



# Factum

## Canadians' Support and Enthusiasm for Development in the Space Sector is Taking Off

### However, There Is Concern That Canada Could Be Left Behind

**Toronto, ON, September 20, 2018** — Support among Canadians to develop Canada's space sector is growing, with most being on board with the opportunity for future prosperity and gaining status as a leader in the industry. According to a new Ipsos poll conducted for members of the Don't Let Go Canada Coalition, 84% of Canadians are supportive of developing the country's space sector – a 20 point increase from a 2007 Praxicus study.

Canadians are ready to take advantage of the emerging space economy. A majority of Canadians say that it would be a good decision to increase the amount of investment that is devoted to space, including in the areas of satellite communications (81%), space science (73%), space robotics (71%), and international space missions (67%). Canadians *disagree* (74%) that their country is too small to participate in the space economy with nations like the USA, the United Kingdom, France, and Italy. Rather, nine in ten Canadians agree that maintaining leadership in space robotics, such as the Canadarm, is important for their country. In fact, 85% would like to see Canada maintain a role in a new Moon mission.

When participants in the focus groups were introduced to information about the new economy that is developing in space, they felt strongly that Canada needs to continue to participate in space and that this country can and should continue to nurture its space sector so as to be well-positioned to take advantage of these opportunities.

### Canadians Are Proud of The Canadarm and Their Astronauts

The poll also found Canadians' pride towards space is stronger than before. Eight in ten Canadians are proud of Canada's activities in space (79%, up 8pts from a 2005 Phoenix SPI survey) and think that Canadian success in advanced space technologies contributes to our knowledge economy, innovation, and economic competitiveness (78%, up 7pts from 2005). Three-quarters also believe that Canada's space activities inspire youth in science and engineering (76%, up 11pts from 2005).

More than nine in ten agree (95%, 67% strongly agree) that Canada's astronauts, including Julie Payette, Chris Hadfield, and Marc Garneau, are a source of national pride, in addition to helping inspire young Canadians to pursue careers in the fields of science and technology. Canadians are also in agreement that they feel proud (92%, 61% strongly agree) of the Canadarm. Consistent with past research conducted by the Canadian Space Agency, the Canadarm (47%) continues to be the most prominent image that comes to mind when Canadians think about Canada's space program or involvement in space.

### Investments in Space Not Top Priority

Perhaps unsurprisingly, support for Canada's investment in space comes behind priorities like education and healthcare. While Canadians acknowledge the importance of being a leader in the field, half of Canadians (53%) agree that Canada should spend less in

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the space sector because we have other greater priorities. Further, 71% agree that the Government of Canada supports a number of scientific programs that offer greater value and more tangible benefits to taxpayers than does pursuing space exploration.

However, Canadians are more likely to support increased investment in Canada's space technology knowing that the program could lead to benefits back home including, new medical discoveries such as robot assisted surgery and new research on Osteoporosis (87% more likely, including 58% much more likely). Support also increases (83% more likely, including 56% much more likely) when Canadians were made aware that monitoring the Earth from space can signal early warning of natural disasters in Canada and help protect our oceans, forests, wetlands and farmlands from climate change. Nearly four in five (78%) Canadians are more likely to support increased investments in Canada's space technology when they hear that if we stop investing in space technology we risk losing our best and brightest to other countries.

Brain drain caused by a lack of opportunities for Canadian engineers, scientists and researchers was a key concern to participants in the focus groups too. Many felt that they are insufficiently informed about space and indicated that it would be important to ensure that Canadians are made aware of Canadian leadership in this sector and about the ways in which space touches their lives.

### Canadians Believe We May Be Falling Behind

A sizeable proportion (42%) of Canadians believe that Canada is falling behind other countries when it comes to achievements in space, while only one-quarter (24%) believe the country is falling behind in the information technology/AI sector or robotics sector. Yet few Canadians are aware that Canada's space budgets are decreasing. A plurality of Canadians believe that about the same amount of money is being invested as was five years ago in international space mission (55%), space robotics (50%), and developing satellite communications (48%). Among those who think spending has changed, more feel that the amount invested in satellite communications is increasing (28% increasing vs. 10% decreasing), and as many believe that spending in space robotics is increasing as those who believe it is decreasing (18% respectively).

When participants in the focus groups learned about the decline in Canada's investment in space relative to other countries they were surprised and displeased.

The Don't Let Go Canada Coalition includes the following organizations: ABB Inc.; Aerospace Industries Association of Canada (AIAC); Canadensys; Canadian Aeronautics and Space Institute (CASI); the Canadian Astronomical Society (CASCA); the Canadian Space Society (CSS); Deltion Innovations Ltd.; Honeywell; IMP Aerospace; Magellan Aerospace; MDA, a Maxar Company; Menya Solutions; Mission Control Space Services; Montreal Student Space Associations; Neptec; NGC Aerospace; the Planetary Society; Royal Astronomical Society of Canada (RASC); SATCAN; SED Systems; Space Strategies Consulting Ltd; and Xiphos Systems Corporation.

### About the Study

*These findings are based on a telephone survey conducted among a representative sample of n=1,602 Canadians aged 18+ (50% cell phone/landline). The survey was conducted between June 7th and 21st, 2018 (fieldwork in Ontario started on the 8th) and was offered in both English and French. A sample of this size yields a margin of error of +/-2.45%, 19 times out of 20. The margin of error will be larger for data that is based on sub-groups of the total sample. The data has been weighted by age, gender, and region to ensure it represents the Canadian population based on the most recent Census data. The survey was followed by a series of 8 focus groups conducted with a cross-section of Canadians in Vancouver, Toronto, Montreal and Halifax. Sessions were conducted between June 27<sup>th</sup> –July 5<sup>th</sup>, 2018.*

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