

CANADIAN PRESS / LEGER MARKETING

Canadians and Police Forces

Report



1.0 Research Findings

- The most frequent encounters with police officers involve traffic tickets.

Question: Have you experienced any of the following situations with a police officer or officers...?

n=1583	YES
... received a ticket for an offence against traffic regulations	47.9%
... asked for help from a police officer	33.2%
... been questioned but not arrested	22.9%
... been brought to the police station	9.3%
... No, have not experienced any of the above	31.3%

- Almost six percent of Canadians (or a member of their immediate family) have previously been a victim of police brutality?

Question: Have you or has a member of your immediate family ever been victim of police brutality?

n=1583	YES	NO	Don't know/Refusal
	5.9%	93.3%	0.7%

- Police officers have just enough power in today's society according to Canadians.

Question: Do you think that police officers have TOO MUCH power, JUST ENOUGH power or NOT ENOUGH power in today's society?

n=1583	Too much power	Just enough power	Not enough power	Dnk/Refusal
	15.7%	52.6%	25.3%	6.3%

- Canadians are generally satisfied with their police forces.

Question: Are you satisfied or not satisfied with the work of the following police forces... ?

n=1583	YES	NO	Refusal
... the Royal Canadian Mounted Police	81.7%	8.9%	9.3%
... the Sûreté du Québec	81.6%	13.4%	5.0%
... the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP)	87.6%	7.3%	5.1%
... the local or municipal police forces	79.8%	13.3%	7.0%

2.0 Results

2.1 The most frequent encounters with police officers involve traffic tickets

47.9% of Canadians mentioned having previously received a ticket for a traffic violation. Other encounters with police officers mentioned by respondents were as follows: 33.2% asked for help from the police, 22.9% were questioned by police without being arrested and 9.3% mentioned having been brought to the police station. We note that 31.3% of Canadians have had no encounters with the police whatsoever.

58.9% of men, 56.4% of those 35 to 44, 54.2% of British Columbians, 60.6% of Canadians in higher income brackets, 63.3% of professionals and 54.8% of those who are University-educated mentioned having received a ticket for a traffic violation. However, only 37.5% of women, 36.7% of those 18 to 24, 38.4% of residents of the Atlantic provinces, 35.2% of Canadians in the lower income brackets, 30.4% of homemakers and 35.1% of those who have completed lower levels of education were less likely to have received a traffic ticket.

38.0% of Canadians in the higher income brackets, 42.9% of professionals, 38.9% of those with a University education, 38.5% of those 35 to 44 and 39.7% of British Columbians were more likely to have requested the help of police.

28.9% of men, 37.1% of 18 to 24 year olds and 36.9% of manual workers were more likely to have been interrogated by police without being arrested.

13.8% of men, 16.2% of Albertans and 17.0% of manual workers were more likely to have been brought to the police station.

Question: Have you experienced any of the following situations with a police officer or officers...?

n=1583	...asked for help from police	...received a ticket for a traffic violation	...been questioned but not arrested	...been brought to the police station	None
Atlantic provinces	19.4%	38.4%	28.5%	9.7%	31.8%
Quebec	34.8%	49.8%	23.5%	6.2%	32.3%
Ontario	34.6%	45.8%	21.3%	7.4%	32.6%
Prairies	26.5%	45.7%	19.0%	9.7%	39.6%
Alberta	31.4%	52.8%	21.8%	16.2%	28.9%
British Columbia	39.7%	54.2%	25.6%	14.8%	22.3%
Canada	33.2%	47.9%	22.9%	9.3%	31.3%

2.2 Close to six percent of Canadians have previously been a victim of police brutality

5.9% of Canadians (or a member of their immediate family) mentioned having previously been a victim of police brutality.

8.1% of men, 10.3% of those 18 to 24, 8.1% of British Columbians and 9.7% of manual workers were more likely to make such an affirmation. We note that the percentage falls to 0.7% in the Atlantic provinces.

On the other hand, 28.8% of Canadians said they felt police officers discriminate against visible minorities while 58.6% think that no such discrimination exists. 12.5% of Canadians did not express their opinion in this regard.

40.2% of those 18 to 24 and 34.5% of University-educated Canadians were more likely to feel that discrimination exists among police ranks.

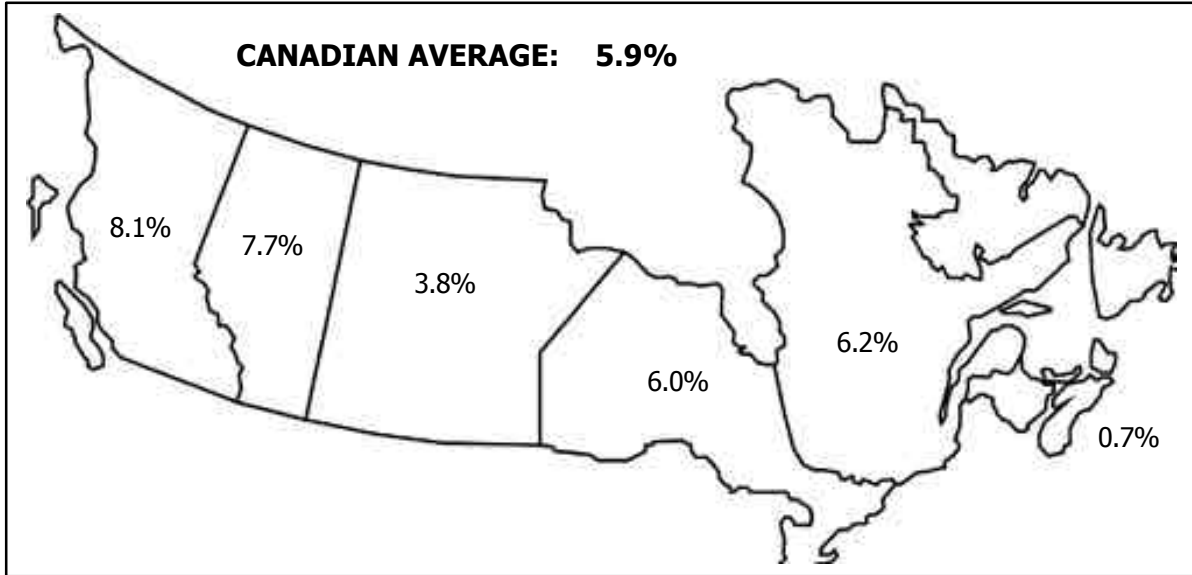
Question: Have you or has a member of your immediate family ever been victim of police brutality?

n=1583	YES	NO	Don't know/ recall/Refusal
Atlantic provinces	0.7%	98.2%	1.1%
Quebec	6.2%	92.9%	0.8%
Ontario	6.0%	93.2%	0.7%
Prairies	3.8%	95.5%	0.7%
Alberta	7.7%	90.7%	1.6%
British Columbia	8.1%	91.9%	0.0%
Canada	5.9%	93.3%	0.7%

Question: Do you think that police officers discriminate against visible minorities?

n=1583	YES	NO	Don't know/ Refusal
Atlantic provinces	23.9%	68.0%	8.2%
Quebec	30.5%	57.7%	11.7%
Ontario	30.0%	56.6%	13.4%
Prairies	23.9%	55.9%	20.2%
Alberta	24.4%	64.5%	11.1%
British Columbia	30.9%	58.0%	11.1%
Canada	28.8%	58.6%	12.5%

**Percentage of Canadians (or a member of their immediate family)
who has been victim of police brutality**



2.3 Police officers have just enough power in today's society

According to 52.6% of Canadians, police officers have just enough power in today's society while 25.3% mentioned that they do not have enough and 15.7% that they have too much.

56.2% of Francophones, 61.6% of residents of the Atlantic provinces, 57.1% of professionals, 66.4% of students and 59.5% of University-educated Canadians were more likely to mention that police officers have just enough power.

29.6% of those 45 to 64, 27.6% of Anglophones, 41.6% of Prairie residents and 29.9% of those in the higher income brackets mentioned feeling that police officers did not have enough power.

However, 17.6% of men, 31.7% of those 18 to 24, 19.7% of Quebeckers, 20.5% of Canadians in the lower income brackets and 25.1% of the unemployed mentioned that police officers have too much power.

Question: Do you think that police officers have TOO MUCH power, JUST ENOUGH power or NOT ENOUGH power in today's society?

n=1583	Too much power	Just enough power	Not enough power	Dnk/Refusal
Atlantic provinces	12.3%	61.6%	22.9%	3.2%
Quebec	19.7%	54.8%	20.4%	5.1%
Ontario	14.7%	53.5%	24.8%	6.9%
Prairies	12.9%	39.6%	41.6%	5.9%
Alberta	15.8%	48.9%	26.6%	8.7%
British Columbia	14.8%	50.6%	27.2%	7.3%
Canada	15.7%	52.6%	25.3%	6.3%

2.4 Canadians are generally satisfied with their police forces

Generally speaking, Canadians are satisfied with the various police forces. We therefore see that the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) obtains an overall satisfaction rating of 81.7% among Canadians and that local and municipal forces obtain a rating of 79.8%. In Ontario, the Ontario Provincial Police obtains a satisfaction score of 87.6% and in Quebec, the Sûreté du Québec obtains a score of 81.6%.

For the other provinces who do not have a provincial police force, the level of satisfaction with the RCMP is 85.6% among residents of the Atlantic provinces, 89.4% in the Prairies, 80.3% in Alberta and 81.1% in British Columbia. In terms of local and municipal police forces, the satisfaction score is 79.2% in the Atlantic provinces, 79.3% in the Prairies, 78.1% in Alberta and 78.4% in British Columbia.

Question: Are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the work of the following police forces...? (Percentage of those who are SATISFIED)

N=1583	... the Royal Canadian Mounted Police	... the Sûreté du Québec	... the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP)	... the local and municipal police forces
Atlantic provinces	85.8%	NA	NA	79.2%
Quebec	75.1%	81.6%	NA	79.5%
Ontario	84.2%	NA	87.6%	81.0%
Prairies	89.4%	NA	NA	79.3%
Alberta	80.3%	NA	NA	78.1%
British Columbia	81.1%	NA	NA	78.4%
Canada	81.7%			79.8%

Moreover, in the provinces where no provincial police force exists, residents were more likely to trust the RCMP (57.7%) than the local police forces.

In Ontario, 32.2% of residents were more likely to trust municipal police forces to a greater extent while this rate was at 24.0% for the RCMP and 22.7% for the OPP.

In Quebec, the Sûreté du Québec earns the trust of 35.5% of the population compared to 33.1% for municipal police forces and 20.6% for the RCMP.

Question: Which of the following police forces do you trust MOST? Is it...?

N=1583	... the Royal Canadian Mounted Police	... the Sûreté du Québec	... the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP)	... the municipal and local police forces
Atlantic provinces	60.5%	NA	NA	27.7%
Quebec	20.6%	35.5%	NA	33.1%
Ontario	24.0%	NA	22.7%	32.2%
Prairies	56.2%	NA	NA	20.1%
Alberta	57.0%	NA	NA	27.3%
British Columbia	58.5%	NA	NA	16.8%
Canada	57.7%			33.1%

3.0 Methodology

This study was conducted by Leger Marketing through telephone interviews among a representative sample of 1583 English- or French-speaking Canadians, 18 years of age or older.

The interviews were conducted from our Montreal call centre between December 4 and December 13, 2001. Up to ten recalls were made in the case of non-response.

Using data from Statistics Canada, the results were weighted according to geographic location, gender and language spoken at home to ensure a sample representative of the entire Canadian adult population. In the end, the maximum margin of error obtained for a sample of 1583 respondents is of $\pm 2.6\%$, 19 times out of 20.