AmericasBarometer
The public speaks on democracy and governance in the Americas

Canada 2017

Public Opinion Research Directorate
Ottawa, ON
July 5, 2017
Why democracy and governance?

Why the Americas?

Why now?
Why democracy and governance?

• Public attitudes matter in democratic societies

• Public opinion research is an essential tool to understanding and measuring public attitudes and priorities

“Surveys produce just what democracy is supposed to produce – equal representation of all citizens.”

Sidney Verba (1996)
Why the Americas?

- Many Latin American countries have been undergoing dynamic changes in political culture and governance over the past few decades – and this process continues to unfold

- The USA has always been a critical benchmark for Canada

- Latin America (and now the USA) look to Canada as a leading benchmark as a successful democracy and civil society
Why now?
BREAKING: Canada at populism, trust crisis tipping point

2017 Edelman Trust Barometer reveals almost half of Canada’s general population distrusts key institutions

TORONTO, Feb. 14, 2017 /CNW/ - The 2017 Edelman Trust Barometer confirms that Canada can no longer count itself immune from the global trend of populism and sinking institutional trust. For the first time since Edelman started tracking the general population, Canada finds itself among countries who distrust their institutions. Trust in business, media and government is in trouble.
Multi-country public opinion survey on democracy, governance and political engagement

Conducted by consortium of academic and think tank partners (Latin American Public Opinion Project (LAPOP))

Started in 1979 and now encompasses 29 countries (99% of hemisphere’s population)

Most comprehensive public opinion project in the western hemisphere

Unique research used extensively by academics and decision-makers (World Bank, OAS, UNDP)
Launched to chart evolution of democracy and civil institutions in Latin America and the Caribbean

Canada and the USA serve as important benchmarks

Issues of democracy and governance are increasingly relevant to all countries in the 21st century

In 2012, The Environics Institute joined the consortium as the Canadian partner
The Environics Institute for Survey Research

• Established by Michael Adams in 2006 as a non-profit research institute

• Promote relevant public opinion & social research on important issues of public policy and social change

• Research to help us better understand Canada as it is today, how it is changing, and where it may be heading

• Focus on surveying individuals/groups not usually heard from, asking questions not normally asked
• Conducted in 29 countries (including roughly 40,000 interviews)

• Core set of survey questions (with country-specific tailoring)

• Conducted by domestic research organizations in country’s principal languages

• In-home, in-person interviews – except in Canada and the USA (online survey using recruited panel)

• Canadian survey conducted March 24 – April 5, 2017 with 1,511 Canadians (aged 18+) - fieldwork by Ottawa-based Elemental Data Collection Inc.
Topics covered in 2017 Canadian survey

- Attitudes about democracy
- Confidence in the political system and institutions
- Tolerance for political dissent
- Democratic and human rights
- Confidence in the justice system and the rule of law
- National economy and household financial circumstances
Today’s presentation

- Current Canadian public attitudes on core themes
- How opinions have changed (or not) since 2014, and before
- Notable variation and trends by region and demographic groups

International benchmark comparisons with the other 28 countries to be released later in a separate report (Fall 2017)
Confidence in Canada’s political system and institutions
Strong pride in being Canadian

2008 - 2017

* 6 or 7 on a 7-point scale (1=not at all, 7=a lot)
Strong pride in Canada

2012 - 2017  By age cohort

Under 30
- 2012: 63
- 2014: 55
- 2017: 66

60 plus
- 2012: 81
- 2014: 87
- 2017: 80

* 6 or 7 on a 7-point scale (1=not at all, 7=a lot)
Despite differences, Canadians have many things that unite us*

2012 - 2017  By region

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>BC</th>
<th>Alberta</th>
<th>MB/Sask.</th>
<th>Ontario</th>
<th>Quebec</th>
<th>Atlantic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>69</td>
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<td>2014</td>
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<td>63</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>66</td>
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<td>2017</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* 6 or 7 on a 7-point scale (1=not at all, 7=a lot)
## Level of trust in central Canadian institutions

### 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>A lot</th>
<th>Some</th>
<th>Little or None</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Canadian Armed Forces</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RCMP</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supreme Court</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Justice system</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prime Minister</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Municipal government</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parliament</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mass media</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political parties</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Legend:
- **A lot**
- **Some**
- **Little or None**
Strong trust in Canadian Forces and RCMP*

2006 - 2017

* 6 or 7 on a 7-point scale (1=not at all, 7=a lot)
Strong trust in Canadian justice*

2006 - 2017

* 6 or 7 on a 7-point scale (1=not at all, 7=a lot)
Strong trust in Municipal government and mass media

2006 - 2017

* 6 or 7 on a 7-point scale (1=not at all, 7=a lot)
Strong trust in Parliament and political parties*

2006 - 2017

* 6 or 7 on a 7-point scale (1=not at all, 7=a lot)
Strong respect, pride and support of Canadian political system*

2006 - 2017

* 6 or 7 on a 7-point scale (1=not at all, 7=a lot)
### Trust in elections in this country

#### 2014 – 2017  By political orientation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Left</strong></th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>2014</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Centre</strong></th>
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<th>2017</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Right</strong></th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Notes:**
- A lot (6-7)
- Some (3-5)
- Little or None (1-2)
Attitudes toward democracy
Satisfaction with democracy in Canada

2006 - 2017

- **2006**
  - Very satisfied: 19
  - Somewhat satisfied: 71
  - Dissatisfied: 9
  - Very dissatisfied: 2

- **2008**
  - Very satisfied: 17
  - Somewhat satisfied: 65
  - Dissatisfied: 13
  - Very dissatisfied: 3

- **2010**
  - Very satisfied: 7
  - Somewhat satisfied: 63
  - Dissatisfied: 24
  - Very dissatisfied: 5

- **2012**
  - Very satisfied: 7
  - Somewhat satisfied: 63
  - Dissatisfied: 24
  - Very dissatisfied: 6

- **2014**
  - Very satisfied: 11
  - Somewhat satisfied: 66
  - Dissatisfied: 19
  - Very dissatisfied: 4

- **2017**
  - Very satisfied: 11
  - Somewhat satisfied: 68
  - Dissatisfied: 17
  - Very dissatisfied: 4
Commitment to democracy

2012 - 2017

- Democracy is preferable to other forms of gov't: 76, 74, 65
- Doesn't matter whether gov't is democratic or non-democratic: 13, 14, 22
- In some circumstances, authoritarian gov't may be preferable: 11, 11, 13
Democracy is preferable to other forms of government

2012 - 2017   By age cohort

18 to 29
1. 2012: 68
2. 2014: 52
3. 2017: 51

30 to 44
1. 2012: 66
2. 2014: 64
3. 2017: 71

45 to 59
1. 2012: 71
2. 2014: 78
3. 2017: 78

60+
1. 2012: 86
2. 2014: 88
3. 2017: 81
The people should govern directly rather than through elected representatives

2008 – 2017

- **Agree (6-7)**
  - 2008: 12
  - 2010: 12
  - 2012: 13
  - 2014: 13
  - 2017: 15

- **No clear opinion (3-5)**
  - 2008: 28
  - 2010: 49
  - 2012: 55
  - 2014: 58
  - 2017: 57

- **Disagree (1-2)**
  - 2008: 60
  - 2010: 39
  - 2012: 32
  - 2014: 28
  - 2017: 27
Prime minister should limit the voice of opposition parties

2010 - 2017

- **Agree (6-7)**
- **No clear opinion (3-5)**
- **Disagree (1-2)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>No Clear Opinion</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Limiting the democratic process in difficult times

2010 - 2017

When the country is facing very difficult times, is it tolerable for the PM to close Parliament?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Political engagement
Personal interest in politics

2010 - 2017

2010:
- A lot: 14
- Some: 40
- Little: 30
- None: 16

2012:
- A lot: 15
- Some: 42
- Little: 29
- None: 13

2014:
- A lot: 16
- Some: 39
- Little: 31
- None: 13

2017:
- A lot: 19
- Some: 46
- Little: 26
- None: 10

Legend:
- A lot
- Some
- Little
- None
You feel you understand the most important political issues of the country*

2010 – 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>No clear opinion</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* 6 or 7 on a 7-point scale (1=not at all, 7=a lot)
You feel you understand the most important political issues of the country*

2010 - 2017 By age cohort

* 6 or 7 on a 7-point scale (1=not at all, 7=a lot)
General political orientation

2012 - 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Left</th>
<th>Middle</th>
<th>Right</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Legend:
- Left
- Middle
- Right
Tolerance for dissent and the rule of law
Rights and freedoms in Canada today

2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Freedom</th>
<th>Very little</th>
<th>Enough</th>
<th>Too much</th>
<th>dk/na</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Human rights protection</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>93</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freedom to express political views without fear</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>72</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freedom of expression</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freedom of the press</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Very little  Enough  Too much  dk/na
Do courts in Canada guarantee a fair trial?

2010 - 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>A lot (6-7)</th>
<th>Some (3-5)</th>
<th>Not at all (1-2)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- A lot (6-7)
- Some (3-5)
- Not at all (1-2)
Citizen's basic rights are well-protected in Canada

2006 - 2017

2006:
- A lot (6-7): 37
- Some (3-5): 54
- Not at all (1-2): 9

2008:
- A lot (6-7): 31
- Some (3-5): 57
- Not at all (1-2): 12

2010:
- A lot (6-7): 25
- Some (3-5): 61
- Not at all (1-2): 14

2012:
- A lot (6-7): 29
- Some (3-5): 59
- Not at all (1-2): 12

2014:
- A lot (6-7): 26
- Some (3-5): 62
- Not at all (1-2): 12

2017:
- A lot (6-7): 31
- Some (3-5): 58
- Not at all (1-2): 11

Legend:
- A lot (6-7)
- Some (3-5)
- Not at all (1-2)
**Those who disagree with the majority represent a threat to the country**

*2008 - 2017*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Agree (6-7)</th>
<th>No clear opinion (3-5)</th>
<th>Disagree (1-2)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Legend:*
- Agree (6-7)
- No clear opinion (3-5)
- Disagree (1-2)
Protection of the rights of people critical of the Canadian form of government

2008 - 2017

Right to conduct peaceful demonstration
- Approve: 61
- No strong opinion: 35
- Disapprove: 4

Right to vote
- Approve: 59
- No strong opinion: 37
- Disapprove: 4

Right to run for public office
- Approve: 45
- No strong opinion: 45
- Disapprove: 9

Right to make speeches on TV
- Approve: 43
- No strong opinion: 49
- Disapprove: 8

Legend:
- Approve
- No strong opinion
- Disapprove
Faith in punishing the guilty

2010 - 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>A lot</th>
<th>Some</th>
<th>Little</th>
<th>None</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>14</td>
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<tr>
<td>2012</td>
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<td>11</td>
</tr>
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<td>2014</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- A lot
- Some
- Little
- None
To reduce crime, punishment of criminals must be increased

2017  By age cohort

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Cohort</th>
<th>Agree (6-7)</th>
<th>No strong opinion (3-5)</th>
<th>Disagree (1-2)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 to 29</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 to 44</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45 to 59</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60+</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Victimized by crime in last 12 months

2006 - 2017

2006: 13 Self, NA Household
2008: 16 Self, NA Household
2010: 15 Self, 21 Household
2012: 13 Self, 17 Household
2014: 11 Self, 15 Household
2017: 11 Self, NA Household
Safety of neighbourhood where you live

2006 - 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Very safe</th>
<th>Somewhat safe</th>
<th>Somewhat unsafe</th>
<th>Very unsafe</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>48</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<td>2010</td>
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<td>2014</td>
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<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Very safe
- Somewhat safe
- Somewhat unsafe
- Very unsafe
Trust in people in your community

2010 - 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Very trustworthy</th>
<th>Somewhat trustworthy</th>
<th>Not very trustworthy/untrustworthy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Quality of life and economic security
Canada’s current economic situation

2010 - 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Neither</th>
<th>Bad</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>43</td>
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<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>42</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Legend:
- **Good**
- **Neither**
- **Bad**
Your own economic situation

2010 - 2017

- **2010**: 38 Good, 42 Neither, 20 Bad
- **2012**: 40 Good, 41 Neither, 19 Bad
- **2014**: 44 Good, 37 Neither, 19 Bad
- **2017**: 52 Good, 33 Neither, 14 Bad

Colors: Green = Good, Light Green = Neither, White = Bad
Adequacy of household income

2010 - 2017

2010
- 19% Good enough and can save from it
- 38% Is just enough, so do not have major problems
- 28% Not enough and am stretched
- 15% Not enough and having a hard time

2012
- 20% Good enough and can save from it
- 36% Is just enough, so do not have major problems
- 25% Not enough and am stretched
- 15% Not enough and having a hard time

2014
- 22% Good enough and can save from it
- 35% Is just enough, so do not have major problems
- 26% Not enough and am stretched
- 13% Not enough and having a hard time

2017
- 26% Good enough and can save from it
- 37% Is just enough, so do not have major problems
- 22% Not enough and am stretched
- 10% Not enough and having a hard time
Overall satisfaction with life depends on adequacy of income

2017

- Good enough and can save from it: 54% very satisfied, 42% somewhat satisfied, 4% somewhat/very dissatisfied
- Just enough so do not have major problems: 35% very satisfied, 59% somewhat satisfied, 6% somewhat/very dissatisfied
- Not enough and am stretched: 19% very satisfied, 63% somewhat satisfied, 19% somewhat/very dissatisfied
- Not enough and am having a hard time: 12% very satisfied, 42% somewhat satisfied, 45% somewhat/very dissatisfied
Government’s responsibility for actively addressing inequality

2008 - 2017

Government should implement strong policies to reduce income inequality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Agree (6-7)</th>
<th>No clear opinion (3-5)</th>
<th>Disagree (1-2)</th>
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<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Legend: Agree (6-7) | No clear opinion (3-5) | Disagree (1-2)
Conclusions
Canadians express mixed views: positive about the country’s democracy but more qualified confidence in political system and some institutions

Opinions have remained strikingly consistent over the past five years; most measures have held steady or improved since 2014; no indications of growing populist or anti-government sentiments

The left-right political divide evident in 2014 has shrunk, and there is no growing polarization by socio-economic class, generation or region

Positive trend may reflect greater confidence in the country’s economy and household finances
Conclusions – group trends since 2014

- **AGE COHORT** – Younger Canadians (18 – 29) show a strong upward shift, reversing or erasing a previous generation gap in attitudes about democracy and institutions. But this cohort is also least committed to established democratic process

- **POLITICAL ORIENTATION** – confidence has improved dramatically among those on the political left; opinions on the right tend not to be as positive, but in most cases have held steady or strengthened

- **REGION** – most notable changes are in western Canada: improving opinions in Alberta and B.C., and the reverse shift in Manitoba and Saskatchewan. Quebecers continue to have lower confidence in the country’s democracy
For more information . . .

CANADA

• Report on Canada 2017 now available at http/www.environicsinstitute.org

• Full report on Canada with benchmarking to 28 countries -- Fall 2017

OTHER COUNTRIES IN AMERICAS

• Data and country reports will be available through LAPOP:
  http/www.vanderbilt.edu/ lapop/
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