
BORDER BEWILDERMENT: DO CANADIANS COMPREHEND WHY LAND BORDERS ARE CLOSED AND AIR BORDERS OPEN? WAB

JACK JEDWAB

CO-CHAIR

METROPOLIS NORTH AMERICA

MIGRATION POLICY FORUM

AUGUST 16, 2021

INTRODUCTION: CANADIANS DON'T UNDERSTAND BORDER ASYMMETRY

One in three Canadians say they don't know why air borders are open and land borders closed, while another 17% think it makes no sense. Hence a majority of Canadians either don't know and/or don't understand our ongoing land/air border asymmetry

On Monday July 19, 2021, the federal government announced that Canada will allow fully vaccinated Americans into the country as of Aug. 9. For their part, the US government announced yesterday (July 21) that the U.S. land border will remain closed to non-essential travel until at least Aug. 21 saying that while vaccination rates have improved, opening the land border to non-essential travel still poses too great a risk. Since March 2020 Canada's borders have been closed to all non-essential travel as restrictions were introduced to prevent the spread of COVID-19. While land borders between the two countries remained closed other than for essential services, travel by air was permitted with a series of restrictions for cross border travel. Pressure has been applied by American and Canadian citizens, the business community and elected officials to ease cross border travel requirements. However the land closed/air open asymmetry is not fully understood by many Canadians as revealed in an Association for Canadian Studies-poll conducted with 1529 Canadians between July 16 and 18, 2021.

ONE IN THREE CANADIANS DON'T KNOW WHY AIR BORDERS ARE OPEN AND LAND BORDERS CLOSED, WHILE ANOTHER 17% THINK IT MAKES NO SENSE

At present you can travel to the United States by air, but you cannot travel to the U.S. by land (you can't drive over the border). Why do you think this is case?	
Don't know / refusal	34%
It is absurd/illogical/unnecessary/stupid / it doesn't make sense	17%
For better control / control / ease of tracking / harder tracking through land crossings	13%
To limits travel/the number of travellers (crossing the boarder) / only essential travel	9%
For safety reasons / COVID-19 prevention / to limit the pandemic from spreading / caution	7%
Government policy/restrictions / people in charge of the rules are not thinking properly / poor policy	7%
Because airlines require negative COVID test / no test is available when crossing by car/land	6%
Double standard / it is completely contradictory / the same law should apply to all methods / loopholes	5%
To make sure that passenger have been vaccinated/fully vaccinated / to manage the movement of unvaccinated people	4%

CANADIANS DIVIDED OVER AIR/LAND BORDER ASYMMETRY

Which of the following scenarios do you think makes the most sense in terms of the Canada-U.S. border?				
	Total	18-34	35-54	55+
Keep air 'borders' to the US open, but keep land borders with U.S. closed	19%	27%	16%	16%
Keep air borders open and open the land borders to the US	44%	45%	47%	41%
Close both air and land borders to the US closed	36%	29%	36%	42%

METHODOLOGY

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

From July 16-18, 2021 1529 Canadians were surveyed via web panel

Using data from the Census, results were weighted according to 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 in this case). However for comparative purposes, a probability sample of 1529 Canadians would have a margin of error of $\pm 2.52\%$, 19 times out of 20.

The research results presented here are in full compliance with the CRIC Public Opinion Research Standards and Disclosure Requirements.

© 2021 Association for Canadian Studies
All Rights Reserved.

Created on August 16, 2021



www.acs-aec.ca