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# Continuous Qualitative Data Collection of Canadians' Views – June 2023

## Final Report

### **Prepared for the Privy Council Office**

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Canada 

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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 fourth cycle of the first year of this study included a total of twelve focus groups with Canadian adults (18 years of age and older) conducted between June 6<sup>th</sup>, 2023, and June 28<sup>th</sup>, 2023.

Cette publication est aussi disponible en français sous le titre : Rapport final - Collecte continue de données qualitatives sur les opinions des Canadiens – juin 2023.

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Privy Council Office  
Blackburn Building  
85 Sparks Street, Room 228  
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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: July 10, 2023

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 of Canada, as well as emerging trends.

This report includes findings from 12 online focus groups which were conducted between June 6<sup>th</sup>, 2023, and June 28<sup>th</sup>, 2023, in multiple locations across the country including Alberta, Ontario, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Atlantic Canada, Quebec, the Northwest Territories (N.T.), and British

Columbia (B.C.). Details concerning the locations, recruitment, and composition of the groups are provided in the section below.

The research for this cycle focused largely on the Government of Canada's priorities and performance on a range of issues important to Canadians. Related to this, some groups took part in targeted discussions focusing on federal activities related to the cost of living, Chinese Canadian perspectives, the Northwest Territories, and official languages. All participants discussed what they had seen, read, or heard about the Government of Canada in recent days, with the group based in the Prairies focusing on the response to the wildfires which had been occurring in the region.

This research cycle also explored the issue of housing, which was discussed by recent graduates in the Prairies, recent home buyers in Ontario, Indigenous peoples in the N.T., and crime-concerned Canadians in the Greater Toronto Area (G.T.A.). Other topics, such as the outlook for Canada's energy sector and the federal price on carbon were explored by those residing in Calgary and Edmonton, rural Prairie centres, and St. John's, Newfoundland.

Participants in small and mid-size centres in Quebec, and Francophones in Atlantic Canada and Ontario discussed immigration, while topics related to health care and other issues such as pharmacare, opioids and suicide prevention were discussed at length by participants in St. John's, small and mid-size centres Quebec, Thunder Bay, Vancouver Island, major Quebec centres, and the N.T. Francophones residing in Ontario and Atlantic Canada and those in major Quebec centres also took part in extended discussions related to the protection and promotion of the French language. Other topics discussed this cycle included job creation, post-secondary issues, the Government of Canada's relationship with China, community safety, and local issues in St. John's, Newfoundland.

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.
- Groups were split primarily by location.
- Some groups focused on specific cohorts of the population including recent post-secondary graduates, Chinese diaspora, Francophones living outside of Quebec, recent home buyers, Indigenous peoples, and crime-concerned individuals.

### Detailed Approach

- Twelve groups across various regions in Canada.

- Six groups were conducted among the general population residing in small and mid-size centres in Quebec, Thunder Bay, St. John’s, Calgary and Edmonton, rural Prairies, and major centres in Quebec.
- The other six groups were conducted with key subgroups including:
  - Recent post-secondary graduates who have either started working or are looking for work;
  - The Chinese Diaspora;
  - Francophones living outside of Quebec;
  - Recent home buyers;
  - Indigenous peoples;
  - Crime-concerned individuals;
- The two groups in Quebec and the group in Francophone centres in Atlantic Canada and Ontario were conducted in French. All other groups were conducted in English.
- All groups for this cycle were conducted online.
- A total of 8 participants were recruited for each group, assuming 6 to 8 participants would attend.
- Across all locations, 83 participants attended, in total. Details on attendance numbers by group can be found below.
- Each participant received an honorarium of \$125.

### Group Locations and Composition

LOCATION	GROUP	LANGUAGE	DATE	TIME (EST)	GROUP COMPOSITION	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS
Small and Mid-Size Centres Quebec	1	French	June 6	6:00-8:00 pm	General Population	6
Thunder Bay	2	English	June 7	6:00-8:00 pm	General Population	7
Major City Centres Prairies (SK, MB)	3	English	June 12	8:00-10:00 pm	Recent Post-Secondary Graduates – started working or looking for work	7
St. John’s, NL	4	English	June 13	5:00-7:00 pm	General Population	7
Vancouver Island	5	English	June 14	9:00-11:00 pm	Chinese Diaspora	8
Francophone Centres Atlantic Canada and Ontario	6	French	June 15	6:00-8:00 pm	Francophones Living Outside Quebec	8
Calgary and Edmonton	7	English	June 19	8:00-10:00 pm	General Population	6
Rural Prairies (AB, SK, MB)	8	English	June 20	8:00-10:00 pm	General Population	8

Major Centres Ontario	9	English	June 21	6:00-8:00 pm	Recent Home Buyers – within the last 5 years	8
Major Centres Quebec	10	French	June 22	6:00-8:00 pm	General Population	8
Northwest Territories	11	English	June 27	8:00-10:00 pm	Indigenous	4
Greater Toronto Area	12	English	June 28	6:00-8:00 pm	Crime-Concerned	6
<b>Total number of participants</b>						<b>83</b>

## Key Findings

### Government of Canada in the News (All Locations)

At the beginning of each group, participants were asked what they had seen, read, or heard about the Government of Canada in recent days. A wide range of announcements and initiatives were recalled, including the federal government’s response to large-scale wildfires occurring in many parts of the country, the recent decision by the Bank of Canada to raise interest rates by 25 basis points, the introduction of new initiatives aimed at assisting first-time home buyers, ongoing investigations into allegations of Chinese interference in recent Canadian federal elections, and investments by the Government of Canada towards developing electrified transportation infrastructure.

Participants also recalled actions and initiatives related to the Government of Canada on the international stage. These included the continued provision of financial and military assistance for Ukraine, the Prime Minister’s recent trip to Kyiv, and the announcement that 13 new countries had been accepted into the Electronic Travel Authorization (eTA) program.

### Response to Wildfires (Rural Prairies)

Participants residing in rural centres in the Prairies engaged in an additional discussion regarding the Government of Canada’s response to the wildfires that had been impacting their region in recent months. Very few were aware of any actions from the federal government on this front. Provided with information regarding numerous measures the Government of Canada had taken to address this situation, all reacted positively and felt that these actions would be greatly helpful to those impacted by the fires. Asked what more could be done by the federal government to address the threat of wildfires going forward, several expressed the need for greater support for community volunteer firefighter programs. It was felt that these programs were essential to the protection of rural communities and currently lacked the resources they needed to adequately respond to wildfires.

### **Government of Canada Priorities and Performance (All Locations)**

All groups took part in conversations related to a number of issues currently facing Canadians as well as their perspectives regarding the federal government's performance in managing these priorities. Asked to identify areas in which they felt that the federal government had performed well as of late, participants provided a range of responses. These included the provision of affordability measures to help those struggling with the high cost of living, immigration, climate change and the environment, actions to assist those impacted by recent wildfires across the country, reconciliation with Indigenous peoples, and foreign assistance to countries such as Ukraine.

Participants also identified a range of areas in which they felt that the Government of Canada had room for improvement. These included reducing inflation and the high cost of living, a perceived lack of affordable housing in Canada, addressing health care worker shortages and long wait times for primary and emergency care, actions to reduce crime and gang violence, and the need to better support vulnerable or marginalized communities such as those experiencing homelessness, persons living with disabilities, and individuals struggling with addiction and/or mental health challenges.

### **Cost of Living (Mid-Size Centres Prairies Recent Post-Secondary Graduates, Major Centres Ontario Recent Home Buyers)**

Two groups took part in longer conversations related to the perceived high cost of living at present. Almost all reported having had to adjust their spending habits as of late in response to rising prices. A number expressed that the rising cost of living had negatively impacted their mental health and that concerns over finances had become a growing source of stress in their lives. Discussing what they believed was behind the rising cost of living, while most viewed this issue as initially resulting from supply chain interruptions thought to be connected to the COVID-19 pandemic, several felt that these challenges had been exacerbated by large corporations (such as major grocers) raising their prices significantly in response.

Asked if they were aware of any recent actions from the federal government to address the cost of living, participants recalled a range of initiatives. These included the introduction of the Canada Dental Benefit (CDB), the announcement of a one-time Grocery Rebate for lower-income households, and agreements reached between the federal and provincial/territorial governments to make child care more affordable for Canadian families. Most expected that the cost of living would likely continue to worsen over the next year unless significant action was taken to address this problem. No participants expected that the cost of living would improve over the next year.

### **Chinese Canadians (Vancouver Island Chinese Diaspora)**

The group comprised of members of the Chinese diaspora residing in Vancouver Island engaged in a brief discussion related to the challenges facing Chinese Canadians at present. Asked to identify the biggest issues currently impacting Chinese Canadians, a number believed that it needed to be easier for those educated outside of Canada to have their credentials recognized and be permitted to work in their fields of expertise. Some thought that more needed to be done to preserve and promote Chinese culture and heritage in Canada. A few also were of the view that anti-Asian hate and

discrimination had increased in recent years, with some believing that this had been connected to the COVID-19 pandemic. Asked if they could recall any actions from the Government of Canada related to increasing its engagement with Chinese Canadians, a number spoke positively of what they viewed as a recent initiative to reach out to the country's diverse population (including the Chinese diaspora) in languages other than English and French. Discussing additional actions that could be taken by the Government of Canada on this front, participants suggested initiatives such as increasing funding for programming celebrating Chinese culture and heritage, providing further language resources for those who do not speak English or French, and encouraging greater representation of Chinese Canadians at all levels of government.

### **The Northwest Territories (Northwest Territories Indigenous Peoples)**

Participants in the group comprised of Indigenous peoples residing in the Northwest Territories (N.T.) briefly discussed a number of issues currently facing their region. Asked to identify the most significant challenges impacting their respective communities, participants mentioned issues such as climate change, homelessness, mental health and addiction, and concerns related to the child welfare system. While a few spoke positively of the counselling resources provided by Indigenous Services Canada (ISC), it was felt that far more needed to be done by governments at the federal and territorial level to engage with and support Indigenous families.

Discussing the most important industries to their communities, many identified mining as playing a pivotal role in the region's economy. Asked which areas were most in need of additional support from the federal government, participants mentioned concerns related to education, health care, a lack of basic necessities such as clean drinking water, and the need for further action to mitigate the potential damaging impacts of climate change to the region. All felt that the federal government was currently on the wrong track when it came to managing these issues, with some expressing that many of these challenges had existed for several decades and that little in the way of tangible progress had ever been made. It was felt that far more needed to be done at all levels of government to engage with Indigenous-led organizations to better understand their concerns and determine which actions would be most effective towards finding long-term solutions to these challenges.

### **Official Languages (Atlantic Canada and Ontario Francophones)**

One group, comprised of Francophones residing in Atlantic Canada and Ontario, took part in an additional exercise where they were presented with a list of priorities related to official languages and asked to identify those that they felt were most important for the federal government to focus on. Almost all selected the priority of guaranteeing the equality of the French and English languages in Canada. Several felt that until this was achieved Francophones living outside of Quebec would continue to face difficulties in accessing the same level and range of services available to their English-speaking counterparts. The priority of ensuring that every Canadian could be heard and understood by a judge in the official language of their choice when before a court also received a high level of support. This was widely seen as a basic legal right and one that needed to be made available to all Canadians. Many also believed that it was important to increase funding for schools for Francophone communities outside of Quebec. The view was expressed that there were considerably fewer resources



available to French-speaking schools and that this had served to greatly reduce the quality of French-language education in these communities.

### **Housing (Mid-Size Centres Prairies Recent Post-Secondary Graduates, Major Centres Ontario Recent Home Buyers, Northwest Territories Indigenous Peoples, G.T.A. Crime Concerned)**

Four groups engaged in discussions related to housing. These conversations focused on actions taken by the Government of Canada to increase the housing supply, initiatives and supports related to first-time home buyers, and the housing situation in Canada's North.

### **Housing Supply (Mid-Size Centres Prairies Post-Secondary Graduates, Major Centres Ontario Recent Home Buyers, G.T.A. Crime Concerned)**

Three groups shared their perspectives related to the housing supply at present as well as actions from the federal government to increase the number of available homes for Canadians. Asked to identify the largest challenges at this time related to housing, many mentioned high home prices and the difficulties in saving up enough to afford a sufficient down payment. Several were of the opinion that increases in housing prices in recent years had been the result of not enough homes being available to meet the demands of prospective home buyers and that more needed to be done to increase the supply of housing in Canada. The view was added that along with building more homes the Government of Canada and governments at the provincial/territorial and municipal level also needed to ensure that enough supporting infrastructure such as public transportation, hospitals, and schools was being constructed to accommodate the increased populations in these communities.

Asked why they felt that more new homes were not being built at a faster rate, several believed that this was related to perceived increases in costs for building materials and challenges related to municipal zoning laws and the types of homes that developers are permitted to build. Asked whether they had heard of the Housing Accelerator Fund, very few had. Provided with information about this initiative, while a number felt that it might be helpful in increasing the amount of available housing, several were concerned as to what oversight would be put into place to ensure that the funds allocated to municipalities under this program would be used effectively. Discussing whether they had any concerns related to building more homes faster, many felt that there was a risk of these homes being of poorer quality due to their more rapid rate of construction. Some were also concerned that even if they added to the housing supply, these new housing developments would be highly priced and unaffordable for a large number of Canadians.

Asked what impacts, if any, they thought that changes to municipal zoning bylaws could have on building more homes, several expected that this would have a significant impact, believing that these laws dictated the type of housing that could be built in each municipality as well as where these new developments could be located. Most were of the opinion that municipalities should be encouraged to make zoning changes to allow for the building of more homes in their communities. Related to this, several believed that there should be an increased focus on increasing density and building multi-family housing complexes rather than single-family homes.



### **Recent Home Buyers (Major Centres Ontario Recent Home Buyers)**

Participants in this group, comprised of individuals who had purchased a home within the past five years, discussed their experiences related to home ownership as well as initiatives from the federal government related to assisting first-time home buyers. Asked if they could recall any recent actions taken by the Government of Canada, participants mentioned initiatives such as the creation of the new First Home Savings Account (FHSA), the First-Time Home Buyer Incentive (FTHBI), and its commitment to increasing the housing supply across Canada.

Almost all indicated being concerned about recent changes to the prime interest rate. Several reported having purchased their homes when interest rates were much lower and were concerned about how much their monthly payments might increase when it came time to renew their mortgages. A large number expressed that home ownership had become less affordable for them in the past five years. Almost all were of the impression that their home utility costs had also risen considerably during this period. For many, these increases in housing-related costs had led to a decrease in discretionary spending and a greater portion of their monthly income being allocated towards servicing their mortgage payments and other debt.

Participants were next provided with information related to various housing initiatives from the Government of Canada. Several spoke positively of the decision to ban blind bidding, believing that this would help future home buyers by ensuring that they were not overbidding on homes due to not knowing the amounts that other potential buyers were offering. A number also expressed interest in rent-to-own housing options and felt that this could represent a way for Canadians to build equity in a property without the requirement of putting down a significant down payment. While expecting that these programs might be helpful to some, most believed that the Government of Canada was currently on the wrong track when it came to making home ownership more affordable. It was widely felt that due to what they viewed as exceedingly high home prices in many parts of the country, the amounts offered through these programs would likely have little impact on the ability of most Canadians to purchase a home.

### **Northern Housing (Northwest Territories Indigenous Peoples)**

Those in the group comprised of Indigenous peoples residing in the Northwest Territories (N.T.) briefly discussed the housing situation in their region. Almost all believed that housing in their communities was very lacking at present and that it had become increasingly difficult for those residing there to afford to purchase or rent a home. The view was added that the limited available housing was often in poor condition and in drastic need of repair. All felt that the housing situation in their region had worsened in recent years and a few commented that they would likely be leaving the North in the future due to the lack of housing options and other challenges related to the high cost of living there.

Discussing what would need to happen to improve the situation in the N.T., participants believed that far greater investments needed to be made towards building more homes in the region. Most felt that the federal government was currently on the wrong track when it came to housing, with a few expressing that they no longer felt homeownership was a realistic possibility for them. Asked what more could be done by the Government of Canada on this front, participants recommended greater assistance for first-time home buyers as well as increased funding towards improving the quality and availability of housing in Northern communities.

### **Energy Outlook (Calgary and Edmonton, Rural Prairies)**

Two groups shared their perspectives regarding Canada's energy sector, with a specific focus on their expectations related to oil and gas production going forward. All felt that oil and gas was a significant economic driver at present and was of critical importance both to the Prairies as well as for Canada more broadly. Discussing the importance of oil and gas in their region, several reported that this sector continued to be a top employer in their communities and felt that these resources were essential to meeting the energy needs of a large portion of Canadians. As such, it was expected that it would be difficult to transition away from oil and gas at any point in the near future. Almost all believed that the oil and gas sector was performing strongly at present and had experienced significant economic growth in recent years. Asked how important they felt it was from an economic perspective to diversify beyond oil and gas, most believed this to be a significant priority, with several of the impression that this process had already begun in their respective areas. A number thought that given the finite nature of non-renewable resources such as oil and gas, more sustainable alternatives would soon become a necessity. Several also felt this to be important from an environmental perspective, believing that a greater use of renewable energy would have a considerable benefit towards mitigating the potential impacts of climate change.

Most believed that clean energy represented a significant economic opportunity for Canada and expected that investments in this sector would likely lead to the creation of numerous high-paying jobs (including for those currently employed in oil and gas). Questioned if they were familiar with the term 'sustainable jobs', very few were. Discussing what came to mind when they thought about sustainable jobs in the clean energy sector many believed that these would likely be those positions responsible for maintaining and managing the systems responsible for producing this energy. Asked who or what they believed was driving the development of the clean energy sector in their region, several felt that this had primarily resulted from a public desire in many jurisdictions across the world to transition to more renewable energy sources as a way of mitigating the impacts of climate change. It was thought that the Government of Canada had also worked to develop this sector through the provision of grants and tax credits to clean energy producers as well as by making significant investments towards the construction of clean energy infrastructure.

### **Carbon Pricing (St. John's Newfoundland, Calgary and Edmonton, Rural Prairies)**

Three groups took part in conversations related to the Government of Canada's carbon pricing system. To begin, participants were asked how important they felt it was for the federal government to reduce carbon pollution in Canada. Many believed this to be an important priority, feeling it was prudent to take these actions now in order to reduce the impacts of climate change on future generations. Asked if they were aware of any actions taken by the Government of Canada to reduce carbon pollution, participants mentioned initiatives such as the introduction of a federal price on carbon, rebates for the purchase of electric vehicles (EVs), increased funding for public transportation systems in Canadian communities, and grants for home retrofitting projects via the Canada Greener Homes Grant (though not mentioned by name).

Questioned whether they supported placing a price on carbon, many were uncertain and felt that they did not know enough to properly evaluate this measure. A roughly similar smaller number expressed support for a price on carbon as those who opposed this initiative. To aid in conversation, participants were informed that there were two parts to carbon pollution pricing – a fuel charge, which applies to things such as oil and gas and a separate system for industry, and that in provinces where the federal fuel charge applies all direct proceeds are returned to Canadians, primarily through Climate Action Incentive Payments (CAIPs). Many questioned the purpose of most households receiving this money back as this felt counterintuitive to many.

Discussing where they would go if they were interested in finding more information related to carbon pollution pricing, many indicated that they would likely look to official websites hosted by the Government of Canada. Asked whether they viewed climate scientists as credible sources for information related to carbon pricing, most did, believing these individuals typically had considerable expertise in this area. While several felt that economists were also trustworthy sources of information on this front, concerns were expressed by some that they may be overly focused on the financial aspects of carbon pricing rather than the environmental impacts.

Informed that other countries, including Denmark, the United Kingdom (U.K.), Sweden, France, Netherlands, Chile, and Japan, all had implemented their own ways of pricing carbon pollution, participants were asked whether this impacted their level of support for carbon pricing in Canada. While a number felt that it was encouraging that other countries were taking these steps, very few said that knowing this impacted their support for carbon pricing. Participants were largely of the view that each country faced its own unique challenges related to limiting carbon pollution and that Canada's carbon pricing system should be tailored to its own needs and not be influenced by strategies utilized in other jurisdictions.

Asked whether they felt that a price on carbon would discourage Canadians from polluting, few believed that it would. While it was expected that some individuals might adjust their daily behaviours to produce fewer emissions, it was generally thought that this was not possible for everyone. The view was added that making these changes would be particularly difficult for those living rurally who often had to drive long distances to get from place to place and whose communities typically had limited public transportation options available. Questioned whether they felt that the costs of a price on carbon were higher in the short term than the costs of climate change, most were uncertain. This said, a large number were of the view that even if the costs of implementing a price on carbon were relatively high, this action was still worth taking if it served to mitigate the impacts of climate change on future generations.

### **Immigration (Small and Mid-Size Centres Quebec, Atlantic Canada and Ontario Francophones)**

Participants in two groups discussed the current state of the immigration system in Canada. Asked if they could recall any recent actions taken by the federal government related to this front, a number had heard that it was currently working to increase the rate of immigration to Canada in the coming years. While most were generally accepting of a higher level of immigration, several were concerned about the capacity of Canadian communities to accommodate and support a large influx of new

arrivals. Related to this, it was widely felt that a proportionate amount of additional infrastructure and essential services such as hospitals and schools would need to be constructed to accommodate these newcomers.

Asked whether they thought that the Government of Canada was currently on the right track when it came to immigration, most in Quebec felt this to be the case. Those residing in Atlantic Canada and Ontario were more mixed in their opinions with a roughly equal number feeling that the federal government was on the right track as those who believed it was headed in the wrong direction. Discussing the potential benefits of immigration, several felt that it was essential to ensure that there would be enough workers to meet the needs of Canadians, particularly in vital sectors such as health care and education. Some also spoke about the potential for immigration to increase the diversity of the population, believing that this would provide a greater variety of perspectives and cultural richness to Canadian communities. Among the smaller number who felt that the federal government was on the wrong track when it came to immigration, concerns were expressed that the addition of too many new arrivals in a short period of time would place severe strain on areas such as housing, health care, and the education system. Asked whether they thought that the immigration rate to Canada should increase, decrease, or stay the same, most believed that it should be kept relatively stable in the years to come. It was widely felt that this would be the most effective way to bring more people to Canada while not overwhelming the housing market and/or the ability of communities to continue providing essential services to their residents.

A number expressed the view that efforts should be taken to ensure that a sizeable portion of new arrivals spoke French. This was thought to be especially important in terms of the ability of newcomers in French-speaking municipalities to successfully integrate into their new communities. Informed that through the Action Plan for Official Languages, the Government of Canada was planning to boost Francophone immigration, participants were largely positive in their reactions. Several thought that this action would go a long way towards strengthening the French language and Francophone culture in Canada. Discussing what more should be done by the federal government on this front, a number recommended a greater focus on recruiting French-speaking individuals with qualifications in important sectors such as health care, education, construction, and other trades, as well as making it easier for their credentials to be recognized in Canada.

### **Health Care (St. John's Newfoundland)**

Participants residing in St. John's, Newfoundland took part in a brief discussion related to health care in their region. Almost all felt that the health care system in their province was under considerable strain and that this had greatly impacted the quality and accessibility of these services. Describing the most pressing challenges related to health care at present, many identified what they viewed as a persistent shortage of doctors and nurses in the region. Related to this, several identified long wait times at emergency rooms and walk-in clinics as a growing area of concern, believing that worker shortages had made it difficult to access emergency or primary care in a timely fashion. A large number also mentioned a lack of family doctors practicing in the region, with several describing having personally faced challenges in acquiring a family physician in recent years.

Provided with information related to priority areas recently established by the Government of Canada related to health care, all reacted positively. Several reiterated the importance of addressing health worker shortages and reducing wait times, expressing the view that many of the other issues currently facing the health care system in their province stemmed from a lack of available personnel and resources. A number also thought that it was of critical importance for the Government of Canada to place an increased focus on addressing mental health and substance use. It was believed that these issues had increased substantially in their community in recent years and required urgent attention. A few also spoke positively of the priority related to modernizing health data management and virtual care. It was felt that by implementing a digital health system, health care providers would be able to communicate much more effectively with one another, making it easier for patients to have their records transferred and benefit from a more personalized health care experience.

### **Pharmacare (Small and Mid-Size Centres Quebec, Thunder Bay)**

Two groups engaged in discussions related to the potential implementation of a national pharmacare program. Asked to identify the biggest challenges related to health care in need of further attention from the Government of Canada, participants identified a wide range of issues, including long wait times when accessing emergency care, a shortage of doctors and nurses, a dearth of family doctors in many Canadian communities, limited mental health services, a lack of home care options for the aging population, a limited availability of virtual care options, and a perceived lack of prevention-based medicine. Asked specifically about the cost of prescription drugs, almost all in the group from Thunder Bay thought this was an important issue, while most in the group from Quebec believed that there were more pressing issues facing the health care system at present.

Describing the current state of prescription drug coverage in Canada, a large number were of the impression that they were relatively affordable in most cases. Almost all were familiar with the term 'pharmacare' and most believed that this referred to the public provision of prescription drugs and medications. None were aware of any plans from the Government of Canada on this front. To aid in the conversation, it was clarified that the federal government intended to move forward on implementing a national pharmacare program to make prescription drugs more affordable and accessible to a greater number of Canadians. Almost all reacted positively to this information, and many were enthusiastic about the prospect of reducing the costs associated with prescription drugs and helping to make them more accessible to all Canadians.

Asked who they felt should be covered under a national pharmacare plan, participants expressed a range of views. Most felt that this coverage should be extended only to those who did not have access to a private insurance plan. Regarding potential options, participants were informed that a national pharmacare program could be completely public (similar to health care) or could work to 'close the gaps' so that people could continue to use existing public and private plans. Discussing the potential benefits and drawbacks of each approach, all expressed a preference for the completely public option, believing that providing equal coverage to all Canadians represented the best way to deliver a pharmacare program. Asked if they would support a universal pharmacare program, almost all

reported that they would. Most, however, indicated that they would be less likely to support this program in the event that it led to higher or new taxation or increased the federal deficit.

### **Opioids (Thunder Bay, Vancouver Island Chinese Diaspora)**

Participants residing in Thunder Bay and Vancouver Island took part in conversations related to addiction and opioid use in their communities. All in Thunder Bay and most from Vancouver Island felt this to be a major issue at present and believed that the rate of addiction and substance abuse in their area had increased substantially as of late. No participants were hopeful that this issue would improve in the coming years. It was felt that too few resources had been devoted towards addressing substance use in Canadian communities and that more needed to be done to ensure those suffering from addiction were able to access treatment. Asked if they could recall any actions taken by the federal government regarding this issue, a few mentioned initiatives such as increased funding for safe injection sites and the availability of Naloxone kits for those experiencing overdoses.

Asked what came to mind when they heard terms such as 'safe supply' and 'safe injection sites', most were positive in their impressions. On balance, it was believed that these were initiatives aimed at preventing overdose deaths by ensuring those suffering from addiction had a safe place to consume these substances and greater assurance that the drugs they were consuming had not been laced with more dangerous substances. While mostly supportive of harm reduction initiatives such as these, several did not believe that these programs would be sufficient on their own in curbing the rate of addiction. It was felt that while the availability of a safe supply and access to safe injection sites would likely reduce overdose deaths, a greater focus needed to be placed on assisting these individuals in accessing treatment for their addictions and getting them to stop using drugs in the long term. It was widely felt that the Government of Canada had a role to play both in the funding of harm reduction initiatives as well as ensuring treatment options were available for those suffering from addiction.

Provided with information related to the federal government's Substance Use and Addictions Program (SUAP), most expected that this initiative would have a positive impact on reducing overdoses and other harms associated with substance use. It was widely felt, however, that in order for these actions to be effective they would need to be accompanied by increased accessibility to mental health treatment and safe and affordable housing for those suffering from addiction. It was thought that more should be done to incentivize Canadians to pursue careers in mental health and addiction treatment, with some of the impression that there was currently a shortage of skilled workers in these areas.

### **Job Creation (Mid-Size Centres Prairies Recent Post-Secondary Graduates)**

Participants residing in mid-size centres in the Prairies engaged in a brief conversation regarding the state of the Canadian job market and recent job creation efforts undertaken by the Government of Canada. All reported being recent post-secondary graduates. Sharing their perspectives regarding the current state of the job market and the opportunities available to new graduates, many indicated that

it had been difficult to find work in their field of study and that they had either accepted employment in an unrelated area or been searching unsuccessfully for work for several months.

All felt that the Canadian job market would be significantly worse in five years' time. Several were concerned about the potential proliferation of artificial intelligence (AI) and believed that this could result in mass layoffs and fewer job opportunities for humans. All believed that the Government of Canada was currently on the wrong track when it came to creating jobs and very few were aware of any work it had undertaken on this front. Asked what more could be done to create jobs, provide skills training, and support workers, participants suggested that the federal government create incentives for students to study and enter in-demand fields (such as health care), as well as make post-secondary education more affordable for Canadians.

### **Post-Secondary Issues (Mid-Size Centres Prairies Recent Post-Secondary Graduates)**

Participants in the group comprised of recent post-secondary graduates residing in the Prairies, took part in a brief discussion related to the affordability of post-secondary education. Asked if they were aware of any work the Government of Canada had done to make post-secondary studies and paying off student loans more affordable, many recalled its recent decision to permanently eliminate interest on Canada Student Loans and Canada Apprentice Loans. Several were also aware of the availability of student loan repayment assistance programs, including the ability to defer loan payments until borrowers began earning an annual income of more than \$40,000. All were positive in their reactions to these actions and many expressed appreciation regarding the decision to permanently eliminate interest on Canada Student Loans and Canada Apprentice Loans. While enthusiastic about these initiatives, most felt that these actions represented temporary solutions to addressing education unaffordability, rather than a permanent or long-term resolution to this issue.

Asked what more the Government of Canada could do to help new graduates, participants believed that actions could be taken to ensure that entry-level work would be available to students in their fields of study upon graduation. Others suggested that the federal government reverse its recent decision to allow international students to work for more than 20 hours per week, believing that this had created further competition in what was perceived to be an already competitive job market.

### **Relationship with China (Vancouver Island Chinese Diaspora)**

One group, comprised of members of the Chinese diaspora living in Vancouver Island, engaged in a short discussion related to the Government of Canada's current relationship with China. Almost all believed that Canada's relationship with China had worsened in recent years and several expressed concerns related to the potential economic and geopolitical consequences of perceived escalating tensions with China. Discussing actions that the federal government could take to improve its management of this relationship, a large number believed that more could be done to broaden its economic and cultural connections to China. It was felt that this could include increasing the number of students studying abroad in each country and further expanding trade relations between the two jurisdictions. Asked how they expected this relationship to develop moving forward, most felt that this

was difficult to predict and would depend considerably on the actions taken by China on an economic and geopolitical level going forward.

### **French Language Protection and Promotion (Atlantic Canada and Ontario Francophones, Major Centres Quebec)**

Participants in two groups engaged in brief conversations related to the protection and promotion of the French language in Canada. All were of the view that this needed to be a top priority for the Government of Canada. Asked whether they could recall any actions from the federal government on this front, many mentioned the announcement of the Government of Canada's *Action Plan for Official Languages: 2023-2028*.

Provided with information regarding the specific objectives and initiatives contained within this Plan almost all were positive in their reactions, and many felt that these measures would be greatly helpful in protecting and promoting the French language both in Quebec and across Canada. Several expected that it would greatly benefit Francophone communities outside of Quebec, providing them with a broader range of resources and programming for their residents. Many thought that the initiative to invest in Francophone child care centres across Canada would be especially impactful, believing that it would help a greater number of children to develop French language skills from an early age. A number also felt that investments towards Francophone community organizations would have a significant impact, believing it had the potential to strengthen Francophone communities and ensure broader access to French-language services and resources.

Asked what else the Government of Canada could do to better protect and promote the French language, participants recommended increased investments towards French-language programming and resources for seniors, promoting the greater use of French on labels and signage, and requiring manufacturers and corporations throughout Canada to provide French-language products and services.

### **Suicide Prevention (Major Centres Quebec, Northwest Territories Indigenous Peoples)**

**Content Advisory: Please note that the following section deals with the topic of suicide and emotional distress and may be upsetting for some readers.**

Participants in two groups engaged in discussions related to suicide prevention and the implementation of 9-8-8, a three-digit telephone number for those suffering from emotional distress and dealing with suicidal ideation. Shown a number of potential statements designed to promote and provide information related to this service, participants largely favoured those which were direct, informative, and provided statistics that conveyed the gravity of these mental health challenges.

Focusing on the different features offered by the 9-8-8 service, many felt that confidentiality was of significant importance, believing that a far greater number of Canadians would be motivated to utilize this service knowing that their conversations would be kept private. The view was expressed that there was still considerable stigma around mental health and suicidal thoughts and that confidentiality was

key to this service being effective. A large number also felt it important that this service be free, though many thought that this would already be an expectation for most and did not need to be highlighted to a significant extent. It was widely thought that it was important for the 9-8-8 service to be culturally appropriate for users. Several commented that some cultures might experience mental health challenges in different ways and that it was of critical importance for responders to be able to communicate to callers in ways that related to them and their backgrounds. Participants in the group comprised of Indigenous peoples felt that this might encourage a greater number from their communities to utilize this service, believing that they would feel more confident in knowing that their unique experiences and challenges would be understood by responders.

Discussing the types of promotional materials and information resources related to 9-8-8 that they felt would be most effective once the number was launched, several believed that this advertising should appear on social media platforms as well as on television and radio. Given the perception that many younger Canadians often faced with struggles related to mental health, it was felt that social media would be a highly intuitive place for messaging regarding 9-8-8 to appear. A few also suggested that these messages should be accompanied by images of real people, further conveying to viewers the human consequences related to struggles with mental health and suicidal thoughts. Asked if they would be likely to share information related to 9-8-8 with family, friends, and/or colleagues almost all indicated that they would. Shown a number of potential names for this service, most participants felt the service should be called '9-8-8 Canada', with an accompanying call to action ("988 Canada: Call or text for suicide crisis help"). Related to this potential call to action, a few commented that it was important to let people know that they could also text this service, believing that this had not previously been apparent.

### **Community Safety (G.T.A. Crime Concerned)**

Participants residing in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) shared their perspectives related to the current rate of crime in their area. A roughly similar number believed that crime was currently a major issue in their community as those who felt it was a moderate or minor challenge. Asked to identify the types of crimes that they felt were an issue at present, participants mentioned activities such as home robberies, violent assaults, car theft, and drunk driving. Many were also of the opinion that crime on public transit had become a growing concern in recent years. Almost all felt that the rate of crime had increased as of late, with a small number believing it had mostly remained the same. Several reported having recently changed their behaviours in response to rising crime. Actions taken on this front included no longer walking alone at night, driving as opposed to taking public transit, and keeping a closer eye on their children in public areas.

Asked what actions should be taken to address rising crime, a few believed there needed to be increased investments towards law enforcement and bolstering the presence of police in their community. A larger number, however, felt differently, believing that increased policing was not the answer and that more needed to be done to address the root causes behind why these crimes were occurring. Asked whether they could recall any actions from the Government of Canada related to addressing crime, a number recalled recent bans on certain types of firearms. While generally

supportive of taking action to reduce gun crime, a few believed that other types of firearms, notably hunting rifles, had been banned due to this action, and felt that this was unfair.

Provided with information regarding steps the federal government was taking to crack down on gang violence, including through increased investments towards law enforcement, participants were mixed in their reactions. While hopeful that these actions would be effective, many were concerned that not enough focus was being placed on preventing crimes from occurring in the first place. It was felt that if significant investments were made towards providing individuals with safe and affordable housing, a living wage, and treatment for issues such as mental health and addiction, many would no longer be compelled to engage in criminal behaviour. With this in mind, it was thought that a greater focus should be placed on increasing the overall well-being of vulnerable individuals and that taking this approach would be much more effective in the long term towards reducing crime.

### **Local Issues (St. John's Newfoundland)**

Participants residing in St. John's, Newfoundland engaged in a brief discussion related to the top issues impacting their region that they believed required further prioritization from the federal government. Asked to identify the most pressing challenges currently facing their community, participants mentioned areas such as inflation and the high cost of living, a perceived lack of affordable housing, health care worker shortages, long wait times for emergency and primary care, and what was viewed as increasing rates of homelessness and addiction in recent years. Almost all felt that not enough attention was being paid to these issues by the Government of Canada at this time.

Discussing the most important sectors and industries in their region all felt that the oil and gas sector was of critical importance to the local economy and served as one of the top employers for those residing in the region. Asked what they viewed as the biggest issues facing the oil and gas sector at present, a number mentioned increasing fuel and energy prices, believing that this had served to reduce consumer demand in the sector. Identifying additional challenges, participants also described what they viewed as a growing global trend away from non-renewable resources towards more sustainable energy options, believing this had also contributed to a decrease in demand for oil and gas.

Asked whether they were aware of the Bay du Nord Development Project, a roughly similar number of participants reported having heard of it as those who had not. Informed that Equinor, the company behind the project, had recently decided to postpone the project for three years for economic reasons, while most felt this likely made financial sense, it was widely felt that this action would have a negative impact on the provincial economy and the creation of high-paying jobs in their community. Several hoped that the project would eventually go forward and were of the view that it would be a major loss to their region if it were to be cancelled permanently.



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**MORE INFORMATION**

The Strategic Counsel

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# Detailed Findings

## Timeline of June 2023 Announcements

To help place the focus group discussions within the context of key events which occurred during the month, below is a brief synopsis for the month of June 2023.

- June 1-7
  - June 1. The Government of Canada provided an update on federal support for communities affected by wildfires in Alberta, including a total of \$20 million in funds raised for the Canadian Red Cross through a donation matching scheme with the federal government and the Government of Alberta. The Government of Canada also announced the signing of nine agreements as part of the first phase of the Wildfire Training Fund designed to support the hiring and training of firefighters.
  - June 1. The Government of Canada announced \$1.4 million in funding towards Advance Care Planning through the Canadian Hospice Palliative Care Association (CHPCA).
  - June 1. The Government of Canada announced \$16 million in funds through the Skills for Success program to provide skills and support for over 7,000 Canadians so they may succeed in the workforce.
  - June 1. The Government of Canada and its research partners in Quebec, Ontario, New Brunswick, and Saskatchewan announced \$9 million in research funding to research evidence-based policy solutions for the health care system.
  - June 1. The Government of Canada invested \$5.9 million in Indigenous-led clean energy projects and skills training.
  - June 1. The Government of Canada announced it would aid wildfire response efforts in the province of Nova Scotia.
  - June 2. The Government of Canada and its partners in Newfoundland and Labrador announced \$30 million in funding for the improvement of Route 3 in St. John's and Mount Pearl.
  - June 2. The Government of Canada and the Assembly of First Nations announced updates to the School Space Accommodation Standards (SSAS) policy to improve education infrastructure on reserves.
  - June 2. The Government of Canada and the Government of British Columbia (B.C.) invested \$48.6 million to support wastewater treatment infrastructure projects across the province.
  - June 2. The Government of Canada announced \$3.6 million in funding for Small Business BC to support the export capacity of small businesses across the province.
  - June 3. The Government of Canada announced federal assistance for Quebec to combat wildfires in the province.
  - June 5. The Government of Canada announced a \$9.6 million investment towards the construction of the Kenhtè:ke Language and Cultural Centre on Tyendinaga Mohawk Territory.
  - June 5. The Government of Canada announced \$1.5 million in funding to support projects addressing family and gender-based violence in B.C.

- June 6. The Government of Canada announced \$1.15 million in funding for the Native Women’s Association of Canada (NWAC).
- June 6. The Government of Canada announced \$1.5 million in funding to support Indigenous-led research on food access inequality and food security in northern communities.
- Focus groups were held with the general population living in Quebec (June 6th) and with the general population living in Thunder Bay (June 7th).
- June 8-14
  - June 8. The Government of Canada announced \$287.1 million in funding to support safe and affordable housing projects in urban, rural, and northern Indigenous communities.
  - June 9. The Government of Canada announced that almost \$2.6 million has been distributed to 10 Indigenous women’s organizations to protect and empower Indigenous girls, women, and 2SLGBTQI+ people.
  - June 10. The Government of Canada announced additional sanctions in response to Russia’s invasion of Ukraine.
  - June 12. The Government of Canada announced special measures, including free document replacement, for Canadians affected by wildfires.
  - June 12. The Government of Canada announced new immigration streams for skilled refugees to continue their careers in Canada.
  - Focus group was held with recent post-secondary graduates in Saskatchewan and Manitoba (June 12<sup>th</sup>).
  - June 13. The Government of Canada announced over \$960,000 in funding for energy-modelling projects to inform Canada’s clean energy actions.
  - Focus group was held with the general population living in St. John’s (June 13<sup>th</sup>).
  - June 14. The Government of Canada and Chief Nursing Officer hosted the Nursing Retention Forum in response to challenges facing Canada’s health care workforce.
  - Focus group was held with the Chinese diaspora in Vancouver Island (June 14<sup>th</sup>).
- June 15-21
  - Focus group was held with francophones from Atlantic Canada and Ontario (June 15<sup>th</sup>).
  - June 16. The Government of Canada and the Government of Ontario announced the construction of a francophone primary school and daycare in Barrhaven and Manotick.
  - June 17. The Government of Canada and the Government of Ontario announced that litigation related to the Robinson-Huron Treaty was settled for a total of \$10 billion.
  - June 18. The Government of Canada announced measures to protect Calgary’s upcoming by-elections from foreign interference.
  - June 19. The Government of Canada invested over \$8.2 million in a variety of Indigenous-led projects in Northern Ontario.
  - Focus group was held with the general population in Calgary and Edmonton (June 19<sup>th</sup>).
  - June 20. The Government of Canada and the Government of Saskatchewan announced a joint investment of \$6.6 million to support livestock and forage research.
  - June 20. The Government of Canada and the Government of Manitoba announced \$2.9 million in funding to support the province’s renewable transportation fuel sector.

- Focus groups were held with the general population in the rural Prairies (June 20<sup>th</sup>) and recent home buyers in Ontario (June 21<sup>st</sup>).
- June 22-30
  - June 22. The Government of Canada announced \$1.9 million in funding through the Health Canada Substance Use and Addictions Program (SUAP) to address harms related to substance use in Ottawa, Ontario.
  - Focus group was held with the general population in Quebec (June 22<sup>nd</sup>).
  - June 23. The Government of Canada and the Government of the United States sign an arrangement to strengthen joint efforts to combat wildfires and protect communities.
  - June 26. The Government of Canada announced an investment of \$850,000 through the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario (FedNor) to support music, film, and television in Northern Ontario.
  - June 27. The Government of Canada announced new measures to support skills development for foreign workers and fill labour market gaps.
  - June 27. The Government of Canada invested over \$8.1 million through the Pacific Economic Development Agency of Canada (PacifiCan) in six Greater Victoria organizations to support innovation, economic growth, and job creation.
  - June 27. The Government of Canada announced that three Indigenous women's and 2SLGBTQIA+ organizations received a total of over \$1.5 million in funds to provide gender-based violence prevention programs.
  - Focus group was held with Indigenous peoples living in the Northwest Territories (N.T.) (June 27<sup>th</sup>).
  - June 28. The Government of Canada announced \$113,000 in funding for West Nipissing Arts Council (CANO) to support francophone arts and culture in francophone minority communities.
  - June 28. The Government of Canada announced an investment of \$472,000 to improve accessibility and recreational facilities in Yellowknife, N.T.
  - June 28. The Government of Canada invested over \$7 million in the Saskatchewan clean energy sector.
  - Focus group was held with crime concerned individuals in the Greater Toronto Area (G.T.A.) (June 28<sup>th</sup>).
  - June 29. The Government of Canada announced \$87 million in funds to support the transition to clean energy in Newfoundland and Labrador.
  - June 29. The Government of Canada invested \$1.37 million towards reducing greenhouse gas emissions in N.T.
  - June 29. The Government of Canada announced over \$735,000 to improve the Roots Community Food Centres facilities in Thunder Bay, Ontario.
  - June 29. The Government of Canada invested \$50 million in Indigenous-led Bekevar Wind Power Project to support clean and renewable energy in Saskatchewan.
  - June 30. The Government of Canada announced investments of \$101.7 million and \$62.7 million for Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, respectively, to support the transition to clean energy.

## Government of Canada in the News (All Locations)

At the beginning of each group, participants were asked what they had seen, read, or heard about the Government of Canada in recent days. A wide range of announcements and initiatives were recalled, including:

- The Government of Canada's response to large-scale wildfires occurring in many parts of the country, including Alberta, Quebec, and Nova Scotia. Several recalled hearing that the federal government had taken actions such as ensuring those displaced by the fires had access to food and shelter, the provision of financial assistance to affected communities, and the deployment of Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) personnel to assist with the relief effort;
- The decision by the Bank of Canada to raise the policy interest rate by 25 basis points on June 7<sup>th</sup>, 2023. A number were concerned that this would make it increasingly difficult for Canadians to continue to afford their monthly mortgage and other debt payments;
- The introduction of new initiatives aimed at assisting first-time home buyers. A few specifically recalled hearing that the federal government had announced the creation of a new Tax-Free First Home Savings Account (FHSA) to assist Canadians in saving towards the purchase of a home;
- Ongoing investigations by the federal government into allegations of Chinese interference in recent Canadian federal elections, and the resignation of the Independent Special Rapporteur on Foreign Interference;
- The introduction of a federal price on carbon in Newfoundland and Labrador beginning on July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023. Several residing in Newfoundland were aware of this upcoming change regarding how carbon would be priced in their province;
- The implementation of Bill C-11, also known as the *Online Streaming Act*. Related to this, a few recalled hearing that in response to this legislation Google and Meta had indicated they would be removing links to Canadian news articles on their platforms;
- The announcement by the Minister of Employment, Workforce Development, and Diversity Inclusion that Bill C-22 (also known as the *Canada Disability Benefit Act*) had received royal assent on June 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2023, allowing for the creation of the Canada Disability Benefit (CDB);
- Investments by the federal government towards further developing Canada's electrified transportation infrastructure, including the deployment of electric vehicle (EV) charging stations and hydrogen refuelling stations via the Zero Emission Vehicle Infrastructure Program (ZEVIP); and
- The celebration of National Indigenous Peoples Day on June 21<sup>st</sup>, 2023. A number in the group based in the Northwest Territories (N.T.) reported having taken part in cultural and social events in their respective communities to commemorate the day.

Participants also recalled actions and initiatives related to the Government of Canada on the international stage. These included:

- Ongoing support for Ukraine, including the continued provision of financial and military assistance, as well as efforts to take in and accommodate Ukrainians fleeing from the conflict. Related to this, several recalled having heard that the Prime Minister had recently travelled to Kyiv, Ukraine on June 10<sup>th</sup>, 2023, to reaffirm the Government of Canada's solidarity and support for Ukraine; and
- The announcement that 13 new countries, including five in the Caribbean, had been accepted into the Electronic Travel Authorization (eTA) program, allowing residents of these countries to travel to Canada visa-free.

### Response to Wildfires (Rural Prairies)

Participants residing in rural centres in the Prairies engaged in an additional discussion related to the Government of Canada's response to the wildfires that had been impacting their region in recent months. Asked whether they were aware of any actions from the federal government on this front, very few were. To aid in conversation, participants were provided with information regarding numerous measures the Government of Canada had taken to help those affected by the wildfires. These included:

- *Working with provinces and non-profits to match donations, raising \$20 million in support for community groups in Alberta;*
- *Giving financial aid to affected provinces to help with response costs and covering up to 90% of their eligible recovery costs;*
- *Deploying the Canadian Armed Forces to help with firefighting, planning, coordination, and other response tasks;*
- *Using national emergency stockpiles of medical supplies, equipment, and pharmaceuticals to help affected provinces;*
- *Helping those impacted by wildfires access benefits like Employment Insurance, Old Age Security, and Canada Pension Plan; and*
- *Implementing a two-year Training Pilot program to train more firefighters.*

All reacted positively to this information, with several expressing that these were the kinds of actions they would expect from the Government of Canada during emergencies such as this. While still supportive, a number felt that more needed to be done to communicate these actions to the public, believing that many were currently unaware of the programs and supports available to them. Asked what more could be done by the federal government to address the threat of wildfires going forward, a number expressed the need for greater support for community volunteer firefighter programs. It was felt that these programs were essential to the protection of rural communities and currently lacked the resources necessary to adequately respond to wildfires. A few also felt that more needed to be done to mitigate the impacts of climate change more generally. It was believed that the increase in the size and number of wildfires this year was at least in part connected to rising temperatures and perceived greater unpredictability in weather patterns in recent years.

# Government of Canada Priorities and Performance (All Locations)

All groups took part in conversations related to a number of issues currently facing Canadians as well as their perspectives regarding the federal government's performance in managing these priorities. Asked to identify areas in which they felt that the federal government had performed well as of late, participants provided a range of responses. These included:

- Affordability measures – Many mentioned the wide range of benefits and supports provided by the Government of Canada aimed at assisting those currently struggling with the cost of living. Participants mentioned initiatives such as the provision of a one-time Grocery Rebate to low-income households, agreements with the provinces and territories to make child care more affordable, and programs such as Employment Insurance (EI). A few also identified other initiatives such as the Canada Summer Jobs (CSJ) program, believing that this was helpful in assisting younger Canadians with finding employment;
- Immigration – Several spoke positively of what they viewed as the federal government's commitment to increasing the rate of immigration to Canada. Participants were of the impression that Canadians were generally very welcoming of immigrants and that numerous federal supports had been created to assist these new arrivals with integrating into their new communities. It was felt that increased immigration would have a positive impact on alleviating perceived worker shortages in critical sectors such as health care and education;
- Environment and climate change – A number felt that addressing the impacts of climate change continued to be a major priority of the federal government and that it had made numerous investments in this area in recent years. Participants spoke positively of the federal government's support for initiatives such as the development of renewable energy sources, the construction of green infrastructure, and the expansion of public transportation systems in Canadian communities. A number in the group based in Calgary and Edmonton expected that increased investments towards clean energy could lead to the creation of a wide range of high-paying jobs in their region;
- Wildfire assistance – Many believed that the Government of Canada had acted swiftly to address the large-scale wildfires that had occurred in several parts of the country in recent months. It was felt that it had been effective in providing basic necessities, financial support, and additional resources to assist those displaced by the fires;
- Reconciliation – A number felt that the federal government had placed a strong focus on issues related to reconciliation with Indigenous peoples. The view was expressed by some that even if there was still room for improvement, there had been considerable progress on these issues in recent years. A few in the group comprised of Indigenous participants residing in the Northwest Territories (N.T.) spoke positively of what they viewed as the numerous employment opportunities and grants available to Indigenous peoples;
- Support during the COVID-19 pandemic – It was thought that the federal government had done a strong job in supporting Canadians over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Actions and initiatives recalled by participants included the establishment of the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB), various supports for small businesses, and the provision of 10 days of paid sick leave for all workers in federally regulated industries; and

- Foreign assistance – It was thought that the Government of Canada had performed well in assisting those impacted by international crises, such as the ongoing conflict in Ukraine and natural disasters such as the massive earthquakes that hit Türkiye and Syria in February 2023. Several were of the impression that Canada had a strong reputation on the global stage and was generally viewed positively throughout the world.

Participants also identified a range of areas in which they felt that the Government of Canada had room for improvement. These included:

- Inflation and the high cost of living – Many believed that more needed to be done to address the high cost of living at present. It was felt by several that it was becoming increasingly difficult to make ends meet financially, with some reporting that due to higher interest rates they were now struggling to afford their mortgage payments. A few were of the impression that most of the benefits and supports provided by the federal government were primarily targeted towards lower-income families and that more needed to be done to assist middle-class households as well as single Canadians who were currently dependent on a sole income. A small number expressed the opinion that efforts should be taken at the federal level to reduce spending, believing that recent budget deficits had contributed to higher inflation in recent years;
- Housing affordability – A large number believed that efforts needed to be taken to accelerate the construction of new housing in Canada. It was felt that housing was currently becoming increasingly unaffordable and that more should be done to ensure that all Canadians had access to safe and affordable housing in their communities;
- Health care – Several felt that the health care system in Canada was under considerable strain at present and that actions needed to be taken to address challenges such as a perceived shortage of doctors and nurses, long wait times at emergency rooms and walk-in clinics, and a lack of family doctors in many communities;
- Carbon pricing – A number believed that the recent implementation of a price on carbon by the federal government had been mostly ineffective in curbing carbon pollution and had made life more unaffordable for many households who were already struggling financially;
- Crime – It was thought by some (including a number residing in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA)) that crime had risen substantially in recent years. Several believed that more should be done to further limit the presence of firearms in Canadian society as well as to curtail gang violence;
- Reconciliation – Participants expressed a range of concerns regarding what they viewed as a lack of progress by the federal government on reconciliation with Indigenous peoples. It was believed that even though this had been identified as a top priority by the Government of Canada, issues such as a lack of clean drinking water, poor living conditions, and challenges related to mental health and addiction continued to persist in many Indigenous communities; and

- Support for vulnerable individuals – It was believed that many marginalized individuals were currently struggling and that far more supports needed to be developed by the Government of Canada to assist vulnerable groups such as seniors, those experiencing homelessness, individuals struggling with addiction and mental health, and persons living with disabilities.

Asked to identify the top issues that they felt the Government of Canada should be prioritizing, many reiterated the view that greater efforts needed to be taken to make life more affordable for Canadians and to reduce the high cost of living. Several also identified health care as a key priority area, believing that unless action was taken to address issues such as long wait times and perceived shortages of doctors and nurses that these challenges would only grow in severity in the years to come. Other priority areas mentioned by participants included the need for safe and affordable housing, reconciliation with Indigenous peoples, making post-secondary education more affordable, and a continued focus on the environment and climate change. Speaking more generally, a number were of the opinion that a greater focus should be placed by the federal government on assisting Canadians living in Canada rather than devoting resources to international initiatives.

### **Cost of Living (Mid-Size Centres Prairies Recent Post-Secondary Graduates, Major Centres Ontario Recent Home Buyers)**

Two groups took part in longer conversations related to the perceived high cost of living at present. Almost all reported having had to adjust their spending habits as of late in response to rising prices. Actions taken on this front included seeking out sales to a greater extent than before, buying non-brand name groceries and clothing, utilizing public or active transportation methods rather than driving their automobiles, limiting activities such as dining out at restaurants and going to concerts and events, and postponing planned projects such as home renovations. A number expressed that the rising cost of living had negatively impacted their mental health and that concerns over finances had become a growing source of stress in their lives. A few commented that due to the rising cost of living it was becoming increasingly difficult to save towards future goals such as the purchase of a home or saving towards retirement. Discussing what they believed was behind the rising cost of living, while most viewed this issue as initially resulting from supply chain interruptions thought to be connected to the COVID-19 pandemic, several felt that these challenges had been exacerbated by large corporations (such as major grocers) raising their prices significantly in response. A few felt that increased federal spending over the course of the pandemic had also contributed to the rising rate of inflation.

Asked if they were aware of any recent actions from the federal government to address the cost of living, participants recalled a range of initiatives. These included the introduction of the Canada Dental Benefit (CDB), the announcement of a one-time Grocery Rebate for lower-income households, and agreements reached between the federal and provincial/territorial governments to make child care more affordable for Canadian families. A number in the group comprised of recent home buyers residing in Ontario were of the impression that several initiatives had recently been announced by the federal government to make housing more affordable for Canadians, though few could recall any details. Most expected that the cost of living would likely continue to worsen over the next year unless significant action was taken to address this problem. A smaller number were more uncertain, believing

that while the rate of inflation would subside in coming months, it was unlikely that prices would decrease substantially in the short term. No participants expected that the cost of living would improve over the next year.

### **Chinese Canadians (Vancouver Island Chinese Diaspora)**

The group comprised of members of the Chinese diaspora residing in Vancouver Island engaged in a brief discussion related to the challenges facing Chinese Canadians at present. Asked to identify the biggest issues currently impacting Chinese Canadians, a number believed that it needed to be easier for those educated outside of Canada to have their credentials recognized and be permitted to work in their fields of expertise. Some also thought that more needed to be done to preserve and promote Chinese culture and heritage in Canada. It was said that many historic Chinatowns, including in Victoria, B.C., were currently in poor condition and that significant financial investments would be required to revitalize these neighbourhoods. A few also were of the view that anti-Asian hate and discrimination had increased in recent years, with some believing that this had been connected to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Asked if they could recall any actions from the Government of Canada related to increasing its engagement with Chinese Canadians, a number spoke positively of what they viewed as a recent initiative to reach out to the country's diverse population (including the Chinese diaspora) in languages other than English and French. A few believed that further steps could be taken in this regard, including through the provision of official signage in Mandarin and/or Cantonese in neighbourhoods and communities with large populations of Chinese descent. Discussing additional actions that could be taken by the Government of Canada on this front, participants suggested initiatives such as increasing funding for programming celebrating Chinese culture and heritage, providing further language resources for those who do not speak English or French, and encouraging greater representation of Chinese Canadians at all levels of government.

### **The Northwest Territories (Northwest Territories Indigenous Peoples)**

Participants in the group comprised of Indigenous peoples residing in the Northwest Territories (N.T.) briefly discussed a number of issues currently facing their region. Asked to identify the most significant challenges impacting their respective communities, participants mentioned issues such as climate change, homelessness, and mental health and addiction. A few also expressed concern over the current state of the child welfare system and the cultural impact it has on Indigenous communities when children are removed from their families.

Discussing the most important industries to their communities, many identified mining as playing a pivotal role in the region's economy. Asked which areas were most in need of additional support from the federal government, participants mentioned concerns related to education, health care, a lack of basic necessities such as clean drinking water, and the need for further action to mitigate the potential damaging impacts of climate change to the region. Recalling actions taken by the Government of Canada related to these priorities, while a few believed that it had provided funding and been working

in collaboration with the territorial government to address these issues, none could provide any details. All felt that the federal government was currently on the wrong track when it came to managing these issues, with some expressing that many of these challenges had existed for several decades and that little in the way of tangible progress had ever been made. It was felt that far more needed to be done at all levels of government to engage with Indigenous-led organizations to better understand their concerns and determine which actions would be most effective towards finding long-term solutions to these challenges.

### **Official Languages (Atlantic Canada and Ontario Francophones)**

One group, comprised of Francophones residing in Atlantic Canada and Ontario, took part in an additional exercise where they were presented with a number of priorities related to official languages and asked to identify those that they felt were most important for the federal government to focus on. These included:

- *Creating a strategy to support entrepreneurs in official language minority communities;*
- *Ensuring every Canadian can be heard and understood by a judge in their official language of choice when before a court;*
- *Ensuring that the private sector provides services in the preferred official language of Canadians;*
- *Guaranteeing the equality of the English and French languages in Canada;*
- *Increasing funding for schools for Francophone communities outside of Quebec; and*
- *Making investments to improve access to French immersion and French second-language programs across the country.*

Almost all selected the priority of guaranteeing the equality of the French and English languages in Canada. Several felt that until this was achieved Francophones living outside of Quebec would continue to face difficulties in accessing the same level and range of services available to their English-speaking counterparts. A number were concerned that the French language was being used increasingly less in many parts of Canada and hoped action would be taken to address this going forward. The priority of ensuring that every Canadian could be heard and understood by a judge in the official language of their choice when before a court also received a high level of support. This was widely seen as a basic legal right and one that needed to be made available to all Canadians. Many also believed that it was important to increase funding for schools for Francophone communities outside of Quebec. The view was expressed that there were considerably fewer resources available to French-speaking schools and that this had served to greatly reduce the quality of French-language education in these communities. Only a small number selected the creation of a strategy to support entrepreneurs in official language minority communities. No participants chose the priorities of ensuring that the private sector provides services in Canadians' preferred official language and investing to improve access to French immersion and French second-language programs across the country. Regarding the latter, it was felt that while increasing the ability of Anglophones to learn French would likely be helpful in promoting the language, it was not as high a priority as increasing the quality of education for Francophones in these communities.

## Housing (Mid-Size Centres Prairies Recent Post-Secondary Graduates, Major Centres Ontario Recent Home Buyers, Northwest Territories Indigenous Peoples, G.T.A. Crime Concerned)

Four groups engaged in discussions related to housing. These conversations focused on actions taken by the Government of Canada to increase the housing supply, initiatives and supports related to first-time home buyers, and the housing situation in Canada's North.

### **Housing Supply (Mid-Size Centres Prairies Post-Secondary Graduates, Major Centres Ontario Recent Home Buyers, G.T.A. Crime Concerned)**

Three groups shared their perspectives related to the housing supply at present as well as actions from the federal government to increase the number of available homes for Canadians. Asked to identify the largest challenges at this time related to housing, many mentioned high home prices and the difficulties in saving up enough to afford a sufficient down payment. It was widely felt that housing had become increasingly unaffordable in much of the country and that this, along with the perceived high cost of living, had made it very difficult to save towards the eventual purchase of a home. Several were of the opinion that high housing prices were the result of not enough homes being available to meet the demands of prospective home buyers and that more needed to be done to increase the supply of housing in Canada. The view was added that along with building more homes the Government of Canada and governments at the provincial/territorial and municipal level also needed to ensure that enough supporting infrastructure such as public transportation, hospitals, and schools was being constructed to accommodate the increased populations in these communities. Additional challenges related to housing identified by participants included rising interest rates, the negative impact of foreign and corporate investments into residential housing, and a lack of safe and affordable housing for lower-income Canadians.

Asked why they felt that more new homes were not being built at a faster rate, several believed that this was related to perceived increases in costs for building materials and challenges related to municipal zoning laws and the types of homes that developers are permitted to build. While a small number recalled recent actions from the federal government such as a temporary ban on non-Canadians from purchasing residential housing in Canada as well as the implementation of an Underused Housing Tax on vacant or underused housing, none could recall any specific actions related to increasing the housing supply in Canada. Asked whether they had heard of the Housing Accelerator Fund, very few had. To clarify, participants were informed that the Housing Accelerator Fund is a \$4 billion fund that gives money to municipal governments to encourage them to take steps to increase the local housing supply in their communities. While a number felt that this initiative might be helpful in increasing the amount of available housing, several were concerned as to how this program would be implemented and what oversight would be provided by the federal government to ensure municipalities were using these funds effectively. A few questioned which municipalities would be receiving this support, with some of the opinion that \$4 billion would not be sufficient to address what was viewed as a pervasive lack of affordable housing throughout the country. Asked whether they felt that there should be consequences for municipalities that do not

prioritize the building of additional homes, several thought that there should. It was expressed that there needed to be accountability for those municipalities which did not work to provide sufficient housing for their residents, believing that municipal governments had a responsibility to ensure that those in their community had access to safe and affordable housing. This was felt to be the case especially for those communities which received funding through programs such as the Housing Accelerator Fund. A few were of the view that there were already inherent consequences for municipalities which did not prioritize housing, in that these communities would likely stagnate as it became less affordable for Canadians there.

Discussing whether they had any concerns related to building more homes faster, many felt that there was a risk of these homes being of poorer quality due to their more rapid rate of construction. A large number also reiterated the need to ensure that these new housing developments were accompanied by a proportionate increase in the provision of vital services such as health care, education, and public transportation. Some were concerned that even if they added to the housing supply, these new housing - developments would be highly priced and unaffordable for a large number of Canadians. A small number were concerned that their area could become overly congested if too many new houses were built.

Only a small number were familiar with the concept of municipal zoning. To clarify, participants were informed that:

*A municipal zoning bylaw controls the use of land in your community. It is set by municipal governments and states exactly how land may be used, where buildings and other structures can be located, the types of buildings that are permitted, and how they may be used.*

Asked what impacts, if any, they thought municipal zoning bylaws could have on building more homes, several believed that these had a significant impact in that they dictated the type of housing that could be built in each municipality as well as where these new developments could be located. Most were of the opinion that municipalities should be encouraged to make zoning changes to allow for the building of more homes in their communities. Related to this, several believed that there should be a greater focus on increasing density and building multi-family housing complexes rather than single-family homes. A smaller number felt differently and did not want to see more people compacted into a centralized area. A few were also hesitant regarding the changing of zoning laws. Among these participants, it was believed that many municipalities had likely been carefully planned around existing zoning requirements, and that changes to these laws could have unintended consequences for the environment and the long-term sustainability of these communities. Asked what more the federal government could do when it came to building more homes, a number suggested a greater focus on the development of sustainable, walkable communities with less urban sprawl requiring residents to drive to get from place to place.

### **Recent Home Buyers (Major Centres Ontario Recent Home Buyers)**

Participants in this group, comprised of individuals who had purchased a home within the past five years, discussed their experiences related to home ownership as well as initiatives from the federal government related to assisting first-time home buyers. Asked if they could recall any recent actions taken by the Government of Canada, participants mentioned initiatives such as the creation of the new First Home Savings Account (FHSA), the First-Time Home Buyer Incentive (FTHBI), and its commitment to increasing the housing supply across Canada. While a few were of the impression that there were plans to convert federally-owned lands to build more residential housing, none could recall any details on this front.



Almost all indicated being concerned about recent changes to the prime interest rate. Several reported having purchased their homes when interest rates were much lower and were concerned about how much their monthly payments might increase when it came time to renew their mortgages. A roughly equal number indicated that their mortgage payments had increased in recent years as those whose payments had remained the same. While only a small number felt they had a strong understanding of how interest rates were set, most believed that this had something to do with the Bank of Canada. A large number expressed that home ownership had become less affordable for them in the past five years. Almost all were of the impression that their home utility costs had also risen considerably during this period. For many these increases in housing-related costs had led to a decrease in discretionary spending and a greater portion of their monthly income being allocated towards servicing their mortgage payments and other debt. A few commented that due to this rise in housing costs, they now had to focus primarily on meeting their immediate financial needs rather than saving up towards future goals such as retirement.

Participants were next provided with information related to various housing initiatives from the Government of Canada. These included:

- *Introducing a new Tax-Free First Home Savings Account to allow Canadians to save up to \$40,000, tax-free, to help buy their first home;*
- *The First-Time Home Buyer Incentive, a shared-equity mortgage with the Government of Canada which provides a 5% or 10% down payment towards the purchasing of a first home;*
- *Expanding the First-Time Home Buyers' Incentive to allow more flexibility and making it easier for single Canadians to access;*
- *Doubling the First-Time Home Buyers' Tax Credit to provide up to \$1,500 in direct support to home buyers to offset closing costs involved in buying a first home;*
- *Investing \$200 million to increase rent-to-own housing options; and*
- *Banning blind bidding (blind bidding is where home buyers don't know how much others are bidding).*

While a few had heard of the creation of the FHSA and the FTHBI, most indicated that they had been largely unaware of these initiatives. Several spoke positively of the decision to ban blind bidding, believing that this would help future home buyers by ensuring that they were not overbidding on homes due to not knowing the amounts that other potential buyers were offering. A number also expressed interest in rent-to-own housing options and felt that this could represent a way for Canadians to build equity in a property without the requirement of putting down a significant down payment. While expecting that these programs might be helpful to some, most believed that the Government of Canada was currently on the wrong track when it came to making home ownership more affordable. It was widely felt that due to what they viewed as exceedingly high home prices in many parts of the country, the amounts offered through these programs would likely have little impact on the ability of most Canadians to purchase a home. Asked specifically about the FHSA, while some thought that this might help prospective home buyers save towards a down payment, it would likely have a negligible effect unless efforts were taken to significantly lower housing prices going forward. To aid in conversation, participants were provided with the following information regarding the FHSA:

*The new Tax-Free First Home Savings Account gives prospective first-time home buyers the ability to save up to \$40,000 on a tax-free basis. Similar to the Registered Retirement Savings Plan (RRSP), contributions will be*

*tax-deductible, and withdrawals to purchase a first home, including from investment income, will be non-taxable, similar to a Tax-Free Savings Account (TFSA). It will be tax-free in and out.*

Reacting to this information, most believed that the amounts involved in this program were insufficient to make much of an impact on the ability of Canadians to purchase a home. The view was expressed that even if one were able to save up to the maximum of \$40,000, this amount was far too low to afford a down payment in most parts of the country. Very few felt they would have personally benefitted from this program when looking to purchase their home. Asked whether they believed that supporting first-time home buyers was a priority for the federal government, few thought that it was. Discussing what more could be done to support Canadians looking to purchase a home, some suggested actions such as the creation of special lower interest rates for first-time home buyers as well as matching payments from the federal government for those who make contributions to programs such as the FHSA.

### **Northern Housing (Northwest Territories Indigenous Peoples)**

Those in the group comprised of Indigenous peoples residing in the Northwest Territories (N.T.) briefly discussed the housing situation in their region. Almost all believed that housing in their communities was very lacking at present and that it had become increasingly difficult for those residing there to afford to purchase or rent a home. The view was added that the limited available housing was often in poor condition and in drastic need of repair. It was said that many houses were currently overcrowded and that multiple individuals often had to share a single room. All felt that the housing situation in their region had worsened in recent years. It was felt that this had impacted young people especially, with many feeling it was almost impossible for younger individuals to find housing at present. A few commented that they would likely be leaving the North in the future due to the lack of housing options and other challenges related to the high cost of living there.

Discussing what would need to happen to improve the situation in the N.T., participants believed that far greater investments needed to be made towards building more homes in the region. Asked if they were aware of any recent actions from the Government of Canada related to housing, a few recalled the one-time \$500 top-up to the Canada Housing Benefit (CHB) that had recently been provided to Canadians below a certain income threshold. Most felt that the federal government was currently on the wrong track when it came to housing, with a few expressing that they no longer felt homeownership was a realistic possibility for them. Asked what more could be done by the Government of Canada on this front, participants recommended greater assistance for first-time home buyers as well as increased funding towards improving the quality and availability of housing in Northern communities.

## Energy Outlook (Calgary and Edmonton, Rural Prairies)

Two groups shared their perspectives regarding Canada's energy sector, with a specific focus on their expectations related to oil and gas production going forward. All felt that oil and gas was a significant economic driver at present and was of critical importance both to the Prairies as well as for Canada more broadly. Discussing the importance of oil and gas in their region, several reported that this sector continued to be a top employer in their communities and felt that these resources were



essential to meeting the energy needs of a large portion of Canadians. As such, it was expected that it would be difficult to transition away from oil and gas at any point in the near future. Unprompted, a number expressed the view that greater efforts should be taken by the federal government to enable the production and refinement of more oil and gas in Canada. It was felt that Canada generally had much stronger environmental standards in this regard relative to other jurisdictions and that producing more of these resources domestically would likely lead to greater sustainability in the long term. Almost all believed that the oil and gas sector was performing strongly at present and had experienced significant economic growth in recent years. A few, however, were of the opinion that the sector had become increasingly vulnerable to fluctuations in global energy demand and that this would likely continue to be the case as a growing number of jurisdictions transitioned towards using renewable energy sources.

Asked how important they felt it was from an economic perspective to diversify beyond oil and gas, most believed this to be a top priority, with several of the impression that this process had already begun in their respective areas. A number thought that given the finite nature of non-renewable resources such as oil and gas, more sustainable alternatives would soon become a necessity. As such, it was felt that it would be economically beneficial for Canada to position itself as a global leader in the transition to renewable energy sources, while continuing to use oil and gas in the interim. Several also felt this to be important from an environmental perspective, believing that a greater use of renewable energy would have a significant benefit towards mitigating the potential impacts of climate change. It was also widely thought that regardless of the state of the oil and gas sector, it was important for provinces such as Alberta (and Canada more broadly) to diversify economically, believing that it was imprudent to be overly dependent on a single industry or sector.

Discussing the sectors which they felt would be most important from an economic perspective going forward, participants identified a range of areas, including manufacturing, technology, finance (in larger cities such as Calgary and Edmonton), and the production of clean energy sources such as solar, wind, hydroelectricity, and hydrogen fuel. Focusing specifically on clean energy, most believed that this represented a significant economic opportunity for Canada and expected that investments in this sector would likely lead to the creation of numerous high-paying jobs (including for those currently employed in oil and gas). A few, however, reiterated the view that any transition to clean energy would need to be gradual and that this should be seen as a long-term goal for the federal government rather than an immediate priority.

Questioned if they were familiar with the term 'sustainable jobs', very few were. A small number speculated that this referred to those jobs which were likely to continue to exist in the long term as well as careers related to sustainability and the green economy. Discussing what came to mind when they thought about sustainable jobs in the clean energy sector many believed that these would likely be those positions responsible for maintaining and managing the systems responsible for producing this energy. While it was expected that there would likely be a large number of jobs initially available related to the building of clean energy infrastructure, it was not believed that these jobs would be sustainable as most would no longer be necessary once these projects were completed. Asked who or what they believed was driving the development of the clean energy sector in their region, several felt this had primarily resulted from a public desire in many jurisdictions across the world to transition to

more renewable energy sources as a way of mitigating the impacts of climate change. It was thought that the Government of Canada had also worked to develop this sector through the provision of grants and tax credits to clean energy producers as well as by making significant investments towards the construction of clean energy infrastructure.

## Carbon Pricing (St. John's Newfoundland, Calgary and Edmonton, Rural Prairies)

Three groups took part in conversations related to the Government of Canada's carbon pricing system. To begin, participants were asked how important they felt it was for the federal government to reduce carbon pollution in Canada. Many believed this to be an important priority, feeling it was prudent to take these actions now in order to reduce the impacts of climate change on future generations. Among the smaller number who were more uncertain or did not believe that reducing carbon pollution was a major priority, it was believed that Canada produced far fewer emissions relative to many jurisdictions throughout the world and thus did not bear as much responsibility on this front compared to other larger emitters. Asked if they were aware of any actions taken by the Government of Canada to reduce carbon pollution, participants mentioned initiatives such as the introduction of a federal price on carbon, rebates for the purchase of electric vehicles (EVs), increased funding for public transportation systems in Canadian communities, and grants for home retrofitting projects via the Canada Greener Homes Grant (though not mentioned by name). To clarify, participants were informed that:

*The Government of Canada is undertaking several measures to reduce carbon pollution. These measures include setting a price on carbon pollution, setting clean fuel standards, investing in renewable energy and clean technologies, and investing in energy efficiency programs.*

Focusing on the measure of setting a price on carbon pollution, participants were asked whether they were aware prior to these discussions that the federal government had implemented a price on carbon. Across all groups, a roughly similar number reported being aware of this measure as those who were not. Among those who were aware of the federal price on carbon it was believed that this program had placed additional costs on actions which produced carbon emissions and was applicable to businesses as well as individual households. A few were of the impression that financial rebates were being provided to those households which did not produce significant levels of emissions. Asked if they had any questions about this program, a number expressed concerns regarding how much this initiative would cost as well as whether it would further exacerbate what was viewed as the high cost of living at present. Several also questioned how the funds collected under this program would be utilized and what metrics were being used to calculate the current price on carbon.

Questioned whether, given what they had learned thus far, they supported placing a price on carbon, many were uncertain and felt that they did not know enough to properly evaluate this measure. A roughly similar smaller number expressed support for a price on carbon as those who opposed this initiative. To aid in conversation, participants were informed that:

*There are two parts to carbon pollution pricing – a fuel charge, which applies to things like oil and gas, and a separate system for industry. In provinces where the federal fuel charge applies, all direct proceeds are returned to Canadians, mostly through Climate Action Incentive Payments (CAIP) to households. Most households receive more money back through these payments than they pay on the fuel charge.*

Asked whether this information impacted their level of support for this initiative, none indicated that it did. Many questioned why most households were receiving more money back than they paid on the fuel charge, as this felt counterintuitive. A few in the group based in the rural Prairies expressed skepticism as to whether most households were truly receiving more money back, commenting that they had not received any Climate Action Incentive Payments (CAIP) to date.

Discussing where they would go if they were interested in finding more information related to carbon pollution pricing, many indicated that they would likely look to official websites hosted by the Government of Canada. A number commented that they would also use search engines such as Google to look deeper into any information they found on official websites that they had additional questions about. A few mentioned that they might also seek out friends or family who were knowledgeable about this subject area and could provide additional perspective on carbon pricing systems. Asked whether they viewed climate scientists as credible sources for information related to carbon pricing, most did, believing these individuals typically had considerable expertise in this area. While several felt that economists were also trustworthy sources of information on this front, concerns were expressed by some that they may be overly focused on the financial aspects of carbon pricing rather than the environmental impacts. Informed that many economists had said that setting a price on carbon pollution is the most cost-effective way to reduce carbon emissions at the scale and speed necessary to mitigate the impacts of climate change, a number felt that this provided further justification for the implementation of a price on carbon. A few were more skeptical, questioning how many economists felt this way and whether there were any who had dissenting opinions that were more critical of carbon pricing.

Informed that other countries, including Denmark, the United Kingdom (U.K.), Sweden, France, Netherlands, Chile, and Japan, all had implemented their own ways of pricing carbon pollution, participants were asked whether this impacted their level of support for carbon pricing in Canada. While a number felt that it was encouraging that other countries were taking these steps, very few said that knowing this impacted their support for carbon pricing. Participants were largely of the view that each country faced its own unique challenges related to limiting carbon pollution and that Canada's carbon pricing system should be tailored to its own needs and not be influenced by strategies utilized in other jurisdictions. Participants were next provided with information related to alternative strategies to carbon pricing implemented in other jurisdictions:

*Some countries, like the U.S. have chosen not to put a price on carbon pollution, opting instead to invest heavily in the private sector, so that corporations can develop the clean technologies needed to reduce carbon pollution emissions on their own. To achieve this, the U.S. government is investing \$400 billion, about one-fifth of Canada's entire economy.*

While a number felt that this strategy could ultimately be effective in reducing carbon emissions and that investments in the private sector might yield a range of innovations on this front, very few



thought that this would be an effective approach for the Government of Canada to pursue. It was generally felt that given the size of its economy, such a strategy was more feasible for the U.S. as it could afford to make the significant investments required for this approach to be effective. Some expressed considerable skepticism related to this strategy, believing that it would be difficult to ensure that the funding provided to private sector businesses would truly be used towards the development of clean technologies and more sustainable industrial practices.

Asked whether they felt that a price on carbon would discourage Canadians from polluting, few believed that it would. While it was expected that some individuals might adjust their daily behaviours to produce fewer emissions, it was generally thought that this was not possible for everyone. The view was added that making these changes would be particularly difficult for those living rurally who often had to drive long distances to get from place to place and whose communities typically had limited public transportation options available. Questioned whether they felt that the costs of a price on carbon were higher in the short term than the costs of climate change, most were uncertain. This said, a large number were of the view that even if the costs of implementing a price on carbon were relatively high, this action was still worth taking if it served to mitigate the impacts of climate change on future generations.

Informed that Canada's greenhouse gas emissions in 2021 were 7.4% below pre-pandemic (2019) emission levels, very few felt that this was in any way connected to the introduction of a price on carbon by the federal government. It was generally felt that this drop in emissions had primarily been the result of fewer Canadians having to commute to work during the pandemic as well as a widespread reduction in recreational travel and other activities during this period.

## Immigration (Small and Mid-Size Centres Quebec, Atlantic Canada and Ontario Francophones)

Participants in two groups discussed the current state of the immigration system in Canada. Asked if they could recall any recent actions taken by the federal government related to this front, a number had heard that it was currently working to increase the rate of immigration to Canada in the coming years. A few were of the impression that as part of this initiative, there would be a focus on bringing in more Francophone immigrants to Canada. Some in the group based in Quebec also recalled that those crossing from the United States into Canada via Roxham Road were now being turned back to the U.S. (due to the expansion of the Safe Third Country Agreement).

While most were generally accepting of a higher level of immigration, several were concerned about the capacity of Canadian communities to accommodate and support a large influx of new arrivals. Related to this, it was widely felt that a proportionate amount of additional infrastructure and essential services such as hospitals and schools would need to be constructed to accommodate these newcomers. Discussing other aspects of the immigration system, a number were of the impression that it was currently quite backlogged and that it was often a lengthy process for new immigrants to become Canadian citizens. A few reported being immigrants themselves and spoke highly of the

Canadian immigration system, believing that it had been fair and efficient and had provided a number of supports to assist new arrivals in acclimatizing to their new communities.

Asked whether they thought that the Government of Canada was currently on the right track when it came to immigration, most in Quebec felt this to be the case. Those residing in Atlantic Canada and Ontario were more mixed in their opinions with a roughly equal number feeling the federal government was on the right track as those who believed it was headed in the wrong direction. Discussing the potential benefits of immigration, several felt that it was essential to ensure that there would be enough workers to meet the needs of Canadians, particularly in vital sectors such as health care and education. Related to this, it was felt that by bolstering the workforce via immigration, Canada would be able to gain significant economic benefits and increase productivity across a range of economic sectors. Some also spoke about the potential for immigration to increase the diversity of the population, believing this would provide a greater variety of perspectives and cultural richness to Canadian communities. Among the smaller number who felt that the federal government was on the wrong track when it came to immigration, concerns were expressed that the addition of too many new arrivals in a short period of time would place severe strain on areas such as housing, health care, and the education system.

Participants were next shown the following statement and asked whether they agreed or disagreed with its message:

*“Canada needs to welcome more new immigrants in order to fill labour shortages and grow the economy.”*

All in the group based in Quebec and most in Atlantic Canada and Ontario agreed with this statement. Several were of the view that there were currently significant worker shortages in sectors such as health care and education and believed that a high rate of immigration would be an effective way for the Government of Canada to address this. Informed that, according to Statistics Canada, in the second quarter of 2022 employers across all sectors in Canada were actively seeking to fill nearly one million vacant positions (the highest quarterly number on record) most felt that this further emphasized the need for further immigration. A few, however, commented that economic purposes should not be the only reason for Canada to accept more immigrants and that considerations should also be made to bring in those seeking asylum and/or fleeing dangerous situations in their home countries. Asked whether they thought that the immigration rate to Canada should increase, decrease, or stay the same, most believed that it should be kept relatively stable in the years to come. It was widely felt that this would be the most effective way to bring more people to Canada while not overwhelming the housing market and/or the ability of communities to continue providing essential services to their residents.

Asked whether they had any concerns about bringing more immigrants to Canada, a number felt that efforts should be taken to ensure that a sizeable portion of these new arrivals spoke French. This was thought to be especially important in terms of the ability of newcomers in French-speaking municipalities to successfully integrate into their new communities. While a few were of the impression that the federal government would be prioritizing increased immigration from French-

speaking countries, none could recall any specific details related to this. To aid in conversation, participants were provided with the following information:

*Through the Action Plan for Official Languages, the Government of Canada is planning to boost Francophone immigration by investing:*

- *\$18.5 million to boost promotion and recruitment in order to attract more French-speaking or bilingual workers to Canada;*
- *\$16.3 million to boost recruitment of French-speaking teachers to teach in Francophone minority communities;*
- *\$50 million to help with the settlement and integration of new French-speaking immigrants into Francophone minority communities;*
- *\$25 million to establish a new Centre of Innovation in Francophone Immigration that will have a grant and contribution program to give Francophone communities an opportunity to promote themselves and recruit French-speaking workers; and*
- *\$10.5 million to help newcomers learn French.*

Participants were largely positive in their reactions to these initiatives, with several feeling that these actions would go a long way towards strengthening the French language and Francophone culture in Canada. While a few thought that less efforts should be taken to help newcomers learn French and that more should be done to bring over those who already spoke the language, a larger number felt differently. Among these participants, the view was expressed that it was of critical importance to assist new arrivals in learning French and that doing so would further enhance the presence of the French language in Canadian communities. Discussing what more should be done by the federal government on this front, a number recommended a greater focus on recruiting French-speaking individuals with qualifications in important sectors such as health care, education, construction, and other trades, as well as making it easier for their credentials to be recognized in Canada. While few indicated that learning about this plan had changed their opinion regarding the Government of Canada's management of the immigration system, some felt more encouraged knowing that investments were being made towards promoting and strengthening the French language going forward.

## Health Care (St. John's Newfoundland)

Participants residing in St. John's, Newfoundland took part in a brief discussion related to health care in their region. Almost all felt that the health care system in their province was under considerable strain and that this had greatly impacted the quality and accessibility of these services. Describing the most pressing challenges related to health care at present, many identified what they viewed as a persistent shortage of doctors and nurses in the region. It was widely believed that there were not enough health professionals to meet the current level of demand, and many were concerned that this issue would be exacerbated by the growing number of doctors and nurses expected to retire in the years to come. Related to this, several identified long wait times at emergency rooms and walk-in clinics as a growing area of concern, believing that worker shortages had made it difficult to access emergency or primary care in a timely fashion. A large number also mentioned a lack of family

doctors practicing in the region, with several describing having personally faced challenges in acquiring a family physician in recent years.

Asked whether they were aware of any actions from the federal government related to improving health care in their region, a few recalled recent agreements it had reached with the provinces and territories related to increased Canada Health Transfer (CHT) payments and the establishment of priority areas outlining how these additional funds could be deployed. To aid in conversation, participants were provided with the following information:

*The Government of Canada announced five priority areas in health care:*

- *Addressing health worker shortages and reducing wait times;*
- *Increasing access to family health services;*
- *Improving long term care and home care;*
- *Addressing mental health and substance use; and*
- *Modernizing health data management and virtual care.*

All reacted positively to this list and felt that these were the areas that the Government of Canada should be focusing its attention on. Several reiterated the importance of addressing health worker shortages and reducing wait times, expressing the view that many of the other issues currently facing the health care system in their province stemmed from a lack of available personnel and resources. A number also thought that it was of critical importance for the Government of Canada to place an increased focus on addressing mental health and substance use. It was believed that these issues had increased substantially in their community in recent years and required urgent attention. A few also spoke positively of the priority related to modernizing health data management and virtual care. It was felt that by implementing a digital health system, health care providers would be able to communicate much more effectively with one another, making it easier for patients to have their records transferred and benefit from a more personalized health care experience.

## Pharmacare (Small and Mid-Size Centres Quebec, Thunder Bay)

Two groups engaged in discussions related to the potential implementation of a national pharmacare program. Asked to identify the biggest challenges related to health care in need of further attention from the Government of Canada, participants identified a wide range of issues. These included long wait times when accessing emergency care, a shortage of doctors and nurses, a dearth of family doctors in many Canadian communities, limited mental health services, a lack of home care options for the aging population, a limited availability of virtual care options, and a perceived lack of prevention-based medicine. Asked specifically about the cost of prescription drugs, almost all in the group from Thunder Bay thought this was an important issue, while most in the group from Quebec believed that there were more pressing issues facing the health care system at present.

Describing the current state of prescription drug coverage in Canada, a large number were of the impression that they were relatively affordable in most cases. A smaller number in Thunder Bay felt

differently, believing that prescription drug coverage was not affordable, even for those who had prescription drug coverage through their employer. Several residing in Quebec mentioned that all residents who did not have existing prescription drug coverage received coverage under the Régie de l'assurance maladie du Québec (RAMQ) Public Prescription Drug Insurance Plan, which was thought to further improve the affordability and accessibility of prescription drugs in the province.

Almost all were familiar with the term 'pharmacare'. Most believed that this term referred to the public provision of prescription drugs and medications, though a small number reported that despite having an awareness of the term itself, they found it difficult to provide an exact definition. While some believed that pharmacare referred to a program of universal prescription drug coverage for all, others were of the impression that this type of program reduced the cost of prescription drugs to make them more affordable, rather than covering the entire cost. None were aware of any plans from the Government of Canada on this front. To aid in the conversation, participants were provided with the following clarification:

*In 2019, the Government of Canada announced it intended to move forward on implementing a national pharmacare program to make prescription drugs more affordable and more accessible to more Canadians. Since then, the Government of Canada has started by developing a Canadian Drug Agency to negotiate prescription drug prices on behalf of Canadians and buy them in bulk to help save Canadians money in the long term. The Government of Canada has also been developing its national strategy for high-cost drugs for rare diseases to help Canadians get better access to these drugs, as a first step towards expanded coverage.*

Almost all reacted positively to this information, and many were enthusiastic about the prospect of reducing the costs associated with prescription drugs and helping to make them more accessible to all Canadians. A small number expressed doubts about the feasibility of such a program being implemented in the near future. A few were also concerned about the potential unintended consequences which they believed could arise from the implementation of a pharmacare program. These included potential prescription drug shortages; long wait times to receive prescription drugs; being required to use generic drugs rather than brand name options; and the potential for drugs to expire or be wasted, resulting in increased program costs in the long run.

Asked who they felt should be covered under a national pharmacare plan, participants expressed a range of views. Most felt that this coverage should be extended only to those who did not have access to a private insurance plan. Others, however, posited a number of options, including a universal program that covered prescription drug costs for all Canadians; an income-based program where high earners would be excluded or receive only limited coverage; a progressive, 'safety-net' type program which would cover prescription drug costs once they exceeded a certain income threshold; a program that covered a flat percentage or amount of every prescription drug for all Canadians; or a program that covered only those under age 18 and above age 65. Regarding potential options, participants were shown the following:

*Pharmacare could be completely public, like health care, where all Canadians are on the same plan. Alternatively, it could "close the gaps" so that people can still use existing public and private plans. This*



*type of plan would be set up to ensure that everyone receives coverage, including those currently not covered.*

Discussing the potential benefits and drawbacks of each approach, all expressed a preference for the completely public option, believing that providing equal coverage to all Canadians represented the best way to deliver a pharmacare program.

Almost all reported currently having coverage through a private prescription drug coverage plan. A small number of those in the group from Quebec did not have private insurance but nonetheless received prescription drug coverage through the RAMQ Public Prescription Drug Insurance Plan. Asked which types of medication they expected would be covered under a national pharmacare plan, those in the group from Quebec believed that all prescription drugs should be covered under this program. A roughly equal number of those residing in Thunder Bay felt that all prescription drugs should be covered as those who believed that a national pharmacare program should focus primarily on ensuring accessibility to the most commonly prescribed medications rather than those required for rarer conditions.

Though a number, particularly among those in Thunder Bay, felt that national pharmacare would make life more affordable, others in Quebec were concerned that such a program would not make a significant difference regarding the affordability of medications for most Canadians. Asked if they would support a universal pharmacare program, all in Thunder Bay and most in Quebec stated that they would. Most, however, indicated that they would be less likely to support this program in the event that it led to higher or new taxation or increased the federal deficit. A few reiterated concerns about being forced to use generic drugs under a potential pharmacare program, commenting that they would prefer to continue using the brand name drugs available under their current coverage. A small number suggested that prior to introducing pharmacare nationally, the federal government should undertake a pilot program to test the feasibility and value of this initiative.

## Opioids (Thunder Bay, Vancouver Island Chinese Diaspora)

Participants residing in Thunder Bay and in Vancouver Island took part in conversations related to addiction and opioid use in their communities. All in Thunder Bay and most from Vancouver Island felt this to be a major issue at present and believed that the rate of addiction and substance abuse in their area had increased substantially as of late. A number in Thunder Bay felt that the perceived rise in addiction to dangerous substances such as fentanyl had been connected to ongoing gang activity in their community, and that these groups were closely involved in the illegal distribution and sale of these drugs. Several from Vancouver Island attributed rising addiction and overdoses to increasing rates of homelessness in communities such as Victoria, British Columbia (B.C.). It was believed that a lack of safe and affordable housing had placed a growing number of individuals into vulnerable situations where they were exposed to these substances. No participants were hopeful that this issue would improve in the coming years. It was felt that far too few resources had been devoted towards addressing substance use in Canadian communities and that more needed to be done to ensure those



suffering from addiction were able to access treatment, including for challenges related to their mental health. Asked if they could recall any actions taken by the federal government regarding this issue, a few mentioned initiatives such as increased funding for safe injection sites and the availability of Naloxone kits for those experiencing overdoses.

Asked what came to mind when they heard terms such as 'safe supply' and 'safe injection sites', most were positive in their impressions. On balance, it was believed that these were initiatives aimed at preventing overdose deaths by ensuring those suffering from addiction had a safe place to consume these substances and greater assurance that the drugs they were consuming had not been laced with more dangerous substances. To aid in conversation, participants were provided with the following definitions:

*Safe supply refers to providing prescribed medications as a safer alternative to the toxic illegal drug supply to people who are at high risk of overdose.*

*Safe injection sites provide a safe, clean, space for people to bring their own drugs in the presence of trained staff.*

While mostly supportive of harm reduction initiatives such as these, several did not believe that these programs would be sufficient on their own in curbing the rate of addiction. It was felt that while the availability of a safe supply and access to safe injection sites would likely reduce overdose deaths, a greater focus needed to be placed on assisting these individuals in accessing treatment for their addictions and getting them to stop using drugs in the long term. A small number believed that initiatives such as these perpetuated the cycle of addiction and should be discontinued going forward. It was widely felt that the Government of Canada had a role to play both in the funding of harm reduction initiatives as well as ensuring treatment options were available for those suffering from addiction. Participants were next provided with the following information related to the Substance Use and Addictions Program (SUAP):

*Through the SUAP, the Government of Canada is funding projects that address the harms associated with substance use. Through this program, the Government of Canada is funding safer supply and injection site services, and it is also funding projects that focus on things like overdose prevention, education, detox support, peer support, outreach, mentorship, mental health supports, and more.*

Most felt that these programs would have a positive impact on reducing overdoses and other harms associated with substance use. Several, however, expressed the view that unless those using these substances were willing to commit to treatment, little progress would be made in addressing the root causes of their addictions. It was widely felt that in order for these initiatives to be effective they would need to be accompanied by increased accessibility to mental health treatment and safe and affordable housing for those suffering from addiction. It was thought that more should be done to incentivize Canadians to pursue careers in mental health and addictions treatment, with some of the impression that there was currently a shortage of skilled workers in these areas. A few residing in Thunder Bay also believed that a greater focus needed to be placed on providing access to culturally sensitive treatment options, especially for Indigenous peoples.

The group based in Vancouver Island was asked an additional question regarding how they felt about a recent decision by the Government of Canada to grant an exemption to the *Controlled Drugs and Substances Act* to remove penalties for the possession of up to 2.5 grams of certain illegal drugs in B.C. Participants were mixed in their reactions to this initiative. While some believed that this would take some pressure off law enforcement and the criminal justice system, a roughly similar number were concerned that this would lead to increased drug use and rising crime rates in their communities. A few believed that the Government of Canada should focus on imposing stricter penalties for the possession of illegal substances, believing this would serve as an effective deterrent for potential drug users.

## Job Creation (Mid-Size Centres Prairies Recent Post-Secondary Graduates)

Participants residing in mid-size centres in the Prairies engaged in a brief conversation regarding the state of the Canadian job market and recent job creation efforts undertaken by the Government of Canada. All reported being recent post-secondary graduates. Sharing their perspectives regarding the current state of the job market and the opportunities available to new graduates, many indicated that it had been difficult to find work in their field of study and that they had either accepted employment in an unrelated area or been searching unsuccessfully for work for several months. A small number reported that while they had been able to find entry-level work in their field, they had opted for a job in an unrelated sector where they could earn a higher income. The view was expressed that many employers had unrealistic expectations regarding the qualifications of job applicants, and that even some entry-level positions required three or more years of experience. A small number stated that it had not been difficult to find a job in their field and had begun working almost immediately after completing their post-secondary program.

All felt that the Canadian job market would be significantly worse in five years' time. Several were concerned about the potential proliferation of artificial intelligence (AI) and believed that this could result in mass layoffs and fewer job opportunities for humans. All believed that the Government of Canada was currently on the wrong track when it came to creating jobs and very few were aware of any work it had undertaken on this front. A small number were of the impression that actions had been taken as of late to recruit a greater number of immigrants to come to Canada and bolster the country's workforce. Asked what more the Government of Canada could do to create jobs, provide skills training, and support workers, participants suggested that it create incentives for students to study and enter in-demand fields (such as health care), as well as make post-secondary education more affordable for Canadians.

## Post-Secondary Issues (Mid-Size Centres Prairies Recent Post-Secondary Graduates)

Participants in the group comprised of recent post-secondary graduates residing in the Prairies, took part in a brief discussion related to the affordability of post-secondary education. Asked if they were aware of any work the Government of Canada had done to make post-secondary studies and paying off student loans more affordable, many recalled its recent decision to permanently eliminate interest on Canada Student Loans and Canada Apprentice Loans. Several were also aware of the availability of student loan repayment assistance programs, including the ability to defer loan payments until borrowers began earning an annual income of more than \$40,000. To aid in conversation, participants were provided with information related to actions that the Government of Canada had taken to make post-secondary studies and paying off student loans more affordable. These included:

- *Permanently eliminating the federal interest on Canada Student Loans and Canada Apprentice Loans;*
- *Increasing Canada Student Grants by 40%, to provide up to \$4,200/academic year for full-time students; and*
- *Improving the repayment assistance plan so that an individual earning under \$40,000 a year no longer has to make student loan payments, with the income threshold increasing by family size.*

All were positive in their reactions to these actions. Many expressed appreciation regarding the decision to permanently eliminate interest on Canada Student Loans and Canada Apprentice Loans. Several, however, commented that they still had provincial loans which continued to accrue interest and represented a significant financial burden in their lives. While enthusiastic about these initiatives, most felt that these actions represented temporary solutions to addressing education unaffordability, rather than a permanent or long-term resolution to this issue. Asked what more the Government of Canada could do to help new graduates, participants believed that actions could be taken to ensure that entry-level work would be available to students in their fields of study upon graduation. Others suggested that the federal government reverse its recent decision to allow international students to work for more than 20 hours per week, believing that this had created further competition in what was perceived to be an already competitive job market.

## Relationship with China (Vancouver Island Chinese Diaspora)

One group, comprised of members of the Chinese diaspora living in Vancouver Island, engaged in a short discussion related to the Government of Canada's current relationship with China. Almost all believed that Canada's relationship with China had worsened in recent years, with several citing the 2018 arrest and detention of Huawei Technologies' Chief Financial Officer in Canada as a significant factor in this deterioration. Several expressed concerns related to the potential economic and geopolitical consequences of perceived escalating tensions with China.

Discussing actions that the federal government could take to improve its management of this relationship, a large number believed that more could be done to broaden its economic and cultural connections to China. It was felt that this could include increasing the number of students studying abroad in each country and further expanding trade relations between the two jurisdictions. Asked how they expected this relationship to develop moving forward, most felt that this was difficult to predict and would depend considerably on the actions taken by China on an economic and geopolitical level going forward.

## French Language Protection and Promotion (Atlantic Canada and Ontario Francophones, Major Centres Quebec)

Participants in two groups engaged in brief conversations related to the protection and promotion of the French language in Canada. All were of the view that this needed to be a top priority for the Government of Canada. Asked whether they could recall any actions from the federal government on this front, many mentioned the announcement of the Government of Canada's *Action Plan for Official Languages: 2023-2028*. Those residing in Quebec were especially aware of this plan and were able to identify a number of specific initiatives from the Plan, including those related to encouraging increased Francophone immigration to Canada as well as providing French language training for new arrivals.

Focusing on the *Action Plan for Official Languages* in greater detail, participants were provided with the following list of key objectives and proposed measures related to this plan:

### *Encouraging more Francophone immigration to Canada:*

- *Creating a new French immigration policy;*
- *Expanding global promotion and recruitment work in French-speaking countries; and*
- *Investing in language training for newcomers.*

### *Promoting lifelong learning opportunities in French:*

- *Expanding program offerings in French minority-language schools outside of Quebec;*
- *Investing in French second-language programs throughout Canada; and*
- *Investing in Francophone child care centres across Canada*

### *Supporting French community organizations:*

- *Boosting funding to Francophone community organizations;*
- *Providing grants to projects that strengthen attachment to the French language and Francophone culture; and*
- *Providing grants to Francophone artists.*

*Creating a centre within Heritage Canada that supports the Government of Canada in taking additional steps to support French language minority communities.*

Almost all were positive in their reactions and many felt that these measures would be greatly helpful in protecting and promoting the French language both in Quebec and across Canada. Several expected that this Plan would greatly benefit Francophone communities outside of Quebec, providing them with a broader range of resources and programming for their residents. Many thought that the initiative to invest in Francophone child care centres across Canada would be especially impactful, believing that it would help a greater number of children to develop French language skills from an early age. A number also felt that investments towards Francophone community organizations would have a significant impact, believing it had the potential to strengthen Francophone communities and ensure broader access to French-language services and resources.

While most felt that all aspects of the *Action Plan for Official Languages* should be implemented, several residing in Francophone communities in Ontario and Atlantic Canada were of the opinion that a greater focus needed to be placed on meeting the needs and priorities of Francophone Canadians, rather than what they viewed as a focus on increasing Francophone immigration from outside of Canada. A small number, though enthusiastic about the Plan, expressed concerns about the implementation of the objectives, and felt that there needed to be a long-term strategy in place to manage and evaluate the progress of these initiatives. Asked what else the Government of Canada could do to better protect and promote the French language, participants recommended increased investments towards French-language programming and resources for seniors, promoting the greater use of French on labels and signage, and requiring manufacturers and corporations throughout Canada to provide French-language products and services.

## Suicide Prevention (Major Centres Quebec, Northwest Territories Indigenous Peoples)

**Content Advisory: Please note that the following section deals with the topic of suicide and emotional distress and may be upsetting for some readers.**

Participants in two groups engaged in discussions related to suicide prevention and the implementation of 9-8-8, a three-digit telephone number for those suffering from emotional distress and dealing with suicidal ideation. To begin, participants were provided with the following information:

*The Government of Canada is currently working with the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health on the implementation of 9-8-8, a three-digit number for suicide prevention and emotional distress. The number is not live in Canada yet. It will launch on November 30, 2023.*

Engaging in an exercise, participants were shown a number of potential statements designed to promote and provide information related to the 9-8-8 service. It was clarified that these statements would likely appear in advertisements, on social media, and/or on other digital platforms. The first statement shown was:

*Thinking of suicide? Feeling emotional distress? Nationwide help is available. Call or text 9-8-8 for support from trained responders 24/7/365. People can also call or text 9-8-8 if they are worried about a loved one who may be thinking of suicide and need support.*

Participants were largely mixed in their reactions to this statement. While a few felt it was encouraging that there was a number that Canadians would be able to call that was specifically designated to handle emotional distress and suicidal ideation, some felt that the wording of the statement was distant and lacking in warmth. A small number were of the opinion that rather than opening with a question, the statement should be more direct and reassuring in its messaging. Asked to share their understanding of 'emotional distress' within the context of this message, several believed this referred to situations in which one's mental well-being had become compromised and thoughts of self-harm were beginning to enter their minds. Discussing ways in which the message could be improved, a number felt that the wording could be clearer and more well-defined. It was thought that emotional distress was a somewhat vague term and could refer to many things, including but not limited to suicidal thoughts. Asked whether the statement would be improved if 'feeling emotional distress' was removed and the focus was placed directly on 'thinking of suicide', a few believed that it would. It was felt that taking this step would likely make the mandate of the 9-8-8 service clearer to those encountering this message.

The second statement shown to participants was:

*Approximately 12 people in Canada die by suicide each day. If you or someone you know is having suicidal thoughts or is in crisis, there is help. Text or call 9-8-8 for support from a trained responder.*

Several reacted positively to this messaging, believing it did a better job of forming an emotional connection than the previous wording. A number felt that the statistic provided was helpful in conveying the gravity of this issue and how it impacted real people who were suffering from severe mental health challenges and suicidal thoughts. It was thought that by including this statistic, those encountering this message would likely be able to relate to it on a more personal level. Asked if they felt that there was a difference between the terms 'crisis' and 'emotional distress', several felt that crisis was more impactful and better communicated the urgency of those facing suicidal ideation. A smaller number felt that the term crisis was somewhat vague, believing this could apply to a number of concerns and not just those related to mental health. A number felt that making mention of the trained responders who would be offering support through the 9-8-8 line provided additional value to this statement.

Focusing on the different features offered by the 9-8-8 service, many felt that confidentiality was of significant importance, believing that a far greater number of Canadians would be motivated to utilize this service knowing that their conversations would be kept private. The view was expressed that there was still considerable stigma around mental health and suicidal thoughts and that confidentiality was key to this service being effective. A large number also felt it important that this service be free, though many thought that this would already be an expectation for most and did not need to be highlighted to a significant extent. It was also widely thought that it was important for the 9-8-8 service to be culturally appropriate for users. Several commented that some cultures might experience mental health challenges in different ways and that it was of critical importance for responders to be

able to communicate to callers in ways that related to them and their backgrounds. Participants in the group comprised of Indigenous peoples felt that this might encourage a greater number from their communities to utilize this service, believing that they would feel more confident in knowing that their unique experiences and challenges would be understood by responders. While a few felt that the service being 'trauma informed' was important, most were uncertain as to what this term specifically referred to.

Participants were next shown a third statement:

*Free, confidential mental health support is available any time, from anywhere in Canada. Learn more about 9-8-8 suicide prevention and emotional distress support, and other non-crisis mental health supports at [Canada.ca/mental-health](http://Canada.ca/mental-health).*

A number felt that this statement was effective, citing its broader language and perceived focus on a range of mental health issues rather than just suicidal thoughts. It was commented that this type of messaging may encourage those facing mental health challenges but who were not yet in crisis to reach out and potentially prevent these issues from escalating further. A few felt differently, believing that the wording of this statement made 9-8-8 sound more like an information service rather than a number they could call to receive immediate assistance from trained responders. The view was added that there was too much information contained in this statement and that efforts should be taken to make it more concise.

The final statement shown to participants was:

*When you call 9-8-8, the goal is to make sure you are safe, and together we will explore options for your safety. Emergency services, such as 9-1-1, will only be called if you are at risk of dying or seriously harming yourself. This only happens in a very small number of cases.*

Asked whether they felt that it was important to clarify the distinction between 9-8-8 and 9-1-1, a number believed that it was and that doing so would ensure that emergency resources connected to 9-1-1 would not be deployed in situations that did not warrant them. Reacting to this statement, a few in the group comprised of Indigenous peoples felt that the messaging was somewhat condescending and were concerned that the verbiage could be interpreted as talking down to and diminishing the importance of the challenges faced by those considering calling 9-8-8. Asked how they would improve this statement, it was suggested that the word 'goal' be removed. It was believed that the focus of this statement should be on assisting those suffering from severe mental health crises and not on achieving a stated goal. Several also expressed uncertainty as to whether it was necessary to include the second part of the statement which clarified that emergency services would only be provided in certain situations, believing this took away from the focus on the 9-8-8 line and its objectives and could downplay the severity of mental health challenges.

Discussing the types of promotional materials and information resources related to 9-8-8 that they felt would be most effective once the number was launched, several believed that this advertising should appear on social media platforms as well as on television and radio. Given the perception that many younger Canadians often faced with struggles related to mental health, it was felt that social media would be a highly intuitive place for messaging about 9-8-8 to appear. A few also suggested that

these messages should be accompanied by images of real people, further conveying to viewers the human consequences related to struggles with mental health and suicidal thoughts. Asked if they would be likely to share information related to 9-8-8 with family, friends, and/or colleagues almost all indicated that they would.

Participants were next shown a number of potential names for this service. These included:

- *9-8-8: Suicide and Crisis Support;*
- *9-8-8: Suicide and Crisis Hotline; and*
- *9-8-8: Call or text for suicide and crisis support*

While a small number respectively felt that 'suicide and crisis support' and 'suicide and crisis hotline' were the most effective names for this service, many believed that the service should simply be called '9-8-8' and be accompanied by a call to action such as 'call or text for suicide and crisis support'. Related to this potential call to action, a few commented that it was important to let people know that they could also text this service, believing that this had not been apparent in previous statements.

## Community Safety (GTA Crime Concerned)

Participants residing in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) shared their perspectives related to the current rate of crime in their area. A roughly similar number believed that crime was currently a major issue in their community as those who felt it was a moderate or minor challenge. Asked to identify the types of crimes that they felt were an issue at present, participants mentioned activities such as home robberies, violent assaults, car theft, and drunk driving. Many were also of the opinion that crime on public transit had become a growing concern in recent years. An equal number reported feeling worried about the current level of safety in their communities as those who felt relatively secure at present. Among those who felt that their communities had become less safe as of late, it was widely believed that assaults and property crime had been on the rise. A small number reported having personally been the victim of an attempted robbery and now felt considerably less safe in their community as a result. Almost all felt that the rate of crime had increased in recent years, with a small number believing it had mostly remained the same. Several reported having recently changed their behaviours in response to rising crime. Actions taken on this front included no longer walking alone at night, driving as opposed to taking public transit, and keeping a closer eye on their children in public areas. A few were specifically concerned about the increase in random attacks in recent years, believing that a growing number of violent assaults were now being committed by those with no connection to their victims.

Describing the factors that they felt were driving the perceived rise in crime in their communities, a number blamed social media and were of the impression that the content posted on these platforms was influencing younger people to engage in criminal behaviour. A few also believed that the rise in crime had been related to the COVID-19 pandemic. It was felt that due to the pandemic, a growing number of Canadians were now suffering from challenges related to homelessness, addiction, and their mental health, and that this had led to a number of these individuals committing crimes out of desperation. Asked what actions should be taken to address rising crime, a few believed there needed



to be increased investments towards law enforcement and bolstering the presence of police in their community. A larger number, however, felt differently, believing that increased policing was not the answer and that more needed to be done to address the root causes behind why these crimes were occurring. Asked whether they could recall any actions from the Government of Canada related to addressing crime, a number recalled recent bans on certain types of firearms. While generally supportive of taking action to reduce gun crime, a few believed that other types of firearms, notably hunting rifles, had been banned due to this action, and felt that this was unfair. Questioned whether they were aware of any action related to gang activity and violence, none were. To aid in conversation, participants were shown the following:

*The Government of Canada announced \$390 million over the next five years to help provinces crack down on gang violence and reduce the number of crimes committed with firearms. This money will help fund a variety of programs, including those in law enforcement, border security, and crime prevention. In the past, programs like Operation Centaur, an initiative to reinforce police with specialized units, disrupt firearms trafficking, and prevent crime have been funded.*

While hopeful that these actions would be effective, many were concerned that not enough focus was being placed on preventing crimes from occurring in the first place. It was felt that if significant investments were made towards providing individuals with safe and affordable housing, a living wage, and treatment for issues such as mental health and addiction, many would no longer be compelled to engage in criminal behaviour. With this in mind, it was thought that a greater focus should be placed on increasing the overall well-being of vulnerable individuals and that taking this approach would be much more effective in the long term towards reducing crime.

## Local Issues – (St. John’s Newfoundland)

Participants residing in St. John’s, Newfoundland engaged in a brief discussion related to the top issues impacting their region that they believed required further prioritization from the federal government. Asked to identify the most pressing challenges currently facing their community, participants mentioned areas such as inflation and the high cost of living, a perceived lack of affordable housing, health care worker shortages, long wait times for emergency and primary care, and what was viewed as increasing rates of homelessness and addiction in recent years. Almost all felt that not enough attention was being paid to these issues by the Government of Canada at this time.

Discussing the most important sectors and industries in their region, participants mentioned areas such as fisheries, mining, and the extraction and development of oil and gas. All felt that the oil and gas sector was of critical importance to the local economy and served as one of the top employers for those residing in the region. It was expressed that a large number of businesses in St. John’s were either directly involved in oil and gas production or were geared towards supporting the sector in some fashion. Asked what they viewed as the biggest issues facing the oil and gas sector at present, a number mentioned increasing fuel and energy prices, believing that this had served to reduce consumer demand in the sector. This was primarily viewed as a global issue, brought on by supply chain interruptions believed to be related to the COVID-19 pandemic as well as the ongoing conflict in Eastern Europe. Discussing additional challenges, participants also described what they viewed as a



growing global trend away from non-renewable resources towards more sustainable energy options, believing this had also contributed to a decrease in demand for oil and gas. Asked whether they were aware of the Bay du Nord Development Project, a roughly similar number of participants reported having heard of it as those who had not. To aid in conversation, participants were provided with the following information:

*Equinor is proposing to install and operate a floating offshore oil and gas production facility in the Flemish Pass, approximately 500 kilometres east of St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador, in the Atlantic Ocean. As proposed, the Bay du Nord Development Project would be in operation for approximately 30 years, with the potential for additional wells and tie-backs to the production facility.*

*Recently, Equinor announced it was postponing the project for three years citing volatile market conditions and significant cost increases in many aspects of the development.*

On balance, while most believed that it made sense for Equinor to postpone the project for economic reasons, it was widely felt that this action would have a negative impact on the provincial economy and the creation of high-paying jobs in their community. Several hoped that the project would eventually go forward and were of the view that it would be a major loss to their region if it were to be cancelled permanently. Asked whether they were aware of the federal government's position related to this project, few were. A small number, however, were of the impression that the Government of Canada had granted approval for this project and had been generally supportive of further oil and gas development in the region.

# Appendix A – Recruiting Scripts

# English Recruiting Script

**Privy Council Office  
Recruiting Script – June 2023  
English Groups**

## Recruitment Specifications Summary

- Groups conducted online.
- Each group is expected to last for two hours.
- Recruit 8 participants.
- Incentives will be \$125 per person and will be sent to participants via e-transfer following the group.

Specifications for the focus groups are as follows:

Group	Date	Time (EDT)	Local Time	Location	Composition	Moderator
2	Wed, June 7 <sup>th</sup>	6:00-8:00	6:00-8:00 (EDT)	Thunder Bay	General Population	DN
3	Mon, June 12 <sup>th</sup>	8:00-10:00	6:00-8:00 (CST) 7:00-9:00 (CDT)	Mid-Size Centres Prairies (SK,MB)	Recent Post-Secondary Graduates	TBW
4	Tue, June 13 <sup>th</sup>	5:00-7:00	6:30-8:30 (NDT)	St. John's, NL	General Population	DN
5	Wed, June 14 <sup>th</sup>	9:00-11:00	6:00-8:00 (PDT)	Vancouver Island	Chinese Diaspora	TBW
7	Mon, June 19 <sup>th</sup>	8:00-10:00	6:00-8:00 (MDT)	Calgary & Edmonton	General Population	TBW
8	Tue, June 20 <sup>th</sup>	8:00-10:00	6:00-8:00 (MDT) 6:00-8:00 (CST) 7:00-9:00 (CDT)	Rural Prairies (AB, SK, MB)	General Population	TBW
9	Wed, June 21 <sup>st</sup>	6:00-8:00	6:00-8:00 (EDT)	Major Centres Ontario	Recent Homebuyers	DN
11	Tue, June 27 <sup>th</sup>	8:00-10:00	6:00-8:00 (MDT)	Northwest Territories	Indigenous	MP
12	Wed, June 28 <sup>th</sup>	6:00-8:00	6:00-8:00 (EDT)	Greater Toronto Area	Crime-concerned	DN

## **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**

English **CONTINUE**

French **THANK AND END**

On behalf of the Government of Canada, we're organizing a series of online video 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	<b>THANK AND END</b>
A marketing, branding, or advertising agency	<b>THANK AND END</b>
A magazine or newspaper	<b>THANK AND END</b>
A federal/provincial/territorial government department or agency	<b>THANK AND END</b>
A political party	<b>THANK AND END</b>
In public/media relations	<b>THANK AND END</b>
In radio/television	<b>THANK AND END</b>
No, none of the above	<b>CONTINUE</b>

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

Yes	<b>THANK AND END</b>
No	<b>CONTINUE</b>

2. In which city do you reside?

LOCATION	CITIES	
Thunder Bay	Thunder Bay	<b>CONTINUE – GROUP 2</b>
Mid-Size Centres Prairies (SK,MB)	<p>Cities include:</p> <p><u>Manitoba:</u> Brandon, Steinbach, Thompson, Portage la Prairie, Winkler, Selkirk, Morden, Dauphin</p> <p><u>Saskatchewan:</u> Prince Albert, Moose Jaw, Lloydminster, Yorkton, Swift Current, North Battleford, Estevan, Warman, Weyburn, Martensville</p> <p><b>ENSURE 4 PARTICIPANTS FROM EACH PROVINCE. NO MORE THAN 1 PER CITY. ENSURE A GOOD MIX OF CITIES ACROSS THE REGION.</b></p>	<b>CONTINUE – GROUP 3</b>
St John's	St. John's	<b>CONTINUE – GROUP 4</b>
Vancouver Island	<p>Cities could include (but are not limited to):</p> <p>Victoria, Nanaimo, Campbell River, Courtenay, Port Alberni, Colwood, Comox, Oak Bay, Parksville, Langford.</p>	<b>CONTINUE – GROUP 5</b>

	<b>NO MORE THAN 3 FROM VICTORIA. AIM FOR A GOOD MIX OF CITIES ACROSS THE REGION. INCLUDE THOSE RESIDING IN LARGER AND SMALLER COMMUNITIES.</b>	
Calgary & Edmonton	<p>Cities include:</p> <p>Calgary, Edmonton</p> <p><b>ENSURE 4 FROM EACH CITY.</b></p>	<b>CONTINUE – GROUP 7</b>
Rural Prairies (AB, SK, MB)	<p>Cities/Municipalities could include (but are not limited to):</p> <p><u>Alberta</u>: Athabasca, Banff, Barrhead, Beaver County, Whitecourt, Three Hills, Redcliff, Rocky View County.</p> <p><u>Saskatchewan</u>: Aberdeen, Humboldt, Meadow Lake, Melville, Britannia No. 502.</p> <p><u>Manitoba</u>: Alexander, Bifrost-Riverton, Blumenfort, Brokenhead, Cornwallis, Gimli, Grunthal, Elton, Macdonald.</p> <p><b>ENSURE AT LEAST 2 PARTICIPANTS FROM EACH PROVINCE. NO MORE THAN ONE FROM EACH CITY. ENSURE A GOOD MIX OF CITIES ACROSS THE REGION.</b></p>	<b>CONTINUE – GROUP 8</b>
Major Centres Ontario	<p>Cities include (but are not limited to):</p> <p>Population &gt; 100 000</p> <p>Toronto, Ottawa, Mississauga, Brampton, Hamilton, London, Markham, Vaughan, Kitchener, Windsor, Richmond Hill, Burlington, Sudbury, Oshawa, Barrie, St. Catherines, Guelph, Cambridge, Kingston, Waterloo, Brantford, Sault Ste. Marie</p> <p><b>NO MORE THAN 2 PER CITY. ENSURE A GOOD MIX ACROSS THE REGION.</b></p>	<b>CONTINUE – GROUP 9</b>
Northwest Territories	<p>Cities include (but are not limited to):</p> <p>Yellowknife, Hay River, Inuvik, Fort Smith, Behchoko, Fort Simpson, Tuktoyaktuk, Norman Wells, Fort McPherson, Fort Providence, Deline, Whati, Aklavik, Fort Good Hope, Fort Liard, Fort Resolution.</p>	<b>CONTINUE – GROUP 11</b>

	<b>ENSURE A GOOD MIX OF CITIES ACROSS THE REGION. NO MORE THAN 2 PER CITY.</b>	
Greater Toronto Area	<p>Cities include: City of Toronto, Durham (Ajax, Clarington, Brock, Oshawa, Pickering, Whitby), Halton (Burlington, Halton Hills, Oakville, Milton), Peel (Brampton, Caledon, Mississauga), York (Markham, Vaughan, Richmond Hill, Newmarket, Aurora, King).</p> <p><b>ENSURE A GOOD MIX ACROSS THE REGION .NO MORE THAN 2 FROM THE CITY OF TORONTO OR PER REGION/COUNTY.</b></p>	<b>CONTINUE – GROUP 12</b>

2a. How long have you lived in [INSERT CITY]? **RECORD NUMBER OF YEARS.**

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>

3. 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>CONTINUE</b>
25-29	<b>CONTINUE</b>
30-34	<b>CONTINUE</b>
35-45	<b>CONTINUE</b>
46-49	<b>CONTINUE</b>
50-54	<b>CONTINUE</b>
55+	<b>CONTINUE</b>
<b>VOLUNTEERED</b> Prefer not to answer	<b>THANK AND END</b>

**ENSURE A GOOD MIX.**

4. **[DO NOT ASK]** Gender **RECORD BY OBSERVATION.**

Male	<b>CONTINUE</b>
Female	<b>CONTINUE</b>

**ENSURE A GOOD MIX BY GENDER IN EACH GROUP WHERE APPLICABLE.**

5. **ASK ONLY IF GROUP 3** Have you graduated from a postsecondary program in the last 2 years?

Yes **CONTINUE TO Q5a**  
No **THANK AND END**  
**VOLUNTEERED** Prefer not to answer **THANK AND END**

**5a. ASK ONLY IF GROUP 3** What type of postsecondary program did you recently complete?

Undergraduate Degree **CONTINUE TO Q5b**  
College Diploma **CONTINUE TO Q5b**  
Graduate Degree (MA, PhD) **CONTINUE TO Q5b**  
Professional Degree (MD, MBA, JD) **CONTINUE TO Q5b**  
Apprenticeship **CONTINUE TO Q5b**  
Other, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_ **CONTINUE TO Q5b**  
**VOLUNTEERED** Prefer not to answer **THANK AND END**  
**ENSURE A GOOD MIX BY DEGREE. NO MORE THAN 2 OF EACH DEGREE.**

**5b. ASK ONLY IF GROUP 3** Do you plan to attend a new postsecondary program in the upcoming year?

Yes **THANK AND END**  
No **CONTINUE TO Q5c**  
**VOLUNTEERED** Prefer not to answer **THANK AND END**

**5c. ASK ONLY IF GROUP 3** What is your employment status?

Employed **CONTINUE TO Q 5d**  
Unemployed, Seeking employment **CONTINUE TO Q 5d**  
Unemployed, Not seeking employment **THANK AND END**  
Self-employed **CONTINUE TO Q 5d**  
Other, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_ **CONTINUE TO Q 5d**  
**VOLUNTEERED** Prefer not to answer **THANK AND END**  
**ENSURE A GOOD MIX. NO MORE THAN 2 WHO ARE SELF-EMPLOYED.**

**5d. ASK ONLY IF GROUP 3** Are you currently [working in a position/seeking work] related to your field of study?

Yes **CONTINUE TO GROUP 3**  
No **CONTINUE TO GROUP 3**

**6. ASK ONLY IF GROUP 5** Do you identify your primary cultural and/or ethnic heritage to be Chinese?

Yes **CONTINUE TO Q6a**  
No **THANK AND END**  
**VOLUNTEERED** Prefer not to answer **THANK AND END**

**6a. ASK ONLY IF GROUP 5** Where did you and/or your family immigrate from?

Hong Kong **CONTINUE TO Q6b**



Mainland China **CONTINUE TO Q6b**  
Taiwan **CONTINUE TO Q6b**  
Singapore **CONTINUE TO Q6b**  
Malaysia **CONTINUE TO Q6b**  
Vietnam **CONTINUE TO Q6b**  
Other, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_ **CONTINUE TO Q6b**  
**VOLUNTEERED** Prefer not to answer **THANK AND END**  
**ENSURE A GOOD MIX BY COUNTRY/REGION OF IMMIGRATION.**

**6b. ASK ONLY IF GROUP 5** Were you born in Canada?

Yes **CONTINUE TO GROUP 5**  
No **CONTINUE TO Q.6c**  
**VOLUNTEERED** Prefer not to answer **THANK AND END**  
**ENSURE A GOOD MIX BETWEEN THOSE WHO WERE NOT BORN IN CANADA AND THOSE BORN IN CANADA.**

**6c. ASK ONLY IF GROUP 5** How many years have you lived in Canada?

Less than 5 years **CONTINUE TO GROUP 5**  
5 to < 10 years **CONTINUE TO GROUP 5**  
10 to <20 years **CONTINUE TO GROUP 5**  
20 to <30 years **CONTINUE TO GROUP 5**  
30 or more years **CONTINUE TO GROUP 5**  
**VOLUNTEERED** Don't know/Prefer not to answer **THANK AND END**  
**ENSURE A GOOD MIX OF TIME LIVED IN CANADA FOR THOSE NOT BORN IN CANADA.**

**7. ASK ONLY IF GROUP 9** Have you purchased a home in the last 5 years?

Yes **CONTINUE TO Q7a**  
No **THANK AND END**  
**VOLUNTEERED** Prefer not to answer **THANK AND END**

**7a. ASK ONLY IF GROUP 9** Was this your first time purchasing a home?

Yes **CONTINUE TO Q7b**  
No **THANK AND END**  
**VOLUNTEERED** Prefer not to answer **THANK AND END**

**7b. ASK ONLY IF GROUP 9** What type of home did you purchase?

Condo **CONTINUE TO GROUP 9**  
Apartment **CONTINUE TO GROUP 9**  
Townhouse **CONTINUE TO GROUP 9**  
Detached home **CONTINUE TO GROUP 9**  
Other, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_ **CONTINUE TO GROUP 9**  
**ENSURE A GOOD MIX BY TYPE OF HOME PURCHASED.**



**8. ASK ONLY GROUP 11** Do you identify as Indigenous?

Yes **CONTINUE TO 8a**  
No **THANK AND END**  
**VOLUNTEERED** Prefer not to answer **THANK AND END**

**8a. ASK ONLY IF GROUP 11** Do you identify as...?

First Nations (Off-reserve) **CONTINUE TO GROUP 11**  
First Nations (On-reserve) **CONTINUE TO GROUP 11**  
Métis **CONTINUE TO GROUP 11**  
Inuit **CONTINUE TO GROUP 11**  
None of the above **THANK AND END**  
**ENSURE A GOOD MIX.**

**9. ASK ONLY GROUP 12** How would you describe your level of concern about crime in your community and more broadly across Canada?

Very concerned **CONTINUE TO Q9a**  
Somewhat concerned **CONTINUE TO Q9a**  
Indifferent **THANK AND END**  
Not very concerned **THANK AND END**  
Not at all concerned **THANK AND END**  
Don't know/Prefer not to answer **THANK AND END**

**9a. ASK ONLY GROUP 12** In the past 5 years, would you say the level of crime in your community has ...

Increased **CONTINUE TO Q9b**  
Stayed about the same **THANK AND END**  
Decreased **THANK AND END**  
**VOLUNTEERED** Not Sure **THANK AND END**

**9b. ASK ONLY GROUP 12** What type of crime are you most concerned about?

Violent crime  
Property crime  
Petty crime  
Hate crimes (based on gender, racial, or religious prejudice)  
Fraudulent crimes  
Other, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_  
**VOLUNTEERED** Not sure **THANK AND END**  
**VOLUNTEERED** Preferred not to answer **THANK AND END**  
**ENSURE A GOOD MIX.**

**10. ASK ALL GROUPS EXCEPT GROUP 5 AND GROUP 11** Which of the following racial or cultural groups best describes you? (multi-select)



White/Caucasian  
South Asian (e.g., East Indian, Pakistani, Sri Lankan)  
Chinese  
Black  
Latin American  
Filipino  
Arab  
Southeast Asian (e.g., Vietnamese, Cambodian, Thai)  
Korean or Japanese  
Indigenous  
Other (specify)  
**VOLUNTEERED** Prefer not to answer **THANK AND END**  
**ENSURE A GOOD MIX.**

11. Which of the following best describes the industry/sector in which you are currently employed?

Accommodation and Food Services  
Administrative and Support, Waste Management and Remediation Services  
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting  
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation  
Automotive  
Construction  
Educational Services  
Finance & Insurance  
Health Care  
Social Assistance  
Information and Cultural Industries  
Management of Companies and Enterprises  
Manufacturing  
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction  
Other Services (except Public Administration)  
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services  
Public Administration  
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing  
Retail Trade  
Transportation and Warehousing  
Utilities  
Wholesale Trade  
Unemployed  
Full Time Student  
Retired  
Other, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_  
**ENSURE A GOOD MIX BY TYPE OF EMPLOYMENT IF APPLICABLE. NO MORE THAN TWO PER SECTOR.  
NO INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS.**

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



Yes      **CONTINUE**

No      **EXPLAIN THE FOLLOWING** “a focus group consists of six to eight 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.”

13. As part of the focus group, you will be asked to actively participate in a conversation. Thinking of how you engage in group discussions, how would you rate yourself on a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 means ‘you tend to sit back and listen to others’ and 5 means ‘you are usually one of the first people to speak’?

1-2      **THANK AND END**

3-5      **CONTINUE**

14. As this group is being conducted online, in order to participate you will need to have high-speed Internet and a computer with a working webcam, microphone and speaker. **RECRUITER TO CONFIRM THE FOLLOWING. TERMINATE IF NO TO EITHER.**

Participant has high-speed access to the Internet

Participant has a computer/webcam

15. Have you used online meeting software, such as Zoom, Webex, Microsoft Teams, Google Hangouts/Meet, etc., in the last two years?

Yes      **CONTINUE**

No      **CONTINUE**

16. How skilled would you say you are at using online meeting platforms on your own, using a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means you are not at all skilled, and 5 means you are very skilled?

1-2      **THANK AND END**

3-5      **CONTINUE**

17. During the discussion, you could be asked to read or view materials on screen and/or participate in poll-type exercises online. You will also be asked to actively participate online using a webcam. Can you think of any reason why you may have difficulty reading the materials or participating by video?

**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, ANY CONCERNS WITH USING A WEBCAM OR IF YOU AS THE INTERVIEWER HAVE A CONCERN ABOUT THE PARTICIPANT’S ABILITY TO PARTICIPATE EFFECTIVELY.**

18. **MENTION ONLY TO GROUP 11** In the course of the two-hour discussion a wide variety of issues will be discussed, including some topics which you may feel are sensitive in nature. The moderator will alert you in advance and all participants are free to opt out of the conversation at any point.

19. 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.21**

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

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

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

0-4 groups **CONTINUE**  
5 or more groups **THANK AND END**

**22.** On what topics were they and do you recall who or what organization the groups were being undertaken for?

**TERMINATE IF ANY ON SIMILAR/SAME TOPIC OR GOVERNMENT OF CANADA IDENTIFIED AS ORGANIZATION**

#### **ADDITIONAL RECRUITING CRITERIA**

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

**23. ASK ALL EXCEPT GROUP 3** 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 **THANK AND END**  
**ENSURE A GOOD MIX.**

**24.** Which of the following categories best describes your total household income in 2022? 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.**

**THANK AND END**

25. 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 online 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 \$125 for your participation following the group via an e-transfer.

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.

Would you be willing to attend?

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

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:**

You will receive an e-mail from **[INSERT RECRUITER]** with the instructions to login to the online group. Should you have any issues logging into the system specifically, you can contact our technical support team at [support@thestrategiccounsel.com](mailto:support@thestrategiccounsel.com).

We ask that you are online at least 15 minutes prior to the beginning of the session in order to ensure you are set up and to allow our support team to assist you in case you run into any technical issues. We also ask that you restart your computer prior to joining 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. Also, you will need a pen and paper in order to take some notes throughout the group.

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.

Thank you very much for your time.

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

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

# French Recruiting Script

**Bureau du Conseil privé**  
**Questionnaire de recrutement – juin 2023**  
**Groupes en français**

## Résumé des consignes de recrutement

- Groupes tenus en ligne.
- Durée prévue de chaque rencontre : deux heures.
- Recrutement de huit participants.
- Incitatifs de 125 \$ par personne, versés aux participants par transfert électronique après la rencontre.

Caractéristiques des groupes de discussion :

GROUPE	DATE	HEURE (HAE)	HEURE (LOCALE)	LIEU	COMPOSITION DU GROUPE	MODÉRATEUR
1	Tue, June 6 <sup>th</sup>	6:00-8:00	6:00-8:00 (HAE)	Centres de petite et moyenne taille au Québec	Population générale	MP
6	Thu, June 15 <sup>th</sup>	6:00-8:00	6:00-8:00 (HAE)	Centres francophone du Canada atlantique et de l'Ontario	Francophones vivant hors du Québec	MP
10	Thu, June 22 <sup>nd</sup>	6:00-8:00	6:00-8:00 (HAE)	Grandes villes au Québec	Population générale	MP



## 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, 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?  
**[CONTINUER DANS LA LANGUE PRÉFÉRÉE]**

### NOTER LA LANGUE ET CONTINUER

Anglais **REMERCIER ET CONCLURE**

Français **CONTINUER**

Nous organisons, pour le compte du gouvernement du Canada, une série de groupes de discussion vidéo en ligne afin 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

**CONCLURE**

**REMERCIER ET**

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 **REMERCIER ET CONCLURE**  
Non **CONTINUER**

**2. Quelle est la première langue que vous avez apprise lorsque vous étiez enfant et que vous parlez toujours couramment aujourd'hui?**

Anglais **REMERCIER ET CONCLURE**  
Français **CONTINUER**  
Autre [Préciser ou non la langue, selon les besoins de l'étude] **REMERCIER ET CONCLURE**  
Préfère ne pas répondre **REMERCIER ET CONCLURE**

**3. Dans quelle ville habitez-vous?**

LIEU	VILLES	
Centres de petite et moyenne taille Québec	<p>Ces villes peuvent notamment comprendre (mais ne sont pas limitées à):</p> <p>Petites villes = Population &lt;49 999 <u>Pour les petites villes :</u> Dollards-des-Ormeaux, Saint-Eustache, Vaudreuil-Dorion, Sallaberry-de-Valleyfield, Rouyn-Noranda, Boucherville, l'Assomption.</p> <p>Taille moyenne = Population 50 000-99 999 <u>Pour les villes de taille moyenne :</u> Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu, Chateauguay, Drummondville, Granby, Saint-Hyacinthe.</p> <p><b>RECRUTER QUATRE RÉSIDENTS DANS CHAQUE CATÉGORIE DE VILLE (EN FONCTION DE LA TAILLE DE LA POPULATION). PAS PLUS QUE DEUX</b></p>	<b>CONTINUER – GROUPE 1</b>

	<b>PARTICIPANT PAR VILLE. ASSURER UN BON MÉLANGE.</b>	
Centres francophone du Canada atlantique et de l'Ontario	<p>Ces villes comprennent :</p> <p><u>Ontario</u> : Sudbury, Hawkesbury, Hamilton.</p> <p><u>Nouveau-Brunswick</u> : Région Haut-Saint-Jean (Edmundston, Ville de Haut-Madawaska, première nation Malécite du Madawaska).</p> <p><u>Nouvelle-Écosse</u> : Clare.</p> <p><u>Terre-Neuve-et-Labrador</u> : Labrador City-Wabush.</p> <p><u>Île-du-Prince-Édouard</u> : Région Évangeline (Abram-Village, Baie-Egmont, Mont-Carmel, Saint-Raphaël, Saint-Timothée, Wellington).</p> <p><b>PAS PLUS QUE 3 PARTICIPANTS PAR PROVINCE. ASSURER UN BON MÉLANGE.</b></p>	<b>CONTINUER – GROUPE 6</b>
Grandes villes au Québec	<p>Ces villes peuvent notamment comprendre :</p> <p>Grandes villes = Population 100 000+ <u>Les grandes villes</u> : Montréal, Gatineau, Ville de Québec, Saguenay, Sherbrooke, Trois-Rivières, Saint-Jérôme, Chicoutimi – Jonquière.</p> <p><b>PAS PLUS QUE DEUX PARTICIPANT PAR VILLE. ASSURER UN BON MÉLANGE.</b></p>	<b>CONTINUER – GROUPE 10</b>
Autre lieu		<b>REMERCIER ET CONCLURE</b>
<b>RÉPONSE SPONTANÉE</b> Préfère ne pas répondre		<b>REMERCIER ET CONCLURE</b>

4. Depuis combien de temps habitez-vous à [INSÉRER LE NOM DE LA VILLE]? **NOTER LE NOMBRE D'ANNÉES.**

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

5. **[NE PAS DEMANDER] Sexe NOTER SELON VOTRE OBSERVATION.**

Homme  
Femme

**ASSURER UNE PROPORTION ÉGALE D'HOMMES ET DE FEMMES DANS CHAQUE GROUPE.**

6. **DEMANDER SEULEMENT POUR LE GROUPE 6** Parlez-vous français régulièrement à la maison?

Oui **CONTINUER**  
Non **REMERCIER ET CONCLURE**

7. 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 19 ans	<b>CONTINUER</b>
20 à 35 ans	<b>CONTINUER</b>
36 à 44 ans	<b>CONTINUER</b>
45 à 54 ans	<b>CONTINUER</b>
55 à 64 ans	<b>CONTINUER</b>
65 ans ou plus	<b>CONTINUER</b>
<b>RÉPONSE SPONTANÉE</b> Préfère ne pas répondre	<b>REMERCIER ET CONCLURE</b>

**ASSURER UNE BONNE REPRÉSENTATION DES ÂGES DANS CHAQUE GROUPE, S'IL Y A LIEU.**

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

Oui **CONTINUER**  
Non **EXPLIQUER QUE** : « *un groupe de discussion se compose de six à huit 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.* ».

9. Dans le cadre du groupe de discussion, on vous demandera de participer activement à une conversation. En pensant à la manière dont vous interagissez lors de discussions en groupe, quelle note vous donneriez-vous sur une échelle de 1 à 5 si 1 signifie « j'ai tendance à ne pas intervenir et à écouter les autres parler » et 5, « je suis habituellement une des premières personnes à parler »?

1-2 **REMERCIER ET CONCLURE**



3-5 **CONTINUER**

10. Étant donné que ce groupe se réunira en ligne, vous aurez besoin, pour participer, d'un accès Internet haut débit et d'un ordinateur muni d'une caméra Web, d'un microphone et d'un haut-parleur en bon état de marche. **CONFIRMER LES POINTS CI-DESSOUS. METTRE FIN À L'APPEL SI NON À L'UN DES TROIS.**

Le participant a accès à Internet haut débit

Le participant a un ordinateur avec caméra Web

11. Avez-vous utilisé des logiciels de réunion en ligne tels que Zoom, Webex, Microsoft Teams, Google Hangouts/Meet, etc., au cours des deux dernières années?

Oui **CONTINUER**

Non **CONTINUER**

12. Sur une échelle de 1 à 5 où 1 signifie que vous n'êtes pas du tout habile et 5 que vous êtes très habile, comment évaluez-vous votre capacité à utiliser seul(e) les plateformes de réunion en ligne?

1-2 **REMERCIER ET CONCLURE**

3-5 **CONTINUER**

13. Au cours de la discussion, vous pourriez devoir lire ou visionner du matériel affiché à l'écran, ou faire des exercices en ligne comme ceux qu'on trouve dans les sondages. On vous demandera aussi de participer activement à la discussion en ligne à l'aide d'une caméra Web. Pensez-vous avoir de la difficulté, pour une raison ou une autre, à lire les documents ou à participer à la discussion par vidéo?

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

14. **DIRE SEULEMENT POUR LE GROUPE 10** Au cours de cette discussion de deux heures, une grande variété de thèmes seront abordés, y compris certains sujets que vous pourriez juger sensibles par nature. Le modérateur vous préviendra à l'avance et tous les participants sont libres de se retirer de la conversation à tout moment.

15. 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.19**

16. 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**

17. 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**

18. Quel était leur sujet, et vous rappelez-vous pour qui ou pour quelle organisation ces groupes étaient organisés?

**TERMINER SI LE SUJET EST SEMBLABLE OU IDENTIQUE, OU SI L'ORGANISATION NOMMÉE EST LE GOUVERNEMENT DU CANADA**

#### CRITÈRES DE RECRUTEMENT SUPPLÉMENTAIRES

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

19. Laquelle des catégories suivantes décrit le mieux le revenu annuel total de votre ménage en 2022 – c'est-à-dire le revenu cumulatif de l'ensemble des membres de votre ménage avant impôt?

Moins de 20 000 \$	<b>CONTINUER</b>
20 000 \$ à moins de 40 000 \$	<b>CONTINUER</b>
40 000 \$ à moins de 60 000 \$	<b>CONTINUER</b>
60 000 \$ à moins de 80 000 \$	<b>CONTINUER</b>
80 000 \$ à moins de 100 000 \$	<b>CONTINUER</b>
100 000 \$ à moins de 150 000 \$	<b>CONTINUER</b>
150 000 \$ ou plus	<b>CONTINUER</b>
<b>RÉPONSE SPONTANÉE</b> : Préfère ne pas répondre	<b>REMERCIER ET CONCLURE</b>

**ASSURER UN BON MÉLANGE, S'IL Y A LIEU.**

20. Parmi les choix suivants, lequel décrit le mieux le secteur d'activité dans lequel vous travaillez?

Administrations publiques  
 Agriculture, foresterie, pêche et chasse  
 Arts, spectacle et loisirs  
 Autres services, sauf les administrations publiques  
 Commerce de détail  
 Commerce de gros  
 Construction  
 Extraction minière, exploitation en carrière, et extraction de pétrole et de gaz  
 Fabrication  
 Finance et assurances  
 Gestion de sociétés et d'entreprises  
 Hébergement et services de restauration  
 Industrie de l'information et industrie culturelle



Services administratifs, services de soutien, services de gestion des déchets et services d'assainissement  
Services d'enseignement  
Services immobiliers et services de location et de location à bail  
Services professionnels, scientifiques et techniques  
Services publics  
Soins de santé et assistance sociale  
Transport et entreposage  
Sans emploi  
Aux études à temps plein  
À la retraite  
Autre situation ou autre secteur; veuillez préciser : \_\_\_\_\_

**CONTINUER POUR TOUS LES RÉPONDANTS. ASSURER UNE BONNE REPRÉSENTATION DES TYPES D'EMPLOI DANS CHAQUE GROUPE. PAS PLUS DE DEUX RÉPONDANTS PAR SECTEUR D'ACTIVITÉ. PAS D'ÉTUDIANTS ÉTRANGERS.**

**21. DEMANDER À TOUS LES GROUPES** Lequel ou lesquels des groupes raciaux ou culturels suivants vous décrivent le mieux? (Plusieurs choix possibles)

Blanc  
Sud-asiatique (p. ex., indien, pakistanais, sri-lankais)  
Chinois  
Noir  
Latino-américain  
Philippin  
Arabe  
Asiatique du sud-est (p. ex., vietnamien, cambodgien, thaïlandais)  
Coréen ou japonais  
Autochtone  
Autre groupe racial ou culturel (préciser)

**RÉPONSE SPONTANÉE** : Préfère ne pas répondre  
**ASSURER UN BON MÉLANGE.**

**22.** 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.**



**23.** 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 CONCLUREE**



## INVITATION

J'aimerais vous inviter à ce groupe de discussion en ligne, qui aura lieu le **[DONNER LA DATE ET L'HEURE EN FONCTION DU N° DE GROUPE INDIQUÉ DANS LE TABLEAU, PAGE 1]**. La discussion durera deux heures et vous recevrez 125 \$ pour votre participation. Ce montant vous sera envoyé par transfert électronique après la tenue du groupe de discussion.

Veillez 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 donnez votre consentement à ces modalités.

Est-ce que vous accepteriez de participer?

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

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 au sujet du groupe?

**Nom :**

**Numéro de téléphone :**

**Adresse courriel :**

Vous recevrez un courrier électronique du **[INSÉRER LE NOM DU RECRUTEUR]** expliquant comment rejoindre le groupe en ligne. Si la connexion au système vous pose des difficultés, veuillez en aviser notre équipe de soutien technique à : [support@thestrategiccounsel.com](mailto:support@thestrategiccounsel.com).

Nous vous prions de vous mettre en ligne au moins 15 minutes avant l'heure prévue, afin d'avoir le temps de vous installer et d'obtenir l'aide de notre équipe de soutien en cas de problèmes techniques. Veuillez également redémarrer votre ordinateur avant de vous joindre au groupe.

Vous pourriez devoir lire des documents au cours de la discussion. Si vous utilisez des lunettes, assurez-vous de les avoir à portée de main durant la rencontre. Vous aurez également besoin d'un stylo et de papier pour prendre des notes.

Ce rendez-vous est un engagement ferme. Si vous pensez ne pas pouvoir participer 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 quelqu'un pour vous remplacer.

Merci de votre temps.

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

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

## Appendix B – Discussion Guides

# English Moderator's Guide

## MASTER MODERATOR'S GUIDE

June 2023

### **INTRODUCTION (10 minutes)** All Locations

- Moderator or technician should let participants know that they will need pen and paper in order to take some notes, jot down some thoughts around some material that we will show them later in the discussion.
- **Thunder Bay Ontario, Chinese Diaspora Vancouver Island British Columbia, Major Centres Quebec, Indigenous Northwest Territories** Moderator to also note that the [opioids crisis/topic of suicide] will be a topic of discussion in the latter part of the agenda. Remind participants that their participation is voluntary, and they should feel free to step back from the conversation if they feel uncomfortable. Moderator will remind participants again when we reach that point in the discussion.

### **GOVERNMENT OF CANADA IN THE NEWS (5-20 minutes)** All Locations

- What have you seen, read, or heard about the Government of Canada in the last few days?
  - **Small and Mid-Size Centres Quebec, Thunder Bay Ontario, Indigenous Northwest Territories** What are your reactions to this news?
  - **Francophones Atlantic Canada and Ontario, Major Centres Quebec** IF NOT MENTIONED: What about when it comes to immigration?
  - **Rural Prairies** IF NOT MENTIONED: Have you seen, read, or heard about the federal government's response to the wildfires?
    - **Rural Prairies** How would you describe the Government of Canada's response to the wildfires?
  - **Indigenous Northwest Territories** IF NOT MENTIONED: What about news on National Indigenous Peoples Day? Did anyone do anything to commemorate National Indigenous Peoples Day?

#### **Rural Prairies** SHOW ON SCREEN:

**Rural Prairies** The Government of Canada has taken several actions to help those affected by wildfires:

- **Rural Prairies** Working with provinces and non-profits to match donations, raising \$20 million in support for community groups in Alberta.
- **Rural Prairies** Giving financial aid to affected provinces to help with response costs and covering up to 90% of their eligible recovery costs.
- **Rural Prairies** Deploying the Canadian Armed Forces to help with firefighting, planning, coordination, and other response tasks.
- **Rural Prairies** Using national emergency stockpiles of medical supplies, equipment, and pharmaceuticals to help affected provinces.
- **Rural Prairies** Helping those impacted by wildfires access benefits like Employment Insurance, Old Age Security, and Canada Pension Plan.
- **Rural Prairies** Implementing a two-year Training Pilot program to train more firefighters.
- **Rural Prairies** What are your initial thoughts about these actions?
  - **Rural Prairies** Is the Government of Canada doing enough to help communities affected by the wildfires?
  - **Rural Prairies** What more should the federal government be doing?

**PERFORMANCE AND PRIORITIES (10-30 minutes)** **All Locations**

- **Small and Mid-Size Centres Quebec, Thunder Bay Ontario, Recent Post-Secondary Graduates Mid-Size Centres Prairies (Saskatchewan and Manitoba), St. John's Newfoundland, Francophones Atlantic Canada and Ontario, Calgary and Edmonton Alberta, Rural Prairies, Recent Home Buyers Major Centres Ontario, Major Centres Quebec, Indigenous Northwest Territories, Crime Concerned Greater Toronto Area** What does the Government of Canada do well?
  - **Calgary and Edmonton Alberta** What about when it comes to managing the economy and creating jobs?
  - **Calgary and Edmonton Alberta** What about when it comes to dealing with climate change?
    - **Calgary and Edmonton Alberta** Are there opportunities to create new jobs while dealing with climate change?
    - **Calgary and Edmonton Alberta** IF YES: What are these opportunities? Should the Government of Canada be encouraging and supporting these opportunities?
- **Small and Mid-Size Centres Quebec, Thunder Bay Ontario, Recent Post-Secondary Graduates Mid-Size Centres Prairies (Saskatchewan and Manitoba), St. John's Newfoundland, Francophones Atlantic Canada and Ontario, Calgary and Edmonton Alberta, Rural Prairies, Recent Home Buyers Major Centres Ontario, Major Centres Quebec, Indigenous Northwest Territories, Crime**

**Concerned Greater Toronto Area** What does the Government of Canada need to improve on? [Why?]

- **Recent Post-Secondary Graduates Mid-Size Centres Prairies (Saskatchewan and Manitoba), Chinese Diaspora Vancouver Island British Columbia, Recent Home Buyers Major Centres Ontario, Indigenous Northwest Territories, Crime Concerned Greater Toronto Area** In your opinion, what are the top issues that the Government of Canada should be prioritizing? [Why?]
  - **Recent Post-Secondary Graduates Mid-Size Centres Prairies (Saskatchewan and Manitoba), Recent Home Buyers Major Centres Ontario** IF NOT MENTIONED: What about the cost of living?
    - **Recent Post-Secondary Graduates Mid-Size Centres Prairies (Saskatchewan and Manitoba), Recent Home Buyers Major Centres Ontario** Has the rising cost of living affected your behaviour? Your spending habits? How so?
    - **Recent Post-Secondary Graduates Mid-Size Centres Prairies (Saskatchewan and Manitoba), Recent Home Buyers Major Centres Ontario** What do you think is behind the rising cost of living? [(e.g. why do you think the cost of living is rising?)]
  - **Chinese Diaspora Vancouver Island British Columbia** Are there any challenges impacting Chinese Canadians that the federal government should be prioritizing?
  - **Indigenous Northwest Territories** What are the top issues in your community specifically that the federal government should be prioritizing?
  - **Indigenous Northwest Territories** Has the Government of Canada done anything to help on these issues?
- **Recent Post-Secondary Graduates Mid-Size Centres Prairies (Saskatchewan and Manitoba), Recent Home Buyers Major Centres Ontario** What work, if any, has the Government of Canada done to address the cost of living?
- **Recent Post-Secondary Graduates Mid-Size Centres Prairies (Saskatchewan and Manitoba), Recent Home Buyers Major Centres Ontario** How do you expect the cost of living to change a year from now? Do you think things will be better, worse, or the stay same as they are now? Why?
- **Chinese Diaspora Vancouver Island British Columbia** What news have you seen, read, or heard about the Government of Canada's past work on any of these issues?

- **Chinese Diaspora Vancouver Island British Columbia** What work, if any, is the Government of Canada planning to do on these issues?
- **Chinese Diaspora Vancouver Island British Columbia** On these priorities, is the Government of Canada generally on the right track or wrong track? Why do you say that?
  - **Chinese Diaspora Vancouver Island British Columbia** For those who say they are on the wrong track, what could the Government of Canada do to get on the right track?
- **Indigenous Northwest Territories** What are the most important sectors and industries for your community?
  - **Indigenous Northwest Territories** Which sectors and industries in your community do you feel need the most help?
  - **Indigenous Northwest Territories** Has the Government of Canada done anything to support these sectors and industries?
- **Chinese Diaspora Vancouver Island British Columbia, Indigenous Northwest Territories** When it comes to engaging with [Chinese Canadians/the people in the Northwest Territories, like listening and responding to their issues], would you say the Government of Canada is generally on the right or wrong track?
  - **Chinese Diaspora Vancouver Island British Columbia, Indigenous Northwest Territories** What [do you think] are better ways for the [federal] government to engage with [Chinese Canadians/people in the Northwest Territories]?

**OFFICIAL LANGUAGE GOVERNMENT PRIORITIES (20 minutes)** **Francophones Atlantic Canada and Ontario**

**POLL:** Now, I will show you a list of priorities related to official languages. I'd like you to select which of these priorities you believe are the most important for the Government of Canada to work on. You can select up to 3; if you don't think any should be a priority, don't select any.

**SHOW ON SCREEN:**

- Creating a strategy to support entrepreneurs in official language minority communities;
- Ensuring every Canadian can be heard and understood by a judge in their official language of choice when before a court;
- Ensuring that the private sector provides services in the preferred official language of Canadians;
- Guaranteeing the equality of the English and French languages in Canada;
- Increasing funding for schools for Francophone communities outside of Quebec; and



- Making investments to improve access to French immersion and French second-language programs across the country.

#### *MODERATOR TO GO THROUGH SELECTIONS*

- Why did you make your selection?
- Was there anything missing from this list?
- Is there anything else the Government of Canada should be doing to support the francophone community?

#### **PROMOTING AND PROTECTING THE FRENCH LANGUAGE (30-40 minutes) Francophones Atlantic Canada and Ontario, Major Centres Quebec**

- How big of a priority should protecting and promoting the French language be?
- What, if anything, is the Government of Canada doing to help protect and promote the French language?
  - IF NOT MENTIONED: Has anyone seen, read, or heard anything about the Government of Canada's new Action Plan for Official Languages?

The Government of Canada has announced its Action Plan for Official Languages. The Action Plan proposes over 30 measures aimed at achieving a few key objectives. First, I'm going to share with you the key objectives and a few examples of the proposed measures, and then I'll ask for your thoughts.

#### **SHOW ON SCREEN ONE AT A TIME**

##### **Encouraging more Francophone immigration to Canada**

Examples of measures:

- Creating a new French immigration policy;
- Expanding global promotion and recruitment work in French-speaking countries; and
- Investing in language training for newcomers.

##### **Promoting lifelong learning opportunities in French**

Examples of measures:

- Expanding program offerings in French minority-language schools outside of Quebec;



- Investing in French second-language programs throughout Canada; and
- Investing in Francophone child care centres across Canada.

### **Supporting French community organizations**

Examples of measures:

- Boosting funding to Francophone community organizations;
- Providing grants to projects that strengthen attachment to the French language and Francophone culture; and
- Providing grants to Francophone artists.

**Creating a centre within Heritage Canada** that supports the Government of Canada in taking additional steps to support French language minority communities.

ASK AFTER EACH SCREENSHARE:

- What are your reactions to this objective and measures?
- What impacts do you think these will have?

ASK AFTER MEASURES HAVE BEEN DISCUSSED:

- Overall, which do you feel will have the greatest impact on promoting and protecting the French language? Why?
- Is there anything here the Government of Canada should not be doing? Why?
- What else should the Government of Canada do to promote and protect the French language?

**IMMIGRATION (40 minutes)** **Small and Mid-Size Centres Quebec, Francophones Atlantic Canada and Ontario**

**Francophones Atlantic Canada and Ontario** Now let's focus in on one of those pillars: encouraging Francophone immigration to Canada...

- **Small and Mid-Size Centres Quebec** What news have you seen, read, or heard about immigration lately?
  - **Small and Mid-Size Centres Quebec** What are your reactions?

- **Small and Mid-Size Centres Quebec** Where did you see, read, or hear this news?
- [Generally] How would you describe the current state of the immigration system in Canada?
  - Would you say the Government of Canada is generally on the right track or wrong track when it comes to immigration? Why [do you say that]?
- What do you think are some of the benefits that welcoming new immigrants has for Canada?
- To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: “Canada needs to welcome more new immigrants in order to fill labour shortages and grow the economy.”
  - How big of an issue, if at all, are labour shortages in your community?

[PROMPT/CLARIFY]: According to Statistics Canada, in the second quarter of 2022 employers across all sectors in Canada were actively seeking to fill nearly one million vacant positions, the highest quarterly number on record.

- What are your reactions to this?
  - Should immigration help to fill these vacancies? Why/ why not?
- Do you have any concerns about welcoming new immigrants? If yes, what are these concerns?
  - Are you concerned at all about the impact of immigration on the health care system?
  - What about on the housing/rental market?
  - What about when it comes to the French language?
- Do you think the Government of Canada should increase, decrease, or keep the rate of immigration at about the same level? Why?
  - IF INCREASE OR DECREASE: What impacts would this have in Canada, either socially or economically?
- What have you seen, read, or heard about the Government of Canada’s plan to increase immigration from French-speaking countries?
  - What do you think about promoting immigration from French-speaking countries? What impacts, if any, could this have on the French language in Canada?

**SHOW ON SCREEN:**

Through the Action Plan for Official Languages, the Government of Canada is planning to boost Francophone immigration by investing:

- \$18.5 million to boost promotion and recruitment in order to attract more French-speaking or bilingual workers to Canada.
- \$16.3 million to boost recruitment of French-speaking teachers to teach in Francophone minority communities.
- \$50 million to help with the settlement and integration of new French-speaking immigrants into Francophone minority communities.
- \$25 million to establish a new *Centre of Innovation in Francophone Immigration* that will have a grant and contribution program to give Francophone communities an opportunity to promote themselves and recruit French-speaking workers.
- \$10.5 million to help newcomers learn French.
- What are your reactions to this plan?
- What do you think will have the greatest impacts?
- Is there anything else the Government of Canada should be doing?
- Is there anything the Government of Canada should not be doing?
- Does this plan change your view on how the Government of Canada is managing the immigration system in Canada? Why/why not?

**PHARMACARE (45 minutes) Small and Mid-Size Centres Quebec, Thunder Bay Ontario**

- In your opinion, what are the top issues that the Government of Canada should be prioritizing?
  - IF NOT MENTIONED: What about health care? How big of a priority should health care be?
- What are the biggest challenges in health care that the Government of Canada should be addressing?
  - PROMPT AS NEEDED: What about shortages of doctors and nurses across the country? What about providing mental health support to all Canadians? What about reducing wait

time for medical services? What about expanding virtual health care?

- What about the cost of prescription medication in Canada? Would you say this issue is more important, as important, or less important than the health care challenges you mentioned earlier?
- How would you describe the state of prescription drug coverage in Canada today?
  - Is [it/prescription medication] affordable? Is it accessible?
- Who here is familiar with the term pharmacare?
  - What does it mean to you?
- Are you aware of any work or plans the Government of Canada has done or is planning to do on pharmacare? What have you seen, read, or heard?

CLARIFY: In 2019, the Government of Canada announced it intended to move forward on implementing a national pharmacare program to make prescription drugs more affordable and more accessible to more Canadians.

Since then, the Government of Canada has started by developing a Canadian Drug Agency to negotiate prescription drug prices on behalf of Canadians and buy them in bulk to help save Canadians money in the long term. The Government of Canada has also been developing its national strategy for high-cost drugs for rare diseases to help Canadians get better access to these drugs, as a first step towards expanded coverage.

- What are your reactions to this information? Is this something the Government of Canada should be prioritizing?
- As the Government of Canada plans the next steps of its national pharmacare plan, what are the most important things it should keep in mind?
- Who should be covered by a national pharmacare plan? Should the plan be universal, so everyone gets coverage, or should it be more of a “safety net” plan, so that it only applies to Canadians when prescription drug costs exceed a percentage of their income? Why?
  - Which approach is fairer or more equitable?
  - Do you have any concerns with either approach?

- Pharmacare could be completely public, like health care, where all Canadians are on the same plan. Alternatively, it could “close the gaps” so that people can still use existing public and private plans. This type of plan would be set up to ensure that everyone receives coverage, including those currently not covered.
  - In your view, what are the benefits and drawbacks of both approaches?
  - Which approach is fairer or more equitable?
  - Do you have any concerns with either approach?
- Who here has a prescription drug coverage plan?
  - IF YES: Are you satisfied with your plan? Why/why not?
  - IF YES: Do you think a national pharmacare plan would have better or worse coverage than the plan you have now? Why?
- If the Government of Canada does implement a national pharmacare plan, what type of medication would you expect it to cover? PROMPT: Life-saving medicine, drugs for rare diseases, more common/frequently prescribed medication...
- Would a national pharmacare plan have an impact on making life more affordable?
- What impacts would it have on our health care system?
- Would you support a universal pharmacare system?
  - Even if it added to the deficit?
  - Even if it increased taxes?
- Do you have any questions about pharmacare?

**RELATIONSHIP WITH CHINA (35 minutes) Chinese Diaspora Vancouver Island British Columbia**

- How would you describe Canada’s current relationship with China?
  - What are the biggest issues impacting Canada’s relationship with China?
  - How has Canada’s relationship with China changed? What do you think caused this relationship to change?
- When it comes to managing Canada’s relationship with China, would you say the Government of Canada is generally on the right track or wrong track?

- When it comes to managing relations with China, what has the Government of Canada done well?
- What could the federal government improve on when it comes to managing relations with China?
  - What would you like to see Canada do with this relationship?
- Moving forward, what do you expect Canada and China's relationship to look like?

**OPIOIDS (35 minutes) Thunder Bay Ontario, Chinese Diaspora Vancouver Island British Columbia**

Moving on to a different topic ...

- Would you say that opioid addiction is a major issue, a minor issue, or not an issue at all in your community?
- Briefly, how has this issue evolved over time?
  - Has this issue gotten better or worse [in the last few years]?
- Are you hopeful that there will be progress on this issue in the coming years? Why/why not?
- What, if anything, has the Government of Canada done to address opioid addiction [in British Columbia]?
- What comes to mind when you hear "safe supply?"
- What comes to mind when you hear "safe injection sites?"

CLARIFY:

Safe supply refers to providing prescribed medications as a safer alternative to the toxic illegal drug supply to people who are at high risk of overdose. [Safer supply services can help prevent overdoses, save lives, and connect people who use drugs to other health and social services.]

Safe injection sites provide a safe, clean, space for people to bring their own drugs in the presence of trained staff. [This prevents accidental overdoses and reduces the spread of infectious diseases. They also offer a range of harm reduction services.]

- What are your reactions to hearing these definitions?

- How important, if at all, is it for those suffering with opioid addiction to have access to a safe supply and safe injection sites? Why do you feel this way?
  - **Thunder Bay Ontario** As far as you know, do these services help to prevent overdoses? Would knowing that these services help prevent overdoses impact your support for them?
  - **Thunder Bay Ontario** Would knowing that these services can also be a way to help connect people who use drugs with other health and treatment services have an impact on your support for these services? Why/why not?
  
- What role does the Government of Canada have in safer supply services and safe injection sites?

CLARIFY: Through the Substance Use and Addictions Program [(SUAP)], the Government of Canada is funding projects that address the harms associated with substance use.

Through this program, the Government of Canada is funding safer supply and injection site services, and they are also funding projects that focus on things like overdose prevention, education, detox support, peer support, outreach, mentorship, mental health supports, and more.

- What are your reactions to the Government of Canada investing in harm reduction projects?
- What [impacts, if any,/impact] do you expect these projects to have?
- **Chinese Diaspora Vancouver Island British Columbia** How do you feel about the Government of Canada granting an exemption to the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act to remove criminal penalties for possession of up to 2.5 grams of certain illegal drugs in British Columbia? Do you support or oppose a measure like this one? Why do you say that?
  - **Chinese Diaspora Vancouver Island British Columbia** What impacts, if any, will this have?
  - **Chinese Diaspora Vancouver Island British Columbia** Will this change have an impact on crime in British Columbia? Why do you feel this way?
- What [else] would you like to see [the Government of Canada do to address/from the Government of Canada] these issues?

**POST-SECONDARY ISSUES (15 minutes)** Recent Post-Secondary Graduates Mid-Size Centres Prairies (Saskatchewan and Manitoba)

When we invited you here, you each indicated you recently completed your secondary studies ...

- Who here is aware of any work the Government of Canada has done to help make post-secondary studies and paying off loans more affordable?

I'm going to show you a few things the Government of Canada has done and ask for your reactions.

**SHOW ON SCREEN:**

- **Permanently eliminating the federal interest** on Canada Student Loans and Canada Apprenticeship Loans.
- **Increasing Canada Student Grants** by 40%, to provide up to \$4,200/academic year for full-time students.
- **Improving the repayment assistance plan** so that an individual earning under \$40,000 a year no longer has to make student loan payments, with the income threshold increasing by family size.
- What are your reactions to these measures? Do you have any questions on any of these measures?
- Is there anything else that you think the Government of Canada should do help recent graduates?

**Jobs (25 minutes)** Recent Post-Secondary Graduates Mid-Size Centres Prairies (Saskatchewan and Manitoba)

When we invited you here, you also indicated you were currently looking for work or had started working ...

- How would you rate the state of the job market right now? Is it good, poor, or somewhere in between? Why do you say that?
  - How easy is it for someone like you to find a job in the field you're interested in? Are there any challenges/barriers you've encountered when searching for work?
    - Are there enough job opportunities in your area?

- Thinking five years into the future, do you imagine the Canadian job market will be worse, better, or the same? Why?
  - IF WORSE: What would make you more optimistic?
- Would you say the Government of Canada is on the right track or wrong track when it comes to creating jobs in Canada?
- Are you aware of any work the Government of Canada is doing to help create jobs, provide skills training, or support workers?
- What else do you think the Government of Canada should do to help?

### **COMMUNITY SAFETY (40 minutes) Crime Concerned Greater Toronto Area**

I'd now like to shift our attention to community issues more broadly.

- What are the main issues affecting your community?
  - How big of an issue is crime in your community? What makes you say that?
    - What have you seen, read, or heard recently on crime?
  - What type of crime is an issue in your community?
  - IF NOT MENTIONED: What about when it comes to crime on public transit?
    - How big of an issue is crime on public transit?
- Do you feel that your community is safe? Why/Why not?
- As far as you can tell, has there been an increase, decrease, or no change in the level of crime in your community?
  - IF INCREASE: What have you noticed specifically?
    - What do you think is behind the increase in crime in your community? What are some of the causes?
    - Have you changed any of your daily habits or behaviours because of this increase in crime? If yes, what have you changed?
    - What should be done, if anything, in response?
    - Is there anything you feel the federal government should do to respond to the level of crime in your community?

- Do you know of anything the Government of Canada has done over the last few years to address crime? Are they doing anything now?
  - IF NOT MENTIONED: What about any work on gun control?
    - IF YES: What are your reactions to this?
  - IF NOT MENTIONED: What about working to reduce gang activity and violence?

The Government of Canada announced \$390 million over the next five years to help provinces crack down on gang violence and reduce the number of crimes committed with firearms.

This money will help fund a variety of programs, including those in law enforcement, border security, and crime prevention.

In the past, programs like Operation Centaur, an initiative to reinforce police with specialized units, disrupt firearms trafficking, and prevent crime have been funded.

- What are your reactions to this? What impacts do you think this type of funding will have?
- Do you support this approach to addressing crime? Why/why not?
- Do you have any questions or concerns about this funding?
- What else should the Government of Canada do to help reduce crime

**HOUSING (20-80 minutes)** Recent Post-Secondary Graduates Mid-Size Centres Prairies (Saskatchewan and Manitoba), Recent Home Buyers Major Centres Ontario, Indigenous Northwest Territories, Crime Concerned Greater Toronto Area

Recent Post-Secondary Graduates Mid-Size Centres Prairies (Saskatchewan and Manitoba) , Crime Concerned Greater Toronto Area Moving on to a different topic...

- Recent Home Buyers Major Centres Ontario What have you seen, read, or heard about the Government of Canada's policies on housing?
- What are the biggest challenges in housing [that the Government of Canada should be addressing]?

- **Recent Post-Secondary Graduates Mid-Size Centres Prairies (Saskatchewan and Manitoba), Recent Home Buyers Major Centres Ontario, Crime Concerned Greater Toronto Area** IF NOT MENTIONED: What about building more homes?
  - **Recent Home Buyers Major Centres Ontario** IF NOT MENTIONED: What about helping Canadians in buying their first homes?
    - **Recent Home Buyers Major Centres Ontario** How concerned are you about changes to the prime interest rate?
    - **Recent Home Buyers Major Centres Ontario** When you renew your mortgage, do you anticipate that rates will have gone up, down, or stayed about the same compared to when you bought?
    - **Recent Home Buyers Major Centres Ontario** [IF HIGHER/LOWER] What do you expect will be the impact of this change on the overall affordability of your mortgage? Could you see it having a major, minor, or no impact?
      - **Recent Home Buyers Major Centres Ontario** What about on your household overall?
  - **Indigenous Northwest Territories** PROMPT AS NECESSARY: Affordability both of purchasing and renting, quality, supply, etc...
  - **Recent Post-Secondary Graduates Mid-Size Centres Prairies (Saskatchewan and Manitoba), Crime Concerned Greater Toronto Area** As far as you know, why aren't homes being built faster? What's causing delays in housing projects? [PROMPT IF NECESSARY:] Who [or what] is responsible [for the delays]?
  - **Recent Post-Secondary Graduates Mid-Size Centres Prairies (Saskatchewan and Manitoba), Crime Concerned Greater Toronto Area** What actions or solutions do you think should be taken to address the issue of housing project delays?
  - **Recent Home Buyers Major Centres Ontario** Who or what do you believe is responsible for setting the prime interest rate?
- Recent Home Buyers Major Centres Ontario** When we asked you to come in today, each of you said that you had purchased a home within the past 5 years...
- **Recent Home Buyers Major Centres Ontario** Overall, how affordable is home ownership for you personally? Has owning your home become more affordable, less affordable, or has it stayed about the same?

- **Recent Home Buyers Major Centres Ontario** What about when it comes to your mortgage payments? Have your payments gone up, gone down, or have they stayed about the same?
- **Recent Home Buyers Major Centres Ontario** What about your home insurance premiums?
- **Recent Home Buyers Major Centres Ontario** What about your utility costs?
  - **Recent Home Buyers Major Centres Ontario** [ASK FOR EACH, IF GONE UP/GONE DOWN] What impact did this have on your household budget?
- **Recent Home Buyers Major Centres Ontario** When it came to purchasing your first home, what would you say were your biggest challenges?

**Recent Home Buyers Major Centres Ontario** I'm now going to show you various housing initiatives from the Government of Canada.

**Recent Home Buyers Major Centres Ontario** **SHOW ON SCREEN:**

- **Recent Home Buyers Major Centres Ontario** Introducing a new **Tax-Free First Home Savings Account** to allow Canadians to save up to \$40,000, tax-free, to help buy their first home;
- **Recent Home Buyers Major Centres Ontario** The **First-Time Home Buyer Incentive**, a shared-equity mortgage with the Government of Canada which provides a 5% or 10% down payment towards the purchasing of a first home;
- **Recent Home Buyers Major Centres Ontario** Expanding the **First-Time Home Buyers' Incentive** to allow more flexibility and making it easier for **single Canadians** to access;
- **Recent Home Buyers Major Centres Ontario** Doubling the **First-Time Home Buyers' Tax Credit** to provide up to \$1,500 in direct support to home buyers to offset closing costs involved in buying a first home;
- **Recent Home Buyers Major Centres Ontario** Investing \$200 million to increase **rent-to-own** housing options; and
- **Recent Home Buyers Major Centres Ontario** **Banning blind bidding** (blind bidding is where home buyers don't know how much others are bidding).
- **Recent Home Buyers Major Centres Ontario** Is there anything on this list that you were not aware of?
- **Recent Home Buyers Major Centres Ontario** When you were looking to purchase your home, did you use any Government of Canada programs?
  - **Recent Home Buyers Major Centres Ontario** If YES: Which ones?
    - **Recent Home Buyers Major Centres Ontario** What was your experience like?

- **Recent Home Buyers Major Centres Ontario** How big of an impact did these programs have?
- **Recent Home Buyers Major Centres Ontario** Whether you accessed the programs in the list or not, do you think the Government of Canada is on the right track or wrong track in making home ownership more attainable?
  - **Recent Home Buyers Major Centres Ontario** What about the new Tax-Free First Home Savings Account?

**Recent Home Buyers Major Centres Ontario** CLARIFY: The new Tax-Free First Home Savings Account gives prospective first-time home buyers the ability to save up to \$40,000 on a tax-free basis. Similar to the Registered Retirement Savings Plan (RRSP), contributions will be tax-deductible, and withdrawals to purchase a first home, including from investment income, will be non-taxable, similar to a Tax-Free Savings Account (TFSA). It will be tax-free in and out.

- **Recent Home Buyers Major Centres Ontario** Do you think this initiative would have personally benefited you? What about new home buyers in general?
- **Recent Home Buyers Major Centres Ontario** Do you have any questions or feedback about any of these programs?
- **Recent Home Buyers Major Centres Ontario** What else should the Government of Canada do to support first-time home buyers?
  - Do you think supporting first-time home buyers is a priority for the Government of Canada? Why/why not?

**Recent Home Buyers Major Centres Ontario** Shifting over to building more homes ...

- **Recent Post-Secondary Graduates Mid-Size Centres Prairies (Saskatchewan and Manitoba), Recent Home Buyers Major Centres Ontario, Crime Concerned Greater Toronto Area** What have you seen, read, or heard about work the Government of Canada is [planning or doing/doing or planning to do] to encourage the construction of more homes?
- **Recent Post-Secondary Graduates Mid-Size Centres Prairies (Saskatchewan and Manitoba), Recent Home Buyers Major Centres Ontario, Crime Concerned Greater Toronto Area** What have you seen, read, or heard about the Housing Accelerator Fund? CLARIFY: The Housing Accelerator

Fund is a \$4 billion fund that gives money to municipal governments to encourage them to take steps to increase local housing supply.

- Recent Post-Secondary Graduates Mid-Size Centres Prairies (Saskatchewan and Manitoba), Recent Home Buyers Major Centres Ontario, Crime Concerned Greater Toronto Area What are your reactions to this?
- Recent Post-Secondary Graduates Mid-Size Centres Prairies (Saskatchewan and Manitoba), Recent Home Buyers Major Centres Ontario, Crime Concerned Greater Toronto Area What impact do you think a fund like this will have?
- Recent Home Buyers Major Centres Ontario Would you support or oppose an increase to the housing supply in your area?
  
- Recent Post-Secondary Graduates Mid-Size Centres Prairies (Saskatchewan and Manitoba), Recent Home Buyers Major Centres Ontario, Crime Concerned Greater Toronto Area Should there be consequences for municipalities that don't prioritize building enough homes? [Why?]
  - Recent Post-Secondary Graduates Mid-Size Centres Prairies (Saskatchewan and Manitoba), Recent Home Buyers Major Centres Ontario, Crime Concerned Greater Toronto Area IF YES: What consequences do you think would be appropriate?
  
- Recent Post-Secondary Graduates Mid-Size Centres Prairies (Saskatchewan and Manitoba), Recent Home Buyers Major Centres Ontario, Crime Concerned Greater Toronto Area Do you have any concerns about building more homes [faster/in your community]?
  - Recent Post-Secondary Graduates Mid-Size Centres Prairies (Saskatchewan and Manitoba), Recent Home Buyers Major Centres Ontario, Crime Concerned Greater Toronto Area IF YES: What are they?
  
- Recent Post-Secondary Graduates Mid-Size Centres Prairies (Saskatchewan and Manitoba), Recent Home Buyers Major Centres Ontario, Crime Concerned Greater Toronto Area Who here is familiar with municipal zoning? CLARIFY: A municipal zoning bylaw controls the use of land in your community. It is set by municipal governments and states exactly how land may be used, where buildings and other structures can be located, the types of buildings that are permitted, and how they may be used.
  
- Recent Post-Secondary Graduates Mid-Size Centres Prairies (Saskatchewan and Manitoba), Recent Home Buyers Major Centres Ontario, Crime Concerned Greater Toronto Area What impacts, if any, do you think municipal zoning bylaws could have on building more homes?

- **Recent Post-Secondary Graduates Mid-Size Centres Prairies (Saskatchewan and Manitoba), Recent Home Buyers Major Centres Ontario, Crime Concerned Greater Toronto Area** [Do you think municipalities should be encouraged/how important is it to encourage municipalities] to make zoning changes to allow for more homes in their communities? Why[/why not]?
  - **Recent Post-Secondary Graduates Mid-Size Centres Prairies (Saskatchewan and Manitoba)** Do you have any concerns if municipalities did this?
    - [PROMPT AS NEEDED:] [What if it made communities/what if these changes meant your neighbourhood would be/would you still feel this way if it made communities] more compact and populated?
- **Indigenous Northwest Territories** Thinking about the challenges you just described, would you say the situation has worsened, improved, or stayed the same in the last few years?
- **Indigenous Northwest Territories** Do you expect access to housing in the Northwest Territories will improve or worsen over the next few years? Why?
  - **Indigenous Northwest Territories** What needs to happen for access to housing in the Northwest Territories to improve?
- **Indigenous Northwest Territories** What have you seen, read, or heard about the Government of Canada's work on housing?
- **Indigenous Northwest Territories** When it comes to housing, has the Government of Canada generally been on the right track or wrong track? What makes you say that?
- What [else] would you like to see from the Government of Canada [when it comes to building more homes/on housing]?

**LOCAL ISSUES/OIL AND GAS (25 minutes) St. John's Newfoundland**

I'd now like to shift our attention to community issues more broadly.

- What are the main issues affecting your community that the Government of Canada should be focusing on?
- Do you think the Government of Canada is giving these issues the right amount of attention, not enough, or too much? What makes you say that?

- Which local sectors and industries do you feel need the most help? Why do these sectors and industries need federal support?
- IF NOT MENTIONED: What about oil and gas, how important is this industry in Newfoundland?
- Compared to the other industries mentioned, does the oil and gas industry generally have a large or small impact on your community? Why do you say that?
- What do you think are the biggest issues with the oil and gas industry today?
- Has anyone heard of any oil and gas projects in Newfoundland? If yes, which one(s)? What are your thoughts on this/these project(s)?
- Has anyone heard anything about the proposed Bay du Nord Development Project? What have you heard?

CLARIFY: Equinor is proposing to install and operate a floating offshore oil and gas production facility in the Flemish Pass, approximately 500 kilometres east of St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador, in the Atlantic Ocean. As proposed, the Bay du Nord Development Project would be in operation for approximately 30 years, with the potential for additional wells and tie-backs to the production facility.

Recently, Equinor announced it was postponing the project for three years citing volatile market conditions and significant cost increases in many aspects of the development.

- What are your reactions?
- Do you know what the federal government's position is on the project? If so, what is it?
- What would you like to see happen? Why?

**HEALTH CARE (15 minutes) St. John's Newfoundland**

Shifting topics...

- How would you describe the health care system in Newfoundland today?
  - How do you feel about the quality and availability of health care in your area?

- What are the most pressing challenges related to health care in your community?
- Has anyone heard about any recent commitments or announcements made by the Government of Canada on health care?

**SHOW ON SCREEN:**

The Government of Canada announced five priority areas in health care:

- Addressing health worker shortages and reducing wait times;
  - Increasing access to family health services;
  - Improving long term care and home care;
  - Addressing mental health and substance use; and
  - Modernizing health data management and virtual care.
- What are your initial reactions after hearing this priority list?
  - Are there any priorities listed that you think are particularly important?
  - Are there any priorities listed that you do not think should be there? Why do you say that?

**ENERGY OUTLOOK (25 minutes) Calgary and Edmonton Alberta, Rural Prairies**

- How important, if at all, is the oil and gas sector to [Alberta's/the Canadian] economy?
- How would you describe the current state of the oil and gas sector [in Alberta/at present]?
- How important, if at all, is it for the [Albertan/Canadian] economy to diversify beyond oil and gas? Why?
  - Which sectors will be the most important to the [future Albertan] economy [in the future]?
    - IF NOT MENTIONED: What about the clean energy sector? How much will the future of [Alberta's/the] economy depend on developing its clean energy sector?
    - Do you think developing the clean energy sector will have a positive impact, a negative impact, or no impact on someone like you? What about [on/for] workers [in Alberta]?

- EXPLAIN AS NEEDED: The clean energy sector could include various renewable energy sources like solar energy, wind energy, hydro energy, hydrogen fuel, or technologies like those that capture and store carbon.
- Has anyone heard the term “sustainable jobs” before? What does it mean?
- What comes to mind when you think about sustainable jobs in the clean energy sector?
  - Do you think the creation of sustainable jobs in the clean energy sector would benefit the [Albertan] economy? What about you and your family? Why/why not?
- What, or who, do you think is driving the development of the clean energy sector in [Alberta/Canada]?

**CARBON PRICING (45 minutes)** St. John’s Newfoundland, Calgary and Edmonton Alberta, Rural Prairies

- How important is it for the Government of Canada to reduce carbon pollution in Canada? Why?
- Are you aware of anything the Government of Canada is doing to reduce carbon pollution in Canada?

[CLARIFY:] The Government of Canada is undertaking several measures to reduce carbon pollution. [These measures include setting a price on carbon pollution, setting clean fuel standards, investing in renewable energy and clean technologies, and investing in energy efficiency programs./Here are a few of those measures:]

Calgary and Edmonton Alberta, Rural Prairies **SHOW ON SCREEN:**

- Calgary and Edmonton Alberta, Rural Prairies Setting a price on carbon pollution
- Calgary and Edmonton Alberta, Rural Prairies Setting clean fuel standards
- Calgary and Edmonton Alberta, Rural Prairies Investing in renewable energy and clean technologies
- Calgary and Edmonton Alberta, Rural Prairies Investing in energy efficiency programs

For today, we’ll be mostly focusing on the first measure: setting a price on carbon pollution.

- [Before today,] who was aware that the Government of Canada set a price on carbon pollution [before today]?

- What do you know about the price on carbon pollution?
- What questions do you have about [it/the price on carbon pollution, if any]? What do you want to know?
- Based on what you already know, would you say you support or oppose putting a price on carbon pollution, or are you unsure?

CLARIFY: There are two parts to carbon pollution pricing – a fuel charge, which applies to things like oil and gas, and a separate system for industry. In [those] provinces where the federal fuel charge applies, all direct proceeds are returned to Canadians, mostly through Climate Action Incentive Payments [(CAIP)] to households. Most households receive more money back through these payments than they pay on the fuel charge.

- Does knowing this have any impact on your support for or opposition to carbon pollution pricing? Why/why not?
- If you were looking for information about carbon pollution pricing, where would you start?
  - What sources of information would you use? What sources are trustworthy or credible on this issue?
    - PROMPT: What about climate scientists? What about economists? Why [do you say that]?

CLARIFY: Many economists say that setting a price on carbon pollution is the most cost-effective way to reduce carbon emissions at the scale and speed that is necessary to mitigate the impacts of climate change. [Moderator's note:] Provide source in the chat so participants can verify if they wish: <https://clcouncil.org/economists-statement/>

- Does knowing this have any impact on your support for or opposition to carbon pollution pricing? Why/why not?
- Other countries, like Denmark, the [United Kingdom/U.K.], Sweden, France, Netherlands, Chile, and Japan, all have their own ways of pricing carbon pollution. Does knowing that other countries have taken this approach make [Canada's price on carbon pollution more favourable, less favourable, or does it have no impact on your support/you more inclined, less inclined or does it have no impact on your support for Canada putting a price on carbon pollution]? Why/why not?

CLARIFY: As mentioned, the Government of Canada is also investing in renewable energy and clean technologies to help reduce emissions. [But] some countries, like the United States [(U.S.)], have chosen not to put a price on carbon pollution, opting instead to invest heavily in the private sector, so that corporations can develop the clean technologies needed to reduce carbon pollution emissions on their own. To achieve this, the U.S. government is investing \$400 billion, about one-fifth of Canada's entire economy.

- What do you think about this approach? What are the benefits and costs to taking this approach?
- Do you think the Government of Canada should take a similar approach? Why/why not?
  - Could the Government of Canada afford to take such an approach?
- Do you think a price on carbon pollution will discourage people from polluting? Why/why not?
  - What other impacts, if any, might a price on pollution have on Canadians?
  - In the short term, do you think the costs of a price on carbon pollution are greater than the costs of climate change to communities? Why?
    - What about in the long run?
- In 2021, Canada's greenhouse gas emissions were 7.4% below pre-pandemic (2019) emission levels. What do you think may have contributed to this decline? PROMPT [FOR/:] GOVERNMENT POLICIES, INCLUDING POLLUTION PRICING.
  - In your view, what could be done to reduce emissions further?

**9-8-8 (45 minutes) Major Centres Quebec, Indigenous Northwest Territories**

During the following discussion, one of the topics we will address is suicide prevention and emotional distress. While we have tried to minimize any potential risks and discomfort, due to the sensitive nature of the topic, if at any time you feel uncomfortable or uneasy giving your opinion, please feel free not to answer any of the questions asked [or step away].

If you or someone you know is going through a crisis and needs support, please know that there are mental health resources you can consult. Our tech support will provide you with some of these resources in the chat now. We will also send an email to each one of you after the group with this list of resources as well as additional numbers that you can call or text.

- TECH SUPPORT TO PROVIDE LIST OF RESOURCES IN CHAT
- **Major Centres Quebec** In Quebec: [www.suicide.ca](http://www.suicide.ca) OR 1-866-APPELLE (1-866-277-3553)

- Talk Suicide Canada: [www.talksuicide.ca](http://www.talksuicide.ca) OR 1-833-456-4566
- Get Help Here: <https://www.canada.ca/mental-health>
- Wellness Together Canada: <https://www.wellnesstogether.ca/en-CA>
- The Hope for Wellness Helpline: <https://www.hopeforwellness.ca/>

On the topic of mental health resources ...

The Government of Canada is currently working with the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health on the implementation of 9-8-8, a three-digit number for suicide prevention and emotional distress. The number is not live in Canada yet. It will launch on **November 30, 2023**.

I'm going to present you with a few different statements that you might see on social media, in advertisements, online, etc. regarding topics related to suicide prevention and mental health. After each message, we will discuss your impressions.

**SHOW ON SCREEN:**

**Statement 1: Thinking of suicide? Feeling emotional distress? Nationwide help is available. Call or text 9-8-8 for support from trained responders 24/7/365.**

**Secondary message: People can also call or text 9-8-8 if they are worried about a loved one who may be thinking of suicide and need support.**

- What does this message motivate you to do or think?
- What is your understanding of “emotional distress”, as it appears in this messaging?
- How would you improve this message?
- What if the text “feeling emotional distress” was removed and the message focused only on “thinking of suicide”? Does the meaning change for you?
- What if the text “thinking of suicide” was removed and the message focused only on “emotional distress”? Does it change the meaning for you?

**SHOW ON SCREEN:**

**Statement 2: Approximately 12 people in Canada die by suicide each day. If you or someone you know is having suicidal thoughts or is in crisis, there is help. Text or call 9-8-8 for support from a trained responder.**

- What does this message motivate you to do or think?
- In this statement, the word “crisis” is used instead of “emotional distress”. In your opinion, is there a difference between crisis and emotional distress?
- How would you improve this message?
- Does including a statistic make the message resonate more or have a bigger impact on you?
- Does the mention of a “trained responder” add value to the message?
- Let’s talk about other important features of the service. Which of the following are important to mention in an ad promoting 9-8-8?
  - Confidential
    - Why/Why not?
  - Trauma-informed
    - Why/Why not?
  - Culturally appropriate
    - Why/Why not?
    - Does “culturally appropriate” resonate with you?
    - What about “culturally sensitive”?
  - Free
    - Why/Why not?

**SHOW ON SCREEN:**

**Statement 3:** Free, confidential mental health support is available any time, from anywhere in Canada. Learn more about 9-8-8 suicide prevention and emotional distress support, and other non-crisis mental health supports at [Canada.ca/mental-health](https://Canada.ca/mental-health).

- What does this message motivate you to do or think?
- How would you improve this message?
- Do you find this message includes too much information?

- Is it clear which action to take depending on the state of someone’s mental health?

**SHOW ON SCREEN:**

**Statement 4:** When you call 9-8-8, the goal is to make sure you are safe, and together we will explore options for your safety. Emergency services, such as 9-1-1, will only be called if you are at risk of dying or seriously harming yourself. This only happens in a very small number of cases.

- In your opinion, is it important to distinguish 9-8-8 services from 9-1-1?
  - Does this message clarify the difference between the two and how they may interact?
- How would you improve this message?
- Is this an important message to include?

Now thinking about 9-8-8 in general ...

- Once 9-8-8 is launched, what types of promotional materials, information resources or advertising about 9-8-8 would you be most likely to pay attention to?
- What kind of information would help someone know when to call or text 9-8-8?
- Would you be motivated to share information about 9-8-8 with family, friends or someone else you know, such as a colleague?

I’m now going to show you a couple of potential names for this service. A reminder that 9-8-8 will be a talk and text-based service.

**SHOW ON SCREEN:**

- 9-8-8: Suicide and Crisis Support
- 9-8-8: Suicide and Crisis Hotline
- 9-8-8: Call or text for suicide and crisis support
- With a show of hands, which one of these do you think is the most suitable:
  - How many think ‘9-8-8: Suicide and Crisis Support’ works best? What makes you say that?
  - How many think ‘9-8-8: Suicide and Crisis Hotline’ works best? What makes you say that?
  - How many think ‘9-8-8’ as a name on its own, followed by a call-to-action message such as “call or text for suicide and crisis support” works best? What makes you say that?



**CONCLUSION (5-10 minutes)** All Locations

- Before we close, is there anything else you would like to say to the federal government? It can be an additional point related to anything we discussed today, or it could be something you think is important but wasn't discussed.
- Major Centres Quebec, Indigenous Northwest Territories Moderator to remind participants that we will send a follow-up email with a list of mental health resources.



THE  
**STRATEGIC  
COUNSEL**

# French Moderator's Guide

To be added once translated.