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Insights on Canadian Society

Taking the pulse: Perceptions of democracy in Canada

by Ian Walker, Samuel MacIsaac and Andrew Canning

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INSIGHTS ON CANADIAN SOCIETY



Taking the pulse: Perceptions of democracy in Canada

by Ian Walker, Samuel MacIsaac and Andrew Canning

Overview of the study

This study uses data from the Survey Series on People and their Communities (2022 to 2024) to assess Canadians' hopefulness about how democracy works in Canada among those aged 15 years and older. It also examines how hopefulness about the functioning of democracy relates to trust in information sources, confidence in civic institutions and participation in political activities.

- In 2024, 12% of people in Canada reported being very hopeful about the way democracy works in Canada, while 71% reported being a little or somewhat hopeful and 17% were not at all hopeful.
- People in age groups 45 and older (ranging from 12% to 18%) were more likely to report feeling very hopeful about the functioning of democracy in Canada, compared with those aged 25 to 34 (8%) and 35 to 44 (10%).
- People who reported that they were not at all hopeful about the way democracy works in Canada were also less trusting of most information sources, compared with those who reported higher levels of hope.
- People who reported being not at all hopeful about the way democracy works in Canada reported lower confidence in many civic institutions, such as the justice system and courts and the Canadian media.
- Having a lower level of hopefulness about the way democracy works in Canada was not associated with lower voter turnout or political disengagement. People who were not at all hopeful about democracy in Canada were more likely to have participated in one or more political activities in the last 12 months (57%), compared with those who were a little or somewhat hopeful (44%) and those who were very hopeful (44%).

Introduction

Canadians' views about their institutions and their participation in democratic activities may indicate how well democracy is functioning in Canada. Confidence in elections, trust in information sources and trust in public institutions are important indicators of a well-functioning democracy.¹ However, recent trends suggest that voter turnout² and confidence in institutions³ remain relatively low.

Despite Canada's long democratic history, the country is not immune to challenges and threats to its democratic institutions, norms and practices.⁴ For example, misinformation and disinformation can make it harder for people to judge what information is reliable, and this can affect their trust in elections and public institutions. In response, the federal government has taken steps to better understand and address misinformation as a form of interference in democratic processes.⁵ In 2022, the Privy Council Office launched the Trust, Information, and Digital Ecosystems Study to collect—via nationally representative surveys—information on misinformation and disinformation and their connection to trust in people and civic institutions.⁶ Elections Canada also supports research on voter turnout, confidence in how elections are run and trust in the electoral process.⁷

This study leverages a new survey question on hope about the future regarding how democracy works in Canada, which offers a new, forward-looking measure of public trust. People who feel less hopeful about democracy may also be less likely to express trust in institutions or to participate in democratic activities such as voting. Monitoring levels of hopefulness about the functioning of democracy over time can

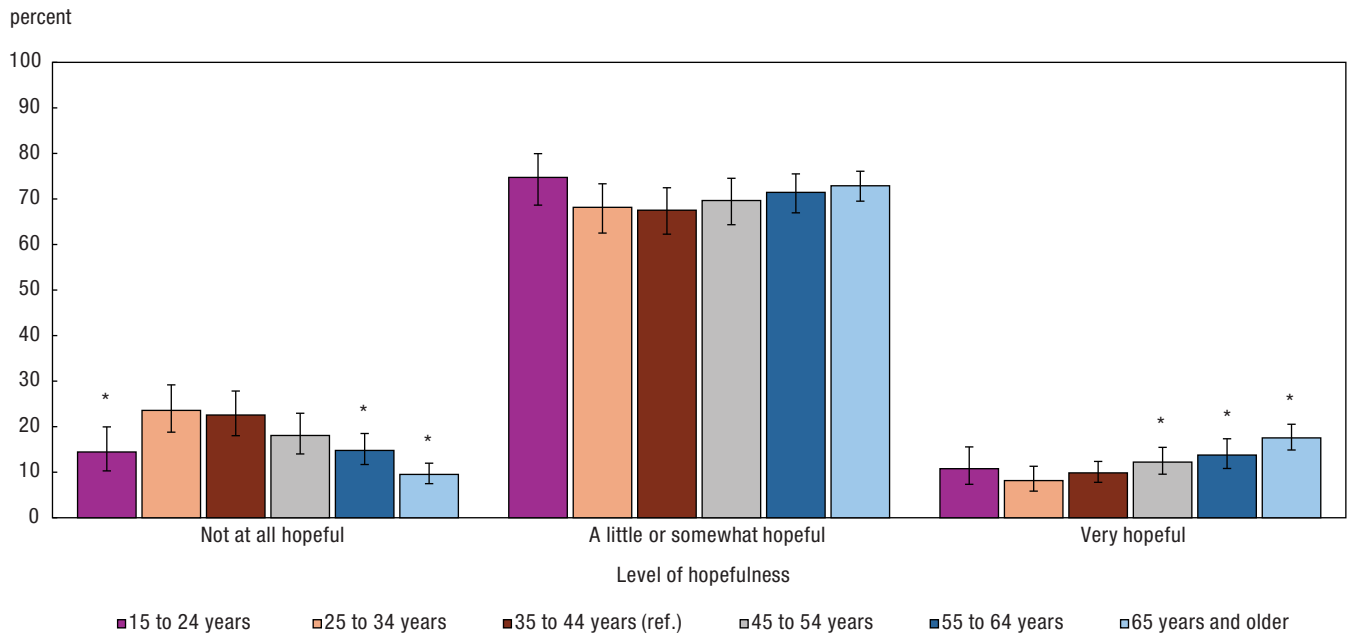
help identify shifts in public perceptions and point to potential challenges or areas that may warrant attention.

This study uses data collected in the [Survey Series on People and their Communities](#) from October 2022 to April 2024 to examine how hope about the way democracy works in Canada varies across groups. Furthermore, the study explores the relationship between levels of hopefulness about how Canadian democracy works and trust in information sources, confidence in civic institutions and political engagement.

The majority of Canadians feel a little or somewhat hopeful about how democracy works in Canada

In 2024, when asked to think about the future, most Canadians aged 15 and older (71%) were a little or somewhat hopeful about the way democracy works in Canada. The percentage of people who reported being very hopeful differed across age groups, with older people generally feeling more hopeful about democracy in Canada (Chart 1). Almost one-fifth of those aged 65 and older (18%) and more than one-tenth (14%) of those aged 55 to 64 reported feeling very hopeful about the functioning of democracy in Canada (Table 1).

Meanwhile, except for people aged 15 to 24, younger adults were more likely to report lower levels of hopefulness. Nearly one-quarter of adults aged 25 to 34 (24%) and 35 to 44 (23%) reported that they were not at all hopeful about how democracy works in Canada (Table 1; Chart 1).

Chart 1**Level of hopefulness about how democracy works in Canada, by age group, 2024**

* significantly different from reference category (ref.) after adjusting for all other variables in the logistic regression model ($p < 0.05$)

Notes: Error bars represent the 95% confidence intervals.

The study population included those aged 15 years and older who expressed a level of hopefulness about how democracy works in Canada.

Source: Statistics Canada, Survey Series on People and their Communities, 2024.

Table 1**Percentage and predicted probability of feeling very hopeful or not at all hopeful about how democracy works in Canada, by sociodemographic characteristics, 2024**

Sociodemographic characteristics	Very hopeful				Not at all hopeful			
	percentage	95% confidence interval		predicted probability	percentage	95% confidence interval		predicted probability
		lower	upper			lower	upper	
Age								
15 to 24 years	10.8	7.4	15.6	11.6	14.5	10.3	20.0	14.0*
25 to 34 years	8.2	5.9	11.3	7.3	23.6	18.8	29.2	23.3
35 to 44 years (ref.)	9.9	7.8	12.4	8.4	22.6	18.0	27.9	22.7
45 to 54 years	12.2	9.6	15.5	11.9*	18.1	14.0	23.0	17.9
55 to 64 years	13.8	10.8	17.3	14.6*	14.8	11.7	18.5	15.2*
65 years and older	17.6	14.9	20.6	19.1*	9.5	7.5	12.0	10.4*
Gender								
Men+ (ref.)	13.2	11.5	15.2	13.2	17.9	15.5	20.7	18.0
Women+	11.5	10.0	13.2	11.5	15.6	13.5	18.0	16.0
Education								
Less than high school diploma	11.8	8.4	16.2	11.5	9.7	6.8	13.6	14.1
High school diploma or equivalent	12.4	9.8	15.4	13.0	17.3	13.6	21.7	16.6
College, trades, CEGEP or other certificate or diploma below bachelor level	10.0	8.3	12.0	10.1*	19.8	16.7	23.4	19.5
Bachelor's degree or higher (ref.)	15.3	13.3	17.5	14.5	15.9	13.4	18.8	15.4
Income								
Less than \$15,000	9.8	7.8	12.3	9.4	17.8	13.6	23.0	20.5
\$15,000 to less than \$30,000	13.9	11.1	17.4	13.7	12.9	10.1	16.4	14.5
\$30,000 to less than \$45,000	11.7	9.4	14.4	11.7	16.7	13.2	20.9	15.8
\$45,000 to less than \$70,000 (ref.)	11.8	9.8	14.1	12.6	20.0	16.3	24.3	18.4
\$70,000 or more	14.2	11.2	17.8	14.0	18.8	15.1	23.2	16.6

Table 1

Percentage and predicted probability of feeling very hopeful or not at all hopeful about how democracy works in Canada, by sociodemographic characteristics, 2024

Sociodemographic characteristics	Very hopeful				Not at all hopeful			
	95% confidence interval			predicted probability	95% confidence interval			predicted probability
	percentage	lower	upper		percentage	lower	upper	
Racialized group								
South Asian	18.9	16.0	22.1	14.9	13.7	11.1	16.8	15.9
Chinese	10.4	8.2	13.2	8.3	12.8	10.2	15.9	13.5
Black	23.0	19.8	26.4	21.3*	11.2	8.8	14.0	14.7
Filipino	24.0	20.7	27.7	21.2*	7.1	5.3	9.5	7.3*
Arab	21.0	17.3	25.1	19.5*	14.9	11.6	18.9	21.3
Latin American	22.9	19.2	27.1	19.8*	14.1	11.0	18.0	16.5
Southeast Asian	19.4	15.6	23.7	18.4*	11.4	8.1	15.8	12.6
West Asian	22.7	17.5	28.9	18.6*	15.7	10.1	23.5	19.2
Korean or Japanese	9.5	6.4	13.9	8.0	10.1	6.3	15.8	10.5*
Racialized group, n.i.e., or multiple racialized groups	12.0	8.6	16.5	10.5	16.1	10.9	23.1	16.1
Not belonging to a racialized group (ref.)	10.2	8.7	11.9	10.9	18.4	16.1	20.8	17.8
Immigrant status								
Non-immigrant	9.5	8.0	11.3	10.6*	18.6	16.3	21.2	18.0
Established immigrant (ref.)	17.9	16.3	19.6	13.7	13.9	12.2	15.9	16.8
Recent immigrant	24.4	21.7	27.4	22.0*	7.2	5.7	9.1	7.6*
Non-permanent resident	21.3	17.9	25.2	21.8*	7.9	5.5	11.3	7.8*
Region								
Atlantic	11.2	8.1	15.3	12.3	21.4	16.2	27.8	20.6
Quebec	10.0	7.9	12.5	10.2	8.6	6.3	11.8	9.0*
Ontario (ref.)	13.6	11.7	15.8	13.1	16.9	14.2	20.1	17.4
Prairies	11.2	8.7	14.3	11.0	24.7	20.0	30.0	24.3*
British Columbia	14.8	11.8	18.4	15.1	17.3	13.8	21.4	17.3
Residence in a census metropolitan area								
Yes (ref.)	13.3	12.0	14.8	12.7	15.3	13.5	17.3	15.5
No	9.6	7.4	12.5	11.2	21.2	17.5	25.5	21.3*
2SLGBTQ+ status								
2SLGBTQ+	11.0	7.0	16.9	16.0	23.9	17.3	32.1	21.2
Non-2SLGBTQ+ (ref.)	12.5	11.3	13.8	12.1	16.1	14.4	18.0	16.6
Disability status								
Yes	8.1	5.6	11.5	9.4	16.0	11.8	21.3	13.5
No (ref.)	13.1	11.8	14.5	12.8	16.9	15.1	18.9	17.7
Religious status								
Identified a religion or spiritual tradition	13.6	12.2	15.2	12.5	14.8	13.0	16.8	16.6
Did not identify a religion or had secular perspectives (ref.)	9.9	8.0	12.2	12.0	20.8	17.5	24.5	17.7
Household composition								
Living alone (ref.)	12.4	9.5	16.0	12.6	15.2	11.7	19.5	15.8
Multiple-person household, no children	12.8	11.1	14.8	12.4	17.0	14.8	19.5	17.8
Multiple-person household, with one or more children	11.7	9.9	13.7	12.2	17.0	14.1	20.3	16.3
Mental health								
Excellent or very good	16.7	15.0	18.6	15.2*	12.7	10.9	14.8	13.7
Good (ref.)	9.9	8.0	12.1	10.1	17.0	14.0	20.4	16.9
Poor or fair	6.2	3.9	9.8	7.9	26.2	21.4	31.6	23.6*

* significantly different from reference category (ref.) after adjusting for all other variables in the logistic regression model ($p < 0.05$)

Notes: The men+ category includes men (and boys), as well as some non-binary people, while the women+ category includes women (and girls), as well as some non-binary people.

The acronym "n.i.e." refers to racialized people not included elsewhere.

The acronym "2SLGBTQ+" refers to people who are Two-Spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or queer, or who use other terms related to gender and sexual diversity.

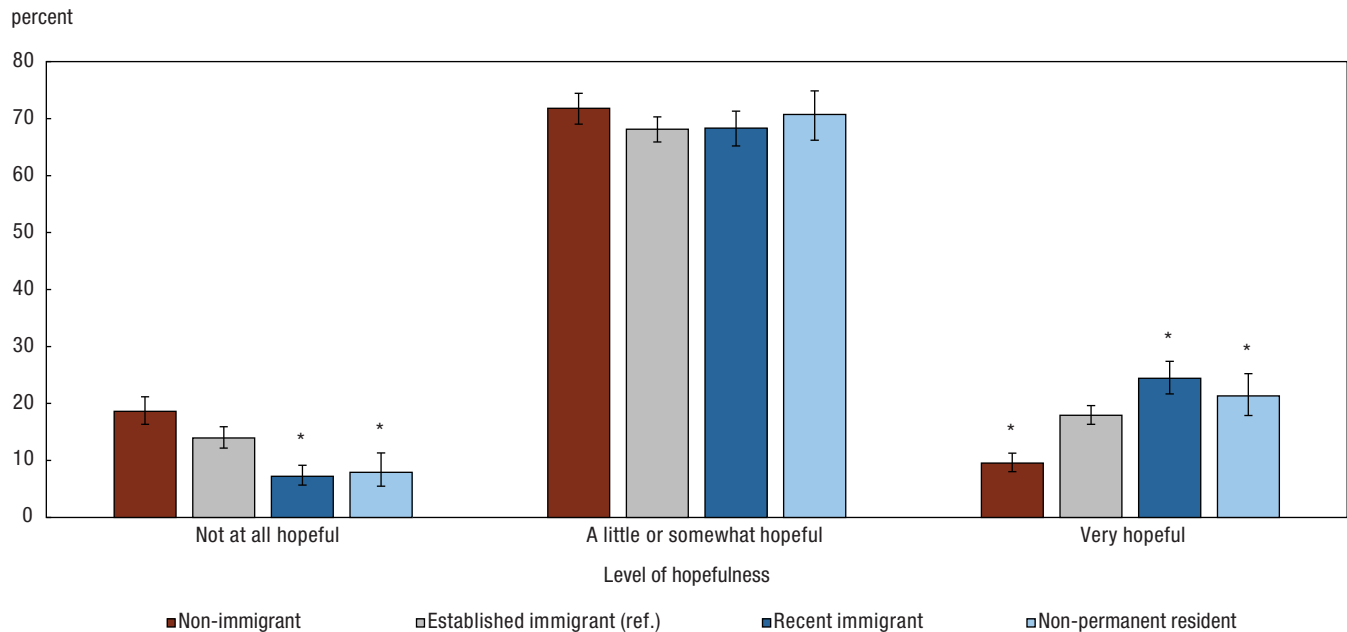
Source: Statistics Canada, Survey Series on People and their Communities, 2024.

Hopefulness about the way democracy works also differed by immigrant status (Chart 2). Among immigrants, those who were established were generally less hopeful about the way democracy works in Canada, with twice as many reporting being not at all hopeful (14%), compared with recent

immigrants (7%) and non-permanent residents (8%). Hopefulness levels also differed between established immigrants and non-immigrants, with established immigrants being almost twice as likely to report feeling very hopeful about how democracy works in Canada (18% vs. 10%).

Chart 2

Level of hopefulness about how democracy works in Canada, by immigrant status, 2024



* significantly different from reference category (ref.) after adjusting for all other variables in the logistic regression model ($p < 0.05$)

Notes: Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals.

The study population included those aged 15 years and older who expressed a level of hopefulness about how democracy works in Canada.

Source: Statistics Canada, Survey Series on People and their Communities, 2024.

There were regional differences in the percentage of people who felt not at all hopeful about democracy. People in the Prairies were more likely (25%) than residents of Ontario (17%) to report being not at all hopeful about the way democracy works in Canada. Conversely, people in Quebec were less likely (9%) to report feeling not at all hopeful, compared with residents of Ontario (Table 1). People who lived outside census metropolitan areas (CMAs)—that is, people living in a rural setting or in smaller centres—were more likely than those who lived in CMAs to report being not at all hopeful about the way democracy works in Canada (21% vs. 15%). When it came to feeling very hopeful about the way democracy works, there were no differences by region.

People who are not at all hopeful about the way democracy works are less likely to trust various sources of information

Compared with Canadians who were more hopeful, those who were not at all hopeful about how democracy works in Canada were less likely to trust various information sources. For example, they were less likely to report a high level of trust in scientific experts or peer-reviewed journals (46%) than those who were a little or somewhat hopeful (72%) or very hopeful (83%) (Chart 3). Similarly, less than one-fifth

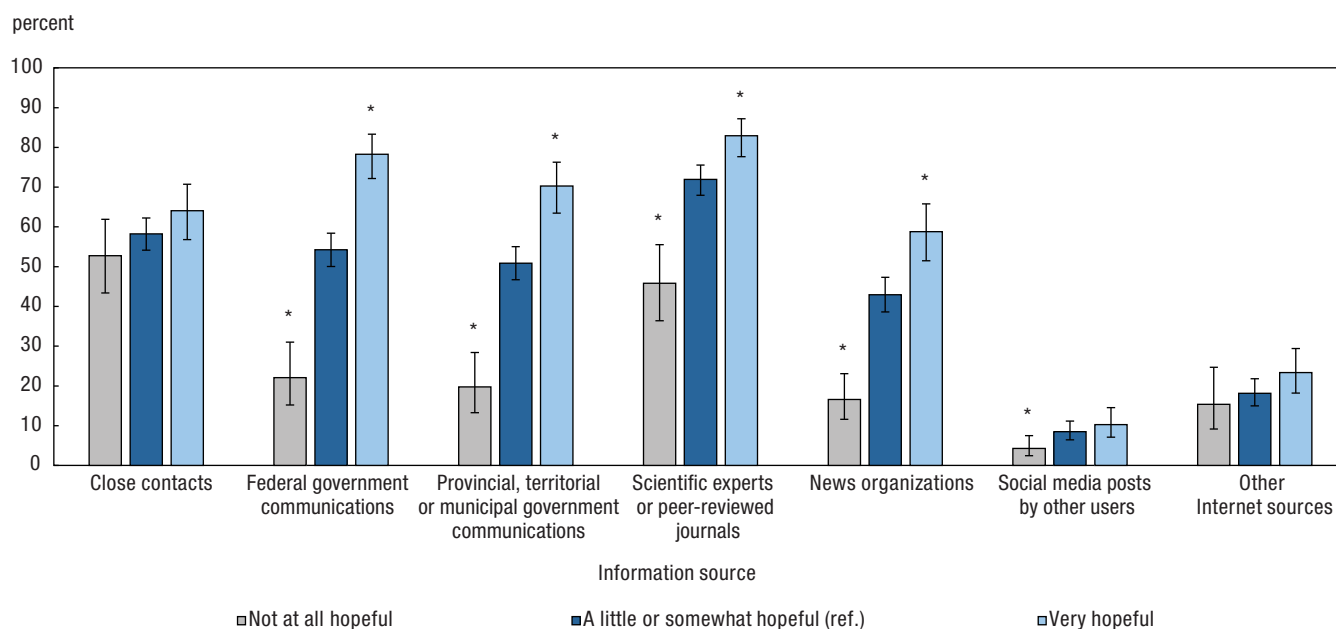
(17%) of those who were not at all hopeful about the way democracy works reported a high level of trust in news organizations, compared with 43% of people who were a little or somewhat hopeful about the democracy and 59% of people who were very hopeful.

Despite the least hopeful group being less trusting of most information sources than those who were more hopeful, there were two exceptions: similar proportions of people across all levels of hopefulness reported having a high level of trust in their close contacts and other Internet sources

(e.g., Google searches, online forums). This finding is especially pertinent given the increasing public focus on misinformation. In 2025, four-fifths (80%) of Canadians reported seeing news or information on the Internet that they suspected was misleading, false or inaccurate at least once a month.⁸ Additionally, nearly half of Canadians (47%) reported that distinguishing between true and false information is becoming more difficult compared with three years prior to the survey date, and more than half (61%) reported high or extreme levels of concern about misinformation online.

Chart 3

Percentage of people who report a high level of trust in information sources, by level of hopefulness about how democracy works in Canada, 2023 and 2024



* significantly different from reference category (ref.) ($p < 0.05$)

Notes: Error bars represent the 95% confidence intervals.

The study population included those aged 15 years and older who expressed a level of hopefulness about how democracy works in Canada.

Source: Statistics Canada, Survey Series on People and their Communities, 2023 and 2024.

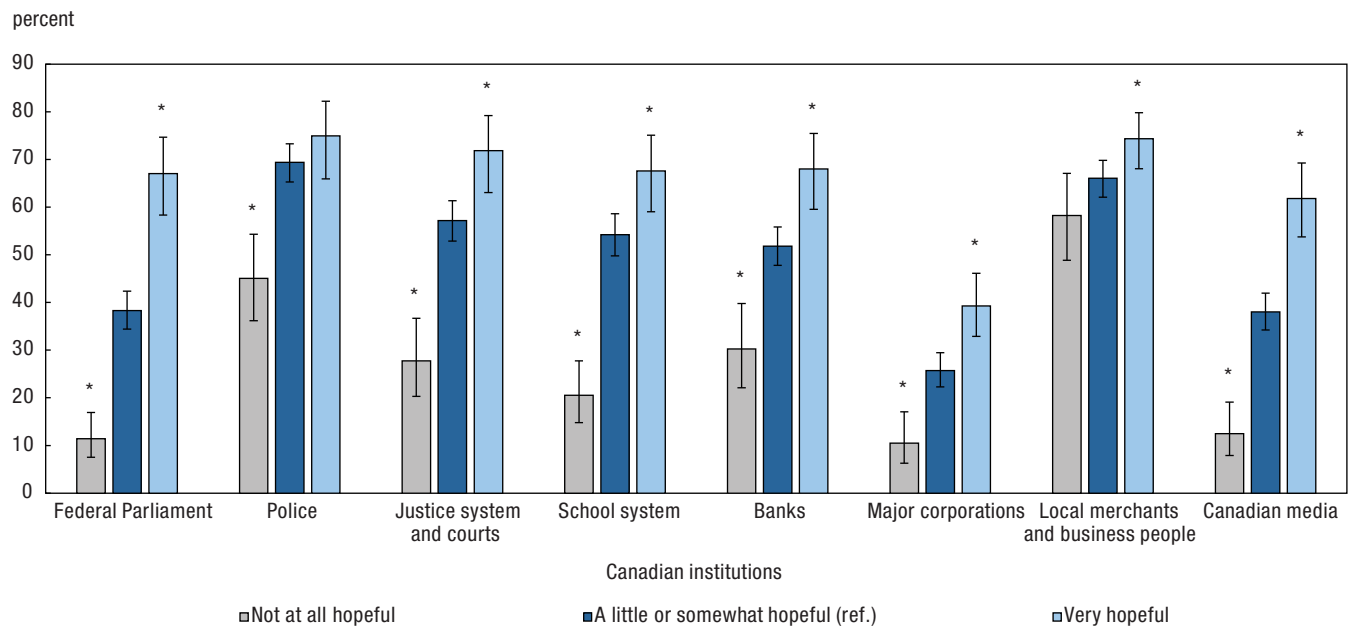
Feeling not at all hopeful about the way democracy works is associated with lower confidence in institutions

In addition to reporting lower trust in information sources, people who were not at all hopeful about the way democracy works in Canada reported lower confidence in most civic institutions than those who were a little or somewhat hopeful. The only exception was confidence in local merchants and business people. This finding aligns with previous research that found that trust in institutions may be associated with national levels of optimism.⁹

Specifically, just over one-tenth (11%) of those who were not at all hopeful about democracy reported high confidence in the federal Parliament, compared with more than one-third (38%) of those who were a little or somewhat hopeful about democracy and two-thirds (67%) of those who were very hopeful (Chart 4). Similarly, high levels of confidence in the Canadian media, the school system, the justice system and courts, banks, major corporations, and the police were less frequently reported by people who were not at all hopeful about the way democracy works in Canada.

Chart 4

Percentage of people who report a high level of confidence in institutions in Canada, by level of hopefulness about how democracy works in Canada, 2023 and 2024



* significantly different from reference category (ref.) ($p < 0.05$)

Notes: Error bars represent the 95% confidence intervals.

The study population included those aged 15 years and older who expressed a level of hopefulness about how democracy works in Canada.

Source: Statistics Canada, Survey Series on People and their Communities, 2023 and 2024.

Overall, people who were very hopeful about the way democracy works in Canada reported higher confidence in civic institutions across all institution types compared with their less hopeful counterparts, with one exception. The prevalence of high confidence in the police did not differ significantly between those who were very hopeful (75%) about democracy and those who were a little or somewhat hopeful (69%).

People who lack hope about how democracy works are still turning up to vote

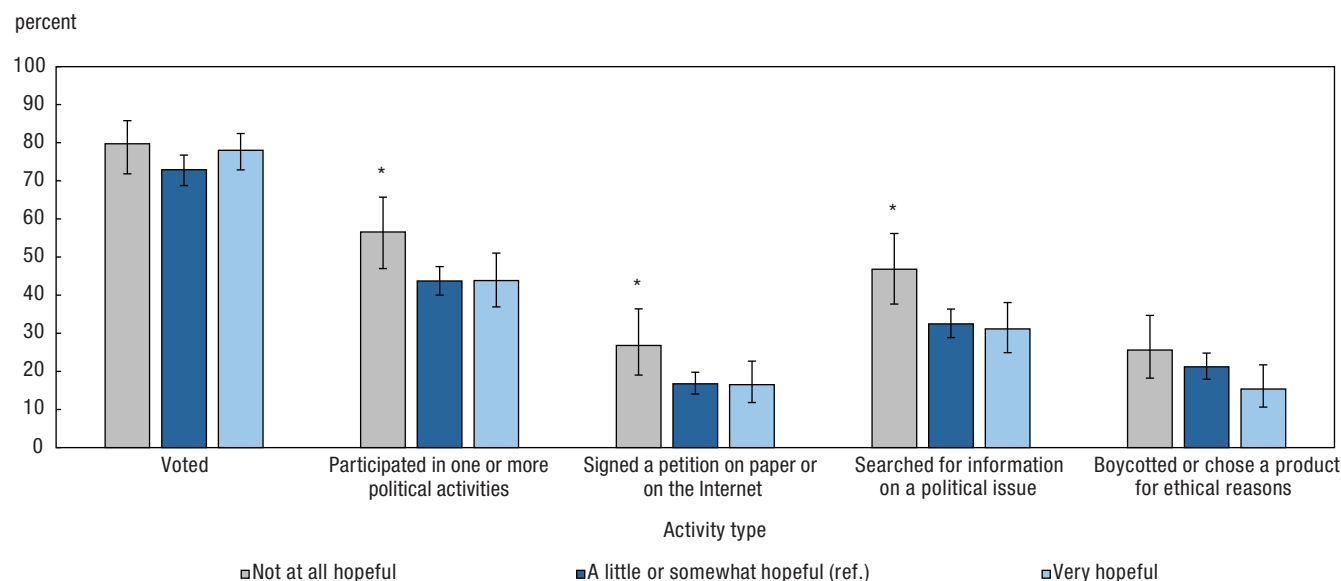
Despite recent trends pointing to Canadians' relatively low voter turnout, having lower levels of hopefulness

about the way democracy works in Canada was not associated with lower voter turnout or with political disengagement. Those who were not at all hopeful about democracy reported that they still took the time to vote. The likelihood of voting in the 2021 federal election did not differ significantly by respondents' level of hopefulness about the functioning of democracy in Canada (Chart 5).

Previous research has shown that apathy may be associated with lower participation in political activities.¹⁰ Other research on the relationship between satisfaction with democracy and voting has shown mixed results, with some studies finding that those who are more satisfied with democracy are more likely to vote and other studies finding the opposite.¹¹

Chart 5

Participation in voting and political activities, by level of hopefulness about how democracy works in Canada, 2023 and 2024



* significantly different from reference category (ref.) ($p < 0.05$)

Notes: Error bars represent the 95% confidence intervals.

The study population included those aged 15 years and older who expressed a level of hopefulness about how democracy works in Canada.

Political activities did not include voting.

Political activities included the following: searched for information on a political issue; expressed their views on a political or social issue through an Internet forum or news website; signed a petition on paper or on the Internet; boycotted or chose a product for ethical reasons; attended a public meeting; spoke out at a public meeting; volunteered for a political party; expressed their views on an issue by contacting a newspaper or a politician; participated in a demonstration or march; or wore a badge, T-shirt or displayed a lawn sign in support of or opposition to a political or social cause.

Source: Statistics Canada, Survey Series on People and their Communities, 2023 and 2024.

In this study, people who said they were not at all hopeful about democracy reported similar voter participation as those who were more hopeful about democracy. Additionally, a larger proportion of respondents who were not at all hopeful about the way democracy works in Canada participated in political activities than those who were more hopeful. Over half (57%) reported that they engaged in one or more political activities in the previous 12 months, and they were more likely to have done so than their more hopeful counterparts (44% of those who were a little or somewhat hopeful and 44% of those who were very hopeful).

Regarding specific types of political activities, those who were not at all hopeful about democracy were more likely to sign a petition (27%) and search for information on a political issue (47%) than those who were a little or somewhat hopeful (17% and 32%, respectively); they were also more likely to boycott or choose a product for ethical reasons compared to those who were very hopeful (26% versus 15%).

Conclusion

In 2024, the majority of Canadians reported that they were a little or somewhat hopeful about the way democracy works. People aged 45 and older, recent immigrants, non-permanent residents, and those who reported excellent or very good mental health were more likely to report feeling very hopeful about Canadian democracy. In contrast, those more likely to express a lack of hope about the functioning of democracy in Canada included adults aged 25 to 44, non-immigrants and established immigrants, people in the Prairies, and people living outside a CMA.

A notable finding was that people who were not at all hopeful about how democracy works in Canada did not appear to be politically disengaged. In fact,

those who were not at all hopeful about democracy reported voting rates similar to those of their more hopeful counterparts and were more likely to have participated in one or more political activities in the last 12 months. As noted earlier, there are mixed findings in the research literature regarding the relationship between satisfaction with democracy and participation in voting.¹² In contrast to previous studies that found a link between satisfaction with democracy and voter turnout,¹³ this study found no connection between how hopeful Canadians feel about how democracy works and whether they vote. This matters because voting is a central feature of democratic life. Moreover, people who were not at all hopeful about how democracy works were less likely to trust most sources of information and were less confident in most institutions.

Though informative, the results of this study represent only a snapshot of Canadians' behaviours and views. Given the rapid pace of social change, it may be useful to repeat these survey questions at a later date to examine how perceptions about the functioning of democracy evolve over time. For example, major events that occurred after this survey series was conducted—such as recent trade and diplomatic tensions between Canada and the United States, and the April 2025 Canadian federal election—may have influenced the relationships observed in this study. Better understanding the hopefulness of Canadians about democracy when facing evolving challenges and the confidence of Canadians in their country's institutions, and what this may mean for electoral participation, can benefit policy makers and Canadians alike.

Andrew Canning and **Ian Walker** are analysts in the Centre for Social Data Development and Insights at Statistics Canada. **Samuel MacIsaac** is an analyst with the Economic and Social Analysis and Modelling Division at Statistics Canada.

Data sources, methods and definitions

Data sources

The [Survey Series on People and their Communities](#) (SSPC) is a series of social surveys that began in 2022, which involved creating a panel of people who agreed to complete a series of short surveys. The first half of this paper used Panel 5, which focused on socioeconomic and demographic characteristics, while the analysis on trust in information sources, confidence in institutions, voting and political participation was based on all panels. These surveys were administered in 2022, 2023 and 2024 and covered the topics of racism and discrimination, satisfaction with relationships, and well-being, among others. The reference period for this survey series is October 14, 2022, to April 22, 2024 (Panel 1 from October 14, 2022, to January 3, 2023; Panel 2 from May 5 to July 25, 2023; Panel 3 from October 2 to 22, 2023; Panel 4 from November 27 to December 17, 2023; and Panel 5 from April 2 to 22, 2024). Although the same respondents were approached for each panel of the SSPC, cohorts differ because of varying response rates. Attrition across the panels could lead to selection bias.

The SSPC is part of Statistics Canada's Disaggregated Data Action Plan, which aims to produce detailed statistical information to highlight the lived experiences of specific population groups, such as women, Indigenous Peoples, racialized groups and people living with disabilities. Using the 2021 Census survey frame, the sample for the SSPC included an oversampling of immigrants and Canadians self-declaring as being part of racialized groups. This enabled the production of more reliable statistics for diverse racialized groups and immigrant populations.

The target population for the SSPC is those aged 15 years and older living in the 10 provinces of Canada. The SSPC's coverage excludes residents of Yukon, the Northwest Territories and Nunavut; full-time residents of institutions (e.g., inmates and patients living in nursing homes); and residents of reserves and other Indigenous settlements. Together, these groups represent an exclusion of less than 2.5% of the Canadian population aged 15 and older. Because the survey frame is based on respondents to the 2021 Census long-form questionnaire, the observed population does not include individuals who immigrated to Canada after the census reference date of May 11, 2021.

The SSPC target sample consisted of 70,000 individuals, with response rates of 53.2% for Panel 1, 33.8% for Panel 2, 27.2% for Panel 3, 24.4% for Panel 4 and 24.1% for Panel 5. Survey weighting was done, including

non-response adjustment and calibration, to align the sample with the target population. More information on SSPC sampling procedures can be found at [Survey Series on People and their Communities](#).

Methods

This study uses a question on hopefulness about the future of democracy from Panel 5 of the SSPC. The SSPC Longitudinal Weights file, which contains questions on trust in information sources, confidence in institutions, voting and political engagement from other panels, was leveraged to examine these topics. The sample size of the merged file is smaller because it includes only respondents who answered all panels.

All estimates were produced using survey weights, which were adjusted to account for non-response and calibrated to population totals, to make the results representative of the Canadian population.

Logistic regression models were used to assess the relationship between hopefulness about the way democracy works in Canada and various individual characteristics, including age, gender, education level, income, racialized group, immigrant status, region, residence in a census metropolitan area, 2SLGBTQ+ status, disability status, religious status, household composition and self-rated mental health.

The confidence limits were calculated using the Wilson method; therefore, the upper and lower confidence limits may not be equally distant from the proportion.

Comparisons across trust in information sources, confidence in institutions, voting and political participation are based on unadjusted group differences, and statistical significance was assessed using t-tests. Results by sociodemographic group are presented descriptively, and references to differences across age groups, immigrant status categories and regions were included if those differences remained statistically significant after adjusting for other variables in the multivariable regressions (see Table 1).

Definitions

Hopefulness about the future was assessed using the following question: "Thinking about the future in Canada, how hopeful are you about each of the following topics?" "The way democracy works in Canada" was one of the topics. The scale included the following responses: very hopeful, somewhat hopeful, a little hopeful and not at all hopeful.

Confidence in institutions was assessed using the following question: “Using a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 means ‘No confidence at all’ and 5 means ‘A great deal of confidence’, please answer the following questions. How much confidence do you have in the following institutions?” The institutions were the police, the justice system and courts, the school system, the federal Parliament, banks, major corporations, local merchants and business people, and the Canadian media. High confidence in an institution corresponds to a score of 4 or 5.

Trust in information sources was assessed using the following question: “On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means ‘Cannot be trusted at all’ and 5 means ‘Can be trusted completely’, what is your level of trust in each of the following as a source of reliable news or information?” This question referred to close contacts; federal government communications; provincial, territorial or municipal government communications; scientific experts or peer-reviewed journals; news organizations; social media posts by other users; and other Internet sources. High trust in an information source corresponds to a score of 4 or 5.

Voting behaviour and political participation were assessed using self-declared responses to the following questions: “Did you vote in the last federal election?” and “In the past 12 months, have you done any of the following activities?” The following activities were listed: searched for information on a political issue; volunteered for a political party; expressed your views on an issue by contacting a newspaper or a politician; expressed your views on a political or social issue through an Internet forum or news website; signed a petition on paper or on the Internet; boycotted or chose a product for ethical reasons; attended a public meeting; spoke out at a public meeting; participated in a demonstration or march; wore a badge, T-shirt or displayed a lawn sign in support of or opposition to a political or social cause; and did not participate in any of these activities.

In the SSPC, **misinformation** is defined as “news or information that is verifiably false or inaccurate. The sharer of misinformation may or may not be aware that it is misinformation. When they are aware, it is often referred to as **disinformation**.”

Women+ includes women (and girls), as well as some non-binary people.

Men+ includes men (and boys), as well as some non-binary people.

The **racialized population** is derived directly from the concept of “visible minority” in the 2021 Census. The *Employment Equity Act* defines visible minorities as “persons, other than Aboriginal peoples, who are non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour.” This population consists mainly of the following groups: South Asian, Chinese, Black, Filipino, Latin American, Arab, Southeast Asian, West Asian, Korean and Japanese. Korean and Japanese people were grouped together because of low counts.

2SLGBTQ+ refers to people who are Two-Spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or queer, or who use other terms related to gender and sexual diversity.

Immigrant refers to a person who is, or who has ever been, a landed immigrant or permanent resident. Such a person has been granted the right to live in Canada permanently by immigration authorities. Immigrants who have obtained Canadian citizenship by naturalization are included in this group. **Established immigrants** have lived in Canada since before 2016. **Recent immigrants** arrived in Canada from 2016 to 2021.

Canadians refers to all people living in Canada, regardless of citizenship status.

Limitations

The longitudinal survey weights file includes respondents who participated in all five panels of the SSPC. Accordingly, the sample size for those sections of this study was smaller ($n = 3,910$), and the response rate was 5.7%. Despite rigorous methodological processes to ensure data quality and representativeness of the broader Canadian population, methods such as survey weights cannot correct for all forms of non-response bias. Survey weights adjust for overall non-response to the extent that selected sociodemographic characteristics (e.g., immigrant status and age) are correlated with the variables of interest. Biases may still arise if survey participation in later waves was predicated on other factors, including respondents' attitudes or views that are not tied to those used to estimate survey weights. Another important limitation of the SSPC is that it focused on self-reported attitudes and behaviours. In such cases, survey respondents may be susceptible to desirability bias, whereby they answer in a way that they perceive would be viewed favourably by others. Voter turnout rates measured using surveys ([Voter turnout](#)) are known to be higher than actual turnout rates ([Elections Canada](#)).

Because of low counts, Indigenous people were not included in this study.

Notes

1. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2024.
2. Elections Canada, 2025a; Elections Canada, 2025b.
3. Steinburg, 2024.
4. Little and Meng, 2024; Privy Council Office, 2025.
5. Government of Canada, 2025.
6. Privy Council Office, 2024.
7. Phoenix Strategic Perspectives, 2022.
8. Statistics Canada, 2026.
9. Bericat, 2021.
10. Dahl et al., 2017.
11. Singh and Mayne, 2023.
12. Singh and Mayne, 2023.
13. Ezrow and Xezonakis, 2016.

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