

Canadians and Social Inequalities



Report



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1. Study Highlights

- Canadians are divided when it comes to their perception of inequalities in Canada.

Question: *In the last few years, do you have the feeling that inequalities in Canada are CLEARLY WORSE, SLIGHTLY WORSE, SLIGHTLY BETTER or CLEARLY BETTER?*

N=1500	WORSE	BETTER	Don't know / Refusal
Canada	42%	39%	20%

- A majority of Canadians consider that inequalities in Canada are not as significant as those of other North American countries.

Question: *Compared to other North American countries, do you have the feeling that inequalities in Canada are MORE SIGNIFICANT or LESS SIGNIFICANT?*

N=1500	More Significant	Less Significant	Don't know / Refusal
Canada	30%	56%	14%

- Close to three in four Canadians believe that it is possible to fight social inequalities.

Question: *In your opinion is it POSSIBLE or NOT to truly fight against social inequalities?*

N=1500	Yes	No	Don't know / Refusal
Canada	74%	18%	7%

- Income and access to health care are the most serious inequalities.

Question: *Among the following inequalities, which one seems to be the most serious in your opinion? Is it...?*

N=1500	
... income inequalities	28%
... access to health care inequalities	27%
... education inequalities	17%
... housing inequalities	12%
... heritage inequalities	6%
... access to information inequalities	4%
None	2%
Don't know	4%

2. Results

2.1 Canadians are divided when it comes to their perception of inequalities in Canada

Though 42% of Canadians believe that inequalities have become worse in Canada in the last few years, 39% find that on the contrary, they have been improving during this period. It is worth noting that 20% of respondents interviewed did not express an opinion on the subject.

The strongest proportion of Canadians who perceive that inequalities have become worse in Canada can be found in Quebec (56%). Conversely, Canadians who live in the Prairies (49%) are more inclined to perceive an improvement when it comes to inequalities in the last few years.

Moreover, women (44%), Francophones (58%) and respondents between 55 and 64 years of age (51%) are proportionately more likely to perceive that inequalities have been getting worse. However, Canadians between 18 and 24 years of age (51%), Anglophones (41%), students (51%) and employees in the service sector, sales and office workers (45%) have a tendency to perceive an improvement in inequalities.

Question: *In the last few years, do you have the feeling that inequalities in Canada are CLEARLY WORSE, SLIGHTLY WORSE, SLIGHTLY BETTER or CLEARLY BETTER?*

N=1500	Clearly Worse	Slightly Worse	Slightly Better	Clearly Better	Don't know / Refusal
Atlantic Provinces	10%	26%	29%	15%	21%
Quebec	27%	29%	23%	9%	11%
Ontario	11%	26%	33%	8%	23%
Prairies	16%	19%	38%	11%	15%
Alberta	7%	24%	35%	11%	23%
British Columbia	12%	32%	27%	6%	24%
Canada	15%	27%	30%	9%	20%



42%



39%

2.2 A majority of Canadians consider that inequalities in Canada are not as significant as those of other North American countries

According to 56% of Canadians, inequalities in Canada are less significant than those experienced in other North American countries. On the other hand, 30% of the population are of the opposite opinion, while 14% did not express an opinion.

There is no significant difference between major Canadian regions when it comes to the opinion of Canadians on the extent of social inequalities in Canada compared to other North American countries.

However, employees in the service sector, sales and office workers (34%), as well as Canadians with an elementary (42%) or high school (34%) education are more likely to say that inequalities in Canada are more significant than elsewhere in North America. In contrast, men (59%), people between 18 and 24 years of age (66%), those with an annual household income above \$80 000 (69%), professionals (63%), students (71%), those who have a job (60%) and those who have a university education (64%) are more inclined to think that inequalities are less significant in Canada.

Question: *Compared to other North American countries, do you have the feeling that inequalities in Canada are MORE SIGNIFICANT or LESS SIGNIFICANT?*

N=1500	More Significant	Less Significant	Don't know / Refusal
Atlantic Provinces	25%	58%	17%
Quebec	27%	60%	13%
Ontario	31%	55%	14%
Prairies	33%	51%	15%
Alberta	29%	59%	12%
British Columbia	32%	52%	16%
Canada	30%	56%	14%

2.3 Nearly 3 out of 4 Canadians believe it is possible to fight social inequalities

Three-quarters of Canadians (74%) believe that it is truly possible to fight social inequalities. This opinion is mainly shared among respondents between 25 and 34 years of age (80%), employees in the service sector, sales and office workers (80%), students (88%) and those with university degrees (83%).

Only 7% of Canadians do not have an opinion on the subject.

Question: *In your opinion is it POSSIBLE or NOT to truly fight against social inequalities?*

N=1500	Yes	No	Don' know / Refusal
Atlantic Provinces	75%	13%	11%
Quebec	75%	22%	3%
Ontario	74%	16%	11%
Prairies	72%	21%	8%
Alberta	75%	19%	6%
British Columbia	74%	19%	7%
Canada	74%	18%	7%

2.4 Inequalities pertaining to income and access to health care would be among the most serious

More than a quarter of Canadians (28%) are of the opinion that income inequalities represent the most serious type of social inequality. A similar proportion (27%) feel that inequalities pertaining to access to health care are more serious.

We notice that women (33%), Canadians between 65 years of age and older (35%), Francophones (37%), Quebecers (35%), people whose gross annual household income is below \$40 000 (33%), retired respondents (36%), those without a job (32%) and those with an elementary (48%) or high school (35%) education are more likely to say that access to health care inequalities are more serious.

Question: *Among the following inequalities, which one seems to be the most serious in your opinion? Is it...?*

N=1500	... income inequalities	... access to health care inequalities	... educational inequalities	... housing inequalities	... heritage inequalities	... access to information inequalities	None
Atlantic Provinces	25%	25%	18%	14%	8%	4%	3%
Quebec	35%	35%	10%	10%	3%	5%	0%
Ontario	25%	24%	18%	13%	7%	4%	2%
Prairies	23%	25%	18%	6%	15%	4%	2%
Alberta	25%	25%	18%	17%	4%	3%	4%
British Columbia	31%	23%	21%	8%	7%	5%	1%
Canada	28%	27%	17%	12%	6%	4%	2%

3. 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 July 6 and July 11, 2004. 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 ± 2.5 , 19 times out of 20.

4. Questionnaire

Questionnaire

PC6

PC6. In the last few years, do you have the feeling that inequalities in Canada are CLEARLY WORSE, SLIGHTLY WORSE, SLIGHTLY BETTER or CLEARLY BETTER?

Clearly worse.....	1
Slightly worse.....	2
Slightly better.....	3
Clearly better.....	4
Don't know.....	8
Refusal.....	9

PC7

PC7. Compared to other North American countries, do you have the feeling that inequalities in Canada are MORE SIGNIFICANT or LESS SIGNIFICANT?

More significant.....	1
Less significant.....	2
Don't know.....	8
Refusal.....	9

PC8

PC8. In your opinion is it POSSIBLE or NOT to truly fight against social inequalities?

Yes.....	1
No.....	2
Don't know.....	8
Refusal.....	9

PC9

PC9. Among the following inequalities, which one seems to be the most serious in your opinion? Is it...?

READ

Rotation => 6

...income inequalities.....	1
...access to health care inequalities.....	2
...housing inequalities.....	3
...educational inequalities.....	4
...access to information inequalities.....	5
...heritage inequalities.....	6
None.....	7
Don't know.....	8
Refusal.....	9

5. Cross Tabulations
