



GenomeCanada

## PUBLIC PERCEPTIONS OF GENOMICS IN CANADA

### Key findings from Genome Canada's 2022 national survey with Abacus Data

Genomics is transforming our economy, environment and health—fuelled by major advances in sequencing capabilities, AI and computing power, and bioengineering technologies. This science is unlocking solutions to some of today's most pressing challenges, from food insecurity to climate change to disease.

**As genomics generates impact for Canada through new knowledge, technologies and solutions, it is vital that we understand how those impacts—and the science driving them—are experienced, perceived and understood.**

That's why Genome Canada conducted **public opinion research** with Abacus Data in Spring 2022 to better understand how Canadians view genomics to inform our work and strengthen our impact.

- Custom national survey conducted online with 3,000 Canadian adults aged 18+
- Built with insights from previous polling by regional Genome Centres
- In the field from March 4-13, 2022
- Data generated weighted according to census data to ensure sample matched Canada's population

#### About us

Genome Canada drives national research and innovation in genomics and associated biosciences. Through a pan-Canadian network of six regional Genome Centres, strong cross-sectoral partnerships and large-scale multidisciplinary applied research initiatives, we are on a mission to translate research into real-world impact.



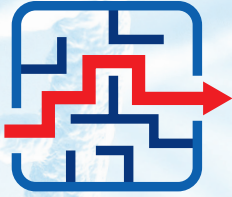
**Investing in inclusive genomics research and innovation, shaped by diverse perspectives and communities, is essential to ensuring the benefits of genomics are shared by all.**

At the heart of Genome Canada's work is a commitment to:

- Fostering the responsible, ethical, equitable and effective development, uptake and implementation of genomics research, innovation and technologies.
- Supporting evidence-based policy and decision making.
- Building public trust and understanding of genomics.

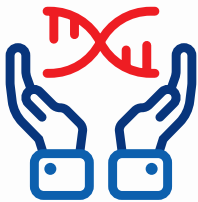
Learn more about our work on Genomics in society at [genomecanada.ca/society](https://genomecanada.ca/society)

*For more information or details on this survey, contact [Sapna Mahajan, Director, Genomics in Society at Genome Canada](#).*



## CANADIANS BELIEVE GENOMICS CAN AND SHOULD SOLVE OUR GREATEST CHALLENGES

By a significant margin, Canadians think genomics should be used to help solve some of the world's most significant challenges (**58%**), although some (**15%**) think the risks outweigh benefits. One quarter (**27%**) are not sure. Support for specific applications of genomics across sectors, such as targeting particular diseases, is very high.



## SUPPORT FOR SPECIFIC APPLICATIONS

Support for the use of genomics was highest for diagnosis and treatment planning for cancer (**81%**), rapid diagnosis of rare disease (**79%**) and identifying, tracking and containing COVID-19 (**77%**). In areas outside human health, support for use of genomics was also high in such areas as bee colony protection (**75%**), invasive pest control in forests (**75%**), mining runoff water cleanup (**73%**) and livestock methane reduction (**70%**), among others.



## CANADIANS ARE AWARE AND INTERESTED IN LEARNING MORE

Awareness of genomics is modest (**31%** at least somewhat familiar).

There is considerable interest among Canadians in learning more about genomics. In fact, **70%** of Canadians are interested or somewhat interested in learning more.



## STRONG SUPPORT FOR INVESTMENT IN CANADA'S GENOMICS FUTURE

There is widespread support for investing more in genomic research, especially when tied to delivering health and disease-related benefits. More than **7 in 10** Canadians think the government should invest the same amount or more in genomics research. Only **9%** think there should be less investment.

When asked about targeted investment to understand the genetic causes of disease, for example, support is higher: more than half (**57%**) want more investment and **78%** want the investment to be the same or more. Only **7%** want the government to invest less.



## IMPRESSIONS OF GENOMICS ARE POSITIVE OVERALL

Overall impressions of genomics are positive as virtually no one holds a negative view and **44%** are either positive or somewhat positive. Familiarity with genomics is associated with being more positive. Those that are not positive are mostly either not sure (**26%**) or have mixed feelings about genomics (**27%**).

The pandemic experience has increased Canadians' awareness of genomics, with **41%** reporting that they definitely or somewhat became more aware as a result of COVID-19. The majority (**64%**) know that genomics was used during the pandemic. The pandemic experience has notably improved public impressions of genomics, with **55%** being more positive or somewhat more positive about their feelings.

Learn more at [genomecanada.ca/abacus2022](https://genomecanada.ca/abacus2022).