

Wanted: Government vision for small business

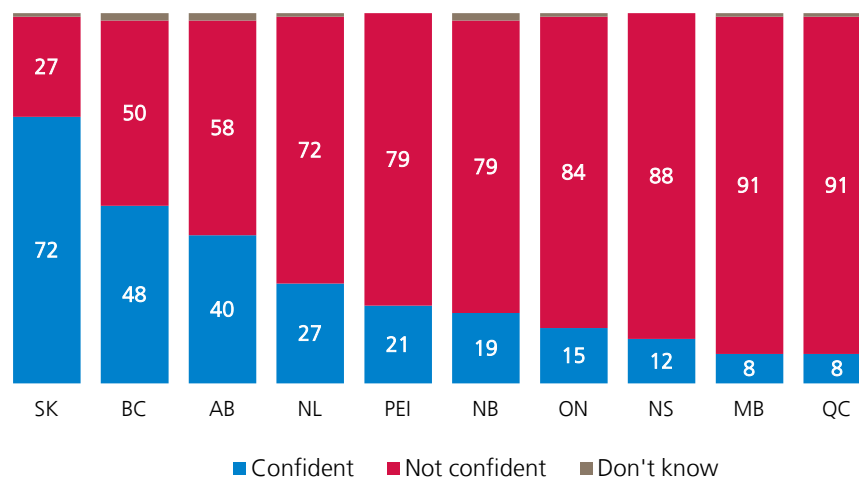
A cross-country analysis of small business friendliness

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Provincial governments across the country make frequent reference to the importance of the small business sector and their initiatives to support it. Yet a CFIB survey of small business owners from across Canada reveals substantial differences in how provincial governments are perceived in their vision for and understanding of small business.

Figure 1:

How confident are you that your provincial government has a vision that supports small business? (% response)



Source: All figures from CFIB, *Provincial/Territorial Entrepreneurial Vision Survey*, August 2013.

Businesses in Saskatchewan are most likely to report confidence (72 per cent) that their provincial government has a small business friendly vision, whereas those in Quebec and Manitoba are least likely to have confidence (eight per cent, see Figure 1). Not surprisingly, the vast majority of small business owners (96 per cent) agree that it is important for government to focus on creating a climate for small businesses to thrive.

This report examines the perceptions that small business owners have about their provincial governments and the impact of government policies and priorities on small business. It also explores differences between the best and worst jurisdictions, and suggests how governments can create a more favourable climate for small business¹.

Why small business matters

Canada is home to more than one million small businesses with fewer than 100 employees employing over five million people—nearly half of the private sector labour force.² Small businesses are embedded in communities across Canada, contributing jobs and taxes; generating tourism and enhancing cultural diversity; and supporting local charities and community groups, teams and projects. In a recent Angus Reid Forum poll of over 2,000 adult Canadians, entrepreneurs emerged as one of the most valued and respected contributors to both local communities and Canadian society as a whole.³ The small business sector is a critical component of Canada's economy, employment prospects and social fabric. A coherent and meaningful small business vision is therefore a mandatory element of any provincial or territorial government's agenda.

Small business view of provincial government vision

Of all Canadian small business owners surveyed, those in Saskatchewan are most positive about their provincial government's vision for small business, with 72 per cent of respondents indicating they are confident in their government's support for entrepreneurship (see Figure 1). It is the only province where the majority of business owners are confident that the government's vision supports small business. British Columbia and Alberta follow with confidence rankings of 48 and 40 per cent respectively, making small business owners in western provinces far more likely to suggest that governments have a supportive vision.

Newfoundland and Labrador, Prince Edward Island, and New Brunswick reported confidence rankings of 27, 21 and 19 per cent. Although these results are low, they are situated in the middle of the range of responses. Nova Scotia businesses are the

¹ Due to a lower number of responses from small business owners in the Yukon and Northwest Territories, these survey results are presented in Appendix B.

² Source: Industry Canada: *Key Small Business Statistics*, July 2012

³ Troster, Nicole: CFIB, *Perspectives on Small Business in Canada*, July 2011

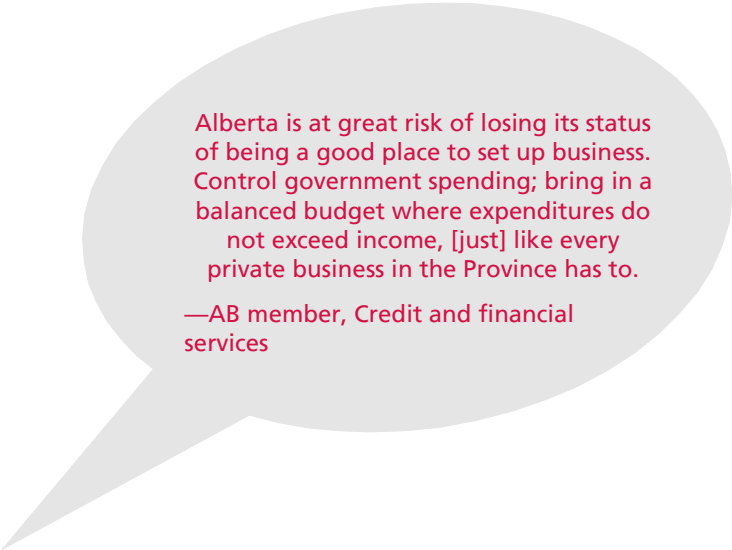
least confident in Atlantic Canada, with only 12 per cent reporting they feel confident.⁴

Confidence levels in Ontario, Manitoba and Quebec are very low, with just 15 per cent of businesses in Ontario and only eight per cent of businesses in Manitoba and Quebec reporting they are confident in their provincial government's vision to support entrepreneurs.

Alarming, an abysmal 0.3 per cent of small business owners in Quebec are "very confident" in the direction their government is taking. The results in this category are low across the country, except in Saskatchewan where a notable 20 per cent of small business owners are "very confident." The response from Quebec small business owners is still significantly lower than in provinces with a similar population base, including British Columbia (four per cent) and Alberta (two per cent). For a detailed breakdown of results please refer to Appendix C.

Would you start a business?

Saskatchewan again takes first place when it comes to recommending the province as a place to do business—a remarkable 88 per cent of small business owners in Saskatchewan say they would suggest their province as a place to start a business, including 36 per cent who are "very likely" to do so (see Figure 2). Alberta, Newfoundland and Labrador and British Columbia are the only other jurisdictions to score above 50 per cent. Small business owners in these four provinces pointed to favourable provincial economies, competent governments that understand the needs of small business, and generally competitive tax rates as reasons to choose their province as a place to launch an entrepreneurial venture.



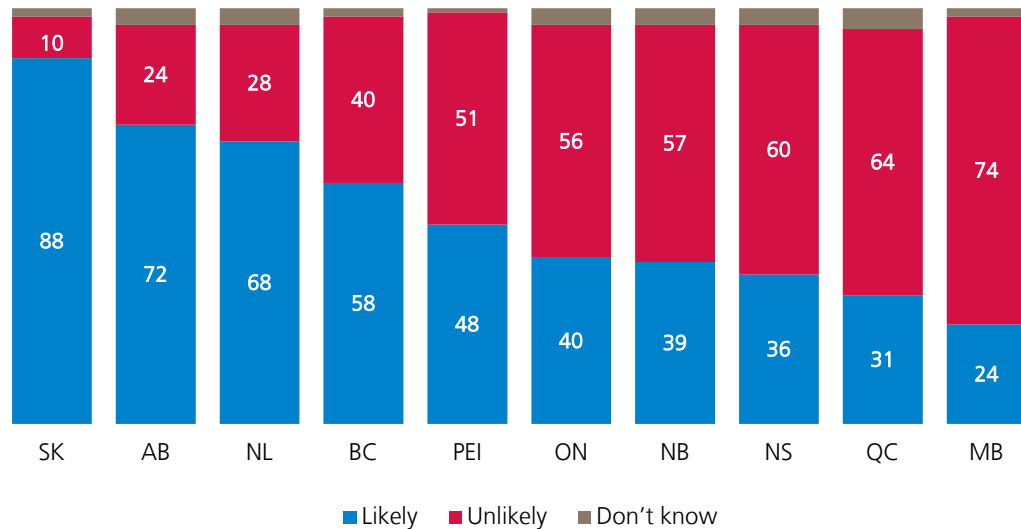
Alberta is at great risk of losing its status of being a good place to set up business. Control government spending; bring in a balanced budget where expenditures do not exceed income, [just] like every private business in the Province has to.

—AB member, Credit and financial services

⁴ It should be noted that this survey of provincial government vision was conducted in advance of the October 2013 Nova Scotia election. The results should therefore not be interpreted as an assessment of the current Premier, but rather as an indication of the work Premier McNeil has ahead of him to build confidence with that province's small business community.

Figure 2:

How likely would you be to recommend starting a business in your province? (% responses)



Less than a quarter of Manitobans are likely to recommend starting a business in their province. Small business owners in Manitoba and Quebec were nearly universal in pointing to excessive red tape and bureaucracy coupled with high taxes. Many survey participants, including a number of small business owners from New Brunswick and Quebec, commented that their governments favoured big business interests to the exclusion of the small business sector.

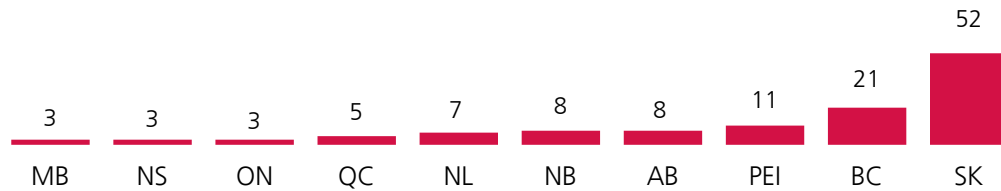
In the Maritimes, key concerns expressed in survey comments included the outmigration of young workers to other parts of the country and the associated impact on labour stability; in Ontario, excessive hydro costs; and in British Columbia, the return to a complex and burdensome GST/PST system that requires businesses to deal with both the federal and the provincial governments.

Does the Premier understand small business?

In terms of understanding the realities of running a small business, Saskatchewan Premier Brad Wall received top marks from the small business owners in his province; Premier Wall was also the only provincial leader to receive a positive ranking from more than half of Saskatchewan small business owners. In Manitoba, Nova Scotia, and Ontario, a dismal three per cent of small business owners indicated that their Premier understood the reality of operating a small business.

Figure 3:

My Premier understands the realities of running a small business (% response)— Agree



Small business advice to Premiers

Independent business owners had no shortage of advice to share with provincial leaders on how to create a vision to support entrepreneurship. Common themes that emerged across all provinces included lower taxes, reduced bureaucracy and red tape.

For Premiers Robert Ghiz (Prince Edward Island), David Alward (New Brunswick) Stephen McNeil (Nova Scotia) and Kathleen Wynne (Ontario), the central theme from the small business community was clear: reduce the mounting costs associated with running a business. Small business owners in these provinces advised that in order for the economy to improve, jobs to be created, and the small business sector to succeed, taxes must be lowered immediately⁵.

In British Columbia and Quebec, the advice to Premiers Christy Clark and Pauline Marois focused on excessive bureaucracy: small business owners in these provinces expressed frustration at the delays and costs provincial regulations and processes caused for their business. Small business owners across Newfoundland and Labrador also pointed to costly and time-consuming red tape as a priority issue.

The shortage of qualified labour was top of mind for small business owners in Alberta and Saskatchewan, who advised Premiers Alison Redford and Brad Wall that ongoing challenges to find appropriately skilled workers is a priority issue and must be addressed for the economy to meet its full potential.

The resounding message to Manitoba Premier Greg Selinger was to run the province like a business and face the difficult decisions entrepreneurs make each day to ensure their businesses are viable, financially sound, and meet the needs and expectations of their clients. This message also featured in advice given to Premiers across the country.

⁵ For a fuller discussion of tax recommendations specific to each province, see *Ranking Provincial Tax Systems in Canada: CFIB's 2013 Small Business Provincial Tax Index*, October 2013, <http://cfib.ca/a5557e>

It is small business that produces jobs and feeds the economy; by having high taxes we are driving jobs and business to other provinces.

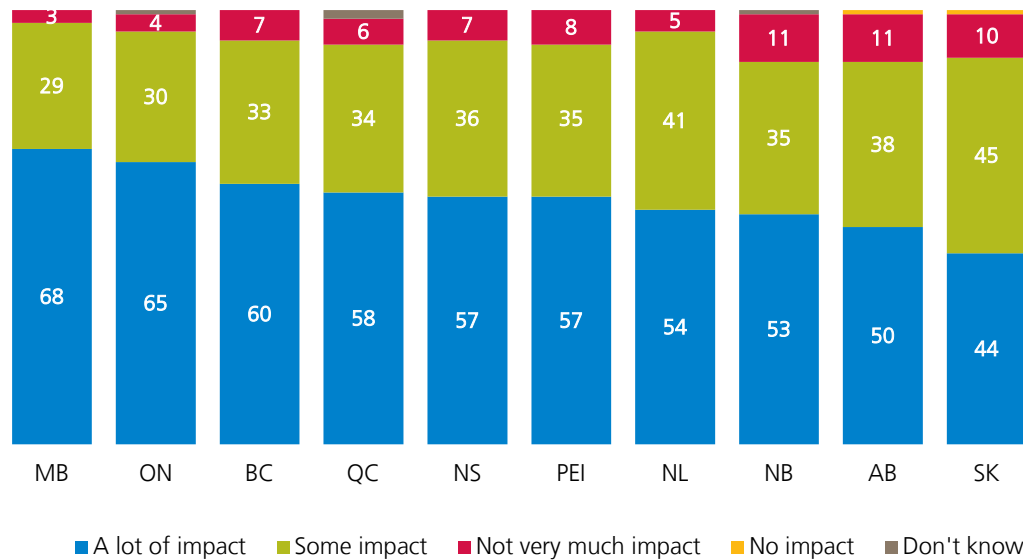
—MB member, Construction

The impact of government policy

Overview

Figure 4:

How much impact do government policies (e.g. tax rates, regulation, labour policies) have on your business? (% response)



The vast majority of small business owners perceive the policies of their provincial or territorial government (such as tax rates, regulation, labour) to have a substantial impact on their business. This holds true across all jurisdictions. Nationally, 93 per cent responded that these policies have “a lot” of (60 per cent) or “some” (33 per cent) impact and nowhere did this value fall below 85 per cent.

I have seen the growing interference in the operations of our business, the increased taxation on our services that I must collect and remit and the increase in regulations imposed on us. If these conditions are not rolled back, the public will only be able to do business with the big box multinational businesses.

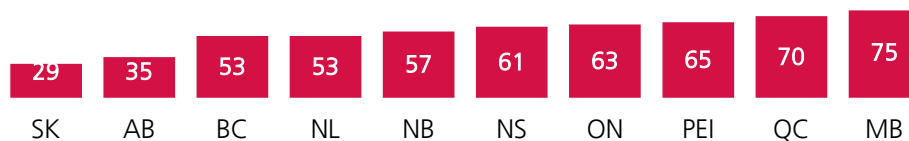
—QC member, Hotel

These results imply an approximate inverse correlation between the degree to which respondents feel their provincial government has a vision supportive of small business, and how much impact they feel the policies of that government impacts their business. A notable exception to this trend is British Columbia, which has recently reverted from a Harmonized Sales Tax to its previous Provincial Sales Tax, a development that has been amply reflected in survey comments collected from that province. Similar examples include the PST hike in Manitoba, payroll taxes in Quebec, and fiscal struggles in Ontario. In general, however, small businesses look more favourably on provincial government policies that are less intrusive on their day-to-day operations.

Taxation

Figure 5a:

Provincial taxes discourage me from growing my business
(% response)—Agree

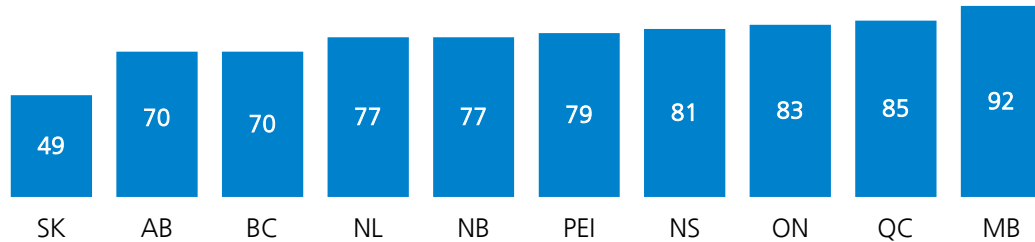


All but two provinces—Saskatchewan and Alberta—have a majority of business owners who agree that taxes constrain the potential growth of their business. Entrepreneurs in Saskatchewan and Alberta are most likely not to be deterred by their tax regimes, which on balance are relatively favourable. Independent business owners in Quebec and Manitoba are well aware of the challenge they face of growing their businesses despite poorly designed tax policy.

Red tape

Figure 5b:

My provincial government considers the impact on my business when it imposes regulation (% response)—Disagree

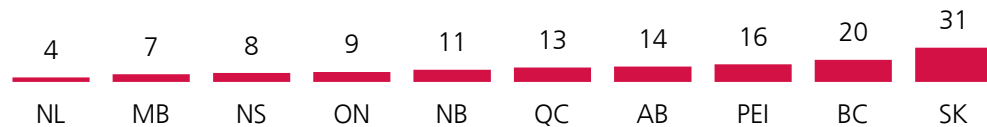


A government that has a vision that supports small business is also likely to be a government that considers the impact of its proposed regulations on those small businesses. Saskatchewan is the only jurisdiction where a majority agree that their government considers these impacts.

Labour issues

Figure 5c:

I am satisfied with my province's approach to address labour and skills shortages (% response)—Agree



No province comes remotely close to satisfying small businesses' needs regarding labour and skills shortages. This reflects the nearly universal obstacles that these problems create for small businesses across Canada. Those provinces with booming economies are least satisfied with their governments' approach to this issue, due to acute shortages they are facing and the constraints this places on economic growth. At the same time, Maritime concerns with generational outmigration are evident. While the solutions will be complex and require the engagement of the federal government in concert with provinces and territories, there is no question that stronger commitments and more effective approaches are required.

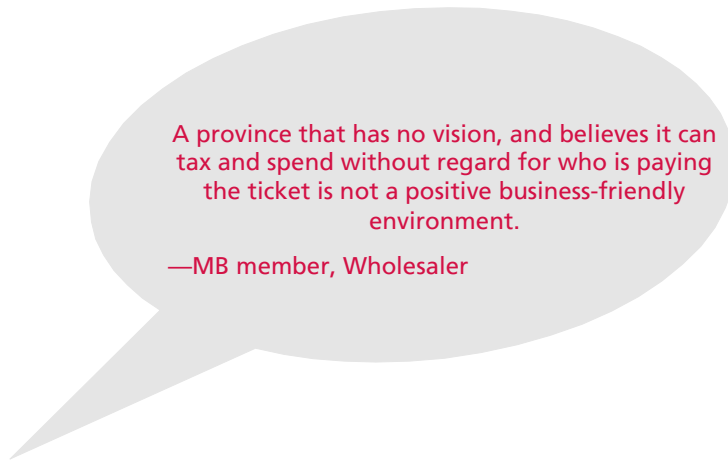
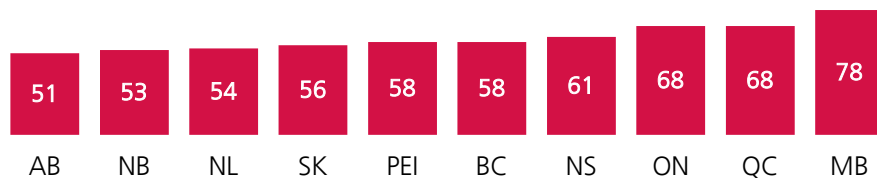


Figure 5d:

Labour laws in my province should be fairer and more equitable (% response) —Agree



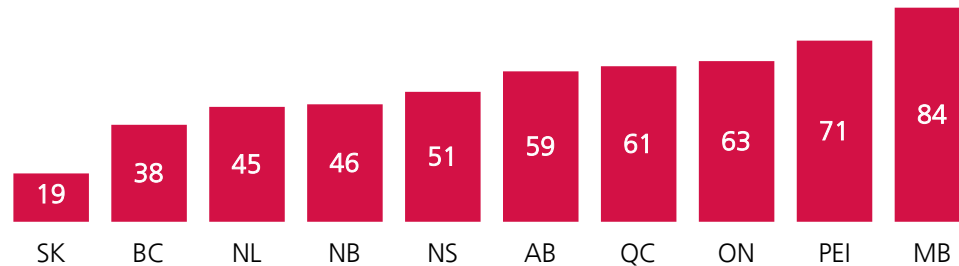
A majority of small business owners in every province agree that their labour laws should be made more fair and equitable. The Western and Atlantic provinces are the least unsatisfied with the current state of provincial labour legislation, with Ontario and Quebec showing a higher level of dissatisfaction. Manitoba is alone in the significant unhappiness small business owners express regarding their perception that labour laws in that province are tilted too much against the standard of “fair and equitable,” with nearly 80 per cent of respondents calling for a course correction.



Public Finances

Figure 5d:

Reducing the deficit/debt is not a priority for my provincial government
(% response)—Agree



In Saskatchewan, the majority of small business owners credit their government with making debt and deficit reduction a serious priority, while Alberta is underperforming in this category due to the depletion of long-term sustainability funds. Manitoban survey participants singled out provincial debt and deficit as being among their top reasons for not recommending starting a business in their province. In Quebec and Ontario, which have the highest debt to GDP ratios⁶, about two-thirds of small business owners did not believe it was a priority for their provincial government.

The economy is not strong in this province and the future is uncertain...[this] province has a lot of debt which has increased government costs and taxation.

—PEI member, Retail

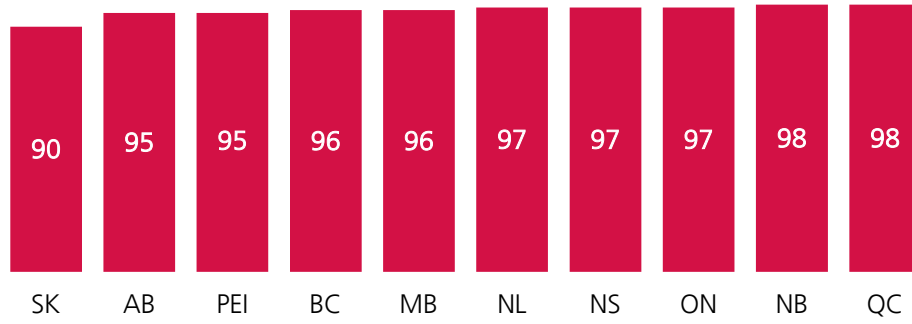
Provincial leadership and business climate

Small business owners across the country are nearly unanimous in their agreement that the leader of their province must devote greater focus to creating a climate for independent business to thrive. Only in Saskatchewan, where small business owners are largely positive about the province's existing vision for and understanding of small business, does agreement with this statement drop below 95 per cent (see Figure 6).

⁶ Mallett, Ted: *Canada's Fiscal Fitness*, CFIB, March 2013, <http://cfib.ca/a4974e>

Figure 6:

It is important that my Premier focus more on creating a climate for small businesses to thrive (% response)—Agree



Do government commitments stack up to expectations?

Provincial governments across Canada make frequent reference to the importance of the small business sector, their support for it, and the value of entrepreneurship to the provincial economy. It is telling that many of these statements point to commitments to improve provincial conditions for entrepreneurs that have yet to be realized, demonstrating a significant gap between political messaging and the realities that small business owners face every day—a theme that is evident throughout this report.

Here's a sample of what provincial leaders from across the country are saying about small business:

British Columbia

“Today, B.C. is the most small-business-friendly jurisdiction in Canada. The BC Small Business Accord is about making sure it stays that way tomorrow. Even as our economy changes, we are committed to ensuring small businesses have every chance to prosper.” Premier Christy Clark, March 20, 2013

Alberta

“Our innovation, entrepreneurial spirit and having one of the most competitive business climates in the world are the cornerstones of Alberta.” Premier Alison Redford, *Highlights of the Alberta Economy*, 2012

Saskatchewan

“Most politicians will say, whatever their stripe, that the small business sector is the most important sector in the economy, and they say it for good reason, because it's the truth. In our province there is some real and compelling numbers that we can point to including 140,000 people directly employed by small business here in Saskatchewan. Over \$3.3 billion in GDP.” Premier Brad Wall, September 2011

Manitoba

“Small business is the backbone of our economy...That's why we were the first and still the only province to eliminate the small business tax.” Premier Selinger, September 11, 2011, NDP 2011 election platform release, NDP website

Ontario

“My top priority as Premier is to grow the economy and create jobs, so we can protect the public services Ontario families rely on. That means promoting investment and reducing barriers to job creation, particularly for small business.” Premier Kathleen Wynne, response to South Central Ontario Region Economic Development Corporation

Quebec

“To support economic growth and job creation, we must encourage individual and corporate investment. More specifically, it is job creating small businesses throughout the territory that must be supported.” Premier Pauline Marois speech, *Québec’s Economic Policy – Putting Jobs First*, October 7, 2013

Nova Scotia

“Instead of writing blank cheques to large corporations, we will refocus attention on small businesses, offering supports and incentives to help them grow their operations. Nova Scotians have pride in their businesses — it’s time government did as well.” Stephen McNeil, *Nova Scotia First*. NS Liberal Platform Document, 2013

New Brunswick

“Small businesses are the most important job creators in our province, creating two out of every three jobs. We need to do more to make starting and running a business easier for these entrepreneurs.” *Putting New Brunswick First...For a Change*. NB Progressive Conservative Platform Document, 2010

Prince Edward Island

“Small businesses are the backbone of the Prince Edward Island economy, and make a significant contribution to jobs and growth.” Premier Ghiz, press release for small business week, 2011

Newfoundland and Labrador

“Small businesses are the heart of Newfoundland and Labrador’s economy and the driving force behind economic growth. I respect how hard our province’s entrepreneurs work and I applaud their tenacity and commitment. The benefit of our strong small business community is felt throughout the province every day through better employment opportunities, stronger communities and a diversified economy.” Former Innovation, Business and Rural Development Minister Charlene Johnson, news release, October 21, 2013

Conclusion

Small business owners are nearly unanimous in agreeing that their Premiers must focus on creating a better climate for small business. To truly create a provincial climate that supports and values entrepreneurs and grows small business—and the significant contributions they make to their communities and provincial economies—Premiers must live up to the commitments they have made. They can achieve this by heeding the advice of the small business owners who drive their provincial economies, and by observing the examples of their colleagues across Canada, for better and for worse. It is hoped that this report might provide some of those examples and insights, and serve as a starting point for some honest and necessary self-reflection.

Methodology

The Canadian Federation of Independent Business surveyed 7,155 owners of small- and medium- sized businesses between August 13 and August 30, 2013, seeking their evaluation of the vision their respective provincial and territorial governments have for small business. The results are accurate within plus/minus 1.2 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.

Appendix A: Additional Comments

Participants were invited to provide their own message to their Premier about creating conditions for success for small business. A comment field was also included for additional feedback and 1,192 respondents provided written comments. This appendix features representative comments on subjects including taxes, red tape, investment, infrastructure, labour, marketing and procurement.

“Keep up the good work.”—*Saskatchewan member, Equipment rental services*

“Enough already.”—*Manitoba member, Restaurant*

“All I do is write cheques to [the] Minister of Finance and Receiver General.”
—*Manitoba member, Manufacturing*

“We are highly over taxed within the province and municipalities. What the government seems to forget is that we are the backbone of the economy, and they are trying to destroy us by raising wages, taxes, and giving "their own" more benefits at the expense of us and our employees.”—*Newfoundland and Labrador member, Restaurant*

“Get the debt down to make interest on debt less would be a good start!!!”
—*Manitoba member, Auto parts and tires*

“Unless one is to be a one person operation and not need any staff it is very difficult to operate a business.”—*British Columbia member, Retail*

“I think that Alberta offers the best climate for small business in Canada but I think that the Alberta government has lost its way. I feel that unless there is a change of policy or a change in government, the climate will erode.”—*Alberta member, Manufacturing*

“...to top it off the government is continually placing new regulations on business which creates larger burdens. Quite frankly I wish the government would focus on their own wasteful spending before looking to me to pay for all their mistakes.”
—*Ontario member, Personal services*

“People are moving out of our community to find work to support their families.”
—*Nova Scotia member, Beauty salon*

“Get serious about getting input from small business and organizations like CFIB... and then get even more serious about acting on that advice.”—*Ontario member, Retail*

“Small businesses cannot survive if forced to comply with the same types of rules and regulations as large business [...] the less red tape, the better the environment for small business to grow and create sustainable jobs for the province.”
—*Saskatchewan member, Construction*

“There is no support from the government for small businesses. Large businesses get more attention from the government, including huge grants which do not have to be paid back or are not paid back because when the money dries up, they close down. Small businesses fall through all the cracks.”—*New Brunswick member, RV park*

“High taxes, high government expenditures, high level of government corruption and waste, high level of red tape, public servants and public servant unions dominate political decisions.”—*Ontario member, Lawyer/Notary*

“Province does not understand the importance of small business.”—*Prince Edward Island member, Recreation services*

“It’s high time the government opened its eyes. Small businesses can be a significant source of revenue and jobs. They just need to be given a chance to grow.” —*Québec member, Film and video industry*

“What we need at the provincial level are true leaders and people that have a real vision for small business.”—*Quebec member, Equipment rental*

“At every turn it gets more difficult, and there is no support, only downloading of costs and responsibilities.”—*Nova Scotia member, Remediation and waste management*

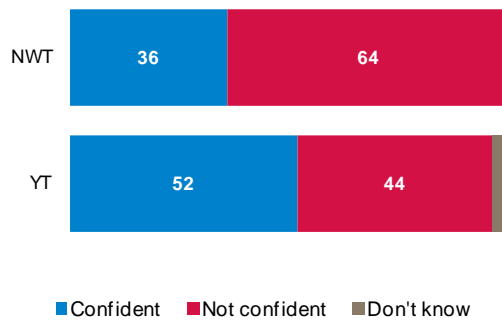
“...the province must stop pandering to the public sector employees and use its resources towards helping Ontario grow, and that is by enabling small businesses to thrive. When a person decides to dig deep, invest large sums of money, and take huge risks, it is not up to the government to stand in the way of their success.”
—*Ontario member, Private school*

“Do I have business and development projects? Yes. Do I want to grow them in the current regulatory, environmental, administrative and tax environment? NO!”
—*Québec member, Automotive industry*

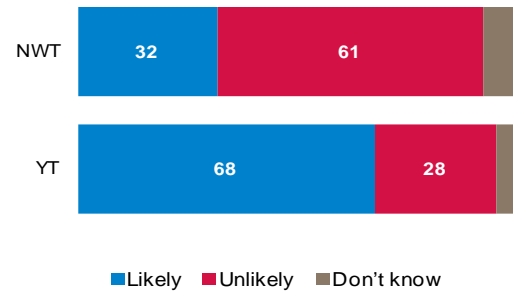
Appendix B: Territories

Due to low response rates from small business owners in the Yukon and the Northwest Territories (Y=25, NWT=28) survey results from these regions are presented here. These results show how independent business owners from the territories feel about the local business climate.

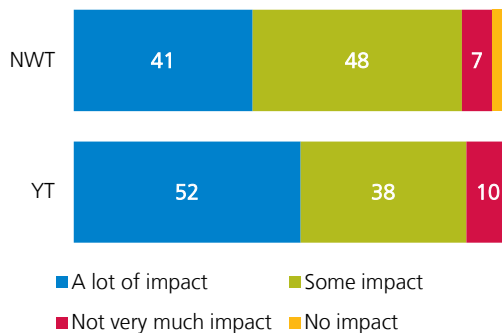
How confident are you that your territorial government has a vision that supports small business? (% response)



How likely would you be to recommend starting a business in your territory? (% response)

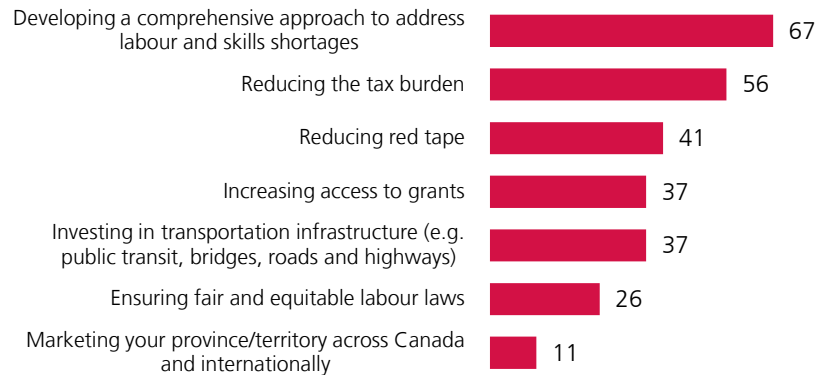


How much impact do government policies (e.g. tax rates, regulation, labour policies) have on your business? (% response)

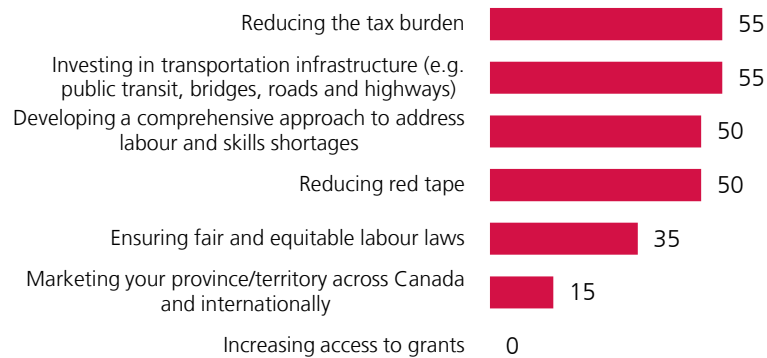


What should your territorial government focus on to help your business thrive? (Select a maximum of three responses, % response)

Northwest Territories



Yukon Territory



“The NWT government (GNWT) is poor at supporting Northern small business. Its “northern preference policy” is antiquated (Walmart is considered a local business under it). It ignores its own policies and will go direct to southern suppliers.”—*NWT member, Publishing/printing industries*

“From our 19 years of experience, there are only high costs: operations, employees, and especially telecommunications and electricity. Far outweighs the expected profit for a business to operate and stay alive!!!!” —*YT member, Retail*

**“The GNWT is not supportive beyond the political statements.”
—*NWT member, Water transport***

“Create a climate of respect for small business... At one time you went to a government office to find out how you could do something, now they just tell you how it can't be done.” —*YT member, Retail*

Appendix C: Survey Results by province/territory

CFIB's Provincial/Territorial Entrepreneurial Vision survey was conducted between August 13, 2013 and August 30, 2013. The results are based on 7,155 responses and are statistically accurate to +/- 1.2 per cent 19 times in 20.

1. How confident are you that your provincial/territorial government has a vision that supports small business? (Select one answer only)

Responses	YT	NT	BC	AB	SK	MB	ON	QC	NB	NS	PEI	NL	Can.
	25	28	889	671	288	326	3,008	1,140	297	314	71	85	7,142
	% response												
Very confident	8	4	4	2	20	1	1	0	2	1	1	2	2
Somewhat confident	44	32	44	38	52	7	14	8	17	11	20	25	21
Not very confident	28	46	35	39	23	30	45	55	43	51	55	47	43
Not confident at all	16	18	15	19	4	61	39	36	36	37	24	25	32
Don't know	4	0	2	2	1	1	1	1	2	0	0	1	2

2. How likely would you be to recommend starting a business in your province/territory? (Select one answer only)

Responses	YT	NT	BC	AB	SK	MB	ON	QC	NB	NS	PEI	NL	Can.
	25	28	879	665	287	323	2,991	1,122	295	314	71	84	7,084
	% response												
Very likely	16	7	11	23	36	3	6	5	8	6	4	17	9
Somewhat likely	52	25	47	49	52	21	34	26	31	30	44	51	36
Somewhat unlikely	20	43	25	19	8	36	31	40	35	37	35	11	30
Very unlikely	8	18	15	5	2	38	25	24	22	24	16	17	21
Don't know	4	7	2	4	2	2	4	5	4	4	1	4	4

3. How much impact do government policies (e.g. tax rates, regulation, labour policies) have on your business? (Select one answer only)

Responses	YT	NT	BC	AB	SK	MB	ON	QC	NB	NS	PEI	NL	Can.
	21	27	832	624	276	312	2,829	1,034	279	297	65	79	6,675
	% response												
A lot of impact	52	41	60	50	44	68	65	58	53	57	57	54	60
Some impact	38	48	33	38	45	29	30	34	35	36	35	41	33
Not very much impact	10	7	7	11	10	3	4	6	11	7	8	5	6
No impact	0	4	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Don't know	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	1	0	0	0	1

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4. What should your provincial/territorial government focus on to help your business thrive? (Select a maximum of three responses)

	YT	NT	BC	AB	SK	MB	ON	QC	NB	NS	PEI	NL	Can.
Responses	20	27	831	615	275	309	2800	1,028	278	297	63	78	6,621
	% response												
Marketing your province/territory across Canada and internationally	15	11	12	13	19	7	7	9	23	19	16	12	11
Reducing the tax burden	55	56	77	67	64	88	79	77	73	79	83	80	77
Investing in transportation infrastructure (e.g. public transit, bridges, roads and highways)	55	37	24	27	48	33	20	19	28	31	13	30	24
Developing a comprehensive approach to address labour and skills shortages	50	67	34	49	47	32	29	31	37	38	49	45	34
Reducing red tape	50	41	62	62	37	55	69	75	51	51	62	58	64
Ensuring fair and equitable labour laws	35	26	35	31	38	53	41	18	19	27	27	21	34
Increasing access to grants	0	37	16	19	18	10	24	27	37	26	21	26	23

5. Do you agree or disagree with the following statements: (Select one for each line)

a. Provincial/territorial taxes discourage me from growing my business.

	YT	NT	BC	AB	SK	MB	ON	QC	NB	NS	PEI	NL	Can.
Responses	20	26	813	606	264	299	2,755	1,015	271	294	62	75	6,500
	% response												
Agree	20	62	53	35	29	75	63	70	57	61	65	53	59
Disagree	65	31	31	50	56	14	22	19	27	26	27	28	27
Don't know/Not Applicable	15	7	16	15	15	11	15	11	16	13	8	19	14

b. My provincial/territorial government considers the impact on my business when it imposes regulation.

	YT	NT	BC	AB	SK	MB	ON	QC	NB	NS	PEI	NL	Can.
Responses	20	26	812	612	265	300	2,753	1,011	272	291	62	76	6,500
	% response												
Agree	5	8	14	13	26	4	8	7	11	10	15	9	10
Disagree	75	81	70	70	49	92	83	85	77	81	79	77	79
Don't know/Not Applicable	20	11	16	17	25	4	9	8	12	9	6	14	11

c. I am satisfied with my province's/territory's approach to address labour and skills shortages.

	YT	NT	BC	AB	SK	MB	ON	QC	NB	NS	PEI	NL	Can.
Responses	20	25	808	611	266	297	2,751	1,012	272	292	62	76	6,492
	% response												
Agree	35	16	20	14	31	7	9	13	11	8	16	4	12
Disagree	55	72	57	64	44	75	69	66	67	75	65	82	66
Don't know/Not Applicable	10	12	23	22	25	18	22	21	22	17	19	14	21

Wanted: Government vision for small business

d. Labour laws in my province/territory should be fairer and more equitable.

	YT	NT	BC	AB	SK	MB	ON	QC	NB	NS	PEI	NL	Can.
Responses	20	25	805	605	266	302	2,753	1,008	269	291	62	74	6,480
	% response												
Agree	65	56	58	51	56	78	68	68	53	61	58	54	64
Disagree	25	20	17	20	22	12	12	13	15	12	11	14	14
Don't know/Not Applicable	10	24	25	29	22	10	20	19	32	27	31	32	22

e. The bidding process for government contracts (procurement) in my province/territory makes it easy for my business to participate.

	YT	NT	BC	AB	SK	MB	ON	QC	NB	NS	PEI	NL	Can.
Responses	20	26	807	608	265	300	2,734	1,007	273	294	62	75	6,471
	% response												
Agree	25	23	8	8	13	6	6	18	15	11	15	11	9
Disagree	55	69	37	35	27	41	42	37	43	42	31	37	39
Don't know/Not Applicable	20	8	55	57	60	54	53	45	42	47	55	52	52

f. Reducing the deficit/debt is not a priority for my provincial/territorial government.

	YT	NT	BC	AB	SK	MB	ON	QC	NB	NS	PEI	NL	Can.
Responses	21	20	776	704	302	240	2,563	875	271	289	76	133	6,270
	% response												
Agree	35	50	38	59	19	84	63	61	46	51	71	45	57
Disagree	40	27	47	31	65	12	23	26	38	33	19	34	29
Don't know/Not Applicable	25	23	15	10	16	4	14	13	16	16	10	21	14

g. My Premier understands the realities of running a small business.

	YT	NT	BC	AB	SK	MB	ON	QC	NB	NS	PEI	NL	Can.
Responses	20	26	809	609	266	303	2,751	1,008	273	293	62	75	6,495
	% response												
Agree	60	15	21	8	52	3	3	5	8	3	11	7	9
Disagree	30	73	59	75	26	94	87	87	80	87	86	73	79
Don't know/Not Applicable	10	12	20	17	22	3	10	8	12	10	3	20	12

h. It is important that my Premier focus more on creating a climate for small businesses to thrive.

	YT	NT	BC	AB	SK	MB	ON	QC	NB	NS	PEI	NL	Can.
Responses	20	26	811	608	265	299	2,760	1,010	272	294	62	75	6,502
	% response												
Agree	100	92	96	95	90	96	97	98	98	97	95	97	96
Disagree	0	0	2	2	5	3	2	1	1	2	5	1	2
Don't know/Not Applicable	0	8	2	3	5	1	1	1	1	1	0	2	2