

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **Only 31% of Canadians feel they have a meaningful say in the social, political and economic decisions shaping their lives**

*New national belonging survey reveals strong national identity, growing skepticism towards corporations, and a performance gap for governments – with rural Canadians reporting the lowest sense of voice*

**Toronto, ON – March 4, 2026** – Canadians feel a powerful connection to their country and the natural environment around them, but far less connection to the institutions and systems that shape their daily lives, according to a new national survey from the [Belonging Forum](#).

The “Belonging in Canada” survey of 4,000 Canadians aged 18+ finds that just 31% of Canadians feel a meaningful connection to social, political, and economic decision-making, pointing to a widening gap between identity and agency. Belonging is strongest through People and Purpose, while Place and Power lag behind, helping to explain why many Canadians may feel proud to belong to Canada, yet unsure their voice carries weight in how the country is run.

**Kim Samuel, Founder and Chief Architect of the Belonging Forum, said:** “Canadians still feel proud of this country but many don’t feel they have a meaningful place in the decisions that shape their lives. When less than a third feel connected to social, political and economic decision-making, that isn’t apathy; it’s a warning light. Belonging isn’t just about being included in the story of Canada – it’s about having a voice in how the next chapter is written.”

### **Key Findings**

- 57% of Canadians feel they “completely” or “mostly” belong in Canada

- 13% say they don't feel they belong in Canada at all
- 78% strongly believe they belong to Canada, compared with 41% who report a sense of belonging to the world
- Canadians feel belonging more strongly to Canada (78%) than to their neighbourhood or street (60%)

### **A gap in voice is most pronounced outside major urban centres**

Feelings of connection to decision-making are weakest among rural Canadians. Only 25% report a meaningful connection to social, political, and economic decision-making, compared with 34% of urban Canadians.

### **People trust people more than institutions**

While 55% of Canadians report feeling a strong connection to other people, only 36% feel connection to their wider community, and only 31% feel they belong in Canada's social, political and economic systems.

### **Corporations face a credibility challenge on belonging**

More than half of Canadians (52%) say corporations do a poor job promoting belonging in society. Just 11% believe corporations have "a lot of potential" to strength belonging, while 51% believe they have little or very little potential to do so. By contrast, small businesses, non-profits and individuals are viewed more positively.

### **Governments are seen as underperforming, not irrelevant**

Between 42% and 49% of Canadians say federal and provincial governments are doing a poor job promoting belonging. At the same time, many Canadians still believe governments have meaningful potential to do better, suggesting a performance gap rather than a loss of relevance.

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## **Notes to Editors**

“Belonging in Canada” is based on a nationally representative survey of 4,000 Canadians aged 18+, commissioned by the Belonging Forum and conducted by Opinium in August 2025.

The research measures belonging across four dimensions – People, Place, Power, and Purpose – to understand how Canadians experience connection, identity, agency, and meaning in everyday life.

The sample size (n=4,000) was selected to provide robust national findings and sufficient depth to explore differences across key demographic groups and regions. The achieved sample included representation across age, gender, province/territory, and ethnicity.

The full report is available on request.

## **About the Belonging Forum**

The Belonging Forum is a global non-profit advancing the right to belong – a birthright that connects us to one another, to the places we call home, to the systems that shape our lives, and to a shared sense of purpose.

We bring together research, advocacy, and action to ensure belonging is embedded in policies, institutions, and everyday life. Through collaboration with thought leaders, community builders, and changemakers around the world, we turn ideas into impact and build a world where everyone can flourish.

The Belonging Forum was founded by Kim Samuel – activist, author, educator, and a leading voice in the global movement for belonging.

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