



Ipsos Descarie

## **Newfoundlanders' Views On The Canadian Seal Hunt: Research Report**



**A quantitative study conducted on behalf of:**



**HUMANE SOCIETY  
INTERNATIONAL**

May 2010

Study #: 10-043060



# Introduction

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In late 2009 and early 2010, Ipsos conducted an initial study on the topic of the commercial seal hunt on behalf of Humane Society International (HSI). The study, which surveyed fishing industry processors and wholesalers, fishing vessel owners, and individual fishermen, provided valuable feedback regarding opinions concerning the commercial seal hunt and openness to a proposed federal buyout of same.

HSI would like to broaden and extend the scope of inquiry delineated by this initial study. As a first initiative, they requested a submission from Ipsos for a quantitative, statistically robust survey of Newfoundlanders examining awareness and opinions pertaining to the commercial seal hunt.

To this end, Ipsos was mandated to execute a telephone survey of the general population of Newfoundland.

The present report details the main findings of the study, conducted in January 2011.

<b>Data collection method</b>	Telephone (CATI) survey.		
<b>Sample size</b>	<b>Sample</b>	<b>Max margin of error</b> (19 times out of 20)	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1000</b>	<b>±3.1%</b>
<b>Respondent selection</b>	Random, from the Newfoundland general population. Equal split by region (St John's 500, rest of province 500) Equal split by gender Aged 18+		
<b>Questionnaire</b>	Developed by Ipsos.		
<b>Survey duration</b>	5.5 minutes on average		
<b>Data collection dates</b>	January 3 <sup>rd</sup> to January 16 <sup>th</sup> , 2011		
<b>Significant differences within sub-groups</b>	An underlined result for a given sub-group indicates that it is significantly different at a 95% confidence level relative to its counterpart.		
<b>Analytics</b>	Data were processed using SPSS-PC software.		
<b>Weighting</b>	Data were weighted according to the latest Newfoundland Census (2006): 20% for citizens living in the St-John's area and 80% for citizens living elsewhere in the province.		

When asked to name the pressing issues for Newfoundland today, close to 3-in-10 (30%) identify healthcare, followed by unemployment (23%) and childcare (20%). An issue slightly ahead of transportation (13%) and the economy (12%) was support for the fishery sector (14%).

Over 4-in-5 (84%) Newfoundlanders believe the majority of seals are killed when they are at least 3 months of age, with more than 1-in-2 (55%) believing that the majority of seals are killed when they are at least 1 year of age.

Just under 3-in-4 Newfoundlanders (72%) support a prohibition on the killing of seals under three months of age; 38% would extend that protection to seals under one year of age. A further 8% oppose the killing of all seals, regardless of age. Only 13% favor no limitations on the age at which seals can be killed.

Among Newfoundlanders registering an opinion, a majority (53%) support a sealing license buy-out in which the seal hunt would be ended, fishermen compensated for lost income, and funds invested in economic alternatives.



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## Detailed Findings



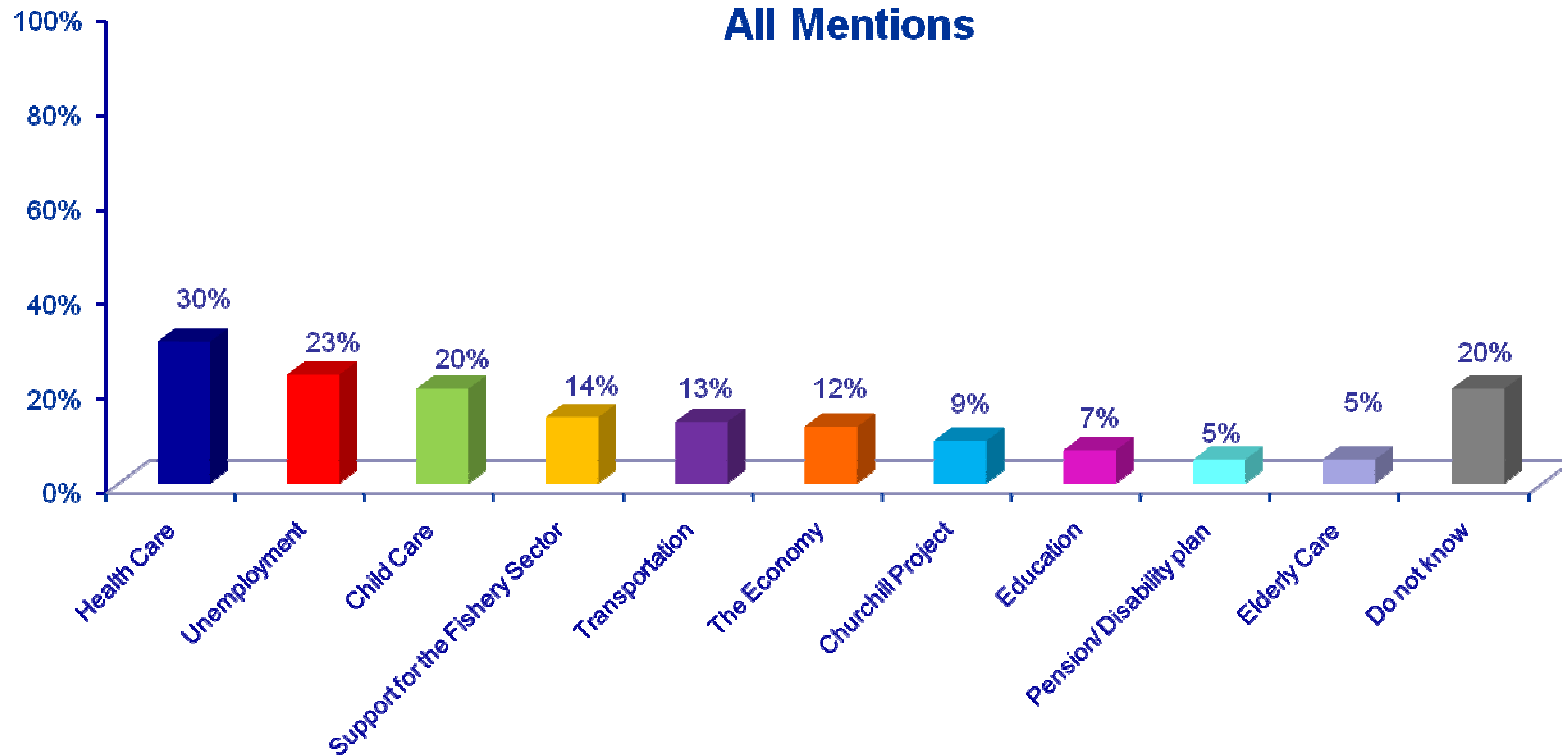


**Healthcare dominates issues of local importance, followed by unemployment and child care.  
Roughly 1-in-10 cite support for the fishery sector as a pressing issue for Newfoundlanders.**



Q. What do you see as the single most pressing issue that Ottawa ought to be addressing to best serve the needs of the citizens of Newfoundland and Labrador? Q1a What other pressing issues should Ottawa be addressing?

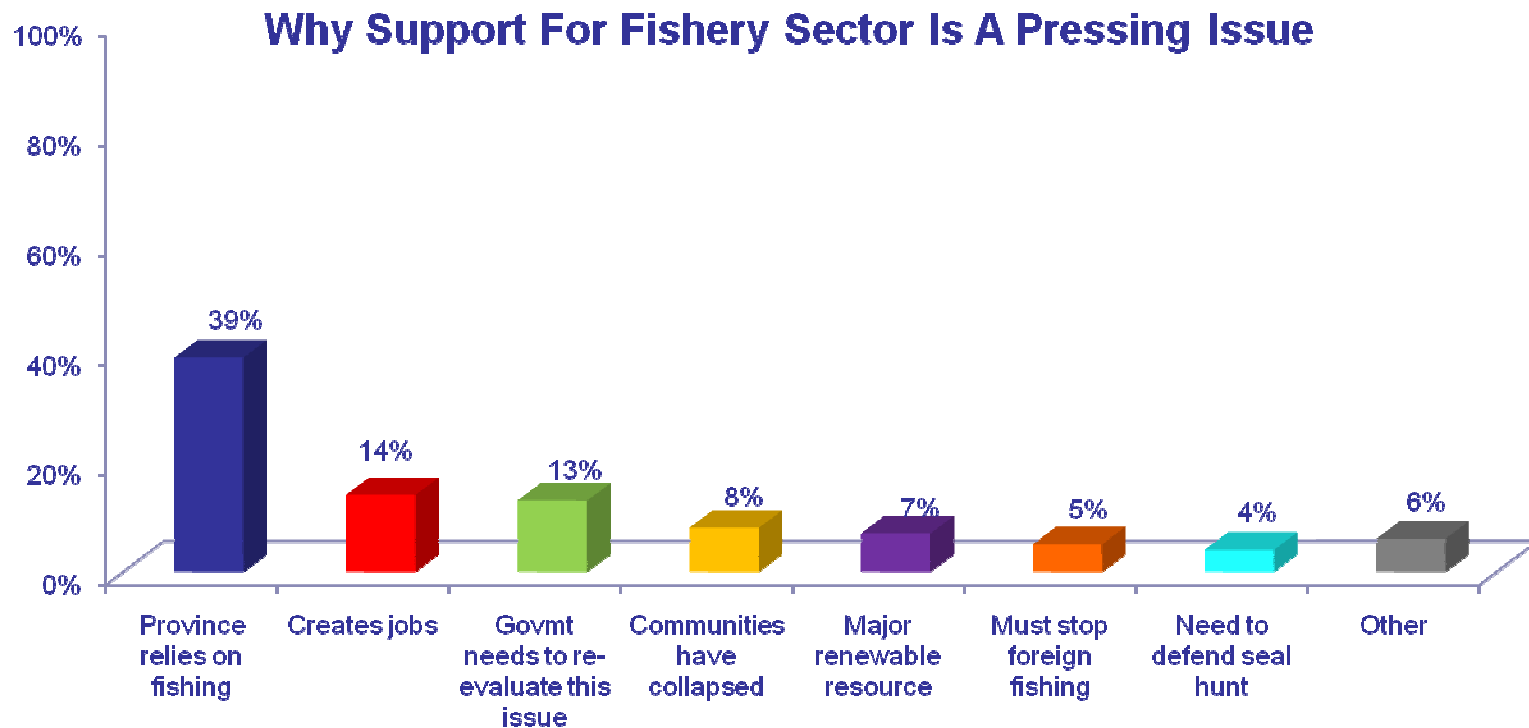
**Local Issues Most Requiring Federal Government Attention  
All Mentions**



Base: All Respondents (n=1000)

**By a wide margin, support for the fishery sector is regarded as a pressing issue because of its (perceived) ability to stimulate the local economy.**

Q. Why do you see support for the fishery sector as a pressing issue?

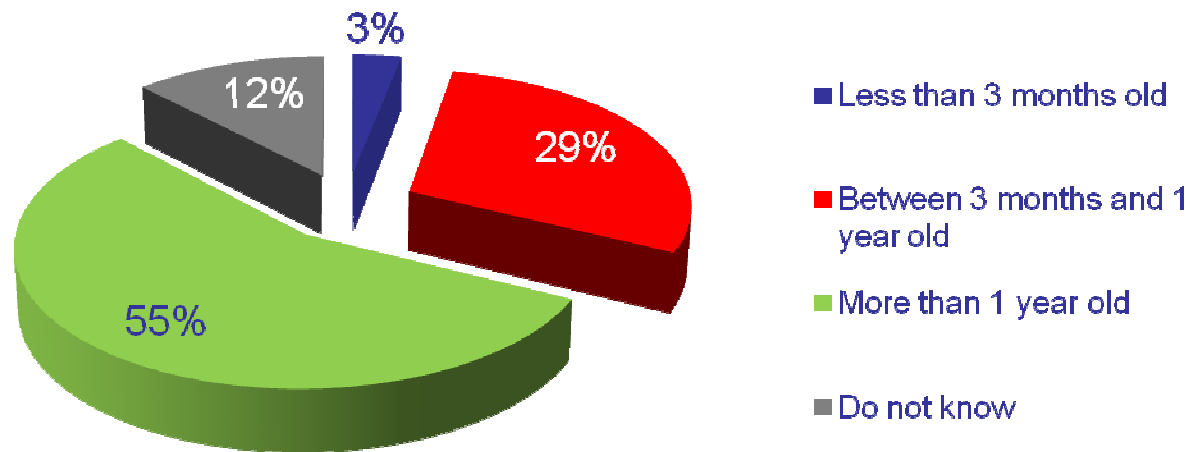


Base: Respondents who mentioned "Support for fishery sector" at Q1. (n= 122)

**More than half (55%) of Newfoundlanders surveyed believe that the majority of seals are killed when they are more than 1 year old. In total, 84% believe that most seals are killed when they are at least 3 months old.**

Q. To the best of your knowledge, at what age are the majority of seals killed in Canada's commercial seal hunt? Would you say the majority are killed at....

### Age At Which Majority Of Seals Are Killed



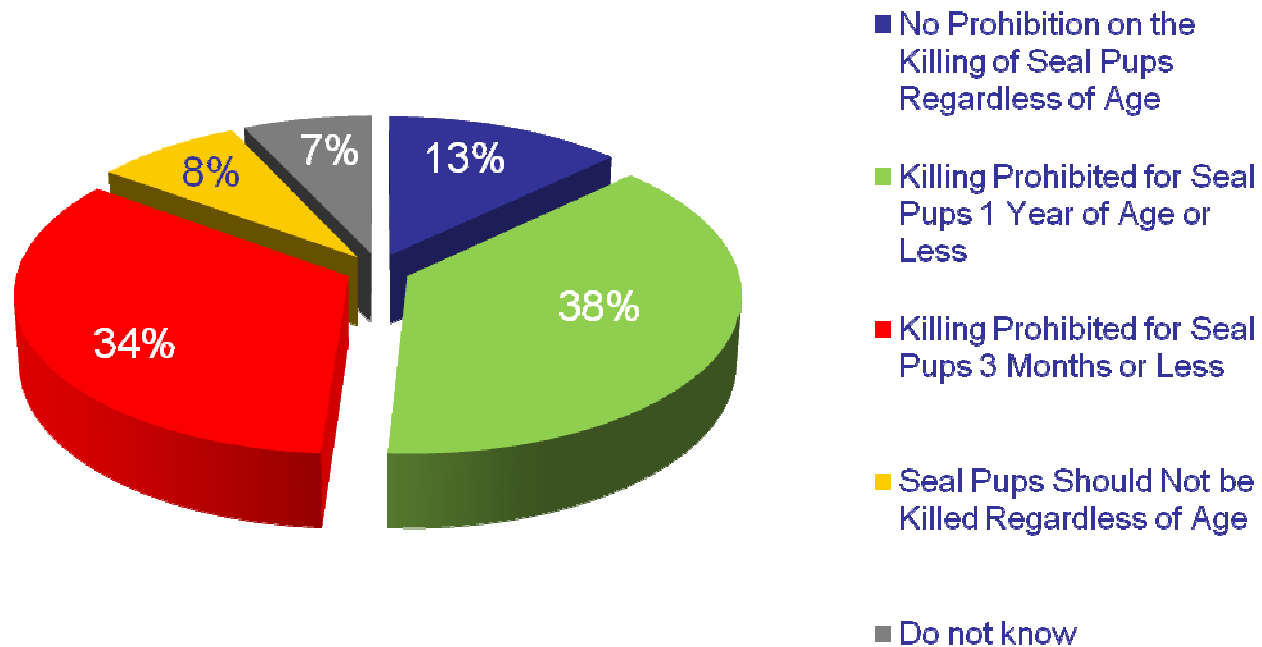
Base: All Respondents (n=1000)



**The large majority (72%) believe that there should be a prohibition on the killing of seal pups, depending upon the age of the pup.**

Q. Which of the following statements best reflects your opinion regarding the commercial seal hunt?

### Views On Prohibition Of Killing Seal Pups

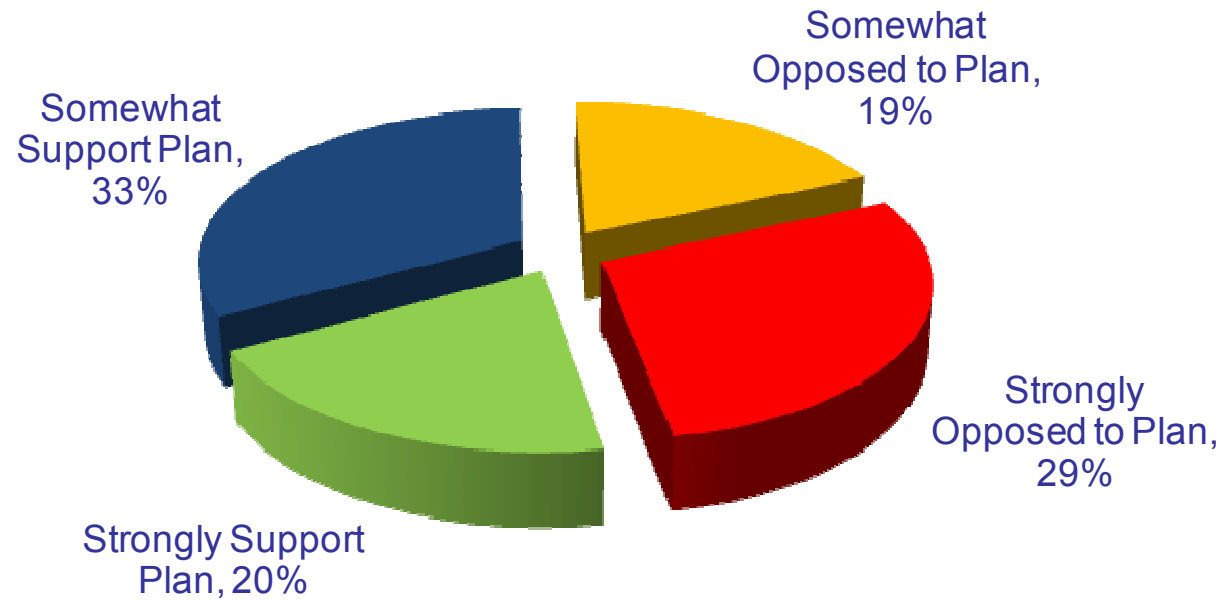


Base: All Respondents (n=1000)

**Overall, roughly half of Newfoundlanders surveyed with an opinion expressed support for a government buy-out of the commercial seal hunt, provided a majority of Newfoundlanders supported such a plan.**

Q. A recent survey of Newfoundland sealers found that half of all sealers with an opinion support the idea of a sealing license buy-out in which the seal hunt would be ended, fishermen compensated for lost income, and funds invested in economic alternatives in the communities affected. Assuming a majority of Newfoundland sealers supported such a plan, what would be your views on this idea?

### Views On Government Buy-Out Plan



Base: Respondents expressing an opinion (n=941)

# Respondent Profile (non-weighted)

	Gender
Male	50%
Female	50%
	Age
< 20 years	<1%
21-35	11%
36-50	33%
51-65	36%
> 65 years	20%

	Employment
Full-time	46%
Part-time	9%
Homemaker	6%
Retired/ Student	30%
No paid employment	2%
Other	7%
	Region
St.John's	50%
Rest of province	50%

	Income
Less than 75K	58%
75K or more	42%
Median	\$52,500
	Education
HS or less	26%
College	32%
University	42%