

# Equity in Question: A majority of Canadians do not feel that companies should take cultural background into account when hiring

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December 2024

# Introduction and methodology

On Monday November 25, the world's largest retailer, Walmart rolled back its diversity, equity and inclusion policies, joining a growing list of major corporations that have done the same after such policies have come under increased scrutiny. The Government of Canada has legislative commitments to DEI in hiring and representation of racial minorities is regarded as an important outcome in achieving government hiring goals and is also often required amongst employers that with contractual relationships with the Government. Yet there is clearly pushback on DEI approaches that extend to hiring practices and support for employment equity (affirmative action in the US) appears to be softening both in Canada perhaps more so than it is in the United States. This conclusion is drawn from a survey conducted by Leger Marketing for the Association for Canadian Studies which reveals that some 57% of Canadians disagree that when hiring people, it is important for employers to take into account their cultural background (e.g., racial status / visible minority). In the United States some 46% disagree with taking cultural background into account when hiring.

The survey was conducted by Leger for the Association for Canadian Studies with 1539 respondents in Canada over the period November 22 to 24, 2024. A margin of error cannot be associated with a non-probability sample in a panel survey for comparison purposes. A probability sample of 1539 respondents would have a margin of error of  $\pm 2.5\%$ , 19 times out of 20. In the United States, the survey was conducted by Leger with 1009 respondents over the period November 22-24, 2024 and has a probabilistic margin of error of  $\pm 3.9\%$ , 19 times out of 20.

# Americans are more open than Canadians to take into account cultural background when hiring people (e.g. Racial or visible minority status)

When companies hire people, it is important for employers to take their cultural background (e.g., racial status / visible minority) into account. -	Canada	United States
Yes	28%	36%
No	57%	46%
I don't know	15%	18%

# A majority of Canadians disagree that When companies hire people, it is important for employers to take their cultural background (e.g., racial status / visible minority) into account

When companies hire people, it is important for employers to take their cultural background (e.g., racial status / visible minority) into account.	Total	Male	Female	Between 18 and 24	Between 25 and 34	Between 35 and 44	Between 45 and 54	Between 55 and 64	65+
Yes	28%	29%	26%	30%	34%	27%	23%	27%	28%
No	57%	57%	57%	50%	51%	60%	62%	58%	58%
I don't know	15%	13%	17%	20%	15%	13%	15%	15%	15%

**Quebecers are most likely to disagree that When companies hire people, it is important for employers to take their cultural background (e.g., racial status / visible minority) into account.**

When companies hire people, it is important for employers to take their cultural background (e.g., racial status / visible minority) into account.	Atl.	QC	ON	MB/SK	AB	BC
Yes	36%	26%	26%	32%	33%	29%
No	50%	63%	55%	53%	58%	57%
I don't know	14%	12%	19%	15%	10%	14%

**Amongst those identifying as Visible Minorities, most disagree  
When companies hire people, it is important for employers to  
take their cultural background (e.g., racial status / visible  
minority) into account.**

When companies hire people, it is important for employers to take their cultural background (e.g., racial status / visible minority) into account.	Non-Immigrant	Immigrant
Yes	26%	34%
No	59%	50%
I don't know	15%	16%

# By contrast with Canada, Racial minorities in the United States are more likely than not to support taking cultural background into account when hiring

	Canada		United States	
	White	Not white	White	Not white
When companies hire people, it is important for employers to take their cultural background (e.g., racial status / visible minority) into account.				
Yes	26%	34%	31%	45%
No	59%	49%	52%	36%
I don't know	15%	17%	17%	18%

# Some one in three part time workers, students and unemployed favor companies taking into account cultural background when hiring

When companies hire people, it is important for employers to take their cultural background (e.g., racial status / visible minority) into account.	Working full time	Working part time	Self-employed / freelance work	Student	Homemaker	Unemployed	Retired
Yes	27%	31%	18%	31%	25%	31%	28%
No	58%	51%	73%	49%	50%	57%	57%
I don't know	15%	18%	9%	20%	25%	12%	15%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%