

PUBLIC PERSPECTIVES



Perils of Perception

Things Are Often Not as Bad as They Seem

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PERCEPTIONS ARE NOT REALITY...

... THINGS ARE OFTEN NOT AS BAD AS THEY SEEM

These are the latest findings from the 5th annual Ipsos **Perils of Perception** survey. The results highlight how right or wrong people across **37 countries** are about some key issues and features of the population in their country.

WHAT DOES THE DATA SHOW?

- Many Canadians fancy themselves to be among the most knowledgeable and well-informed people in the world.
- Well not so fast! Canadians rank 11th most accurate out of 37 countries on the Perils of Perception Misperceptions Index*.

TOP 10 MOST ACCURATE	
	Rank
Hong Kong	1
New Zealand	2
Sweden	3
Hungary	4
Great Britain	5
Denmark	6
Singapore	7
Poland	8
Australia	9
Spain	10

11 th -20 th MOST ACCURATE	
	Rank
Canada	11 
Montenegro	12
Chile	13
South Korea	14
United States	15 
Switzerland	16
Netherlands	17
France	18
Argentina	19
Italy	20

LEAST ACCURATE	
	Rank
Serbia	21
Japan	22
South Africa	23
Germany	24
Romania	25
India	26
Belgium	27
Peru	28
China	29
Saudi Arabia	30
Russia	31
Colombia	32
Brazil	33
Malaysia	34
Turkey	35
Mexico	36
Thailand	37

*Combination of 9 individual metrics

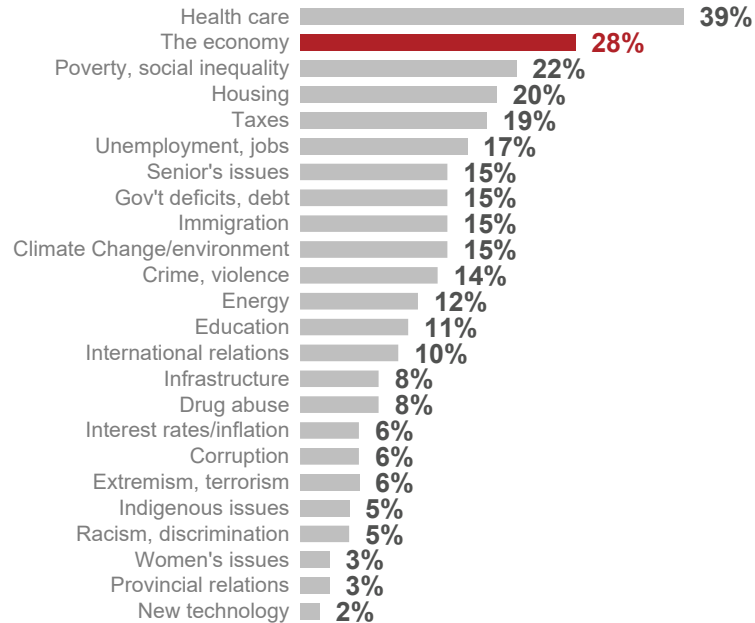
WHAT DOES THE DATA MEAN?

- Canadians crack the top 10 most accurate countries on three of the measures – one environmental (estimate of the number of years out of the last 18 that set heat records worldwide), one related to the economy (estimate of the unemployment rate) and one related to health (infant vaccination rates).
- But, Canadians rank among the least knowledgeable countries on three items related to the country's population: the proportion of the population not born in the country, the proportion of Muslims in the country, and the proportion of the population that will be 65 years/older in the future.
- The implications of these results are clear, especially in a world consumed by issues associated with fake news. The quality of public discourse – the root of public pressure on the public and private sector, etc – depends on accurate knowledge. The Perils of Perception study suggests that in Canada, and many other countries, perceptions are out of line with the reality.
- There are many different reasons why we may be wrong about various facts of society. These can include external influences on us, such as what we hear in the media or online, but our own internal biases are just as important. These biases include our tendencies to focus on negative stories over positive ones, to believe that things were always better in the past, to put too much emphasis on our own individual experience, and simply not being very good with numbers. What is crucial to understand is that we overestimate what we worry about as much as we worry about what we overestimate – in other words, misperceptions can be a very useful pointer to people's real concerns. It also means that trying to correct misperceptions by only repeating the facts is unlikely to work. Instead, we need to engage with the more emotional reasons that might be driving why people are worried about a topic.

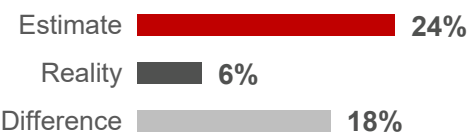
ECONOMY

The economy is a top ranked priority issue among Canadians.

MOST IMPORTANT ISSUES FACING CANADA (Sept 2018, Mentioned in Top 3)



Canadians **SIGNIFICANTLY OVER-ESTIMATE** unemployment rates in the country.



Canada ranks tied for 9th out of 37 countries on accuracy.

Q. Out of every 100 people of working age in [COUNTRY], about how many do you think are unemployed and looking for work?

Canadians **UNDER-ESTIMATE** the relative size (rank) of the Canadian economy vs other countries.



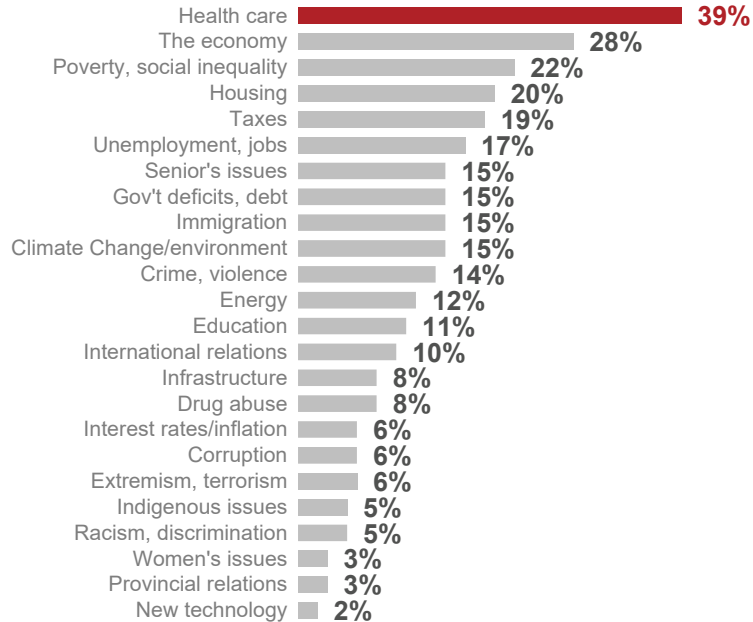
Canada ranks tied for 12th out of 37 countries on accuracy.

Q. Thinking about [COUNTRY], where do you think you rank in the world's top 200 countries? So if you think your country is the biggest economy in the world, you would rank it 1, and if you think it's the smallest from these 200, you'd rank it 200.

HEALTH

Healthcare is the top ranked priority issue among Canadians.

MOST IMPORTANT ISSUES FACING CANADA (Sept 2018, Mentioned in Top 3)



Canadians UNDER-ESTIMATE vaccination rates for infants in the country.

Estimate  75%

Reality  91%

Difference  16%

Canada ranks
8th out of 37
countries on
accuracy.

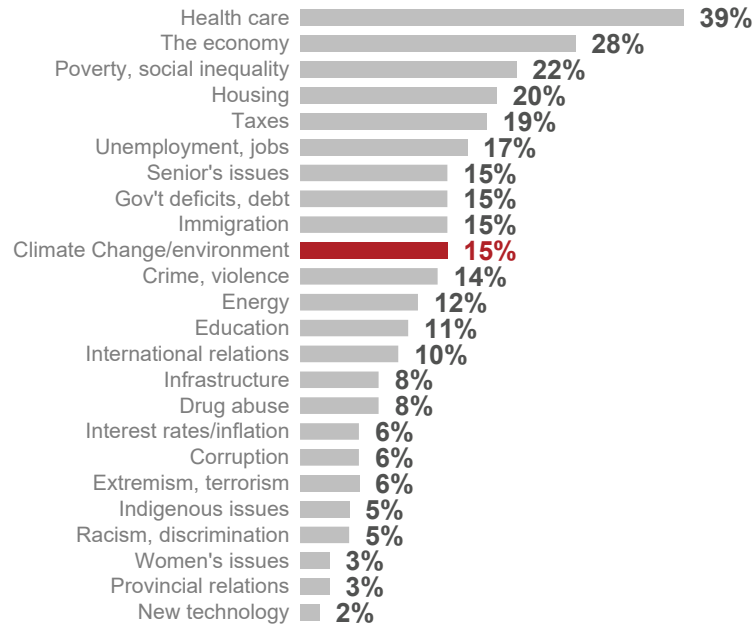
Q. Out of every 100 infants aged under 12 months in [COUNTRY], about how many do you think have had all the World Health Organisation recommended vaccinations for Diphtheria, Tetanus, Whooping Cough, Polio and Measles?

ENVIRONMENT

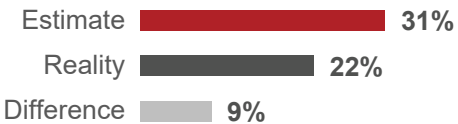
While more of a middle-level issue, a sizeable proportion of Canadians consider Climate Change, environment issues to be priorities in the country.

MOST IMPORTANT ISSUES FACING CANADA

(Sept 2018, Mentioned in Top 3)



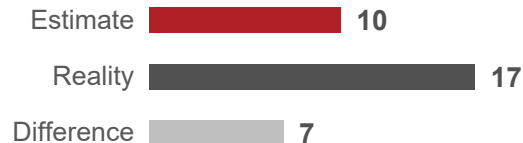
Canadians **OVER-ESTIMATE** the percentage of total energy consumed in the country produced from renewable resources.



Canada ranks **15th** out of 37 countries on accuracy.

Q. What percentage of total energy consumed in [COUNTRY] comes from renewable sources? Renewable sources can be defined as those that are not depleted when used, such as wind or solar power.

Canadians **UNDER-ESTIMATE** the number of years out of the last 18 that set heat records worldwide.



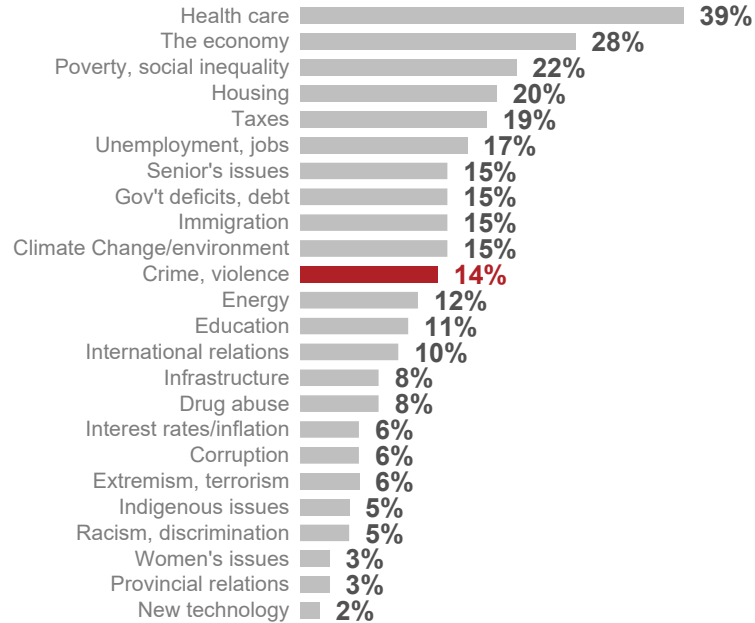
Canada ranks **tied for 4th** out of 37 countries on accuracy.

Q. The World Meteorological Organization collects annual global temperatures, to see whether they are rising or falling across the world. How many of the last 18 years have been the hottest for the world as a whole since they began collecting data in 1961?

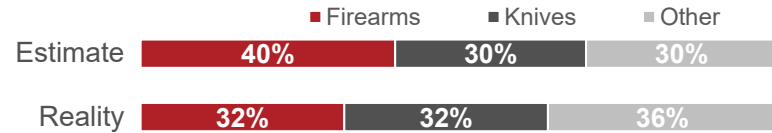
CRIME

While more of a middle-level issue, a sizeable proportion of Canadians consider Crime, violence to be priorities in the country.

MOST IMPORTANT ISSUES FACING CANADA (Sept 2018, Mentioned in Top 3)



Canadians are **REASONABLY ACCURATE** in estimating the number of people killed in the country by guns vs knives vs other sources.



Q. Thinking about people who are killed by other people, in [COUNTRY] in 2015, do you think more people were killed by firearms, sharp objects such as knives or other physical violence? Choose the one option that you think resulted in the most deaths

Canadians are **REASONABLY ACCURATE**, although **over-estimate** a bit, the occupancy of prisons in the country.



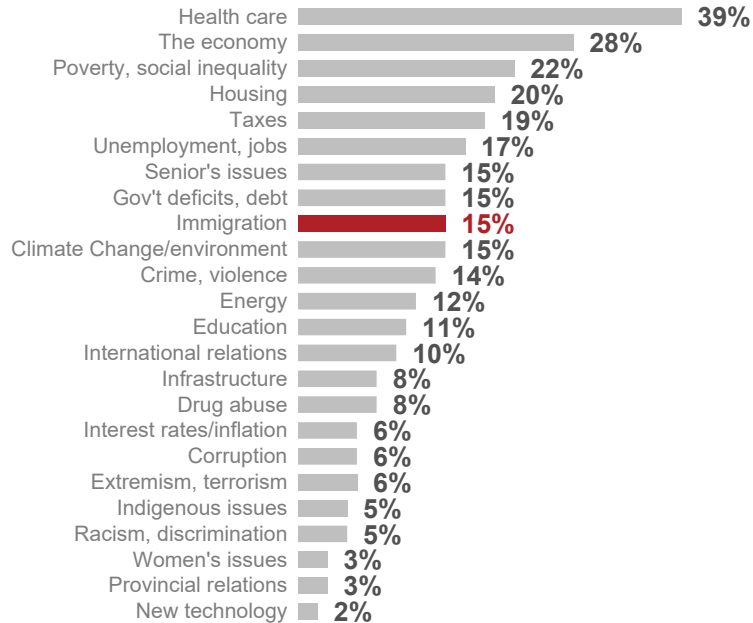
Q. What do you think the occupancy level of prisons in [COUNTRY] is? By occupancy level, we mean, how full do you think prisons in your country are, with 0 being empty, 100 being full and 200 being at double the capacity

POPULATION

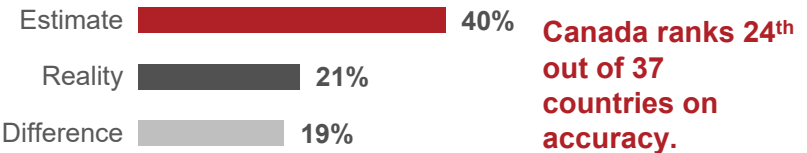
While more of a middle-level issue, a sizeable proportion of Canadians consider Immigration to be a priority in the country.

MOST IMPORTANT ISSUES FACING CANADA

(Sept 2018, Mentioned in Top 3)

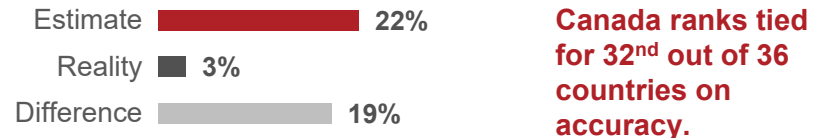


Canadians OVER-ESTIMATE the proportion of the population that were not born in the country.



Q. Out of every 100 people in [COUNTRY] about how many do you think are immigrants (i.e. not born in [COUNTRY])?

Canadians OVER-ESTIMATE the presence of Muslims in the country.



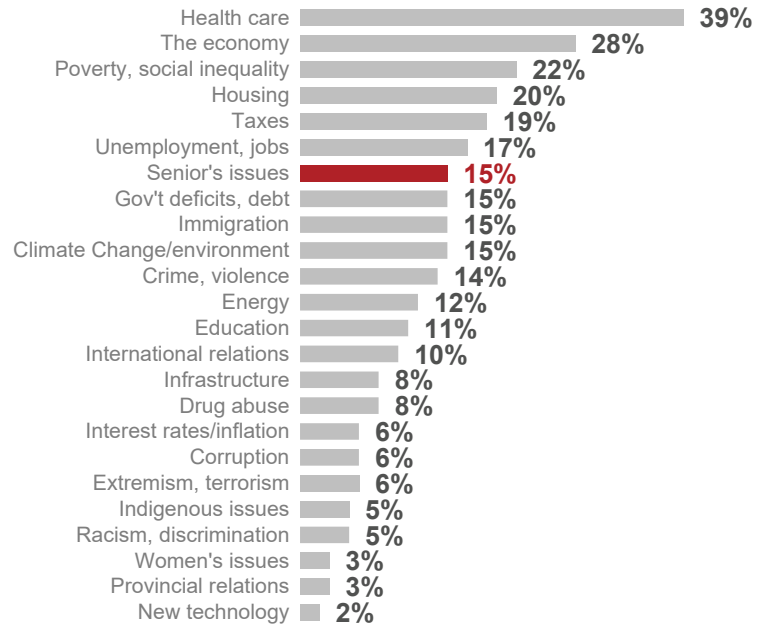
Q. Out of every 100 people in [COUNTRY], about how many do you think are Muslim?

POPULATION *cont'd*

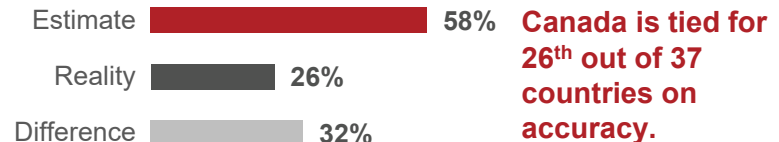
While more of a middle-level issue, a sizeable proportion of Canadians consider Senior's issues to be a priority in the country.

MOST IMPORTANT ISSUES FACING CANADA

(Sept 2018, Mentioned in Top 3)



Canadians SIGNIFICANTLY OVER-ESTIMATE the proportion of the population that will be 65 years/older in the future.



Q. Now thinking about 2050, out of every 100 people in [COUNTRY], about how many do you think will be over 65, according to projections by the World Bank?

SEX

Canadians perceive young men and women to be like rabbits. They **SIGNIFICANTLY OVER-ESTIMATE** the number of times young men and young women have had sex in the last 4 weeks.

WOMEN AGED 18-29 YEARS

Estimate  19

Reality  5

Difference  14

Q. On average, how many times do you think women aged 18-29 in [COUNTRY] have had sex in the past 4 weeks?

MEN AGED 18-29 YEARS

Estimate  20

Reality  5

Difference  15

Q. On average, how many times do you think men aged 18-29 in [COUNTRY] have had sex in the past 4 weeks?

METHODOLOGY

Interviews were conducted between 28th September – 16th October 2018. The survey is conducted in 37 countries around the world, via the Ipsos Online Panel system in Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Denmark, France, Germany, Great Britain, Hong Kong (SAR, China), Hungary, India, Italy, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Peru, Poland, Romania, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Turkey and the USA. The following countries used either online or face-to-face methodologies: Montenegro, Serbia.

Approximately 1000 individuals aged 16-64 or 18-64 were surveyed in Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, Great Britain, Hong Kong, India, Italy, Mexico, Montenegro, Serbia, Singapore, Spain and the USA. Approximately 2000 individuals aged 16-64 were surveyed in Japan. Approximately 500 individuals aged 16-64 were surveyed in Argentina, Belgium, Chile, Colombia, Denmark, Hungary, Malaysia, Netherlands, New Zealand, Peru, Poland, Romania, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, South Korea, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand and Turkey.

21 of the 37 countries surveyed online generate nationally representative samples in their countries (Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Great Britain, Hong Kong (SAR, China), Hungary, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, New Zealand, Poland, Singapore, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and United States).

Brazil, Columbia, China, Chile, India, Malaysia, Mexico, Peru, Romania, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, South Africa, Thailand and Turkey produce a national sample that is more urban & educated, and with higher incomes than their fellow citizens. We refer to these respondents as “Upper Deck Consumer Citizens”. They are not nationally representative of their country.

The “actual” data for each question is taken from a variety of verified sources.

Where results do not sum to 100 or the ‘difference’ appears to be +- 1 more/less than the actual, this may be due to rounding, multiple responses or the exclusion of don't knows or not stated responses. Data are weighted to match the profile of the population.

CONTACTS

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