

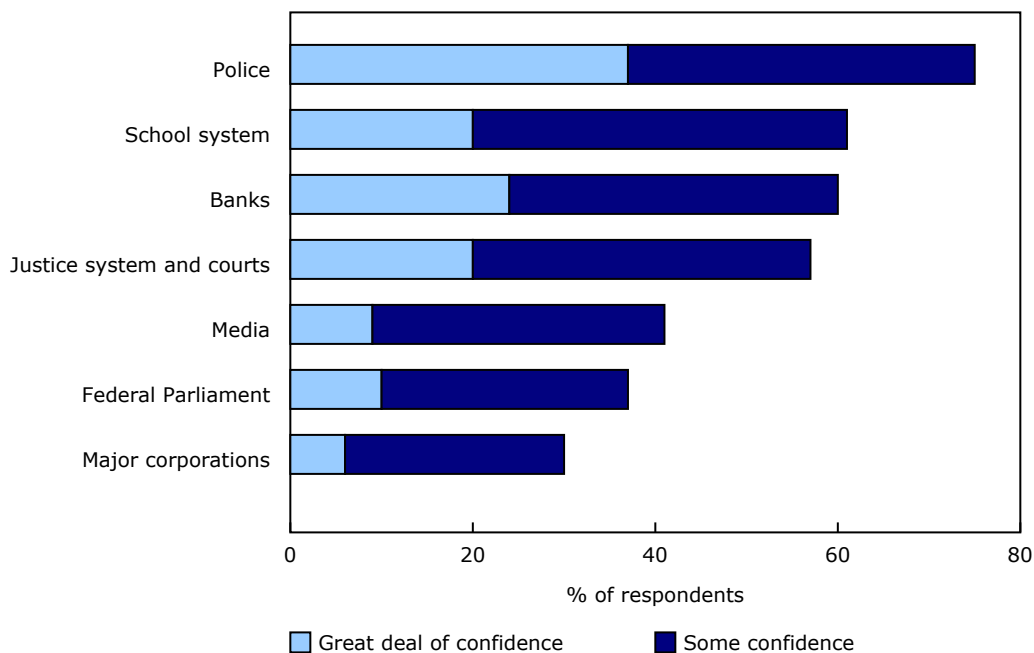
# Study: Public confidence in Canadian institutions, 2013 and 2014

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According to the 2013 General Social Survey, three-quarters (76%) of Canadians have some or a great deal of confidence in the police, making it the institution with the highest level of public confidence.

At the same time, around 6 in 10 Canadians were confident in the school system (61%), banks (59%) and the justice system and courts (57%). In contrast, a minority of Canadians expressed confidence in the media (40%), Federal Parliament (38%) and major corporations (30%).

**Chart 1**  
**Confidence in Canadian institutions, 2013**



**Note(s):** Responses of "don't know" / "not stated" are excluded from the calculation of percentages.

**Source(s):** General Social Survey on Social Identity (5024).

## Confidence in government and institutions varies among the provinces

Levels of confidence in institutions varied across the provinces. Residents of Newfoundland and Labrador and New Brunswick tended to have the most confidence in institutions. In New Brunswick, confidence was above the provincial average for six of the seven institutions in the survey. The exception was the Federal Parliament. In Newfoundland and Labrador, confidence was above average for five of seven institutions, while confidence in the justice system and courts and Federal Parliament was on par with the provincial average.

Residents of Quebec reported lower levels of confidence in all institutions, with the exception of the media and Federal Parliament, where confidence was similar to the provincial average. In British Columbia, confidence in the police, the school system, the justice system and courts, and Federal Parliament were all below the provincial average.



## **Residents of Toronto and Calgary generally have more confidence in institutions**

At the census metropolitan area (CMA) level, Toronto's institutional confidence was generally highest among the 33 CMAs surveyed. Residents of Toronto reported the most confidence in banks, the justice system and courts, and Federal Parliament, while confidence in major corporations was also above the CMA average.

In contrast, confidence was lowest in the Quebec CMAs of Montréal and Sherbrooke. In particular, residents of Montréal had lower than average confidence in the police, the school system, banks, the justice system and courts, and major corporations. Residents of Sherbrooke had below average levels of confidence in banks, major corporations, the justice system and courts, and media.

## **Most Canadians believe police are doing a good job**

In addition to having a high level of confidence in police, the majority of Canadians believe police were doing a good job across the six categories examined in the study, according to the 2014 General Social Survey on Victimization. These categories were: being approachable and easy to talk to (73%), ensuring the safety of citizens (70%), promptly responding to calls (68%), treating people fairly (68%), enforcing the laws (65%) and providing information on crime prevention (62%).

Canadians' perceptions of police have become more favourable over time, as more Canadians believe police are doing a good job in five of the six categories compared with 2004. The proportion of Canadians who believed police were doing a good job being approachable and easy to talk to was the same.

Perceptions of police performance were generally highest in Quebec and lowest in the western provinces. Specifically, residents of the Prairie provinces and British Columbia were less likely to state their local police were doing a good job in five of the six measures of police performance. Only the perception of the police's ability to be approachable and easy to talk to were similar to the provincial average.

## **Residents of Ottawa rate police performance higher than average for all six measures**

Residents of Ottawa were more likely to state their local police were doing a good job for each of the six categories. Compared with the CMA average, perceptions of police in Ottawa ranged from 6 percentage points higher for their ability to provide information on crime prevention to 11 percentage points higher for their ability to promptly respond to calls.

In contrast, for each of the six questions on police performance, residents of Winnipeg were less likely to state local police were doing a good job, in particular, at enforcing the laws and promptly responding to calls. Residents of Vancouver rated police below average for five of the six measures.

## **Many factors influence perceptions of confidence and performance**

In addition to differences by geography, several socioeconomic and demographic characteristics are associated with varying levels of confidence in government and institutions. For example, women, older Canadians, those with a household income of \$80,000 or more, visible minorities, and immigrants were generally more likely to have confidence in government and institutions.

Similarly, women and older Canadians were generally more likely to rate police performance favourably. In contrast, Canadians who were victims of crime or who reported contact with police for any reason in the 12 months preceding the survey were less likely to believe that police were doing a good job.

**Note to readers**

*Today, Statistics Canada releases a report on confidence in selected public and private institutions and perceptions of the performance of police, based on data from the 2013 General Social Survey on Social Identity and the 2014 General Social Survey on Victimization.*

*For this report, the target population included all people 15 years of age and older living in the provinces and excluded full-time residents of institutions.*

**Table 1**  
**Confidence in institutions, by province and census metropolitan area, 2013**

	Police	School system	Banks	Justice system and courts	Media	Federal Parliament	Major corporations
	%						
<b>Total, provinces<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>76</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>30</b>
Newfoundland and Labrador	83*	68*	64*	56	48*	35	38*
Prince Edward Island	75	65	58	58	42	26*	32
Nova Scotia	77	57*	62	57	42	28*	28
New Brunswick	79*	65*	63*	62*	48*	32*	34*
Quebec	73*	59*	54*	51*	42	38	27*
Ontario	77	62	61*	64*	40	40*	31
Manitoba	77	64	63*	51*	39	37	37*
Saskatchewan	79*	64	64*	58	41	34*	33
Alberta	78*	63*	62*	56	38*	40	32
British Columbia	74*	58*	58	51*	40	34*	29
<b>Total, census metropolitan areas<sup>2,3</sup></b>	<b>76</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>30</b>
St. John's	81*	66	63	57	52*	33*	36
Halifax	78	55*	59	54*	38	27*	24*
Moncton	84*	62	64	66	46	33	36
Saint John	75	66	62	62	43	31*	31
Saguenay	76	62	52	49	41	29*	28 <sup>E</sup>
Québec	72*	58	50*	48*	40	36	28
Sherbrooke	80	62	46*	47*	32*	34	20* <sup>E</sup>
Trois-Rivières	71	52	51	41*	35	30*	22 <sup>E</sup>
Montréal	71*	59*	53*	54*	42	40	26*
Ottawa	81*	63	61	67*	40	36	27
Oshawa	84*	64	59	61	33	34	32
Toronto	75	63	62*	68*	41	45*	33*
Hamilton	83*	65	61	65	42	40	38*
Kitchener–Cambridge–Waterloo	78	61	60	68*	36	34	23*
Guelph	86*	64	65	69	46 <sup>E</sup>	38 <sup>E</sup>	36 <sup>E</sup>
Barrie	68	46*	54	48	34	39	26 <sup>E</sup>
Winnipeg	78	65	63	52*	39	39	36*
Saskatoon	82*	69*	61	59	39	34	32
Calgary	81*	63	61	62	38	43	34*
Edmonton	76	66*	61	56	37	38	29
Kelowna	76	48*	53	44*	30*	28* <sup>E</sup>	23 <sup>E</sup>
Abbotsford–Mission	86*	70	68	62	37 <sup>E</sup>	40	30 <sup>E</sup>
Vancouver	73*	62	61	55*	43	38	32
Victoria	82*	58	53	54	36	29*	26

<sup>E</sup> use with caution

\* significantly different from reference category ( $p < 0.05$ )

1. Reference category for provinces.

2. The following census metropolitan areas are not displayed in this table because levels of confidence in all institutions were not statistically different from the total for all census metropolitan areas: Gatineau, Kingston, Peterborough, St. Catharines–Niagara, Brantford, London, Windsor, Greater Sudbury, Thunder Bay and Regina.

3. Reference category for census metropolitan areas.

**Note(s):** Includes those who stated they had a great deal of confidence or some confidence. Responses of "don't know" / "not stated" are excluded from the calculation of percentages.

**Source(s):** General Social Survey on Social Identity (5024).

**Table 2**  
**Perception that local police are doing a good job, by province and census metropolitan area, 2014**

	Being approachable and easy to talk to	Ensuring safety of citizens	Promptly responding to calls	Treating people fairly	Enforcing the laws	Providing information on ways to prevent crime
	%					
<b>Total, provinces<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>73</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>62</b>
Newfoundland and Labrador	80*	67*	59*	70	56*	65*
Prince Edward Island	81*	72	73*	76*	65	65
Nova Scotia	75*	68*	65*	67	58*	60*
New Brunswick	76*	72	68	72*	66	63
Quebec	71*	76*	75*	75*	71*	66*
Ontario	73	70	70*	67*	65	61
Manitoba	71	64*	54*	63*	55*	57*
Saskatchewan	72	63*	55*	63*	55*	58*
Alberta	71	67*	64*	66*	61*	61
British Columbia	73	67*	65*	65*	61*	59*
<b>Total, census metropolitan areas<sup>2,3</sup></b>	<b>72</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>61</b>
St. John's	76*	64*	53*	66	55*	64
Halifax	74*	68	68	65	59*	58
Moncton	78*	77*	73	75*	72*	65
Saint John	80*	74	69	74*	69	65
Saguenay	79	79*	75	85*	73	72*
Québec	73	82*	81*	80*	76*	71*
Sherbrooke	69	78	81*	77*	79*	75*
Trois-Rivières	76	82*	72	81*	79*	79*
Montréal	68*	74*	73*	69*	68*	60
Ottawa	81*	76*	80*	76*	74*	67*
Kingston	74	80*	68	73	68	75*
Peterborough	72	61	60	63	48*	63
Toronto	70*	68	70	64*	65	58*
Hamilton	77*	74	70	72	65	67*
St. Catharines–Niagara	70	61*	64	59*	55*	58
Kitchener–Cambridge–Waterloo	79*	76	71	70	71	67
Guelph	71	77	88*	67	78*	58
London	78*	73	70	71	68	63
Barrie	59	64	52*	60	54	61
Greater Sudbury	64	60	49*	55	59	55
Thunder Bay	67	51*	52*	56	55	57
Winnipeg	67*	60*	50*	59*	53*	56*
Regina	71	63*	55*	63	62	63
Saskatoon	69	64*	59*	57*	56*	55
Calgary	75*	76*	76*	72*	75*	64
Edmonton	70	63*	59*	62*	55*	62
Vancouver	71	65*	65*	63*	59*	55*
Victoria	79*	76*	73	72	71*	64

\* significantly different from reference category ( $p < 0.05$ )

1. Reference category for provinces.

2. The following census metropolitan areas are not displayed in this table because perceptions of all six measures of police performance were not statistically different from the total for all census metropolitan areas: Gatineau, Oshawa, Brantford, Windsor, Kelowna, and Abbotsford–Mission.

3. Reference category for census metropolitan areas.

**Note(s):** Responses of "don't know" / "not stated" are excluded from the calculation of percentages.

**Source(s):** General Social Survey on Victimization (4504).

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**Available in CANSIM: tables [116-0001 to 116-0006](#).**

**Definitions, data sources and methods: survey numbers [4504](#) and [5024](#).**

The article "[Public confidence in Canadian institutions](#)" is now available as part of *Spotlight on Canadians: Results from the General Social Survey (89-652-X)* from the *Browse by key resource* module of our website under *Publications*.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact us (toll-free 1-800-263-1136; 514-283-8300; [STATCAN.infostats-infostats.STATCAN@canada.ca](mailto:STATCAN.infostats-infostats.STATCAN@canada.ca)) or Media Relations (613-951-4636; [STATCAN.mediahotline-ligneinfomedias.STATCAN@canada.ca](mailto:STATCAN.mediahotline-ligneinfomedias.STATCAN@canada.ca)).