

Negative sentiment towards Immigrants in Canada is on the rise

Jack Jedwab

President and CEO, Metropolis Institute and the Association for
Canadian Studies

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Introduction:

In the month of September the share of Canadians that believe that Canada is admitting too many newcomers attained yet another record with nearly two in three Canadians saying there were too many. Indeed almost no Canadian surveyed feels that there are too few immigrants. Yet another change we're seeing from previous polling is a sharp rise in negative sentiment towards immigrants increasing by 13 points from May 2024, from 28% holding a negative opinion to 41% in September, A relatively high percentage of Canadians (43%) say they have little or no understanding of immigration policies in Canada.

The survey was conducted by the firm Leger Marketing for the Association for Canadian Studies over the period September 20-22, 2024 with a sample of 1612 Canadians. A margin of error cannot be associated with a non-probability sample in a panel survey for comparison purposes. A probability sample of 1612 respondents would have a margin of error of $\pm 2.5\%$, 19 times out of 20.

Canadians saying there are too many immigrants reached yet another record with less than one in four saying there are about the right number (22%) or too few (2%)

| Do you feel that there are (currently) too many, too few or about the right number of immigrants coming to Canada? | September 2024 (Leger-ACS) | July 2024 (Leger-ACS) | February 2024 (Leger-ACS) | September 2023 (Leger-ACS) | March 2019 (Leger –ACS) |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|
| Too many | 65% | 60% | 50% | 49% | 35% |
| About the right number | 22% | 28% | 37% | 35% | 49% |
| Too few | 2% | 3% | 7% | 5% | 12% |
| I don't know / I prefer not to answer | 11% | 9% | 6% | 10% | 3% |
| NET | 100.0% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |

Canadians between the ages of 18 and 24 and British Columbians only somewhat less likely to say there are too many immigrants

| Do you feel that there are too many, too few or about the right number of immigrants coming to Canada? | Total | 18-34 | 35-54 | 55+ | Atl. | QC | ON | MB/SK | AB | BC | Not White | White |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-----|------|-----|-----|-------|-----|-----|-----------|-------|
| Too many | 65% | 58% | 63% | 70% | 72% | 63% | 64% | 68% | 70% | 61% | 61% | 66% |
| About the right number | 22% | 25% | 21% | 20% | 17% | 25% | 21% | 21% | 17% | 23% | 23% | 21% |
| Too few | 2% | 4% | 2% | 2% | 2% | 4% | 2% | 1% | 0% | 4% | 3% | 2% |
| I don't know | 11% | 12% | 13% | 8% | 9% | 9% | 12% | 10% | 12% | 12% | 13% | 11% |

The higher rate of concern over immigrant numbers in rural areas confirms that the presence of immigrants in the area is not the key predictor in the growing degree of anxiety

| Do you feel that there are too many, too few or about the right number of immigrants coming to Canada? | Which of the following best describes the area in which you live: | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|------------|
| | Urban area | Suburban area | Rural area |
| Too many | 62.9% | 64.6% | 69.4% |
| About the right number | 23.4% | 21.8% | 18.0% |
| Too few | 2.6% | 2.3% | 2.2% |
| I don't know | 11.1% | 11.3% | 10.4% |
| Total | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% |

Negative sentiment towards immigrants increases sharply between May and October

| Immigrants – Do you have a very positive, somewhat positive, somewhat negative or very negative view of the following? | October | May | February |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|------------|------------|
| NET POSITIVE | 50% | 58% | 61% |
| Very positive | 11% | 14% | 14% |
| Somewhat positive | 39% | 44% | 46% |
| NET NEGATIVE | 41% | 28% | 28% |
| Somewhat negative | 27% | 20% | 20% |
| Very negative | 13% | 8% | 8% |
| I prefer not to answer | 9% | 14% | 11% |

Men more likely than women to express negative sentiment towards immigrants; No difference in negative sentiment between racialized and non racialized Canadians

| Immigrants - Do you have a very positive, somewhat positive, somewhat negative or very negative reaction to the following? | Total | Male | Female | 18-34 | 35-54 | 55+ | White | Not White/Visible Minority |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|----------------------------|
| NET POSITIVE | 50% | 50% | 51% | 49% | 48% | 53% | 51% | 48% |
| Very positive | 11% | 12% | 10% | 12% | 13% | 10% | 40% | 13% |
| Somewhat positive | 39% | 37% | 41% | 37% | 36% | 43% | 11% | 35% |
| NET NEGATIVE | 41% | 43% | 38% | 40% | 42% | 40% | 41% | 38% |
| Somewhat negative | 27% | 27% | 27% | 28% | 25% | 28% | 28% | 25% |
| Very negative | 13% | 16% | 11% | 11% | 17% | 12% | 13% | 13% |
| I prefer not to answer | 9% | 7% | 11% | 11% | 9% | 7% | 8% | 12% |

Negative views on Immigrants are highest in the Prairies and Alberta

| Immigrants - Do you have a very positive, somewhat positive, somewhat negative or very negative reaction to the following? | Total | Atl. | QC | ON | MB/SK | AB | BC | White | Not White |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|------|-----|-----|-------|-----|-----|-------|-----------|
| NET POSITIVE | 50% | 56% | 54% | 47% | 44% | 48% | 54% | 51% | 50% |
| Very positive | 11% | 15% | 10% | 12% | 9% | 5% | 15% | 11% | 15% |
| Somewhat positive | 39% | 42% | 44% | 35% | 35% | 43% | 39% | 40% | 35% |
| NET NEGATIVE | 41% | 37% | 38% | 41% | 48% | 46% | 39% | 41% | 38% |
| Somewhat negative | 27% | 22% | 29% | 27% | 32% | 30% | 25% | 28% | 25% |
| Very negative | 13% | 15% | 9% | 14% | 16% | 16% | 15% | 13% | 13% |
| I prefer not to answer | 9% | 7% | 8% | 12% | 8% | 6% | 7% | 8% | 12% |

Canadians in the Lowest income cohort and in 80-99k group express most negative sentiment to immigrants

| Immigrants - Do you have a very positive, somewhat positive, somewhat negative or very negative reaction to the following? | <40k | 40-59k | 60-79k | 80-99k | 100k+ |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| NET POSITIVE | 44% | 57% | 50% | 45% | 55% |
| Very positive | 12% | 13% | 6% | 9% | 14% |
| Somewhat positive | 32% | 44% | 44% | 36% | 41% |
| NET NEGATIVE | 47% | 36% | 41% | 46% | 41% |
| Somewhat negative | 30% | 22% | 31% | 28% | 29% |
| Very negative | 16% | 14% | 10% | 17% | 12% |
| I prefer not to answer | 9% | 7% | 9% | 9% | 4% |

Nearly half of Canadians acknowledge not having a good understanding of immigration policies in Canada

| Immigration policies in Canada - Do you have a very good understanding, somewhat good understanding, very little understanding or do not understand the following? | Total | Male | Female | 18-34 | 35-54 | 55+ |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|------|--------|-------|-------|-----|
| NET GOOD | 50% | 56% | 43% | 41% | 54% | 52% |
| Very good understanding | 10% | 16% | 5% | 11% | 11% | 9% |
| Somewhat good understanding | 39% | 41% | 37% | 30% | 42% | 43% |
| NET LITTLE/NO | 43% | 36% | 49% | 47% | 39% | 43% |
| Very little understanding | 33% | 28% | 37% | 37% | 27% | 34% |
| No understanding | 10% | 8% | 12% | 9% | 12% | 9% |
| I prefer not to answer | 8% | 7% | 8% | 12% | 8% | 5% |

Ontarians and British Columbians most likely to say that they have little of no understanding of immigration policies in Canada

| Immigration policies in Canada - Do you have a very good understanding, somewhat good understanding, very little understanding or do not understand the following? | Total | Atl. | QC | ON | MB/SK | AB | BC |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|------|-----|-----|-------|-----|-----|
| NET GOOD | 50% | 45% | 48% | 50% | 42% | 53% | 52% |
| Very good understanding | 10% | 11% | 9% | 11% | 9% | 12% | 11% |
| Somewhat good understanding | 39% | 34% | 39% | 40% | 34% | 41% | 41% |
| NET LITTLE/NO | 43% | 50% | 44% | 39% | 50% | 44% | 41% |
| Very little understanding | 33% | 37% | 34% | 29% | 35% | 38% | 32% |
| No understanding | 10% | 12% | 10% | 10% | 14% | 7% | 9% |
| I prefer not to answer | 8% | 5% | 8% | 10% | 8% | 2% | 6% |

Majorities of persons that believe they have a very good or no understanding of immigration policies hold negative views of immigrants

| Immigrants - Do you have a very positive, somewhat positive, somewhat negative or very negative reaction to the following? | Immigration policies in Canada - Do you have a very good understanding, somewhat good understanding, very little understanding or do not understand the following? | | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|------------------|
| | Very good understanding | Somewhat good understanding | Very little understanding | No understanding |
| Very positive | 17.3% | 13.7% | 8.7% | 7.4% |
| Somewhat positive | 27.4% | 44.2% | 44.6% | 27.2% |
| Somewhat negative | 19.0% | 27.5% | 31.3% | 34.0% |
| Very negative | 32.7% | 9.5% | 7.2% | 23.5% |
| I prefer not to answer | 3.6% | 5.1% | 8.2% | 8.0% |
| Total | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% |

Persons reporting a very good understanding of immigration policies in Canada most likely to believe there are too many immigrants it is a view that does not represent the majority

| Do you feel that there are too many, too few or about the right number of immigrants coming to Canada? | Immigration policies in Canada - Do you have a very good understanding, somewhat good understanding, very little understanding or do not understand the following? | | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|------------------|
| | Very good understanding | Somewhat good understanding | Very little understanding | No understanding |
| Too many | 78.0% | 62.6% | 64.6% | 72.0% |
| About the right number | 17.9% | 27.1% | 19.5% | 18.0% |
| Too few | 1.8% | 2.7% | 2.3% | 1.2% |
| I don't know | 2.4% | 7.6% | 13.6% | 8.7% |
| Total | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% |

Those saying there are too many or about the right number of immigrants are proud to be Canadian

| | Do you feel that there are too many, too few or about the right number of immigrants coming to Canada? | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|---------|
| I am proud to be Canadian - Please answer Yes, No or I don't know / Does not apply to the following statements. | Too many | About the right number | Too few |
| Yes | 82% | 82% | 64% |
| No | 10% | 11% | 23% |
| I don't know / Does not apply | 8% | 7% | 13% |
| Total | 100% | 100% | 100% |