

COVID Impacts

TRUST & VACCINATIONS BY SOCIAL INDICATORS - CANADA AND THE UNITED STATES

This factsheet examines the change in vaccination rates when we examine whether someone has trust in the government and science. From our data, we see decreases in vaccinations across the board when people lack trust in science, which is especially true when examining political affiliation.

TRUST IN PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS

We currently have data on trust in the following public institutions:

- City and municipal authorities
- Provincial/State Governments
- Federal Governments
- Tribe/Band/Nation Government (For Indigenous respondents only)
- Public Health Officials
- Media/Journalists
- The Military
- The World Health Organization (WHO)
- Pharmaceutical companies
- Scientists
- Religious Leaders

OTHER TRUST INDICATORS

We also have the following trust indicators:

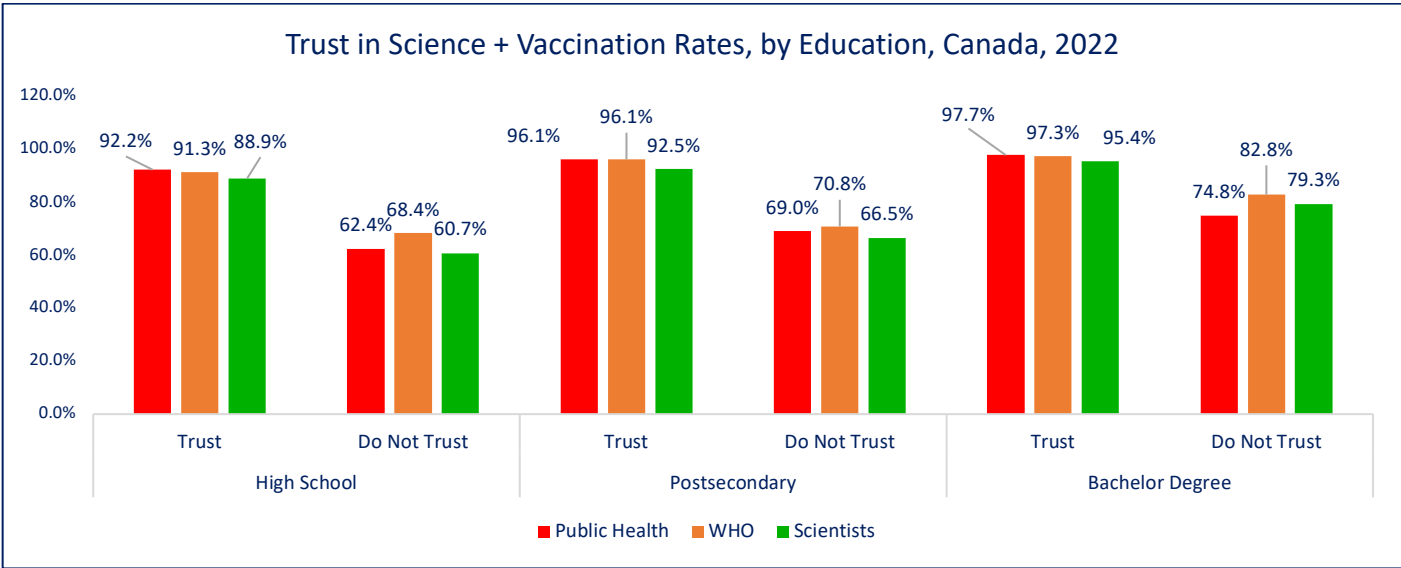
- People in general
- Immigrants/newcomers
- Canadians
- Americans
- Mexicans
- Community Leaders (Elders, Band Council, ethnic group leaders)

These indicators can give us a good idea of the general trust levels a community has. We also know that more equal societies have higher levels of trust (Gould & Hijzen, 2017) and should then, have higher vaccination rates (Thorton, 2022)

EDUCATION

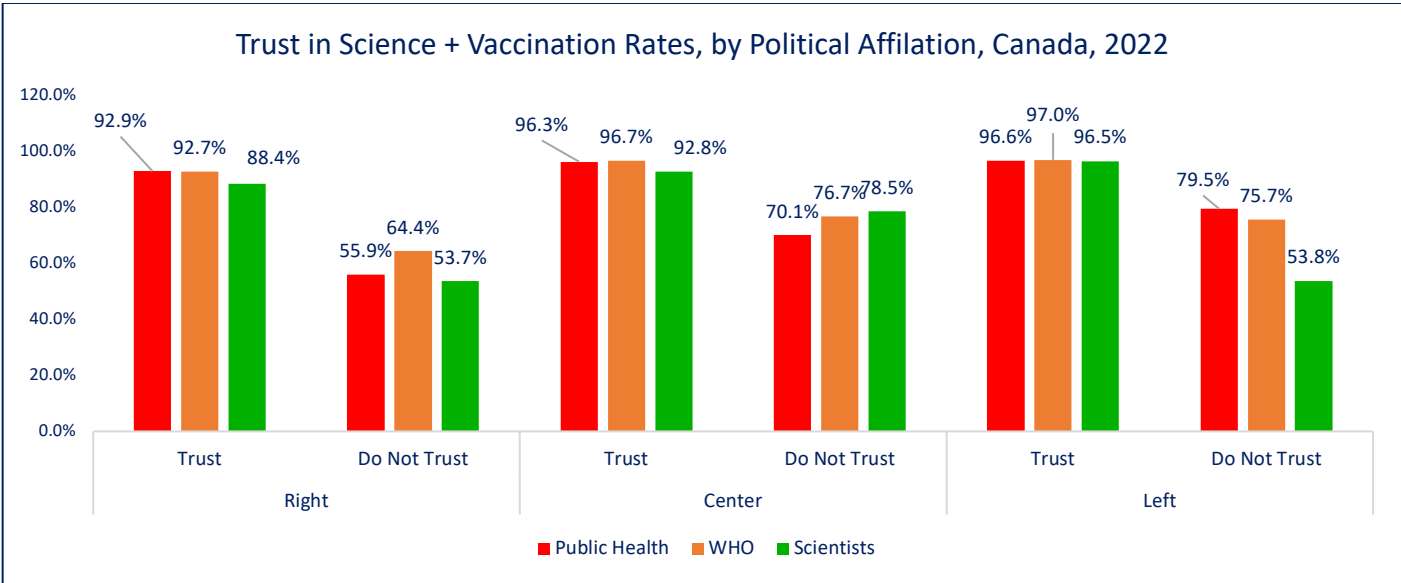
While vaccination rates remain relatively stable when someone reports trusting in science across education levels in Canada, there is a divergence when someone reports a lack of trust. Vaccination rates for those with a high school diploma or less is 10-20% lower than those with a bachelor's degree or higher.

However, we know that education can affect vaccinations. The high school respondents reported an average vaccination rate of 82%, while those with a bachelor's degree reported a vaccination rate of 93.3%. Essentially, those with a high school degree without trust in science have a more significant drop in vaccination (22% from the average for trust in scientists) than those with bachelor's degrees who drop by 15% for lack of trust in scientists. It is curious that those with bachelor's degrees who do not trust science still have high vaccination rates. This is a potential research question to examine what other factors are at play for those who hold bachelor's degrees. Overall, we know that trust levels are generally lower for those with lower levels of education (Rainie et al., 2019).

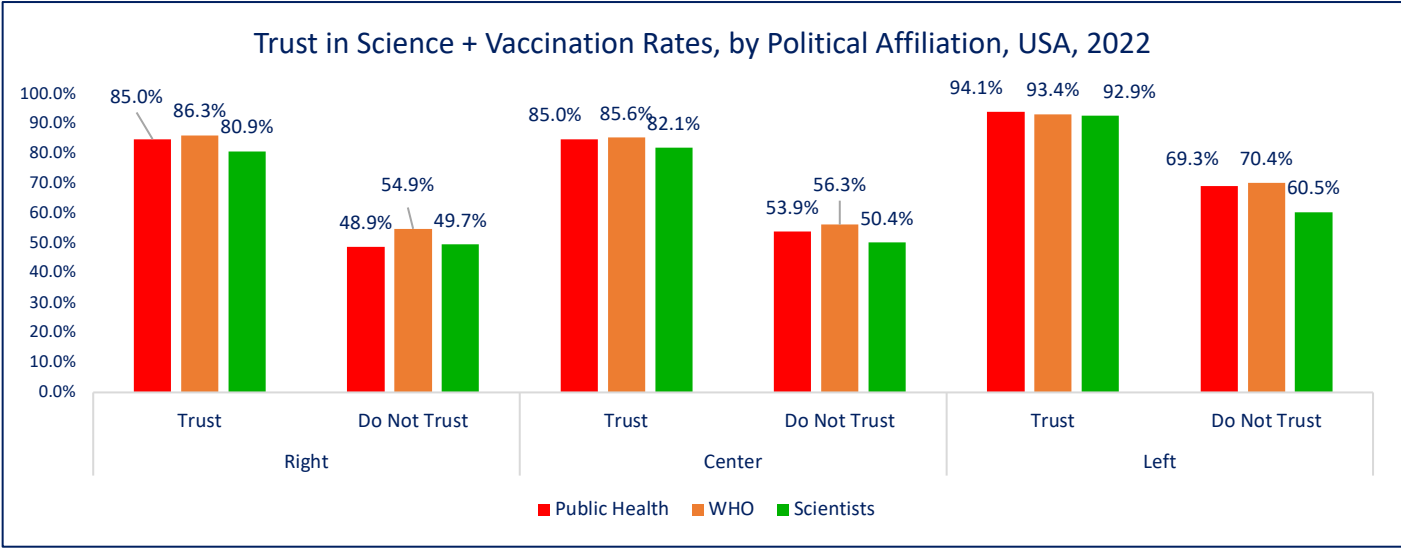


The same cannot be said about those with bachelor's degrees in the United States. For example, when also looking at trust in scientists, those who report trusting scientists have a vaccination rate of 90.4%, almost 10% higher than the average of 81.3%, while those who report not trusting scientists have a vaccination rate of 58.3%.

POLITICAL AFFILIATION

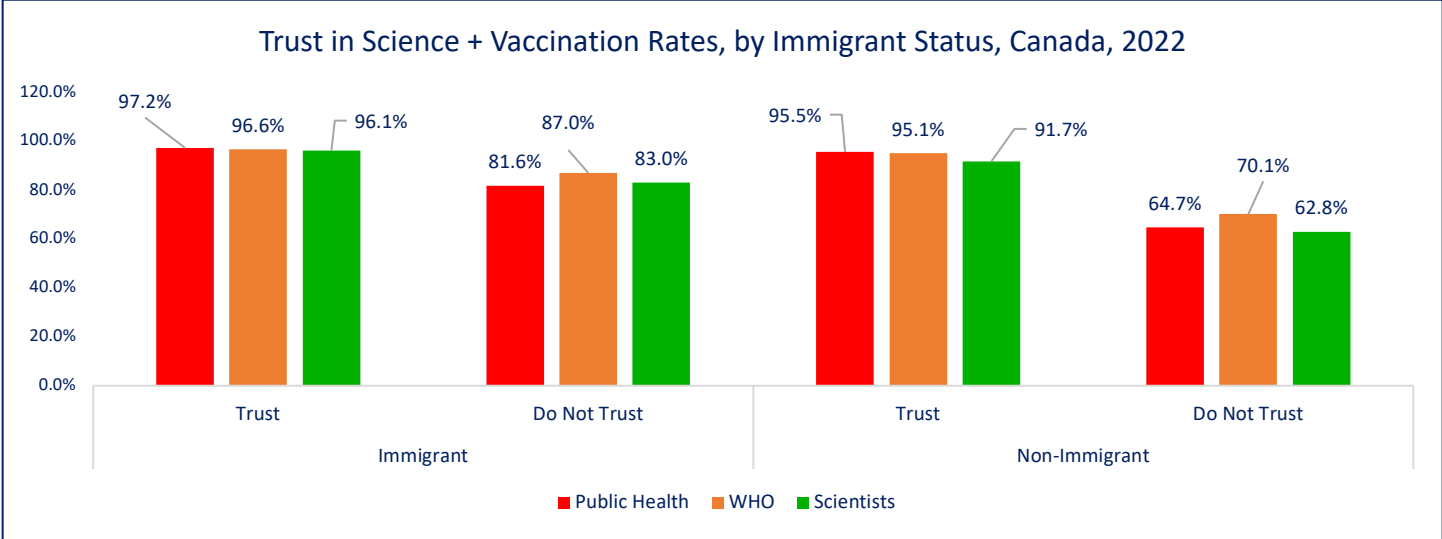


In both countries, vaccination rates are lowest for those who identify as right-wing and do not trust science, especially those who do not trust public health officials and scientists. While there is a difference in vaccination rates for those on either side of the aisle, it is more extensive in the United States regardless of trust level

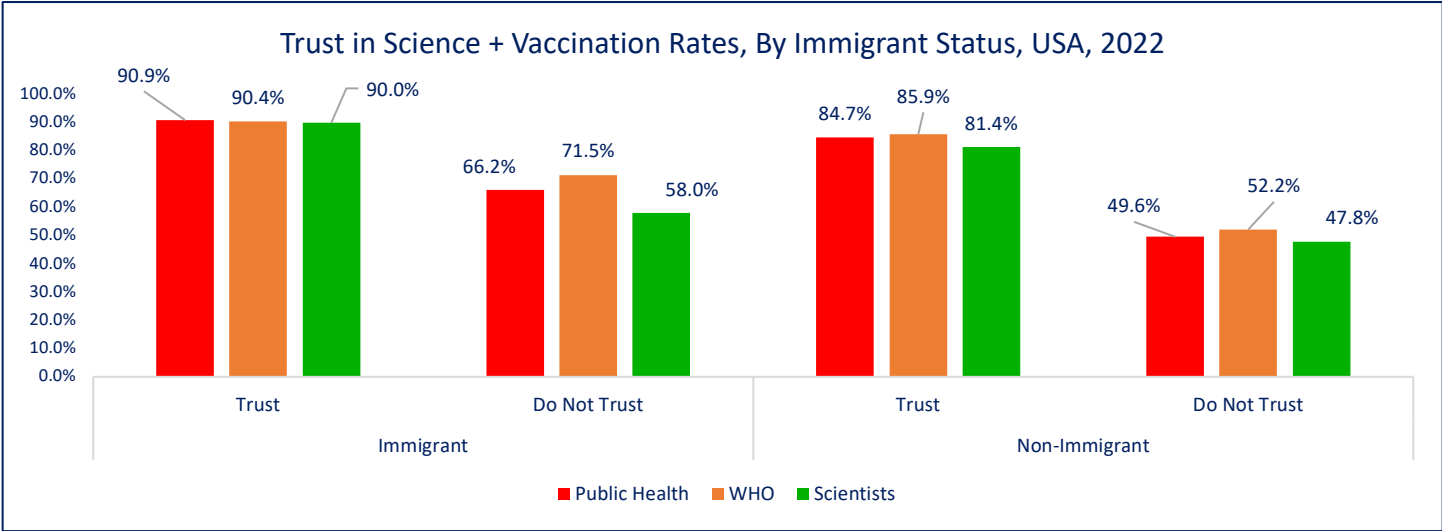


In the United States, those on the right have an average vaccination rate of 69.2% compared to 79.2% in Canada. The difference between countries is slightly smaller on the left, with Canada’s vaccination rate at 94.2% and the United States at 89.9%. This means that when those on the left in the United States do not trust scientists, they are almost 30% less likely to be vaccinated than the average. The difference is even higher for those in Canada who do not trust scientists at almost 40% less likely than the average not to be vaccinated. These differences are more significant than any seen when examining education or ethnicity. This suggests that political affiliation could be the most critical indicator of whether someone will be vaccinated when looking at trust in institutions.

IMMIGRANT STATUS



In both countries, we see that immigrants are more likely to be vaccinated regardless of levels of trust. However, we see a significant drop in vaccination rates in the United States for immigrants that we do not see in Canada. This could mean that the public distrust in institutions is stronger or more prevalent than in Canada or that immigrants are more influenced by the discourse of mistrust in the United States. Studies in Canada have found that immigrants have higher levels of trust than Canadian-born residents (Gilkinson, Tara & Sauve, Genevieve, 2010; Proof Strategies, 2022).



REFERENCES

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Thornton J. Covid-19: Trust in government and other people linked with lower infection rate and higher vaccination uptake *BMJ* 2022; 376 :o292 doi:10.1136/bmj.o292

ABOUT THE PROJECT

The researchers: A cross-national team of over 30 researchers led by Dr. Lori Wilkinson, Dr. Kiera Ladner and Dr. Jack Jedwab, received funding from CIHR for this study *COVID-19's differential impact on the mental and emotional health of Indigenous Peoples and Newcomers: A socioeconomic analysis of Canada, US and Mexico*.

The study: The team has been collecting data in Canada since March 9 and the United States since March 27, 2020. Ongoing survey waves now include Mexico.

Our goal is to measure and follow the changes in attitudes, behaviours, health and socioeconomic outcomes among persons living in all three countries using a mixed methodology of surveys and unstructured interviews.

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