

Pandemic Public Policy

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RYERSON LEADERSHIP LAB

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Introduction

What are the health, economic, and social policy responses to the pandemic?

How did the choices arise?

What comes next?

The pandemic has sparked rapid policy responses to gaps in our social, economic and political foundations. The learnings from this crisis, and the solutions to help Canada rebuild, need to be captured as it plays out in real time.

Public Policy Responses to the Pandemic, and Building Back Better is an interdisciplinary virtual learning experience about the policy responses to the pandemic, and the debate around whether, and how, to “build back better” — to use the occasion of the pandemic to bring in other fundamental policy reforms.

You will learn the economic and social impacts of, and responses to, COVID-19 in Canada — as well as the ideas, tools, and skills available for each of us to shape the recovery.

Together we will explore a variety of topics:

- how income supports that might have kept you or your family afloat were created;
- why the ideas of a few long-dead economists might be relevant in understanding how to move forward;
- what we need to do to help people inform themselves and not be misled; and
- whether Canada should, or even can, radically rethink some of its policies coming out of the pandemic.

PANDEMIC CONTROL BASICS



Learning Objectives

Welcome & Introduction. What Are We Doing Together?:

- Identify preliminary policy goals that should be achieved at the beginning of deadly and disruptive phenomena like pandemics
- Describe key characteristics of policy study by distinguishing between public policy, public administration/governance, and politics
- Define key pandemic terms: pandemic, flattening the curve, herd immunity, and complementary frameworks
- Recognize the impact and relationship between public policy, public administration/governance, and politics

This module will help learners explore policy study characteristics that impact the public during crises like pandemics. By the end, learners will demonstrate an understanding of different policy goals that contribute to ending COVID-19.

Instructor's Course Introduction



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- "What are policy professionals saying we must do first?"

What are policy professionals saying we must do first?

First Policy Response

March 24, 2021 | By Matthew Mendelsohn,
Sean Mullin and Karim Bardeesy

<https://policyresponse.ca/what-are-policy-professionals-saying-we-must-do-first/>

As the exponential growth in the number of Covid-19 cases starts to sink in, the exponential growth in the economic calamity is also becoming apparent. It is unprecedented in our lifetime. The potential destruction of individuals' economic lives, security and well-being is staggering. As governments try to deal with the health emergency, they are also dealing with an economic shock unlike any they have ever felt.

Unlike any other economic downturn

The number of Canadians who applied for Employment Insurance was almost 930,000 last week, compared to 27,000 for the same week last year. And as staggering as those numbers are, they dramatically understate unemployment because over $\frac{1}{3}$ of

Canadians who were employed two weeks ago are contract workers or the self-employed. They aren't represented in those numbers.

Millions of Canadians have less than a month of savings — and it is likely that hundreds of thousands of Canadians will not be able to pay their rent next month.

Thinking differently, quickly

Policies are being proposed that would have been inconceivable a month ago.

The most compelling policy ideas will be those that bridge us through the pandemic and stabilize the economic lives of Canadians immediately — to the greatest extent possible and with all the tools at our disposal. These have to be the immediate policy goals.

Medium-term and longer term economic stabilization and renewal efforts will come later. But the current crisis is serving to highlight the systemic vulnerabilities that have been highlighted for years. The sense of vulnerability that many of us are feeling today are experienced by gig workers and the self-employed every day due to policies that have not kept pace with the evolving labour market.

If you are still talking about “stimulus,” please stop. It isn't the right framework and it misunderstands the problems we are facing. This type of crisis requires a new [playbook](#).

A consensus is emerging that measures have to be large and fast and that we must find the quickest way of getting cash or relief (e.g. debt repayment pause, moratorium on evictions, etc.) into the hands of people who are at immediate risk of losing businesses or lodging, and into the hands of those who have suddenly lost their income

the immediate economic crisis into a longer term economic one is far larger than the risk of doing too much.

Delivering benefits — you can't just flick a switch

The options governments can realistically deploy are also constrained by the systems that currently exist. Our Employment Insurance system covers only a fraction of workers, requires those workers to make proactive applications, and is already overloaded by demand. The Canada Child Benefit goes out to Canadian parents based on their income last year. We have no national data set that includes every Canadian.

Many good ideas will bump up against the reality of our current delivery mechanisms and data. Delivering something tomorrow, through government, that addresses 70% of a given problem will be more effective than rolling out something next month that deals with all of it. That's especially true if not-for-profits can get their own funding to help fill the gaps for those populations they touch, where governments can't.

We know that some of the programs are being rolled out slower than is ideal; we also know that everyone working on these things in Canada is working around the clock to roll them out as quickly as humanly possible.

The quickest instruments are the bluntest. Using the Canada Child Benefit and the GST rebate remain simple and useful vehicles to get money to people quickly, but many people who receive these benefits are facing catastrophic losses in income, while others are facing no loss in income at all. As tools get deployed, we will have to be really clear about which problems are being addressed and which people need different programs.

As governments experiment with many new approaches at once, some won't work. Some money will leak away. Some people — even now — will find ways to run a scam. But waiting for perfect is not an

option. And things are moving so quickly that ideas that get rolled out tomorrow may already be too little to address the issues that emerge next week. There will need to be differentiated responses for some sectors. Although small businesses in the tourism sector or the cultural sector face some of the same challenges as nail salons and pubs, there will be issues unique to each sector. We know Ministers and their departments are working now to craft responses to help.

Some groups are not receiving attention yet. In an online video meeting yesterday, Deena Ladd of the Workers' Action Centre and Garima Talwar Kapoor of Maytree pointed to the many populations and groups — from migrant farmworkers to social assistance recipients — whose situations have yet to be addressed by the announcements to date.

The federal package

Federal, provincial, municipal and Indigenous governments are rolling out new initiatives every day. To understand what is going on, a good place to start is always the official source, and we encourage Canadians to check out the official documents being rolled out by their governments on a daily basis.

The federal effort, first announced on March 18, outlined initiatives to help stabilize the incomes of individuals and businesses. <https://www.canada.ca/en/departement-finance/economic-response-plan.html>. The expansion of existing programs to the self-employed and those not covered by EI is particularly important. The extension of existing programs, like job sharing arrangements through EI, should have a material impact on the ability of businesses to retain some workers. And measures like eliminating the one week waiting period for EI will allow people to access cash immediately.

The Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation is reacting in

real time. Initiatives to make sure people don't lose their homes – and parallel provincial efforts to ensure renters don't lose theirs – will be particularly important. Stabilizing the housing situation for renters and owners is crucial to building an economic bridge through Covid-19. If people can't pay their rent or mortgage and lose their home because of Covid-19, that would be a catastrophic policy failure with long-ranging consequences, some of which we saw in the United States when so many Americans lost their homes following the financial crisis of 2008.

Two new experiments are worth applauding. The Emergency Support benefit will provide up to \$5-billion in support to workers who are not eligible for EI. A new 10% wage subsidy for businesses is an unprecedented new broad-based support. Both will likely need to be bigger, and implemented with great speed. (more on that below)

Policy community responses

Luckily, the Canadian public policy community is diverse and creative. In this first post, we will highlight some of the best work that has been done (Apologies if we missed you! Get in touch by [e-mail](#) or [Twitter](#)!), with a particular focus on those ideas designed to stabilize the economic lives of Canadians, businesses and not-for-profits and bridge them through the next few months.

Sending cash and relief fast

[Jennifer Robson](#) is trying to help Canadians make sense of the benefits and has [prepared this Google doc](#), for example, on the benefits that working age adults can receive.

[Tammy Sch](#)

tips for Canadians — like making sure the CRA has your accurate address and banking information to ensure you get the benefits you need.

[Kevin Milligan](#) has been doing a great job analyzing these proposals in real time on Twitter, [outlining their rationale](#), and addressing plausible criticisms ([here](#) and [here](#)). His perspective is that the government was right to lean towards the use of existing mechanisms, even when they are imperfect, which he outlines in [this CD Howe Institute memo](#). There is concern that some of the initiatives will take too long to roll out — but realistically, there is no conceivable way that the government through the Canada Revenue Agency could roll out a program like emergency income support any faster than is being proposed.

[Sean Mullin](#) and [Karim Bardeesy](#), in [their Toronto Star op-ed of last week](#), make a call for a three-part framework to guide thinking on economic policy — first, send money to stabilize the situation; then, traditional stimulus; finally, work to adapt to a new economy that can thrive

[Ken Boessenkool](#) [proposed an immediate Crisis Basic Income in Maclean's](#) to deal with the biggest economic challenge we face: the sudden loss of working income. As a way to stabilize incomes quickly, an immediate cash benefit could be very effective. It would not be as expensive as the immediate price tag, because some of these funds could be taxed back or clawed back through the tax system, if an individual's income stabilized.

[Jim Stanford](#) [does his quick analysis at Progressive Economics](#) on the initial federal efforts. Stanford argues

And the [Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives](#) highlighted the [desperate challenges that many renters](#) are facing.

Business, not-for-profits, and other public services

There is rightly lots of interest in increasing the wage subsidy to employers beyond the 10% offered by the government so far, consistent with what other countries have offered. Many are concerned that there is not enough yet to stabilize small and medium sized businesses.

[David Samuel](#) and [William Robson](#) argue in [The Globe and Mail](#) that subsidies to help businesses pay their workers need to be larger

In [Policy Options](#), [Erin Millar](#), [Teara Fraser](#), and [Suzanne Siemens](#) outline the challenges they are facing and document how easier access to more debt and small wage subsidies are not going to be sufficient to bridge businesses through the next several months.

[Jon Shell](#) [pleads to not forget the kinds of small and medium-sized retail businesses](#) that populate our streets and welcome customers face-to-face. He proposes specific measures to save business owners and their families from financial ruin. They are all intended to reduce and postpone expenses, including suspending commercial rent payments up to \$10,000, suspending water and electricity bills, delaying collection of property taxes or remitting of sales taxes, and getting credit companies to delay payments and waive interest on corporate cards up to \$25,000.

these organizations – and that they now need more money to support the people they serve

[Brian Dijkema](#) and [Sean Speer](#) argue in this [CARDUS report](#) that the federal government should match charitable contributions on a one-to-one basis. We would add that many of the income support policy proposals currently being considered to help SMEs are equally applicable to not-for-profits.

One policy area that risks neglect as policymakers attend to the health and economic aspects of COVID-19 is public education. [Sam Andrey](#) (also Director of Policy and Research at the Ryerson Leadership Lab) has some [actionable prescriptions in The Toronto Star](#) on how to re-direct resources, and attend to students and families on the wrong side of the digital divide.

High-level thinking

We'll conclude our round-up with some higher-level arguments around what a proper response to COVID-19 looks like, for governments and institutions.

In *The Globe and Mail*, [Michael Sabia](#) has [strong guidance](#) for governments to be creative, and start thinking about the future economy now.

[Andrew Potter](#) has [launched a newsletter](#) that attempts to summarize evolving “policies for a pandemic.”

[Karim Bardeesy](#) calls on leaders to make sacrifices, retool their institutions, and help their people to be their best selves on the [Ryerson](#)

Hearing from the community

We hope to source many more contributions from the policy community, and link to existing work, through this PolicyResponse.ca project. Get in touch by [e-mail at policyresponse@ryerson.ca](mailto:policyresponse@ryerson.ca) or reach out to us on [Twitter at @PolicyResponse](#). You can also [subscribe to our mailing list](#).



[Matthew Mendelsohn](#) is Visiting Professor at Ryerson University and a co-creator, with the Ryerson Leadership Lab and the Brookfield Institute for Innovation + Entrepreneurship, of First Policy Response.



[Sean Mullin](#)



[Karim Bardeesy](#) is Co-Founder and Executive Director of the Ry

Quiz on Mendelsohn, Bardeesy, and Mullin's article "What are policy professionals saying we must do first?":



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For general information on taxes, and specifically the GST, please click on the photo below:



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- "Campaign catch-up: Focus on vaccine passports"

Campaign catch-up: Focus on vaccine passports

First Policy Response

September 14, 2021 | By Stephanie MacLellan

<https://policyresponse.ca/campaign-catch-up-focus-on-vaccine-passports/>

Each week leading up to the federal election on Sept. 20, First Policy Response will highlight news and debates about recovery-related policy issues that surface on the campaign trail. We'll recap the policy proposals put forward by the main national parties and hear from researchers and practitioners about what it will take for those ideas to work on the ground.

One big issue: Proof of vaccination

The background

COVID-19 vaccination has been deployed repeatedly as a wedge issue during the election campaign. Protesters railing against vaccination have disrupted campaign events for Liberal Leader Justin Trudeau, and more recently raised public ire by staging noisy

and disruptive demonstrations outside of hospitals across the country. Trudeau has tried to link these protesters to his Conservative rival, Erin O'Toole, who is not requiring his candidates to get vaccinated. However, there appears to be more overlap with Maxime Bernier's People's Party of Canada — several protesters at Liberal campaign stops were spotted in PPC gear, the president of a local PPC riding association was [charged with throwing gravel](#) at Trudeau, and Bernier has [violated public health orders](#) around quarantines and opposed vaccination and mask-wearing as violations of Canadians' freedoms. (The Constitution does allow governments to [limit basic freedoms](#) if they can show a restriction is reasonable and necessary.)

Immunization records are actually a provincial responsibility. Indeed, since this summer, several provinces — including Quebec, British Columbia and Ontario — have announced plans for their own proof-of-vaccination regimes for non-essential spaces such as shops, gyms and restaurants. However, the federal government can require vaccination for people working in areas where it has jurisdiction, such as the federal civil service, on domestic flights and trains, or at international borders. It can also offer support to lower levels of government to implement their vaccination programs.

According to [Government of Canada data](#), more than 73 per cent of the population, and 84 per cent of people older than 12, have received at least one vaccine dose as of Sept. 4. Nearly 68 per cent, or 77 per cent of those over 12, are fully vaccinated.

Where the parties stand

Liberal Party: The Liberals would implement a national vaccine passport, and require federal civil servants and passengers on domestic transportation to be vaccinated

vaccination system for non-essential spaces, and bring in legislation to shield businesses and organizations that require proof of vaccination from legal challenge.

Conservative Party: O'Toole has consistently said he would not make vaccination mandatory, and that the party would not require vaccination for federal civil servants, travellers or people entering the country, instead relying on rapid testing. However, he has set a goal of fully vaccinating 90 per cent of eligible Canadians, through paid time off for employees, providing transportation to vaccine clinics, a national marketing campaign and targeted information to address vaccine hesitancy among groups with a history of being disenfranchised by the health system. The platform promises to support the provinces with logistical resources to deliver vaccines and booster shots, and to make rapid tests more widely available.

NDP: The party would roll out a national vaccine passport, with \$1 billion to increase vaccination rates, and support provinces and territories to “create targeted, inclusive programs that will remove the remaining barriers and help those who are still unvaccinated get their shots.”

Green Party: There is no specific reference to vaccine mandates in the party platform, but Leader Annamie Paul has [questioned](#) how proposed mandatory vaccination plans would accommodate people with “legitimate reasons” for not getting vaccinated, such as “whether those be medical conditions, religious or cultural convictions, or that live in rural communities with limited access to either vaccination clinics or information that addresses their concerns.”

The reaction

The case for vaccine passports is obvious: After 18 months of repeated lockdowns and restrictions, everyone is anxious to get

back to their normal routines, but the Delta variant is driving a fourth wave that is delaying a full reopening. Delta spreads much more easily than previous strains of COVID-19, but vaccinated people are far less likely to contract the virus or become seriously ill from it. The vast majority of Canadian residents who are vaccinated are understandably eager for something to be done to stop the remaining 30 per cent of the population from continuing to spread the virus.

But there are still concerns about how such a program would be implemented. For starters, we've seen over and over that the pandemic [affects marginalized groups](#) — such as racialized, low-income and immigrant communities — worse than it does others, and we've learned how well-intentioned policies can actually serve to reinforce inequity. Observers fear the same thing could happen with vaccine passports. According to **Dr. Danyaal Raza**, a physician and health advocate with **Unity Health Toronto**:

“Communities already excluded from many public and private spaces, like undocumented migrants who fear deportation and communities that often lack formal ID such as those who are houseless, are at risk of being further marginalized. Vaccine passports are critical and must be rolled out with targeted supports including community outreach funding, a secure paper passport option and ongoing vaccination support.”

Seher Shafiq of **North York Community House**, who is also an FPR editor, offers a similar observation when it comes to immigrant and refugee communities:

“Some populations can have a mistrust in government for a variety of reasons — particularly immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers who come from authoritarian or unstable regimes. In the immigrant- and refugee-serving sector, we often see clients hesitant to share personal information with government authorities because of a lack of trust due to

experiences with governments in their home countries.

I hope that the vaccine passport rollout takes an equitable approach and finds a way to address these barriers. This could include educational campaigns in different languages to assure people that the personal information they submit is safe, secure, and will not be misused.”

Others such as **Nour Abdelaal** of the **Ryerson Leadership Lab’s Cybersecure Policy Exchange** point out that with most passports expected to be primarily digital in format, those who [lack digital devices or expertise](#) are at risk of exclusion:

“We know that more Indigenous peoples, older adults, low-income individuals and people with disabilities do not have a home internet connection or smartphone — tools that are needed to access digital proofs of vaccination and register for protection statuses efficiently online. Targeted outreach, training and technical support for those facing greater digital challenges should be prioritized to protect vulnerable populations, who actually face greater risks of contracting COVID-19.”

Bianca Wylie and **Sean McDonald** of **Digital Public** warn that by focusing too much on digital solutions to public health problems, policy-makers run the risk of overlooking the bigger picture:

“Governments that implement vaccine passports should be equally committed to the wide range of public health interventions we need, including free N-95 masks for all, easy access to testing, ventilating public spaces and access to justice mechanisms for digital rights issues. But they’re not. Whether it’s the breakthrough of Delta, the lack of vaccine access for

Meanwhile, **Yuan Stevens** of the **Cybersecure Policy Exchange** adds that there are also security risks inherent in any digital identification system that could put users' privacy at risk:

“As regions and countries roll out vaccine passports, it's crucial to prioritize the security of these tools. Hire a team tasked with assessing and mitigating security threats. Provide robust disclosure pipelines — and legal protection — for external people who disclose security flaws.”

In addition to the risks a vaccine passport system may pose to the general public, there are also concerns about how it would affect the people tasked with enforcing it — in particular, small business owners who have already [struggled to stay afloat](#) during repeated lockdowns, and retail and service workers, many of whom are already working with low pay and limited benefits. Food journalist **Corey Mintz**, who has been reporting on the challenges facing the food service industry during the pandemic, told us:

“Many provincial governments left businesses to develop and enforce their own safety protocols. At this stage, businesses need a clear proof of vaccination system that works across provinces and takes legitimate medical exemptions into account, in order to implement policies intended to protect the safety of their employees and customers. And workers, if they haven't gotten a vaccination yet, deserve paid time off to do so.”

Karla Briones, an Ottawa entrepreneur who works with immigrants launching their own businesses, wrote about her concerns in the [Ottawa Citizen](#):

“Policing this is exactly what I'm scared of. If we are getting spat

provide to business owners so that we don't become the first line of casualties in such a divisive topic? So that we don't get sued or assaulted while we struggle to keep our businesses alive."

She calls on the government to do more to include business owners in their decision-making processes.

More from the campaign trail

Long-term care

The Liberals said they would spend \$9 billion to help the long-term care sector that was ravaged by the first waves of the COVID-19 pandemic. That would triple the amount promised in the April budget. The proposal would train 50,000 more workers and raise their wages to \$25/hour, and implement new national standards. Because long-term care is a provincial responsibility, the federal governments would have to reach agreements with the provinces to make the changes.

Like the Liberals, the NDP has pledged better pay and working conditions for long-term care workers and a set of national standards. The party also said it would end private, for-profit long-term care.

The Conservative platform earmarks \$3 billion for infrastructure funding for long-term care over the next three years. They also pledged to add more care workers, in part by accepting more immigrants working in long-term care or home care, but didn't specify a number. Rather than introducing national standards, the Conservatives would work with the province to develop best practices.

The Green Party also wants to eliminate for-profit long-term

care and improve working conditions for care workers, as well as bringing long-term into the Canada Health Act and developing and enforcing national standards. It would prioritize aging in place to allow more seniors to remain at home, by establishing a dedicated Seniors' Care Transfer to provide "transformative investment" to provinces and territories for improvements to home and community care.

Dr. Samir Sinha, director of health policy research at **Ryerson University's National Institute on Ageing**, said he was looking to see more details from the parties:

"While all major parties are proposing much-needed investments in long-term care, there continues to be a lack of clarity on critical logistics. How would federal parties work with provinces and territories to ensure meaningful reform occurs equitably in communities from coast to coast to coast? Across the political spectrum, we have also seen a disappointing lack of commitment to adequately resource homecare, which is an integral part of the larger solution to Canada's long-term care crisis."

Dr. Shara Nauth, chief geriatrics fellow at **Western University**, also cautioned that too much focus on long-term care facilities could stymie much-needed improvements to homecare:

"There's no doubt that increasing capital in long-term care is essential. The question is: will it be enough? Canadian older adults have made it clear that they need and want to age in place – and other countries have demonstrated that this is a more cost-effective solution. Similarly, it is excellent that [personal support worker] compensation is addressed – but if wages only increase in the LTC sector, the already drained homecare workforce will be decimated. Caring for older adults requires a comprehensive approach – we've been approaching this in silos for too long. We need a party that will create an integrated plan that stops focusing on

long-term care beds and is willing instead to invest in care where Canadians need it most.”

Afghan refugee intake

Just as the election was called, the crisis in Afghanistan reached a tipping point, with the Taliban taking control of the government and thousands of desperate citizens trying to flee the country – including interpreters and other locals who had helped the Canadian military during its operations in the country, and whose lives were now in danger because of their involvement.

The governing Liberals initially said Canada would take in 20,000 Afghan refugees, but doubled that number to 40,000 during the campaign. Their platform also pledges to “expand the new immigration stream for human rights defenders and work with civil society groups to ensure safe passage and resettlement of people under threat, including from Afghanistan.” The Conservatives say they will take in at least 20,000 Afghans in addition to those who worked with Canadian forces, and work with allies to help Afghans trying to flee the country. The NDP and Green Party have both endorsed the demands of the [Canadian Campaign for Afghan Peace](#), which include resettling at least 40,000 Afghans; identifying the Hazara ethnic group as a vulnerable group; eliminating barriers to applying for immigration; and increasing funding to resettlement agencies and Afghan-led organizations in Canada to support Afghan newcomers.

Anna Triandafyllidou, the **Canada Excellence Research Chair on Migration and Integration** at **Ryerson University**, said that Canada’s experience with Syrian refugee settlement has taught us that private sponsorship can be highly effective; “However, if the sponsorship arrangement breaks down, the refugees can find themselves in a difficult situation.” She adds:

“We have also learned that private sponsors need more training and support from government and immigration professionals in terms of how to prepare for their sponsorship, what to expect, and how to deal with crisis with their sponsored refugees or within the sponsorship team. In addition, there has been some very interesting research pointing to the importance of matching refugees with sponsors at the same phase in their lives. For example, a young family with kids may understand their challenges better than a group of young, single professionals or students.”

Do you work on the front lines of policy issues – such as child care, long-term care, small business, mental health, poverty reduction, creative work, settlement services or anything else? We would love to hear from you. Send us your thoughts about

Quiz on MacLellan's article "Campaign catch-up: Focus on vaccine passports":



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• "Principles and policies for a national pandemic response"

Principles and policies for a national pandemic response

First Policy Response

December 11, 2021 | By Karim Bardeesy

[https://policyresponse.ca/principles-and-p](https://policyresponse.ca/principles-and-policies-for-a-national-pandemic-response/)

of welcome, but discrete, policy and spending announcements, not related to a clear set of objectives, priorities or timelines. With exhortations — to families, businesses and other governments — to do things. All in the hopes that not only will the vaccine resolve the pandemic, but that its rollout will be quick, orderly and welcomed by everyone.

In recent days, we've seen a robust economic support package that will last well into 2021, the quick approval of one vaccine, the preparation of vaccine rollout plans, even the resumption of regular news conferences from the prime minister — all necessary pieces to fight the virus.

But on top of these discrete policy announcements, we need a real, cohesive plan: a comprehensive national plan, or a unified set

communications message (ditto), and around [equity for the most at-risk populations](#) (ditto)? No.

Provincial governments are spending that federal money (eight out of every 10 government dollars spent on the pandemic comes from Ottawa, as the federal government is fond of pointing out), adding their own spending, and generally attempting — with limited success — to stem outbreaks of the virus in workplaces, [schools](#) and [long-term care facilities](#). The protections are not widespread enough; they are not accompanied by rapid testing, tracing and re-tracing; they have generally not taken an equity lens; and they do not share messages and policy approaches across the country, apart from aggressive messaging around personal responsibility. And so provinces are failing to stem the tide.

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in turn, will help explain many of the decisions and choices that are underpinned by those principles. Call those principles and objectives the rock on which the entire foundation of our approach rests.

Principles for a national crisis response

I'll take a shot, and say those principles are something like the following:

1. This is a national emergency that requires a national response, and the prime ministers, first ministers, mayors/ councils and Indigenous leaders are in charge

typically defined as at-risk, but clearly under existential threat – so they know we are all in this together?

3. We need to solve for families, for the heart, and for a holiday

Public policy is not good at emotion, though politicians are often good at emoting. Public policy solutions for families, for the heart, for a holiday would recognize the profound human need to connect safely. These policies would have us collectively plan and set goals for when we can gather indoors in smaller family units – with whatever inventive approaches that might require. These policies would create new holidays and intersperse them across 2021 by region. And they would bring all the resources available to help bring a sense of connection to the lonely

Policies for a national crisis response

Those policies could look something like the following:

1. Keep only the most important indoor work and living spaces open

This means that public schools and childcare centres should be the last frontier for institutional closure; that we should target long-term care, and any other in-person caregiving settings, for the greatest security, connectivity and testing-and-tracing measures; and that we should, as a corollary, relax the policing on some contacts and lower-risk outdoor activities that we need to be well and happy.

the way in which we created — reluctantly, inadvertently or intentionally — winners and losers during the pandemic.

They'll involve considerations around vaccine certification and immunity passports. They'll involve continued testing and contact tracing, because we will continue to need it to re-open workplaces.

If we are solving for loss, for grief, for the need to restore connection, then we need to start planning now to rebuild devastated sectors, and rebuild human capital in all of those whose education was interrupted, or whose careers or connections to the workforce were knocked off track. And again, we will need to target supports to the need

leadership, municipal organizations, and Indigenous, First Nations, Métis and Inuit governments, again on a public schedule.

Some revenue-raising and power-dispersing measures may be necessary. These are, transparently, more important for public support for the full set of measures, not because they contribute in a significant way to the bottom line of the effort. These policies need to be implemented and communicated because shared sacrifice is part of the foundation for dealing with this in a co-ordinated way, and it's been the basis for success in responding to past national emergencies.

Shared sacrifice does not mean equal sacrifice. But many small businesses and frontline workers (in health care and retail, in particular) observe that sacrifice is not being

every day of delay or half-measures decreases trust — trust which can plummet at rates almost as exponential as the virus's spread.

Is there too much to do right away? Yes, though we've known this for months. Politically naïve? Perhaps, but the pandemic has made the bounds of what is politically possible pretty elastic.

At the very least, as a start, we could start to muster national goodwill through plans that do the following, co-ordinated at the federal level or through other levels of government with the private sector, labour and community sectors:

1. Co-ordinated vaccine

for a national pandemic response. *First Policy Response*.
<https://policyresponse.ca/principles-and-policies-for-a-national-pandemic-response/>

Quiz on Bardeesy's article "Principles and policies for a national pandemic response":



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Please click on the photo below to learn more about the Atlantic Bubble:



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- "How Canada can pursue an inclusive industrial policy"

How Canada can pursue an inclusive industrial policy

First Policy Response

January 28, 2021

By Matthew Mendelsohn and Noah Zon

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generational failure if we neglect to account for what kind of growth we want to see and what kinds of communities we want to build.

Strong macroeconomic fundamentals are important. But these on their own were never enough to create, scale and retain globally leading companies. The most dynamic economies in the world in Europe and Asia have been successful in part because of an active state and strategic and creative ways of supporting firms, sectors and regions.

Today, around the world, governments are investing more in their industrial policies, focusing on building competitive advantages in sectors like AI and energy transition. Here in Canada, the current federal government — even before the massive investments during the pandemic — had embraced an agenda focused on supporting key

In a joint effort with the [Brookfield Institute and Innovation and Entrepreneurship](#) and the [Ryerson Leadership Lab](#), we recently released a [report](#) outlining how Canadian governments can build an inclusive industrial policy that delivers more economic inclusion and community wealth, and helps Canada achieve its 2050 climate goals.

The report lays out a toolkit of tested inclusive industrial policy approaches that could be scaled or introduced here in Canada. Among the key levers that governments can use are a more strategic use of procurement and standard-setting; more democratic and inclusive access to capital; and government investment in Canadian firms, including taking equity. If these tools are used, Canada would be more likely to see economic growth and innovation, while at the same time making progress on goals like reconciliation, racial justice, gender equality, community-wealth and net zero

Noah Zon is the co-founder of Springboard Policy, a public policy research and advisory firm based in Toronto. He has spent his career in public policy in the non-profit sector, think tanks and public service.

Keywords: ECONOMICS, FPR ORIGINAL, INCLUSIVE POLICY MAKING, INDUSTRIAL POLICY

Citation: Mendelsohn, M., & Zon, N. (2021, January 28). How Canada can pursue an inclusive industrial policy. First Policy Response. <https://policyresponse.ca/how-canada-can-pursue-an-inclusive-industrial-policy/>

Quiz on Mendelsohn and Zon's article "How Canada can pursue an inclusive industrial policy":



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Final Assessment

Based on the articles above from *First Policy Response*, please engage in the following assessments to test your learning.

Policy in Action:

You are an Ontario government policy analyst. The province has had a relatively successful roll out of its [vaccine passport program](#). However, you have been alerted to COVID-19-related tensions within a small northern Ontario rural town.

A vocal

one level of governance (e.g., federal, provincial, or municipal) or an institution that has been active in some aspect of the response to the COVID-19 pandemic (e.g., a corporation, advocacy group, or non-profit) from a pandemic control perspective.

1. **Mask mandates:** How can policy makers and health care advocates promote sustainable mask mandate policies to control future COVID-19 outbreaks? In short, how do we perpetuate masking as a long-term pandemic control measure without overly burdening citizens who are already fatigued from life under COVID-19?
2. **Future Vaccine Doses:** As COVID-19's daily impact decreases and life improves over the course of the pandemic, how can policy makers ensure continued high rates of vaccination booster shots in the long-term as well as an equitable distribution of shots across Ontario?

HEALTH



Learning Objectives

Identifying Gaps in Ontario's Healthcare System—Long Term Care, Racism, and Health Equity:

- Describe the process of COVID-19 vaccine administration
- Identify infection prevention and control measures that have been/could be used during the pandemic
- Outline the physical and psychological practices of healthcare workers
- Analyze healthcare system roles and responsibilities when advancing care in collaboration with federal, provincial, and municipal governments

This module will help learners understand how governments leverage policies to address gaps in the

- "For more equitable health outcomes, start with the health-research system"

For more equitable health outcomes, start with the health-research system

First Policy Response

November 5, 2020 | Zahra Bhimani

Canada's clinical research response to studying patients with COVID-19 and related treatments must be representative and inclusive of racially marginalized populations across Canada. The Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) [recently released a statement](#) committed to fostering a more "equitable, diverse and inclusive research-funding system," noting that its predominant focus to date has been on sex and gender diversity.

The homogeneity of clinical trial participants has long been recognized as both an [ethical and scientific issue](#); relying on data that may not be generalizable (but may be considered as such) is problematic. Taking action that will result in tangible change is important, and the time to act is now. The current pandemic offers an opportunity to address this problem by reducing disparities in health outcomes across the country, but that depends on organizations

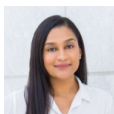
being made about patients (such as long-term care facilities and visitation rights), [patient and public voices were largely left out](#) of the decision-making. The second wave offers an opportunity to make policy decisions transparent and inclusive.

Require equitable inclusion of racially marginalized populations in clinical research

While researchers may have the willingness to improve the diversity of clinical trials, they have to consider many important barriers, such as historical abuses. One particularly successful means for building trust, educating patients and raising awareness is through [community-based participatory research](#). Trial sponsors and research teams are forging new paths to diversity

patients and who use simplified language to explain their research, will help overcome the barriers to including low-income and racially marginalized populations in research. This solution would not only be a step closer toward inclusive science, but also toward health equity and consequently, improved health outcomes.

As we strive as a country to tackle the second wave of the pandemic, and as CIHR develops a new strategic plan for 2021-25 Canada's health research-funding community must take a close look at current research practices that may be exacerbating inequalities in clinical research, and act swiftly to enact these recommendations.





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- "Underfunded long-term care system is still vulnerable to COVID-19 outbreaks"

Underfunded long-term care system is still vulnerable to COVID-19 outbreaks

First Policy Response

September 18, 2020 | Samir Sinha

what we call our [NIA Long-term Care COVID-19 Tracker](#). It's available online and we continue to update it to this day. By May, or at the height of the pandemic, if you will, we were even up as high as 82, 83 per cent of Canadian deaths that occurred in long-term care settings. By the time the Canadian Institute for Health Information did an [analysis](#) towards the end of May looking at our data, they confirmed about 80 to 81 per cent. Right now that number is about 77 per cent of Canadian deaths that have occurred in long-term care homes. So the number is decreasing a little bit, but it's staying around the 80 per cent mark, and this reflects that more younger people are now becoming infected. And certainly younger populations, with the second ripple or second wave that's starting to develop across the country, we're starting to see more deaths occurring outside long-term care homes in the general population, as well.

actually been infected, probably, with COVID-19. The challenge is that, when it came to the way that we were preparing ourselves in our health-care system, a huge amount of focus was placed on our hospitals at the expense of our long-term care and our retirement-home systems, which really in the end were not well equipped and well supported enough to deal with COVID-19. So even though COVID-19 was circulating in the communities, we weren't making sure that all of our long-term care homes were fully equipped with personal protective equipment. While we assumed that our staff in these homes knew how to follow IPAC [Infection Prevention and Control] procedures and use their PPE, this wasn't quite the case. And then we already had a system that was plagued with staffing shortages and issues. And as COVID got into homes and spread easily – because we weren't aware early on of the possibilities of asymptomatic spread and transmission – staff weren't equipped with enough PPE and we already

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Check the map below to see COVID-19's global impact.

outcomes?

