



Factum

Canadian Families Becoming More Insular as Poll Finds Time With Family Increasing While Connections with Neighbours and Community Decreasing

Canadians Have Had a Social Visit with Only 2 of Their Neighbours in the Last 6 Months; Know the Last Names of Only 3 of their Closest 10 Neighbours

Toronto, ON, December 28, 2018 — Canadians are turning more insular as social cohesion is eroding, according to a new Ipsos poll conducted on behalf of Global News. In the past year, Canadians say they are spending more time with their families, and about the same amount of time with their friends, while spending less time with their neighbours or volunteering in the community. This points to a society that is making fewer face-to-face connections and is surrounding itself with like-minded people in their own family, consequently being less exposed to the diversity that exists outside the walls of their own family life. Specifically, in the past year...

- One in three (33%) Canadians have spent more **time with their family**, compared to 13% who have spent less time. One half (53%) say the amount of time with family has stayed roughly the same. British Columbians are most likely (38%) to say that they're spending more time with family.
- One in four (23%) have spent more time with **friends**, while an equal proportion (23%) have spent less time – a wash. A majority (55%) are spending the same amount of time with friends. Once again, British Columbians are most likely (33%) to be spending more time with friends compared to previous years.
- Just 12% spent more time with their **neighbours** in the last year, while 28% spent less time. Most (59%) have not altered the amount of time spent with neighbours over the past year. Quebecers are most likely (34%) to say they're spending less time with neighbours.
- Only one in ten (13%) are spending more time **volunteering in their community**, while three in ten (30%) are spending less time. Six in ten (57%) are spending about the same amount of time this past year volunteering. Quebecers are once again most likely (37%) to say they're spending less time volunteering in their community. Interestingly, Boomers and Gen Xers are most likely to say they're spending less time doing this (32%), while fewer Millennials (23%) say the same.

Given a reduction in the amount of time spent among neighbours and in the community, it's perhaps not surprising that Canadians appear to know very little about their neighbours, or don't spend very much time interacting with them. Those in BC and Atlantic Canada seem to know their neighbours a little better than those in Alberta and Quebec do. When asked to think about their 10 closest neighbours whose homes or apartments are closest to their own...

- Canadians say that only 4.8 of their neighbours, on average, **wave to them** if they walk or drive past their home, highest in Atlantic Canada (5.7), lowest in Quebec (4.2)
- Canadians know the **last names** of 3.4 of their closest neighbours, highest in Atlantic Canada (4.9) and lowest in Alberta (2.7).

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- Canadians know where 2.8 of their **neighbours work**, highest in Atlantic Canada (3.9), lowest in Quebec (2.1)
- Canadians have had a **social visit** (i.e. meal, beer, tea, etc.) with 2.1 of their neighbours in the past 6 months, highest in BC (2.4), lowest in Alberta (1.6)
- Canadians know how 1.6 of them **voted it the last election**, highest in BC (2.0), lowest in Alberta (0.9)
- Canadians know whether or not only 1.6 of their neighbours **use public transit to get to work**, highest in BC (1.8) and Ontario (1.8), lowest in Atlantic Canada (1.0)
- Canadians know the **favourite food** of only 1.4 of their neighbours, highest in BC (1.6), lowest in Alberta (0.9)

All of this isolation could be leading to a decline of social cohesion, reflected in the attitudes and beliefs that people share (or don't share) with those in their community or elsewhere in Canada. Only four in ten (42%) Canadians say that their outlook on life and their opinions on issues that are important are the same as other Canadians, down 6 points since 2017. Conversely, three in ten (27%) say their attitudes are different than other Canadians, up 6 points since last year, while a mix of same and different holds steady at 31%. The trend captured by these most recent figures points to a Canadian society that is becoming increasingly fragmented.

Similar trends prevail when asking Canadians about whether their outlook, attitudes and beliefs are the same or different from other people in their community. Only four in ten (41%) say they're generally the same, down 4 points, while 27% say they're quite different, up 4 points. One in three (31%) say they have a mix of differing points of view and similar opinions to others in their community (down 1 point). With Millennials being most likely to say their attitudes are different (35%), the momentum towards less social cohesion is likely to continue.

About the Study

These are some of the findings of an Ipsos poll conducted between December 7 to 12, 2018, on behalf Global News. For this survey, a sample of 2,001 adults living in Canada was polled. Weighting was then employed to balance demographics to ensure that the sample's composition reflects that of the adult population according to Census data and to provide results intended to approximate the sample universe. The precision of Ipsos online polls is measured using a credibility interval. In this case, the poll is accurate to within ± 2.5 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, had all Canadian adults been polled. The credibility interval will be wider among subsets of the population. All sample surveys and polls may be subject to other sources of error, including, but not limited to coverage error, and measurement error.

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