



Government
of Canada

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Continuous Qualitative Data Collection of Canadians' Views – March 2023

Executive Summary

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Ce rapport est aussi disponible en français.

The word "Canada" in a serif font, with a small red maple leaf icon above the letter "a".

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 March 7th, 2023, and March 30th, 2023, in multiple locations across the country including Ontario, Quebec, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba, Atlantic Canada, and British Columbia. 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. All groups took part in conversations related to this topic, with some groups discussing at length concerning issues related to Islamophobia, immigration, and middle-class Canadians. The groups engaging in these targeted discussions were respectively comprised of Muslims living in Quebec, Canadian citizens who had immigrated to Canada within the last 10 years, and middle-class individuals experiencing financial pressures. All groups also engaged in discussions related to recent news and announcements concerning the federal government. The group comprised of members of the Turkish and Syrian diaspora engaged in an extended discussion related to the Government of Canada's response to the devastating earthquakes which had recently impacted Türkiye and Syria.

The research also explored the Government of Canada's 2023 federal Budget, with six groups discussing their pre-budget expectations, and three others sharing their impressions following the tabling of the Budget on March 28th, 2023. Several groups also evaluated creative concepts for the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) related to Bill C-11, also known as the *Online Streaming Act*. Additional topics discussed by groups included behaviours related to climate change, Prairies Economic Development Canada (PrairiesCan), and the initiative by Statistics Canada to begin working with disaggregated data.

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 women aged 55 and over, Muslims living in Quebec, the Turkish and Syrian diaspora, young adults aged 18-24, middle-class individuals experiencing financial pressures, and Canadian citizens born outside of Canada who had immigrated to Canada in the last 10 years.

Detailed Approach

- Twelve focus groups across various regions in Canada.
- Six groups were conducted with the general population in Eastern Ontario, Saskatchewan and Manitoba, Quebec City, Alberta, Atlantic Canada, and British Columbia.
- The other six groups were conducted with key subgroups including:
 - Women aged 55 and over;
 - Muslims living in Quebec;
 - The Turkish and Syrian diaspora;

- Young adults aged 18-24;
- Middle-class Canadians experiencing financial pressures; and
- Canadian Citizens born outside of Canada who had immigrated to Canada in the last 10 years;
- The three groups in Quebec 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, 88 participants attended, in total. Details on attendance numbers by group can be found below.
- Each participant received an honorarium. The incentive ranged from \$125 per participant, depending on the location and the composition of the group.

Group Locations and Composition

LOCATION	GROUP	LANGUAGE	DATE	TIME (EST)	GROUP COMPOSITION	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS
Eastern Ontario	1	English	March 7	6:00-8:00 pm	General Population	8
Major Centres (SK, MB)	2	English	March 8	7:00-9:00 pm	General Population	8
Quebec City	3	French	March 9	6:00-8:00 pm	General Population	7
Ontario	4	English	March 14	6:00-8:00 pm	Women aged 55+	8
Rural Alberta	5	English	March 15	8:00-10:00 pm	General Population	7
Major Centres Quebec	6	French	March 16	6:00-8:00 pm	Quebec Muslims	6
Greater Toronto Area (GTA) & Greater Montreal Area (GMA)	7	English	March 21	6:00-8:00 pm	Turkish and Syrian Diaspora	6
Major Centres (SK, MB, AB)	8	English	March 22	8:00-10:00 pm	Young Adults, aged 18-24	8
Quebec	9	French	March 23	6:00-8:00 pm	Experiencing financial pressures, Middle-Class	8
GTA	10	English	March 28	6:00-8:00 pm	Canadian Citizens born outside of Canada but immigrated in the last 10 years	7
Mid-Size and Major Centres Atlantic Canada	11	English	March 29	5:00-7:00 pm	General Population	8

Mid-Size and Major Centres British Columbia	12	English	March 30	9:00-11:00 pm	General Population	7
Total number of participants						88

Key Findings

Government of Canada in the News (All Locations)

All groups were asked to share what they had seen, read, or heard about the Government of Canada in recent days. A wide range of federal announcements and initiatives were recalled, including investigations into alleged interference by China in recent federal elections, the recent decision by the Bank of Canada to maintain interest rates at 4.5%, the tabling of the 2023 federal Budget, the announcement of an increase to the federal minimum wage to \$16.65 per hour as of April 1st, 2023, and recent health care agreements reached between the federal and provincial/territorial governments related to increases to Canada Health Transfer (CHT) payments.

Participants also mentioned a number of recent actions from the Government of Canada on the global stage, including the official visit by the President of the United States to Ottawa, ongoing military and financial support for Ukraine, and an announcement by Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) that it would be allowing Turkish and Syrian nationals displaced by the earthquakes that had struck their countries to extend their status free of charge and continue studying, working, and/or visiting family in Canada.

Response to Earthquakes in Türkiye and Syria (GTA and GMA Turkish and Syrian Diaspora)

Participants in the group comprised of members of the Turkish and Syrian diaspora took part in a conversation related to the massive earthquakes which struck Türkiye and Syria on February 6th, 2023, as well as the Government of Canada’s response in the aftermath of this disaster.

Asked to recall what they had seen, read, or heard about this situation, many recalled the announcement by the federal government of a \$10 million donation towards assisting Türkiye and Syria with the relief efforts. Several were of the impression that the Government of Canada had also pledged to match an additional \$10 million in donations raised by the Humanitarian Coalition for earthquake relief. Unprompted, a large number expressed disappointment that the Government of Canada had not provided a more immediate, on the ground response in the hours after the earthquake. It was widely felt that the rescue effort in the immediate aftermath of the disaster could have been greatly assisted had Canadian medical workers, engineers, and Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) personnel been deployed.

Provided information about financial and other supports provided by the Government of Canada to assist those impacted by this disaster, several reiterated their disappointment that the Government of Canada had not provided more direct support in the days following the earthquake. While

appreciative of the financial supports offered, a number hoped that the federal government would provide greater clarity as to how these financial supports would be allocated once arriving in Türkiye and Syria.

Presented with details related to other initiatives the Government of Canada had taken, this time pertaining to immigration and accommodating those impacted by the earthquake, participants were largely positive in their reactions. Several expressed feeling proud that the Government of Canada was taking steps to accommodate a large number of Turkish and Syrian citizens displaced by the earthquakes by way of extending their stay in Canada and prioritizing their visa applications. It was believed that this would be immensely beneficial towards assisting these individuals as well as likely benefiting Canada as a whole through the contributions these new arrivals would make to the Canadian economy.

Asked whether they felt the Government of Canada was headed in the right direction when it came to assisting those impacted by the earthquake, roughly an equal number felt that the federal government was on the wrong track as those who were more uncertain. No participants thought it was headed in the right direction. Reiterating the lack of physical presence by Canadian experts and personnel following the earthquake, several who felt the Government of Canada was on the wrong track recommended the establishment of an emergency task force that could readily be deployed anywhere in the world following a major natural disaster.

Discussing the federal government's broader engagement with the Turkish and Syrian communities living in Canada, most believed it to be on the right track. The view was expressed that there was a strong focus on diversity and multiculturalism throughout Canada and that this had made it easier for Turkish and Syrian individuals to celebrate their own cultures. Asked what more could be done by the federal government on this front, it was suggested that additional efforts could be taken to connect members of the Turkish and Syrian diaspora with other individuals from these backgrounds. It was felt that an increased focus on establishing distinct Turkish and Syrian neighborhoods (similar to the Chinatowns in many Canadian cities) would make it easier for these individuals to find one another.

Government of Canada Priorities and Performance (All Locations)

All groups took part in discussions related to numerous 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 Government of Canada had performed well as of late, participants provided a range of responses. These included climate change and the environment, affordability measures to assist Canadians with the rising cost of living, the high quality of Canadian health care, the response to the COVID-19 pandemic, immigration, protecting the 2SLGBTQI+ community, reconciliation with Indigenous peoples, and international assistance to countries such as Ukraine. Also asked to identify areas in which they felt that the Government of Canada had room for improvement, participants mentioned issues related to inflation and the rising cost of living, housing affordability, health care accessibility and difficulties receiving primary care, and the high costs of post-secondary education.

Discussing which issues the Government of Canada most needed to prioritize going forward, several reiterated concerns related to inflation and the rising cost of living. It was thought that more needed to be done to assist those currently struggling financially, including groups such as seniors and those living with disabilities who primarily relied upon fixed income benefits and supports. A large number also mentioned health care as an issue requiring increased prioritization, including addressing issues such as the perceived widespread shortage of doctors and nurses as well as the need for further investments into mental health treatment. Housing affordability was also cited as an important issue by many, with a number expressing the need to devote increased resources towards increasing the housing supply as well as cracking down on those seeking to use Canadian residential properties primarily as financial investments.

Islamophobia (Major Centres Quebec Muslims)

Participants in the group comprised of Muslims residing in Quebec took part in a conversation related to Islamophobia and recent actions by the Government of Canada to address this issue. Asked to identify what they felt to be the top issues impacting Muslims in Canada, several cited what they perceived as a lack of equity for their religion compared to others practiced throughout the country. Several described what they viewed as limited accommodation for rituals such as daily prayer as well as discrimination towards visual symbols associated with their religion, including the wearing of headscarves. Participants were specifically concerned about the rights of Muslim women, with a number specifically mentioning Quebec's recently enacted legislation Bill 21 – *An Act respecting the laicity of the State*, which prohibits Quebec citizens who work in public service from wearing religious symbols while fulfilling their civic duties.

Discussing whether the Government of Canada was presently headed in the right direction in its actions to combat Islamophobia, participants were mixed in their views. A number who felt more positively cited what they viewed as significant progress in recent decades regarding the representation of Muslims in all levels of government as well as in key roles in the private sector. The view also expressed that Canadians today had a greater tolerance and understanding of the Islamic religion today compared to previous generations. A few felt differently, believing that more needed to be done by the Government of Canada to protect the rights of Muslim Canadians as well as work to integrate them more thoroughly within Canadian society.

Several reported having heard about the recent appointment by the Government of Canada of a Special Representative on Combatting Islamophobia. Participants were largely positive in their reactions to this announcement, believing that this would help towards the development of strategies to better educate Canadians regarding their religion and the challenges that they face.

Middle Class Canadians (Quebec Middle Class Experiencing Financial Pressures)

Participants in the group comprised of middle-income Quebecers currently experiencing financial pressures briefly took part in a conversation related to issues specific to middle-class Canadians. Asked to identify what they felt to be the most pressing issues currently facing the middle class, almost all mentioned issues related to the perceived high cost of living at present. Several were of the impression that prices for a wide range of goods and services had increased over the past year,

including substantial increases to the costs of essentials such as groceries and gasoline. A number also mentioned what they viewed as a pervasive lack of affordable housing, believing it was becoming increasingly difficult for low and middle-income Canadians to afford to rent or purchase a home.

No participants felt that the Government of Canada currently devoted enough attention to the middle class. Asked what more could be done to help middle-income households, several expressed the need for tax relief. It was thought that action should be taken by the federal government to re-examine existing tax brackets and adjust them to account for the rapid rise in inflation over the past year. A number also believed that efforts should be taken to increase the rate of taxation on large corporations, especially for major energy companies and grocers who were believed to have reported record profits in recent years.

Immigration (GTA Immigrated to Canada Within the Past 10 Years)

Participants in one group, comprised of recent immigrants to Canada, discussed the issue of immigration. Asked to identify the most pressing issues facing immigrants in Canada, participants provided a range of responses. These included challenges related to employment (including difficulties related to the foreign credential recognition process), learning Canada's official languages, and the limited availability of benefits for new immigrants on work or study visas.

Focusing specifically on the issue of foreign credential recognition, all participants felt that it was important for the Government of Canada to prioritize streamlining this process. While understanding that it was important for specialized jobs to have high qualification standards, several believed that workers educated outside of Canada often went through rigorous training and certification processes in their home countries. A number reiterated the opinion that addressing this issue was an especially important priority given perceived labour shortages throughout the country in key sectors such as health care and education.

Discussing whether they felt that the Government of Canada paid enough attention to the issues affecting immigrants, participants were mixed in their views. A number spoke positively of what they viewed as the federal government's actions to prioritize immigration and increase the number of new arrivals to Canada, as well as its efforts to assist those fleeing conflicts in countries such as Ukraine, Afghanistan, and Syria. Several, however, felt that there were not enough resources available for new immigrants in Canada and that this often made it very difficult for these individuals to gain employment and integrate into Canadian society. It was expressed that if the federal government continued to prioritize a high level of immigration that additional investments would need to be made into areas such as affordable housing, health care, and education to ensure that Canadian communities would be able to accommodate this influx of new arrivals.

Budget 2023 (Eastern Ontario, Major Centres Saskatchewan and Manitoba, Quebec City, Ontario Women 55+, Rural Alberta, Major Centres Quebec Muslims, GTA Immigrated to Canada Within the Past 10 Years, Mid-Size and Major Centres Atlantic Canada, Mid-Size and Major Centres British Columbia)

Nine groups engaged in discussions related to the 2023 federal Budget, which was tabled on March 28th, 2023. Participants in the six groups conducted prior to the Budget's unveiling shared their perspectives regarding the priorities that they felt that the Government of Canada should focus on. Those in the three groups held following the Budget's tabling provided their initial reactions to the key focus areas and initiatives that had been announced.

Pre-Budget Expectations (Eastern Ontario, Major Centres Saskatchewan and Manitoba, Quebec City, Ontario Women 55+, Rural Alberta, Major Centres Quebec Muslims)

Engaging in an exercise, participants were asked to identify what priorities and issues they hoped would be addressed in the upcoming Budget. Across all groups responses primarily focused on key areas such as health care, inflation and the cost of living, and housing affordability. Other priorities mentioned by participants included the need to provide further supports to seniors and others living on fixed incomes, increasing the affordability of post-secondary tuition education, and continuing to take actions related to combatting climate change.

Discussing whether the federal government should increase its support towards growing Canadian industries such as electric vehicle (EV) manufacturing and clean energy production, a large number felt that this was an important step to take. Asked whether investments into these areas would benefit the Canadian economy, many expected that they would. Related to this, it was widely believed that the clean energy sector would provide a large number of high paying, skilled jobs for Canadians in the years to come. It was also felt that by making these investments Canada could position itself as a global leader in the clean energy sector and acquire a significant economic advantage as a result. A number expected that taking these actions would lead to environmental benefits, including improvements to the air quality of their respective communities. A few, however, expressed concerns related to the environmental costs of mining the raw materials used in EV batteries as well as questioned whether it was possible to safely dispose of or recycle these batteries.

Budget Impressions (GTA Immigrated to Canada Within the Past 10 Years, Mid-Size and Major Centres Atlantic Canada, Mid-Size and Major Centres British Columbia)

The three groups conducted following the tabling of the Budget were asked to share their initial impressions regarding the actions and initiatives that had been announced. Roughly an equal number of participants reported having been aware of the Budget as those who were not. While few were aware of the theme or focus of the Budget, a small number recalled hearing about initiatives such as the expansion of the Canada Dental Benefit (CDB), affordability measures such as a one-time Grocery Rebate, and actions related to green energy and climate change.

Participants in the groups based in Atlantic Canada and British Columbia (B.C.) were informed that the main priorities of Budget 2023 were to help make life more affordable for Canadians, to improve

Canada's publicly funded health care systems, and to grow the clean economy. Discussing whether they felt the Government of Canada was headed in the right direction on these priorities, a roughly equal number believed this to be the case as those who were more uncertain or mixed in their impressions. No participants explicitly felt that the federal government was headed in the wrong direction.

These two groups were next shown a list of actions announced as part of the Budget that were designed to help make life more affordable for Canadians and asked to identify which they felt would be the most impactful. Among these initiatives, the decision to increase the federal portion of post-secondary student grants by 40% received the highest level of support among participants, with many expecting that this would have a substantial impact towards improving the economic situation of current and future post-secondary students in Canada. Several also focused on initiatives such as cracking down on junk fees and limiting predatory lending practices by high interest lenders, believing these would be highly helpful actions for the Government of Canada to take. The view was expressed that high-interest lenders often took advantage of those in desperate financial circumstances and that these businesses posed an increasing threat to vulnerable Canadians amidst the rising cost of living. Actions to lower credit card transaction fees for small businesses and increase accessibility to automatic income tax filing also received a moderate level of support among participants. Discussing whether there were any actions that the federal government should not be taking, several felt that the one-time Grocery Rebate would not be an effective measure towards providing a long-term solution to the affordability issues Canadians were facing.

Participants residing in Atlantic Canada were presented with a second list of initiatives, this time centering on making improvements to Canada's publicly funded health care system. Almost all participants selected the initiative by the federal government to move forward with new funding agreements with the provinces and territories to address shortages of doctors and nurses and wait times for emergency services and diagnostic tests. It was felt that this action would have a positive impact on health care provision throughout the country and would greatly increase health care accessibility for Canadians. Several also spoke positively of the action to modernize the health care system through better data collection, with a number discussing previous difficulties they had encountered in transferring their health data from province to province. The action to safeguard access to abortion and other sexual and reproductive services was also seen as an important step, with some commenting that this would have a positive impact on protecting the rights of all women in Canada.

Those in the group based in B.C. were presented with information concerning a pair of initiatives related to helping to grow the clean economy. These included the creation of a new tax credit to support the manufacturing of clean technologies as well as a tax credit to encourage investments that assist in building out Canada's clean electricity grid across the country. Focusing on the new tax credit to support the manufacturing of clean technologies, many felt this would have a significant impact on the economy and job creation. The expectation was expressed that the increasing use of clean energy was likely to be a global trend in the decades to come and that it made sense for the Government of Canada to be supporting this sector. Several believed that growth in this area could lead to the creation of many high paying jobs for skilled Canadians.

Discussing the new tax credit targeted towards building up the clean electricity grid, participants were largely uncertain as to whether this would have an impact on the affordability of electricity for Canadians. Several expected that the success of this initiative would be largely dependent on whether the energy corporations benefitting from this tax credit utilized these savings effectively. A number thought that this tax credit would likely have a positive long-term impact on the environment and believed that a transition away from non-renewable energy sources would likely lead to cleaner air and the overall better health of Canadians.

Having received this additional information, those residing in B.C. and Atlantic Canada were prompted to share their overall opinions of the Budget. Most were of the impression that the Budget had primarily been designed with a focus on large corporations and lower-income Canadians, and many expressed that they would have liked to see more initiatives introduced that would directly benefit the middle class. The view was reiterated by several that middle income Canadians were also struggling financially and required a far greater level of support than they were currently receiving.

Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission Branding (Eastern Ontario, Quebec City, Major Centres Prairies Young Adults, Quebec Middle Class Experiencing Financial Pressures)

Participants in four groups took part in a discussion related to the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) and potential visual concepts and slogans related to educating Canadians about Bill C-11 -*The Online Streaming Act*. Only a small number were aware of CRTC and its mandate. Of those who were aware, most were of the impression that it was a regulatory body responsible for overseeing the content broadcast to Canadians on television, radio, and the Internet.

Presented with a visual concept currently under development by the CRTC and informed that this imagery would primarily be displayed on physical brochures and signage, on websites, and on social media platforms such as Twitter and LinkedIn, participants were asked to share their initial impressions. Many expressed feeling that the imagery was quite generic, with a few commenting that the images selected felt like stock photos. While most did not personally relate to the concept, a few felt a connection to the images depicting families and different generations of Canadians interacting with one another, commenting that this had prompted them to think of their own loved ones. Focusing specifically on the colours utilized, several spoke positively of the vibrancy of the colours and their contrast with the black and white photos. A number, however, felt differently and commented that the colours were somewhat bland and/or did not contrast well with the accompanying images and text. Asked whether they felt that the colours were modern, participants were mixed in their views with a roughly equal number believing that they were relative to those who thought that they evoked a more nostalgic, retro feeling.

Participants were next shown a list of potential wordings that could be used for the concept's text and asked to share their thoughts on each. Among these concepts, *Your stories, your way* received the most positive reaction among participants. It was generally felt that the wording of this concept was quite clear and communicated to the viewer that this initiative would be focused on producing

Canadian stories made by Canadians. A number expressed that this was the most inclusive of the options in that its wording seemed to encompass the diverse demographic groups and communities within Canada.

Asked whether they felt that the concept effectively communicated the CRTC's goals, a larger number thought that it did not compared to those who did. Several felt that the concept was too vague and that there was not enough connection between the images and any of the potential accompanying texts. It was thought that the overall concept could be cleaner by featuring only one or two images rather than what they viewed as a cloud-type presentation. Among those who felt differently, it was said that the concept did a strong job in communicating the diversity and multiculturalism of Canada through the images selected as well as its messaging that Canadian media was for everyone. Asked whether this concept effectively represented the CRTC, several thought that more needed to be done to clearly demonstrate the connection between the campaign and the organization.

Climate Change Behaviours (Major Centres Saskatchewan and Manitoba, Rural Alberta, Major Centres Prairies Young Adults, Quebec Middle Class Experiencing Financial Pressures)

Four groups engaged in conversations related to climate change as well as the actions individuals can take to be more environmentally sustainable in their daily lives. Asked to identify actions or behaviours that individuals could engage in to help mitigate the impacts of climate change, participants provided a range of responses. These included personal behaviours such as recycling and composting, greater use of public transportation, engaging in home retrofitting projects, and consuming more products that are manufactured in Canada.

Asked what behaviours related to climate change they felt were easiest to engage in, many again mentioned recycling. Other actions or habits shared by participants included using reusable shopping bags and personal travel mugs, buying used products, using public transportation, and taking steps to consume less electricity and water at home. Discussing actions that were more difficult to take, many cited the high upfront costs of home retrofitting projects or the purchase of a zero-emission vehicle (ZEV). Several also described what they viewed as a lack of public transportation options in their communities.

While most felt that the environment was an issue that the majority of Canadians cared about, several were of the impression that a large number of Canadians did not currently engage in many actions towards fighting climate change. It was thought that given the increased financial challenges that a growing number of households were believed to be facing amidst the current high rate of inflation, that many Canadians did not have the time or resources available to be more sustainable in their daily lives. Questioned whether they felt they cared about climate change more, less, or about the same as the rest of Canadians, a larger number in the groups based in major Prairie centres as well as in Quebec felt they cared more about this issue than the average Canadian. All residing in rural Alberta expected that they cared about the same as the rest of Canadians.

Discussing who they felt had the most responsibility to act towards combatting climate change, most believed that industry, governments at the federal and provincial/territorial level, and individuals all

had a role to play on this front. Given their impression that private corporations were often among the largest emitters, many felt that industry bore the most responsibility towards mitigating the impact for stopping climate change. Few, however, expected that corporations such as those in the oil and gas sector would be willing to curb emissions on their own and, as such, it was widely felt that the Government of Canada would need to do more to regulate major emitters going forward.

Prairies Economic Development Canada (Major Centres Saskatchewan and Manitoba, Rural Alberta, Major Centres Prairies Young Adults)

Participants in three groups engaged in a brief discussion related to Prairies Economic Development Canada (PrairiesCan). Asked where they would expect to find resources for business funding and support, many mentioned websites operated by the federal and provincial/territorial governments. A few also thought it likely that they would be able to learn about these supports via word of mouth from other business owners or through financial institutions (such as banks), which they believed also provided grants and loans for Canadian businesses.

Across all groups, no participants were aware of PrairiesCan. Asked what they expected the purpose of this organization was, a number speculated that it was likely involved in providing funding and support for businesses based in the Prairies, as well as those operating in the agricultural sector. A small number were of the view that more in general needed to be done by the federal government to promote organizations such as this, believing that many Canadian business owners were currently unaware of the supports available to them.

Disaggregated Data (Ontario Women 55+, Major Centres Quebec Muslims, GTA Immigrated to Canada Within the Past 10 Years)

Participants in three groups took part in conversations related to a recent initiative by Statistics Canada to begin using disaggregated data. Very few were familiar with the concept of disaggregated data as well as how it might be utilized by the Government of Canada. Provided further information, participants were asked whether they felt that taking this approach would yield any benefits for Canadians. Several expected that by separating data into specific subcategories, the federal government would be able to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the issues facing Canadians and how these challenges might vary across different regions and demographics. Almost all believed that this represented a step in the right direction on the part of the federal government and felt that it would have a positive impact on the lives of Canadians, and especially those belonging to more vulnerable or marginalized demographics.

Each group engaged in an exercise where they were presented with a list of different phrases that could potentially be used to explain the concept and purpose of disaggregating data to Canadians and asked to select which they felt would be most effective. Across all groups *Diversity Data for an Equitable Canada* received the highest level of support among participants. Several felt that this option most accurately described the intent of this initiative, especially its focus on better understanding Canada's diverse population and informing more equitable policymaking decisions for

all Canadians. It was expressed that by focusing on the concept of increasing equity, this phrase effectively conveyed the primary aim of disaggregating data. A number also spoke positively of *Diversity Data for Better Decision-making*. It was thought that this concept successfully highlighted the initiative's focus on diversity as well as its aim of improving the decision-making process at the federal level.

MORE INFORMATION

The Strategic Counsel

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