

# Executive Summary – Public Opinion Research Study on Electoral Matters - Wave 4

[Printable PDF version](#)

Prepared for Elections Canada

**Supplier:** Léger Marketing Inc.

**Contract Number:** 05005-221079/001/CY

**Contract Value:** \$81,622.16 (including HST)

**Award Date:** 2022-02-24

**Delivery Date:** 2024-04-19

**Registration Number:** POR 127-21

For more information on this report, please contact Elections Canada at [rop-por@elections.ca](mailto:rop-por@elections.ca).

Léger is pleased to present Elections Canada with this report on findings from the fourth 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. who 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 fourth wave of the survey, conducted on electoral matters with 2,501 Canadians who were eligible electors between March 12 and 19, 2024. The first wave of this study was conducted in April 2021.<sup>1</sup> This serves as the baseline for measuring and identifying significant trends or changes in the opinions and attitudes of Canadian electors over time, across up to a total of five survey waves. The second wave was conducted in April 2022<sup>2</sup> and the third in March 2023.<sup>3</sup>

The project aims 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 EC's policies, programs and services.

## **Methodology**

This public opinion research was conducted via online surveys, using Computer Aided Web Interviewing (CAWI) technology. Fieldwork for the wave four survey was carried out from March 12 to 19, 2024. A total of 2,501 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 the Leo panel and the overall response rate for the survey was 11.3%.

The questionnaire comprised questions posed in the wave three survey conducted in March 2023.

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 A of this report.

A pre-test of 51 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 A](#)).

## **Overview of the findings**

- The top news sources remain unchanged from March 2023 to March 2024: television comes out first (29%), followed closely by online news websites or apps (28%) and social media posts by news organizations or journalists (15%).
- A vast majority (80%) of electors said they see news about Canadian politics very or somewhat often; almost one in five (18%) respondents said they rarely see news about politics from any origin, stable since 2023 (17%).
- In March 2024, Elections Canada came second to the police in terms of electors' confidence in institutions, with seven out of 10 (69%) having a fair amount or a great deal of confidence in EC, compared with 70% for the police. Confidence in EC has dropped by 5 percentage points since April 2022 (74%) and by 9 percentage points since April 2021 (78%). A significant loss in confidence in the federal government is also notable, with 45% of respondents being confident in March 2024 compared to 53% in March 2023.
- A large majority (79%) of electors in March 2024 generally believe that Elections Canada runs federal elections fairly; results remain stable since the last survey in March 2023 (78%).
- Reasons for thinking Elections Canada runs elections unfairly remain somewhat similar to March 2023, with some key differences. A significantly smaller proportion of respondents mentioned concerns about electoral integrity and security: how the rules are applied, including broad statements about "rigging," (6% in March 2024 versus 18% in March 2023) and concerns about foreign/Chinese influence/interference (2% in March 2024 versus 7% in March 2023) as the reason why the system is unfair. With these changes, the regional distribution of seats being unfair and the election being decided by Ontario/Quebec has become the primary reason why the Canadian electoral system is considered to be unfair (8%, stable since March 2023).
- Nearly three quarters (74%) 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. These results have remained stable since March 2023.
- The spread of false information online is still perceived by a large proportion of electors (80%) as the type of electoral interference that can have a moderate or major impact on the outcome of the next federal election, a result that is significantly higher than March 2023 (76%). There is a significantly greater proportion of respondents who perceive foreign countries or groups using social media and other means to influence the political opinions of Canadians as having a major or minor impact on the outcome of the federal election (69%, compared to 65% in 2023). This increase means that compared to March 2023, foreign money being used to influence politics in Canada has moved into third place (68%), followed by hacking by foreign countries or groups into the computer systems that support the election (64%).
- In 2024, voting by mail in Canada is perceived to be even less safe and reliable compared with the voting system in general (35% compared with 63%). Voting by mail is perceived as safe and reliable by a significantly smaller proportion of electors in March 2024 compared to March 2023 (35% versus 42% in March 2023).
- Similar to March 2023, the largest proportion (42%) of electors in March 2024 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 (38%). Around three out of 10 electors also agreed that someone voting more than once (34%) and someone stealing or tampering with ballots after they have been cast (29%) happens often or sometimes. Results have remained stable since March 2023.

- Two thirds (67%) of respondents agreed that they did not think the government cares about what people like them think (up 2% since March 2023), around half (49%) agreed that politics and government seem so complicated that people like them cannot understand, and four in 10 (41%) agreed that all federal political parties are basically the same and do not really offer a choice. Agreement with the last two statements remained stable compared to 2023.
- Almost half (47%) of electors do not feel polarized in how they relate to other Canadians: they do not find it easier to relate to those they agree with politically and do not find it harder to relate to those with whom they disagree. On the other hand, 14% of electors feel strongly polarized, meaning they find it easier to relate to those they agree with politically to a moderate or large extent while also agreeing that it is harder for them to relate to those with whom they disagree. Over a third (39%) feel somewhat polarized, falling in the middle of the two groups. Overall, respondents' feelings of being polarized were based more often on an affinity toward those they agreed with politically rather than an aversion to those with whom they disagreed: 50% of respondents agreed to a moderate or large extent that they find it easier to relate to people if they agree with them politically; 39% agreed that they find it harder to relate to people if they disagree with them politically. Results have remained stable since March 2023.
- The proportion of people who accept various broad conspiracy theories about government to be true in March 2024 has not changed since March 2023. The most accepted theory remained that certain significant events have been the result of the activity of a small group who secretly manipulate world events, with four in 10 (42%) accepting it as definitely or probably true (similar to 42% in March 2023).

## **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 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 for this survey were selected among those who have volunteered to participate/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 from the most recent survey wave (March 2024 for this report).

Subgroup differences are reported when they are statistically significant at the 95% confidence level. Subgroup differences 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 combined 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 result for all other respondents aged 25 and older. Please note that the use of the words "significant" and "significantly" throughout the report refer to statistical significance rather than magnitude. Finally, unless otherwise signalled, respondents to this survey will be referred to as "electors."

## 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

## Footnotes

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

<sup>2</sup> See: [Public Opinion Research Study on Electoral Matters - Wave 2 – Elections Canada](#).

<sup>3</sup> See: [Public Opinion Research Study on Electoral Matters - Wave 3 – Elections Canada](#).

- [Previous](#)
- [Table of Contents](#)
- [Next](#)