

ONTARIANS TO HARRIS - HOLD THE LINE ON TUITION FEES

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***Six in ten (61%) Ontarians feel that funding for post-secondary education
should be increased***

***Ontarians are evenly split (48% support, 49% oppose) on establishing
privately owned and operated universities***

***Ontarians are divided about whether young people should be encouraged
to go to community college (51%) or university (38%)***

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Toronto, Ontario -- An Angus Reid/Globe and Mail/Global Television survey of Ontario residents indicates that they are overwhelmingly (82%) opposed to increasing tuition fees. However, most think the government should spend more on post-secondary education: six in ten (61%) say that funding for universities, community colleges, and technical schools should be increased from current levels. Residents are evenly split (48% support, 49% oppose) on establishing privately owned and operated universities in Canada. Meanwhile, Ontarians are divided between those who think young people should be encouraged to “get a trade or skill at a community college” (51%) and those who feel young people “should go to university and get a general education” (38%).

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These are the findings of an Angus Reid/Globe and Mail/Global Television poll conducted between February 8th and February 15th 2000. The poll is based on a randomly selected sample of 1,000 adult Ontarians. One can say with 95 percent certainty that the results are within ± 3.1 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, of what they would have been had the entire adult Ontario population been polled. The margin of error will be larger within regions and for other sub-groupings of the survey population. These data were statistically weighted to ensure the sample's regional and age/sex composition reflects that of the actual Ontario population according to the 1996 Census data.

Eight in ten (82%) Ontarians oppose increasing tuition fees

Eight in ten (82%) Ontarians oppose “increasing tuition fees so that university and college students pay more of the actual costs of education”. Almost two-thirds (63%) “strongly oppose” and one in five (19%) “somewhat oppose” increasing tuition fees. Only 17 percent support this idea including 5 percent who “strongly support” and 12 percent who “somewhat support” increasing tuition fees. Meanwhile, Ontarians feel that business has a role to play in funding post-secondary education. More than eight in ten (86%) Ontarians support “encouraging businesses to provide funding to certain post-secondary programs such as business schools”. This includes a majority (51%) who “strongly support” this idea and one-third (35%) who “somewhat support” it. Only 14 percent oppose this idea – 7 percent “strongly oppose” while 7 percent “somewhat oppose”.

- Younger Ontarians (88%) are more likely to oppose increasing tuition than middle aged (80%) or older Ontarians (77%).
- Women (85%) are more likely than men (79%) to oppose increasing tuition.
- Older Ontarians (80%) are less likely than younger (90%) or middle aged (87%) Ontarians to support funding from business.
- Ontarians with a university education (83%) are slightly less likely than those without (88%) to support funding from business.

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Six in ten (61%) Ontarians feel that funding for post-secondary education should be increased

Most Ontarians think the government should spend more on education. Six in ten (61%) Ontarians say that government funding for universities, community colleges, and technical schools “should be increased from current levels”. One-third (35%) say funding “should be maintained at current levels” and only 3 percent say funding should be cut back.

- Ontarians with a university education (71%) are much more likely than Ontarians with a college education (58%) or high school education (52%) to think that funding for post secondary education should be increased.
- Younger (62%) and middle aged (63%) Ontarians are slightly more likely than older (57%) residents to support increasing funding for post secondary education.

Ontarians are evenly split (48% support, 49% oppose) on establishing privately owned and operated universities

Ontarians are split as to whether they support (48%) or oppose (49%) encouraging “the establishment of one or more privately owned and operated universities in Canada”. However, there is greater intensity among those who oppose private universities. Indeed, the number who “strongly oppose” (28%) is almost double the number who “strongly support” (15%) the establishment of private universities. However, there is strong support (63%) for “having universities specialize in certain programs, rather than having them all offer a wide range of programs as they do today”. This includes three in ten (31%) who “strongly support” and one-third (32%) who “somewhat support” this strategy. One-third (35%) of Ontarians oppose this strategy, with 18 percent who “somewhat oppose” and a similar number (17%) who “strongly oppose”.

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- Men (55%) are much more likely to support private universities than women (42%).
- Support for private universities is much lower among older residents (40%) than among younger (53%) or middle aged (49%) Ontarians.
- Support for private universities decreases as education increases, from 53 percent among those with a high school education or less to 43 percent among university graduates.
- Support for specialization among universities varies only with age. Sixty percent of those under 35 while two-thirds (66%) of those 35 or older support specialization.

Ontarians are divided about whether young people should be encouraged to go to go to community college (51%) or university (38%)

Half of Ontarians (51%) think young people should be encouraged to “get a trade or skill at a community college”. In contrast, 38 percent think young people should “go to university and get a general education” and 12 percent say they “don’t know”.

- Ontarians with a university education (52%) are much more likely than those who have not completed university (31%) to say that young people should go to university.
- Similarly, high income Ontarians (43%) are more likely than middle (34%) and low income (35%) Ontarians to suggest that young people should go to university.
- Younger Ontarians (41%) are slightly more likely than middle aged Ontarians (34%) to say that young people should be encouraged to go to university.

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***John Wright
Senior Vice President
Angus Reid
(416) 324-2900***

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