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# THE COMPLEX STATE OF FEDERALIST GOVERNANCE IN 2022

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# INTRODUCTION: THE STATE OF THE FEDERATION IN 2022

Over the course of 2022 there has emerged a number of challenges /cracks in intergovernmental relations in Canada. Amongst them the handing of the so-called freedom convoy protests in the nation's capital, in Quebec disputes over the passage of legislation (Bills 21 and 96) in potential violation of the Charter of Rights and recently far and away the most important challenge is the of 2022 arises from the Government of Alberta's adoption of the "*Alberta Sovereignty Within a United Canada Act*" or Bill 1, (aka the *Alberta Sovereignty Act*). As Alberta Premier Danielle Smith has observed: "it's not like Ottawa is a national government," adding that the country works is that we are a federation of sovereign, independent jurisdictions.


What does it all mean for the state of Federalism in Canada in 2022. A Leger survey for the Association for Canadian Studies conducted between November 11 and November 13<sup>th</sup>, 2022 with 1537 Canadians analyses the results of three questions aimed at providing insight into how Canadians in provinces/regions of the country feel about federalist governance. The results are compared with Leger similar questions asked in July-August 2020 (the 2020 questions included a preamble that read, "Since the outbreak of Covid 19 do you strongly agree, somewhat agree ... " whereas the November 2022 survey had not reference to Covid.). That said, the comparative results point to an important decline the perceived state of federal-provincial relations across most of the country but some ambiguity in feelings about federalism and all the while an important degree of pride in Canada.

The July 31-August 2, 2020 survey conducted by Leger for the Association for Canadian Studies with 1531 Canadians with a total of 1531 Canadians

# METHODOLOGY

That which follows is divided into five sections

- 1) Comparing results on federalist Governance July 2020 and November 2022
- 2) Results on federalist governance for November 2022 with proportional distribution for those respondents indicating that they “don’t know” to agree and disagree respectively
- 3) Views on Federalist Governance based on party preference
- 4) Intersecting views on federalist governance
- 5) Pride in Canada



# COMPARING RESULTS ON FEDERALIST GOVERNANCE 2020 TO 2022

**PERCEIVED ADVANTAGES OF FEDERALISM HAVE DECLINED EVERYWHERE EXCEPT IN ATLANTIC CANADA IN THE PAST 24 MONTHS THOUGH THE LARGEST NEGATIVE SWING HAS BEEN ON MANITOBA AND SASKATCHEWAN NOW RIVALING ALBERTANS IN THE EXTENT OF THE PERCEIVED GAP BETWEEN DISADVANTAGE OVER ADVANTAGE**

<b>Do you agree, disagree or don't know whether ...Federalism has more advantages than disadvantages for my province</b>		Total	Atl.	QC	ON	MB/SK	AB	BC
		Agree	Nov-22	35%	39%	40%	35%	21%
Jul-20	44%		33%	47%	46%	41%	33%	45%
Disagree	Nov-22	30%	24%	34%	23%	33%	40%	34%
	July 20	22%	20%	29%	18%	21%	34%	15%
I Don't Know	Nov-22	36%	37%	26%	42%	45%	32%	32%
	Jul-20	34%	47%	24%	36%	38%	33%	40%

# OVER THE PAST 24 MONTHS MASSIVE NEGATIVE SHIFT IN PERCEPTIONS AROUND THE STATE OF FEDERAL-PROVINCIAL RELATIONS IN QUEBEC AND ONTARIO

Do you agree, disagree or don't know whether ... Relations have been good between the federal government and my province's government -		Total	Atl.	QC	ON	MB/SK	AB	BC
Agree	Nov-22	35%	54%	28%	37%	18%	15%	54%
	Jul-20	52%	50%	58%	62%	29%	20%	56%
Disagree	Nov-22	51%	30%	59%	46%	63%	75%	35%
	July 2020	31%	26%	30%	22%	44%	70%	24%
I Don't Know	Nov-22	14%	16%	13%	17%	19%	10%	11%
	Jul-20	17%	24%	12%	17%	27%	10%	20%

**ONTARIO, QUEBEC AND ALBERTA ARE THE MOST LIKELY PROVINCES TO AGREE THAT THEIR PROVINCES SHOULD RESPECTIVELY BE RESPONSIBLE FOR HELPING THOSE PROVINCES THAT ARE MOST VULNERABLE**

Do you agree, disagree or don't know whether ...My province should be responsible for helping those provinces that are most vulnerable		Total	Atl.	QC	ON	MB/SK	AB	BC
Agree	Nov-22	44%	35%	46%	46%	35%	46%	41%
	Jul-20	48%	39%	46%	54%	42%	42%	48%
Disagree	Nov-22	36%	52%	26%	34%	48%	41%	41%
	July-20	35%	42%	36%	30%	39%	45%	33%
I Don't Know	Nov-22	20%	14%	28%	20%	17%	14%	19%
	Jul-20	17%	19%	18%	17%	19%	13%	19%



RESULTS FOR NOVEMBER 2022 WITH PROPORTIONAL  
DISTRIBUTION OF THOSE RESPONDENTS INDICATING  
THAT THEY “DON’T KNOW” TO AGREE AND DISAGREE  
RESPECTIVELY



## AFTER REDISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS INDICATING THEY DON'T KNOW PRAIRIE AND ALBERTAN RESIDENTS MORE LIKELY TO POINT TO DISADVANTAGES OF FEDERALISM

**Federalism has more advantages than disadvantages for my province - Do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree with the following?**

November 2022	Total	Atl.	QC	ON	MB/SK	AB	BC
<b>TOTAL AGREE</b>	54%	63%	54%	60%	39%	42%	51%
<b>TOTAL DISAGRE E</b>	46%	37%	46%	40%	61%	58%	49%

AFTER REDISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS INDICATING THEY DON'T KNOW SOME 60% OF CANADIANS DO NOT THINK THAT RELATIONS BETWEEN FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AND THEIR PROVINCE'S GOVERNMENT ARE GOOD WITH PRAIRIE RESIDENTS AND QUEBECERS MOST LIKELY TO FEEL AS SUCH

**Relations have been good between the federal government and my province's government - Do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree with the following?**

NOV 22	Total	Atl.	QC	ON	MB/SK	AB	BC
<b>TOTAL AGREE</b>	41%	64%	32%	44%	23%	16%	61%
<b>TOTAL DISAGREE</b>	59%	36%	68%	56%	77%	84%	39%

# KNOW A MAJORITY OF CANADIANS FEEL THAT THEIR SHOULD BE RESPONSIBLE FOR HELPING THOSE THAT ARE MOST VULNERABLE WITH QUEBECERS LEADING THE WAY!

My province should be responsible for helping those provinces that are most vulnerable - Do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree with the following?							
NOV 22	Total	Atl.	QC	ON	MB/SK	AB	BC
TOTAL AGREE	55%	40%	64%	58%	42%	53%	50%
TOTAL DISAGREE	45%	60%	36%	42%	58%	47%	50%



# VIEWS ON FEDERALIST GOVERNANCE BASED ON PARTY PREFERENCE

# MORE LIKELY TO FEEL THAT FEDERALISM HAS MORE ADVANTAGES THAN DISADVANTAGES WHILE A PLURALITY OF CONSERVATIVES FEEL OTHERWISE

Federalism has more advantages than disadvantages for my province - Do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree with each of the following?							
	PLC	NDP	BQ	CPC	GPC	PPC	Total
Agree	54%	32%	20%	31%	33%	20%	37%
Disagree	16%	29%	66%	40%	25%	43%	31%
I don't know	30%	40%	14%	29%	43%	37%	31%

Note: Cell values may not add up to 100% due to rounding error.

# LIBERALS MOST LIKELY TO REGARD FED-PROV RELATIONS AS GOOD

Relations have been good between the federal government and my province's government - Do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree						
	PLC	NDP	BQ	CPC	GPC	PPC
Agree	48%	40%	23%	34%	25%	16%
Disagree	45%	49%	71%	59%	49%	81%
I don't know	7%	11%	6%	8%	27%	3%

Note: Cell values may not add up to 100% due to rounding error.

**AT A MORE THAN 2 TO 1 RATIO LIBERALS BELIEVE THAT THEIR PROVINCE'S SHOULD BE RESPONSIBLE FOR HELPING THE MORE VULNERABLE ONES; CONSERVATIVES FEEL OTHERWISE**

**My province should be responsible for helping those provinces that are most vulnerable - Do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree with each of the following?**

	PLC	NDP	BQ	CPC	GPC	PPC
Agree	56%	49%	46%	36%	51%	23%
Disagree	26%	29%	30%	54%	29%	55%
I don't know	17%	21%	24%	10%	20%	23%

Note: Cell values may not add up to 100% due to rounding error.



# INTERSECTING VIEWS ON FEDERALIST GOVERNANCE



## THERE IS A CLEAR INTERSECTION BETWEEN THOSE WHO REGARD FED-PROV RELATIONS AS BAD AND THE VIEW THAT FEDERALISM IS ADVANTAGEOUS

Federalism has more advantages than disadvantages for my province	Relations have been good between the federal government and my province's government - Do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree with each of the following?			
	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
Strongly agree	43.1%	11.6%	9.3%	12.8%
Somewhat agree	27.6%	39.9%	21.7%	13.2%
Somewhat disagree	5.2%	16.2%	31.1%	19.0%
Strongly disagree	0.0%	4.4%	7.9%	30.8%
I don't know	24.1%	27.9%	30.1%	24.2%

Note: Cell values may not add up to 100% because "I don't know" responses are omitted from above table.

**THERE IS A CLEAR INTERSECTION BETWEEN THOSE WHO DO NOT BELIEVE THAT THERE PROVINCE SHOULD BE HELPING OTHERS AND THE VIEW THAT FEDERALISM IS ADVANTAGEOUS**

<b>Federalism has more advantages than disadvantages for my province</b>	<b>My province should be responsible for helping those provinces that are most vulnerable</b>			
	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Somewhat agree</b>	<b>Somewhat disagree</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>
<b>Strongly agree</b>	30.2%	12.2%	5.9%	9.9%
<b>Somewhat agree</b>	21.4%	35.2%	25.4%	13.1%
<b>Somewhat disagree</b>	13.8%	16.8%	29.9%	22.1%
<b>Strongly disagree</b>	8.8%	6.6%	10.7%	27.2%
<b>I don't know</b>	25.8%	29.2%	28.1%	27.7%

Note: Cell values may not add up to 100% because “I don’t know” responses are omitted from above table.



PRIDE IN CANADA



# VIEWS AROUND FEDERALISM ASIDE PRAIRIE, ALBERTAN AND ATLANTIC RESIDENTS AT THE TOP

I am proud to be Canadian							
	Canada	Atlantic Canada	Quebec	Ontario	Prairies	Alberta	British Columbia
Strongly agree	57.3%	61.7%	42.8%	60.0%	64.2%	65.2%	61.3%
Somewhat agree	23.8%	24.3%	29.4%	21.7%	23.9%	20.3%	23.5%
Neither agree nor disagree	10.5%	7.0%	15.7%	9.7%	6.4%	8.0%	10.0%
Somewhat disagree	2.9%	2.6%	5.1%	2.6%	0.9%	1.6%	2.6%
Strongly disagree	3.0%	3.5%	4.1%	3.2%	1.8%	2.7%	1.3%
Don't know enough to provide an opinion	2.5%	0.9%	3.0%	2.9%	2.8%	2.1%	1.3%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

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