



Factum

Six in Ten (61%) Ontarians Say Hydro Prices Will Impact Their Vote

Many (35%) Ontarians Lack Confidence in Any Party's Ability to Tackle Energy Prices; Tories (29%) Ahead of the NDP (20%) and Liberals (13%) on the Issue

Toronto, ON, May 29, 2018 — According to a new Ipsos poll conducted exclusively for Global News, six in ten (61%) Ontarians agree (25% strongly/36% somewhat) that the current price of hydro in Ontario is impacting their vote. Past Ipsos polls have found lowering energy costs to be a prominent ballot-box issue in the upcoming provincial election, counting among Ontarians' top-five most important election issues.

Conservative (68%) and NDP voters (66%) are most likely to indicate that current hydro prices in Ontario are impacting their vote (vs. 41% Liberal voters). Across the province, current hydro costs are most likely impacting the way Northern (74%) and Southwestern (67%) residents will vote, followed by GTA 905 (60%), East (56%), GTA 416 (55%) and Central (54%).

The topic of lowering energy costs has been widely debated by candidates, as each party has presented a different approach to lowering energy costs for Ontarians. When asked which party has the best plan to lower energy prices in the province, nearly four in ten (35%) believe none of the parties have the best plan to lower energy costs. Three in ten (29%) believe the Progressive Conservatives put forth the best plan, while 20% say the NDP, 13% say Liberals and 3% say some other party.

Highlighting why energy costs are such a prominent issue, fewer than half (47%) of Ontarians agree (14% strongly/34% somewhat) they can easily afford their hydro bill, leaving 53% who disagree (19% strongly/34% somewhat) with this statement. When it comes time to paying the bill, four in ten (38%; 14% strongly/25% somewhat) Ontarians confess to having trouble paying their hydro bill. Moreover, relatively few Ontarians are content with current hydro prices – only one in three (31%) agree (8% strongly/23% somewhat) that the amount they pay for hydro is fair.

Liberal voters are most likely to say they can easily afford their hydro bill (60% vs. 45% PC voters and 45% NDP voters), and that the amount they pay for hydro is fair (55% vs. 28% NDP voters and 21% PC voters). NDP voters admit to having the most trouble paying their hydro bill (44% vs. 39% PC voters and 31% Liberal voters).

Evaluating the Fair Hydro Plan

On July 1st, 2017 the Ontario Liberal Government's Fair Hydro Plan came into effect – a policy to tackle rising energy costs by reducing residential consumer electricity bills by an average of 25 per cent. Nearly a year after implementation, only 22% of Ontarians have noticed a decrease in their hydro bills. In fact, one quarter (24%) say their hydro bills are unchanged, while two in ten (19%) indicate that their hydro bills have risen as a result. Nearly four in ten (35%) haven't noticed an impact of the Fair Hydro Plan on their hydro bills.

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While a majority (57%) say they clearly understand all the charges on their hydro bill, 43% disagree that they do. Liberal voters are most likely to say they clearly understand the charges presented on their bill (68% vs. 56% PC voters and 52% NDP voters).

About the Study

These are some of the findings of an Ipsos poll conducted between May 18 to 21, 2018, on behalf of Global News. For this survey, a sample of 1000 Ontarians eligible to vote and 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 ± 3.5 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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