

# Law 21

## Discourse, Perceptions & Impacts

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## KEY FINDINGS

1. Among the many noble values associated with law 21, **neutrality** is one of the most central. Yet, Quebecers by their own admission not only have relatively little contact with members of religious minority groups but perceive religions and religious symbols along an ascending curve of negativity from Christianity to Judaism to Sikhism to Islam. This hierarchy of negativity is amplified among strong supporters of law 21 and the large gaps between supporters and opponents point to a causal link between negative opinions of non-Christian symbols and support for law 21.
2. The **prevalent negativity toward non-Christian religious symbols** that drives support for law 21 is directly reflected in experiences and testimonies of the community members whose practices the law restricts. Muslim, Jewish and Sikh respondents describe being exposed, in their daily lives, to attitudes and behaviours that directly impact their sense of acceptance and safety, civic engagement and sense of fulfillment, well-being and hope. The waning of hope for the next generation is especially striking in all three communities.

The findings speak to some of the **central questions** raised in the public sphere today in connection with the health of our democracy.

3. **Charters of Rights and the Courts.** It has been argued that the National Assembly is the sole arbiter of the collective will. Yet 64.5% of the Quebecers surveyed deem it important for the Supreme Court to determine whether law 21 is discriminatory. And if the courts were to declare the law in violation of the Charter of Rights, support for it would drop 18 points, from 63.7% to below the 50% majority mark, to 46.7 %. Indeed, study findings highlight the importance of the counterbalancing role played by the courts in ensuring the respect of fundamental charter rights. Levels of experienced discrimination among religious minority respondents surpass those reported among members of visible minority groups (Visible Minority Men: 33.8%, Women 29.6%) for Muslim Men (38%) and Women (47.2%), Sikh Men (57%) and Women (62.5%). Among Jewish men (25%), discrimination is almost double that found in the Quebec population as a whole (13.8%).

Cont...

## ...KEY FINDINGS

4. Law 21 has been touted as a law that protects **gender equality**. Yet Quebec women overall are less supportive of the law than are men, particularly in the case of the younger age cohorts. Support remains below the majority among women between 18 and 44. Women are also more cognizant of the law's potential to discriminate against other women. This evidence of sisterly solidarity is noteworthy in the context of survey findings that identify Muslim women as among the groups most severely impacted by stigmatization (53%), injustice (47.2%) and marginalization (decline of 78.4%). In addition, women in all three religious minority communities reported more important declines in their levels of safety and freedom of expression than their male counterparts, dimensions of life that are vital if we are in search of a genuine equality that removes obstacles to full potential. 73% of Muslim women, 46% of Jewish women and 85.7% of Sikh women relayed a decline in their sense of safety in public over the last 3 years. Declines in readiness to express oneself freely in public were also high among women in all three groups: (Muslim women: 56.7%, Jewish women: 50%, Sikh women: 87.5%).

5. **Who is a Quebecer?** Majorities in all three communities surveyed report a decline in their sense of acceptance as full-fledged members of Quebec society, with the most marked deterioration found among Muslim women (82.9%) and Sikh men (86.7%), the two groups most impacted by law 21 across the board. Deteriorations in the capacity to participate in social and political life (Muslim women: 63.9%, Sikh men: 66.7%, Sikh women: 87.5%) are also important trends to follow, as feeling one can contribute to one's society is foundational to a lasting sense of belonging.

6. **Addressing the Spread of Hate.** Members of all three religious minority communities recount chilling interactions at work, at school, when receiving or providing services, in dealing with coercive authorities and in the street. These involve the denigration of their identities, the questioning of their claim to citizenship and accusations that they are a threat to Quebec society. Hateful remarks were accompanied at times by threats and acts of physical aggression (spitting, tearing off a hijab). Several respondents recounted facing physical even mortal danger (running away from a pickup truck with a 3-year-old in tow ). Reported exposure to hate incidents and crimes are high with women among Muslims (66.7%) and men among Jews (50%) and Sikhs (66.7%) most impacted in their respective communities. (Visible minority men: 36.4% and women: 42.3%).

# What Makes This Study Unique?

This is the **most extensive** study conducted of religious minority communities affected by law 21 (Muslims, Jews and Sikhs) measuring their experiences and perceptions of the Quebec climate since law 21 was enacted.

A **combined** study (Léger survey of Quebec population as a whole & ACS survey of religious minority groups) merged and weighted by Léger, this enquiry provides a window into the interplay between public discourse, popular perceptions and experienced impacts around law 21 in Quebec.

It offers access to the opinions, perceptions and experiences of both **majority** and **minority** Quebecers among a representative sample of **1,828 Quebecers**, including **632 Muslims**, **165 Jews** and **56 Sikhs**.

It gives insight into Quebecers' views of religions and into what motivates support for and opposition to law 21.

It also measures the law's impacts on the religious communities impacted by the law, including their sense of prejudice, discrimination, acceptance, exposure to hate, safety, citizen engagement, fulfillment, wellbeing and hope for their children's future.

# Combined ACS-Léger Survey

## Conducted via

- SurveyMonkey, April 27 to June 06, 2022
- Léger Marketing Survey, May 02 to 20, 2022

Additional questions from Léger  
Marketing Survey, June 10 to 12, 2022

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## Respondents

1828 Quebecers 

including

632 Muslims



165 Jews



56 Sikhs



# METHODOLOGY

1. The results are based on a Web survey conducted by Leger from May 2 to 20, 2022 among a representative sample of 1,239 Quebecers, including 170 Muslims, 92 Jews and 2 Sikhs, aged 18 and over, who can speak English or French. A margin of error cannot be associated with a non-probability sample in a panel survey. For comparison purposes, a probability sample of this size would have a margin of error of  $\pm 2.78\%$ , 19 times out of 20.
2. An online survey via Survey Monkey was also conducted by ACS between April 27 and June 06, 2022, gathering responses from 589 Quebecers, including 462 Muslims, 73 Jews and 54 Sikhs, aged 18 years and over.

Using Statistics Canada data, Léger weighted the results of the combined surveys by gender, age, region, language spoken at home, education, and presence of children in the household to ensure that the sample is representative of the entire study population, with a total representative sample of **1,828 Quebecers, including 632 Muslims, 165 Jews and 56 Sikhs.**

# INTRODUCTION

## Discourse, Perceptions & Impacts

Law 21 has been touted as a stepping stone in the evolution of Quebec into a fully modern secular and egalitarian society. The narrative that promotes both the need for and importance of the legislation associates it with noble values that are foundational to democratic life: **neutrality, laicity, equality, social harmony** and **moderation**.

Drawing strength from the roughly  $\frac{2}{3}$  popular support the law has enjoyed since its inception, its defenders have portrayed it as an expression of Quebecers' **collective will**. By extension it is seen as a reflection of that which makes Quebec society distinct, and therefore as constituting a vital step on the path to fulfilling the **destiny** of the Quebec nation.

The democratic values and aura of inevitability associated with the law, reinforced by the use of the notwithstanding clause, have made it difficult, even problematic, for those voicing a dissenting opinion. Those who maintain that the law is unconstitutional and contravenes fundamental human rights, including members of the religious communities targeted by the legislation, have had to combat tendencies to label their position as being against Quebec interests, as misunderstanding and even being disloyal to Quebec society.

This report identifies the central values associated with law 21 and, **drawing on survey results, evaluates the law's success in living up to each of these values**, with a particular focus on the perceptions and experiences of the Muslim, Jewish and Sikh communities as they navigate the Quebec environment in the 3 years since the law was enacted.

# Support for Law 21 in Quebec

Support has remained around the  $\frac{2}{3}$  mark with minor variations over the last 3 years.

63.7%

**Support  
Law 21**

Léger May 2022

60%

**With “I don’t  
know” option**

Léger June 2022

57%

**As it applies  
to teachers**

Léger June 2022

# Values, Espoused & Experienced

01

## Neutrality

Applies equally to all religions

02

## Laicity

Legacy of the Quiet Revolution

03

## Equality of Women

Lower support among women

04

## Collective Will

The National Assembly vs. the Courts

05

## Destiny & Loyalty

The acceptability of dissent

06

## Social Harmony & Moderation

Whose measure of harmony?

01

Neutrality



# NEUTRALITY

“It is not a movement against religions, but a religious neutrality of the State which means that all religions are on the same footing and that all citizens are equal.”\*

“The law applies to all religions and therefore does not cause any direct discrimination.”

## WHAT THE SURVEY SHOWS

Neutrality is one of the most central values associated with law 21. While the law claims to place all religions on the same footing, this study reveals that **Quebecers have relatively little contact with members of non-Christian religious groups** and that their perceptions of these religions, their followers and respective symbols rise in **increasing order of negativity from Christianity to Judaism to Sikhism to Islam**. Negative opinions of the turban (52.1%), Islam (54.1%) and the hijab (57%) reach above the 50% mark.

This **hierarchy of negativity is significantly amplified among strong supporters** of law 21, increasing more than 20% in the case of the turban (75.7%), Islam (75%) and the hijab (78.1%). The negativity curve is flattened among unconditional opponents of law 21, whose negative views of members of different religious groups, their religions and their symbols range from 15 to 22%.

The survey also **demonstrates a causal link between these high levels of negativity and support** for law 21. Indeed, the large divergence of opinion between unconditional supporters and unconditional opponents of law 21 when it comes to non-Christian religious groups is an indication that **negativity toward non-Christian minority religions and symbols**, particularly the turban (gap of 55.4%), Islam (gap of 54.4%) and the hijab (gap of 57.8%), but also Sikhism (gap: 42.5%) and the kippah (gap: 40.2%), are **drivers of support** for law 21.

## **Baseline Contact**

**Quebecers have significantly less contact with members of non-Christian religions**

**Most of my friends share the same cultural background as me**

**81 %**

**I sometimes or often have contact with**

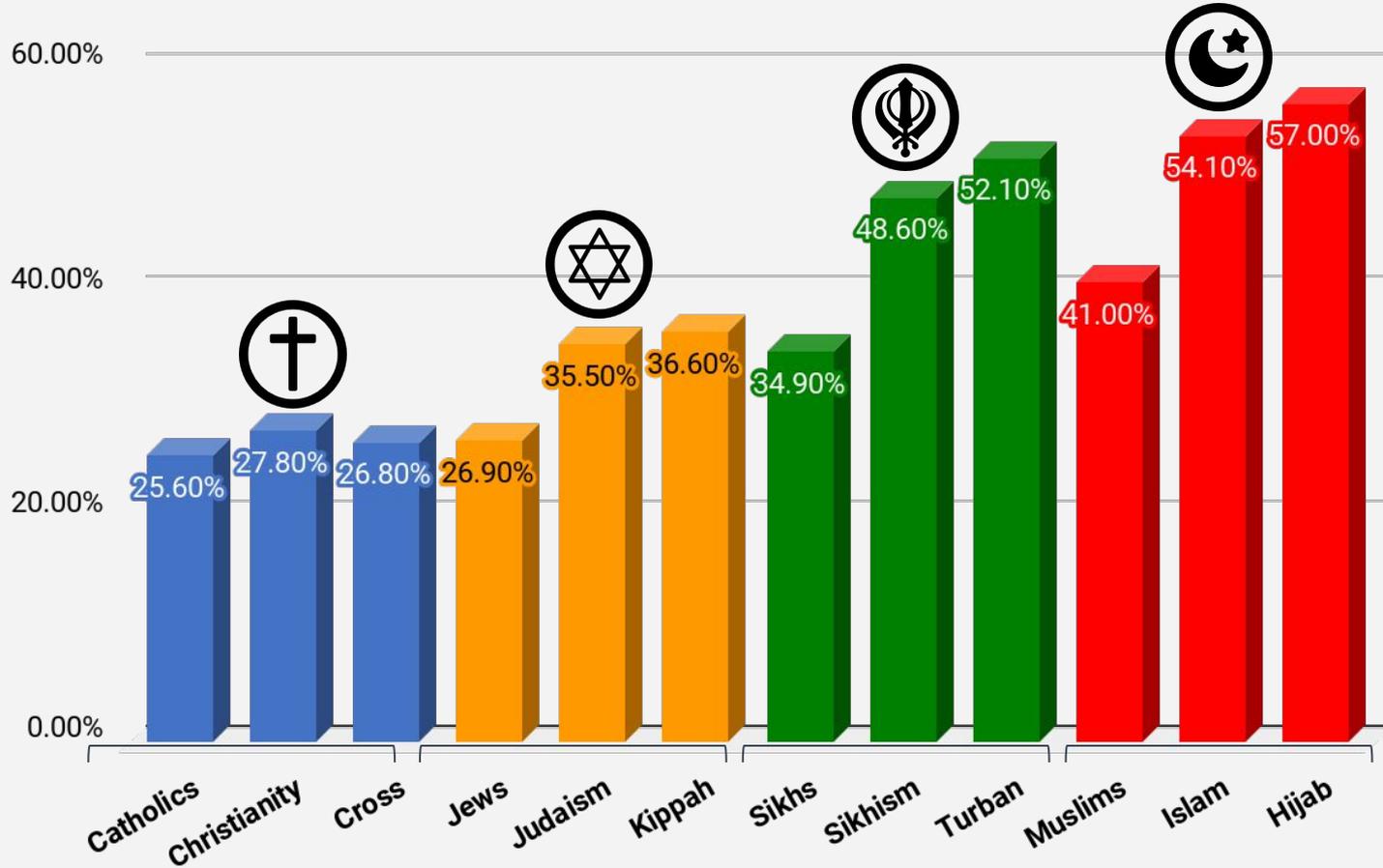
**Jews 22%**

**Muslims 30%**

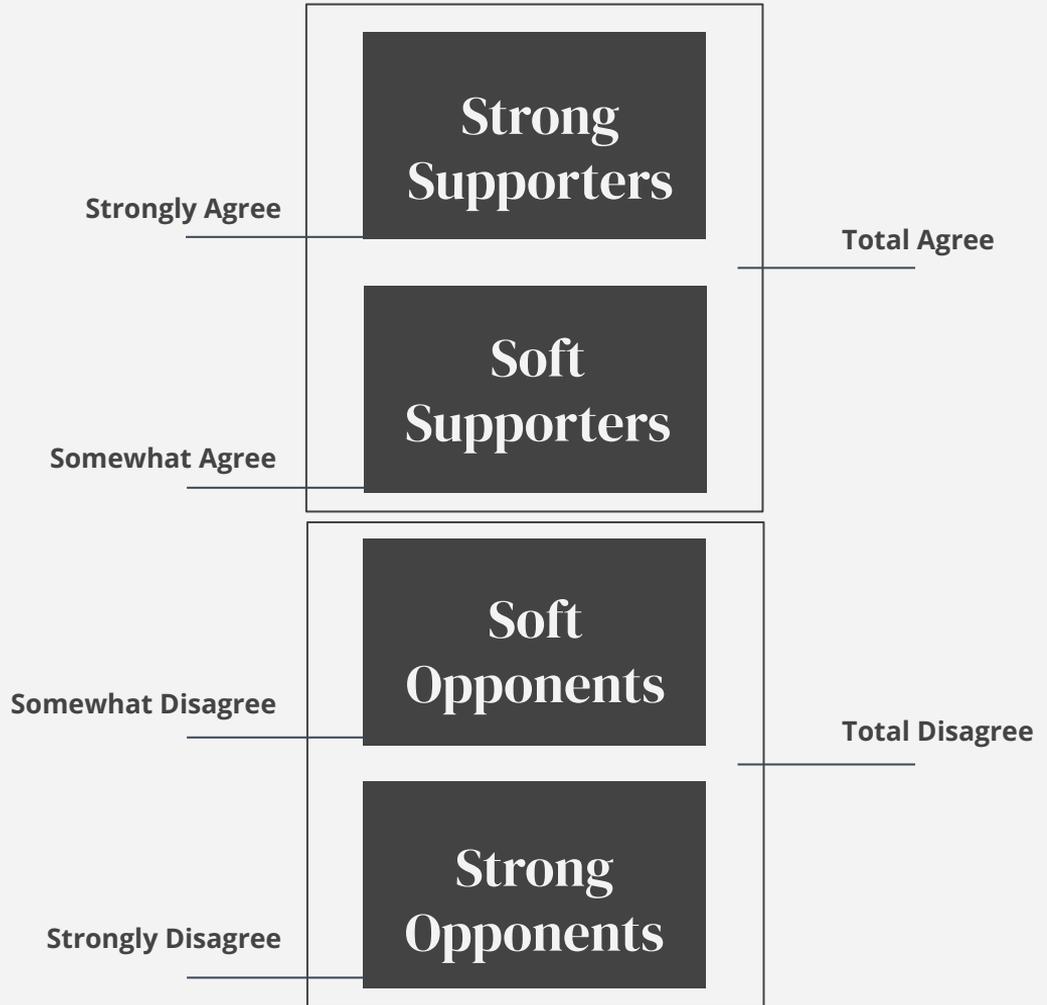
**Christians 74%**

# Baseline Negative Opinions of Religions among Quebecers

Hierarchy of negativity: Christianity, Judaism, Sikhism, Islam. In each case, people are viewed more positively than are religions and symbols.

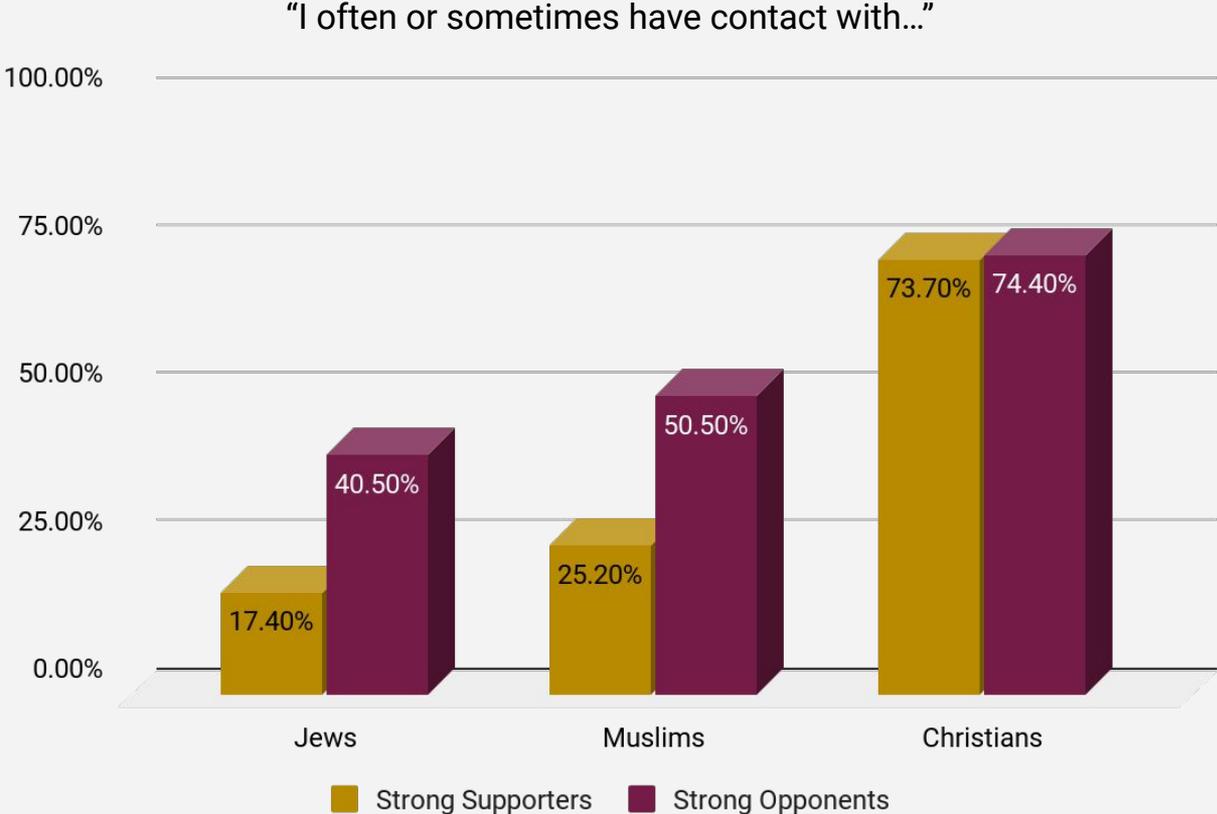


The following slides show gaps in perceptions and habits between strong supporters and strong opponents of law 21



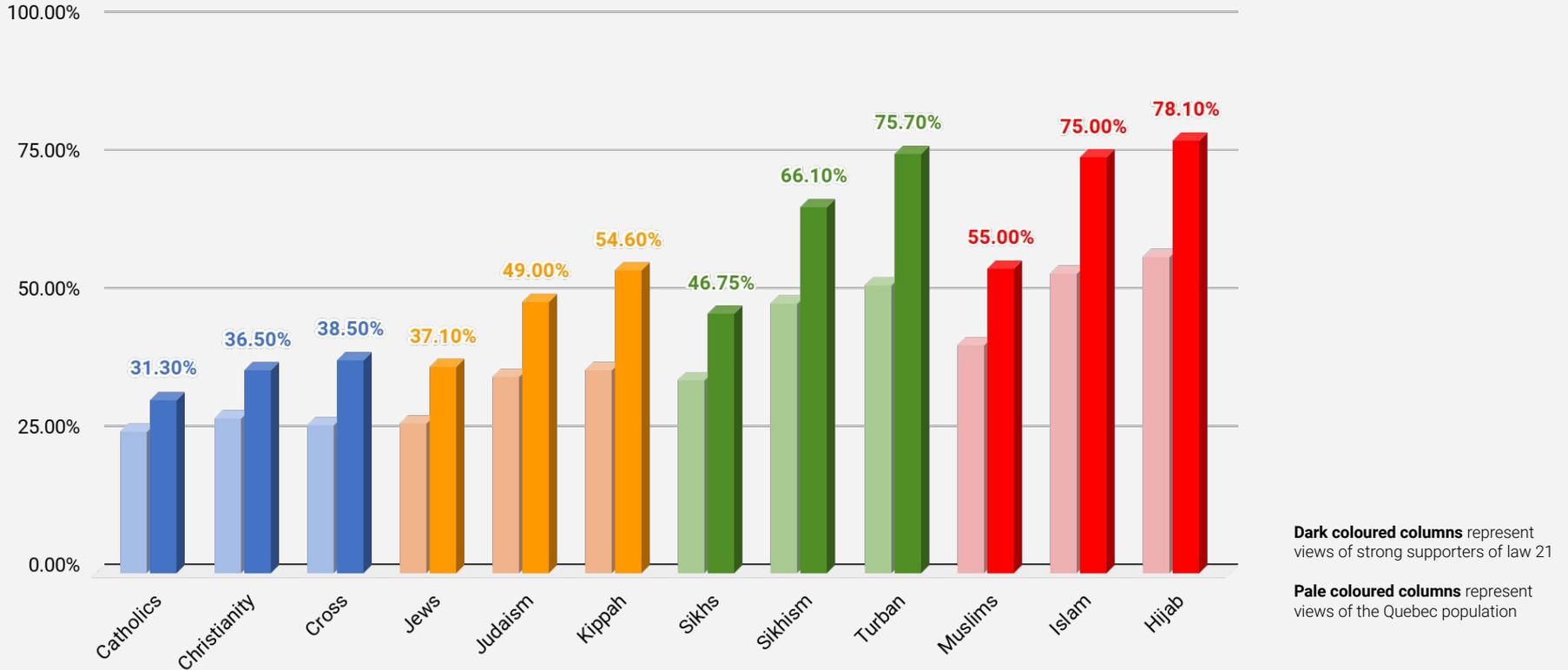
# Gaps in Contact with Religious Groups between Strong Supporters and Strong Opponents

Strong supporters have significantly less contact with members of non-Christian religions than do strong opponents



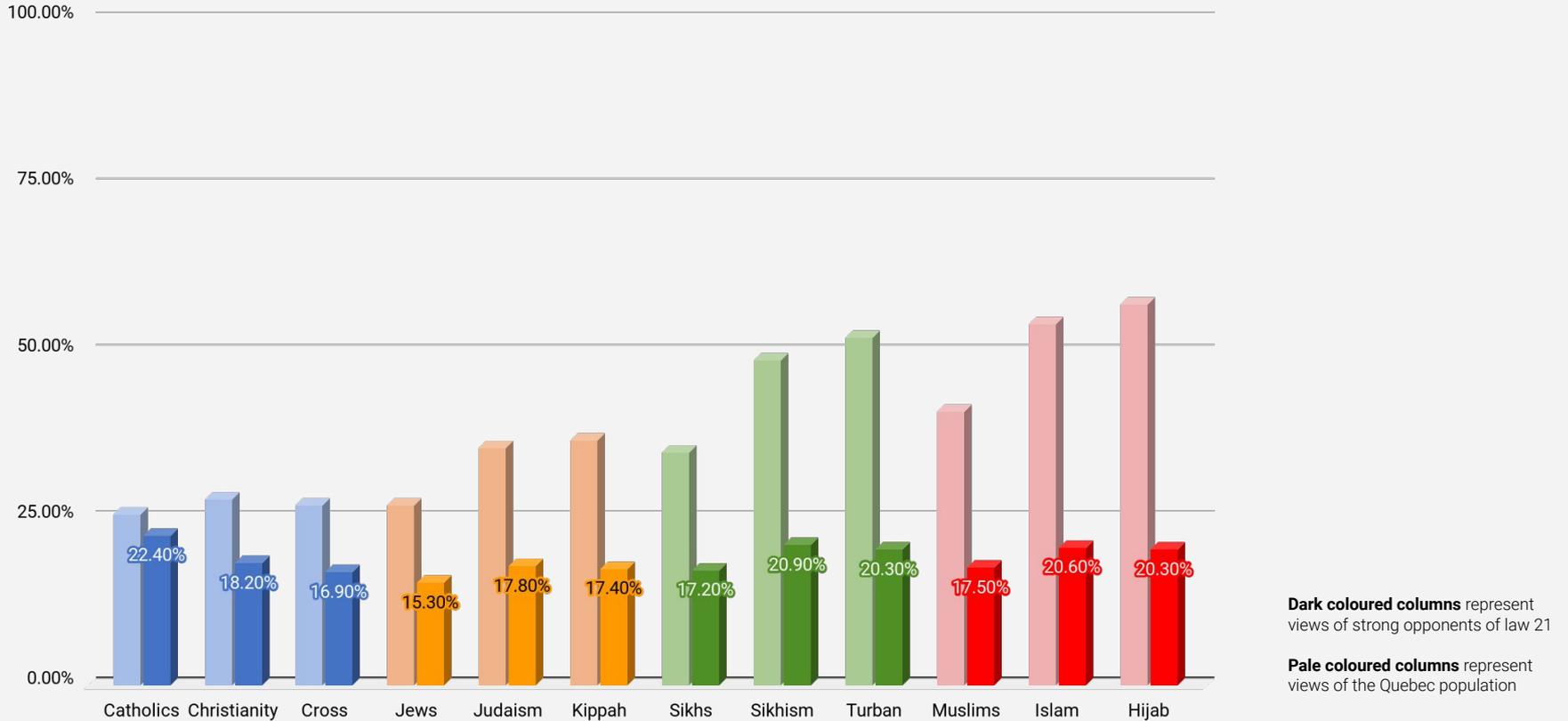
# Negative Opinions of Religions among Strong Supporters of law 21

Negativity vis-à-vis religions, particularly non-Christian religions, is accentuated among strong supporters when compared with the views of Quebecers in general. All non-Christian religions and symbols are viewed negatively at close to or more than 50%, with the turban and the hijab at the summit of negativity.

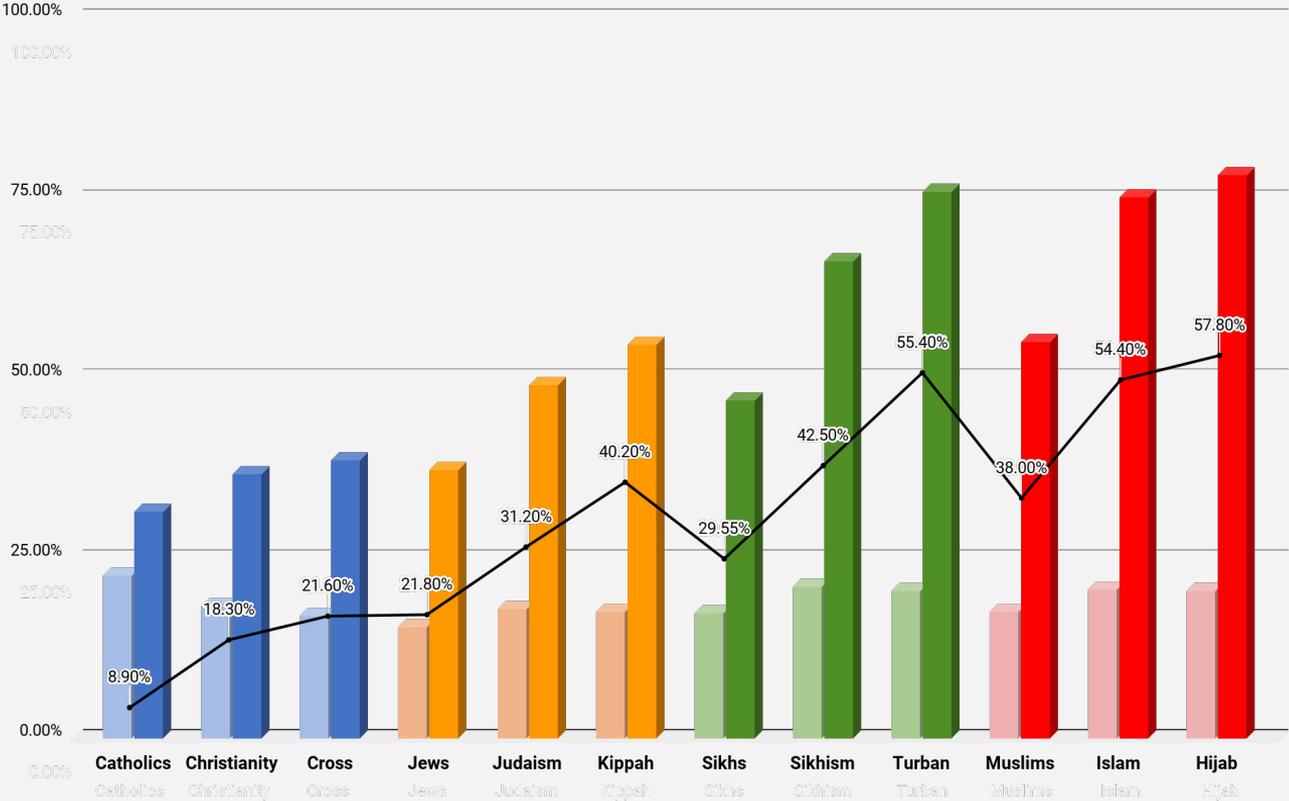


# Negative Opinions of Religions among Strong Opponents of law 21

The hierarchy of negativity disappears among strong opponents of law 21 and negativity vis-à-vis non-Christian groups, in particular, is lower among strong opponents than among Quebecers overall



# The Gaps in Negative Opinions between Strong Supporters and Strong Opponents



**The black line** illustrates the gaps in negative opinions of religions, adherents and symbols between strong supporters and strong opponents of law 21.

Where there is a large divergence of opinion between supporters and opponents, this indicates that these perceptions are drivers of support for the legislation.

In this instance, the gaps are larger when it comes to non-Christian religions. They exceed 40% for the kippah and Sikhism and are at their largest when it comes to perceptions of the turban (gap of 55.4%), of Islam (gap of 54.4%) and of the hijab (gap of 57.8%).

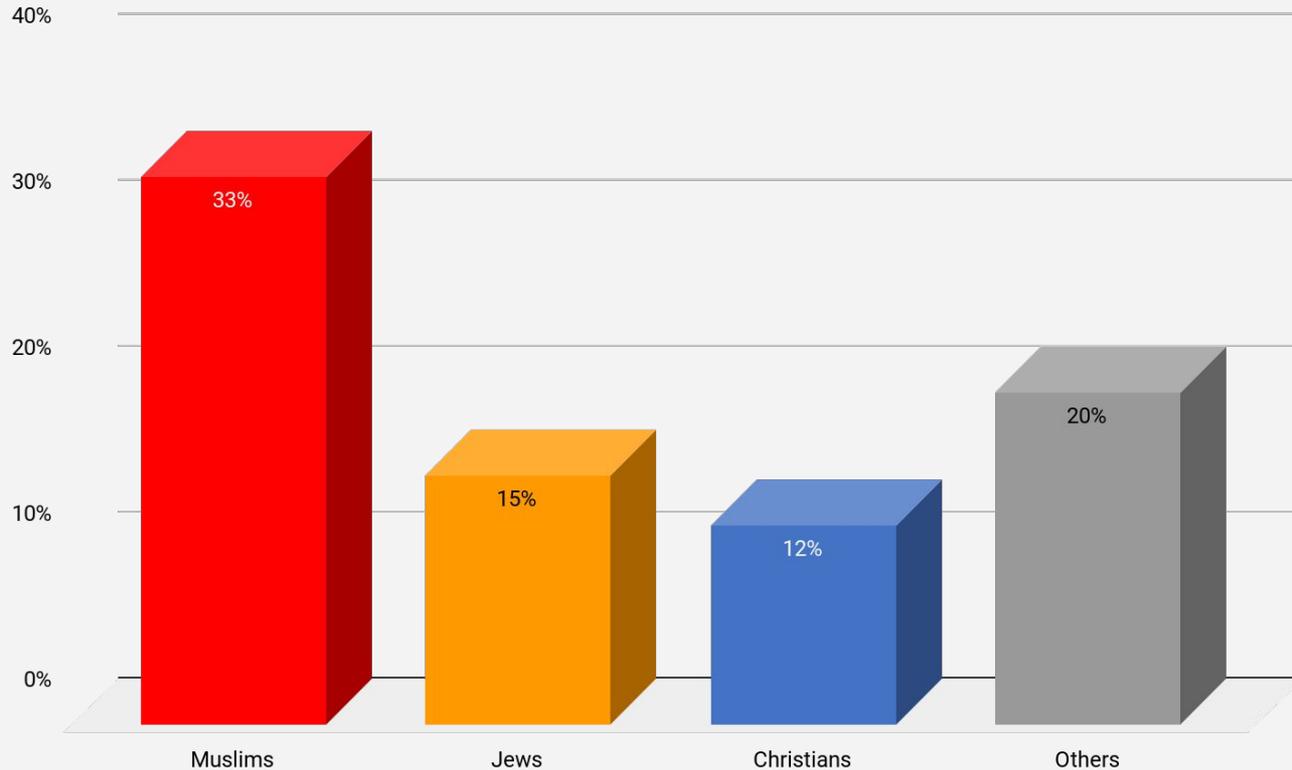
**Dark coloured columns** represent views of strong supporters of law 21

**Pale coloured columns** represent views of strong opponents of the law.

# Frequency of prejudicial remarks heard by Quebecers

Quebecers admit to hearing prejudicial remarks about Muslims more than about other groups

“I often or sometimes hear prejudicial remarks about...”





Laicity

02

# LAICITY

**“Law 21 regarding the laicity of the State is a logical continuation of the Quiet Revolution. In our history, we have lived through the dark days of the excessive control of the Catholic religion over the people of Quebec. This tentacular hold controlled the education system and women's bodies. It was also through its alliance with the State that the power of the Church was exercised. This is now a thing of the past and law 21 guarantees that there will be no going back.”\***

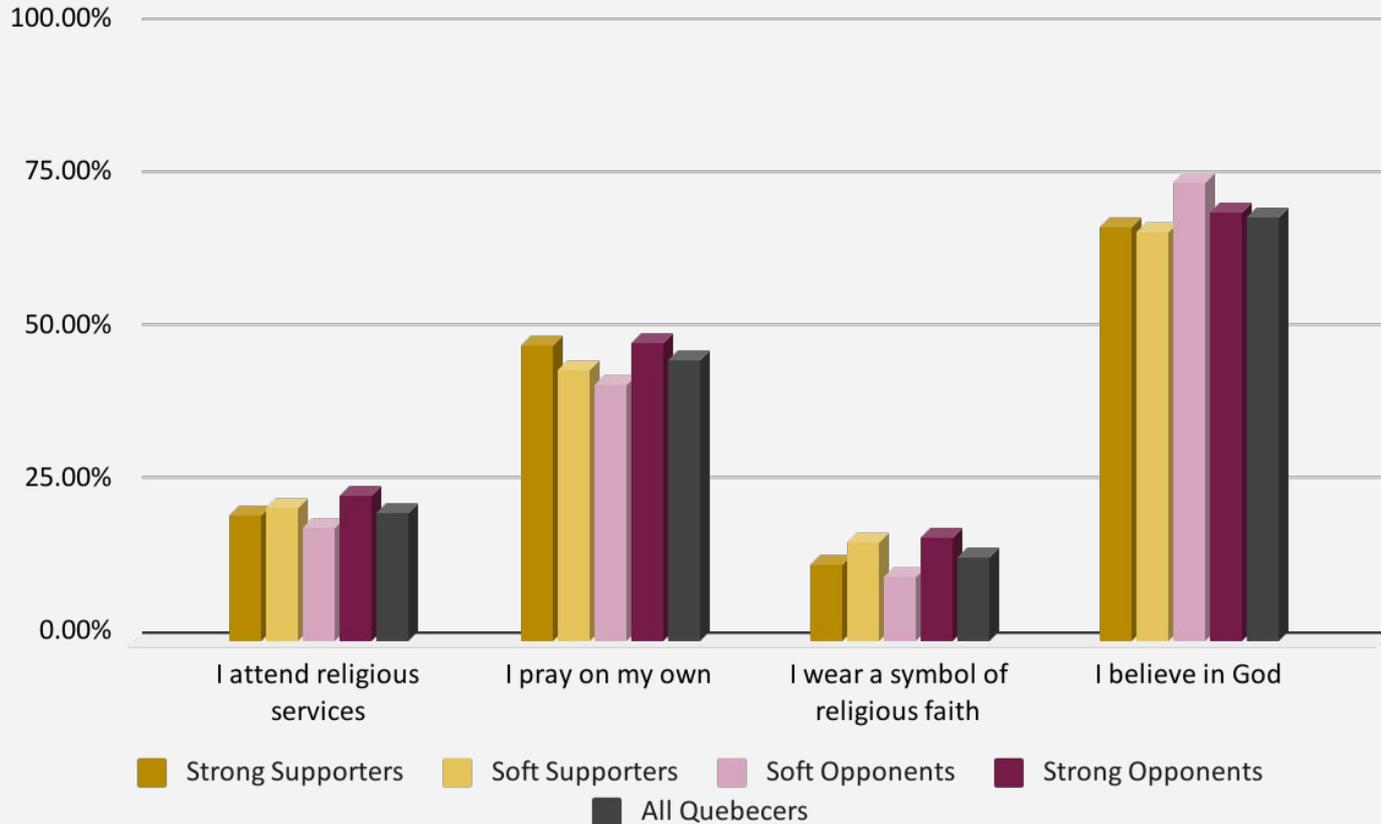
## WHAT THE SURVEY SHOWS

The version of laicity incarnated in law 21 has been traced back to Quebecers' **mistrust of religion** in the wake of the long period when the Catholic church had a stranglehold on Quebecers' social and moral choices. However, the survey shows that **levels of religiosity do not vary much** between supporters and opponents of the law.

If anything, those who identify as **Catholics are slightly more supportive** of the law than are atheists.

# Support and Opposition to Law 21 according to Religious Practice

There are minimal gaps in religiosity between supporters and opponents



# Support for Law 21 - Catholics and Atheists

There is no large difference in support for law 21 between Catholics and Atheists.  
If anything support among Catholics is slightly higher

63.7%

Quebecers  
as a whole

70.3%

Catholics

65.3%

Atheists



03 Equality of Women

# EQUALITY

“The importance that the Quebec nation places on equality between women and men is one of the reasons for law 21. The equality of all citizens is one of the principles on which the law is based.”\*

“A resolutely feminist law.”\*

## WHAT THE SURVEY SHOWS

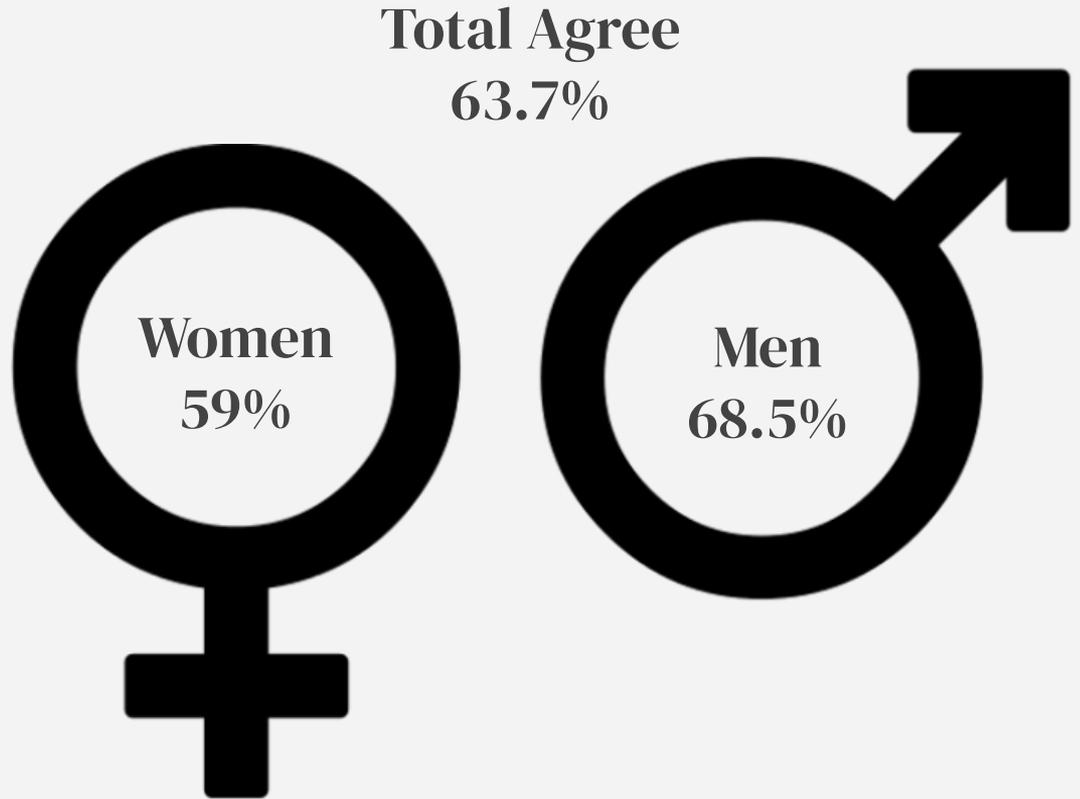
Overall, 59% of Quebec women support law 21, almost 10% below the rate among men (68.%%), a proportion one might expect to see reversed in connection with a law meant to promote women’s equality. **Younger women in particular are less supportive of law 21 than their male contemporaries**, with a gap of around 20% among younger age cohorts. Women between the ages of 18 and 44 support the law at rates below 50%.The only age group where women’s support exceeds that of men is among the older baby boomers (75+).

In addition, women are more likely to label the law as discriminatory against women from minority religions. They are more likely to identify fellow women as the group most impacted by the law. They are also more prone to see the law as divisive and are **less in favour of the enforcement** of the law against a public servant who fails to comply with it.

In short, **muted enthusiasm** and evidence of **sisterly solidarity** indicate that many Quebec women remain yet to be convinced about the law’s virtues as a promoter of women’s equality.

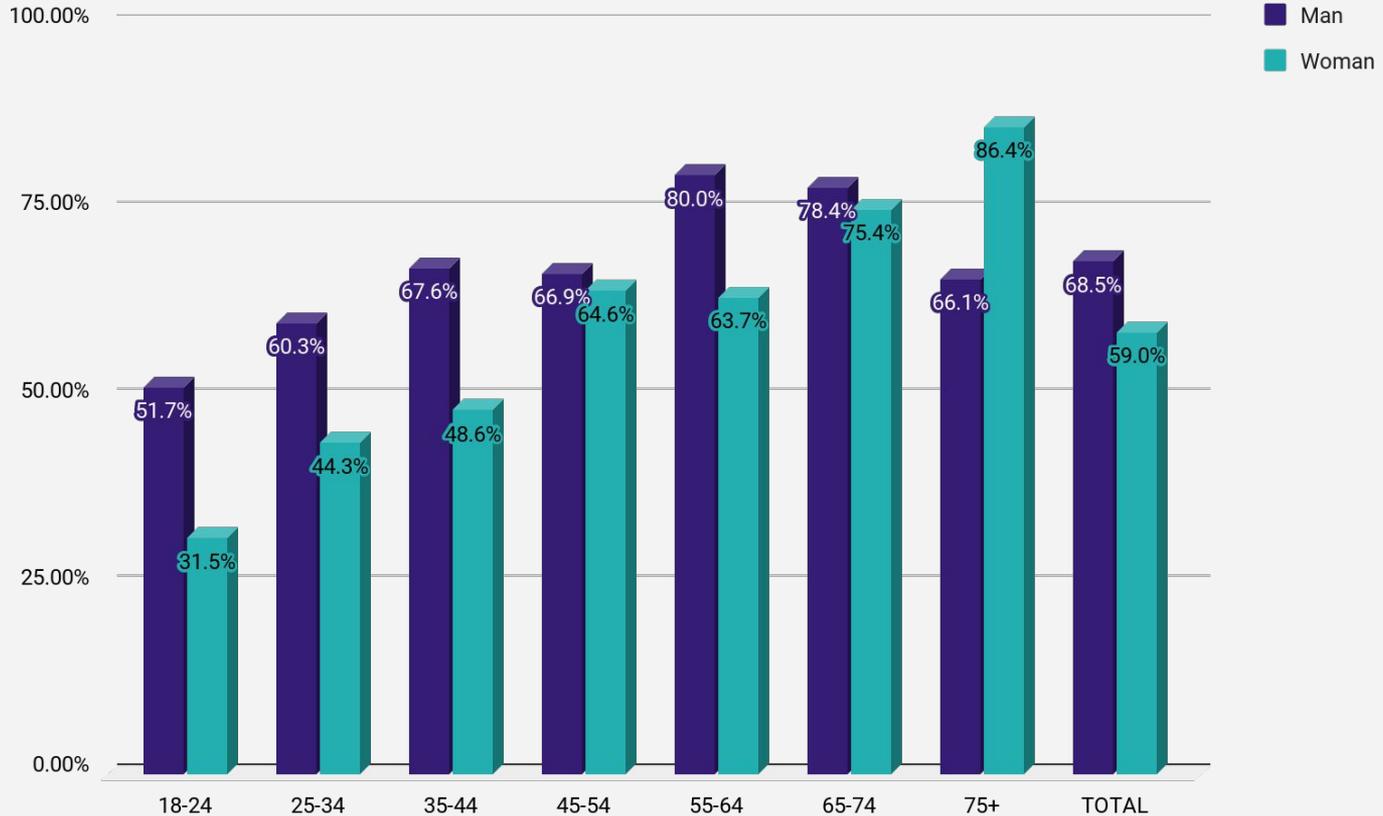
**Support for  
Law 21  
according  
to gender**

**Support among  
women almost  
10% lower than  
among men**



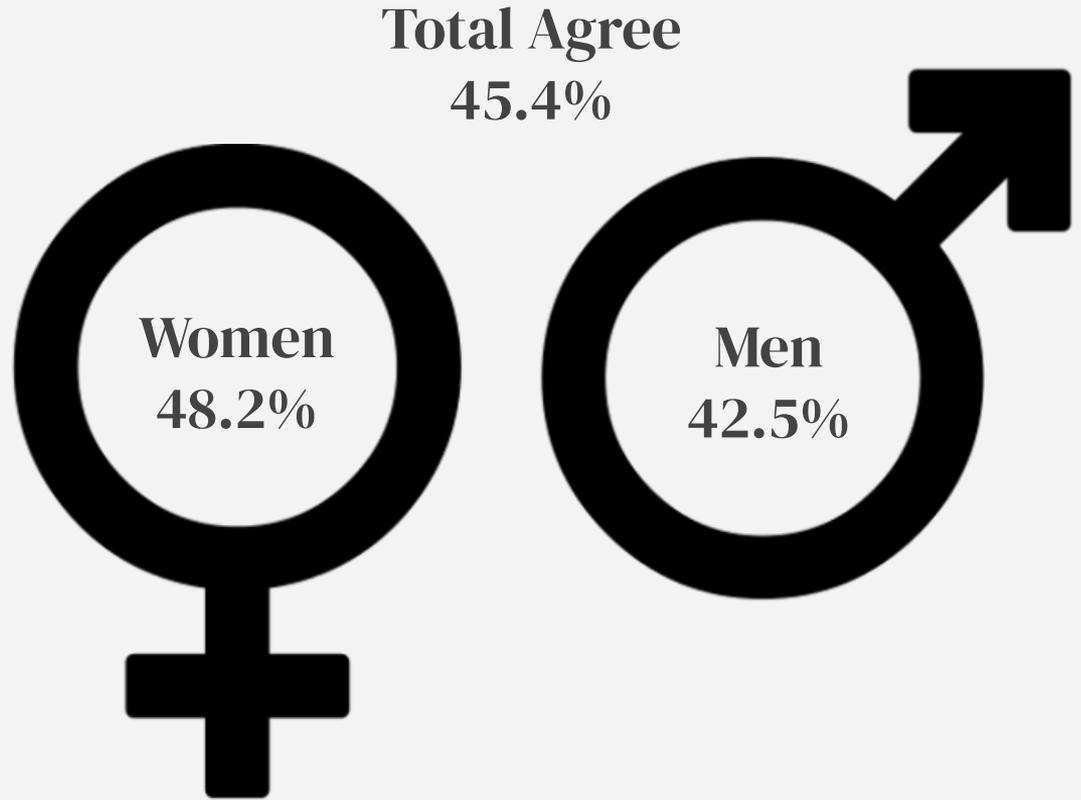
# Support for law 21 by age and gender (Total Agree)

Younger women are much less in favour of law 21 than their male counterparts. The gap in the younger age cohorts (18-44) approaches 20%. The only age group where women's support surpasses that of men is among those 75 and older.



**Law 21  
discriminates  
against women  
from religious  
minorities**

**Women are more  
likely to say that  
the law  
discriminates  
against women  
than men are.**



# Which groups are most impacted by law 21?

Women are more likely to identify women as the group most impacted by the law.

Who do **WOMEN** think is most impacted?

**Women 43.4%**

**Men 3.5%**

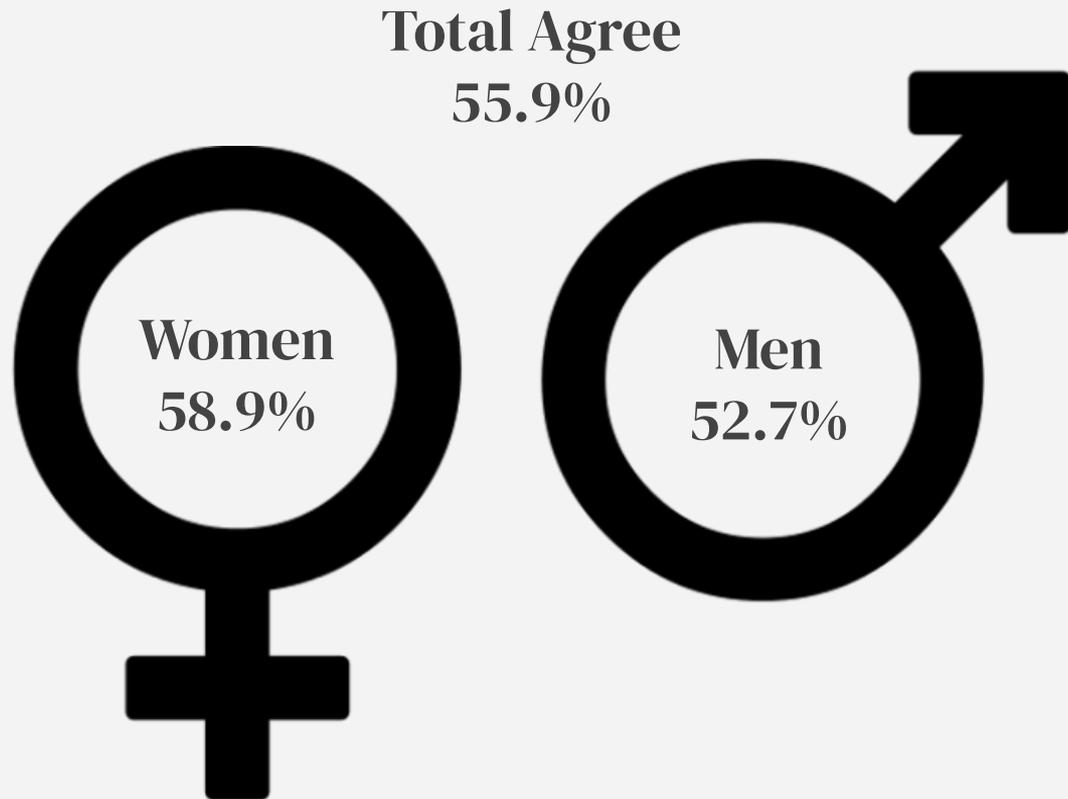
Who do **MEN** think is most impacted?

**Women 28.1%**

**Men 8.3%**

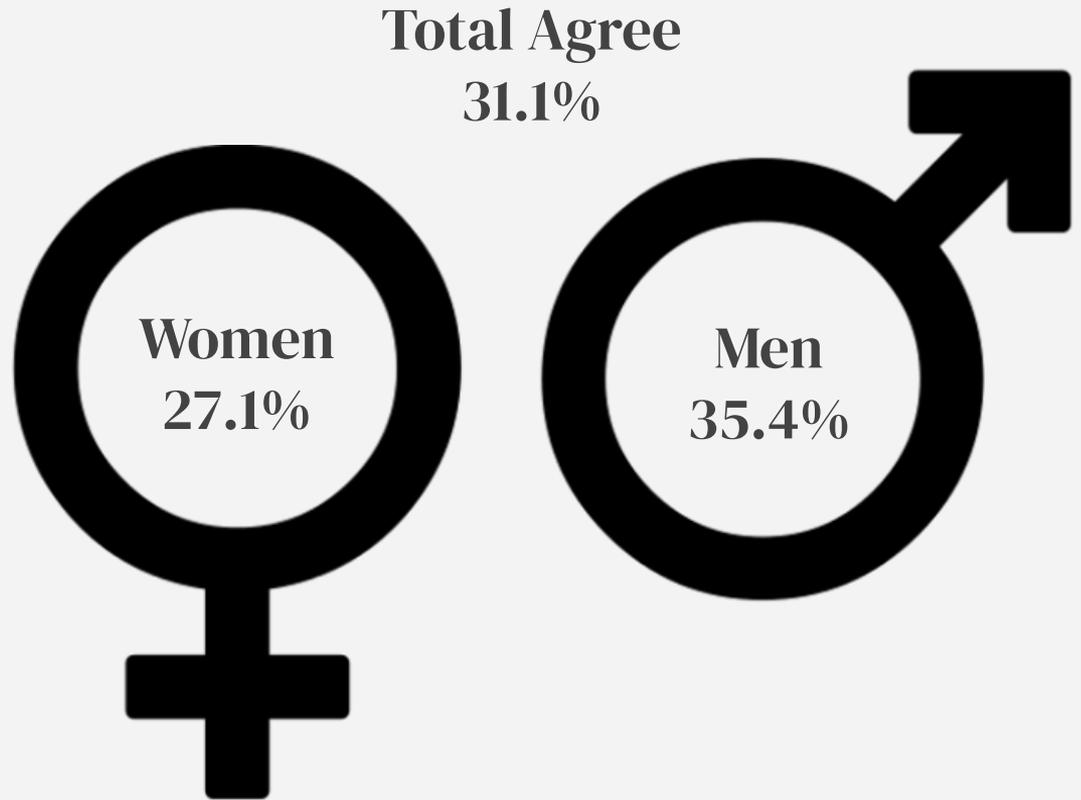
**Law 21 is  
dividing  
Quebecers**

**Women are more  
likely to see the law  
as divisive.**



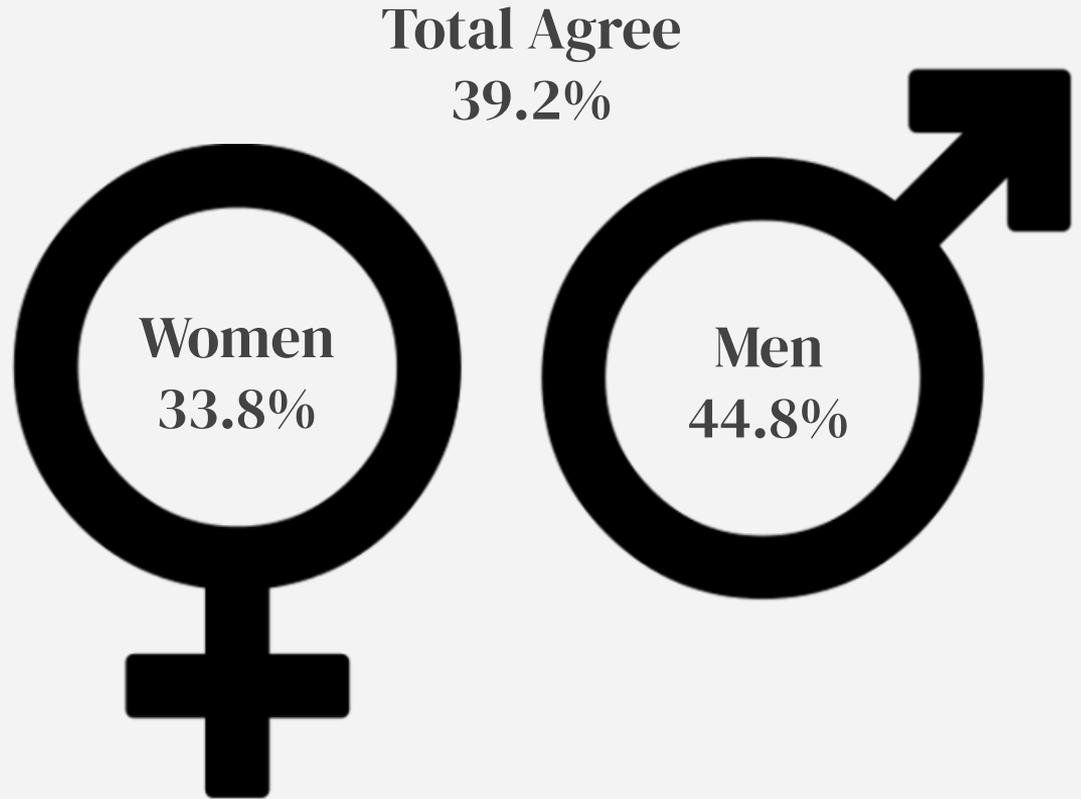
**Opponents of  
Law 21 who  
live in Quebec  
are not 'loyal'  
Quebecers**

**Women are less  
likely to label  
opponents as  
disloyal.**



**A public servant who does not comply with Law 21 should lose their job**

**Women are less willing to have the law cost someone their job.**





The Collective  
Will

04

# THE COLLECTIVE WILL

**“It is not up to the courts to define the social contract, it is up to the elected members of the National Assembly.”**

## WHAT THE SURVEY SHOWS

While it is argued by some that the **National Assembly** alone incarnates Quebec’s collective will and is the **sole arbiter of the law’s validity and legitimacy**, Quebecers don’t seem prepared to give up on court judgments in determining whether the law is constitutional and respectful of human rights.

**64.5%** of Quebecers think it is important for the **Supreme Court** to rule on whether the law is discriminatory, including almost half of those who support law 21 unconditionally (strong supporters, 44.7%) and a large majority of those who somewhat support the legislation (soft supporters, 64.9%).

If the courts determine that the law violates the charters, **support** for it would drop by 18% to **below the majority mark** (from 63.7 % to 47%).

It is important for the Supreme Court to issue an opinion on whether Law 21 is discriminatory.

TOTAL AGREE

64.5%

**It is important for the Supreme Court to issue an opinion on whether Law 21 is discriminatory**

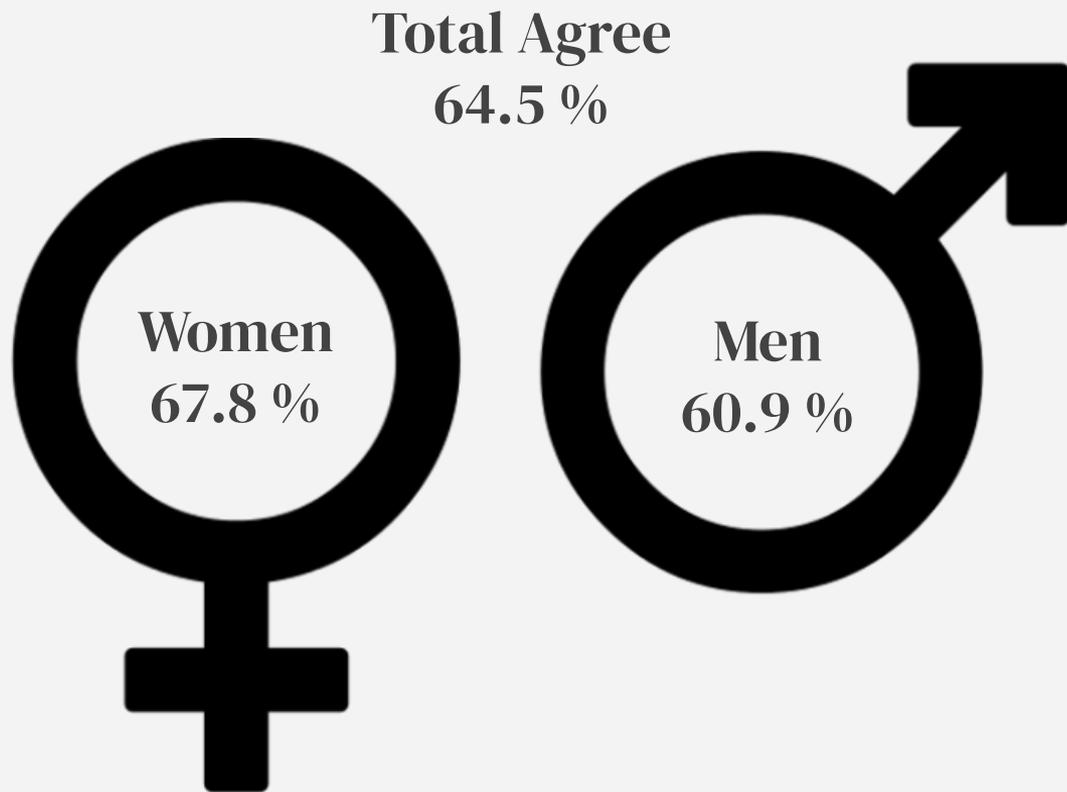
**Agreement according to support for law 21**

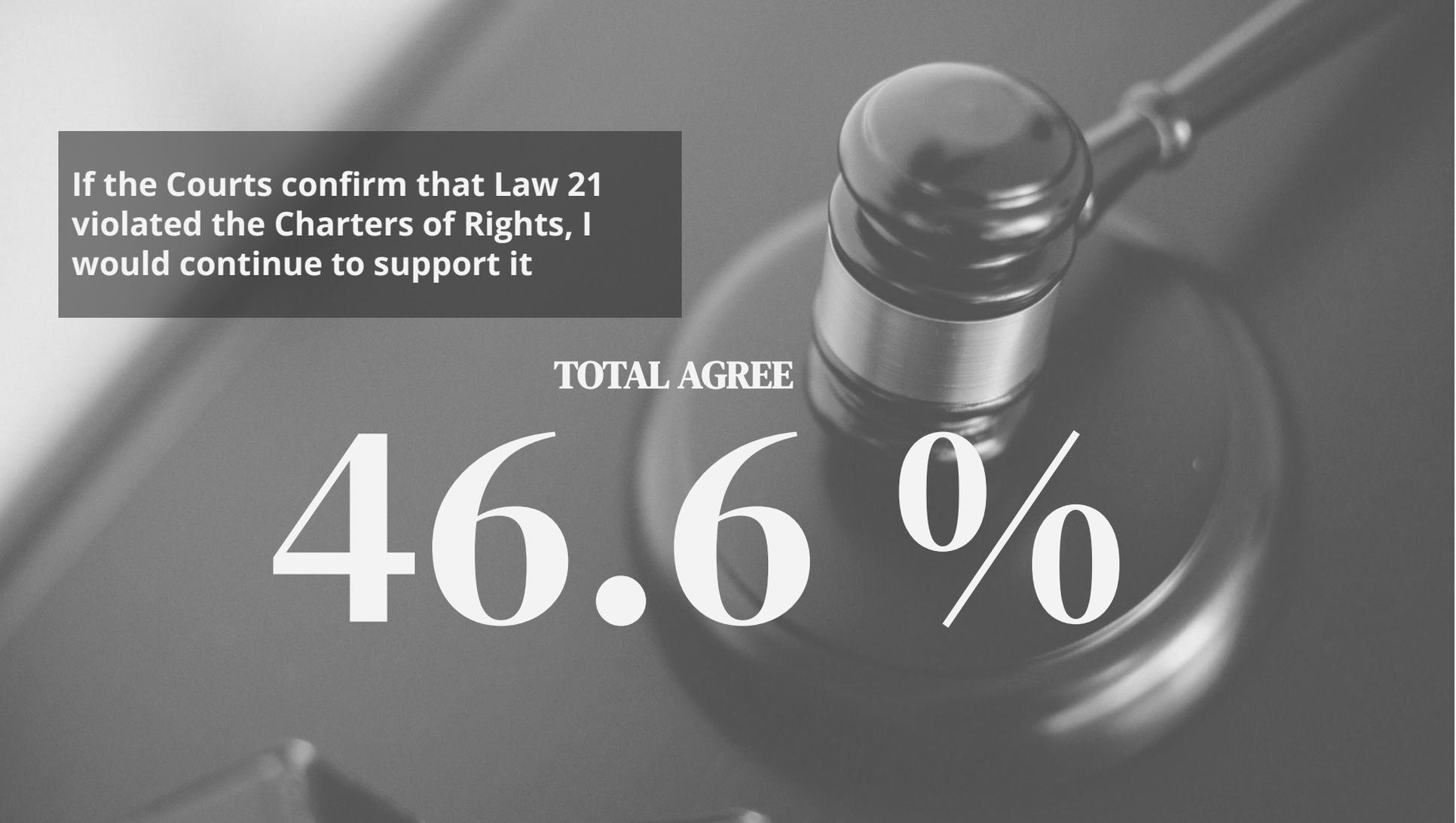
**Total Agree  
64.5%**



**It is important for  
the Supreme Court  
to issue an opinion  
on whether Law 21 is  
discriminatory**

**Agreement according  
to gender**





If the Courts confirm that Law 21  
violated the Charters of Rights, I  
would continue to support it

TOTAL AGREE

46.6 %



05 *Destiny &  
Loyalty*

# DESTINY & LOYALTY

“Beyond the simple question of law 21, the distinct society debate is back in the foreground: "Whatever we say and whatever we do, Quebec is, today and forever, a distinct society, free and capable of assuming its destiny and its development”\*

“Because, in Quebec, this is how we live.”

## WHAT THE SURVEY SHOWS

Because law 21 has been linked by its supporters to the fulfillment of Quebec’s destiny, dissent has become associated in some quarters with a sense of **disloyalty** to Quebec society. **The fact that more than 30% of Quebecers equate opposition to the law with disloyalty** is a trend worth monitoring at a time when the importance of freedom of expression is at the forefront of public discourse. Depicting opponents as beyond the pale **impedes dialogue and consensus**. It is worth noting that majorities in **all three minority religious communities surveyed reported a worsening in their readiness to express themselves freely in public** (the exception being Jewish men who nevertheless reported a decline of 33%) over the last 3 years.

Among Quebecers who agree with the law in principle, the percentage of those who wish to see it applied, resulting in the **loss of a job**, is only high among strong supporters of the law. Among soft supporters, desire to see the law applied falls to  $\frac{1}{3}$  and is in the 10% range among soft and strong opponents.

Finally, it is noteworthy that despite the law’s association with inevitability and destiny, Quebecers show an awareness of the divisiveness it creates. Almost **as many** Quebecers see the law as **divisive** (55.9%) as are in favour of the legislation (63.7%). Even among strong supporters, almost 40% admit the law causes division. Women are more sensitive than men to these divisions and their impacts (see chapter on equality). In the context of Quebecers’ known aversion to rifts and quarrels, this recognition goes against the affirmation that the law enjoys an unshakeable consensus.

So while there are some signs that the law **polarizes**, there is also evidence of **reluctance to see the law applied** and indications of awareness about the **division the law creates**.

\*Martineau, Richard. (02/11/2019). “Loi 21 : vers une collision frontale”. *Le Journal de Montréal*. Citation : Robert Bourassa

**Opponents of law 21 are  
not loyal Quebecers**

**Total Agree  
31.1 %**

**Agreement according to  
support for law 21**

**Index of polarization: 1/3 of Quebecers  
and almost 1/2 of partisans of law 21  
are prepared to see support for the  
law as a measure of loyalty to Quebec  
society, thus delegitimizing  
opposition and impeding open  
dialogue**



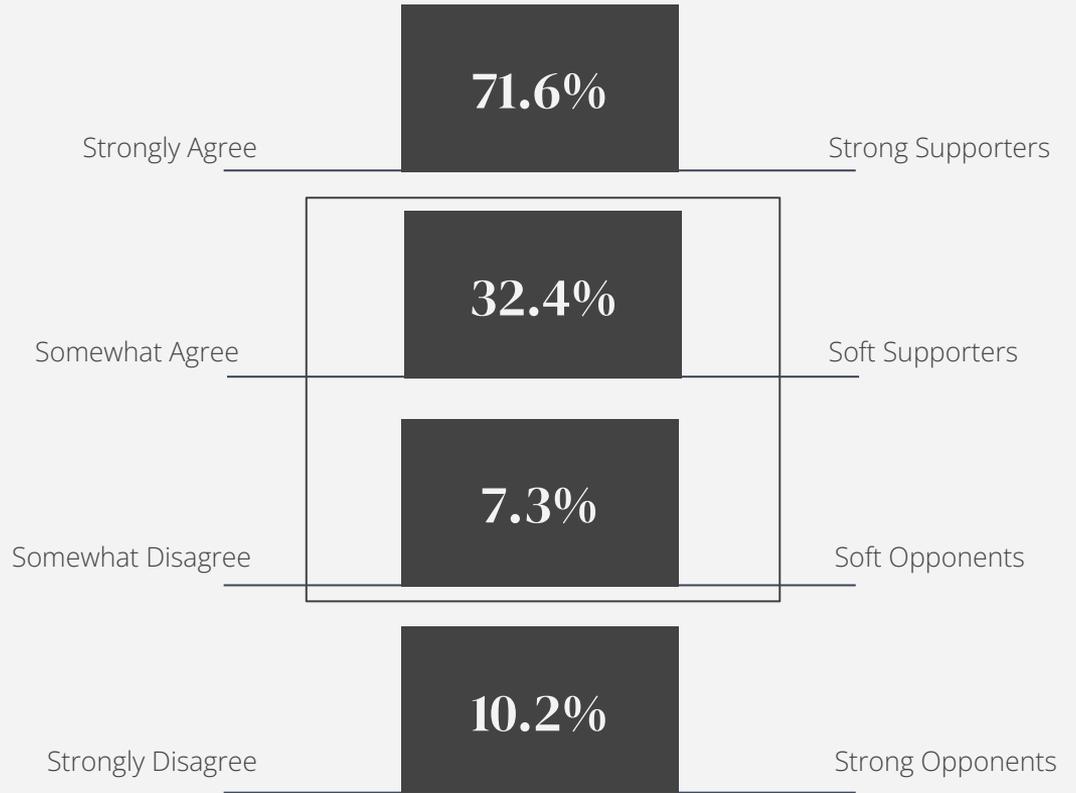
Source : Léger-ACS May 2022

**A public servant who  
does not comply with  
Law 21 should lose  
their job**

**Total Agree  
39.2 %**

**Agreement According  
to Support for the law**

**While strong supporters are  
largely in favour of implementing  
the law, all other groups seem  
reluctant to see people lose their  
jobs as a result of the legislation.**

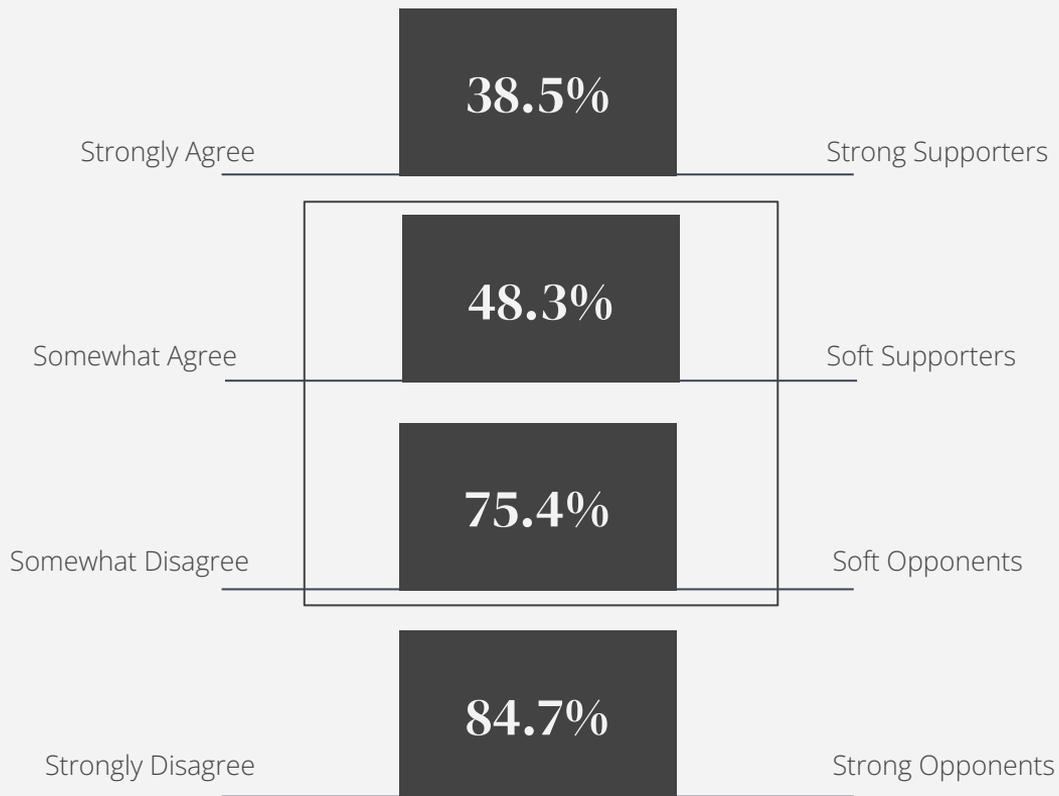


## Law 21 is dividing Quebecers

# Total Agree 55.9 %

## Agreement According to Support for the law

While the law has been tied to Quebec destiny, a majority of Quebecers are aware of the division the law has created. This is significant in a society known to dislike rifts.





**Social  
Harmony &  
Moderation**

**06**

## SOCIAL HARMONY

“Law 21 will contribute to social harmony.”

## MODERATION

“Some will say it goes too far. Others will say it doesn't go far enough. In reality, this law is moderate, like Quebecers themselves are .”

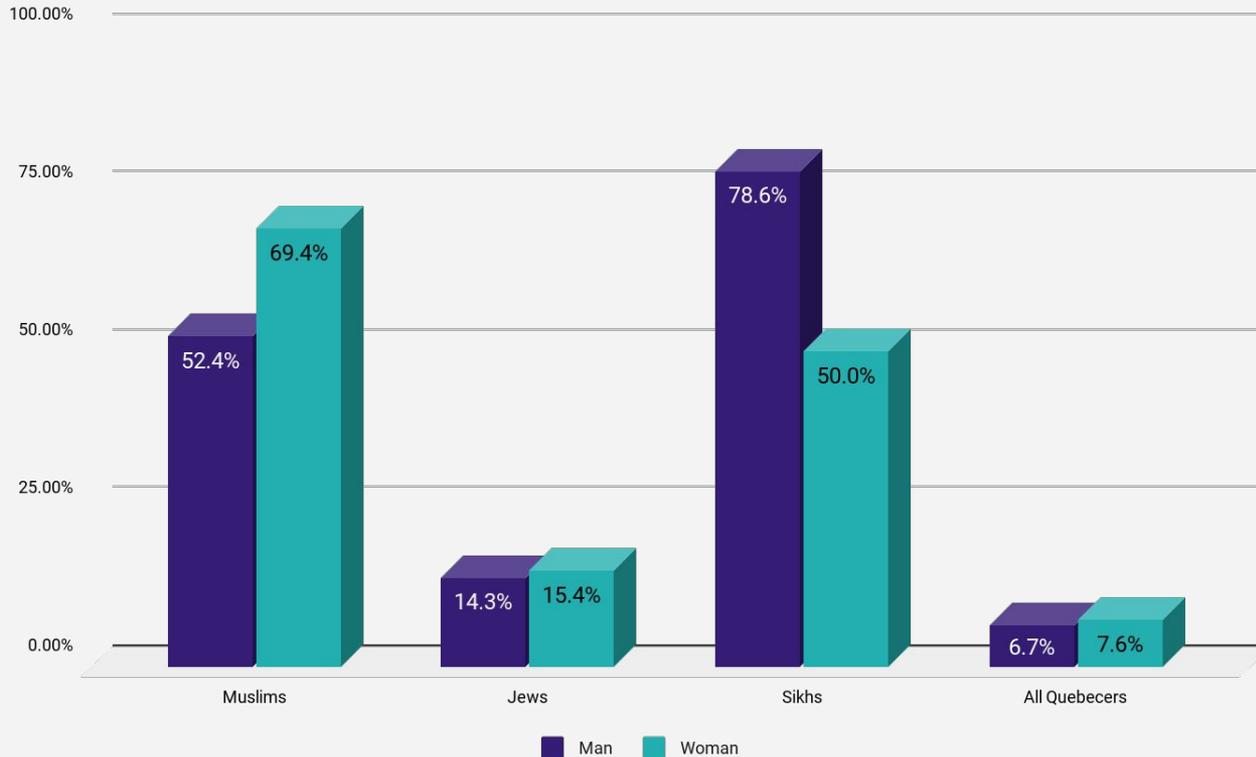
## WHAT THE SURVEY SHOWS

Intended to bring an almost 20-year debate on religious accommodation to a close, law 21 is thought to resolve concerns about the place of religion in Quebec society and, as a result, to promote **social harmony**. The law's **moderation**, when weighed up against comparable measures implemented in other countries like France, is praised as part of what makes the law distinctly “québécois” in nature. However, those who attribute these qualities to law 21 seem to assume that the question being debated is one in which only the majority population has a real and legitimate stake.

This study shows that for most of the minority religious community members surveyed, life in Quebec since law 21 was enacted is significantly less peaceful and less harmonious. Our evaluation of the hospitality of the climate in Quebec for those who identify as Muslim, Jewish and Sikh reveals **negative impacts** that are **broad-ranging, disruptive and profound**, reaching systemic proportions that are anything but moderate in four important dimensions of life: **1. Acceptability & Acceptance; 2. Hate & Safety; 3. Citizenship; 4. Fulfillment, Wellbeing & Hope.**

# Have you and/or members of your family or friends been affected by Law 21?

In describing the impacts of law 21 in their entourage, Jewish respondents estimate effects at double that found in the general population. Half of Muslim Men and Sikh women see the impacts of the law in their circles. Muslim women and Sikh men are the most dramatically affected at rates nearing and exceeding 75%.



# **Muslim, Jewish and Sikh Perceptions & Experiences of the Quebec climate**

## 1. Acceptability & Acceptance

Measures levels of experienced prejudice and discrimination and change in sense of being accepted in Quebec society since law 21 was enacted.

## 2. Hate and Safety

Measures levels of exposure to hate incidents/crimes and perceived change in levels of personal safety over the last 3 years.

## 3. Citizenship

Measures perceived changes in readiness to participate in social and political life and readiness to express oneself freely in public over the last 3 years.

## 4. Fulfillment, Wellbeing & Hope

Measures perceived changes over the last 3 years in the potential to flourish and achieve one's goals, in mental health and in hope for one's children's future.



# Muslims

Demographic Profile

Summary of Results

1. Acceptance and Acceptability
2. Hate & Safety
3. Citizenship
4. Fulfillment, Wellbeing & Hope

**Slide 49**

**Slide 50**

**Slides 51-54**

**Slides 55-57**

**Slides 58-60**

**Slides 61-67**



**The Muslims** of Quebec number between 320,000 and 330,000. They are a majority immigrant community with significant arrivals beginning in the 1990s and accelerating in the first decade of the 21st century. They are a relatively young community with a high percentage of young children.

## **Demographic Profile\***

### **The Muslim Population of Quebec**

2011:	243,430
2022:	320,000-330,000

### **Age**

Under 15 years:	29.66%
25-54 age range:	50%

### **% of Immigrants**

Arrival 1991-2000:	24.18%
Arrival 2001-2011:	64.5%

\*The most recent demographic figures for religious communities from Statistics Canada date back to 2011. Current estimates are based on projections.



## Summary of Results

Muslims in general are highly impacted in all four dimensions of life surveyed, with **Muslim women** more significantly impacted, reporting **severe social stigmatization, injustice** in interactions with those who have authority over them in their daily lives and **marginalization** with respect to their acceptance as full-fledged members of society.

Half of Muslim men and more than **two thirds** of Muslim women have been **exposed to hate incidents** and crimes and feel significantly **less safe** than they did 3 years ago.

Similar proportions report a **deterioration** in their readiness to **participate in social and political life**, and **decline** in their levels of **fulfillment, wellbeing** and even future **hope for their children**.



## 1. Acceptability & Acceptance

**Summary.** All Muslims report high **levels of exposure to prejudicial remarks** (Men 38%, Women 53%) and discrimination (Men 38%, Women 47.2%), **exceeding even rates reported among visible minority Quebecers** (Men 33.8%, Women 29.6% - where men are more impacted than women). These indicators are accompanied by a deterioration of **perceived acceptance in Quebec society since law 21 was enacted** (Men 61.9%, Women 78.4%).

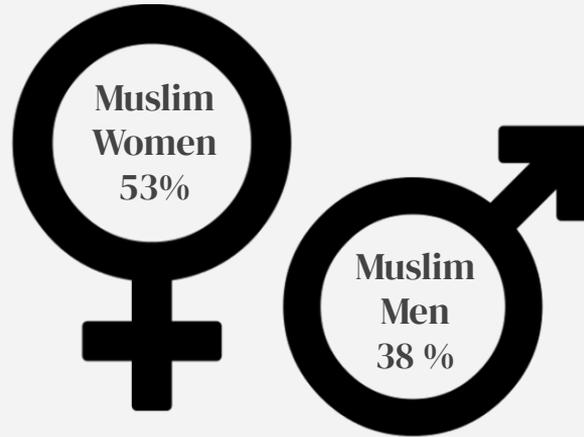
**Women are significantly more impacted than are men in all these dimensions,** reporting what amounts to severe social stigmatization, injustice in interactions with those who have authority over them in their daily lives and marginalization with respect to their acceptance as full-fledged members of society.

# “I often or sometimes hear prejudicial remarks from family members, friends or colleagues about Muslims”

"Colleagues: you work at Revenue Quebec, you will soon lose your job. You shouldn't wear a hijab to work. Why do you wear that head scarf..."

"These Muslim women with rags on their heads, if they are not able to integrate, let them return to their country."

"A Quebec friend I've known for a long time said that the law was necessary and that we Muslims had to take off our head scarfs to work in anything public - we Quebecers fought to exclude religion from public services, etc."



## WHO?

Colleagues  
Friends  
Family  
Strangers  
Media  
Neighbours  
Government

## WHAT?

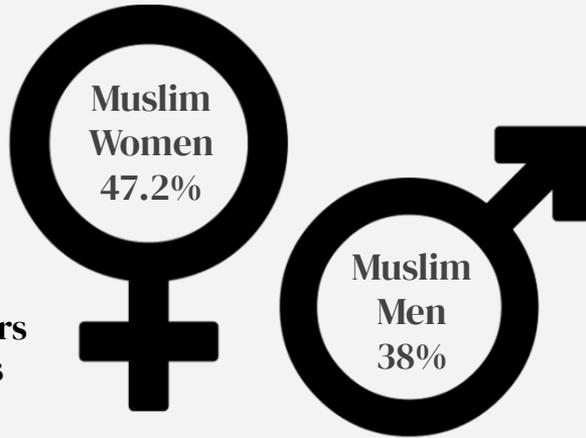
Hijab  
Go back  
Submissive  
Terrorist  
Backward  
Invasive  
Stereotypes

"There are Muslim terrorists...Muslim women are submissive...you fast during the month of Ramadan and then eat like pigs at night."

**“I have been treated unfairly by a person in a position of authority  
(Police officer/elected official/health care provider/employer/professor or teacher)  
because of my racial, ethnic or religious identity.”**

**WHO?**

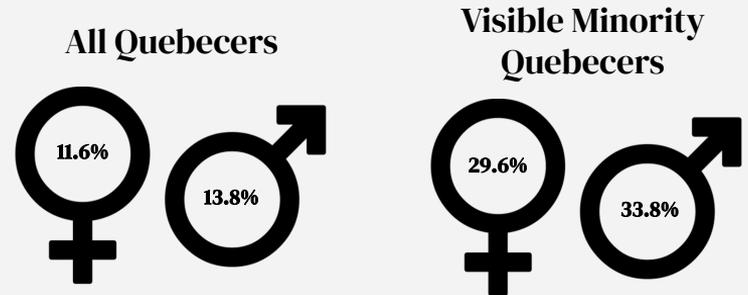
- Police
- Professors
- Supervisors
- Colleagues
- Bosses
- Service Providers
- Custom Officers



“A policewoman in Quebec City called me a dirty immigrant.”

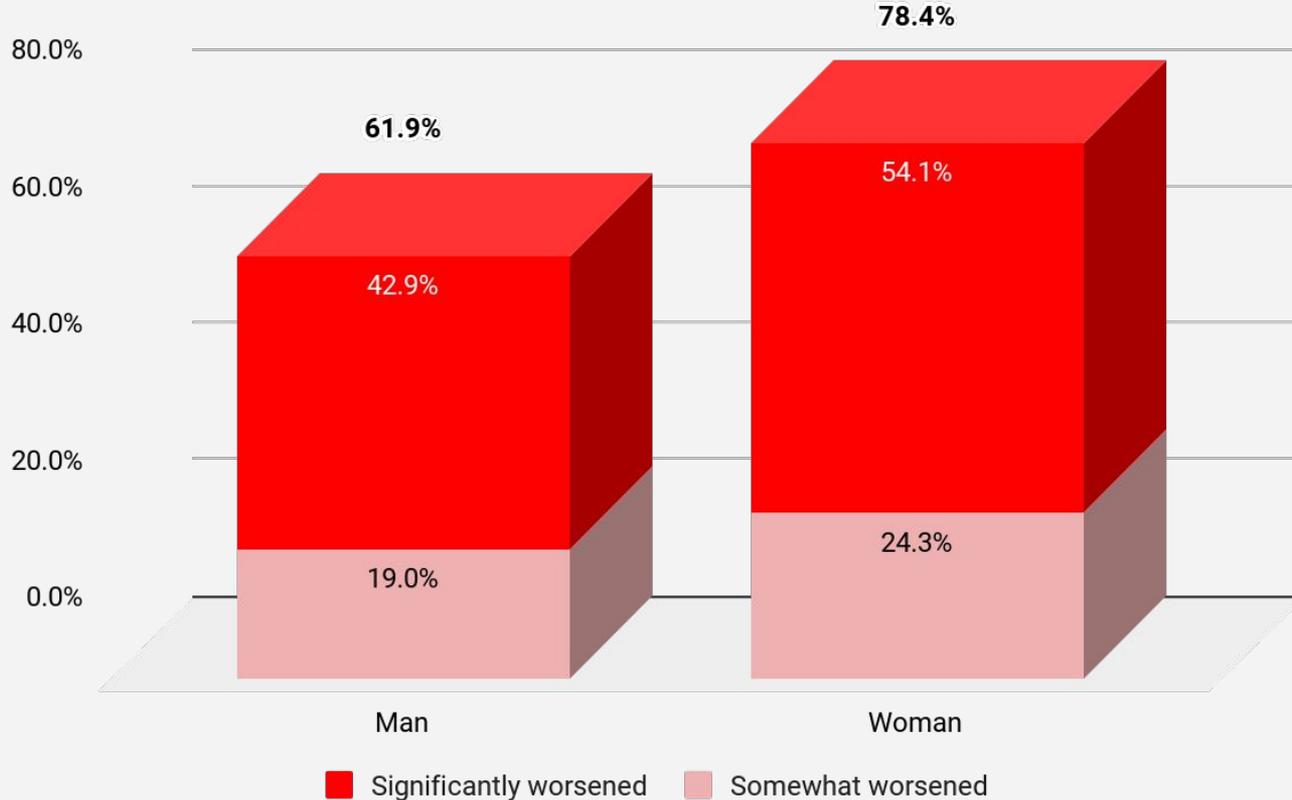
“A teacher who told disparaging anecdotes about my religion in class and asked me to corroborate them in front of others.”

“At the renewal of my health insurance card, the lady wanted me to take off my headscarf when I took my picture, I refused and the lady was furious.”



# Change in feeling of being accepted as a full-fledged member of Quebec Society over last 3 years

Both Muslim men and women have noted a significant deterioration in their sense of acceptance as full-fledged members of Quebec society. Two-thirds of Muslim men feel the level of acceptance has worsened since law 21 was enacted. Almost as many women (57%) indicate a significant deterioration of acceptance with an overall perception of worsening acceptance approaching 80%.





## 2. Hate & Safety

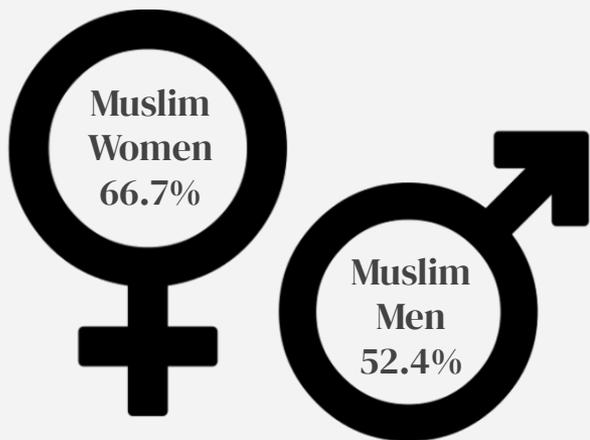
**Summary.** Levels of **exposure to hate incidents and hate crimes** among Muslims, and even more so Muslim women (Men 52.4%, Women 66.7%), are **almost triple those found in the population in general** (Men 21.3%, Women 18.1%) and almost double those experienced by visible minority Quebecers (Men 42.3%, Women 36.4%).

The deterioration in the sense of safety in public over the last 3 years is extraordinary, situated at about 2/3 for Muslim men and reaching **over 70% for Muslim women**. Muslim men, and particularly women, are suffering attacks directed at their identity as Muslims and are feeling significantly less safe as a result.

# “I have been a victim and/or a witness of a hate incident or a hate crime”

## WHAT?

Lack of Respect  
Insults  
Racial Slurs  
Aggressive Acts  
Threats  
Violence



“I was attacked by a man who insulted me in a shopping mall and **threatened me with death** while making racist remarks.”

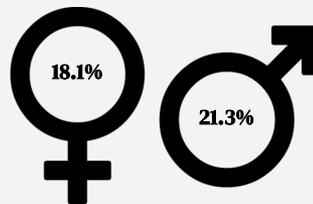
“Go back to your country”, “Get that thing off your head”, “**Crappy language**, we’re in Quebec here, we live in French here.”

“My friend’s hijab was **pulled off** on the metro.”  
“On the bus, a person **spat** on us.”

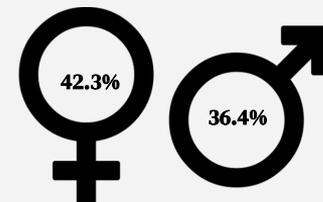
“When law 21 was announced, a man on the bus told me **I would have to take off my headscarf.**”

“I was walking home from daycare with my 3 year old daughter. A young man tried deliberately to **run us over with a large pickup truck.**”

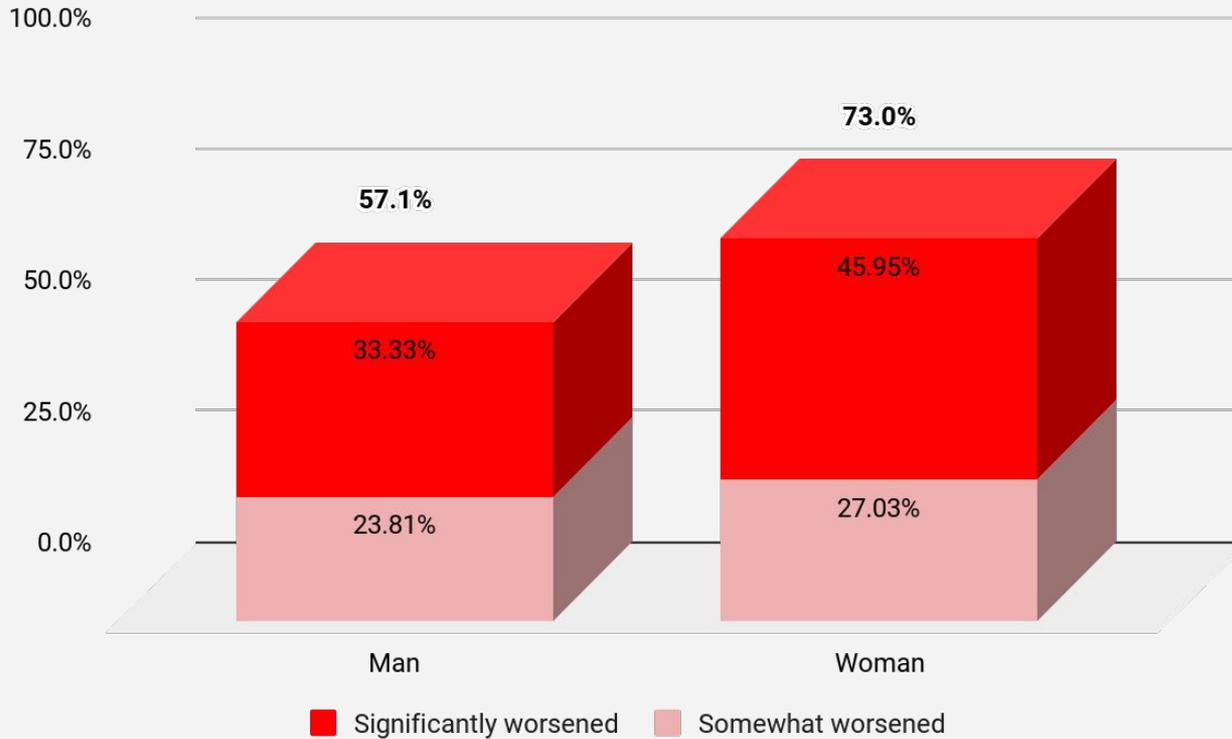
All Quebecers



Visible Minority Quebecers



## Change in level of comfort about safety in public over the last three years





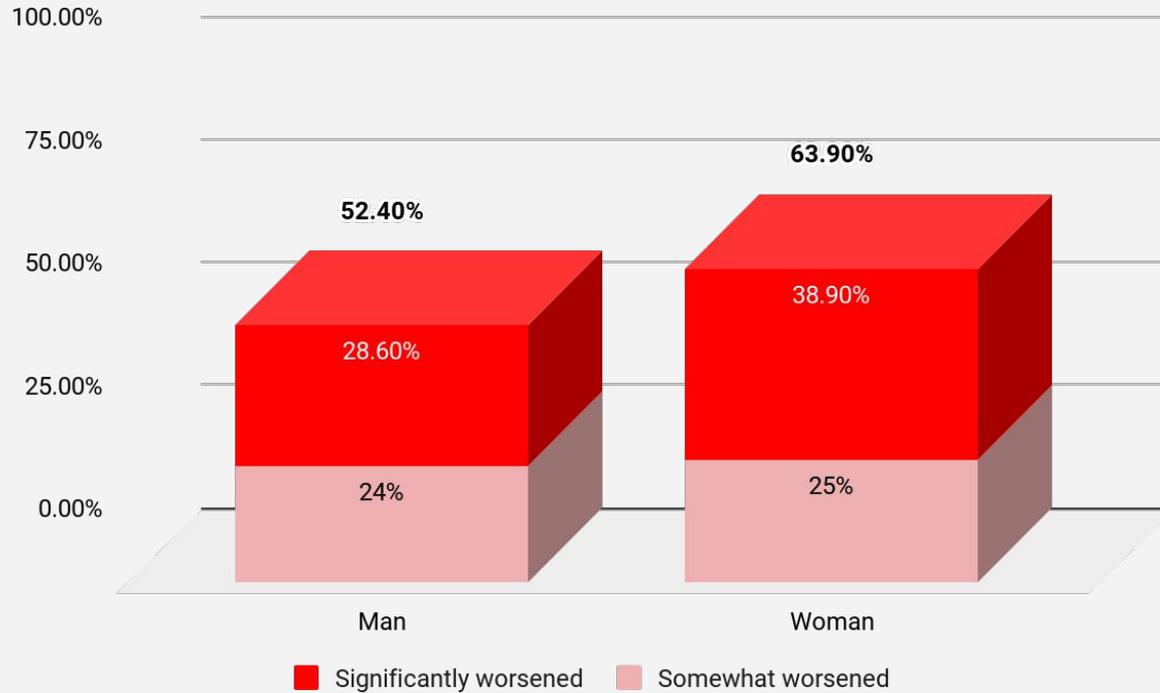
### 3. Citizenship

**Summary.** Muslims report high rates of deterioration in their **readiness to participate in social and political life** (almost half of Muslim men, two-thirds of Muslim women) and in their readiness to express themselves freely in public (Men 55%, Women 56.7%). **Muslim women are affected at higher rates than men** and the percentage of those reporting significant worsening in these dimensions is exceptionally high.

Law 21 is intended to set out rules for good citizenship but, in the current climate, Muslims as a whole are much less willing to engage in the social and political process. It is worth reflecting on the fact that a law **designed to promote equality between men and women seems to undermine** the willingness of some Quebec women to participate in the democratic process.

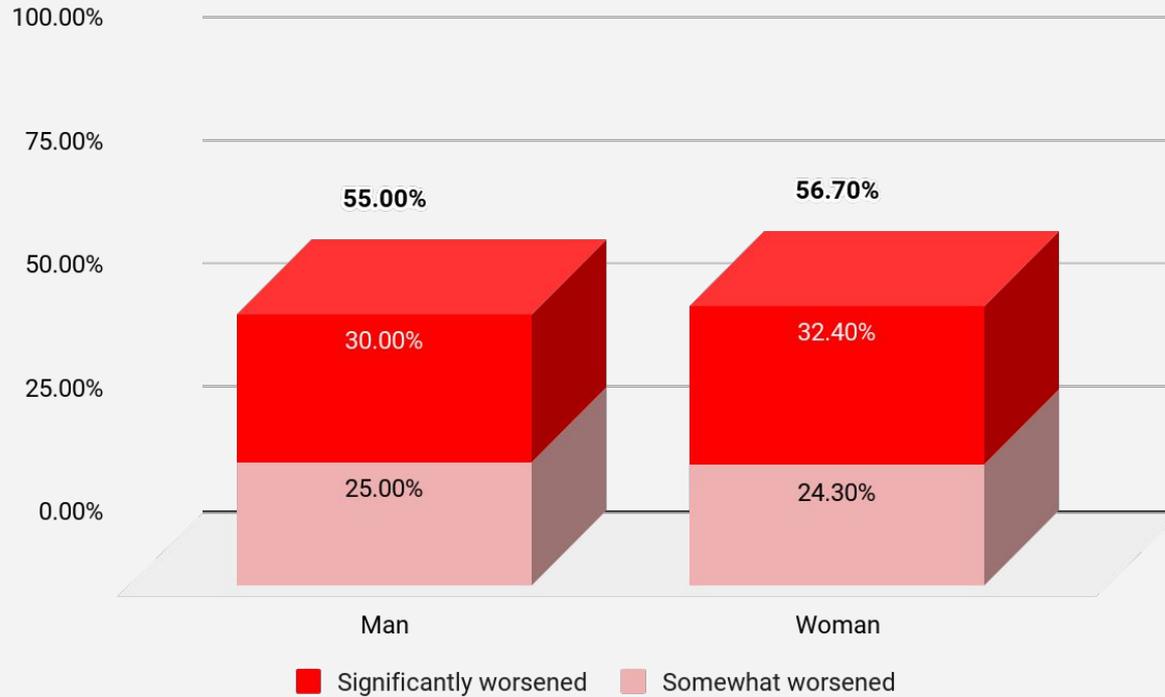
## Change over the last 3 years

Readiness to participate in social and political life



## Change over the last 3 years

Readiness to express myself freely in public



The logo features a stylized crescent moon and a five-pointed star (shamsa) inside a circle, which is itself inside a larger, lighter circle. The word "Muslims" is written in a bold, serif font to the right of the inner circle.

# Muslims

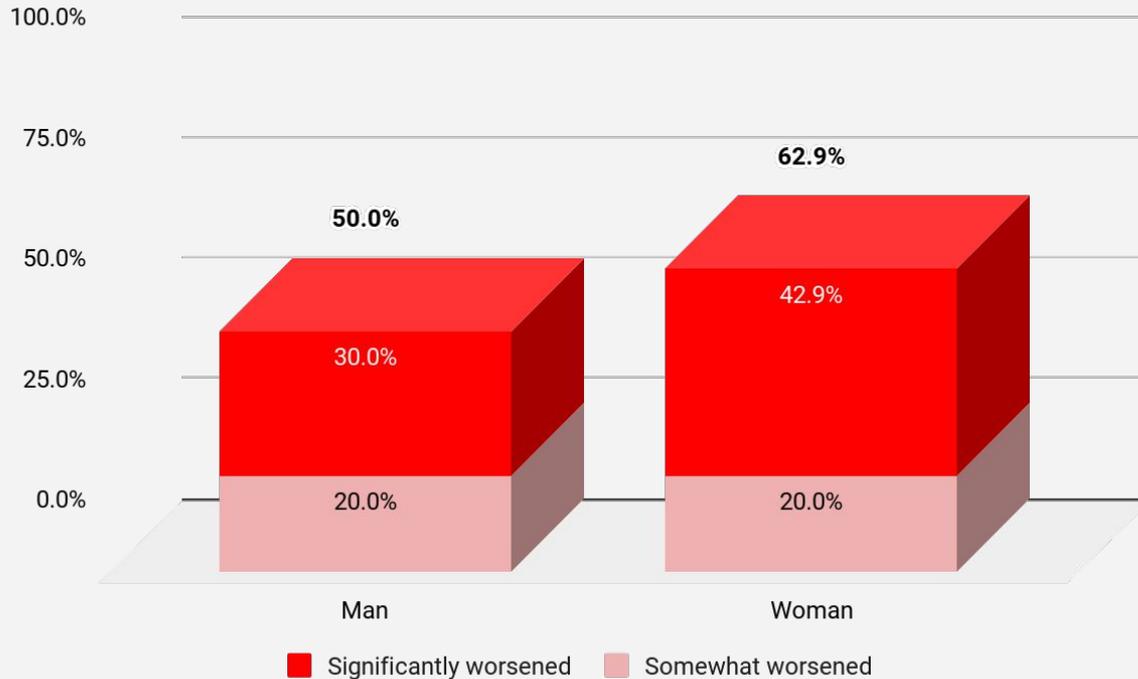
## 4. Fulfillment, Wellbeing & Hope

**Summary.** Muslims report declines in indicators that measure sense of fulfillment, wellbeing and even future hope for their children. 50% of Muslim men reveal a worsening in their ability to flourish and achieve their goals and in the state of their mental health, whereas **these dimensions have deteriorated for 2/3 of Muslim women.** The deterioration in the hope Muslims have for the next generation is particularly high, with 70% of Muslim men and over **80% of Muslim women** recording a decline over the last 3 years. A large percentage of these judged this decline to be significant.

The final two slides in this series focus on gaps in experience according to whether or not respondents wear religious symbols and by immigration status. While the rates of decline in indicators of acceptance, safety, fulfillment and hope are predictably higher for Muslims who are immigrants and who regularly wear religious symbols, the **impacts** are nonetheless **significant for Muslims who are not personally affected by the restrictions imposed by Bill 21 and who were born in Canada.** The declining hospitability of the Quebec climate is thus felt across Muslim communities as a whole.

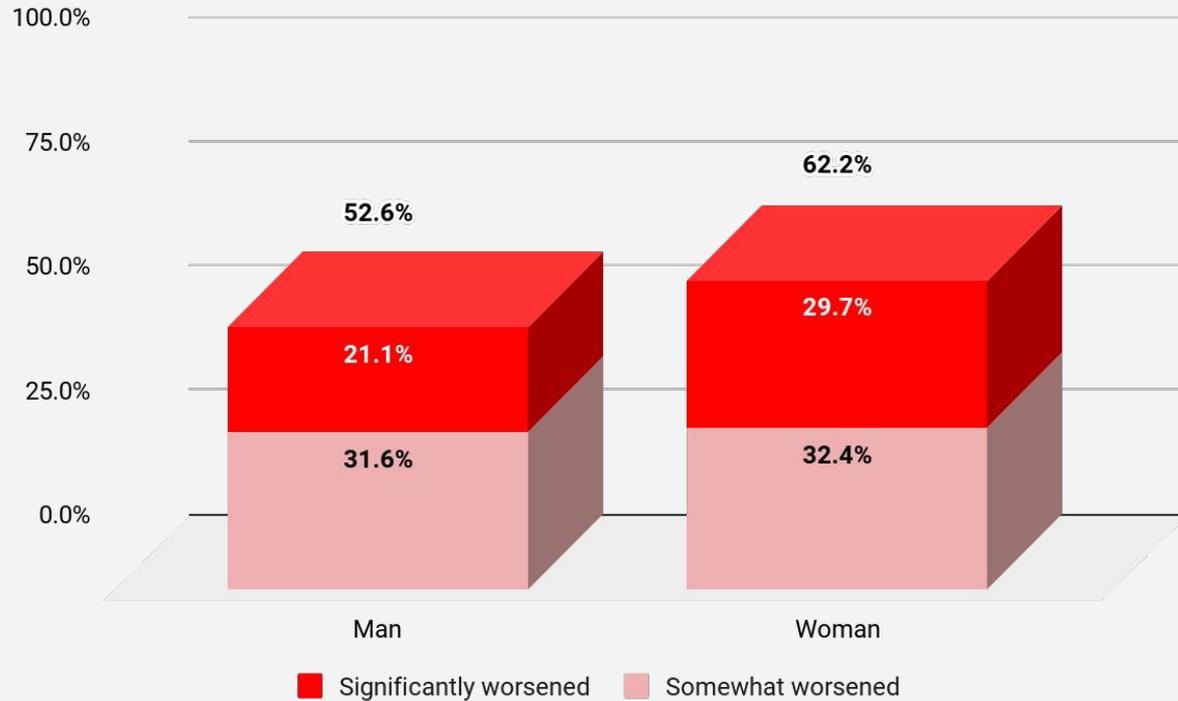
## Change over the last 3 years

My potential to flourish and achieve my goals and aspirations for the future



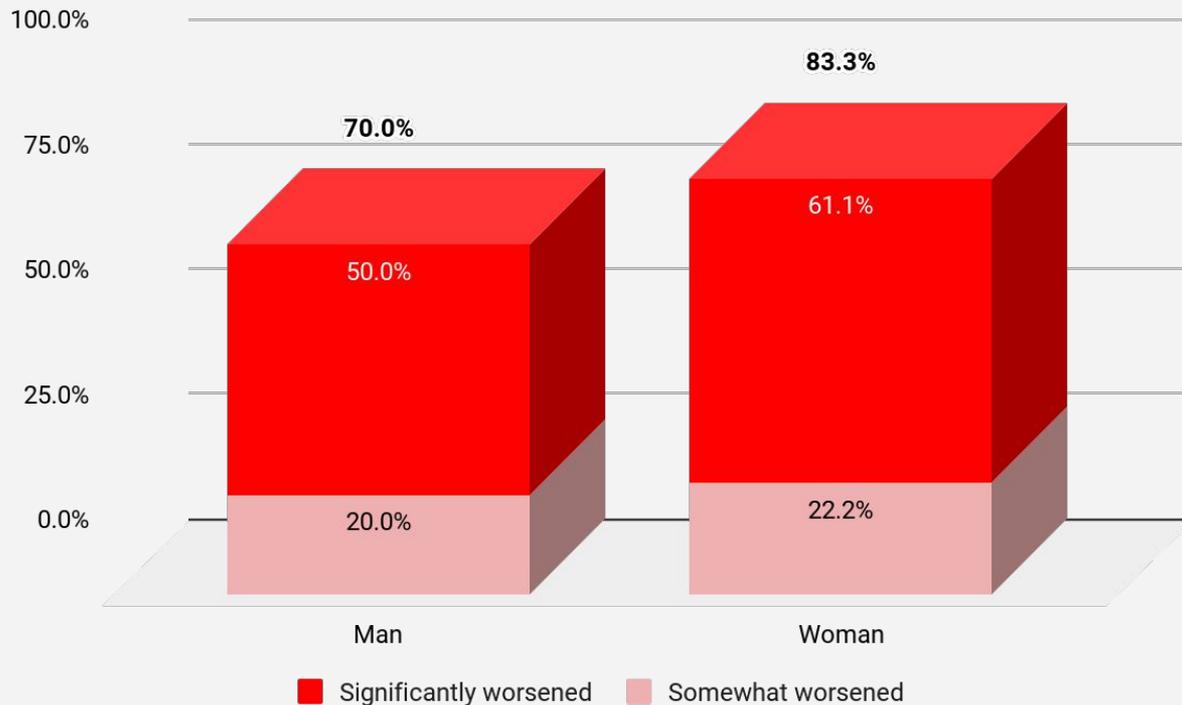
# Change over the last 3 years

My mental health

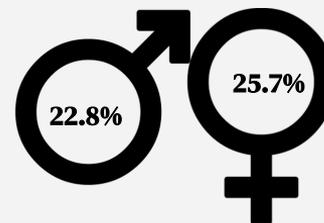


## Change over the last 3 years

My confidence in my children's future



All Quebecers



## **Deterioration in the social climate**

### **Gaps in experience between Muslims who wear religious symbols and those who don't**

While levels of acceptance, security, engagement and present and future hope have deteriorated more among Muslims who wear religious symbols, the levels of negative change remain high even among Muslims who never wear religious symbols. The sense of identity being stigmatized extends to the larger community.

<b>Deterioration reported among Muslims over the last 3 years</b>	<b>I wear a religious symbol</b>	
	Often	Never
My feeling of being accepted as a full-fledged member of Quebec society	86.20%	58.80%
My level of comfort about my safety in public	82.80%	50%
My readiness to participate in social and political life	72.40%	43.80%
My potential to flourish and achieve my goals and aspirations for the future	70%	41.20%
My confidence in my children's future	89.70%	62.50%

## **Deterioration in the social climate**

### **Gaps in experience between Muslims born in Canada and Immigrants**

While levels of acceptance, security, engagement and present and future hope have deteriorated more among Muslims who were born outside of Canada, those born here nevertheless record significant deterioration in these dimensions of life. Immigrants feel significantly less safe and less able to flourish. Change in hope for the next generation virtually identical for the two groups.

<b>Deterioration reported among Muslims over the last 3 years</b>	<b>I was born in Canada</b>	
	YES	NO
My feeling of being accepted as a full-fledged member of Quebec society	69.20%	77.30%
My level of comfort about my safety in public	53.80%	71%
My readiness to participate in social and political life	50.00%	60.00%
My potential to flourish and achieve my goals and aspirations for the future	41%	60.00%
My confidence in my children's future	75.00%	77.80%



Demographic Profile

Summary of Results

1. Acceptance and Acceptability
2. Hate & Safety
3. Citizenship
4. Fulfillment, Wellbeing & Hope

**Slide 68**

**Slide 69**

**Slides 70-74**

**Slides 75-77**

**Slides 78-78**

**Slides 80-81**



**The Jews** of Quebec number between 83,000 and 87,000. They are a majority Canadian-born community and the longest established of the three surveyed, with a history of several hundred years and strong organizational and institutional presence in the province.

## **Demographic Profile\***

### **The Jewish Population of Quebec**

2011:	<b>85,105</b>
2022:	<b>83,000-87,000</b>

### **Age**

Under 15 years:	<b>19.12%</b>
25-54 age range:	<b>31.2%</b>

<b>% of Immigrants</b>	<b>30.1%</b>
Arrival Before 1971:	<b>37.26%</b>
Arrival 2001-2011:	<b>17.47%</b>

\*The most recent demographic figures for religious minority communities from Statistics Canada date back to 2011. Current estimates are based on projections.



## Summary of Results

While the Jewish respondents surveyed appear to be less impacted on a personal level than do Muslims and Sikhs, results show that **Jews in Quebec feel less accepted and less hopeful for the future of the next generation than they did 3 years ago**. Several respondents alluded to being subjected to long-standing antisemitic tropes.

In the survey, levels of discrimination experienced by Jewish men (25%) are **almost double those reported by Quebecers as a whole** (13.8%) and half of the Jewish men surveyed shared feeling the need to hide to avoid discrimination and the same percentage relayed being exposed to hate incidents and crimes. Two thirds of Jewish respondents expressed feeling discriminated against by the Quebec government and a majority of both men and women feel less accepted in Quebec than they did 3 years ago. **Half of Jewish women and 1/3 of Jewish men are less inclined to express themselves freely in public** and roughly 2/3 of both genders feel less hopeful for their children's generation.



## 1. Acceptability & Acceptance

**Summary.** 33% of Jewish women and 40% of Jewish men report exposure to prejudicial remarks. Levels of discrimination experienced by Jewish men (25%) are almost double those reported by Quebecers as a whole (13.8%). Half of the Jewish men surveyed admitted to feeling the need to **hide their identity to avoid discrimination.**

The deterioration over the last 3 years in feeling accepted as a full-fledged member of Quebec society is around the 60% mark for both Jewish men and women.

# “I often or sometimes hear prejudicial remarks from family members, friends or colleagues about Jews”

“I get remarks on a daily basis because apparently a lot of French speakers think I should leave where I'm from because they say my French isn't good enough. I have had police and firefighters hang up on me in an emergency because of my French telling me "call back when you can speak proper French.”



## WHO?

Colleagues  
Friends  
Neighbours  
Service providers  
Family  
Acquaintances  
Peers

“Colleague making disparaging remarks about Jews forgetting my presence. Persons making disparaging remarks about Muslims.”

“Friends in my neighbourhood. That Jews are rich, that Muslim women should not wear hijab, that Jews and Muslims should adapt to Quebec culture.”



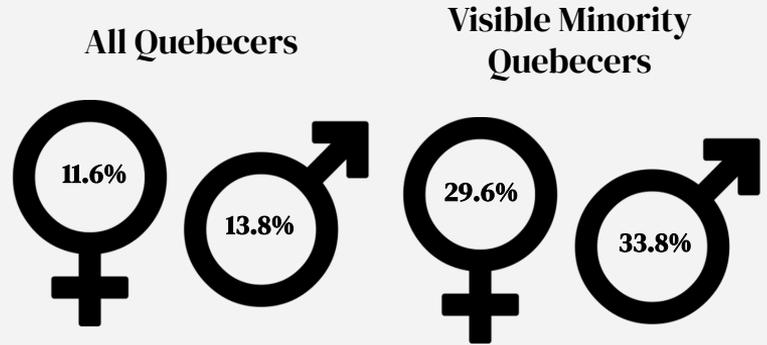
**“I have been treated unfairly by a person in a position of authority (Police officer/elected official/health care provider/employer/professor or teacher) because of my racial, ethnic or religious identity.”**

**WHO?**

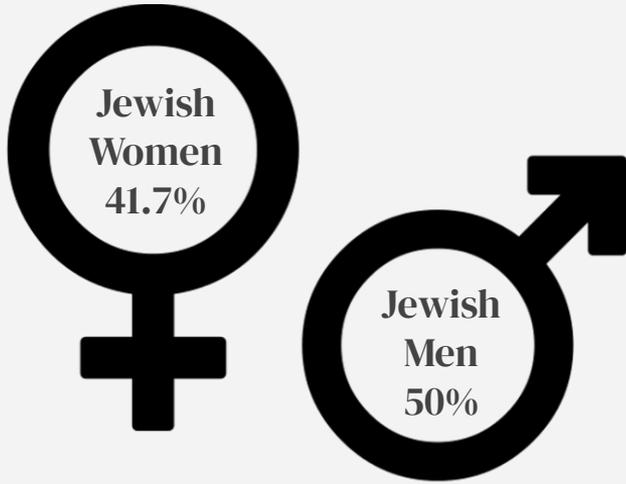
- Professor
- Police
- Authorities
- Employer

“I was asked to remove my kippah by my employer while working as a multifaith chaplaincy student.”

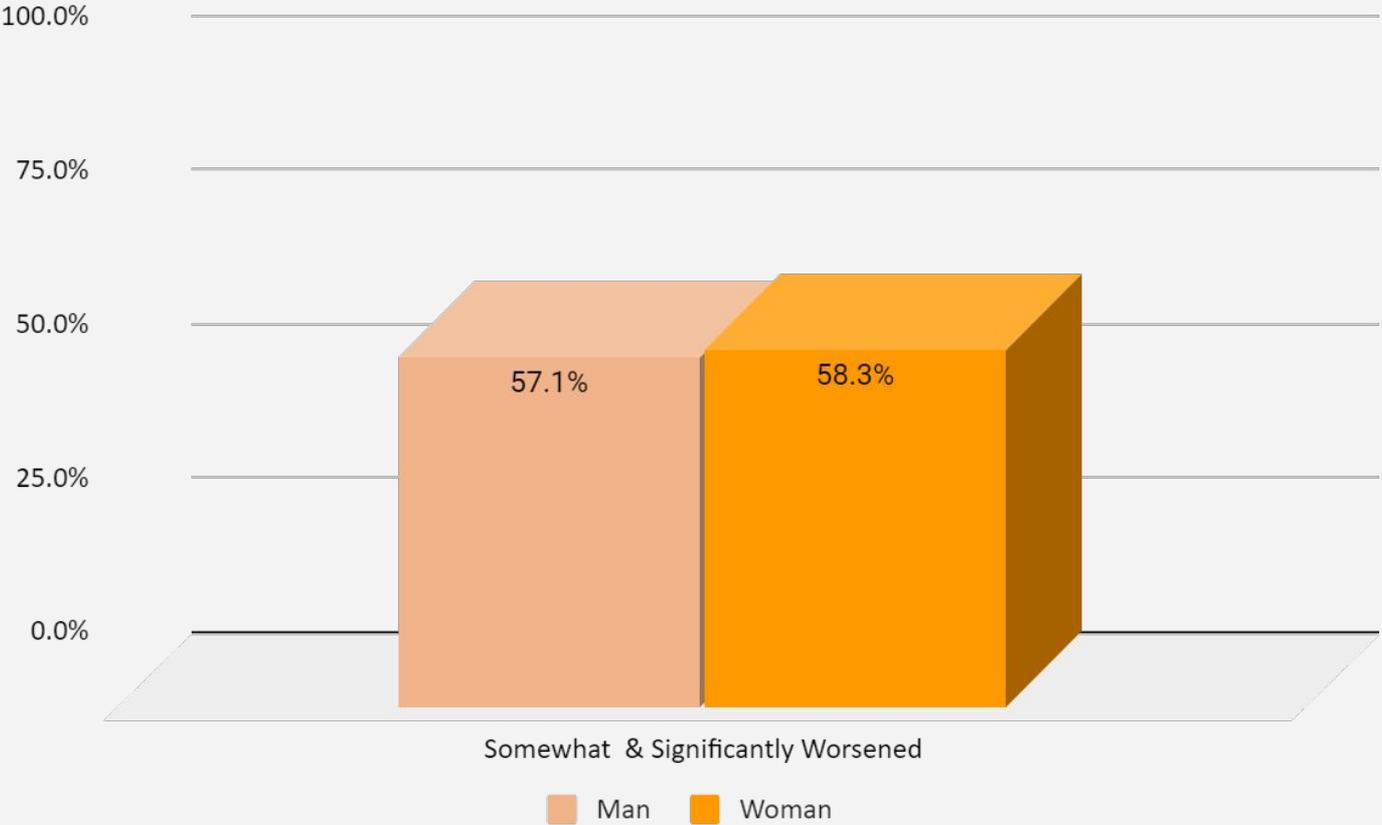
“I was not offered a job because there was concern over my being absent during the first month of school due to religious holidays.”



**“I often or sometimes feel the need to hide my identity to avoid discrimination”**



# Change in feeling of being accepted as a full-fledged member of Quebec Society over last 3 years



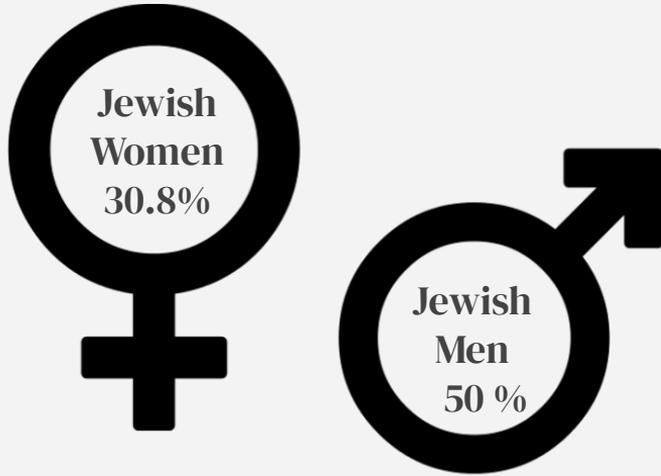


## 2. Hate & Safety

**Summary.** Levels of exposure to hate incidents and hate crimes among Jewish men (50%) exceed those recorded among visible minorities in this survey by more than 10%. One third of Jewish women also relay exposure to hate.

The recorded deterioration in safety in public is above 40% for men (42.9%) and approaches the halfway mark for women (46.2%).

# “I have been a victim and/or a witness of a hate incident or a hate crime”



**WHAT?**  
Slurs  
Insults  
Stigmatisation  
Assaults  
Graffiti



“I was called a f\*\*\* Jew because I would not lend somebody money.”

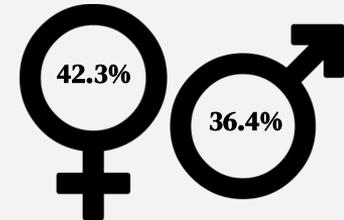
“Verbally assaulted in the bus for discussing a religious holiday with a friend.”

“Anti semitic graffiti on a synagogue.”

**All Quebecers**

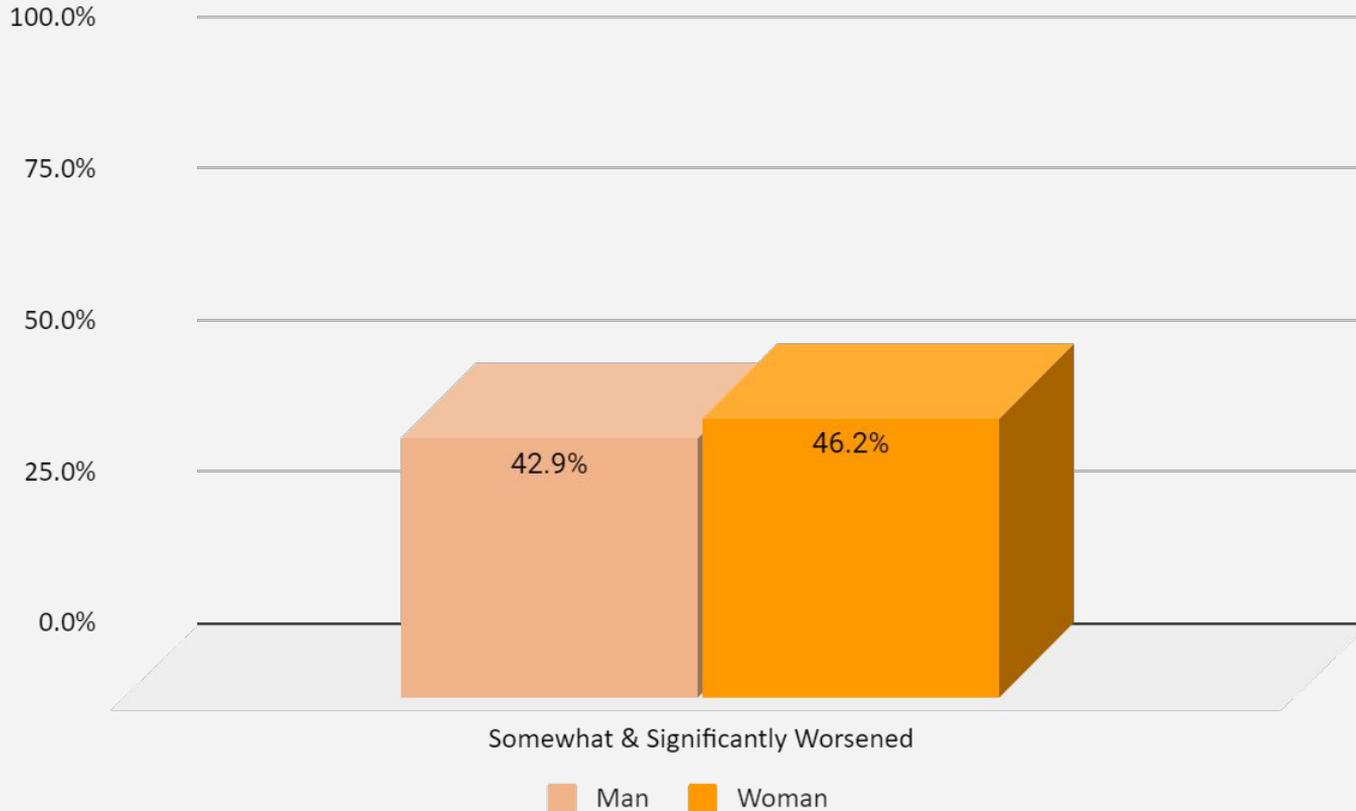


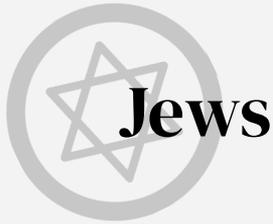
**Visible Minority Quebecers**



# Change over the last 3 years

My level of comfort about my safety in public





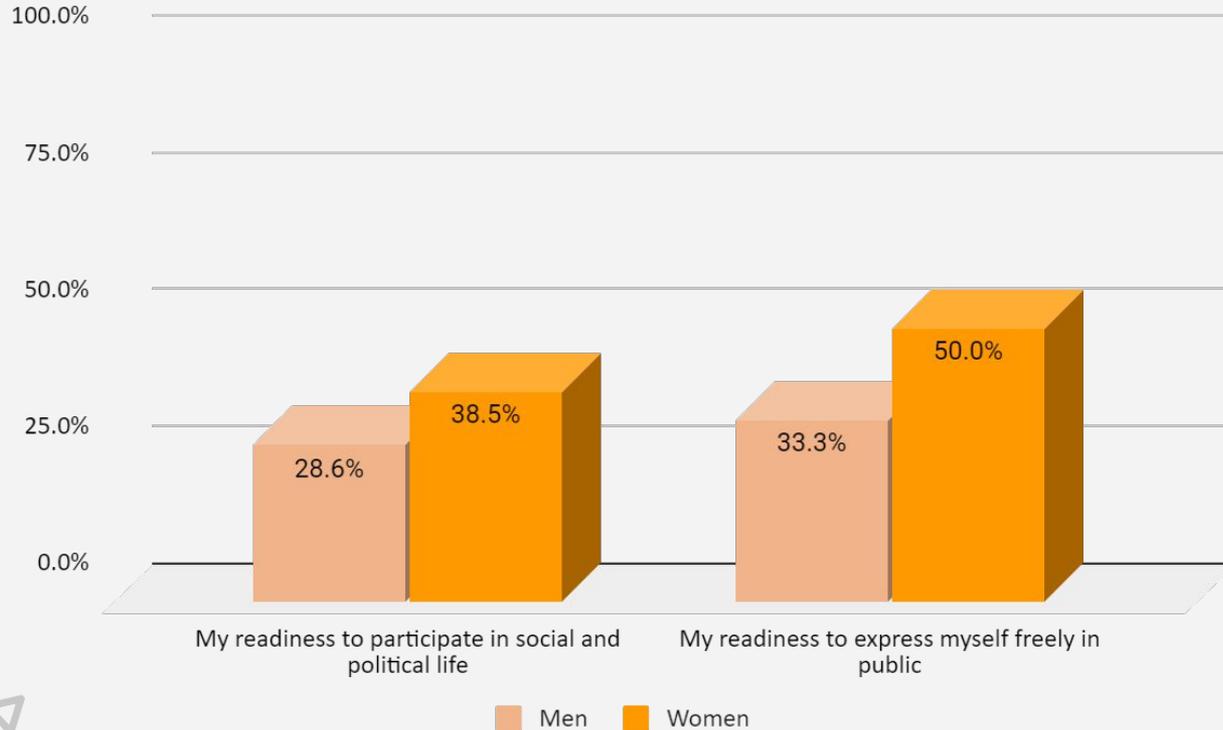
### 3. Citizenship

**Summary.** Nearly **40% of Jewish women feel less inclined to participate in social and political life** (Quebec women overall 14.3%) than they did 3 years ago. One third of Jewish men and half of Jewish women feel less free to express themselves publicly (Quebec men 11%, Quebec women 13.6%).

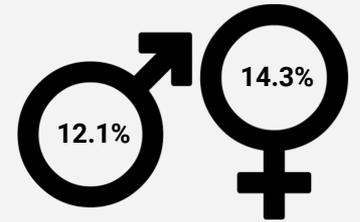
While the decline in these indicators of engagement in the democratic process are not as marked as those found among Muslim respondents,  $\frac{2}{3}$  of Jewish respondents expressed feeling discriminated against by the Quebec government.

## Change over the last 3 years

Readiness to participate in social and political life



**All Quebecers**  
Change in readiness to participate in social and political life



I have felt discriminated against and/or excluded by comments, statements or measures made by representatives of the Quebec government.

**Jewish Respondents: 62%**





## 4. Fulfillment, Wellbeing & Hope

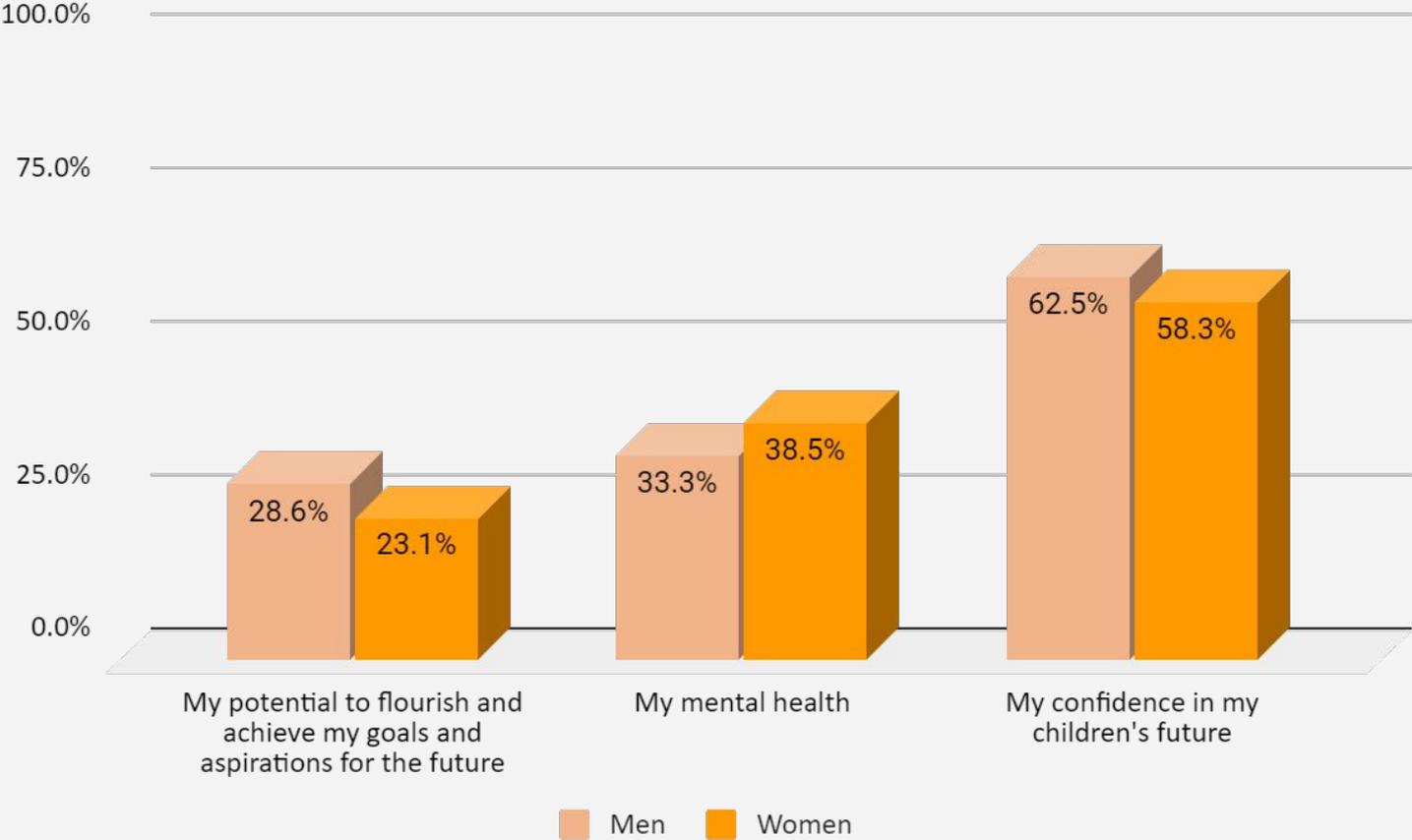
**Summary.** While the deterioration in the potential to flourish among Jewish men and women (28.6% vs. 23.1%) may seem lower than that reported among Muslims, it is nevertheless more than double the percentages found among Quebecers overall (7.7% vs. 10.9%).

The deterioration in mental health among Jewish respondents (Men, 33.3% vs. Women, 38.5%) is also triple the percentage reported by men in Quebec overall (10.5%) and more than double those indicated by Quebec women (16.8%).

Roughly **2/3 of Jewish men and women report feeling a deterioration in the hope for their children's future.**

# Change over the last 3 years

## Somewhat & Significantly Worsened





Demographic Profile

Summary of Results

1. Acceptance and Acceptability
2. Hate & Safety
3. Citizenship
4. Fulfillment, Wellbeing & Hope

**Slide 83**

**Slide 84**

**Slides 85-88**

**Slides 89-91**

**Slides 92-93**

**Slides 94-95**



**The Sikhs** of Quebec number between 10,000 and 10,500 and are therefore the smallest of the communities surveyed. They are a majority immigrant community with significant arrivals in the last decade of the 20th century and the first decade of the 21st century. They are a relatively young community.

## **Demographic Profile\***

### **The Sikh Population of Quebec**

2011:	<b>9,275</b>
2022:	<b>10,000-10,500</b>

### **AGE**

Under 15 years:	<b>19.35%</b>
25-54 age range:	<b>46.9%</b>

### **% OF IMMIGRANTS**

Arrival 1991-2000:	<b>32.56%</b>
Arrival 2001-2011:	<b>44.71%</b>

\*The most recent demographic figures for religious minority communities from Statistics Canada date back to 2011. Current estimates are based on projections.



## Summary of Results

Two thirds of Sikh men and almost 2/3 of Sikh women have experienced discrimination in their daily interactions at work, school, when receiving services or in interactions with coercive authorities. Three quarters of Sikh women and more than 80% of Sikh men report a deterioration in their sense of acceptance in Quebec society.

**Half of Sikh women and 2/3 of Sikh men report exposure to hate incidents and over 2/3 of both genders feel less safe than they did 3 years ago.**

The percentages of both men and women who feel less inclined to take part in the democratic process and record a worsening in their sense of fulfillment, wellbeing and hope for their children's generation varies between 62% and almost 90%.



# Sikhs

## 1. Acceptability & Acceptance

**Summary. Two thirds of Sikh men** and almost 2/3 of Sikh women **have experienced discrimination in their daily interactions** at work, school, when receiving services or in interactions with coercive authorities.

Three quarters of Sikh women and **more than 80% of Sikh men report a deterioration in their sense of acceptance in Quebec society.**

## What prejudicial remarks have you heard from family members, friends or colleagues?

### **WHO?**

Colleagues

Friends

Strangers

### **WHAT?**

Ridicule

Mistaken for

Muslim

Abuse

Return to country

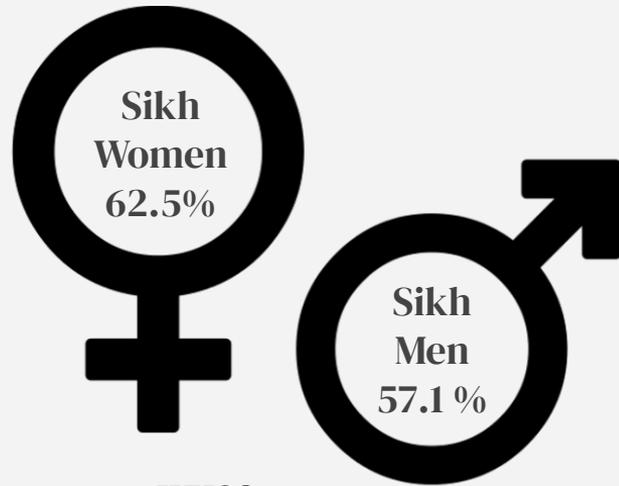
Turban

“It was mostly because of the turban. They told me that it must be difficult to hear with your turban on. Mostly, they mistakenly consider me Muslim and they will be rude and use F words. I can surely feel for Muslims and how they would have felt.”

“Experienced racism and being abused saying that immigrants should leave the country. Also, experienced hostile behaviour for not being able to speak French.”



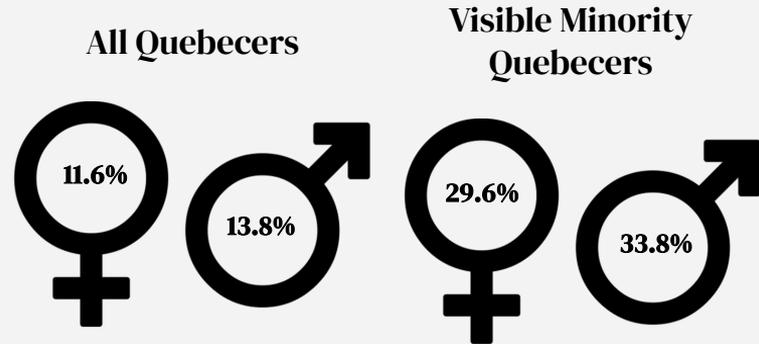
**“I have been treated unfairly by a person in a position of authority (Police officer/elected official/health care provider/employer/professor or teacher) because of my racial, ethnic or religious identity.”**



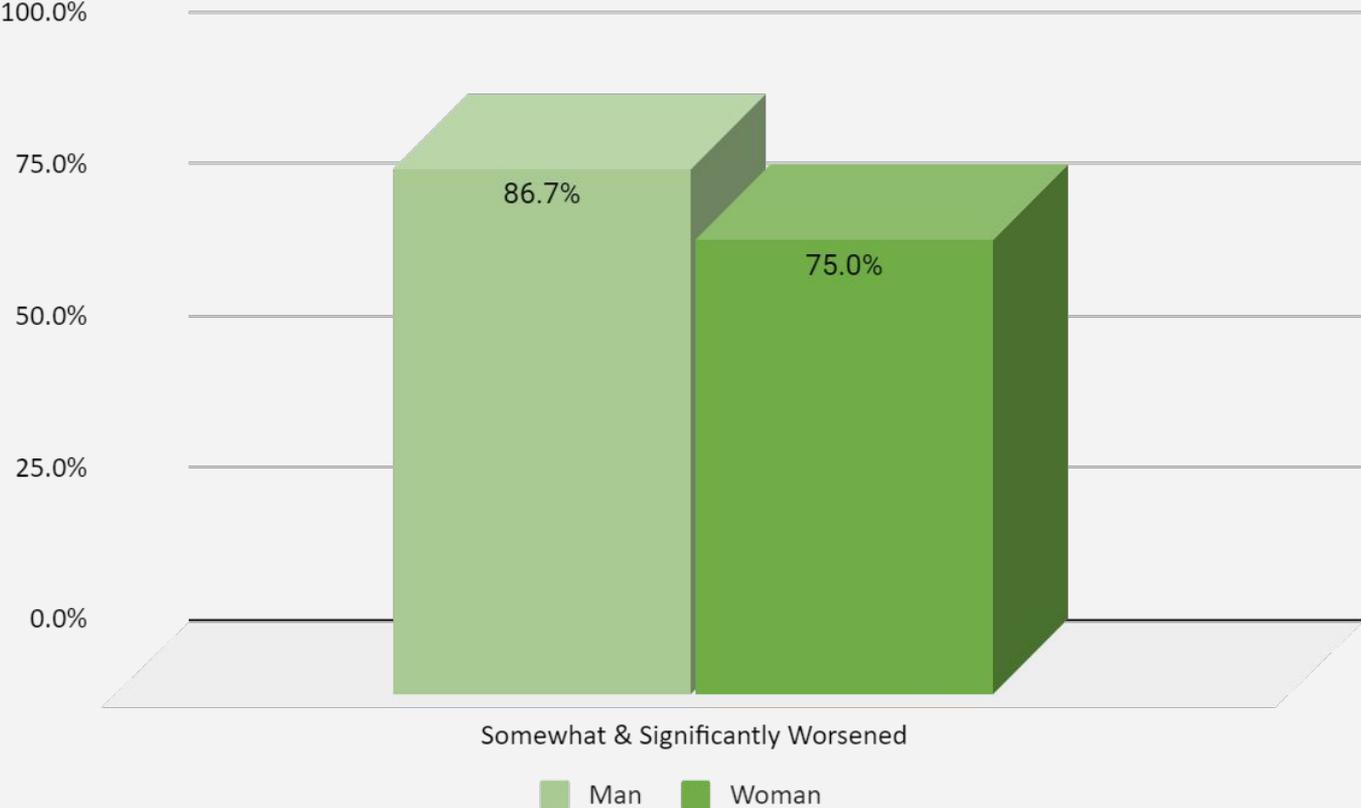
**WHO?**  
Police  
School administration  
Manager  
Professor/Teacher



**“I am an international student here in Canada. I am doing public administration. I would like to work in the public sector but I will not get the opportunity to do so because of this law.”**



# Change in feeling of being accepted as a full-fledged member of Quebec Society over last 3 years



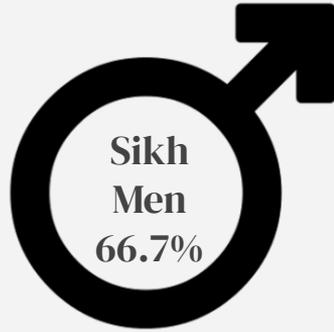


## 2. Hate and Safety

**Summary.** Levels of exposure to **hate incidents and hate crimes** among Sikhs, in particular Sikh men (Sikh women, 50% vs Sikh men, 66.7%), far exceed those in the population in general (Quebec men, 13.8% vs. Quebec women, 11.6%) and, in the case of Sikh men, are **almost double those reported in this survey by visible minority Quebecers** (Visible minority men 36.4%).

The **deterioration** in the **sense of safety in public over the last 3 years is exceptionally high, reaching over 75%** for both Sikh men and women.

# “I have been a victim and/or a witness of a hate incident or a hate crime”



**WHAT?**  
Insults  
Abuse  
Racial slurs  
Stonewalling  
Attacks

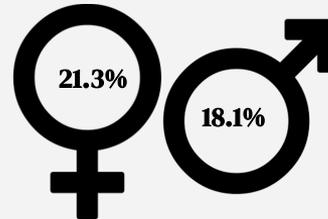
“Called me names due to my turban.”

“I have been spat on, told to return to my country and bullied. None of the incidents were reported because it feels like this is what minorities have to deal with in Quebec.”

“It was by my Manager - "I will kick your Turban off". I didn't complain.”

“A brown friend was beaten up in a park - they called him paki, go back to your country. A pharmacist refused to serve me in English after Bill 21 became law. She is perfectly bilingual and had served me in English before the existence of Bill 21.”

All Quebecers

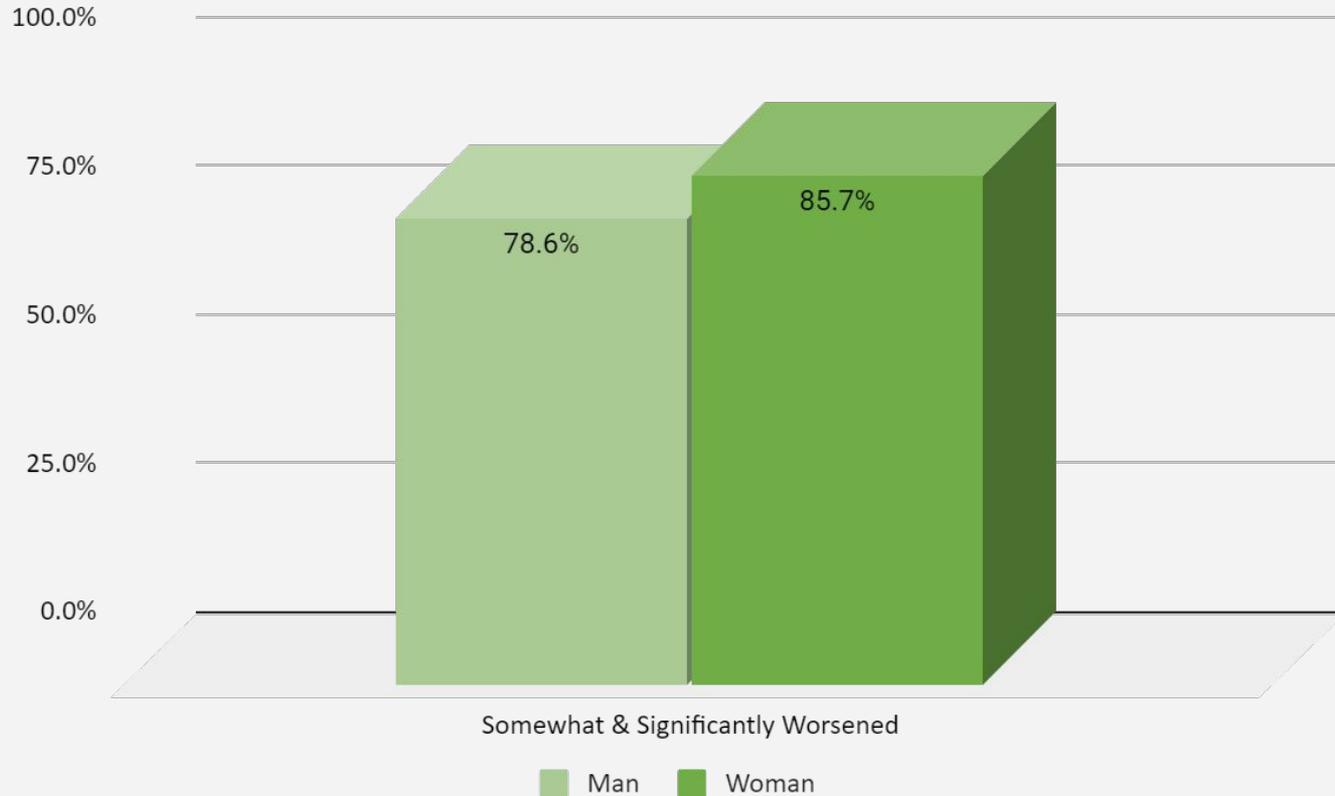


Visible Minority Quebecers



## Change over the last three years

My level of comfort about my safety in public





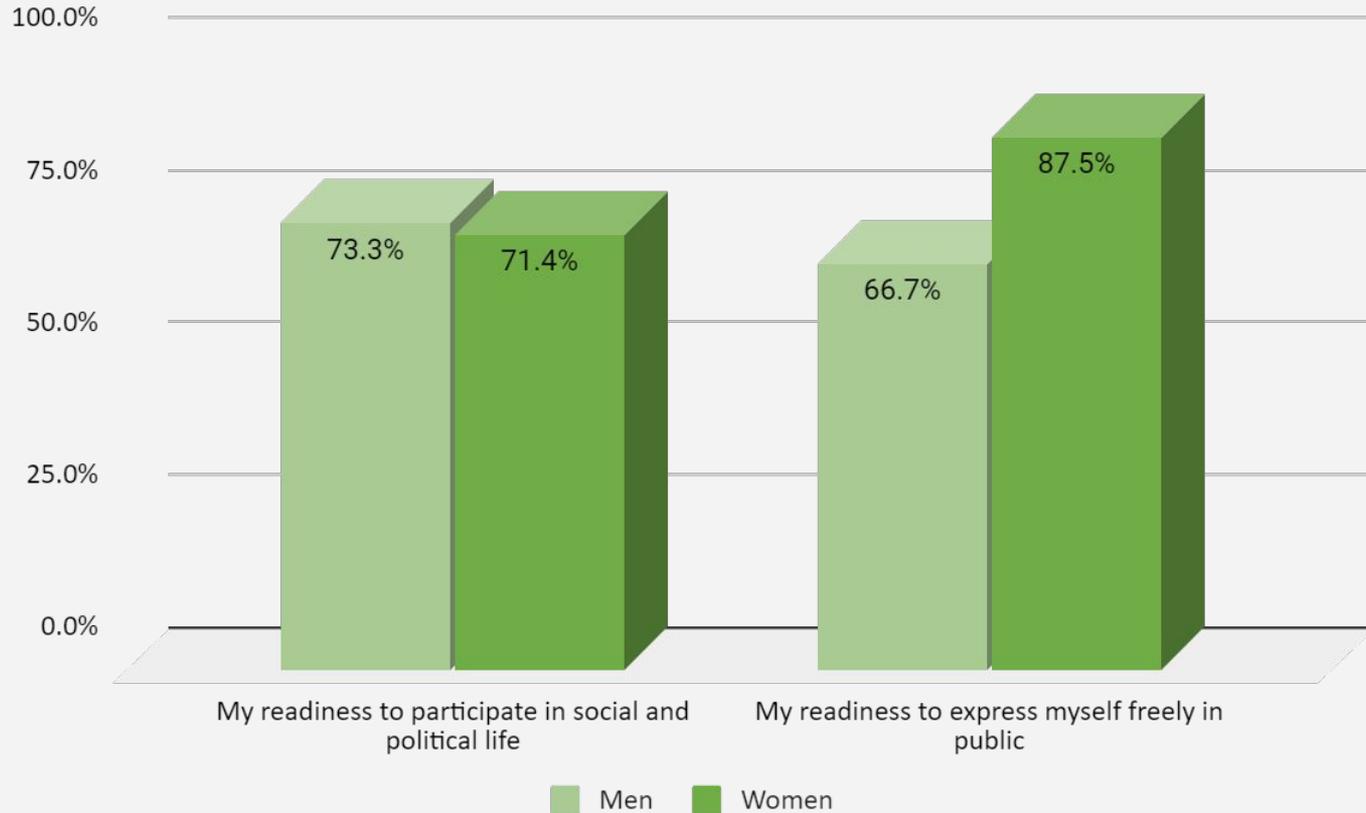
### 3. Citizenship

**Summary.** Three quarters of Sikh men and almost as many Sikh women feel less inclined to participate in social and political life in the province since law 21 was enacted.

Almost **90% of Sikh women and ¾ of Sikh men report a deterioration in their readiness to express themselves freely in public.**

# Change over the last 3 years

## Somewhat & Significantly Worsened



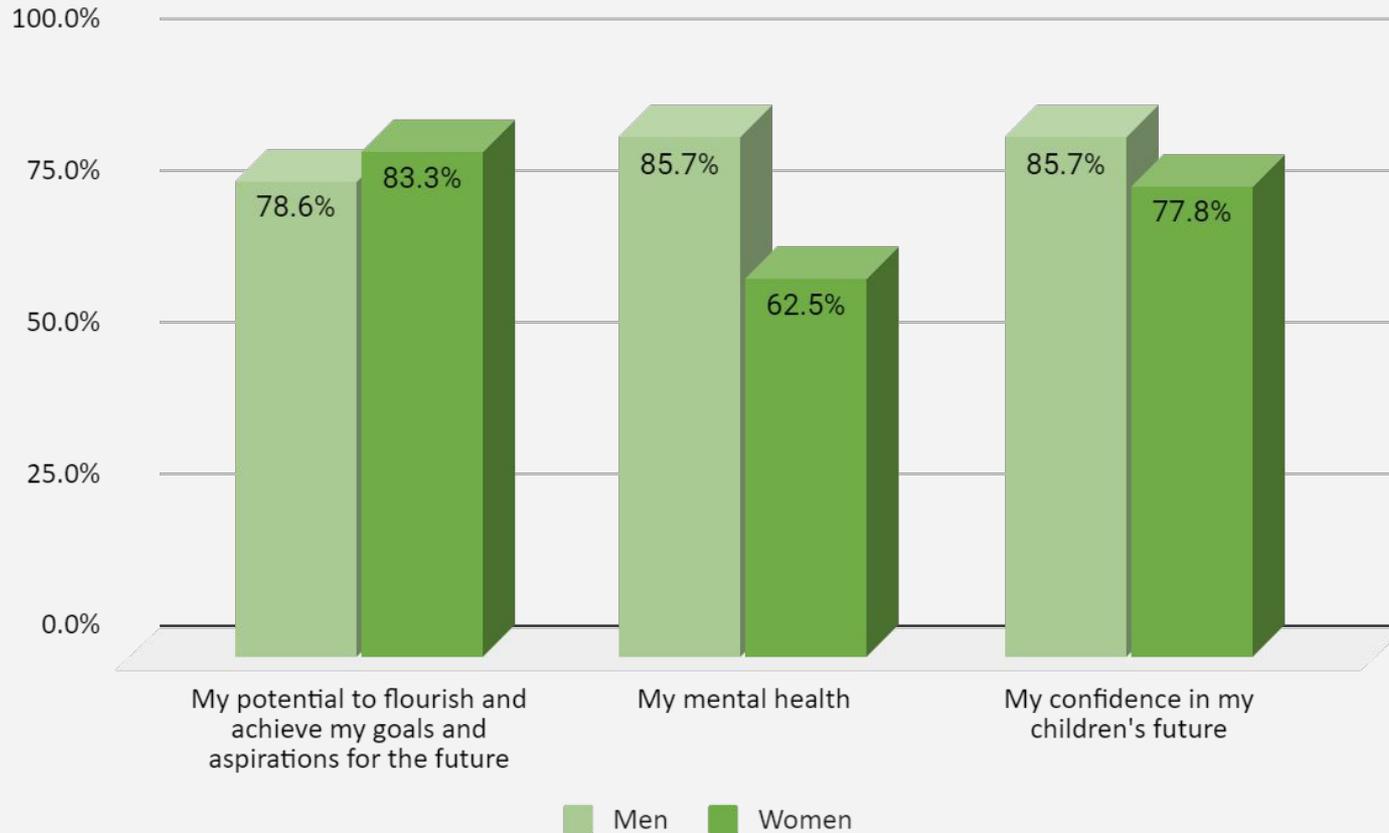


## 4. Fulfillment, Wellbeing & Hope

**Summary.** Sikhs report a **significant deterioration** in indicators that measure sense of fulfillment, wellbeing and hope for the future, with in almost all cases more than 75% reporting a worsening of their situations.

# Change over the last 3 years

## Somewhat & Significantly Worsened



## CONCLUDING REMARKS

### 1. Religious Symbols Politicized

Legislation is known to have a normative impact, influencing both attitudes and behaviours. In some instances laws reinforce and validate existing opinions, in others, as in the case of seatbelt mandates and same sex marriage, they help shift public perceptions.

Implicit in the imposition of governmental restrictions on religious symbols, no matter how mild, is the notion that the **behaviour being limited is potentially harmful and that the groups whose practices are being limited need to be held in check**. This focus on and politicization of religious symbols when coupled with the prevalent negativity toward non-Christian religions and symbols that drives support for law 21\* is a potent mix. All societies have their share of prejudice, and the origins of negative preconceptions are complex. What is revealed in this study is that, in Quebec in 2022, religious minority groups see the negative opinions of their fellow citizens vis-à-vis non-Christian religious symbols and groups reflected in their daily interactions at work, at school, when receiving or providing services, dealing with authorities, in public transport or on the street.

\*The hijab is viewed negatively by strong supporters at 78.1%, the turban at 75.7% and the kippah at 54%.

**CONTINUED ON NEXT SLIDE ...**

## ...CONCLUDING REMARKS

### ...Religious Symbols Politicized

The language and incidents that members of religious minorities describe in the open-ended answers of the survey are unsettling and chilling. Recurring themes in remarks made to Muslims, Jews and Sikhs in public spaces include:

- Unapologetic expressions of disdain and denigration;
- The labelling of community members as backward and uncivilized;
- Assertions that religious symbols are resistant to or disrespectful of Quebec values, an obstacle to Quebec destiny and that those who insist on continuing to wear them are stubborn and intransigent and are either deliberately refusing to integrate or are seeking to impose their way of life;
- The often-repeated “invitation” to “go back to where you came from”, aiming to delegitimize without regard for the real identity of the interlocutor;
- The voiced opinion that restrictions are bound to be applied more broadly over time, even extended to all public spaces, with complete assimilation viewed by some as a logical outcome;
- The dispensing with restraint and civility that normally govern interactions between strangers, people giving themselves license to be rude, aggressive, resort to xenophobic tropes, make comments of an invasive nature and openly express fatigue at having to look at the religious symbols in question.

The step from these assumptions and behaviours to physical violence is a small one and, indeed, several respondents relayed how **being identified with their religious community placed them in physical even mortal danger**.

In the present circumstances, the gut reactions of observers, who might feel malaise or discomfort when exposed to unfamiliar symbols, take precedence in people’s minds over the deeply held convictions of the wearers to whom the symbols belong. The hijabi woman, for instance, labelled simultaneously as submissive and a source of threat, is robbed in the eyes of those she encounters of her moral agency in decisions that involve what she does with her own body.

# CONCLUDING REMARKS

## 2. Questions of Identity

For the most part, Quebecers require no lessons on the importance of identity, on the role identity plays in determining social and political power and on the damage that can be caused when identity is disrespected or misunderstood.

In recent decades, along with other pluralistic societies, we have become more aware of the importance of eradicating shame and secrecy when giving members of groups subject to prejudice the tools to combat bullying and stigmatization. If a young member of the LGBTQ+ community is to thrive, they **need to have the space to proudly display their identity, as lack of self-esteem** and negative or uninformed feedback are known breeders of prejudice and discrimination.

The assumption that citizens need to prove their loyalty by placing their **national and religious identities in a hierarchical order of preference** is now being challenged as reductionist and outdated by experts in transnational and multiple identities. Wearing a religious symbol is part of a series of life choices that can enhance the wearer's ability to make a contribution to their society and their nation. **Multiple identities, where the soil is fertile for their expression, can be a pathway to engagement** and national allegiance.

As revealed in this study, perpetuating an environment that is inhospitable to the religious identities espoused by Quebecers is dangerous and counterproductive for those concerned but also damaging to our society as a whole, creating suffering and undermining potential.

## CONCLUDING REMARKS

### 3. Solidarity & Democracy

Solidarity, tolerance, a shared humanity and care for the more vulnerable are values prized by many Quebecers. Yet a 20-year-long reasonable accommodation debate **has politicized religious symbols, placing them at the centre of political controversy**. This study has demonstrated the high costs of allowing a climate of negativity to be perpetuated. In recent decades, we have become more cognizant of the fragility of democracies and of the dangers of fragmentation.

Democratic theorists warn against the temptation to foster national unity by contrasting national goals with negative traits ascribed to minority groups.\* This is not only **extremely detrimental to the groups themselves** but also **tears at the fabric of society** and undermines the health of our democracy. Instituting a law and creating a climate that promote the stigmatization of religious minority groups, contribute to disengagement and undermine fulfillment, wellbeing and hope and go directly against some of the more noble qualities that Quebecers pride themselves on.

\*See among others: Alexander, Jeffrey. *The Civic Sphere*. Oxford, 2007

## Two Levels of Reality

**Values  
ascribed  
to law 21**

- Neutrality
- Equality
- Social Harmony
- Collective will
- Destiny
- Loyalty

**Popular  
support**

### Level 1

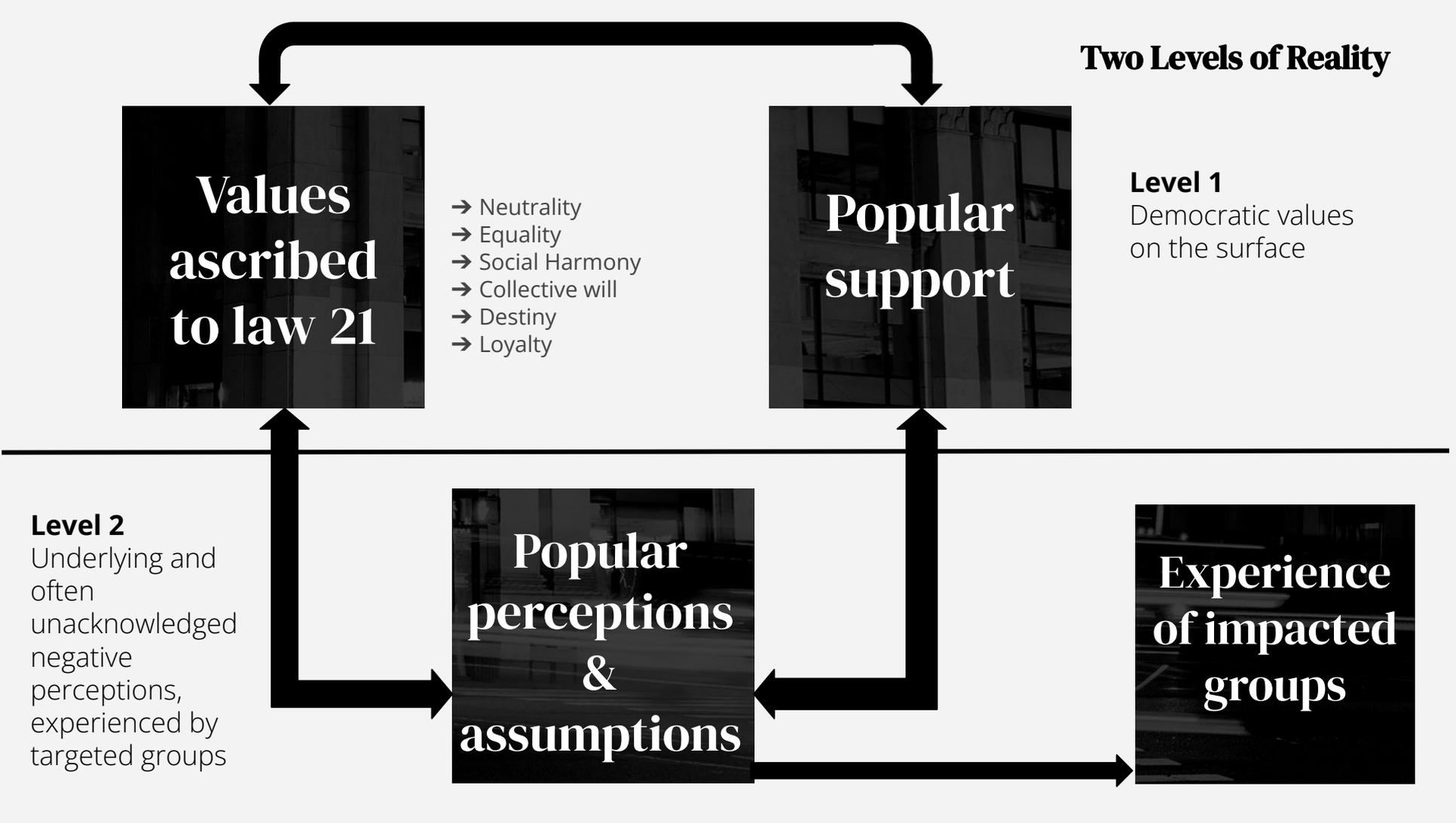
Democratic values  
on the surface

### Level 2

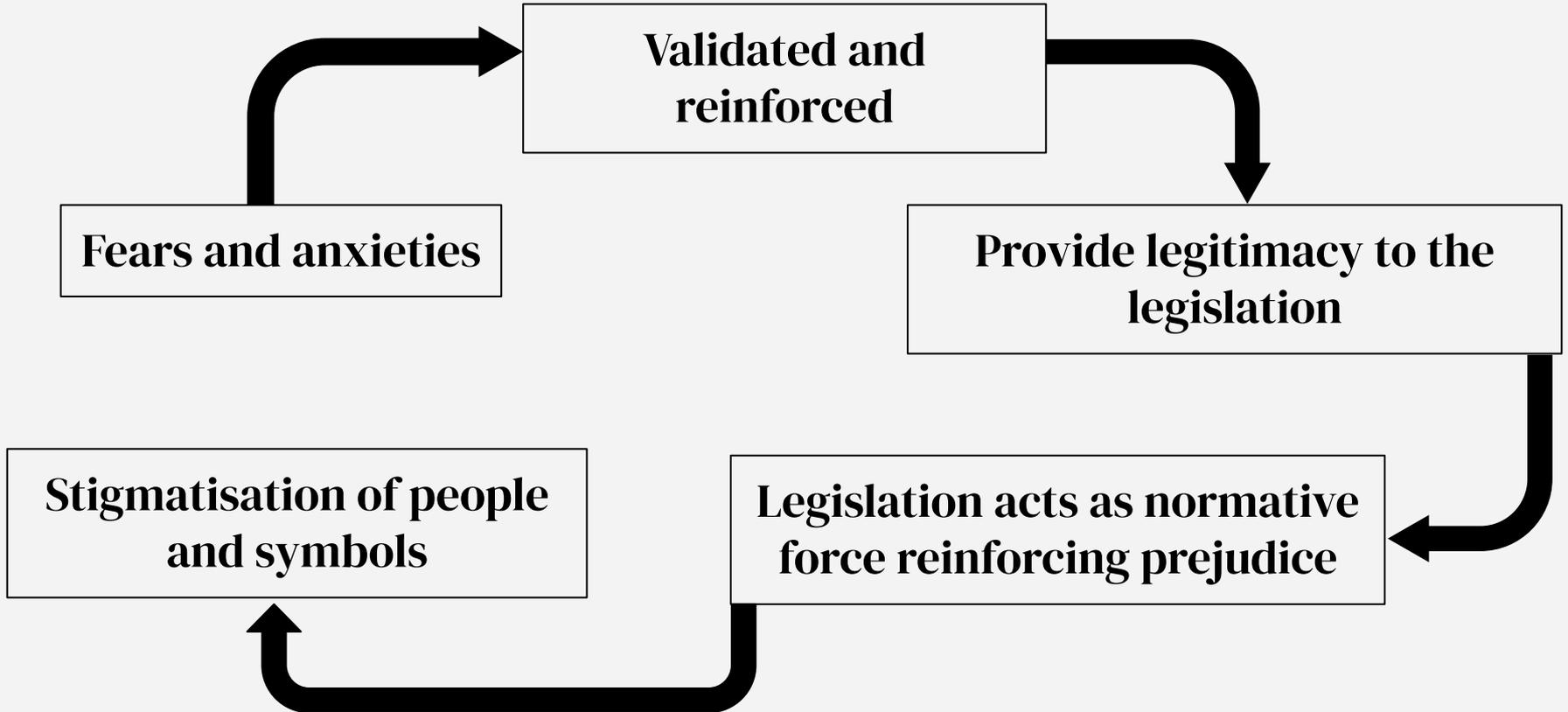
Underlying and  
often  
unacknowledged  
negative  
perceptions,  
experienced by  
targeted groups

**Popular  
perceptions  
&  
assumptions**

**Experience  
of impacted  
groups**



# The Vicious Cycle



Thank you !



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