



REPORT

# Economic Confidence

CANADA



JANUARY 2026

#10651-10014591



# 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 from the Canada-wide study January 2026.*



*Additional methodology details and detailed regional results can be found in the appendix.*

## Methodology

- Results are based on online research conducted with a representative sample of Canadian adults 18 years of age and older from LEO's (Leger Opinion) panel.
- Sample sizes and field dates:
  - 2,622 Canadians Jan 9-12, 2026.
  - 2,452 Canadians Sep 5-8, 2025.
  - 2,621 Canadians June 13-16, 2025.
  - 2,645 Canadians Jan 12-15, 2025.
  - 2,620 Canadians July 12-15, 2024.
  - 2,043 Canadians Jan 5-7, 2024.
  - 2,142 Canadians Sep 22-25, 2023.
  - 2,385 Canadians Jan 6-10, 2023.
  - 2,399 Canadians Jan 7-12, 2022.
  - 1,614 Canadians Feb 3-8, 2021.
  - 2,157 Canadians, Feb 10-18, 2020.
  - 1,004 Canadians, Jan 19 to 22, 2019.
  - 1,339 Canadians, Mar 20-23, 2017.
- The data was statistically weighted according to 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 2,622 would have a margin of error of  $\pm 1.9\%$ , 19 times out of 20.

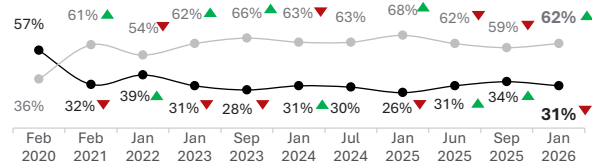


## NATIONAL ECONOMY

## Current Confidence

Confidence in the Canadian economy is stalled and remains in negative territory.

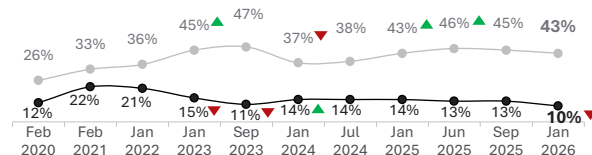
● Good/very good  
● Poor/very poor



## Future Confidence

Future expectations remain stubbornly pessimistic.

● Improve  
● Decline

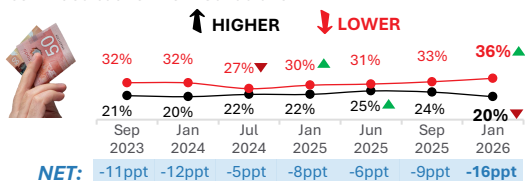


Economic confidence has yet to turn a corner. The modest optimism seen last fall has faded in the new year with early 2026 showing signs of growing caution among Canadians. Concerns around housing affordability, inflation and tariffs remain high, and it seems that shoppers are unlikely to splash out on discretionary purchases in the near term.

Canadians' elbows remain very prominent in the face of US tariffs, with a majority regularly avoiding buying from American suppliers. Forward-looking intentions indicating this behaviour will persist.

## Expected Discretionary Spending

Predictions about future discretionary spending showcase continued caution from Canadians.



## Ongoing US Tariff Impact

Varying modestly by product category, a majority of Canadians continue to routinely avoid buying US.

Future intentions indicate this will not only continue but that the trend may escalate.

## AVOID BUYING US BY CATEGORY

48% to 69%  
always or sometimes  
avoid buying US

29% to 37%  
less likely to buy US in  
next 6 months

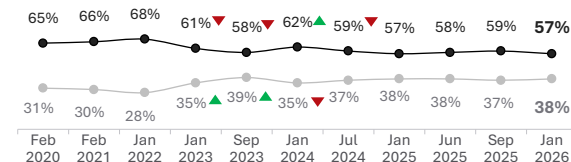


## HOUSEHOLD FINANCES

## Current Confidence

Views of household finances are – as usual – more positive and stable compared with that of the country.

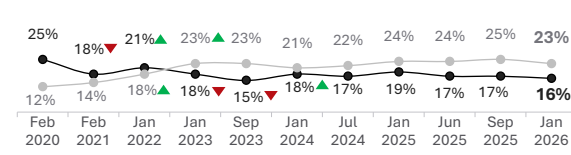
● Good/very good  
● Poor/very poor



## Future Confidence

Future confidence in household finances is also stable but continues to be more negative than positive.

● Improve  
● Decline



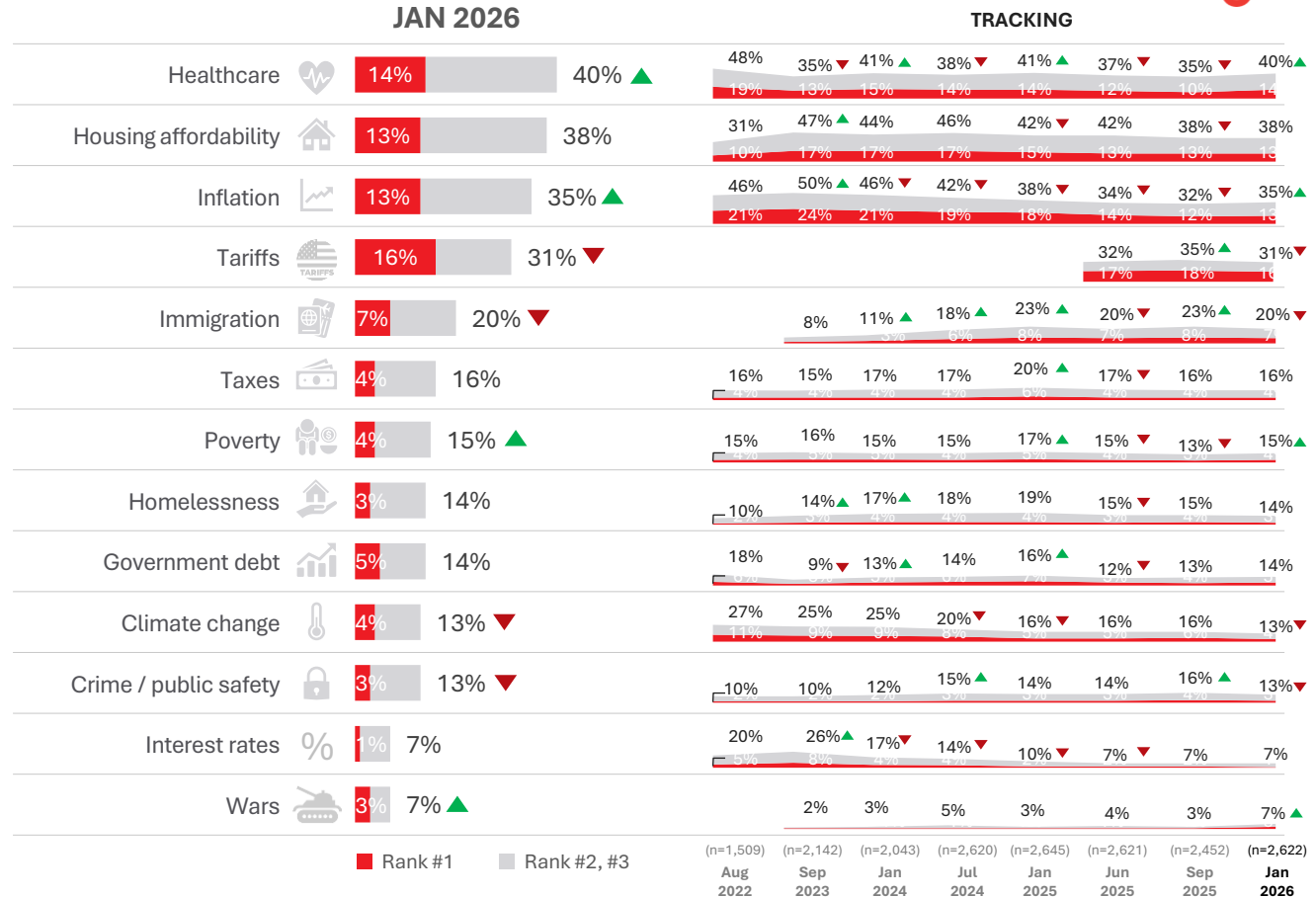
# IMPORTANT CANADIAN ISSUES AIDED

While concerns about tariffs from the US are still significant, they are somewhat less prominent than in 2025. Instead, attention has shifted toward other issues, including healthcare, inflation, poverty, and global conflict.

Despite lower interest rates and easing inflation, economic uncertainty remains firmly entrenched in the Canadian mindset in 2026, with housing affordability and inflation continuing to rank among the top concerns.

By contrast, immigration and crime/public safety – both less prominent in the current political discourse – have declined as issues of concern. Climate change has also continued to recede in salience, overshadowed by issues that are perhaps perceived as more immediate or pressing.

Note: Responses >6% for Jan 2026 are shown.



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

## CURRENT ECONOMIC PERCEPTIONS

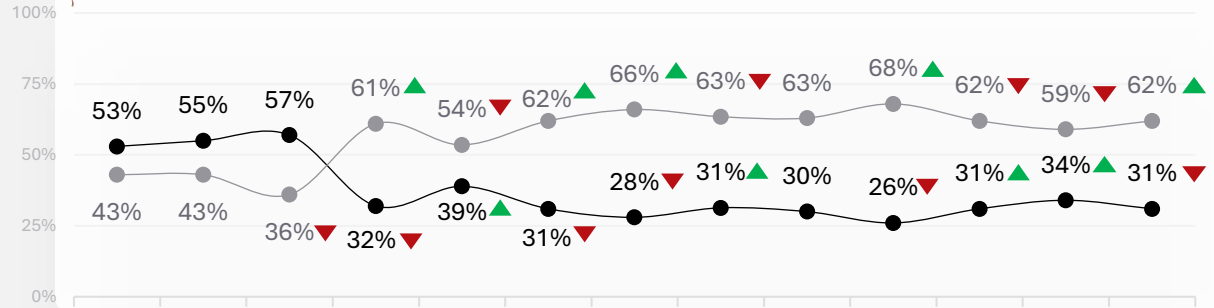
The increased optimism reflected in last fall's results has faded in the new year, with perceptions of the Canadian economy reverting to levels last seen in the summer. Any upward momentum appears to have been short-lived, with views now firmly plateaued in assessments of how the nation is faring.

As is typically the case, perceptions of household finances are notably more positive than views of the national economy and have remained virtually unchanged over the past year and a half.

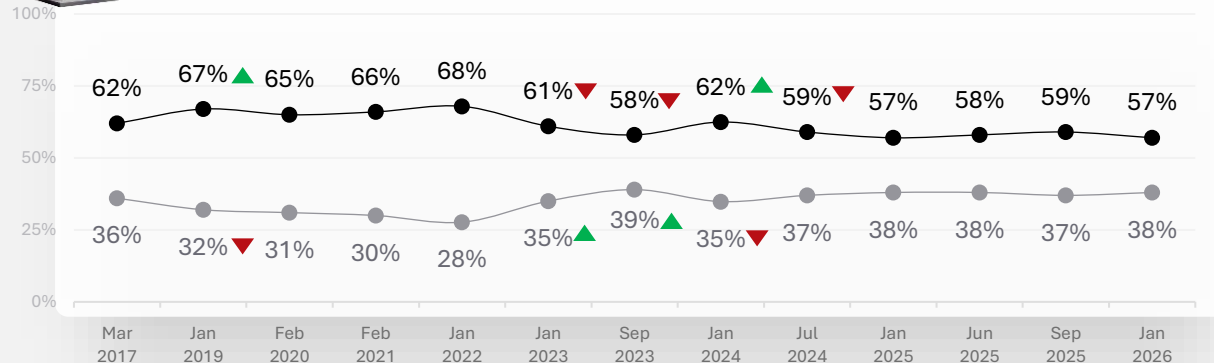
- Good/very good
- Poor/very poor



### Canada Economy



### Household Finances



▲ ▼ Statistically significantly higher/lower than previous wave

# FUTURE ECONOMIC CONFIDENCE

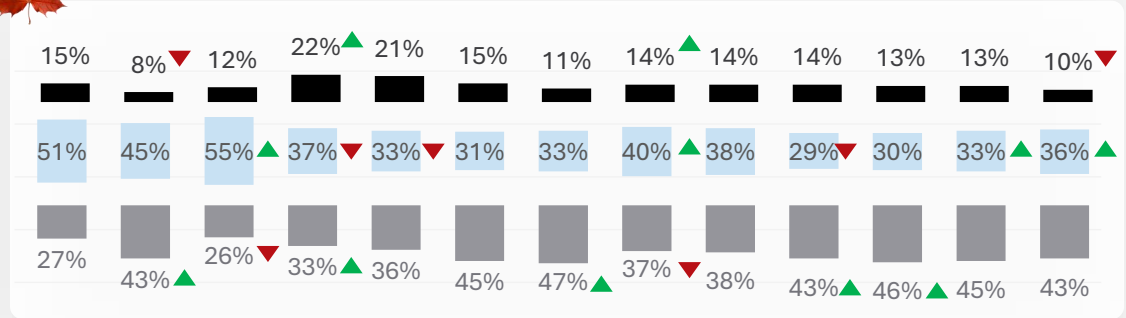
Expectations for the national economy to make positive strides over the next six months remain stalled. A plurality of Canadians continue to anticipate a decline, while only a small minority expect improvement.

In line with current sentiment, outlooks for household finances largely point to the status quo and are notably more stable than expectations for the broader Canadian economy.

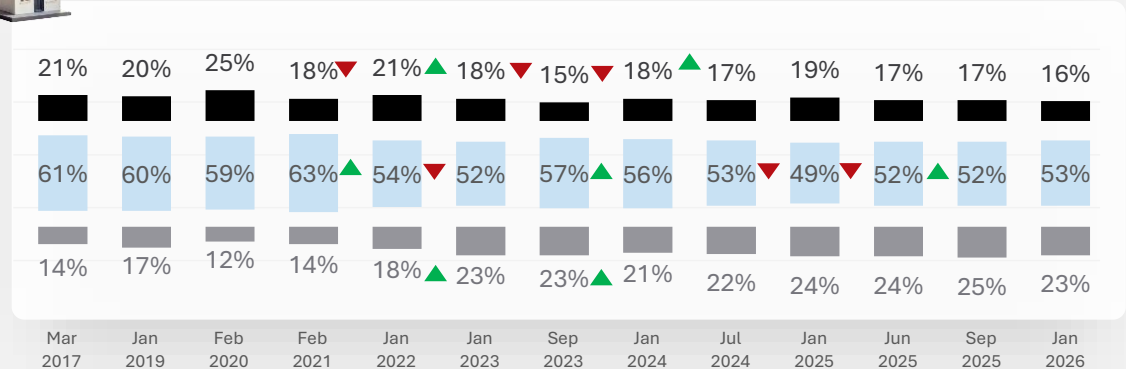
- Improve
- Stay the same
- Decline



## Canada Economy

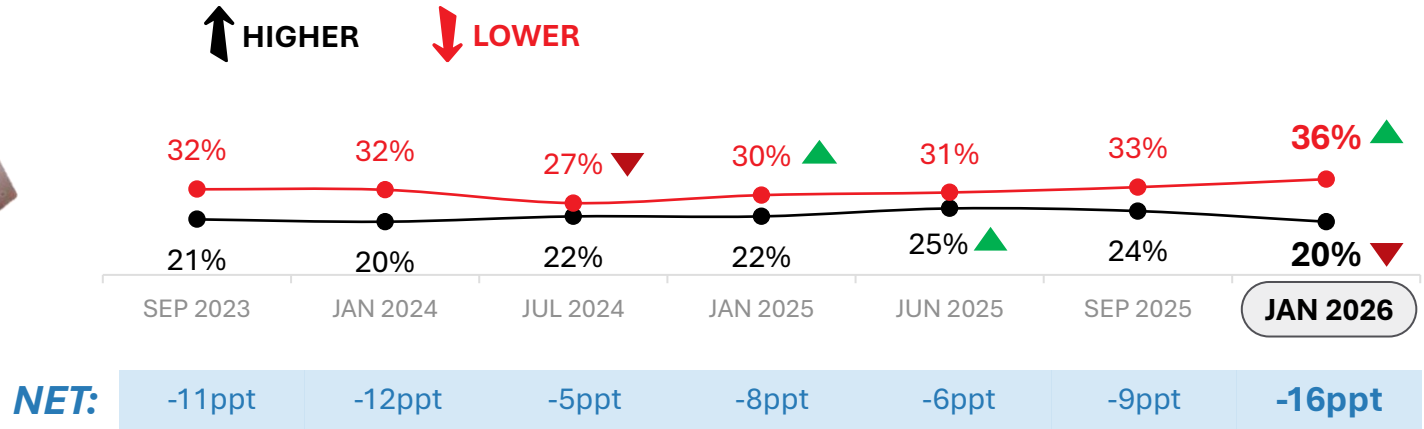


## Household Finances



# OVERALL DISCRETIONARY SPENDING EXPECTATIONS

Canadians' expectations for discretionary spending over the next six months are more negative this January than at any point in the more than two-year history of this measure. Compared with just four months ago, there has been a 4 ppt decline in the share planning to increase their spending, alongside a 3 ppt increase in those planning a decrease. Expectations are now even softer than at the same time last year, pointing to a heightened risk of further economic retrenchment as pessimism about the future persists.

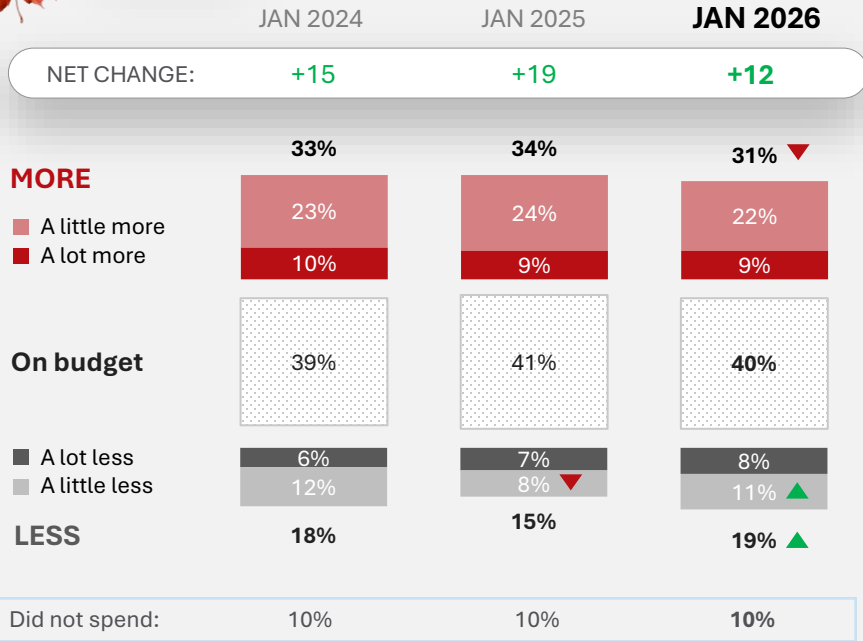


# WINTER HOLIDAY SPENDING VS. BUDGET

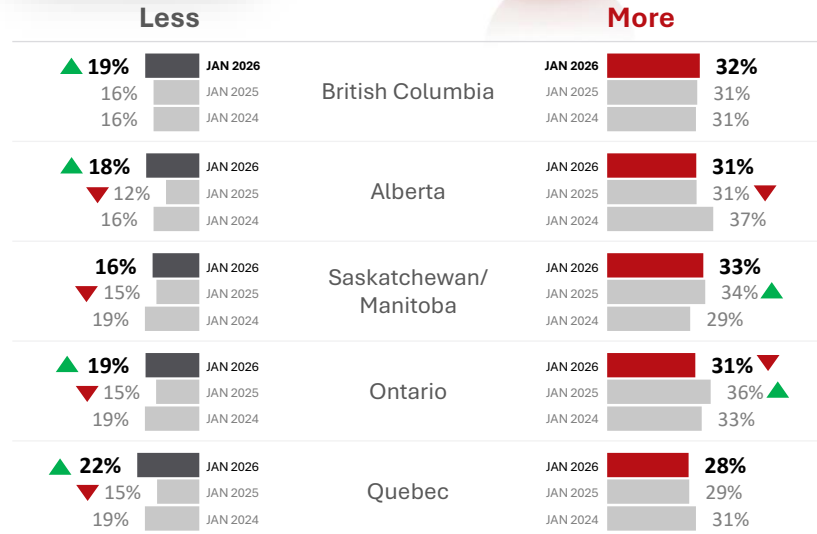
Despite generally gloomy expectations for the economy and discretionary spending, Canadians were – as is typically the case – more likely to exceed their budgets than come in under when shopping during the winter holiday season. That said, results are somewhat softer than last year, reinforcing broader signs of pessimism and a reduced willingness to take economic risks.



## CANADA



## By Region



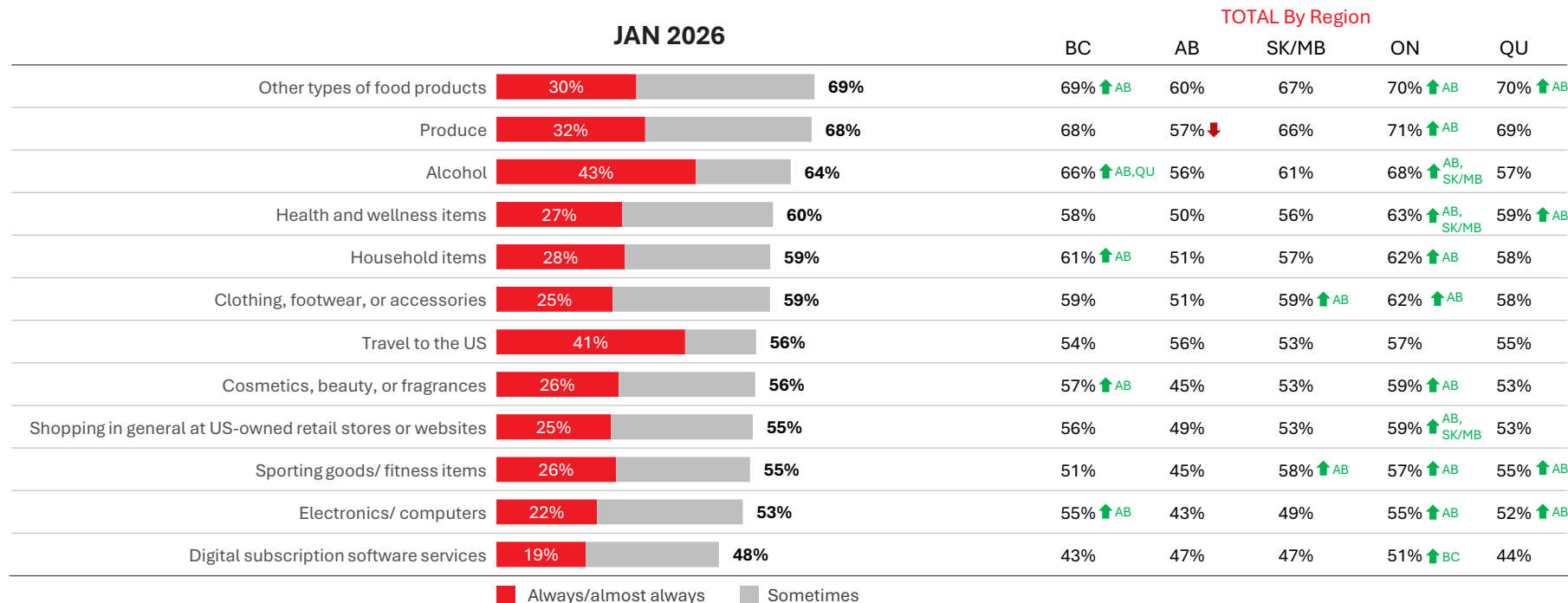


# CURRENT AVOIDING BUYING ALWAYS/SOMETIMES FROM THE US

(Among Buyers of Each)

Between half and seven in ten Canadians report that they always or sometimes avoid purchasing products and services from US suppliers. While this behaviour is evident across all provinces, it varies modestly by region and product category, with Albertans overall somewhat less inclined toward avoidance.

Food (both produce and other grocery items) and beverages (particularly alcohol) are where the largest majorities are taking a stand. Notably, Canadians are most “absolute” in their avoidance when it comes to alcohol purchases and travel to the US, with the highest proportions saying they always or almost always avoid these categories. By contrast, avoidance is most challenging in the area of digital subscription services, which are heavily dominated by US-based providers such as Netflix.

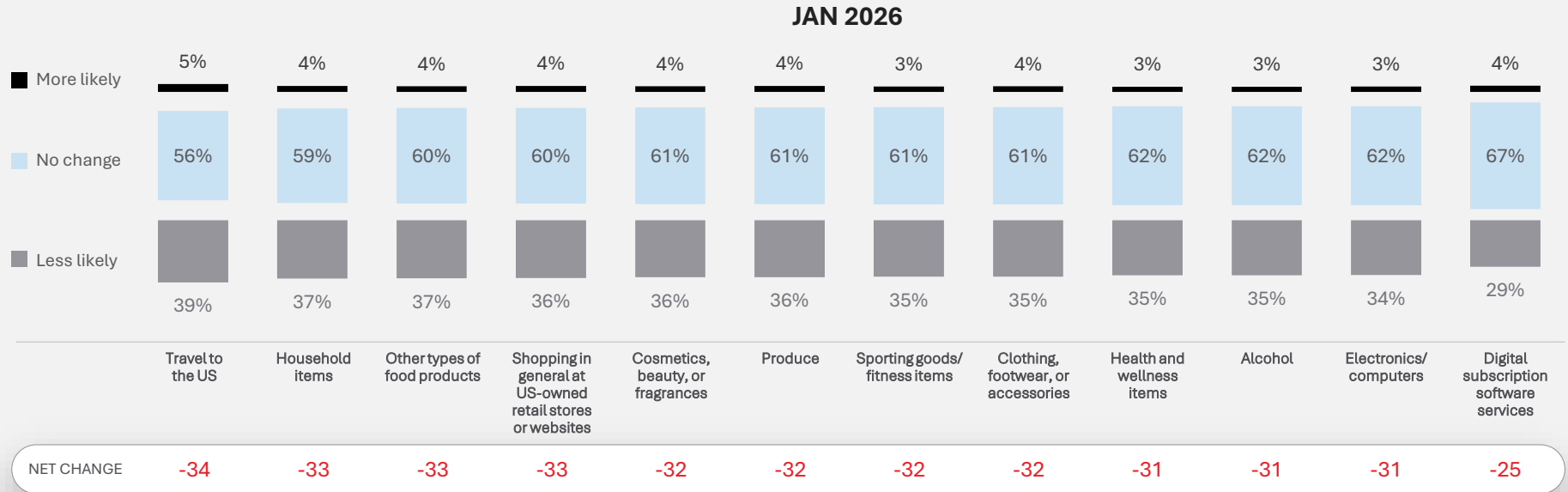


# FUTURE LIKELIHOOD TO CONSIDER BUYING FROM THE US

(Among Buyers of Each)

Reflecting their “elbows up” attitudes, a strong majority of Canadians report currently avoiding purchases from the US across all categories tested. Moreover, a notable minority (one in three or more) plan to intensify these efforts and be even less likely to buy from the US over the next six months. Only a very small share anticipate backtracking and becoming more likely to purchase from US suppliers in the near term.

Taken together, these findings clearly indicate that avoidance of US products and services is not a short-term reaction, but a trend with staying power.



# Appendix



## METHODOLOGY

- The LEO (Leger Opinion) panel is the largest Canadian panel with over 450,000 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 app.
- 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

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

Region	Unweighted	Weighted
BC	401	366
AB	400	292
SK/MB	700	169
ON	605	1,014
QU	414	607
Atlantic	102	174

Gender	Unweighted	Weighted
Male	1,270	1,280
Female	1,352	1,342

Age group	Unweighted	Weighted
18-34	588	695
35-54	835	846
55+	1,199	1,081

## 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/lower than previous wave

- In this report, statistically significant differences between subgroups are shown as follows:

↑↓ Statistically significantly higher/ lower than comparison group(s)

# MOST IMPORTANT CANADIAN ISSUE: **AIDED x REGION**

## TOP 3 MOST IMPORTANT ISSUES

	British Columbia							Alberta							Saskatchewan/ Manitoba						
	Sep 2023 n= 410	Jan 2024 400	Jul 2024 405	Jan 2025 410	Jun 2025 402	Sep 2025 401	Jan 2026 401	Sep 2023 408	Jan 2024 401	Jul 2024 401	Jan 2025 412	Jun 2025 400	Sep 2025 193	Jan 2026 400	Sep 2023 142	Jan 2024 127	Jul 2024 700	Jan 2025 700	Jun 2025 700	Sep 2025 700	Jan 2026 700
Healthcare	36%	43% ▲	39%	40%	43%	39%	<b>42%</b>	33%	33%	33%	41% ▲	33% ▼	36%	<b>45% ▲</b>	41%	46%	39%	49% ▲	39% ▼	39%	<b>41%</b>
Housing affordability	54%	57%	52%	45% ▼	42%	43%	<b>44%</b>	40%	40%	44%	38%	37%	28%	<b>29%</b>	29%	29%	32%	31%	33%	27%	<b>30%</b>
Inflation	47%	42%	41%	43%	30% ▼	30%	<b>35%</b>	56%	50%	51%	44% ▼	41%	41%	<b>44%</b>	56%	53%	45%	43%	36% ▼	35%	<b>39%</b>
Tariffs	-	-	-	-	29%	33%	<b>24%</b>	-	-	-	-	26%	28% ▲	<b>24%</b>	-	-	-	-	28%	32%	<b>29%</b>
Immigration	6%	7%	14% ▲	15%	18%	17%	<b>13%</b>	10%	10%	15% ▲	21% ▲	19%	28% ▲	<b>25%</b>	3%	8%	14% ▲	18% ▲	17%	21%	<b>17%</b>
Taxes	10%	20% ▲	21%	25%	17% ▼	17%	<b>16%</b>	16%	20%	22%	17%	17%	17%	<b>18%</b>	27%	21%	25%	24%	21%	19%	<b>18%</b>
Poverty	15%	11%	12%	12%	13%	10%	<b>14%</b>	12%	14%	15%	17%	15%	13%	<b>11%</b>	18%	8% ▼	13%	15%	15%	14%	<b>15%</b>
Homelessness	16%	20%	23%	22%	18%	18%	<b>20%</b>	12%	15%	15%	17%	14%	14%	<b>11%</b>	9%	21% ▲	17%	19%	12% ▼	15%	<b>16%</b>
Government debt	5%	13% ▲	15%	17%	11% ▼	10%	<b>14%</b>	13%	18% ▲	15%	20%	16%	14%	<b>20%</b>	13%	13%	17%	19%	16%	11% ▼	<b>14%</b>
Climate change	28%	27%	24%	18% ▼	14%	18%	<b>14%</b>	21%	16%	13%	17%	15%	14%	<b>10%</b>	14%	22%	15%	13%	11%	11%	<b>8%</b>
Crime / public safety	17%	12% ▼	14%	19%	19%	21%	<b>17%</b>	12%	17% ▲	14%	10%	13%	11%	<b>11%</b>	9%	21% ▲	22%	21%	25%	25%	<b>21%</b>
Interest rates	21%	13% ▼	9%	8%	6%	7%	<b>5%</b>	30%	18% ▼	14%	10%	7%	6%	<b>6%</b>	31%	18% ▼	11%	8%	6%	7%	<b>4% ▼</b>
Wars	2%	1%	3%	3%	3%	3%	<b>7% ▲</b>	2%	1%	3%	3%	3%	1%	<b>3%</b>	5%	5%	5%	3%	3%	2%	<b>7% ▲</b>

Note: Responses >6% for Jan 2026 are shown.










































What is the number one important issue facing Canada today?

What is the second most important issue? The third most important?

▲ ▼ Statistically significantly higher/lower than previous wave

# MOST IMPORTANT CANADIAN ISSUE: **AIDED x REGION**

## TOP 3 MOST IMPORTANT ISSUES

TOP 3 MOST IMPORTANT ISSUES		Ontario							Quebec						
		Sep 2023 <small>n=</small> 640	Jan 2024 601	Jul 2024 601	Jan 2025 602	Jun 2025 605	Sep 2025 624	Jan 2026 605	Sep 2023 436	Jan 2024 414	Jul 2024 412	Jan 2025 419	Jun 2025 413	Sep 2025 428	Jan 2026 414
	Healthcare	32%	33%	34%	37%	33%	30%	38% 	37%	50% 	41% 	40%	40%	36%	36%
	Housing affordability	51%	43% 	49% 	45%	42%	42%	41%	43%	40%	42%	40%	42%	37%	38%
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	Immigration	9%	13% 	19% 	25% 	20% 	22%	22%	8%	12%	22% 	26%	22% 	25%	20%
	Taxes	19%	17%	15%	21% 	18%	17%	17%	9%	13%	14%	15%	12%	11%	14%
	Poverty	17%	16%	16%	16%	15%	14%	14%	17%	18%	16%	20%	14% 	14%	19%
	Homelessness	17%	20%	18%	19%	17%	15%	16%	12%	10%	14%	17%	13%	13%	7% 
	Government debt	9%	12%	12%	12%	11%	12%	10%	10%	12%	18% 	21%	13% 	15%	17%
	Climate change	19%	21%	17%	11% 	14%	13%	12%	36%	38%	26% 	23%	22%	20%	19%
	Crime / public safety	11%	13%	17%	15%	17%	22% 	14% 	6%	9%	11%	12%	7% 	6%	7%
	Interest rates	24%	17% 	15%	9% 	8%	7%	8%	30%	19% 	17%	10% 	6% 	9%	10%
	Wars	2%	4%	4%	3%	3%	3%	6% 	3%	3%	7%	5%	6%	5%	9% 

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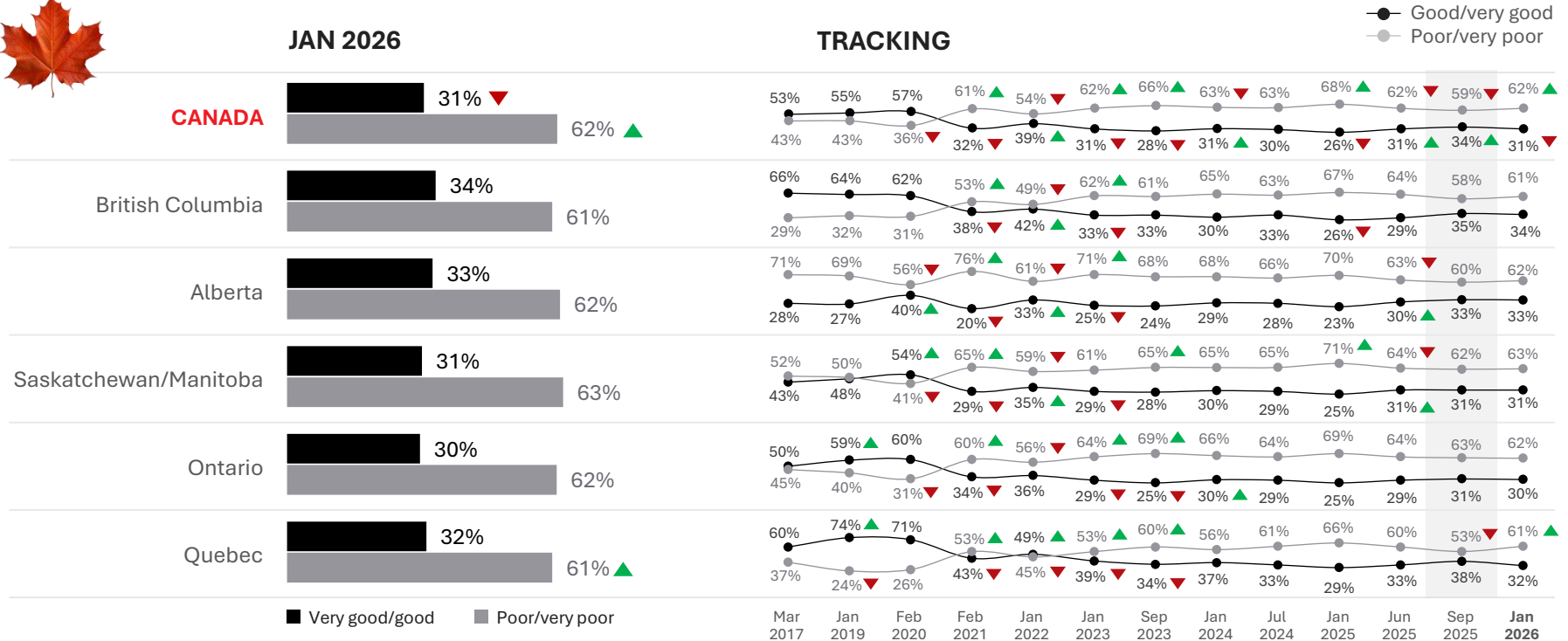
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What is the second most important issue? The third most important?

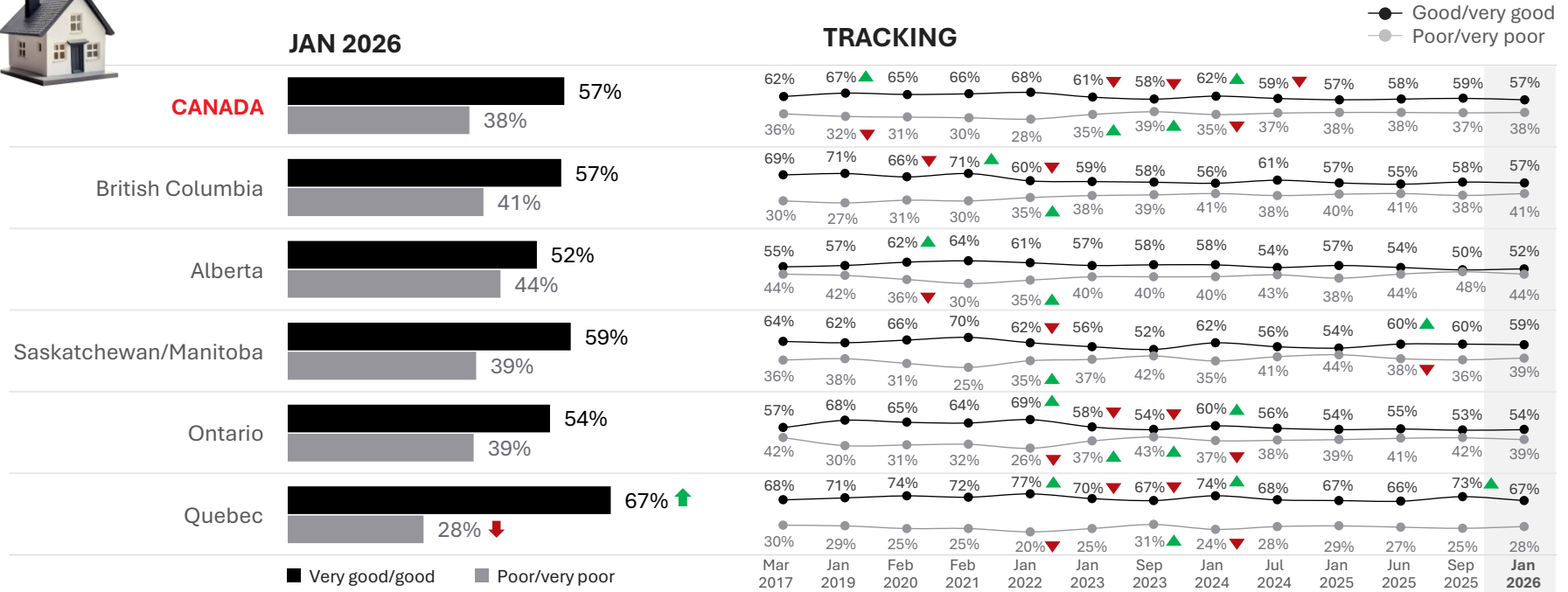
▲▼ Statistically significantly higher/lower than previous wave



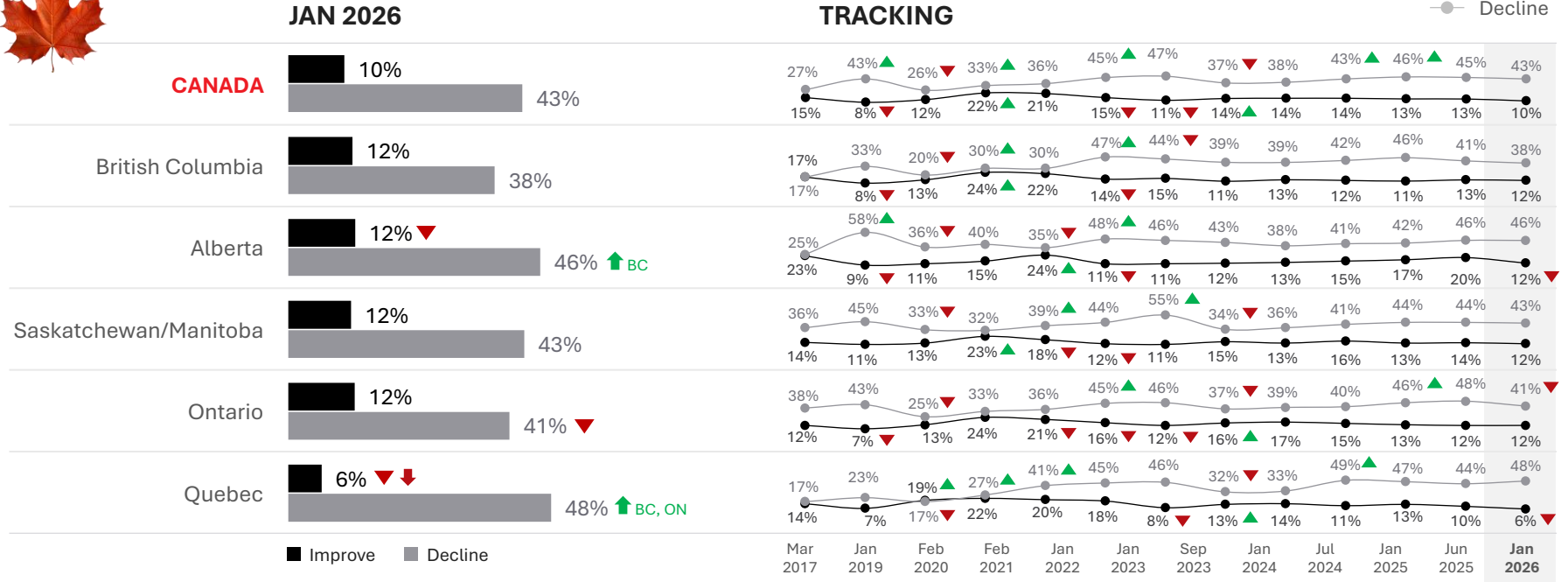
# CURRENT CANADIAN ECONOMIC PERCEPTIONS x REGION



# CURRENT HOUSEHOLD ECONOMIC PERCEPTIONS x REGION



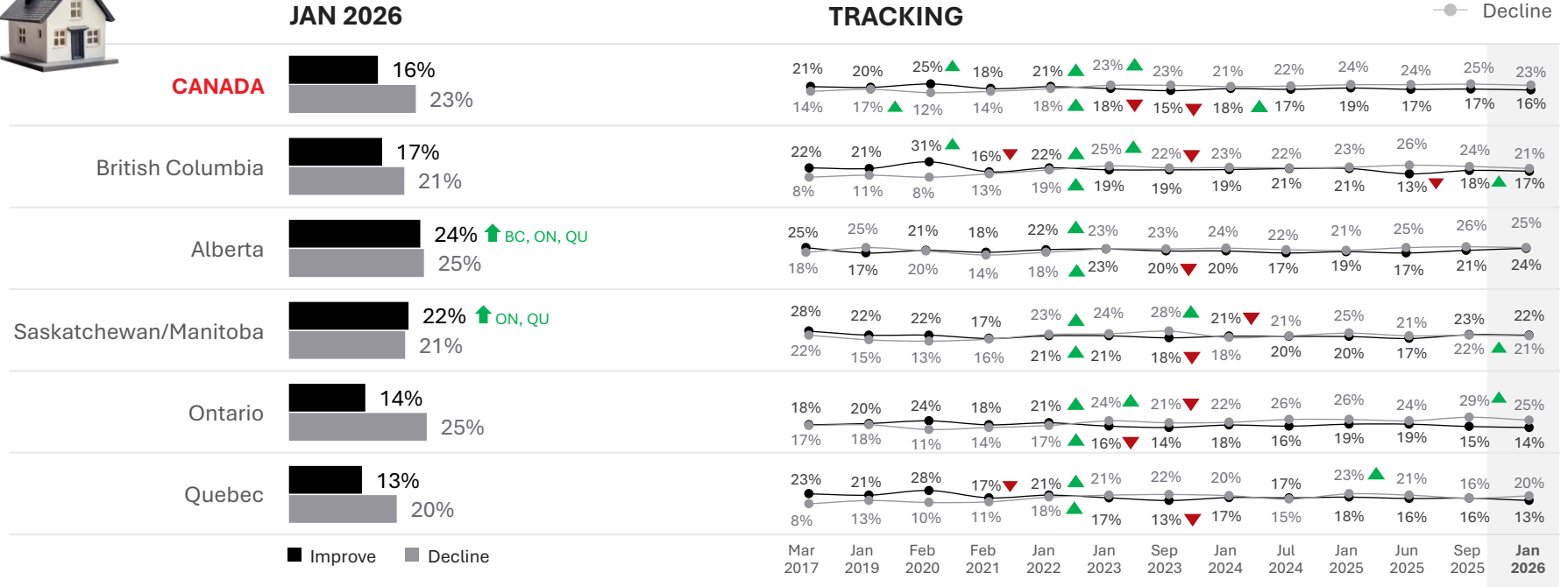
# FUTURE CANADIAN ECONOMIC PERCEPTIONS x REGION



Over the next six months, do you expect the Canadian economy to improve, remain the same, or decline?

▲ Statistically significantly higher/lower than previous wave  
 ▲ Statistically significantly higher/lower than comparison group(s)

# FUTURE HOUSEHOLD ECONOMIC PERCEPTIONS x REGION



Over the next six months, do you expect your own household's finances to improve, remain the same, or decline?

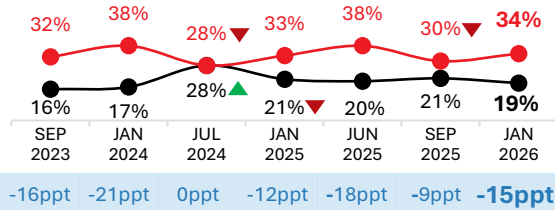
▲ ▼ Statistically significantly higher/lower than previous wave  
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# OVERALL DISCRETIONARY SPENDING EXPECTATIONS x REGION

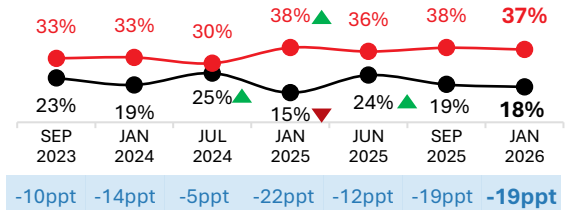


↑ HIGHER ↓ LOWER

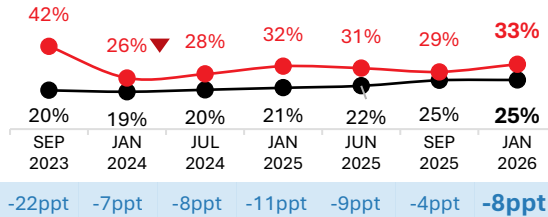
## BRITISH COLUMBIA



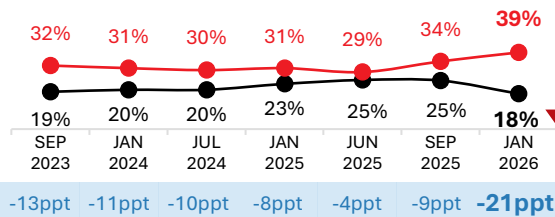
## ALBERTA



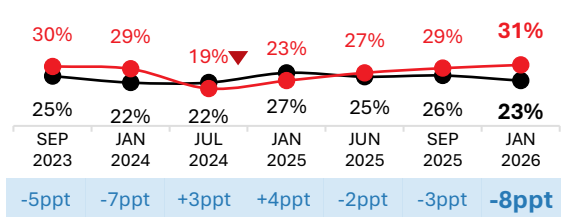
## SASKATCHEWAN / MANITOBA



## ONTARIO




## QUEBEC



# LESS LIKELY TO CONSIDER BUYING FROM THE US x REGION

(Among Buyers of Each)

JAN 2026	TOTAL	BC	AB	SK/MB	ON	QU
Travel to the US	39%	35%	36%	39%	40%	40%
Household items	37%	33%	33%	39%	39%	37%
Other types of food products	37%	37%	34%	37%	35%	36%
Shopping in general at US-owned retail stores or websites	36%	36%	33%	37%	38%	34%
Cosmetics, beauty, or fragrances	36%	31%	33%	35%	37%	36%
Produce	36%	34%	34%	35%	35%	36%
Sporting goods / fitness items	35%	32%	33%	35%	36%	36%
Clothing, footwear, or accessories	35%	33%	32%	37%	36%	35%
Health and wellness items	35%	31%	32%	36%	36%	35%
Alcohol	35%	32%	27%	35%	33%	39%  AB
Electronics / computers	34%	31%	30%	35%	36%	35%
Digital subscription software services	29%	27%	27%	29%	28%	30%

Compared to how you have felt about buying products from the USA in the past 6 months or so, do you think you will be more or less likely to consider buying these items from the USA in the NEXT six months, or will how you feel about buying them not be likely change?

  Statistically significantly higher/ lower than 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)

**300**  
employees

**185**  
consultants

**8**  
offices

MONTRÉAL | QUÉBEC |  
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 is a sponsor of [CAIP Canada](#), Canada's professional body for Certified Analytics and Insights Professionals who uphold CRIC's marketing research and public opinion research standards. CAIP Canada is globally endorsed by ESOMAR and the MRII/University of Georgia.



# Contact Us

For more information on this study, please contact our experts:



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