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But Political Fallout is Minimal as Announcement Boosts Liberals in Quebec and BC But Shows Negative Impact in Ontario

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#### Seven in Ten (70%) Say Trudeau Wrong to Exclude Potential Liberal Candidates based on Abortion Beliefs

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**Toronto, ON** – Federal Liberal Leader Justin Trudeau recently announced that all new prospective candidates for the Liberal Party in the future must agree to vote in favour of a woman's right to choose whenever votes about abortion arise in the House of Commons. Without agreeing ahead of time, one's candidacy to run for the Liberal Party could be declined.

But according to a new CTV poll conducted by Ipsos Reid, a large majority of Canadians do not support his recent announcement. Seven in ten (70%) believe that 'even as party leader, Justin Trudeau has no right to exclude potential candidates from running for the Liberal Party based on whether or not they are pro-choice.' Conversely, just three in ten (30%) believe that 'as party leader, Justin Trudeau has the right to decide if he only wants pro-choice candidates to run for the Liberals in the next election.'

Abortion in Canada is not limited by law, and Canada has not had a national abortion law since the Supreme Court decided on a case in 1988. One third (33%, down 3 points since 2010) of Canadians find this lack of a national abortion law 'unacceptable', but the rest of Canadians either find the absence of a national abortion law 'acceptable' (40%, up 13 points) or 'don't care one way or another' (27%, down 7 points).

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One quarter (24%) of Canadians believe abortions 'should be permitted in certain circumstances, such as if a woman has been raped,' while one in ten (9%) believe abortions 'should not be permitted under any circumstances, except when the life of the mother is in danger.' Only 4% believe abortions 'should not be permitted under any circumstances.'

However, most Canadians (52%) think that a women's right to choose should not be constrained, and that abortion 'should be permitted whenever a woman decides she wants one.' In sum, over half (52%) would accept any form of abortion, compared to a quarter (24%) who believe abortions can be permitted in certain circumstances, and 13% who are against abortion virtually all-together. One in ten (11%) don't know or prefer not to say their position on abortion.

Given a general acceptance of the status quo, it's not surprising that appetite for reopening the abortion debate in Canada is relatively low. Only one in three (32%, down 2 points) think the national government should 'reopen the issue of abortion', while over half (52%, up 6 points) think we should 'leave things the way they are'. One in five (16%, down 1 point) Canadians 'don't care one way or another'.

The net impact on the likelihood of Canadians to vote for the Liberals as a result of this announcement appears to be relatively minor. One quarter (22%) say Trudeau's position makes them more likely to vote for the federal Liberal Party, while nearly three in ten (27%) say this makes them less likely to support the Liberals, meaning the net impact on likeliness to vote for the Liberals is only slightly lower. For the most part, Canadians are not swayed either way by this announcement: half (51%) say it had no impact on their voting intentions.



## Trudeau's Announcement has Negative Impact in Ontario; Gives Liberals Boost in Québec and British Columbia...

- In the key battleground of **Ontario**, with its 106 seats in the House of Commons, Trudeau's emphasis on nominating pro-choice Liberal candidates has made one third (31%) of Ontarians less likely to support the party. This is compared to the one in five (19%) who said that it would make them more likely to support the Liberals, resulting in a -12 net impact on Ontarians likelihood to vote for the Liberals.
- However, in **Québec**, the announcement gave the Liberals a small boost, with a quarter (25%) reporting an increased likelihood to vote for the Liberals, while only two in ten (21%) report a diminished likelihood, resulting in a net impact of +4.
- Similarly, 27% of **British Columbians** report an increased likelihood of voting Liberal, compared to two in ten (22%) who said it has made them less likely to vote for the party. The net impact on likelihood to vote Liberal in BC is +5.

## Canadians with University Education More Sympathetic to Trudeau's position on Abortion...

• When asked about whether Trudeau had "the right to decide if he only wants prochoice candidates to run for the Liberals in the next election," four in ten (42%, +12 points compared to the Canadian average) Canadians with university educations agree. Conversely, only two in ten (22%) of those with less than a high school education agree with the statement.

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• This higher support for Trudeau's right to select candidates based on their views of abortion likely stems from the more status quo attitudes towards abortion found among Canadians with higher education. Over half (51%, 11 points higher than the national average) find the lack of a national abortion law acceptable and six in ten (63%, 11 points higher than the national average) prefer that the national government leave things the way they are when it comes to the issue of abortion.

These are some of the findings of an Ipsos Reid poll conducted between June 2<sup>nd</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup>, 2014 on behalf of CTV News. For this survey, a sample of 1,008 Canadians from Ipsos' Canadian online panel was interviewed online. Weighting was then employed to balance demographics to ensure that the sample's composition reflects that of the adult population according to Census data and to provide results intended to approximate the sample universe. 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 had all Canadians adults been polled. 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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- 4 -