



Factum

Healthcare, Economy, Taxes and Energy Costs Top List of Issues Driving Ontario’s Vote Choice

Key Election Issues Give Glimpse into Party Strategy

Toronto, Ontario, Feb 23, 2018 — Healthcare, the economy and jobs, lower taxes and lower energy costs are by far the most important issues driving the vote in Ontario, according to a new Ipsos poll conducted on behalf of Global News. All other issues resonate only with relatively smaller proportions of Ontarians.

Those polled were presented with a list of 25 campaign issues and were asked to identify the three that are most important in determining how they will vote on election day. Healthcare (40%) – a perennial favourite – is in first position, and dominates among those aged 55+ (56%) and NDP voters (50%). In second position is the economy and jobs (35%), which resonates more with those living in the GTA (41%). In third position is lower taxes (34%), particularly popular among those aged 35-54 (40%) and Conservative voters (41%). Rounding out the top four is lower energy costs (29%), which resonates more among those 35-54 (34%) and 55+ (35%) and those outside of the GTA.

The chart below shows the percentage of Ontarians who rank each issue among their top-three issues. Respondents were then probed on those top-three issues and asked which party and leader is best to deal with each issue. On the second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh-most important issues of the campaign, the Tories have differentiated themselves from their rivals and are chosen as the party who is best to deal with each issue, placing significantly ahead of the other parties.

The Liberals have differentiated themselves on the legalization of marijuana, education funding and issues important to students – none of which crack the top-ten issues of the campaign, according to Ontarians. The NDP has differentiated itself on the issue of social assistance programs, climate change and corruption, the eighth, ninth and tenth-most important issues, respectively. While Andrea Horwath may personally be popular, her policy advantage does not lie with the most-important issues of the campaign. In other words, the Tories have differentiated themselves and lead on almost every issue that matters most to the greatest number of Ontarians.

Issue	% of Ontarians who rank among top-three issues	Which Party is best to deal with issue?*				
		PCs	Libs	NDP	Other	None – they’re all the same
Healthcare	40%	23%	20%	25%	3%	29%
Economy and jobs	35%	40%	13%	13%	2%	32%
Lower taxes	34%	38%	9%	18%	1%	33%
Lower energy costs	29%	39%	6%	23%	2%	30%
Integrity in government and its leaders	15%	27%	13%	12%	5%	43%
Debt repayment and balanced budget	15%	50%	11%	11%	1%	27%
Crime and public safety	13%	32%	24%	15%	3%	26%
Social assistance programs	12%	12%	23%	34%	0%	30%
Preventing climate change	11%	14%	17%	26%	16%	26%

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Fighting corruption	10%	20%	3%	29%	15%	33%
Increasing the minimum wage in Ontario	10%	10%	28%	22%	5%	34%
The rules governing the growing, sale and consumption of marijuana in Ontario	9%	17%	42%	19%	3%	18%
Education funding	9%	14%	34%	17%	6%	29%
Maintenance of road infrastructure	8%	23%	21%	11%	0%	44%
Investment in public transportation	7%	21%	19%	24%	1%	36%
Small business issues	7%	29%	10%	21%	1%	40%
Aboriginal issues	6%	13%	21%	28%	12%	26%
issues important to small town and rural Ontario	6%	32%	1%	35%	1%	31%
Issues that impact people who commute to work	5%	22%	19%	13%	12%	33%
Issues important to Ontario's big cities**	4%	22%	16%	13%	7%	42%
Issues important to students**	4%	16%	32%	10%	3%	39%
Issues important to new immigrants	4%	30%	16%	37%	0%	17%
Issues important to farmers**	3%	5%	22%	27%	13%	33%
Improving tolerance for minority communities**	2%	29%	19%	25%	0%	27%
Other**	3%	13%	2%	15%	3%	67%

* Question asked only to those who named issue a top-three issue driving their vote choice

** Small base sizes for “who is best to deal with issue” follow-up question

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About the Study

These are some of the findings of an Ipsos poll conducted between February 15 and 19, 2018, on behalf of Global News. For this survey, a sample of 802 Ontarians aged 18+ from Ipsos' online panel was interviewed online, supplemented by river-based sampling. Weighting was then employed to balance demographics to ensure that the sample's composition reflects that of the adult population according to Census data and to provide results intended to approximate the sample universe. The precision of Ipsos online polls is measured using a credibility interval. In this case, the poll is accurate to within ± 4.0 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, had all Ontarian adults been polled. The credibility interval will be wider among subsets of the population. All sample surveys and polls may be subject to other sources of error, including, but not limited to coverage error, and measurement error.

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