

## TransMountain: Canadians weigh in on economic implications, protesters, and 'social licence'

*Six-in-ten say Kinder Morgan could have done a better job earning the public's trust on this project*

**April 23, 2018** – Protests against Kinder Morgan's TransMountain Pipeline have followed Prime Minister Justin Trudeau for months, from Vancouver to Ottawa to London.

Not London, Ontario. London, England.

The protests from the United Kingdom's branch of Greenpeace during Trudeau's recent visit for the Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting serve as an indication of the scale of interest this pipeline debate has garnered. But, while Canadian protesters may find unity in the demonstration by their international counterparts, the broader Canadian public is less enthusiastic about resistance to this project.

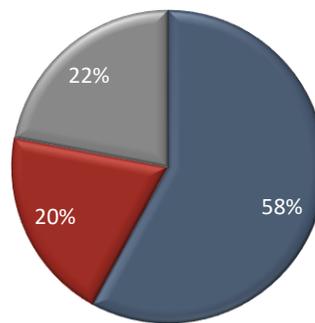
The second report in a two-part Angus Reid Institute study of the TransMountain conflict finds Canadians are three times more likely to say the protesters (the Canadian ones) do not represent the mainstream view of their compatriots.

This opinion may be driven by the perceived benefits of approval or consequent harms of rejection on this project. Six-in-ten Canadians (59%) say the pipeline expansion would help the Canadian economy overall, while one-in-five (17%) say it would have negative consequences.

### More Key Findings:

- Six-in-ten Canadians (60%) say that they view the protests against TransMountain as not representative of the mainstream view, but fewer (46%) say they would like to see B.C. Premier John Horgan should condemn them
- By a ratio of three-to-one (58% vs 20%) Canadians say Kinder Morgan could have done a better job of earning public support, and brought much of this conflict upon itself. This opinion is held by supporters (56%) and opponents (70%) alike.

**Agree/disagree with the statement:  
"Kinder Morgan could have done a better job  
earning public support for this project and  
brought much of this on themselves"**



■ Agree ■ Disagree ■ Not sure/Can't say

### METHODOLOGY:

The Angus Reid Institute conducted an online survey from April 16 – 17, 2018, among a representative randomized sample of 2,125 Canadian adults who are members of the [Angus Reid Forum](#). The sample plan included large oversamples in some regions, weighted back to provide a national snapshot. For comparison purposes only, a probability sample of this size with this sample plan would carry a margin of error of +/- 3.0 percentage points, 19 times out of 20. Discrepancies in or between totals are due to rounding. The survey was self-commissioned and paid for by ARI. Detailed tables are found at the end of this release.

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- The debate over the TransMountain project has captured the nation's attention. More than half of Canadians say they're paying close attention to this issue – including majorities in every region other than Quebec

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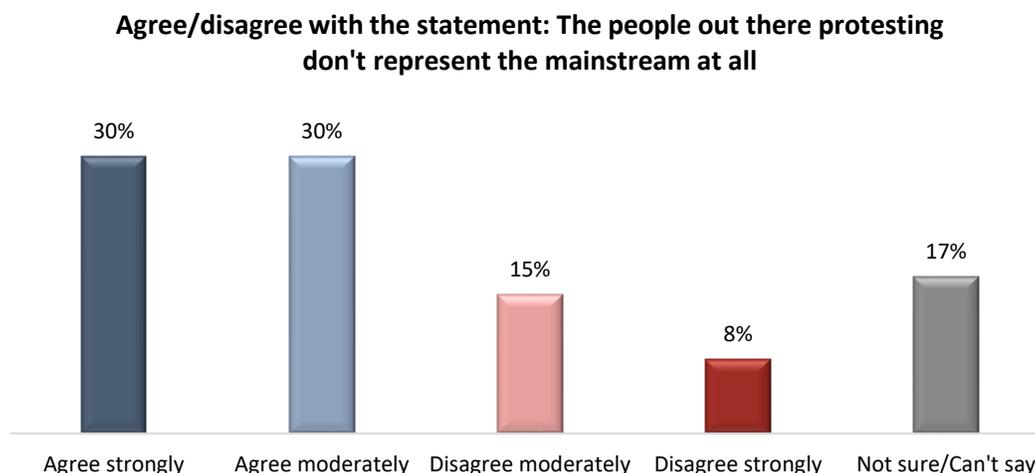
**Do the protesters have public support?**

Protesters have been involved in directly confronting Kinder Morgan on Burnaby Mountain since 2014. Indeed, the first arrests began in November of that year, as [more than 100 people were detained](#) for disrupting survey work and drilling.

As the project has continued, protests have increased. Since March of this year roughly 200 more people have been arrested, including federal Green Party leader Elizabeth May and federal NDP MP Kennedy Stewart.

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While protesters have vowed to continue, most Canadians are not of the belief that this group represents the mainstream view of their neighbours. In fact, six-in-ten Canadians say this group represents a fringe view, while just 23 per cent disagree:

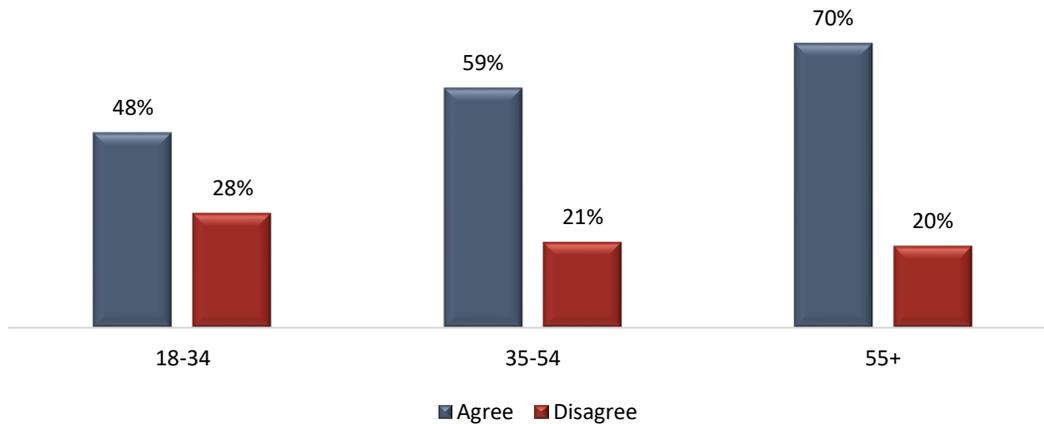


This opinion varies substantially by age, though in each generational cohort more Canadians agree than disagree that protesters are a minority view.

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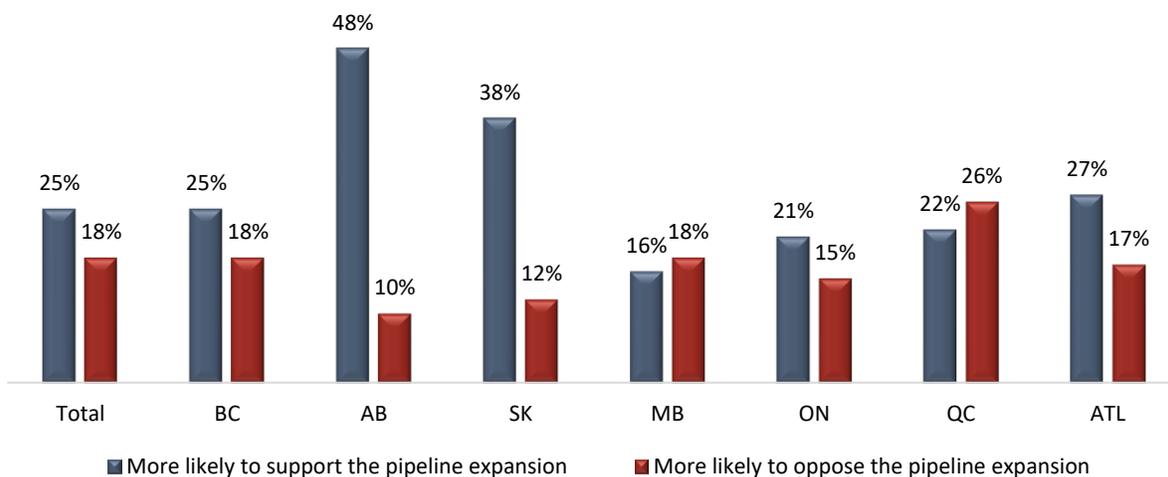
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**Agree/disagree with the statement: The people out there protesting don't represent the mainstream at all**



Notably, when asked whether the protests they have seen make them more or less likely to support the pipeline, only in Manitoba and Quebec do the demonstrations have the desired effect. In each case, a marginal number of respondents say they're more likely to oppose the expansion from what they have seen:

**Overall, do these protests make you...**

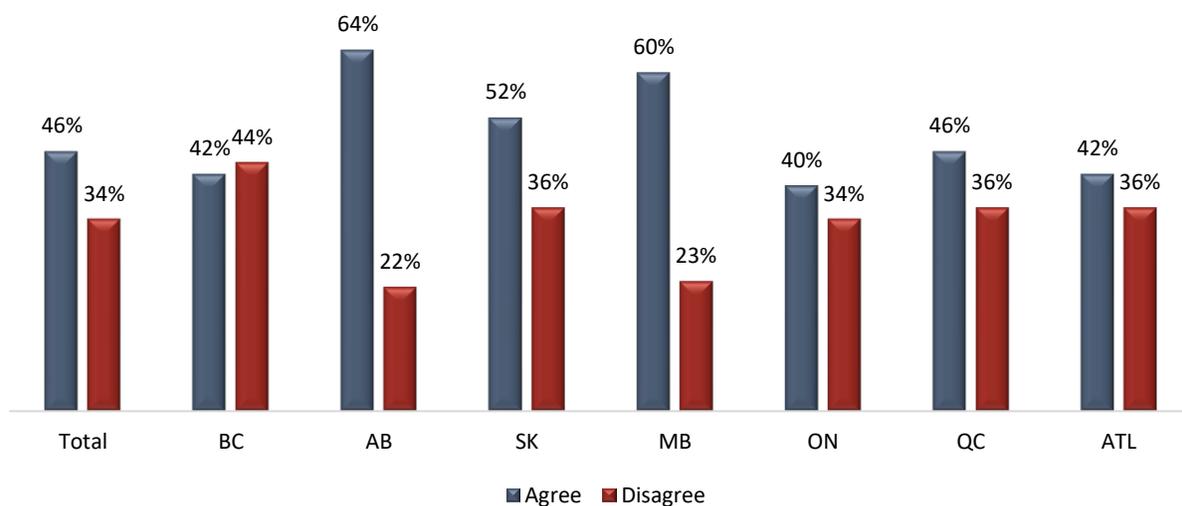


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B.C. Premier John Horgan has abstained from condemning or praising the protesters on Burnaby Mountain. He recently suggested that his government should not bear responsibility for dealing with further protests, saying “I believe the federal government should be accountable for the circumstances we find ourselves in at this time.” For their part, close to half of Canadians (46%) say that he should be doing more to condemn the actions of protests, but a significant number disagree (34%). In B.C., an equal number take either side on this proposition:

**Agree/disagree with the statement: B.C. Premier John Horgan should be doing more to condemn the actions of those protesting the pipeline**



**Indigenous concerns top of mind for most outside of Alberta**

When Horgan, Trudeau, and Alberta Premier Rachel Notley met in Ottawa to discuss a resolution to this conflict earlier this month, National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations Perry Bellegarde noted that First Nations voices were being left out of the conversation.

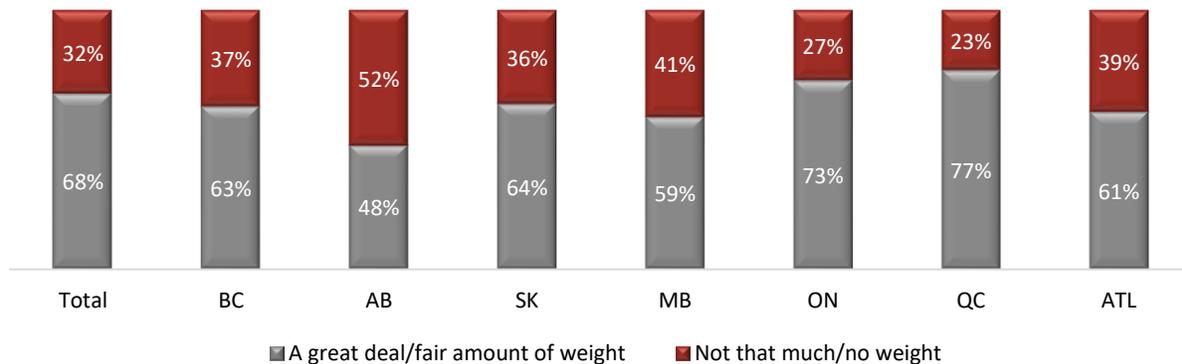
While Kinder Morgan has signed mutual benefit agreements with more than 40 First Nations thus far, a number of other First Nations leaders have continued to state that these do not necessarily constitute consent, and the community remains divided.

This process and a potential resolution to concerns will be important going forward. Two-thirds of Canadians (68%) agree that maintaining a positive relationship between the government and those First Nations that oppose the pipeline should be given significant consideration during this process. This includes a firm majority in all regions outside of Alberta:

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**In this discussion, how much weight should be given to: The importance of maintaining a positive relationship between the federal government and those First Nations that oppose the pipeline**

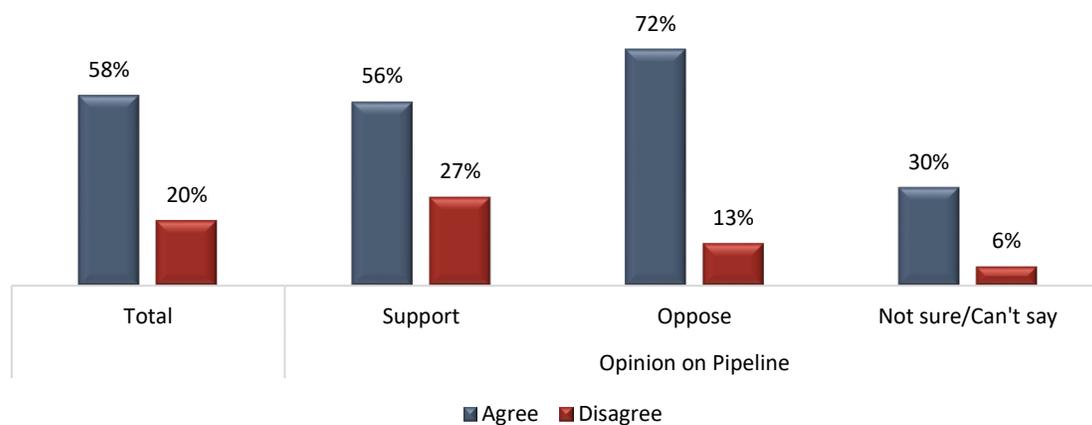


**Majority say Kinder Morgan brought troubles upon itself**

Many opponents – including Grand Chief Stewart Phillip, president of the Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs – claim that Kinder Morgan did not attain “[consent or social licence](#)” from British Columbians and Indigenous peoples for this project, which has led to conflict and delays. A majority of Canadians agree.

Six-in-ten (58%) say that Kinder Morgan brought much of this problem upon themselves by not ensuring social licence was gained, and just one-in-five (20%) disagree. Even among supporters of the pipeline, 56 per cent say that Kinder Morgan could have done a better job:

**Agree/disagree with the statement:  
Kinder Morgan could have done a better job earning public support for this project and brought much of this on itself**



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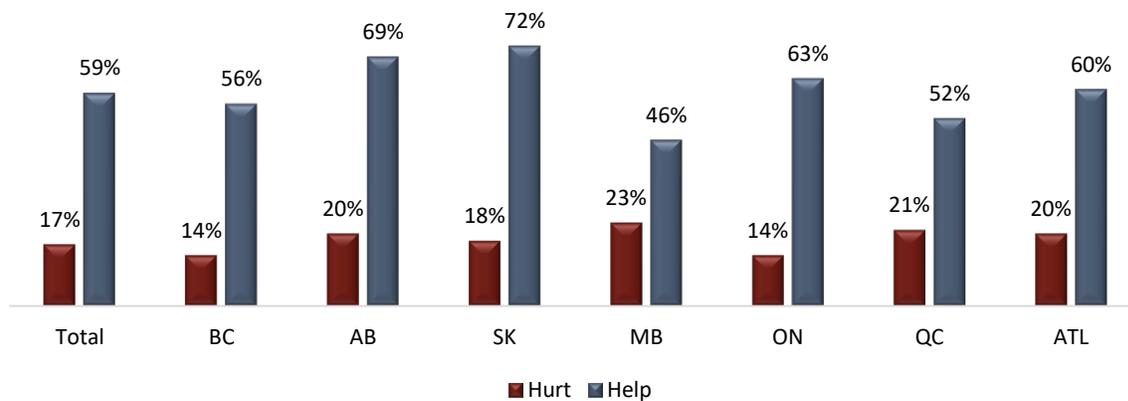
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**Canadians see economic benefits of expansion, voice concern over environment**

If the Trudeau government’s strategy in gaining public support for this project is to make the economic case for the country, it may just succeed. While there have been cases made [in support of](#) and [in opposition to](#) the pipeline from a strictly economic perspective, Canadians tend to lean toward the support argument.

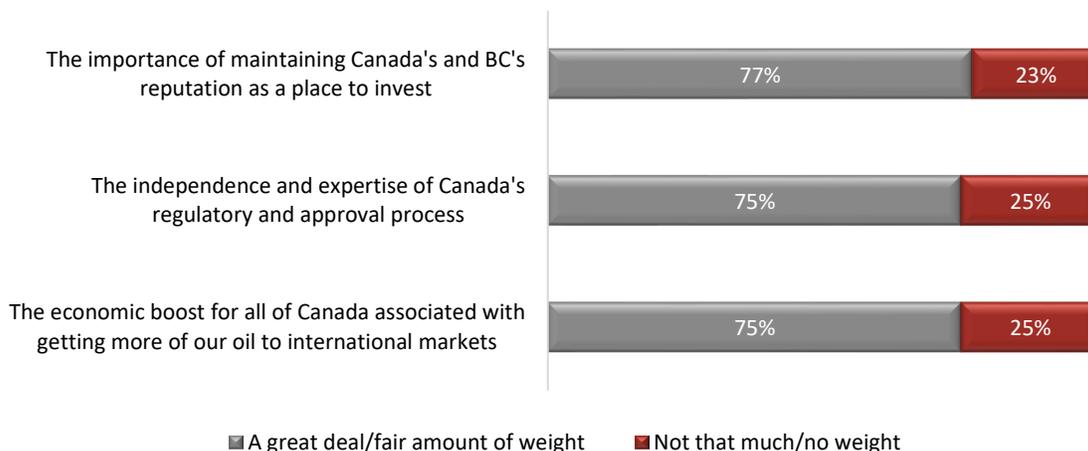
When asked whether building the pipeline would help, hurt or have no impact on the Canadian economy, Canadians are overwhelmingly positive about the perceived benefits:

**In your opinion, would building the pipeline help, hurt, or have no impact on the Canadian economy as a whole?**



Three-quarters of Canadians say that one of the considerations in this discussion is the importance of maintaining Canada’s reputation as a strong place to invest. The same number say that the independence and expertise of Canada’s regulatory process should be at play here. This, after the National Energy Board [approved the project with 157 conditions](#), ahead of the federal government’s approval:

**In this discussion, how much weight should be given to:**

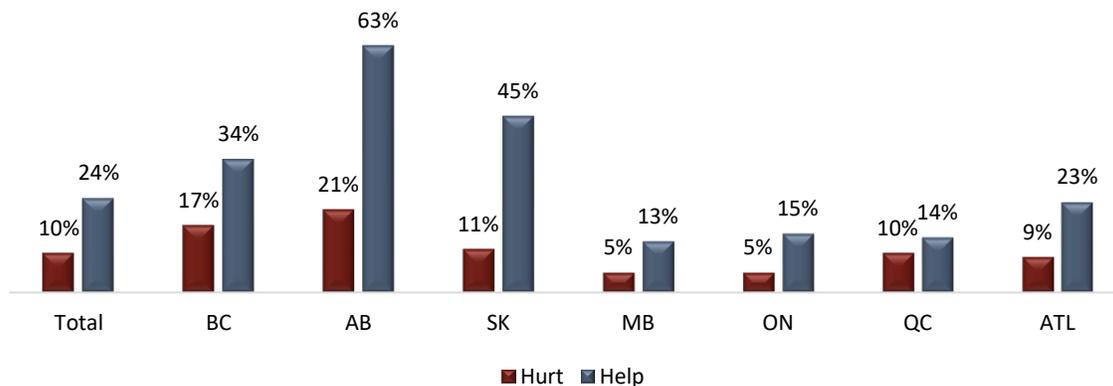


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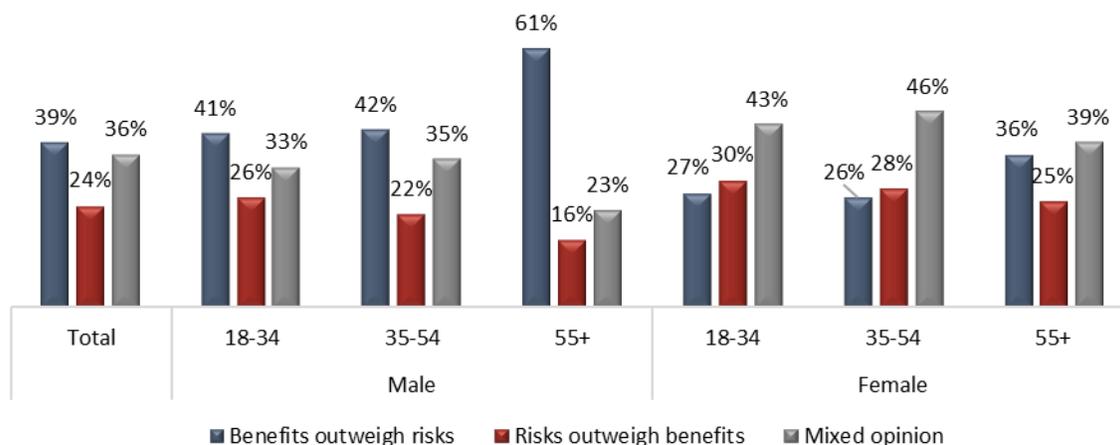
That said, fewer Canadians say they will see an economic benefit in their own community. The numbers are not altogether insignificant, however. In every region of the country, more residents say their community will be helped rather than harmed if the project is completed. This opinion is predictably highest in Alberta, though a large portion of Saskatchewan and B.C. residents also say their communities will be buoyed:

**In your opinion, would building the pipeline help, hurt, or have no impact on your local economy?**



While the desire for economic growth is clearly evident among the Canadian public, so too is the concern about the associated risks of the project. Asked to consider the tension between economic benefits and environmental risk, one-in-three (36%) say that they believe the risk versus benefit tradeoff is close to equal, while one-in-four (24%) say the risks outweigh the benefits. Notably, men of all ages are significantly more likely to take the economic side of this consideration:

**Overall, when you think about this whole issue, how do you weigh the potential economic benefits versus potential environmental risks?**

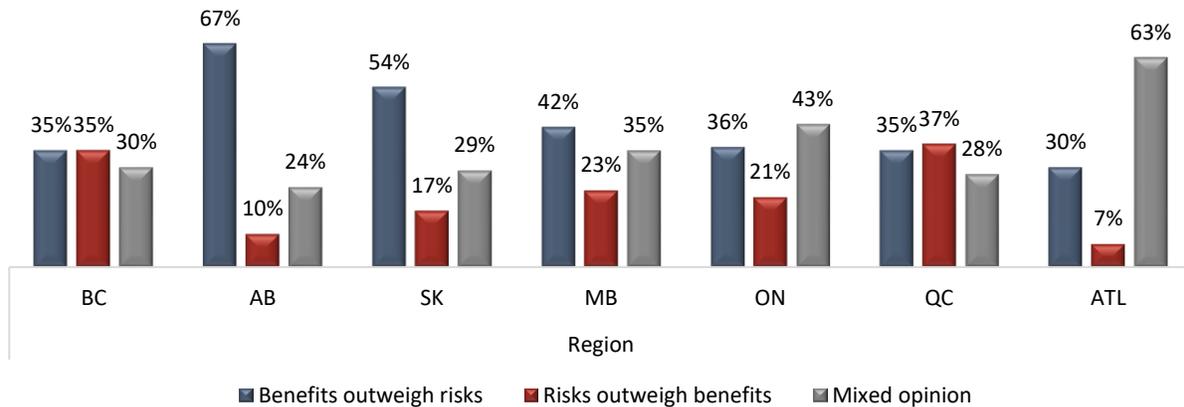


As might be expected, Albertans overwhelmingly say the economic benefits outweigh the environmental risks, while respondents in B.C. and Quebec are evenly divided:

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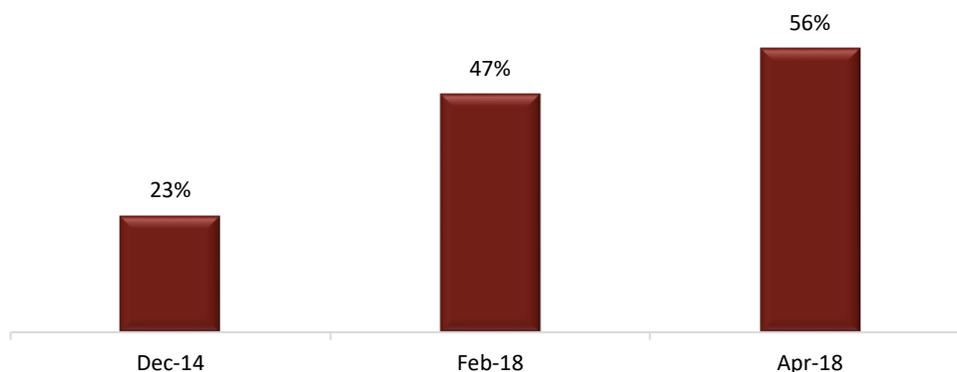


**A regional conflict becomes a national issue**

For B.C. residents, the debate over Kinder Morgan’s TransMountain pipeline expansion is nothing new. British Columbians have been watching the story unfold for six years, since Kinder Morgan first [applied to increase capacity at](#) the Westridge Marine Terminal in 2012.

For the rest of the country, this issue is also now front-and-centre. When the Angus Reid Institute first asked about the TransMountain issue, amid 2014 protests, just 23 per cent of Canadians were following the issue closely. After Alberta cut off B.C. wine purchases early this year, that number had doubled. Now, just two months later, the number following this issue has risen another nine percentage points nationally:

**Percentage of Canadians following TransMountain debate closely**

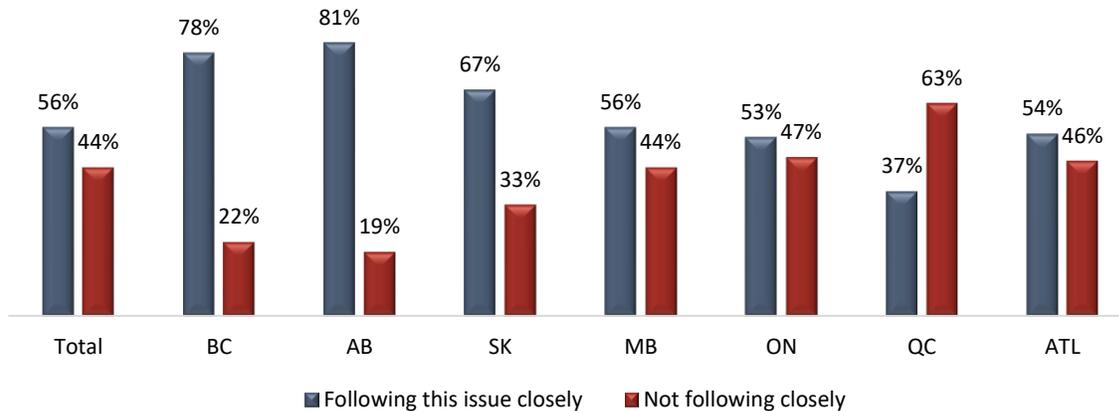


Providing more evidence of just how much of a national issue this has become is the fact that in every region outside of Quebec a majority of residents say they have been following these discussions closely:

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**How closely would you say you have been following this issue?**



The **Angus Reid Institute (ARI)** was founded in October 2014 by pollster and sociologist, Dr. Angus Reid. ARI is a national, not-for-profit, non-partisan public opinion research foundation established to advance education by commissioning, conducting and disseminating to the publicS accessible and impartial statistical data, research and policy analysis on economics, political science, philanthropy, public administration, domestic and international affairs and other socio-economic issues of importance to Canada and its world.

For detailed results by age, gender, region, education, and other demographics, [click here](#).

Kinder Morgan could have done a better job earning public support and brought much of this on themselves				
	Total	Opinion on pipeline		
		Support	Oppose	Not sure/Can't say
Agree	58%	56%	72%	30%
Disagree	20%	27%	13%	6%

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**How closely have you been following this TransMountain pipeline expansion issue?**

	Date of poll		
	December 2014	February 2018	April 2018
Closely following	23%	47%	56%
Not following that closely	77%	53%	44%

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