

Survey of Canadians' Attitudes Towards Government Science - November 2013

Prepared for: The Professional Institute of the Public Service of Canada



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THE PROFESSIONAL INSTITUTE OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE OF CANADA
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Research objectives and methodology

The objective of this research was to identify the public's top priority for government scientific activity, and gauge reaction to projected cuts to federal spending on scientific activities.

A telephone survey was conducted with a national random sample of 1,003 Canadians (18 years or older), between November 14 and 20, 2013. The margin of error for a sample of this size is +/- 3.1 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.

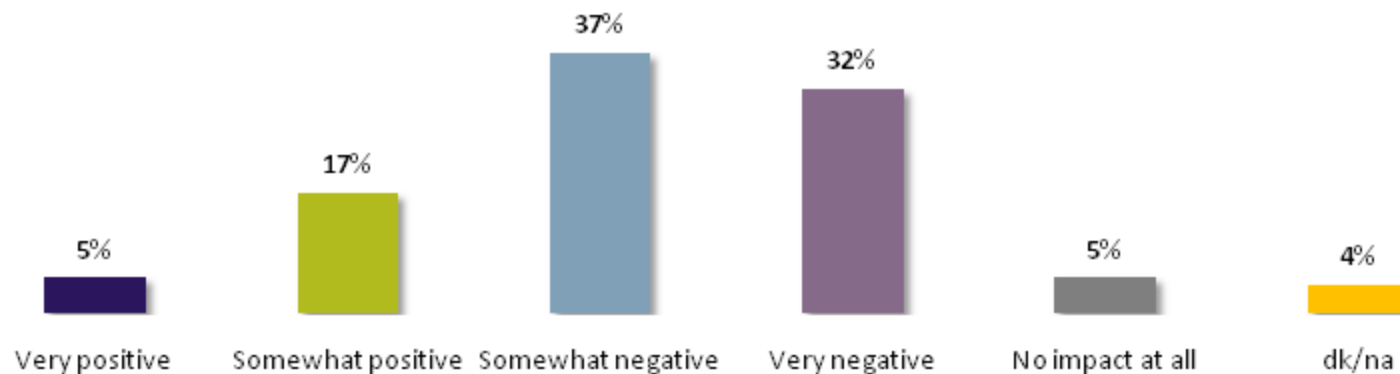
In order to represent the growing number of adults who do not have a landline or rarely use a landline, interviews were collected using a dual frame sample. The overall sample of 1,003 adults consisted of 960 interviews conducted via landline phones and 43 conducted on cellphones. Both landline and cellphone samples are created using a random digit dial generation method and are replicated and stratified by region.

Data collection was conducted from our central location dialling facilities in Toronto, Ontario.

In this report, results may not add to 100% due to rounding or multiple responses.

Seven in ten think cuts to federal science activities will have a negative impact on the government's ability to serve the interests of Canadians

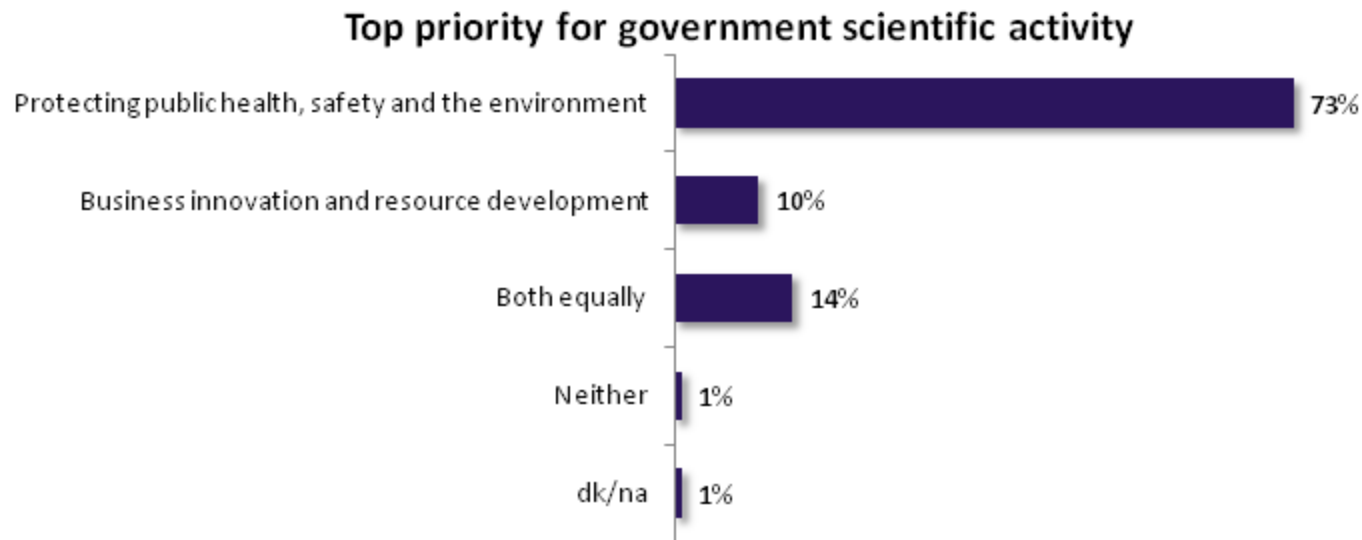
Impact of federal government science cuts on serving the interests of Canadians



- When Canadians are told that it is projected that federal government spending on scientific activities will be cut by \$355 million, a large majority of seven in ten think that these cuts will have a negative impact on the federal government's ability to serve the interests of Canadians, including three in ten who think the impact will be very negative. Two in ten believe such cuts will have a positive impact, and five percent believe they will have no impact at all.
- The feeling that these cuts will have a negative impact are most pronounced among Canadians with higher incomes and higher levels of education. It's notable that even among Conservative supporters, six in ten (59%) feel that these cuts will have a negative impact.

Q2. This year, it is projected that federal government spending on scientific activities will be cut by \$355 million. What impact do you think these cuts to government science will have on the federal government's ability to serve the interest of Canadians? Will the impact be...?

The vast majority of Canadians feel the top priority for government scientific activity should be protecting public health, safety and the environment



- The vast majority (73%) of Canadians believe that protecting public health, safety and the environment should be the top priority for government scientific activity, while just one in ten believe business innovation and resource development should be the top priority. Another 14 percent think that both should be equal priorities.
- This sentiment that protecting public health, safety and the environment should be the top priority is consistent across all demographic and regional groupings. Two-thirds (67%) of Conservative Party supporters also feel that this ought to be the top priority.

Q3. The federal government currently invests in scientific activities that support public health, safety and environmental protection, as well as activities that support business innovation and resource development. What should be the TOP priority for government scientific activity? Should it be...?



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