

2025 Edelman Trust Barometer

Canada Report: Trust and the Crisis of Grievance

Top 10 Findings

01 High Trust in Scientists, Lower Confidence in Leaders

Canadians exhibit a strong trust in scientists (78%), which is more than double the trust placed in CEOs (37%). This significant disparity highlights a critical challenge for business leaders, who, along with government and media figures, are perceived by two-thirds of Canadians as deliberately misleading the public.

02 Majority Lack Optimism for the Next Generation

A mere 21% of respondents believe that the next generation will experience improved conditions. Notably, perspectives vary across age groups: 28% of individuals aged 18-34 are optimistic, whereas only 17% of those aged 55 and above share this sentiment.

03 4 in 10 Approve of Hostile Activism

To effect change, 40% of Canadians approve of at least one form of hostile activism, including online attacks, intentional dissemination of misinformation, threats or acts of violence, and damage to property. This approval is markedly higher among the 18-34 age group (67%) compared to those aged 55 and above (17%).

04 Low-Income Individuals Mired in Distrust, But Less Than Elsewhere

Canadians in the lowest income quartile report a Trust Index of 49, reflecting their average trust in business, government, media, and NGOs. However, among the 28 countries surveyed, Canada exhibits the smallest trust gap between the lowest and highest income groups, at just 6 points.

05 Majority Harbor Grievances Against Government, Business, and the Rich

62% of Canadians express a moderate or high sense of grievance, characterized by the belief that governmental and business actions complicate their lives, serve narrow interests, and that the affluent unfairly benefit while ordinary individuals face hardships.

06 Widespread Grievance Erodes Trust and Increases Pressure On Business

Those with a high sense of grievance exhibit distrust toward all four institutions. Additionally, they perceive businesses as falling short in addressing critical issues such as affordability, climate change, job retraining, misinformation, and discrimination.

07 Media Hangs On

Despite a decline in media credibility, with two-thirds of Canadians finding it challenging to distinguish between authentic news and misinformation—a concern intensified by AI-generated content—traditional media remains the most trusted news source (58%), slightly surpassing search engines (56%).

08 Growing pressure on employees

The proportion of employees apprehensive about job loss due to trade conflicts (53%), a potential recession (52%), and automation (52%) has risen notably since the previous year.

09 CEOs Are Encouraged to Act Where Impactful and Performance-Enhancing

CEOs are granted the mandate to engage in societal issues, particularly when their businesses have contributed to the problem, when such issues adversely affect their stakeholders, when they can effect significant positive change, or when addressing these issues would enhance business performance.

10 Business cannot do it alone: All institutions must help build trust to address grievance

All institutions must collaborate to deliver equitable outcomes, mend the social fabric, advocate for reliable information, and restore economic optimism.

To learn more about the Edelman Trust Barometer, visit <https://www.edelman.com/trust/2025/trust-barometer> #TrustBarometer

All data is based on general population sample unless otherwise noted.

