



**GREENPEACE**

# **Canadians' views on Throne Speech promises**

**October 2020**



# Objectives and methodology

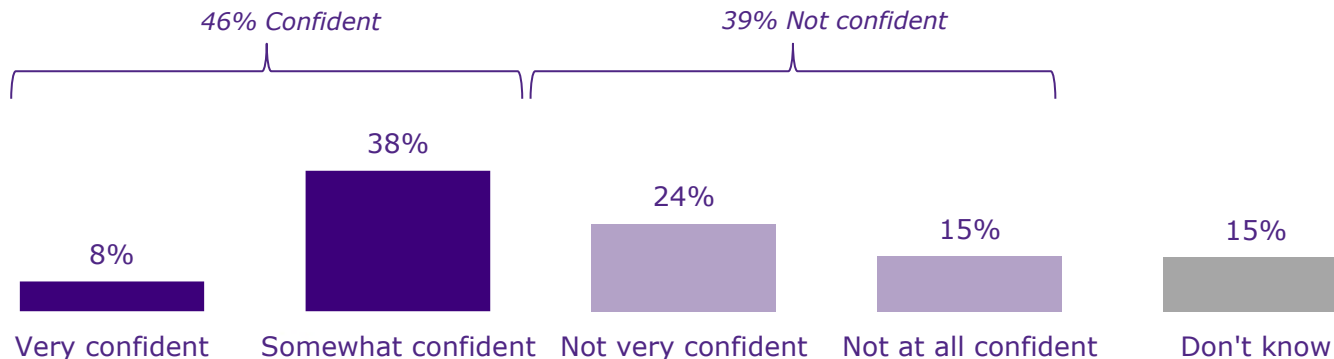
To understand Canadians opinions and expectations related to environmental promises made in the federal Throne Speech on September 23, 2020, Environics asked a series of questions on a national telephone omnibus survey.

The results are based on telephone interviews conducted with a representative sample of 1,000 adult Canadians, from October 6 to October 11, 2020. The margin of error for a random probability sample of this size is  $\pm 3.1$  percentage points at the 95% confidence level.

# Summary

- Canadians are not particularly optimistic about the federal government's accountability. Fewer than half (46%) are confident the government will deliver on the promises made in the Throne Speech, including very few (8%) who are very confident.
- Despite this uncertainty about the federal government's ability to follow through, Canadians are broadly supportive of the policies alluded to in the Throne Speech:
  - Green transition: By a three-to-one margin, Canadians prioritize federal investments in renewable energy (68%) over investments in fossil fuels (22%).
  - Job creation: The public believe it is important to prioritize jobs related to protecting nature and the environment (87%, including more than half who believe it is very important).
- Considering the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on people and the economy, a majority of Canadians (62%) think it is the right time for the federal government to address long-standing societal and environmental problems; one-third believe now is not the time.
- Canadians prefer that the federal government finance the economic recovery from COVID-19 by taxing those who can best afford it - the biggest polluters (35%) or the wealthiest Canadians (31%).

# Federal accountability for promises made



**There are mixed views about whether the federal government will deliver on the priorities laid out in the Throne Speech. Canadians tend to be more optimistic (46% confident) than pessimistic (39% not confident), but few (8%) are very confident the federal government will be accountable.**

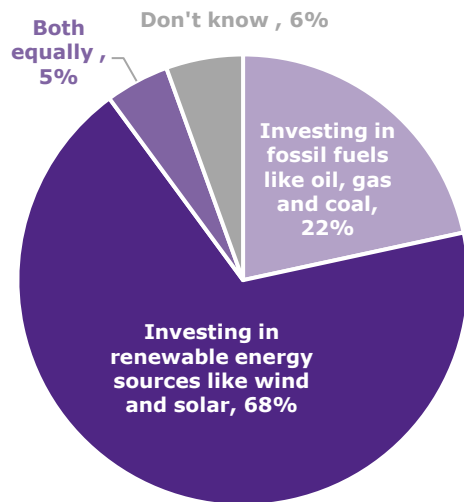
Confidence (very or somewhat) in the federal government's accountability is more widespread among:

- Residents of the Atlantic region (65%) and Ontario (54%, vs. 38% in the West and 39% in Quebec)
- Older Canadians (53% age 55+ vs. 42% age 18-54)

Confidence is closely linked to political affiliation; not surprisingly, it is strongest among Liberal supporters (74%, vs. 25% Conservative, 45% NDP and 40% Greens).

Q1. *In the recent Throne Speech, the federal government laid out its goals and priorities for the coming months and how it will work to achieve them. How confident are you that the federal government will deliver on these priorities?*

# Prioritization of a green transition



## By a three-to-one margin, Canadians support federal investments in renewable energy over fossil fuels.

A two-thirds majority (68%) say investing in renewable energy should be the federal government's priority for post-COVID recovery spending, compared to only two in ten (22%) who say fossil fuel investments should be the priority. Five percent volunteer the view that both deserve equal investment.

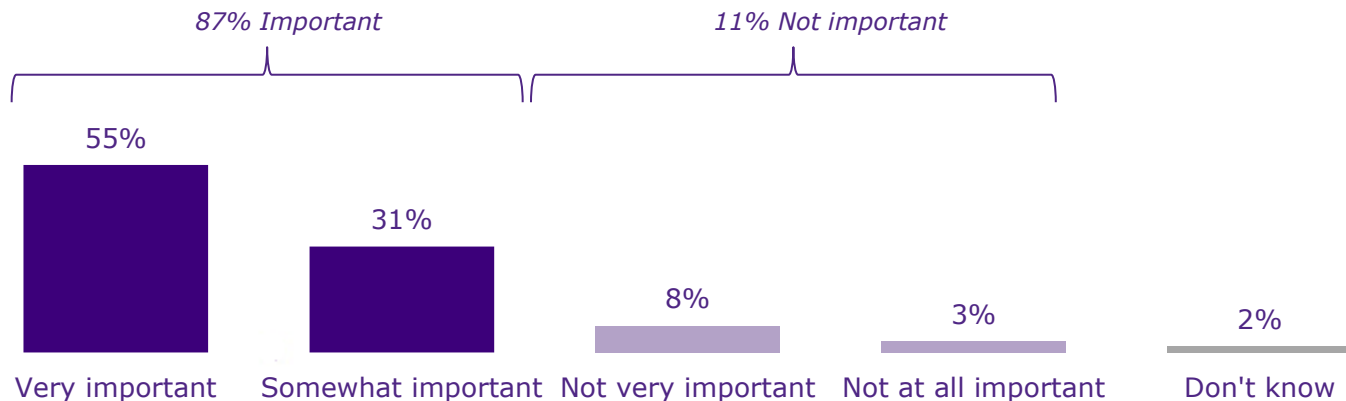
Prioritizing renewables is more widespread among Eastern and Central residents (77% Atlantic, 77% Quebec and 71% Ontario), but still represents a majority in the West (57%, including 56% in Alberta). Renewables are also more widely favoured by:

- Younger Canadians (80% aged 18-34, vs. 64% age 35+)
- Those with lower household incomes (78% under \$40k vs. 68% \$40k+)

Conservative supporters are divided in their support for renewable (40%) versus fossil fuel (45%) investments.

Q4. The federal government will be investing billions in the post-COVID economic recovery. Thinking about this new government spending, which of the following do you think should be the priority?

# Importance of prioritizing environment-related jobs

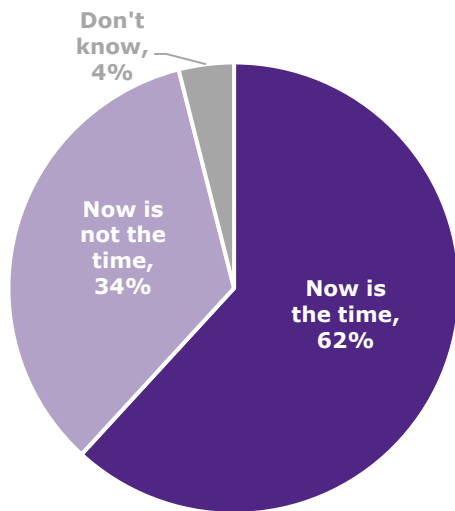


**Nearly nine in ten Canadians believe it is important to prioritize jobs related to nature and the environment, including more than half who believe it is very important.**

Belief that environment-related jobs are *very important* is notably higher in the Atlantic provinces (72% vs. 51% to 57% in the rest of Canada) and among those with lower household incomes (64% under \$40k vs. 50% \$80k+); this view is notably lower among Conservative supporters (34% very important), who are in turn much more likely than others to say this is *not important* (27%).

Q2. In the Throne Speech, the federal government promised to create jobs as part of its recovery plan. In your view, how important is to prioritize new jobs related to protecting and restoring nature and the environment?

## Transformational change



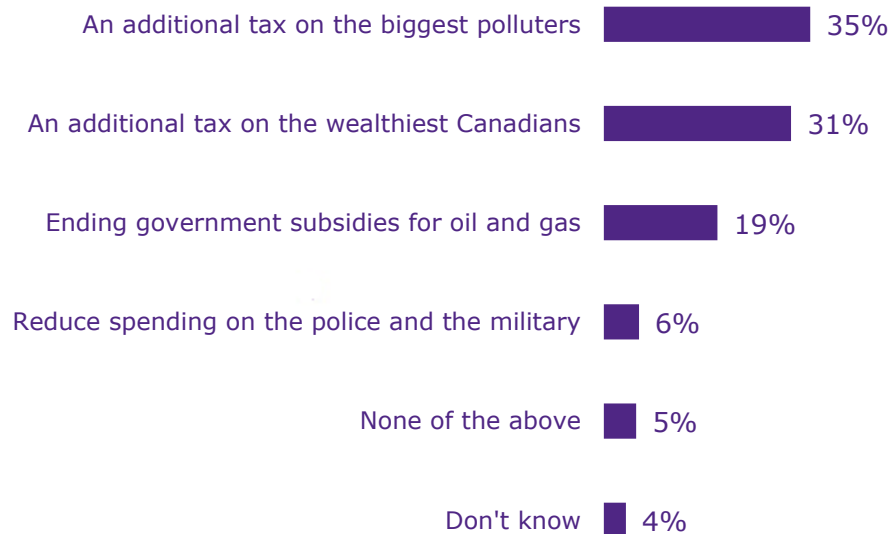
**Six in ten Canadians believe now is the time to make major changes to fix longstanding-problems such as inequality, climate change and racism, compared to one in three who believe it is not the time.**

Majorities in all population segments hold the view that *now is the time for change*; this view is more widespread by Canadians under 55 (66%, vs. 55% aged 55+)

While only a minority in any population segment believes *now is not the time*, this view is more widespread in the West (42%) and among Conservative supporters (63%) .

Q3. Thinking about the impacts that the COVID-19 pandemic has had on people and economy, would you say now is the time or now is not the time for the federal government to make major changes to fix long-standing problems in society, like inequality, climate change and racism?

## Paying for a green and just recovery



### Canadians think the economic recovery should be financed through more taxes on others.

When asked how the federal government should pay for the economic recovery from COVID-19, the top choices are an additional tax on either the biggest polluters (35%) or the wealthiest Canadians (31%). About one in five (19%) would prefer to end oil and gas subsidies; few in Canada (6%) would choose to defund the police/military.

These results are largely consistent across the population. However, Quebec residents are more likely than others to favour taxing polluters (42%) over taxing wealthy Canadians (15%). Taxing polluters is also a more popular choice among Green Party supporters (53%).

Q5. Which of the following would you most prefer the federal government use to pay for the economic recovery from COVID-19?



# For further information or questions



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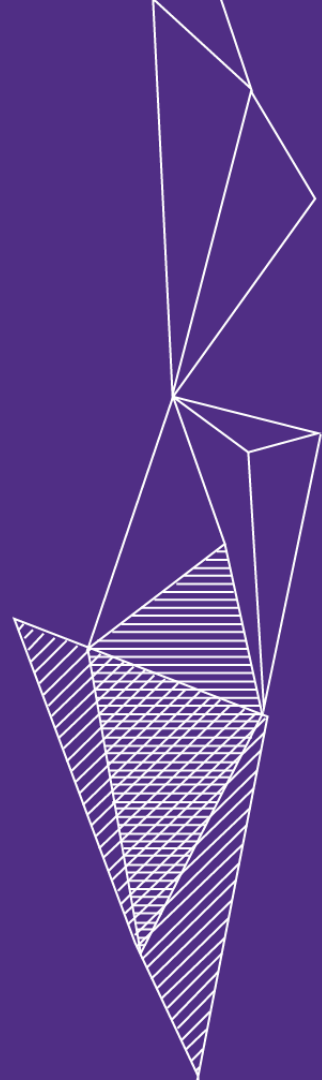


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