

# DRAMATIC IMPROVEMENT IN PUBLIC PERCEPTIONS OF BC ECONOMY

*Six-in-Ten (58%) British Columbians Think Provincial Economy  
in “Good” Shape – Highest Level in Seven Years*



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## DRAMATIC IMPROVEMENT IN PUBLIC PERCEPTIONS OF BC ECONOMY

### *Six-in-Ten (58%) British Columbians Think Provincial Economy in "Good" Shape – Highest Level in Seven Years*

**Vancouver, BC** – A new Ipsos-Reid poll shows that for the first time in seven years, a majority (58%) of British Columbians describe the overall state of the BC economy as "good" or "very good". This is a significant improvement from the 36% of British Columbians who described the provincial economy as "good" or "very good" in Ipsos-Reid's last economic poll taken eight months ago in October 2003. Public perceptions of the BC economy have ranged from the low 20's to the mid 30's since 1998.

On a more personal level, three-quarters (74%) of British Columbians currently describe their own financial situation as "good" or "very good". While the trend in this number is positive (up 4 points from 70% in October 2003), the increase is much less dramatic than for the BC economy as a whole.

"Considering the economic cloud British Columbia has been under the last few years, the shift in these numbers is stunning," says Ipsos-Reid Vice-President Kyle Braid. "Perhaps the term economic confidence will no longer be an oxymoron in British Columbia."

*These are the findings of an Ipsos-Reid telephone poll conducted June 1<sup>st</sup> to June 8<sup>th</sup> with a randomly selected sample of 800 adult British Columbia residents. The results are considered accurate to within  $\pm 3.5$  percentage points, 19 times out of 20, of what they would have been had the entire BC adult 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 BC population according to the 2001 Census.*

## ***Six-in-Ten (58%) British Columbians Think Provincial Economy in “Good” Shape – Highest Level in Seven Years***

British Columbians are more upbeat about the provincial economy than they have been at any time since 1997. Currently six-in-ten (58%) residents describe the overall state of the BC economy as “good” or “very good”. This is an increase of 22 percentage points from October 2003 (36%) and the highest level recorded since September 1997 (71%).

While perceptions are improving, the findings are muted somewhat by the intensity of public sentiment. Only 3% think the BC economy is “very good”, while 56% think the economy is “good”. Meanwhile, four-in-ten (41%) British Columbians think the BC economy is in “very poor” shape (6%) or “poor” shape (35%) right now.

There are some notable regional and demographic differences:

- Lower Mainland residents are more likely than residents in the rest of BC to rate the provincial economy as “good” or “very good” (62% vs. 54%).
- Men are more positive than women (64% vs. 53%).
- Residents of non-union households are more positive than residents of union households (63% vs. 48%).

## ***Three-Quarters (74%) Think Their Own Financial Situation is “Good”***

Three-quarters (74%) of British Columbians describe their own financial situation as “very good” (8%) or “good” (66%). This is an increase of four percentage points from October 2003 (70%) and the highest recoded result since Ipsos-Reid began tracking this question in October 2000. One-in-four (25%) British Columbians describes their personal financial situation as “very poor” (7%) or “poor” (18%).

Positive assessments (“good” or “very good”) increase with household income (45% <\$30K, 73% \$30-\$60K, 87% \$60K+) and with education (68% high school or less, 70% some post-secondary, 83% university graduates).

## Tracking Economic Perceptions of British Columbians

<i>Poll Date</i>	<i>BC Economy "Good" or "Very Good"</i>	<i>Personal Financial Situation "Good" or "Very Good"</i>
Jun 2004	58%	74%
Oct 2003	36%	70%
Apr 2003	34%	65%
Oct 2002	35%	68%
Apr 2002	22%	67%
Nov 2001	20%	70%
Apr 2001	25%	70%
Oct 2000	31%	67% (new question)
Apr 2000	24%	-
Dec 1999	24%	-
Sep 1999	28%	-
Jun 1999	21%	-
Dec 1998	22%	-
Jun 1998	26%	-
Dec 1997	55%	-
Sep 1997	71%	-
Jun 1997	69%	-
Mar 1997	63%	-
Dec 1996	68%	-
Sep 1996	76%	-
Jun 1996	75%	-
Mar 1996	66%	-

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*For more information on this news release, please contact:*

**Kyle Braid**  
**Vice-President**  
**Ipsos-Reid Corporation**  
**604-257-3200**  
[kyle.braid@ipsos-reid.com](mailto:kyle.braid@ipsos-reid.com)

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