



## FACTUM

### Majority (54%) of Canadians Believe Trucker Protests At Least Partially Contributed to Loosening of COVID Restrictions

Approval of Behaviour of Truckers (36%) Only Slightly Behind Approval of Trudeau's Handling of Situation (43%); Premiers Come Out Ahead (53%)

**Toronto, ON, February 24, 2022** – As COVID restrictions begin to ease across many of Canada's provinces, a new Ipsos poll conducted as the protestors were being cleared from Ottawa has revealed that a majority (54%) of Canadians believe that the trucker protests had some influence on the loosening of those restrictions. Moreover, the poll conducted exclusively for Global News reveals that Canadians' approval of the truckers is only 7-points lower than that of the Prime Minister.

- Two in ten (20%) Canadians believe that **governments are changing their pandemic restrictions mostly due to pressure from the truck protestors**. Those aged 18-34 (32%) are most likely to hold this position, compared to fewer of those aged 35-54 (21%) and 55+ (9%).
- A further one in three (34%) say the changes are coming about due to a combination of pressure from the trucker protests and because of progress we have made controlling the pandemic.
- Nearly half (46%) believe the trucker protests had no impact, believing that the **loosening of restrictions is entirely attributed to progress we have made controlling the pandemic**. Canadians aged 55+ (59%) are most likely to adopt this position, while only a minority of those aged 35-54 (42%) or 18-34 (34%) feel this way.

Given that many perceive some degree of effectiveness of the protests at changing government policy, four in ten (41%) agree (12% strongly/29% somewhat) that protests like those organized by the truckers are a legitimate way to get the government to change their policies. However, a majority (59%) disagrees (32% strongly/27% somewhat) with this tactic.

With many actors having a role in the protests, Canadians have weighted in and assessed the degree to which they approve of the way that the protest was handled on all sides. Nearly four in ten (36%) approve of the way the truckers handled themselves throughout the protest. This contrasts with 43% who approve of how Prime Minister Justin Trudeau handled the situation, and 53% who approved of how the premier of their province handled it. In Ontario, where most of the protest activity was focused, 49% approve of Doug Ford's handling of the situation, narrowly besting the 46% who approve of Justin Trudeau's performance.

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### Approval of How the Following Have Handled the Trucker-Led Protests

Person(s)	% approve (strongly/somewhat)	% disapprove (strongly/somewhat)
Prime Minister Justin Trudeau	43% (13%/31%)	57% (37%/19%)
Conservative Party leaders	38% (7%/31%)	62% (28%/34%)
Provincial premiers	53% (12%/41%)	47% (20%/27%)
NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh	52% (8%/43%)	48% (21%/27%)
PPC Leader Maxime Bernier	29% (7%/22%)	71% (36%/34%)
The truckers	36% (14%/22%)	64% (40%/24%)

With the core of the protests broken up by police over the weekend, Canadians remain divided on how they feel about them. Nearly one half (46%, unchanged throughout the protests) say they may not agree with everything the people who have taken part in the truck protests in Ottawa have said and done but their frustration is legitimate and worthy of our sympathy. Once again, a deep generational divide is evident, with a majority of those aged 18-34 (58%) and 35-54 (53%) holding this position compared to only 32% of those aged 55+.

Conversely, a slim majority (54%, unchanged) of Canadians maintain the argument that what the people in Ottawa have said and done is wrong and does not deserve any of our sympathy. Nearly seven in ten (68%) of those aged 55+ feel this way, in stark contrast to the 47% of 35–54-year-olds and 42% of 18-34-year-olds who do.

As to how we got here, Canadians say there is a lot of blame to go around:

- A slim majority (52%) agree (26% strongly/26% somewhat) that the **prime minister is mostly responsible** because he chose to make dealing with the pandemic a divisive political issue.
- Half (50%) agree (11% strongly/39% somewhat) that the **Conservative party and their senior leaders are responsible** for these truck protests because they initially encouraged the protestors.
- Four in ten (39%) agree (14% strongly/25% somewhat) that the **provincial premiers are mostly responsible** for these protests because they imposed unreasonable restrictions that have lasted too long. Quebecers (50%) are most likely inclined to agree, followed by those living in Ontario (40%), British Columbia (38%), Atlantic Canada (33%), Saskatchewan and Manitoba (29%) and Alberta (25%).
- One half (48%) agree (12% strongly/36% somewhat) that if Canadians weren't suffering as much economic hardship as they are, these trucker protests never would have happened.

Some have argued that the protests in Ottawa have parallels to the events in Washington DC on January 6, 2021, and Canadians overall do see some similarities. Six in ten (61%) agree (29% strongly/32% somewhat) that the truckers are mostly fringe anti-government activists using pandemic restrictions as an excuse to cause general mayhem and disorder in Canada like the January 6<sup>th</sup> protestors did in the USA. Conversely, four in ten (39%) disagree (20% strongly/19% somewhat) with this premise, rising to 56% among Conservative voters.



## FACTUM

The similarities end in the way that the protests ended, however, as the trucker protest did not result in a storming of the parliament buildings. In fact, six in ten (59%) Canadians agree (15% strongly/44% somewhat) that, while it took some time to happen, they believe the way that the Ottawa and other truck protests were ended was the best way to handle it given the circumstances.

The protests may have inspired many Canadians – mostly young – to take similar tactics in support of a cause: one quarter (26%) agree (8% strongly/18% somewhat) that now that they've seen what the truckers have been able to achieve with their protests, they're tempted to participate in a similar protest to change government policy – rising to 35% of those aged 18-34.





## FACTUM

### About the Study

These are some of the findings of an Ipsos poll conducted between February 18-22, 2022, 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  $\pm 3.5$  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](mailto:Darrell.Bricker@ipsos.com)

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