



FACTUM

Majority of Canadians (61%) Disagree with Protestors Shutting Down Roads and Rail Corridors; Half (53%) Want Police to End It

But Growing Majority (75%, up 12 points since 2013) Say Federal Government Must Act Now to Raise Quality of Life for Indigenous Communities

Toronto, ON, Feb 19, 2020 — As the indigenous blockade of key transportation corridors in solidarity with the Wet'suwet'en Nation continues for another week, a majority of Canadians (61%) say they disagree (26% strongly/35% somewhat) that the protestors are conducting justified and legitimate protests, according to a new Ipsos poll conducted exclusively for Global News. Four in ten (39%) take the opposite view, agreeing (12% strongly/28% somewhat) that the protests are both legitimate and justified.

However, in 2013, a poll of Canadians reacting to indigenous blockades at that time showed that 31% thought the blockades were justified and legitimate, compared to 69% who didn't think this was the case. Therefore, support for the position of these indigenous protestors is 8 points higher now than it was in 2013.

Opinion about the ongoing protests is divided sharply along demographic fault lines: Canadians aged 18-34 (58%), women (43%), and residents of Quebec (47%) and Ontario (45%) are more likely to see the protests as justified. Those aged 55+ (71%), men (65%), and residents of Alberta (76%), the Prairies (72%), and BC (71%) are more inclined to disagree.

Hereditary chiefs of the Wet'suwet'en Nation in British Columbia oppose the construction of the Coastal GasLink natural gas pipeline in British Columbia, despite the project being approved by the local band councils whose territory the pipeline passes through. Protests by indigenous peoples and their supporters have blocked project construction in BC and have also spread to other regions of the country, including blocking main rail lines moving freight and passengers.

In response to the blockade, a majority (53%) of Canadians support (27% strongly/26% somewhat) intervention by police to end the blockade of key transportation corridors by indigenous protestors, while three in ten (28%) oppose (12% strongly/16% somewhat) police intervention. Two in ten (19%) Canadians don't know.



FACTUM

An east-west divide is again in evidence: support for police intervention is highest in BC (68%) and Alberta (69%), followed by Saskatchewan and Manitoba (61%), trailing in Atlantic Canada (55%), Ontario (48%) and Quebec (42%). Conversely, opposition towards the use of police to end the blockade is highest in Quebec (38%), followed by Ontario (29%), Atlantic Canada (24%), BC (22%), Saskatchewan and Manitoba (21%) and Alberta (15%). Likewise, Canadians aged 35-54 (32%) and 18-34 (31%) are most opposed to police intervention, while those 55 and over are more supportive (66%).

Canadians Following Closely, Split on What Protests Mean for Country

The issue has received the attention of Canadians, with six in ten (60%) saying that they're following along: 15% are very familiar and are following closely, while 45% are somewhat familiar and know some of the details. Four in ten say they've either heard about but aren't following (26%) or haven't heard about it at all (14%). The issue is particularly salient in BC, where 80% are following the issue (24% closely).

One in three (32%) Canadians has a favourable (10% strongly/22% somewhat) view of these protests, peaking at 38% in Quebec and 36% in Ontario, while half (49%) have an unfavourable view (27% very/22% somewhat), rising to 64% in BC. Two in ten (20%) are unsure of what to think. Those following the protests more closely are more likely to be unfavourable toward them: more than half (57%) of those following closely hold an unfavourable view of the protests, while 38% are favourable and just 5% don't know.

Canadians are split down the middle about what these protests mean for Canada. While 38% believe that they are a sign of a healthy democracy and strong freedom of expression, nearly the same proportion (34%) believes that it is a sign of an unhealthy democracy and a declining rule of law. Three in ten (28%) are unsure of which of these points of view is closer to their own. Once again, the Boomer generation (45%) is more likely to see the protests as unhealthy, as Western Canadians: 47% in Saskatchewan and Manitoba, 47% in BC, and 43% in Alberta hold this view.

Canadians are also fairly evenly split on which side of the dispute is being more fair and reasonable. While one in three (34%) believe that government and others who support the Coastal GasLink project are being more fair and reasonable, three in ten (27%) believe that indigenous Canadians and those who oppose the project are being more fair and reasonable. Four in ten (39%) believe that neither party holds the higher ground in this dispute. Ontario (32%) and Quebec (34%) are more likely to see indigenous Canadians and those who oppose the project as more fair and reasonable, as are 37% of those aged 18-34. Meanwhile Alberta (50%), BC (47%), and the Prairies (45%) are more inclined to side with the government and supporters of the pipeline project, as are 43% of Canadians aged 55 and over.



FACTUM

Shrinking Proportion of Canadians (55%, down 7 points) Believe Indigenous Peoples Treated Well by Government; Most (75%, up 12 points) Say Feds Should Act Now to Help Raise Quality of Life for Aboriginal Communities

A slim majority (55%) of Canadians agree (17% strongly/38% somewhat) that Canada's indigenous peoples are treated well by the Canadian government, but nearly half (45%) disagree (14% strongly/31% somewhat) with this position. This question was last asked in 2013, during the Idle No More movement and the hunger strike by Attawapiskat Chief Theresa Spence, and at the time 62% believed that indigenous Canadians were treated well – representing a 7-point decline in 7 years. Ontario residents are by far the most likely to disagree that indigenous peoples are treated well by government: more than half (56%) disagree, significantly more than in any other province.

In fact, most Canadians recognize room for improvement: three quarters (75%) agree (31% strongly/44% somewhat) that the federal government must act now to help raise the quality of life of Canada's aboriginal peoples, which is up 12 points since 2013. Only one quarter (25%) disagree (8% strongly/17% somewhat) that the government should act quickly in this manner, down 12 points.

Thinking about the government's duty to consult indigenous communities on resource-development projects impacting their territory, fewer than six in ten (56%) agree (17% strongly/39% somewhat) that indigenous peoples are adequately consulted. Nearly half (44%) disagree (13% strongly/31% somewhat), suggesting that they believe the amount of consultation is inadequate.



FACTUM

About the Study

These are some of the findings of an Ipsos poll conducted between February 14 and 17, 2020, on behalf of on behalf of Global News. For this survey, a sample of 1,301 Canadians aged 18+ was interviewed online. Quotas and weighting were employed to ensure that the sample's composition reflects that of the Canadian population according to census parameters. The precision of Ipsos online polls is measured using a credibility interval. In this case, the poll is accurate to within ± 3.2 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, had all Canadians aged 18+ 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, PhD
CEO, Ipsos Global Public Affairs
+1 416 324-2001
Darrell.Bricker@ipsos.com

About Ipsos

Ipsos is the world's third largest market research company, present in 90 markets and employing more than 18,000 people.

Our passionately curious research professionals, analysts and scientists have built unique multi-specialist capabilities that provide true understanding and powerful insights into the actions, opinions and motivations of citizens, consumers, patients, customers or employees. We serve more than 5000 clients across the world with 75 business solutions.

Founded in France in 1975, Ipsos is listed on the Euronext Paris since July 1st, 1999. The company is part of the SBF 120 and the Mid-60 index and is eligible for the Deferred Settlement Service (SRD).

ISIN code FR0000073298, Reuters ISOS.PA, Bloomberg IPS:FP

www.ipsos.com