
SITUATING OURSELVES ACROSS THE IDEOLOGICAL SPECTRUM IN CANADA...AND HOW WE COMPARE WITH OUR NEIGHBORS

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INTRODUCTION:

When asked globally about where Canada is situated along the ideological spectrum most observers will collectively place us at the center. Indeed it is often remarked that Canada is a country that is governed from the center and that any attempt to by political parties to get elected needs to keep that in mind. Indeed, Canada sometimes gets compared with the US as a country that is more at the center whereas its neighbor to the South is generally regarded as more to the right of that spot. Where do Canadians situate themselves across the ideological spectrum? The answer is somewhat more complex when considering the country's regional, socio-demographic and partisan makeup not to mention the numbers of Canadians that don't offer a response to the question. The same is true for the US and the comparison may be affected by different meanings assigned to right and left in the two countries. That which follows offers one of more detailed political, demographic and social profiles of Canadians ideological predilections and constitutes the basis for a larger study of evolving Canadian political identities over the course of the decade.

The findings arise from a survey of 3031 Canadians done via web panel over the period October 3 to October 14 2022 conducted by the firm Leger for the Association for Canadian Studies and the University of Manitoba. While no margin of error can be associated with a non-probability sample (Web panel in this case) for comparative purposes, a probability sample of 3031 respondents would have a margin of error of $\pm 1.9\%$, 19 times out of 20

CANADIANS ARE MUCH LESS WILLING THAN AMERICANS TO SITUATE THEMSELVES ON THE POLITICAL SPECTRUM BUT FAR MORE AMERICANS (1 IN 6) ARE WILLING TO IDENTIFY AS BEING ON THE 'RIGHT' ARE CANADIANS (LESS THAN 1 IN 16) .

	How would you place yourself on the political spectrum?							
	Right	Right of center	Center	Left of center	Left	I don't know	I prefer not to answer	Total
Canada	5.8%	12.1%	25.7%	14.3%	9.3%	24.3%	8.5%	100.0%
United States	16.8%	12.7%	29.9%	8.3%	11.4%	15.4%	5.5%	100.0%

FEDERAL LIBERALS MORE LIKELY TO BE ON THE LEFT THAN CENTER AND LEFT DOMINATES RIGHT BY TWO TO ONE; MAJORITY OF CONSERVATIVES IDENTIFY TO THE RIGHT; NDP SEE MAJORITY ON THE LEFT

	How would you place yourself on the political spectrum?							Total
	Right	Right of center	Center	Left of center	Left	I don't know	I prefer not to answer	
Liberal Party of Canada	7.2%	9.3%	30.5%	23.7%	10.4%	15.7%	3.2%	100.0%
Conservative Party of Canada	15.6%	33.1%	27.9%	4.1%	1.4%	14.4%	3.5%	100.0%
New Democratic Party	1.1%	6.1%	19.7%	22.6%	29.1%	18.2%	3.1%	100.0%
Bloc Québécois	1.8%	15.0%	31.0%	23.0%	3.5%	20.4%	5.3%	100.0%
Green Party of Canada	3.2%	3.2%	29.5%	21.1%	22.1%	18.9%	2.1%	100.0%
People's Party of Canada	22.6%	21.0%	14.5%	4.8%	3.2%	21.0%	12.9%	100.0%

US DEMOCRATS DEFINE MORE TO THE 'RIGHT' THAN CANADA'S LIBERALS AND SOMEWHAT MORE THAN CANADA'S CONSERVATIVES THOUGH THE LATTER ARE OVERALL MORE TO THE RIGHT THAN US DEMOCRATS. AMERICAN REPUBLICANS TWICE AS LIKELY THAN CANADIAN CONSERVATIVES TO SAY THAT THEY ARE ON THE RIGHT

		Right	Right of center	Center	Left of center	Left	I don't know	I prefer not to answer	Total
United States	Democratic Party	20.1%	8.9%	24.5%	11.3%	22.6%	10.7%	2.0%	100.0%
	Republican Party	30.4%	25.3%	24.6%	4.4%	2.0%	10.9%	2.4%	100.0%
	Independent	4.9%	10.5%	50.7%	8.4%	4.6%	17.0%	3.8%	100.0%
Canada	Liberal Party of Canada	7.2%	9.3%	30.5%	23.7%	10.4%	15.7%	3.2%	100.0%
	Conservative Party of Canada	15.6%	33.1%	27.9%	4.1%	1.4%	14.4%	3.5%	100.0%



BREAKING DOWN CANADA'S IDEOLOGICAL SPECTRUM



BC LEANS MORE ON THE LEFT WING WHILE ALBERTANS AND PRAIRIES HAVE A HIGHER SHARE OF PERSONS IDENTIFYING ON THE RIGHT THAN DO OTHER CANADIANS BUT LARGER PLURALITIES ARE IN THE CENTER; ONTARIO SOMEWHAT MORE TO THE LEFT THAN THE RIGHT; QUEBEC AND THE ATLANTIC LEAST LIKELY TO IDENTIFY ON THE SPECTRUM BUT THE LATTER SHOW RELATIVELY FEW ON THE RIGHT

	How would you place yourself on the political spectrum?							Total
	Right	Right of center	Center	Left of center	Left	I don't know	I prefer not to answer	
British Columbia	2.8%	13.7%	27.2%	16.5%	13.2%	19.4%	7.1%	100.0%
Alberta	8.4%	14.7%	31.3%	11.3%	7.2%	20.6%	6.6%	100.0%
Prairies	7.3%	13.5%	25.2%	12.4%	8.4%	24.8%	8.4%	100.0%
Ontario	6.2%	12.6%	26.2%	13.5%	10.0%	22.4%	9.1%	100.0%
Quebec	5.0%	10.7%	21.6%	16.8%	7.4%	28.2%	10.2%	100.0%
Maritimes	6.5%	6.5%	25.7%	12.2%	8.7%	34.3%	6.1%	100.0%

CANADIANS IN THEIR EARLY 30'S MOST LIKELY THAN OTHERS TO SITUATE ON THE RIGHT;

	How would you place yourself on the political spectrum?							Total
	Right	Right of center	Center	Left of center	Left	I don't know	I prefer not to answer	
Between 18 and 24	4.8%	9.3%	18.2%	11.8%	15.0%	32.6%	8.3%	100.0%
Between 25 and 29	6.8%	10.0%	19.6%	12.0%	12.8%	30.4%	8.4%	100.0%
Between 30 and 34	8.1%	15.1%	19.0%	11.6%	10.2%	27.1%	8.8%	100.0%
Between 35 and 44	5.3%	10.3%	23.4%	16.0%	9.4%	25.4%	10.1%	100.0%
Between 45 and 54	5.9%	12.2%	29.0%	13.9%	7.1%	22.2%	9.7%	100.0%
Between 55 and 64	6.8%	11.7%	30.2%	13.4%	8.4%	22.6%	6.8%	100.0%
Between 65 and 74	4.7%	15.9%	26.8%	17.5%	8.1%	18.7%	8.3%	100.0%
75 or older	3.2%	13.4%	40.8%	17.2%	4.5%	16.6%	4.5%	100.0%
Total	5.8%	12.1%	25.7%	14.3%	9.3%	24.3%	8.5%	100.0%

HIGHEST INCOME CANADIANS PUT THEMSELVES SLIGHTLY MORE ON THE RIGHT THAN TO THE CENTER OR LEFT; INCOME INFLUENCES THE EXTENT TO WHICH CANADIANS REPORT THEIR IDEOLOGICAL LEANING

	How would you place yourself on the political spectrum?							Total
	Right	Right of center	Center	Left of center	Left	I don't know	I prefer not to answer	
\$19,999 or less	7.2%	6.3%	19.8%	10.8%	12.2%	32.0%	11.7%	100.0%
Between \$20,000 and \$39,999	4.4%	7.3%	26.0%	11.8%	10.2%	32.0%	8.2%	100.0%
Between \$40,000 and \$59,999	6.1%	13.4%	24.9%	11.5%	10.2%	27.8%	6.1%	100.0%
Between \$60,000 and \$79,999	6.7%	10.7%	28.3%	17.9%	9.7%	19.9%	6.9%	100.0%
Between \$80,000 and \$99,999	5.6%	12.9%	24.9%	18.5%	8.0%	22.5%	7.5%	100.0%
Between \$100,000 and \$124,999	7.4%	13.5%	26.1%	17.4%	8.7%	20.6%	6.1%	100.0%
Between \$125,000 and \$149,999	5.0%	19.0%	29.6%	15.6%	11.1%	15.6%	4.0%	100.0%
\$150,000 or more	8.2%	19.9%	26.8%	16.2%	10.3%	14.1%	4.5%	100.0%

CANADIANS REPORTING HIGHER LEVEL OF EDUCATION ARE MORE LIKELY TO SITUATE THEMSELVES ON THE IDEOLOGICAL SPECTRUM AND TEND TO DO SO ON THE LEFT

	Right	Right of center	Center	Left of center	Left	I don't know	I prefer not to answer	Total
Less than high school	2.5%	11.3%	25.0%	5.0%	3.8%	37.5%	15.0%	100.0%
High school diploma	4.2%	8.3%	26.3%	9.6%	7.5%	33.7%	10.5%	100.0%
Trades certificate or diploma	6.6%	13.2%	26.8%	7.5%	7.9%	31.6%	6.6%	100.0%
College certificate or diploma	6.4%	10.1%	24.8%	13.5%	7.6%	28.1%	9.5%	100.0%
University certificate, diploma or degree	6.3%	15.2%	26.1%	19.0%	11.8%	15.5%	6.0%	100.0%
Total	5.8%	12.1%	25.7%	14.3%	9.3%	24.3%	8.5%	100.0%

IMMIGRANTS AND NON-IMMIGRANTS ROUGHLY SIMILAR PATTERN WHEN SITUATING ON THE IDEOLOGICAL SPECTRUM

	How would you place yourself on the political spectrum?							Total
	Right	Right of center	Center	Left of center	Left	I don't know	I prefer not to answer	
Born in Canada	5.5%	12.4%	25.1%	15.3%	9.2%	24.3%	8.3%	100.0%
Born outside pf Canada	6.9%	11.5%	27.3%	11.5%	9.8%	24.5%	8.6%	100.0%

ON THE BASIS OF VISIBLE MINORITY IDENTIFICATION NO ONE GROUP SEEMS TO BE OVERREPRESENTED ON ANY END OF THE SPECTRUM

	Right	Right of center	Center	Left of center	Left	I don't know	I prefer not to answer	Total
White	5.6%	14.4%	25.2%	16.5%	8.4%	22.5%	7.3%	100.0%
Indigenous / Aboriginal / First Nations (Metis, Inuit, Native American) / American Indian / Native Hawaiian / Alaskan Na	4.7%	10.1%	24.1%	12.5%	10.4%	28.2%	10.1%	100.0%
Black (African, African-American, etc.)	6.9%	7.8%	24.9%	8.4%	9.3%	33.0%	9.6%	100.0%
South Asian (Indian, Bangladeshi, Pakistani, Sri Lankan, etc.)	10.2%	8.9%	29.3%	15.9%	10.8%	19.1%	5.7%	100.0%
Chinese	5.8%	13.6%	33.5%	11.2%	9.5%	21.1%	5.4%	100.0%
Total	5.8%	12.1%	25.7%	14.3%	9.3%	24.3%	8.5%	100.0%



IDEOLOGY, PARTY PREFERENCE AND THE ISSUES



MAJORITY IDENTIFYING ON THE RIGHT SEE PANDEMIC REACTION AS BLOWN OUT OF PROPORTION; CLIMATE CHANGE ALSO SEEN AS EXAGGERATED ON THE RIGHT; ON RIGHT OF CENTER AND IN THE CENTER IT'S GENDER EQUALITY IS SEEN AS MOST EXAGGERATED;

Percentage that believe the issue is being blown way out of proportion	Right	Right of center	Center	Left of center	Left	I don't know	I prefer not to answer
Covid 19 pandemic	54.5%	33.4%	18.3%	8.1%	9.6%	23.1%	27.1%
Climate Change	54.5%	36.4%	17.1%	6.7%	5.3%	13.3%	21.3%
Gender Inequality	49.4%	41.8%	23.4%	13.2%	9.2%	17.0%	25.6%
Racism	44.9%	35.1%	18.5%	9.0%	5.7%	15.9%	19.8%
Reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples	39.8%	32.3%	22.2%	14.1%	4.6%	14.0%	14.0%
Russian invasion of Ukraine	30.1%	15.2%	13.6%	7.6%	7.8%	12.2%	18.2%
Concerns over immigration	26.1%	25.5%	16.7%	21.7%	28.7%	14.4%	17.4%
Econ Challenges (like inflation)	19.9%	8.7%	7.7%	3.5%	5.3%	7.3%	9.7%

PPC AND CONSERVATIVES ARE MOST LIKELY TO SEE PANDEMIC REACTION AS EXAGGERATED BUT THE GAP BETWEEN THEM IS VERY WIDE; CONSERVATIVES REGARD CLIMATE CHANGE AS MOST OUT OF PROPORTION

Percentage that believe the issue is being blown way out of proportion	Liberal Party of Canada	Conservative Party of Canada	New Democratic Party	Bloc Québécois	Green Party of Canada	People's Party of Canada
Covid 19 pandemic	11.7%	37.8%	11.2%	15.9%	28.4%	77.4%
Climate Change	10.2%	43.7%	8.7%	9.7%	10.5%	64.5%
Gender Inequality	15.5%	41.5%	11.2%	28.3%	15.8%	58.1%
Racism	13.5%	36.6%	8.3%	18.6%	12.6%	48.4%
Reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples	15.4%	33.9%	11.0%	21.2%	13.7%	37.1%
Russian invasion of Ukraine	12.0%	16.2%	9.2%	8.8%	14.7%	48.4%
Concerns over immigration	20.3%	24.0%	23.3%	15.9%	28.4%	21.0%
Econ Challenges (like inflation)	8.6%	9.0%	5.6%	8.8%	16.8%	12.9%

PERSONS IDENTIFYING AS RIGHT FAR MORE LIKELY TO THINK THERE ARE TOO MANY IMMIGRANTS

	In your opinion, do you feel there are too many, too few or about the right number of immigrants						
	Right	Right of center	Center	Left of center	Left	I don't know	I prefer not to answer
Too many	47.2%	31.5%	28.4%	15.0%	13.1%	31.9%	38.4%
Too few	11.9%	17.4%	14.5%	23.1%	26.6%	9.9%	9.7%
About the right number	27.8%	38.6%	39.7%	42.7%	36.9%	25.7%	23.3%
I don't know	11.9%	11.7%	16.3%	18.5%	23.4%	30.2%	20.2%
I prefer not to answer	1.1%	.8%	1.0%	.7%		2.3%	8.5%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

PERSONS IDENTIFYING AS RIGHT WERE THE LEAST LIKELY TO GET VACCINATED WITH ONE IN FIVE SAYING THEY'VE NOT DONE SO; MAJORITY THAT IDENTIFY WITH PPC DID NOT GET VACCINATED; ONE IN SIX GREENS SAY THEY DID NOT GET VACCINATED

	: Have you had the vaccine for COVID-19?							Total
	Right	Right of center	Center	Left of center	Left	I don't know	I prefer not to answer	
Yes	80.7%	92.1%	91.8%	96.5%	95.4%	89.4%	82.9%	90.9%
No	19.3%	7.9%	8.2%	3.5%	4.6%	10.6%	17.1%	9.1%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

	: Have you had the vaccine for COVID-19?						
	Liberal Party of Canada	Conservative Party of Canada	New Democratic Party	Bloc Québécois	Green Party of Canada	People's Party of Canada	
Yes	97.3%	87.1%	93.9%	99.1%	83.2%	53.2%	
No	2.7%	12.9%	6.1%	.9%	16.8%	46.8%	
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

GAP IN SELECT INSTITUTIONAL TRUST BETWEEN LEFT AND RIGHT BUT NOT PEOPLE, FELLOW CANADIANS AND SCIENTISTS

Trust a lot and somewhat	Right	Right of center	Center	Left of center	Left	I don't know	I prefer not to answer	Difference between right and left
Central/Federal Government	39.8%	47.3%	63.8%	75.8%	72.7%	49.7%	43.8%	-32.9
Public Health officials	53.4%	71.2%	77.6%	86.1%	81.9%	69.4%	60.1%	-28.5
People in General	44.9%	43.8%	49.9%	44.3%	38.3%	42.9%	38.8%	+5.6
Scientists	50.6%	54.6%	61.8%	67.7%	63.8%	53.8%	44.6%	-13.2
Pharmaceutical companies	62.5%	79.1%	82.8%	95.2%	92.6%	74.7%	67.4%	-29.5
Canadians	56.3%	63.3%	70.8%	67.2%	58.9%	58.7%	53.1%	-2.6

CONSIDERABLE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN PLC AND CPC IN DEGREES OF INSTITUTIONAL TRUST BUT THE GAP BETWEEN CPC AND PPC IS QUITE SIGNIFICANT; GAP BETWEEN PLC AND NDP SUPPORTERS IS MODERATE WHEN IT COMES TO INSTITUTIONAL TRUST

Trust a lot and somewhat	Liberal Party of Canada	Conservative Party of Canada	New Democratic Party	Bloc Québécois	Green Party of Canada	People's Party of Canada
Central/Federal Government	81.1%	41.9%	67.7%	51.3%	57.9%	14.5%
Public Health officials	88.2%	64.5%	83.2%	79.6%	69.5%	22.6%
People in General	49.1%	48.1%	40.1%	42.5%	52.6%	37.1%
Scientists	90.4%	73.9%	90.4%	85.8%	86.3%	33.9%
Pharmaceutical companies	71.2%	52.2%	62.6%	69.0%	53.7%	16.1%
Canadians	73.9%	63.2%	60.8%	53.1%	69.5%	50.0%

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