over the 2017 calendar year, with the option of renewing the yearly cycle of research for two additional years.

This fifth wave was comprised of a series of 8 focus groups with Canadians aged 20 years old and above, held between August 15th and 30th, 2017. All group discussions lasted approximately two hours and were conducted in the evening, with the first session in each city starting at 5:30pm and the second starting at 7:30pm. These sessions were held in the following locations:

- August 15th – Winnipeg, Man
- August 17th – Nanaimo, BC
- August 29th – Quebec City, QC
- August 30th – Brampton, ON

A total of 12 participants were recruited for each session to ensure that a minimum of eight to ten participants would attend. In total, 73 participants took part in the discussions. All participants received an honorarium of \$75 for attending the sessions at the focus group facilities.

Group participants were meant to be representative of select sub-groups of the Canadian population for each location. Participants in Winnipeg and Brampton were all parents with children under the age of 18 living at home. Participants in Quebec City were all aged 55 years and above as issues pertaining to elderly Canadians were discussed in more depth in that location. Finally, participants in Nanaimo were recruited to be representative of the local population aged 20 years and above.

All participants were recruited using a formal recruitment screening questionnaire administered via a telephone interview. The screening questionnaire helped ensure that participants included a good cross-section of the Canadian population, with good mixes of gender (half men and half women in all groups), ages, education and income levels, as well as household composition. The fully-detailed recruiting questionnaire is presented in Appendix B.

The recruitment screener was devised by Ipsos in collaboration with PCO and in accordance with the specifications of the project authority, the Standards for the Conduct of Government of Canada Public Opinion Research – Qualitative Research (<http://www.tpsgc-pwgsc.gc.ca/rop-por/rechqual-qualres-eng.html>) and following all Market Research and Intelligence Association (MRIA) standards and guidelines for the conduct of qualitative research. All groups were moderated by an Ipsos research professional.

In accordance with the Standards for the Conduct of Government of Canada Public Opinion Research – Qualitative Research, and the MRIA guidelines for the conduct of qualitative research, Ipsos informed participants of their rights under Privacy Law. Ipsos provided participants with details specific to the conduct of the groups, and obtained their consent for audio/video taping of the discussion, the presence

of observers, explained the purpose of the one-way mirror, basic rules about privacy and confidentiality including the fact that tapes will be destroyed according to MRIA guidelines, and that participation was voluntary.

As is standard with qualitative research done on behalf of the Government of Canada, the following conditions were also applied for all participants recruited for this study:

- They had not participated in a discussion group within the last six months;
- They had not attended, in the past two years, a focus group discussion or in-depth interview on issues related to the topic at hand;
- They had not attended five or more focus groups or in-depth interviews in the past five years;
- At least one third of the participants recruited for each group must never have attended a group discussion or in-depth interview before;
- They had a sufficient command of English (or French for the Trois-Rivières groups) to fully participate in the focus group sessions; and,
- They or their family are not employed in any of the following:
 - A research firm
 - A magazine or newspaper
 - An advertising agency or graphic design firm
 - A political party
 - A radio or television station
 - A public relations company
 - Federal or provincial government

As with all research conducted by Ipsos, contact information was kept entirely confidential and all information that could allow for the identification of participants was removed from the data, in accordance with the *Privacy Act* of Canada.

Appendix B. Recruitment Guide

**Government of Canada
RECRUIT 12 FOR 10**

Hello, my name is _____. I'm calling from Ipsos, a national public opinion research firm. On behalf of the Government of Canada we're organizing a series of discussion groups with Canadians to explore current issues of importance to the country. A variety of topics will be discussed and we are interested in hearing your opinions.

EXPLAIN FOCUS GROUPS. About ten people like you will be taking part, all of them randomly recruited just like you. For their time, participants will receive an honorarium of \$75. But before we invite you to attend, we need to ask you a few questions to ensure that we get a good mix and variety of people. May I ask you a few questions?

- Yes **CONTINUE**
- No **THANK AND TERMINATE**

Participation is voluntary. No attempt will be made to sell you anything or change your point of view. The format is a “round table” discussion lead by a research professional. All opinions expressed will remain anonymous and views will be grouped together to ensure no particular individual can be identified.

S1) Do you or any member of your household work in or has retired from:

	YES	NO
Market Research or Marketing	1	2
Public Relations or Media (TV, Print)	1	2
Advertising and communications	1	2
An employee of a political party	1	2
An employee of a government department or agency, whether federal or provincial	1	2

IF “YES” TO ANY OF THE ABOVE, THANK AND TERMINATE

S2) Are you a Canadian citizen at least 20 years old who normally resides in the [INSERT LOCATION] area?

- Yes 1 **CONTINUE**
- No 2 **THANK AND TERMINATE**

S3) How long have you lived in [CITY]? _____

TERMINATE IF LESS THAN 2 YEARS

S4) Are you the head or co-head of your household?

Yes	1	CONTINUE
No	2	CONTINUE

S5) Have you ever attended a consumer group discussion, an interview or survey which was arranged in advance and for which you received a sum of money?

Yes	1	MAX. 1/3 PER GROUP
No	2	GO TO Q1

S6) How long ago was it? _____

TERMINATE IF IN THE PAST 6 MONTHS

S7) How many consumer discussion groups have you attended in the past 5 years?

TERMINATE IF MORE THAN 4 DISCUSSION GROUPS

ASK ALL

Q1) Could you please tell me what age category you fall in to? Are you...

Under 20	0	THANK AND TERMINATE
20-24 years	1	} ENSURE GOOD MIX PER GROUP
25-34 years	2	
35-44 years	3	
45-54 years	4	
55-64 years	5	
65+ years	6	
Refuse	9	THANK AND TERMINATE

[IN QUEBEC CITY, ONLY RECRUIT PARTICIPANTS AGED 55 YEARS AND ABOVE]

Q2) Do you currently have children under the age of 18 living in the house with you?
[RECRUIT MIX. IN WINNIPEG AND BRAMPTON, RECRUIT ONLY PARENTS]

Yes	1
No	2

Q2a) Do you currently have children under the age of 13 living in the house with you?
[RECRUIT MIN 3 per group]

Yes	1
-----	---

No 2

Q3) How many people above the age of 18 are there in your household?

One 1
 More than one 2

Q4) Could you please tell me what is the last level of education that you have completed?

Some high school	1	} ENSURE
Completed high school	2	
Some College/University	3	
Completed College/University	4	
RF/DK	9	

GOOD
MIX PER GROUP

Q5) What is your current employment status?

Working full-time	1	} MAX 3 PER GROUP
Working part-time	2	
Self-employed	3	
Retired	4	
Currently not working	5	
Student	6	
Other	7	
DK/RF	9	

Q6) [IF EMPLOYED/RETIRED] _____ What is/was your current/past occupation? (PLEASE SPECIFY)

Q7) 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 [READ LIST]?

Under \$20,000	1	} Ensure good mix by...
\$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	
DK/RF	99	Recruiting 5-6 from the above

Recruiting 2-3 from the below \$40K category
 Recruiting 3-4 from the between \$40 and \$80K category

Q8) **DO NOT ASK – NOTE GENDER**

Male	1	} ENSURE 50-50 SPLIT
Female	2	

Q9) If you won a million dollars what would be the first two things you would do with the money? (**MUST HAVE TWO RESPONSES TO ACCEPT. TERMINATE IF FLIPPANT, COMBATIVE OR EXHIBITS DIFFICULTY IN RESPONDING**)

TERMINATE IF RESPONDENT OFFERS ANY REASON SUCH AS SIGHT OR HEARING PROBLEM, A WRITTEN OR VERBAL LANGUAGE PROBLEM, A CONCERN WITH NOT BEING ABLE TO COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY OR IF YOU HAVE A CONCERN.

During the discussion, you will be audio- and videotaped. This taping is being done to assist us with our report writing. Also, in this room there is a one-way mirror. Sitting behind the mirror may be Government of Canada staff, including members of the staff from the department that sponsored this research, and by staff members from Ipsos. This is standard focus group procedure to get a first-hand look at the research process and to hear first-hand your impressions and views on the research topic.

Do you agree to be observed for research purposes only?

Yes	1	THANK & GO TO INVITATION
No	2	THANK & TERMINATE

******(IN EACH LOCATION, PLEASE ENSURE TWELVE (12) PARTICIPANTS ARE RECRUITED FOR 8-10 TO SHOW)******

[Read to Stand-by Respondents]

Thank you for answering my questions. Unfortunately, at this time, the group you qualify for is full. We would like to place you on our stand-by list. This means that if there is an opening in the group, we would then call you back and see if you are available to attend the discussion. May I please have a daytime contact number, an evening contact number and an email address, if you have one, so that we can contact you as soon as possible if an opening becomes available?

[RECORD CONTACT INFO]

[Read to Screened in Respondents]

Wonderful, you qualify to participate in one of these group discussions which will take place on, (DATE) @ (TIME) for no more than 2 hours. The Government of Canada is sponsoring this research. All those who participate will receive a **\$75** honorarium as a thank you for their time.

Do you have a pen handy so that I can give you the address where the group will be held? It will be held at:

Location	Time	Date
Winnipeg NRG Research Group Suite 804-213 Notre Dame Ave	Parents Group 1 – 5:30pm Group 2 – 7:30pm	August 15, 2017
Nanaimo Coast Bastion Hotel 11 Bastion Street Rooms : Colvile : participants Douglas : client	General population Group 1 – 5:30pm Group 2 – 7:30pm	August 17, 2017
Quebec City SOM Recherche 3340 rue de La Perade 3rd Floor	Seniors (55+) Group 1 – 5:30pm Group 2 – 7:30pm	August 29, 2017
Brampton Contract Testing 119 West Drive	Parents Group 1 – 5:30pm Group 2 – 7:30pm	August 30, 2017

We ask that you arrive at least 20 minutes early to be sure you locate the facility and have time to check-in with the hosts. Prior to being admitted into the focus group room you will be required to sign a non-disclosure agreement, failure to do so will result in you being denied participation in the focus group session for which you have been selected. Payment of the incentive is contingent on participation in the focus group sessions.

In addition, we will be checking your identification prior to the group, so please be sure to bring two pieces of government issued photo identification with you (i.e. driver’s license, health card or other). Also, if you require glasses for reading, please bring them with you.

As we are only inviting a small number of people, your participation is very important to us. We have invited you to participate based on the questions we went through a moment ago, so we ask that you do not send a representative on your behalf should you be unable to participate. **IF FOR SOME REASON YOU ARE UNABLE TO ATTEND, PLEASE CALL SO THAT WE MAY GET SOMEONE TO REPLACE YOU.** You can reach us at 1-xxx-xxx-xxxx at our office. Someone will call you the day before to remind you about the discussion.

What would be a good time to reach you?
 And at what telephone numbers?
 May I please get your name? ON FRONT PAGE

Thank you very much for your help!



Appendix C. Discussion Guides

INTRODUCTION (5 minutes)

- Introduce moderator and welcome participants to the focus group.
 - As we indicated during the recruiting process, we are conducting focus group discussions on behalf of the Government of Canada.
- The discussion will last approximately 2 hours. Feel free to excuse yourself during the session if necessary.
- Explanation re:
 - Audio-taping – The session is being audio-taped for analysis purposes, in case we need to double-check the proceedings against our notes. These audio-tapes remain in our possession and will not be released to anyone without written consent from all participants.
 - One-way mirror – There are observers representing the government who will be watching the discussion from behind the glass.
 - It is also important for you to know that your responses today will in no way affect your dealings with the Government of Canada.
 - Confidentiality – Please note that anything you say during these groups will be held in the strictest confidence. We do not attribute comments to specific people. Our report summarizes the findings from the groups but does not mention anyone by name. The report can be accessed through the Library of Parliament or Archives Canada.
- Describe how a discussion group functions:
 - Discussion groups are designed to stimulate an open and honest discussion. My role as a moderator is to guide the discussion and encourage everyone to participate. Another function of the moderator is to ensure that the discussion stays on topic and on time.
 - Your role is to answer questions and voice your opinions. We are looking for minority as well as majority opinion in a focus group, so don't hold back if you have a comment even if you feel your opinion may be different from others in the group. There may or may not be others who share your point of view. Everyone's opinion is important and should be respected.
 - I would also like to stress that there are no wrong answers. We are simply looking for your opinions and attitudes. This is not a test of your knowledge. We did not expect you to do anything in preparation for this group.

Please note that the moderator is not an employee of the Government of Canada and may not be able to answer some of your questions about what we will be discussing. If important questions do come up over the course of the group, we will try to get answers for you before you leave.

- (Moderator introduces herself/himself). Participants should introduce themselves, using their first names only.
 - What are your main hobbies or pastimes?

WARM-UP (5 minutes)

- What have you seen, read or heard about the Government of Canada lately?

CANADA-US RELATIONS (50 minutes)

- What have you heard lately about Canada-US relations?

HANDOUT:

- I’ve got a handout that has some issues. Please rank the top three you think it is most important for the Canadian and US governments to discuss: RANK1-2-3
 - *Issues: The environment and climate change, the treatment of minority groups, immigration and refugees, oil pipelines, trade, anti-terrorism security, joint military operations overseas, reducing border delays, border security cooperation*
- Are there any other issues missing from this list you think are important for the two countries to work on?
- What did you pick as your top issue?
 - WHY is this issue important?
 - What specifically on this issue needs to be discussed?
- Are there any issues that you think the Canadian and US Governments shouldn’t work together on? Why?

ASYLUM SEEKERS (50 minutes), BRAMPTON AND QUEBEC CITY ONLY

- Who here has heard about asylum seekers crossing the Canada-US border? (show of hands)
 - How did you hear about this story?
 - What news source or news sources have you heard about asylum seekers from?
 - And what specifically have you heard about asylum seekers crossing the Canada-US border?
- As far as you know, what happens to these individuals after they cross the border?
- Why do you think these asylum seekers are choosing to cross the border illegally into Canada?
- Because seven different Canadian provinces share a land border with the US, many asylum seekers are crossing into different parts of the country. Some say each province should develop their own strategy for dealing with the individuals that have crossed into their own territory. Others say the federal government has a responsibility to deal with all asylum seekers that enter the country no matter where they cross the border. Which do you agree with more?

BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR THE MODERATOR:

If an individual comes into Canada through a designated port of entry at a land border and makes an asylum claim, the Canadian Border Services Agency (CBSA) assesses whether they can enter Canada.

If an individual illegally crosses into Canada (e.g. walks across a field into Canada), once they are in Canada, they are arrested by the RCMP and transferred to CBSA for an immigration examination. The individual can make an asylum claim.

- Looking specifically at the federal government, do you generally think the Government of Canada is doing a good or a bad job of managing recent increases in the number of asylum seekers in Canada?
 - What is the federal government doing well to manage this issue?
 - What does the federal government need to change in how they are approaching the issue?
 - PROBE: Better border security? Accept more asylum claims?
- I would like you to imagine that your city was near the Canada-US border and individuals who were crossing the border nearby were being housed in your community while their asylum claims are being processed. What impact, if any, do you think that would have on your community?
 - What impact, if any, do you think this would have on you personally?

CLIMATE CHANGE (25 minutes), BRAMPTON AND QUEBEC CITY ONLY

- What have you heard about the Government of Canada’s plan to address climate change?
- How do you think the government’s plan to address climate change affects you? Your family? Your community?
- How do you think your community should act on climate change?
- What other environmental issues do you think should be top of mind for the Government of Canada? What environmental issues are affecting your community?
 - PROBE AS NECESSARY:
 - water quality (drinking water sources and management)
 - air quality (visibility and/or health)
 - pollution
 - transportation
 - infrastructure
- The government’s plan to combat climate change includes investments in the development of clean technologies. How do you see the development of clean technologies affecting the economy?
 - PROBE AS NECESSARY: Do you think clean technologies can lead to economic growth?
 - PROBE: Some say clean technologies have the potential to create new opportunities in Canada’s resource sectors, increase the productivity and competitiveness of Canadian businesses, and create new employment opportunities, while also improving environmental performance. Knowing this, do you feel differently about the economic impact the climate change plan might have?

(IF PREVIOUSLY RAISED): Some of you mentioned the Government of Canada’s national plan on carbon pricing.

- What have you heard recently (in the last 6 months) about the government’s plan?
 - How did you hear about it?
 - What news source or news sources have you heard about the government’s plan from?
- How much attention have you been paying to the national plan on carbon pricing? Why is that?
 - What kind of priority do you place on this topic?
 - PROBE AS NECESSARY: How relevant is the plan on carbon pricing to:
 - Yourself or your family
 - Your community/region
 - Your province
- What do you think about putting a price on carbon? Is it a good idea? A bad idea? How so?
 - Do you think this will affect the competitiveness of Canadian firms?
 - PROMPT AS NECESSARY: (As you may know) the US has withdrawn from the Paris Agreement. Do you think this will make Canadian businesses more competitive than US firms, less competitive, or have no impact?
 - Do you think this will affect:
 - The Canadian economy? How so?
 - The middle class? How so?
- The federal government has said it will implement a carbon tax in provinces that have not yet put a price on carbon emissions, beginning in 2018. **Revenues remain in the jurisdiction of origin** [EMPHASIZE, MUST BE INCLUDED]. Each jurisdiction can use carbon-pricing revenues according to their needs, including to address impacts on vulnerable populations and sectors and to support climate change and clean growth goals.
- How do you feel about the federal government implementing a carbon tax in provinces that do not set one up?
- What do you know of your province’s approach to the carbon pricing plan?
 - What do you see as the strengths? The drawbacks?

POSSIBLE HANDOUT

- What should the revenue be used for?
 - PROBE: Do you think the revenue should be used to:
 - Provide a direct rebate to the population
 - Fund innovation
 - Invest in environmental initiatives
 - Invest in programs to help Canada transition towards cleaner energy sources
 - Return the money to provinces through transfers that fund healthcare

BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR THE MODERATOR:

The Government of Canada has stated the following:

- Canada is committed to creating a cleaner, more innovative economy that reduces emissions and protects our environment, while creating well-paying jobs for the middle class and those working hard to join it. The government understands that the economy and the environment go hand in hand. That is why we must take action on carbon pollution now—to strengthen the middle class today and preserve our planet for posterity.

LOCAL CHALLENGES (30 minutes), BRAMPTON AND NANAIMO ONLY

- Thinking about everything the government has done in the past year, what, if anything, do you think will have the most positive impact on the local community here?
- Have they done anything that you think will have a negative impact on the local community?

HANDOUT:

I’ve got a handout with various items. I’d like you to put a check mark beside each one that you think is a major concern in your community:

NOTE: IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER HERE FOR EASE OF REFERENCE; DOES NOT NEED TO BE PRESENTED THIS WAY TO PARTICIPANTS

- A shrinking middle class
- Ability of local businesses and industries to succeed
- An aging population
- Availability of affordable childcare options
- Availability of broadband internet
- Availability of cell phone service
- Availability of healthcare services
- Availability of jobs
- Availability of public transit
- Availability of services
- Clean air
- Cost of housing
- Cost of post-secondary education
- Crime
- Homelessness
- Integrating immigrants into the community
- Level of Employment Insurance benefits for those who can’t find work
- Opioid addiction and overdoses
- Poverty
- Environmental preservation
- Quality of roads and bridges
- Retirement security
- Traffic congestion
- Water quality
- Young people leaving for opportunities elsewhere

Now I’d like you to circle the top 2 or 3 that you worry about the most.

- Was there anything missing from that list?

HAVE PARTICIPANTS EACH READ OUT THEIR TOP CONCERN.

- PROBE ONLY ISSUES THAT ARE THE TOP CONCERN FOR MORE THAN ONE PERSON: What *specifically* is the problem? *Why* is it a problem?

WINNIPEG ISSUES (15 minutes), ONLY IN WINNIPEG

- Who is familiar with the Port of Churchill?
- Has anyone heard news about the Port lately?
 - (if YES) Can you explain to me what is going on?
 - (if YES) Is this important to you?
- Is anyone familiar with the Health Accord signed between the federal government and several provinces earlier this year? (ask them to describe details)

Earlier this year, the federal government signed Health Accords with all provinces except Manitoba. The new 10-year agreement includes additional funding from the Government of Canada for home care and mental health.

- Are home care and mental health important health care priorities to focus on?
- How do you feel about Manitoba being the lone province who hasn’t signed?

PARENT POLICIES (35 minutes), ONLY IN WINNIPEG

- There are obviously a lot of expenses associated with raising children. What are the one or two you find most stressful? That is, the specific things that cause you to say “geez, I wish this didn’t cost so much”.
- What policies, programs and services, if any, has the government done that benefit parents?
- These are some things the Government of Canada has done over the past year, which could benefit parents (among other people). Please circle up to five things on this list which you feel will have the most positive impact on you and your family.
 - Signed the Paris Climate Change Agreement
 - Created a Prime Minister’s Youth Council to advise the Prime Minister from a youth perspective
 - Created new Caregivers Tax Credit, making it easier for Canadians to take leave from work to care for a sick family member
 - Cut taxes on the middle class and raised taxes on the wealthy
 - Enhanced the Canada Student Loans Program
 - Expanded EI benefits to parts of the country who have experienced significant job losses
 - Introduced a national price on carbon pollution
 - Introduced a plan to legalize marijuana
 - Increased non-repayable tuition grants for low and middle income students
 - Introduced the Canada Child Benefit
 - Invested \$165 million in a Youth Employment Strategy including Canada Summer Jobs
 - Lengthened maximum parental leave time from 12 months to 18 months
 - Provided funding for local infrastructure, including the Waverley Street Underpass

- Provided funding for Winnipeg buses and public transit infrastructure
- Provided funding to provinces to create new childcare spaces for low-income individuals
- Think about the one you circled which will have the most positive impact on you and your family?
 - PROBE: Why specifically do you feel it will have a positive impact?
- Was there anything on this list which you feel will have a negative impact on you and your family?
 - PROBE: Why specifically do you feel this will have a negative impact?

(if marijuana legalization is mentioned) Some people have said legalizing marijuana will make it easier for teens to get access to it since older people could buy it legally and sell it to them. Other people say marijuana is already more widely available to teens than alcohol, so legalizing it will push it out of the hands of organized crime making it harder for teens to have access.

- Do you think marijuana usage among teens will increase, decrease, or stay the same after it is legalized?
- The federal government has increased penalties for those who sell marijuana to minors. Do you think this will help?
 - Do they need to do anything else to prevent access to marijuana by minors?
 - PROBE: What specifically could be done?
- Has anyone heard of the Canada Child Benefit?
 - What, if anything, do you like about the Canada Child Benefit?
 - What, if anything, do you not like about the Canada Child Benefit?
- For those who get the Canada Child Benefit, on what type of things do you use the money?
- Thinking again about parents, is there something else the government should be doing?

DISABILITIES (25 minutes), NANAIMO ONLY

- I want to talk about disabilities for a bit. When you think about people with disabilities, what specific types of disabilities come to mind?
- What are the largest challenges facing Canadians with disabilities?
- Are you aware of any actions the Government of Canada has taken to help Canadians with disabilities?
- Which of the following types of actions do you think would be most important for the government to take: *(show of hands, then discuss WHY it’s important)*
 - Improving building accessibility for people with disabilities
 - Improving access to employment for people with disabilities
 - Improving transportation options (including air, train, ferry, and bus) for people with disabilities
 - Improving government customer service for people with disabilities
- Is there something else missing on this list that the Government of Canada needs to do to help Canadians with disabilities?
- Compared to other priorities, how important do you feel it is for the government to introduce legislation touching on these issues?
 - *(if important)* WHY?

- Should workplaces be encouraged to hire people with disabilities?
- Should employers be responsible for making workplaces more accessible to people with disabilities, or should it be up to the government to provide funding for this?
 - Thinking about building accessibility, if companies or organizations do not make their buildings more accessible to people with disabilities, should they be fined?
- How would you feel about the Government of Canada only providing infrastructure funding to buildings and projects that are accessible to Canadians with disabilities? So, for example, the government would not fund new transit buses and platforms which are not accessible?

APOLOGIES (10 minutes), WINNIPEG ONLY

The Government of Canada has made formal apologies to groups who were mistreated historically. For example, in 2008 the government apologized for the mistreatment of First Nations in the residential schools system. In 2016, the Government of Canada apologized for turning back the Komagata Maru, a ship full of Sikh, Muslim, and Hindu refugees fleeing persecution in India in 1914. Later this year, the federal government will apologize for actions taken against LGBTQ2 Canadians in the army and public service from the 1950s to the 1990s.

- Do you feel these type of high-profile apologies are important?
 - PROBE on why or why not?
- How should the government decide which historical incidents receive a formal apology?
- Does doing too many of these types of apologies diminish the significance of the ones which are made?

CONCLUSION (5 minutes)