

Premiers' Performance: In the wake of pipeline problems, approval of both Kenney and Horgan falls

Ball, McNeil, Ford the least approved of in the country

March 3, 2020 – The blockade crisis surrounding the Coastal GasLink pipeline project has had the country in its grips for weeks now, and the political fallout from it does not appear to have been kind to the provincial leaders at the centre of it.

In British Columbia, Premier John Horgan's job approval has dropped ten points, from 56 per cent in December to 46 per cent now. In a [survey published](#) by the Angus Reid Institute last week, just 18 per cent of British Columbians said Horgan had handled the Wet'suwet'en protests and solidarity blockades well, while 65 per cent said he had done a poor job.

In Alberta, Premier Jason Kenney's approval has also slipped below the majority mark: It is down seven points to 47 per cent.

It comes as the Alberta government [introduced](#) the Critical Infrastructure Defence Act, which would impose "stiff new penalties on law breakers who purposefully block critical, essential infrastructure, such as railways, roadways ... and other related infrastructure". Some legal observers [have questioned](#) whether the law may infringe on protesters [Charter rights](#).

Legault and Moe maintain top spot

Two fixtures at the top of the premier approval ratings list remain there. Saskatchewan Premier Scott Moe has not yet ruled out an early provincial election, otherwise the province must head to the polls by October 26 of this year. 58 per cent of Saskatchewan residents approve of the Premier, the same number who did so at the end of 2019.

Quebec's François Legault has spent the last few weeks dealing with railway blockades in his province related to the Coastal Gaslink pipeline. Several Indigenous leadership groups [have criticized](#) Legault's response to protests, with the Mohawk Council of Kahnawake calling his comments about members of



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METHODOLOGY:

The Angus Reid Institute conducted an online survey from February 24 – 28, 2020 among a representative randomized sample of 5,042 Canadian adults who are members of [Angus Reid Forum](#). For comparison purposes only, a probability sample of this size would carry a margin of error of +/- 2.0 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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their community being armed with AK-47's "[reckless](#)". Legault still holds the approval of 58 per cent of Quebec residents, but this represents a decline of five points.

Conservatives Higgs, Pallister

New Brunswick Premier Blaine Higgs lost his deputy premier, MLA Robert Gauvin, in February after Gauvin [resigned](#) from the position and quit the Conservative party, moving to sit as an independent in the legislature. This, after the minority Conservative government announced it would be closing six hospital emergency rooms during overnight hours, as a part of healthcare reforms. Higgs [later announced](#) that his government would not be going forward with the reforms until further consultations are completed. His approval this quarter is unchanged at 48 per cent.

Just over two-in-five Manitoba residents (43%) approve of Premier Brian Pallister, a decline of four points. The Conservative leader [recently hinted](#) at a provincial carbon tax that would meet federal standards after discussions with Justin Trudeau and other federal government officials in recent months. That said, with a deal yet to have been struck, Pallister also said that his government will go ahead with a court challenge to the federal carbon plan.

Ford's continued fall

Just under one-third (31 per cent) of Ontarians now say they approve of Ontario Premier Doug Ford's job performance. Ford [recently praised](#) U.S. President Donald Trump on a trip to Washington, while criticizing the Democratic leadership in the country. This, after last year referring to himself as a "[big Republican](#)". Seven-in-ten (71%) Ontario residents say they have a negative view of the U.S. President, suggesting Ford's comments may not be helping ([see detailed tables here](#)). Meanwhile, at home, Ford's government is dealing with rotating strikes from the teacher's union [who are protesting](#) increases to class sizes, mandatory online classes and other changes the provincial government has made to education policy. Ford's job approval has only declined (a total of 11 points overall) since the June 2018 Ontario election.

McNeil and Ball

The two least popular premiers in the country are found in Atlantic Canada. Fewer than one-third (28%) of Nova Scotians see Premier Stephen McNeil as doing a good job these days. McNeil's government [recently announced](#) new public spending measures in the 2020 budget to combat projects of a slowing provincial economy.

Newfoundland and Labrador Premier Dwight Ball announced that he will be resigning from his position. He holds the approval of 26 per cent of residents.

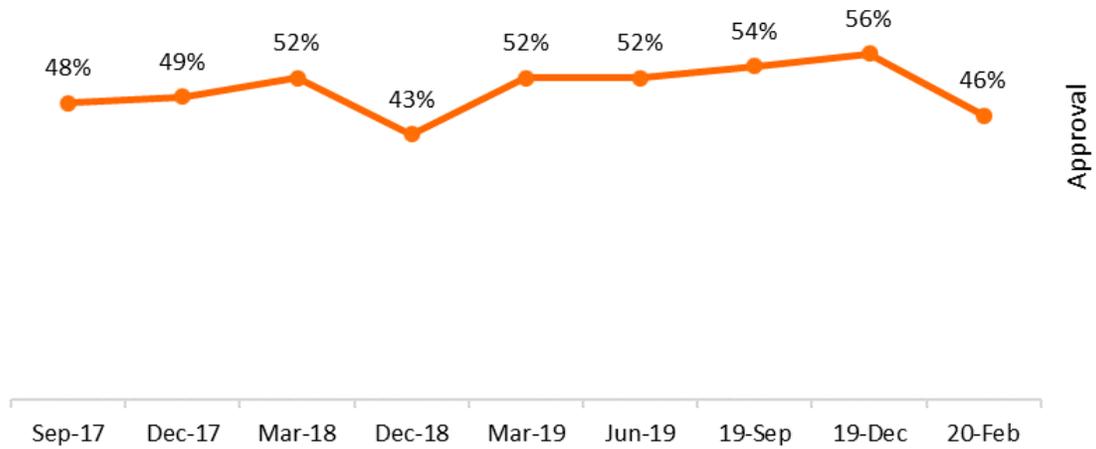
About ARI

*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 public 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.*

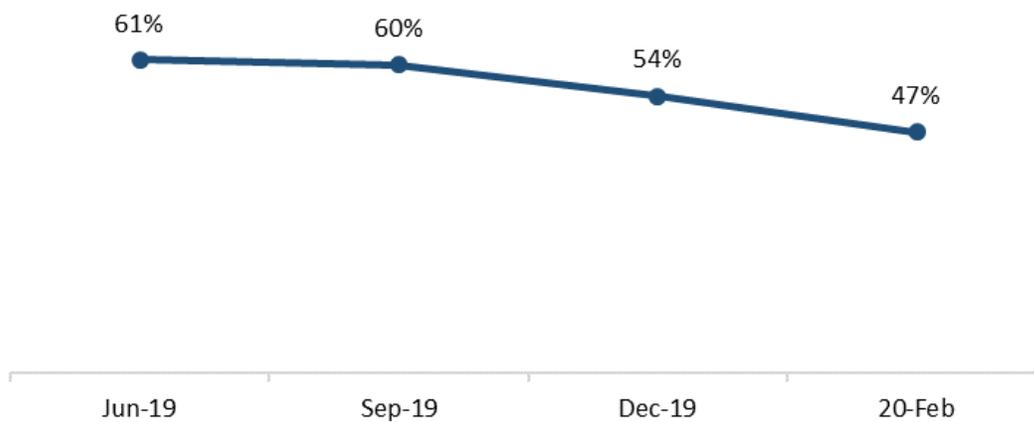
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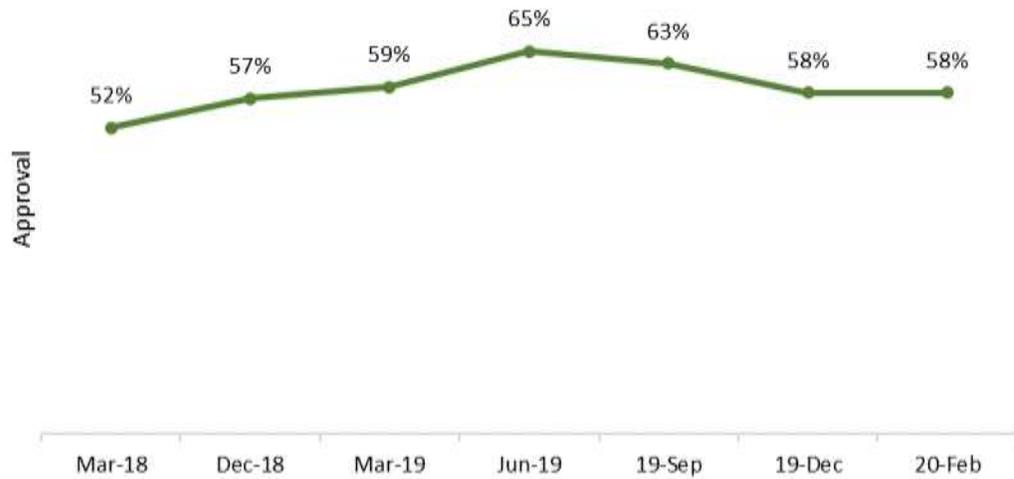
British Columbia Premier John Horgan (NDP)



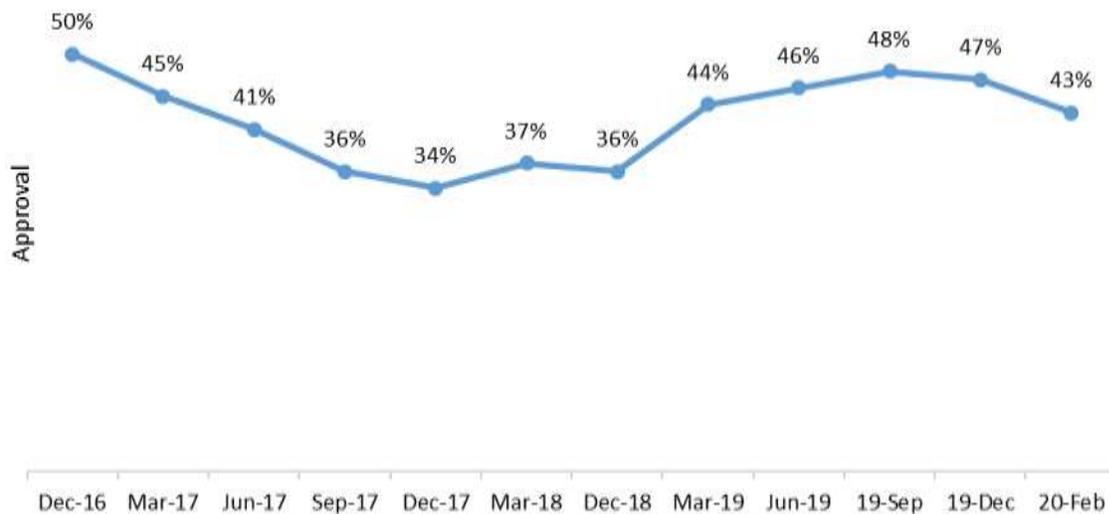
Alberta Premier Jason Kenney (UCP)



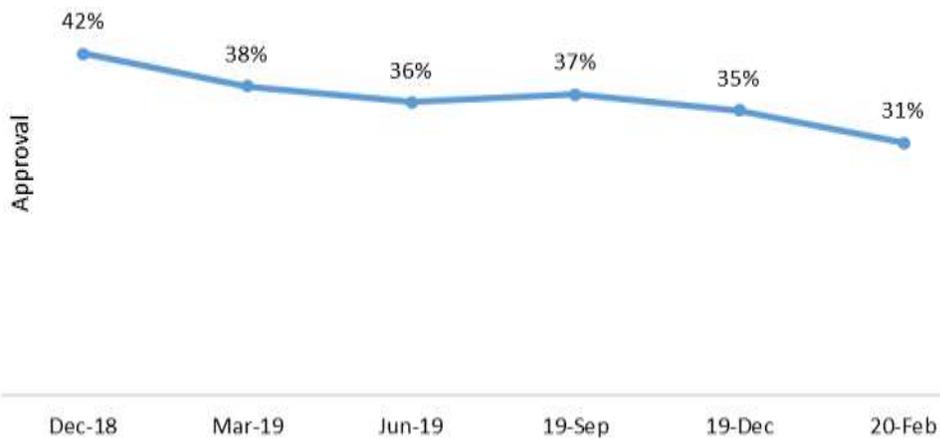
Saskatchewan Premier Scott Moe (Saskatchewan Party)



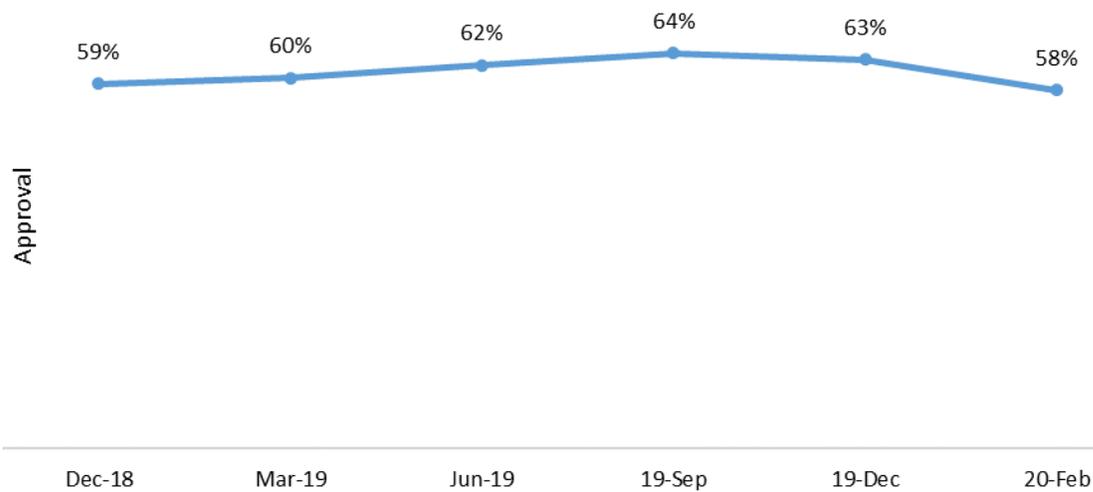
Manitoba Premier Brian Pallister (Progressive Conservative)



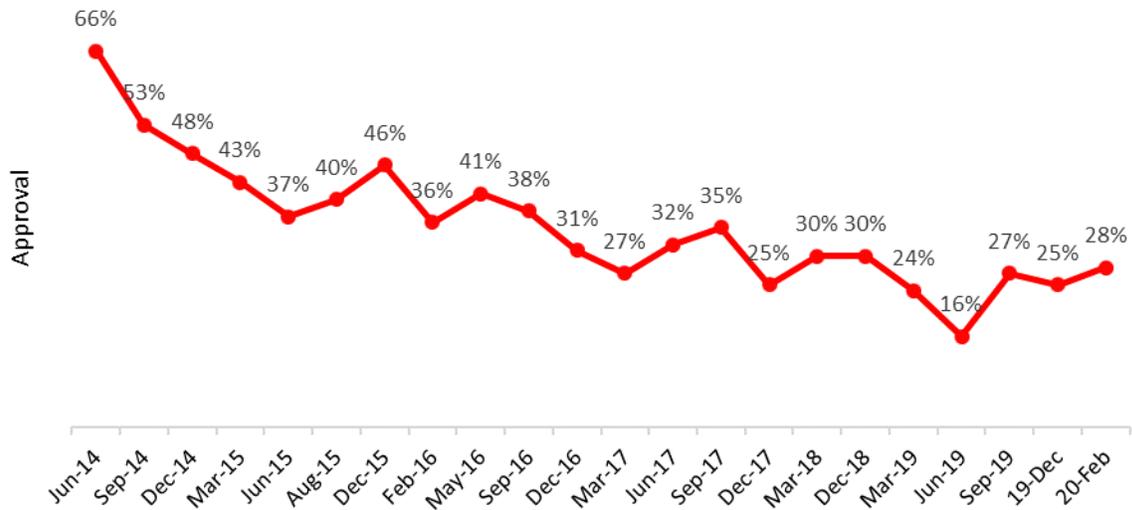
Ontario Premier Doug Ford (Progressive Conservative)



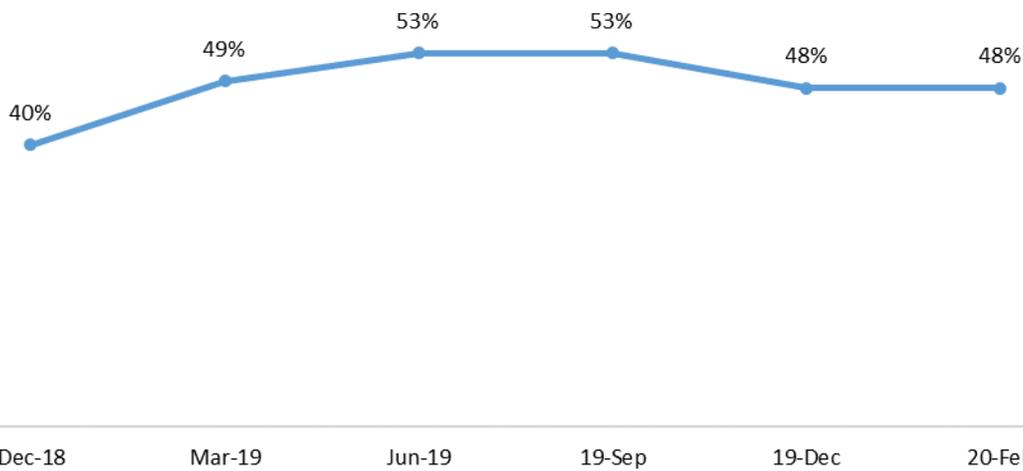
Quebec Premier François Legault (Coalition Avenir Quebec)



Nova Scotia Premier Stephen McNeil (Liberal)



New Brunswick Premier Blaine Higgs (Progressive Conservative)

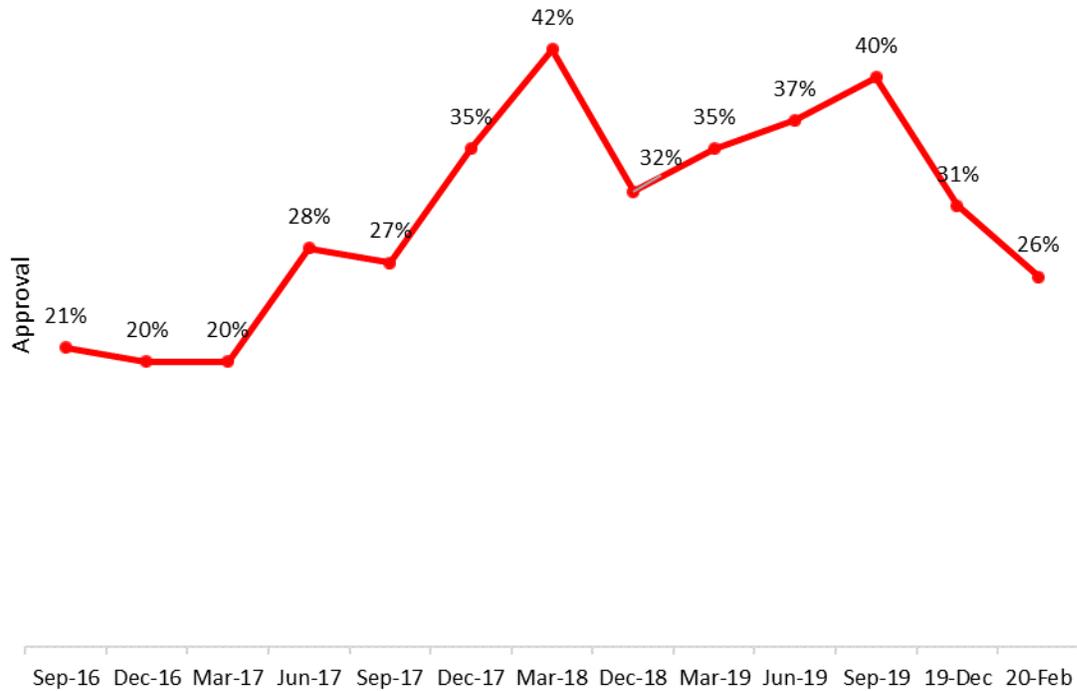


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Newfoundland and Labrador Premier Dwight Ball (Liberal)



Margins of error								
BC (608)	AB (597)	SK (601)	MB (598)	ON (1,051)	QC (719)	NB (252)	NS (300)	NL (223)
+/- 4.0%	+/- 4.0%	+/- 4.0%	+/- 4.0%	+/- 3.0%	+/- 3.7%	+/- 6.2%	+/- 5.7%	+/- 6.6%

**Because its small population precludes drawing discrete samples over multiple waves, data on Prince Edward Island is not released.*

Do you approve or disapprove of each of the following people? (Percent Approval)				
(unweighted sample sizes)	June 2019	September 2019	December 2019	February 2020
British Columbia (N=608): Premier and New Democratic Party leader John Horgan	52%	54%	56%	46%
Alberta (N=597): Premier and United Conservative Party leader Jason Kenney	61%	60%	54%	47%
Saskatchewan (N=601) Premier and Saskatchewan Party leader Scott Moe	65%	63%	58%	58%
Manitoba (N=598) Premier and Progressive Conservative leader Brian Pallister	46%	48%	47%	43%
Ontario (N=1,051) Premier and Progressive Conservative leader Doug Ford	36%	37%	35%	31%
Québec (N=719) Premier and Coalition Avenir Québec leader François Legault	62%	64%	63%	58%
New Brunswick (N=252) Premier and Progressive Conservative leader Blaine Higgs	53%	53%	48%	48%
Nova Scotia (N=300) Premier and Liberal Party leader Stephen McNeil	16%	27%	25%	28%
Newfoundland and Labrador (N=223) Premier and Liberal Party leader Dwight Ball	37%	40%	31%	26%

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