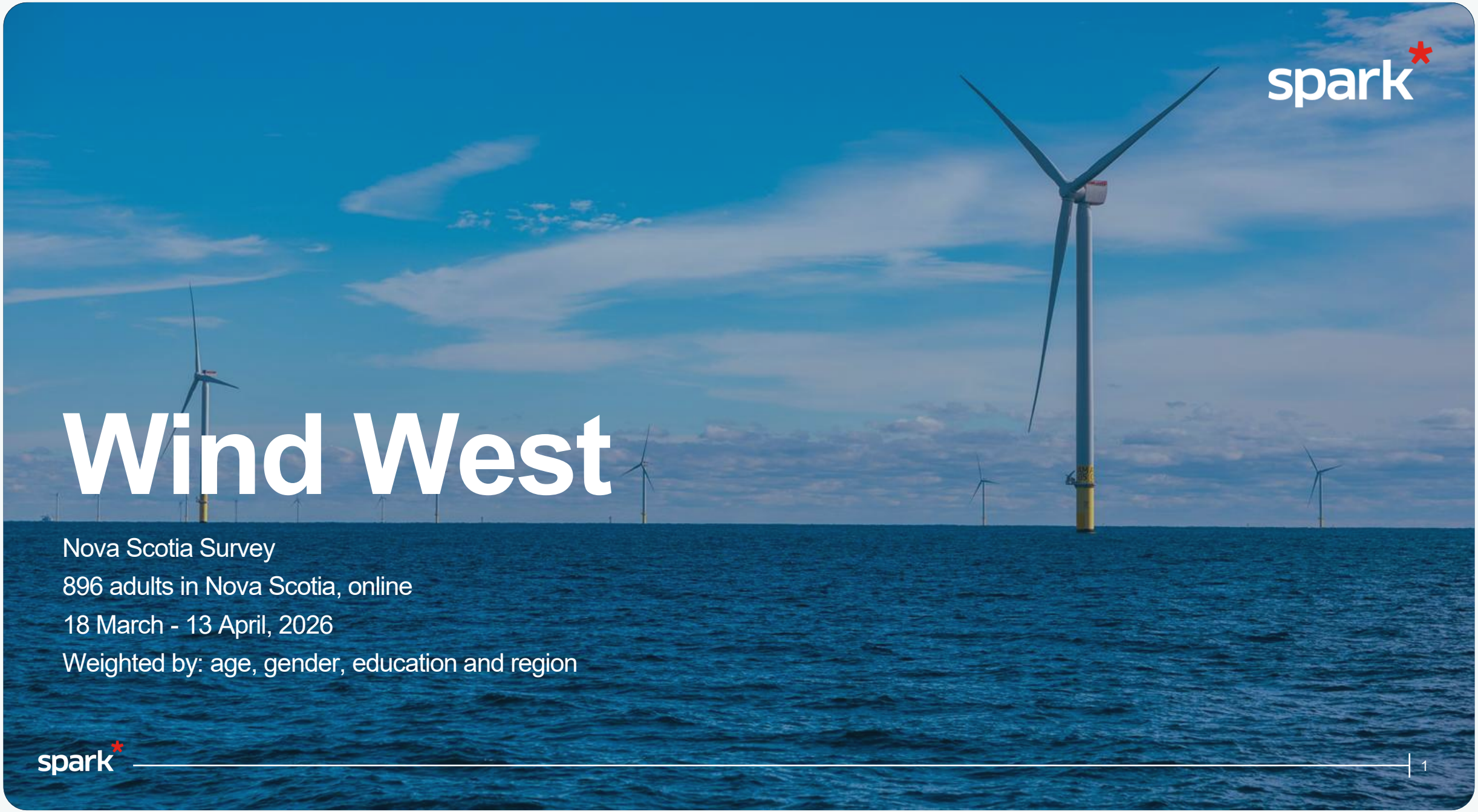

Wind West

Nova Scotia Survey

896 adults in Nova Scotia, online

18 March - 13 April, 2026

Weighted by: age, gender, education and region

Nearly three in four Nova Scotians (73%) hold a positive impression of offshore wind energy, with support consistent across age groups, genders, and political affiliations.

Most Nova Scotians have heard something about offshore wind, but only 14% have heard "a lot" and 13% feel they understand how these projects work very well.

Biggest Concern: Offshore Wind Energy Projects in Nova Scotia (Open-ended)

Most responses focus on concerns about marine life and the environment, especially impacts on fish, whales, and ocean ecosystems. There are also worries about the fishing industry and local livelihoods.

A second theme is cost and fairness, whether projects will raise power bills or mainly benefit corporations instead of Nova Scotians. Many respondents also say they don't know enough and want more information and transparency.

Overall, support exists but is conditional on protecting the environment and ensuring clear local benefits.

What is your biggest concern about offshore wind energy projects in Nova Scotia? (Open-ended)

Concerns are high across all ten dimensions tested, with marine ecosystem impacts (74%), whale habitat disruption (70%), and risk management (69%) topping the list. Coastal communities and Indigenous, Mi'kmaw respondents registering higher concern levels than the general population across nearly every dimension.

Awareness & Perceptions of Wind West

Wind West is known to 44% of Nova Scotians, with 26% saying they have heard a lot or some about the project and 56% of Nova Scotians saying they have heard nothing about it.

Among those familiar with Wind West, impressions are positive — 61% hold a favourable view compared to just 6% unfavourable, with favourability consistent across partisan lines and reaching 76% among Indigenous, Mi’kmaw respondents.

Support for Wind West stands at 55% across the province, with just 6% in opposition and 38% neutral.

Support rises 10 points to 66%, when Nova Scotians are given more information about Wind West, with the neutral share declining and opposition holding steady at 5%.

The largest increases are seen among women (+20 points) and communities closest to proposed project footprint (+15), pointing to the role that project communications can play in building a broader base of support.

Information Needs and Sources

Additional Information needed

Most respondents are looking for more practical and detailed information, especially around costs, impact on power bills, and who will benefit financially.

- There is strong interest in environmental impacts, particularly how marine life and ecosystems will be protected.
- Many want clarity on jobs, local economic benefits, and whether Nova Scotians will benefit directly.
- Transparency is another key theme, with questions about who is funding, managing, and making decisions.

At the same time, a large share say they don't need more information or are unsure what to ask, reinforcing that overall awareness and understanding of the project is still building.

In your own words, what additional information, if any, would you like to know about Wind West? (Open-ended)

The questions Nova Scotians most want answered about Wind West centre on: who will benefit economically, want to understand potential risks to ocean ecosystems and impacts on fisheries and marine-related livelihoods.

Local media is both the primary source and the most trusted channel for information about Wind West: 35% of Nova Scotians cite it as where they have encountered information about the project, and 46% name it as their most trusted source, well ahead of social media (16%) and national media (13%).

After watching a video featuring Nova Scotia's Premier describing Wind West, 67% of Nova Scotians say they are more supportive of the project, with just 6% less supportive. Support increases are consistent across subgroups.

Nova Scotians broadly view Wind West as a major economic opportunity for the province, with 59% agreeing when the characterization is attributed to the Premier and 63% agreeing when it is not — suggesting the economic framing resonates on its own merits regardless of who is saying it.

International Examples & the Nova Scotia - Massachusetts Agreement

When presented with examples of offshore wind projects in Rhode Island and the UK, majorities say each example suggests Wind West can be viable and beneficial for Nova Scotia (54% and 58% respectively), and overall, 64% say learning about international examples makes them more supportive of Wind West, with just 3% less supportive.

The Nova Scotia–Massachusetts offshore wind agreement is largely unknown, with 51% having heard nothing about it. After reading a description, 66% view it favourably, though unfavourability is at 34%.

When asked how offshore wind electricity should be used, 60% say power should go mostly to Nova Scotia with any surplus going to other provinces.

Conclusion

Awareness and support

- **Baseline openness, but views are still forming:** Nova Scotians are broadly positive toward offshore wind and open to Wind West, but many remain neutral with limited understanding of the project.
- **Support is conditional:** The economic opportunity is supported, opinions are more strongly influenced by concerns around environmental impact, marine life safety and local benefits.
- **Proximity drives scrutiny, not opposition**: Communities closest to the project are more cautious, reflecting a focus on real-world impacts. Across the province, there is a clear expectation that benefits should be local, visible, and fairly distributed.

Information and communication

- **Support strengthens as understanding improves:** As Nova Scotians receive more context, support increases, suggesting those who are neutral/opposed are still actively forming their views. This pattern holds across different types of information, with project details and real-world examples.

- **Trust in information sources varies, with local media standing out**: Nova Scotians are receptive but discerning, looking for clear and trustworthy information on project delivery. Among those who have encountered information, local media emerges as the most trusted source, playing a central role in shaping how the project is understood.