

Four out of five Canadians believe that future governments should continue to choose independent senators. Familiarity with the role of the Senate of Canada hits tracking low.

The research gauged the opinions among Canadians on views on familiarity with and impressions of the Senate of Canada. Additionally, questions were asked on awareness of changes to the Senate, awareness of independent senators, views on independent advisory boards, appointing senators, and watching television broadcasts of the Canadians Senate Committee meetings.

Nanos conducted an RDD dual frame (land- and cell-lines) hybrid telephone and online random survey of 1099 Canadians, 18 years of age or older, between March 31 to April 4, 2026 as part of an omnibus survey. Participants were randomly recruited by telephone using live agents and administered a survey online.

The margin of error for a random survey of 1,099 Canadians is ± 3.0 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.


The research was commissioned by Senator Dasko and was conducted by Nanos Research.

Full data tables with weighted and unweighted number of interviews is here: [by region age and gender](#)

Note: Charts may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

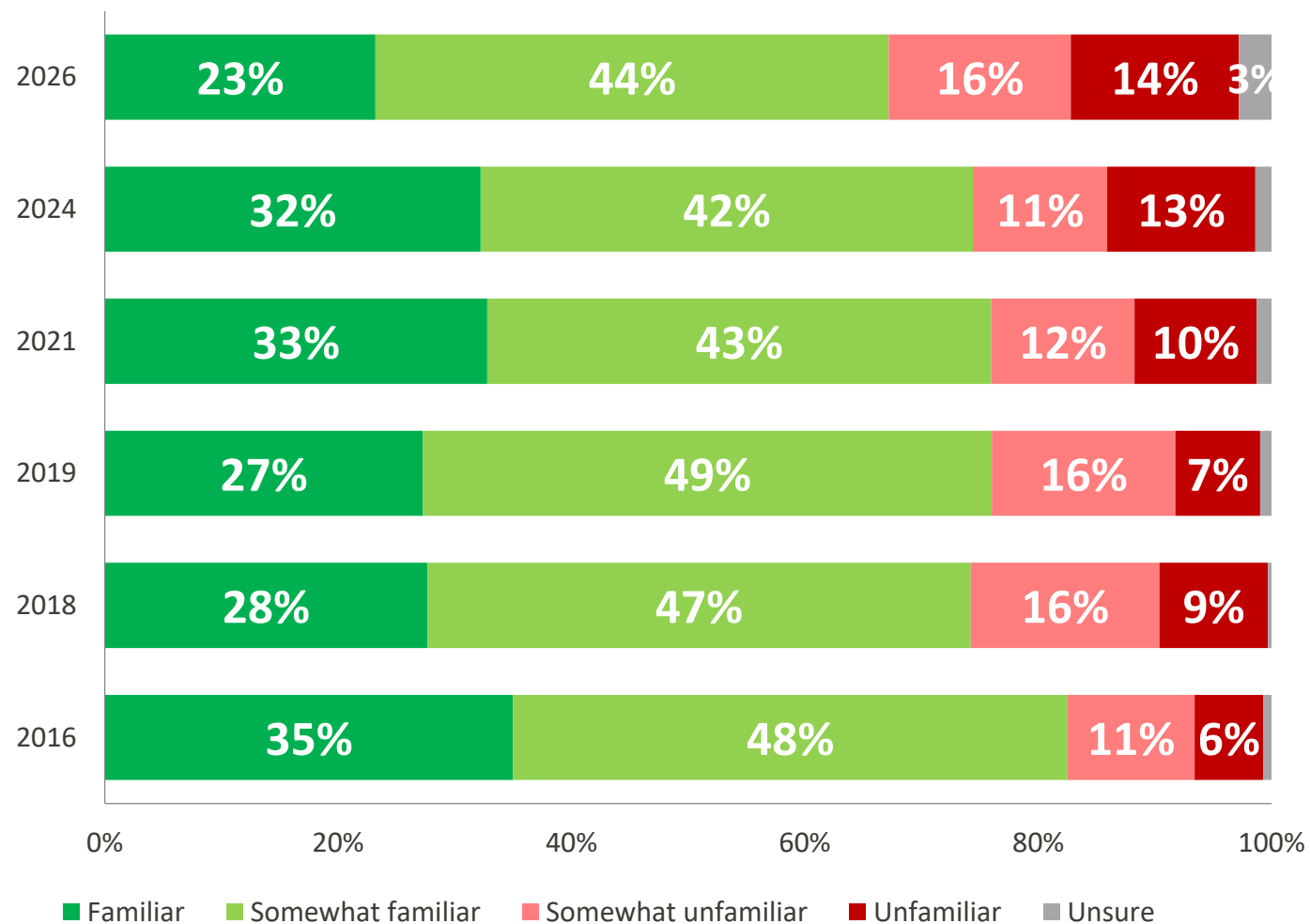
UPSHOT

- 1. Positive impressions of Canadian senators on the rise:** For the first time since the start of tracking, Canadians have a net positive view of someone who is a senator (41% positive/somewhat positive; 36% negative/somewhat negative).
- 2. Majority of Canadians on board with independent senators:** Seventy-nine percent of Canadians believe future governments should continue to choose independent senators rather than reverting to appointing senators who will sit as members of a political party (5%).
- 3. Most Canadians believe the change in practices to the Senate in 2016 were good changes:** The majority of Canadians report that the changes of having an independent advisory board review and assess applications to the Senate (77%), having senators sit as independent members (77%) and allowing Canadian citizens to apply for senate positions (67%) were good changes.
- 4. Familiarity with the role of the Senate hits tracking low:** Less than a quarter of Canadians (23%) report being outright familiar with the role that the Senate of Canada plays in the federation, the lowest number since tracking began in 2016. Overall, Canadians are still twice as likely to report being familiar to some degree (67%) than unfamiliar to some degree (30%).

The image shows a grand, dimly lit chamber, likely the Senate Chamber in Ottawa. It features two large, ornate, red tufted seats with high backs, set against a dark wood paneling with intricate carvings. Two Canadian flags are visible on either side of the seats. In the foreground, there are several rows of desks with microphones, suggesting a formal assembly or debate. The overall atmosphere is solemn and historical.

Views on the Senate

Q – Would you say that you are familiar, somewhat familiar, somewhat unfamiliar or unfamiliar with the role of the Senate of Canada in the federation? [PROFILING]



*Weighted to the true population proportion.

*Charts may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Familiarity with the role of the Senate

Two thirds (67%) of Canadians report that they are familiar to some degree of the role that the Senate of Canada plays in the federation. The fewest number of Canadians reported being outright familiar (23%) with the role of the Senate, the lowest since tracking began in 2016. Thirty percent of Canadians report being unfamiliar to some degree with the role of the Senate of Canada.

Familiarity with the role of the Senate – By demographics

Q – Would you say that you are familiar, somewhat familiar, somewhat unfamiliar or unfamiliar with the role of the Senate of Canada in the federation?

	Canada 2026-04 (n=1099)	Atlantic (n=120)	Quebec (n=206)	Ontario (n=362)	Prairies (n=246)	BC (n=165)	Male (n=578)	Female (n=521)	18 to 34 (n=183)	35 to 54 (n=412)	55 plus (n=504)
Familiar	23.2%	13.9%	10.5%	26.9%	32.0%	27.6%	28.7%	18.0%	11.9%	23.5%	30.3%
Somewhat familiar	44.0%	58.8%	35.5%	46.8%	44.1%	42.8%	42.4%	45.5%	41.4%	46.6%	43.7%
Somewhat unfamiliar	15.6%	14.5%	24.2%	13.8%	11.1%	12.6%	14.1%	17.1%	18.9%	14.9%	14.0%
Unfamiliar	14.4%	11.7%	23.8%	10.7%	10.7%	14.8%	12.7%	16.0%	23.4%	12.7%	9.9%
Unsure	2.8%	1.1%	6.0%	1.8%	2.1%	2.2%	2.2%	3.4%	4.5%	2.3%	2.2%

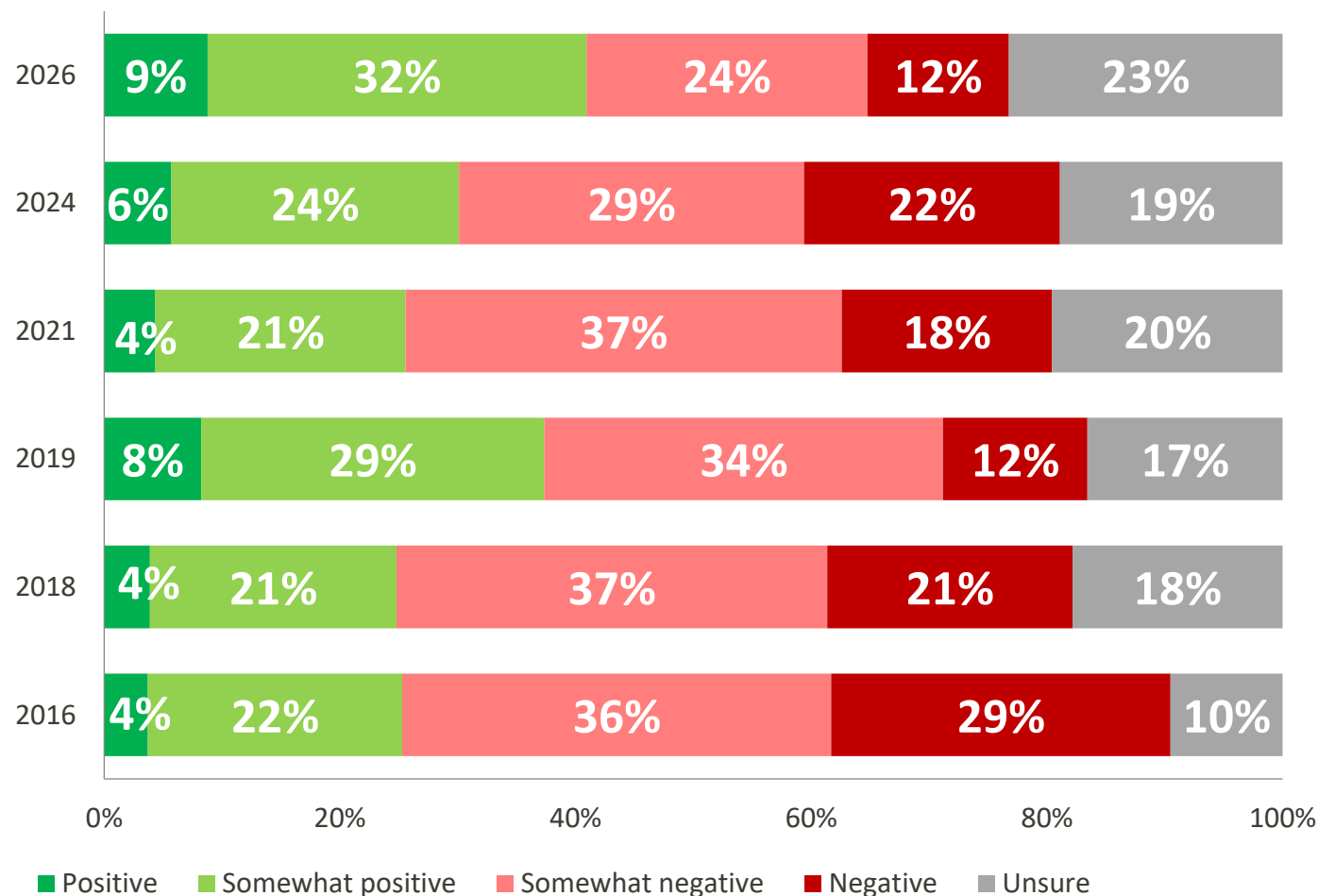
*Subgroups which are statistically different than the national average are highlighted yellow.

Residents of the Prairies (32%) are three times more likely to report being outright familiar with the role of the Senate of Canada than residents of Quebec (10%). Additionally, Canadians 55 and older (30%) report being more familiar with the role that the Senate of Canada plays than Canadians aged 18 to 34 (12%).

Impression of Senators

Four in ten (41%) Canadians report having positive (9%) or somewhat positive (32%) impressions of Canadian senators, reaching a tracking high and continuing its increase from previous waves (30% in 2024, 25% in 2021). Just over a third of Canadians (36%) report having negative views to some degree of someone who is a Canadian senator. Twenty-three percent of Canadians report being unsure.

Q – Do you have a positive, somewhat positive, a somewhat negative or a negative impression of someone who is a Senator of Canada?



*Weighted to the true population proportion.

*Charts may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Impression of senators – By demographics

Q – Do you have a positive, somewhat positive, a somewhat negative or a negative impression of someone who is a Senator of Canada?

	Canada 2026-04 (n=1099)	Atlantic (n=120)	Quebec (n=206)	Ontario (n=362)	Prairies (n=246)	BC (n=165)	Male (n=578)	Female (n=521)	18 to 34 (n=183)	35 to 54 (n=412)	55 plus (n=504)
Positive	8.8%	6.2%	4.2%	10.1%	11.1%	10.9%	6.3%	11.2%	5.6%	6.8%	12.4%
Somewhat positive	32.2%	33.3%	32.2%	32.3%	29.0%	35.0%	30.2%	34.0%	26.3%	31.9%	36.2%
Somewhat negative	23.8%	28.3%	25.0%	23.0%	25.6%	19.9%	24.8%	22.9%	22.0%	25.1%	24.0%
Negative	12.0%	10.6%	12.5%	9.5%	17.3%	12.3%	18.1%	6.1%	9.4%	14.2%	12.0%
Unsure	23.2%	21.7%	26.1%	25.0%	17.0%	22.0%	20.5%	25.8%	36.8%	22.0%	15.4%

Canadian men (18%) are three times more likely to report having an outright negative impression of someone who is a Senator of Canada than Canadian women (6%). Over a third (37%) of Canadians aged 18 to 34 report being unsure when asked what their impression of someone who is a Senator of Canada, comparatively fifteen percent of those 55 and older report being unsure.

Reasons for impressions of senators – Positive views

Q – Why do you have that opinion? [OPEN]

Positive/Somewhat positive

TOP RESPONSES

	Change since 2024	2026 (n=357)	2024 (n=260)	2021 (n=238)	2019 (n=367)	2018 (n=220)
Sober second opinion/neutral opinion/ to help pass bills/important	+17.6	34.7%	17.1%	N/A	N/A	N/A
Many senators are hard-working, esteemed public servants /they're not all bad/well connected/respected/accomplished	-17.4	23.4%	40.8%	14.9%	38.4%	28.2%
The Senate's purpose and the work it does/has done before is valuable	+9.0	9.7%	0.7%	31.8%	12.5%	22.3%
It depends on the senator/ I know one/worked for one	-4.3	6.5%	10.8%	14.9%	10.6%	10.5%
It's not useful / It doesn't accomplish much	+0.8	4.5%	3.7%	0.4%	0.5%	2.3%

Reasons for impressions of senators – Negative views

Q – Why do you have that opinion? [OPEN]

Negative/Somewhat negative

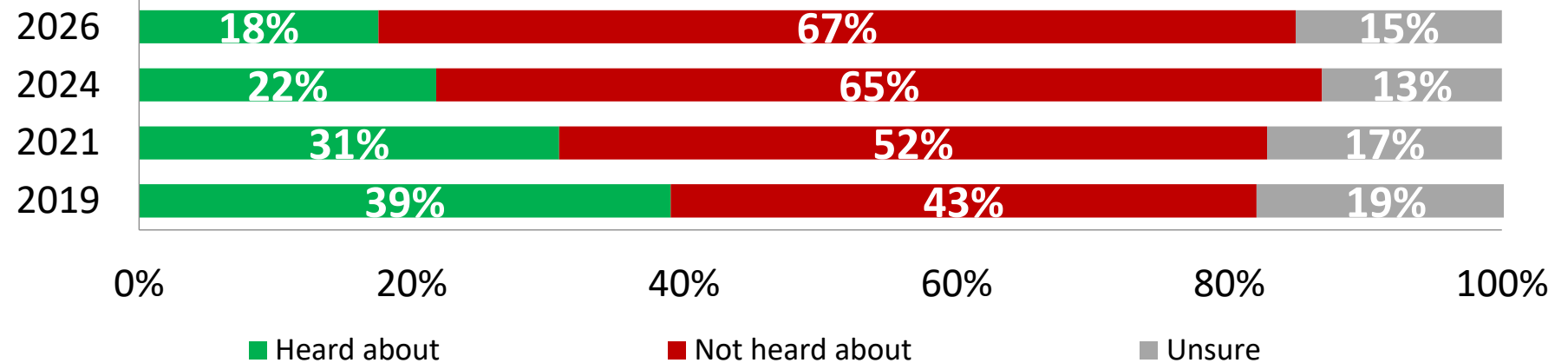
TOP RESPONSES

	Change since 2024	2026 (n=340)	2024 (n=449)	2021 (n=505)	2019 (n=463)	2018 (n=512)
It is an unelected/appointed body	+13.2	25.6%	12.4%	17.5%	19.2%	13.1%
It's not useful / It doesn't accomplish much	+9.8	20.2%	10.4%	16.6%	12.5%	17.0%
It is too partisan/unaccountable/entitled/untrustworthy	-12.3	11.0%	23.3%	17.1%	6.3%	29.7%
The appointment criteria and process are flawed/ term limits	+5.8	9.5%	3.7%	5.1%	5.0%	3.1
They are lazy/ out of touch/too old / obscures the good work done by others/they don't do anything/unqualified	-6.0	7.7%	13.7%	4.6%	8.2%	2.7%
It's a waste of (tax-payers') money, public funds/ cost too much/ too many	-5.4	7.2%	12.6%	11.3%	9.3%	8.8%

Source: Nanos Research, RDD dual frame hybrid telephone and online random survey, March 31 to April 4, 2026, n=340, accurate 5.3 percentage points plus or minus, 19 times out of 20.

Awareness of changes to the Senate

Q – Have you heard or read about any changes that have been made to the Senate of Canada over the past few years?



2 in 3 Canadians

have not heard or read about the changes that have been made to the Senate of Canada over the past few years. Continuing the trend in the increase of those who have not heard or read about the changes in the past few years.

*Weighted to the true population proportion.

*Charts may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Awareness of changes to the Senate

Q - Have you heard or read about any changes that have been made to the Senate of Canada over the past few years?

	Canada 2026-04 (n=1099)	Atlantic (n=120)	Quebec (n=206)	Ontario (n=362)	Prairies (n=246)	BC (n=165)	Male (n=578)	Female (n=521)	18 to 34 (n=183)	35 to 54 (n=412)	55 plus (n=504)
Yes, heard about	17.6%	14.3%	17.4%	19.9%	15.3%	15.7%	20.2%	15.0%	10.8%	15.8%	23.3%
No, have not heard about	67.3%	67.5%	69.8%	64.3%	68.4%	70.0%	65.1%	69.4%	72.3%	71.4%	60.9%
Unsure	15.1%	18.2%	12.8%	15.8%	16.3%	14.3%	14.7%	15.6%	16.9%	12.8%	15.8%

*Subgroups which are statistically different than the national average are highlighted yellow.

Just under a quarter of Canadians aged 55 and older (23%) report having heard or read about the changes to the Senate of Canada, higher than the Canadian average (18%).

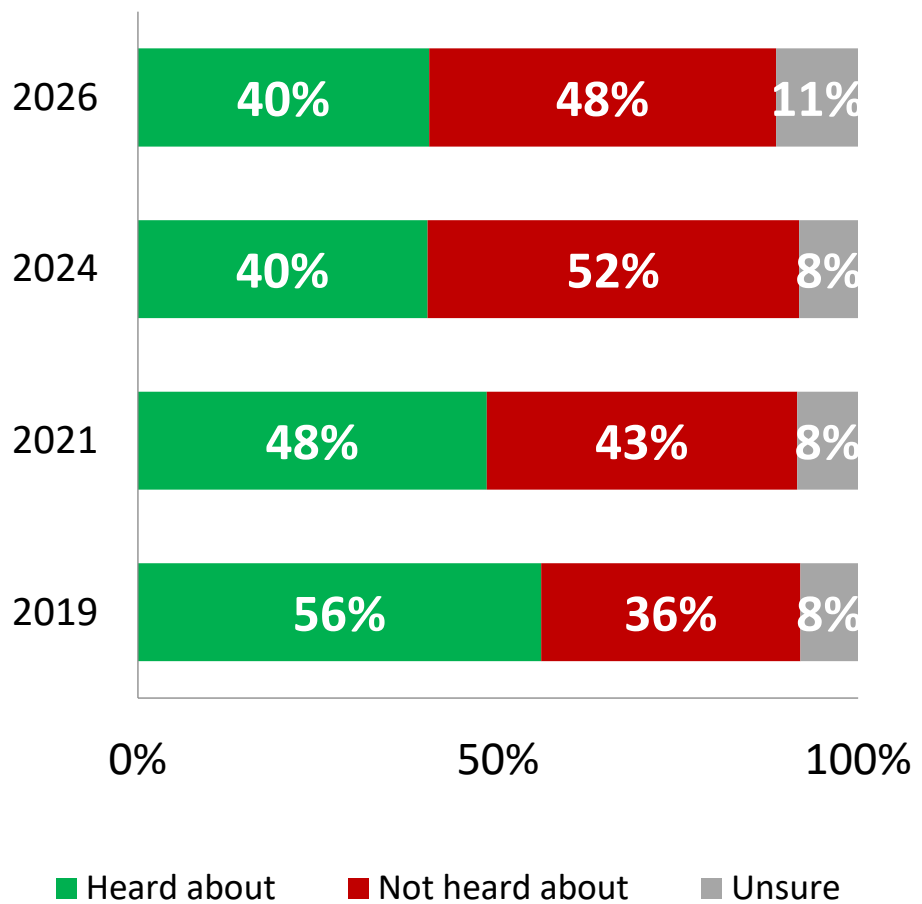
Changes read or heard about the Senate

Q – [IF “Yes, heard about” IN Q4] What changes have you heard or read about? [OPEN]

	Change since 2024	2026 (n=182)	2024 (n=208)	2021 (n=303)	2019 (n=369)	
Top mentions	More independent, non-partisan in general	+6.3	32.5%	26.2%	40.7%	37.8%
	Changes to appointment process	-0.6	17.0%	17.6%	9.9%	11.2%
	Senators released from Caucus\senators vote freely	+8.9	11.4%	2.5%	N/A	N/A
	Partisanship (false non-partisan/failed non-partisanship)	+7.2	11.2%	4.0%	N/A	N/A
	Independent Liberal senators	-17.2	10.0%	27.2%	27.3%	21.3%
	Other	+0.2	4.6%	4.4%	9.2%	7.7%
	Abolishing the Senate\ senators should have less power	+2.5	4.0%	1.5%	1.6%	2.2%
	Elected Senators	-0.5	3.7%	4.2%	3.4%	4.5%
	More accountability, expense control	+0.7	2.9%	2.2%	5.3%	7.2%

Source: Nanos Research, RDD dual frame hybrid telephone and online random survey, March 31 to April 4, 2026, n=182, accurate 7.3 percentage points plus or minus, 19 times out of 20.

Q – Have you heard anything about independent senators?



*Weighted to the true population proportion.
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Awareness of independent senators

	Atlantic (n=120)	Quebec (n=206)	Ontario (n=362)	Prairies (n=246)	BC (n=165)
Heard about	41.9%	43.7%	38.7%	41.2%	38.3%
	Men (n=578)	Women (n=521)	18 to 34 (n=183)	35 to 54 (n=412)	55 plus (n=504)
	44.4%	36.7%	31.6%	37.7%	48.4%
Not heard about	48.6%	47.3%	47.7%	46.8%	52.3%
	Men (n=578)	Women (n=521)	18 to 34 (n=183)	35 to 54 (n=412)	55 plus (n=504)
	46.1%	50.1%	54.4%	51.8%	41.2%

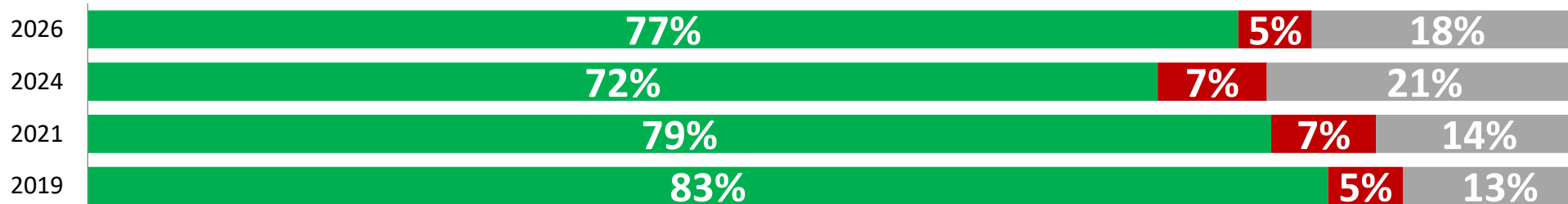
Changes to the Senate of Canada

Q - In 2016, the following practices were changed with regard to the Senate of Canada. Please tell me if you think each of the following is a good change, or not a good change? [RANDOMIZE]

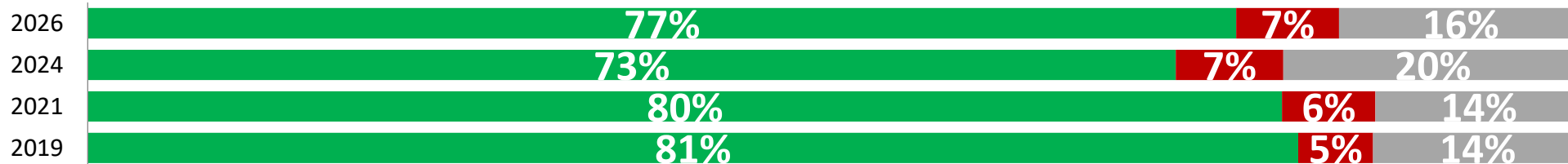
Canadian citizens can now APPLY for Senate positions that come open.



An independent advisory board reviews and assesses the applications for the Senate that are received



New senators sit as INDEPENDENT members in the Senate and ARE NOT ACTIVE IN A POLITICAL PARTY – [TWEAKED 2024]



0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

■ Good change ■ Not a good change ■ Unsure

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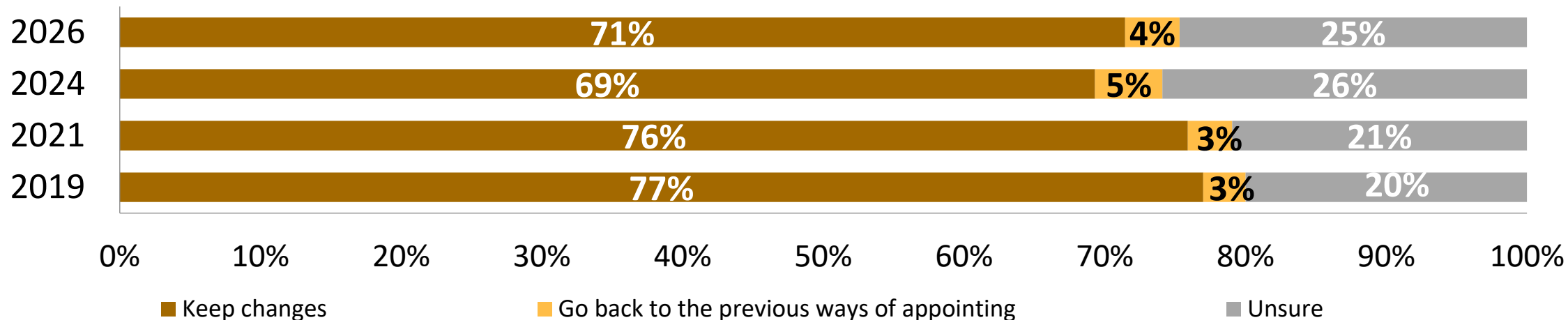
Changes to the Senate of Canada - Demographics

Q – In 2016, the following practices were changed with regard to the Senate of Canada. Please tell me if you think each of the following is a good change, or not a good change? [RANDOMIZE]

		2026-04 (n=1099)	Atlantic (n=120)	Quebec (n=206)	Ontario (n=362)	Prairies (n=246)	BC (n=165)	Men (n=578)	Women (n=521)	18-34 (n=183)	35-54 (n=412)	55 plus (n=504)
Good change	New Senators sit as INDEPENDENT members in the Senate and are NOT ACTIVE IN A POLITICAL PARTY	76.9%	75.8%	74.7%	75.3%	83.0%	77.6%	78.3%	75.5%	75.8%	77.8%	76.8%
	An independent advisory board reviews and assesses the applications for the Senate that are received	77.0%	73.1%	75.6%	76.3%	81.3%	77.6%	75.6%	78.3%	73.9%	76.4%	79.5%
	Canadian citizens can now APPLY for Senate positions that come open	66.6%	68.0%	65.1%	64.6%	70.8%	68.9%	67.3%	66.0%	72.1%	67.9%	62.1%
Not a good change	New Senators sit as INDEPENDENT members in the Senate and are NOT ACTIVE IN A POLITICAL PARTY	6.9%	8.4%	5.7%	8.3%	5.5%	5.9%	8.6%	5.2%	6.3%	5.9%	8.0%
	An independent advisory board reviews and assesses the applications for the Senate that are received	4.9%	9.5%	3.7%	4.6%	5.1%	5.4%	6.6%	3.3%	4.9%	4.8%	5.0%
	Canadian citizens can now APPLY for Senate positions that come open	11.5%	8.5%	13.6%	11.7%	12.3%	8.1%	14.1%	9.0%	8.3%	9.3%	15.4%

Keeping the changes to the way of appointing senators

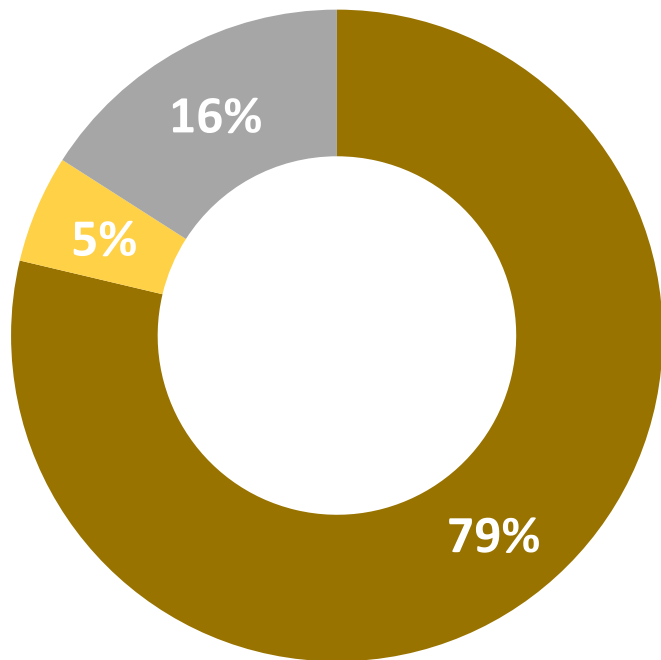
Q – And looking ahead, do you think future governments should keep these changes or go back to the previous ways of appointing senators?



	2026-04 (n=1099)	Atlantic (n=120)	Quebec (n=206)	Ontario (n=362)	Prairies (n=246)	BC (n=165)	Men (n=578)	Women (n=521)	18-34 (n=183)	35-54 (n=412)	55 plus (n=504)
Keep changes	71.4%	75.5%	72.2%	71.0%	70.8%	70.2%	73.1%	69.8%	67.8%	72.6%	72.9%
Go back to the previous ways of appointing	3.9%	6.2%	4.8%	3.8%	3.6%	1.9%	4.3%	3.5%	2.5%	4.9%	4.0%
Unsure	24.7%	18.4%	23.0%	25.2%	25.5%	28.0%	22.6%	26.7%	29.8%	22.5%	23.1%

*Weighted to the true population proportion.
 *Charts may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Q – And looking ahead, should future governments continue to choose independent senators, or should they go back to appointing senators who will sit as members of a political party?



- Continue to choose independent senators
- Go back to appointing senators who will sit as members of a political party
- Unsure

Independent vs. Partisan Senate

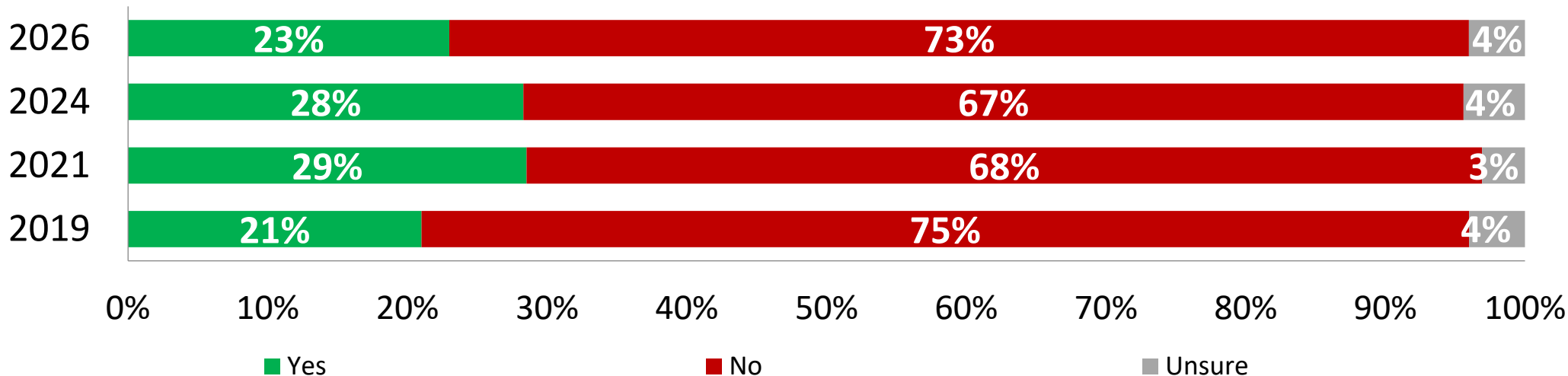
	Atlantic (n=120)	Quebec (n=206)	Ontario (n=362)	Prairies (n=246)	BC (n=165)
Continue to choose independent senators	77.6%	78.9%	78.4%	78.4%	80.3%
	Men (n=578)	Women (n=521)	18 to 34 (n=183)	35 to 54 (n=412)	55 plus (n=504)
	78.4%	79.0%	72.8%	79.1%	82.2%
Go back to appointing senators who will sit as members of a political party	6.7%	3.3%	6.8%	4.9%	4.6%
	Men (n=578)	Women (n=521)	18 to 34 (n=183)	35 to 54 (n=412)	55 plus (n=504)
	5.5%	5.2%	7.2%	4.6%	4.8%

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Source: Nanos Research, RDD dual frame hybrid telephone and online random survey, March 31 to April 4, 2026 , n=1,099, accurate 3.0 percentage points plus or minus, 19 times out of 20.

Watching television broadcasts of the Canadian Senate

Q – Have you ever watched television broadcasts of Canadian Senate committee meetings or meetings in the Senate chamber?



	2026-04 (n=1099)	Atlantic (n=120)	Quebec (n=206)	Ontario (n=362)	Prairies (n=246)	BC (n=165)	Men (n=578)	Women (n=521)	18-34 (n=183)	35-54 (n=412)	55 plus (n=504)
Yes	23.0%	29.9%	13.9%	26.3%	26.1%	21.8%	23.1%	22.9%	23.4%	24.5%	21.6%
No	73.0%	67.8%	83.6%	69.0%	69.8%	73.0%	73.3%	72.7%	70.4%	72.3%	75.2%
Unsure	4.0%	2.4%	2.5%	4.7%	4.1%	5.2%	3.7%	4.3%	6.2%	3.2%	3.2%

*Subgroups which are statistically different than the national average are highlighted yellow.

*Weighted to the true population proportion.

*Charts may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Source: Nanos Research, RDD dual frame hybrid telephone and online random survey, March 31 to April 4, 2026, n=1,099, accurate 3.0 percentage points plus or minus, 19 times out of 20.



METHODOLOGY

Nanos conducted an RDD dual frame (land- and cell-lines) hybrid telephone and online random survey of 1099 Canadians, 18 years of age or older, between March 31 to April 4, 2026, as part of an omnibus survey. Participants were randomly recruited by telephone using live agents and administered a survey online. The results were statistically checked and weighted by age and gender using the latest Census information and the sample is geographically stratified to be representative of Canada.

Individuals were randomly called using random digit dialing with a maximum of five call backs.

The margin of error for a random survey of 1099 Canadians is ± 3.0 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.

The research was commissioned by Senator Dasko and was conducted by Nanos Research.

Note: Charts may not add up to 100 due to rounding.



Element	Description	Element	Description
Research sponsor	Senator Dasko	Weighting of Data	The results were weighted by age and gender using the latest Census information (2021) and the sample is geographically stratified to ensure a distribution across all regions of Canada. See tables for full weighting disclosure.
Population and Final Sample Size	1099 Randomly selected individuals.	Screening	Screening ensured potential respondents did not work in the market research industry, in the advertising industry, in the media or a political party prior to administering the survey to ensure the integrity of the data.
Source of Sample	Nanos Probability Panel	Excluded Demographics	Individuals younger than 18 years old; individuals without land or cell lines, and individuals without internet access could not participate.
Type of Sample	Probability	Stratification	By age and gender using the latest Census information (2021) and the sample is geographically stratified to be representative of Canada. Smaller areas such as Atlantic Canada were marginally oversampled to allow for a minimum regional sample.
Margin of Error	±3.0 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.	Estimated Response Rate	13 percent, consistent with industry norms.
Mode of Survey	RDD dual frame (land- and cell-lines) hybrid telephone and online omnibus survey	Question Order	Question order in the preceding report reflects the order in which they appeared in the original questionnaire.
Sampling Method Base	The sample included both land- and cell-lines RDD (Random Digit Dialed) across Canada.	Question Content	Topics on the omnibus ahead of the survey content included: views on political issues, views on economic issues, defence spending, US-Cuba relations, gas prices, air travel, views on the NDP, Canada's relationship with the EU, F-35 fighter jets, the Iran conflict, nuclear weapons, and trade negotiations.
Demographics (Captured)	Atlantic Canada, Quebec, Ontario, Prairies, BC; Men and Women; 18 years and older. Six-digit postal code was used to validate geography.	Question Wording	The questions in the preceding report are written exactly as they were asked to individuals.
Fieldwork/Validation	Individuals were recruited using live interviews with live supervision to validate work, the research questions were administered online	Research/Data Collection Supplier	Nanos Research
Number of Calls	Maximum of five call backs to those recruited.	Contact	Contact Nanos Research for more information or with any concerns or questions. http://www.nanos.co Telephone:(613) 234-4666 ext. 237 Email: info@nanosresearch.com.
Time of Calls	Individuals recruited were called between 12-5:30 pm and 6:30-9:30pm local time for the respondent.	Tabulations	Data tables by region, gender and age
Field Dates	March 31 to April 4, 2026.		
Language of Survey	The survey was conducted in both English and French.		
Standards	Nanos Research is a member of the Canadian Research Insights Council (CRIC) and confirms that this research fully complies with all CRIC Standards including the CRIC Public Opinion Research Standards and Disclosure Requirements. https://canadianresearchinsightscouncil.ca/standards/		



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ABOUT NANOS

Any questions?



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