

Methodology:

Results are based on an online study conducted from January 16 to January 18, 2021, among 800 adults in British Columbia. The data has been statistically weighted according to Canadian census figures for age, gender and region in British Columbia. The margin of error—which measures sample variability—is +/- 3.5 percentage points, nineteen times out of twenty.

Thinking about the Legislative Assembly of British Columbia, do you support or oppose each one of the following ideas? – “Support” listed

Providing public access, wherever possible, to the data and information being used to make decisions in accessible and manageable ways – 80%
Establishing a non-partisan “fact-checker” of statements made by MLAs in the Chamber – 70%
Eliminating heckling during Question Period – 63%
Developing strategies for civic organizations to engage with the Legislative Assembly – 63%
Establishing an all-party parliamentary committee to examine parliamentary decorum, including heckling – 57%
Eliminating the banging of desks during Question Period – 55%
Eliminating clapping during Question Period – 41%
Lowering the voting age for provincial elections to 16 – 28%

British Columbians Want Data Access and Decorum in Legislature

More than three-in-five of the province’s residents believe it is time to eliminate heckling during Question Period.

Vancouver, BC [January 29, 2021] – Many residents of British Columbia are on board with some changes recently suggested by the outgoing Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, a new Research Co. poll has found.

In December, Darryl Plecas—who served as speaker from September 2017 to December 2020—[issued a report](#) outlining several recommendations for the future of the Legislative Assembly.

In the online survey of a representative provincial sample, four-in-five British Columbians (80%) are in favour of providing public access, wherever possible, to the data and information being used to make decisions in accessible and manageable ways.

In addition, seven-in-ten British Columbians (70%) agree with establishing a non-partisan “fact-checker” of statements made by MLAs in the Chamber, and more than three-in-five (63%) want to develop strategies for civic organizations to engage with the Legislative Assembly.

There is also wide support for specific measures aimed at fostering respectful behaviour inside the legislature. More than half of British Columbians (57%) support establishing an all-party parliamentary committee to examine parliamentary decorum, including heckling. This includes majorities of British Columbians who voted for the BC Green Party (57%), the BC New Democratic Party (NDP) (62%) and the BC Liberals (66%) in last year’s provincial election.

There is no definite consensus on what type of behaviour British Columbians would like to banish from Question Period in the legislature. While only 41% of British Columbians would eliminate clapping, there is majority support for abandoning two other practices: the banging of desks (55%) and heckling (63%).

The idea of lowering the voting age for provincial elections to 16 years is supported by 28% of British Columbians, while 64% are opposed.

British Columbians aged 18-to-34 are more likely to be in favour of lowering the voting age (38%) than their counterparts aged 35-to-54 (31%) and aged 55 and over (17%).

“There is very little opposition from British Columbians to the proposals that seek to address information transparency and



public participation in the legislature," says Mario Canseco, President of Research Co. "The most contentious idea is the one related to lowering the voting age."

In a two-country survey conducted by Research Co. [in November 2020](#), 62% of Canadians and 58% of Americans rejected the notion of allowing people aged 16 and 17 to vote in federal elections.

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About Research Co.

Simply put, we are curious about what people think and the decisions they will make. Some call it public opinion, others call it polling or public affairs. We never compromise facts for profit. Our agenda is the truth.

We have a global network of partners in the qualitative, data collection and data visualization specialities.

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