

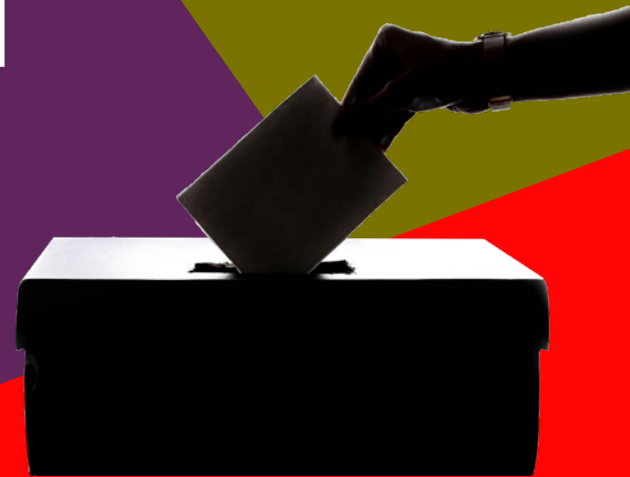


Canadian  
Survey

AmericasBarometer

2025 SERIES

# Democracy and the fairness of elections in Canada



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The Environics Institute for Survey Research was established by Michael Adams in 2006 with a mandate to conduct in-depth public opinion and social research on the issues shaping Canada's future. It is through such research that Canadians can better understand themselves and their changing society.

## Get in touch

[environicsinstitute.org](https://environicsinstitute.org)

[info@environicsinstitute.org](mailto:info@environicsinstitute.org)

701-33 Bloor Street East  
Toronto, ON M4W 3H1



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AmericasBarometer

These results are from the Canadian portion of the 2025-26 AmericasBarometer, a regular comparative survey of democratic values and behaviours that covers countries in North, Central and South America, as well as a significant number of countries in the Caribbean (the 2025-26 study will cover 20 countries).

The project is led by the LAPOP Lab at Vanderbilt University's Center for Global Democracy (CGD) and was conducted by the Environics Institute for Survey Research, in partnership with CGD's LAPOP Lab at Vanderbilt University and with the support of the Max Bell Foundation.

The survey was conducted online with a sample of 3,550 Canadians (aged 18 and over) between July 30 and August 7, 2025. The results are weighted by region, age, gender, education and language so as to be fully representative of the Canadian population.

[See our website for more reports from this survey.](#)

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# Background

The April 2025 Canadian federal election was far from a routine event in the country's political life. Its principal outcome – the return of the Liberal Party to government – seemed highly improbable given the extent of party's unpopularity only several months earlier. Conversely, the Conservative Party suffered a fourth consecutive defeat, despite leading by a wide margin in the public opinion polls for months prior to the start of the campaign. And the third national party – the New Democratic Party – experienced its worst result since its formation, losing official party status in the House of Commons.

Did these events leave Canadians feeling more or less supportive of their democracy? Free and fair elections, offering realistic opportunities for citizens to remove from power governments that have disappointed or deceived them, are the defining features of democratic systems. And in healthy democracies, it is not enough for the victors to be satisfied with the results; the losers must also accept the legitimacy of the outcome, even if their acceptance is couched in bitterness.

The question of how this election shaped feelings about democracy in Canada is hardly a rhetorical one. In the United States, the past several elections have been marred by claims that the votes were not counted fairly. The actions of Donald Trump following the 2020 presidential election, in particular, showed that it could no longer be taken for granted that a defeated candidate would graciously concede, acknowledging that the people had spoken (and were never wrong). In Canada, the overall fairness of vote-counting is rarely called into question, but the 2025 election was not flawless, as voters in some areas claimed their mail-in ballots were not counted due to a printing error on the envelope provided to them. Moreover, in recent years, questions have been raised about whether foreign governments have been trying to surreptitiously influence the selection and election of their favoured local candidates.

The AmericasBarometer 2025 Survey in Canada provides an opportunity to measure support for democracy and elections in Canada in the aftermath of the spring election campaign. The biennial study has been tracking satisfaction with democracy, using a consistent method, since 2010, with additional questions on trust in elections added since then.

This year, the survey finds that the level of satisfaction with the way democracy works in Canada has seen a modest increase, while overall trust in elections has held stable. However, it also finds that fewer Canadians are confident that votes are always counted fairly in Canada, or that foreign governments never influence our election results.

Satisfaction with democracy, trust in elections, and the sense that votes are always counted fairly, have all declined steadily and significantly among Conservative Party supporters since the party lost power a decade ago – and in the context of four consecutive election losses. Despite this, seven in ten Conservative Party supporters continue to hold that “democracy is preferable to

any other form of government,” and the same proportion agrees that “election results should be respected regardless of which candidate or party wins.”

Taken together, these results suggest that, while there may be growing frustration with aspects of the democratic process in Canada among opposition party supporters, this does not necessarily amount to a weakening of support for democracy itself. Yet, steps should be taken to reinforce overall public confidence in the way votes are received and counted (including mail-in ballots), and in the way candidate selection and elections are insulated from foreign interference.



# Key findings

- Seven in ten Canadians (70%) say they are either very satisfied or **satisfied with the way democracy works in Canada**. This represents a modest five-point rebound from 2023. Relatively few Canadians, however, are *very satisfied* with the way their democracy works.
- Satisfaction remains highest among supporters of the Liberal Party. It is **much lower among Conservative Party supporters**, and has been declining consistently since that party lost power in 2015. For the first time, Conservative Party supporters are now more or less equally divided between those who are satisfied and dissatisfied with the way democracy works in Canada.
- Regionally, satisfaction with the way democracy works in Canada is **highest in Quebec and lowest in Alberta**. This is a reversal of the situation in 2010, when satisfaction was lowest in Quebec and highest in Alberta.
- When presented with three statements about democracy, at least seven in ten supporters of each of the three main federal parties favour the one most supportive of democracy, namely that “**democracy is preferable to any other form of government.**” And, in this case, there has been only a modest decline in the proportion of Conservative Party supporters who favour this statement.
- The overall proportion of Canadians with **high trust in elections in this country has remained fairly stable** since 2017. However, the trend differs among supporters of the different federal political parties. Supporters of the federal Liberal Party are the most likely to have high trust in elections, and this proportion is slightly higher in 2025 than it was in 2019. Conversely, supporters of the Conservative Party are less likely to express high trust in elections, and this proportion has fallen notably since 2019.



- The proportion of Canadians who say that **votes are *always* counted correctly and fairly in Canada has been declining**, dropping 10 percentage points (from 64% to 54%) since this question was first asked in 2021. The proportions saying that the rich *never* buy election results in this country, or that foreign government *never* influence our election results, have also declined since 2021.
- The **decline of trust in elections among Conservative Party supporters** is accompanied by a larger than average decline in the proportion of these supporters who say that votes are always counted correctly and fairly in Canada.
- Three in four Canadians agree that **"election results should be respected regardless of which candidate or party wins."** Agreement is highest among Liberal Party and Bloc Québécois supporters, and somewhat lower among supporters of the NDP and the Conservative Party. But, in this case, seven in ten Conservative Party supporters agree, and fewer than one in ten disagree (two in ten neither agree nor disagree).

# Satisfaction with democracy

Seven in ten Canadians (70%) say they are either very satisfied or satisfied with the way democracy works in Canada. This represents a modest five-point rebound from 2023, when 65 percent expressed satisfaction. Three in ten Canadians (30%) say they are either dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the way democracy works in Canada, which is five points lower than the proportion that held this view in 2023.

Relatively few Canadians, however, are *very satisfied* with the way their democracy works: only 12 percent feel this positively. It is much more common for people to feel “satisfied” (58%), even if not very satisfied. Similarly, very few are *very dissatisfied* (6%); 24 percent are “dissatisfied” with the way democracy works, even if not very dissatisfied.



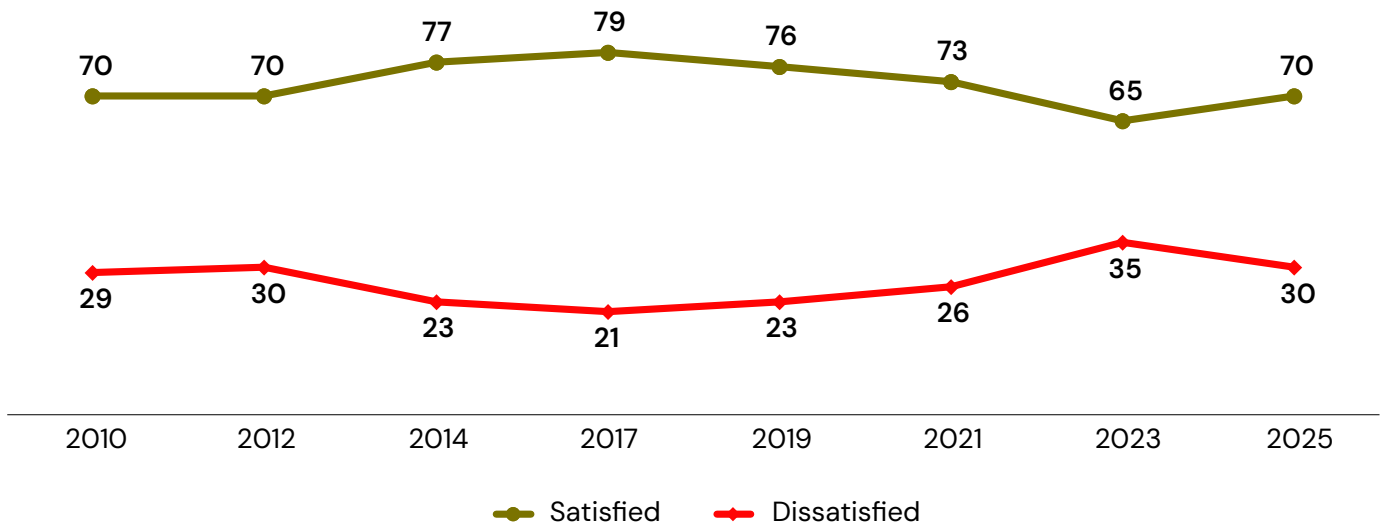
The picture over the longer term is more one of stability than of change, as the proportion of Canadians who are satisfied with their democracy is the same in 2025 as it was when this series of surveys began in 2010.

Satisfaction with the way democracy works in Canada had increased between 2012 and 2017 before declining in three subsequent surveys (from 2019 to 2023). This decline has now been partially reversed. The picture over the longer term is more one of stability than of change, as the proportion of Canadians who are satisfied with their democracy (70%) is the same in 2025 as it was when this series of surveys began in 2010. The proportion that is *very satisfied* is marginally higher today than in 2010 (12%, compared to 7%); the proportion that is *very dissatisfied* is basically unchanged (6%, compared to 5%).

**Figure 1**

## Satisfaction with the way democracy works in Canada

2010 – 2025



*In general, would you say that you are very satisfied, satisfied, dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the way democracy works in Canada?*

The gaps in the level of satisfaction with democracy between supporters of the main federal political parties has widened considerably over the past decade:

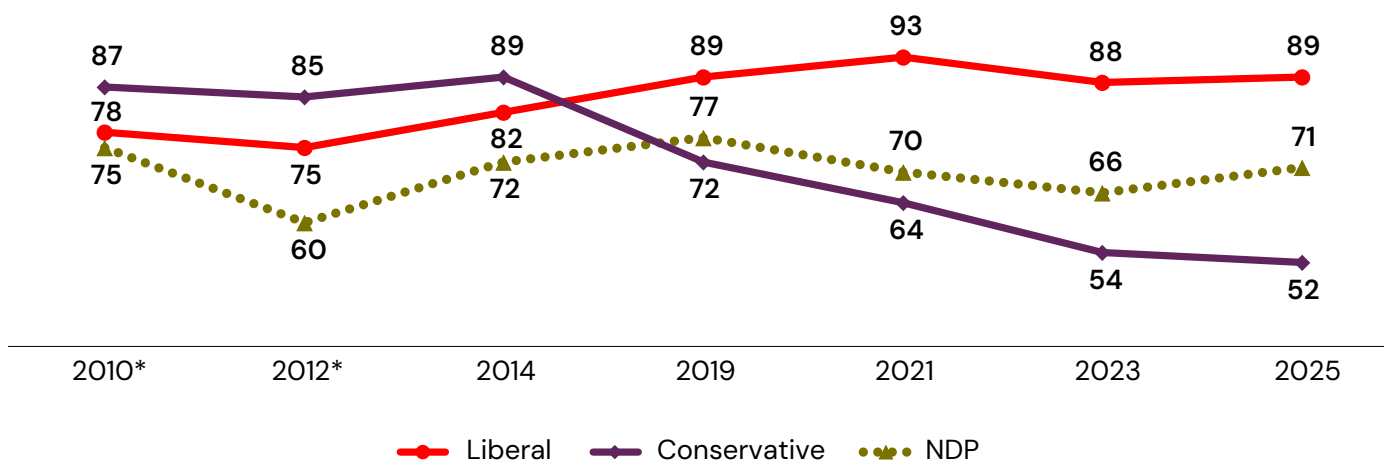
- Satisfaction remains highest among supporters of the Liberal Party (89%), which has now won four consecutive elections. In each of the past four surveys (from 2019 to 2025), roughly nine in ten Liberal Party supporters have said they are very satisfied or satisfied with the way democracy works in Canada.
- Satisfaction is much lower among Conservative Party supporters (52%), and has been declining consistently since that party lost power in 2015. In 2014, when the Conservative Party still formed government, 89 percent of its supporters expressed satisfaction with Canadian democracy. That proportion declined in each of the next four surveys. For the first time, Conservative Party supporters are now more or less equally divided between those who are satisfied (52%) and dissatisfied (48%).

- The level of satisfaction among NDP supporters currently stands in between that of their Liberal and Conservative counterparts (71%). NDP supporters have grown slightly more satisfied with the way democracy works in Canada since the previous survey in 2023 (up 5 points).
- Satisfaction with Canadian democracy in 2025 is higher than average among Bloc Québécois supporters (78%).
- Satisfaction with Canadian democracy is lower than average among undecided voters (60%), but has increased by 11 percentage points since 2023.

## Figure 2

### Satisfaction with the way democracy works in Canada

2010 – 2025, Very satisfied or satisfied, by federal vote intention



*In general, would you say that you are very satisfied, satisfied, dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the way democracy works in Canada?\** Results for the 2010 and 2012 surveys are based on a question about the party you voted for in the most recent election (2008 and 2011 respectively). Results from 2014 onward are based on a question about the party you would vote for if an election were held today. No question on party support was included in the 2017 survey.

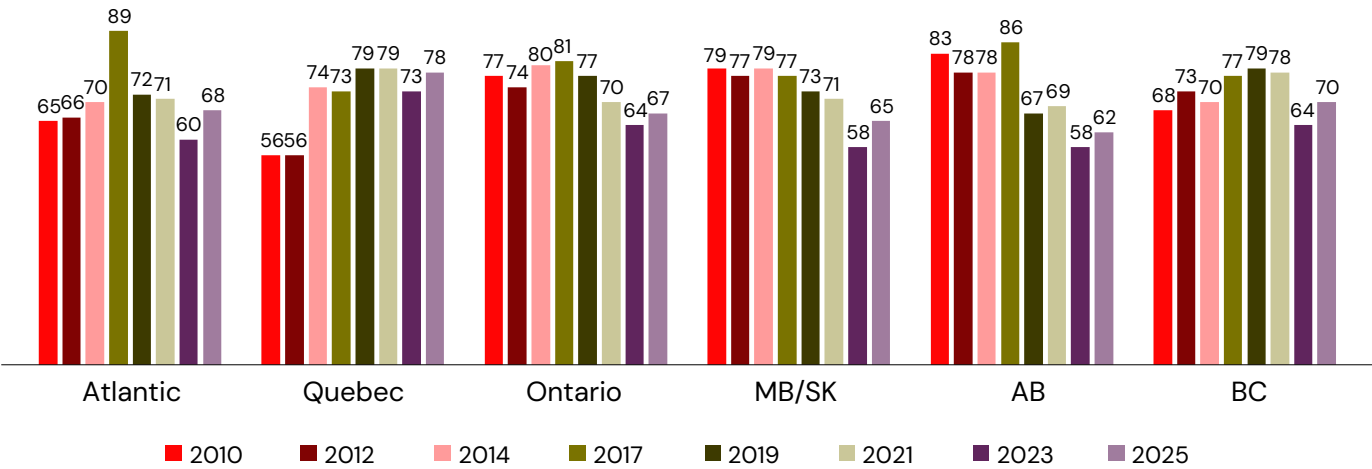
Between 2014 and 2019 – that is, either side of the 2015 election, which led to a change in government – the gap in satisfaction between Liberal Party and Conservative Party supporters reversed: whereas in 2014, Conservative Party supporters were seven points more likely to be satisfied, in 2019 they were 17 points less likely. Since 2019, that 17-point gap has widened to 37 points.

There are also differences among regions in the extent of satisfaction with the way democracy works in Canada, and these regional differences have also shifted over time.

Currently, satisfaction is highest in Quebec (78%) and lowest in Alberta (62%). But this is a reversal of the situation at the beginning of this series of surveys in 2010, when satisfaction was lowest in Quebec and highest in Alberta.

Figure 3

Satisfaction with the way democracy works in Canada  
2010 – 2025, Very satisfied or satisfied, by region

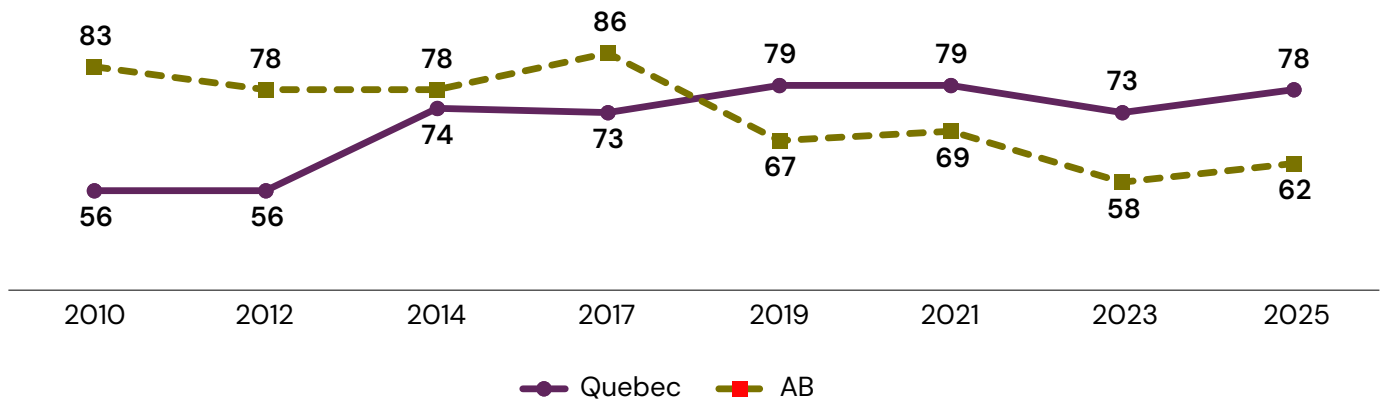


*In general, would you say that you are very satisfied, satisfied, dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the way democracy works in Canada?*

**Figure 4**

### Satisfaction with the way democracy works in Canada

2010 – 2025, Very satisfied or satisfied, Quebec & Alberta



*In general, would you say that you are very satisfied, satisfied, dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the way democracy works in Canada?*

Returning to the differences among supporters of the different federal political parties, additional context can be provided by comparing results to the question about satisfaction with democracy with those from two related questions.

First, a similar pattern emerges when Canadians are asked whether they are satisfied or dissatisfied with the way *the political system* works in Canada. Satisfaction in 2025 is much higher among supporters of the Liberal Party (90%) than supporters of the Conservative Party (50%), with the result for supporters of the NDP falling in between the two (71%). But, after rising somewhat between 2019 and 2021, satisfaction has fallen significantly among Conservative Party supporters (from 72% in 2021 to 50% in 2025), while holding steady for both Liberal Party and NDP supporters.

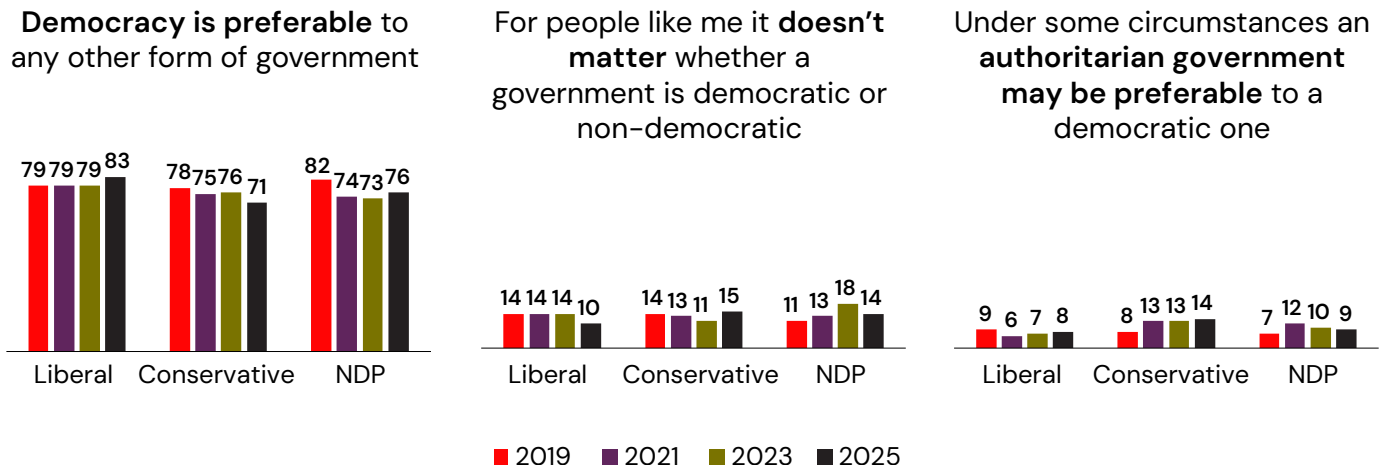
A second question, however, shows somewhat different results. When presented with three statements about democracy, at least seven in ten supporters of each of the three main federal parties favour the one most supportive of democracy, namely that “democracy is preferable to any other form of government.”

And, in this case, there has been only a modest decline in the proportion of Conservative Party supporters who favour this statement, from 78 percent in 2019 to 71 percent in 2025. Conversely, very few supporters of any of these three parties prefer the alternative statements, either that “it doesn’t matter whether a government is democratic or non-democratic” or that “under some circumstances an authoritarian government may be preferable to a democratic one.” There is only a six percentage-point difference between the proportions of Liberal and Conservative Party supporters who prefer the latter statement; and the proportion of Conservative Party supporters open to authoritarian government has increased by only six points since 2019.

## Figure 5

### Three statements about democracy

2019 – 2025, by federal vote intention



*Which of the following statements do you agree with the most?*

These last results suggest that, generally speaking, growing frustration with the outcomes of the democratic process among opposition party supporters in Canada should not be interpreted as a weakening of support for democracy itself.

# Trust in elections

Most Canadians have at least some trust in elections. When asked about the extent to which they trust elections in this country (answering on a scale of 1 to 7, where 1 means “not at all” and 7 means “a lot”), 41 percent express a high level of trust (6 or 7 on the scale) and 47 percent express some trust (3 to 5 on the scale). Only 12 percent have a low level of trust (1 or 2 on the scale).

## Point scale explainer

Answers along the seven-point scale can be grouped in different ways. In addition to reporting that 41 percent express a high level of trust in elections (6 or 7 on the scale), it is also possible to say the following:

- 65 percent have “positive trust” (5 to 7 on the scale), 15 percent are neutral (at the mid-point (4) on the scale) and 20 percent have “negative trust” (1 to 3 on the scale).
- 80 percent have trust in elections (scoring at the mid-point of the scale or higher) and 20 percent do not trust elections (1 to 3, or below the mid-point, on the scale).

The remainder of this report will use the following groupings for analysis: high trust (6 or 7 on the scale), some trust (3 to 5 on the scale) and low trust (1 or 2 on the scale).

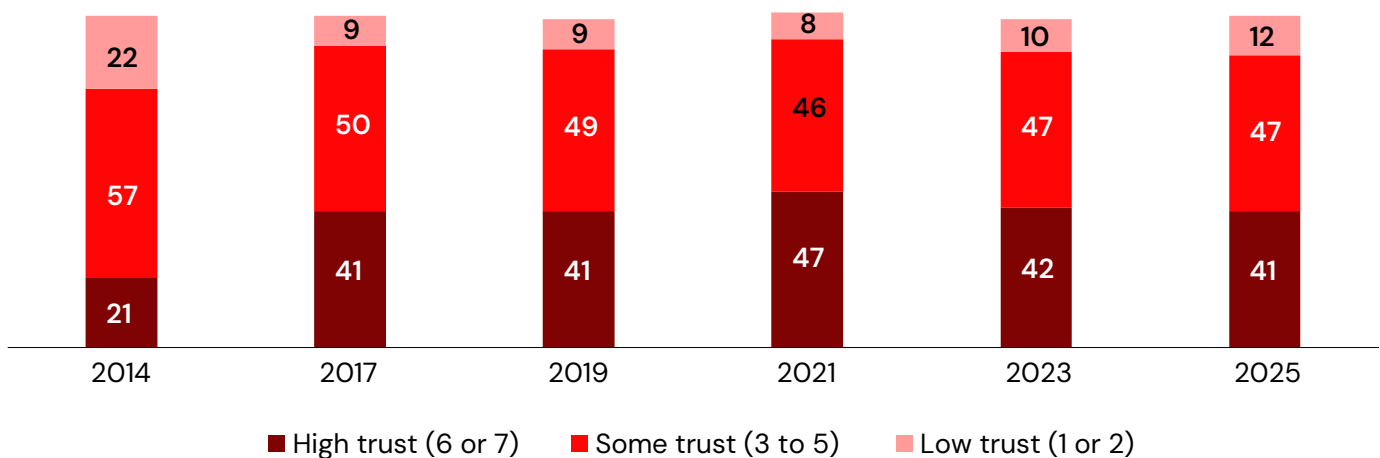


The proportion with high trust in elections has remained fairly stable since 2017, though high trust was slightly higher in 2021.<sup>1</sup> The proportion expressing low trust in elections has increased marginally, by two points, since 2023 – but more generally has remained more or less unchanged since 2017, at around one in ten.<sup>2</sup>

## Figure 6

### To what extent do you trust elections in this country?

2014 – 2025



*To what extent do you trust elections in this country? (Using a scale ranging from 1 to 7, where 1 means “not at all” and 7 means “a lot.”)*

The overall proportion with high trust in elections in 2025 is the same as that in 2019 (41%). However, the trend differs among supporters of the different federal political parties:

- Supporters of the federal Liberal Party are the most likely to have high trust in elections, and this proportion is slightly higher in 2025 (63%) than it was in 2019 (58%).

1 Trust in the different elements of Canada’s political system was generally higher in the first half of 2021, as governments responded to the COVID-19 pandemic with emergency benefits, and the procurement and distribution of vaccines. Reports from the 2021 AmericasBarometer survey can be found here: <https://www.environicsinstitute.org/projects/listing/-in-tags/type/americas-barometer>.

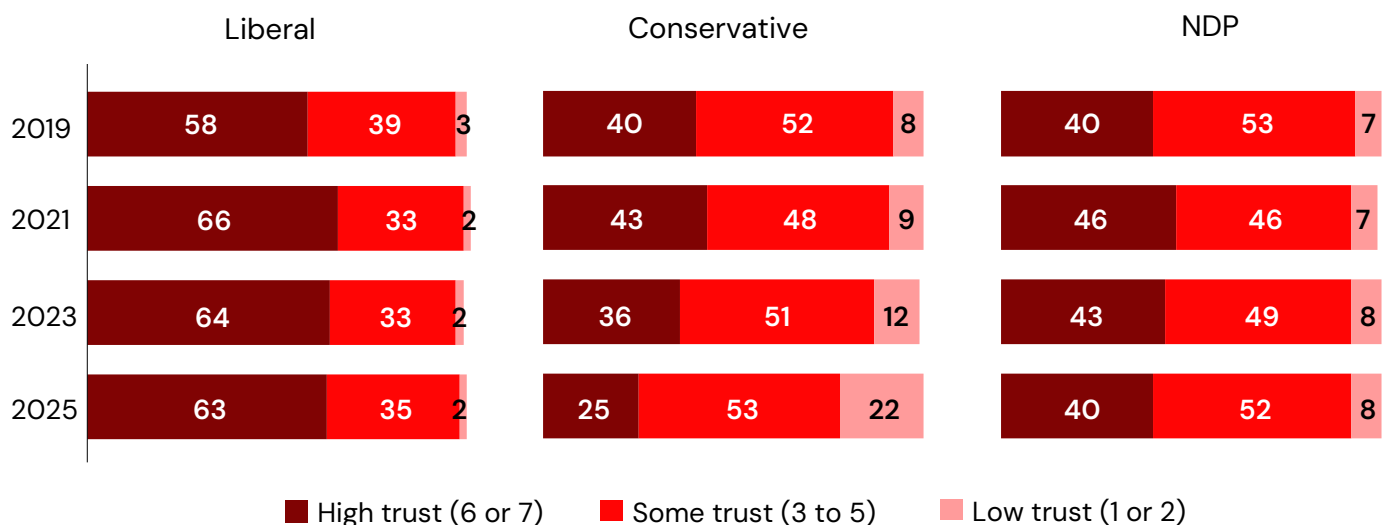
2 The proportion expressing low trust in elections was higher in 2014. The 2014 survey took place several weeks after the start of the trial of the former political staffer who had organized “robocalls” to impede voters during the 2011 election campaign.

- Conversely, supporters of the Conservative Party are less likely to express high trust in elections, and this proportion has fallen notably since 2019, from 40 to 25 percent. In 2019, there was an 18-point gap in the extent of high trust in elections held by Liberal and Conservative party supporters; in 2025, this gap now stands at 38 points.
- Among NDP supporters, the proportion with high trust in 2025 is the same as it was in 2019 (40%).

## Figure 7

### To what extent do you trust elections in this country?

2019 – 2025, by federal vote intention



*To what extent do you trust elections in this country? (Using a scale ranging from 1 to 7, where 1 means “not at all” and 7 means “a lot.”)*

In 2025, 45 percent of Bloc Québécois supporters express high trust in elections; but high trust is much lower than average among undecided voters (24%).<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> It is not possible to compare the change between 2019 and 2025 for either Bloc Québécois supporters or undecided voters. The subsample of Bloc Québécois supporters in 2019 is too small, and the 2019 survey question categorized undecided voters differently than in subsequent surveys.



The decline in *high trust* in elections among Conservative Party supporters is perhaps not surprising, as their party has lost three elections since the 2019 survey. More concerning is the observation that it was not the proportion with only *some trust* that increased. Rather, the proportion of Conservative Party supporters with *low trust* in elections has increased over the same period from eight to 22 percent.

In addition to these differences by vote intention, the extent of high trust in elections also varies by age (older Canadians are more likely to have high trust than their younger counterparts), as well as by education and income (with those with more education or higher incomes being more likely to have high trust). In these cases, however, those less likely to have high trust are more likely to have some trust. The proportions with low trust in elections remain at 15 percent or lower for all age, education and income groups.



Supporters of the Conservative Party are less likely to express high trust in elections, and this proportion has fallen notably since 2019.

# The fairness of elections

While the extent to which Canadians trust elections has remained relatively stable, there has been a decline in the proportion saying that votes are always counted correctly and fairly in Canada.

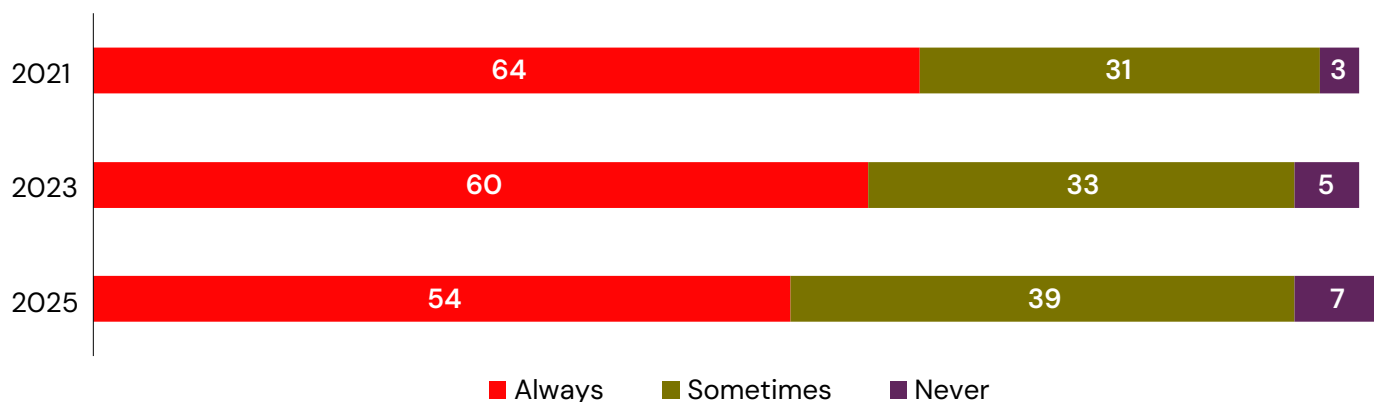
Overall, in 2025, 54 percent say that votes are *always* counted correctly and fairly, and 39 percent says this happens *sometimes*. Only seven percent of Canadians say that votes are *never* counted correctly and fairly in this country.

While it is reassuring that only a small proportion of Canadians say that votes are never counted fairly, the proportion that says this always happens has been declining, dropping 10 percentage points (from 64% to 54%) since this question was first asked in 2021.

## Figure 8

Are votes are counted correctly and fairly?

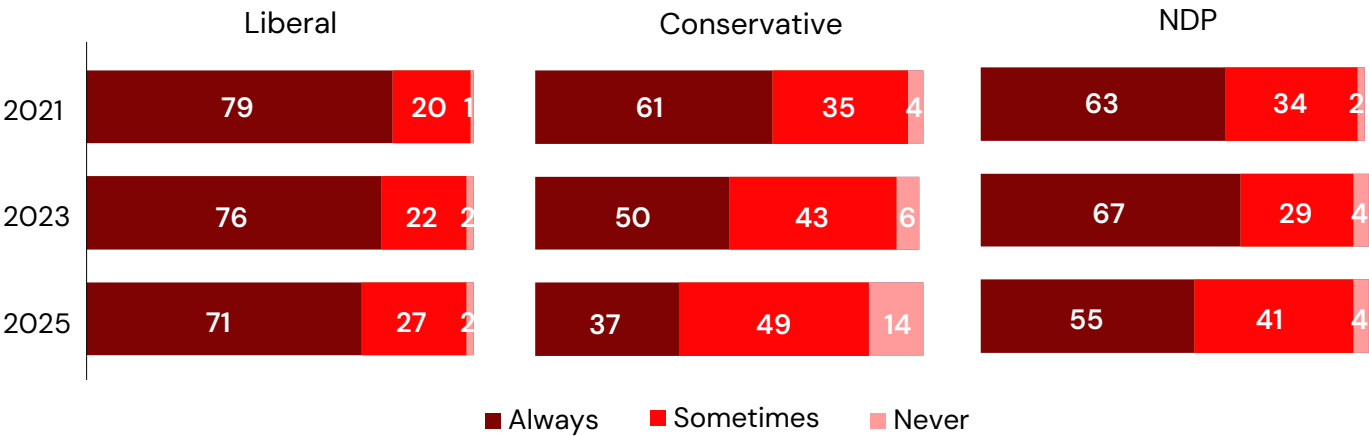
2021 – 2025



*Here are some things that can happen during elections. Would you say the following happen always, sometimes or never in Canada? Votes are counted correctly and fairly.*

This drop, however, is much larger for supporters of the Conservative Party; whereas, in 2021, a majority of Conservative Party supporters (61%) said votes are always counted fairly in Canadian elections, in 2025, only 37 percent hold this view – a drop of 24 points. The proportion saying that votes are always counted fairly also declined among supporters of other parties, though by lesser amount: down by eight points for both Liberal Party and NDP supporters. There was also a 13-point drop among undecided voters.

**Figure 9**  
**Are votes are counted correctly and fairly?**  
2021 – 2025, by federal vote intention



*Here are some things that can happen during elections. Would you say the following happen always, sometimes or never in Canada? Votes are counted correctly and fairly.*

The proportion saying that votes are always counted correctly and fairly declined between 2023 and 2025 in all regions of the country. The decline was largest in Quebec (a drop of 10 points, from 66% to 56%). This could reflect in part the impact of the controversy following the April 2025 federal election in one constituency in the province, where the Liberal candidate won by a single vote, but where some voters had their mail-in ballots rejected because of a printing error in the address marked on the envelope. (This incident may also have impacted how Conservative Party supporters answer this question.)

Canadians were also asked about two other ways in which the fairness of elections could be impeded:

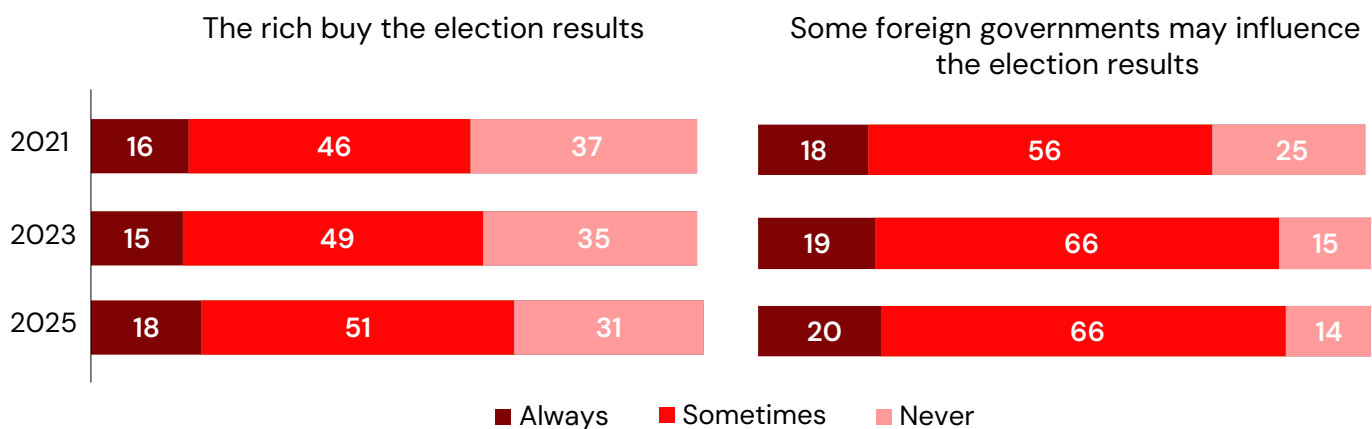
- Overall, 18 percent say it always happens that “**the rich buy the election results**” in Canada, while 51 percent say this sometimes happens and 31 percent say it never happens.
- Turning to the issue of foreign interference, 20 percent say it always happens that “**some foreign governments may influence the election results of Canada,**” while 66 percent this sometimes happens and 14 percent say it never happens.

In each case, the proportions saying this never happens has declined since 2021: from 37 to 31 percent in the case of the rich buying election results, and from 25 to 14 percent in the case of foreign governments having influence on the results. It is notable that, consistently since this question was first asked in 2021, a majority says that it can at least sometimes happen that election results are either “bought” by the rich or influenced by foreign governments.

## Figure 10

### Undue influence on elections in Canada

2021 – 2025



*Here are some things that can happen during elections. Would you say the following happen always, sometimes or never in Canada?*

In the case of both of these questions, however, the differences between the supporters of the different federal parties are somewhat less pronounced than on the question about the counting of votes. Currently, Conservative Party supporters are 16 points more likely than Liberal Party supporters to say that the rich always buy election results (27%, compared to 11%); and 18 points more likely to say that foreign governments always influence results (32%, compared to 14%). But this is narrower than the 34-point gap between the two groups of supporters on the question of fair vote counting.

Supporters of the Conservative Party have become a little more likely to say that the rich always buy election results (up by 8 percent points between 2021 and 2025) and that foreign governments always influence results (up by 7 points). But these changes are much smaller than the 24-point drop in the proportion of Conservative Party supporters who say that votes are always counted fairly. There has been no corresponding increase in the proportions of Liberal Party supporters who say these things always happen in Canada.<sup>4</sup>



Consistently since this question was first asked in 2021, a majority says that it can at least sometimes happen that election results are either “bought” by the rich or influenced by foreign governments.

4 The proportion of NDP supporters who say that the rich always buy election results in Canada increased marginally, from 15 percent to 19 percent, between 2021 and 2025; the proportion of these supporters who say that foreign governments always influence election results is more or less unchanged (16% in 2021 and 14% in 2025).

# Respecting election results

The fact that a notable minority of Canadians (currently about three in ten) are not satisfied with the way democracy works in this country, or that only a small majority is confident that election votes are always counted correctly and fairly, does not mean that they are prepared to reject the legitimacy of election outcomes. In fact, very few are prepared to call election results in Canada into question.

In 2025, three in four Canadians (76%) agree that “election results should be respected regardless of which candidate or party wins.” An additional 18 percent say they neither agree nor disagree. Only six percent disagree.

Agreement is higher than average among older Canadians (those age 60 and older) (85%), those with a university education (81%) and those with higher household incomes (\$110,000 or more) (83%). But very few younger people, people without a post-secondary education or people with lower incomes disagree – in fact, disagreement remains below 10 percent in all of these cases. Rather, those who are less likely to agree are more likely to say they neither agree nor disagree.

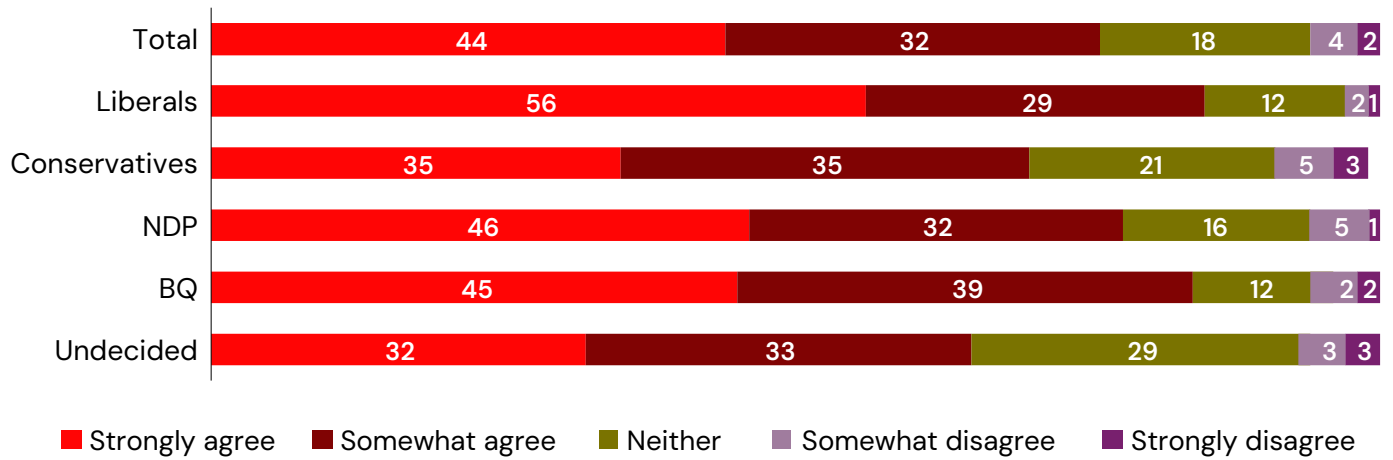
This is also the case when it comes to supporters of the main federal political parties. Agreement that “election results should be respected regardless of which candidate or party wins” is highest among Liberal Party and Bloc Québécois supporters (85% each), and lower among supporters of the NDP (78%) and the Conservative Party (71%).<sup>5</sup> However, fewer than 10 percent disagree in each case: disagreement reaches only six percent among NDP supporters and eight percent among Conservative Party supporters. But NDP (16%) and Conservative Party (21%) supporters are more likely to say they neither agree nor disagree.

5 It is lower for support of the Green Party (59%), but the subsample for this group is smaller (n=130); therefore, this result should be treated with caution.

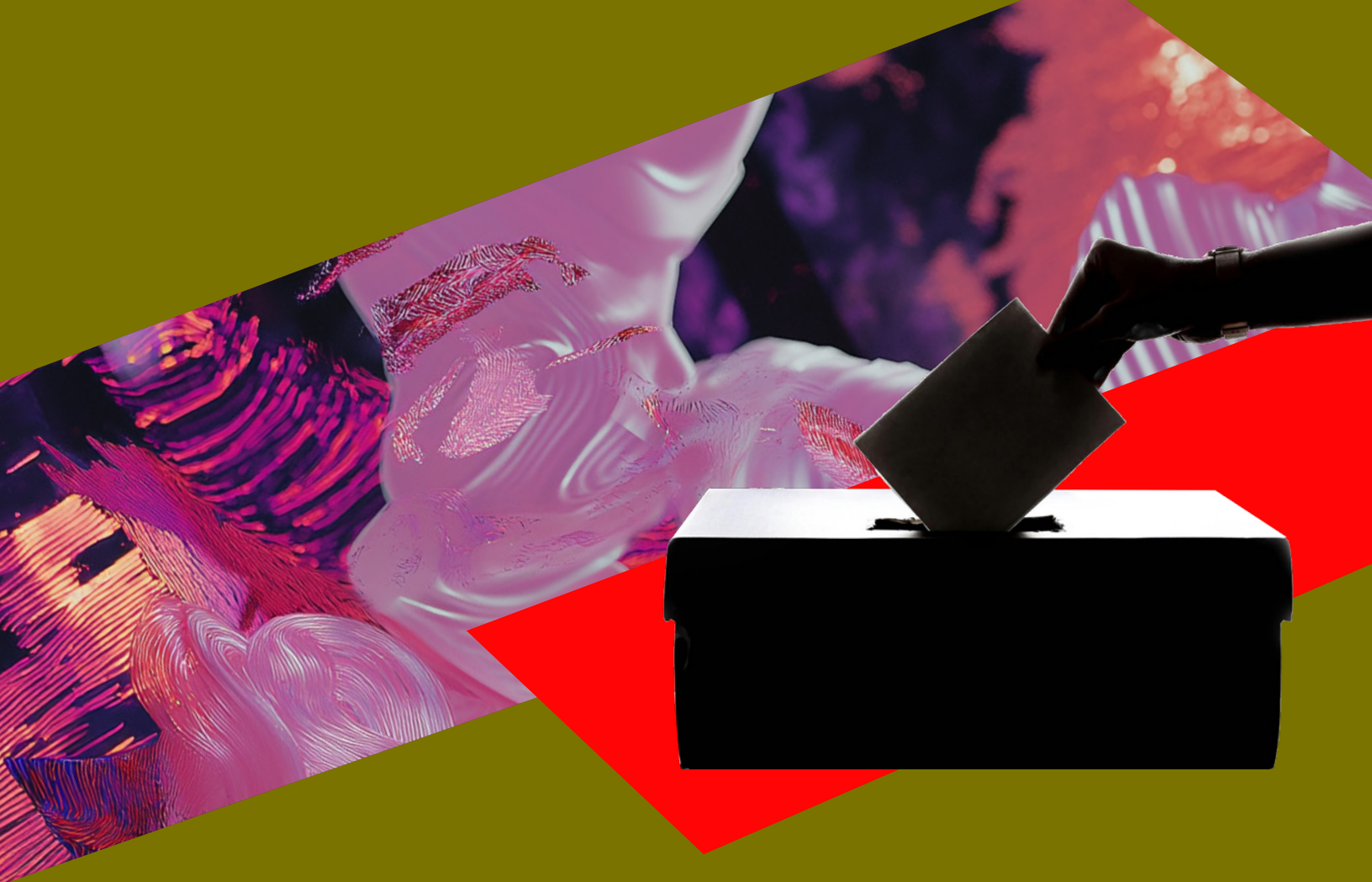
**Figure 11**

**Respect for election results**

2025, by federal vote intention



*Election results should be respected regardless of which candidate or party wins. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this statement?*



# Canadian Survey

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