

Communication
Canada



Listening to Canadians

Winter 2004

February





Canada

- The “Listening to Canadians” survey is a custom research study commissioned by Communication Canada
- The survey examined areas such as:
 - Perceptions of the Government of Canada performance;
 - Awareness and knowledge of key corporate communications;
 - Government of Canada agenda items; and
 - Patterns of consumption and usage of various media.

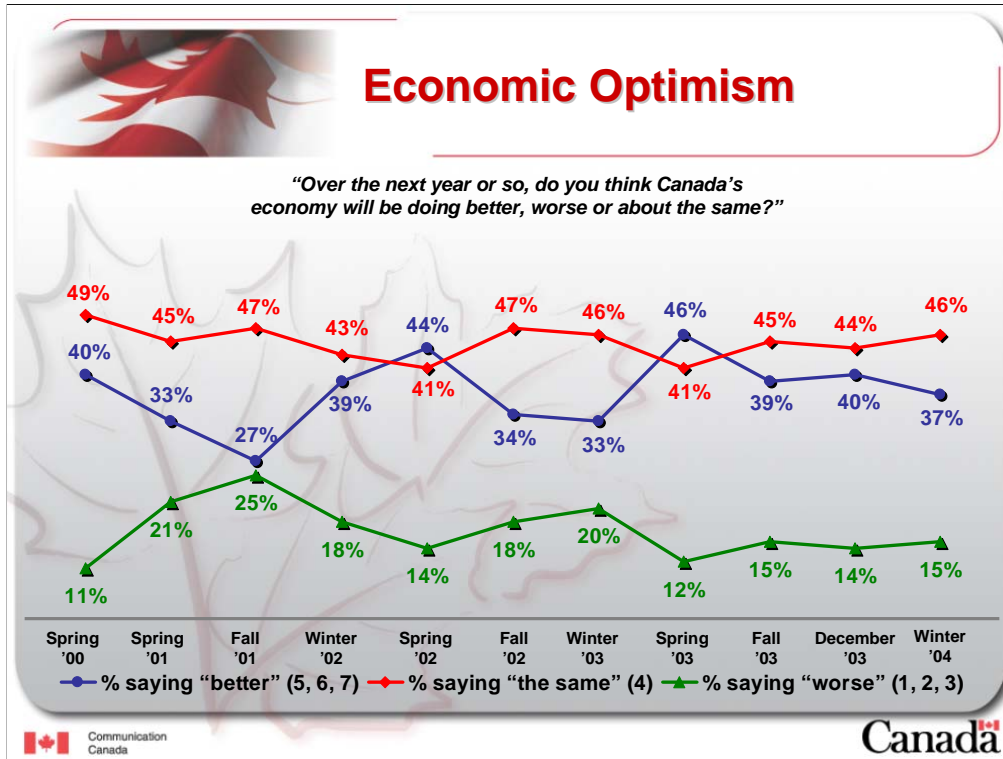
Methodology

February 3 – 15, 2004

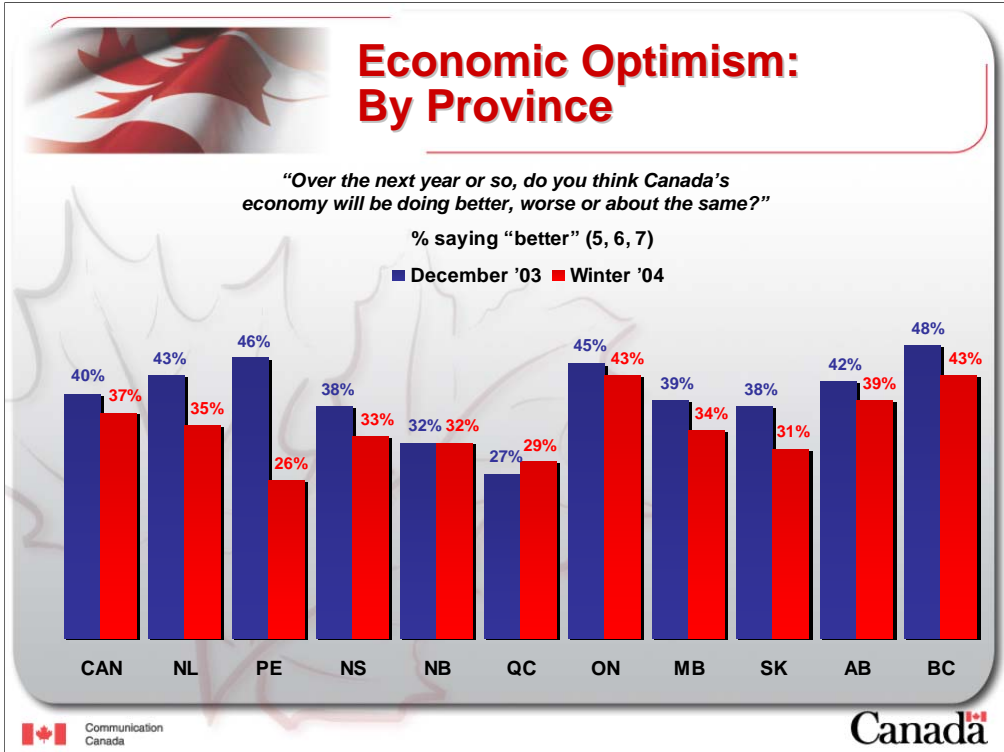
- *5805 interviews*
- *Margin of error +/- 1.29%*
- *All data statistically weighted to reflect the actual demography of Canada*

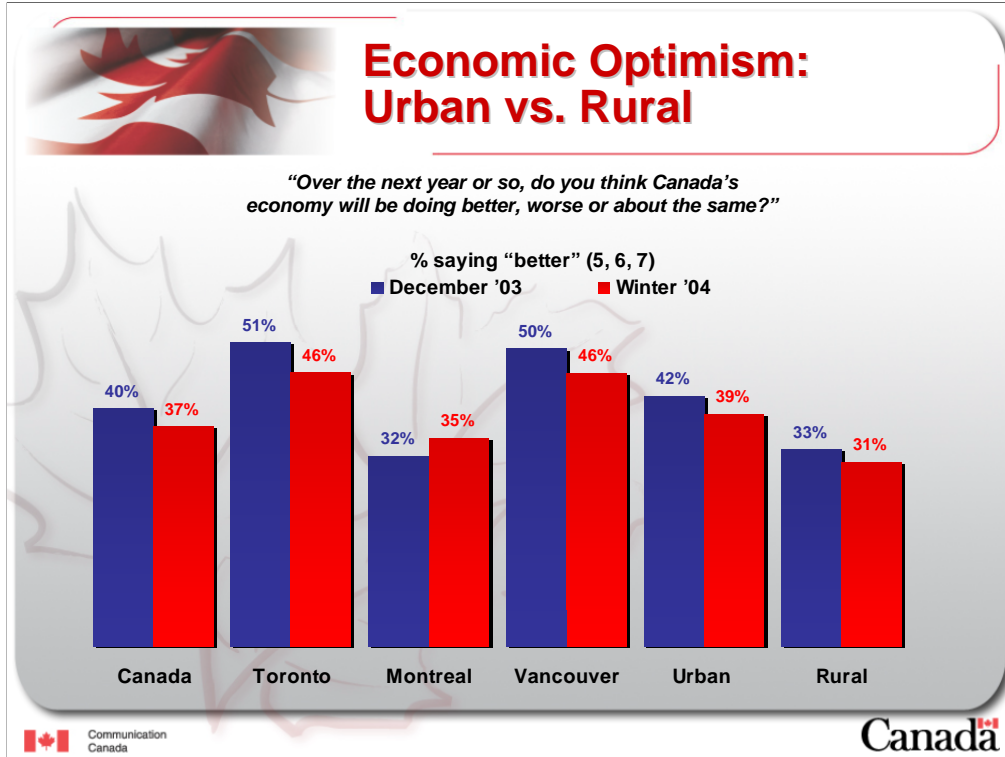
- The slides that follow summarize the results of a telephone survey with 5,805 adult Canadians. The survey was conducted by GPC Research between February 3 and 15, 2004.
- Margin of error +/- 1.29%.



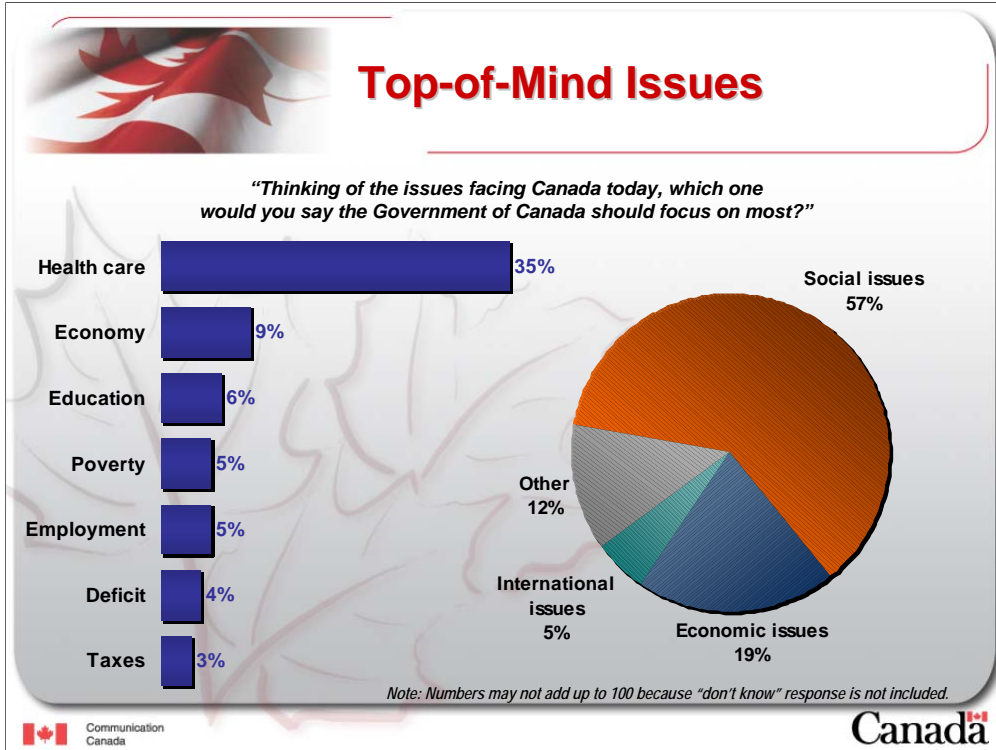
- Overall Canadians are optimistic regarding the future of the Canadian economy.
- 83% believe that the Canadian economy will improve or stay the same in the next twelve months.
- 37% believe the economy will get better, 46% believe it will remain the same, while 15% believe it will get worse.



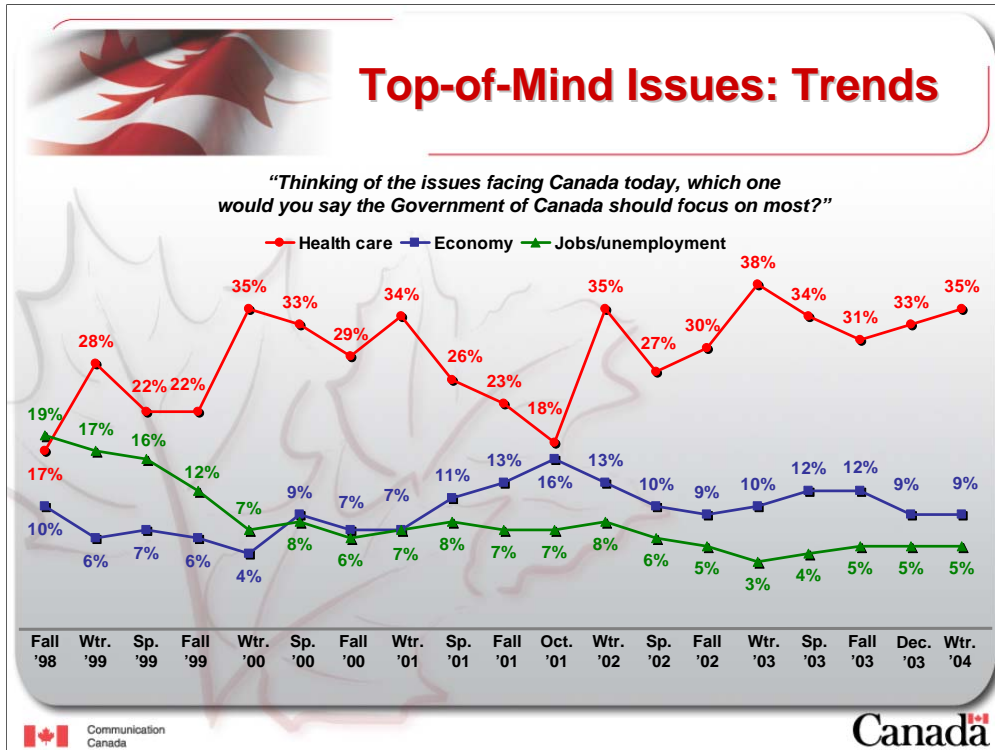
- Currently economic optimism is highest in Ontario (43%) and British Columbia (43%).
- Economic optimism was up from 27% to 29% in Quebec and remained stable in New Brunswick.



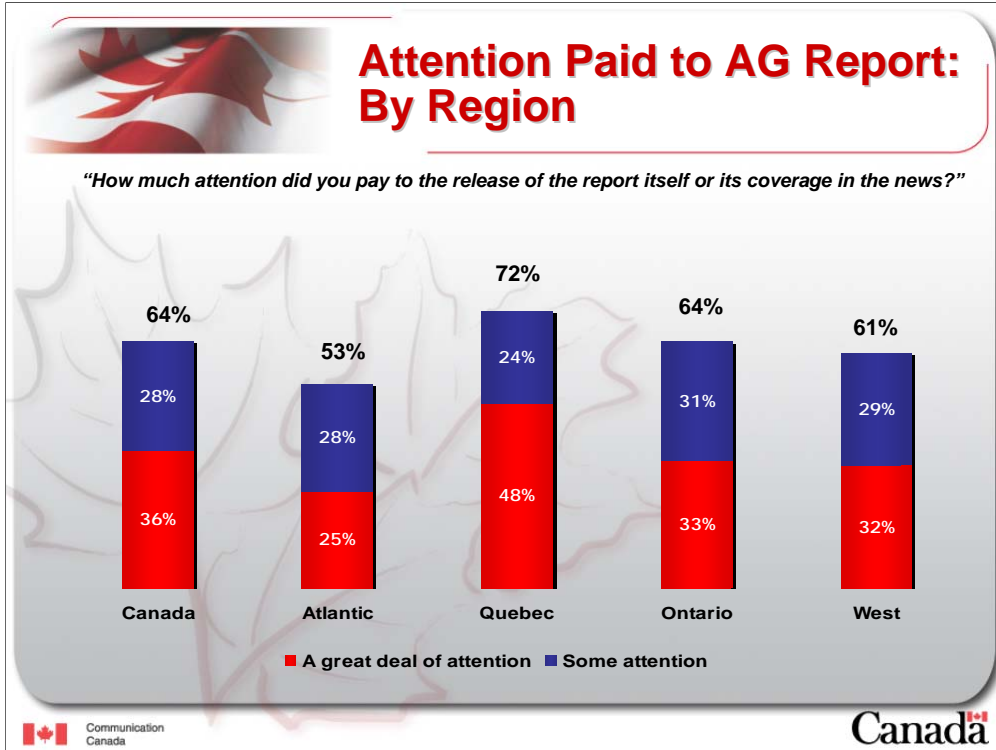
- A closer look at economic optimism reveals that the highest levels of optimism seem to be concentrated in Canada’s big cities, especially Toronto and Vancouver.
- Canada’s rural residents are less likely than their urban counterparts to express optimism.



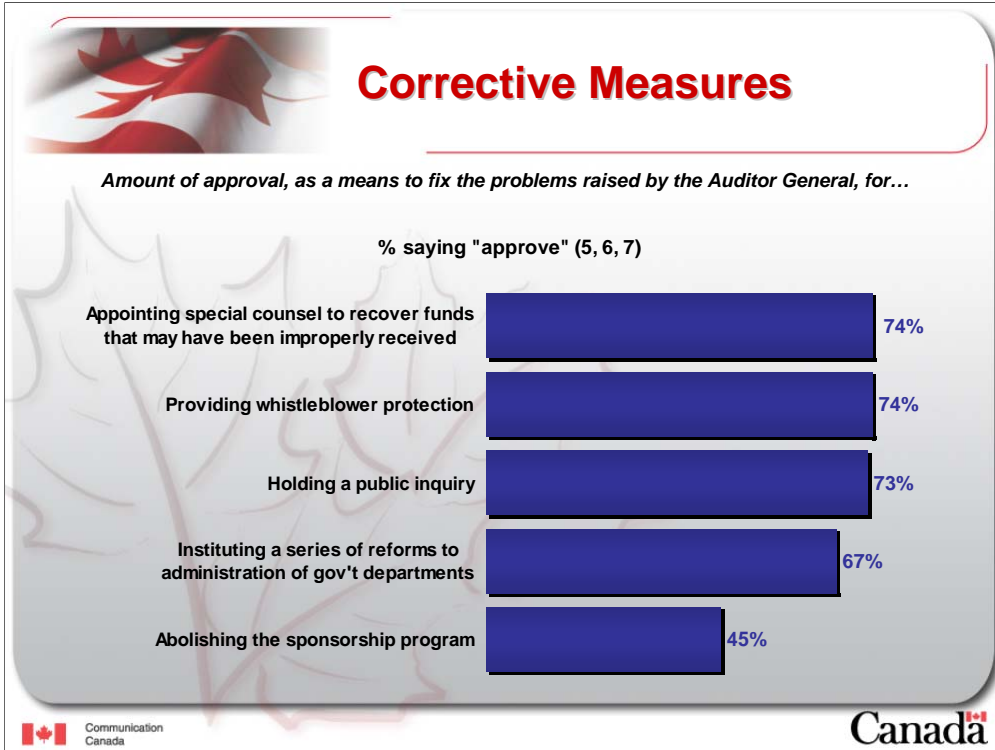
- Canadians were asked to identify the most important issue on which the Government should focus.
- Health care remains the first top-of-mind issue of the largest number of Canadians (35%).
- The economy is the second-most frequently mentioned issue (9%).



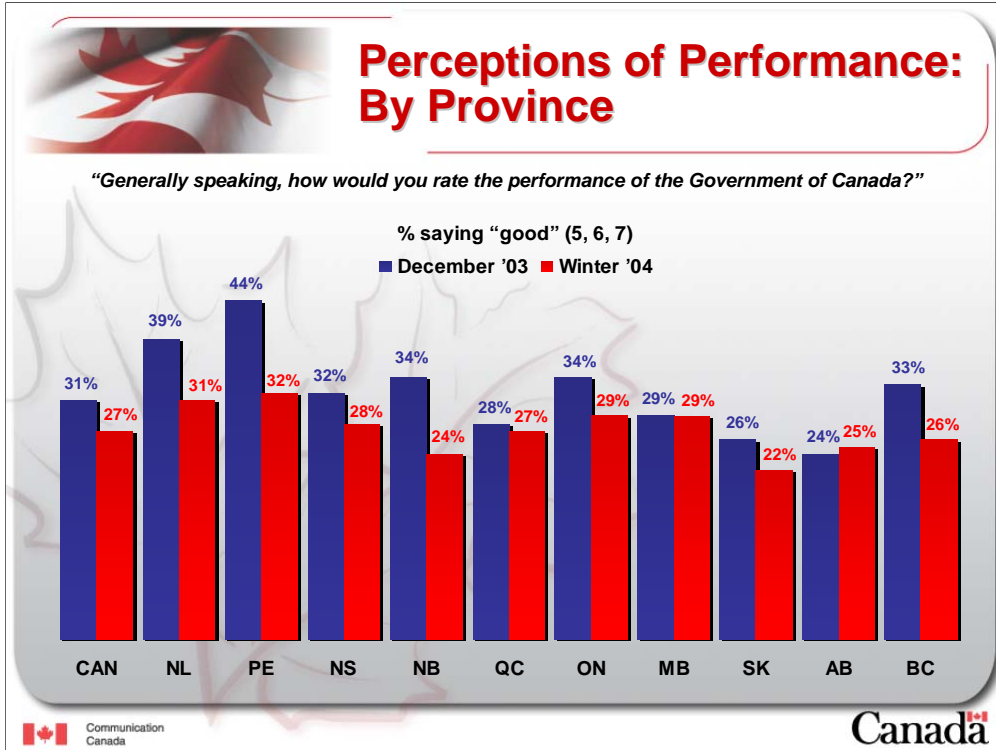
- The top-of-mind concerns for Canadians have oscillated over time. Employment was the dominant issue during the 1990's. As the economy strengthened, however, Canadians turned their attention to the health care system.
- Since 1999, health care has been the dominant top-of-mind concern for Canadians. Over the last year this dominance has continued with nearly four times the number of Canadians focused on health care as compared to the economy, which is the next biggest issue.
- Over the last five years, concerns about the health care system has spiked during the winter months. This may be due to a seasonal effect with more Canadians being sick more often and making greater use of the health care system.



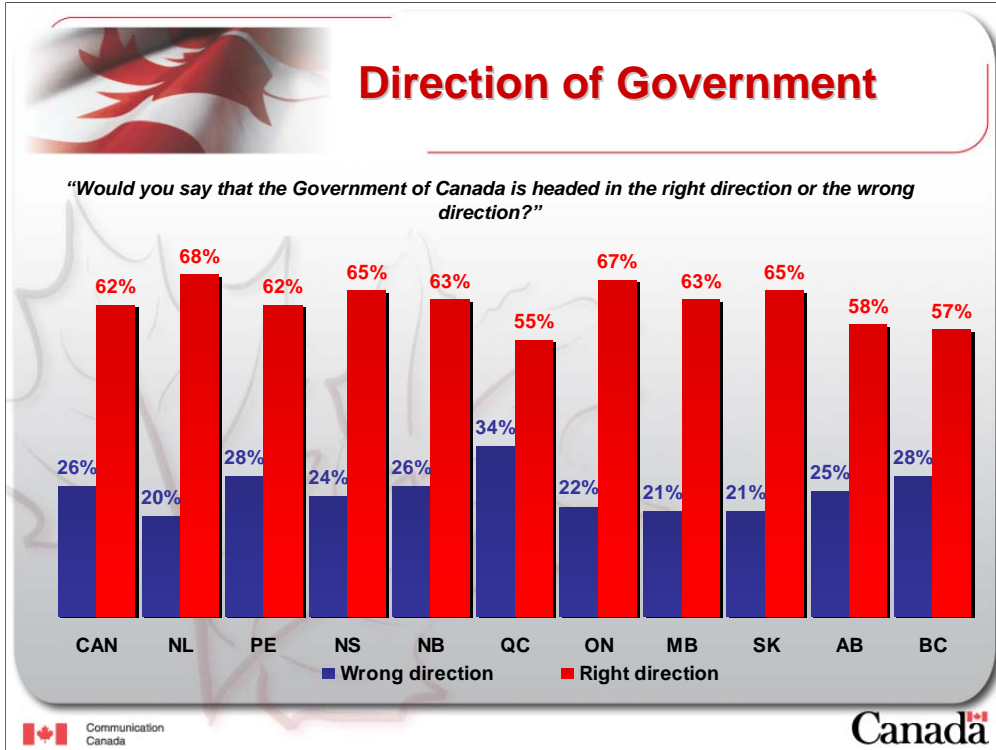
- Overall, Quebec residents (72%) paid the most attention to the Auditor General's report, 48% paid a great deal of attention and another 24% paid some attention.
- Residents of Atlantic Canada (53%) paid the least attention.



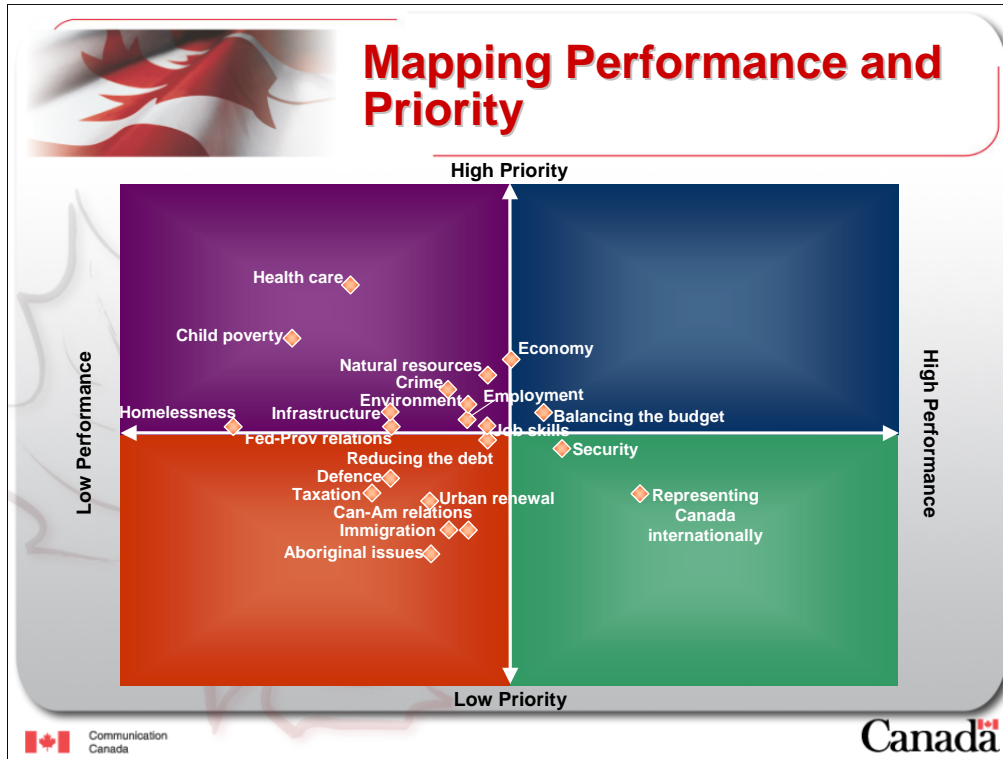
- With regards to the Auditor General's report, 74% of Canadians approve of appointing a special counsel to recover the funds that may have been improperly received. An identical percentage also supports whistleblower protection.
- 45% of Canadians approve of abolishing the sponsorship program.



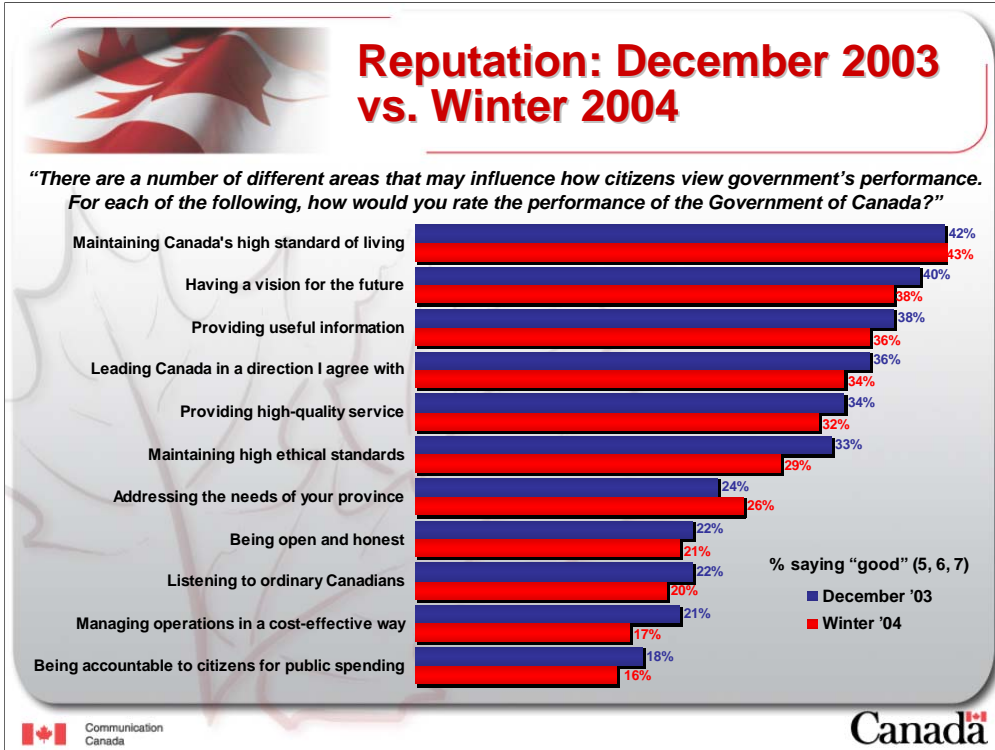
- Performance ratings decreased in almost every province, with the exception of Alberta.
- The largest decrease was in P.E.I., where overall Government performance dropped from 44% to 32%.



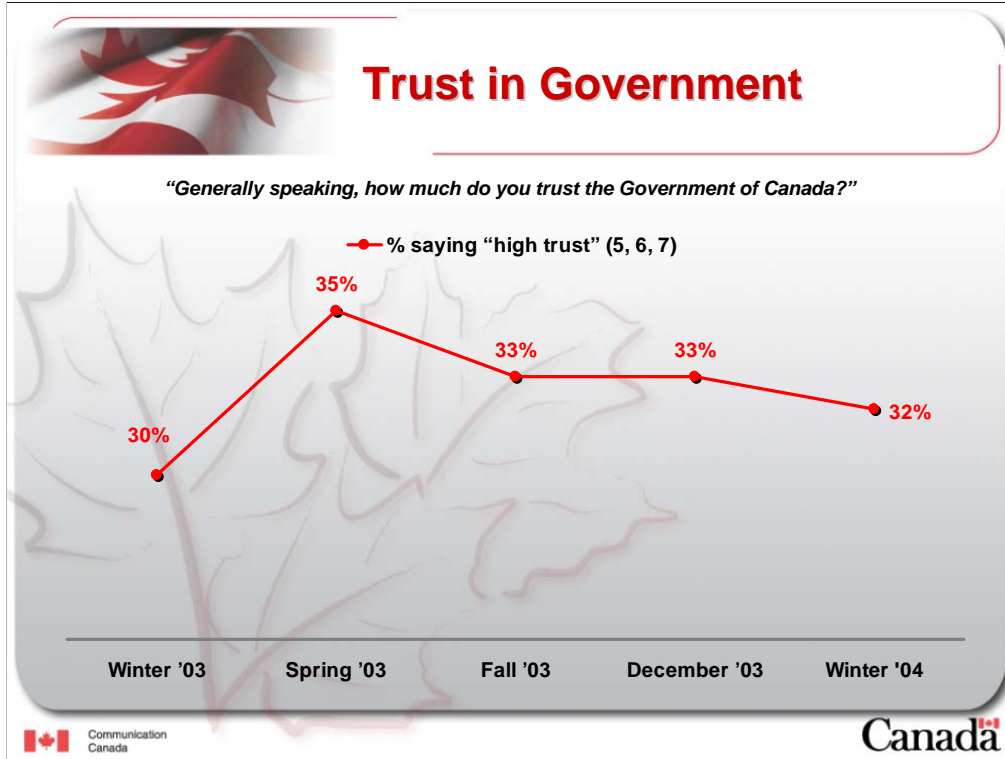
- Canadians in all provinces feel that the Government is heading in the right direction. Canadians in Newfoundland and Labrador (68%) and Ontario (67%) are most likely to believe the Government is heading in the right direction.



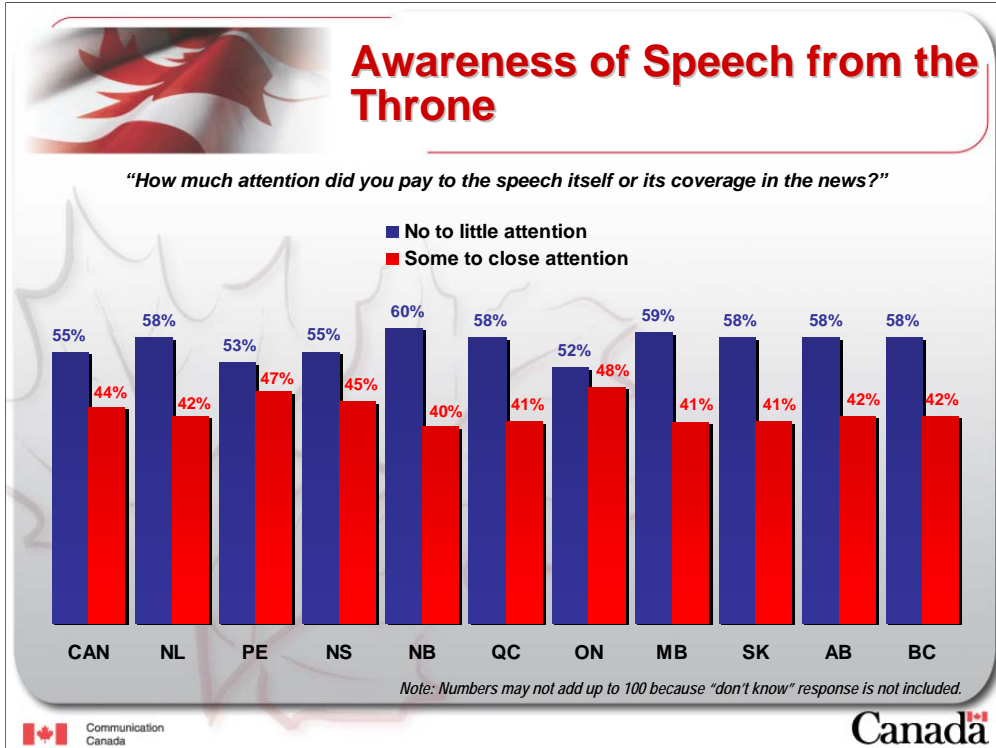
- The priority accorded by Canadians to the key policy issues, and the evaluation they give to the Government's performance on them, vary widely. Managing the economy and balancing the budget are accorded high priority by Canadians who perceive the Government to be performing well in these areas.
- On the other hand, health care, child poverty, natural resources, crime, environment, infrastructure, employment, job skills, homelessness and federal-provincial relations are seen as high priorities for which the Government receives relatively lower performance.
- Reducing the debt, defence, taxation, urban renewal, Canadian-American relations, immigration and aboriginal issues are viewed as lower priorities for which the Government receives relatively low performance ratings.
- Finally, on security and representing Canada internationally, the Government received good evaluations for its performance on these issues even though they command less priority from the public.



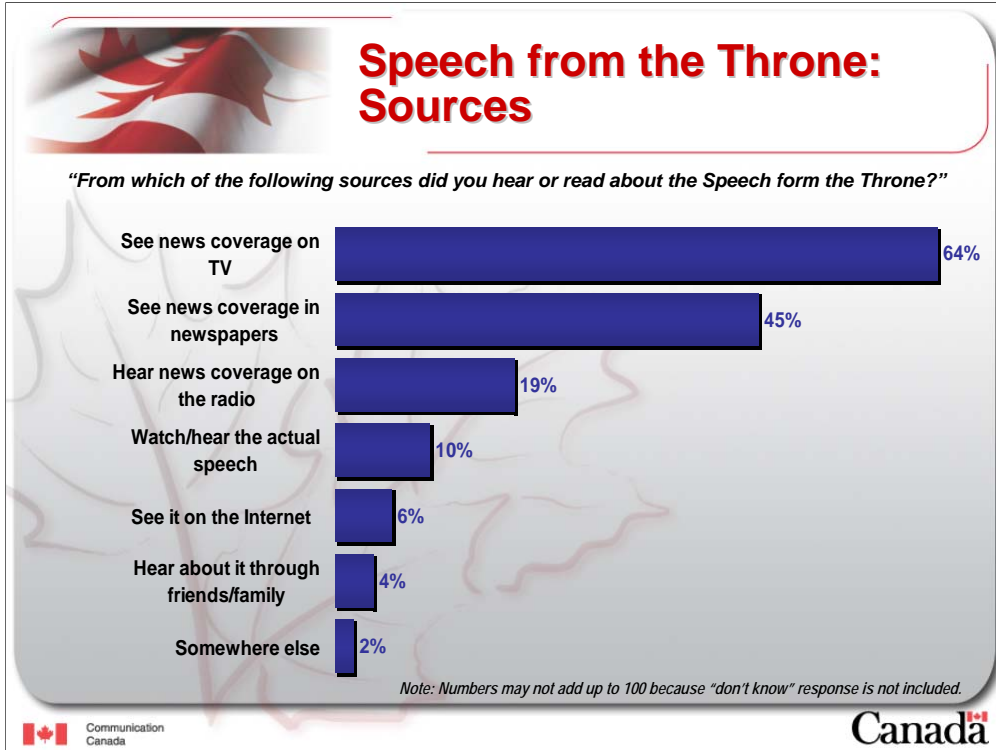
- All but two of the reputation factors have decreased from December 2003.
- Only maintaining Canada’s high standard of living and addressing provincial needs have slightly increased.



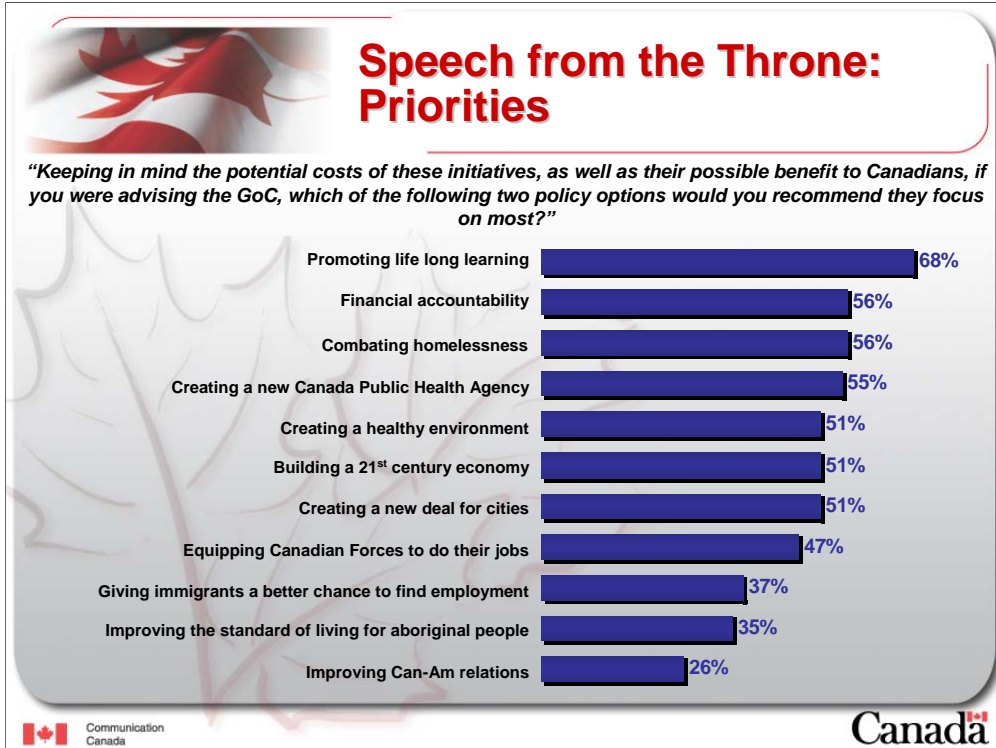
- Trust in Government decreased marginally from 33% to 32%.



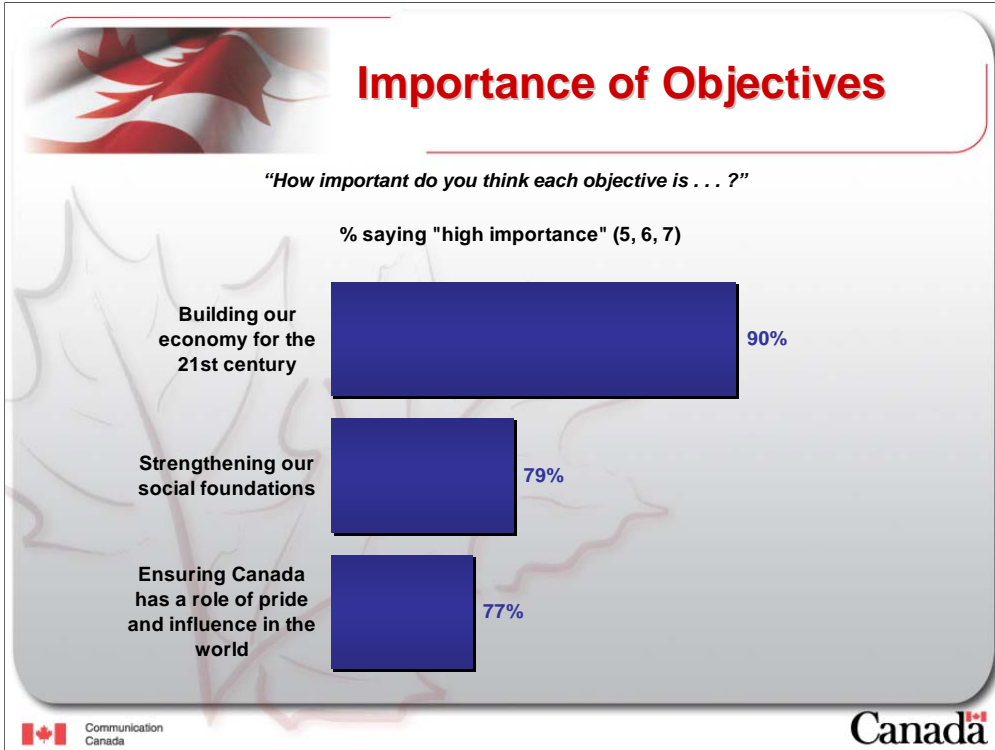
- Generally speaking, close to 45% of Canadians paid “some” to “close attention” to the Speech from the Throne.
- Residents of Ontario (48%) and P.E.I (47%) paid the most attention, while residents of New Brunswick paid the least attention.



- The majority of Canadians (64%) got their information about the Speech from the Throne from news coverage on TV, followed by coverage in newspapers (45%).
- Only 6% of Canadians got their information from the Internet, and 4% heard about it from family and friends.



- 68% of Canadians feel that the Government should focus on promoting life long learning.
- Other priority areas include:
 - Financial accountability (56%)
 - Combating homelessness (56%)
 - Creating a new Canada Public Health Agency (55%)
 - Creating a healthy environment (51%)
 - Building a 21st century economy (51%)
 - Creating a new deal for cities (51%) and
 - Equipping the Canadian Forces to do their jobs (47%)
- Lesser priorities include:
 - Giving immigrants a better chance to find employment (37%)
 - Improving the standard of living for aboriginal people (35%) and
 - Improving Canadian-American relations (26%)



- When asked the importance of certain objectives, 90% of Canadians felt that building the economy for the 21st century was the most important objective followed by strengthening our social foundations (79%), and ensuring Canada has a role of pride and influence in the world (77%).



- Canadians were further asked if they felt the Government was heading in the right direction or the wrong direction to meet their objectives.
- 53% felt that the Government is heading in the right direction with regards to building the economy for the 21st century.
- 52% believe that the Government is heading in the right direction to ensure Canada has a role of pride and influence in the world.
- 44% believe that the Government is heading in the right direction to strengthen our social foundations.

