

# Prince Edward Island Ballot Results

Issue: Fuel Price Regulation

Tabulation Date: January 19, 2018  
Issue #269

## Question 1:

Should Prince Edward Island continue to regulate fuel prices?

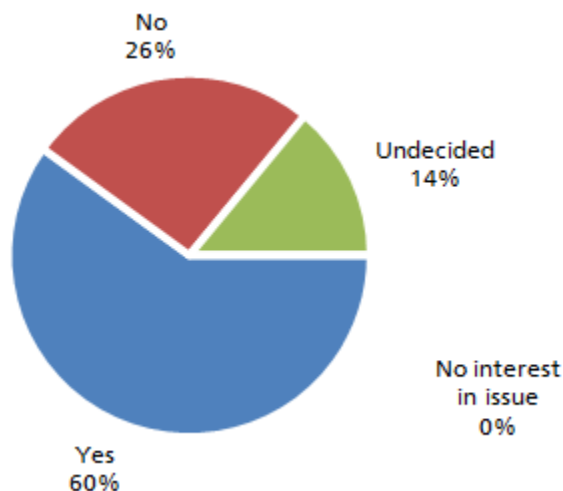
**Background:** The Island Regulatory and Appeals Commission (IRAC) is responsible for regulating the prices of most petroleum products sold within PEI, including gasoline and home heating fuel, since 1991. IRAC reviews and sets prices twice a month, but occasionally makes unscheduled price adjustments with no advance warning for consumers. Some say that PEI should stop regulating fuel prices.

### Supporters say:

- ▶ Regulation provides some price stability for consumers of fuel;
- ▶ Regulation means that fuel prices are relatively uniform, whether it's an urban or rural market.

### Opponents say:

- ▶ Regulation isn't necessary because market forces drive fuel prices;
- ▶ Regulation eliminates the opportunity for competition to drive prices down.



# National Ballot Results

Issue: Tax Treatment Changes for  
Businesses

Tabulation Date: January 19, 2018  
Issue #269

## Question 2:

**Should the federal government conduct an analysis of the economic impacts on small businesses before proceeding with major tax changes?**

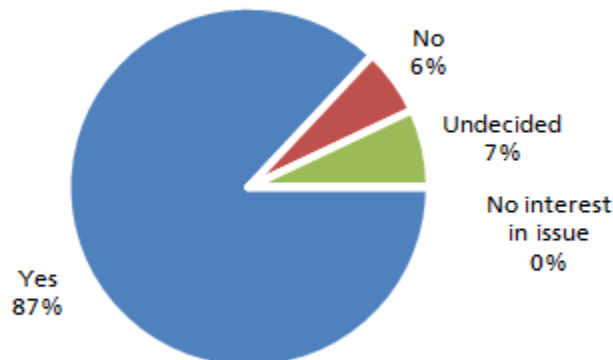
**Background:** The federal government is proposing changes to the tax treatment of private businesses. The reforms would limit the use of tax planning tools used by small business owners (i.e., sharing income with family members and saving passive investment income in a corporation). The government did not conduct an analysis of the economic impacts on small businesses before drafting its proposals. Some say that the government should put these changes on hold and conduct an analysis of the economic impacts on small businesses before proceeding with current and future major tax changes.

### Supporters say:

- ▶ The government should understand the potential impact (e.g., tax burden, job creation) of major tax changes on small businesses before implementing them;
- ▶ Tax reform is complex and should be thoroughly analysed to ensure that there is informed democratic debate.

### Opponents say:

- ▶ An analysis of the economic impact on small businesses would be costly and time-consuming;
- ▶ There is no guarantee that the results of the analysis on major tax changes would be considered.



# National Ballot Results

Issue: Minimum Wage

Tabulation Date: January 19, 2018  
Issue #269

## Question 3:

**Should governments focus on alternatives (e.g. personal income tax cuts) rather than minimum wage increases to help low-income earners?**

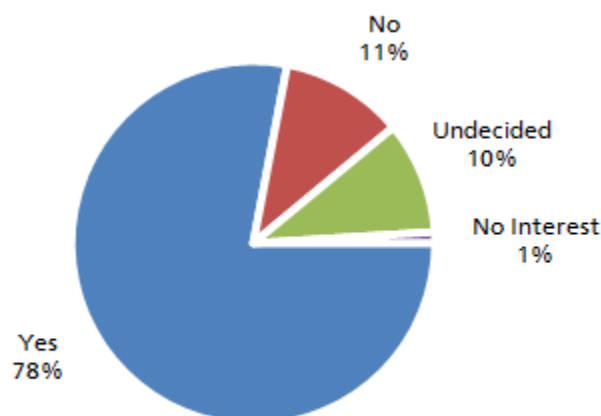
**Background:** Provincial and territorial governments have increased the minimum wage in recent years as a way to help low-income earners. In 2016, the Alberta government was the first provincial government to announce an increase to the minimum wage rate to \$15 per hour by 2018. Ontario followed suit with a plan to increase the minimum wage rate to \$15 per hour by 2019. The Government of British Columbia also plans on implementing a minimum wage increase to \$15 per hour. Some suggest that governments focus on alternatives (e.g. personal income tax cuts) rather than minimum wage increases to help low-income earners.

### Supporters say:

- ▶ Alternatives would be more effective than a minimum wage increase as they better target those who most need it;
- ▶ It would alleviate the burden on small business owners as minimum wage increases would increase their payroll costs.

### Opponents say:

- ▶ It is governments' role to ensure that low-income earners are receiving fair wages through minimum wage policy;
- ▶ Employers should be responsible for paying higher wages to low-income earners, not taxpayers.



# National Ballot Results

Issue: NAFTA

Tabulation Date: January 19, 2018  
Issue #269

## Question 4:

**Should a renegotiated North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) include a focus on reducing trade barriers for small business?**

**Background:** Currently, the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) negotiations are underway which will have an impact on the Canadian economy as well as many small businesses engaged in trade or thinking about trade with the U.S. and/or Mexico. The Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) agreement, which is still under negotiation, includes a chapter dedicated to small businesses that focuses on finding ways for small businesses to take advantage of new commercial opportunities. Currently, Canada, U.S. and Mexico have provisionally agreed to have a chapter in NAFTA that would focus on SMEs.

### Supporters say:

- ▶ It would help address the specific barriers to trade such as red tape, which has a greater impact on small businesses;
- ▶ This would encourage small businesses who have not yet traded with the U.S. and/or Mexico to consider new business opportunities.

### Opponents say:

- ▶ There are not enough small businesses who trade with the U.S. to make it worth including in the agreement;
- ▶ These considerations would be largely symbolic and would not help address the actual concerns of small businesses.

