



Government  
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# Continuous Qualitative Data Collection of Canadians' Views – October 2024

## Executive Summary

### **Prepared for the Privy Council Office**

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Ce rapport est aussi disponible en français.

Canada 

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This public opinion research report presents the results of a series of focus groups conducted by The Strategic Counsel on behalf of the Privy Council Office. The sixth cycle of the second year of this study included a total of twelve focus groups with Canadian adults (18 years of age and older) conducted between October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024, and October 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2024.

Cette publication est aussi disponible en français sous le titre : Rapport final - Collecte continue de données qualitatives sur les opinions des Canadiens – octobre 2024.

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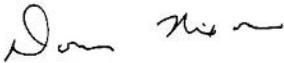
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## Political Neutrality Certification

I hereby certify as a Senior Officer of The Strategic Counsel that the deliverables fully comply with the Government of Canada political neutrality requirements outlined in the Policy on Communications and Federal Identity and the Directive on the Management of Communications – Appendix C – Mandatory Procedures for Public Opinion Research.

Specifically, the deliverables do not include information on electoral voting intentions, political party preferences, standings with the electorate, or ratings of the performance of a political party or its leaders.

Signed:  \_\_\_\_\_

Date: December 9, 2024

Donna Nixon, Partner  
The Strategic Counsel

# Executive Summary

## Introduction

The Communications and Consultation Secretariat of the Privy Council Office (PCO) commissioned The Strategic Counsel (TSC) to conduct continuous cycles of focus group research across the country with members of the public on key national issues, events, and policy initiatives related to the Government of Canada.

The broad purpose of this ongoing qualitative research program is three-fold: to explore the dimensions and drivers of public opinion on the most important issues facing the country; to assess perceptions and expectations of the federal government's actions and priorities; and, to inform the development of Government of Canada communications so that they continue to be aligned with the perspectives and information needs of Canadians, while remaining both clear and easy-to-understand.

The research is intended to be used by the Communications and Consultation Secretariat within PCO in order to fulfill its mandate of supporting the Prime Minister's Office in coordinating government communications. Specifically, the research will ensure that PCO has an ongoing understanding of Canadians' opinions on macro-level issues of interest to the Government of Canada, as well as emerging trends.

This report includes findings from twelve online focus groups which were conducted between October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024, and October 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2024, in multiple locations across the country. Details concerning the locations, recruitment, and composition of the groups are provided in the section below.

The research for this cycle focused largely on immigration, consumer protection, and communications related to climate change and the environment. Regarding the latter, groups shared their opinions



related to messaging the Government of Canada was developing related to clean electricity as well as advertising concepts focusing on the Canada Carbon Rebate (CCR).

Participants also discussed what they had seen, read, or heard about the federal government as of late, as well as their impressions regarding its management of the most important priorities facing Canadians at present. Other topics focused on during this cycle included pharmacare, the Order of Canada, and the design of the EnerGuide home energy label.

As a note of caution when interpreting the results from this study, findings of qualitative research are directional in nature only and cannot be attributed quantitatively to the overall population under study with any degree of confidence.

## Methodology

### Overview of Groups

Target audience

- Canadian residents, 18 and older.
- Groups were split primarily by location.
- Some groups focused on specific cohorts of the population, such as those who are climate change supportive or ambivalent.

### Detailed Approach

- Twelve groups were conducted across various regions in Canada.
- Eight groups were conducted among the general population residing in Urban Alberta and Manitoba, Rural Ontario, the Mauricie region of Quebec, London, Nova Scotia, Quebec City, Vancouver Island, and Prince Edward Island (PEI).
- The other four groups were conducted among climate change supportive and ambivalent individuals residing in Ontario, PEI, Nova Scotia, Newfoundland and Labrador, Quebec, Alberta, and Manitoba.
- The three groups based in Quebec were conducted in French. All other groups were conducted in English.
- All groups for this cycle were conducted online.
- A total of 8 participants were recruited for each group, assuming 6 to 8 participants would attend.
- Across all locations, 90 participants attended, in total. Details on attendance numbers by group can be found below.
- Each participant received an honorarium of \$125.

### Group Locations and Composition

LOCATION	GROUP	LANGUAGE	DATE	TIME (EDT)	GROUP COMPOSITION	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS
Ontario	1	EN	Tues, Oct 1 <sup>st</sup>	6:00-8:00 PM	Climate Change Supportive/Ambivalent	7
PEI, Nova Scotia, and Newfoundland & Labrador	2	EN	Wed, Oct 2 <sup>nd</sup>	5:00-7:00 PM	Climate Change Supportive/Ambivalent	8
Quebec	3	FR	Wed, Oct 2 <sup>nd</sup>	6:00-8:00 PM	Climate Change Supportive/Ambivalent	8
Manitoba & Alberta	4	EN	Thurs, Oct 3 <sup>rd</sup>	8:00-10:00 PM	Climate Change Supportive/Ambivalent	8
Urban Alberta & Manitoba	5	FR	Tues, Oct 8 <sup>th</sup>	8:00-10:00 PM	General Population	8
Rural Ontario	6	EN	Wed, Oct 9 <sup>th</sup>	6:00-8:00 PM	General Population	8
Mauricie Region Quebec	7	FR	Thurs, Oct 10 <sup>th</sup>	6:00-8:00 PM	General Population	6
London	8	EN	Tues, Oct 15 <sup>th</sup>	6:00-8:00 PM	General Population	7
Nova Scotia	9	EN	Wed, Oct 16 <sup>th</sup>	5:00-7:00 PM	General Population	8
Quebec City	10	FR	Thurs, Oct 17 <sup>th</sup>	6:00-8:00 PM	General Population	5
Vancouver Island	11	EN	Tues, Oct 22 <sup>nd</sup>	9:00-11:00 PM	General Population	8
Prince Edward Island	12	EN	Wed, Oct 23 <sup>rd</sup>	5:00-7:00 PM	General Population	8
<b>Total number of participants</b>						<b>89</b>

## Key Findings

### Government of Canada in the News (All Locations)

All groups were asked to share what they had seen, read, or heard about the Government of Canada in recent days. A wide range of announcements and initiatives were recalled, including the announcement by the Bank of Canada that it would be lowering its policy interest rate to 3.75 per cent, the announcement that Bill C-64 (*An Act Respecting Pharmacare*) had received royal assent, and the tabling by the Minister of Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) of the 2025-2027



Immigration Levels Plan which aimed at pausing population growth in the short-term in order to achieve well-managed, sustainable growth in the long term.

Participants also recalled hearing that the Government of Canada would be introducing a 100 per cent surtax on all Chinese-made electric vehicles (EVs) and that Global Affairs Canada had issued six Indian diplomats and consular officials with notices of expulsion from Canada in relation to a targeted campaign against Canadian citizens by agents linked to the Government of India.

### **Economic Indicators (Quebec Climate Change Supportive/Ambivalent, Mauricie Region Quebec, Prince Edward Island)**

Three groups engaged in extended conversations related to economic indicators such as interest rates, inflation, and the current rate of unemployment.

Questioned whether they had seen, read, or heard anything recently about the Bank of Canada cutting interest rates, several indicated that they had. Among those who had heard something, participants were largely of the impression that the Bank of Canada had made a number of reductions to its policy interest rate over the past year. Asked how they felt lower interest rates might affect their respective households, participants were mixed in their opinions. While some who were expecting to renew their mortgages in the near future felt that this could lead to lower monthly mortgage payments for them, most did not believe that this action by the Bank of Canada would have a tangible impact on their personal financial situations.

Asked whether they had heard anything as of late about the rate of inflation, including reports that inflation had been easing in recent months, a smaller number reported having heard something compared to those who had not. While most felt that this was positive news, very few reported having noticed any reduction in prices in their own lives and were of the impression that a large number of Canadians in many parts of the country were continuing to face challenges related to the cost of living. Several expressed the opinion that even if the overall rate of inflation were to stabilize and remain at the Bank of Canada's target levels in the months and years to come, it was unlikely that businesses would lower prices back to what participants viewed as affordable rates for consumers.

Discussing whether they were aware of any news about the unemployment rate in Canada, only a small number reported having heard something. Informed that the unemployment rate was currently 6.6 per cent, compared to 5.4 per cent in 2023, and 5.7 per cent in 2019 before the COVID-19 pandemic, several expressed concern and were of the impression that this would likely have a particularly negative impact on the employment prospects of young adults, including those entering the workforce upon completion of their post-secondary education. A few believed that greater efforts needed to be taken by the federal government to create more high-paying job opportunities for Canadian workers and to encourage employers to raise the wages they are offering.

### **Government of Canada Priorities and Performance (London, Nova Scotia, Quebec City)**

Three groups took part in a conversation related to issues currently facing Canadians as well as their perspectives regarding the Government of Canada's management of these priorities. Asked to identify



what they viewed as the most important issues or areas for the federal government to be prioritizing at present, participants provided a range of responses. These included the cost of living, the affordability of housing, health care (including perceived long wait times and a shortage of doctors and nurses), immigration, climate change and the environment, and the provision of humanitarian assistance to those outside of Canada who had been impacted by conflicts and natural disasters.

Asked specifically if they felt the cost of living was a top issue that the Government of Canada should be focusing on, all believed that it was. Questioned whether they could recall any actions or initiatives from the federal government related to addressing the cost of living, participants recalled a range of programs aimed at supporting Canadians. These included the establishment of a national pharmacare program, the Canada Dental Care Plan (CDCP), the Canada Carbon Rebate (CCR), the Canada Disability Benefit, and the quarterly goods and services tax/harmonized sales tax (GST/HST) credit.

Discussing whether they felt the federal government was on the right track when it came to addressing the cost of living, almost all believed that it was headed in the wrong direction, with a smaller number more neutral or uncertain in their views. Describing actions that they felt the federal government could take to improve its management of the cost of living, many felt that more needed to be done to stabilize and lower the cost of groceries, including implementing stronger regulations and oversight of major grocery chains. It was also thought that more needed to be done to introduce greater competition into sectors such as telecommunications that were perceived as currently being dominated by a small number of major corporations.

### **Consumer Protection (London, Nova Scotia, Quebec City)**

Three groups engaged in conversations related to the cost of living and actions that the federal government was taking to protect Canadian consumers. Asked how they would describe the current cost of living, all believed that it was exceptionally high, with a number of the impression that many households were struggling to afford basic necessities such as groceries and gasoline. Questioned what level of responsibility, if any, they felt private industry and corporations had in respect to rising costs, almost all believed that businesses and corporations had played a significant role in increasing the cost of living for Canadian consumers.

Very few reported feeling confident in the Government of Canada's ability to protect their rights and interests as consumers. A number expressed the view that while the federal government had taken some actions, such as summoning the heads of major grocery chains to Parliament to discuss ways to stabilize grocery prices, they did not believe that this had led to any noticeable reduction in prices for consumers. Discussing specific actions that they would like to see from the Government of Canada to better protect consumers, several believed that more needed to be done to increase competition within the Canadian marketplace and especially in sectors such as telecommunications that were believed to currently be dominated by a few major companies

Provided with a list of actions and initiatives that the federal government had announced related to protecting consumer rights and reducing the costs paid by consumers, participants engaged in an exercise where they were asked to select which two measures they felt would be the most effective in



protecting consumers and/or reducing consumer costs. On balance, participants expressed the greatest level of support for the creation of a Grocery Code of Conduct. It was widely felt that high grocery costs were an issue that was impacting a significant number of families at present and that by taking this action, the federal government could make tangible progress towards making groceries more affordable for all Canadians. Participants also expressed a high level of support for the initiative to strengthen the *Competition Act*. It was expected that taking this action would allow for increased competition in many sectors and would likely result in an increased range of choices and lower prices for consumers. A smaller number selected the actions to reduce practices related to predatory lending and to crack down on hidden fees charged by banks and telecommunications firms, while very few selected the initiative to enhance the rights of airline passengers.

Discussing what types of information they would be most likely to look for when it came to learning more about the Government of Canada's actions to reduce consumer costs and better protect consumers, several expressed the desire for the creation of a centralized online location or digital app where they could quickly learn about their rights as consumers as well as who to contact if they felt that their rights had been violated. A number also wanted to learn more about ways that they could better protect themselves as consumers and suggestions regarding how they could save more money going forward. Discussing where they would likely go to find this information, participants mentioned sources such as official government websites, search engines such as Google, social media platforms, and by word of mouth from friends or family who were knowledgeable in this area.

Asked whether, having discussed the initiatives the Government of Canada was taking to protect consumers and address the cost of living, they felt these actions would be helpful in making life more affordable for them and their families, most believed that they would. For a number, however, it was thought that the impact of these initiatives would primarily be dependent on how effectively they were implemented, as well as the degree to which large businesses and corporations were held accountable to these new rules and regulations set out by the federal government.

### **Immigration (Urban Alberta and Manitoba, Rural Ontario, Mauricie Region Quebec, Vancouver Island, Prince Edward Island)**

Five groups took part in conversations regarding immigration and the current state of the Canadian immigration system. Asked whether they had recently seen, read, or heard anything about immigration, participants mentioned a range of actions and initiatives related to the Government of Canada. Several recalled hearing that Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) had announced that it would be implementing an intake cap on international student study permit applications for 2024 and 2025, as well as limiting the number of hours international students can work off-campus to 24 hours per week. Participants also recalled that IRCC had announced that individuals who had entered Canada on visitor visas would no longer be able to apply for work permits while still inside the country.

Asked how they would describe the overall current state of the Canadian immigration system, while most expressed support for immigration more generally, many participants viewed the current system as being 'broken' and believed that there was significant room for improvement. A large number



expressed the opinion that too many immigrants had been admitted to Canada over the past few years and that there was not enough housing and employment opportunities to meet the needs of these new arrivals. It was felt that the perceived strain on services and infrastructure believed to be caused by higher immigration in recent years was having a negative impact on those already living in Canada and newcomers alike.

Questioned whether they felt the Government of Canada was generally on the right track when it came to immigration, very few felt that it was. Many reiterated concerns about the perceived high rate of immigration in recent years and did not believe that this would be sustainable in the long term. It was felt that if high immigration persisted, many Canadian communities would ultimately be unable to meet the needs of their residents and that this could potentially bring about a significant shortage of jobs, affordable housing, and vital services such as health care and education. A number worried about the impact that high immigration could have on the cost of living and the availability of resources in their community and expressed concerns about how this would impact their own lives as well as those of their children.

Asked whether they felt there were too many, too few, or about the right number of immigrants coming to Canada at present, on balance, a larger number thought that were currently too many immigrants coming to Canada compared to those who felt that immigration was at about the right level. Informed that this year the Government of Canada was aiming to welcome 485,000 new immigrants, most felt that this immigration target should be decreased, with a smaller number believing that immigration should be maintained at its current levels.

Discussing what impacts they felt a decrease in immigration would have on Canada from an economic and social perspective, several believed that this approach would help to provide Canadian communities with more time to increase the capacity of their respective housing supplies and infrastructure in order to welcome more immigrants in the future. A number expected that a decrease in immigration would lead to lower economic productivity in the short-term and worried that this action could potentially lead to labour shortages in many parts of the country. The opinion was expressed, however, that a reduction in immigration would likely lead to a more resilient national economy in the long-term as it would compel businesses to become more reliant on Canadian workers and would likely increase the number and quality of employment opportunities available to those already living in Canada.

Asked whether they felt, if immigration rates were to be reduced, should they be lowered in the short-term or the long-term, most believed that this should be a short-term initiative. Among these participants, it was widely felt that immigration provided economic and social benefits to Canada and that a higher number of new immigrants would be welcomed more positively once the country was better prepared to accommodate them. Questioned what they defined as 'short-term', most believed this to be a period somewhere between 2 to 5 years. Among the smaller number who felt that immigration should be reduced for a long period of time, the opinion was expressed that given the disproportionately high rate of immigration in recent years, it would take a considerable amount of time (likely between 10 to 20 years) for communities to increase their capacity to provide sufficient

housing, employment opportunities, and social services to meet the needs of a large number of new arrivals in the future.

Discussing what additional actions would need to be taken for immigration to increase again, participants provided a range of suggestions. A number believed that there needed to be a greater distribution of new arrivals across the country. It was felt that at present, a significant amount of newcomers were choosing to reside in major centres in Toronto, Montreal, and Vancouver, and that this had placed increased strain on the housing market and cost of living in these cities. It was also thought that a greater focus should be placed on recruiting and bringing in immigrants with skills and training that would allow them to immediately contribute to in-demand sectors within the country. The view was expressed that the Government of Canada should work with the individual provincial/territorial governments to determine the unique needs of each jurisdiction in this respect.

### **Pharmacare (Vancouver Island)**

Participants residing in Vancouver Island took part in a discussion regarding recent actions that the Government of Canada had taken towards the implementation of a national pharmacare program. Asked to describe what they viewed as the biggest challenges in health care that required greater attention from the federal government, many identified long wait times for emergency and primary care as a significant issue at present. Questioned whether they felt increasing the affordability of prescription medication was an important area for the Government of Canada to be focusing on, all believed that it was.

Prompted to describe the state of prescription drug coverage in Canada today, several felt that while prescription medication was relatively affordable for those who had health benefits through their employer, it could be very expensive for those without coverage. Describing what they viewed as the biggest challenges faced by people without drug coverage, participants mentioned issues such as affordability and financial hardship, the stress and uncertainty of how their medical conditions might impact their lives, and the potential for their conditions to worsen if they were unable to access the medication they required.

Questioned as to whether they would support a “universal” pharmacare plan, all expressed strong support, believing that this would provide significant assistance to those who were currently unable to afford their prescriptions. A number expressed the opinion that access to health care was a fundamental human right and that prescription medication should be included as an essential part of any universal health care system.

Provided with information related to the first phase of the federal government’s national pharmacare program, all reacted positively, with many believing that this type of initiative was long overdue. Asked what impacts they felt this coverage would have and who would benefit the most from this initiative, many expected that those with diabetes as well as women facing challenges accessing contraception would be the primary beneficiaries of the initial phase of this program. A number reported having family members with diabetes who they expected would benefit greatly due to their medication being covered as part of this program.



Asked whether they would support British Columbia (B.C.)'s involvement in a national pharmacare program, all reported that they would. Several reiterated the view that universal access to prescription medication was a critical part of health care provision and believed that B.C.'s inclusion in this program would have a positive impact on the overall health of many of those living in the province. Questioned as to how they would react if other provinces joined a national pharmacare program, but B.C. chose not to, almost all expressed that they would be disappointed and concerned about this outcome.

Discussing what they felt were the most important things for the Government of Canada to be keeping in mind as it planned the next steps of its national pharmacare program, participants shared a range of considerations. Many felt that the federal government should be prioritizing the inclusion of life-saving medications, including cancer treatments and mental health medications, in the next phase of this program as well as those for chronic conditions such as multiple sclerosis (MS). Several also believed that a priority would need to be placed on recruiting more health care workers (including family doctors and pharmacists) to ensure that the country had the capacity to meet Canadians' prescription drug needs under this program.

When asked whether this plan should be completely public or utilize a "close the gaps" approach incorporating both public and private options, most expressed support for a fully public system where all Canadians were on the same plan. It was widely believed that a single, unified plan would be best suited to eliminate disparities in coverage and ensure that all individuals had equal access to care.

### **Order of Canada (Quebec City)**

Participants residing in Quebec City engaged in a brief discussion related to the Order of Canada. Asked whether they were familiar with the Order of Canada, none indicated that they were. Provided with information about this award, participants were asked what types of achievements they felt would fall under the Order of Canada's criteria of having made "extraordinary contributions to the nation". A number of areas were identified, including contributions related to health and medical research, scientific discovery, technological advancement, humanitarian initiatives, and actions related to protecting the environment and mitigating the impacts of climate change.

Informed that candidates for the Order of Canada are nominated by members of the public, participants were asked whether they would ever consider nominating someone for the Order of Canada themselves. While a small number indicated that they would consider submitting a nomination for this award, none had any specific candidates in mind that they felt would qualify for this achievement.

### **Environment and Climate Change Messaging (Ontario Climate Change Supportive/Ambivalent, Quebec Climate Change Supportive/Ambivalent, Alberta and Manitoba Climate Change Supportive/Ambivalent, Urban Alberta and Manitoba, Rural Ontario)**

Five groups took part in a discussion related to climate change and clean electricity. Asked what the term “clean electricity” meant to them, most believed that this referred to electricity generated using renewable energy sources, such as wind, solar, hydro, and nuclear power.

Participants engaged in an exercise where they were presented with a number of statements related to clean electricity and for each, were asked whether they agreed, disagreed, or had no opinion about the statement. The statements shown to participants varied between groups.

On balance, participants expressed a high level of support for statements that spoke to the importance of building and investing in the development of clean energy infrastructure and efforts to increase the resilience of electricity grids across the country. Many also agreed that regions such as the Prairies and Southern Ontario should be taking whatever steps they could to harness and utilize naturally occurring energy sources such as wind and solar power, believing that there were few potential drawbacks to taking this approach.

While some had concerns related to the safety of this technology, a large number expressed support for the increased development of nuclear energy as a source of clean electricity. The view was expressed that nuclear energy had a much greater energy-producing capacity compared to other renewable electricity sources, and that this technology was best positioned to serve as a reliable alternative to oil and gas.

Though expressing hope that increased investments towards clean electricity development would lead to lower energy prices for consumers, a number expressed skepticism regarding statements claiming that this would come to pass. While it was felt that the expanded use of clean electricity would help to build a more resilient energy grid, many believed that energy producers would ultimately be reluctant to lower the prices that they charge to consumers.

A number expressed concerns related to the statements that focused on technologies such as large-scale battery storage and electric vehicles (EVs). Several reported having heard that there were potential environmental concerns associated with the mining of the raw materials utilized in EV and other batteries as well as challenges in disposing of these batteries at the end of their lifespan.

Many also disagreed with statements claiming that renewable energy would eventually be able to meet all the energy needs of Canadians, including those living in harsh climates such as the Prairies. It was felt that non-renewable energy sources such as oil and gas would likely always play a role in this regard, and especially so for those living in rural and/or remote communities.

Asked an additional question as to whether they would be willing to pay slightly more in the short term to lay the foundation for a lower cost clean electricity transition over the longer term, participants provided a range of responses. Among those who supported paying slightly more in the short term to invest in the transition to clean electricity, it was felt that given the perceived gravity of the threat posed by climate change, it was necessary to take these types of actions now in order to protect the environment for future generations.

For those who were more uncertain as to whether they would be willing to pay more to accomplish this goal, many expressed the view that the cost of living was already very high at present and that



they did not believe they would be able to financially accommodate any additional increases to their expenses. A number believed that rather than increasing the amount paid by taxpayers to support clean electricity initiatives, a greater responsibility should be placed on major energy providers to facilitate this transition and especially those that had reported record profits in recent years.

### **Climate Change Advertisement Message Testing (Ontario Climate Change Supportive/Ambivalent, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, & Newfoundland Climate Change Supportive/Ambivalent, Quebec Climate Change Supportive/Ambivalent, Alberta and Manitoba Climate Supportive/Ambivalent)**

Four groups shared their perspectives related to two potential advertisements currently being developed by the federal government to inform Canadians about the actions it was taking to address climate change. Groups were presented with scripts for these video ads and were informed that these videos could appear on digital media such as YouTube and other online platforms as well as on television. Those residing in Quebec were read a French-language version of the script, while all other groups were read an English-language version.

To begin, participants were presented with a video script which was read to them twice, in succession. Sharing their initial reactions, participants were largely mixed in their opinions, with a roughly equal number reacting positively to the advertisement compared to those who felt otherwise. Among those who viewed the ad as being effective, a number commented positively regarding what they perceived as the script's environmental focus. It was believed that the opening imagery of forests, nature, and lush green spaces would appeal to a broad range of Canadians and that the visuals of the family enjoying the environment would be relatable for many viewers.

Among those who felt differently, a number believed that the script was attempting to fit too much content into one advertisement and were worried that this would lead to the ad being quite lengthy once filmed. Some were also of the opinion that the transitions described within the script would be potentially jarring for viewers and could distract from the video's overall messaging.

Asked to describe what they viewed as being the main message of the advertisement, many felt it was aiming to communicate that the federal government was focused on making life in Canada more sustainable and that it was taking actions, such as building more EV infrastructure and encouraging greater adoption of this technology, to achieve this. It was felt by several that the script was seeking to convey to viewers that the Government of Canada taking this approach would yield both environmental and economic benefits for them in the future. Questioned whether they felt this was an appropriate message to be coming from the federal government, most felt that it was. The view was expressed that as climate change and the environment were issues that impacted all Canadians, it was important for the federal government to be taking action on this front.

Identifying potential changes that could be made to make this ad more effective, several believed that the script was too focused on EVs and that more should be done to highlight the full scope of actions that the federal government was taking to mitigate the impacts of climate change. It was also felt that more could be done to highlight the everyday activities that Canadians could engage in, such as



recycling or using public transportation, to reduce their own carbon footprints and help to promote a greener future.

Participants (with the exception of those residing in Quebec) were next presented with a second script that was read to them twice, in succession. Sharing their reactions, several spoke positively of what they viewed as the financial focus of this advertisement, believing that the imagery of individuals receiving their quarterly Canada Carbon Rebate (CCR) payments would likely be effective in grabbing the attention of viewers. A number specifically liked the ad's highlighting of the push notification that Canadians would receive when their CCR payments arrived, believing that this would be a convenient way to find out that these amounts had been deposited in their bank accounts. Feeling somewhat differently, a number expressed having found the ad somewhat confusing and did not believe it effectively explained how CCR amounts were calculated as well as whether any action was required on their end to receive their payments.

Asked what they felt was the main message of the ad, most believed it was to highlight the positive aspects of the federal government's carbon pricing system and to communicate to viewers that they would be automatically receiving quarterly CCR payments going forward. It was also felt that the advertisement was working to convey to viewers that they could benefit both economically and environmentally from this system going forward and that by implementing a price on carbon the Government of Canada was helping to build a more sustainable future. It was widely thought that the message of the ad was straightforward and would be easily understandable for most viewers. Questioned whether this was an appropriate message to be coming from the federal government, almost all believed that it was, reiterating the view that climate change was an issue that impacted all Canadians.

Discussing the two scripts they had been presented with, participants were asked whether they felt either of the two ads would be effective in terms of encouraging them to visit the website for more information. While several felt that the information included in the second advertisement regarding CCR payments was more interesting and impactful to them on a personal level, many expressed that, given that they were already aware of the carbon pricing initiative and how it worked, they would be unlikely to feel compelled to visit the website to learn more upon watching this video. With this in mind, a number felt that the call to action to visit the website was stronger in the first advertisement, believing that more viewers would be interested in learning about the federal government's Climate Plan, as this might include new information regarding the specific steps that it was taking to combat climate change.

### **Home Energy Label Design (Nova Scotia, Newfoundland & Prince Edward Island Climate Supportive/Ambivalent)**

Participants in the group comprised of residents of Nova Scotia, Newfoundland, and Prince Edward Island (PEI) who were either supportive or ambivalent regarding climate change engaged in a discussion related to the design of home energy labels produced for the Government of Canada's EnerGuide program. Discussing whether they were familiar with home energy labels, a few indicated that they were, believing that they primarily served to provide homeowners with information related to



their home's energy use as well as the financial cost of using certain appliances or heating/cooling systems.

Asked what types of information they would want a home energy label to tell them about their home, participants identified a range of areas. These included the overall energy consumption of their home on a daily, monthly, and annual basis, their energy consumption by source, the energy efficiency of their home and appliances, areas where their home's energy efficiency could be improved, and information as to where they could go to find out more about making these upgrades.

Participants were next provided with the following information related to the Government of Canada's EnerGuide program as well as a visual example of the EnerGuide home energy label. Describing their initial reactions to this label, while a number thought that the label was useful in that it provided them with a way to compare their home's energy efficiency to other similarly sized homes in their area, several felt that the information presented in the bottom half of the label was quite dense and difficult to understand at first glance. Discussing additional information that they felt could be provided on this label, some believed that a greater focus should be placed on providing homeowners with an energy efficiency target that they could work towards achieving, especially if their home was on the lower end of the scale in this respect.

Questioned whether they felt a home energy label would assist them in making decisions regarding their home or a home they were considering purchasing or renting, most believed that it would. Many expressed a desire for their home to be as energy efficient as possible and expected that they would take the information provided on a home energy label into account when making a purchasing decision.

Participants were next shown a number of different examples of home energy labels from other countries around the world. Asked which labels they felt would be most useful, many spoke positively of those designs that they believed provided the most straightforward presentation of information when it came to better understanding their home's energy efficiency. Several specifically identified the designs that provided information regarding their home's annual estimated energy costs as well as the amount of money they could save by making their homes more energy efficient as being particularly effective.

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## **MORE INFORMATION**

The Strategic Counsel

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Contract value: \$1,629,482.60

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