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### Canadians Increasingly Worried About COVID-19 Variants (88%, +7), Fourth Wave (71%, +2)

#### Despite Increased Worry, Canadians More Comfortable with Learning to Live with COVID (70%, +3)

**Toronto, ON, September 13, 2021** — As Canada continues through the fourth wave of the COVID-19 pandemic, Canadians remain worried about what the COVID-19 variants might mean for getting back to normal but are somewhat more accepting of the idea of living with the virus into the fall.

A recent Ipsos poll on conducted on behalf of Global News finds that Canadians are more worried about the fourth wave than they were when it was only a possibility (71%, +2) and are especially more concerned about COVID-19 variants delaying things getting back to normal (88%, +7). Furthermore, Canadians are now less likely to agree that the spread of less-serious COVID-19 cases is acceptable in order to live without restrictions (52%, -4), which could include mask or distancing mandates. Given the growing level of worry about COVID-19 and its impact on the country, it is no surprise that 68% of Canadians also agree that we should *not* be holding an election during a pandemic,<sup>1</sup> which has seen a 10-point increase since the end of August.<sup>2</sup>

Despite this, more Canadians feel we should learn to live with active COVID-19 cases as long as hospitals are not overwhelmed (70%, +3) and support for lockdown measures in light of the fourth wave has decreased (63%, -6). Taken together, this suggests that, overall, Canadians are approaching what could be considered the ever-discussed “new normal.”

	July 2021	September 2021
The spread of less-serious COVID-19 cases is acceptable in order to live without restrictions	56%	52% (-4)
I would support more lockdown measures if there is/in light of the fourth wave of COVID-19	69%	63% (-6)
We should learn to live with active COVID-19 cases as long as hospitals aren't overwhelmed	67%	70% (+3)
I am worried about the [potential of] fourth wave of the pandemic	69%	71% (+2)
I am worried that new COVID-19 variants will delay things getting back to normal	81%	88% (+7)

While just over half (53%) of Canadians agree that the fourth wave will be worse than the others, there remains another nearly half of Canadians who do *not* feel the fourth wave will be worse. Just over one-third of Canadians agree that people are overreacting about the fourth wave of the pandemic (37%).

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.ipsos.com/en-ca/news-polls/One-Five-Protests-Liberal-Events-Affect-Vote>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.ipsos.com/en-ca/news-polls/a-quarter-of-canadians-do-not-feel-safe-going-to-a-polling-station>

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That said, there are key demographic differences and variance by vote intention when it comes to these issues. Younger Canadians are more likely to agree that the spread of less-serious COVID-19 cases is acceptable in order to live without restrictions (59% 18-34, 55% 35-54, 44% 55+). In fact, those aged 55+ are more worried than those under 55 when it comes to the fourth wave (81% 55+, 68% 35-54, 60% 18-34) variants delaying things getting back to normal (93% 55+, 87% 35-54, 82% 18-34), and the fourth wave being worse than the previous waves (60% 55+, 51% 35-54, 46% 18-34). Older Canadians are also significantly more likely to support further lockdowns (69% 55+, 61% 35-54, 57% 18-34).

Consistent with polling in July, those from BC (81%) and Atlantic Canada (75%) remain the most supportive of lockdown measures in light of the fourth wave (65% SK/MB, 64% ON, 57% AB, 49% QC). Those from Quebec appear to be most in favour of opening back up and least worried: they are significantly more likely than those in other regions to feel we should learn to live with active cases (81%, compared to 73% AB, 72% ATL, 68% SK/MB, 67% ON, 58% BC) and to feel people are overreacting about the fourth wave (48%, compared to 41% AB, 36% ON, 35% SK/MB, 31% ATL, 27% BC), continuing a trend of optimism among this group seen in Ipsos research throughout this year.

### *Conservative Voters More Comfortable with Living with COVID*

Conservative voters are more likely to feel that the spread of less-serious cases in order to live without restrictions is acceptable (60%). In fact, Conservatives are, overall, more supportive of learning to live with active cases as long as hospitals are not overwhelmed (77%), and more likely to feel people are overreacting about the fourth wave (44%). By contrast, Liberal and NDP voters appear more worried overall, and are less supportive of learning to live with active cases or the spread of less-serious COVID-19 cases. In particular, NDP voters are least likely to see living with active cases as an acceptable future (55%) and are most worried about the variants delaying things getting back to normal (94%). Given the tight race between Conservative and Liberal federal parties, it remains to be seen whether the outcome of the election will mark a dramatic change in the handling of the pandemic.

### Agreement by Stated Vote Intention

	Overall	Conservative	Liberal	NDP	BQ	Green
The spread of less-serious COVID-19 cases is acceptable in order to live without restrictions	52%	60%	45%	43%	48%	82%
I would support more lockdown measures if there is/in light of the fourth wave of COVID-19	63%	53%	77%	78%	48%	57%
We should learn to live with active COVID-19 cases as long as hospitals aren't overwhelmed	70%	77%	66%	55%	83%	70%
I am worried about the [potential of] fourth wave of the pandemic	71%	64%	83%	81%	67%	62%
I am worried that new COVID-19 variants will delay things getting back to normal	88%	87%	82%	94%	85%	77%

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People are overreacting about the fourth wave of the pandemic	37%	44%	29%	23%	41%	37%
The fourth wave of the pandemic will be worse than the previous waves	53%	42%	62%	63%	47%	58%

### About the Study

These are some of the findings of an Ipsos poll conducted between September 3rd and 6th, 2021, on behalf of Global News. A sample of n = 1,500 was interviewed online, via the Ipsos I-Say panel and non-panel sources, and respondents earn a nominal incentive for their participation. Quotas and weighting were 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 polls which include non-probability sampling is measured using a credibility interval. In this case, the poll is accurate to within  $\pm 2.9$  percentage points, 19 times out of 20, had all Canadians 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. Ipsos abides by the disclosure standards established by the CRIC, found here:

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<https://ipsosintelligence.ca/canadiancontext/>

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