

The logo for Leger, featuring the word "Leger" in a bold, sans-serif font. The letter "L" is black, "e" is red, "g" is black, and "er" is black. The logo is centered within a white circular background.

Leger

Founded in 1986, we empower you to make better decisions by providing the highest-quality market research and data analytics in North America.

MONTREAL • QUEBEC • TORONTO • WINNIPEG • EDMONTON • CALGARY • VANCOUVER • NEW YORK

Leger

REPORT

Economic Confidence

Jan 2024

BRITISH COLUMBIA FOCUS



BACKGROUND

- Perceptions of the economic state in Canada is an important driver of how consumers will spend (or not spend) in the coming months.
- Leger, the largest Canadian-owned polling and marketing research firm, monitors views on the economy and Canadians' own finances to keep a pulse on the mood and sentiment of the public.
- *This report represents the results that focus on **British Columbia** in particular.*

METHODOLOGY

- Results are based on online research conducted among a sample of British Columbians 18 years of age and older.
- The most recent wave was conducted among a sample of 400 British Columbians, with fieldwork January 5-7, 2024.
- The data was statistically weighted according to 2021 Canadian Census figures.
- A margin of error cannot be associated with a non-probability sample in a panel survey, but for comparison purposes, a probability sample of 400 would have a margin of error of $\pm 4.9\%$, 19 times out of 20.

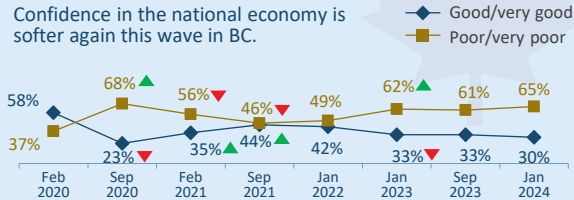
Additional methodology details can be found in the appendix.

DASHBOARD OF KEY METRICS

NATIONAL ECONOMY

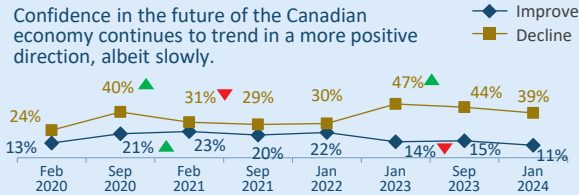
Current Confidence

Confidence in the national economy is softer again this wave in BC.



Future Confidence

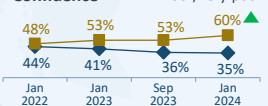
Confidence in the future of the Canadian economy continues to trend in a more positive direction, albeit slowly.



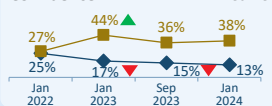
BC ECONOMY

Views of the provincial economy are similar to the national perspective, soft and not yet in recovery mode.

Current Confidence



Future Confidence



In contrast to the national sense of cautious optimism, economic confidence in BC (national, provincial and personal) is softer again this wave. Views remain pessimistic and worries are high.

Even as concerns about inflation decline, housing affordability remains a key and is likely contributing to worries about personal finances. After over-spending on the holidays (resulting in credit card debt for many), it may be a little while longer before we see a resurgence in spending.

DISCRETIONARY SPENDING

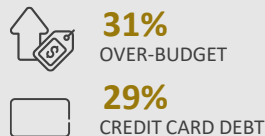


Predictions about discretionary spending demonstrate that optimism has yet to extend to a greater willingness to shop.

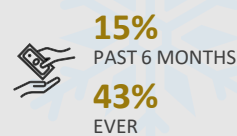
BUDGETS AND DEBT

Many over-spent during the holidays and have credit card debt to pay off. More generally, use of BNPL is quite widespread.

Winter Holiday Spending



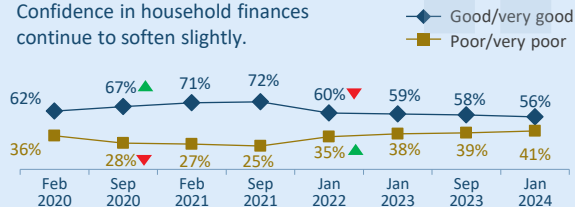
Buy Now/Pay Later



HOUSEHOLD FINANCES

Current Confidence

Confidence in household finances continue to soften slightly.



Future Confidence

Confidence in future personal finances is basically stable from last wave.



WORRIES

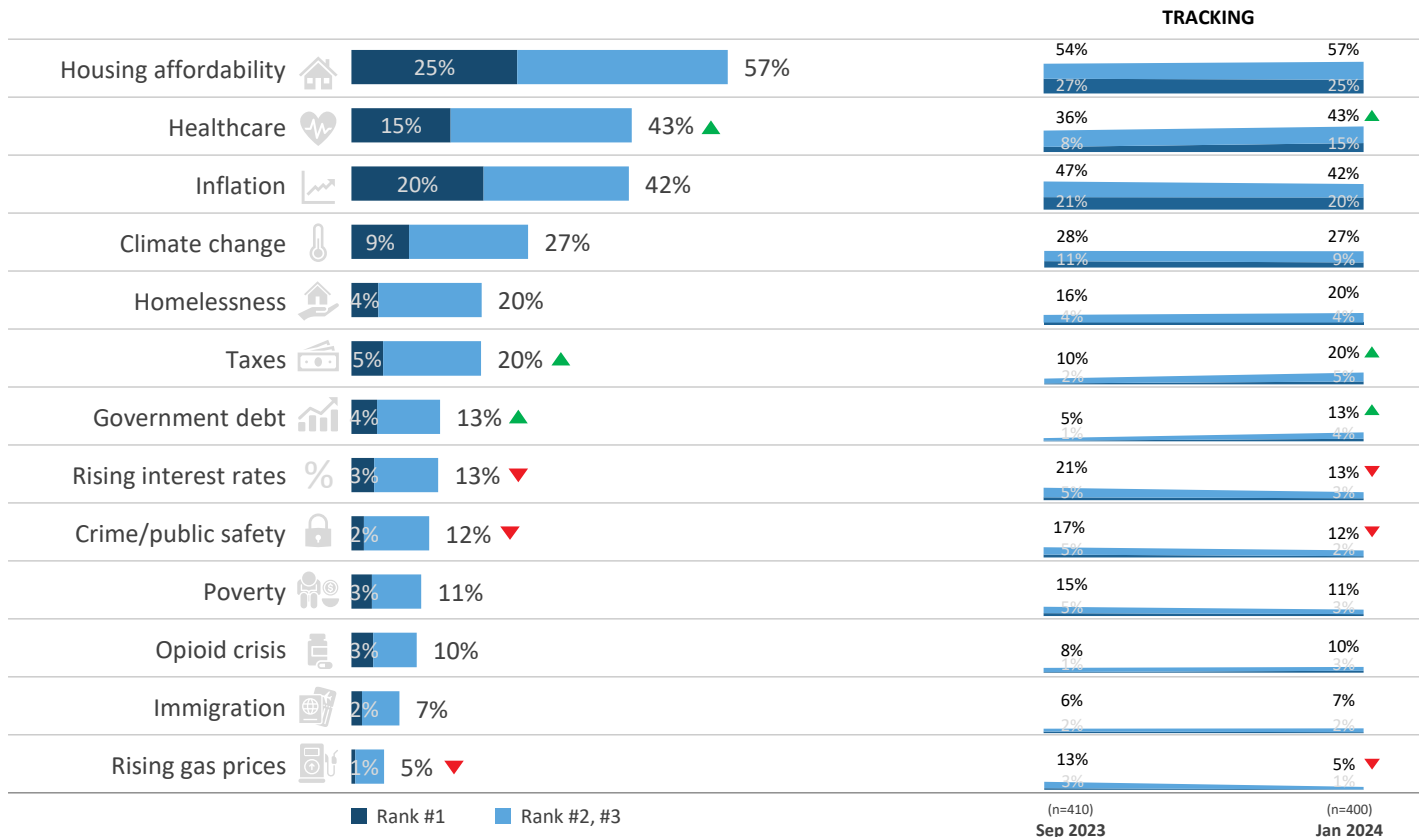
Worries about day-to-day finances and other concerns are at a steady or slightly increasing level again this wave, in keeping with a general lack of financial optimism in BC.

▲ Statistically significantly higher than previous wave.
▼ Statistically significantly lower than previous wave.

IMPORTANT CANADIAN ISSUES: AIDED

Affordability – especially housing – continues to be the key issue for British Columbians to an even greater extent than Canada-wide. While other economic concerns like interest rates, rising gas prices and even inflation are abating, economic times still feel tough in this province. In support of this, mentions of taxes have doubled since last wave.

As in most other regions, concerns about **healthcare** have increased, taking the place of economic pressures for some. Similarly, worries about **government debt** (likely a reflection of the need to pay off COVID supports) have increased.



What is the number one important issue facing Canada today?
 What is the second most important issue? The third most important?

▲ Statistically significantly higher than previous wave.
 ▼ Statistically significantly lower than previous wave.

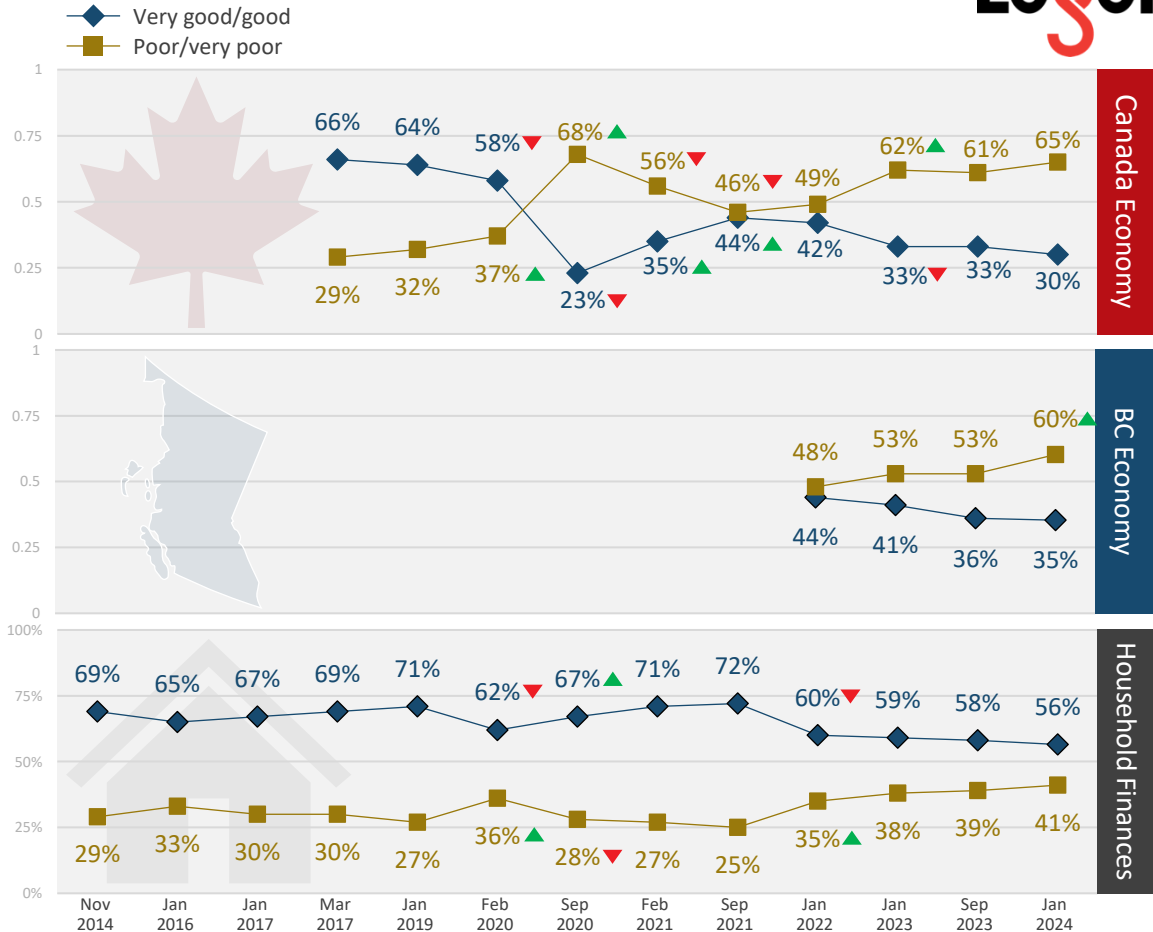
†Note: Responses 4% and greater for Jan 2024 are shown.

CURRENT ECONOMIC PERCEPTIONS



Contrary to the national trend – which shows increasing optimism around both Canadian and household finances – British Columbians have more pessimistic views than ever. While changes from last fall are small, economic confidence – nationally, provincially and personally – have all softened again this wave and are at historically poor levels in all cases

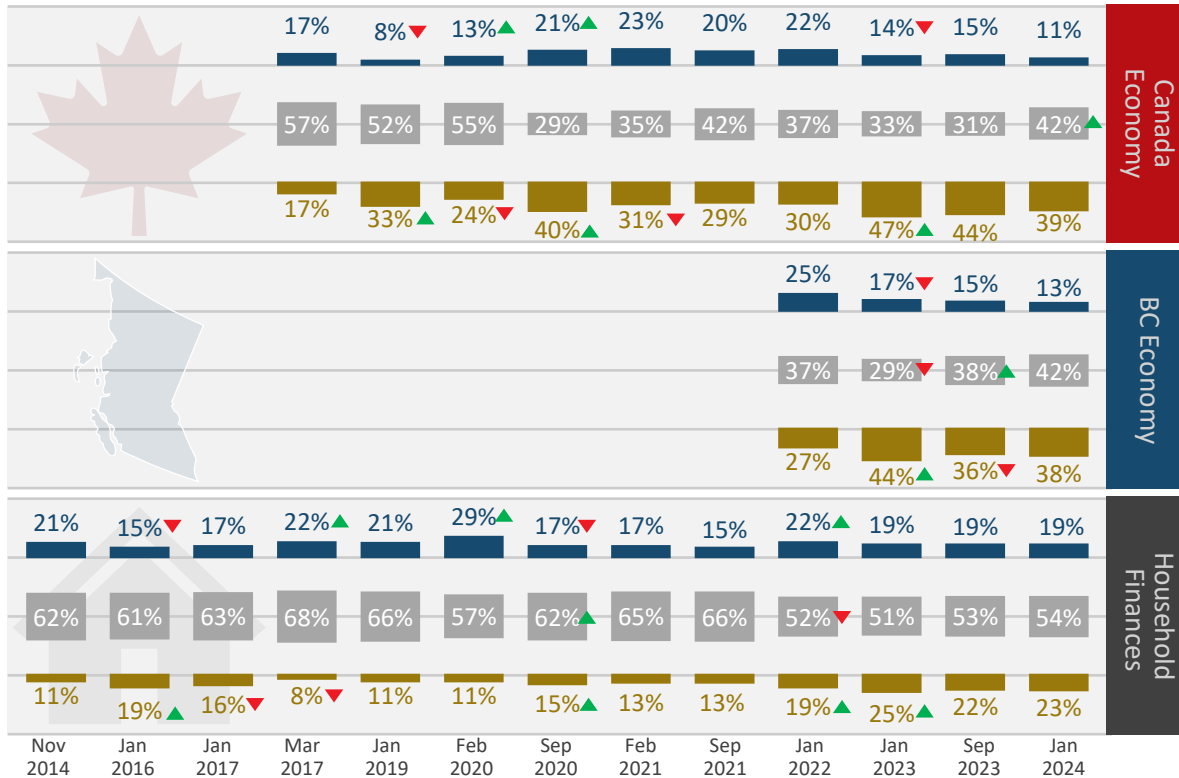
It may be that housing affordability – which has yet to be impacted – is driving economic views to a greater extent in this province than elsewhere, resulting in less visible recovery in confidence.



How would you describe the economic conditions in Canada today?
Thinking specifically about your home province/territory, how would you describe the economic conditions in ... today?
How would you describe your own household's finances today?

▲ Statistically significantly higher than previous wave.
▼ Statistically significantly lower than previous wave.

FUTURE ECONOMIC CONFIDENCE



Looking forward, expectations of the national and provincial economies— while still in negative territory – have started to improve. As such, while views of the current economy aren't yet trending upwards, there is a sense of hopefulness for the future.

Still, this has yet to trickle down to greater optimism on the household finance front, stable since September. Again, it may take more for British Columbians to perceive relief from affordability issues in this province.

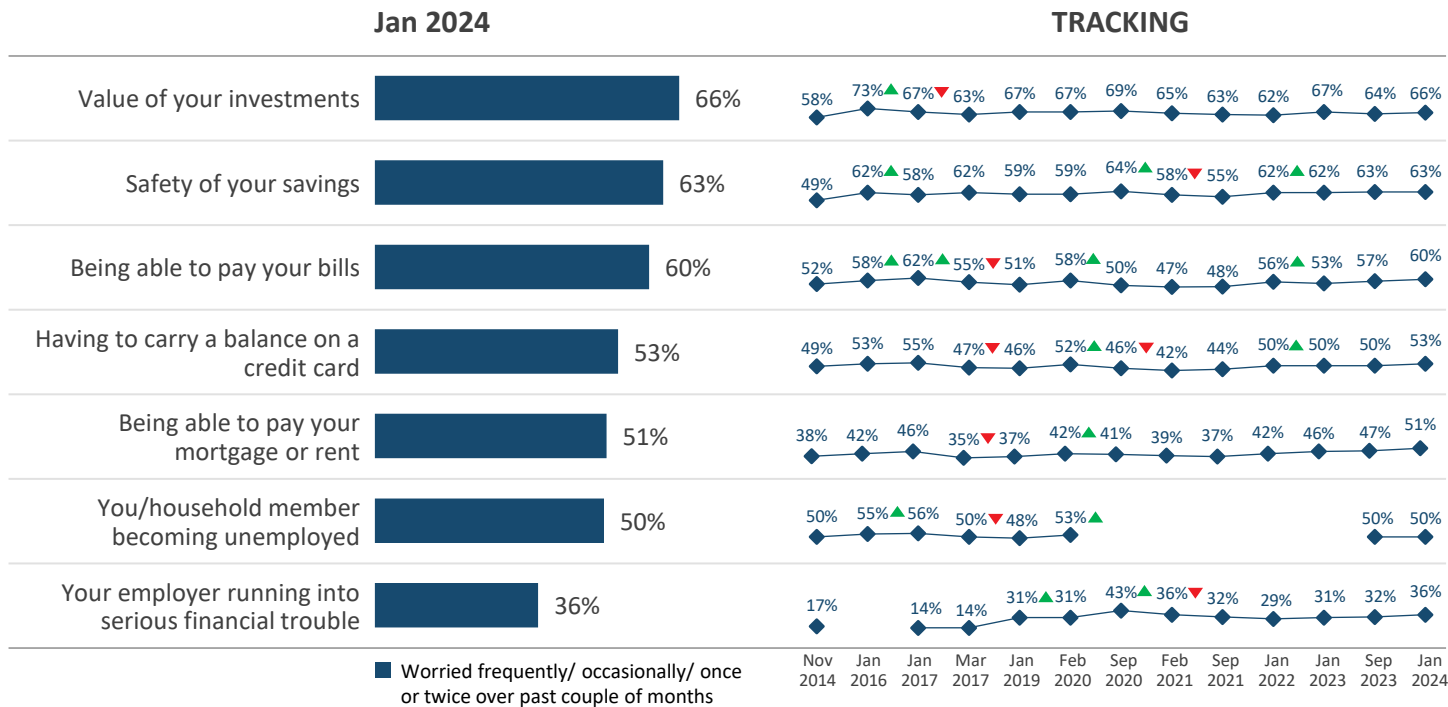
- Improve
- Stay the same
- Decline

Over the next six months, do you expect the Canadian economy to improve, remain the same, or decline?
 Thinking specifically about your home province/territory, over the next six months, do you expect the economy to improve, remain the same, or decline?
 Over the next six months, do you expect your own household's finances to improve, remain the same, or decline?

▲ Statistically significantly higher than previous wave.
 ▼ Statistically significantly lower than previous wave.

Worries

Reflecting general stable or softer of views about the economy and their finances, financial worries in BC are relatively little changed over the past two waves. Still, any small changes seen reflect increasing (rather than decreasing) worry in this province.

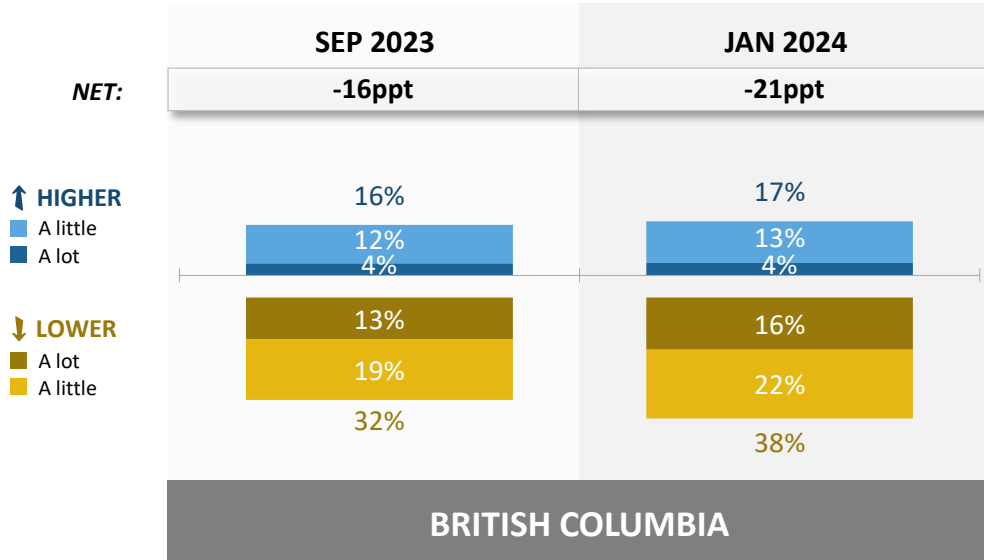


In the past couple of months, how often have you worried about each of the following?

▲ Statistically significantly higher than previous wave.
▼ Statistically significantly lower than previous wave.

OVERALL DISCRETIONARY SPENDING EXPECTATIONS

In keeping with generally pessimistic views, it is unlikely that many British Columbians will increase their discretionary spending in the short term. This wave, the number who plan to spend less is even slightly more outweighed by the number who plan to spend less this wave.



The next questions are about your **discretionary spending** – by this, we mean your spending on **non-essential** items (items that you can choose to spend your money on or not). Do you expect your discretionary spending in the **next 6 months** to be higher, about the same or lower compared to the past 6 months?

▲ Statistically significantly higher than previous wave.
▼ Statistically significantly lower than previous wave.

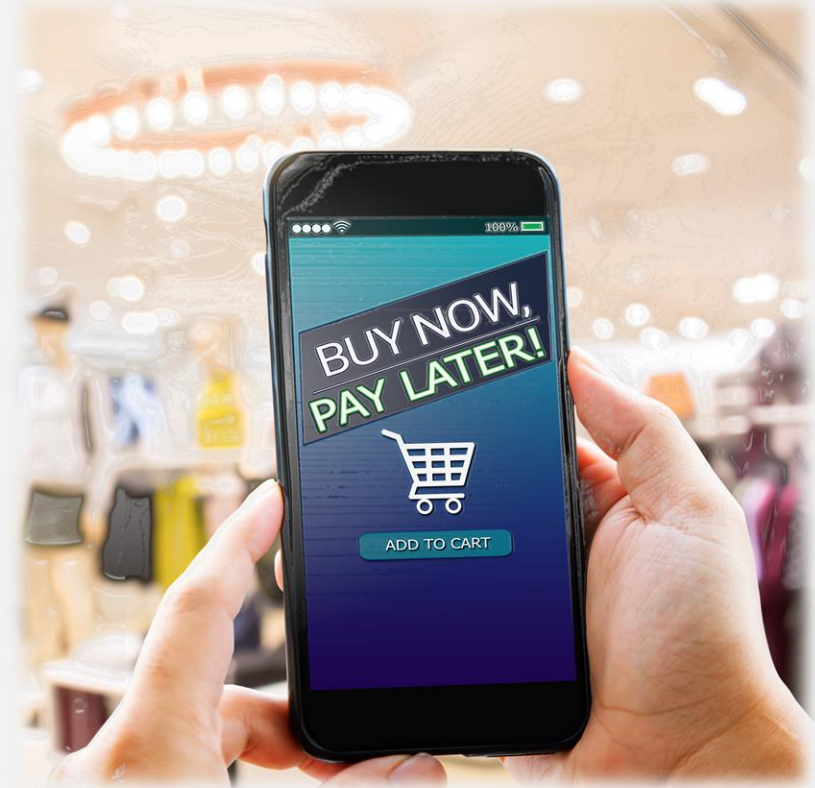
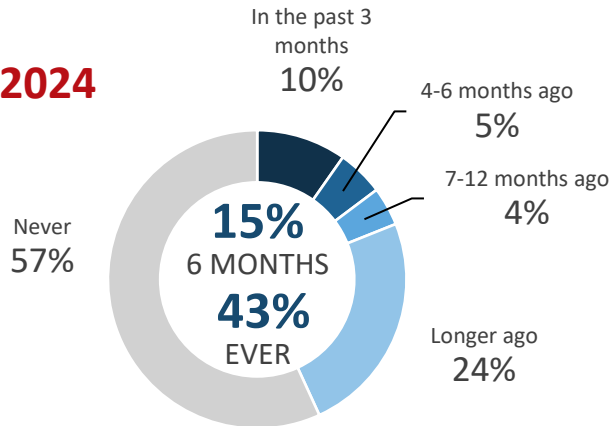
BUY NOW/PAY LATER (BNPL)

Use of BNPL is a newer trend in financing purchases, offered not by lenders like financial institutions or credit cards but directly from a retailer, website or other company.

Almost half of British Columbians have taken advantage of BNPL in the past, but use is probably infrequent for most, as just 15% have used it in the past 6 months and 10% over what can be considered the winter holiday period.

Use of BNPL is a little lower in BC than elsewhere (between 18% and 23% past six-months in other regions).

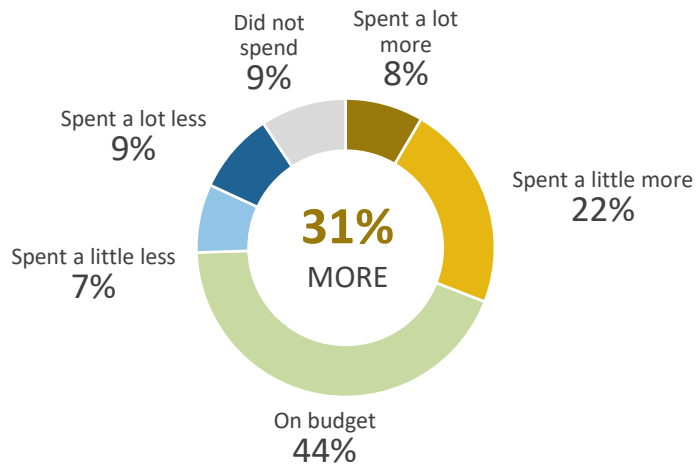
JAN 2024



WINTER HOLIDAY SPENDING VS. BUDGET

Despite economic concerns and pessimism, many British Columbians over-spent over the holiday season, at a fairly typically level to the national average (33%).

JAN 2024



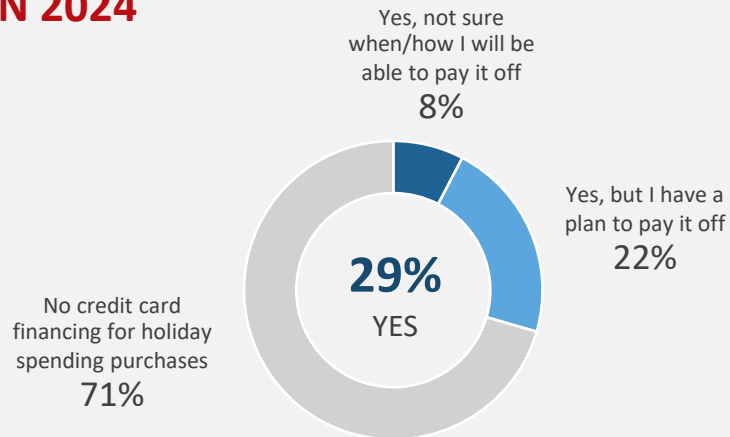
Thinking about spending related to the recent winter holiday season (including gifts, entertaining, and spending for yourself), how did it compare to your intentions/budget?

CREDIT CARD FINANCING FOR WINTER HOLIDAY PURCHASES

(Among Those Who Did Any Holiday Spending)

At over one-quarter, use of credit card is an expensive form of financing for holiday purchased used by many shoppers. Still, most have a plan to pay off their balances, with only 8% unsure how/when they will do so. British Columbians are also fairly average compared to national figures here.

JAN 2024



Did you/will you have to use any credit card financing (carrying a balance beyond when it is due) to pay for your recent winter holiday season spending?



APPENDIX



METHODOLOGY

- The LEO (Leger Opinion) panel is the largest Canadian panel with over 400,000 representative panelists from all regions of Canada. LEO was created by Leger based on a representative Canadian sample of Canadian citizens with Internet access.
 - Many of LEO's panelists were randomly selected through Leger's telephone call centre (RDD), panelists from more hard-to-reach target groups were also added to the panel through targeted recruitment campaigns. The double opt-in selection process, a model to detect fraud and the renewal of 25% of the panel each year ensures complete respondent quality. To ensure a higher response rate and reach people on their mobile devices, Leger has developed a high-performance Apple and Android application.
- The results presented in this study comply with the public opinion research standards and disclosure requirements of CRIC (the Canadian Research and Insights Council) and the global ESOMAR network. Leger is a founding member of CRIC and is actively involved in raising quality standards in the survey industry. President Jean-Marc Léger is a member of the CRIC's Board of Directors and the Canadian representative of ESOMAR.

WEIGHTED AND UNWEIGHTED SAMPLE (BC)

The tables below present the distribution of respondents for the most recent wave on key variables before and after weighting for the current waves.

GENDER	Unweighted	Weighted
Male	215	138
Female	185	146

AGE GROUP	Unweighted	Weighted
18-34	98	75
35-54	144	90
55+	158	119

NOTES ON READING THIS REPORT

- The numbers presented have been rounded. However, the numbers before rounding were used to calculate the sums presented and might therefore not correspond to the manual addition of these numbers.
- In this report, statistically significant differences in trending over time are shown as follows:
 - ▲ Statistically significantly higher than previous wave.
 - ▼ Statistically significantly lower than previous wave.
- In this report, statistically significant differences between subgroups are shown as follows:
 - ↑ Statistically significantly higher than comparison group(s).
 - ↓ Statistically significantly lower comparison group(s).

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)

600

EMPLOYEES



185

CONSULTANTS



8

OFFICES

MONTREAL | QUEBEC CITY | TORONTO | WINNIPEG
EDMONTON | CALGARY | VANCOUVER | NEW YORK

OUR COMMITMENTS TO QUALITY



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

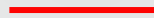


Leger is a member of [ESOMAR](#) (European Society for Opinion and Market Research), the global association of opinion polls and marketing research professionals. As such, Leger is committed to applying the [international ICC/ESOMAR](#) code of Market, Opinion and Social Research and Data Analytics.



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

Leger



We Know Canadians

STEVE MOSSOP

Executive Vice-President

smossop@leger360.com

604-424-1017

