



## FACTUM

### Perceptions about the Safety of Canada's Roads have Deteriorated within the Last Two Years

The Proportion of Canadians who Think that Road Safety is a Serious Issue in Canada has increased from 59% in 2021 to 65% in 2023

**Toronto, ON, March 29, 2023** – According to a recent Ipsos study on behalf of Parachute, the perception that Canada's roads are unsafe has become more prevalent compared to 2021.

#### *Road Safety*

Canadians are more concerned with the safety of our roads compared to two years ago. Two-thirds (65%) agree that road safety is a serious issue, compared to 59% in 2021. More Canadians rate the country's roads unsafe (22% consider roads unsafe in 2023, vs 15% in 2021), and the proportion of those who rate the roads safe has fallen significantly (39%, vs 46% in 2021). As a result, when considering road safety amidst other issues faced by their community, over half (54%) of Canadians place road safety among the top 5 priorities in their community for public administrators to work on.

According to most (66%), addressing drivers' behaviours would have a stronger positive impact in preventing collision injuries and deaths on roads than addressing road design (34%). Therefore, it is not surprising that police checking and arrests for impaired driving are considered among the most effective road safety strategies (Rated effective, T3B: 82% - arrests for impaired driving, 81% - police checking for impaired driving). Further, speeding is an unsafe behaviour which draws increasing attention from Canadians. Compared to two years ago, more Canadians now agree that 'speed limits are too high and should be lowered' (28% vs 22% in 2021) and acknowledge the effectiveness of reducing speed limits as a strategy for preventing collisions that cause serious injuries or death (52% vs 46% in 2021).

#### *Road Sharing*

Almost two-thirds of Canadians (64%) believe that roads are to be shared by everyone including drivers, pedestrians, and cyclists. However, only 6 in 10 (61%) of Canadians understand that cyclists, pedestrians, the elderly, and children are more vulnerable to unsafe roads, and as a result, are more likely to get killed or injured because of unsafe roads.

Not only are roads shared, but the responsibility to keep them safe is also considered a responsibility that should be shared by all: 89% of Canadians agree that everyone must do their part to make roads safe. However, the survey findings suggest that there is a way to go to make roads accessible to everyone. The 2023 survey covered equity issues related to road access and safety and the findings reveal that only a minority of Canadians (36%) think that their community is well-equipped to serve people living with any type of disability. What is more, only 36% of Canadians are aware that marginalized communities, such as those of low socio-economic status, and ethnic and visible minorities, have less access to safe roads. In addition, there is an opportunity to increase the levels of awareness of equity issues associated with delivering safe roads to all.



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### *Concerning Behaviours*

Despite the overall idea that roads are to be shared by all, it is surprising that one-third (32%) of Canadians continue to think that cyclists don't belong on the road. In fact, compared to 2021 fewer Canadians think that drivers should take extra precautions around cyclists and pedestrians (decreased by 5 pts, 85% vs. 90% in 2021).

In addition, compared to two years ago, Canadians seem more forgiving of behaviours that poses risk to road safety, such as distracted driving or driving after taking certain substances. Specifically, Canadians are less likely to consider these behaviours listed below dangerous for road safety:

- driving while sending or reading a text message decreased by 4 points (90% vs 94% in 2021).
- driving after taking stimulants for recreational purposes decreased by 4 points (88% from 92%).
- driving after using cannabis decreased by 5 points (81%, vs 86% in 2021).
- driving within two hours of having two or more alcoholic drinks (decreased by 5 points (74% from 79% in 2021).

These findings indicate an increased opportunity to continue reiterating and focusing on educational efforts about elements that threaten the safety of Canada's roads.

### **About the Study**

These are findings from a 16-minute online survey that Ipsos conducted between February 10 to 17, 2023 on behalf of Parachute.

- The survey was conducted among 1,000 adult Canadian residents, with a teen boost of 101 Canadians between the ages of 16 and 17. Quotas and weighting, via age, gender and region were employed to ensure that the sample's composition reflects that of the Canadian population according to census parameters [for all Canadians of legal driving age. (16+).]
- The precision of online polls is measured using a credibility interval. In this case the results are considered accurate to within +/- 3.4 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, of what the results would have been had all Canadian aged 16+ been surveyed. The credibility interval will be wider for subsets of the population. For more information on Ipsos's use of credibility intervals, please visit the Ipsos website.
- 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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