



Canadian  
Survey

AmericasBarometer

2025 SERIES

# Trust in Political Institutions in Canada



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# Environics Institute

For Survey Research

The Environics Institute for Survey Research was established by Michael Adams in 2006 with a mandate to conduct in-depth public opinion and social research on the issues shaping Canada's future. It is through such research that Canadians can better understand themselves and their changing society.

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## AmericasBarometer

These results are from the Canadian portion of the 2025–26 AmericasBarometer, a regular comparative survey of democratic values and behaviours that covers countries in North, Central and South America, as well as a significant number of countries in the Caribbean (the 2025–26 study will cover 20 countries).

The project is led by the LAPOP Lab at Vanderbilt University's Center for Global Democracy (CGD) and was conducted by the Environics Institute for Survey Research, in partnership with CGD's LAPOP Lab at Vanderbilt University and with the support of the Max Bell Foundation.

The survey was conducted online with a sample of 3,550 Canadians (aged 18 and over) between July 30 and August 7, 2025. The results are weighted by region, age, gender, education and language so as to be fully representative of the Canadian population.

This report also includes results from the companion survey conducted in the United States. This survey was conducted online with a 1,600 Americans, 18 years of age and older, between October 3 and 16, 2025. The results are weighted by region, age, gender, education and ethnicity so as to be fully representative of the American population.

[See our website for more reports from this survey.](#)

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# Are Canadians losing trust in government?

The popularity of particular political leaders and parties inevitably rises and falls over time. But, in a democracy, it is expected that these feelings should not affect citizens' underlying support for the institutions of democratic government.

Over the longer term – that is, over several decades following the end of the Second World War – citizens in Western democracies became less obedient toward authority and more questioning, particularly as they became more educated and informed. That longer-term trend notwithstanding, concerns have been expressed more recently that we have grown even less trusting of government – with a shift in the public's mindset from healthy skepticism toward anger and disillusionment. Such a change could create opportunities for authoritarian movements to gain support on the basis of promises of more radical change.

Reports of declining trust in government often grab the headlines and fuel commentary for this reason, but the evidence from survey research led by the Environics Institute paints a much more nuanced picture. Rather than steadily declining, levels of trust tend to oscillate as circumstances change. For instance, trust in democratic actors and institutions generally rose in Canada after the onset of the pandemic, as governments responded by providing emergency financial support and procuring vaccines. Trust subsequently dipped as the pandemic subsided and as economic conditions (particularly the cost of living) worsened.

It is also important to distinguish between the extent of trust (whether trust is high or low) and the trend over time (whether trust is rising or falling). Few Canadians typically express a lot of trust in politicians or political parties; however, this is neither new nor necessarily worsening over time.

The AmericasBarometer surveys conducted in Canada by the Environics Institute have been tracking trust in political institutions and actors in a consistent way since 2010. The results of the latest survey, conducted in the summer of 2025, provide a comprehensive update. They show that the extent to which Canadians trust political actors and institutions has, in most cases, held steady over the past 15 years. In some cases, trust has increased. The results also cast doubt on the assumption that young people, in particular, are losing trust in the political system. If one age group stands out, it is older people, not younger people – older Canadians are much more likely to express strong support for the country’s political system.

Where trust *has* been declining over the past decade is among supporters of the Conservative Party – since the party was defeated in 2015. As a result of this trend, the current extent of the gaps in trust between supporters of the Liberal and Conservative parties in Canada are now as wide in some cases as those between supporters of the Republican and Democratic parties in the U.S. – with the exception that trust is

higher among supporters of the more left-wing party in Canada, but the more right-wing party in the U.S. The key distinction is not between left- and right-wing parties, but between governing and opposition parties (or between election winners and losers). Only time will tell whether trust will rebound significantly among supporters of the Conservative Party once their party returns to power, or whether this decline in trust over the past decade will prove more difficult to reverse.



# Key findings

- Support among Canadians for the country's political system has held steady over the past 15 years. Specifically, there has been no increase in the proportion expressing a low degree of support.
- Only a minority of Canadians say they have a lot of trust in political actors and institutions, such as the Prime Minister, Parliament and political parties. However, this proportion has not been declining over time; in fact, in some cases, it has increased.
- The proportion currently expressing a lot of trust in the Prime Minister of Canada is now the highest registered since this series of surveys began in 2010; the proportion is also twice as high as it was a decade ago.
- Very few Canadians have a lot of trust in political parties. But the proportion saying they don't trust political parties at all has nonetheless declined by 14 percentage points over the past decade.
- Relatively few Canadians have a lot of trust in the mass media. In this case, however, the proportion with low trust is trending upwards, albeit gradually.
- Canadians are more likely to say they have a lot of trust in elements of the justice system, such as the RCMP and the Supreme Court, than in political institutions, such as Parliament or political parties. Trust in these parts of the justice system has not declined over time.
- There are some differences among age groups in the proportions that express the strongest support for Canada's political system. But it is older, not younger, Canadians who stand out. Those age 60 and older are much more likely than those age 59 and younger to express a lot of support for the political system, as well as a lot of pride in living under the country's political system.
- In none of the measures covered in this report do younger Canadians stand out as experiencing a decline of trust over time (since 2010).

- Those whose preferred party has won the most recent election (or elections) tend to have more positive opinions about the trustworthiness of the political system. This is the case for both Liberal Party supporters in Canada and for Republican Party supporters in the United States.
- The current extent of the gaps in trust between supporters of the Republican and Democratic parties in the U.S. is very similar to that between supporters of the Liberal and Conservative parties in Canada – with the exception that trust is higher among supporters of the more left-wing party in Canada, but the more right-wing party in the U.S. (that is to say, the parties currently in power in each country).
- Trust in some institutions was as low among Liberal Party supporters when they were in opposition prior to the 2015 election as it has been after that election among Conservative Party supporters.



In none of the measures covered in this report do younger Canadians stand out as experiencing a decline of trust over time.

# Is trust declining?

The extent to which Canadians express support for the country's political system has held steady over the past 15 years. At the same time, while only a minority of Canadians say they have a lot of trust in political actors and institutions – such as the Prime Minister, Parliament and political parties – this proportion also has not been declining over time; in fact, in some cases, it has increased.

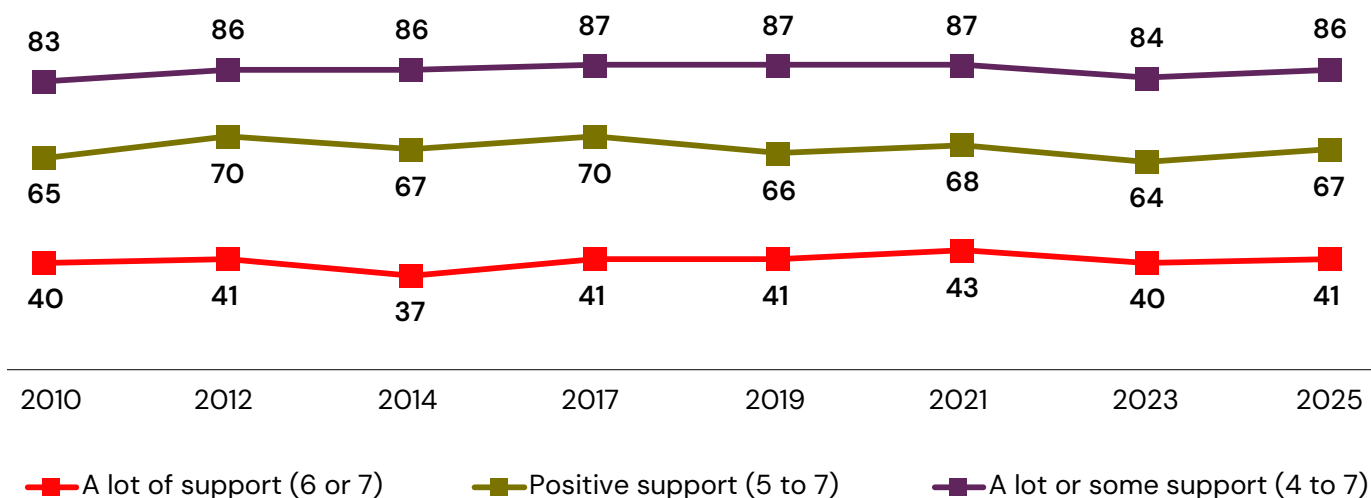
## Support for the political system

Most Canadians express at least some support for the country's political system. In fact, almost nine in ten (86%) say they think that one should support the political system of Canada. This figure includes all those who answer at the midpoint or higher on a seven-point scale (that is, 4 to 7 on a scale where 7 means "a lot of support" and 1 means "no support at all").

**Figure 1**

### Support for the political system of Canada: three different measures

2010 – 2025



*To what extent do you think that one should support the political system of Canada? (Using a scale ranging from 1 to 7, where 1 means "not at all" and 7 means "a lot.")*

Answers can be grouped in a variety of ways. The proportion expressing a lot of support (6 or 7 on the scale) stands at 41 percent. A majority (67%) expresses a positive degree of support, providing an answer above the midpoint of the scale (5 to 7).

Only eight percent of Canadians express low support for the political system (answering either 1 or 2 on the scale).

Whichever measure is used, the trend is stable over time. The proportion expressing a lot of support for the country’s political system has hovered around 40 percent across eight surveys conducted since 2010. And there has been no increase over time in the proportion saying the system does not deserve a lot of support.

## Table 1

### Canada’s political system: support, pride and respect

2010 – 2025

To what extent do you...									
Survey year	...think that one should support the political system of Canada?			...feel proud of living under the political system of Canada?			...respect the political institutions of Canada?		
	A lot	Some	Not a lot	A lot	Some	Not a lot	A lot	Some	Not a lot
2010	40	51	9	35	52	12	18	62	20
2012	41	50	8	39	50	11	23	62	15
2014	37	55	8	37	53	11	20	62	18
2017	41	51	7	39	52	9	22	65	13
2019	41	51	8	39	52	10	25	61	14
2021	43	51	6	41	50	9	31	56	12
2023	40	51	9	37	51	12	27	58	16
2025	41	51	8	40	48	11	29	58	13

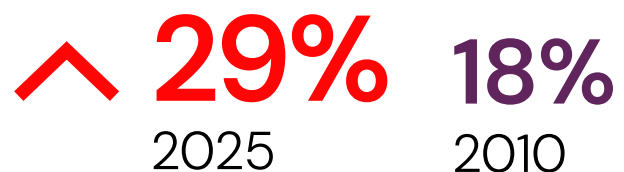
*Using a scale ranging from 1 to 7, where 1 means “not at all” and 7 means “a lot.” (In this table, a lot = 6 or 7 on the scale, some = 3 to 5, and not a lot = 1 or 2.)*



The pattern is broadly similar when Canadians are asked if they feel proud of living under Canada's political system. Roughly two in five feel a lot of pride, whereas about one in ten express not a lot of pride, with these proportions remaining more or less unchanged since 2010. The proportion saying they have a lot of respect for the country's political institutions, however, is higher today than in 2010 (29%, compared to 18%), and the proportion with not a lot of respect is lower (13%, compared to 20%).



The proportion of people saying they have a lot of respect for Canada's political institutions is higher today than in 2010.



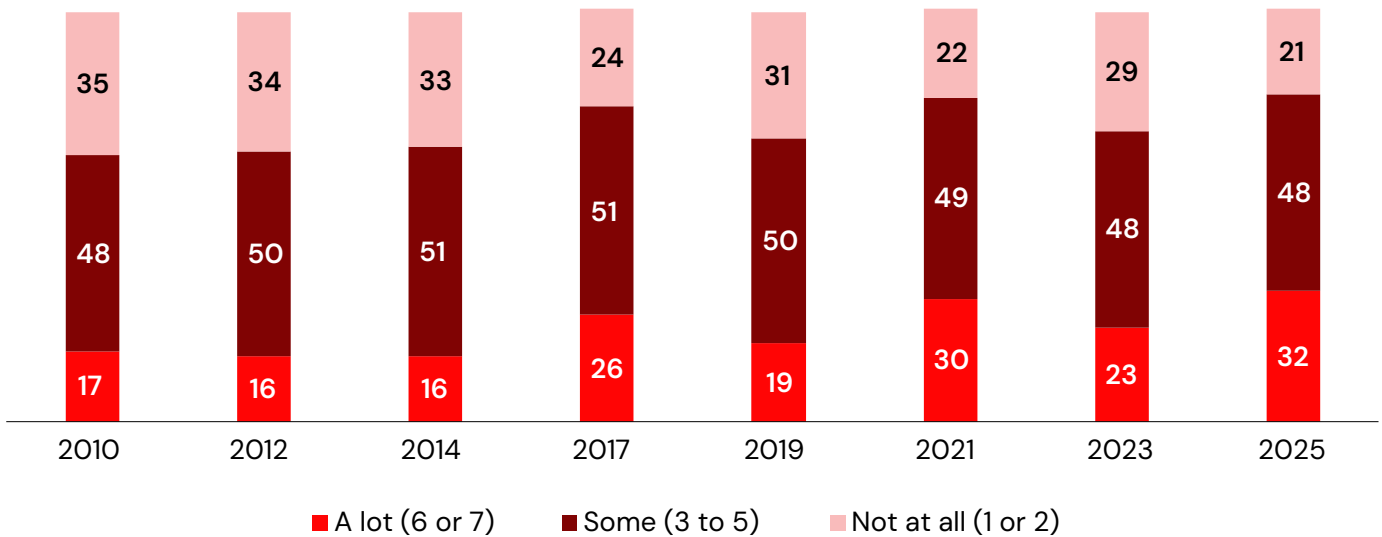
## Trust in political actors and institutions

Only minorities of Canadians say they have a lot of trust in political actors and institutions, such as the Prime Minister, Parliament and political parties. However, these proportions have not been declining over time; in fact, in some cases, they have increased.

### Figure 2

#### Trust in the Prime Minister

2010 – 2025



*To what extent do you trust the prime minister? (Using a scale ranging from 1 to 7, where 1 means “not at all” and 7 means “a lot.”)*

The proportion with a lot of trust in the Prime Minister of Canada increased from 23 percent in 2023 to 32 percent in 2025 – a change which undoubtedly is connected to the switch in leadership from Justin Trudeau to Mark Carney. The proportion currently expressing a lot of trust in the Prime Minister is now the highest registered since this series of surveys began in 2010; the proportion is also twice as high as it was a decade ago.

The proportion with a lot of trust in Parliament peaked in 2021, during the pandemic, and has declined since then; it currently stands at 25 percent. However, this is higher than it was in the 2010s.

Very few Canadians (12%) have a lot of trust in political parties. Most (70%) are in the middle, while 18 percent say they don't have a lot of trust. The proportion saying they don't trust political parties at all has nonetheless declined by 14 percentage points over the past decade.


**Table 2**

**Trust in political actors and institutions**

2010 – 2025

To what extent do you trust...									
Survey year	...the Prime Minister?			...Parliament?			...political parties?		
	A lot	Some	Not a lot	A lot	Some	Not a lot	A lot	Some	Not a lot
2010	17	48	35	13	64	23	11	63	26
2012	16	50	34	17	63	20	6	64	30
2014	16	51	33	16	61	23	7	61	32
2017	26	51	24	19	64	17	10	66	24
2019	19	50	31	22	61	17	12	64	24
2021	30	49	22	32	56	12	17	65	18
2023	23	48	29	26	56	18	15	64	21
2025	32	48	21	25	58	17	12	70	18

*Using a scale ranging from 1 to 7, where 1 means “not at all” and 7 means “a lot.” (In this table, a lot = 6 or 7 on the scale, some = 3 to 5, and not a lot = 1 or 2.)*



### More from this series

The AmericasBarometer survey also asks about trust in elections. This topic is covered in a separate report in this series – [Democracy and the Fairness of Elections in Canada](#).

# Trust in the mass media

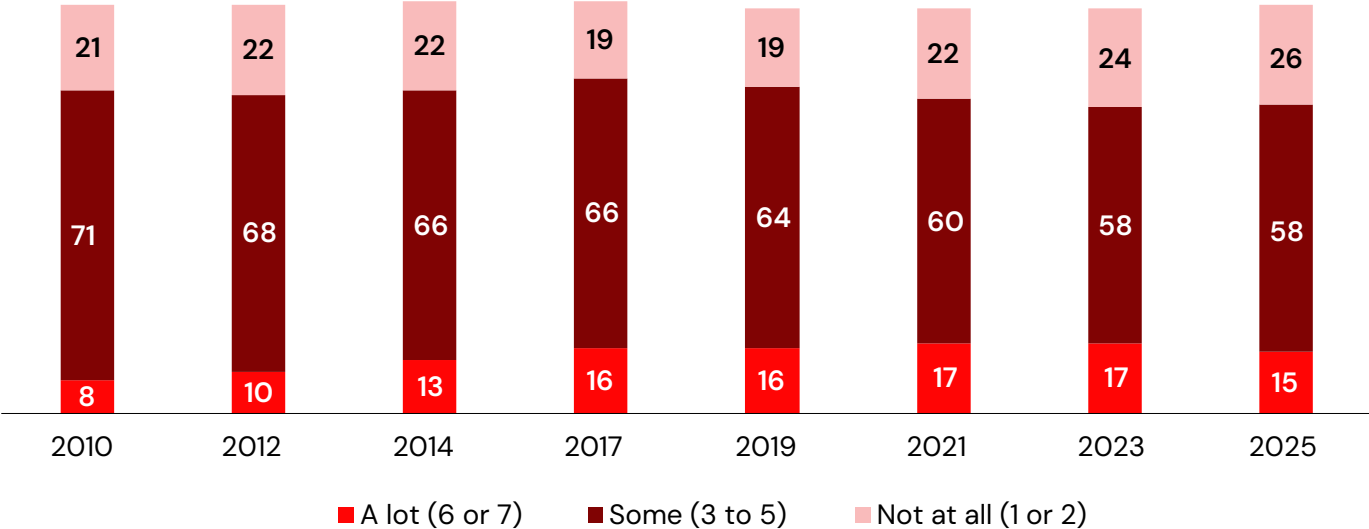
As in the case with trust in institutions such as political parties, relatively few Canadians (15%) have a lot of trust in the mass media. Most are in the middle (58%), and one in four (26%) say they don't trust the media at all.

In this case, however, the proportion with low trust is trending upwards, albeit gradually. The proportion saying they do not trust the mass media at all has risen by seven points since 2017, from 19 to 26 percent.

**Figure 3**

## Trust in the mass media

2010 – 2025



*To what extent do you trust the mass media? (Using a scale ranging from 1 to 7, where 1 means "not at all" and 7 means "a lot.")*

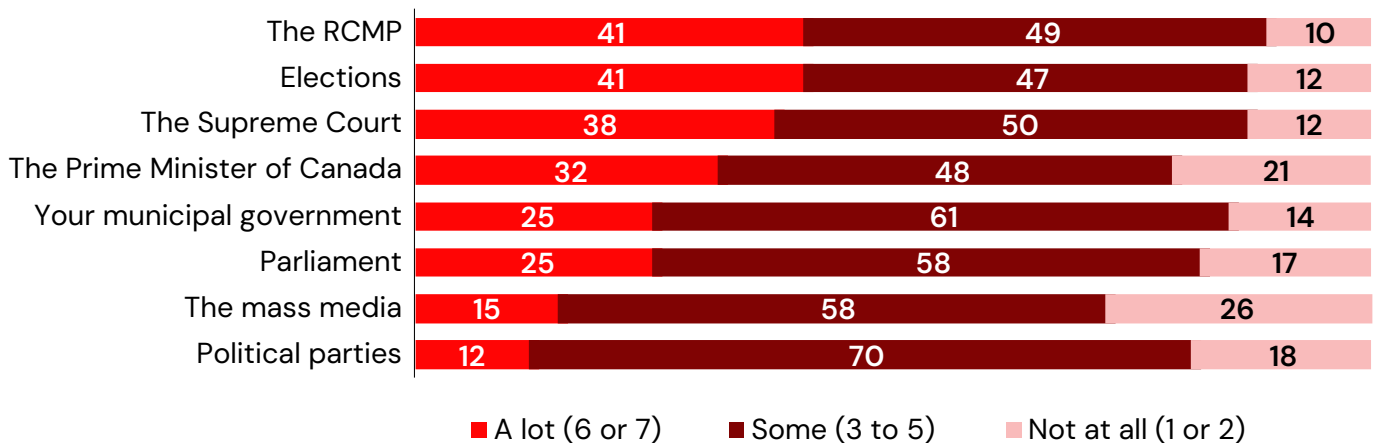
## Trust in the justice system

Canadians are more likely to say they have a lot of trust in elements of the justice system, such as the RCMP and the Supreme Court, than in political institutions, such as Parliament or political parties. Specifically, about two in five Canadians say they have a lot of trust in the RCMP (41%) and the Supreme Court (38%). Conversely, about one in ten (10% and 12%, respectively) say they don't trust either of these institutions.

### Figure 4

#### Trust in democratic actors and institutions

2025



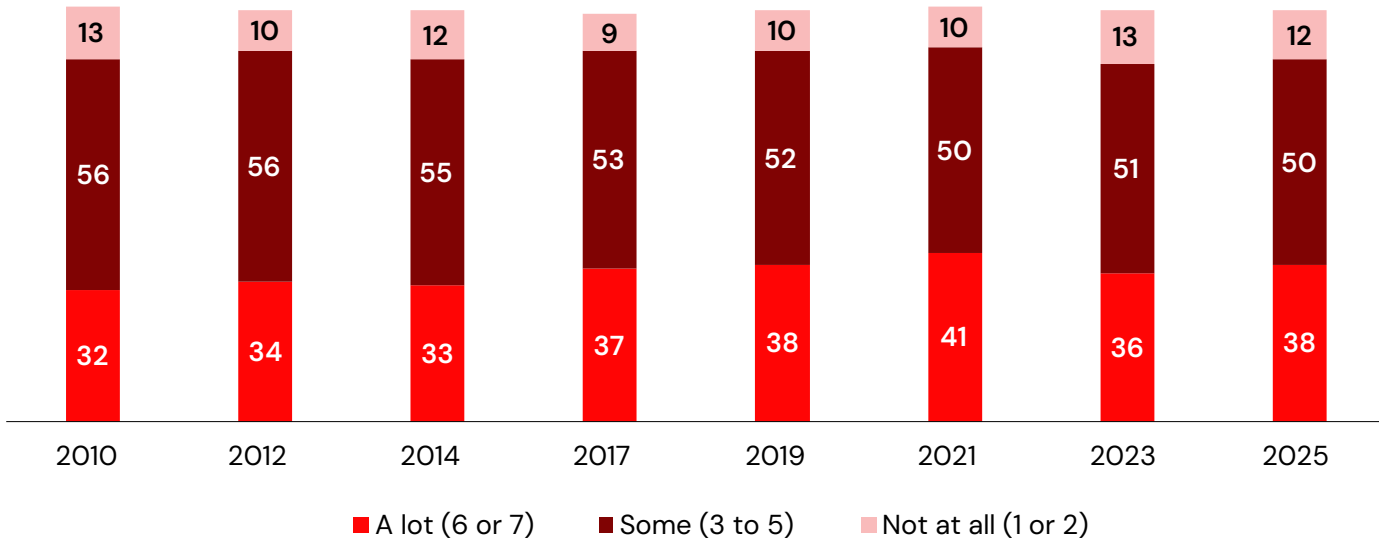
*To what extent do you trust ...? (Using a scale ranging from 1 to 7, where 1 means "not at all" and 7 means "a lot.")*

As is the case with trust in most political institutions, trust in these parts of the justice system is also not declining over time. The proportion of Canadians expressing a lot of trust in the Supreme Court, for instance, rose modestly in the 2010s, and has held more or less steady since then.

## Figure 5

### Trust in the Supreme Court

2010 – 2025



*To what extent do you trust the supreme court? (Using a scale ranging from 1 to 7, where 1 means "not at all" and 7 means "a lot.")*



As is the case with trust in most political institutions, trust in these parts of the justice system is also not declining over time.



Canadians also tend to agree that, to some extent at least, the justice system protects citizens' rights. As with the case with trust in political institutions, however, most Canadians are in the middle. Only a minority of Canadians *strongly agree* that the courts in Canada guarantee a fair trial (31%), and that citizens' basic rights are well-protected by the country's political system (34%). At the same time, far fewer – only about one in ten – *strongly disagree*.

### Table 3

#### Citizens' rights and the justice system

2010 – 2025

To what extent do you think...						
Survey year	...the courts in Canada guarantee a fair trial?			...that citizens' basic rights are well-protected by the political system of Canada?		
	A lot	Some	Not a lot	A lot	Some	Not a lot
2010	23	67	10	25	61	14
2012	28	63	9	29	59	12
2014	29	63	9	26	62	12
2017	30	63	7	31	58	11
2019	31	58	9	33	57	10
2021	–	–	–	32	57	11
2023	31	60	9	32	55	13
2025	31	59	10	34	55	11

Using a scale ranging from 1 to 7, where 1 means "not at all" and 7 means "a lot." (In this table, a lot = 6 or 7 on the scale, some = 3 to 5, and not a lot = 1 or 2.)

Moreover, the proportion that has low trust in the fairness of the justice system has not increased over the past 15 years. And the proportions strongly agreeing that the courts in Canada guarantee a fair trial, or that citizens' basic rights are well-protected by the country's political system, are both higher than in 2010.

# Political trust among younger and older Canadians

Older Canadians stand out as having more positive views about the political system. That said, trust in political actors and institutions among younger Canadians is not trending downwards.

Discussions of trust in government often focus on the question of whether trust varies significantly among age groups – and, in particular, whether trust is lower and declining among younger adults. If the political system is failing to respond to the interests of younger voters, the concern is that these voters will lose faith in the current system and be more open to supporting anti-democratic leaders and parties.

## Support for the political system

There are some differences among age groups in the proportions expressing the strongest support for, respect for and pride in Canada's political system. Most notably, older Canadians stand out as having more positive opinions. But this difference notwithstanding, there has been no steady decline in support among younger Canadians since 2010.

Three specific points support the conclusion that younger people's support for the system is not declining, at least not over the medium term.

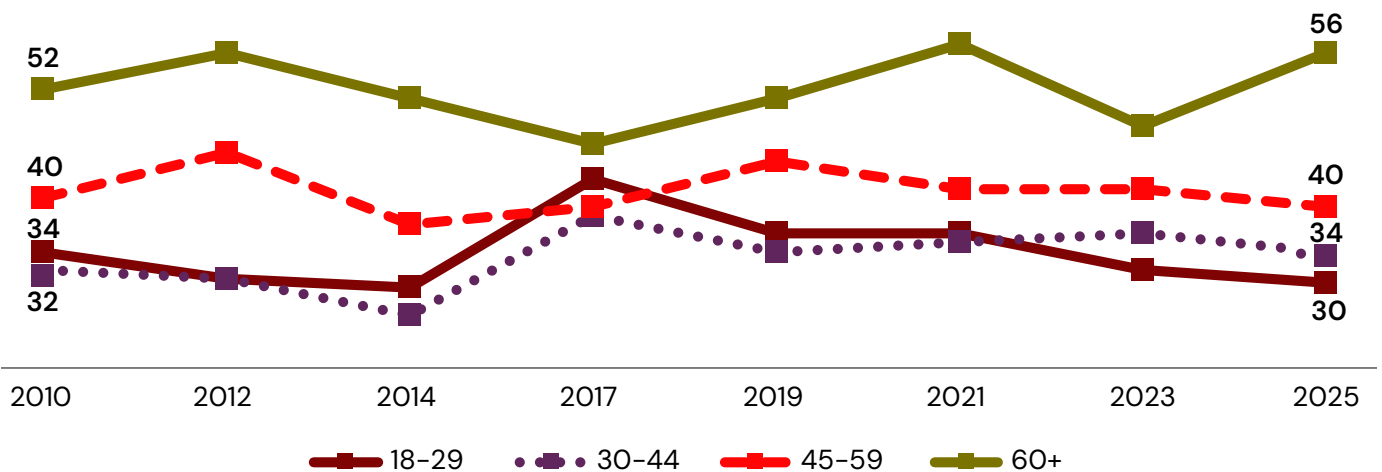
- First, the exception tends to be older Canadians, not younger Canadians. On these three questions, there is relatively little difference in the opinions of Canadians age 18 to 29, 30 to 44 and 45 to 59. However, those age 60 and older are much more likely than those age 59 and younger to express a lot of support for the political system, as well as a lot of pride in living under the country's political system.

- Second, across all age groups, support for the political system has either been more or less stable, or else strengthened, over the full period covered by this series of surveys (2010 to 2025). In particular, over this period, there has been no steady decline in support among younger Canadians.
- Third, support increased more sharply among younger Canadians between 2014 and 2017 (covering the period before and after the 2015 federal election and change of government), but this increase subsequently subsided. This means that, over the shorter term (from 2017 to 2025), it is accurate to say that support declined. The proportion of those between the ages of 18 to 29 that expresses a lot of support for the country’s political system, for instance, fell from 42 to 30 percent over this period. This, however, is a decline only relative to the unusual increase seen in 2017; the figure in 2025 is the same as it was in 2014, before that increase took place.

**Figure 6**

Support for the political system, by age group – A lot of support (6 to 7 on a 7-point scale)

2010 – 2025



*To what extent do you think that one should support the political system of Canada? (Using a scale ranging from 1 to 7, where 1 means “not at all” and 7 means “a lot.”)*

## Trust in political institutions

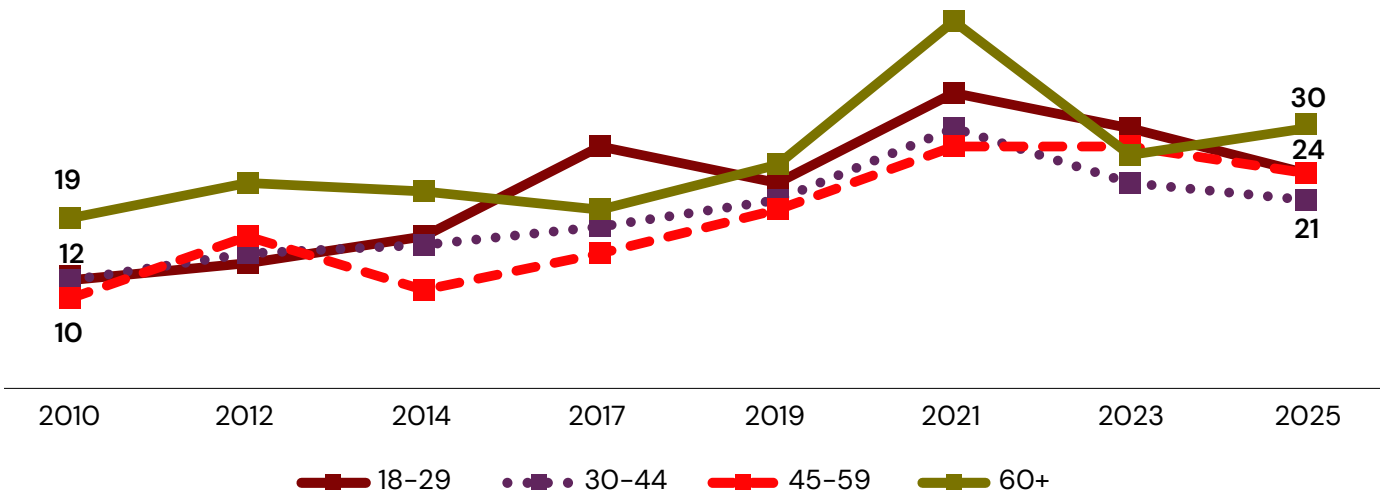
As previously shown, trust in political actors and institutions in Canada, generally speaking, is not trending downwards. This holds not only for the population as a whole, but also for younger Canadians specifically.

The proportion expressing a high degree of trust in Parliament, for instance, while modest, has nonetheless increased for each age group since 2010; it has actually doubled for those age 18 to 29, from 12 to 24 percent. Similarly, the proportion that says they have a lot of trust in the Prime Minister of Canada is also higher in 2025 than it was in 2010 for each age group (although, in this case, there was a sharper increase most recently, between 2023 and 2025, among those age 60 and older).

**Figure 7**

Trust in Parliament, by age group – A lot of support (6 to 7 on a 7-point scale)

2010 – 2025

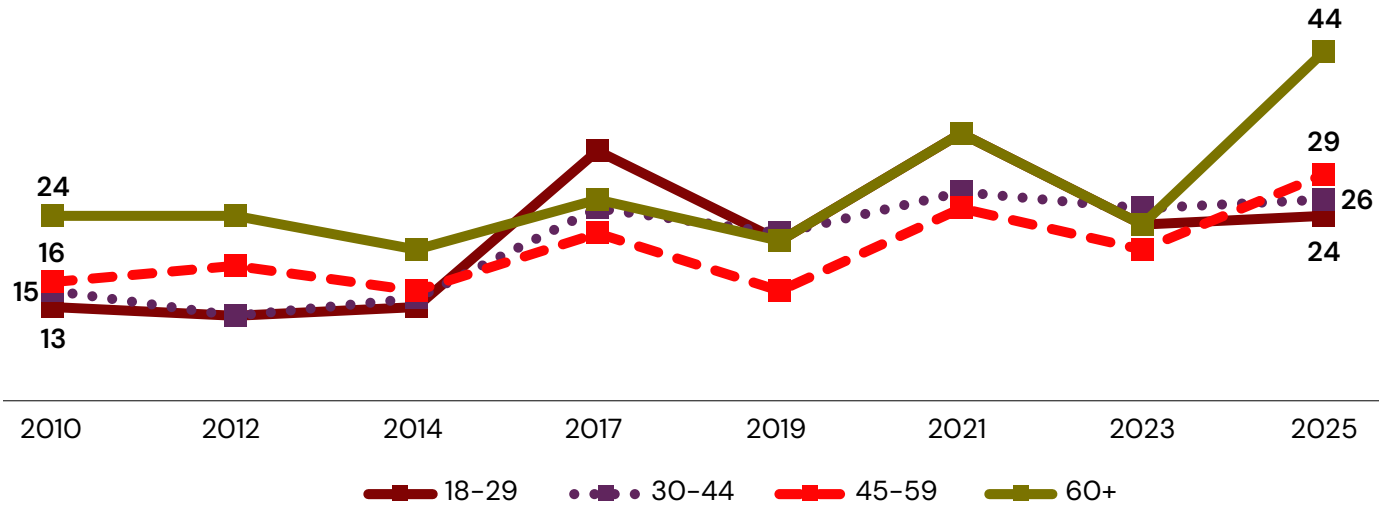


*To what extent do you trust parliament? (Using a scale ranging from 1 to 7, where 1 means "not at all" and 7 means "a lot.")*

**Figure 8**

Trust in the Prime Minister, by age group – A lot of support (6 to 7 on a 7-point scale)

2010 – 2025



*To what extent do you trust the Prime Minister of Canada? (Using a scale ranging from 1 to 7, where 1 means "not at all" and 7 means "a lot.")*

In short, on none of the measures covered in this report do younger Canadians stand out as experiencing a decline of support or trust.

# Contrasting trends for supporters of the governing and opposition parties

Trust in the country's political institutions has been declining among supporters of the Conservative Party since it lost power a decade ago. Trust is also fairly low among supporters of some of the other opposition parties, as well as among undecided voters. Liberal Party supporters, whose party forms government, stand out as being much more likely than all others to express high trust in the country's political institutions.

Discussions of trust in government start by focusing on the overall trend: is trust declining, holding steady or even increasing?

But, underlying the general trend are contrasting ones between supporters of the party in government and the main party in opposition. Not surprisingly, those whose preferred party has won the most recent election (or elections) tend to have more positive opinions about the trustworthiness of the political system.

- The proportion of Liberal Party supporters expressing a lot of support for Canada's political system jumped from 42 percent in 2014 to 61 percent in 2019 (before and after 2015 election which returned the party to power), and has held steady since then. By contrast, the proportion of Conservative Party supporters expressing a lot of support for the system fell from 52 percent in 2014 to 41 percent in 2019, and has continued to decline since then – reaching a low of 28 percent in 2025.
- Similarly, the proportion of Liberal Party supporters who say they have a lot of trust in Parliament is twice as high today (42%) as it was in 2014 (21%), prior to the 2015 election. But the proportion of Conservative Party supporters with a lot of trust in Parliament has fallen to 13 percent.

- Not surprisingly, the proportion of Conservative Party supporters expressing a lot of trust in the Prime Minister of Canada is much lower today than it was prior to 2015, when Conservative Stephen Harper held the office. But the proportion of Liberal Party supporters who say they have a lot of trust in the Prime Minister is five times higher today than prior to 2015.

**Table 4**

**Trust in institutions, by federal party support**

A lot of trust (6 or 7 on a 7-point scale), 2010 – 2025

		2010	2012	2014	2019	2021	2023	2025
Parliament	Liberal	17	21	21	39	52	46	42
	Conservative	21	28	19	18	20	17	13
	<i>Difference</i>	-4	-7	2	21	32	29	29
Prime Minister of Canada	Liberal	9	10	12	44	59	49	60
	Conservative	40	42	35	9	13	9	11
	<i>Difference</i>	-31	-32	-23	35	46	40	49
Political parties	Liberal	14	6	9	19	27	26	20
	Conservative	9	7	8	12	14	9	7
	<i>Difference</i>	5	-1	1	7	13	17	13
Supreme Court	Liberal	44	42	43	55	60	58	57
	Conservative	37	45	35	32	36	29	24
	<i>Difference</i>	7	-3	8	23	24	29	33
Mass media	Liberal	9	12	14	24	24	27	23
	Conservative	8	8	13	16	17	11	8
	<i>Difference</i>	1	4	1	8	7	16	15

It is notable, however, that the same pattern holds even for some institutions that normally would be considered above the fray of party politics. In 2014, for instance, Liberal Party supporters were only eight percentage points more likely than Conservative Party supporters to say they have a lot of trust in the Supreme Court (the figures were 43% and 35%, respectively). Since then, the gap has widened to 33 points, as the proportion with high trust has increased among Liberal Party supporters (reaching 57%), but decreased among Conservative Party supporters (falling to 24%). Similarly, there was only an insignificant one-point difference in trust in the mass media between the two groups of supporters in 2014; by 2025, the gap had widened to 15 points.



## Close up:

# Trust and political polarization in Canada and the United States

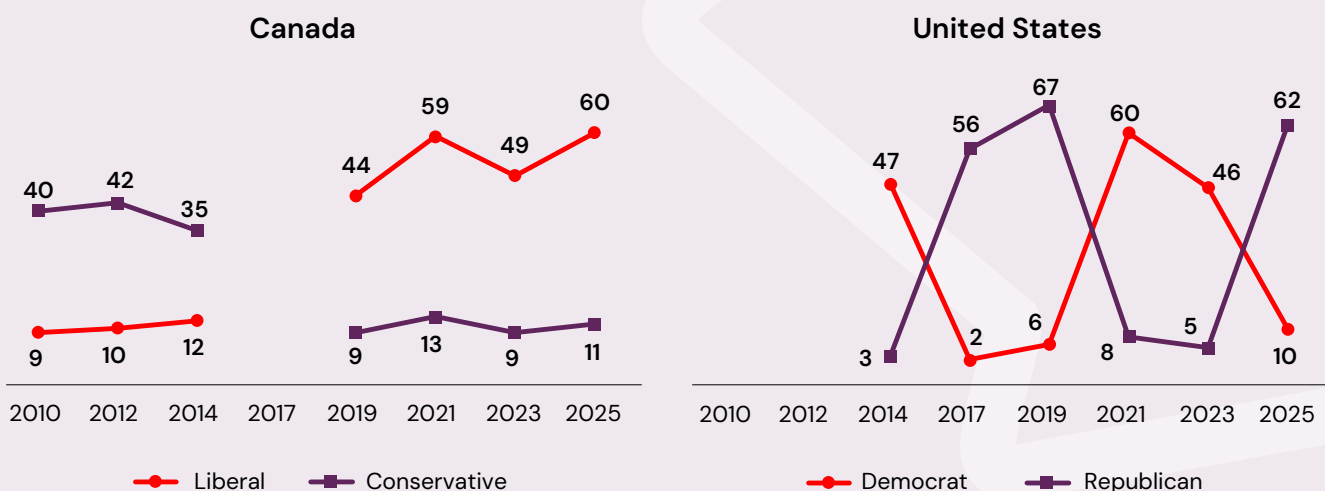
The contrasting trends between supporters of governing and opposition parties (or election winners and losers) is evident not only in Canada, but also in the United States.

In the United States, the extent of trust in political institutions differs significantly between the supporters of the Republican and Democratic parties, with the patterns reversing after elections that lead to a change of administration. The proportion of Republicans with a lot of trust in Congress, for instance, jumped up after the 2016 and 2024 elections, which saw their party win the White House, as well as majorities in the Senate and the House of Representatives. And, most dramatically, the extent of trust in the President expressed by supporters of the Democratic and Republican parties is both very different, and reversed, after each of the 2016, 2020 and 2024 presidential elections.

**Figure 9**

Trust in President/Prime Minister, by party support – A lot of support (6 to 7 on a 7-point scale)

2010 – 2025



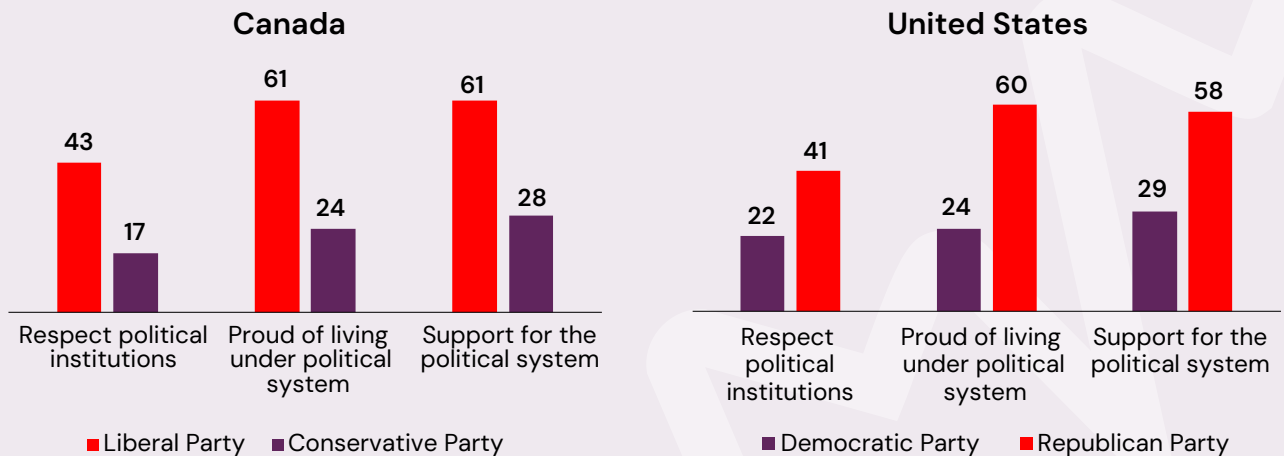
To what extent do you trust the President/Prime Minister? (7-point scale: a lot = 6 & 7/not at all = 1 & 2).

It is striking that the current extent of the gaps in trust between supporters of the Republican and Democratic parties in the U.S. is very similar to that between supporters of the Liberal and Conservative parties in Canada – with the exception that trust is higher among supporters of the more left-wing party in Canada, but the more right-wing party in the U.S. (that is to say, the parties currently in power in each country).

**Figure 10**

Support for the political system in Canada and the United States, by federal party support – A lot of trust (6 to 7 on a 7-point scale)

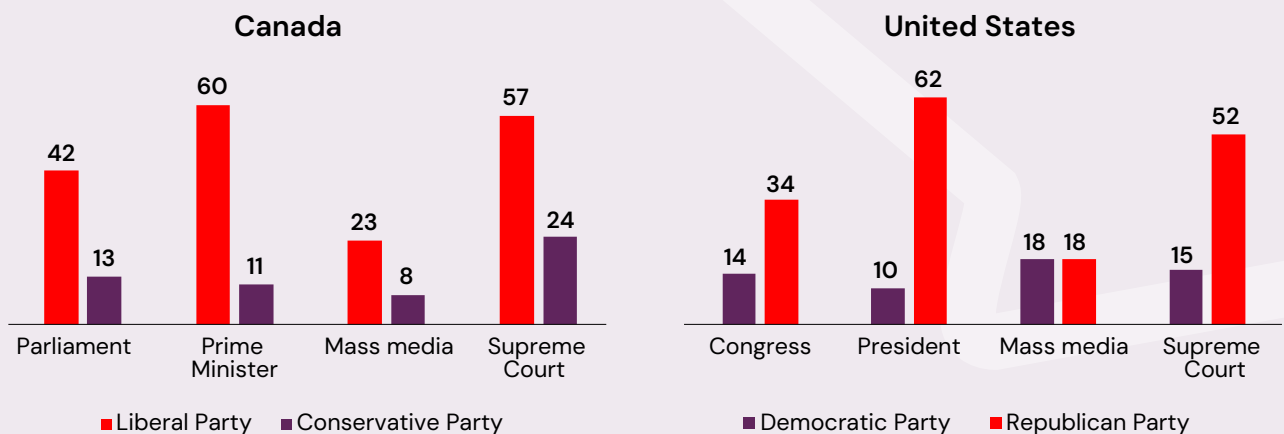
2025



**Figure 11**

Trust in political institutions in Canada and the United States, by federal party support – A lot of trust (6 to 7 on a 7-point scale)

2025



There may be similarities between Conservative Party supporters in Canada and Republican Party supporters in the U.S. on selected policy issues (for example, the preferred role for or size of government, or the importance of climate change). But, when it comes to support for the political system and trust in government, Conservatives resemble Democrats. It is Liberal Party supporters who hold opinions similar to those of U.S. Republicans.





The remaining question is what to make of the decline in trust in institutions among supporters of the Conservative Party of Canada, which currently forms the official opposition. Is this a worrying sign of a weakening commitment to Canada's system of democratic government or a natural sign of growing frustration after successive election defeats – frustration that can be expected to disappear as soon as the party wins an election and returns to power?

In addressing this question, it is helpful to widen the focus to include the opinions of supporters of smaller opposition parties, as well as undecided voters.<sup>1</sup> Though trust in Parliament, the Prime Minister and political parties is currently low among supporters of the Conservative Party, it is also fairly low among these other voters and non-voters; it is, generally speaking, supporters of the Liberal Party who stand out as more exceptional (as they are much more likely than all others to express high trust in the country's political institutions).<sup>2</sup>

1 It is not possible to present details for the change over time for supporters of smaller parties or for undecided voters. The subsamples for third party supporters in some earlier survey years are too small, and earlier survey questions classified undecided voters differently than in subsequent surveys

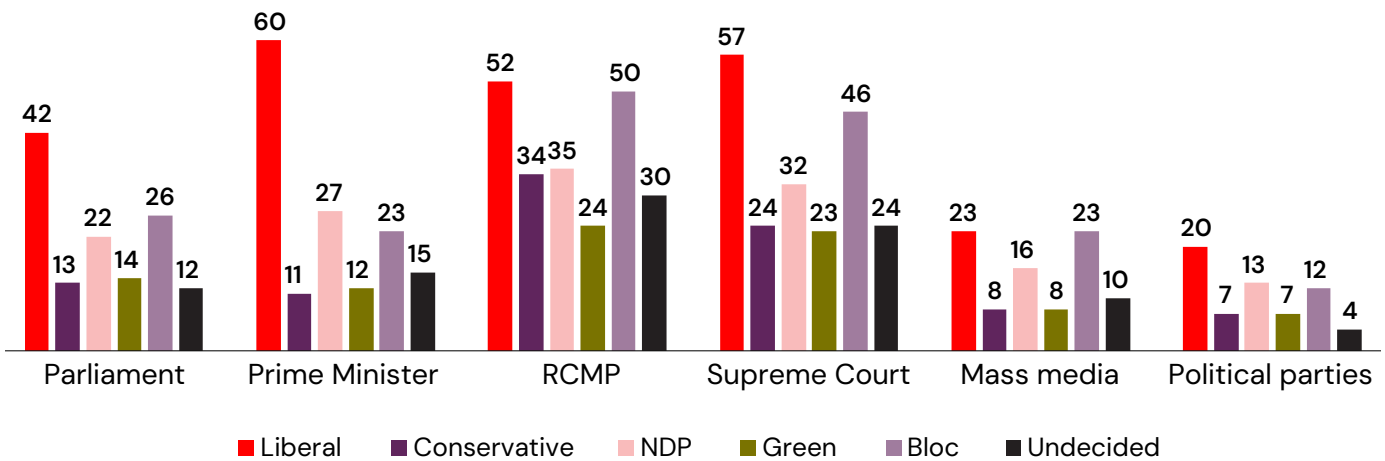
2 A partial exception to this pattern is that supporters of the Bloc Québécois are currently almost as likely as Liberal Party supporters to express a lot of trust in elements of the justice system.

The nine percentage-point gap in the proportion of Conservative Party and NDP supporters with high trust in Parliament, for instance, is much smaller than the gap between either of those groups of supporters and supporters of the Liberal Party (29 and 20 points, respectively). And the proportion of undecided voters who express high trust in institutions is very similar (and similarly low) to that of Conservative Party supporters.

## Figure 12

### Trust in institutions, by federal party support – A lot of trust (6 to 7 on a 7-point scale)

2025



A second observation is that trust in some institutions was as low among Liberal Party supporters when they were in opposition prior to the 2015 election as it has been after that election among Conservative Party supporters. This is certainly the case when it comes to trust in the Prime Minister of Canada. The 12 percent of Liberal Party supporters who expressed a lot of trust in the Prime Minister in 2014, when the office was held by Stephen Harper, is almost identical to the 11 percent of Conservative Party supporters who have a lot of trust in the Prime Minister today.

Both these observations cast some doubt on the assumption that the situation among Conservative Party supporters today is that unusual. At the same time, the gaps in trust between supporters of the governing party and the official opposition are widening, and are certainly wider today than they were in the early 2010s, when the positions of each party were reversed.

Only time will tell, however, whether trust will rebound significantly among supporters of the Conservative Party once their party returns to power, or whether this decline in trust over the past decade has persisted to the point that it will prove more difficult to reverse.



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