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# Continuous Qualitative Data Collection of Canadians' Views – December 2019

Final Report

**Prepared for the Privy Council Office**

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Canada 

# Continuous Qualitative Data Collection of Canadians' Views

## Final Report

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This public opinion research report presents the results of a series of focus groups conducted by The Strategic Counsel on behalf of the Privy Council Office. The third cycle of the study included a total of fourteen focus groups with Canadian adults (18 years of age and older) between December 8 and 18, 2019.

Cette publication est aussi disponible en français sous le titre : Rapport final - Collecte continue de données qualitatives sur les opinions des canadiens – décembre 2019.

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## Political Neutrality Certification

I hereby certify as a Senior Officer of The Strategic Counsel that the deliverables fully comply with the Government of Canada political neutrality requirements outlined in the Policy on Communications and Federal Identity and the Directive on the Management of Communications – Appendix C – Mandatory Procedures for 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.

Signed:  \_\_\_\_\_

Date: January 10, 2019

Donna Nixon, Partner  
The Strategic Counsel

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# Executive Summary

## Introduction

The Communications and Consultation Secretariat of the Privy Council Office (PCO) commissioned The Strategic Counsel (TSC) to conduct continuous cycles of focus group research across the country with members of the public on key national issues, events, and policy initiatives related to the Government of Canada.

The broad purpose of this ongoing qualitative research program is three-fold: to explore the dimensions and drivers of public opinion on the most important issues facing the country; to assess perceptions and expectations of the federal government's actions and priorities, and; to inform the development of Government of Canada communications so that they continue to be aligned with the perspectives and information needs of Canadians, while remaining both clear and easy-to-understand.

The research is intended to be used by the Communications and Consultation Secretariat within PCO in order to fulfill its mandate of supporting the Prime Minister's Office in coordinating government communications. Specifically, the research will ensure that PCO has an ongoing understanding of Canadians' opinions on macro-level issues of interest to the government, as well as emerging trends.

This report includes findings from 14 in-person focus groups which were conducted between December 9th and 18th, 2019 in seven locations across the country including in Ontario, Quebec, Newfoundland, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia. Details concerning the locations, recruitment, and composition of the groups are shown in the section below.



Among the specific objectives for this cycle of focus groups, the research explored a wide range of issues, many of them in-depth, including awareness and perceptions of recent Government of Canada stories in the news, specific initiatives and recent announcements in relation to the NATO Summit in London, medical assistance in dying the environment, including the Paris Agreement and the 'circular economy'. In addition, the research explored local issues of concern, identifying specific challenges with respect to infrastructure and the economy.

Specific topics such as 'Western alienation' and the Frontier Mine were explored in some locations where they were deemed more relevant. Similarly, a series of exercises were completed by participants, depending on the location and the topic being discussed. In all locations participants were asked to complete an exercise intended to identify their top issues with respect to Government of Canada goals. Additionally, in the three Western locations, participants were also asked to write down a few words which, in their view, described the relationship between the Government of Canada and their province. Participants' responses to these exercises were formally captured and recorded, as were the ensuing discussions exploring these topics in more detail.

As a note of caution when interpreting the results from this study, findings of qualitative research are directional in nature only and cannot be attributed quantitatively to the overall population under study with any degree of confidence.

## Methodology

### **Overview of Groups**

Target audience

- Canadian residents, 18 and older
- For the third cycle, groups were split primarily by gender

### **Detailed approach**

- 14 in-person focus groups across 7 Canadian cities
- Two groups conducted per location, in Brampton and Thunder Bay, Ontario (Dec 9<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup>), Chicoutimi, Quebec (Dec. 10<sup>th</sup>), St. John's, Newfoundland (Dec. 12<sup>th</sup>), Kelowna, British Columbia (Dec. 16<sup>th</sup>), Saskatoon, Saskatchewan (Dec. 17<sup>th</sup>) and Calgary, Alberta (Dec. 18<sup>th</sup>)
- Groups in Chicoutimi, Quebec were conducted in French, while all others were conducted in English
- A total of 10 participants were recruited for each group, assuming 8 to 10 participants would attend
- Each participant received an \$90 honorarium in respect of their time

- Across all locations, 122 participants attended, in total. Details on attendance numbers by group can be found below.

### Group Locations and Composition

LOCATION	GROUP	LANGUAGE	DATE	TIME	GROUP COMPOSITION	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS
Brampton	1	English	Dec. 9, 2019	5:30-7:30	Women	9
	2			7:30-9:30	Men	8
Chicoutimi	3	French	Dec. 10, 2019	5:30-7:30	Women	10
	4			7:30-9:30	Men	10
Thunder Bay	5	English	Dec. 11, 2019	5:30-7:30	Women	9
	6			7:30-9:30	Men	8
St. John's	7	English	Dec. 12, 2019	5:30-7:30	Women	8
	8			7:30-9:30	Men	10
Kelowna	9	English	Dec. 16, 2019	5:30-7:30	Women	9
	10			7:30-9:30	Men	10
Saskatoon	11	English	Dec. 17, 2019	5:30-7:30	Women	7
	12			7:30-9:30	Men	9
Calgary	13	English	Dec. 18, 2019	5:30-7:30	Women	8
	14			7:30-9:30	Men	7
<b>Total number of participants</b>						<b>122</b>

## Key Findings

The following outlines a summary of the key findings from each topic discussed during the cycle of focus groups undertaken in December, 2019. Unless otherwise noted, topics were explored in all locations.

### Government of Canada News

There was low awareness of Government of Canada stories beyond the recent election and resulting changes at the political level in Ottawa. Among other news, issues affecting Western Canada received a mention in most groups, especially in the West, including the economy and pipelines in Alberta,





federal-provincial relations, regional alienation, and, to a lesser extent, equalization payments. Cannabis legalization and “vaping” received a number of comments, as did environmental issues. These latter mentions were mostly in regard to climate change, with a few mentions of a “carbon tax”. Indigenous issues and immigration were also top of mind for some.

Collectively, there were a few comments pertaining to international issues, including some references to disputes with China, “NAFTA,” and the ‘hot mic’ issue at the NATO Summit.

However, no single issue or set of issues stood out, and many participants struggled to identify any news story that related specifically to the federal government.

### **NATO (St. John’s, Chicoutimi, Brampton, Thunder Bay)**

There was very low awareness of the recent NATO Summit and even less of the defence spending issue that came up at the meeting. Provided with some background, and asked for their opinion regarding whether or not Canada should increase military spending to reach its 2% of GDP commitment, participants expressed little support (except in St. John’s).

Most felt that Canada faces more important concerns and cannot afford what many assumed would be a costly expenditure at the expense of other priorities. A number of participants were against more military spending, in principle, feeling it is inconsistent with Canada’s role as a “peacekeeper”. And some didn’t like the idea of Canada being pressured by other countries to spend more on defence.

Among those who did support it, most agreed that Canada should honour its commitment to NATO and do its part. Some felt this is in Canada’s self-interest, not only with respect to national defence but to maintain good standing with other NATO countries and avoid any potential negative repercussions for trade and economic cooperation. Some noted that increases in military spending might be good for the local economy and jobs as well.

Whether participants expressed opinions for or against the increase, they did not appear to be especially locked in to a view one way or another. Some who were initially against the increase wavered a bit over the course of the discussion, and many seemed to want more information before solidifying their opinion.

### **Medical Assistance in Dying (St. John’s, Chicoutimi, Brampton, Thunder Bay)**

Other than in Quebec, few participants were aware of any new developments in Canada around medical assistance in dying. Some were vaguely aware of recent news concerning a court case or “lack of consistency in the rules” applied across the country. Only in Chicoutimi, among the men, was anyone aware that changes to the law are pending that could possibly make assisted dying more accessible.



## Government of Canada Priorities

### Throne Speech

There was extremely low awareness of the recent Throne Speech. Among the handful of those who said they knew something about it when asked, there was limited mention of priorities such as climate change, tax cuts, pipelines, “east-west issues,” and Pharmacare. A few had positive comments about the speech striking the right tone, while some others were critical based on a sense that the West was overlooked or that the Speech simply reiterated previous commitments. Most who said they were aware of the speech however had little recall of any particulars and generally held neutral opinions overall.

### Unaided Priorities

Asked to identify what the Government of Canada’s priorities should be in the next two years, there wasn’t strong convergence around any particular theme or set of issues. The most common mentions related to the environment, immigration, and economic concerns.

The environment was identified in most groups primarily in relation to climate change, with a few references to a “carbon tax”. Immigration arose as a concern specifically relating to jobs, government spending, refugees, borders, and security. Economic issues received some specific mention in the context of jobs, incomes, the cost of living, taxes, and exports, with many mentioning these issues as a local or regional concerns. Other regional priorities included water quality in Thunder Bay and Western-specific issues in Calgary and Kelowna, including regional alienation and pipelines.

### Aided Priorities

In every group, participants were provided with a list of priorities from the Throne Speech and asked to select the three most important to them personally, including their number one priority, and to identify any items they felt that the federal government should not pursue.

In general, across most groups, the priorities that rose to the top of the list were universal access to family doctors, tax relief for the middle class, and the implementation of a national Pharmacare program. There were, however, some notable regional differences, with the elimination of water advisories on reserves identified as the top priority in Thunder Bay and Saskatoon, and among the top three in Kelowna. Conservation of oceans and land, along with raising the federal minimum wage, were higher priorities in St. John’s compared to other locations. Lowering taxes for the middle class was more widely identified as an important priority in Calgary and Kelowna and was near the bottom of the list in Thunder Bay.

Participants widely agreed it is unlikely that the federal government will be able to accomplish all the priorities on the list in the next few years. Most felt this would be “overly-ambitious” or “unrealistic”. Many of the individual priorities were viewed as challenging to accomplish, especially the commitments to ensure universal access to a family doctor, implement a national Pharmacare program, and eliminate water advisories on reserves. These priorities, while important to many, were



viewed as complex and complicated for the government to address effectively, from a practical point of view, in such a short period of time.

There was fairly widespread opposition to the banning of assault rifles, and many felt this would be politically challenging to accomplish, as well as hard to implement to good effect if the intent is to reduce gun-related crime and violence more broadly. A number of participants were wary of government intrusion into what they viewed as the right of law-abiding citizens to own and use guns responsibly, especially for their own protection, and felt that a ban on assault rifles could represent a step toward greater restrictions of gun ownership in the future. Even among those who identified this as a top priority – with those in Ontario most likely to do so – many felt that assault rifles are not really the issue in relation to concerns about guns, and that a ban would not effectively address illegal guns coming across the border or getting into the hands of criminals. Most anticipated strong opposition to this initiative.

Reducing cell phone costs, while important to some, also engendered a fair bit of opposition, and was at the bottom of the list in terms of importance. The main issue, widely identified, was a sense that government does not have a legitimate role to play in regulating the prices set by industry. Most felt that this should be left to the market (but that there should be competition) and that the Government of Canada should focus on bigger problems within its purview.

Putting a price on pollution didn't generate much support, but it wasn't widely opposed either. It was in the middle of the list, although some expressed confusion with the language used for what was more commonly understood as a "carbon tax". Comments suggest that participants were somewhat divided on this priority. They were also personally ambivalent when it comes to balancing environmental and economic concerns and the ability of the federal government to implement this kind of pricing scheme effectively. Moreover, some disagreed with the federal government imposing a pricing pollution system on the provinces, especially in Calgary.

### **Local Challenges (St. John's, Chicoutimi, Brampton, Thunder Bay)**

In all locations, participants identified a need for more investment in infrastructure - most commonly highways, roads, and public transit - as well as health care and supports for vulnerable populations.

The challenges associated with demographic shifts were also quite prominent, though differing by community. In Brampton, the population boom was widely identified as a key issue, creating significant challenges with traffic, transportation, and what is perceived as rapid, poorly-planned development. In smaller communities, population aging was a common concern, creating increased demand on the health care system and social programs while at the same time reducing the tax base and causing a financial squeeze. In Chicoutimi, population aging combined with overall population decline was identified as leading to a shortage in the labour force for local industry.

In many of the smaller communities, participants pointed to industrial shifts and the resulting disruptions and challenges related to jobs. Poverty and social issues were top of mind in both Thunder Bay and St. John's, along with issues concerning the safety of the local water supply. In Thunder Bay

there were also marked concerns about crime and the inequities faced by the local Indigenous population.

Federal government investments were not high on the radar among most participants in any location.

### **Western Alienation (Saskatoon, Calgary, Kelowna)**

Federal-provincial relationship - Exercise

Participants in the western groups were asked to write down those words or phrases that they would use to describe the relationship between the Government of Canada and their province. All the descriptions tended to be negative or suggestive of some level of friction or misalignment, and focussed on a few key dynamics and descriptions (note that the word choice was unprompted).

**Damaged:** Participants widely used words like fractured, strained, disconnected, dysfunctional and, in Calgary, separation.

**Unproductive:** Most felt that the current dynamic is polarized, immature, and adversarial, and characterized by bickering, rhetoric, misunderstanding and a lack of compromise.

**Lacking trust:** Many stressed that “both sides” are to blame for a relationship lacking in good will, described with words like animosity, hostile, unfriendly, hateful, greedy, and shifty.

**Unfair:** Participants clearly felt their own provinces were not being treated fairly, leaving them feeling frustrated, disappointed, misunderstood, neglected, left out, unseen, used, and an afterthought.

Most felt it was important to “move on” from the current dynamic and that the federal government needs to do a lot more than is currently the case to assume leadership in that regard by being more present and visible in their province, making more effort to listen and understand their perspective and by being more collaborative and responsive. Participants said they want to hear more about the ‘bigger picture’ and what the Government of Canada is accomplishing for Western provinces.

Most also said they want to see some concrete efforts on specific issues of importance to their provinces, including: re-examining equalization payments in Alberta and helping with the transition of their economy toward more job-rich and sustainable industries; rethinking immigration and “focusing on Canadians first”; making more effort to assist with the challenges faced by Indigenous people and communities; and collaborating more with the provinces on reducing international and interprovincial trade barriers.

### **TMX Pipeline**

There was fairly widespread confusion and lack of awareness about what is happening with the Trans Mountain Pipeline (TMX) pipeline, even in Calgary. Many weren’t sure if construction had started on the pipeline, or even if a final decision had been made about it going ahead. Few believed that the pipeline will be built on time, simply because it’s a large complex project and especially because of all the challenges, sensitivities and obstacles involved, including opposition on so many fronts. Some were



concerned about a lack of consultation and the possibility that corners could be cut on construction quality, conceding that there are legitimate concerns and that it needs to be done properly, even if it takes more time. Only one person felt that the pipeline will be constructed on time, because it is needed to generate revenues. A number of participants, unaided, stated their support for the project.

### **Bills C-69 and C-48**

Few participants were familiar with these bills by name. When provided with descriptions a number of participants felt they had heard something about them, or simply assumed that these kinds of measures and requirements were already in place.

Most could see both sides of the argument for and against each of these bills. Many acknowledged the importance of protecting the environment, especially water, in building pipelines and transporting oil in tankers along the coast.

With respect to Bill C-69, many acknowledged the importance of consulting with and respecting the concerns of local communities. At the same time, many were concerned about getting bogged down and being unable to move forward with projects that are critical for the economy.

Similarly, with respect to Bill C-48, participants tended to support the environmental protections in principle, but many wondered if the regulation would work in practice, or if industry would simply find a way to work around it.

While seeing the pros and cons of both bills, most felt that they needed more information before drawing any conclusions about whether either of these bills should go ahead or would work to produce the kinds of protections they've been designed for, while also supporting much-needed economic activity. Participants wanted to know more, including the costs involved, how they would be implemented, and what the implications would be on jobs. Few expressed much faith in government to get the balance right.

### **Equalization payments**

Familiarity with the term 'equalization payments' was high in Calgary while those in Saskatoon and Kelowna were much less knowledgeable. Only a few participants could describe how the equalization system works in Canada with any degree of accuracy or confidence. A number of participants in the Calgary groups, and a few others elsewhere, had a visceral sense that the arrangement is unfair to the West and Alberta, in particular, which they believe pays out significantly more than it gets, to the benefit of Central and Eastern Canada.

Many weren't sure if the system should be changed, owing to a lack of understanding of the current model. Those with an opinion about it in the Calgary groups tended to be critical of the current system and supportive of some relief for Alberta, if only temporarily. But few held particularly well formed views owing to an admitted lack of knowledge, the complexity of the issue, and how politicized it has become in recent years. Those with the strongest negative opinions tended to be participants in the men's group in Kelowna who felt that the West, in general, was being shortchanged.



Due to their lack of detailed knowledge about how the system of equalization payments works, there were no concrete suggestions put forward as to how it might be changed or improved.

### **China's boycott of the Canadian canola industry**

Very few participants in most groups were aware of this issue, with familiarity higher in Calgary and lower in Saskatoon. Most didn't know the details, but felt it is part of a larger diplomatic and trade dispute between Canada and China. No one was aware of the regional impact the boycott is having or what the federal government has been doing to respond to the issue.

All groups were then provided with some background for clarity and asked to consider three options in terms of a possible response from the Government of Canada:

- Make concessions so that China will buy Canadian canola again;
- Retaliate against China by imposing our own sanctions on their products; or
- Continue to financially support farmers while trying to negotiate a solution with China that doesn't involve concessions or retaliation.

Most said that Canada should try to negotiate with China, without retaliation or concessions, while continuing to support farmers, which they widely felt to be the most reasonable, constructive, and "Canadian" approach to the problem.

Some felt that concessions might be wise, depending on what they are, given the size of the Chinese market and the country's importance to Canada as a trading partner. But many believe that China would take advantage of any capitulation. Those few who favoured retaliation in some groups were met with resistance by other who thought this approach would be counterproductive and only lead to an escalation of the dispute and possibly further counter-retaliation from China.

### **Top Federal priority for Western Canada**

Of the various issues discussed that specifically affect Western Canada – the TMX pipeline, Bills C-69 and C-48, equalization payments, and China's boycott of canola – participants were asked to select the one they felt should be the priority for the Government of Canada.

In most groups, there was a consensus among participants that the TMX pipeline, and getting it built, should be the top priority for the federal government, given its importance to the regional economy and resulting stimulus to jobs. Many also felt that Bill C-69 has a direct role to play in enabling this project and is also important. The only outlier was the Kelowna women's group, where environmental concerns were heightened and some felt it would be better to either resolve the canola boycott with China or negotiate a better deal for the West on equalization payments.

### **Frontier Mines (Calgary)**

Most had not previously heard of the Frontier Mines. When provided with a description and asked if the federal government should proceed with approval, most said yes but only if there were sufficient regulations in place to ensure oversight and enforcement from government, in addition to assurances

being given by the company to protect the environment. Participants felt that the company should be required to commit to a wide variety of safety precautions and environmental protections, in addition to guaranteeing jobs for Albertans.

Many believed that the environmental costs of this project can be offset through thoughtful measures. Assurances that this would happen, and be paid for by industry, did make a number of participants feel more comfortable with the project. Told that some experts have questioned whether the mine would be able to generate sufficient revenue to justify the costs of constructing it, this made a number of participants somewhat more wary of the project, especially among women. On balance, while some were against the project, or ambivalent, most felt the project should go ahead, with appropriate regulations, conditions, technologies and investments in place to safeguard the environment and minimize the harms, while ensuring that jobs and benefits accrue to the province.

## **Environment**

### **Top of Mind Awareness**

Top-of-mind, the most commonly identified environmental stories were related to global warming and climate change, especially with regard to their impact on glaciers, ice caps, and polar bears. Other related issues identified included forest fires, droughts, rising oceans, and the loss of coral reefs. The “carbon tax” was cited by some, as was Greta Thunberg and her recent selection as Time Magazine’s person of the year. Among the few issues unrelated to climate change, plastic pollution and, to a lesser extent, the plastic ban were identified in a few groups.

### **Awareness of Government of Canada actions**

There was low awareness of any recent Government of Canada initiatives related to the environment, with most participants unable to cite anything, unprompted. The most common mentions were related to the “carbon tax” or plastics ban, with a few references to rebates for electric cars or federal-provincial conflict over pipelines and putting a price on pollution.

### **Paris Agreement**

Most had not heard of the Paris Agreement. Of those familiar with it, some were able to describe it as a global contract among nations to reduce greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs), but no one was able to provide any details of the 2030 reduction targets to which Canada has committed.

When provided with more information on the Agreement, participants were somewhat divided about whether or not Canada would meet its reduction targets. Participants cited a wide range of barriers, from public complacency and the inherent difficulty of transitioning our economy and making the sacrifices and investments required, to political division and opposition from business, to a lack of political will by the Canadian government and follow through from other countries.

Some were more positive about advances to date in responding to the challenge, but few felt Canada was currently on track. And despite some difference in opinion regarding the outlook, or whether or

not the Paris targets are realistic, most agreed that they play an important role as a concrete goal to work towards, and that Canada and other countries must do more to reduce their emissions.

While few were certain, most felt that the Paris targets were likely a good measure of progress, having been so widely agreed to by many countries. Asked to identify other indicators, many participants weren't sure, but some did generate a modest list, including evidence of behaviour change such as more recycling and less waste, improvements in the health of wildlife, oceans, and forests, scientific data and reporting, and more investments in green technologies, energy and infrastructure, as well as activities like tree planting.

When asked what Canada has done to address climate change, few were able to cite anything specifically. Responses included a "carbon tax" and the proposed single-use plastics ban, most commonly, as well as tightened industry regulations around emissions, investments in green energy and recycling, rebates for electric vehicle (EV) purchases, and investments in charging stations and infrastructure.

Many participants stressed the need to do more, from more education, encouragement and incentives directed toward the public, to stronger laws and regulations to force businesses to act, especially, to more investments in technology, alternative energy, sustainable products and initiatives. Many also felt that more leadership is required by all levels of government to work together more effectively toward the goal of reducing emissions. Only a few mentioned a price on pollution or a "carbon tax".

### **GHG reduction/pipelines**

Opinions were split on whether or not Canada can effectively take action on climate change while at the same time supporting its oil and gas industry by building the TMX pipeline. Although participants were somewhat ambivalent, many ultimately sided with the view that we can do both, as long as we strike a balance. And many felt that we must in fact do both, at least in the short term, in order to protect our economy so that we can make the investments needed to transition away from fossil fuels and toward more sustainable sources of energy over the longer term. Most saw this as a process. Most of the participants in Thunder Bay and Chicoutimi ultimately sided with this approach, as did everyone in the Calgary groups and in the men's group in Kelowna.

Some others were, however, less supportive or outright opposed to this approach. These participants held the view that combating climate change and building pipelines were fundamentally at odds, and some stressed that going ahead with the pipeline fails to recognize the reality and urgency of the climate crisis. There were participants in every location, other than Calgary, who did not support the government's plan to build the TMX, and others who were either indifferent or wanted to know more about the impact of the pipeline and the efforts and investments being made to mitigate adverse effects on the global warming. In Brampton, most participants were on the fence or unsupportive of the government's decision to build the TMX pipeline. In St. John's and the Kelowna women's group, participants were split.



### **Circular Economy (St. John's, Chicoutimi, Brampton, Thunder Bay, Saskatoon, Kelowna)**

Few participants were previously aware of the term 'circular economy' but most were familiar with the concept or readily grasped it after being provided with an explanation.

Universally, across all groups and locations, participants strongly supported this way of doing business as a "good idea" and an approach that "makes sense". Most felt that they were already participating in the circular economy to some degree and were able to provide a wide range of examples, from recycling and spending more on higher quality, more durable goods to buying second hand or refurbished items or products made of recycled materials. Many commented on the "feel good" element of these types of purchases, viewed as beneficial for the environment, by reducing waste and extending the life of existing products, while also saving money.

While strongly in favour of a "circular economy", and readily citing evidence of it in the marketplace and their own participation, most also felt that we could do much more, although they also noted that there were significant barriers to widespread adoption. In fact, most felt that there were strong countervailing tendencies among businesses and consumers, evident in the increased production and consumption of cheap, disposable goods, as well as excessive packaging by retailers, food waste, and the proliferation of single use plastics. Participants blamed businesses for pursuing profits at the expense of the environment. They blamed consumers, including themselves, for complacency and prioritizing convenience and short-term affordability above social responsibility. And they blamed governments for a lack of leadership and the political will required to implement stricter regulations and penalties to force change.

Participants overwhelmingly agreed that all businesses should be expected to participate in the circular economy and not only do more but be forced to do more by government to reduce waste across the board.

Some mentioned the proposed ban on single-use plastics as a positive step by the federal government and many acknowledged that we have come a long way, in many respects, toward embracing a more circular economy. At the same time, most felt that we have not done nearly enough to adopt what everyone agreed is a very meaningful approach to protecting the environment.

Most agreed that the Government of Canada can and should do more to encourage the public to take part. But, they also wanted to see more concrete action in the form of laws, regulations, penalties and incentives that would force the kind of change everyone agreed is needed.

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#### **MORE INFORMATION**

The Strategic Counsel  
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THE  
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## Detailed Findings

### Government of Canada News (St. John's, Chicoutimi, Brampton, Thunder Bay, Saskatoon, Calgary, Kelowna)

There was very low awareness of Government of Canada news, including stories making headlines around the time of the groups, such as the Throne Speech, the NATO summit, or the signing of CUSMA. No single issue or set of issues emerged as particularly salient for participants across locations. Many, in fact, struggled to identify any recent stories, with some noting they have not been paying attention and others saying that political coverage and “polarized” debate have overshadowed other federal government news in the media. Typically, there were only one or two ‘high-information’ participants in each of the groups who were following the mainstream news agenda, with others tending to comment on broad themes and issues, if anything.

Among the stories that did get multiple mentions, the most common ones were of a more political nature. These were related to the recent election, including the new minority government, changes to the Cabinet and the Speaker of the House, and the resignation of the Leader of the Opposition. Western issues also received a mention in most of the groups, with comments about the strained relationship between the federal government and Alberta, or Alberta and other provinces, as well as some remarks in the Western groups about neglect of their region and a perceived bias toward Central or Eastern Canada, particularly Quebec. There were also a few top-of-mind mentions in Calgary and Saskatoon about equalization payments.

Among other news more related to policies and programs, cannabis legalization and concerns about “vaping” received a mention in a number of groups. The same was true for climate change, which was identified as a recent federal government story in all locations except St. John's and Chicoutimi. A few participants in Brampton and the Western groups also mentioned a “carbon tax”, mostly in relation to controversies, provincial opposition to the federal government's pollution pricing system, or “planned rate increases”.

Indigenous issues received some mention. In Thunder Bay, there were comments about reconciliation and perceived neglect of First Nations, in Saskatoon about the water issues on reserves, and in St. John's about the legacy of residential schools and opposition to pipelines. Pipelines, and the controversies and opposition surrounding their construction, were noted in Brampton and Kelowna as well. Immigration was raised in a few groups, primarily as a problem.

Collectively, there were a number of comments regarding international issues, including a few references to trade and diplomatic disputes with China, and a few comments about “NAFTA” or the “new NAFTA” agreement, as well as some allusions to the NATO summit, mostly focused on the ‘hot mic’ controversy and relations between the Prime Minister and the US President.

### **NATO (St. John’s, Chicoutimi, Brampton, Thunder Bay)**

There was very low awareness of the recent North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) summit in London, except for the ‘hot mic’ controversy, and virtually no familiarity with the discussion that emerged regarding Canada’s military spending contribution. Quite a few participants, especially among the women’s groups, were unfamiliar with NATO and its role.

All groups were provided with the following information for context:

*“Several NATO members, including the United States, have recently declared that all NATO members must spend 2% of their annual gross domestic product (GDP) on their military so that the military alliance is prepared to react to threats. Canada currently spends 1.3% of its GDP on military spending and is one of the 19 NATO countries not meeting this goal.”*

Participants were then asked the following question:

*“Understanding that an increase in military spending might require a decrease in spending on other priorities, do you think Canada should commit to increasing military spending to reach this goal?”*

Response to this question varied somewhat across locations. In Brampton and Chicoutimi, there was very little support for Canada increasing its military spending to reach this goal. In Thunder Bay, there was some support among the men, and in St. John’s there was more support than in other locations, with the women roughly split, and most of the men saying that Canada should increase its military spending to 2%.

Among those who did not support the increase, a variety of reasons were given. Most felt that Canada simply has bigger priorities and cannot afford what many assumed would be a costly increase, shouldered by tax payers, at the expense of investments in social programs, debt and deficit reduction, health care, or the environment and climate change action. In St. John’s, the few who did not support the increase were especially worried about cuts to social programs in their province and the effect this could have on already struggling families, while in Chicoutimi the environment was raised as a particular area of concern that could be negatively affected by the trade-offs required for increased spending on defence. A number of participants in various locations also felt that an increase in military spending is wrong in principle, regardless of cost and trade-offs, and inconsistent with Canada’s role as a “peacekeeper”. Some felt quite strongly that increases in military spending only feed global conflict, while others did not like the idea of outside pressure on Canada to make spending increases on defence.



Among those who did support the increase, most agreed that Canada should honour its commitment to NATO and do its part. Some felt that it is important for Canada's national security to make this investment. One participant referenced North Korea as a concern, and another "the loss of the US as a reliable ally", with both saying that Canada must do more to protect its own interests, which generated some agreement. Others were concerned that failure to meet this commitment could lead to some form of penalty or retaliation from other NATO countries, which could negatively affect trade and economic cooperation. A few in Thunder Bay felt that increases in military spending by the federal government might be good for the local economy and jobs.

In most instances, whether for or against the increase, opinions were not especially hardened. In fact, a great deal of the commentary from participants on the issue was presented in the form of a question. Many wanted more information about NATO and GDP, for instance, to better understand the issues and amount of money involved. Most participants wondered how much money was at stake, with many feeling that it must be a lot but not quite sure. Some asked whether Canada really needs to make this increased investment and who set the target. Many wondered where that money would come from. Among a number of participants who were inclined to oppose the increase, some wavered and felt Canada might be able to invest a bit more, perhaps, if not quite the 2%, provided it did not cost too much or affect spending on other national priorities. Many seemed to want more information before solidifying their opinion.

### **Medically Assisted Dying (St. John's, Chicoutimi, Brampton, Thunder Bay)**

There was widespread, but not universal, awareness of the legalization of medically assisted dying in Canada. Other than in Chicoutimi, few were aware of the recent court ruling in Quebec that both the province's and federal's laws on assisted dying were too restrictive. There were participants who were vaguely aware of some recent news on this issue. Some had heard of a recent court case or of a "lack of consistency in the rules," but few could cite any particulars. The men's group in Chicoutimi was the main exception. In this group most said they were aware of recent news concerning a proposed change to the law to make assisted dying more accessible by eliminating some current restrictions. In both the men's and women's groups in this location, a number of participants also said they had heard something about "increasing the 'delay' required" to access medically-assisted dying, though few could provide further clarity or details.

# Government of Canada Priorities (St. John's, Chicoutimi, Brampton, Thunder Bay, Saskatoon, Calgary, Kelowna)

## **Speech from the Throne**

There were no top-of-mind mentions of the Throne Speech when participants were asked to identify recent Government of Canada news. On an aided basis, when asked directly about it, few had seen, read or heard anything about the speech, with the exception of a handful of participants across locations. A number of participants indicated that they were unfamiliar with the concept of a Speech from the Throne.

Among those who were aware of the speech, only a few participants could cite any specifics from it, which included, variously, some mention of climate change, tax cuts, pipelines, "East-West issues," and Pharmacare. A couple of the women in the Kelowna group said they had seen some positive coverage suggesting that the speech had affected a welcome "humble tone" or was about "building bridges" or "working together". Others were neutral with not a lot to say, and a few were more critical or dismissive. A couple of participants in Thunder Bay felt that it did not adequately address Western issues.

## **Top-of-Mind Priorities (Unaided)**

There was no strong consensus across groups and locations about what the Government of Canada should be focussed on. The most common mentions related to the environment, immigration, and economic concerns.

Environmental priorities tended to focus on climate change and the need to address this challenge and transition toward a more sustainable economy. There were a few mentions of a "carbon tax" and pollution, generally. While these issues came up in all locations, getting a mention in most groups, they were most prevalent in Chicoutimi and among the women in Kelowna.

With respect to immigration, those who cited it as a priority were generally concerned about too much immigration and wanted to see the Government of Canada increase border security and/or focus more on helping current Canadian residents. These kinds of comments, which came up in multiple groups and locations, were fuelled by perceptions that newcomers were being favoured for local job opportunities, public spending was being diverted to support immigrants and refugees rather than for (other) vulnerable Canadians, and that immigrants and refugees posed a security risk.

Economic concerns were relatively high on the radar as well, especially in the Western groups. Jobs and job-related education and re-training were mentioned in the Calgary groups, along with the need to get pipelines built. In Saskatoon, there was notable concern with low incomes and the high cost of living, especially in the North, and a desire for more support for housing, post-secondary education and food expenses, as well as mental health and addiction, which many linked to poverty. In Kelowna, there was a real focus within the men's group on building the economy and increasing jobs and exports, as well as reducing the tax burden. In both Kelowna and Thunder Bay, there was also a desire for the federal government to support the growth of sectors focussed on the refinement and processing of natural resources prior to export.

Among other issues mentioned, participants in Thunder Bay felt the federal government needs to do more to assist with the safety of the local water supply. And in Calgary and Kelowna, there were mentions of the need to focus on Western concerns and national unity.

### **Priorities Exercise**

All groups were provided with a list of priorities that the Government of Canada pledged to implement in the recent Speech from the Throne. Participants were asked to identify the three priorities on the list most important to them personally, as well as their number-one choice, in addition to any item they thought the Government of Canada should not pursue.

The following list of priorities was provided:

- Banning all assault rifles in Canada
- Conserving and protecting 25% of Canada's land and 25% of Canada's oceans by 2025
- Eliminating all long-term drinking water advisories on First Nations reserves by 2021
- Ensuring every Canadian has access to a family doctor.
- Implementing a price on pollution on every province that refuses to implement their own
- Implementing a universal Pharmacare program to reduce the cost of prescriptions
- Increasing the federal minimum wage to \$15/hour
- Lowering taxes for the middle class
- Planting 2 billion trees in Canada to clean the air
- Reducing the cost of cellphone bills by 25%
- Reducing Canada's greenhouse gas emissions to net-zero by 2050 (West only)

Following the exercise, participants were asked to identify and explain their choices. There was also a group discussion about whether or not the government will be able to complete all of these priorities in the next few years, and which, if any, might be most difficult to complete. Participants were also asked how they would evaluate whether the government is taking action to complete each of these priorities.

With respect to the broad question of whether the government will be able to complete all the priorities on the list over the next few years, participants felt that this was unlikely. The list was widely

viewed as a lengthy one, and many of the individual priorities were perceived to be challenging, either practically or politically.

Detailed findings are as follows, with priorities listed in order of importance, based on the number of respondents who placed them among their top three.

### **Ensuring every Canadian has access to a family doctor**

While the need for greater access to family doctors was not top-of-mind when participants were asked to identify Government of Canada priorities unaided, it was the number one priority selected from the list provided. By a wide margin, it was most commonly selected as the top-three *and* number-one priority, in total, with men and women equally likely to identify it as such.

In Chicoutimi and St. John's, in particular, universal access to a family doctor was overwhelmingly identified as the most important priority by participants in these two communities, while in others it emerged as either first or second on the list. The exception was Saskatoon, where a number of other priorities were seen to be more important, especially safe water on reserves.

In explaining their choice, many identified personal experiences with the difficulty of trying to find a doctor, either firsthand or through family and friends. Participants spoke about overreliance and strains on walk-in clinics and emergency departments in their communities, leading to inconsistent care and long waits. For those in smaller cities this was especially widespread and concerning. A number of participants in Thunder Bay and Chicoutimi, in particular, talked about the added strains on the health care system resulting from the aging population, compounded by the fact that many existing family doctors are nearing retirement age themselves. In Thunder Bay, some noted that the situation is especially dire for members of local Indigenous communities.

In the larger centres of Calgary and Brampton, a number of participants emphasized the importance of this priority to communities smaller than their own and talked about the broad social relevance of this priority for Canadians in general. There were participants in all groups and locations who spoke about universal health care as a core Canadian value, and access to doctors as a fundamental precondition for delivering on that promise. One participant in Brampton noted that good health "leads to everything else", and this comment received general agreement.

Everyone felt that delivering on this priority will be difficult for the Government of Canada. Most agreed this kind of goal was "easier said than done". Some noted the enduring nature of the problem as evidence. Others identified specific barriers, like the time required for more doctors to graduate, the difficulty for new immigrant doctors to get their foreign credential recognized, the public costs involved in paying for more doctors, and a lack of sufficient medical schools and spots for aspiring physicians. In Thunder Bay, many felt that doctors do not want to go to Northern communities like theirs.

In terms of how they would evaluate government action against this priority, most felt they would see results first-hand, either by getting/keeping a family doctor for themselves and their immediate family members, by seeing more signs in doctors' offices about accepting new patients, or experiencing reduced wait times for appointments and less crowding in walk-in clinics and emergency rooms. Many



also noted that they would hear about it from family, friends and others, as well as from the media and government.

### **Lowering taxes for the middle class**

As with increased access to doctors, middle class tax relief was not top-of-mind as a priority for most. But it was near the top of the list on an aided basis when presented to participants for consideration. In terms of the totals across groups, it was the second most widely selected top-three and number-one priority by participants overall, although significantly trailing the need for more doctors.

Regionally, however, there were some interesting variations. In Calgary and Kelowna, tax relief was the most widely selected top-three and number-one priority. In Brampton as many people identified the need for tax cuts as they did the need for better access to doctors, putting both in the top spot. In St. John's and Saskatoon, on the other hand, middle class tax cuts were closer to the middle of the list, while in Thunder Bay only two people placed middle class tax cuts in their top three, and no one chose it as their number-one priority, placing it right near the bottom of the list of priorities in this location.

Among the many who identified middle class tax cuts as a top priority, most felt that they are good for the middle class, good for businesses, the economy and jobs, and good for Canada, overall, by putting more money in the pockets of the majority of Canadians. Some felt that a tax break would help reduce inequality, strengthen the middle class, or help the majority of households deal with the ever-rising cost of living, while others felt that the middle class simply needs a break and is being taxed too much.

Among those who did not place this on the list of their top priorities, and even among some who did, a number of concerns were expressed about tax breaks. Some felt we simply cannot afford it and criticized the move as a bid for popularity that won't make a big difference to individuals but will have a big negative impact on government by reducing revenue and its ability to put money toward other important priorities. Some, especially in Brampton, where overall support for tax cuts was high, were concerned about the unintended effects on deficit and debt reduction as well as spending on social programs. That said, only four participants, overall, said that middle-class tax cuts should not be pursued by the Government of Canada – none of them in St. John's and only one in Thunder Bay, where relatively few identified middle class tax cuts as a high priority.

Few felt that this would be a difficult priority for the federal government to accomplish from a practical perspective, because it is so straight forward and easily done. Some, however, felt that it might be a bit more difficult due to some potential political opposition.

In terms of how they would evaluate action toward accomplishing this priority, many said that they would see and feel the impact of the tax cuts firsthand, with more disposable income in addition to hearing about it via media coverage and from the government.

### **Implementing a universal Pharmacare program to reduce the cost of prescriptions**

Pharmacare was also widely selected as both a top-three and number-one priority, coming in just a little behind tax cuts for the middle class on both measures overall. Participants in St. John's were much more likely to identify this as a high priority than participants in other locations, reflecting a

heightened concern with cost of living, pocketbook issues, and the added strain of expensive medications.

In all locations and groups, those identifying Pharmacare as a high priority spoke about medication as an essential part of healthcare, and the importance of making it universally accessible for those who need it most. For some, it was personally relevant, owing to a lack of coverage. But for most, it was a matter of fairness, expressed in concern for others - whether family, friends, or "working people" with low incomes - who need access to expensive medication and either struggle to afford it or go without. Pharmacare was seen by most as critical for delivering on the promise of universal health care, identified by one participant in Calgary as a "basic right", to general agreement.

Most also felt that successfully implementing a Pharmacare program would be difficult, costly, and complicated. Many were not sure how it would work, what role the federal government would play, how and if insurance and pharmaceutical companies would be involved, and whether it would drive up public costs in pursuit of profits. A few participants in multiple locations felt that pharmaceutical companies would fight the implementation of this priority. Some felt that the federal government would be purchasing drugs directly and wondered if that would bring costs down. Others wondered if there could be unintended negative consequences, like the overuse and overprescribing of medications, especially in regard to opiates, which might increase costs and exacerbate problems with addiction and overdoses. Overall, though, nearly all felt that if managed wisely, and with the cooperation of the many players involved, a national Pharmacare program would be a net benefit, possibly even delivering savings, and especially important for the people without sufficient access to needed drug therapies because of cost and lack of coverage.

With respect to evaluating action in support of this kind of program, most felt they would see it directly through increased savings and access to medicine-based treatments, hear less about cost barriers for others, and see media coverage and communications about it from government.

### **Conserving and protecting 25% of Canada's land and 25% of Canada's oceans by 2025**

A significant number of participants, equally split between men and women, placed this priority in their top three, with participants in Chicoutimi and St. John's most likely to do so. Relatively few, however, in any location identified it as their number-one priority compared to the priorities above.

Among those who felt this should be a key priority for government, reasons given tended to be general versus specific. Most simply stated that conservation is important. A few were adamant, stressing just how fundamental conservation is to the health of our environment, economy, and way of life. For many who chose it, responses suggest they viewed it as a basic issue, and simply hard to disagree with as a very important priority.

That said, a number of people did disagree with it. About as many people identified it as a priority that the government should not pursue as those who identified it as their number-one priority. The issue here, which emerged as a broader concern, is that success would be difficult to achieve and even harder to measure. Some liked the "25%" target, as something concrete to work towards, but more were confused by it, describing it as "vague" or "abstract" and wondering how this would be determined, pursued, and evaluated. Where would government focus? Would it be equitable? Who



would be involved? What resources would be chosen, and specific actions undertaken? Participants had a lot of questions and seemed to struggle with the concept of conserving 25% of land and oceans in the absence of more information about how this would be accomplished in real terms. Some also felt that the time allotted to accomplish this goal was too short to be realistic.

Accordingly, most felt it would be very difficult for government to achieve this goal, and few had any idea, when asked directly, how actions to implement it would be evaluated.

### **Eliminating all long-term drinking water advisories on First Nations reserves by 2021**

The wording of this priority caused confusion among some participants. A number of people identified it as one that should not be pursued because they interpreted it as an intention to just stop the advisories without addressing the underlying problem. This happened most commonly in Brampton and Calgary among participants who appeared to be somewhat uniformed of the issue with clean water on reserves in Canada. In these two locations, as well as Chicoutimi and St. John's, very few if any participants identified this as a top priority, placing it at or near the bottom of the list.

By contrast, this was very clearly the top priority for participants in Thunder Bay who understood that this priority was about the improvement of water quality. More people placed it in the top three than greater access to doctors, and it was in a class of its own in being selected as the number-one priority by the greatest number of people in this location. In Saskatoon, as well, it was the top-three and number-one priority identified by the greatest number of people, though not by the same wide margin. In Kelowna it was also near the top of the list.

In Thunder Bay, water issues were clearly a huge concern, and not just with respect to what is happening on reserves but in the city itself, where water safety has been negatively affected by old lead pipes that are only slowly getting replaced. A number of participants in the women's group conflated the two issues in describing the reasons for their selection. Across both groups, however, participants talked about clean water being a "human right" and how the lack of it affects everything, including human health, animal health, and public morale. Many were angry or dispirited by a perceived lack of action to ensure that Indigenous people, and citizens of Thunder Bay, have access to something as fundamental as safe drinking water. Some described it as "shameful".

Many of these sentiments were echoed in other groups as well, especially (but by no means exclusively) in Kelowna and Saskatoon, where there was greater awareness of the issue and a higher level of concern. While some participants required a bit of an explanation to better understand the problem and the government's efforts to address it, a lack of safe water on reserves was widely viewed as a moral issue and failing by Canada. Multiple participants across locations stressed that access to clean water is essential to life and health, a basic human right, and something that no Canadian should go without. Words like "shameful" and "terrible" were widely used to describe the problem. Given the intensity of the sentiments and general consensus regarding the significance of this problem, it is possible that an initial greater understanding of this priority goal would have pushed it up the ranks of importance, overall.

Most felt that this is a very challenging problem that will be hard for the Government of Canada to solve, especially within such a short time. A number of participants described the time frame as overly



ambitious or unrealistic. Some also pointed to the persistence of the issue as evidence of its intractability, citing the number of times commitments have been made over the years and then left unfulfilled. Many felt that there was a lack of will to getting this done, while others described it as costly and complicated, given the role that poverty and physical isolation play in regard to this issue. Some, especially in Thunder Bay, felt that the government and the Canadian public simply don't care, or don't care enough. A few in Brampton felt that Indigenous communities have either contributed to the problem or bear some responsibility for water quality issues.

Asked how they would evaluate action against the successful accomplishment of this commitment, most said they would either hear about it in the media, and hear less about the problem.

### **Increasing the federal minimum wage to \$15/hour**

Selections of this priority were moderate, placing it in the middle of the list as a top-three priority, with very few putting it in their number-one spot. Regionally, the greatest support for an increase in the federal minimum wage was found in St. John's and Saskatoon, particularly among the women.

Those who selected this commitment as an important one for them were not outwardly concerned for themselves. Most said it was a matter of fairness, and important to them that low income workers earn a decent wage especially with the cost of living so high.

A fair number of participants felt that the Government of Canada should not pursue this priority, especially among the men, overall, and in Thunder Bay and Kelowna; however, there were only few participants, at most, in any one group who expressed opposition.

Among those who were concerned about an increased federal minimum wage, the costs for businesses and unintended consequences for jobs and the economy were mentioned most commonly. In St. John's among the men's group, there was a fear that much-needed businesses and employers could close as a result. And in Thunder Bay some felt that few people in their own community would benefit but that larger companies might be affected.

Most felt that increasing the federal minimum wage would be easy to do but would also be met with strong resistance from businesses, and that it might not work out as planned because of the negative consequences for the economy and jobs. As for evaluating government action against this promise, most said it would be self-evident through implementation, and that they would hear or read about in the news.

### **Reducing Canada's greenhouse gas emissions to net-zero by 2050 (West only)**

In the three western groups (Kelowna, Saskatoon, and Calgary) where this priority was included, it was rated as a moderate priority, overall. In Kelowna, there was a big gender split: about half the women selected it as a top-three priority versus only one man, while nearly half the men opposed it versus none of the women. In Saskatoon, there was neither opposition to nor strong support for this goal. And in Calgary, results were middling, with only a few placing it in their top three, but even fewer opposing it.



Those who said this priority was of high importance to them were concerned about the environment, overall, especially climate change, and felt that it is important for Canada to get serious about transitioning away from fossil fuels and to lead by example in order to get other countries on board.

Participants who opposed this priority tended to dislike or distrust the solutions. Some described the “carbon tax” as an undesirable and ineffectual tactic that increases costs for average citizens, hurts the economy and jobs, and makes Canada less competitive, while doing little to actually curb emissions, especially among the big polluters. This was an especially prominent view among the men in Kelowna. Others weren’t sure how this goal would be accomplished and felt that it was unrealistic. In Calgary, there was some comment that the oil and gas sector is already taking this on and have to be the ones to lead this effort, with support from the province, in order to get the balance right and protect the economy.

Most felt this goal would be extremely difficult to accomplish for the Government of Canada for a wide variety of reasons, including a lack of workable solutions, resistance from businesses, and disagreements with key provinces about how to go about it. As for evaluating progress against this goal, participants pointed to more discussion and agreement between the federal and provincial governments, more incentives for consumers, like rebates for electric vehicles, more sustainable products on offer, and more renewable energy sources, like windmills and electric vehicle (EV) charging stations.

### **Planting 2 billion trees in Canada to clean the air**

This priority was closer to the bottom of the list, with nearly as many people opposed to it as those who placed it in their top-three. Men were more likely than women to identify this as a priority for them. Those who did, felt that it could have a big impact on the environment, and that it is easier to do and more straight-forward than some of the other solutions to climate change, like reducing GHGs, which faced resistance from businesses and interest groups. Among, other reasons, this was seen as a way for Canada to show global leadership given the available land here, deforestation was an issue in parts of the country such as Northern Alberta, and tree planting was viewed as a good way to provide employment for those out of work.

Among those who were not supportive, or did not place a high priority on this initiative, some felt (particularly in Thunder Bay and St. John’s) that we already had enough trees in Canada and were a “tree rich” country, and there was some question about the practicalities, sheer scope of the undertaking, and how it would be done and evaluated. There was some division on this in some of the groups.

In terms of evaluating it, there was little comment, except to debate the difficulty or ease of the undertaking. Some felt they would see the impact in their neighbourhood, and a few in Brampton felt it would be important for their community, with all the new development and traffic in their city.

### **Implementing a price on pollution on every province that refuses to implement their own**

Relatively few selected this a top-three priority and were just as likely to select it as one of the priorities the government should not pursue. Women were more likely than men to place importance

on this goal, and men were more likely than women to be opposed to it, overall. Regionally, those in Chicoutimi were most likely to say that implementing a price on pollution in provinces without it is a high priority for them, and no one in these groups, or in St. John's, felt this is something the Government of Canada should not do. Men in Kelowna were the most opposed, with about half of them identifying this as a priority that they did not support, as were participants in Calgary, although there was not widespread opposition here, or in any of the other groups.

Among those who did identify this as a top priority, most said that climate change was a serious issue that needed to be addressed, and that putting a price on pollution was just a start but a "move in the right direction". In Quebec, the general sentiment was that we had no choice, and that it was imperative for the other provinces to participate and "do their part". A few commented positively that this would be aimed at businesses, primarily, as the big polluters, and not consumers like themselves. And many assumed that the money raised from this kind of initiative would be invested in the green technology and energy required to transition our economy away from its reliance on fossil fuels, which they felt was necessary.

Even among those who did not identify this as a top priority, there was fairly broad agreement with the sentiments expressed above, and more support for this priority than the results from the exercise may reflect, given some participants' unfamiliarity with the term "price on pollution".

Among those who opposed it, there was some discomfort with the idea of the Government of Canada imposing this on the provinces. In Calgary, in particular, there was general agreement that this was and should be a provincial matter. The bigger concerns, however, tended to focus on the potential negative impacts on the economy and jobs, as well as the effectiveness of putting a price on pollution and whether this would work, how it would be applied, and to what extent Canada would be joined in this effort by other countries, especially the big global polluters needed to make it worthwhile.

Most felt that this would be a very difficult priority to implement for the Government of Canada. It was widely viewed as complicated, hard to balance with economic imperatives, and politically very challenging, given resistance from the provinces and many in the West. Many also identified resistance from businesses as a hurdle.

A number of participants were unsure how action against this priority would be evaluated and commented less about the actual implementation of a provincial plan than about the mechanics of the pricing scheme and its success in reducing pollution, which a number of participants felt would be hard to implement, enforce, and measure.

### **Banning all assault rifles in Canada**

Banning assault rifles was a low priority, overall. Everywhere outside Ontario, in fact, it was widely identified as a priority that the government should not pursue. This was especially true in Chicoutimi and Kelowna, in particular, where a significant number of participants were against the ban and some of the men brought it up, unaided, when discussing Government of Canada priorities.

Among the relatively few who identified the ban as a top priority, most were in Brampton or Thunder Bay, where there was heightened concern about gun crime, and a belief among some that banning



guns, in general, is a good idea. Even here, though, there were many in the groups who felt that assault rifles were not really the issue, given their rarity, and that banning them was not sufficient to deal with guns and violence, more broadly.

In the other groups where high numbers of people were against the ban, the same kind of reasons were given, but more emphatically. Most felt that it would not only fail to reduce crime but infringe on the rights, as they saw it, of law-abiding citizens to own and use guns responsibly, including for their own protection, which could unwittingly compromise safety. The general sentiment was that criminals were the problem, not guns, and that criminals did not respect bans and will acquire illegal guns coming over the border from the US in any case. Quite a few participants saw this ban as the beginning of a more broad-based ban or set of restrictions on gun ownership and were opposed to this kind of government intrusion.

Regardless of their support or opposition to the ban, most felt that this priority would be very hard for the Government of Canada to implement successfully. On the one hand, many felt that it likely would not have much of an impact on illegal guns and gun-related violence and criminal activity. On the other hand, many felt that it would be politically difficult to implement, based on a sense that there would be opposition from various groups, including political opponents, those living in the west and rural communities, as well as gun-rights lobbyists.

In terms of how they might evaluate whether the Government is taking action to complete this priority, most said they would hear about it in the news, especially with regard to opposition. Among those more optimistic about its effect, some said they would hear less about gun violence in the media and see more data showing reduced violence and crime.

### **Reducing the cost of cellphone bills by 25%**

This priority was right at the bottom of the list, overall, with very few identifying it as a top-three priority for themselves, no one identifying it as their number one priority, and quite a few selecting it as an item on the list that the federal government should not pursue. The few for whom it was a priority tended to be located in large cities (Brampton and Calgary) and were either self-employed or running small businesses and directly responsible for fairly significant cell phone costs as a result. These participants identified cell phone costs as a concern. In fact, reducing cell phone costs was identified, unaided, as a priority for the Government of Canada by at least one participant in each of the Calgary groups.

Most participants acknowledged that cell phone costs in Canada are too high “compared to other countries,” While some noted that the government could remove restrictions and increase competition to help bring prices down, many interpreted this priority as the government setting prices for private companies and telephone services, which they felt was not the government’s role.. Others simply said they weren’t clear how government would achieve a 25% reduction, which made them wary. Most also felt, quite strongly, that the Government of Canada simply had much bigger priorities.

Accordingly, most also felt that any move to implement this kind of reduction would be met with resistance from businesses and “interest groups”, as well as members of the public like themselves who wouldn’t want to see government interfere in the market by setting prices. Few had any idea how they



would evaluate government action against this priority and were resistant to considering it, although some did say there would likely be “an announcement” from government as well as reports in the media, especially about opposition to the move.

### **Top priorities by location**

While the top three priorities across groups, in total, were universal access to family doctors, tax relief for the middle class, and a national Pharmacare program, there were some notable differences across locations. Below are the most important priorities identified in each location, rank-ordered based on the number of participants who selected them as their top three (with their relative strength as a number-one choice mentioned where notable). Priorities with the same results are combined with “/”. The top three priorities are listed for each location, except for Brampton, Thunder Bay and Calgary, where only two priorities were widely selected.

**St. John’s:** Family doctors (very strong), Pharmacare, conservation/minimum wage.

**Chicoutimi:** Family doctors (very strong), lowering taxes, and Pharmacare/price on pollution/conservation.

**Brampton:** Family doctors/lowering taxes.

**Thunder Bay:** Water on reserves (very strong) and family doctors.

**Saskatoon:** Water on reserves, Pharmacare/minimum wage, taxes.

**Calgary:** Lowering taxes/family doctor.

**Kelowna:** Lowering taxes, family doctors, water on reserves.

## Local Challenges (St. John’s, Chicoutimi, Brampton, Thunder Bay)

Participants identified a wide range of challenges in their respective communities, with some convergence on common themes but some notable divergence as well. In all locations participants raised a need for more investment in infrastructure, most commonly related to highways, roads, and public transit. Most also wanted increased investments in their health care systems, as well, and more support and services for vulnerable and aging populations. The challenges associated with demographic shifts, or economic ones, were also commonly mentioned. To a large degree, however, the real character of the issues and priorities varied by community.

In all locations, there was very limited awareness of federal investments and some mixed views about the Government of Canada’s impact on the community.





## **Brampton**

In Brampton, top-of-mind local challenges focussed heavily on cars and transportation, from the high cost of auto insurance in the area (the highest in the province, many said), to extreme traffic congestion and insufficient public transit, to poor drivers and road safety. Rapid population growth and urban development were also strongly top-of-mind. Many complained of poor urban planning, influential developers, and overcrowding in the city, with residences being over-occupied and houses being built too close together. Many felt that the population boom was not only putting considerable strain on the existing transportation infrastructure but outpacing new investments in this critical area. Among other infrastructure issues, a number of participants commented on the cancellation of a planned university in Brampton and how that adds to transportation woes because local students needed to travel outside the city, while some identified the need for a larger hospital.

There was very low awareness of federal investments in Brampton. A few participants in the men's group were aware of some federal funding for light rail transit (LRT) in the area. But there was little sense, overall, that the Government of Canada has done much for the area in recent years. Some felt strongly, in fact, that federal policies around immigration are exacerbating local challenges. The biggest change to the area in the last 5-10 years was widely viewed as population explosion combined with rapid, poorly planned development.

## **Thunder Bay**

In Thunder Bay, the general view was that the area is struggling in many respects, both economically and socially. The declining industrial base, population, and tax base were mentioned as compounding challenges, with negative implications for much-needed investments in infrastructure and social services. There was mention of old buildings sitting empty, old lead service pipes affecting the safety of the water supply, and inadequate public transport. A number of participants mentioned the need for better support for the aging population, including more seniors' residences, and for more doctors and better health care in general. Issues related to poverty, homelessness, unaffordable housing and substance abuse were also identified. And even with the homicide rate down, most said, crime continues to be a big local issue focussed on gangs, drugs, and sex trafficking primarily. Anti-Indigenous racism from police was mentioned, as well, by Indigenous participants, in addition to "missing" Indigenous people, both male and female.

Most in Thunder Bay felt that big changes have taken place in their community and region in recent years, mostly related to shifts in the economic base. Large industries and employers have left, many said, citing multiple closures in the saw and paper mill sectors, in particular, with some blaming the softwood lumber tariffs. On the upside, some pointed to diversification in the economy and a shift to greater public-sector employment, from government offices and local universities, for instance, as well as an increase in the number of hotels and small businesses, creating local jobs. A few in the men's group also positively noted that shipping through the harbour has increased, along with the number of trains coming through the city.



Participants were somewhat split about whether or not the federal government has had much of an impact on the local economy and community recently. Many were unaware of any investments while others felt that the Government of Canada is actively neglecting Thunder Bay. The problem with the local water supply came up again in this context, as an important local issue receiving little attention from the federal government. More positively, a participant noted that the federal government has put money into the community's waterfront and harbour, which triggered some broader recognition of this investment. One pointed to the local universities as a probable area of federal investment, to some wider agreement. Overall, however, there was very low awareness of any federal investments, with many inclined to think this is evidence of little being done.

### **St. John's**

In St. John's, economic and financial challenges were strongly top-of-mind, especially with respect to local jobs and incomes, with many citing high unemployment and the low minimum wage as big local problems. Related to these, cost-of-living and pocket-book issues were widely mentioned, ranging from unaffordable housing, to high prices for electricity, gas, and groceries. A number of participants also cited the lack of social supports for those in need, with reference to food insecurity, low income seniors, children in foster care, and those with mental health or addiction issues. Insufficient child and senior care received mentions as well, as did infrastructure issues related to roads, public transit, and the local water system.

Compared to other communities, few in St. John's were able to identify significant changes to their community in recent years. Among the issues that did get mentioned, immigration was top-of-mind, prompting some positive comments about increased diversity as well as negative ones about employers hiring newcomers rather than local residents, and a perception that new immigrants were receiving too many subsidies from the government. Some positively identified growth in the number of hotels in the city and improvements to the airport, while others commented more negatively on small "mom and pop" businesses disappearing and getting replaced with large chains, eroding opportunities for local entrepreneurs and leading to more low-wage jobs.

Participants in St. John's had little to say about whether or not recent federal government policies or programs have had an impact on their community. No one was aware of any recent investments. There was some positive mention of cannabis legalization generating economic activity and jobs in the area, while high electricity prices received several mentions as an area requiring government subsidies or intervention to help make energy more affordable.

### **Chicoutimi**

In Chicoutimi, challenges related to population decline and aging were prominently mentioned, especially in relation to a reduction in the qualified workforce, making it hard for many businesses and industries to grow or flourish. In addition to reducing the work force, these demographic changes were seen to be reducing the tax base while at the same time increasing the need for more retirement residences and support services for seniors, and placing additional strains on an already-stretched



healthcare system with too few doctors and overcrowded emergency rooms. Road infrastructure was also mentioned as an area in need of new investment. And there was some concern in the women's group about a shortfall in local daycares, kindergartens and teachers, as well as heavy industry coming into the area and creating problems, potentially, for the environment and tourism industry.

Asked about changes in Chicoutimi over the past 5-10 years, many pointed, again, to population aging and decline. Most, however, were positive overall, citing the growth of tourism, the opening of new businesses and shops, improvements in the quality of life, increases in longevity, and new highway and bridge infrastructure.

Asked if the Government of Canada's policies, programs or investments over the last year have had a positive impact in the area, the men and women's group were split. The women were quite positive in their assessments, citing federal investments in a new bridge, and immigration policies perceived as a plus for increasing the supply of labour in the area. The men, on the other hand, tended to be somewhat negative, based on a sense that the federal government had not supported the aluminum industry enough in recent trade negotiations and that the federal government's approach had led to a soured trading relationship with the US. Some of the men pointed to legalized cannabis as a positive while others felt it has had a negative influence on the city.

## Western Alienation (Saskatoon, Calgary, Kelowna)

### **Exercise**

Participants in the Western groups were asked to write down on a sheet of paper words that they would use to describe the relationship between the Government of Canada and their province. All the descriptions were negative and focussed on a few key dynamics and descriptions.

**Damaged:** Participants widely used words to describe a damaged relationship, like fractured, strained, disconnected, unharmonious, unstable, misaligned, dysfunctional and, in Calgary, separation.

**Unproductive:** Most felt that the current dynamic is extremely unproductive, describing it as polarized, immature, adversarial, bleak, and cantankerousness, characterized by bickering, inflammatory rhetoric, misunderstanding and a lack of cooperation, compromise and communication.

**Lacking trust:** Many stressed that both the federal and their provincial governments were responsible for the current relationship and dynamic, which they characterised as lacking in trust and good will, and described with words like animosity, hostile, unfriendly, hateful, greedy, and shifty.

**Unfair:** Participants in all three locations felt like their provinces were not being treated fairly by the Canadian government and within confederation, to some degree. The "East-West" tension was



mentioned. Many felt the situation is “unbalanced”. In Alberta, equalization was brought up a number of times as unfair to their province. And participants in all three locations widely felt frustrated and disappointed, like their interests are being treated with a lack of empathy, and that their province was misunderstood, neglected, or an afterthought.

Asked what the federal government could do to demonstrate that they are in touch with the concerns of their province, participants had a lot of suggestions. Most felt that we needed to “move on” from the current dysfunctional dynamic and that the federal government needed to show some leadership in this regard by being more proactive, more visible and present in their province, more active in undertaking consultations, listening more, and by being more conciliatory, understanding, collaborative, accessible and responsive. Some felt that the federal government needed to look at and talk about the ‘bigger picture’ more, and what they are doing for the Western provinces, demonstrating what is being accomplished and not just paying superficial attention to Western concerns.

In Calgary, some said that the federal government needed to re-examine equalization payments and understand that, at the moment, Alberta might not be a “have province”. Many agreed that Alberta needed help with investment in the development of alternative energy, technology to reduce emissions from the oil and gas industry, and retraining for more job-rich industries. There were a few comments about immigration being too high and the federal government needing to prioritize issues affecting Canadians.

In Saskatoon and Kelowna, there was a desire for the federal government to undertake more action to resolve challenges of particular relevance to their provinces, like providing education for First Nations, reversing cuts to programs that negatively affect these communities, and investing in ‘at risk’ youth.

There were some calls for more restrictive immigration policies in the Kelowna groups as well as resentment expressed towards Central Canada.

Participants also said that the federal government needed to work with their provinces more on reducing trade barriers, including interprovincial ones, and increase coordination and consultation between federal and provincial ministries and Ministers involved in economic affairs, including more regular visits by federal Ministers to their provinces, and increased visibility and presence in the West.

### **TMX Pipeline**

In addition to discussing the relationship between the Government of Canada and western provinces, the groups included a discussion about a set of specific issues affecting Western Canada, the Trans Mountain Pipeline (TMX) pipeline being one of them.

Asked what they have seen, read or heard lately about the TMX pipeline, most participants were a bit vague and some admittedly confused. Even in Calgary many said they didn’t know a lot about what’s happening or even which pipeline this is, specifically. Most had seen some headlines and understood that there is controversy surrounding TMX being built (and pipelines generally), with different stakeholders taking different positions on the issues, and lots of tensions and obstacles involved. In



Saskatoon, participants commented that it's hard to know who to trust, and to get any clarity around what was happening and what was at stake, because different governments were taking different positions, and environmentalist and Indigenous groups had different perspectives still, with little convergence on a coherent narrative.

Similarly, many weren't sure if construction had started on the pipeline, especially in Calgary, and some were unsure if a final decision had even been made yet about whether or not the pipeline was going ahead at all. Across locations, a number of participants said that it was definitely moving forward, as far as they knew, and others felt that they may have heard something about this recently. Some said construction had started or was about to start; others that it might have started or be about to start, but weren't sure which, or weren't certain about either.

Few believed that the pipeline will be built on time, for a variety of reasons. Some felt that these types of big projects always fall behind schedule. And participants across locations pointed to the many obstacles involved, including concerns about potential water safety and proximity to water tables and river systems, especially on Indigenous land, as well as protests and opposition from Indigenous communities, environmentalists and, some said, Quebec. Some in Kelowna were concerned about a lack of consultation and the possibility that construction quality could be compromised to save time and money, noting that there were legitimate concern about construction and that it needs to be done properly, even if it takes more time.

In Calgary, many in the women's group stressed the need to get it done, for the sake of the provincial economy, while also acknowledging that Alberta needed to accept that it has to transition away from its reliance on oil and gas and accept that the world is changing. In Kelowna, too, a number of the men stated their support for the project, with the caveat that we should be refining the oil here in Canada and not simply exporting bitumen.

### **Bills C-69 and C-48**

Few participants in these groups were familiar with these bills by name. There was some recognition among the participants in Calgary, but no one could provide any details. A couple of the women in Kelowna knew that they had something to do with environmental oversight and protection.

In each group, participants were provided with the following descriptions of the bills for clarity, with some of the debate about them briefly outlined, before being asked for their opinion:

*"Bill C-69 is a recently enacted federal government law that strengthens the requirements for environmental assessments and consultations with local communities before large scale infrastructure projects can be built. While some say this law provides important protections to ensure local communities know the environmental risks of new projects and have a say in whether they go forward, others say it creates too much red tape and may slow or stop important projects, including pipelines from going forward."*



*“Bill C-48 is also another recently enacted federal law, which prevents oil tankers from transporting large amounts of oil to and from the North Coast of BC. Some say this law will reduce the risk of oil spills in delicate marine ecosystems, while others worry it will restrict Canada’s ability to export oil to markets overseas by limiting which ports can be used by oil tankers.”*

There was more recognition of these bills following the descriptions. A number of participants felt they had heard something about them, or simply assumed that these kinds of measures and requirements were already in place.

Most could see both sides of the argument for and against each of these bills. Many acknowledged the importance of protecting the environment, especially water, in building pipelines and exporting oil and gas products overseas.

With respect to Bill C-69, many acknowledged the importance of consulting local communities, respecting their concerns, and creating accountability. At the same time, many were concerned about getting bogged down in consultations and being unable to move forward with projects that are critical for the economy and province or region, overall, and concerned that projects could be stymied by endless efforts to get a large number of small communities and their citizens onside before going ahead. Many were worried that if not managed properly this would result in delays, and that the process could become mired in local politics and divisiveness, leading to ballooning public costs and the cancellation of important projects. While considered reasonable in principle, the big concern was that this would not work well in practice, given the number of small communities affected and the fact, some felt, that a small portion of the public, who might not be well informed, would be asked to give approval and could be easily divided by rivaling leadership or interest groups and end up shutting down economic progress and job creation for the many. A number of participants suggested that there have to be some clear conditions for and limits to consultations to get the balance right, like dealing with representatives and not the entire community or ensuring that just a few people act as representatives.

With respect to Bill C-48, again, participants tended to support it in principle, and some overall, saying that this is an essential measure to protect the coast. But many wondered if it would work in practice, and if industry wouldn’t simply find work arounds, like sending the same volume of oil in a large number of small tankers that could just as easily cause the kind of environmental damage that the bill seeks to avoid.

While seeing the pros and cons of both bills, most felt that they needed a lot more information before drawing any conclusions about whether either should go ahead or would work to produce the kinds of protections they’ve been designed for, while also supporting much-needed economic activity. In respect to both bills, participants wanted to know more about the pros and cons, the costs involved, how they would be implemented, what the effect would be on jobs, and what kinds of safeguards would be in place to avoid unnecessary derailing of projects and efforts to get oil and gas to overseas markets. Many were wary and didn’t have a lot of faith in government to get the balance right.

### **Equalization payments**

Most in Calgary were familiar with the term 'equalization payments', but many participants in the other Western groups were unfamiliar with it, especially in Saskatoon, or only vaguely aware of what it refers to and how the system works. Participants described it as "payouts" that provinces make into a "federal pot" that then gets redistributed based on the relative wealth and needs of various provinces. Most in Calgary said they had a general idea of how the system works, and that Alberta was paying more than it is receiving. Few could describe it in detail or with much confidence, however, even in Calgary. The most fulsome description given was to say it is "a formula for redistributing tax revenue to level the playing field among provinces and provide more to those who need it from those with more money among the provinces." A number of participants in the Calgary groups, and a few others elsewhere, felt that Quebec had negotiated a "good deal" and was on the receiving end, perhaps undeservedly, and a number of participants commented on the East Coast and Maritime provinces receiving money from the formula, with some using the language of "have and have not".

Many weren't sure if the system should be changed, owing to a lack of knowledge about it, but a number of participants in all groups were aware that this has become an issue of contention in Alberta and the west more broadly. Some in Calgary and Kelowna felt that it is an example of bias against the West in favour of Central and Eastern Canada and were critical of the system, feeling that it hurts their economies, and should be changed. A few also had concerns that equalization payments are a form of welfare for less wealthy provinces that, in their view, could be entrenching economic struggles by stopping these provinces from diversifying their economies and becoming more self-sustaining. Some in Calgary were concerned that Alberta was "never on the receiving end" and should be given a break, at least temporarily. Even in Calgary, however, a number of participants weren't really sure, noting that coverage of the issue, and others like it, could be biased or distorting. While opinion, where it did exist, tended to be critical, few were hardened, owing to a basic lack of knowledge. Those with the strongest negative opinions tended to be among the men's group in Kelowna who felt that the West, in general, was being shortchanged.

Due to their lack of detailed knowledge about how the system of equalization payments work, no one had any concrete suggestions for how it might be changed or improved.

### **China's boycott of the Canadian canola industry**

Only a few participants in most groups were aware of this issue, with familiarity highest in Calgary and lowest in Saskatoon among the women. Most didn't know any of the details, beyond the headlines they had seen in the media, but felt it was part of a larger diplomatic and trade dispute between Canada and China that was related to house arrest of a Chinese business executive. No one was aware of the regional impact the boycott was having or what the federal government had been doing in response to the issue, either with respect to support for farmers or its relationship with China.

All groups were provided with a bit of background on the issue, for clarity, and then asked for their opinion about what the Government of Canada should do. They were given three options to consider:



- Make concessions so that China will buy our canola again;
- Retaliate against China by imposing our own sanctions on their products; or
- Continue to financially support farmers while trying to negotiate a solution with China that doesn't involve concessions or retaliation.

Most felt that Canada should choose the last option, and continue to negotiate with China, without retaliation or concessions, while continuing to support farmers, which they widely felt to be the most reasonable, constructive, and "Canadian" approach to the problem. Most agreed with both aspects of this approach: that negotiation was wise and most constructive and that we needed to continue take care of our farmers. Many also stressed the importance of looking beyond the Chinese market for Canadian products.

With respect to making concessions, some felt it really depended on what those concessions might be, and a few felt that this might be the pragmatic option, given the size of the Chinese market and the country's importance to Canada as a trading partner. But most felt that that it was simply a bad idea and would embolden China to take further action and exploit Canada's willingness to capitulate. A few felt we should retaliate as a show of determination and force, but most felt this would be counterproductive and even perilous, given Canada's size, , serving only to escalate the dispute and lead to further retaliation from China.

### **Top Federal priority for Western Canada**

Of various issues discussed with these groups that specifically affect Western Canada – the TMX pipeline, Bills C-69 and C-48, equalization payments, and China's boycott of Canola – participants were asked to select one of them as their top priority for the Government of Canada.

In most groups, there was a consensus amongst participants that the TMX pipeline, and getting it built, should be the top priority for the federal government, given its importance to the regional economy and ability to create jobs and generate revenue. Many also felt that Bill C-69 had a direct role to play in enabling this project and was therefore important too. The only outlier was the Kelowna women's group, where concerns about the environment were relatively heightened, and most opted for negotiating with China to resolve the boycott against Canadian Canola, and to support our farmers. A few felt that dealing with equalization payments and improving that system to favour the West more than it might currently should be the priority, as they assumed that it affects more people and the economy overall than Canola exports to China.

## Frontier Mines (Calgary)

Most had not previously heard of the Frontier Mines. Participants were provided with the following description before being asked their opinions about it:





*“The Frontier Mine, which was first proposed in 2011, would be the largest oil sands mine in history if approved by the federal government. This project could create as many as 7,500 new construction jobs in Alberta, but it would also be a major source of greenhouse gas emissions and could jeopardize Canada’s ability to meet international commitments to reduce pollution.”*

Based on the description above, participants were asked if the federal government should approve the project, reject the project, or approve it only if there were commitments made by the company to ensure the environmental impact is limited. Most felt it should go ahead with assurance from the company and only if there were sufficient safety regulations in place to ensure oversight and enforcement from government, in addition to assurances being given by the company. Participants were concerned not just about emissions but about safety, in general, including contamination of the land and water. Participants felt that the company should be required to fund environmental studies, undertake remediation of land after use and clean up tailings, as well as invest in technology to reduce the greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs) resulting from the project, and be held responsible for all environmental and safety issues. Most also felt that jobs for Albertans should be guaranteed. Some stressed, to general agreement, that the project should be approved only if all these conditions were met. Toward that end, one in the men’s group suggested putting it on hold and implementing C-69 first, which also received some agreement from others.

Told that some experts have questioned whether the mine would be able to generate enough revenue to justify the costs of constructing it, participants were asked if this affected their opinion about whether the mine should be built. Some said yes, and it clearly raised concern about the project, especially among some of the women, but it also created some push back by others about never knowing what the future holds, especially with respect to the price of oil.

Most agreed, when asked, that it was possible for the federal government to reduce emissions and protect the environment, on the one hand, while also approving this project. The key, most said, was “balance”. Many believed that the environmental costs of this project could be offset through measures like investing in renewable energy, funding green initiatives, undertaking tree planting and making industry pay. Assurances that this would happen did make a number of participants feel better about the project.

On balance, while some were against the project or ambivalent, especially in the men’s group, most felt the project should go ahead, with appropriate regulations, conditions, technologies and investments in place to safeguard the environment and minimize the harms, while ensuring that jobs and benefits accrue to the province.

Environment (St. John’s, Chicoutimi, Brampton,  
Thunder Bay, Saskatoon, Calgary, Kelowna)



### **Top of Mind Awareness**

Asked what they had read, seen or heard about the environment lately, few referenced specific news stories or current events, focussing instead on broad themes and issues. The most common mentions, by far, were related to global warming and climate change, especially with regard to their effects on the North. In nearly every group, participants remarked on melting ice caps and glaciers or, more commonly, the negative effects of rising temperatures on polar bears. There were also a variety of comments related to increased forest fires, droughts, rising sea levels, and the loss of coral reefs, as well as some general mention of a “carbon tax”. There were a few references to Greta Thunberg, whose recent selection as Time Magazine’s person of the year was the only specific news story mentioned. Among the few issues unrelated to climate change, plastic pollution and, to a lesser extent, the federal government’s proposed single-use plastic ban were identified in a few groups.

### **Awareness of Government of Canada actions**

There was very low awareness of recent Government of Canada initiatives related to the environment. When asked, most participants were unable to cite anything top of mind. Where federal actions were identified, the most common mentions related to a “carbon tax” or the proposed single-use plastics ban, in addition to a few references to rebates for electric cars and federal-provincial conflict over pipelines and putting a price on pollution.

### **Paris Agreement**

Most had not heard of the Paris Agreement, but a couple people, at least, in all locations said they had some familiarity with the accord, with awareness greatest in Chicoutimi among the men. Of those familiar with the agreement, some were able to describe it as a global contract among nations to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Beyond that, knowledge tended to be vague. A few were aware of targets being set, and some knew that the US had withdrawn, but no one could provide any details of the 2030 reduction targets to which Canada has committed.

After being provided with details, participants were asked if they had heard anything about Canada meeting its targets. Some said Canada was not on track, and most assumed this to be the case. Asked whether Canada would, in their opinion, meet the target set for 2030, participants were somewhat divided. Many felt they didn’t have enough information to form an opinion, a few were cautiously optimistic, but most were doubtful or pessimistic.

Reasons for doubt tended to be vague in some cases, but most felt that a number of barriers were standing in our way: a poor track record so far; public complacency and unwillingness to make the changes required; financial costs and the importance of polluting industries to our economy; a belief that businesses were not in agreement or would skirt compliance; political divisions and resistance from provincial governments; a lack of will by the federal government to follow through; and issues like population growth, too many cars on the road, and a lack of investment in public transportation. A number of participants also felt that other countries were not taking sufficient actions to reduce

emissions, and that without them, especially big polluters like the US, China and India, the agreement would not succeed.

Those who were more optimistic about Canada meeting the Paris target tended to view our current situation and efforts in Canada more positively, overall. They pointed to considerable advances by industry to-date in reducing their emissions, a growing recognition of the urgency and importance of climate change action, and new advances and investments in technology and sustainable energy that would help us overcome some of the challenges involved.

Regardless of the difference in opinion over whether or not the targets set by the Paris Agreement would actually be met, most agreed that meeting them, or at least striving to meet them, was important, and that Canada and other countries must do more to reduce their emissions. Some saw this as a question of survival, stressing the urgency of climate change action. Most agreed that it was required to protect the environment, and quality of life for future generations. A number of participants commented on the importance of Canada showing global leadership as one of the world's wealthiest nations. And while a few participants downplayed or questioned the urgency of climate change, they were in the minority. Most felt, and many strongly, that Canada, and all countries, needed to act, and that the Paris Agreement gave us something concrete to work toward.

Asked if the Paris target was a good indicator of Canada's progress towards addressing climate change, many weren't sure. The question led to some discussion about whether the targets were realistic. Some felt they might be too ambitious from a practical perspective; others, that they did not go far enough. Most seemed to feel that the question was simply beyond the scope of their knowledge. That said, participants tended to concede, on balance, that the Paris targets were likely a good measure of progress, having been agreed to by countries.

Similarly, few felt they had the knowledge to identify 'better' indicators of progress. In the Ontario groups, it was a struggle for participants to identify any other meaningful measures of progress. In most other groups, however, participants were able to come up with at least a modest list, generally grouped as follows: evidence of behaviour change by businesses and consumers (less packaging, more recycling, and more uptake of electric cars, for instance); improvements in outcomes like the health of wildlife, fisheries, oceans, and forests; scientific data and reporting; and more investments in green tech, energy and infrastructure, as well as activities like tree planting.

Asked what Canada had done to address climate change, some participants, especially in St. John's, were unable to cite anything. In most locations, however, implementing a "carbon tax" and single-use plastics ban were mentioned. Some pointed to tightened industry regulations around emissions, and investments in green energy and recycling. In Kelowna there was some mention of rebates for EV purchases and investments in charging stations and infrastructure.

Many participants, however, stressed the need to do more. Some felt that there needed to be more public education and encouragement for individuals to do their part and assume more personal responsibility, and that more incentives needed to be provided, as well, in the form of subsidies or rebates for purchasing energy efficient products and electric cars, for instance. Many felt that stronger

laws and regulations, with more power, were required to force businesses to act, that more recycling and waste reduction efforts were required, and that more investment was needed in green tech and energy to assist with the transition. Some stressed the need for more investment in public transportation, as well. And many felt that more leadership was required by all levels of government to work together more effectively toward the goal of reducing emissions and responding to climate change. Only a few mentioned a tax on pollution, or a “carbon tax”, specifically. A number of participants noted that countries in Europe had been far more successful than Canada in leading concerted action to address climate change.

### **GHG reduction/pipelines**

Opinions were split on whether or not Canada could effectively take action on climate change while at the same time supporting its oil and gas industry by building the TMX pipeline. Most agreed, and some strongly, that we had to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and move away from our overreliance on oil and gas and transition toward more sustainable energy sources, including, quite broadly, in Calgary. But many saw this as a process requiring a transition. In the interim, many said, we needed to accept the important role that oil and gas played in our economy and in supporting employment and our way of life. A large segment of participants, especially in Thunder Bay, Chicoutimi, and Calgary, felt that we could and must do both in the short term. The men in Kelowna also strongly agreed, emphasising the need for industry, economic strength, and jobs in order to be able to invest in green technology and undertake the transition to a greener economy. The key, for those who supported doing both, was balance, ensuring that Canada made the investments needed to minimize the impact of new pipelines and oil and gas production.

There were some participants, however, who were either more ambivalent or less supportive of this approach. For these participants, combating climate change and building pipelines were viewed as fundamentally at odds, failing to recognize the reality of the climate crisis and the urgency with which we must act to protect the environment for future generations. There were a few participants in every group and location, other than Calgary, who did not support the government’s plan to build the TMX for this reason, and many others who were equivocal and wanting to know more about the impact of the pipeline and what was being done to ensure that targets were met and investments made in support of reducing emissions. In Brampton, most participants were either undecided or unsupportive of the government’s decision to build the TMX pipeline. In St. John’s and the Kelowna women’s group, participants were split.

## Circular Economy (St. John’s, Chicoutimi, Brampton, Thunder Bay, Saskatoon, Kelowna)



Few participants were previously aware of the term 'circular economy' or could provide any kind of definition when asked. Most were familiar with the concept, however, or readily grasped it after being provided with the following explanation:

*"The circular economy is a new way of doing business that extracts as much value as possible from our natural resources by recycling, repairing, reusing, repurposing, remanufacturing or refurbishing products and materials—it reduces waste and greenhouse gas emissions and it injects used products and materials back into the economy. The long-term goal of the circular economy is to design out the concept of waste."*

Universally, across all groups and locations, participants liked the concept and strongly supported this way of doing business, or "way of life", as some described it. Participants widely felt it was a "good idea" and a sensible approach – for organizations, individuals, the environment, and the economy. Most viewed it as a virtuous cycle. A number of participants commented that embracing this approach would require a significant shift. At the same time, most felt that they were already participating in the circular economy to some degree and that a significant transition was already underway in terms of both public consciousness and behaviour change among businesses, governments, and other institutions, as well as consumers and citizens, more broadly.

Asked to provide examples of their own participation in the circular economy, participants came up with lengthy lists in all groups and locations, including recycling of waste and spending a bit more to purchase higher quality, more durable goods - everything from clothing, shoes and jewellery, to batteries, cleaning products and household items, to furniture, cars, appliances, electronics, and building supplies. Many noted the savings to be had over the long run. Most participants said they bought or had bought used items, as well, citing many of the same items listed above, commenting on the proliferation of retail and online options, from consignment stores and online classified advertising services, as well as "buy and sell" or swapping opportunities on social media.

Most said they had also purchased products made from recycled materials, and everyone had seen advertising for these types of goods, including paper, tires, boxes, and bottles. Many commented on the "feel good" element of these types of purchases, which were good for the environment, by reducing waste and extending the life of existing products, while also saving money. Many liked the idea of buying refurbished goods, as well, and many said they had, like phones, in particular, which were increasingly on offer for a discount through larger retailers and manufacturers, although some were a bit wary of purchasing items like electronics and appliances without a warranty.

There was less support for the idea of paying more to buy "sustainably-sourced" products, as the concept seemed a bit too abstract or vague for most. Many questioned what the concept meant, how it was verified, and if they could trust that kind of claim on a label from companies. Some wanted to know what the premium would be for these kinds of products, and most were uncomfortable with the idea of paying more without better understanding the benefits or evidence to support it.

While strongly in favour of a "circular economy", and readily citing evidence of it in the marketplace and their own participation, most also felt that we all needed to do more and that there were significant barriers to widespread adoption. In fact, most felt that there were strong countervailing and

even contradictory tendencies among businesses and consumers, evident in the increased production and consumption of cheap, disposable goods, from electronics and furniture to clothing, in particular, as well as excessive packaging by retailers, food waste, and the proliferation of single use plastics. Participants blamed businesses for pursuing profits at the expense of the environment. In addition, they blamed consumers, including themselves, for their complacency, and for prioritizing convenience, choice, status, and short-term affordability above social responsibility. And they blamed governments for a lack of leadership and the political will required to implement stricter laws, regulations, and penalties, in particular, as well as incentives, to force more widespread adoption of waste reduction.

Participants in all groups and locations overwhelmingly agreed that businesses should be expected to participate in the circular economy. Some felt this applied to large and heavily-polluting companies and industries, in particular, but most felt that all companies, regardless of size or sector, should not only do more but be forced to do more by government to reduce waste, whether that related to industrial pollution, consumer packaging, or the production of cheap, disposable goods.

There was some mention of the proposed ban on single-use plastics as a positive step by the federal government, and widespread acknowledgement that we had come a long way, in many respects, toward embracing the policies, principles and practices required to achieve a more circular economy. At the same time, however, most felt that we had not done nearly enough to adopt what everyone agreed was a very meaningful approach to protecting the environment.

Asked what the Government of Canada could do to improve awareness of the circular economy, there was little meaningful response. Many agreed that more could and should be done to encourage the public to take part and understand the ways in which they could, but there was ample commentary, as well, to suggest that people were wary of more discussion and talk. There was strong consensus, in fact, that what we needed at this point was more concrete action in the form of laws and regulations, and both penalties and incentives, that would force the kind of change that everyone was already aware that we needed.

# Appendix A – Recruiting Scripts

**Privy Council Office  
Recruiting Script (Nov. 27 2019)**

**Recruitment Specifications Summary**

- Total of 14 groups
- Each group is expected to last for two hours
- Recruit 10 participants for 8 to show
- Incentives will be \$90 per person
- Groups split by gender. Ensure good mix by age (all 18+), marital status, education and income.

Specifications for the focus groups are as follows:

GROUP	LOCATION		MODERATOR	LANG.	DATE	TIME	COMPOSITION
1	Brampton	<b>Infoquest</b> (Mississauga) 6655 Kitimat Rd #12, Mississauga, ON L5N 6J4	T. Woolstencroft	English	Mon. Dec. 9 <sup>th</sup>	5:00-7:00	Women
2						7:30-9:30	Men
3	Chicoutimi	<b>Hotel La Sagouenne</b> 250 Rue des Sagoueneens Chicoutimi, QC G7H 3A4	M. Proulx	French	Tues. Dec. 10 <sup>th</sup>	5:00-7:00	Women
4						7:30-9:30	Men
5	Thunder Bay	<b>Hampton Inn &amp; Suites by Hilton</b> 760 Arthur St W Thunder Bay, ON P7E 5R9	T. Woolstencroft	English	Wed. Dec. 11 <sup>th</sup>	5:00-7:00	Women
6						7:30-9:30	Men
7	St. John's	<b>MQO</b> 55 Duckworth Street St. John's, NL A1C 1E6	M. Proulx	English	Thurs. Dec. 12 <sup>th</sup>	5:00-7:00	Women
8						7:30-9:30	Men
9	Kelowna	<b>Holiday Inn Express &amp; Suites Kelowna</b> 1620 Powick Road Kelowna, BC V1X 7G5	D. Nixon	English	Mon. Dec. 16 <sup>th</sup>	5:00-7:00	Women
10						7:30-9:30	Men
11	Saskatoon	<b>Insightrix</b> 1-3223 Millar Avenue Saskatoon, Saskatchewan S7K 5Y3	D. Nixon	English	Tues. Dec. 17 <sup>th</sup>	5:00-7:00	Women
12						7:30-9:30	Men
13	Calgary	<b>Qualitative Coordination</b> 707 10 Ave SW #120, Calgary, AB T2R 0B3	D. Nixon	English	Wed. Dec. 18 <sup>th</sup>	5:00-7:00	Women
14						7:30-9:30	Men





## Recruiting Script

### INTRODUCTION

Hello, my name is **[RECRUITER NAME]**. I'm calling from The Strategic Counsel, a national public opinion research firm, on behalf of the Government of Canada/Bonjour, je m'appelle **[NOM DU RECRUTEUR]**. Je vous téléphone du Strategic Counsel, une entreprise nationale de recherche sur l'opinion publique, pour le compte du gouvernement du Canada.

Would you prefer to continue in English or French?/Préférez-vous continuer en français ou en anglais?  
**[CONTINUE IN LANGUAGE OF PREFERENCE]**

### RECORD LANGUAGE AND CONTINUE

English

French **GROUP 3 OR 4 ONLY IN CHICOUTIMI**

On behalf of the Government of Canada, we're organizing a series of focus group discussions to explore current issues of interest to Canadians.

The format is a "round table" discussion, led by an experienced moderator. Participants will be given a cash honorarium in appreciation of their time.

Your participation is completely voluntary and all your answers will be kept confidential. We are only interested in hearing your opinions - no attempt will be made to sell or market you anything. The report that is produced from the series of discussion groups we are holding will not contain comments that are attributed to specific individuals.

But before we invite you to attend, we need to ask you a few questions to ensure that we get a good mix/variety of people in each of the groups. May I ask you a few questions?

Yes **CONTINUE**

No **THANK AND END**

### SCREENING QUESTIONS

1. Have you, or has anyone in your household, worked for any of the following types of organizations in the last 5 years?

A market research firm

**THANK AND END**

A marketing, branding or advertising agency

**THANK AND END**

A magazine or newspaper

**THANK AND END**

A federal/provincial/territorial government department or agency

**THANK AND END**

A political party

**THANK AND END**

In public/media relations

**THANK AND END**

In radio/television  
No, none of the above

**THANK AND END  
CONTINUE**

1a. **IN ALL LOCATIONS:** Are you a retired Government of Canada employee?

Yes      **THANK AND END**  
No        **CONTINUE**

2. Gender: **DO NOT ASK. RECORD BY OBSERVATION.**

Male	<b>CONTINUE GROUP 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14</b>
Female	<b>CONTINUE GROUP 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13</b>

3. In which City do you reside?

Brampton	<b>+ FEMALE = GROUP 1 + MALE = GROUP 2</b>
Chicoutimi	<b>+FRENCH + FEMALE = GROUP 3 +FRENCH + MALE = GROUP 4</b>
Thunder Bay	<b>+ FEMALE = GROUP 5 + MALE = GROUP 6</b>
St. John's	<b>+ FEMALE = GROUP 7 + MALE = GROUP 8</b>
Kelowna	<b>+ FEMALE = GROUP 9 + MALE = GROUP 10</b>
Saskatoon	<b>+ FEMALE = GROUP 11 + MALE = GROUP 12</b>
Calgary	<b>+ FEMALE = GROUP 13 + MALE = GROUP 14</b>
Other	<b>THANK AND END</b>
<b>VOLUNTEERED</b> Prefer not to answer	<b>THANK AND END</b>

**PARTICIPANTS SHOULD RESIDE IN THE ABOVE-NOTED CENTERS PROPER.**

3a. How long have you lived in [INSERT CITY]?

Less than two years	<b>THANK AND END</b>
Two years or more	<b>CONTINUE</b>
Don't know/Prefer not to answer	<b>THANK AND END</b>

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

Under 18 years of age	<b>IF POSSIBLE, ASK FOR SOMEONE OVER 18 AND REINTRODUCE. OTHERWISE THANK AND END.</b>
18-24	<b>RECORD AND CONTINUE</b>
25-34	
35-44	
45-54	
55+	
<b>VOLUNTEERED</b> Prefer not to answer	<b>THANK AND END</b>

**ENSURE A GOOD MIX OF AGES WITHIN EACH SUBGROUP.**

5. Are you familiar with the concept of a focus group?

Yes **CONTINUE**

No **EXPLAIN THE FOLLOWING** *“a focus group consists of eight to ten participants and one moderator. During a two-hour session, participants are asked to discuss a wide range of issues related to the topic being examined.”*

6. How comfortable are you in expressing your views in public, reading written materials or looking at images projected onto a screen?

Very Comfortable

Somewhat Comfortable

Somewhat Uncomfortable **THANK AND END**

Very Uncomfortable **THANK AND END**

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

Yes **CONTINUE**

No **SKIP TO Q.11**

8. How long ago was the last focus group you attended?

Less than 6 months ago **THANK AND END**

More than 6 months ago **CONTINUE**

9. How many focus group discussions have you attended in the past 5 years?

0-4 groups **CONTINUE**

5 or more groups **THANK AND END**

10. And on what topics were they?

**TERMINATE IF ANY ON SIMILAR/SAME TOPIC**



### **ADDITIONAL RECRUITING CRITERIA**

Now we have just a few final questions before we give you the details of the focus group, including the time, date, and location.

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

Grade 8 or less  
Some high school  
High school diploma or equivalent  
Registered Apprenticeship or other trades certificate or diploma  
College, CEGEP or other non-university certificate or diploma  
University certificate or diploma below bachelor's level  
Bachelor's degree  
Post graduate degree above bachelor's level

**VOLUNTEERED** Prefer not to answer

**ENSURE A GOOD MIX.**

12. 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  
\$20,000 to just under \$40,000  
\$40,000 to just under \$60,000  
\$60,000 to just under \$80,000  
\$80,000 to just under \$100,000  
\$100,000 to just under \$150,000  
\$150,000 and above

**VOLUNTEERED** Prefer not to answer

**ENSURE A GOOD MIX.**

13. During the discussion, you could be asked to look at materials that are pinned up on a wall and to read handouts or other materials in print. You will also be asked to actively participate in a conversation about these materials. Can you think of any reason why you may have difficulty reading the materials or participating in the discussion? You may also be asked to write down a few thoughts on paper. Are you comfortable writing in (English/French)?

**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 AS THE INTERVIEWER HAVE A CONCERN ABOUT THE PARTICIPANT'S ABILITY TO PARTICIPATE EFFECTIVELY.**

14. The focus group discussion will be audio-taped and video-taped for research purposes only. The taping is conducted to assist our researchers in writing their report. Do you consent to being audio-taped and video-taped?

Yes

No **THANK AND END**



**INVITATION**

I would like to invite you to this focus group discussion, which will take place the evening of **[INSERT DATE/TIME BASED ON GROUP # IN CHART ON PAGE 1]**. The group will be two hours in length and you will receive \$90 for your participation. Please note that there may be observers from the Government of Canada at the group and that the discussion will be videotaped. By agreeing to participate, you have given your consent to these procedures. We will ask you to provide your explicit consent by signing a note to this effect when you arrive at the group.

Would you be willing to attend?

Yes                    **CONTINUE**  
No                     **THANK AND END**

The group will be held at: **[INSERT LOCATION]**

We will be calling you back to verify the information given and will confirm this appointment the day before. May I please have your full name, a telephone number that is best to reach you at as well as your e-mail address if you have one so that I can send you the details for the group?

**Name:**  
**Telephone Number:**  
**E-mail Address:**

This is a firm commitment. If you anticipate anything preventing you from attending (either home or work-related), please let me know now and we will keep your name for a future study. If for any reason you are unable to attend, please let us know as soon as possible at **[1-800-xxx-xxxx]** so we can find a replacement.

We ask that you arrive 10-15 minutes prior to the beginning of the session and identify yourself to our staff who will gladly welcome you. Please bring photo identification with you, so that we make sure only people who have been invited participate in the group. You may be required to view some material during the course of the discussion. If you require glasses to do so, please be sure to have them handy at the time of the group.

Thank you very much for your time.

**RECRUITED BY:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**DATE RECRUITED:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Bureau du Conseil privé  
Questionnaire de recrutement (27 novembre 2019)**

**Résumé des consignes de recrutement**

- Total de 14 groupes.
- Durée prévue de chaque rencontre : deux heures.
- Recrutement de dix participants pour assurer la présence d'au moins huit personnes.
- L'incitatif sera de 90 \$ par personne.
- Groupes distincts pour les hommes et les femmes. Groupes diversifiés en fonction de l'âge (18 ans et plus), de l'état matrimonial, de l'éducation et du revenu.

Informations pratiques sur les groupes de discussion :

N° DU GROUPE	LIEU	MODÉRATEUR	LANGUE	DATE	HEURE	COMPOSITION DU GROUPE	
1	Brampton	<b>Infoquest</b> (Mississauga) 6655 Kitimat Rd #12, Mississauga, ON L5N 6J4	T. Woolstencroft	Anglais	Lundi 9 décembre	17 h 00 — 19 h 00	Femmes
2						19 h 30 — 21 h 30	Hommes
3	Chicoutimi	<b>Hotel La Saguenéenne</b> 250 Rue des Saguenéens Chicoutimi, QC G7H 3A4	M. Proulx	Français	Mardi 10 décembre	17 h 00 — 19 h 00	Femmes
4						19 h 30 — 21 h 30	Hommes
5	Thunder Bay	<b>Hampton Inn &amp; Suites by Hilton</b> 760 Arthur St W Thunder Bay, ON P7E 5R9	T. Woolstencroft	Anglais	Mercredi 11 décembre	17 h 00 — 19 h 00	Femmes
6						19 h 30 — 21 h 30	Hommes
7	St. John's	<b>MQO</b> 55 Duckworth Street St. John's, NL A1C 1E6	M. Proulx	Anglais	Jeudi 12 décembre	17 h 00 — 19 h 00	Femmes
8						19 h 30 — 21 h 30	Hommes
9	Kelowna	<b>Holiday Inn Express &amp; Suites Kelowna</b> 1620 Powick Road Kelowna, BC V1X 7G5	D. Nixon	Anglais	Lundi 16 décembre	17 h 00 — 19 h 00	Femmes
10						19 h 30 — 21 h 30	Hommes
11	Saskatoon	<b>Insightrix</b> 1-3223 Millar Avenue Saskatoon, Saskatchewan S7K 5Y3	D. Nixon	Anglais	Mardi 17 décembre	17 h 00 — 19 h 00	Femmes
12						19 h 30 — 21 h 30	Hommes
13	Calgary	<b>Qualitative Coordination</b> 707 10 Ave SW #120, Calgary, AB T2R 0B3	D. Nixon	Anglais	Mercredi 18 décembre	17 h 00 — 19 h 00	Femmes
14						19 h 30 — 21 h 30	Hommes

## Questionnaire de recrutement

### INTRODUCTION

Hello, my name is **[RECRUITER NAME]**. I'm calling from The Strategic Counsel, a national public opinion research firm, on behalf of the Government of Canada/Bonjour, mon nom est **[NOM DU RECRUTEUR]**. Je vous appelle du Strategic Counsel, une entreprise nationale de recherche sur l'opinion publique, pour le compte du gouvernement du Canada.

Would you prefer to continue in English or French?/Préférez-vous continuer en français ou en anglais ?  
**[CONTINUER DANS LA LANGUE PRÉFÉRÉE]**

### NOTER LA LANGUE ET CONTINUER

Anglais

Français **GRUPE 3 OU 4 SEULEMENT À CHICOUTIMI**

Nous organisons, pour le compte du gouvernement du Canada, une série de groupes de discussion en vue d'explorer des questions d'actualité qui intéressent les Canadiens.

La rencontre prendra la forme d'une table ronde animée par un modérateur expérimenté. Les participants recevront un montant d'argent en remerciement de leur temps.

Votre participation est entièrement volontaire et toutes vos réponses seront confidentielles. Nous aimerions simplement connaître vos opinions : personne n'essaiera de vous vendre quoi que ce soit ou de promouvoir des produits. Notre rapport sur cette série de groupes de discussion n'attribuera aucun commentaire à une personne en particulier.

Avant de vous inviter à participer, je dois vous poser quelques questions qui nous permettront de former des groupes suffisamment diversifiés. Puis-je vous poser quelques questions ?

Oui **CONTINUER**

Non **REMERCIER ET CONCLURE**

### QUESTIONS DE SÉLECTION

1. Est-ce que vous ou une personne de votre ménage avez travaillé pour l'un des types d'organisations suivants au cours des cinq dernières années ?

Une société d'études de marché  
**CONCLURE**

**REMERCIER ET**

Une agence de commercialisation, de marque ou de publicité  
**CONCLURE**

**REMERCIER ET**

Un magazine ou un journal  
**CONCLURE**

**REMERCIER ET**

Un ministère ou un organisme gouvernemental fédéral, provincial ou territorial <b>CONCLURE</b>	<b>REMERCIER ET</b>
Un parti politique <b>CONCLURE</b>	<b>REMERCIER ET</b>
Dans les relations publiques ou les relations avec les médias <b>CONCLURE</b>	<b>REMERCIER ET</b>
Dans le milieu de la radio ou de la télévision <b>CONCLURE</b>	<b>REMERCIER ET</b>
Non, aucune de ces réponses	<b>CONTINUER</b>

1a. **POUR TOUS LES LIEUX** : Êtes-vous un ou une employé(e) retraité(e) du gouvernement du Canada ?

Oui	<b>REMERCIER ET CONCLURE</b>
Non	<b>CONTINUER</b>

2. Sexe : **NE PAS DEMANDER. NOTER SELON VOTRE OBSERVATION.**

Homme	<b>CONTINUER GROUPES 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14</b>
Femme	<b>CONTINUER GROUPES 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13</b>

3. Dans quelle ville habitez-vous ?

Brampton	<b>+ FEMME = GROUPE 1 + HOMME = GROUPE 2</b>
Chicoutimi	<b>+ FRANÇAIS + FEMME = GROUPE 3 + FRANÇAIS + HOMME = GROUPE 4</b>
Thunder Bay	<b>+ FEMME = GROUPE 5 + HOMME = GROUPE 6</b>
St. John's	<b>+ FEMME = GROUPE 7 + HOMME = GROUPE 8</b>
Kelowna	<b>+ FEMME = GROUPE 9 + HOMME = GROUPE 10</b>
Saskatoon	<b>+ FEMME = GROUPE 11 + HOMME = GROUPE 12</b>
Calgary	<b>+ FEMME = GROUPE 13 + HOMME = GROUPE 14</b>
Autre ville	<b>REMERCIER ET CONCLURE</b>
<b>RÉPONSE SPONTANÉE</b> Préfère ne pas répondre	<b>REMERCIER ET CONCLURE</b>

**LES PARTICIPANTS DOIVENT RÉSIDER DANS LESDITS CENTRES.**

3a. Depuis combien de temps habitez-vous à [INSÉRER LE NOM DE LA VILLE] ?

Moins de deux ans	<b>REMERCIER ET CONCLURE</b>
Deux ans ou plus	<b>CONTINUER</b>
Ne sais pas/Préfère ne pas répondre	<b>REMERCIER ET CONCLURE</b>



4. Seriez-vous prêt/prête à m'indiquer votre tranche d'âge dans la liste suivante ?

Moins de 18 ans	<b>SI POSSIBLE, DEMANDER À PARLER À UNE PERSONNE DE 18 ANS OU PLUS ET REFAIRE L'INTRODUCTION. SINON, REMERCIER ET CONCLURE.</b>
18 à 24 ans	<b>NOTER L'ÂGE ET CONTINUER</b>
25 à 34 ans	
35 à 44 ans	
45 à 54 ans	
55 ans ou plus	
<b>RÉPONSE SPONTANÉE</b> Préfère ne pas répondre	<b>REMERCIER ET CONCLURE</b>

**ASSURER UNE BONNE REPRÉSENTATION DES ÂGES DANS CHAQUE SOUS-GROUPE**

5. Est-ce que vous connaissez le concept du « groupe de discussion » ?

Oui **CONTINUER**

Non **EXPLIQUER QUE** : « *un groupe de discussion se compose de huit à dix participants et d'un modérateur. Au cours d'une période de deux heures, les participants sont invités à discuter d'un éventail de questions reliées au sujet abordé* ».

6. Dans quelle mesure êtes-vous à l'aise pour exprimer votre opinion en public, lire des documents, ou regarder des images projetées sur un écran ?

Très à l'aise

Assez à l'aise

Assez mal à l'aise

Très mal à l'aise

**REMERCIER ET CONCLURE**

**REMERCIER ET CONCLURE**

7. Avez-vous déjà participé à un groupe de discussion, à une entrevue ou à un sondage organisé à l'avance en contrepartie d'une somme d'argent ?

Oui **CONTINUER**

Non **PASSER À LA Q.11**

8. À quand remonte le dernier groupe de discussion auquel vous avez participé ?

À moins de six mois, **REMERCIER ET CONCLURE**

À plus de six mois, **CONTINUER**

9. À combien de groupes de discussion avez-vous participé au cours des cinq dernières années ?

0 à 4 groupes, **CONTINUER**

5 groupes ou plus **REMERCIER ET CONCLURE**

10. Et sur quels sujets portaient-ils ?

**METTRE FIN À L'ENTRETIEN SI LES SUJETS ÉTAIENT LES MÊMES OU SEMBLABLES**

**CRITÈRES DE RECRUTEMENT SUPPLÉMENTAIRES :**

Il me reste quelques dernières questions avant de vous donner les détails du groupe de discussion, comme l'heure, la date et le lieu.

11. Quel est le niveau de scolarité le plus élevé que vous avez atteint ?

École primaire

Études secondaires partielles

Diplôme d'études secondaires ou l'équivalent

Certificat ou diplôme d'apprenti inscrit ou d'une école de métiers

Certificat ou diplôme d'un collège, cégep ou autre établissement non universitaire

Certificat ou diplôme universitaire inférieur au baccalauréat

Baccalauréat

Diplôme d'études supérieur au baccalauréat

**RÉPONSE SPONTANÉE :** Préfère ne pas répondre

**ASSURER UN BON MÉLANGE.**

12. Laquelle des catégories suivantes décrit le mieux le revenu annuel total de votre ménage — c'est-à-dire le revenu cumulatif de l'ensemble des membres de votre ménage avant impôt ?

Moins de 20 000 \$

20 000 \$ à moins de 40 000 \$

40 000 \$ à moins de 60 000 \$

60 000 \$ à moins de 80 000 \$

80 000 \$ à moins de 100 000 \$

100 000 \$ à moins de 150 000 \$

150 000 \$ ou plus

**RÉPONSE SPONTANÉE :** Préfère ne pas répondre

**ASSURER UN BON MÉLANGE.**

13. Au cours de la discussion, vous pourriez devoir examiner du matériel affiché au mur et lire de la documentation imprimée. On vous demandera également de participer activement aux discussions portant sur ce matériel. Pensez-vous avoir de la difficulté, pour une raison ou une autre, à lire les documents ou à participer à la discussion ? On pourrait aussi vous demander de noter quelques réflexions sur papier. Êtes-vous à l'aise pour écrire (en français/en anglais) ?

**CONCLURE L'ENTRETIEN SI LE RÉPONDANT SIGNALA UN PROBLÈME DE VISION OU D'AUDITION, UN PROBLÈME DE LANGUE PARLÉE OU ÉCRITE, S'IL CRAINT DE NE POUVOIR COMMUNIQUER EFFICACEMENT, OU SI VOUS, EN TANT QU'INTERVIEWEUR, AVEZ DES DOUTES QUANT À SA CAPACITÉ DE PARTICIPER EFFICACEMENT AUX DISCUSSIONS.**

14. La discussion sera enregistrée sur bandes audio et vidéo, strictement aux fins de la recherche. Les enregistrements aideront nos chercheurs à rédiger leur rapport. Est-ce que vous consentez à ce qu'on vous enregistre sur bandes audio et vidéo ?

Oui

Non **REMERCIER ET CONCLURE**

#### INVITATION

J'aimerais vous inviter à ce groupe de discussion, qui aura lieu le [DONNER LA DATE ET L'HEURE EN FONCTION DU N° DE GROUPE INDIQUÉ DANS LE TABLEAU, PAGE 1]. La rencontre durera deux heures et vous recevrez 90 \$ pour votre participation. Veuillez noter que des observateurs du gouvernement du Canada pourraient être présents au groupe et que la discussion sera enregistrée sur bande vidéo. En acceptant de participer, vous avez donné votre consentement à ces modalités. Nous vous demanderons de nous donner votre consentement explicite en signant une confirmation à cet effet à votre arrivée dans le groupe.

Est-ce que vous accepteriez de participer ?

Oui

**CONTINUER**

Non

**REMERCIER ET CONCLURE**

Le groupe de discussion aura lieu à : [DONNER L'ADRESSE]

Nous vous rappellerons la veille de la rencontre pour confirmer le rendez-vous et les renseignements fournis. Puis-je avoir votre nom complet, le numéro de téléphone où vous êtes le plus facile à joindre et votre adresse électronique, si vous en avez une, pour vous envoyer les détails ?

**Nom :**

**Numéro de téléphone :**

**Adresse Courriel :**

Ce rendez-vous est un engagement ferme. Si vous pensez ne pas pouvoir vous présenter pour des raisons personnelles ou professionnelles, veuillez m'en aviser dès maintenant et nous conserverons votre nom pour une étude ultérieure. Enfin, si jamais vous n'êtes pas en mesure de participer, veuillez nous prévenir le plus rapidement possible au [1-800-xxx-xxxx] pour que nous puissions trouver une personne pour vous remplacer.

Nous vous prions d'être sur les lieux au moins dix à quinze minutes avant le début de la rencontre et de vous présenter à notre personnel, qui se fera un plaisir de vous accueillir. Veuillez apporter une pièce d'identité avec photo ; cela nous permettra de vérifier que seules les personnes invitées participent au groupe. Il est possible que vous deviez revoir du matériel durant le cours de la discussion. Si vous nécessitez des lunettes, veuillez les apporter à la discussion.

Merci de votre temps.

**RECRUTEMENT FAIT PAR :** \_\_\_\_\_

**DATE DU RECRUTEMENT :** \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix B – Discussion Guides

## MODERATOR'S GUIDE – December 2019

### INTRODUCTION (10 minutes) ALL LOCATIONS

### GC NEWS (15 minutes; 5 minutes in Kelowna, Saskatoon, Calgary) ALL LOCATIONS

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

### ASK IN BRAMPTON, THUNDER BAY, CHICOUTIMI, ST. JOHN'S

#### NATO

- PROBE: Have you heard, read or seen anything about the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) summit held on December 3rd and 4th in London?

#### *CLARIFY AS NEEDED*

Several NATO members, including the United States, have recently declared that all NATO members must spend 2% of their annual gross domestic product (GDP) on their military so that the military alliance is prepared to react to threats. Canada currently spends 1.3% of its GDP on military spending and is one of the 19 NATO countries not meeting this goal.

(BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR THE MODERATOR: OF THE 28 NATO COUNTRIES, 9 WILL MEET OR EXCEED THE 2% THRESHOLD SET BY THE U.S. FOR 2019)

- Understanding that an increase in military spending might require a decrease in spending on other priorities, do you think Canada should commit to increasing military spending to reach this goal? Why or why not?

### ASK IN BRAMPTON, THUNDER BAY, CHICOUTIMI, ST. JOHN'S

#### Medical Assistance in Dying

- PROBE: Have you heard, read or seen anything about potential changes to the rules around medical assistance in dying in Canada?

### GC PRIORITIES (20 minutes) ALL LOCATIONS

- IF NOT RAISED IN GC NEWS: Have you heard, read or seen anything about the recent Throne Speech outlining the priorities of the federal government for the new Parliament?
- Based on what you may have seen, read or heard recently, what do you think **will be** the top priorities of the Government of Canada over the next year or two?

- What do you think **should be** the top priority of the Government of Canada?

**HANDOUT:**

- The following is a list of priorities that the Government of Canada pledged to implement in the recent Throne Speech on December 5<sup>th</sup>. I want you to circle the three that are the most important to you personally and put an 'x' beside anything on the list that you think the Government of Canada should not do.
  - Banning all assault rifles in Canada
  - Conserving and protecting 25% of Canada's land and 25% of Canada's oceans by 2025
  - Eliminate all long-term drinking water advisories on First Nations reserves by 2021
  - Ensuring every Canadian has access to a family doctor.
  - Implementing a price on pollution on every province that refuses to implement their own
  - Implementing a universal Pharmacare program to reduce the cost of prescriptions
  - Increasing the federal minimum wage to \$15/hour
  - Lowering taxes for the middle class
  - Planting 2 billion trees in Canada to clean the air
  - Reducing Canada's greenhouse gas emissions to net-zero by 2050
  - Reducing the cost of cellphone bills by 25%
- ***HAVE EACH RESPONDENT LIST THEIR CIRCLED OPTIONS AND EXPLAIN WHY THEY CHOSE THE ONE THEY CONSIDER TO BE THE MOST IMPORTANT TO THEM. ASK PARTICIPANTS TO PUT AN \* BESIDE THEIR MOST IMPORTANT ONE***
- Did any of you put an 'x' beside a priority that you thought the Government of Canada should not do? Why?
- Generally speaking, do you think the Government will be able to complete all of these priorities in the next few years?
  - Which priorities, if any, do you think it will be difficult for the government to complete? Why?
- Thinking back to the item that you chose as the most important to you, how will you evaluate whether the Government is taking action to complete the priority?
  - PROBE (if not mentioned): How would you evaluate whether the Government is on track to reduce Canada's greenhouse gas emissions to net-zero by 2050?

**Western Alienation (30 minutes) ASK IN KELOWNA, SASKATOON AND CALGARY**

**HANDOUT:**

- I want to write down three words on a piece of paper that describe the current relationship between the Government of Canada and your province.
  - PROBE: Pick one of the words you wrote down and explain why you chose that word.
  - Overall, would you say the Government of Canada treats your province fairly or unfairly? Why?
- What could the federal government do to demonstrate that it is in touch with the concerns of people in your province?

Next, I am going to briefly discuss several topics that have recently been topics of debate that relate to Western Canada:

- Have you seen, read or heard anything recently about the TMX pipeline project?
  - To the best of your knowledge, has construction started on the pipeline?
  - Do you think it is likely that the pipeline will be built on schedule?
- Have you heard anything about federal government Bills C-69 or C-48?

*CLARIFY AS NEEDED*

Bill C-69 is a recently enacted federal government law that strengthens the requirements for environmental assessments and consultations with local communities before large scale infrastructure projects can be built. While some say this law provides important protections to ensure local communities know the environmental risks of new projects and have a say in whether they go forward, others say it creates too much red tape and may slow or stop important projects, including pipelines from going forward.

Bill C-48 is also another recently enacted federal law, which prevents oil tankers from transporting large amounts of oil to and from the North Coast of BC. Some say this law will reduce the risk of oil spills in delicate marine ecosystems, while others worry it will restrict Canada's ability to export oil to markets overseas by limiting which ports can be used by oil tankers.

- Now that you have heard a bit about both laws, do either of them concern you? Why/why not?
  - What else would you want to know about these bills before deciding whether or not they are necessary? Would you like to see any specific changes to either of these regulations?
- Have you ever heard of the term 'equalization payments'?
  - IF YES: Can you describe to me how equalization payments work?
  - Based on your knowledge of how equalization payments work, do you think the equalization system should be changed? IF YES: How so?

- Have you heard anything lately about China boycotting the Canadian canola industry?

*CLARIFY AS NEEDED*

China, which had previously been the largest purchaser of Canadian canola, announced they would stop buying Canadian canola products this March. The federal government has already announced financial support for farmers affected by the boycott.

- Do you think the government should make concessions to China so that China will buy our canola again, retaliate against China by imposing our own sanctions on their products, or continue to financially support farmers while trying to negotiate a solution with China that doesn't involve concessions or retaliation?
- Out of all the issues we have talked about so far that specifically affect Western Canada, which do you think should be the top priority of the Government of Canada?

**FRONTIER MINE (15 minutes) ASK ONLY IN CALGARY**

- Have you heard, read or seen anything about the proposed Frontier Mine oil sands project north of Fort McMurray?

*CLARIFY AS NEEDED*

The Frontier Mine, which was first proposed in 2011, would be the largest oil sands mine in history if approved by the federal government. This project could create as many as 7,500 new construction jobs in Alberta, but it would also be a major source of greenhouse gas emissions and could jeopardize Canada's ability to meet international commitments to reduce pollution.

- Based on this, do you think the federal government should approve the project, reject the project, or approve the project only if there are commitments made by the company to ensure the environmental impact is limited?
  - If you could set conditions that you think the company should meet before proceeding with the oil sands mine, what would they be?
- Recently, based on the current price of oil, some experts have questioned whether the mine would be able to generate enough revenue to justify the costs of constructing it. If true, would this affect your opinion about whether the mine should be built?
- The federal government has made it a priority to reduce emissions and protect the environment. Do you think it is possible for the government to continue to do this and approve this project at the same time? Why or why not?



- Some have suggested that the government could off-set the environmental costs of this project by taking additional measures to clean the environment, such as planting trees, investing in renewable energy or making big emitters pay fees that would fund green initiatives. Would you feel differently about the Frontier Mine project if the federal government pledged to do some of these additional measures upon approving the project?

**LOCAL CHALLENGES (20 minutes) ASK IN BRAMPTON, THUNDER BAY, CHICOUTIMI, ST. JOHN'S**

- What are the most important local issues in [LOCATION] **LIST ON WHITE BOARD**
  - **FOR EACH:** Why is it important? What needs to be done? **PROBE TO SEE IF OTHERS FEEL IT IS IMPORTANT**
- And what does [LOCATION] need in terms of infrastructure?
  - What are the biggest concerns/challenges? Is there anything that needs to be done?
- Thinking about everything the federal government has done in the past year, what, if anything, do you think will have the most positive impact on [LOCATION]?
- Have they done anything that you think will have a negative impact on [LOCATION]?
- What changes have you seen in [LOCATION] over the last 5-10 years?
  - And, what, if any, has been the impact of those changes?
    - **PROBE FOR:** impact on economy, socio-cultural, etc.

### **ENVIRONMENT (30 minutes)**

- What have you seen, read or heard about the environment lately?
  - And have you seen, read or heard about anything related to the Government of Canada and the environment recently?
- Has anyone heard of the Paris Agreement on climate change? How would you explain it?
  - Do you know what Canada's target is?

#### CLARIFY AS NEEDED

*Under the Paris Agreement, Canada has committed to reducing its GHG emissions by 30% below 2005 levels by 2030.*

Has anyone seen, read or heard anything about Canada meeting its target recently?

What have you heard?

- Do you think Canada will meet its target?
  - What are the factors that could impact whether or not Canada meets this target?
- Do you think it's important for Canada to meet its target? Why/why not?
- Is meeting the Paris Agreement targets a good indicator of Canada's progress towards addressing climate change?
- What would be another/better indicator of progress?
- Can you name anything that Canada has done/or hasn't done in order to address climate change?

Canada is aiming to reduce its carbon emissions in order to combat climate change while at the same time supporting its oil/energy industry by building an oil pipeline (TMX).

- Can Canada both support its oil and gas industry while taking action on climate change? Why? /Why not?

### **CIRCULAR ECONOMY (20 minutes) ALL LOCATIONS, ASK IN CALGARY IF TIME ALLOWS**

- Has anyone here heard the term "Circular Economy"?
- What have you heard?
- How would you describe it?

**HANDOUT:** VISUAL EXAMPLE OF CIRCULAR ECONOMY

CLARIFY AS NEEDED

*The circular economy is a new way of doing business that extracts as much value as possible from our natural resources by recycling, repairing, reusing, repurposing, remanufacturing or refurbishing products and materials—it reduces waste and greenhouse gas emissions and it injects used products and materials back into the economy. The long-term goal of the circular economy is to design out the concept of waste.*

- Now that we have explained the term, would you say you are an active participant or have participated in the past?
  - How so?
- How many people here have paid more for a product because it was of a higher quality and therefore should last longer? (show of hands)
  - Have participants list some examples of products they bought.
- How many people have seen products advertised “made from recycled goods”? Which products?
  - Is this an attractive quality in a product? Why/why not?
- How many of you are willing to pay more for sustainably sourced and made products?
  - Is this an attractive quality in a product? Why/why not?
- How many of you would be willing to buy refurbished products? Or products made from refurbished materials? (i.e. electronics)
- Can you think of ways you’d like to participate in the Circular Economy but are unable to do so?
  - What are they?
- Do you think businesses should be expected to participate in the Circular Economy?
  - What types of businesses?
  - How so?
- Do you think widespread adoption of the Circular Economy would be a meaningful approach to protecting the environment? Why? /Why not?

**Conclusion (5 minutes)**

## GUIDE DU MODÉRATEUR – Décembre 2019

### **INTRODUCTION (10 minutes) TOUS LES LIEUX**

### **NOUVELLES DU GC (15 minutes; 5 minutes à Kelowna, Saskatoon et Calgary) TOUS LES LIEUX**

- Ces derniers temps, qu'avez-vous vu, lu ou entendu au sujet du gouvernement du Canada ?

### **DEMANDEZ À BRAMPTON, THUNDER BAY, CHICOUTIMI ET ST. JOHN'S**

#### L'OTAN

- SONDEZ : Avez-vous entendu, lu ou vu quoi que ce soit au sujet du sommet de l'Organisation du Traité de l'Atlantique Nord (OTAN) tenu les 3 et 4 décembre à Londres ?

#### *ÉCLAIRCISSEMENTS, AU BESOIN*

Plusieurs membres de l'OTAN, dont les États-Unis, ont récemment déclaré que tous les membres de l'OTAN doivent consacrer 2 % de leur produit intérieur brut (PIB) annuel à leurs dépenses militaires afin que l'alliance militaire soit prête à réagir à toute menace éventuelle. Le Canada dépense actuellement 1,3 % de son PIB en dépenses militaires et est l'un des 19 pays de l'OTAN qui n'atteignent pas cet objectif.

(INFORMATION CONTEXTUELLE POUR LA MODÉRATRICE OU LE MODÉRATEUR : SUR LES 28 PAYS DE L'OTAN, 9 ATTEINDRONT OU DÉPASSERONT LE SEUIL DE 2 % FIXÉ PAR LES ÉTATS-UNIS POUR 2019)

- Reconnaisant qu'une augmentation des dépenses militaires pourrait nécessiter une diminution des dépenses consacrées à d'autres priorités, pensez-vous que le Canada devrait s'engager à augmenter ses dépenses militaires pour atteindre cet objectif ? Pourquoi ou pourquoi pas ?

### **DEMANDEZ À BRAMPTON, THUNDER BAY, CHICOUTIMI ET ST. JOHN'S**

#### Aide médicale à mourir

- SONDEZ : Avez-vous entendu, lu ou vu quoi que ce soit au sujet de changements potentiels aux règles entourant l'aide médicale à mourir au Canada ?

### **PRIORITÉS DU GC (20 minutes) DEMANDEZ DANS TOUS LES LIEUX**

- SI CELA N'A PAS ÉTÉ SOULEVÉ DANS *NOUVELLES DU GC* : Avez-vous entendu, lu ou vu quoi que ce soit au sujet du récent discours du Trône énonçant les priorités du gouvernement fédéral pour le nouveau Parlement ?

- D'après ce que vous avez vu, lu ou entendu récemment, **quelles seront**, selon vous, les principales priorités du gouvernement du Canada au cours des deux prochaines années ?
  - Selon vous, quelle **devrait être** la priorité absolue du gouvernement du Canada ?

#### DOCUMENT À DISTRIBUER

Voici une liste des priorités que le gouvernement du Canada s'est engagé à réaliser dans le récent discours du Trône, le 5 décembre dernier. Je vous prie d'encercler les trois qui sont les plus importantes pour vous personnellement et de mettre un « x » à côté de tout élément sur la liste dont vous pensez que le gouvernement du Canada ne devrait pas faire.

- Bannir toutes les armes d'assaut au Canada
  - Conserver et protéger 25 % des territoires du Canada et 25 % des océans du Canada d'ici 2025
  - Éliminer tous les avis sur la qualité de l'eau potable à long terme dans les réserves des Premières nations d'ici 2021
  - S'assurer que chaque Canadienne et chaque Canadien a accès à un médecin de famille
  - Imposer un prix sur la pollution à toutes les provinces qui refusent d'adopter leur propre mesure
  - Mettre en place un régime universel d'assurance médicaments afin de réduire le coût des médicaments d'ordonnance
  - Augmenter le salaire minimum fédéral à 15 \$ l'heure
  - Réduire les impôts de la classe moyenne
  - Planter 2 milliards d'arbres au Canada pour améliorer la qualité de l'air
  - Réduire les émissions de gaz à effet de serre du Canada à un niveau zéro émission nette d'ici 2050
  - Réduire de 25 % le coût des factures de téléphone cellulaire
- **DEMANDEZ À CHAQUE RÉPONDANTE OU RÉPONDANT D'ÉNUMÉRER LES ÉLÉMENTS QU'ELLE OÙ QU'IL A ENCERCLÉS ET D'EXPLIQUER SON CHOIX QUANT À CELUI QUI LUI IMPORTE LE PLUS. DEMANDEZ AUX PARTICIPANTES ET PARTICIPANTS DE METTRE UN \* À CÔTÉ DE L'ÉLÉMENT QUI LEUR EST LE PLUS IMPORTANT.**
  - Y a-t-il quelqu'un parmi vous qui avez mis un « x » à côté d'une priorité dont le gouvernement du Canada ne devrait pas s'occuper selon vous ? Pourquoi ?
  - De façon générale, pensez-vous que le gouvernement sera en mesure de réaliser toutes ces priorités au cours des quelques prochaines années ?
    - Quelles priorités, le cas échéant, croyez-vous que le gouvernement aura de la difficulté à réaliser ? Pourquoi ?



- En réfléchissant de nouveau à l'élément que vous aviez choisi comme étant le plus important pour vous, comment allez-vous déterminer si le gouvernement prend effectivement des mesures pour réaliser cette priorité ?  
SONDER (si non mentionné) : Comment évalueriez-vous si le gouvernement est sur la bonne voie pour réduire les émissions de gaz à effet de serre du Canada à zéro net d'ici 2050 ?

## **ALIÉNATION DE L'OUEST (20 minutes) DEMANDER À KELOWNA, SASKATOON, ET CALGARY**

### **DOCUMENT À DISTRIBUER :**

- Sur une feuille de papier, je vous demanderais d'écrire trois mots qui décrivent la relation actuelle entre le gouvernement du Canada et votre province.
  - SONDER : Choisissez un des mots que vous avez écrits et veuillez m'expliquer pourquoi vous avez choisi ce mot.
  - Dans l'ensemble, diriez-vous que le gouvernement du Canada traite votre province équitablement ou injustement ? Pourquoi ?
- Que pourrait faire le gouvernement fédéral afin de démontrer sa sensibilité aux préoccupations des gens de votre province ?

Maintenant, je vais discuter brièvement de plusieurs sujets qui ont récemment fait l'objet de débats et qui concernent l'Ouest canadien :

- Avez-vous vu, lu ou entendu quelque chose récemment au sujet du projet de pipeline TMX ?
  - Autant que vous sachiez, la construction du pipeline a-t-elle commencé ?
  - Selon vous, est-il probable que la construction du pipeline se réalise dans les délais prévus ?
- Avez-vous entendu quoi que ce soit au sujet des projets de loi C-69 ou C-48 du gouvernement fédéral ?

### **ÉCLAIRCISSEMENTS, AU BESOIN :**

Le projet de loi C-69, récemment adopté par le gouvernement fédéral, renforce les exigences en matière d'évaluation environnementale et de consultation des collectivités locales avant la construction de projets d'infrastructure à grande échelle. Alors que certaines personnes disent que cette loi accorde d'importantes protections pour assurer que les communautés locales soient au fait des risques environnementaux posés par les nouveaux projets et qu'elles aient leur mot à dire sur leur réalisation, d'autres disent qu'elle crée trop de paperasserie et qu'elle risque de ralentir ou de stopper la mise en œuvre d'importants projets, y compris des pipelines.



Le projet de loi C-48, récemment adopté par le gouvernement fédéral, empêche les pétroliers de transporter de grandes quantités de pétrole à destination et en provenance de la côte nord de la Colombie-Britannique. Certaines personnes disent que cette loi réduira le risque de déversement de pétrole dans les écosystèmes marins délicats, tandis que d'autres craignent qu'elle ne limite la capacité du Canada à exporter du pétrole vers les marchés étrangers en limitant les ports que peuvent utiliser des pétroliers.

- Maintenant que vous avez un peu entendu parler des deux lois, est-ce que l'une ou l'autre vous préoccupe ? Pourquoi ?
  - Que voudriez-vous savoir de plus au sujet de ces projets de loi, avant de décider s'ils sont nécessaires ou non ? Souhaitez-vous voir des changements bien précis à l'un ou l'autre de ces règlements ?
- Avez-vous déjà entendu parler du terme « paiements de péréquation » ?
  - SI OUI : Pouvez-vous me décrire comment fonctionnent les paiements de péréquation ?
  - Selon ce que vous savez du fonctionnement des paiements de péréquation, pensez-vous que le système de péréquation devrait être modifié ? SI OUI : De quelle façon ?
- Avez-vous entendu quoi que ce soit dernièrement au sujet du boycottage de l'industrie canadienne du canola par la Chine ?

#### **ÉCLAIRCISSEMENTS, AU BESOIN :**

La Chine, qui était auparavant le plus gros acheteur de canola canadien, a annoncé qu'elle cesserait d'acheter des produits de canola canadiens dès le mois de mars. Le gouvernement fédéral a déjà annoncé une aide financière aux agriculteurs touchés par le boycottage.

- Pensez-vous que le gouvernement devrait accorder des concessions à la Chine pour que celle-ci achète de nouveau notre canola, qu'il réplique en imposant ses propres sanctions sur leurs produits, ou bien qu'il continue à soutenir financièrement les agriculteurs tout en essayant de négocier une solution avec la Chine qui ne comporterait ni concessions ni représailles ?
- De tous les enjeux dont nous avons discuté jusqu'à maintenant et qui touchent particulièrement l'Ouest canadien, selon vous, lequel devrait être la priorité absolue du gouvernement du Canada ?

#### **MINE FRONTIER (15 minutes) SEULEMENT CALGARY**

- Avez-vous entendu, lu ou vu quoi que ce soit au sujet du projet de sables bitumineux de la Mine Frontier proposé au nord de Fort McMurray ?

#### **ÉCLAIRCISSEMENTS, AU BESOIN :**

La mine Frontier, qui fut proposée pour la première fois en 2011, serait la plus grande mine de sables bitumineux de l'histoire si le gouvernement fédéral l'approuvait. Ce projet pourrait créer jusqu'à



7 500 nouveaux emplois dans le secteur de la construction en Alberta, mais il constituerait également une source importante d'émissions de gaz à effet de serre et pourrait ainsi compromettre la capacité du Canada à respecter ses engagements internationaux en matière de réduction de la pollution.

- En fonction de cela, pensez-vous que le gouvernement fédéral devrait approuver le projet, le rejeter ou l'approuver seulement si l'entreprise s'engage à limiter l'impact environnemental ?

Si vous pouviez établir des conditions que vous estimez que l'entreprise devrait respecter avant de poursuivre l'exploitation de la mine de sables bitumineux, quelles seraient-elles ?

- Certains experts se sont récemment demandé, en fonction du prix actuel pour le pétrole, si la mine serait en mesure de générer suffisamment de revenus pour justifier les coûts de sa construction. Si cela s'avérait exact, est-ce que votre opinion sur la pertinence de construire la mine serait affectée ?
- Le gouvernement fédéral s'est donné comme priorité de réduire les émissions et de protéger l'environnement. Selon vous, est-il possible pour le gouvernement de le faire tout en approuvant ce projet ? Pourquoi ou pourquoi pas ?
- Selon certaines personnes, le gouvernement pourrait atténuer les coûts environnementaux de ce projet en prenant des mesures supplémentaires pour assainir l'environnement, tel que planter des arbres, investir dans l'énergie renouvelable ou encore imposer aux grands émetteurs des frais qui permettraient de financer des initiatives vertes. Seriez-vous d'un avis différent, quant au projet de la Mine Frontier, si le gouvernement fédéral s'engageait à prendre certaines de ces mesures supplémentaires dès l'approbation du projet ?

### **DÉFIS À L'ÉCHELLE LOCALE (20 minutes) DEMANDEZ À BRAMPTON, THUNDER BAY, CHICOUTIMI ET ST. JOHN'S**

- Quels sont les enjeux les plus importants à l'échelle locale à [LIEU] ? **ÉNUMÉREZ LES ENJEUX SUR LE TABLEAU BLANC.**
  - **POUR CHACUN DES ENJEUX :** Pourquoi est-ce important ? Qu'est-ce qui doit être fait ?  
**EXPLORER POUR VOIR SI LES AUTRES ESTIMENT QUE C'EST IMPORTANT**
- Quelles sont les infrastructures nécessaires à [LIEU] ?
  - Quelles sont les plus grandes préoccupations/quels sont les plus grands défis ? Y a-t-il autre chose qui doit être fait ?
- En pensant à tout ce qu'a fait le gouvernement fédéral au cours de la dernière année, qu'est-ce qui, selon vous, aura les retombées les plus positives pour [LIEU], s'il y a lieu ?



Le gouvernement fédéral a-t-il fait quelque chose qui, selon vous, aura des répercussions négatives sur [LIEU] ?

- Quels changements avez-vous vus à [LIEU] au cours des 5 à 10 dernières années ?
  - Et quel a été, le cas échéant, l'effet de ces changements ?
    - **SONDEZ POUR** : les répercussions sur l'économie, sur le plan socioculturel, etc.

### **ENVIRONNEMENT (30 minutes)**

- Dernièrement, qu'avez-vous vu, lu ou entendu au sujet de l'environnement ?
  - Et récemment, avez-vous vu, lu ou entendu quoi que ce soit en ce qui a trait au gouvernement du Canada et de l'environnement ?
- Y a-t-il quelqu'un qui a entendu parler de l'Accord de Paris sur les changements climatiques ? Comment l'expliqueriez-vous ?
  - Savez-vous quelle est la cible du Canada ?

### **ÉCLAIRCISSEMENTS, AU BESOIN**

En vertu de l'Accord de Paris, le Canada s'est engagé à réduire ses émissions de GES de 30 % en deçà des niveaux de 2005 d'ici 2030.

- Est-ce que quelqu'un a vu, lu ou entendu dire quoi que ce soit, récemment, quant au Canada et à son objectif d'atteindre sa cible ? Qu'avez-vous entendu ?
- Pensez-vous que le Canada atteindra sa cible ?
  - Quels sont les facteurs qui pourraient avoir une incidence sur la capacité du Canada d'atteindre ou non cette cible ?
- Pensez-vous qu'il est important que le Canada atteigne sa cible ? Pourquoi/pourquoi pas ?
- Est-ce que d'atteindre les objectifs de l'Accord de Paris est un bon indicateur du progrès que fait le Canada dans la lutte aux changements climatiques ?
- Quel serait un autre ou un meilleur indicateur de progression ?
- Pouvez-vous nommer quoi que ce soit que le Canada a fait ou n'a pas fait pour lutter contre les changements climatiques ?

Le Canada vise à réduire ses émissions de carbone afin de lutter contre les changements climatiques tout en appuyant son industrie pétrolière et énergétique en construisant un oléoduc (TMX).



- Le Canada peut-il soutenir son industrie pétrolière et gazière tout en prenant des mesures pour lutter contre les changements climatiques ? Pourquoi ? /Pourquoi pas ?

### **L'ÉCONOMIE CIRCULAIRE (20 minutes) DEMANDEZ DANS TOUS LES LIEUX, DEMANDEZ À CALGARY SI LE TEMPS LE PERMET**

- Y a-t-il quelqu'un qui a déjà entendu le terme « économie circulaire » ?
- Qu'avez-vous entendu ?
- Comment le décririez-vous ?

### **DOCUMENT À DISTRIBUER** : EXEMPLE VISUEL DE L'ÉCONOMIE CIRCULAIRE

#### ÉCLAIRCISSEMENTS, AU BESOIN

L'économie circulaire est une nouvelle façon de faire des affaires qui consiste à extraire le plus de valeur possible de nos ressources naturelles en recyclant, en réparant, en réutilisant, en réaffectant, en remettant à neuf ou en réusinant des produits et des matériaux — cela réduit la quantité de déchets ainsi que les émissions de gaz à effet de serre et réinjecte dans l'économie les produits et matériaux usés. L'objectif à long terme de l'économie circulaire est d'éliminer de façon structurée le concept des déchets.

- Maintenant que nous avons expliqué le terme, diriez-vous que vous êtes une personne qui y participe activement ou plutôt que vous y avez participé dans le passé ?
  - De quelle façon ?
- Combien de personnes ici ont payé plus cher un produit parce qu'il était de meilleure qualité et devait donc durer plus longtemps ? (levez la main)
  - Demandez aux participantes et participants d'énumérer quelques exemples de produits qu'ils ont achetés.
- Combien de personnes ont vu des produits annoncés « fabriqués à partir de produits recyclés » ? Quels produits ?
  - S'agit-il d'une qualité attrayante par rapport à un produit ? Pourquoi/pourquoi pas ?
- Combien d'entre vous sont prêts à payer plus cher pour des produits provenant de sources durables et fabriqués de façon durable ?
  - S'agit-il d'une qualité attrayante par rapport à un produit ? Pourquoi/pourquoi pas ?



- Combien d'entre vous seraient prêts à acheter des produits remis à neuf ? Ou des produits fabriqués à partir de matériaux remis à neuf ? (c.-à-d. électronique)
  
- Pouvez-vous penser à des façons dont vous aimeriez participer à l'économie circulaire, mais que vous n'êtes pas en mesure de le faire ?
  - Quelles sont-elles ?
  
- Pensez-vous qu'on devrait s'attendre à ce que les entreprises participent à l'économie circulaire ?
  - Quels types d'entreprises ?
  - De quelle façon ?
  
- Pensez-vous qu'une adoption répandue de l'économie circulaire serait une approche valable pour protéger l'environnement ? Pourquoi ? /Pourquoi pas ?

**Conclusion (5 minutes)**