

WHAT'S ON THE MINDS OF BRITISH COLUMBIANS

Eight-in-Ten (78%) British Columbians Satisfied With Direction of Their Life

Seven-in-Ten (72%) Feeling Hopeful About Their Future

Health and Balancing Work/Personal Life Most on Minds of British Columbians; Sex Life Last on List – Just Behind Road Network



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Vancouver, BC – A new BC Ipsos-Reid poll reveals that in the face of a year of dramatic political change and a sluggish provincial economy, British Columbians appear to be happy with their own lives and optimistic about their future. Eight-in-ten (78%) BC residents say they are satisfied with the way things are going when they think about the direction of their life. Looking forward, seven-in-ten (72%) BC residents are more hopeful than fearful when they think about their own future.

The poll also sheds light on the kinds of things British Columbians spend a lot of time thinking about. At the top of the list is the health care system in their community (50% think about a lot), followed by their own personal health or that of a family member (47%) and balancing the demands of work life and personal life (46%). On the whole, British Columbians don't spend a lot of time thinking about their sex life. It ranks last on our list (22% think about a lot), just behind the state of their local road and transportation network (23%).

These are the findings of a BC Ipsos-Reid poll conducted between June 4th and 10th, 2002 among a representative cross-section of 800 British Columbian adults. These data are statistically weighted to ensure the sample's regional, age and sex composition reflects that of the actual BC population

according to 1996 Census data. With a provincial sample of 800, one can say with 95 percent certainty that the overall results are within ± 3.5 percentage points of what they would have been had the entire adult BC population been polled. The margin of error will be larger for sub-groupings of the survey population.

Eight-in-Ten (78%) British Columbians Satisfied With Direction of Their Life

Most British Columbians are happy with the way things are going in their own life right now. Eight-in-ten (78%) say they are satisfied with the direction of their own life, including four-in-ten (41%) who are “very” satisfied. Meanwhile, two-in-ten (22%) BC residents are either “very” dissatisfied (9%) or “somewhat” dissatisfied (12%) with the direction of their life.

To put these numbers in perspective, British Columbians are no more or less satisfied than they were five years ago. Personal satisfaction was 77 percent in the Fall 1997. A period of decline then followed, with satisfaction numbers bottoming out at 64 percent in Spring 1998 and then staying down at 65 percent in both Fall 1999 and Spring 2000. A turnaround began in the Spring of 2001, with personal satisfaction rising to 70 percent just before the BC Liberal’s election victory. Personal satisfaction rose as high as 82 percent in Fall 2001, before settling back to 78 percent today.

While the results show that men are generally more satisfied than women (82% vs. 74%), by far the widest variations in personal satisfaction are related to household income. Satisfaction is highest among those in the highest income group (87% among \$60K+) and is nearly as high among those in the middle income group (79% among \$30-\$60K). Those in the lowest household income group (<\$30K) are substantially less satisfied with the current direction of their life (55% satisfied).

Most (72%) Feeling Hopeful About Their Own Future

Not only are British Columbians satisfied with their lives today, most are hopeful about their own future. Seven-in-ten (72%) BC residents say they are more hopeful than fearful when they think about their own future. This includes 35 percent who are “very” hopeful about the future and 37 percent who are “somewhat” hopeful.

On the negative side, nearly three-in-ten (27%) British Columbians are more fearful than hopeful when they think about their own future, including one-in-ten (9%) who are “very” fearful and two-in-ten (18%) who are “somewhat” fearful.

British Columbians’ outlook on the future varies by sex and by household income. Men tend to be somewhat more hopeful than women (78% vs. 67%). Not surprisingly, optimism for the future increases with household income (60% hopeful among <\$30K, 75% among \$30-\$60K) and 77% among \$60K+).

Health and Balancing Work/Personal Life Most on Minds of British Columbians; Sex Life Last on List – Just Behind Community Road Network

Ipsos-Reid asked British Columbians how often they find themselves thinking about a battery of 14 different items. Survey respondents rated each item using a 7-point scale, where 1 means they NEVER think about an item and 7 means they are ALWAYS thinking about an item. Ratings of 6 or 7 are considered to be items that respondents are thinking about A LOT.

Top Tier Issues

Three items stand out from the rest of the pack as preoccupying the thoughts of British Columbians. The first two items relate to health. One-half (50%) of British Columbians say they spend a lot of time thinking about the state of the health care system in their community, and a similar proportion (47%) say they spend a lot of time thinking about the more personal

issue of their own health or that of a family member. The third item was asked only of employed respondents and relates to the difficulties of finding a balance in life. Five-in-ten (46%) employed BC residents say they spend a lot of time thinking about how to balance the demands of their personal and professional life.

- ◆ The state of the health care system in your community (50% think about a lot)
- ◆ Your personal health or that of a family member (47%)
- ◆ Balancing the demands of your work life and personal life (46% - asked of employed only)

Second Tier Issues

The next tier of issues on the minds of British Columbians includes the education system and personal financial concerns. Four-in-ten (38%) BC residents say they spend a lot of time thinking about the education system in their community. The same proportion say they spend a lot of time thinking about their ability to make ends meet (38%) and their ability to save for the future (38%).

- ◆ The state of the education system in your community (38% think about a lot)
- ◆ Your ability to save for the future (38%)
- ◆ Your ability to make ends meet (38%)

Third Tier Issues

Roughly three-in-ten BC residents say they spend a lot of time thinking about each of the six items in our third-tier of issues.

British Columbians spend less time thinking about the economy as a whole than they do about their own financial situation. Roughly three-in-ten (33%) residents say they spend a lot of time thinking about the state of the economy in their community. In fact, just as many British Columbians spend a lot of time thinking about their next vacation (29%). Sticking



with the economic theme, three-in-ten (32%) spend a lot of time thinking about keeping their job (asked of employed only).

Other items in our third tier of issues include worries about crime and violence (27%) and the ethical and moral condition (27%) of communities. Finally, three-in-ten (31%) BC residents say they spend a lot of time thinking about the state of the environment in their community.

- ◆ The state of the economy in your community (33% think about a lot)
- ◆ Keeping your job (32% - asked of employed only)
- ◆ The state of the environment in your community (31%)
- ◆ Your next holiday or vacation (29%)
- ◆ Crime and violence in your community (27%)
- ◆ The ethical and moral condition of your community (27%)

Bottom Tier Issues

British Columbians place their sex life dead last in terms of things that occupy their thoughts. Only two-in-ten (22%) BC residents say they think about their sex life a lot. An equal number of BC residents (23%) spend a lot of time thinking about the state of their community's road and transportation network.

- ◆ The state of the road and transportation network in your community (23% think about a lot)
- ◆ Your sex life (22%)

What's on the Minds of British Columbians – Differences by Sex

Women in British Columbia spend more time than men thinking about big picture issues such as health, education and the environment, as well as personal issues like making ends meet and keeping balance in their life. Men, on the other hand, spend more time thinking about sex.

Women are more likely to spend a lot of time thinking about:

- ◆ The state of the health care system in their community (56% vs. 45% men)
- ◆ The state of the education system in their community (44% vs. 32% men)
- ◆ The state of the environment in their community (36% vs. 26% men)

- ◆ Their ability to make ends meet (42% vs. 33% men)
- ◆ Balancing the demands of their work life and personal life (52% vs. 40% Lower Mainland)

Men are more likely to spend a lot of time thinking about:

- ◆ Their sex life (29% vs. 16% women)

What's on the Minds of British Columbians – Differences by Age

Younger British Columbians appear to have a lot on their minds. The middle age group tend to be thinking about the same things as the younger group, but a little less often. Older British Columbians don't appear to have a lot on their minds relative to other age groups.

Younger residents (18 to 34 years) are more likely to spend a lot of time thinking about:

- ◆ Crime and violence in their community (33% vs. 20% 35 to 54 years)
- ◆ Their personal health or that of a family member (53% vs. 43% 35 to 54 years)
- ◆ The state of the education system in their community (46% vs. 29% 55+ years)
- ◆ Keeping their job (37% vs. 18% 55+ years)
- ◆ Their ability to save for the future (47% vs. 25% 55+ years)
- ◆ Balancing the demands of their work life and personal life (54% vs. 31% 55+ years)
- ◆ Their sex life (30% vs. 22% 35 to 54 years, 14% 55+ years)

Middle age residents (35 to 54 years) are more likely to spend a lot of time thinking about:

- ◆ The state of the education system in their community (37% vs. 29% 55+ years)
- ◆ Keeping their job (31% vs. 18% 55+ years)
- ◆ Their ability to save for the future (40% vs. 25% 55+ years)
- ◆ Balancing the demands of their work life and personal life (44% vs. 31% 55+ years)
- ◆ Their sex life (22% vs. 14% 55+ years)

Older residents (55+ years) are more likely to spend a lot of time thinking about:

- ◆ Crime and violence in their community (30% vs. 20% 35 to 54 years)

What's on the Minds of British Columbians – Differences by Region

Regional differences highlight social and values issues in the Lower Mainland, the economy on Vancouver Island and the health care system in the North/Interior.

Lower Mainland residents are more likely to spend a lot of time thinking about:

- ◆ Crime and violence in their community (32% vs. 19% Island, 23% North/Interior)
- ◆ The ethical and moral condition of their community (30% vs. 17% Island)
- ◆ Their next holiday or vacation (30% vs. 20% Island)

Vancouver Island residents are more likely to spend a lot of time thinking about:

- ◆ The state of the economy in their community (40% vs. 26% Lower Mainland)
- ◆ Their ability to make ends meet (46% vs. 35% Lower Mainland)

North/Interior residents are more likely to spend a lot of time thinking about:

- ◆ The state of the health care system in their community (59% vs. 49% Lower Mainland, 44% Island)
- ◆ The state of the economy in their community (44% vs. 26% Lower Mainland)
- ◆ Their next holiday or vacation (32% vs. 20% Island)

What's on the Minds of British Columbians – Differences by Household Income

Lower and middle income British Columbians spend more time than those with higher incomes thinking about things like making ends meet and saving for the future. Higher income residents appear to have more free time to ponder their sex life.

Lower income residents (<\$30K) are more likely to spend a lot of time thinking about:

- ◆ The state of the environment in their community (42% vs. 28% middle income, 29% higher income)
- ◆ Their ability to save for the future (44% vs. 33% higher income)
- ◆ Their ability to make ends meet (53% vs. 26% higher income)

Middle income residents (\$30-\$60K) are more likely to spend a lot of time thinking about:

- ◆ Their ability to save for the future (44% vs. 33% higher income)
- ◆ Their ability to make ends meet (41% vs. 26% higher income)



Higher income residents (\$60K+) are more likely to spend a lot of time thinking about:

- ♦ Their sex life (26% vs. 16% lower income)

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For more information on this news release, please contact:

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