



Factum

Premier Wynne's Budget Fails to Woo Ontario Voters as more Oppose (33%) than Support (25%) it, Four in Ten (42%) Less Likely to Vote Liberal as a Result

Most (80%) Agree Provincial Budget is Attempt to Buy their Vote

Two in Three (65%) Disagree it Does Good Job of Balancing Spending with Fiscal Responsibility

Toronto, ON, April 12, 2018 - The Ontario Liberal budget has failed to woo voters, despite being loaded with election-year goodies, according to a new Ipsos poll conducted exclusively for Global News. More oppose (33%) the budget than support it (25%), and an Ipsos poll released yesterday shows that Liberal vote support has dropped by a significant 5 points (to 27%) in the aftermath of the budget's delivery at Queen's Park. The Liberals are now statistically tied with the NDP (28%) and well behind the Progressive Conservatives (40%).

Specifically, while nearly half (41%) of Ontarians say they don't know enough about the budget to have an opinion about it either way, those who have an opinion skew towards opposing (33% -- 19% strongly/15% somewhat) it than supporting (25% -- 5% strongly/21% somewhat) it. If the budget was an attempt to attract NDP and PC voters to the Liberal ranks, it doesn't appear to have worked: just one in four (25%) NDP voters supports (2% strongly/23% somewhat) the budget, while only 13% of PC voters support (2% strongly/10% somewhat) it.

In fact, just one in ten (11%) Ontarians say that the budget makes them more likely to vote for the Liberals (including 9% of NDP voters and 4% of PC voters), compared to 42% of Ontarians who say it makes them less likely to do so. For half (48%) of voters, the budget has not impacted their likelihood of voting for the Liberals.

Reflecting on the budget, overall, a majority feels that it isn't fiscally prudent, does not do a good job at addressing the issues that matter most to them, and is simply an election ploy aimed at potential Liberal voters:

- Four in ten (43%) agree (9% strongly/34% somewhat) that **the provincial budget does a good job addressing the issues that matter most** to them. Six in ten (57%) disagree (24% strongly/33% somewhat) that it does.
- Nearly half (48%) agree (10% strongly/38% somewhat) that **the provincial budget does a good job focusing on those who need the most help from government**, while the other half (52%) disagrees (18% strongly/35% somewhat).
- One in three (35%) agrees (7% strongly/28% somewhat) that **the provincial budget does a good job at balancing investments in spending with fiscal responsibility**, while two in three (65%) disagree (27% strongly/38% somewhat).
- Eight in ten (80%) agree (43% strongly/36% somewhat) that **the provincial budget is nothing more than an attempt to buy their vote**, while two in ten (20%) disagree (4% strongly/16% somewhat). Even a majority (54%) of Liberal voters agree.

Address: 160 Bloor Street East, Suite 300
Toronto, ON M4W 1B9
Tel: +1 416 324-2900

Contact: **Darrell Bricker, PhD**
CEO, Ipsos Global Public Affairs
Email: Darrell.Bricker@ipsos.com
Tel: +1 416 324-2001



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Those polled were presented with some of the key provisions contained within the budget. Aside from the idea of running a deficit in the coming year (which is not supported by most), a majority supports most other measures. It’s therefore interesting to note that while some of the specific line items of the budget are popular, the overall budget still does not resonate with most voters, likely because of which party is the messenger.

Budget Provision	% support (strongly/somewhat)	% oppose (strongly/somewhat)
Running a deficit of \$6.7 billion for the coming fiscal year	31% (6%/25%)	69% (35%/34%)
A plan to balance the provincial budget by 2024-25	77% (29%/47%)	23% (11%/13%)
Drug and dental support, reimbursing up to 80% of eligible expenses for those without other coverage, at a cost of about \$800 million over its first two years.	74% (35%/39%)	26% (10%/16%)
Make prescription drugs free for people over age 65, at a cost of about \$1 billion over three years.	80% (41%/39%)	20% (8%/13%)
A plan to make preschool free for kids aged two-and-a-half and older, at a cost of about \$2.2 billion over three years.	52% (21%/31%)	48% (23%/25%)
Improvements to mental health services, adding \$2 billion in funding over the next 4 years.	84% (39%/45%)	16% (4%/12%)
Improvements to hospitals, earmarking \$19 billion over the next decade for hospital construction and renovation.	89% (45%/43%)	11% (2%/9%)

When it comes to the issues that matter the most to Ontarians and determining who they will vote for, the top issues continue to be healthcare, the economy/jobs, taxes, and energy prices, consistent with the findings of Ipsos’ poll conducted in February. Healthcare dominates, particularly among the 55+ cohort (61%), and its overall importance has increased significantly since our February poll (50%; +10 pts), with half of Ontarians placing it among their top-three issues. The economy and jobs continue to hold second position (39%; +4 pts), while lowering taxes ranks third (31%; -3 pts) and remains especially popular among Conservative voters (39%) and the 35-54 cohort (38%). Rounding out the top four is energy prices (26%; -3 pts), which resonates most with the 35-54 (28%) and the 55+ (38%) demographics. All other issues resonate only with relatively smaller proportions of Ontarians.

The chart below shows the percentage of Ontarians who rank each issue among their top-three issues, with tracking comparing back to our February poll. Respondents were then probed on those top-three issues and asked which party is best able to deal with each issue. The Tories continue to differentiate themselves on the second, third, fourth and fifth most-important issues, placing significantly ahead of their rivals.

The NDP have differentiated themselves on climate change, small town issues, Aboriginal issues, and tolerance for minorities. The Liberals are differentiating themselves on marijuana, minimum wage, public transportation, students, commuters, and new immigrants – none of which are particularly important issues of this campaign, according to Ontarians.

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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	50% (+10)	26% (+3)	22% (+2)	24% (-1)	2% (-1)	26% (-3)
Economy and jobs	39% (+4)	37% (-3)	17% (+4)	17% (+4)	2% (-)	27% (-5)
Lower taxes	31% (-3)	43% (+5)	11% (+2)	17% (-1)	2% (+1)	27% (-6)
Lower energy costs	26% (-3)	38% (-1)	9% (+3)	25% (+2)	2% (-)	25% (-5)
Debt repayment and balanced budget	19% (+4)	62% (+12)	3% (-8)	10% (-1)	2% (+1)	23% (-4)
Preventing climate change	13% (+2)	10% (-4)	24% (+7)	32% (+6)	9% (-7)	25% (-1)
Integrity in government and its leaders	12% (-3)	37% (+10)	8% (-5)	19% (+7)	3% (-2)	33% (-10)
Education funding	12% (+3)	14% (-)	24% (-10)	28% (+11)	3% (-3)	30% (+1)
Crime and public safety	11% (-2)	42% (+10)	11% (-13)	15% (-)	2% (-1)	29% (+3)
Social assistance programs	10% (-2)	13% (+1)	37% (+14)	37% (+3)	0% (-)	13% (-17)
Fighting corruption	10% (-)	29% (+9)	8% (+5)	23% (-6)	2% (-13)	39% (+6)
Increasing the minimum wage in Ontario	9% (-1)	10% (-)	43% (+15)	30% (+8)	2% (-3)	15% (-19)
Maintenance of road infrastructure	8% (-)	37% (+14)	17% (-4)	16% (+5)	3% (+3)	27% (-17)
Investment in public transportation	7% (-)	25% (+4)	35% (+16)	17% (-7)	2% (+1)	22% (-14)
issues important to small town and rural Ontario	7% (+1)	24% (-8)	11% (+10)	33% (-2)	0% (-1)	32% (+1)
The rules governing the growing, sale and consumption of marijuana in Ontario	5% (-4)	16% (-1)	42% (-)	17% (-2)	5% (+2)	21% (+3)
Issues important to students**	4% (-)	13% (-3)	33% (+1)	17% (+7)	4% (-1)	32% (-7)
Issues important to farmers**	4% (+1)	31% (+26)	11% (-11)	20% (-7)	11% (-2)	26% (-7)
Small business issues**	4% (-3)	52% (+23)	19% (+9)	19% (-2)	0% (-1)	10% (-30)
Aboriginal issues**	4% (-2)	20% (+7)	18% (-3)	39% (+11)	17% (+5)	6% (-20)
Issues that impact people who commute to work**	3% (-2)	23% (+1)	36% (+17)	19% (+6)	3% (-9)	18% (-15)
Issues important to Ontario's big cities**	3% (-1)	31% (+9)	22% (+6)	26% (+13)	0% (-7)	22% (-20)
Issues important to new immigrants**	3% (-1)	22% (-8)	33% (+17)	20% (-17)	7% (+7)	18% (+1)
Improving tolerance for minority communities**	3% (+1)	12% (-17)	40% (+21)	48% (+23)	0% (-)	0% (-27)
Other**	3% (-)	13% (-)	14% (+12)	14% (-1)	4% (+1)	56% (-11)

* 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

About the Study

These are some of the findings of an Ipsos poll conducted between April 6th and 9th, 2018, on behalf of Global News. For this survey, a sample of 800 Ontarians aged 18+ from Ipsos' online panel was interviewed online, supplemented by river-based sampling. Weighting

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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.

For more information on this news release, please contact:

Darrell Bricker, CEO
Ipsos Global Public Affairs
+1 416 324 2001
Darrell.Bricker@ipsos.com

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www.ipsos.com

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