



Public Opinion Research Study on Electoral Matters – Wave 2

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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Ce rapport est aussi disponible en français

This public opinion research report presents the results of the second wave of an online survey conducted by Léger Marketing Inc. on behalf of Elections Canada. The quantitative research study was conducted with 2,504 Canadians who are eligible electors residing in different regions of Canada between April 25, 2022, and May 4, 2022.

Cette publication est aussi disponible en français sous le titre *Étude d'opinion publique sur des questions électorales*.

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Elections Canada
30 Victoria Street
Gatineau, Quebec
K1A 0M6

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Executive Summary

Léger is pleased to present Elections Canada with this report on findings from the second wave of the tracking quantitative survey designed to learn about Canadians who are eligible electors residing in different regions in Canada. This report was prepared by Léger Marketing Inc., which was contracted by Elections Canada (contract number 05005-221079/001/CY awarded February 24, 2022).

Background and Objectives

As per its mandate, Elections Canada (EC) must always be ready to organize elections, even in exceptional circumstances, such as in the event of a natural disaster or emergency.

In this context, Elections Canada wanted to gauge the general public's opinion on various electoral issues and topics at different points in time between elections.

This report presents the results of the second wave of the survey conducted on electoral matters with 2,504 Canadians between April 25 and May 4, 2022. The first wave of this study was conducted in April 2021¹ and serves as the baseline for measuring and identifying significant trends or changes in the opinions and attitudes of Canadian electors across up to five survey waves that may be conducted over the course of this study through to 2023–24.

The project's aims, among others, are to improve understanding of Canadian electors':

- a) opinions on emerging issues that pertain to the administration of elections
- b) trust in electoral administration and other national institutions
- c) sources of information about elections and the electoral process

More specifically, EC wants to track any significant fluctuation in these measures over time. Other questions are asked to help the agency better understand what other internal or external factors may inform or impact electors' views on trust in electoral administration more generally.

Intended Use of the Research

The information provided in these research reports will be used to inform EC's strategic communications and the development of policies, programs, and services. Future waves of the survey will be used to track these measures over time.

¹ See [Public Opinion Research Study on Electoral Matters - Wave 1 – Elections Canada](#).

Methodology

This public opinion research was conducted via online surveys using Computer Aided Web Interviewing (CAWI) technology. Fieldwork for the wave two survey was carried out between April 25 and May 4, 2022. A total of 2,504 Canadian eligible electors (citizens at least 18 years of age at the time of the survey) with demographic characteristics reflective of the Canadian population were surveyed. The sample was drawn randomly from Léger's Leo panel and the overall response rate for the survey was 15 percent.

The questionnaire primarily comprised questions posed in the wave one survey conducted in April 2021, with some questions added or removed to account for changing research needs between waves.

Using data from the most recent Canadian census, results were weighted within each region by gender and age to ensure the best possible representativeness of the sample within each region and overall. The weight of each region was adjusted to be equivalent to its actual weight in relation to the distribution of the Canadian population. The weighting factors are presented in detail in Appendix 1 of this report.

A pre-test of 49 interviews was completed before launching data collection to validate the programming of the questionnaire in both English and French.

Léger adheres to the most stringent guidelines for quantitative research. This survey was conducted in accordance with the Standards of Conduct of Government of Canada Public Opinion Research for online surveys.

A complete methodological description is provided in the Appendices section of this document (please see Appendix 1).

Overview of the Findings

- In April 2022, confidence in Elections Canada remained high among electors, with three in four (74%) having a fair amount of confidence in EC or higher. However, the overall proportion who had confidence in EC had gone down slightly since April 2021 (down from 78%). Nevertheless, confidence in EC remained higher than confidence in the police (72%) and the provincial (55%) and federal (54%) governments.
- A majority (81%) of electors in April 2022 believed that Elections Canada runs federal elections fairly (very fairly: 41%; somewhat fairly: 40%). This proportion also decreased slightly from April 2021 (down from 87%), but the level remains positive.
- Among the 11% who thought Elections Canada runs elections unfairly, the main reason for thinking so was a perception that the regional distribution of seats is unfair or favours certain provinces (Ontario, Quebec) (16%), followed by broad concerns about electoral integrity and security (11%). The proportion of respondents who considered federal elections to be unfair due to the regional distribution of seats increased compared with April 2021 (up from 9%), while concerns about electoral integrity were unchanged (10% in April 2021).

- Three-quarters (76%) of electors agreed that if Elections Canada proposes changes to how federal elections are run, it is probably to make voting easier or fairer for all Canadians. Nearly two-thirds (64%) agreed that the government more generally would propose changes for the same reason.
- In April 2022, the spread of false information online was still perceived by the largest proportion (77%) of electors as a type of electoral interference that is capable of having a moderate or major impact on the outcome of the next federal election, consistent with April 2021 results (78%). The second-largest proportion (65%) thought that foreign money being used to influence Canadian politics could have an impact (newly added statement). Compared with April 2021, a higher proportion in April 2022 believed that hacking by foreign countries or groups into the computer systems that support the election could have an impact on the next election (60% in April 2022 versus 55% April 2021).
- Voting by mail in Canada was perceived to be less safe and reliable compared with the voting system in general (46% compared with 68%). The proportions of Canadian electors who thought the voting system in general and voting by mail are safe and reliable in April 2022 both decreased from April 2021 (68% versus 74% for the voting system in general, and 46% versus 51% for voting by mail).
- Similar to April 2021, the largest proportion (41%) of electors in April 2022 thought that someone impersonating someone else is a type of voter fraud that happens often or sometimes in Canadian federal elections, followed by someone voting who is not a Canadian citizen (35%). Compared with April 2021, significantly higher proportions in April 2022 thought that someone voting more than once (33% in April 2022 versus 29% in April 2021) and someone stealing or tampering with ballots after they have been cast (29% versus 25%) happens often or sometimes.
- As of April 2022, most Canadian electors (77%) considered COVID-19 public health restrictions in their area to have been reasonable over the course of the pandemic.
- Two-thirds (66%) of respondents agreed that they do not think the government cares about what people like them think; around half (52%) agreed that politics and government seem so complicated that people like them cannot understand; and four in 10 (43%) agreed that all federal political parties are basically the same and do not really offer a choice.
- The proportions of people in April 2022 who accepted various broad conspiracy theories about government to be true did not change from April 2021, although the proportions of those who think they are false decreased, while the proportions of those who do not know increased. The most accepted theory remained that certain significant events are the result of the activity of a small group of people who secretly manipulate world events, with four in 10 (41%) accepting it as definitely or probably true (similar to 40% in April 2021). However, the proportion who said this was false decreased to 47% (from 52% in April 2021).

Notes on Interpretation of the Research Findings

The views and observations expressed in this document do not reflect those of Elections Canada. This report was compiled by Léger based on the research conducted specifically for this project. This research is not probabilistic; the results cannot be inferred to reflect those of the general population of Canada.

Since a sample drawn from an Internet panel is not probabilistic in nature, margins of sampling error cannot be calculated for this survey. Respondents were selected from among those who have volunteered or registered to participate in online surveys. The results of such surveys cannot be described as statistically projectable to the target population. The data have been weighted to reflect the demographic composition of the target population.

The results of this survey cannot be compared with the results of other Elections Canada surveys of electors conducted during the federal general election held on September 20, 2021, due to differences in the research designs and methodologies.

In this report, all results are expressed as percentages unless otherwise noted. Percentages may not always add up to 100 due to rounding or multiple mentions. Comparisons with results from the previous survey wave are presented when possible. For graphs, the reported bases represent the base of respondents based on the most recent survey wave (April 2022 for this report).

Subgroup differences are reported when they are statistically significant at the 95% confidence level and are reported only for the most recent survey wave. When a subgroup is reported as being more or less likely to have given a particular response, this means the result for the subgroup was significantly different compared with the result for all other subgroups combined. For example, if respondents aged 18 to 24 were more likely to give a particular response, it is in comparison to the results for all other respondents aged 25 and older.

Political Neutrality Statement and Contact Information

Léger certifies that the final deliverables fully comply with the Government of Canada's political neutrality requirements outlined in the Policy on Communications and Federal Identity and the Directive on the Management of Communications.

Specifically, the deliverables do not include information on electoral voting intentions, political party preferences, standings with the electorate, or ratings of the performance of a political party or its leaders.



Signed:

Christian Bourque, Senior Researcher

Léger