

Quarantine Questions: Most support 3-day hotel stay for returning air travellers, but far fewer think it's effective

Most want border with United States to remain closed until at least autumn

April 15, 2021 – '[No time soon](#)' was the message from Canada's Prime Minister when recently asked about the Canada-U.S. border potentially reopening. Trudeau stated that until cases of COVID-19 drop significantly, opening the border is a non-starter. That suits most Canadians just fine.

A new study from the non-profit Angus Reid Institute finds Canadians largely unwilling to re-open the border in the short term, despite [calls from Americans](#) to do so, and even though the U.S. may be on pace to reach herd immunity via vaccination [by summer](#).

Asked when they would open it fully to non-essential travel, more than half say either the fall (25%) or the end of the year (31%) is a reasonable target.

This, as Canada continues to impose restrictions on travellers arriving by air and land. Canadians support a hotly-debated measure: a three-day quarantine at a government-selected hotel – paid for at one's own expense – for those arriving in this country via air.

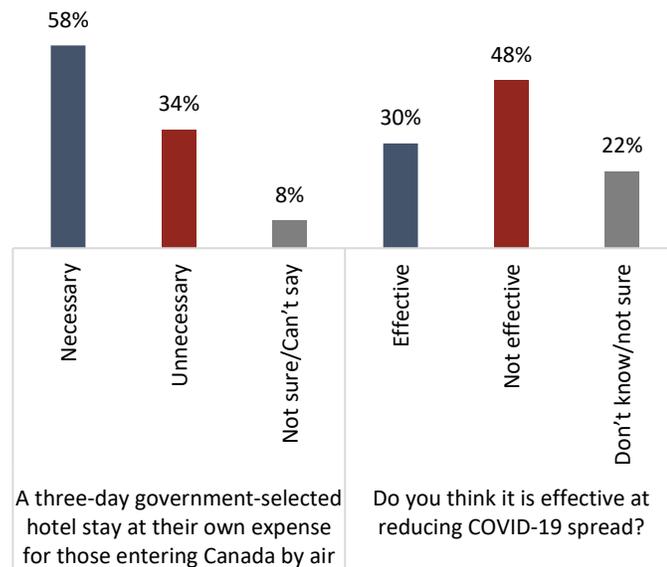
Despite reports of travellers avoiding this requirement by [finding ways around it](#), three-in-five (58%) Canadians see it as a "necessary" measure. That said, only half as many (30%) think the policy is effective at reducing the risk of COVID-19 to others.

Canadians are far more supportive of a mandatory two-week quarantine period for all travellers, regardless of their mode of return (80%), although one-third (37%) would exempt those who can prove they've been fully vaccinated on entry into Canada.

More Key Findings:

- Asked when they think life will go 'back to normal', as it was pre-pandemic, 29 per cent of Canadians now say it never will. This proportion has risen eight points since January. Notably,

Canadian opinions of current policy requiring three-day govt. hotel stay for returning travelers (All respondents, n=1,577)



METHODOLOGY:

The Angus Reid Institute conducted an online survey from April 5 – 8, 2021 among a representative randomized sample of 1,577 Canadian adults who are members of Angus Reid Forum. For comparison purposes only, a probability sample of this size would carry a margin of error of +/- 2.5 percentage points, 19 times out of 20. Discrepancies in or between totals are due to rounding. The survey was self-commissioned and paid for by ARI. Detailed tables are found at the end of this release.

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those who say they will not be vaccinated are twice as likely to say this compared to those who have been or plan to be.

- Three-in-ten Canadians (29%), led overwhelmingly by past Conservative Party voters (51%), say that the government should discontinue the three-day hotel protocol. Meanwhile, 52 per cent overall would keep the policy in place until at least September.
- Half of Canadians (51%) would still support a full ban on international travel, though this is a 14-point drop compared to January levels.

About ARI

*The **Angus Reid Institute (ARI)** was founded in October 2014 by pollster and sociologist, Dr. Angus Reid. ARI is a national, not-for-profit, non-partisan public opinion research foundation established to advance education by commissioning, conducting and disseminating to the public accessible and impartial statistical data, research and policy analysis on economics, political science, philanthropy, public administration, domestic and international affairs and other socio-economic issues of importance to Canada and its world.*

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Part One: Opinions of current border policies

Canada's border with the United States has been closed to non-essential travel for more than one year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite this, however, non-essential trips were and are still being made. Controversy erupted over the holidays in December when numerous government officials were reported to have travelled for personal reasons, leading the federal government, while not banning international travel, to implement new measures in order to deter it.

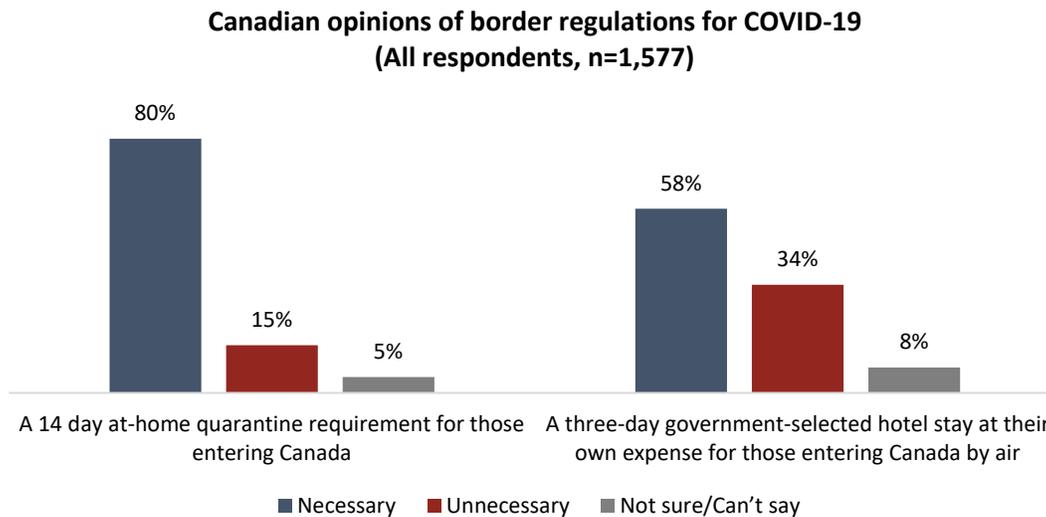
Continued support for hotel stays, though few say it mitigates risk

Since February 21, travellers who fly into Canada are obligated to stay in a government-authorized hotel for three nights at their own expense while they are tested for COVID-19. Further, anyone who arrives in Canada, regardless of their mode of transport, must quarantine for 14 days at home (note that the three-day hotel stay counts toward the 14 day total). Since the policy was implemented 1.3 per cent of the 176,000 travellers have tested positive for COVID-19 upon their arrival.

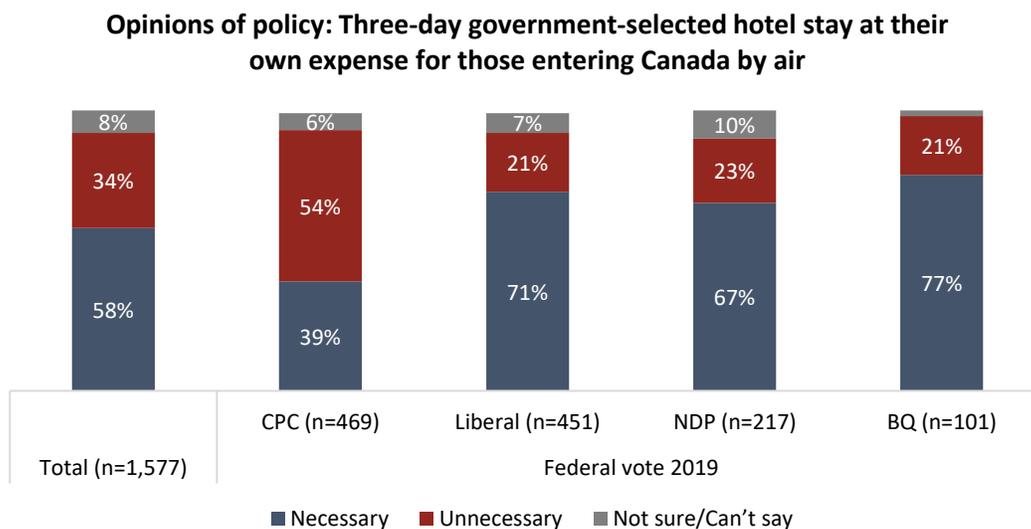
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There is majority support for both these measures. That said, four-in-five say a home quarantine is necessary (80%), while significantly fewer - 58 per cent - say the same of a mandatory three-day hotel stay:

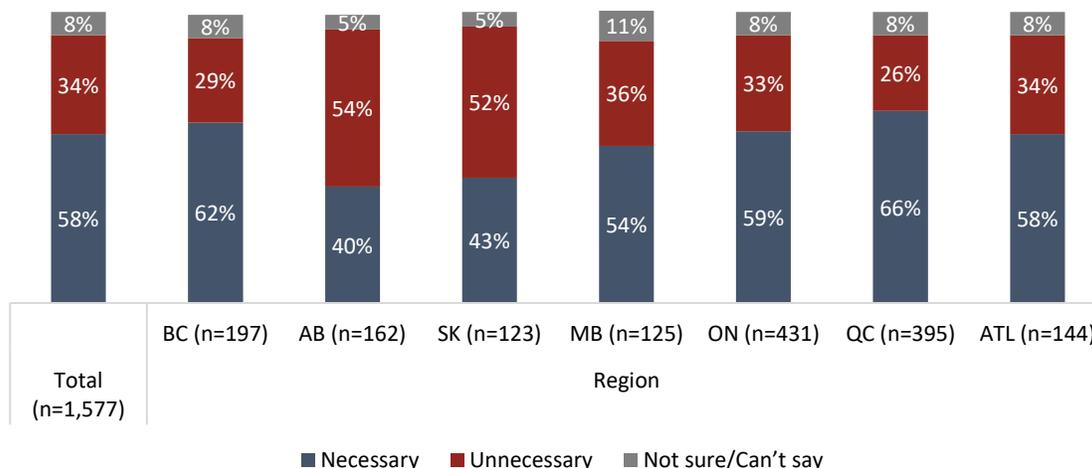


The self-paid, government-approved hotel stay is far more divisive. The most striking disagreements are based on political affiliation. Half of those who supported the CPC in 2019 say that this policy is unnecessary, while at least two-thirds of other major federal party supporters disagree:



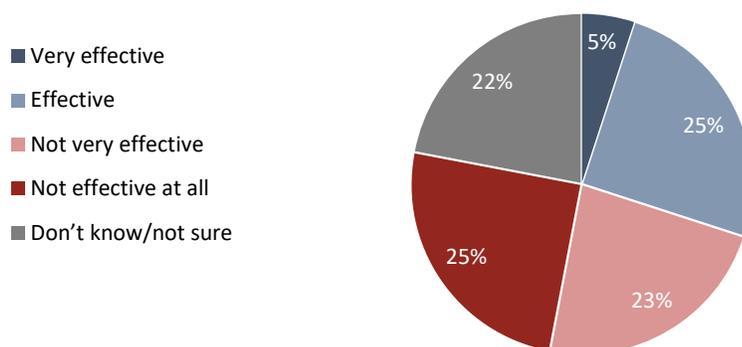
Regionally, Quebec residents are most likely to see a quarantine hotel stay as necessary (66%), alongside three-in-five residents in B.C., Ontario, and Atlantic Canada:

Opinions of policy: Three-day government-selected hotel stay at their own expense for those entering Canada by air



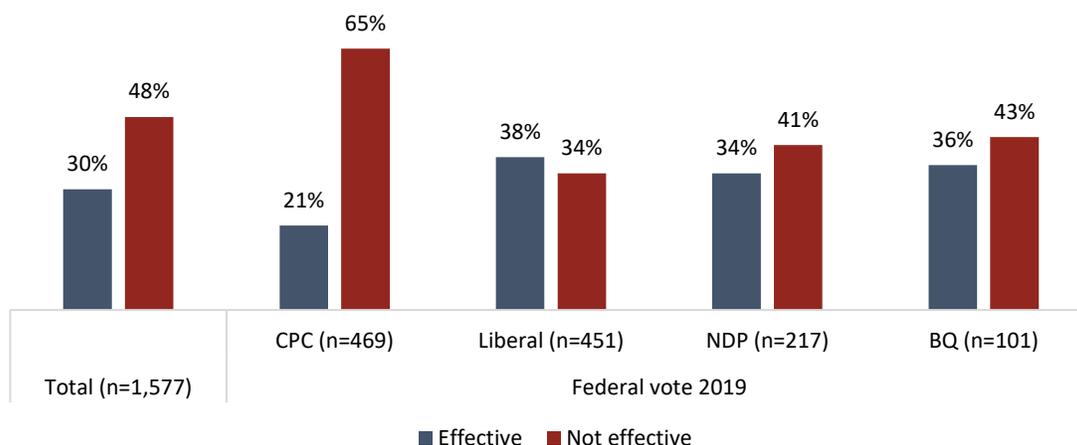
Reports have begun to emerge in recent weeks that travellers are [skirting these hotel quarantine measures](#) by flying to American airports and crossing the border by land, whether through limousine or taxi services. In British Columbia, 106 travellers have recently been fined \$3000 for flouting the three-day stay. Perhaps unsurprisingly, just five per cent of Canadians say the policy is “very effective” at reducing COVID-19 risk for others, while 25 per cent say it is having a serviceable effect. Half (48%) say it is not effective:

**Thinking specifically about the three-day hotel stay requirement for travellers entering Canada by air, do you think it’s been effective at reducing the risk of COVID-19 infection in Canada?
(All respondents, n=1,577)**



Again, political views enter this discussion. Those who supported the current government in 2019 are divided, as are past NDP and Bloc Quebecois voters. Meanwhile, past CPC voters are extremely pessimistic about the efficacy of this measure:

Thinking specifically about the three-day hotel stay requirement for travellers entering Canada by air, do you think it's been effective at reducing the risk of COVID-19 infection in Canada?

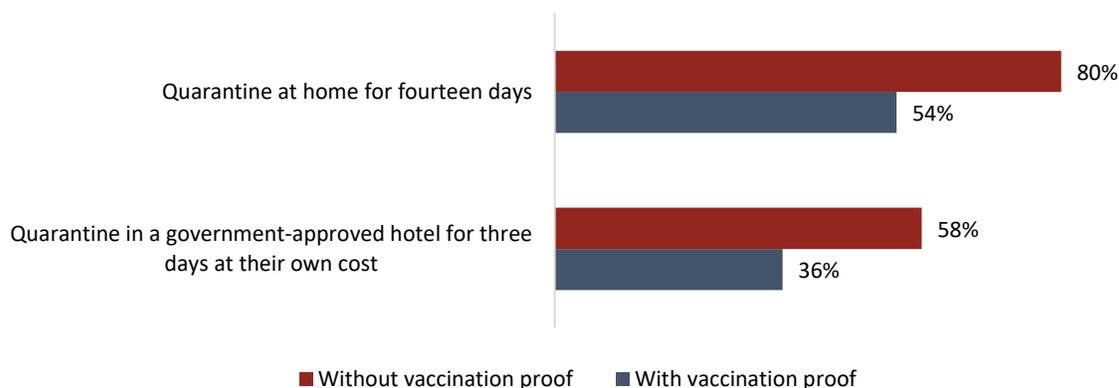


What if returning travellers have been vaccinated?

While discussions of “vaccine passports” – a form of proof that a person has been vaccinated – are debated across the globe, Canadians see value in treating vaccinated and unvaccinated people differently.

The percentage of those saying that each border measure is necessary drops precipitously if the person entering the country can prove they have had a COVID-19 vaccine. Just one-in-three (36%) would in turn have a fully vaccinated person stay at a government approved hotel at their own expense, though half (54%) still say they should quarantine for two weeks like everyone else:

**Percentage saying each measure is necessary:
(All respondents, n=1,577)**



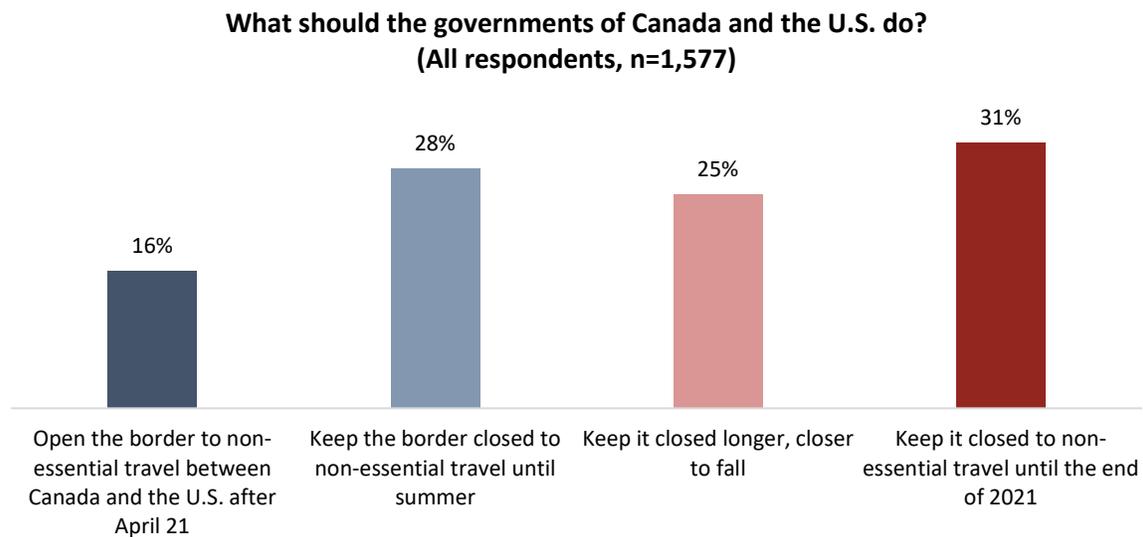
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Part Two: Few want border reopened

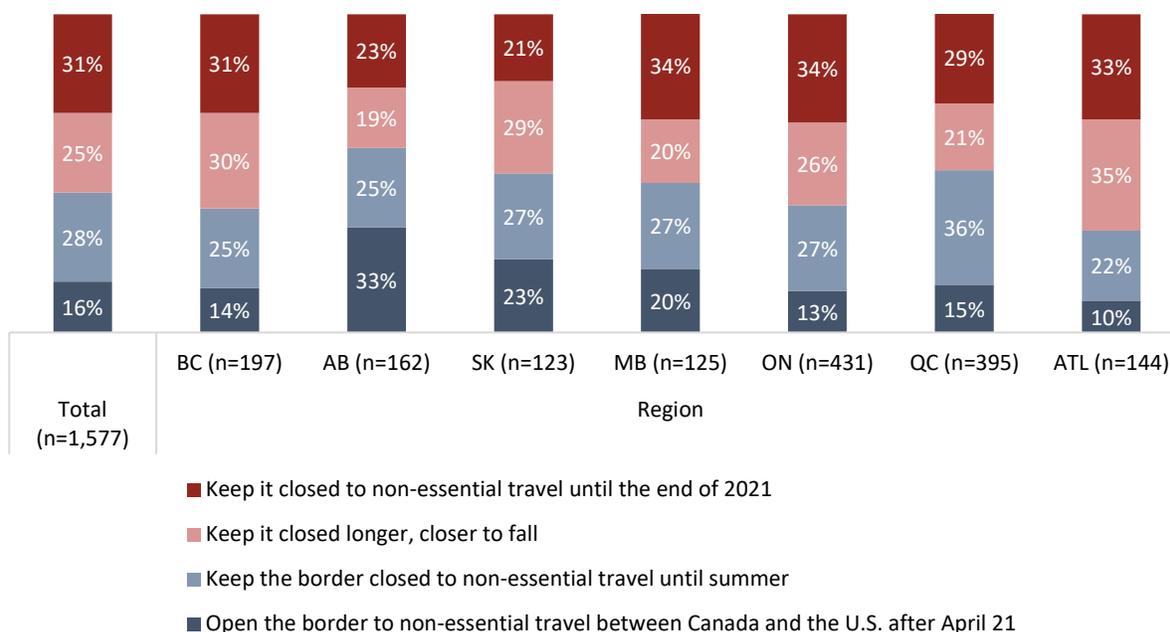
The ongoing closure of the Canada-U.S. border to non-essential traffic is a measure that most Canadians have supported enthusiastically over the course of the pandemic. That continues to be the case, as just 16 per cent would like to see the border opened on April 21.

The Canadian Chamber of Commerce [stated this week](#) that businesses must receive a roadmap for opening in order to prepare for and take advantage of critical opportunities, but to this point, the federal government has eschewed any target date, instead stating that the border will not open until COVID-19 cases are controlled and more people are vaccinated. More than half of Canadians are content to see the border closed until at least September:



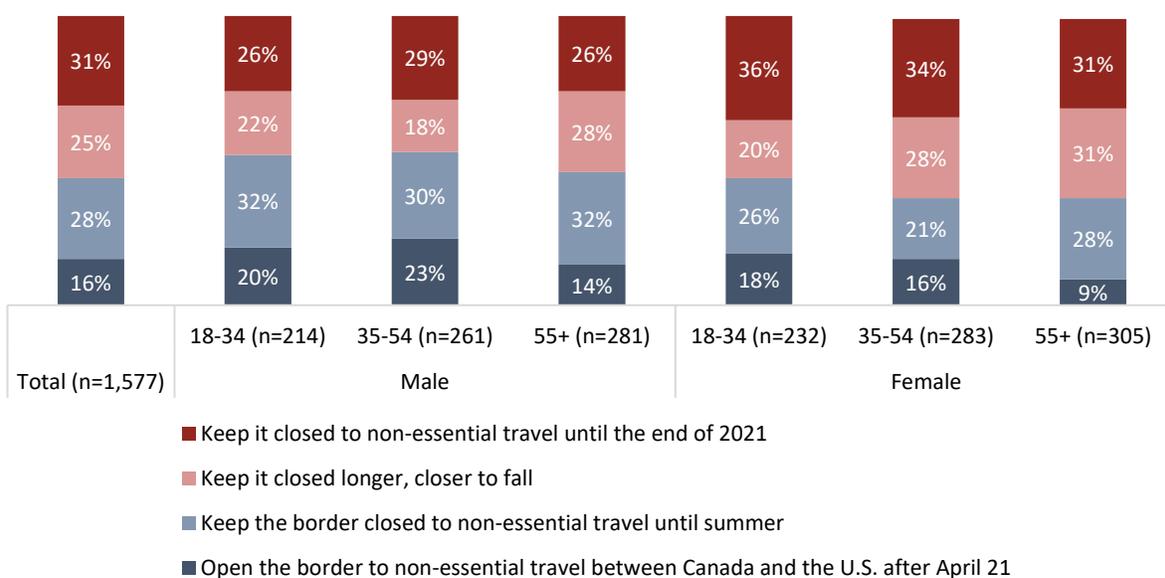
There are considerable regional variations on this issue. In British Columbia (61%), Ontario (60%) and Atlantic Canada (68%) there a desire for the border to be closed until at least fall. In Alberta, one-in-three residents (33%) would open the border next week:

What should the governments of Canada and the U.S. do?



Those most anxious to open the border tend to be male and particularly those under the age of 55. Women over the age of 34 are more likely to support longer closures:

What should the governments of Canada and the U.S. do?



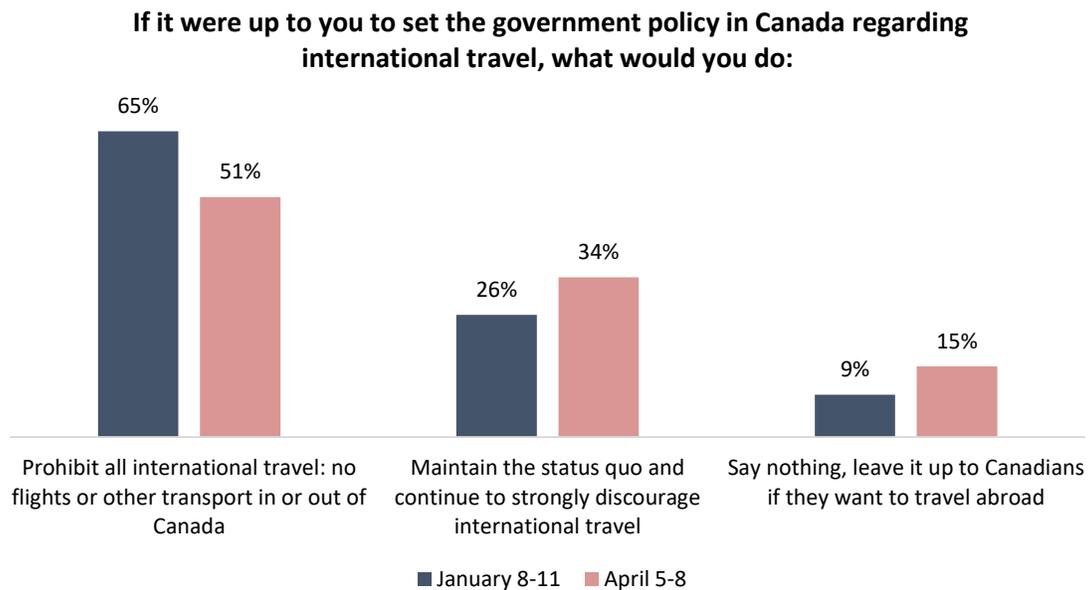
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Part Three: Half say all international travel should be prohibited

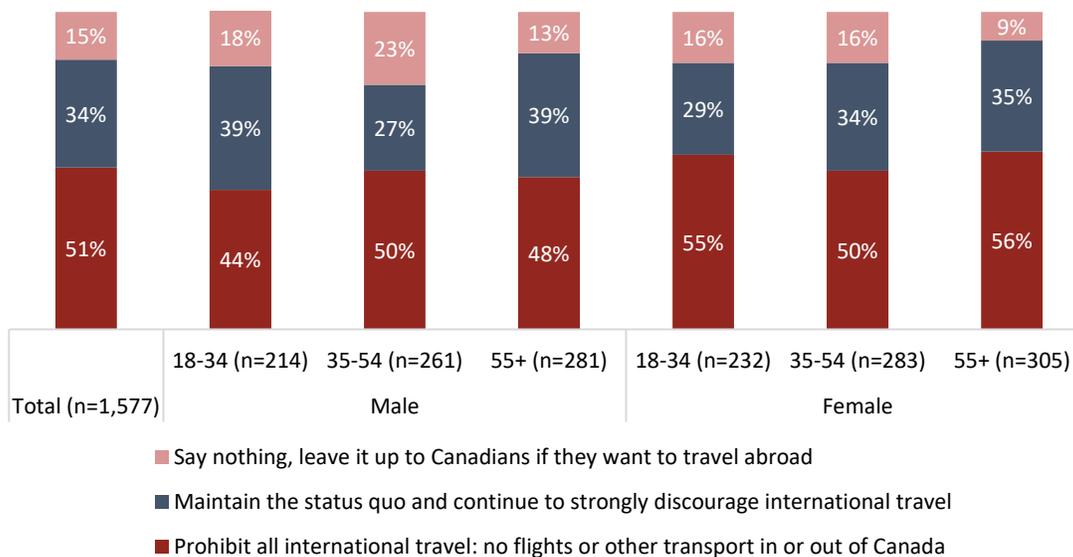
While the federal government has introduced the aforementioned border measures in part to dissuade travelers from leaving the country, there continues to be no outright ban on international travel. Major airlines did put a [pause on trips](#) to sun destinations at the request of the federal government in January, but Air Canada will reportedly [resume some flights](#) in early May.

At this point, half of the Canadian public (51%) continues to support a prohibition on international travel, though this number represents a 14-point decline from January. One-in-three (34%) say that strongly discouraging international travel is fine while 15 per cent say even that goes too far:



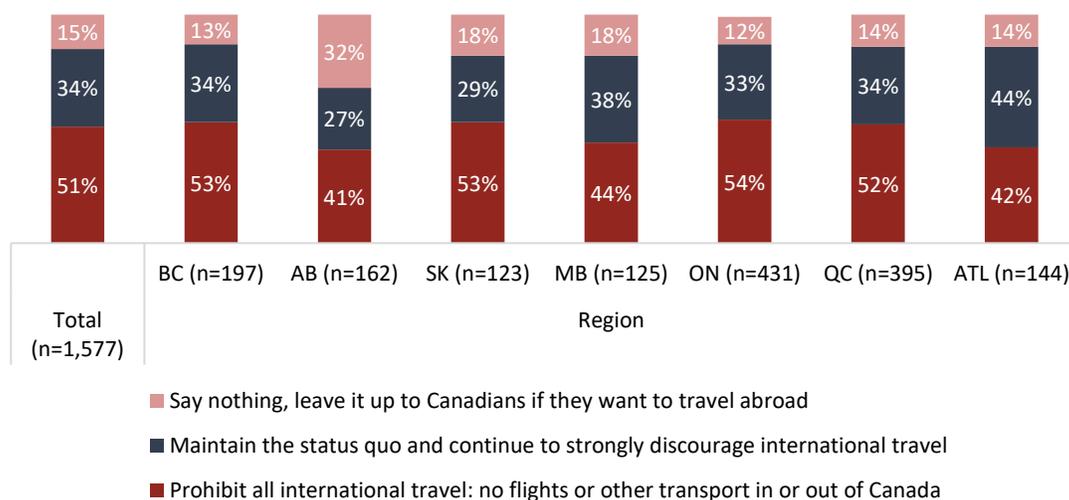
At least 44 per cent across each age and gender combination feel that a ban on international travel would be the right move, though again younger men and older women are most likely to be at odds:

If it were up to you to set the government policy in Canada regarding international travel, what would you do:



At least 41 per cent of Canadians in all regions canvassed are supportive of a ban on international travel, though Albertans are notably divided compared to the rest of the country:

If it were up to you to set the government policy in Canada regarding international travel, what would you do:



Part Four: Dream of return to normal fading

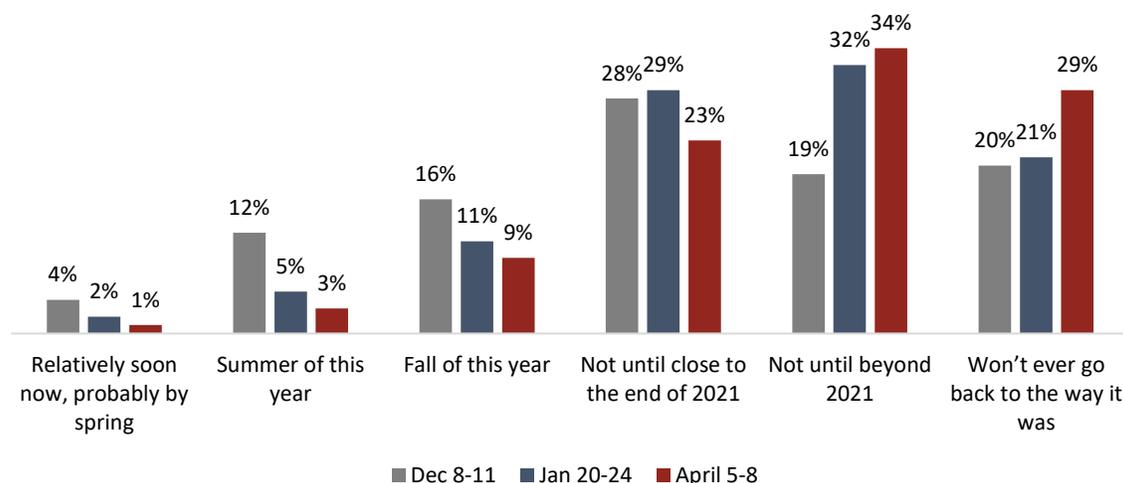
Canadians have now seen multiple waves of the COVID-19 pandemic crest and re-emerge. As the third wave brings record-high infection rates, people across the country are less certain than ever that a pre-

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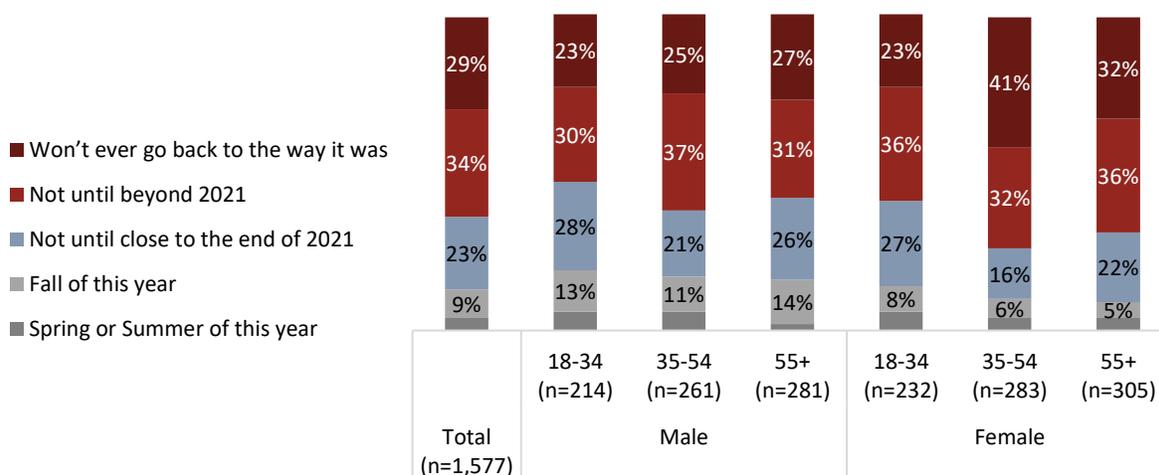
pandemic “normal” is attainable. Indeed, 29 per cent of Canadians now say that life in Canada will never go back to the way it was before COVID-19, an increase of eight points from January. The most common opinion is that if life does return to normal it will not happen until after 2021:

How long do you think it will be before life in Canada goes back to “normal” – that is – the way it was before the pandemic?



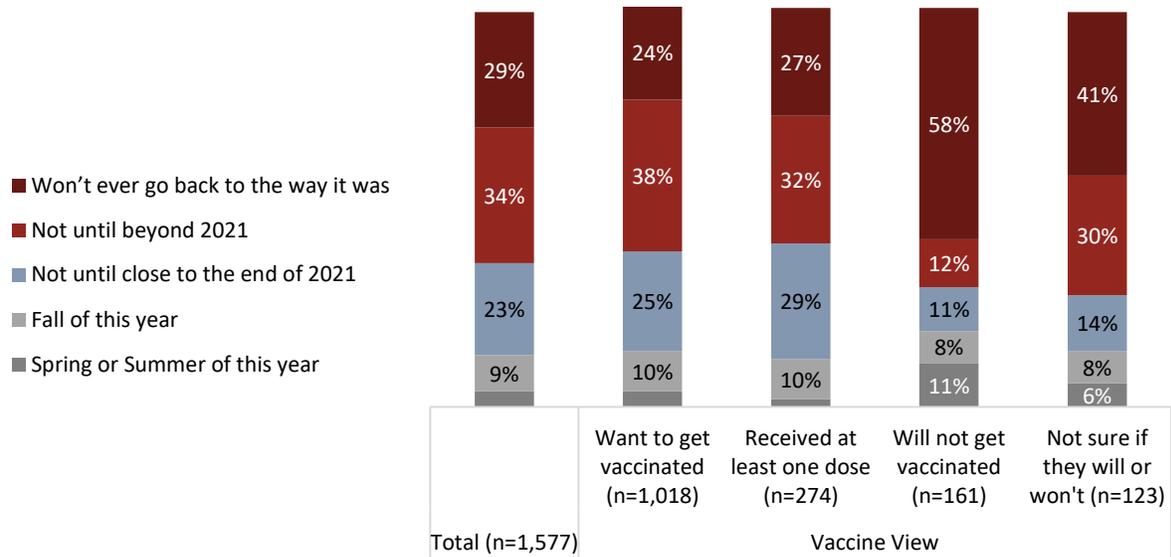
Optimism levels and expectations vary across age and gender. That said, at least 53 per cent of all groups are expecting to wait until 2022 for some semblance of pre-pandemic life:

How long do you think it will be before life in Canada goes back to “normal” – that is – the way it was before the pandemic?



Those most pessimistic are notably, those who are unwilling to be vaccinated. Three-in-five among the small group of Canadians who will eschew the jab say that life will never return to normal. This is more than double the level of those who have been or plan to be vaccinated:

How long do you think it will be before life in Canada goes back to “normal” – that is – the way it was before the pandemic?



For detailed results by age, gender, region, education, and other demographics, [click here](#).