



**Institute
for Canadian
Citizenship**

**Institut pour
la citoyenneté
canadienne**

News Release

Poll shows the impact of discrimination on Canadian immigrants amid COVID-19

June 22, 2020 – A new Institute for Canadian Citizenship–Leger poll reveals that 64% of new Canadians fear rising discrimination amid the pandemic, and many report being judged and targeted.

Launched as part of the institute’s #StandTogether campaign during the crisis, the poll shows how discrimination is affecting newcomers, with 63% saying they worry every time they take public transit.

“I think these numbers demonstrate that immigrants are under a tremendous amount of stress and anxiety,” says Yasir Naqvi, CEO of the institute and former attorney general of Ontario. “It is impacting their day-to-day life and causing stress not only for them, but their families.”

A total 2,471 respondents — including 956 new Canadians — completed the survey between April 27 and 30. The margin of error for the study was +/-2.5%, 19 times out of 20. New Canadians expressed significantly more concern around everyday activities because of discrimination, to the point that:

- 27% are worried about wearing a mask in public (vs. 21% of the general public)
- 49% are worried about going out to run errands (vs. 34% of the general public)
- 53% are worried about going out in public (vs. 35% of the general public)
- 33% are worried about telling people they work with about possible symptoms of illness (vs. 20% of the general public)
- and 63% are worried about taking public transit (vs. 47% of the general public). Among Chinese-Canadian new citizens who responded, a full 81% fear discrimination while taking transit.

Almost half of the new Canadians in the poll report being essential workers. Naqvi says their mental and physical health is being unduly affected if they fear negative reactions each time they don a mask or ride transit to work.

“We need to #StandTogether with Canadians who are feeling left out and who have been bearing a disproportionate impact of the pandemic,” he says. “All Canadians need to do the hard work to counter racism. That’s why we’re doing collecting the data to create that awareness, and to mobilize people.”

About #StandTogether: The Institute for Canadian Citizenship launched the #StandTogether campaign last month to raise awareness of immigrants’ front-line contributions to Canada during the COVID-19 crisis and to combat racism and xenophobia. More on the campaign and poll [here](#).

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