

Report

Who Should Decide Whether a Vaccine should be mandatory?

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By Jack Jedwab, President of Association of Canadian Studies



Who Should decide as to whether a COVID-19 vaccine should be mandatory or not?

This week Alberta Premier Jason Kenney has said that his government will not make a COVID-19 vaccine mandatory for Albertans. Consider this, if the Premier of British Columbia decides otherwise what will it mean for interprovincial mobility. Unfortunately for Premier Kenney, the Leger-Association for Canadian Studies survey (November 27-29, 2020) reveals that a majority in each province feel that a decision about whether the vaccine should be mandatory, should be made by the federal government (including a majority in my home province of Quebec). But the issue is a veritable hot potato for the Government as a majority of Canadians do not believe that the vaccine should be mandatory (55% say it should be voluntary) and an important minority of Canadians say they will not take the vaccine (17% say they will not take it and 18% don't know). An additional problem –as revealed in the survey is that an important segment of Canadians feel that a mandatory vaccine may be a rights violation and there is a strong possibility that many would consider a contestation on that basis

The issue amounts to a real political puzzle and underlying it a fair degree of ambiguity and confusion amongst people in Canada and elsewhere in the world.

Alberta and Ontario both oppose mandatory vaccine

Alberta Premier Jason Kenney But if British Columbia were to decide otherwise what will it mean for interprovincial mobility. Unfortunately for Premier Kenney, this weekend's Leger-Association for Canadian Studies survey reveals that a majority in each province feel that such a decision should be made the federal government (including a majority in my home province of Quebec).

Ontario's chief medical officer of health, Dr. David Williams, says the COVID-19 vaccine will be treated the same as other immunizations: not mandatory, but required for certain access. He insists that the government can't force anyone to take it.

"What we can do is to say sometimes for access or ease in getting into certain settings, if you don't have vaccinations, then you're not allowed into that setting without other protection materials," he said.

Some examples would include school attendance, hospitals and long-term care, Williams said.

Working age Canadians least likely to feel the vaccine should be mandatory

When an approved COVID-19 vaccine becomes available to the population, do you think it should be...													
Nov 27 to 29	Total	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65 +	Atl.	QC	ON	MB/SK	AB	BC
Mandatory for all	41%	47%	30%	38%	36%	48%	45%	45%	43%	38%	36%	46%	38%
Given on a voluntary basis	55%	47%	62%	56%	61%	49%	51%	49%	53%	56%	58%	51%	58%
I don't know	5%	5%	7%	6%	3%	3%	4%	5%	4%	6%	6%	3%	4%

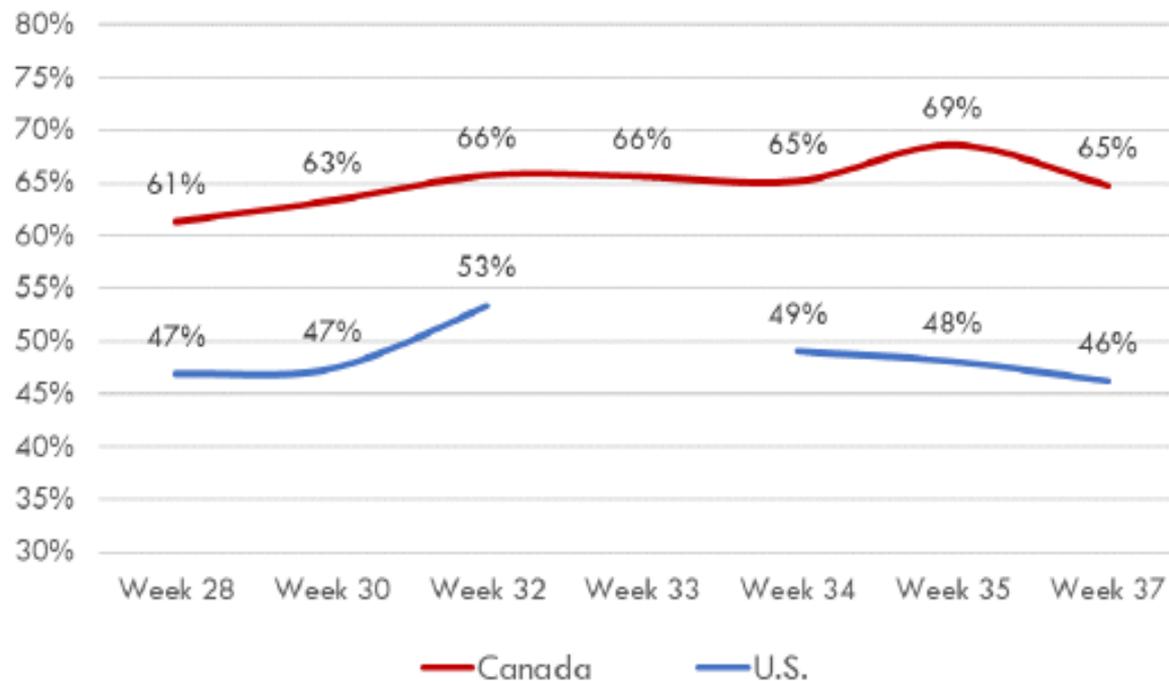
More Canadians than Americans think the vaccine should be mandatory

When an approved COVID-19 vaccine becomes available to the population, do you think it should be...

	Canada Nov 27 to 29	United States Nov 13 to 15
Mandatory for all	41%	29%
Given on a voluntary basis	55%	59%
I don't know	5%	12%

Two-thirds of Canadians intend to get a federally approved vaccination for COVID-19 compared to less than ½ of Americans

When a vaccine for COVID-19 that had been approved by Health Canada / the FDA becomes available to the population and it is free, do you intend to get vaccinated?



Majority of Canadians in all provinces believe it is the Federal Government that should determine whether the vaccine is mandatory or not

Which level of government should determine whether the COVID-19 vaccine is mandatory?							
	Total	Atl.	QC	ON	MB/SK	AB	BC
The Federal Government	57%	59%	54%	57%	57%	59%	57%
The Provincial Governments	11%	10%	15%	11%	9%	3%	10%
Neither	22%	23%	23%	20%	21%	25%	22%
I don't know	11%	9%	7%	12%	13%	13%	11%

Four in ten Canadians say that they would consider contesting a mandatory COVID-19 vaccination and a majority aged 25-34 would consider doing so. Persons with children are more likely to contest a mandatory vaccine than others

I would consider contesting mandatory COVID-19 vaccination as a rights violation - Do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree with the following?									
	Total	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65 +	With Children	Without Children
TOTAL AGREE	41%	41%	52%	47%	44%	31%	34%	47%	39%
Strongly agree	19%	14%	23%	23%	23%	15%	15%	20%	18%
Somewhat agree	22%	27%	29%	24%	21%	16%	19%	27%	21%
TOTAL DISAGREE	59%	59%	48%	53%	56%	69%	66%	53%	61%
Somewhat disagree	28%	25%	31%	27%	27%	29%	26%	27%	28%
Strongly disagree	31%	34%	18%	26%	29%	39%	40%	26%	34%

More than three in four Canadians think that we should prevent people from travelling to the US if they refuse to get vaccinated

Cross border (i.e., to the United States) travel should be prevented to people that refuse to take the COVID-19 vaccine - Do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree with the following?

	Total	Man	Woman	18-34	35-54	55+
TOTAL AGREE	78%	77%	79%	76%	73%	84%
Strongly agree	48%	46%	50%	43%	41%	57%
Somewhat agree	30%	32%	29%	33%	32%	27%
TOTAL DISAGREE	22%	23%	21%	24%	27%	16%
Somewhat disagree	12%	12%	13%	13%	14%	10%
Strongly disagree	10%	11%	8%	11%	13%	6%

Canadians more supportive of preventing unvaccinated Americans from coming to Canada than prohibiting unvaccinated Canadians from going to the US

Do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree with the following?		
	Cross border (i.e., to the United States) travel should be prevented to people that refuse to take the COVID-19 vaccine -	People entering Canada from the United States or elsewhere should be required to have taken the COVID-19 vaccine
TOTAL AGREE	78%	83%
Strongly agree	48%	57%
Somewhat agree	30%	26%
TOTAL DISAGREE	22%	17%
Somewhat disagree	12%	9%
Strongly disagree	10%	8%

Ideology plays some role in the extent to which Canadians think the vaccine should be mandatory

When an approved COVID-19 vaccine becomes available to the population, do you think it should be...	If you had to situate yourself on the following scale would you say that you are:				
	Right wing	Right of centre	Centre	Left of centre	Left wing
Mandatory for all	34.0%	41.6%	37.5%	47.8%	50.5%
Given on a voluntary basis	62.1%	54.9%	56.9%	50.4%	42.2%
I don't know	3.9%	3.4%	5.6%	1.9%	7.3%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Over 90% of those Canadians that intend to get vaccinated think we should prevent the unvaccinated from crossing the border as do one third of those who do not intend to get vaccinated

Cross border (i.e., to the United States) travel should be prevented to people that refuse to take the COVID-19 vaccine - Do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree with the following?	When a vaccine for COVID-19 that had been approved by Health Canada becomes available to the population and it is free, do you intend to get vaccinated?	
	Yes	No
Strongly agree	60.8%	15.5%
Somewhat agree	29.5%	22.3%
Somewhat disagree	7.4%	26.0%
Strongly disagree	2.2%	36.2%
Total	100.0%	100.0%

Of those Canadians that think the vaccine should be given on a volunteer basis some two thirds think we should not allow unvaccinated Canadians to travel to the US

Cross border (i.e., to the United States) travel should be prevented to people that refuse to take the COVID-19 vaccine - Do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree with the following?	When an approved COVID-19 vaccine becomes available to the population, do you think it should be...	
	Mandatory for all	Given on a voluntary basis
Strongly agree	75.8%	27.8%
Somewhat agree	20.5%	36.5%
Somewhat disagree	3.2%	18.8%
Strongly disagree	0.5%	16.9%
Total	100.0%	100.0%

As regards coming to Canada from the US, some 85% of Canadians that prefer voluntary vaccination will want to prevent Americans from coming to Canada

People entering Canada from the United States or elsewhere should be required to have taken the COVID-19 vaccine -	When an approved COVID-19 vaccine becomes available to the population, do you think it should be...	
	Mandatory for all	Given on a voluntary basis
Strongly agree	81.5%	40.0%
Somewhat agree	16.2%	31.4%
Somewhat disagree	1.8%	14.6%
Strongly disagree	0.5%	14.1%
Total	100.0%	100.0%

METHODOLOGY & NOTES



Web survey using computer-assisted Web interviewing (CAWI) technology.



Data collected from November 27-29, 2020



1,566 Canadians ≥ 18 years, randomly recruited from LEO's online panel.



Using data from the 2016 Census, results are weighted by gender, age, mother tongue, region, education level and presence of children in the household in order to ensure a representative sample of the population.



No margin of error can be associated with a non-probability sample (Web panel). However for comparative purposes, a probability sample of 1,522 respondents has a margin of error of $\pm 2.51\%$, 19 times out of 20,. The research results presented here are in full compliance with the CRIC Public Opinion Research Standards and Disclosure Requirements.

If you have questions about the data presented in this report, please contact Jack Jedwab, President & CEO of the Association for Canadian Studies at the following e-mail address: jack.jedwab@acs-aec.ca, or Paul Holley, Research Director at the Association for Canadian Studies at paul.holley@acs-aec.ca.