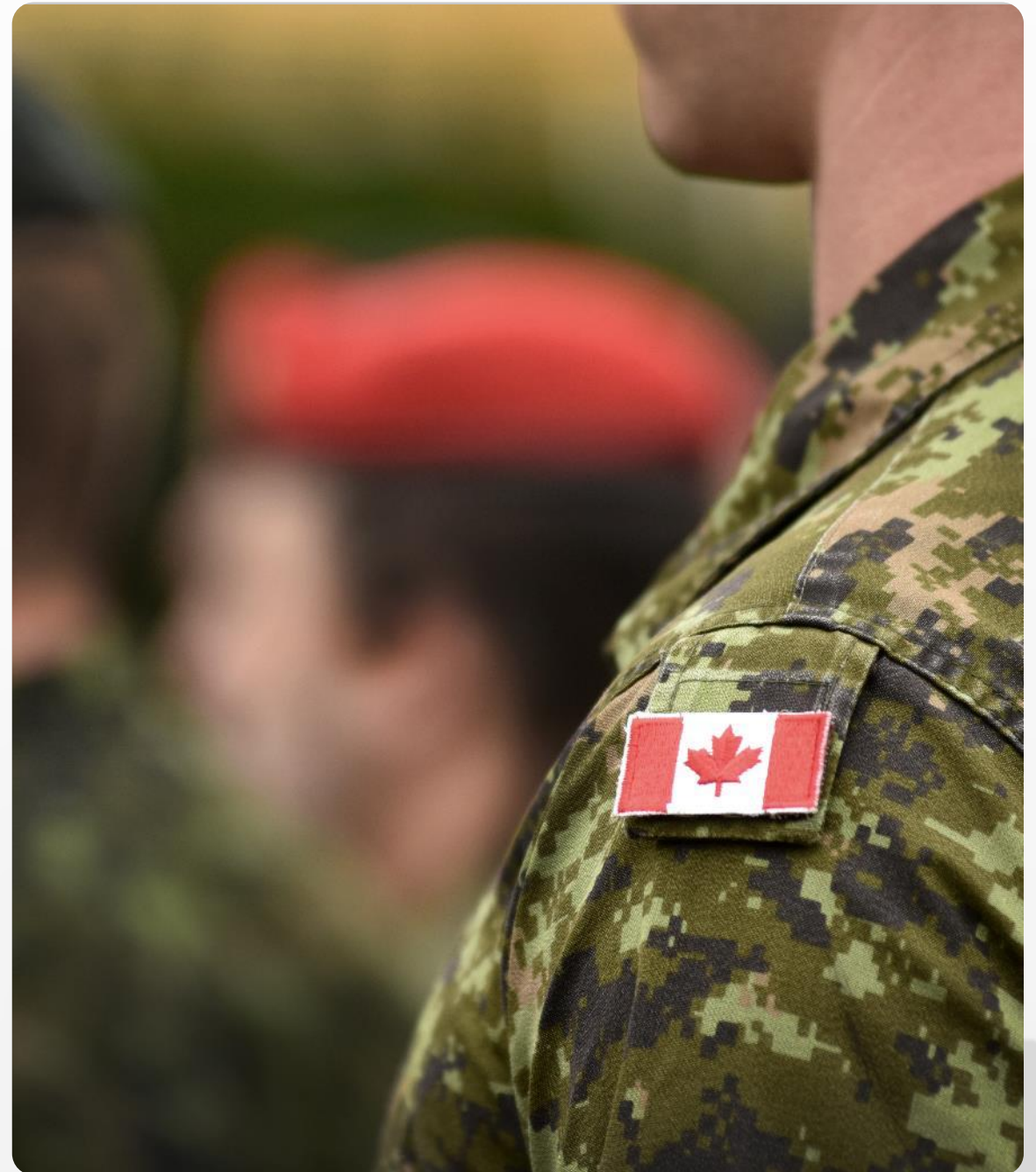Report

Opinions Toward the Canadian Forces

Survey of Canadians

NATIONAL POST

Date: 04 / 11 / 2024
Project: 16811-115

Methodology

Every month, we conduct a survey of Canadians to explore their views on the current government and politics in Canada.

Method

Online survey among respondents 18 years of age or older. (Canadian sample: **n= 1,549**).

Respondents had the option of completing the survey in English or in French and were randomly recruited using LEO's online panel.

Weighting

Results were weighted according to **age, gender, mother tongue, region, education and presence of children in the household** in order to ensure a representative sample of the Canadian population.

When

Data collection from **November 1st to November 3rd, 2024**.

Margin of error

For comparison purposes, a probability sample of this size yields a margin of error no greater than **±2.49%**, (19 times out of 20) for the Canadian sample.

Significant differences

Data in bold **red** characters indicate a significantly lower proportion than that of other respondents. Conversely, data in bold **green** characters indicate a significantly higher proportion than that of other respondents.

Rounded data

The numbers presented have been rounded up. However, the numbers before rounding were used to calculate the sums presented and might therefore not correspond to the manual addition of these numbers.

Questions

Have questions about the data presented in this report? Please contact Andrew Enns, Executive Vice-President, Central Canada at the following e-mail address: aenns@leger360.com

➔ Notes

A more detailed methodology is presented in the Appendix.

Leǧer

Methodology

Sub-title

Most accurate polling firm

Leger is the polling firm that has presented the most accurate election survey data, on average, over the last ten years in Canada. During the last federal election in 2021, Leger was once again **the most accurate firm in the country**. This accuracy is attributed to the quality of the LEO panel and rigorous application of methodological rules by Leger's 600 employees, including 200 professionals in Leger's eight offices across Canada (Montreal, Toronto, Quebec City, Winnipeg, Calgary, Edmonton and Vancouver) and in the United States (New York).

Poll aggregator 338Canada.com gave Leger the highest rating among all polling firms in Canada for the accuracy of its studies.

See https://338canada.com/pollster-ratings.htm

2021 Canadian Federal Election

	Leger Poll Published on September 18, 2021	Official Results 2021 **Canadian** Federal Election
⬤	**33%**	**33.7%**
⬤	**32%**	**32.6%**
NDP	**19%**	**17.8%**
⬤	**7%**	**7.7%**
PPC	**6%**	**5.0%**
⬤	**2%**	**2.3%**

*The official results were obtained from Elections Canada on September 24, 2021, at 9:45 a.m. EDT.

Key highlights: Opinions regarding the Canadian Forces, Recruitment & Spending

Some of **the key highlights** of our survey **about the Canadian Armed Forces...**

1

Fewer than four in ten Canadians (38%) are confident that Canada has the military capability to support its allies in a serious military conflict if such a situation arises today, while 47% lack confidence in the military's ability to take on such a task. However, more broadly as an institution, 64% of Canadians expressed confidence in the armed force (very/somewhat confident). This was ahead of other institutions such as the Federal Government, CSIS or Supreme Court.

2

There is not a high level of confidence that federal government will increase spending to a NATO required 2% of GDP.   One in five Canadians (20%) believe the government will reach its target spending within the planned eight years, while 45% think it will not. Over a third of Canadians (35%) are unsure. Conservative voters (55%) are more likely to believe the government will miss this target, but even 30% of current Liberal supporters feel the target will be missed.

3

Mental health concerns (24%), lack of competitive pay (19%), past incidents of sexual abuse in the military (17%), and a perceived lack of national pride in the Canadian Forces (17%) are the main reasons Canadians cite for the Canadian Armed Forces recruitment challenges. Perhaps contributing to recruitment challenges is the fact just over 2 in 10 Canadians (23%) would be prepared to recommend a career in the armed forces to a family member or friend.

4

Respondents to the survey were presented two options regarding major military equipment purchasing initiatives: *Purchase from global sources at best price* or *purchase Candian manufactured equipment that promoted Canadian jobs*.

Respondents were divided on the best approach: 45% felt purchasing Candian made equipment was the best approach for the armed forces while 35% said purchasing globally was better. 19% were unsure.

Special Topics
Defence Spending & Confidence in the Armed Forces
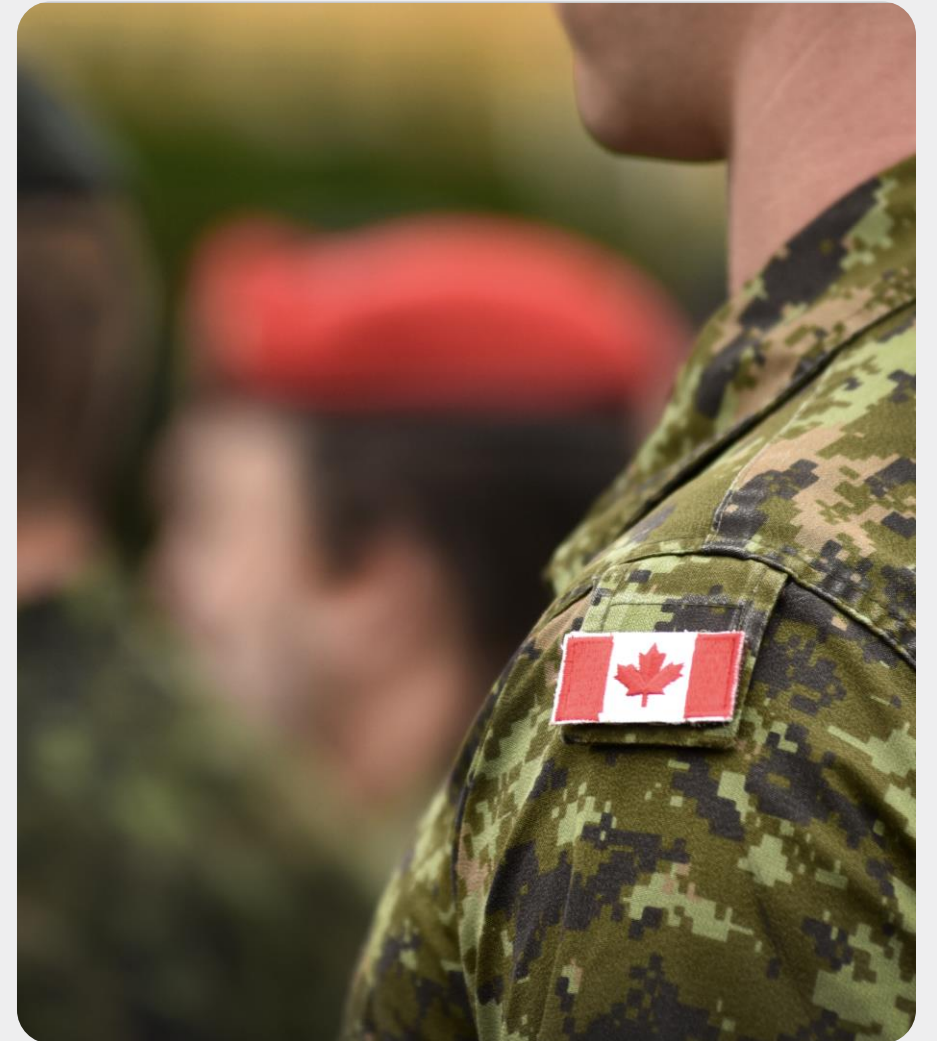
Confidence in Meeting Defence Spending Target
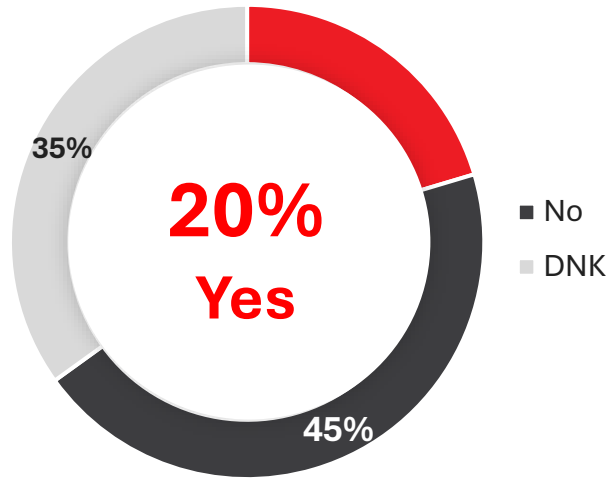
Q1. Canada, as a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), has committed to spend 2% of its GDP on Defence/military spending. Currently, Canada spends 1.3% of GDP on its armed forces. The Trudeau government has committed to increase spending to 2% of GDP in eight years. Do you believe the Canadian government will meet the target of 2% spending on Defence in eight years, an expected increase in funding of up to $40 billion?

Base: All respondents (n=1,549)

20% Yes

35%
45%

- No
- DNK

	Total Canada	ATL	QC	ON	MB/SK	AB	BC	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	Urban	Sub-urban	Rural
Weighted n=	1,549	104	358	600	100	171	216	754	795	412	499	638	687	586	268
Unweighted n=	1,549	100	438	601	125	126	159	770	779	399	518	632	693	569	278
Yes	**20%**	22%	18%	22%	19%	23%	16%	**23%**	**18%**	24%	19%	19%	22%	18%	20%
No	**45%**	36%	**51%**	**40%**	49%	43%	50%	**49%**	**40%**	**39%**	45%	48%	**40%**	47%	**53%**
Don't know	**35%**	42%	31%	37%	31%	34%	34%	**28%**	**42%**	36%	36%	33%	38%	35%	**27%**

Confidence in Meeting Defence Spending Target – By Voting Intentions

Q1. Canada, as a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), has committed to spend 2% of its GDP on Defence/military spending. Currently, Canada spends 1.3% of GDP on its armed forces. The Trudeau government has committed to increase spending to 2% of GDP in eight years. Do you believe the Canadian government will meet the target of 2% spending on Defence in eight years, an expected increase in funding of up to $40 billion?

Base: All respondents (n=1,549)

	Total Canada	CPC	LPC	NDP	BQ	GPC	PPC
Weighted n=	1,549	545	198	110	110	60	28*
Unweighted n=	1,549	465	219	169	169	65	29*
Yes	**20%**	**13%**	**40%**	22%	21%	22%	32%
No	**45%**	**55%**	**30%**	43%	**59%**	50%	43%
Don't know	**35%**	32%	29%	34%	**21%**	28%	24%

Given the small number of respondents (n<30) data are presented for illustrative purposes only.

Confidence in Canada's Military Capability in Supporting Allies (1/2)

Q2. Based on your impression of Canada's military capability, how confident are you that Canada would be able to support its allies in a serious military conflict, similar to past efforts in places like Yugoslavia or Afghanistan, if such a situation were to arise today?
Base: All respondents (n=1,549)

Total Confident: 38%

Total Not Confident: 47%

Very confident	Somewhat confident	Not very confident	Not at all confident	Don't know
6%	32%	35%	12%	15%
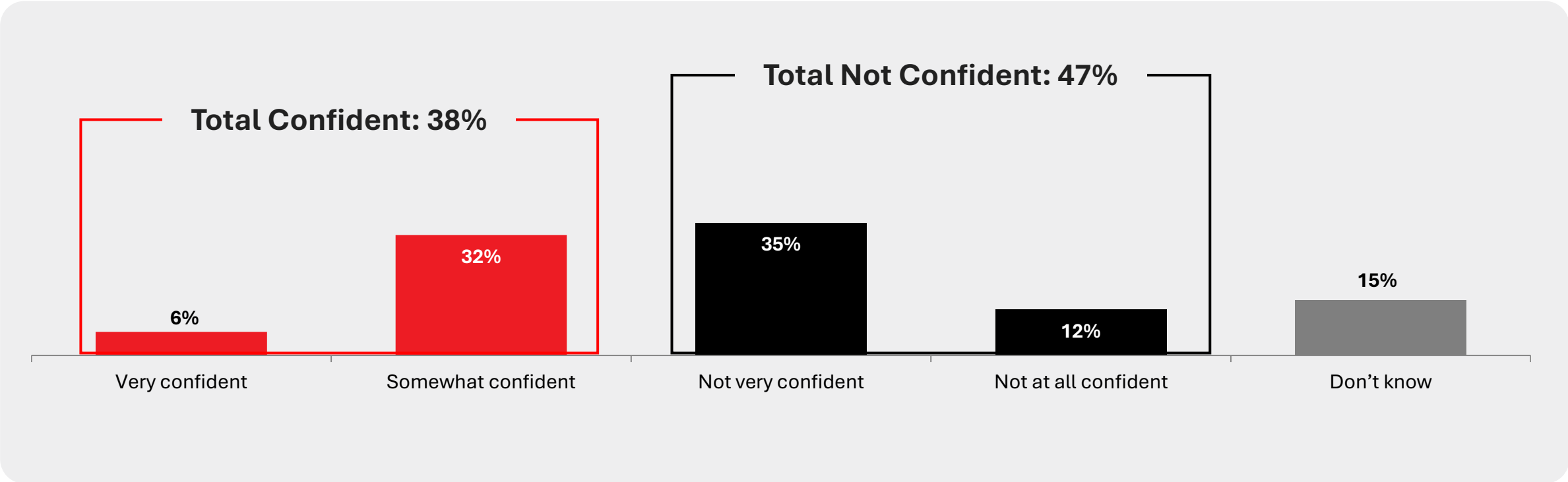
Confidence in Canada's Military Capability in Supporting Allies (2/2)

Q2. Based on your impression of Canada's military capability, how confident are you that Canada would be able to support its allies in a serious military conflict, similar to past efforts in places like Yugoslavia or Afghanistan, if such a situation were to arise today?
Base: All respondents (n=1,549)

	Total Canada	ATL	QC	ON	MB/SK	AB	BC	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	Urban	Sub-urban	Rural
Weighted n=	*1,549*	*104*	*358*	*600*	*100*	*171*	*216*	*754*	*795*	*412*	*499*	*638*	*687*	*586*	*268*
Unweighted n=	*1,549*	*100*	*438*	*601*	*125*	*126*	*159*	*770*	*779*	*399*	*518*	*632*	*693*	*569*	*278*
Total Confident	**38%**	37%	**31%**	41%	42%	42%	38%	38%	38%	**43%**	37%	36%	41%	40%	**29%**
Very confident	**6%**	8%	4%	7%	10%	7%	5%	6%	6%	8%	6%	5%	7%	6%	**4%**
Somewhat confident	**32%**	29%	**26%**	34%	32%	35%	33%	32%	32%	35%	31%	31%	33%	33%	**26%**
Total Not Confident	**47%**	45%	**57%**	**43%**	46%	45%	47%	**53%**	**42%**	**38%**	45%	**54%**	44%	47%	**57%**
Not very confident	**35%**	34%	**42%**	**31%**	33%	36%	35%	**39%**	**32%**	32%	31%	**40%**	35%	34%	40%
Not at all confident	**12%**	11%	15%	12%	13%	9%	12%	14%	10%	**6%**	14%	**15%**	**10%**	13%	**17%**
Don't know	**15%**	18%	13%	16%	12%	13%	15%	**9%**	**20%**	**19%**	17%	**10%**	15%	14%	14%

Confidence in Canada's Military Capability in Supporting Allies – By Voting Intentions

Q2. Based on your impression of Canada's military capability, how confident are you that Canada would be able to support its allies in a serious military conflict, similar to past efforts in places like Yugoslavia or Afghanistan, if such a situation were to arise today?
Base: All respondents (n=1,549)

	Total Canada	CPC	LPC	NDP	BQ	GPC	PPC
Weighted n=	1,549	545	198	110	110	60	28*
Unweighted n=	1,549	465	219	169	169	65	29*
Total Confident	**38%**	**30%**	**56%**	**52%**	**24%**	48%	20%
Very confident	**6%**	4%	12%	7%	3%	7%	2%
Somewhat confident	**32%**	26%	44%	45%	21%	40%	18%
Total Not Confident	**47%**	**60%**	**33%**	**38%**	**70%**	38%	72%
Not very confident	**35%**	41%	28%	35%	48%	30%	43%
Not at all confident	**12%**	18%	5%	3%	22%	8%	30%
Don't know	**15%**	11%	11%	10%	6%	15%	7%

Given the small number of respondents (n<30) data are presented for illustrative purposes only.

Confidence in Canadian Institutions (1/2)

Q8. How much confidence do you have in the following Canadian institutions?
Base: All respondents (n=1,549)

% Total Confident Presented

Institution	%
Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP)	66%
Canadian Armed Forces	64%
Local Police Services	64%
Canadian Border Services Agency (CBSA)	64%
Supreme Court of Canada	61%
Canadian Security Intelligence Services (CSIS)	53%
Businesses and corporations	47%
Federal Government of Canada	40%
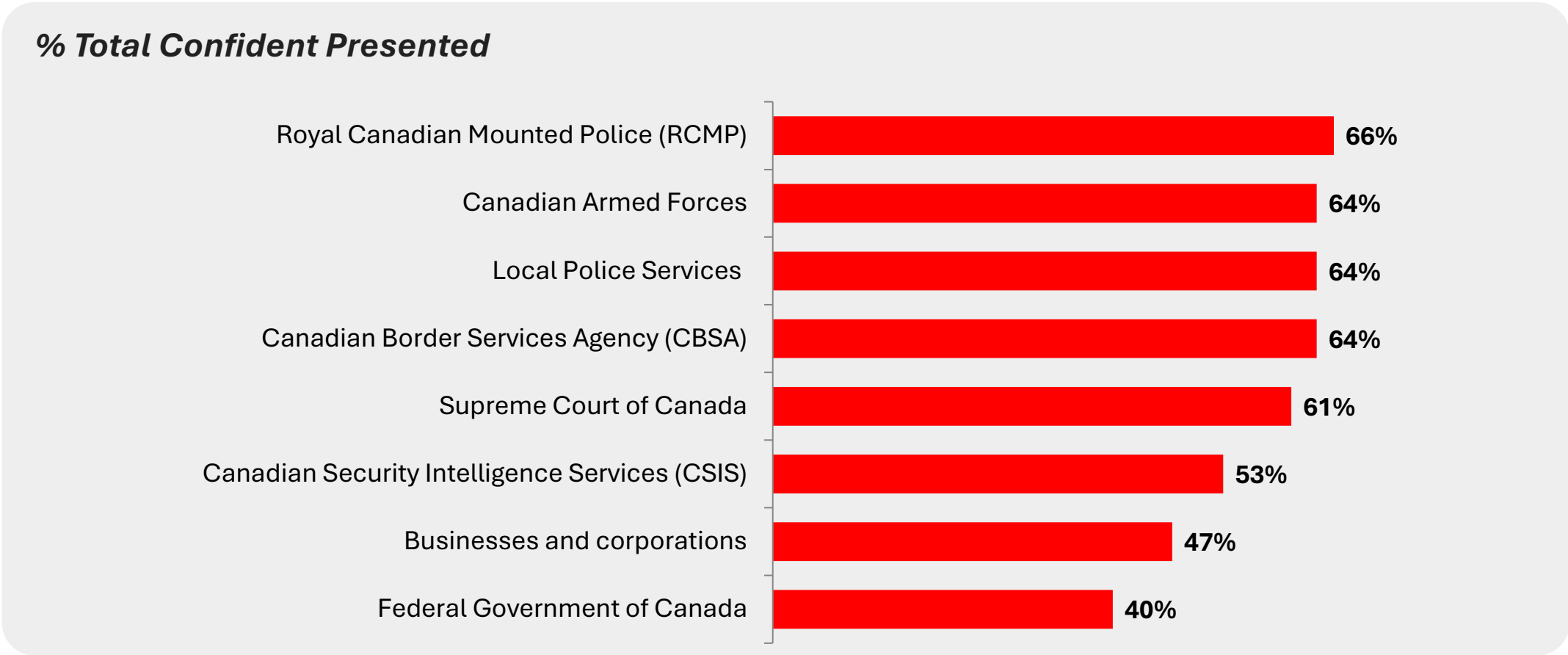
Answer options: *Very confident, Somewhat confident, Not very confident, Not at all confident, Don't know*

Confidence in Canadian Institutions (2/2)

Q8. How much confidence do you have in the following Canadian institutions?

Base: All respondents (n=1,549)

% Total Confident presented	Total Canada	ATL	QC	ON	MB/SK	AB	BC	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	Urban	Sub-urban	Rural
Weighted n=	1,549	104	358	600	100	171	216	754	795	412	499	638	687	586	268
Unweighted n=	1,549	100	438	601	125	126	159	770	779	399	518	632	693	569	278
Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP)	**66%**	66%	**72%**	**62%**	66%	65%	68%	**63%**	**69%**	**58%**	**61%**	**75%**	64%	69%	67%
Canadian Armed Forces	**64%**	68%	**70%**	62%	**73%**	56%	63%	64%	65%	59%	**59%**	**71%**	64%	66%	64%
Local Police Services	**64%**	56%	**74%**	**58%**	65%	61%	70%	61%	67%	**52%**	**58%**	**76%**	62%	65%	67%
Canadian Border Services Agency (CBSA)	**64%**	63%	67%	62%	65%	57%	69%	62%	66%	61%	60%	**68%**	64%	63%	65%
Supreme Court of Canada	**61%**	63%	**66%**	58%	55%	57%	64%	60%	61%	59%	**56%**	**66%**	63%	61%	55%
Canadian Security Intelligence Services (CSIS)	**53%**	49%	56%	56%	48%	**43%**	53%	56%	51%	52%	50%	**57%**	53%	**57%**	**47%**
Businesses and corporations	**47%**	43%	52%	46%	49%	39%	50%	47%	47%	45%	**42%**	**52%**	47%	45%	50%
Federal Government of Canada	**40%**	37%	**46%**	39%	40%	**31%**	44%	40%	41%	44%	**35%**	42%	**45%**	41%	**27%**

Confidence in Canadian Institutions – By Voting Intentions

Q8. How much confidence do you have in the following Canadian institutions?
Base: All respondents (n=1,549)

% Total Confident presented	Total Canada	CPC	LPC	NDP	BQ	GPC	PPC
Weighted n=	*1,549*	*545*	*198*	*110*	*110*	*60*	*28**
Unweighted n=	*1,549*	*465*	*219*	*169*	*169*	*65*	*29**
Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP)	**66%**	65%	**80%**	**57%**	76%	60%	65%
Canadian Armed Forces	**64%**	**63%**	**78%**	61%	67%	72%	59%
Local Police Services	**64%**	64%	**76%**	**52%**	**81%**	64%	55%
Canadian Border Services Agency (CBSA)	**64%**	**59%**	**78%**	62%	67%	66%	50%
Supreme Court of Canada	**61%**	**51%**	**81%**	**71%**	69%	60%	31%
Canadian Security Intelligence Services (CSIS)	**53%**	**46%**	**73%**	52%	62%	61%	41%
Businesses and corporations	**47%**	49%	**57%**	**33%**	**60%**	52%	56%
Federal Government of Canada	**40%**	**20%**	**81%**	45%	41%	52%	24%

Given the small number of respondents (n<30) data are presented for illustrative purposes only.

Perceived Reasons for Recruitment Challenges in the Canadian Armed Forces

Q5. It has been reported that Canadian Armed Forces is having challenges recruiting individuals to serve in the military. What are some of the main reasons you feel the military may be having trouble recruiting people to serve. *Please select the top 2 reasons contributing to your opinion**
Base: All respondents (n=1,549)

Reason	%
Mental health concerns	24%
Lack of competitive pay or compensation compared to other jobs	19%
Past issues regarding sexual abuse in the military make it unattractive	17%
A lack of national pride in the Canadian Forces	17%
Poor work-life balance	14%
Concerns about how I would be treated when I become a veteran	13%
Funding shortfalls	12%
Unwelcoming culture	11%
Current recruitment efforts are too focused on diverse, under-represented populations	11%
Poor morale currently in the Forces	8%
Competitive job market	6%
Poor senior leadership in the military	4%
No stability in the senior leadership – changes too frequently	3%
Something else	6%
I don't know	11%

* Answers may not add to 100% due to multiple responses allowed

Likelihood of Recommending Military Service to Family or Friends

Q6. Would you recommend serving in Canada's military to a family member or close friend?
Base: All respondents (n=1,549)
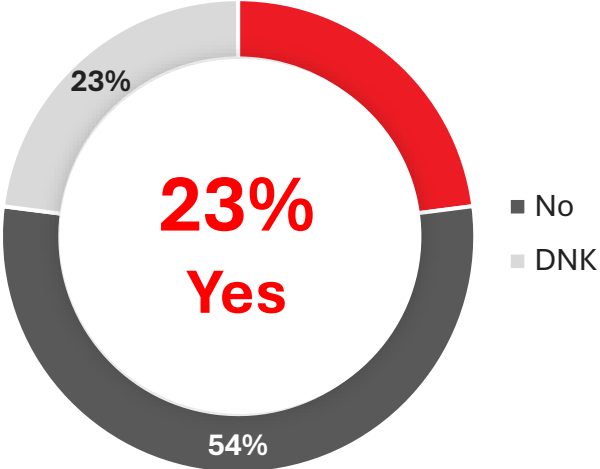
23%
23%
Yes
54%

■ No
■ DNK

	Total Canada	ATL	QC	ON	MB/SK	AB	BC	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	Urban	Sub-urban	Rural
Weighted n=	1,549	104	358	600	100	171	216	754	795	412	499	638	687	586	268
Unweighted n=	1,549	100	438	601	125	126	159	770	779	399	518	632	693	569	278
Yes	**23%**	27%	20%	26%	28%	17%	20%	**28%**	**18%**	**17%**	**19%**	**30%**	24%	22%	23%
No	**54%**	44%	**64%**	51%	47%	46%	60%	**51%**	**57%**	**61%**	56%	**48%**	52%	56%	54%
Don't know	**23%**	29%	**16%**	23%	25%	**37%**	20%	21%	25%	22%	25%	22%	24%	21%	23%

Preference for Domestic vs. Global Sourcing of Military Equipment (1/2)

Q7. There have been some questions raised about the procurement process for making major military equipment purchases, such as fighter jets or naval vessels. Below are two points of view on how Canadian forces could approach buying new equipment. Which one is closest to your opinion?

Base: All respondents (n=1,549)

When making major military equipment purchases the primary goal should be purchasing the best equipment, at the best price, regardless of if the equipment is manufactured in Canada or abroad. — **35%**

When making major military equipment purchases the primary goal should be purchasing the best equipment that can be produced/manufactured in Canada by Canadian workers at the best price. — **45%**

Don't know — **19%**

Preference for Domestic vs. Global Sourcing of Military Equipment (2/2)

Q7. There have been some questions raised about the procurement process for making major military equipment purchases, such as fighter jets or naval vessels. Below are two points of view on how Canadian forces could approach buying new equipment. Which one is closest to your opinion?

Base: All respondents (n=1,549)

	Total Canada	ATL	QC	ON	MB/SK	AB	BC	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	Urban	Sub-urban	Rural
Weighted n=	1,549	104	358	600	100	171	216	754	795	412	499	638	687	586	268
Unweighted n=	1,549	100	438	601	125	126	159	770	779	399	518	632	693	569	278
When making major military equipment purchases the primary goal should be purchasing the best equipment, at the best price, regardless of if the equipment is manufactured in Canada or abroad	**35%**	41%	27%	37%	41%	31%	43%	41%	30%	37%	31%	38%	36%	35%	36%
When making major military equipment purchases the primary goal should be purchasing the best equipment that can be produced/manufactured in Canada by Canadian workers at the best price	**45%**	40%	56%	42%	41%	46%	40%	44%	46%	39%	44%	50%	41%	48%	49%
Don't know	**19%**	19%	17%	21%	18%	24%	17%	15%	24%	24%	25%	12%	23%	17%	15%

17

Respondent Profile

Respondent profiles

(Base n=1,549)

The table below presents the Canadian geographic distribution of respondents before weighting.

Gender

	Unweighted	Weighted
Male	770	754
Female	779	795

Language (Mother Tongue)

	Unweighted	Weighted
French	459	306
English	954	1,079
Other	133	158

Age

	Unweighted	Weighted
18 to 34	399	412
35 to 54	518	499
55+	632	638

Province

	Unweighted	Weighted
British Columbia	159	216
Alberta	126	171
Manitoba/Saskatchewan	125	100
Ontario	601	600
Quebec	438	358
Atlantic	100	104

Our Credentials

Canada

Leger is a member of the Canadian Research Insights Council (CRIC), the industry association for the market/survey/insights research industry.

Europe

Leger is a member of ESOMAR (European Society for Opinion and Market Research), the global association of opinion polls and marketing research professionals.

America

Leger is also a member of the Insights Association, the American Association of Marketing Research Analytics.

International

Leger is a member of the Worldwide Independent Network of Market Research (WIN), a global alliance of leading independent market research and polling firms that collaborate to share expertise, methodologies, and insights across diverse markets.

Our services

Leger
Marketing research and polling

Customer Experience (CX)
Strategic and operational customer experience consulting services

Leger Analytics (LEA)
Data modelling and analysis

Leger Opinion (LEO)
Panel management

Leger Communities
Online community management

Leger Digital
Digital strategy and user experience

International Research
Worldwide Independent Network (WIN)

300
employees

185
consultants

8
offices

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