

Federal leadership: Trudeau enjoys end of year approval bump; Poilievre remains deeply unpopular with women

54% view CPC leader unfavourably, twice the number who said same of Harper at similar point in reign

December 19, 2022 – As Christmas nears, Canadians have more holiday jeers than holiday cheers for the official leader of the opposition.

A new study from the non-profit Angus Reid Institute finds Conservative Party leader Pierre Poilievre provoking more reaction from his predecessors, but perhaps not in the way he may want.

Asked how they view Poilievre, Canadians are much more likely to actually have an opinion of him at this point in his tenure compared to past CPC leaders. Early term uncertainty, however, has mostly been replaced with acrimony. One-in-three (33%) view Poilievre favourably, while more than half (54%) hold a negative view. These levels of unfavourable sentiment are much higher than those of previous leaders Andrew Scheer, Erin O'Toole, and Stephen Harper at the beginning of their own leadership ventures.

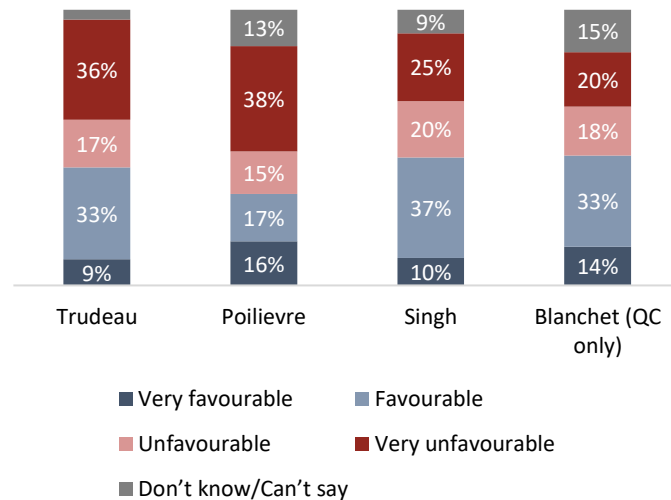
Of those who have occupied Stornoway in the 21st century, only Harper was met with majority positive sentiment after taking the job.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, meanwhile, enjoys a five-point boost in his approval compared to summer levels. He's viewed positively by more than two-in-five (43%). Trudeau appeared at public hearings in November to [defend his February decision](#) to invoke the Emergencies Act in response to [deeply unpopular "freedom convoy" protests](#).

An emerging gender divide is unmistakable: Poilievre's favourability is nearly twice as high among men (44%) as women (23%), while the inverse, though not as pronounced, is true of Trudeau (35% among men, 50% among women).

Both men will have plenty of opportunity to tackle big issues in 2023 and earn more confidence among the population. Canadians head into a new year focused on crumbling health care infrastructure and overwhelming cost of living concerns. These two issues rank atop the list of priorities for every region of the country.

Leadership favourability
(Approval asked for Trudeau, favourability for other leaders;
All respondents, n=5,030)



METHODOLOGY:

The Angus Reid Institute conducted an online survey from Nov. 28 – Dec. 3, 2022 among a representative randomized sample of 5,030 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 +/- 1 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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More Key Findings:

- Trudeau has seen his favourability improve over the year among 18- to 34-year-olds. Two-in-five (39%) men that age, and half (50%) of women, view him favourably.
- Approaching half of constituents view NDP leader Jagmeet Singh (46%) and Bloc Québécois leader Yves-François Blanchet (47%, Quebec only) favourably.
- More than half in Alberta (53%) and Saskatchewan (57%) view Poilievre favourably, the only two provinces where that's the case. Quebecers hold the most unfavourable views, with two-thirds (64%) saying they have negative impressions of Poilievre.

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.

INDEX

Part One: Leader appraisal

- **Trudeau approved of by two-in-five**
- **Poilievre struggles to find favour**

Part Two: Top issues

Part One: Leader appraisal

[“Canada is not broken”](#). Prime Minister Justin Trudeau proclaimed such at a Christmas gathering of Liberal Party organizers and politicians in Ottawa last week, in response to claims to the contrary from opposition leader Pierre Poilievre earlier this year. This, just days after federal NDP leader Jagmeet Singh [threatened](#) to break a confidence-and-supply agreement that has held up the government since the 2021 election. Singh, alongside [the nation's premiers](#), is looking for concrete action to improve a struggling health-care system.

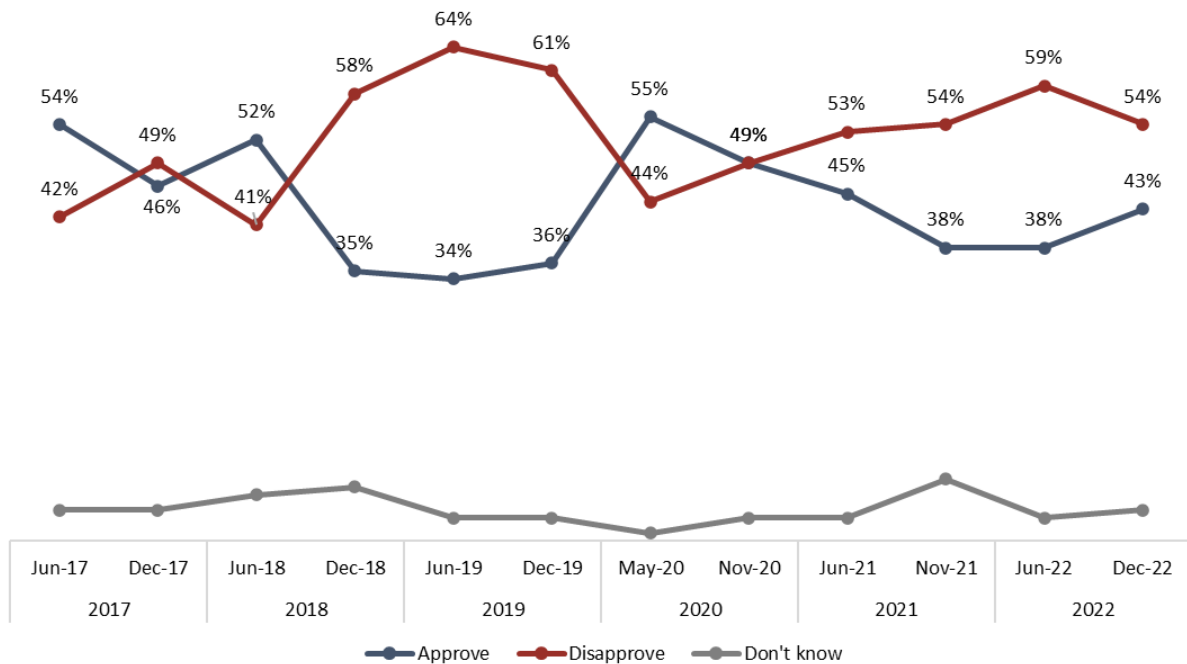
Trudeau approved of by two-in-five

It has been a year of immense challenges for Canadians, from [“freedom convoy”](#) protests, to rising [interest rates and inflation](#), to shortages of [children's medication](#) and [crumbling health care access](#). There are reasons for optimism for the prime minister, nonetheless. Amidst these challenges, his personal job approval rating rises to 43 per cent. Whether this is holiday good will or a newfound momentum for the Liberal leader will likely depend on continued action to address some of the major issues in 2023:

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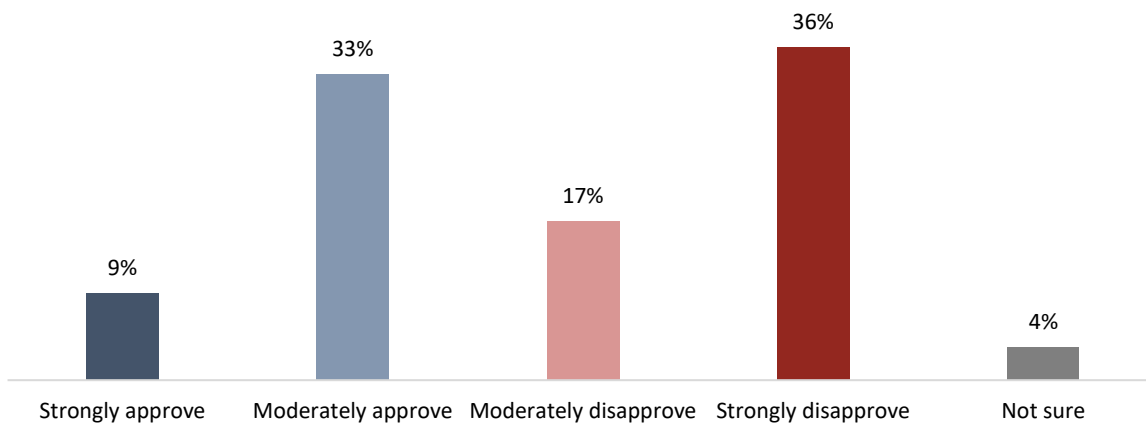
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Approval of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau



Strong disapproval remains a challenge for Trudeau. Past Conservative Party voters offer this view in spades ([see detailed tables](#)). Overall, 36 per cent of Canadians are strongly critical of the PM, while moderate approval is the next most common response:

**Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the performance of Prime Minister and Liberal Party leader Justin Trudeau?
(All respondents, n=5,030)**

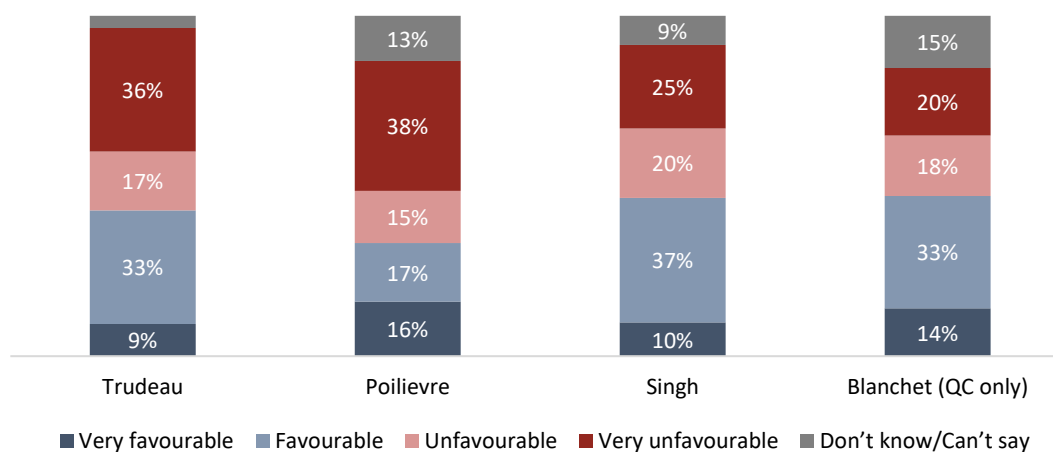


Trudeau appears to have regained some momentum among women. Half of 18- to 34-year-old women approve of Trudeau, compared to the 39 per cent offered in the first quarter of the year. Young men, too, are feeling more amenable to Trudeau heading into the holidays:

Justin Trudeau approval, 2022, by age and gender					
		22-Mar	22-Jun	22-Sep	22-Dec
Male	18-34	31%	29%	31%	39%
	35-54	30%	32%	33%	31%
	55+	37%	34%	33%	36%
Female	18-34	39%	43%	46%	50%
	35-54	42%	41%	45%	47%
	55+	52%	47%	50%	53%

Among the three main federal party leaders, Jagmeet Singh continues to resonate most with the public. His favourability rating nears half at 47 per cent. Poilievre, meanwhile, receives favour from one-in-three (33%):

Leadership favourability
(Approval asked for Trudeau, favourability for other leaders;
All respondents, n=5,030)



Poilievre struggles to find favour

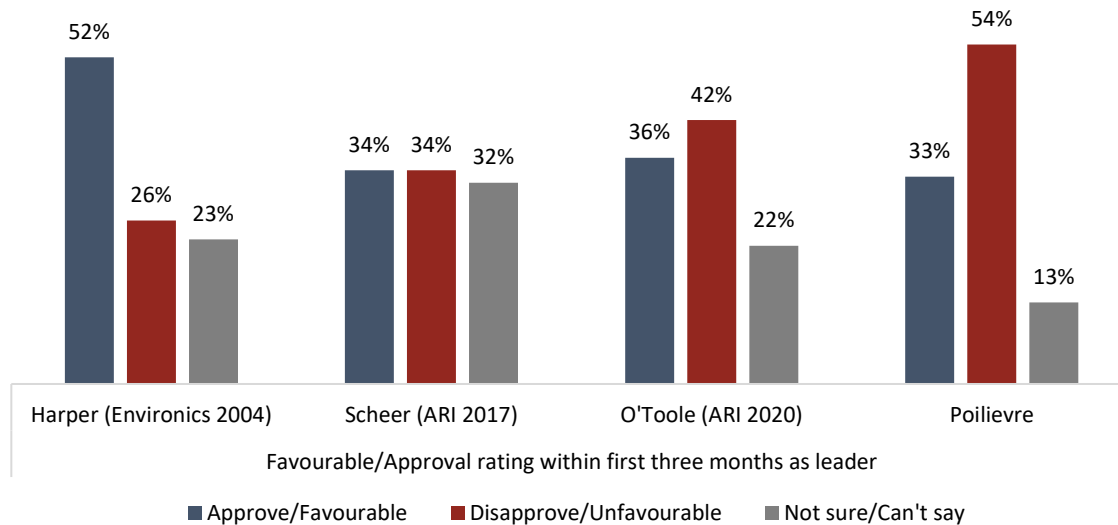
Objective number one for Poilievre this year was to win the Conservative Party leadership race. From that standpoint, 2022 has been a success. The Carleton MP was able to comfortably defeat former Quebec premier Jean Charest to win leadership in September. In this next year he will likely need to deliver more in the way of broad appeal. Approximately three months into his tenure as CPC leader, Poilievre is viewed much more negatively than his predecessors. This, after aligning himself with the deeply

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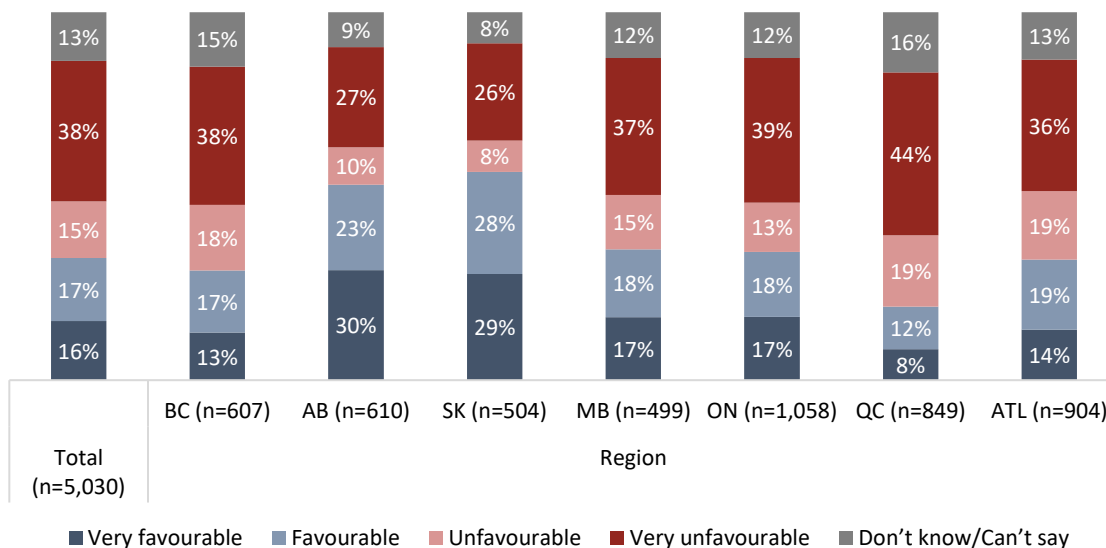
unpopular "[freedom convoy](#)" and embracing [other positions](#) that are unpopular outside of his base, including firing the head of the Bank of Canada.

CPC leader favourability/approval after first three months



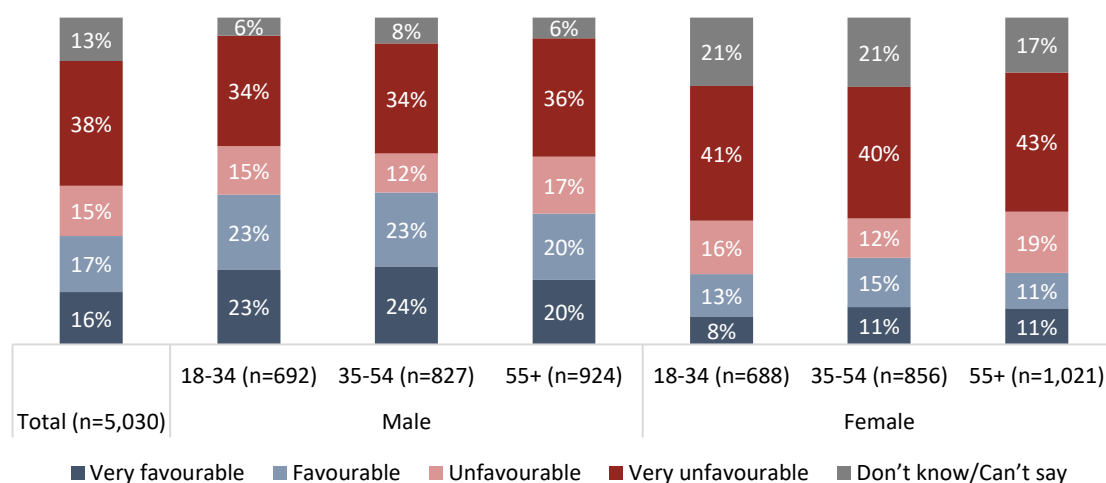
Poilievre enjoys his highest levels of enthusiasm in Alberta and Saskatchewan. The Calgary-born leader continues this trend, which has seen both provinces heavily support other recent CPC leaders. Elsewhere, coming off a significant loss in the Mississauga—Lakeshore by-election this month, Poilievre's issues in Ontario are evident. His favourability hovers around one-in-three in that province (35%), dropping even lower in Quebec (20%):

Do you have an overall favourable or unfavourable view of Conservative Party leader Pierre Poilievre?



While Trudeau's public opinion strength is among women, Poilievre's is among men. Across all generations men are much more likely to view him favourably compared to women of the same age group:

Do you have an overall favourable or unfavourable view of Conservative Party leader Pierre Poilievre?



Part Two: Top issues

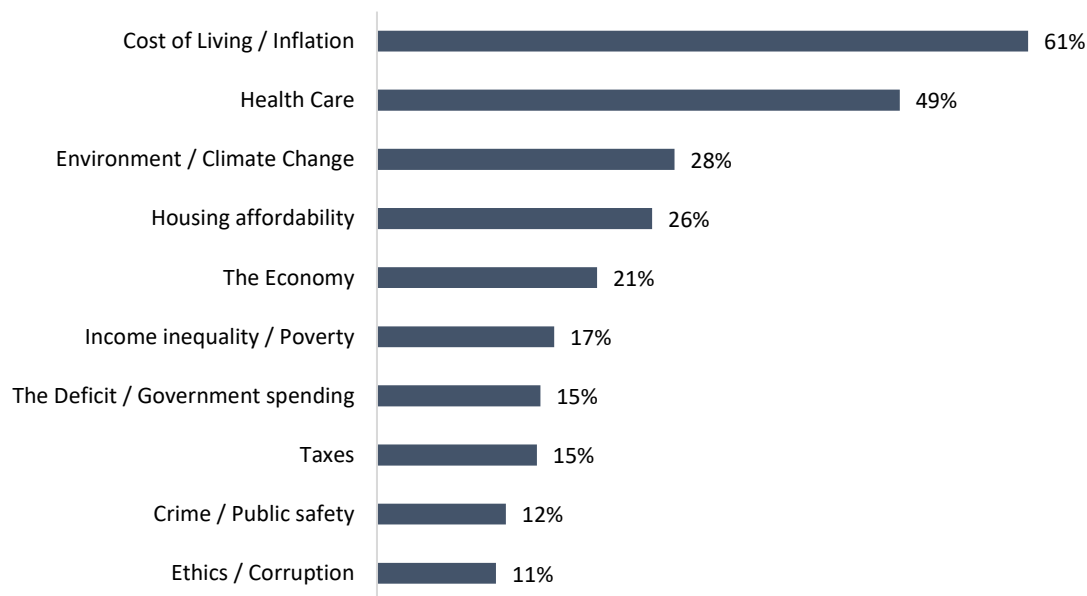
The top issues emerging out of 2022 are those that have defined the better part of the year for many Canadians. While inflation has begun to trend downward in month over month comparisons, the year to

year trend shows a significant increase [of nearly seven per cent](#). This is by far the top concern for Canadians, many of whom have cut back their holiday spending, and cancelled seasonal travel plans this year.

[Related: Inflation realities deflate Christmas shopping plans](#)

Health care, too, ranks high for most Canadians. Federal health minister Jean-Yves Duclos [continues to negotiate](#) with the provinces over health care funding, in the face of labour and supply shortages across the country. The federal government is [seeking reforms](#) from the provinces before it issues larger federal health transfers.

**Top issues facing the country
(Up to three chosen; All respondents, n=5,030)**



Health care has continued to grow in prominence among Canadian priorities, while the issue that has exacerbated challenges since 2020 – COVID-19 – is now a top priority for just one-in-20. This is a sevenfold decrease [compared to the Omicron wave](#) in January of this year ([see detailed tables](#)).

There is some agreement among past NDP, Liberal and Bloc Québécois voters on the top issues facing the country – though those who voted Liberal in the 2021 election are the only group of voters to select health care at a higher rate than inflation. Those who voted CPC have different priorities – one-third (33%) believe the deficit is a top challenge for the country and approaching three-in-ten say the economy (28%) and taxes (29%). All three of those issues rank outside of the top five for voters of the other major parties:

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Top issues by vote last (Up to three chosen; top five shown)				
Total (n=5,030)	2021 Federal Vote			
	CPC (n=1,436)	Liberal (n=1,415)	NDP (n=764)	BQ (n=325)
Cost of Living/ Inflation 61%	Cost of Living/ Inflation 63%	Health Care 62%	Cost of Living/ Inflation 58%	Cost of Living/ Inflation 59%
Health Care 49%	Health Care 36%	Cost of Living/ Inflation 56%	Health Care 54%	Health Care 56%
Environment/ Climate Change 28%	The Deficit/ Government spending 33%	Environment/ Climate Change 41%	Environment/ Climate Change 44%	Environment/ Climate Change 44%
Housing affordability 26%	Taxes 29%	Housing affordability 28%	Housing affordability 40%	Income inequality/ Poverty 25%
The Economy 21%	The Economy 28%	Income inequality/ Poverty 21%	Income inequality/ Poverty 30%	Housing affordability 17%

The top two issues are the same in every region of the country (see detailed tables), but there are varying levels of importance for each across age and gender. Young men show far less concern about health care than their similarly aged female counterparts. Young people are also more interested in climate change and housing affordability than their older peers:

Top issues by age and gender (Up to three chosen; responses receiving >25% shaded)							
	Total (n=5,030)	Male			Female		
		18-34 (n=692)	35-54 (n=827)	55+ (n=924)	18-34 (n=688)	35-54 (n=856)	55+ (n=1,021)
Cost of Living / Inflation	61%	57%	65%	52%	65%	71%	56%
Health Care	49%	28%	32%	52%	48%	55%	69%
Environment / Climate Change	28%	28%	19%	22%	40%	27%	32%
Housing affordability	26%	30%	19%	17%	38%	28%	26%
The Economy	21%	28%	26%	25%	13%	17%	16%
Income inequality / Poverty	17%	15%	13%	16%	18%	17%	19%
The Deficit / Government spending	15%	17%	25%	21%	8%	9%	12%
Taxes	15%	13%	20%	21%	10%	13%	12%

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

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