



## FACTUM

### Happier Holidays: Two-Thirds (66%) of Canadians Agree This Year's Holidays Will Be Better Than Last Year's

Only Three in Ten (29%) Say They Will Avoid Contact with People Outside of Immediate Household During Holidays; Half (54%) Will Ask Others about Vaccination Status Before Gathering

**Toronto, ON, November 27, 2021** – The summer and fall months have taught Canadians to rediscover the joys of outdoor dining and vacationing closer to home. As snow begins to fall on various parts of the country, many are wondering how they will navigate another pandemic holiday season. A recent Ipsos poll on conducted on behalf of Global News finds Canadians are not only taking the ongoing pandemic into account when making holiday plans, but also looking forward to the season; two-thirds (66%) agree (12% strongly/54% somewhat) this year's holiday season will be better than last year's.

#### *In Need of a Break, Hoping Things Will Be Better Than Last Year*

With a majority agreeing this year's holidays will be better than last year's, it also makes sense that a similar proportion (69%) *disagree* (19% strongly/50% somewhat) when asked the opposite – whether they expect this year's holiday season to be *worse* than last year. The proportion who *disagree* with this statement climbs to 76% in Quebec, understandable given that Quebecers entered a Christmas 'circuit breaker' lockdown that continued well into January. Older Canadians are also more likely to disagree (76% among 55+ v. 60% among 18-34 and 68% 35-54), perhaps reflecting the potentially lonely holiday season that many older Canadians had, as much attention was paid to shielding the most vulnerable from contracting coronavirus.

Perhaps explaining why seven in ten Canadians intend to gather with friends and/or family outside of their immediate household, three-quarters (74%) agree (26% strongly/48% somewhat) their mental health needs a normal holiday season this year. More specifically, nearly four in ten (37%) Albertans say they 'strongly agree' with this sentiment, highlighting just how tumultuous this past year has been for those living in Alberta in terms of the economy and pandemic.

However, even if Canadians are allowing themselves a little bit of leeway in terms of holiday celebrations this year, they still will not feel like the pandemic is completely behind them. Only four in ten (44%) agree (6% strongly/38% somewhat) this year's holiday season will feel normal again. Once again highlighting how last year's Christmas unfolded in *la belle province*, this proportion is significantly higher in Quebec (58%). However, older Canadians are significantly less likely to agree (38% v. 48% among 18-34, 46% among 35-54), though this may be reflecting the fact they are also more likely to take precautions (e.g. limiting the number of people they are seeing and asking about vaccination statuses).

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### *Gathering with Friends/Family, But Not Throwing Caution to the Wind*

With increased vaccination rates, Canadians are feeling more comfortable seeing more people around the holidays, perhaps as societies are gradually learning to live with the virus. However, individuals have differing levels of comfort and are approaching their holiday plans differently:

- Three in ten (29%) say they will **avoid contact with people outside of their immediate household** during the holidays.
- One third (33%) say they will **gather freely with both family and friends** over the holidays. Men more likely to say they will get together freely (39% v. 28% among women), as are younger Canadians (43% among 18-34, 38% among 35-54 v. 22% among 55+).
- The remaining four in ten (38%) will find some sort of compromise -- they will **get together with extended family, but not beyond that**. Women (43% v. 33% among men) and older Canadians (47% among 55+ v. 36% among 35-54, 29% among 18-34) are more likely to be taking this approach.

However, not all those who say they will gather with people outside of their immediate household are necessarily throwing caution out the window. One-third (36%) of Canadians agree (11% strongly/25% somewhat) they will engage in all their usual holiday traditions this year. Still keeping cautious, older Canadians are *least* likely to say (21%) they'll do so, with only 5% saying they 'strongly agree' they will completely let loose during the holidays (v. 16% among 18-34 and 15% among 35-54).

The fact remains that many Canadians are finding ways to balance pandemic precautions with holiday festivities. Just over half (54%) agree (17% strongly/37% somewhat) they will ask people about their vaccination status before being indoors with them. Older Canadians more likely to agree with this sentiment (70% among 55+ v. 46% among 18-34 and 45% among 35-54).

### *Protected from the Virus, But Not Necessarily the Bill Collector*

While Canadians are finding ways to protect themselves from coronavirus during the holidays, the same cannot be said for the perennial problem of holiday spending. Four in ten (40%) say they are concerned they will get in over their heads with holiday spending, a proportion rising to nearly 6 in 10 (57%) among those aged 18-34 (vs. 44% among 35-54, 24% among 55+). Although one in ten (11%) say they are 'very concerned' about overspending, this proportion rises to 22% among those living in Saskatchewan and Manitoba.

In addition, nearly half (46%) of Canadians are concerned they might not have enough money to buy holiday gifts for family or loved ones. Two in ten (20%) say they are 'very concerned' about this, reaching a third (33%) among those in Alberta.

As to how Canadians are planning their holiday spending:

- Fewer than 1 in 10 (6%) say they will go all out this year and **spend more than usual** on the holidays, with the oldest Canadians being the least likely to say they will do so (1% among 55+ v. 10% among 18-34, 7% among 35-54).



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- Half (50%) say they will be cautious with how much they spend this year and will **spend less than usual**. Women are more likely to say so (55% v. 45% men)
- The remaining proportion (44%) say their level of holiday spending will be **about the same as they typically spend** (though the question still remains as to whether this 'typical' level of spending is affordable to begin with). Men are more likely to say their holiday spending will be the same (49% v. 40% women), as are older Canadians (55% among 55+ v. 38% among 35-54 and 39% among 18-34).





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### About the Study

These are some of the findings of an Ipsos poll conducted between November 12 and 15, 2021, on behalf of Global News. For this survey, a sample of 1,001 Canadians aged 18+ was interviewed. Quotas and weighting were employed to ensure that the sample's composition reflects that of the Canadian population according to census parameters. The precision of Ipsos online polls is measured using a credibility interval. In this case, the poll is accurate to within  $\pm 3.5$  percentage points, 19 times out of 20, had all Canadians aged 18+ 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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