

**CANADIAN PRESS / LEGER MARKETING**

# **Canadians and the Judicial System**

**Report**



## 1.0 Study Highlights

- Canadians mentioned being satisfied with the judicial system.

Question: *Generally speaking, are you VERY SATISFIED, SATISFIED, DISSATISFIED or VERY DISSATISFIED with the Canadian judicial system?*

n=1503	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied	Don't know / Refusal
Canada	3%	51%	30%	11%	6%

- According to Canadians, judges apply laws effectively, are not as strict with the rich, should be elected as is the case in the US and are not stricter with young people and immigrants.

Question: *Do you AGREE or DISAGREE with each of the following statements: (Percentages represent positive responses)*

n=1503	TOTAL
Judges are not as strict with the rich as they are with the poor	55%
Judges are stricter toward young people	24%
Judges are stricter toward immigrants	17%
Judges are effective in applying laws	63%
Judges should be elected just like in the United States	48%

- More than eight Canadians out of ten find that the judicial system is not strict enough when it comes to crimes of a sexual nature.

Question: *In your view, is the justice system TOO STRICT, JUST STRICT ENOUGH or NOT STRICT ENOUGH in cases ... ?*

n=1503	Too strict	Just strict enough	Not strict enough	Don't know / Refusal
... of rape and sexual crimes	1%	10%	84%	4%
... of acts of pedophilia	1%	10%	83%	6%

- The judicial system should be stricter when it comes to armed robbery.

Question: *In your view, is the justice system TOO STRICT, JUST STRICT ENOUGH or NOT STRICT ENOUGH in cases ... ?*

n=1503	Too strict	Just strict enough	Not strict enough	Don't know / Refusal
... of armed robbery	1%	23%	68%	8%
... of excessive speed	8%	41%	45%	6%
... of shoplifting	4%	43%	38%	15%

- A majority of Canadians would like the possibility of parole to be abolished for all violent criminals.

Question: *In your opinion, should we... ?* (Percentages represent positive responses)

n=1503	
... reintroduce the death penalty in cases where a police officer is murdered	46%
... castrate sexual predators in general	42%
... systematically castrate pedophiles	44%
... abolish the possibility of release on parole	45%
... abolish the possibility of release on parole for all violent criminals	56%
None of the above	15%
Don't know / Refusal	2%

- A significant majority of Canadians agree with the idea that prisoners should pay for the cost of their incarceration.

Question: *Would you AGREE or DISAGREE with the idea of prisoners paying for their incarceration fees from their personal property or through work they would be obliged to do in prison?*

n=1503	Agree	Disagree	Don't know/Refusal
Atlantic provinces	87%	9%	5%
Quebec	94%	5%	0%
Ontario	82%	13%	5%
Prairies	76%	15%	9%
Alberta	81%	13%	7%
British Columbia	83%	13%	5%
Canada	85%	11%	4%

## 2.0 Results

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### 2.1 Canadians Mentioned Being Satisfied with the Judicial System

53% of all Canadians seem to be satisfied with the Canadian judicial system, while 41% are dissatisfied and 6% did not say.

67% of those 18-24 years old mentioned being all the more satisfied with the judicial system along with 62% of residents of the Atlantic provinces, 69% of students and 59% of university graduates.

However, 51% of those 65 years old and over, 47% of Francophones, 48% of British Columbians and 49% of retirees hold the opposite view.

Question: *Generally speaking, are you VERY SATISFIED, SATISFIED, DISSATISFIED or VERY DISSATISFIED with the Canadian judicial system?*

n=1503	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Don't know / Refusal
Atlantic provinces	62%	33%	5%
Quebec	54%	44%	2%
Ontario	54%	37%	9%
Prairies	48%	46%	6%
Alberta	55%	39%	6%
British Columbia	45%	48%	7%
Canada	53%	41%	6%

## 2.2 An Efficient but Unfair System

According to 63% of Canadians, judges apply laws in an effective manner, while 28% hold the opposite view.

72% of those 18-24 years old, 76% of residents from the Atlantic provinces, 67% of Canadians in the higher income brackets, 69% of professionals and 70% of university graduates find judges to be effective in applying laws. However, 41% of Francophones, 40% of Quebeckers and 44% of those with an elementary school education do not share this view.

According to 55% of Canadians, judges are not as strict with the rich as they are with the poor, while 32% of them do not agree with this statement and 14% did not know. 64% of those 45-54 years old, 61% of Francophones, 62% of Quebeckers, 62% of those whose household income is lower than \$20,000, 61% of manual workers and 62% of those whose formal education ceased after high school agree with this statement, while 50% of those 18-24 years old, 39% of those in the higher income brackets, 48% of students and 40% of university graduates do not agree with this statement.

65% of the Canadian population does not believe that judges are stricter toward young people while 24% think otherwise and 11% did not say.

72% of Francophones and Quebeckers, 71% of those in the upper income brackets and 69% of university graduates are more likely to disagree with this statement, while 38% of those 18-24 years old and 33% of those in the lower income brackets say the opposite.

60% of Canadians feel that judges are stricter toward immigrants while 17% think they are not and 23% did not say.

66% of those 18-24 years old, 72% of Francophones and 68% of Quebeckers are more likely not to agree with the idea that judges are stricter toward immigrants, while 23% of 18-24 year-olds, 29% of Allophones, 26% of those in the lower income brackets and 25% of students feel that judges are stricter toward immigrants.

Question: *Do you AGREE or DISAGREE with each of the following statements:*

n=1503	YES	NO	DNK/ Refusal
Judges are effective in applying laws	63%	28%	10%
Judges are not as strict with the rich as they are with the poor	55%	32%	14%
Judges are stricter toward young people	24%	65%	11%
Judges are stricter toward immigrants	17%	60%	23%
Judges should be elected just like in the United States	48%	37%	15%

Finally, in a proportion of 48% versus 37%, Canadians would like judges to be elected as is currently the case in the United States. 15% did not give their opinion in this respect.

It was noted that Francophones (54%) and Quebeckers (53%) are more favourable to the election of judges while 42% of Anglophones, 45% of British Columbians, 45% of those in the higher income brackets, 54% of professionals and 55% of university graduates do not agree with the idea of judges being elected.

## 2.3 More than Eight Canadians out of Ten Find that the Judicial System is not Strict Enough When it Comes to Crimes of a Sexual Nature

84% of Canadians believe that the judicial system is not strict enough in cases of rape and crimes of a sexual nature, while 10% find it strict enough and 1% find it too strict.

Moreover, 83% of the population feels that the judicial system also is not strict enough when it comes to cases of pedophilia, while 10% find it just strict enough and 1% too strict.

When it comes to both of these types of sexual crimes, it is mostly in Quebec that the judicial system is deemed not strict enough with 91% and 90% respectively holding this view. It can also be noted that in both cases, 16% and 15% of university graduates find justice just strict enough for these types of crimes.

Question: *In your view, is the justice system TOO STRICT, JUST STRICT ENOUGH or NOT STRICT ENOUGH in cases of... ?*

n=1503	Too strict	Just strict enough	Not strict enough	Don't know/Refusal
<b>... rape and sexual crimes</b>				
Atlantic provinces	0%	19%	78%	3%
Quebec	0%	8%	91%	0%
Ontario	2%	11%	80%	6%
Prairies	0%	13%	80%	6%
Alberta	0%	8%	84%	8%
British Columbia	2%	4%	89%	6%
Total	1%	10%	84%	4%
<b>... acts of pedophilia</b>				
Atlantic provinces	0%	18%	74%	8%
Quebec	1%	7%	90%	2%
Ontario	1%	12%	80%	7%
Prairies	0%	10%	84%	6%
Alberta	1%	11%	81%	7%
British Columbia	1%	7%	84%	8%
Total	1%	10%	83%	6%

## 2.4 Justice Should be Stricter When it Comes to Armed Robbery

When it comes to cases of armed robbery, 68% of Canadians find that the justice system is not strict enough, while 23% find it just strict enough and 1% too strict. 78% of those 65 years old and over, 75% of Quebecers and 74% of British Columbians, 75% of those in the lower income brackets, 77% of manual workers, 80% of retirees and 76% of people whose formal education ceased after high school believe that the system is not strict enough in this respect.

However, 43% of Canadians think that justice is strict enough when it comes to shoplifting while 38% do not find it strict enough and 4% find it too strict. Among those who find it just strict enough, we find 61% of those 18-24 years old, 52% of Francophones, 51% of Quebecers and 59% of students. Conversely, 48% of those 65 years old and over and 48% of Prairie residents do not find it strict enough.

Finally, opinions are mixed when it comes to speeding. Indeed, 45% would like the system to be stricter toward those who speed while 41% find that the system is strict enough and 8% too strict. Let it be mentioned that 37% of men versus 51% of women would like the system to be stricter.

Question: *In your view, is the justice system TOO STRICT, JUST STRICT ENOUGH or NOT STRICT ENOUGH in cases of... ?*

n=1503	Too strict	Just strict enough	Not strict enough	Don't know / Refusal
<b>.. armed robbery</b>				
Atlantic provinces	1%	33%	62%	5%
Quebec	1%	22%	75%	3%
Ontario	0%	24%	64%	11%
Prairies	1%	22%	70%	7%
Alberta	1%	22%	63%	15%
British Columbia	1%	14%	74%	12%
Total	1%	23%	68%	8%
<b>... shoplifting</b>				
Atlantic provinces	1%	48%	41%	10%
Quebec	7%	51%	37%	5%
Ontario	3%	42%	35%	19%
Prairies	1%	37%	48%	14%
Alberta	2%	42%	37%	19%
British Columbia	5%	31%	42%	22%
Total	4%	43%	38%	15%
<b>... excessive speed</b>				
Atlantic provinces	6%	52%	36%	6%
Quebec	11%	38%	50%	1%
Ontario	8%	44%	42%	6%
Prairies	6%	50%	35%	9%
Alberta	8%	44%	36%	12%
British Columbia	10%	25%	59%	6%
Total	8%	41%	45%	6%

## 2.5 A Majority of Canadians Would be in Favour of Abolishing the Possibility of Parole for Violent Criminals

56% of Canadians would like the possibility of obtaining parole to be abolished for all violent criminals. This is particularly what 60% of women and 69% of Francophones want.

46% of the population would like the death penalty to be reintroduced when it comes to the murder of a police officer. This view is held particularly by 50% of men, 55 % of those 65 years old and over, 54 % of British Columbians and 54% of manual workers.

Moreover, 45% of Canadians seem to agree with the idea of eliminating the possibility of obtaining parole.

In terms of people guilty of sexual crimes, 44% of the population would like pedophiles to be castrated systematically while 42% think the same thing should be done to sexual predators in general.

Question: *In your opinion, should we... ?* (Percentages represent positive responses)

n=1503	TOTAL	Atlantic provinces	Quebec	Ontario	Prairies	Alberta	British Columbia
... abolish the possibility of release on parole for all violent criminals	56%	46%	68%	52%	55%	53%	56%
... reintroduce the death penalty in cases where a police officer is murdered	46%	49%	44%	43%	45%	50%	54%
... abolish the possibility of release on parole	45%	42%	53%	40%	41%	40%	47%
... systematically castrate pedophiles	44%	38%	54%	42%	45%	35%	40%
... castrate sexual predators in general	42%	34%	54%	41%	37%	35%	38%
None of the above	15%	11%	12%	16%	19%	20%	15%
Don't know / Refusal	2%	5%	0%	4%	5%	4%	2%

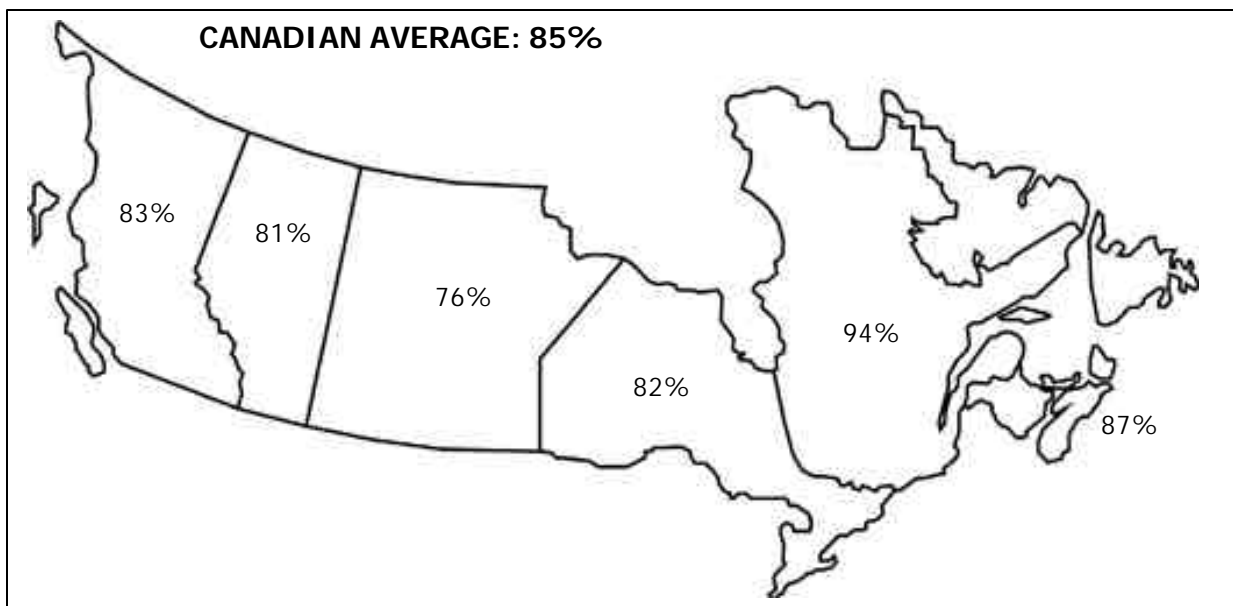
## 2.6 A Significant Majority of Canadians Agree with the Idea of Prisoners Paying the Costs of their Own Incarceration

A proportion of 85% of Canadians mentioned being in agreement with the idea of prisoners paying their own incarceration fees from their personal property or through work they would be obliged to do while in prison.

Question: *Would you AGREE or DISAGREE with the idea of prisoners paying for their incarceration fees from their personal property or through work they would be obliged to do in prison?*

n=1503	Agree	Disagree	Don't know/Refusal
Atlantic provinces	87%	9%	5%
Quebec	94%	5%	0%
Ontario	82%	13%	5%
Prairies	76%	15%	9%
Alberta	81%	13%	7%
British Columbia	83%	13%	5%
Canada	85%	11%	4%

### Proportion of Canadians who agree with the idea that prisoners should pay their own incarceration fees



### 3.0 Methodology

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This study was conducted by Leger Marketing through telephone interviews among a representative sample of 1503 English- or French-speaking Canadians, 18 years of age or older.

The interviews were conducted from our Montreal and Winnipeg call centres between March 19 and March 24, 2002. Up to ten call-backs 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 1503 respondents is of  $\pm 2.6\%$ , 19 times out of 20.