

The Rethinking Government 2007 Study

Background

Since its launch more than a decade ago, EKOS' groundbreaking Rethinking Government has established itself as the most ambitious and comprehensive empirical resource designed to support planning and communications between citizens and their governments.

Looking at the findings from the study's 50 plus surveys since 1994, it is jarring to reflect on just how much the relationship between citizens, government and broader institutions has changed. Citizens have gone from being deficit-obsessed, "technophobic" and trade averse, to being economically confident, pro-trade, technophiles who generally view change as an asset rather than a threat. In retrospect, not only did the public world look radically different in 1994, it is clear that the then consensus prognosis for the country and government was dramatically incorrect.

This Year's Study Objectives

As unexpected and dramatic as these changes have been, we can be certain that the depth and pace of change will accelerate further in the future. Even as the rapidity of change has accelerated, public expectations for the future have risen and an increasingly sophisticated and sceptical citizenry now demand a more strategic and explicit blueprint for the future. Adaptation and response is not enough; we need to actively manage and achieve the future.

In moving forward, there is a need to replace assumptions and ideology with the best empirical

analysis about where we have come from and where we are going. This is the purpose of Rethinking Government. Based on rigorously designed multi-wave surveys of the general public, and with public and private sector decision-makers, the study is uniquely equipped to chart emerging trends and issues.

Thematic Overview

A number of key themes have emerged as being particularly germane to understanding the shifting expectations of government as an institution. These core themes, woven into the history of the past decade, will form a framework for considering change and the future:

- shifting public priorities and expectations (and the policy implications);
- trust, ethics and accountability;
- values, ideology and identity;
- globalization/international affairs/Canada's place in the world;
- the role of the state: levels of government, division of responsibilities, the distribution of power/power sharing and the "democratic deficit"; and
- service and transactions with governments.

As in past years, in addition to these core themes, Rethinking Government will also continue to respond to emerging public issues as they emerge.

Methodology

This year's methodology involves four separate national telephone surveys of randomly selected members of the general public aged 16 years and over, conducted once a quarter. The initial survey is based on a minimum of 3,000 completed interviews, with the other three based on 1,500 cases. Subscriber questions can be included in all four waves and are based on a total of 1,500 cases. Over the course of the four waves, a total of over 7,000 interviews with the general public will be conducted.

In addition, an on-line survey of at least 300 top decision-makers from government and the business sector will be conducted. The survey questionnaire will include items replicated from the general public surveys. This data will be analyzed to: 1) compare the views of decision-makers with those of the Canadian public, highlighting key similarities and differences and 2) compare the opinions of the different types of decision-makers (e.g., public and private sector). Over the years, this component of the research has produced fascinating results, revealing significant differences between average Canadians and the nation's elite.

Timing and Deliverables

Assuming sufficient participation, the study will commence in March 2007 and the major milestones are shown below.

Phase	Tentative Timing
Wave 1	
Client Questions/Instrument Design	March/April 2007
Fieldwork	April/May 2007
Reporting	May/June 2007
Wave 2	
Client Questions/Instrument Design	May/June 2007
Fieldwork	July 2007
Reporting	July/August 2007
Wave 3	
Client Questions/Instrument Design	August/September 2007
Fieldwork	October 2007
Reporting	October/November 2007
Wave 4	
Client Questions/Instrument Design	November/December 2007
Fieldwork	January 2008
Reporting	January/February 2008
Elite Decision Makers	
Instrument Design	Fall 2007
Fieldwork	Fall 2007
Reporting	Fall 2007

Costs

There are three levels of subscription:

<p>Limited Subscription</p> <p>\$10,000 (excluding GST)</p>	<p>E-version and 1 hard copy of all deliverables.</p> <p>Access to the Rethinking Government database (in electronic format)</p> <p>Subscribers at this level can purchase a maximum of 2 special purpose questions at a cost of \$1,500 each*.</p>	<p>Privileged Subscription</p> <p>\$50,000 (excluding GST)</p>	<p>E-version and 4 hard copies of all deliverables</p> <p>Opportunity to define, jointly with EKOS, 20 special purpose questions*.</p>
<p>Core subscription</p> <p>\$25,000 (excluding GST)</p>	<p>E-version and 2 hard copies of all deliverables</p> <p>Opportunity to define, jointly with EKOS, 8 special purpose questions*.</p> <p>Subscribers at this level can purchase a maximum of 4 additional special purpose questions at a cost of \$1,250 each.</p>		<p>A customized presentation (in Ottawa) during the course of the study, at their convenience.</p> <p>Subscribers at this level can purchase a maximum of 6 additional special purpose questions at a cost of \$1,200 each.</p>

Customized services including additional analysis, reporting and presentations are available to study sponsors. Costs are determined based on the scope of the work.

* Client questions are based on 1,500 completed cases and closed ended. Questions can be included, in whole or in part, on any of the four general public survey waves.

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