

## CANADA'S ENERGY FUTURE IN AN AGE OF CLIMATE CHANGE

### PRESS RELEASE

#### **NEW SURVEY SHOWS SURGING SENSE OF URGENCY TO ACT ON CLIMATE, BUT CONFIDENCE IN CANADA'S ABILITY TO ACT IS WEAK**

[The University of Ottawa's Positive Energy program released new survey results tracking Canadians' views about action on climate change.](#) The results provide a timely snapshot of Canadian attitudes towards climate action prior to the federal election call and the fourth wave of COVID-19. The survey was conducted by Positive Energy's official pollster, Nanos Research.

Canadians were asked on a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 means absolutely the worst time and 10 absolutely the best time, how good a time it is for Canada to be ambitious in addressing climate change even if there are costs to the economy. Nearly two in three respondents (64%) said now is the best time to act (7-10), compared to less than one in two (45%) when the question was first posed in June 2020. The results suggest that public opinion is depolarizing on this issue, with more agreement among Canadians that now is the best time to act.

The survey also asked Canadians why it is a good or a bad time to act. More than 1 in 2 respondents (53%) said that we need to act now and climate change cannot wait. When Positive Energy first posed this question in June 2020, just 1 in 5 Canadians gave this answer.

The survey also asked Canadians how confident they are in governments, corporations, and their fellow citizens to take climate action, what most contributes to and undermines their confidence in Canada's ability to reduce emissions, as well as the relative importance of oil and gas to Canada's current and future economy. Asked what most undermines their confidence that Canada can reduce emissions, Canadians most frequently said big business, oil industry interests and lobbying (13%) and government inaction, empty promises and lack of enforcement (12%).

"Canadians report the highest level of confidence in citizens changing their behaviour to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions and the lowest level of confidence in corporations," said Nik Nanos, CEO of Nanos Research and Chair of Positive Energy's Advisory Council. "However, overall public confidence in our ability to act is weak."

"Canadians' appetite for climate action has grown throughout the pandemic," said Professor Monica Gattinger, Chair of Positive Energy and Director, Institute for Science, Society and Policy, University of Ottawa. "But the results underscore that political and industry leaders have work to do to secure public confidence in Canada's ability to reduce emissions."

*Nanos conducted an RDD dual frame (land- and cell-lines) hybrid telephone and online random survey of 1,002 Canadians, 18 years of age or older, between July 30 and August 2, 2021, as part of an Omnibus survey. The margin of error for this survey is  $\pm 3.1$  percentage points, 19 times out of 20.*

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