

Ontarians Believe Next Government should Make Reduction of Poverty a 'Priority'

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Toronto, ON – As the party leaders criss-cross the province in an attempt to gain support going into the provincial election on October 10th, a new Ipsos Reid poll conducted on behalf of the Daily Bread Food Bank reveals that most Ontarians believe that the reduction of poverty should be a priority for the next Government of Ontario. More specifically, nearly one half (45%) of Ontarians maintain that the reduction of poverty should be a ‘high priority’ for the next government, while a similar proportion believes (43%) that it should be a ‘medium priority’. Just one in ten (8%) suggest that the reduction of poverty should be a ‘low priority’ for the next government, while even fewer (4%) believe that this policy area is ‘not a priority at all’.

It appears that Ontarians might have initially underestimated their own assessment of the priority that they believe the reduction of poverty should play for the next government:

- When informed that ‘Ontario currently has no comprehensive plan to reduce poverty’, three quarters (73%) of Ontarians suggested that, for them, the reduction of poverty should become either a ‘much higher’ (36%), ‘somewhat higher’ (24%) or a ‘little higher’ (13%) priority for the next Government of Ontario than they had originally thought. Just three in ten (27%) said that knowing this information did not change their opinion on the matter.
- When informed that, ‘in the past five years, there has been a 15% increase of Ontario children living in low-income households’, eight in ten (77%) believed that, for them,

the reduction of poverty should become either a 'much higher' (34%), 'somewhat higher' (27%), or a 'little higher' (16%) priority for the next Government of Ontario than they had originally thought. One quarter (23%) of Ontarians did not change their opinion on the matter once given this information.

- When informed that 'in the United Kingdom, the child poverty reduction plan has successfully reduced child poverty by almost 25% in 1999', seven in ten (69%) believed that, for them, the reduction of poverty should become either a 'much higher' (22%), 'somewhat higher' (27%), or a 'little higher' (19%) priority for the next Government of Ontario than they had originally thought. For three in ten (31%), their opinion on the matter did not change as a result of knowing this information.
- Finally, when informed that 'Quebec and Newfoundland and Labrador already have poverty reduction plans in place', six in ten (57%) Ontarians said that, for them, the reduction of poverty should become either a 'much higher' (17%), 'somewhat higher' (24%) or a 'little higher' (16%) priority for the Ontario government than they had originally thought. Nearly one half (43%) suggested that knowing this information did not change their opinion on how much of a priority the reduction of poverty should be for the next provincial government.

These are the findings of an Ipsos Reid poll conducted on behalf of the Daily Bread Food Bank from Aug 31 to Sep 7, 2007. For the survey, a representative randomly selected sample of 905 adults living in Ontario was interviewed online. With a sample of this size, the results are considered accurate to within ± 3.3 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, of what they would have been had the entire 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 weighted to ensure that the sample's regional and age/sex composition reflects that of the actual Ontario population according to Census data.

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