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Canadians Divided When it Comes to Canada's Future Economic Direction

Balancing the budget, lowering taxes, or investing in government programs all have public support

Toronto, ON, August 28, 2021 — The federal election will be a key test for what Canadians would like to see in a post-COVID-19 economic plan. At the moment there appears to be no clear consensus among Canadians about what the priority should be for balancing the budget, lowering taxes, or investing in government programs.

A third (33%, +2) of Canadians believe the next federal government should focus on balancing the budget, even if it means spending cuts or tax increases. This opinion is more pronounced among men (37% vs 29% for women). Regionally, there does not appear to be any significant differences, however, Alberta and Quebec are directionally *more likely* to believe the next federal government should focus on balancing the budget (35% Alberta, 35% Quebec, 33% Ontario, 31% SK/MB 29% BC, 29% Atlantic). As well, those with a household income of \$60-\$100k are more likely to believe balancing the budget should be the focus compared to the other household income levels (39% \$60-\$100k vs 36% \$100k+, 31% <\$40k, 27% \$40k-\$60k).

Both Bloc Quebecois and Conservative party voters are more likely to believe the next federal government should focus on the budget than voters supporting other parties (47% BC, 46% Cons, 34% Green, 27% Libs, 23% NDP).

Given the economic strain COVID-19 has put on Canadians, it is no surprise that over a third (37%, +1) of Canadians believe lowering taxes, even if it means continued budget deficits and spending cuts, should be the focus for the next federal government. This belief decreases with an increase in higher education (56% <HS vs 41% HS, 36% Post Sec, 23% Univ Grad). Similarly, to balancing the budget, Conservative party voters are more likely to believe that this should be the focus of the next federal government (40% Cons vs 32% BC, 31% Libs, 30% NDP, 19% Green).

The remaining third (30%, -3) believe the next federal government should focus on investing in government programs, even if it means no tax cuts or continued budget deficits. In contrast to balancing the budget, women are more likely to believe the federal government should invest in government programs compared to men (33% women vs 27% men).

The younger and older cohort are *directionally* more likely to agree that the next federal government should focus on investing in government programs compared to the 35-54 age group (33% 18-34, 26% 35-54, 32% 55+). This is likely a result of increased expenses the two cohorts face, whether that is post-secondary fees and the rental market, or health-care cost and retirement plans.

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Green, NDP, and Liberal voters are more likely to say they believe the focus should be investing in government programs, with Conservative voters the least likely to agree (47% Green, 46% NDP, 42% Libs, 21% BQ, 14% Cons).

University graduates are more likely to believe the federal government should invest in government programs (41% vs 29% post sec, 27% HS, 23% <HS). Notably, there is a higher proportion of university graduates who believe that the federal government should invest in government programs, compared to balancing the budget or lowering taxes.

Agreement about voting, by Stated Vote Intention

	Total	Cons.	Lib.	NDP	BQ	Green
Balancing the budget, even if it means spending cuts or tax increases	33%	46%	27%	23%	47%	34%
Lowering taxes, even if it means continued budget deficits or spending cuts	37%	40%	31%	30%	32%	19%
Investing in government programs, even if it means no tax cuts or continued budget deficits	30%	14%	42%	46%	21%	47%

About the Study

These are some of the findings of an Ipsos poll conducted between August 20 and 23, on behalf of Global News. A sample of n = 1,500 was interviewed online, via the Ipsos I-Say panel and non-panel sources, and respondents earn a nominal incentive for their participation. Quotas and weighting were 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 polls which include non-probability sampling is measured using a credibility interval. In this case, the poll is accurate to within ± 2.9 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, had all Canadians 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. Ipsos abides by the disclosure standards established by the CRIC, found here:

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model that incorporates this polling data. Furthermore, any use of this information to produce polling aggregations or election models without Ipsos' written permission will be considered a violation of our intellectual property, and Ipsos reserves the right to take appropriate legal action. Detailed tabular data tables can be found here:

<https://ipsosintelligence.ca/canadiancontext/>

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