

COMPARING CANADIAN CITIES

How Do Canadians Feel About Their Cities?

AN ISPOS REID SURVEY



Ipsos Reid

COMMISSIONED BY



**THE DOMINION
INSTITUTE**
**L'INSTITUT DU
DOMINION**

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How Do Canadians Feel About Their Cities?

Toronto, ON – The Dominion Institute and Ipsos Reid have undertaken a unique national survey of four of Canada's largest cities, Vancouver, Calgary, Toronto and Montreal, looking to uncover whether or not Canadians are confident in their municipal government and how they feel about the future of the city that they call home.

Citizens were asked about the quality of life in their city, their confidence in their leaders and their municipal infrastructure and what they identify as the key concerns threatening the people of their city. Participants were asked which level of government should take the primary lead in taking Canadian cities into the future, whether their city was “welcoming” or not to new citizens and whether or not they would stay in their home city given a choice and, if they would choose to move, where would they prefer to live.

The Canadian Cities Survey was commissioned as part of the LaFontaine-Baldwin Lecture.

Hosted by the Dominion Institute and John Ralston Saul, the LaFontaine-Baldwin Lecture brings a public thinker to a new city each year to discuss the future of democracy in our country. Celebrated writer and public thinker George Elliott Clarke will deliver the 7th annual lecture at 7:00 PM, Friday March 10 at the EPCOR CENTRE in Calgary. George Elliott Clarke will speak about the growing role of cities in shaping our democratic institutions and values. For more information on the Lecture visit www.lafontaine-baldwin.com.

The Dominion Institute is a national charitable organization dedicated to promoting greater knowledge and awareness of the country's history and shared citizenship. The Dominion Institute is headquartered in Toronto and functions with 14 full time staff. www.dominion.ca.

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Methodology

This release contains the findings of an Ipsos Reid poll conducted for The Dominion Institute and fielded from February 24-27, 2006. For this survey, a representative randomly selected total sample of 1136 adult Canadians (244 in Vancouver, 273 in Calgary, 205 in Toronto and 299 in Montreal) was interviewed via Ipsos Reid's exclusive on-line survey vehicle. With a total sample of this size, the aggregate results are considered accurate to within ± 2.8 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, of what they would have been had the entire adult Canadian population been polled. The margin of error is larger within each sub-grouping of the survey population and ranges between ± 5.8 (sample 300) to ± 7.1 (sample 200). These data were weighted to ensure the sample's regional and age/sex composition reflects that of the actual Canadian population according to Census data.

Attribution

"The Comparing Canadian Cities survey was commissioned by the LaFontaine-Baldwin Symposium and conducted by Ipsos-Reid". All subsequent mentions can use the convention "Comparing Canadian Cities poll conducted by Ipsos-Reid and the Dominion Institute". Referencing of the results in a slide or graphic: "Comparing Canadian Cities poll: LaFontaine-Baldwin Symposium / Ipsos-Reid". The website that can be given out for views and readers to access detailed information on the survey is "www.lafontaine-baldwin.com".

Spokespersons

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Note

Yellow highlighted text in write up for each question denotes an interesting or relevant survey finding.

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The Top 5 Issues For Each Of The Cities Examined:

- **Vancouver**-- **crime [24%]**, followed by public transportation [18%], health care [13%], homelessness/poverty [13%], drugs/abuse [13%], traffic/congestion [11%]
- **Calgary**-- **infrastructure/deteriorating roads [22%]**, followed by public transportation [20%], healthcare [17%], traffic/congestion [15%], taxes/property taxes [14%]
- **Toronto**-- **taxes/property taxes [22%]**, followed by crime [17%], infrastructure/deteriorating roads [14%], garbage/waste management [10%], public transportation [10%]
- **Montréal**-- **infrastructure/and deteriorating roads [31%]**, followed by taxes/property taxes [20%], environment/pollution [19%], public transportation [10%], safety [8%]

<i>In your view, as a resident of your local municipality, what is the most important LOCAL issue facing your community? TOP TEN ISSUE BY GENERAL POPULATION</i>					
	Total Genpop	Vancouver	Calgary	Toronto	Montreal
Infrastructure/ deteriorating roads	23%	6%	22%	14%	31%
Taxes/ property taxes	18%	9%	14%	22%	20%
Healthcare (Doctor Shortage)	14%	13%	17%	9%	3%
Environment/ pollution	10%	7%	7%	8%	19%
Crime (vandalism, theft)	9%	24%	12%	17%	5%
Employment	9%	1%	-	5%	6%
Education/ schools	8%	9%	14%	7%	3%
Public Transportation	6%	18%	20%	10%	10%
Urban development/ growth/ expansion	5%	3%	5%	7%	3%
Homelessness/ poverty	5%	13%	3%	7%	6%

How Confident Do Citizens Feel About The Way Their Local Government Leaders Tackle The Main Issues Facing The City?

<i>How confident do you feel in the way your LOCAL government leaders tackle the main issues facing the city? Are you ... ?</i>					
	Total Genpop	Vancouver	Calgary	Toronto	Montreal
Very confident	49 4%	11 5%	22 8%	18 8%	13 4%
Somewhat confident	583 51%	124 53%	148 56%	100 46%	145 49%
Not very confident	423 37%	91 39%	83 31%	76 35%	124 42%
Not confident at all	82 7%	7 3%	10 4%	22 10%	14 5%

And Which Level Of Government Do Citizens Think Should Be Taking The Primary Lead When It Comes To Making Canada's Cities Work Better....

<i>Which do you think should be taking the primary lead when it comes to making Canada's cities work better, your provincial government or the federal government?</i>					
	Total Genpop	Vancouver	Calgary	Toronto	Montreal
Your provincial government	799 70%	183 78%	205 78%	148 69%	206 70%
The federal government	337 30%	51 22%	59 22%	68 31%	89 30%

At How Do Citizens In Each City Rate The Overall Quality Of Life In Their Municipality Today?

<i>How would you rate the overall quality of life in your municipality today? Would you say it is...</i>					
	Total Genpop	Vancouver	Calgary	Toronto	Montreal
Top2box (Very Good/Good)	1024 90%	220 94%	249 95%	191 89%	257 87%
Low2box (Poor/Very Poor)	112 10%	14 6%	14 5%	24 11%	38 13%

Do They Feel That The Quality Of Life In Their Municipality In The Past Five Years Has Improved, Stayed The Same Or Become Worse?

- **Vancouver** -- 23% say it has improved, 49% say it is stayed the same and 28% say it is become worse for an **index score of -5**.
- **Calgary** -- 26% say it has improved, 56% say it has stayed the same and 18% indicate that it has become worse in for an **index score of +8**.
- **Toronto** -- 19% say that it has improved, 53% indicate that it has stayed the same, and 28% indicate that it has become worse for an **index score of -9**.
- **Montréal** -- 19% say it has improved, 61% indicate that it has stayed the same, and 20% indicate that it is become worse for an **index score of -1**.

And What Are Some Of The Attitudes Of People About Their City?

- *A lot People who live in my city volunteer in their communities and our civic minded:* **Calgary** -- 85% agree/15% disagree; **Vancouver** -- 78% agree/22% disagree; **Toronto** -- 72% agree/28% disagree; **Montréal** -- 69% agree/31% disagree.
- *I am optimistic about my city and its future:* **Calgary** 87% agree/13% disagree; **Vancouver** -- 81% agree/19% disagree; **Montréal** -- 74% agree/26% disagree; **Toronto** 73% agree/ 47% disagree.
- *I am concerned about crime and violence in my city:* **Vancouver** -- 86% agree/14% disagree; **Calgary** -- 85% agree/15% disagree; **Toronto** 80% agree/20% disagree; **Montréal** -- 71% agree/29% disagree.
- *My city looks after the needs of the poor and disadvantaged:* **Calgary** -- 60% agree/40% disagree; **Toronto** -- 54% agree/46% disagree; **Montréal** -- 49% agree/51% disagree; **Vancouver** -- 38% agree/62% disagree.
- *Public transit system in my city works well:* **Montréal** -- 67% agree/ 33% disagree; **Toronto** -- 61% agree/39% disagree; **Calgary** -- 59% agree/41% disagree; **Vancouver** -- 50% agree/50% disagree.
- *My city is a great place to make money and get ahead:* **Calgary** -- 90% agree/ 10% disagree; **Toronto** -- 69% agree/31% disagree; **Vancouver** -- 55% agree/45% disagree; **Montréal** -- 53% agree/47% disagree.

- *Too many people from different backgrounds live in my city:* **Toronto** -- 39% agree/61% disagree; **Calgary** -- 33% agree/67% disagree; **Montréal** -- 31% agree/69% disagree; **Vancouver** -- 28% agree/72% disagree.

And What About Welcoming Newcomers To Their City?

- In **Toronto**, 51% of its citizens believes their city needs to reduce the number of newcomers that it currently welcomes compared to 49% who believe that their city should open its arms more to newcomers.
- In **Montréal**, 71% of its citizens believe that their city needs to open its arms more to newcomers compared with 29% who believe their city needs to reduce the number of newcomers it currently welcomes.
- In **Calgary**, 59% of its citizens believe that their city needs to open its arms more to newcomers compared with 41% who believe their city needs to reduce the number of newcomers it currently welcomes.
- In **Vancouver**, 56% of its citizens believe that their city needs to open its arms more to newcomers compared with 44% who believe in their city needs to reduce the number of newcomers it currently welcomes.

And How Tolerant Is Their City Compared To Five Years Ago?

- In **Montréal**, 77% of their citizens believe their city is more tolerant than it was five years ago compared with 23% who disagree.
- In **Vancouver**, 70% of their citizens believe their city is more tolerant than it was five years ago compared with 30% who disagree.
- In **Toronto**, 66% of their citizens believe their city is more tolerant than it was five years ago compared with 34% to disagree.
- In **Calgary**, 63% of their citizens believe their city is more tolerant than it was five years ago compared with 37% to disagree.

Please read the three statements below and choose the one that is closer to your own point of view: We are a city community that...					
	Total Genpop	Vancouver	Calgary	Toronto	Montreal
Is a more tolerant city community than it was five years ago	797	163	165	143	227
	70%	70%	63%	66%	77%
Is a less tolerant city community than it was five years ago	339	70	98	72	68
	30%	30%	37%	34%	23%

Is Their City Community Becoming More “Just” Or “Unjust” In Its Decisions And How It Treats People And Groups?

- In **Montreal**, 66% believe their city community is becoming more "just" in its decisions compared with 34% who believe it is becoming more "unjust".
- In **Vancouver**, 61% believe their city community is becoming more "just" in its decisions compared with 39% who believe it is becoming more "unjust".
- In **Calgary**, 61% believe their city community is becoming more "just" in its decisions compared with 39% who believe it is becoming more "unjust".
- In **Toronto**, 60% believe their city community is becoming more "just" in its decisions compared with 40% who believe it is becoming more "unjust".

And If Citizens Could Choose To Live In Another City Or Stay Where They Currently Are, What Would They Choose? [Response Were Given A List To Choose From]

- **Vancouver** -- 79% of citizens who live in Vancouver indicate that their own city would be their choice followed by **Calgary** [8%], Halifax [4%], Toronto [3%], Ottawa [2%], Edmonton [2%] Montréal [1%] and St. John's [1%].
- **Calgary** -- 71% of citizens who live in Calgary indicated that their own city would be their choice followed by **Vancouver** [19%], Halifax [3%], Toronto [2%], Saskatoon [1%], Winnipeg [1%], St. John's [1%], Edmonton [1%] and Montréal [1%].
- **Toronto** -- 52% of citizens who live in Toronto indicated that their own city would be their choice followed by **Vancouver** [23%], Calgary [4%], Montréal [4%], Halifax [4%], Québec city [3%], Ottawa [3%], Edmonton [3%], and St. John's [3%].
- **Montréal** -- 44% of citizens who live in Montréal indicated that their own city would be their choice followed by **Québec City** [23%], Vancouver [16%], Calgary [7%], Ottawa [4%], Halifax [3%], Toronto [2%], St. John's [1%] and Regina [1%].