

The Public Monitor

August 2026

Foreign Influence on the Canadian Government



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Introduction

The findings presented in this report are from the most recent Public Monitor – a monthly public opinion omnibus survey. In addition to client questions, this edition of the Public Monitor featured questions around Canada’s economic sovereignty and foreign influence.

The Public Monitor

The Public Monitor is a monthly omnibus survey ideally suited for discerning clients who need a cost-effective solution to their public opinion research needs without compromising quality.

The Monitor is powered by the Modalis Public Opinion Panel – one of Canada’s only *fully* probability-based research panels. There is no need to compromise data quality when using an omnibus.

Benefits

- › Known accuracy of a probability sample.
- › Proprietary research findings at a fraction of the cost of a custom survey.
- › Expert design advice for your proprietary questions.
- › Extensive demographic and other profile data.
- › Ongoing tracking for a range of important metrics – cost of living, housing, economic confidence.

Specifications

- › Nationally representative sample of 1,500+ Canadian adults.
- › Survey is conducted online and via mobile devices in French and English.
- › 100% of the sample is based on random probability sampling, all respondents vetted by live in-house interviewers. No bots or survey fraudsters.



For scheduling and pricing, please reach out to:

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- › [Webpage](#)

Methodology

The Public Monitor is powered by the [Modalis Public Opinion Panel](#) – one of Canada’s only *fully* probability-based research panels.

The survey was conducted online using both email and SMS invitations/reminders, and completed via desktops, laptops, tablets and mobile devices.

A total of 1,646 responses were gathered from Canadian adults. As Modalis is 100% recruited using RDD probability-based telephone sampling, it is statistically valid to calculate the margin of error – it is plus or minus 2.4% at a 95% confidence interval.

The survey was conducted from August 10 to 23, 2026. We run surveys at the optimal timeframe for online surveys (~two weeks) to mitigate the response bias of quick turnaround surveys.

The data have been weighted by age, gender, region and education using the latest Census population data from Statistics Canada.



Notes on Reporting

Numbers in charts and tables may not always add up to 100 per cent due to rounding or the exclusion of non-response at times when it is minimal.

Data tables are shaded to denote statistically significant differences – green means the result is significantly higher than that for others in group, grey means it is significantly lower.

Scale aggregates are presented in parentheses on charts and tables, and are based on either a 5- or 7-point scale.

Foreign Influence on the Canadian Government

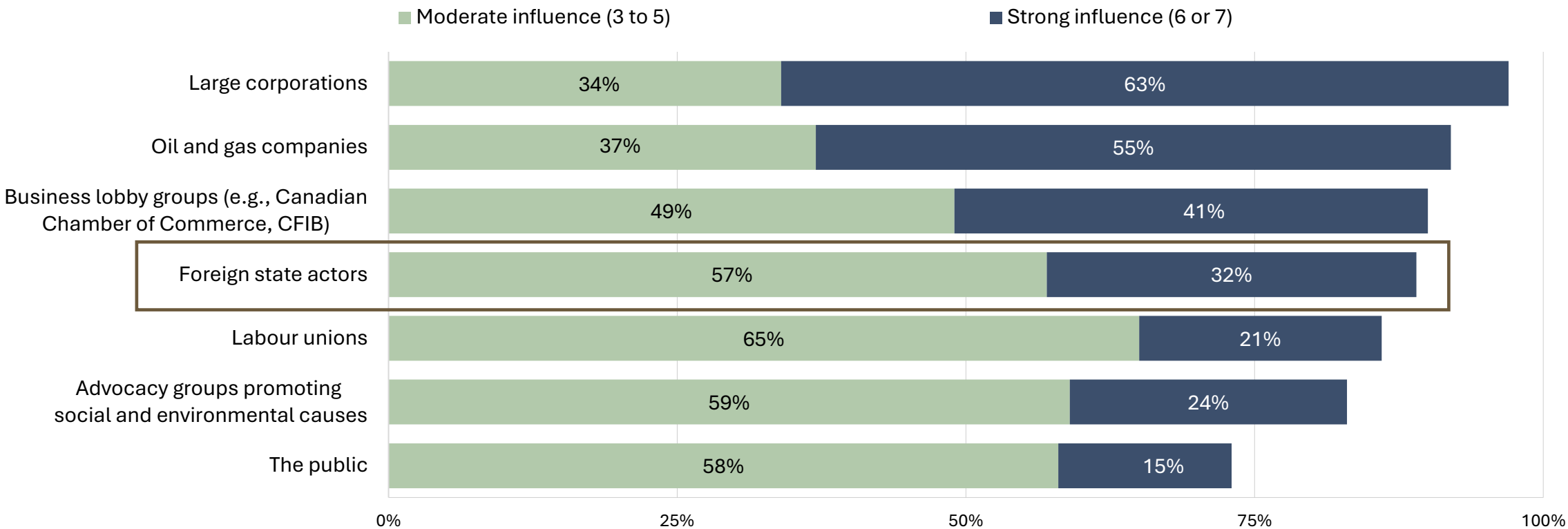
In the eyes of Canadians, foreign influence ranks well down in the list of government influencers

Almost two thirds think that large corporations have a great influence on Canadian government officials and politicians.

- Just half as many see foreign governments as having a comparable level of influence. Foreign influence also ranks behind the two additional business interest groups. Meanwhile, only 1 in 6 believe that the public influences the federal government.

Q In your opinion, to what extent do each of the following groups influence Canadian government officials and politicians?

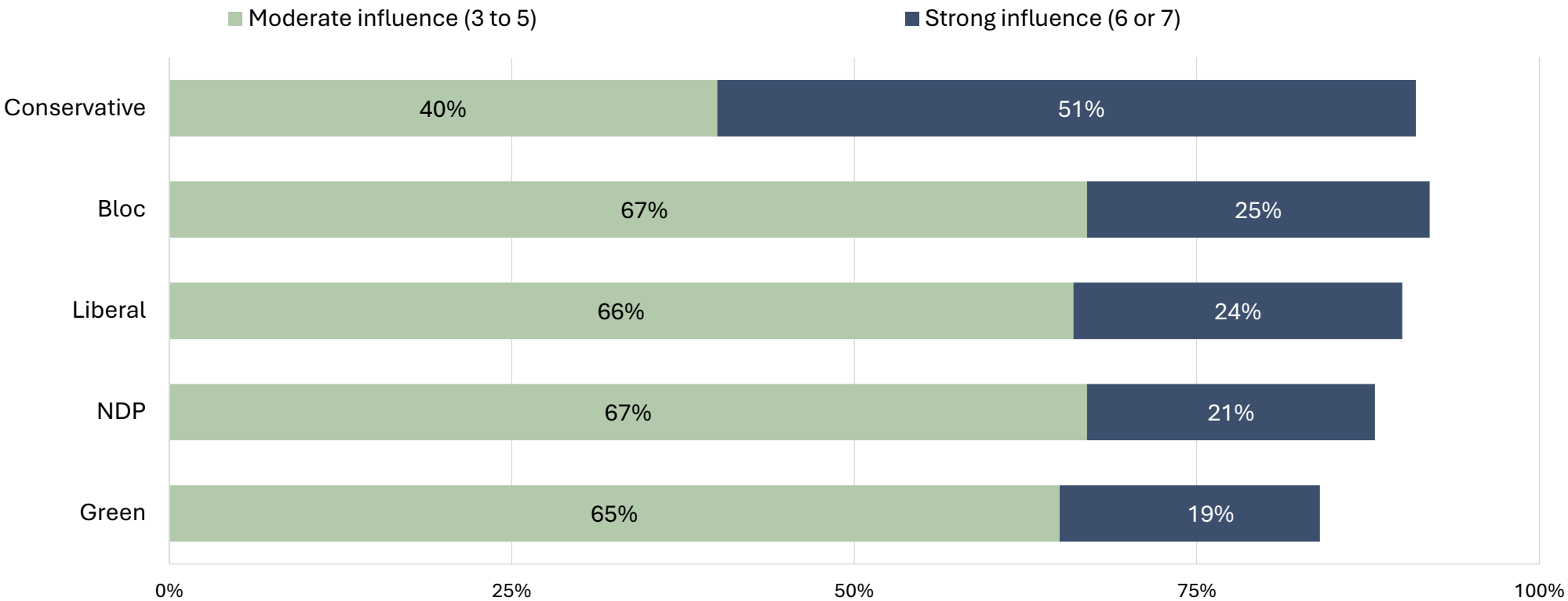
Base: Canadian adults, n=1,646



Conservative supporters are the only population subgroup for which a majority say that foreign influence is strong

Compared against any other voting block, Conservative supporters have more than double the number saying that foreign influence is strong.

Q In your opinion, to what extent do ... **foreign state actors** ... influence Canadian government officials and politicians?
Base: Canadian adults, n=1,646

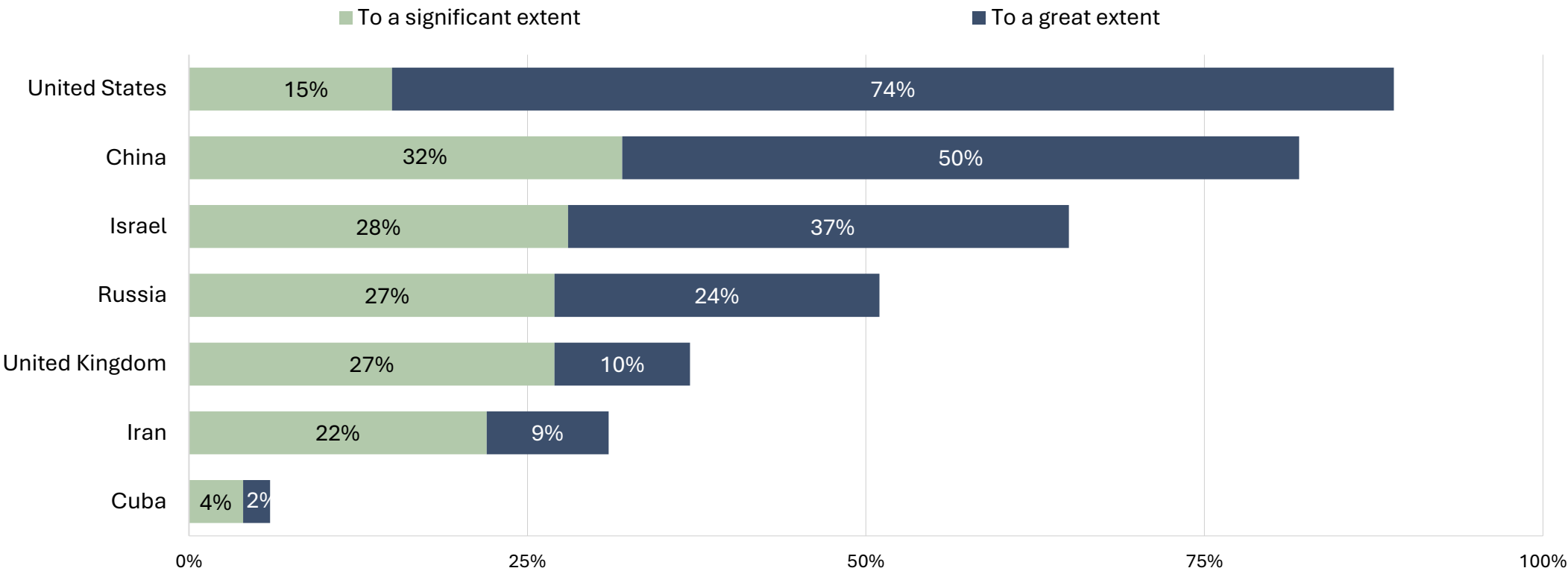


The U.S. is seen as having the greatest foreign influence, followed by China and Israel

Russia, likely due to ongoing hostilities, is seen by under a quarter as having a great influence on Canadian government officials and politicians.

Q In your view, to what extent do you think each of the following countries use lobbyists and other means to influence Canadian government officials and politicians?

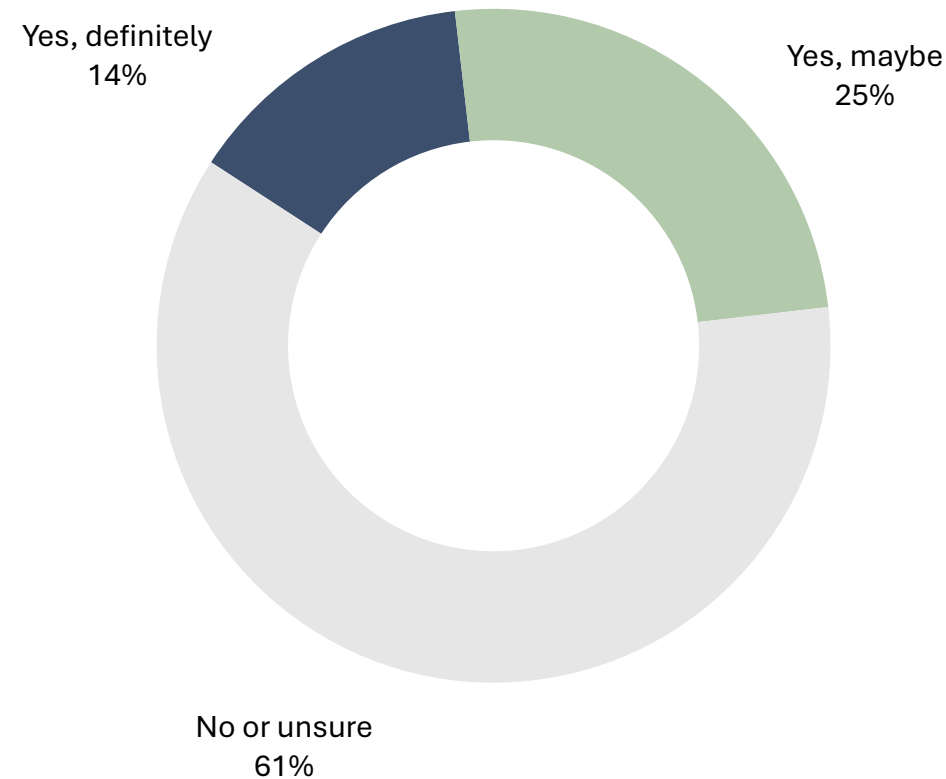
Base: Canadian adults, n=1,646



Only a minority are aware of the new Office of the Foreign Influence Commissioner.

Not many people have noticed that the federal government has set up the Office of the Foreign Influence Commissioner.

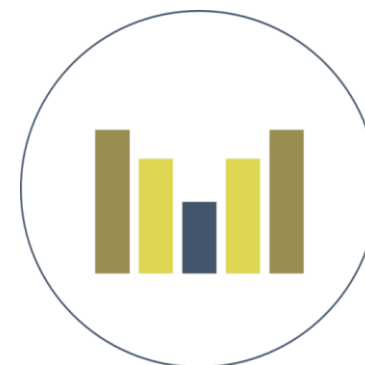
Q The federal government recently set up a new Office of the Foreign Influence Commissioner. A new registry is being created to bring greater transparency to foreign state actors trying to influence federal politicians and government officials. Prior to this survey, had you seen, read or heard anything about the Office of the Foreign Influence Commissioner? Base: Canadian adults, n=1,646



Discussion

A good deal of [media and political attention](#) has been focused over the past several years on foreign influence in Canadian politics. Although this issue has been spearheaded by the Conservative party and is not particularly concerning to most Canadians, within its first year in office the Liberal government has established an [Office of the Commissioner on Foreign Influence](#).

For most Canadians, the influence of foreign actors is relatively minor compared against the influence big business exerts over government. A solid majority of all political stripes think so. Meanwhile, the public is seen as having little influence on our government officials and politicians. Perhaps so-called voter apathy is not rooted in apathy.



The Modus Advantage

Modus Panels versus the Opt-ins

All of the major providers of panel research in Canada rely on opt-in/non-probability recruiting. It is important to know the difference.

- Modus panels rely exclusively on telephone-based random probability recruiting that covers the entire Canadian population (aside from those without a telephone).
- There is no need to qualify your results with [awkward disclaimers](#) like: “For comparison purposes, a probability sample would have a margin of error ...”
- On the basis of probability sampling, we can legitimately cite the margin of error and project the results confidently.
- People cannot join a Modus panel unless we randomly select them and verify them with a live in-house interview. Our panels contain real respondents with none of the AI bots, professional respondents or survey fraudsters that plague opt-in panels.

As the AAPOR [Task Force on Non-probability Sampling](#) pointed out:

- “The use of opt-in panels [is] premised on a willingness to accept overwhelming coverage and selection error.”
- “AAPOR has long maintained reporting margin of sampling error with opt-in or self-identified samples is misleading.”

Features	Modus Panels	Opt-in Panels
Random, probability-based recruiting	Yes	No
Coverage of the entire known population	Yes	No
Measurable accuracy (margin of error)	Yes	No
High response rates	Yes	No
Projectable results	Yes	No
Financial incentives	No	Yes
Exotic sampling, weighting and data cleaning	No	Yes
Survey pros and fraudsters	No	Yes
A.I. bots	No	Yes

Preventing Survey Fraud

Modus panel members are real respondents.

There's a simple and obvious answer to survey fraud. Probability sampling combined with live interviewer intake screens professional respondents and inoculates our panels from A.I. bots. You cannot join a Modus panel unless we select you – randomly over the phone. [Sample matters](#).

Professional respondents are people who join multiple panels motivated to earn money by completing surveys. By our count, these 'pros' make up about **3% of the adult population** – very far from representative. These 'pros' populate the opt-in panels that dominate the Canadian market. They join many panels (including using multiple aliases and VPNs) and complete numerous surveys, often daily and hourly. You have to complete a lot of surveys to make money this way.

- Opt-in panels explicitly advertise the opportunity to make money or 'earn rewards' by completing surveys. It only takes [a simple google search](#) to [see this](#).
- There's many websites dedicated to helping people earn money by joining opt-in panels. One of the more popular of these websites, ironically named Survey Police, [shows that by qualifying for surveys targeting hard-to-reach targets](#) (e.g., wealthy people, doctors, new mothers) "you can earn much more" money. These sites have many industry-leading opt-in panels on their pages.
- Promoting earning money is how opt-in panels recruit their panelists. It is also how survey fraud became an epidemic in the Canadian market research industry. Almost every panel on the Canadian market is opt-in.

In addition to being 100% probability-based, Modus does not offer *any financial incentives* to get people to join. Panel members earn charity dollars that are then donated to registered Canadian charities of our panelists' choice.

- This eliminates the key motivator for panel respondents to misrepresent themselves to qualify for surveys and commit survey fraud – earning money. The promise of financial gain is the main motivator for joining opt-in panels.
- For probability-based panels, the key driver of participation is simply sharing opinions and experiences. This is what we call **real respondents**.



Standards and Ethics



- › Modus staff are members of AAPOR
- › We adhere to AAPOR's stringent [Code of Professional Ethics and Practices](#)
- › Globally, AAPOR is one of the only survey research organizations that maintains strict standards on probability sampling, including explicit restrictions for reporting non-probability samples.

Modus

R E S E A R C H



Sample Matters

modusresearch.com

Data Tables

Ratings of Influences by Income, Home Ownership, and Population Density.

Q In your opinion, to what extent do each of the following groups influence Canadian government officials and politicians?

Base: Canadian adults, n=1,646

Percentages saying strong influence (6 or 7)	Total	Household Income						Home Ownership		Population Density		
		<\$40K	\$40K-\$59K	\$60K-\$79K	\$80K-\$99K	\$100K-\$149K	\$150K+	Own	Rent	Rural (<30K)	Small Urban (30K to <100K)	Large Urban (100K+)
Weighted Sample Size	1,646	195	135	191	196	396	306	1,077	481	441	245	922
Unweighted Sample Size	1,645	168	130	196	198	384	375	1,232	360	425	255	946
Large corporations	63%	64%	69%	65%	59%	64%	56%	61%	67%	59%	64%	64%
Oil and gas companies	55%	62%	59%	60%	55%	53%	50%	52%	64%	48%	58%	58%
Business lobby groups	41%	40%	42%	44%	42%	40%	39%	38%	48%	35%	36%	46%
Foreign state actors	32%	25%	39%	29%	26%	32%	35%	32%	28%	37%	39%	29%
Labour unions	21%	24%	23%	15%	20%	19%	19%	23%	15%	27%	19%	19%
Advocacy groups	24%	22%	29%	17%	23%	18%	25%	25%	21%	30%	23%	20%
The public	15%	16%	10%	14%	16%	16%	14%	16%	12%	17%	16%	14%

Rating of Influences by Age, Gender and Region.

Q In your opinion, to what extent do each of the following groups influence Canadian government officials and politicians?

Base: Canadian adults, n=1,646

Percentages saying strong influence (6 or 7)		Age					Gender		Region					
		Total	< 35	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	Male	Female	BC	Alberta	Prairies	Ontario	Quebec
Weighted Sample Size	1,646	222	501	195	313	360	804	842	223	190	114	634	379	107
Unweighted Sample Size	1,646	108	233	258	409	580	960	686	248	273	182	635	237	71
Large corporations	63%	67%	69%	57%	59%	57%	63%	62%	61%	63%	69%	66%	58%	53%
Oil and gas companies	55%	57%	59%	48%	53%	55%	53%	57%	54%	52%	57%	55%	56%	51%
Business lobby groups	41%	48%	45%	40%	35%	37%	42%	40%	35%	45%	34%	42%	44%	39%
Foreign state actors	32%	22%	33%	36%	37%	32%	33%	31%	30%	37%	32%	36%	26%	35%
Labour unions	21%	14%	17%	28%	23%	27%	23%	20%	23%	24%	17%	22%	19%	22%
Advocacy groups	24%	18%	21%	28%	26%	26%	29%	19%	21%	30%	29%	25%	18%	24%
The public	15%	14%	11%	11%	20%	21%	16%	14%	13%	11%	10%	19%	14%	16%