

CANADIAN PRESS / LEGER MARKETING

Canadians and Elections

Report



1.0 Study Highlights

- Half of Canadians vote at every election.

Question: *Generally speaking, do you vote at EVERY election, MOST elections, SOME elections or at NONE of them, be they at the FEDERAL, PROVINCIAL or MUNICIPAL level?*

n=1500	Every election	Most elections	Some elections	None of them
Canada	55%	22%	10%	12%

- Close to four Canadians out of ten are not loyal to their political party.

Question: *Do you consider yourself loyal to your political party?*

n=1500	YES	NO	No political party in particular	Don't know / Refusal
Canada	45%	38%	13%	4%

- Three-quarters of Canadians choose the party or candidate they will vote for prior to the week before the elections.

Question: *Is your final decision about a particular party or candidate taken... ?*

n=1500	... during the election campaign	... before the election campaign	... in the week before the elections	Other	Don't know / Refusal
Canada	39%	35%	13%	4%	9%

- The majority of those who never vote think that their vote will not change the outcome of the elections.

Question: *Can you tell me if you AGREE or DISAGREE with each of the following statements... ?*
(Percentages correspond to positive responses)

	TOTAL (n=1500)	Those who never vote (n=185)
<i>Whether or not I vote will not change the outcome of the elections</i>	26%	41%
<i>There are no differences among the parties</i>	17%	26%
<i>I am not interested in politics</i>	29%	55%
<i>I do not believe election promises</i>	60%	62%
<i>I do not trust politicians at all</i>	43%	49%

2. Results

2.1 Half of Canadians Vote at Every Election

55% of Canadians mentioned voting at every election, be they federal, provincial or municipal, while 22% mentioned voting at most elections and 10% at some elections. 12% mentioned never voting.

It was noted that the percentage of citizens who vote at every election increases according to the age bracket. We therefore see that 28% of those 18-24, 40% of those 25-34, 51% of those 35-44, 75% of those 55-64 and 72% of those aged 65 and over are more likely to vote at every election.

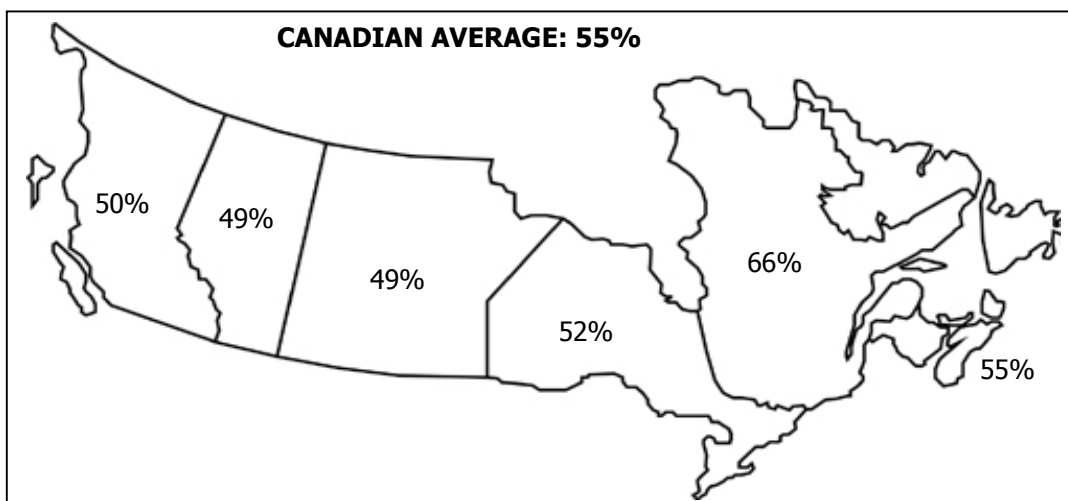
In addition, 38% of those 18-24 and 19% of those 25-34 mentioned never voting.

Finally, it was noted that Quebecers regularly vote at a noticeably higher rate compared to Canadians of the other provinces, namely 66% versus 53% on average for Canadians of other provinces.

Question: *Generally speaking, do you vote at EVERY election, MOST elections, SOME elections or NONE of them, be they FEDERAL, PROVINCIAL or MUNICIPAL?*

n=1500	Every election	Most elections	Some elections	None of them
18-24 years old	28%	20%	14%	38%
25-34 years old	40%	22%	18%	19%
35-44 years old	51%	28%	10%	10%
45-55 years old	64%	23%	7%	5%
55-64 years old	75%	16%	4%	4%
65 years old and over	72%	19%	6%	3%
Canada	55%	22%	10%	12%

Percentage of Canadians who vote at every election



2.2 Close to Four Canadians Out of Ten are not Loyal to Their Political Party

38% of Canadians are apparently not loyal to their political party, while 45% are loyal and 13% are not associated to a political party in particular. Women appear to be more loyal in 48% of cases while men are more disloyal in 41% of cases.

Quebeckers are the most loyal with 55% while Ontarians are the least loyal with 40%.

In addition, voters seem to be more influenced by the personal qualities of their local candidate (30%) than by the party leaders (18%), the local candidate's party (17%) and election promises (14%).

Question: *Do you consider yourself loyal to your political party?*

n=1500	YES	NO	No party in particular	Don't know / Refusal
Atlantic provinces	49%	38%	10%	3%
Quebec	55%	33%	11%	1%
Ontario	40%	41%	15%	4%
Prairies	45%	38%	13%	5%
Alberta	52%	35%	10%	3%
British Columbia	36%	40%	16%	9%
Canada	45%	38%	13%	4%

2.3 Three-Quarters of Canadians Choose the Party or Candidate They Will Vote for Prior to the Week Before the Elections

39% of Canadians will be making their final decision about which party or candidate to vote for during the election campaign while 35% will be making this decision before the election campaign starts and 13% in the week before the elections.

50% of people aged 65 years old and over and 44% of Allophones will be making their final decision before the election campaign while 46% of those in the upper income brackets, 48% of professionals, 45% of university graduates and 44% of Canadians in the labour force will be making their final decision during the campaign.

Question: *Is your final about a particular party or candidate taken... ?*

n=1500	... during the election campaign	... before the election campaign	...in the week before the elections	Other	Don't know / Refusal
Atlantic provinces	38%	40%	9%	5%	8%
Quebec	38%	39%	17%	3%	4%
Ontario	43%	31%	10%	5%	10%
Prairies	38%	33%	12%	6%	12%
Alberta	41%	30%	17%	5%	7%
British Columbia	30%	39%	12%	5%	14%
Canada	39%	35%	13%	4%	9%

2.4 The Majority of People Never Vote Since They Think Their Vote Will Not Affect the Outcome of the Elections

26% of Canadians think their vote will not change the outcome of the elections. This perception is mostly that of 41% of people who never vote, 33% of those aged 65 and over, 36% of allophones, 38% of homemakers and 47% of people with an elementary education.

17% of the public feel that there are no differences between the various political parties. This is more likely to be true for 25% of those 65 years old and over, 26% of Francophones, 25% of those residing east of the province of Ontario and 24% of homemakers. This is the opinion of 26% of people who never vote.

29% of citizens are not interested in politics. This is more likely to be the case of 55% of those who never vote, 40% of those 18-24 years old, 35% of Allophones, 40% of manual workers and 36% of those who have either elementary or high school education.

In terms of election promises, 60% of Canadians do not believe them. This trend is particularly noticeable among Quebecers with 69%.

Finally, 43% of Canadians no longer trust politicians at all. This is more likely to be the case of 50% of those who either vote in some elections or never vote, 47% of men, 50% of Francophones, 61% of the unemployed and 49% of those who have a high school level of education.

Question: *Can you tell me if you AGREE or DISAGREE with each of the following statements...?*
(Percentages correspond to positive responses)

n=1170	TOTAL	Atlantic provinces	Quebec	Ontario	Prairies	Alberta	British Columbia
<i>Whether or not I vote will not change the outcome of the election</i>	26%	30%	21%	27%	34%	26%	27%
<i>There are no difference among the parties</i>	17%	28%	24%	13%	18%	10%	12%
<i>I am not interested in politics</i>	29%	34%	27%	32%	29%	23%	23%
<i>I do not believe election promises</i>	60%	64%	69%	53%	56%	58%	63%
<i>I do not trust politicians at all</i>	43%	40%	47%	41%	34%	44%	45%

3.0 Methodology

This study was conducted by Leger Marketing through telephone interviews among a representative sample of 1500 English- or French-speaking Canadians, 18 years of age or older.

The interviews were conducted from our Montreal and Winnipeg call centres between May 7 and May 12, 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 1500 respondents is of $\pm 2.6\%$, 19 times out of 20.