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Majority (56%) of Canadians Support Another Lockdown to Stop the Spread of Omicron

Eight in Ten Think Omicron Will Delay Return to Normal (82%) and Would Consider Cancelling Travel Plans if COVID-19 Got Worse (80%)

Toronto, ON, December 17, 2021 – With the Omicron variant of COVID-19 spreading quickly and stoking worries of a sharp rise in case counts and hospitalizations, a new Ipsos poll conducted on behalf of Global News reveals that a majority (56%) of Canadians agree (20% strongly/36% somewhat) that we should have another lockdown to help stop the spread of the Omicron variant. Conversely, 44% oppose (18% strongly/26% somewhat) another round of lockdowns. Support is highest in Quebec (62%), British Columbia (61%), Atlantic Canada (60%) and Saskatchewan and Manitoba (59%) and lower in Ontario (53%) and, especially, Alberta (44%).

Although a majority still support lockdown measures, support is dropping. In July of 2021, 69% said they would support more lockdown measures if a fourth wave of the pandemic arose, which dropped to 63% in September, and is now just 56% now that the Omicron wave is upon us.

Canadians believe that Omicron will further delay to the return to normal, particularly when it comes to the ability to travel:

- Eight in ten (82%) agree (35% strongly/47% somewhat) that the Omicron variant will delay things getting back to normal
- Eight in ten (80%) agree (47% strongly/33% somewhat) that they would cancel their travel plans if COVID-19 gets any worse.
- Nearly four in ten (37%) however take a more stubborn approach to travel, agreeing (11% strongly/25% somewhat) that they will travel next year, regardless of fluctuating coronavirus cases.

Canadians have begun rolling up their sleeves yet again to get their COVID booster shots, and the Prime Minister has encouraged the premiers to expedite their delivery of the vaccine within their provinces. But many appear to be willing to wait for their 3rd shot if it means that Canada could share its vaccine supply with low-income countries. Indeed, seven in ten (69%) agree (25% strongly/44% somewhat) that they would be willing to wait, while three in ten (31%) disagree (11% strongly/21% somewhat) with postponing. Those in Atlantic Canada (78%) and Quebec (75%) are most likely to say they'd be fine giving their immediate booster shots to lower-income countries, while those in Ontario (69%), Saskatchewan and Manitoba (64%), Alberta (62%) and British Columbia (59%) are less inclined. Those aged 18-34 (75%) are also more likely than those aged 35-54 (70%) or 55+ (62%) to hold this position.

Canadians Say Public Health Officials Outperforming Political Leaders in Response to COVID-19

Reflecting on the performance of key figures over the past year in their handling of the COVID-19 pandemic, the poll reveals that some public health officials have outperformed their political masters

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in the eyes of Canadians. Dr. Theresa Tam has received a higher approval rating than the collective efforts of Canada's provincial premiers and the Prime Minister, while Canadians' assessment of Dr. Anthony Fauci surpasses that of President Joe Biden. Also interesting is that Canadians' assessment of President Biden's handling of the pandemic is more positive than Prime Minister Trudeau's.

Approval of Handling of the COVID-19 Crisis

Person	% approve (strongly/somewhat); % disapprove (strongly/somewhat)
Prime Minister Justin Trudeau	49% approve (11%/38%); 51% disapprove (25%/26%)
Provincial Premiers	57% approve (14%/43%); 43% disapprove (19%/25%)
Dr. Theresa Tam	64% approve (15%/49%); 36% disapprove (13%/23%)
President Joe Biden	58% approve (11%/47%); 42% disapprove (15%/28%)
Dr. Anthony Fauci	64% approve (16%/48%); 36% disapprove (12%/25%)

Compared to May of 2021, the Prime Minister's COVID-specific approval rating is down by 5 points to 49%, while collectively the premiers' approval rating is down just 2 points. The Premier of Quebec (75%, -1) receives the highest approval ratings among his first minister colleagues, followed by the Premiers of British Columbia (63%, -13), Atlantic Canada (61%, -7), Ontario (52%, +2), Saskatchewan and Manitoba (37%, -7) and Alberta (33%, +2).

About the Study

These are some of the findings of an Ipsos poll conducted between December 10 and 15, 2021, on behalf of Global News. For this survey, a sample of 1,001 Canadians aged 18+ was interviewed. 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 ± 3.5 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
CEO, Ipsos Global Public Affairs
+1 416 324 2001
Darrell.Bricker@ipsos.com



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