

Nine in Ten (89%) Canadians Agree that Government Should Invest in Infrastructure to Create Jobs and Keep Economy Going during Downturn

But only 68% Agree if the Infrastructure Investment involves Running Deficits

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Nine in Ten (89%) Canadians Agree that Government Should Invest in Infrastructure to Create Jobs and Keep Economy Going during Downturn

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Toronto, ON – Nine in ten (89%) Canadians ‘agree’ (40% strongly/50% somewhat) that ‘governments should invest in new projects like roads, public transportation and local facilities so they can create jobs and keep the economy going during an economic downturn’, according to a new Ipsos poll conducted on behalf of Global news. Just one in ten (11%) ‘disagree’ (2% strongly/8% somewhat) with this position.

However, where the issue becomes more contentious is when it is suggested that deficits are run in order to fund these infrastructure investments. Two in three (68%) ‘agree’ (24% strongly/44% somewhat) that ‘governments should invest in new projects like roads, public transportation and local facilities during an economic downturn even if they have to run a deficit to do so’, while one in three (32%) ‘disagree’ (9% strongly/23% somewhat).

That Canadians appear so supportive of infrastructure spending to jumpstart the economy is likely a function of the fact that 15% of Canadians say that they, or someone in their household, is worried about losing their job or being laid off, with job anxiety being highest in Alberta (23%) and Saskatchewan and Manitoba (20%), followed by Quebec (17%), Ontario (14%), Atlantic Canada (11%) and British Columbia (9%). In addition, 7% nationally say that someone in their household has recently lost their job or been laid off.

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Thinking about who Canadians think is most responsible for investing in job creation during an economic downturn, a majority (51%) believes that responsibility falls to the federal government. Others believe that large corporations (17%), their provincial government (14% nationally, or 21% in Quebec), small and medium-sized businesses (14%) or their local municipal government (4%) is most responsible for investing in job creation during a downturn.

While most believe it's primarily the federal government's responsibility to help create jobs during a downturn, nine in ten (90%) still 'agree' (41% strongly/49% somewhat) that their provincial government should be investing in their community to create jobs', while one in ten (10%) 'disagree' (3% strongly/7% somewhat) that the provincial government should be involved in this manner.

Moreover, most (77%) 'agree' (22% strongly/55% somewhat) that their 'local municipal government can play a big role in helping their community weather difficult economic times'. One quarter (23%) 'disagrees' (5% strongly/18% somewhat) that a municipality can have such an impact.

It's often argued that a recession is an ideal time to undertake significant infrastructure investments because low demand for major projects often means that materials are cheaper and labour is more abundant – not to mention that borrowing costs are often lower. On this point, eight in ten (81%) 'agree' (31% strongly/51% somewhat) that 'governments should invest in new projects like roads, public transportation and local facilities so they can benefit from lower material and labour costs during an economic downturn'. Just two in ten (19%) 'disagree' (4% strongly/15% somewhat) with this opportunistic thinking.



These are some of the findings of an Ipsos poll conducted between September 22 and 25, 2015 on behalf of Global News. For this survey, a sample of 1005 Canadians was interviewed online via the Ipsos I-Say Panel (comprising ~150,000 panelists) and non-panel sources (river sampling). Given Ipsos' use of river sampling and a router to match respondents who may not qualify for other surveys with one they do qualify for (such as this poll), it is not possible to identify the number of respondents invited to participate in the survey, or a traditional measure of response rate. Weighting by region, age, gender was 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, 19 times out of 20, had all eligible voters been polled. The credibility interval will be wider among subsets of the population. 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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For more information on this news release, please contact:

**Sean Simpson
Vice President
Ipsos Public Affairs
(416) 572-4474**

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