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# HANDLING HEALTH IN CANADA : WHICH LEVEL OF GOVERNMENT DO CANADIANS TRUST MOST AT THIS TIME OF CRISIS ?

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# INTRODUCTION : WHO YOU TRUST ON HEALTH ?

Over the course of the crisis there appears to be reasonably good cooperation between the federal government and the provinces in addressing the many health issues that have arisen owing to COVID-19. With some exceptions federal and provincial satisfaction rates during the crisis have been quite high as trust in governments. Health is a provincial jurisdiction but given the visibility of federal and provincial health officials Canadians might be uncertain as to who has taken the lead on these most critical matters arising from COVID-19 that are currently facing the country. Additionally, as regards the vital issue of seniors care, the Prime Minister did indicate that the federal government might play a greater role.

That which follows asks which level of government which Canadians trust most to handle health care issues in this time of crisis. The poll was conducted by the firm Leger Marketing in partnership with the Association for Canadian Studies over the period July 31 to August 2, 2020. And while the provinces generally come out on top, the survey results may give the federal government some latitude to exercise additional power on matters of health

# MANAGING HEALTH: THE PROVINCE'S JURISDICTION.

- In 1982, the Supreme Court of Canada stated:  
... "health" is not a matter which is subject to specific constitutional assignment but instead is an amorphous topic which can be addressed by valid federal or provincial legislation, depending in the circumstances of each case on the nature or scope of the health problem in question. 1The Constitution, however, does contain some powers relating directly to health and health care. Section 91(11) assigns responsibility for "quarantine and the establishment and maintenance of marine hospitals" to the federal government. Section 92(7) assigns responsibility for most other hospitals to the provinces. Apart from the operation of hospitals, the structure of health and health care in Canada thus rests for the most part on more indirect sources of constitutional power.
- In addition to its jurisdiction over hospitals, exclusive provincial responsibility for the direct delivery of most medical services, the education of physicians, and numerous related functions is generally agreed to derive from the powers over property and civil rights (section 92(13)) and matters of a merely local or private nature (section 92(16)) in the *Constitution Act, 1867*.
- The areas involving health in which the federal government is most directly involved are derived from three constitutional powers: the criminal law power; the spending power; and, possibly, the power to pass laws for the peace, order and good government of Canada.

Source: [https://lop.parl.ca/sites/PublicWebsite/default/en\\_CA/ResearchPublications/201191E](https://lop.parl.ca/sites/PublicWebsite/default/en_CA/ResearchPublications/201191E)

# MANAGING HEALTH: THE FEDERAL ROLE.

- The areas involving health in which the federal government is most directly involved are derived from three constitutional powers: the criminal law power; the spending power; and, possibly, the power to pass laws for the peace, order and good government of Canada. In a 1997 decision of the Supreme Court of Canada, Justice LaForest stated that Parliament has played its role in the provision of medical care by employing its inherent spending power to set national standards for provincial medicare programs. The *Canada Health Act* ... requires the federal government to contribute to the funding of provincial health insurance programs provided they conform with certain specified criteria.
- It is the spending power that provides the basis for federal initiatives in areas such as:
  - health research;
  - health promotion;
  - health information;
  - disease prevention and control; and
  - pilot projects in connection with provincial health care initiatives.

Source: [https://lop.parl.ca/sites/PublicWebsite/default/en\\_CA/ResearchPublications/201191E](https://lop.parl.ca/sites/PublicWebsite/default/en_CA/ResearchPublications/201191E)

**MOST CANADIANS EQUALLY TRUST THE FEDERAL AND PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENTS TO ADDRESS HEALTH CARE ISSUES BUT WHERE THE CHOICE IS MADE BETWEEN THE TWO PROVINCES BEAT THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT BY A 2 TO 1 RATIO; EXCEPTIONALLY FEDERAL LIBERAL SUPPORTERS TRUST THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TO DEAL WITH HEALTH CARE ISSUES.**

<b>When it comes to dealing with health care issues, I trust ...</b>					
	<b>Total</b>	<b>LPC</b>	<b>NDP</b>	<b>BQ</b>	<b>CPC</b>
<b>The federal government more than the provincial government</b>	14%	<b>27%</b>	19%	<b>2%</b>	<b>7%</b>
<b>The provincial government more than the federal government</b>	29%	<b>19%</b>	28%	<b>67%</b>	<b>40%</b>
<b>Equally trust the Federal and Provincial governments</b>	34%	<b>43%</b>	32%	<b>18%</b>	<b>27%</b>
<b>Neither the federal or provincial governments</b>	24%	<b>11%</b>	22%	13%	<b>26%</b>

ALBERTANS ARE MORE LIKELY TO TRUST THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT THAN THE PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT TO DEAL WITH HEALTH CARE ISSUES, WHILE ONTARIANS ARE LESS EQUIVOCAL THAN OTHER PROVINCES ABOUT WHO THEY TRUST MOST TO HANDLE HEALTH CARE.

When it comes to dealing with health care issues, I trust ...							
	Total	Atl.	QC	ON	MB/SK	AB	BC
The federal government more than the provincial government	14%	12%	10%	16%	8%	28%	7%
The provincial government more than the federal government	29%	16%	42%	21%	28%	20%	41%
Equally trust the Federal and Provincial governments	34%	38%	31%	39%	32%	20%	35%
Neither the federal or provincial governments	24%	34%	18%	24%	32%	32%	17%

# AMONGST THOSE MORE FEARFUL OF GETTING THE CONTAGION THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT EARNS SOMEWHAT MORE TRUST.

When it comes to dealing with health care issues, I trust ...	Are you personally afraid of contracting the COVID-19 (Coronavirus)?			
	Very afraid	Somewhat afraid	Not very afraid	Not afraid at all
The federal government more than the provincial government	19%	15%	11%	10%
The provincial government more than the federal government	24%	29%	32%	23%
Equally trust the Federal and Provincial governments	34%	36%	35%	26%
Neither the federal or provincial governments	23%	20%	22%	41%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

# GREATER SATISFACTION WITH THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT PERFORMANCE ON COVID-19 RESULTS IN MORE TRUST OF THE FEDERAL OVER THE PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT TO HANDLE HEALTH CARE ISSUES.

When it comes to dealing with health care issues, I trust	Federal government - To this day, are you satisfied or not with the measures put in place to fight the COVID-19 (Coronavirus) pandemic by the following?			
	Very satisfied	Somewhat satisfied	Somewhat dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
The federal government more than the provincial government	26.0%	12.2%	5.9%	5.1%
The provincial government more than the federal government	19.0%	30.1%	42.0%	34.3%
Equally trust the Federal and Provincial governments	42.4%	36.8%	22.9%	9.5%
Neither the federal or provincial governments	12.6%	20.9%	29.3%	51.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>



# GREATER SATISFACTION WITH THE PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT PERFORMANCE ON COVID-19 RESULTS IN MORE TRUST OF THE PROVINCIAL OVER THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TO HANDLE HEALTH CARE ISSUES.

When it comes to dealing with health care issues, I trust ...	Your provincial government - To this day, are you satisfied or not with the measures put in place to fight the COVID-19 (Coronavirus) pandemic by the following?			
	Very satisfied	Somewhat satisfied	Somewhat dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
The federal government more than the provincial government	9.3%	12.3%	30.8%	25.5%
The provincial government more than the federal government	39.7%	28.2%	18.9%	3.9%
Equally trust the Federal and Provincial governments	37.9%	36.2%	26.6%	9.8%
Neither the federal or provincial governments	13.2%	23.3%	23.7%	60.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

## METHODOLOGY

Web survey using computer-assisted Web interviewing (CAWI) technology.

From July 31 to August 2, 2020.

1513 Canadians 18 years of age or older, were randomly recruited from LEO's online panel.

Using data from the 2016 Census, results were weighted according to gender, age, mother tongue, region, education level and presence of children in the household in order to ensure a representative sample of the population.

No margin of error can be associated with a non-probability sample (Web panel in this case). However for comparative purposes, a probability sample of 1513 respondents would have a margin of error of  $\pm 2.52\%$ , 19 times out of 20,

The research results presented here are in full compliance with the CRIC Public Opinion Research Standards and Disclosure Requirements.

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