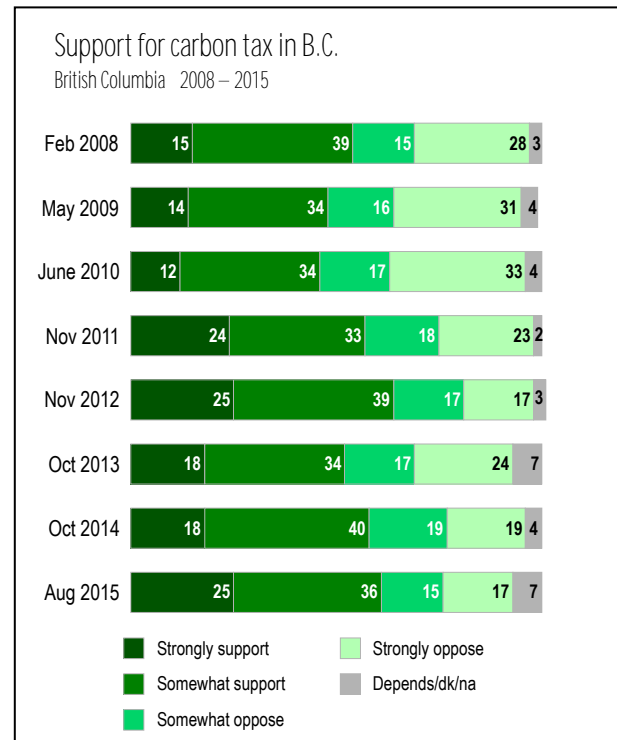


Public support for carbon-based pricing and renewable energy

A clear and growing majority of British Columbians endorse their provincial carbon tax, and a similar proportion elsewhere in the country would support such a tax in their own province to address climate change.

B.C. Carbon Tax. Arguably one of the most significant climate change policies in Canada to date is the carbon tax implemented in British Columbia in 2008, the first such direct carbon pricing measure in North America. The carbon tax has not proceeded without controversy, but it has withstood political attacks and is now firmly established.

Public support for the B.C. carbon tax has strengthened over the past year, with six in 10 now saying they strongly (25%) or somewhat (36%) support it (up from 58% in 2014, with a 7 point jump in the number who express strong support). This matches the highest level of public support for the BC carbon tax since it was first introduced in early 2008. No more than one in three B.C. residents now somewhat (15%) or strongly (17%) oppose the provincial carbon tax (down 6 points since 2014), also now at an all-time low.



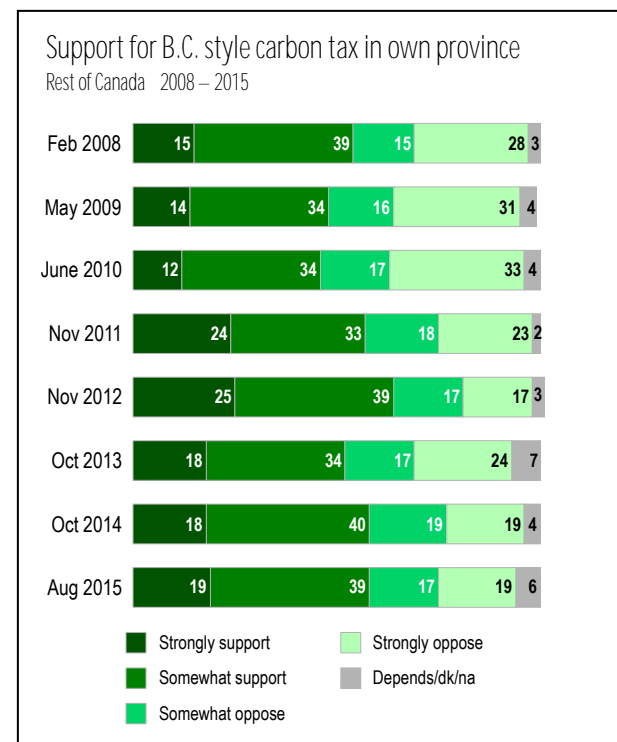
The size of the B.C. subsample limits the scope of subgroup analysis, but it is evident that public support for the carbon tax continues to be most widespread in the Vancouver metropolitan area, and is now also strongest among women (who account for all of the increase over the past year).

Support for B.C.-style carbon tax elsewhere in

Canada. How do citizens elsewhere in Canada view the B.C. carbon tax as a climate change policy for their own province? As has been the case since 2011, a clear majority of Canadians outside of B.C. express support for such a tax in their province. The level of support has inched upwards for the second consecutive year, and is comparable to the views expressed in British Columbia.

Across the country (outside of B.C.), almost six in ten of citizens strongly (19%) or somewhat (39%) support a B.C.-style carbon tax for their province (up 2 points since 2014), while just over one-third somewhat (17%) or strongly (19%) oppose it (down 4 points).¹

Support for this type of carbon pricing is now strongest in Atlantic Canada (67%, up 6 points since 2014), among women (61%, up 4), Canadians under 35 (64%), university graduates (65%), and NDP supporters (73%, up 6). Increased support is also



¹ The survey question used the same description of the B.C. carbon tax, and then asked if respondents would support the introduction of this type of policy in their own province.

evident among Canadians 55 and older, Quebecers, residents of small towns and rural areas, and those without a high school diploma. Consistent with other opinions about climate change, support for a provincial carbon tax is weakest in Alberta (48%, up 2) and among Conservative Party supporters (42%, down 3).

Shift to renewable energy

An increasing majority of Canadians believe it is possible for their province to shift its energy resources from fossil fuels to renewable power.

Because fossil fuel combustion is a major source of greenhouse gases, renewable “green” sources of energy, such as wind, solar, biomass, and run-of-river hydroelectric power, are now being actively developed across the country. These sources currently meet a modest percentage of the current energy supply, but Canadians express optimism that renewable power can replace much of the current reliance on fossil fuels.

Three-quarters (74%) Canadians say they believe it is possible for their province to shift most of its energy requirements from fossil fuels to clean renewable forms of energy, such as wind power, solar power and biofuels, up from 70 percent who expressed this view in 2013. One in five (20%) do not believe this can be done, while a handful are unable to say either way (7%).

Confidence in the future of renewable energy is the majority view in every identifiable group, and has increased in most parts of the country over the past year. Belief in the the possibility of a provincial green energy future is most widespread in Quebec (81%) and British Columbia (82%), as well as among Canadians aged 18 to 24 (87%), and supporters of the NDP (82%) and Green Party (90%). This view is least apt to be shared in Alberta (61%, but is up 9 points) and among Conservative Party supporters (56%, down 1). Across communities of different size, confidence in renewable energy is now strongest among rural residents (77%, up 6 points).

