



Gouvernement
du Canada

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of Canada

BUDGET DAY FOCUS GROUPS

Report

Prepared for Finance Canada

Supplier name: Leger marketing inc.
Contract number: 60074-212074/001/CY
Contract value: \$59,192.50
Awarded date: 2022-03-24
Delivery date: 2021-04-22

Registration number: POR-142-21
For more information on this report, please contact Department of Finance Canada at:
por-rop@fin.gc.ca

Ce rapport est aussi disponible en français.

Canada

This public opinion research report presents the results of an online focus groups conducted by Léger Marketing Inc. on behalf of the Government of Canada. The research study was conducted with 30 Canadians on April 7th, 2022.

Cette publication est aussi disponible en français sous le titre :

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Department of finance

90 Elgin Street

Ottawa, ON K1A 0G5

Catalogue Number:

F2-291/2022E-PDF

International Standard Book Number (ISBN):

978-0-660-42780-5

Related publications (registration number POR-081-19): F2-291/2022F-PDF978-0-660-42782-9

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Executive Summary

Leger is pleased to present the Department of Finance Canada with this report on findings from qualitative online focus groups designed to learn about Canadians opinions and perceptions on the April 7, 2022, federal budget speech.

This report was prepared by Léger who was contracted by the Department of Finance Canada (contract number 60074-212074/001/CY awarded March 24, 2022).

1.1 Limitation of Results

The qualitative portion of the research provides insight into the opinions of a population, rather than providing a measure in percent of the opinions held, as would be measured in a quantitative study. The results of this type of research should be viewed as directional only. No inference to the general population can be done with the results of this research.

1.2 Methodology—Qualitative Research

Online Focus Groups and Moment to Moment Technology

Leger recruited participants by telephone, using a thorough screening process, and those who qualified were invited to attend a 2.5-hour online focus group. Leger recruited 40 participants across four focus groups (10 per group). Two groups were conducted in English and two in French. This research included moment-to-moment technology built into the online focus group environment.

Participants answered introductory questions while the Budget was being delivered (this also ensured participants did not watch the Budget in advance of the moment-to-moment evaluation) before providing real-time feedback using the moment-to-moment technology. Moment-to-moment technology allowed participants to evaluate the budget speech in a simulated real time context. Participants provided their emotional response on a scale while watching the video recording of the speech. The measurement scale used ranked from very negative to very positive.

The following table details the composition of the four focus groups and the actual number of participants in each.

Target	Number of participants
First time home buyers	8
Senior Canadians 65+	7
Millennials (Youth)	8
General population in the province of Quebec	7
TOTAL	30

1.3 Summary of Findings

The reactions to the budget presented were generally positive for most focus group participants. Indeed, most of them provided spontaneous positive reactions to the speech in general. Participants from the general population of Quebec had the most critical, but not overwhelmingly negative, verbal feedback of all groups. It should be noted that expectations were rather high as participants expected a strong government response to the less than favorable economic climate in the post-pandemic context. However, a lot of participants did not really know what to expect in terms of specific measures. That being said, young people and new homeowners were the most enthusiastic in terms of general expectations, while senior participants and those from the general population of Quebec had the most negative expectations.

The results of the dial test show a positive rating of the budget speech. The overall average out of 100% were all above the 50% mark, indicating a rather positive reception. English-speaking participants seemed to have been more critical compared to French-speaking participants: New homeowners had the lowest overall average (58.2), followed by seniors (60.7), the general Quebec population (67.1) and millennials (72.4).

Like the previous budget, there was considerable cynicism and doubt among participants about the government's willingness to fulfill its promises and move forward with these measures. Senior participants showed some optimism and hope in the face of this but many participants in all the groups struggled to see how the measures presented will impact them personally or their family members. This perception that the budget will not have a direct impact on their lives seems to be fuelling the observed estrangement from the budget for some.

Overall, it is the housing measures that generated the most discussion among participants following the budget speech and were of significant interest to many. The discussion quickly turned to more practical aspects of the measures, including the timeframe of the proposed measure (10 years) and who will be able to benefit from the measure. Still reactions were mostly positive.

Group 1 – Seniors (English)

The budget items that received highest ratings from the seniors' focus group were:

- Overall, the budget touched on a lot of important things: Housing; Military; Climate. These were all noted as things that Canada needs to do something about.
- The military investment was noted by several participants as the main positive measure presented in this year's federal budget. Several participants even mentioned it was time Canada did its part and strengthened its military.
- The mention about affordable housing was also well received by the seniors. Most of them being retired, this was a measure they were hoping the budget would cover, so they were happy to see the government had a plan in that regard. Some of the participants had concerns about the mention of "doing it fast". They agreed that more housing is needed, but it needs to be done right, rather than fast.

Overall, there was not a great deal of enthusiasm in this group for the budget nor strong negative responses. Nothing really stood out to them as a big talking point.

The budget items that appeared to garner less support were:

- Most participants felt the budget touched on a lot of important priorities for Canada but was limited to more general statements as opposed to clearly outlined initiatives. There was no clear plan on how these priorities would be addressed.
- A few senior participants from Saskatchewan were impressed and surprised by how specific the details on electric cars and charging stations were presented. *“Seems this was the one point where details were provided and not Canada’s biggest issue right now”*.
- As mentioned, the housing measure was well received by this group, but the pace ‘double in 2 years’ was concerning:
 - It was not clear how that would get done
 - It made them worry that building would be rushed and therefore builders would cut corners and the result would be shoddy housing
- A few people said there was too much focus on the Ukraine issue. They felt that a few comments around increased military spending would have been enough given it was perceived as a domestic budget speech.

Items missing from the budget

- Participants mentioned that the budget did not include specific measures for seniors.
- While healthcare funding and health transfers had been mentioned frequently during the pre-budget discussion, participants outlined this was absent from the speech as well.
- Many seniors commented how little was mentioned in the speech about the pandemic itself and what they could expect for the coming months, as if the motto was simply to “move on”.
- As with some other groups, seniors also mentioned that Indigenous communities were not directly mentioned or addressed in the budget speech.

Group 2 – First time home buyers

Budget items that received highest ratings from homebuyers

- The Minister’s highlighting of the post pandemic economic recovery was positively viewed by homebuyers. Of note was the fact that the economy has recovered 112% of the jobs lost at the height of the pandemic. This saw high positive reaction on the dial test.
- Childcare was received positively. Reactions to this during the dial test spiked. However, when circling back to group participants there were questions on how much this plan would cost. As well, some were apprehensive about supporting a program that they would not be using (primarily those who did not have kids of childcare age).
- The budget’s mention of Canada’s role and position on the Ukraine – Russia war was seen positively. Specifics about the conflict received negative reactions on the dial test, but

when the Minister spoke about Canada's direct support of the Ukrainian military and the need to continue this, reactions were positive.

- When discussing pillar 1 – investing in people, homebuyers had positive reactions to the mention that housing is both a basic human need and an economic imperative. When the Minister presented solutions to the housing crisis such as doubling the construction of new homes, the dial test registered a positive uptick. However, in the post-budget discussion, respondents were less convinced that the construction of new homes would solve the housing crisis. Most agreed with the statement that there is not a single silver bullet to solve the housing affordability crisis in Canada.

Budget items that appear to be less supported

- The discussion on the debt, especially the debt related to the pandemic saw negative reactions. Most homebuyers expressed apprehension and unease about the national debt leading into the budget.
- The discussion on the environment and the green transition received less favourable reactions from homebuyers. The group did not tend to score high positive reactions during this section of the budget, with dial test results hovering above and below the 50-mark line. Few mentioned the environment in the post-budget discussion and among those who did, the discussion hinged on the fact that there is a lack of incentives for electric vehicle purchasing or renewable energy retrofits for their homes.

Items missing from the budget

- In the post budget discussion, homebuyers mentioned that they wished they heard more for renters. There were no mentions about rent control or specific supports to those who are currently renting in order to address the housing affordability crisis.
- Some homebuyers also noted that the budget did not include anything related to health care. The pandemic had exposed shortfalls within provincial health care systems such as hallway medicine and they heard nothing on this.

Group 3 – French Language Millennials (youth)

The budget items that received highest ratings by Millennials were:

- The mention of measures for affordable housing and home ownership had the most positive impact on participants. Many felt that these measures would have a direct impact on their household.
- The additional investment in the military was well received by millennials. The line went up considerably when it was mentioned that this investment would allow the country to deal with any threats we might face.
- Canada's aid to Ukraine (in money and missiles) has also been well received by the Millennials.
- Social measures and those on sustainable development (affordable housing for all, access to home ownership for future generations, fight against climate change, a good health care system, mental health care, equal society for all) that were quickly mentioned

towards the end of the speech were received positively. However, participants were eager to see how they would be implemented.

The budget items that appeared to be less supported by Millennials were:

- Investments in critical minerals and metals were not well received by Millennials.
- During the part of the speech about the conflict in Ukraine, said it was expressed, through the voice of the translator, that we must “fight for peace” (“*Se battre pour la paix*”). This expression was disturbing for some participants. The line went down considerably at this point. Some mentioned the contraction of the words “fight” and “peace” and stressed the fact that we should not fight for peace.

Missing items were:

- While investment in Canadian innovation and talent was well received by participants, some mentioned that lack of jobs was not an issue at the moment, but labour shortage was. Wage and minimum wage increases should have been addressed in their opinion.
- Many participants were looking forward to the environmental measures but were disappointed by the announcement that electric vehicle batteries would be manufactured in Canada, as they felt that this was not the appropriate measure to address the significant environmental problems the country is facing: fighting climate change should be done on other battlefronts rather than that of electric vehicles.
- Some participants were surprised that there were no measures for seniors, people living with disabilities or Indigenous communities.

Group 4 – General Population of Quebec

The budget items that received highest ratings from the Quebec participants were:

- Affordable childcare - Making daycares affordable for all parents with a set pricing of \$10/day in three years was one of the highlights for participants. However, some flags were raised regarding the quality of daycare offered, as well as the recruiting of daycare workers amidst the labour shortage.
- Affordable electric vehicles - Making electric vehicles affordable to the middle class was also positively received. This was however not perceived as being enough of an answer to the climate change crisis, and electricity prices were a source of worry.
- Putting a stop to real estate/property speculation - This was one of the most well-received measures, as foreign investments in Canada were perceived as a threat to Canadian resources and to the Canadian population's access to affordable housing.
- Building housing - Building affordable housing in order to improve access to property was seen as a positive measure overall, but questions about unsafe, unsanitary housing were raised, as this is an issue that needs to be fixed as well. In addition to that, concerns about the rapidly increasing rents and cost of properties were also brought up: *“It is nice to build new housing, but if it still is not affordable, then what is the point?”*
- Investments in research and innovation received positive marks all around.

The budget items that appeared to be less supported by the Quebec participants were:

- Increased security and military investments - This measure was perceived negatively by some Quebecers as they considered other priorities to be more important. Investment in the military was perceived negatively by all participants.
- Creation of the Canadian growth fund – While the measure about supporting research and innovation was well received, it is the creation of a federal agency that will oversee this measure that faced criticism from participants. Federal agencies were seen as a bureaucratic and inefficient organizations. Participants were sceptical about those funds reaching the rightful targets and people, they pointed out the fact that CERB was received by many individuals who they felt did not need it.

Missing items or questions participants expressed about the budget speech:

- Measures to provide safe and affordable housing for Indigenous peoples who live in precarious conditions.
- Further measures to address climate change: no measures about oil and oil extraction operations, nor the transition towards green energies after oil resources run dry.
- Concerns about how Ukrainian refugees will be handled once in Canada were also raised: where will they be housed?
- No measures concerning seniors and people living with disabilities.

1.4 Notes on The Interpretation of The Findings

The opinions and observations expressed in this document do not reflect those of the Department of Finance of Canada. This report was compiled by Leger based on research conducted specifically for this project.

Given the nature of the qualitative research undertaken, some of the findings related here will take the form of figures, numerical ratings and some comparisons will be made between different groups present in the qualitative exercise. Participants had to evaluate the budget speech in real time using a dial with numerical figures and were asked to privately answer some polling questions appearing on their computer screens. However, the reader is advised to exercise caution when reading the analysis which follows as the process remains qualitative in nature and therefore does not allow for statistical inference to be made to a larger population. The “results” presented are only directional in nature and are used to be reflective on what went on during the qualitative exercise.

1.5 Declaration of Political Neutrality and Contact Information

I hereby certify, as chief agent of Leger, that the deliverables are in full compliance with the neutrality requirements of the [Policy on Communications and Federal Identity](#) and the [Directive on the Management of Communications—Appendix C](#) (Appendix C: Mandatory Procedures for Public Opinion Research).

Specifically, the deliverables do not include information on electoral voting intentions, political party preferences, party positions, or the assessment of the performance of a political party or its leaders.

Signed by:



Christian Bourque
Executive Vice President and Associate
Leger
507 Place d'Armes, Suite 700
Montréal, Quebec
H2Y 2W8
cbourque@leger360.com

2.0 Detailed Results – Qualitative Research

Overall, the federal budget was well received by participants, as all groups had an average rating higher than 50. When looking at the dial test results globally speaking, participants who were 18 to 34 years old were the ones who appreciated the budget the most (70.3), followed by men (66.5), women (63.1), those over 55 years old (60.3) and those aged 35-54 years old (58.6). Quebec participants also gave higher ratings to the budget speech compared to those from the rest of Canada (69.9 compared to 59.2 respectively).

In terms of groups, millennials came out first in terms of positive rating (72.4), followed by the Quebec general population (67.1), seniors (60.7), and first-time homebuyers who were last (58.2). The measures that garnered the highest ratings were banning foreign investors from investing in real estate (84), making life affordable for Canadian trade workers and low-pay workers (76), \$10/day daycare (76), helping Canadians and businesses develop new intellectual property (74) and fairness in the tax system (83).

While most feedback on the dial test was positive, participants in all groups had a “Wait and see” attitude towards it. They were skeptical towards the new measures, fearing they might turn into unkept promises, and were eager to see how they would be implemented.

2.1 First Time Homebuyers

2.1.1 Dial test results

First-time homebuyers had the lowest average score among all groups (58.2).

Among this group, the highest ratings were given to healthcare system mentions (79), creating middle class jobs (84), Canada’s GDP growth (76), the ban on foreign real estate investments (81), and \$10 a day daycare (72). On the other hand, the lowest ratings were given to references to inflation and the increase of gas prices (19), the easier welcoming of skilled immigrant workers (41) and the atrocities committed by Putin and his regime in Ukraine (29).

2.1.2 Poll results and discussion

Prior to the speech, there were as many participants who said that Canada was headed in the right direction as there were saying it was headed in the wrong direction. Those who felt like it was going in the right direction mentioned the fact that the government of Canada was giving more attention to issues that directly affect the daily lives of the population, such as dental care and housing affordability. They also appreciated that they were putting more effort into fighting climate change and focusing on more vulnerable minorities like people with disabilities and Indigenous peoples. The ban on foreign real estate investments and the vaccine efforts were also measures that were brought up as hints that Canada is going the right way. On the other hand,

those who felt Canada was going in the wrong direction mainly thought so because of vaccine mandates and proof of vaccination systems, the cost of gas, inflation, and housing prices.

The current state of the Canadian economy was rated as poor by half the participants, and none gave a rating higher than “good.” The majority of participants described the state of their finances as fair or poor.

Participants were divided about whether the Canadian economy is now stronger or weaker than this time last year. Those who perceived the economy to be stronger now justified their answer with the reopening of businesses after COVID closures that was accompanied with a lower unemployment rate. Other participants were either negative or dubious, as they felt it was too early to tell, or that things could go either way. Similarly, participants were also divided as to whether the economy will be stronger or weaker in the next six months.

Half of participants agreed that the federal government was pursuing policies that focus on helping middle class families, and the other half disagreed. Childcare and daycare support was perceived as a positive measure, even though more work is to be done. On the other hand, those who had a more negative view felt like they can never earn enough money to stay on top of things and afford housing. Single individuals and those with a single household income are also left on the sidelines according to participants.

Opinions regarding the federal government’s actions to help Indigenous people were also varied. The main reason among those who disagreed was that access to water and housing are basic human needs that are not provided to Indigenous communities. Those who agreed explained their positive vision of the budgets that are spent on Indigenous communities, even though they felt that those who need it the most are not the ones to get it.

Regarding gender equity, half the participants agreed that the federal government was taking positive steps to reach the goal, and the other half either disagreed or did not provide an answer. Those who agreed mentioned the changes in terms of the visibility of gender identity minorities, while those who did not mentioned a lack of perceived action from the federal government to address sexual harassment and abuse.

No participant agreed with the statement that the federal government is working to improve fairness in the tax system. Regarding job creation, most participants agreed the federal government was taking positive steps as they noted some efforts were made regarding trade-related jobs and other job opportunities.

When it came to climate change, opinions were divided, but federal government efforts to implement the price on pollution system as well as support for solar projects were mentioned.

Regarding the impact of the federal budget on personal finances, half the participants did not provide an answer as they were not sure, while others mostly disagreed. Gas prices and insufficient rebates for electric vehicles were mentioned.

Opinions were also torn regarding the federal government's efforts to support young people and seniors. When it came to the latter, participants felt there was a lack of support, be it financial or medical. Opinions were also torn about federal government support to people with disabilities. Initiatives to integrate people with disabilities into the workforce were saluted, along with the integration and reducing stigma towards people with autism, but on the other hand, eligibility to apply for disability is still perceived as lackluster as people who genuinely need where seen to not qualify but have no other options.

Government of Canada efforts to grow the Canadian economy were acknowledged, as the COVID recovery is going well according to participants. But when it came to housing affordability, participants felt that a lot more efforts could be made, as middle-income individuals did not find affordable housing, even when it comes to renting. The lack of programs to make first-home purchases accessible was also mentioned.

Regarding expectations towards the federal budget, some participants were somewhat positive while others were negative or did not offer an opinion. Those who had negative expectations mentioned the government debt, while those who had somewhat positive expectations were hoping that the budget would focus on uncertainty and affordability of the cost of living.

After the speech, all indicators saw a positive evolution. The vast majority of participants said that Canada was going in the right direction, half of the participants rated the current state of the economy as good or very good, and many of them felt that the Canadian economy would be stronger in the next six months.

Agreement with the different statements regarding the federal government's efforts to support various initiatives and groups of people also increased. More participants agreed that the government was taking positive steps to create jobs, fight climate change, help middle class families and younger people, grow the Canadian economy, invest in research and innovation, and address housing affordability.

However, when discussing their ratings, the general feeling among participants was that the budget speech contained a lot of promises, and whether those promises would be kept was left to see. Some reacted negatively to defense and military investments, and efforts towards making electric cars affordable were seen as insufficient, as participants expressed concerns about hazardous waste from discarded batteries. Housing efforts were also deemed inadequate, with some noting there were no measures geared toward controlling high rental prices. Several had concerns about the associated costs of implementing a \$10 a day daycare system.

Overall, the budget was perceived as somewhat positive as it met most participants' expectations, and the language used was deemed clear and easy to understand. However, a majority of participants did not believe the budget would have a direct impact on their financial situation.

2.2 Senior Canadians

2.2.1 Dial test results

Overall, the federal budget left senior participants somewhat lacklustre. Throughout the broadcasting of the budget, the average rating for seniors was among the lowest of the four groups (60.7), and these participants had the least variation in their dial test results.

The items that received the most positive responses for this group were regarding affordable housing, especially when mentioning controlling foreign investors from buying homes, the defense policy review, and the mention of a robust tax system and the creation of good middle class jobs.

When compared to all participants, seniors gave a significantly lower rating when the situation in Ukraine was raised (25.9 vs 47.9).

Among this group, the highest ratings were given to military investments (89), creating middle class jobs (86), the ban on foreign real estate investments (88), and the investment in innovation (72). On the other hand, the lowest ratings were given when inflation and the increase of gas prices (46), the easier welcoming of skilled immigrant workers (44) and the atrocities committed by Putin and his regime in Ukraine were highlighted (38).

2.2.2 Poll results and discussion

Prior to watching the federal budget, senior participants were divided in their opinion on whether Canada was headed in the right direction or not. When asked why they felt Canada was heading in the right direction, some participants mentioned the movement they are seeing in the daycare sector, on a national scale. Some also mentioned that the country was heading in the right direction, but at a lumbering pace. For participants who felt Canada was going in the wrong direction, they mentioned that even though the federal government knows what the country's problems are, they are not taking care of it. The majority of the group agreed that the Government of Canada handled the pandemic well, but participants who felt Canada is heading in the wrong direction were worried about the resulting large deficits, and called for more fiscal restraint going forward.

Senior participants were again divided when rating the current state of the Canadian economy. Overall, they gave ratings ranging from "poor" to "good". Pandemic-related spending was again raised by participants as a reason for these scores, along with various lockdowns and restrictions that impacted businesses and led to job losses. Some participants also mentioned that the media could be the main reason they feel the economy is not good, based on a sense that the media focused on negative events.

The current state of their own finances was rated everywhere between poor to very good by the participants. Many participants mentioned the current state of their finances are fair or poor, while some described their finances states as good or very good.

Compared to this time last year, seniors were yet again divided on the matter of the Canadian economy. Many participants felt like the economy is stronger, while some believed it is weaker.

When thinking about the next six months, most of the senior participants thought that the economy of Canada would not change or that it would be stronger. The uncertainty related to the pandemic seemed to have no more impact on the participants this far down the road.

Prior to watching the budget, participants were divided on their opinion with regards to the federal government pursuing policies that focus on helping middle class families. Indeed, some participants agreed with the statement, others disagreed, and some even strongly disagreed with the statement. We observed a change in opinion for most of the participants when they were asked the same question after watching the budget announcement: most seniors agreed that the federal government is pursuing policies that focus on helping middle class families.

Regarding the steps taken by the federal government to help Indigenous peoples, most seniors disagreed while only a small number agreed prior to watching the budget. We observed some movement in opinion after watching the budget, with opinion more evenly split between agree and disagree.

About the federal government taking positive steps to improve gender equity, the majority of the participants agreed with that statement prior to the budget presentation, and their opinion remained the same after watching the budget presentation.

Regarding fairness in the tax system, the agreement level of senior participants was low, ranging between strongly disagree to agree. No movement could be observed on their opinion on the matter after watching the budget.

When it came to the federal government taking positive steps to create jobs, the majority of the senior participants agreed. Only a few participants disagreed to some extent. After watching the budget, the majority of the participants who disagreed prior to watching it changed their opinion on the matter.

Senior participants were more divided when thinking about the federal government taking positive steps to protect the environment and fight climate change. Many agreed, while many disagreed. After watching the budget, the majority agreed when presented with that same statement. When discussing the matter, many participants were surprised that the measures presented about the environment and fighting climate change were the only ones presented so precisely, with a concrete plan of what needs to be done and how it will be done.

Prior to the budget speech, senior participants were unsure on how the economic plan would benefit their personal finances. Some agreed, some disagreed, and others strongly disagreed. Opinions did not shift after watching the budget. When discussing the budget after watching it,

some participants mentioned seniors were completely left out. This can also be seen in their opinion with regards to the federal government taking positive steps to support seniors. While some agreed and some disagreed prior to viewing the budget, participants were left more divided after viewing the budget.

As was the case for many of the discussed statements prior to viewing the budget, seniors were also divided on whether the federal government was taking positive steps to support young people, to support persons with disabilities, to grow the Canadian economy, to make it easier for business to invest in research and innovation and to address housing affordability. These divisions between participants remained for most of the measures after the viewing of the budget. Movement was observed regarding the government taking positive steps to make it easier for businesses to invest in research and innovation, with a majority of seniors agreeing the government is showing positive movement in that direction. Movement was also observed with regard to addressing housing affordability.

After viewing the budget, senior participants had a generally positive impression of what they had just heard, but still mentioned some reservations. Measures to help address affordable housing, military investments and affordable childcare were all highlighted as interesting measures by participants. On the other hand, some participants pointed out that there could have been more ambitious parameters to these measures. All in all, the budget was deemed interesting by senior participants. Participants all agreed that the budget was delivered in an accessible and easy-to-understand manner.

The announcements made in the budget did not have a direct impact on the outlook of senior participants on the near future. After viewing the budget, most thought that it was positive (very or somewhat), and one participant thought that it was somewhat negative. All participants agreed that the language used in the budget speech was clear and easy to understand. Regarding their expectations for the budget, results are divided. Almost half of participants said that the budget met their expectations, while the other half said otherwise. Most participants thought that what was said in the budget speech will not have an impact on them or their household while a few thought that the measures will have an impact.

2.3 Millennials (youth)

2.3.1 Dial test results

Millennial participants were those who gave the highest average appreciation score among the four groups (72.4).

The items that received the most positive responses from this group were the social measures and those on sustainable development (affordable housing for all, access to home ownership for future generations, fight against climate change, a good health care system, mental health care, equal society for all) that were mentioned towards the end of the speech. The lowest score in the speech was when the minister mentioned the conflict in Ukraine and the actions of Putin in that country.

2.3.2 Polls results and discussion

Prior to the budget announcement, a majority of participants in this group said they felt that Canada was headed in the right direction, while one participant felt it was headed in the wrong direction and the rest did not choose a direction. The participant who felt Canada is heading in the wrong direction mentioned the rising cost of living. For participants who thought Canada is heading in the right direction, some mentioned the decrease in the deficit. Others mentioned the fact that the federal government did manage the COVID-19 crisis well, including respecting human rights, even if it was difficult at times.

Many participants gave a fair rating to the Canadian economy stating that everything is more expensive, which is particularly onerous for young people. When thinking about their personal finances, responses were pretty divided, but many thought that their finances were good. Participants mentioned that they were trying to save more and in a more intelligent way, because the future is uncertain, especially in a context of rising costs. A majority of participants thought that there was no change in the economy of the country compared to last year and they were unsure if the economy would get stronger or weaker in the next six months.

Prior to the budget, the majority of participants agreed that the federal government took positive steps to improve gender equity, fairness in the tax system for businesses and individuals, to create jobs and to grow the Canadian economy. Most disagreed that the government took positive steps to support young Canadians and seniors, or to address housing affordability. Finally, the results of the surveys were quite divided regarding the help provided to middle class families, Indigenous people, fight climate change, and support to persons with disabilities.

Thinking about the federal budget, half the participants had somewhat positive expectations, while the other half did not know what to expect. Some participants mentioned that they hoped the budget would help those who need it most. Similarly, some participants mentioned that they would like to see increased taxation of the wealthiest in Canada.

Other participants mentioned they would like to see housing, food security and inflation addressed in the budget. Participants in this group also had environmental expectations for this budget. One hoped there would be a focus on returning to balanced budgets, following increased spending to manage COVID-19 impacts.

After viewing the budget, all the participants of this group agreed that Canada is headed in the right direction. While results were still divided regarding the state of the Canadian economy, rating from very good to poor, most thought that the Canadian economy will be stronger in the next six months.

The measures announced in the budget seemed to have an impact on participants' opinions of the federal government in certain areas. More specifically, most participants agreed that the government is taking measures to help middle-class families, that they are taking actions to fight climate change, that they support young Canadians and that they are taking positive steps to address housing affordability. After viewing the budget, almost all participants also agreed that the economic plan will benefit their personal finances and that the government is taking positive steps to grow the Canadian economy.

All participants agreed that what they heard in the budget speech was very or somewhat positive. Most participants of this group thought that the budget speech met their expectations, while some thought that it did not.

Half of the participants thought that the measures announced in the budget will have a direct impact on their household, while the other half didn't think so or didn't know. Measures on affordable housing and home ownership assistance for first-time buyers appeared to be the measures that participants believe will have the greatest impact on finances.

Among other positive elements, participants mentioned investments in innovation and environmental measures, notably the emphasis on moving to a green economy. Assistance to Ukraine was also an element appreciated by most of the participants.

Among the negative elements, the participants of this group noted mainly incomplete or missing measures, such as an emphasis on electric vehicles rather than public transportation to address climate change.

Moreover, the absence of concrete measures concerning seniors, people living with disabilities, Indigenous peoples and homeless persons bothered some participants. All in all, there were more positive than negative elements in the eyes of the participants, but they are waiting to see how they will be implemented in practice, with some expressing skepticism.

To conclude, most agreed that the language used in the speech was clear and easy to understand.

2.4 General Population of Quebec

2.4.1 Dial test results

Overall, the general population of Quebec group had the second highest average dial test rating (67.1). The rating only went below 50 a few times.

Measures pertaining to building more housing, banning foreign investors from buying homes in Canada for two years, reducing childcare fees, and electric vehicles along with support to Canadians and small businesses regarding intellectual property and jobs were the most well received measures.

On the other hand, the lowest ratings occurred when references were made to the recession during the first COVID wave, the increase in prices, last year's promise of making daycare affordable that was received with skepticism at the time, the Ukrainian crisis and the military investments.

2.4.1 Polls results and discussion

Prior to viewing the budget presentation, a majority of participants stated that Canada was going in the wrong direction. The main reason for this opinion was the perceived inaction of the federal government regarding climate change, the deficit, the rising cost of living and housing, and tax evasion. Some participants stated they were pessimistic about the future as they do not have any plans in terms of personal finances and future savings, considering the inflation levels and the rising cost of basic needs such as food and housing. On the other hand, some participants said that things were going in the right direction, as they felt that while there was a lot of room for improvement, Canada was still doing relatively well compared to other countries.

Regarding the current state of the Canadian economy, it was perceived as "good" at most. Half of the participants said it was either bad or fair. Qualitative feedback converged towards the same opinions: Canada is doing well in regard to creating wealth and having a high GDP, but the federal budget is not focused on the right things. While some confusion between federal and provincial responsibilities existed, participants mentioned that a lot of Canadian resources benefited the United States before Canada because of the high volume of exports, and expenditures in the fight against climate change were brought up again, as they were deemed insufficient. The childcare situation was also brought up as participants felt more effort to make it affordable could be made.

The general opinion was that the Canadian economy had deteriorated, and federal government spending, notably related to COVID-19 measures, such as the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB), contributed to further increasing the national debt. Participants felt that there had been a number of issues with the CERB, such as fraudulent claims and loose qualification criteria (e.g., a perception that individuals who did not previously work and did not need any government aid were still eligible and received CERB). Again, participants questioned how COVID funds had been distributed, and how much tax fraud had occurred.

And in the future, participants expected either no change or a further worsening of the economy in the near term. Participants were unaware of any initiatives that would bolster government finances within six months.

When it came to personal finances, opinions varied widely. Those who considered their situation to be good, very good or excellent mainly thought so because they had some savings, did not require any government aid, or because they had no debt. On the other hand, those who felt their situation was fair or poor pointed to the difficulty of saving money because of the increasing cost of living. The adverse effect of the pandemic on personal finances and savings was brought up by several participants.

Regarding the evaluation of the federal government's actions towards different groups, opinions were overall diverse. Gender equity, research and innovation along with job creation were the fields where participants felt the government was placing the most effort. On the other hand, climate change and helping senior citizens, and helping the Canadian economy recover were the fields where participants felt the government's efforts were lacking.

Expectations towards the 2022 federal budget were negative, as a majority of participants said they had somewhat negative expectations, and the rest did not know.

Overall, all the indicators showed a positive increase after the presentation of the speech¹.

All participants agreed that the language used during the budget presentation was clear and easy to understand. A higher proportion of participants felt like the federal government was implementing concrete measures to solve various issues. Gender equity, research and innovation, job creation, housing affordability, personal finances and the Canadian economy were the fields where participant opinions changed positively after the budget presentation. On the other hand, their sense that the government was not doing enough to help Indigenous peoples and people living with disabilities was reinforced, as no concrete measures were mentioned.

However, most of the participants did not feel like the measures presented would have a direct impact on their personal situation. And while the budget presentation was perceived positively by a majority of participants, as many participants stated in the subsequent discussion that the budget did not meet their expectations. Positive answers to polling questions were nuanced with qualitative feedback that was more skeptical towards whether the government would actually fulfill all of the budget initiatives.

Participants expressed several reservations about the measures announced. Regarding the plan to double the rate of new housing units, participants were skeptical about the timeframe that was given, as ten years was considered too long term. Some also did not see how building more housing would counter rising housing prices. In addition to that, the Ukrainian crisis was also mentioned and Canada's capacity to welcome Ukrainians fleeing their country was questioned.

¹ As one participant left the focus group midway because of technical issues, comparison with post-budget poll results needs to be interpreted with caution.

However, the ban on foreign real estate investors was seen as highly positive, as speculation was seen as an important problem that Canada is facing because of foreign investments.

While the measures to cut childcare fees by half and reduce them to \$10/day on average in three years were received positively, participants were unsure about the quality of these childcare centres, and how they would be staffed amidst labour shortages.

The usefulness of further investments in the military was questioned, as these expenditures were perceived very negatively by this group. Expenditures to support war efforts were not perceived as a priority compared to issues like housing and climate change, which were considered more urgent.

Finally, participants were happy about the move to make electric vehicles affordable, but they did not deem this measure was a strong enough response to climate change. They also felt that the speech did not effectively address environmental issues related to the oil and gasoline sector.

Conclusions

All in all, the budget was well received by participants overall. Measures regarding affordable childcare, affordable housing (especially the ban on foreign real estate investments) and fairness in the tax system were especially positive. The measures aimed at fighting climate change were also appreciated, even though they were not deemed enough. On the other hand, investments in the Canadian Armed Forces were perceived less positively than other measures.

The budget speech had a positive impact on participants' opinions towards the federal government's actions to ensure a strong economy moving forward. However, participants did not feel that the budget measures would impact their daily lives and their personal finances. They also felt there were insufficient green measures, and measures aimed at supporting vulnerable and marginalized communities (people with disabilities, seniors, Indigenous peoples). While many participants stated the budget met their expectations, reservations remained as to its concrete implementation and the effects on their personal finances.

Appendix

A.1 Qualitative Methodology

Online Focus Groups and Moment to Moment Technology

Leger has recruited participants by telephone, using a thorough screening process, and those who qualified were invited to attend a 2-hour online focus group. Leger recruited 40 participants to achieve 10 participants per focus group. Two groups were conducted in English and two in French. This research included moment-to-moment technology built into the online focus group environment. Because some technical difficulties were met during the focus groups, interviews went on for an additional half an hour, for a total of two hours and a half. Participants received a higher incentive in order to compensate.

Participants answered introductory questions while the Budget was being delivered (to ensure participants did not watch the Budget in advance of the moment-to-moment evaluation) before providing real-time feedback using the moment-to-moment technology. Moment-to-moment technology allowed participants to evaluate the budget speech in real time. Participants provided their emotional response on a scale while watching the video recording of the speech. The measurement scale used ranked from very negative to very positive.

Target	Language	Number of participants
First time home buyers	English	8
Senior Canadians 65+	English	7
Millennials (Youth)	French	8
General population in the province of Quebec	French	7
TOTAL		30

Recruitment was carried out by professional recruiters. The recruitment guide (available in the appendix B) ensured that the participants met the profiles sought for each session and that they were equipped to participate in an online discussion session. To do so, they had to confirm that they had a high-speed Internet connexion, a computer or a laptop. Recruitment of participants was done through the Leo panel. The initial incentive was \$150, and an additional \$50 was awarded to participants who stayed until the end of the interview to complete the post-speech survey.

Moderation

All focus group sessions were moderated and supervised by a senior Leger researcher assisted by a research analyst. The discussion guide (available in the appendix C) consisted of a semi-structured discussion guide. It allowed the moderator to follow the thread of the discussion and ensured that an array of themes were covered while leaving sufficient room for the participants to express themselves and develop in detail their experiences, ideas, opinions and perceptions.

A.2 Screening Guide

DISCUSSION GROUPS DESCRIPTION (General Population)

The discussion groups will be held online.

The target population for this whole research project is comprised of different groups of Canadians adults 18 and over:

The objective is to recruit 10 participants per discussion group.

	DATE / HEURE	PARTICIPANT PROFILE
GROUP 1 10 participants		Group in French with Youth/millennials <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Adults aged 18-34 (varied socio-demographics)• Gender: a good mix• Education: a good mix• Occupation: a good mix• Income: a good mix• Language spoken French
GROUP 2 10 participants		Group in English with seniors 65 and over <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Seniors 65 and over (varied socio-demographics)• Language spoken English
GROUP 3 10 participants		Group in English with first time homebuyers <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Adults 18+ (varied socio-demographics)• Just purchased a home or are actively looking to purchase a home• Language spoken English
GROUP 4 10 participants		Group in French in Quebec <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Adults 18+ (varied socio-demographics)• Gender: a good mix• Language spoken: French• Age group: a good mix• Education: a good mix• Occupation: a good mix• Income: a good mix

For each participant, collect the following information:

Participant name:

Phone number at home:

Cell phone:

Email address:

Recruitment date:	Recruiter:
Group #:	Confirmation (date):

STEP 1 (WEB) – SCREENING AND PROFILING

INTRO

Hi, I'm _____ of Leger, a public opinion company. We are currently organizing discussion groups on behalf of the Government of Canada. The objective of the discussion group is to collect opinions and perceptions about general topics.

We are preparing to hold a few discussion groups with Canadians like you. These discussion groups will be conducted "online" and will be led by a research professional with up to ten participants. All opinions will remain anonymous and will be used for research purposes only in accordance with laws designed to protect your privacy. We don't have anything to sell and we don't advertise.

Your participation is voluntary. All information collected, used and/or disclosed will be used for research purposes only and the research is entirely confidential. We are also committed to protecting the privacy of all participants. The names of the participants will not be provided to any third party. May I continue?

[INTERVIEWER NOTE: IF ASKED ABOUT PRIVACY LAWS, SAY: “The information collected through the research is subject to the provisions of the Privacy Act, the legislation of the Government of Canada, and to the provisions of relevant provincial privacy legislation.]

The discussion group will take place online on April 7th, 2022, at 4 pm EDT. and will be a maximum of **2 hours**. You will be compensated **\$150** for your time.

Q0

Are you available to participate in this focus group at on April 7th, 2022, at 4 pm EDT?

Yes	1
No	2 THANK AND TERMINATE

A1. Are you interested in participating?

Yes	1	CONTINUE
No	2	THANK AND TERMINATE

I would now like to ask you a few questions to see if you meet our eligibility criteria to participate.

A2. The group discussions we are organizing are going to be held **over the Internet**. They are going to be "online focus groups". Participants will need to have a **computer**, a **high-speed Internet connection**, and a **WebCam** in order to participate in the group. Would you be able to participate under these conditions?

Yes	1	CONTINUE
No	2	THANK AND TERMINATE

PROFILING

INTRO1. Socio-demographic questions

1. Do you or anyone in your immediate family work or have you ever worked in ...?

Marketing Research	1 THANK AND TERMINATE
Marketing and Advertising	2 THANK AND TERMINATE
Public relations, communications	3 THANK AND TERMINATE
Media (newspapers, television, radio, etc.)	4 THANK AND TERMINATE
Telecommunications	5 THANK AND TERMINATE
Federal or Provincial civil service	6 THANK AND TERMINATE
None of the above	9

Sex

2. Are you...?.

... a man	1
... a woman	2
Other	3

Province

3. In which province or territory do you live?

British Columbia	1
Alberta	2
Saskatchewan	3
Manitoba	4
Ontario	5
Quebec	6
New Brunswick	7
Nova Scotia	8
Prince Edward Island	9
Newfoundland	10
Northwest Territories	11
Yukon	12

Nunavut	13
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4. Area

4. Do you currently live in a urban or rural area?

Urban	1
Rural	2

5. Language

5. What is your *first official language spoken*?

French	1	QUALIFY FOR GR1-4 if from Québec
English	2	QUALIFY FOR GR2 -3

6. AGE.

6. What age category do you fall into?

Under 18	99	THANK AND TERMINATE
18 to 24	1	Prioritize GR1 if spoken language is French
25 to 34	2	Prioritize GR1 if spoken language is French
35 to 44	3	
45 to 54	4	
55 to 64	5	
65 and over	6	Prioritize GR2 if spoken language is English

7. EDUCATION.

7. What is the highest level of education you completed?

Some high school or less	1
High school diploma or equivalent	2
Registered Apprenticeship or other trades certificate or diploma	3
College, CEGEP or other non-university certificate or diploma	4
University certificate or diploma below bachelor's level	5
Bachelor's degree	6

Postgraduate degree above bachelor's level	7
--	---

8. NEW HOMEOWNERS

8. Did you purchase your first home in the last twelve months or are you actively looking to purchase your first home?

Yes	1	Prioritize GR3 if spoken language is English
No	2	

8b. NEW HOMEOWNERS 2

8b. Did you purchase your first home in the last 24 months?

Yes	1	Put on hold for GR3 if spoken language is English
No	2	

9. TECH

9. To what extent would you say you are comfortable with technology?

Very comfortable	1	
Somewhat comfortable	2	
Somewhat uncomfortable	3	THANK AND TERMINATE
Very uncomfortable	4	THANK AND TERMINATE

[ASK IF AGE=6]

9b. TECH 2

9b. Have you ever used a videoconference platform (Zoom, MS Teams, etc.)?

Yes	1	
No	2	THANK AND TERMINATE

10. OCCUPATION

10. Which of the following categories best describes your **current** employment status? Are you...

Working full-time (35 or more hours per week)	1
---	---

Working part-time (less than 35 hours per week)	2
Self-employed	3
Unemployed, but looking for work	4
A student attending school full-time	5
Retired	6
Not in the workforce (full-time homemaker, full-time parent, or unemployed and not looking for work)	7
Other employment status. Please specify.	8

11. INCOME

11. Which of the following categories best describes your total household income? That is, the total income of all persons in your household combined, before taxes.

Under \$20,000	1
Between \$20,000 and just under \$40,000	2
Between \$40,000 and just under \$60,000	3
Between \$60,000 and just under \$80,000	4
Between \$80,000 and just under \$100,000	5
Between \$100,000 and just under \$150,000	6
\$150,000 and above	7

Privacy Notice

The personal information you provide to the Government of Canada is governed in accordance with the *Privacy Act*. We only collect the information we need to conduct the research project.

Purpose of collection: We require your personal information to determine your eligibility and record your consent to participate in this research.

Other uses or disclosures: Your personal information will not be shared. In limited and specific situations, your personal information may be disclosed without your consent in accordance with subsection 8(2) of the *Privacy Act*.

Do you consent to participate in this research?

- Yes (continue)**
- No (STOP)**

Participant Name: _____

Date: _____

INVITATION

Thank you. We'd like to invite you to participate in the discussion group.

The discussion group will take place online, on April 7th, 2022 at 4 pm.

Just a quick reminder that you will need a computer, a high-speed Internet connection in order to participate in the chat group. You cannot participate using a mobile phone.

Representatives from the Government of Canada and research analyst may observe the discussion group, but will not have access to any of your personal information. Do you consent to participate in this discussion group ?

Yes	1
No	2 THANK AND TERMINATE

Now I have a few questions that relate to privacy, your personal information and the research process. We will need your consent on a few issues that enable us to conduct our research. As I run through these questions, please feel free to ask me any questions you would like clarified.

We need to provide the **online platform** and **session moderator** with the names and profiles of the people attending the discussion group because only the individuals invited are allowed in the session and the facility and moderator must have this information for verification purposes. Please be assured that this information will be kept strictly confidential. **GO TO P1**

P1) Now that I've explained this, do I have your permission to provide your name and profile **to the online platform and moderator?**

Yes	1 GO TO P2
No	2 THANK AND TERMINATE

P2) A recording of the discussion group session will be produced for the research project purposes. The recording will only be used by **the team of people working on the project at Léger and the Government of Canada** to assist in preparing a report on the research findings.

Do you agree to be recorded for research purposes only?

Yes	1 COMPLETE THE INVITATION
No	2 Read information below and P2A

It is necessary for the research process for us to record the discussion group session as the researcher needs this material to complete the report.

P2a) Now that I've explained this, do I have your permission for recording the discussion group?

Yes	1 COMPLETE THE INVITATION
No	2 THANK AND TERMINATE

As we are only inviting a small number of people to take part, your participation is very important to us. If for some reason you are unable to participate, please call so that we can get someone to replace you. You can reach us at ____ at our office. Please ask for ____.

We will send your login information to the online chat group to your email address. Please confirm receipt of this information when it reaches you.

Your _____ email _____ address _____ :

Thank you very much!

Name:

Phone number (during the day):

Phone number (during the evening):

Email address:

A.3 Discussion Guide

BLOCK 1	Introduction and explanation
Length	10 MINUTES

WELCOME AND PRESENTATION

- Reception of participants

- **Introduction of the moderator:** Hello everyone and welcome to this discussion group. I hope everyone is doing well. Let me introduce myself, my name is _____ and I am _____ at Léger

- **Presentation of Léger** - Léger is a public opinion and consumer research firm. Some of you probably already know Leger from our surveys and our presence in the various media across the country. In addition to surveys, we organize discussion groups, like this one, on a variety of different topics.

PRIMARY AIM

The research is being conducted by Léger on behalf of the Government of Canada. The objective of the meeting is to learn about your opinion and perception on the Federal Budget.

RULES OF DISCUSSION

- Discussion groups are designed to stimulate an open and honest discussion. My role as a moderator is to guide the discussion and encourage everyone to participate. Another function of the moderator is to ensure that the discussion stays on topic and on time.
- Your role is to answer questions and voice your opinions. We are looking for minority as well as majority opinion in a focus group, so don't hold back if you have a comment even if you feel your opinion may be different from others in the group. There may or may not be others who share your point of view. Everyone's opinion is important and should be respected.
- I would also like to stress that there are no wrong answers. We are simply looking for your opinions and attitudes. This is not a test of your knowledge. We did not expect you to do anything in preparation for this group. It is important to give your personal, spontaneous and honest opinions as well as reacting respectfully to the opinions of others.

PRESENTATION OF THE GROUP ROOM

- The session is being recorded for analysis purposes, in case we need to double-check the proceedings against our notes. These recordings remain in our possession and will not be released to anyone without written consent from all participants.
- There are observers representing the government who will be watching the discussion remotely.
- It is also important for you to know that your responses today will in no way affect your dealings with the Government of Canada.
- **Confidentiality** – Please note that anything you say during these groups will be held in the strictest confidence. We do not attribute comments to specific people. Our report summarizes the findings from the groups but does not mention anyone by name. The report can be accessed through the Library of Parliament or Archives Canada.

RESULTS CONFIDENTIALITY

- The discussions we will have this evening will remain confidential at all times.
- Your name will never be mentioned in the report
- Information collected for study purposes only

Please note that the moderator is not an employee of the Government of Canada and may not be able to answer some of your questions about what we will be discussing. If important questions do come up over the course of the group, we will try to get answers for you before you leave.

Do you have any questions before we get started?

INTRODUCTION OF PARTICIPANTS

- What's your first name?
- Your place of residence (province and city)?
- What is your main occupation?

BLOCK 2**Warm-up exercise****LENGTH****5 MINUTES**

The first part will get you comfortable with the technology, explain how they work, in both real time as well as with closed ended questions.

We will be **using technology** so you can share your impressions of the Federal Budget that will be announced shortly. We will measure your reaction to the speech. **EXPLAIN THE TECHNOLOGY BRIEFLY.**

We will get you to answer some questions before and after listening to the Budget speech.

After, we will discuss what you saw/heard, using how you reacted using the dials as reference points.

So the first step is to answer initial questions, then we will watch the speech (which will be 30-45 minutes in length), answer some questions and have a discussion.

BLOCK 3**PRE-SPEECH QUESTIONS****LENGTH****10 MINUTES**

You will now see a question appear on your screen. Please answer this question personally before we discuss your answers.

Q1. Some people say that Canada is generally headed in the right direction. Other people say that there are more things in Canada headed in the wrong direction. Which of those two statements is closer to your own opinion?

0 – Don't know/no response

1 - Right direction

2 - Wrong direction

DISCUSS THE RESULTS OF THE QUESTION WITH THE PARTICIPANTS

PROBE: Why do you think that? What makes you say this?

Q2. How would you rate the current state of the Canadian economy?

Excellent

Very good
Good
Fair
Poor
Don't know/no response

Q3. How would you rate the current state of your own finances?

Excellent
Very good
Good
Fair
Poor

DISCUSS THE RESULTS OF THE QUESTION WITH THE PARTICIPANTS

PROBE: Why do you think that? What makes you say this?

Q4. Compared to this time last year in 2021, do you think the Canadian economy is stronger, weaker, or no change?

3 - Stronger
2 - Weaker
1 - No change
0 - Don't know/no response

Q5. Over the next six months, do you think the Canadian economy will be stronger, weaker or will there be no change?

3 - Stronger
2 - Weaker
1 - No change
0 - Don't know/no response

DISCUSS THE RESULTS OF THE QUESTION WITH THE PARTICIPANTS

PROBE: Why do you think that? What makes you say this?

As you know, we have three level of government in Canada – federal, provincial and municipal. Today, I want to focus specifically on the federal government. (The federal government is responsible for issues that affect the entire country, such as citizenship, national defence and international trade. The provincial government is responsible for areas of jurisdiction such as education, health, some natural resources and traffic laws.

Municipal governments are responsible for managing areas of jurisdiction such as libraries, parks, water systems, roads and parking.)

Q6. For each of the following statements please indicate whether you agree or disagree with them.

0 - Don't know/no response

4 – Strongly agree

3 – Agree

2 – Disagree

1 – Strongly disagree

The federal government is pursuing policies that focus on helping middle class families

The federal government is taking positive steps to help Indigenous people

The federal government is taking positive steps to improve gender equity

The federal government is taking positive steps to improve fairness in the tax system for businesses and individuals

The federal government is taking positive steps to create jobs

The federal government is taking positive steps to protect the environment and fight climate change

The federal government's economic plan will benefit my personal finances

The federal government is taking positive steps to support young people

The federal government is taking positive steps to support seniors

The federal government is taking positive steps to support persons with disabilities

The federal government is taking positive steps to grow the Canadian economy

The federal government is taking positive steps to make it easier for businesses to invest in research and innovation

The federal government is taking positive steps to address housing affordability

DISCUSS THE RESULTS OF THE QUESTION WITH THE PARTICIPANTS

PROBE: Why do you think that? What makes you say this?

Q7. Now thinking about the federal Budget, to what extent would you say that your expectations are positive or negative?

0 - Don't know/no response

5 – Very positive

4 – Somewhat positive

2 – Somewhat negative

1 – Very negative

DISCUSS THE RESULTS OF THE QUESTION WITH THE PARTICIPANTS

PROBE: Why do you think that? What makes you say this?

BLOCK 4	BUDGET SPEECH
LENGTH	30 MINUTES

EXPLAIN THE DIAL EXERCISE TO PARTICIPANTS - REMIND THEM THAT THEY SHOULD CONTINUOUSLY EVALUATE THROUGHOUT THE BUDGET SPEECH ACCORDING TO THEIR OPINION OF WHAT THEY HEAR: POSITIVE OR NEGATIVE. THEY SHOULD USE THE SCALE TO NUANCE THEIR OPINION.

PRESENT THE EXPLANATORY VIDEO

BLOCK 5	POST-SPEECH QUESTIONS
LENGTH	10 MINUTES

NOTE TO MODERATORS: NO NEED TO DISCUSS THE ANSWERS TO EACH OF THESE QUESTIONS.

Now, before we have a discussion, I would like to ask you some more questions ...

NOTE TO READER: WE RE-ASK SOME QUESTIONS FROM THE PRE-BUDGET EXERCISE TO SEE IF THE BUDGET SPEECH SHIFTED ANY VIEWS ON THEIR PERCEPTIONS ON THE ECONOMY.

Q8. Some people say that Canada is generally headed in the right direction. Other people say that Canada right now and that the country is headed in the wrong direction. Which of those two statements is closer to your own opinion?

0 - Don't know/no response

1 - Right direction

2 - Wrong direction

Q9. How would you rate the current state of the Canadian economy?

Excellent

Very good

Good
Fair
Poor
Don't know/no response

Q10. Over the next six months, do you think the Canadian economy will be stronger, weaker or will there be no change?

3 - Stronger
2 - Weaker
1 - No change
0 - Don't know/no response

Q10B. For each of the following statements please indicate whether you agree or disagree with them.

0 - Don't know/no response
4 – Strongly agree
3 – Agree
2 – Disagree
1 – Strongly disagree

The federal government is pursuing policies that focus on helping middle class families
The federal government is taking positive steps to help Indigenous people
The federal government is taking positive steps to improve gender equity
The federal government is taking positive steps to improve fairness in the tax system for businesses and individuals
The federal government is taking positive steps to create jobs
The federal government is taking positive steps to protect the environment and fight climate change
The federal government's economic plan will benefit my personal finances
The federal government is taking positive steps to support young people
The federal government is taking positive steps to support seniors
The federal government is taking positive steps to support persons with disabilities
The federal government is taking positive steps to grow the Canadian economy
The federal government is taking positive steps to make it easier for businesses to invest in research and innovation
The federal government is taking positive steps to address housing affordability

Q11. Now thinking about the overall federal Budget, to what extent would you say that what you saw and heard was for the most part positive or for the most part negative?

- 0 - Don't know/no response
- 5 – Very positive
- 4 – Somewhat positive
- 2 – Somewhat negative
- 1 – Very negative

Q12. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the language used in the budget speech was clear and easy to understand?

- 0 - Don't know/no response
- 4 – Strongly agree
- 3 – Agree
- 2 – Disagree
- 1 – Strongly disagree

Q13. And would you say that what you saw and heard exceeded your expectations, met your expectations, or did not meet your expectations?

- 0 - Don't know/no response
- 1 – Exceeded expectations
- 2 – Met expectations
- 3 – Did not meet expectations

Q14. Was there anything you heard in the budget that would have an impact on your personal or household financial situation?

- 1 – Yes
- 2 – No
- 0 - Don't know/no response

BLOCK 6 POST-SPEECH DISCUSSION

LENGTH 30 MINUTES

Now I would like to have more of a discussion about what you saw/heard in the federal Budget...

What was your overall impression of speech?

PROBE: Why?

What were the main things that you remember hearing in the budget?

What are your impressions of this element? **PROBE:** Why?

What were the best ideas in the speech? **PROBE:** Why?

What were the less positive aspects in the speech? **PROBE:** Why?

As you know, you were using the dial to register your impressions of the speech as it was read. What I would like to do is ask about some specific aspects of the speech that appeared to resonate.

MODERATOR WILL HAVE THE DATA AND WILL LOOK AT THE POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE SPIKES OVER THE COURSE OF THE SPEECH. WILL SELECT 3 TO 4 TOPICS FROM POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE CHANGES AND PROMPT ON THOSE.

Let's start with some of the positives...**FOR EACH TOPIC IDENTIFIED...**

What did you like about this aspect from the budget? **PROBE:** Why?

What did it mean to you? Was it clear? How could it have been clearer?

Is it relevant to you personally?

Let's turn our attention to areas where there were some declines in impressions...**FOR EACH TOPIC IDENTIFIED...**

What was your impression about this aspect from the budget? **PROBE:** Why?

What did it mean to you?

Were there parts that you didn't understand? **PROBE:** Which parts?

Is it relevant to you personally?

Do you feel like with certain topics announced, you feel as though your current living situation will be or in the future any easier or harder? Why is that?

While you were observing the speech, did you think the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance was addressing politicians and economists, or mostly to Canadians?

Why do you say that?

BLOCK 9	CONCLUSION
LENGTH	5 MINUTES

We have covered a lot of topics today and really appreciate you taking the time and energy to join us and give your opinion. Your input is very important and insightful!

To conclude, I wanted to ask you whether you have any last thoughts that you want to give the Government of Canada?

CONCLUDE AND END THE MEETING.
THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR COLLABORATION!