

FACTUM

Strong Majority of Canadians Feel Canada Should Prioritize Promoting and Protecting Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights

Canadians Agree Promotion and Protection of Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights is Important both Within Canada (79%) and Around the World (77%)

Toronto, ON, March 20th, 2023 – Canada is considered by many to be an international leader in several humanitarian pursuits. A new Ipsos poll conducted on behalf of Action Canada for Sexual Health and Rights finds that Canadians consider that the promotion and protection of sexual and reproductive health and rights (which includes, but is not limited to, access to safe abortion services, access to testing and treatment for sexually transmitted infections, comprehensive sexual health education, and access to contraception), should be a priority for Canada. Moreover, Canadians don't differ in their belief as to whether protecting sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) is important at home (79%) or globally (77%), with around eight in ten Canadians agreeing that this should be a priority for Canada.

Majority of Canadians Believe Canada Has an International Diplomatic Role to Play in Advancing Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights

Support for Canada's international leadership is strong among Canadians. Over three-quarters (77%) agree that Canada should play an influential international and diplomatic role in the promotion of SRHR. The commitment to the cause is further demonstrated by a strong majority (77%) agreeing that Canada should be bold and outspoken in its support for SRHR, even in the face of a global backlash towards sexual and reproductive rights. Further, seven in ten (69%) agree that Canada should provide financial and diplomatic support to grassroots organizations globally in advocating for the advancement of SRHR.

Those in Quebec are more likely to feel Canada should provide support for grassroots organizations (78% vs. 72% BC, 71% AB, 66% ON, 64% ATL, 53% SK/MB) and that Canada should play an influential diplomatic role in promoting SRHR (84%, with 84% in BC also agreeing vs. 76% AB, 76% ON, 69% ATL, 60% SK/MB).

When Canadians were asked about what areas of SRHR they think are most neglected or underfunded globally, access to safe abortion came out at the top of the list, with four in ten (39%) identifying this as underfunded. Access to contraception (32%) and comprehensive sexual health education (36%) were also identified by around one-third of Canadians as being neglected or underfunded on an international level.

Women are significantly more likely than men to say each of the above three aspects of SRHR, access to safe abortion (45% vs. 33% of men), access to contraception (37% vs. 27% of men), and access to sexual health education (40% vs. 31% of men), are neglected or underfunded globally.

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Despite Strong Support, Specific Awareness of What Canada is Doing to Promote Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights is Low

Although Canadians express strong support for Canada's international leadership on this front, few say they have knowledge of the details of what Canada has done, or plans to do, to support SRHR globally. Around half of Canadians (47%) say they do not know what kind of role Canada has played in promoting SRHR worldwide, and while around one-quarter of Canadians (23%) are aware that Canada has made a 10-year global commitment to women and children's health with a focus on SRHR, awareness for the specifics of this commitment, as well as other aspects of Canada's work in this area, is low:

Before today, were you aware of the following:



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Those in Alberta in particular are significantly more likely to say they were not aware of Canada's specific funding commitment of \$700 million per year (76% vs. 71% SK/MB, 67% BC, 60% ON, 59% QC, 57% ATL), nor were they aware of Canada's Feminist International Assistance Policy (80% vs. 71% SK/MB, 71% BC, 61% ATL, 59% ON, 56% QC).

While most Canadians are unaware of the details of Canada's work in support of SRHR, broadly almost half believe that Canada is taking concrete actions to advance SRHR, whether diplomatically, through financial commitments, or in multilateral relationships.

When considering their perception of Canada's international actions and diplomacy efforts in the realm of SRHR, Canadians have a moderate level of belief that Canada is playing an active and influential role international role in SRHR in general (48%) and at major global forums (48%); that Canada is distributing significant monetary aid to global SRHR initiatives (46%); and that Canada is doing an effective job delivering on its promises in this area (43%).

Demographically, men (24%) and those 18-34 (27%) are significantly more likely to *disagree* that Canada is distributing significant monetary aid globally in support of SRHR (vs. 15% of women and 17% of 35-54, 17% of 55+). Those 18-34 are also more likely to *disagree* that Canada plays an active and influential role in the promotion of sexual and reproductive health and rights (28% vs. 15% 35-54, 18% 55+).

In relation to how Canada's international leadership compares with other top countries that dedicate funds to promote sexual and reproductive health and rights around the world (the UK, the Netherlands, Germany, Sweden, Japan, and Norway), Canadians are split: one-third of Canadians (34%) feel Canada's international leadership is on par its peers; 29% feel Canada is doing *better* than peer countries; and a small portion (10%) feel Canada is doing *worse*. However, in line with low levels of awareness of Canada's international leadership in SRHR in general, just over one quarter (27%) say they don't know how Canada is faring compared to the other countries.

Younger Canadians are more likely to say Canada is doing a better job (41% somewhat + much better, vs. 27% of 35-54, 21% of 55+) while those 55+ are more likely to say Canada is on par (43% vs. 24% of 18-34, 32% of 35-54). Those in Atlantic Canada (42%) and British Columbia (31%) are also more likely to say Canada is doing a better job (vs. 30% QC, 29% ON, 24% AB, 15% SK/MB).



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About the Study

These are some of the findings of an Ipsos poll conducted on behalf of Action Canada for Sexual Health and Rights between January 20 and 23, 2023. 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.

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