



# Factum

## Healthcare (54%), Economy (36%), Taxes (29%) and Energy Costs (28%) Remain Top Issues of Campaign

### Ontarians Have Lost Faith in Liberals' Ability to Tackle Most-Important Issues, Believe Tories or NDP Best to Lead

**Toronto, ON, May 10, 2018** — With the Ontario election now officially underway, candidates will continue their attempt to convince voters that their party is best to manage the key issues facing Ontario. But according to a new Ipsos poll conducted exclusively for Global News, Ontarians have already taken their own stance on what issues they believe to be the most important issues for this election, and who is best to lead on each issue.

Healthcare, the economy/jobs, lower taxes, and lower energy costs are the most-important issues to Ontarians, consistent with the findings of Ipsos' previous issues poll conducted in April. Healthcare (54%) continues to dominate as the most prevalent issue, and is gaining momentum since April (up 4 pts). The issue resonates most with Baby Boomers (66% vs. 53% Gen X'ers and 39% Millennials) and Liberal voters (61%). The economy and jobs (36%; -3pts) remains the second-most important issued, followed by lower taxes (29%; -2pts) in third place, and lower energy costs (28%; +2pts) in fourth.

The chart below shows the percentage of Ontarians who rank each issue among their top-three, with tracking back to our poll conducted in April. Once ranked, Ontarians were asked a follow-up question to select which party would be best suited to deal with each of their top-three ranked issues.

Ontarians have lost faith in the Liberals' ability to handle the hard-hitting issues, and the Liberals are unable to differentiate themselves in a positive way against their rivals. Instead, Ontarians are turning to the PCs or the NDP. While Ontarians believe the NDP will be best suited to deal with the top ranked issue of healthcare, the Tories hold strong on the second, third, fourth and fifth-most important issues.

Further, Ontarians no longer trust the incumbent Liberal government to deal with many of the issues that have defined their reigning years. Ontarians believe increasing minimum wage, preventing climate change, and investment in public transportation could be better handled by the NDPs, while the rules governing the growing, sale and consumption of marijuana in Ontario would be a best-suited issue for the PCs.

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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	54% (+4)	21% (-5)	24% (+2)	35% (+11)	2% (-)	17% (-9)
Economy and jobs	36% (-3)	40% (+3)	19% (+2)	21% (+4)	2% (-)	19% (-8)
Lower taxes	29% (-2)	53% (+10)	7% (-4)	18% (+1)	1% (-1)	21% (-6)
Lower energy costs	28% (+2)	44% (+6)	6% (-3)	25% (-)	3% (+1)	22% (-3)
Debt repayment and balanced budget	19% (-)	58% (-4)	9% (+6)	12% (+2)	4% (+2)	18% (-5)
Integrity in government and its leaders	15% (+3)	30% (-7)	6% (-2)	29% (+10)	1% (-2)	34% (+1)
Social assistance programs	13% (+3)	10% (-3)	26% (-11)	53% (+16)	1% (+1)	11% (-2)
Preventing climate change	13% (-)	10% (-)	24% (-)	28% (-4)	14% (+5)	25% (-)
Crime and public safety	12% (+1)	49% (+7)	17% (+6)	15% (-)	2% (-)	17% (-12)
Education funding	9% (-3)	16% (+2)	29% (+5)	38% (+10)	5% (+2)	13% (-17)
Maintenance of road infrastructure	8% (-)	29% (-8)	14% (-3)	25% (+9)	0% (-3)	33% (+6)
Investment in public transportation	8% (-)	27% (+2)	25% (-10)	31% (+14)	3% (+1)	15% (-7)
Fighting corruption	7% (-3)	50% (+21)	8% (-)	22% (-1)	1% (-1)	18% (-21)
Increasing the minimum wage in Ontario	7% (-2)	13% (+3)	37% (-6)	43% (+13)	1% (-1)	7% (-8)
The rules governing the growing, sale and consumption of marijuana in Ontario	7% (+2)	36% (+20)	21% (-21)	14% (-3)	6% (+1)	24% (+3)
Issues important to small town and rural Ontario	6% (-1)	38% (+14)	9% (-2)	30% (-3)	5% (+5)	19% (-13)
Issues important to students**	5% (+1)	28% (+15)	23% (-10)	32% (+15)	6% (+2)	11% (-21)
Aboriginal issues**	4% (-)	18% (-2)	26% (+8)	34% (-5)	9% (-8)	14% (+8)
Small business issues**	4% (-)	45% (-7)	8% (-11)	30% (+11)	2% (+2)	15% (+5)
Improving tolerance for minority communities**	4% (+1)	4% (-8)	30% (-10)	50% (+2)	11% (+11)	5% (+5)
Issues important to Ontario’s big cities**	4% (+1)	21% (-10)	14% (-8)	54% (+28)	0% (-)	11% (-11)
Issues important to new immigrants**	4% (+1)	25% (+3)	18% (-15)	36% (+16)	0% (-7)	21% (+3)
Issues that impact people who commute to work**	2% (-1)	33% (+10)	20% (-16)	25% (+6)	0% (-3)	22% (+4)
Other**	4% (+1)	8% (-5)	13% (-1)	8% (-6)	2% (-2)	69% (+13)

\* 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

Momentum on policy issues appears to be with the NDP on healthcare (+11), social assistance programs (+16), transportation (+14) and education (+10). The Tories have seen positive movement on lower taxes (+10), lower energy costs (+6), crime (+7), corruption, (+21) and the legalization of marijuana (+20). The Liberals have failed to improve significantly on any of the most-important issues.

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### Four in ten (39%) Ontarians Pessimistic about Future of Ontario’s Economy, Key Point of Differentiation between NDP and Liberal Voters

Reflecting on the future of Ontario’s economy, six in ten (61%) hold an optimistic view (11% very/50% somewhat). By contrast, nearly four in ten (39%) have a pessimistic outlook (9% very/30% somewhat). Liberal voters (83%) are significantly more likely to have an optimistic outlook on the future of Ontario’s economy compared to PC (58%) and NDP (55%) voters. As such, it’s likely that economic pessimism is driving some voters away from the Liberals, and that economic outlook is a key point of differentiation between Liberal and NDP voters.

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### About the Study

These are some of the findings of an Ipsos poll conducted between May 4 and 7, 2018, on behalf of Global News. For this survey, a sample of 1,197 Ontario eligible voters was interviewed **online** (789 Ontarian eligible voters aged 18+ from Ipsos' online panel were interviewed online, supplemented by river-based sampling) and by **telephone** (408 Ontarian eligible voters aged 18+ via live-operator random-digit dialing, dual-frame cellphone and landline). 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  $\pm 3.2$  percentage points, 19 times out of 20, had all eligible Ontario voters 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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