

CANADIAN PRESS / LEGER MARKETING

Canadians and the Pope's Role

Report



1. Study Highlights

- 48% of Canadians feel it unnecessary to impose a maximum age on papal functions whereas 41% do not agree.

Question: Do you believe that a maximum age should be imposed on papal functions?

N=1502	Yes	No	Don't know/Refusal
Canada	41%	48%	11%

- Half of Canadians feel that Pope John Paul II is not longer able to fulfill his functions.

Question: In your opinion, is Pope John Paul II still capable of fulfilling his functions or not?

N=1502	Yes	No	Don't know/Refusal
British Columbia	40%	47%	13%
Canada	40%	50%	10%

- Has the Pope's numerous trips around the world contributed to increasing the number of Catholics? Opinions are divided.

Question: Do you believe that the Pope's numerous trips around the world have contributed to increasing the number of Catholics or not?

N=1502	Yes	No	Don't know/Refusal
Canada	45%	45%	10%

- A majority of Canadians are of the opinion that the Pope fulfills a spiritual role and not a political role.

Question: In your opinion, is the Pope a spiritual leader or a political leader (with an active political role) ?

N=1502	Spiritual Leader	Political Leader	Both Spiritual and Political Leader	Don't know/Refusal
Canada	61%	19%	15%	5%

2. Results

2.1 The Pope is Ageless

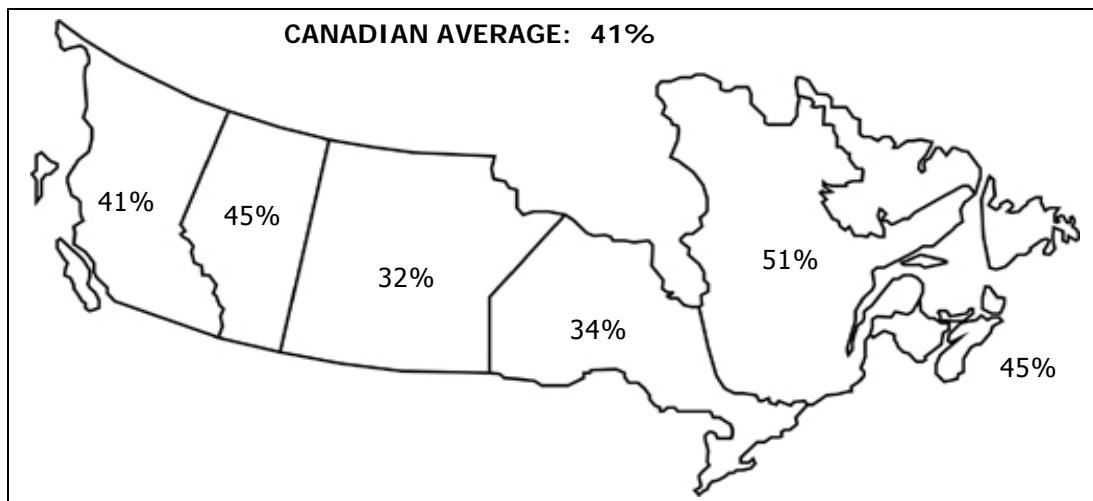
48% of Canadians feel that a maximum age should not be imposed on papal functions whereas 41% do not agree, and 11% have no opinion on the subject. However, one in two Quebecers (51%) and francophones (52%) believe that the church should impose a maximum age. Ontario on the other hand is the province where the highest proportion of respondents (53%) does not think that a maximum age should be imposed on the Pope. This opinion is also shared by a majority of allophones (61%).

Among Catholics, opinions are quite divided: 47% think that a maximum age should be imposed on papal functions and 47% do not agree.

Question: Do you believe that a maximum age should be imposed on papal functions?

N=1502	Yes	No	Don't know/Refusal
Atlantic Provinces	45%	36%	19%
Quebec	51%	42%	7%
Ontario	34%	53%	13%
Prairies	32%	56%	12%
Alberta	45%	49%	6%
British Columbia	41%	47%	12%
Canada	41%	48%	11%

Proportion of Canadians who feel a maximum age should be imposed on papal functions



2.2 Half of Canadians feel that Pope John Paul II is no longer able to fulfill his functions

50% of Canadians doubt that the current pope – Pope John Paul II – is still able to fulfill his functions compared to 40% who think the opposite. A higher proportion (55%) of young Canadian adults, between 18 and 24 years of age, are proportionally more likely than those in other age categories to consider that the Pope can continue assuming his functions.

However, Catholics cannot agree on the question: 46% consider that Pope John Paul II should remain Pope and 48% consider that he should step down.

Question: In your opinion, is Pope John Paul II still capable of fulfilling his functions or not?

N= 1502	Yes	No	Don't know/Refusal
Atlantic Provinces	28%	60%	12%
Quebec	37%	57%	6%
Ontario	43%	46%	11%
Prairies	40%	45%	14%
Alberta	43%	46%	10%
British Columbia	40%	47%	13%
Canada	40%	50%	10%

2.3 A new doctrine regarding moral issues would not increase the number of Catholics

45% of Canadians feel that the Pope's numerous trips around the world have contributed to an increase in the number of Catholics. However, an equally high proportion of respondents (45%) think the contrary.

Francophones (54%), older respondents aged 55 years and up (53%), and Catholics (54%) are among those who see an increase in the number of Catholics.

Question: Do you believe that the Pope's numerous trips around the world have contributed to increasing the number of Catholics or not?

N=1502	Yes	No	Don't know/Refusal
Atlantic Provinces	41%	45%	14%
Quebec	49%	46%	5%
Ontario	47%	42%	11%
Prairies	35%	47%	18%
Alberta	43%	44%	14%
British Columbia	44%	51%	6%
Canada	45%	45%	10%

Also, according to 55% of Canadians, even if the Pope were to adjust his doctrine regarding modern moral issues, this would not lead to an increase in the number of Catholics. Though 36% of respondents did not share this opinion.

Older Canadians, between 45 and 54 years of age (41%), francophones (41%), Quebeckers (41%), respondents with a household income of \$60,000 and up (42%), and respondents with university degrees (42%) are among those who believe that a doctrine more in-line with modern moral issues would lead to an increase in the number of Catholics.

2.4 According to 61% of Canadians the Pope is a spiritual leader and not a political leader

According to 61% of Canadians, the Pope is a spiritual leader rather than a political leader (19%) although 15% consider that the Pope can assume either role.

Women (64%), francophones (67%), Quebeckers (65%) and Catholics (70%) are significantly more inclined to state that the Pope's role is more spiritual than political. Protestants (25%) and those who do not practice any religion (26%) are the highest proportion of respondents to consider that the Pope plays a political role.

Question: In your opinion, is the Pope a spiritual leader or a political leader (with an active political role)?

N=1502	Spiritual Leader	Political Leader	Both Spiritual and Political Leader	Don't know/Refusal
Atlantic Provinces	69%	13%	12%	6%
Quebec	65%	23%	9%	2%
Ontario	58%	18%	19%	5%
Prairies	58%	14%	18%	10%
Alberta	69%	14%	9%	7%
British Columbia	52%	24%	17%	5%
Canada	61%	19%	15%	5%

3. Methodology

This study was conducted by Leger Marketing through telephone interviews among a representative sample of 1502 English- or French-speaking Canadians, 18 years of age or older.

The interviews were conducted from our Montreal and Winnipeg call centres between from October 21 to October 26, 2003. 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 1502 respondents is of ± 2.6 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.

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