

## Budget 2021

**Date of Collection:** January 22 to February 21, 2021

**Number of Respondents:** 5,541

### Budget Overview

The provincial government must set priorities when creating its annual budget. Please review the following list of spending priorities for the Manitoba government and please indicate whether you think this is a high priority, medium priority, low priority or not a priority.

Statements	High priority	Medium priority	Low priority	Not a priority	Unsure
Improving the health care system	73%	22%	4%	1%	0%
Improving education and child care	52%	33%	11%	3%	1%
Lowering taxes	24%	28%	23%	24%	1%
Increasing mental health and addictions support.	43%	38%	14%	4%	1%
Providing financial support for people and businesses affected by COVID-19.	38%	44%	13%	4%	1%
Investing in infrastructure, such as roads, bridges and water/wastewater treatment plants.	30%	48%	18%	3%	1%

The provincial deficit - the amount the money the government spends over and above what it collects in revenue - is expected to be approximately \$2 billion this year. In its October Throne Speech, the Manitoba government set a goal to balance the budget by 2027.

In your opinion, should the government...

Balance the budget before 2027, even if it means reducing government spending further.	10%
Stick with its plan to balance the budget by 2027.	37%
Balance the budget later than 2027, even if it means higher deficits and more provincial debt.	44%
Unsure	9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

The Manitoba government spends the highest amount per person on health care, education and other social services of any provincial government in Canada. Overall, how much value do you feel you receive for the money spent on these services?

Excellent value	9%
Good value	29%
Fair value	32%
Poor value	27%
Unsure	4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Personal Finances and Economic Outlook

Thinking about your own personal financial situation, do you think at this time next year you will be better off, worse off or about the same financially as you are today?

Better off	17%
About the same	62%
Worse off	21%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

The COVID-19 pandemic has led to many people experiencing financial hardship. For each of the following, please indicate if this is a major concern for you? Select all that apply.

Using up all your savings	20%
Being unable to pay a credit card bill	11%
Being unable to pay your utility bill	8%
Being unable to pay your mortgage/rent	9%
Being unable to afford to buy food	8%
I'm not concerned about any of these	37%
Other	6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Health Care

When it comes to our provincial health care system, how much of a priority do you think it should be to increase spending in the following areas? For each, please indicate if it's a high priority, medium priority, low priority or not a priority.

Statements	High priority	Medium priority	Low priority	Not a priority	Unsure
Reducing surgical wait times.	47%	43%	7%	1%	1%
Improving care in long-term care facilities.	64%	28%	5%	1%	1%
More access to mental health and addictions support programs.	45%	37%	13%	4%	1%
Increasing the number of COVID-19 vaccination sites.	40%	31%	17%	10%	2%
Providing more resources for seniors to “age in place” (live in their homes safely for as long as possible).	44%	39%	12%	3%	1%
Providing more personal protective equipment for front-line health care workers.	58%	28%	8%	4%	3%

The COVID-19 vaccine is currently being rolled out in Manitoba. When it is your turn to get it, will you...

Definitely get the vaccine	69%
Probably get the vaccine	16%
Probably not get the vaccine	9%
Definitely not get the vaccine	7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

## COVID-19 Vaccine

Manitoba first received the COVID-19 vaccine in mid-December 2020 and plans to immunize priority populations first. This includes health care workers, seniors in long-term care facilities, adults aged 80 or older and adults at risk living in remote or isolated Indigenous communities.

To what extent do you approve or disapprove of the provincial government's current approach to providing the COVID-19 vaccine?

Strongly approve	47%
Somewhat approve	37%
Somewhat disapprove	10%
Strongly disapprove	6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

Compared to other high-priority areas of provincial health spending, is getting the COVID-19 vaccine to Manitobans...

The highest priority – the provincial government should spend whatever it takes getting all Manitobans who want it vaccinated as soon as possible.	57%
A moderate priority – it's important to make the vaccine available, but there are other priorities in the health care system that are equally as critical.	34%
A lower priority – there are other areas of the health care system that the Manitoba government should invest in first.	8%
Unsure	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Jobs and The Economy

There are many steps the provincial government can take to help the economy recover from the effects of COVID-19. For each of the following, please indicate if this should be a high priority, medium priority, low priority or not a priority.

Statements	High priority	Medium priority	Low priority	Not a priority	Unsure
Helping Manitoba businesses increase the amount of goods and services they sell in other markets.	33%	41%	17%	4%	5%
Attracting more investment from companies located outside Manitoba.	26%	38%	22%	8%	6%
Creating venture capital funds that will help Manitoba businesses expand their operations.	23%	40%	21%	7%	9%
Investing in the tourism sector to bring more visitors to Manitoba.	14%	34%	32%	18%	2%
Investing in infrastructure, such as bridges and roads.	40%	40%	15%	3%	1%
Attracting more immigrants to Manitoba.	12%	29%	30%	26%	3%
Creating apprenticeship training opportunities.	44%	40%	12%	3%	2%

## Jobs and The Economy

The Manitoba government has spent approximately \$1.8 billion on COVID-19 and has committed another \$1.4 billion to help Manitoba deal with the effects of the disease. This spending includes direct supports to businesses, as well as spending on personal protective equipment and contact tracing.

In your opinion, how much will the following steps help residents and businesses recover from the economic effects of COVID-19? For each, please indicate if you think this will be very helpful, somewhat helpful, not very helpful or not at all helpful.

<b>Statements</b>	<b>Very helpful</b>	<b>Somewhat helpful</b>	<b>Not very helpful</b>	<b>Not at all helpful</b>	<b>Unsure</b>
Reducing education property taxes.	23%	32%	23%	18%	4%
Reducing the provincial sales tax (PST) and removing it from certain services.	30%	29%	20%	19%	2%
Bridge grants for businesses, charities and not-for-profits.	34%	45%	11%	4%	6%
Grant programs for businesses (such as restaurants) forced to close their operations due to public health restrictions.	49%	38%	7%	3%	3%
Wage subsidies for businesses that hire new employees.	31%	44%	16%	5%	4%
Deferring interest or penalties on public services, such as hydro bills or auto insurance.	41%	37%	14%	5%	2%
Commercial rent assistance programs for small businesses.	44%	41%	9%	3%	3%

## Education and Child Care

When it comes to education and child care, how much of a priority do you think it should be to increase spending in the following areas?

For each, please indicate if it's a high priority, medium priority, low priority or not a priority.

Statements	High priority	Medium priority	Low priority	Not a priority	Unsure
Providing a higher number of child care spaces.	44%	35%	12%	6%	3%
Making child care more affordable.	50%	29%	13%	6%	2%
Investments that make schools more safe for students and teachers (e.g. PPE, more distancing between students).	42%	30%	16%	10%	2%
Building 20 new schools in the next 10 years.	18%	34%	27%	10%	11%
Investing in programs that improve students' learning outcomes.	59%	28%	7%	3%	3%

The report from the K-12 Education Commission will be released this spring, and the provincial government will be responding to its recommendations. How satisfied are you with the current education system and the quality of education our students receive?

Very satisfied	14%
Somewhat satisfied	42%
Somewhat dissatisfied	20%
Very dissatisfied	12%
Unsure	12%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Communications and Engagement

How did you hear about the 2021 budget survey? Please select all that apply from the list below.

Radio	3%
Newspaper	2%
TV	4%
EngageMB website	15%
Email from EngageMB	47%
The news - general	5%
Social media, such as Facebook or Twitter	10%
Virtual meeting	0%
Telephone town hall	4%
Referred by friend or family member	3%
Government website	3%
Internet search (Google)	1%
Other	3%
Unsure	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

What format do you most prefer for sharing your views about Manitoba's annual budget? Select all that apply.

Telephone town hall	5%
Virtual meeting	8%
In-person meeting	5%
Online survey	78%
Unsure	2%
Other	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>