

Report

Canadian Sentiments Towards CFL Rule Changes

The Canadian Football League has publicly stated that they are considering options to help make the game as entertaining as possible.

Leger measured Canadians' level of support of the CFL and whether switching to American rules would increase or decrease fandom.

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METHODOLOGY AND KEY FINDINGS

Methodology



How?

Online surveys with Canadians were conducted via Leger's online panel, LEO.



When?

From December 25th to December 27th, 2021.



Who?

1503 residents of Canada that are 18 years of age or older.



Weighting

Using data from the 2016 Census, results were weighted according to, age, gender, and region in order to ensure a representative sample of the population in Canada.



MOE

No margin of error can be associated with a non-probability sample. However, for comparative purposes, a probability sample of 1503 respondents would have a margin of error of $\pm 2.5\%$, 19 times out of 20.

Key Findings



Only 3% of Canadians consider themselves a die-hard CFL fan, but almost half of the population has shown interest in the CFL.

- Approximately 70% of people in Manitoba and Saskatchewan are, on some level, fans of the CFL. This is more than double than in other provinces.
- CFL fans skew older, with most die-hard and frequent fans aged 55+.
- 64% of CFL fans are male.
- 69% of Canadian females and 42% of Canadian males have no interest in the CFL at all.
- The Atlantic provinces and Quebec show the lowest level of support for the CFL, with 68% of Maritimers and 64% of Quebecers having no interest at all.
- Those who live in urban and suburban areas are more likely to be interested in the CFL than those who live in rural areas.
- Canadians who attended college or university are more likely to be interested in the CFL than those with a high school or less level of education (47% vs 38%).



A complete switch to an NFL sized field, with 4 downs and all NFL rules, has the highest level of support from the age group 18-34 (20% increase, 10% decrease in fandom).

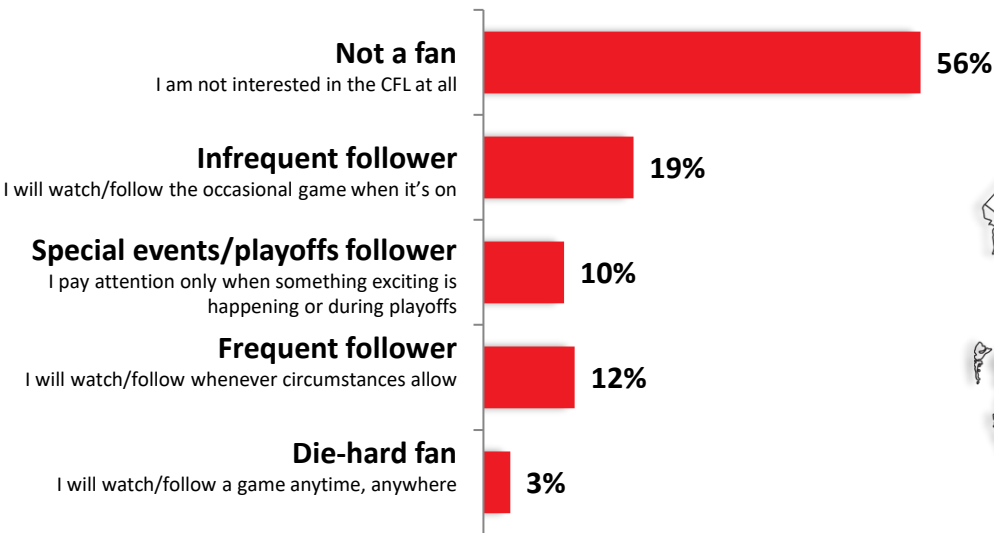
It has the lowest level of support from the age group 55+ (8% increase, 23% decrease in fandom).

A close-up photograph of a red, textured surface with a repeating pattern of small, raised, rounded shapes. A black cord is visible, running diagonally across the frame. In the upper right corner, there is a woven structure made of light-colored, flat strips, possibly made of wood or bamboo, which appears to be part of a larger object. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting the texture of the red surface and the woven structure.

DETAILED RESULTS

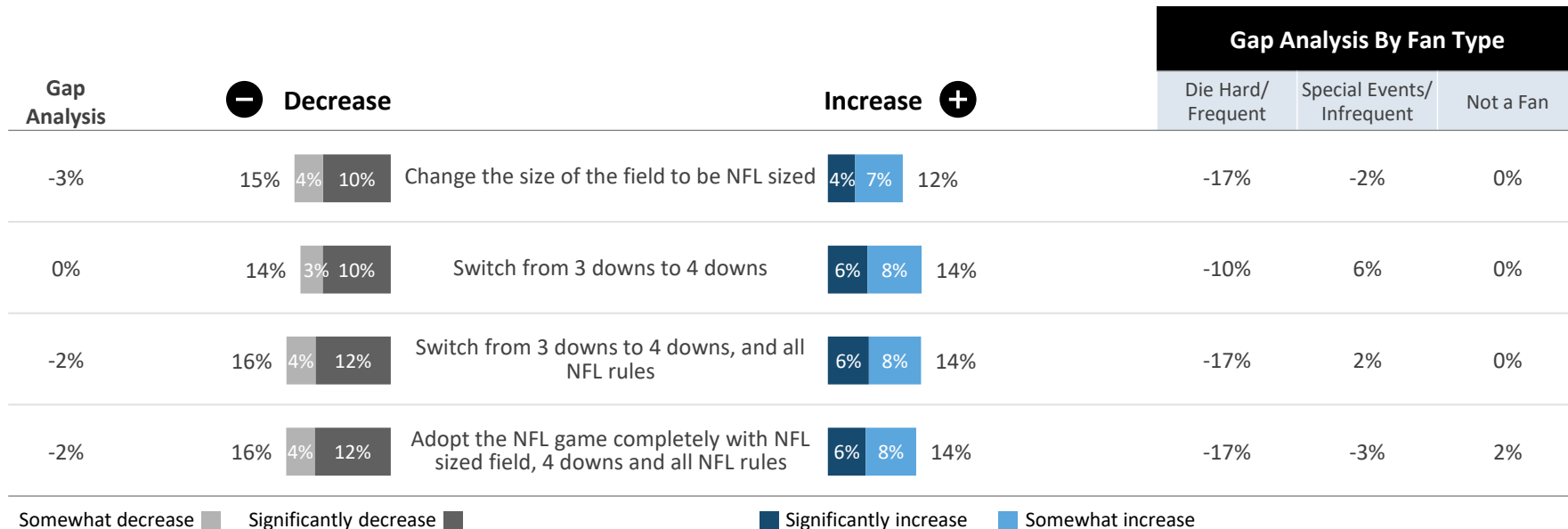
Level of Fandom

Current composition of CFL fandom in Canada.



Impact of CFL Rule Changes on Fandom

To the biggest fans, any of the suggested changes would significantly decrease their interest in the CFL. Among the casual viewers none of the changes would cause an impact (positive or negative) on their interest of the sport.



Insights

While further research is needed, preliminary data suggests the following:

- 1

Over two thirds of people who reside in Manitoba and Saskatchewan have some level of interest in the CFL. This drops substantially outside of these two provinces. In order to grow the fan base, the CFL needs to learn how to effectively attract and engage those who reside outside of Manitoba and Saskatchewan.
- 2

To the biggest fans, any of the suggested changes would decrease their level of fandom. However, the biggest fans are a small minority overall, and amongst the casual fans, which are the CFL fan type majority, none of the changes would cause an impact on their level of fandom. Rule changes could provide an opportunity to attract new and younger fans.
- 3

While rule changes may alienate those who describe themselves as die-hard (3%), the extent of that alienation, and how to mitigate its negative effects, would need to be investigated (game attendance, viewership and merchandise sales).
- 4

In a competitive and growing sports market, the CFL is one option amongst many. Other leagues will continue to market to growing fan bases. Rule changes warrant exploration if growing the fan base is a priority.



Our Credentials



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



Leger is a member of [ESOMAR](#) (European Society for Opinion and Market Research), the global association of opinion polls and marketing research professionals. As such, Leger is committed to applying the [international ICC/ESOMAR](#) code of Market, Opinion and Social Research and Data Analytics.



Leger is also a member of the [Insights Association](#), the American Association of Marketing Research Analytics.

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We know Canadians

