

Federal-Provincial Issues

Key Research Findings



Methodology

- 1,000 interviews with a representative sample of Albertans were conducted by telephone between September 23 and October 5, 2003.

Are You More of an Albertan or More of a Canadian?

- When asked if they feel they are more of a citizen of Alberta or more of a citizen of Canada, Albertans are divided. Almost half (49%) say they are more of a citizen of Alberta, and slightly fewer (44%) say they are more of a citizen of Canada. Six percent say they identify themselves as both Albertan and Canadian and one percent are undecided.
- Other polls asking similar questions usually find that slightly more Albertans identify themselves as Canadian than Albertan. However, it is important to note that rural Albertans are typically under-represented in most polls. In this survey, extra effort was made to ensure adequate representation of rural residents. As rural residents, particularly those in the north (67%), are more likely than others to identify themselves as being more of an Albertan than a Canadian, this survey provides a more accurate picture of the strength of provincial identification in Alberta.

Support For Alberta Government's Approach to Federal-Provincial Relations

- After it was explained to respondents that the top-priorities of the Alberta Government in the area of Federal-Provincial Relations is to encourage the federal government to hold annual First Ministers meetings, encourage more provincial involvement when negotiating international agreements, and have Senators appointed from a list of names submitted by the province, a large majority (81%) say they approve of this approach.
- More specifically, 42% strongly approve and 39% somewhat approve. Another 14% disapprove (8% somewhat and 6% strongly) and 6% are undecided.
- When those 14% who disapprove are asked why, responses tend to fall in one of three categories:
 - i) The Alberta Government is asking the Federal Government for too much.
 - ii) The Alberta Government is not asking for enough, especially in the area of Senate reform.
 - iii) The Alberta Government should focus on other areas, especially spending priorities and government waste.

Reform Options

- A large majority (81%) approve of the idea of seeing the Alberta Government pursue the issue of Senate Reform with the Federal Government (51% strongly and 30% somewhat approve). Calgaryans (86%) and men (85%) are particularly likely to approve of this idea.
- Six in ten (60%) approve of the Alberta Government pursuing the idea of having the provincial government take over the collection of provincial income tax (30% strongly and 30% somewhat approve). This idea is particularly popular with rural residents living in Southern Alberta (68%).
- A bare majority (53%) approve of pursuing the idea of establishing an Alberta Provincial Police Force (25% strongly and 28% somewhat approve). This idea is particularly popular with those aged 18 to 24 (66%).
- Four in ten (40%) approve of pursuing the idea of opting out of the Canada Pension Plan and developing an Alberta Pension Plan (19% strongly and 21% somewhat approve). This idea is most popular with those aged 18 to 24 (57%), who are likely the most anxious about whether there will be money in the Canada Pension Plan when it comes time for them to retire.

Pursuing Alberta Separatism

- When asked to reflect on the current state of relations between Alberta and the rest of Canada, a large majority (78%) believe Alberta should not seriously pursue the idea of separation. One in five (20%) believe they should seriously pursue separation and 2% are undecided.