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Belief in Conspiracy Theories

DATE 2023-12-06

Methodology

Method

Online survey among respondents 18 years of age or older.
(American Sample: n= 1,001).

Respondents had the option of completing the survey in English or in French and were randomly recruited using LEO's online panel.

When

November 24 to November 26, 2023

Margin of error

For comparison purposes, a probability sample of this size yields a margin of error no greater than ±3.1%, (19 times out of 20) for the American sample

Weighting

Results were weighted according to **age, gender, region, education, ethnicity and number of people in the household** in order to ensure a representative sample of the American population.

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Methodology

Significant differences

Data in bold **red** characters indicate a significantly lower proportion than that of other respondents. Conversely, data in bold **green** characters indicate a significantly higher proportion that that of other respondents.

Rounded data

The numbers presented have been rounded up. However, the numbers before rounding were used to calculate the sums presented and might therefore not correspond to the manual addition of these numbers.

Questions

Have questions about the data presented in this report? Please contact Alicia Ierardi, Executive Vice-President, at the following e-mail addresses: aierardi@leger360.com

A more detailed methodology is presented in the Appendix.

Methodology

Leger is the polling firm that has presented the most accurate election survey data, on average, over the last ten years in Canada. During the last federal election in 2021, Leger was once again **the most accurate** firm in the country. This accuracy is attributed to the quality of the LEO panel and rigorous application of methodological rules by Leger's 600 employees, including 200 professionals in Leger's eight offices across Canada (Montreal, Toronto, Quebec City, Winnipeg, Calgary, Edmonton and Vancouver) and in the United States (New York).

Poll aggregator 338Canada.com gave Leger the highest rating among all polling firms in Canada for the accuracy of its studies. See https://338canada.com/pollster-ratings.htm

2021 CANADIAN FEDERAL ELECTION	C	L	NDP	B	PPC	(green)
LEGER SURVEY Published in *Le Journal de Montréal and The National Post/Postmedia* September 18, 2021	33%	32%	19%	7%	6%	2%
OFFICIAL RESULTS 2021 **Canadian** Federal Election*	33.7%	32.6%	17.8%	7.7%	5.0%	2.3%

Key highlights

From November 24 to 26, 2023, we surveyed Canadians and Americans to know more about their beliefs in different conspiracy theories.

Some of the key highlights of our survey on conspiracy theories include...

- **84%** of U.S. residents believe in at least one of the theories they were exposed to, while Canadians are significantly less likely to believe in conspiracy theories.

- Republican voters (94%) are more likely to believe in at least one of the theories presented compared to Democratic and Independent voters.

- The most widely believed theories include:
  - Mainstream media manipulates the information it disseminates (63%)
  - COVID-19 was created as a biological weapon in a lab (51%)
  - Governments are hiding the truth about the harmfulness of vaccines from the public (49%)

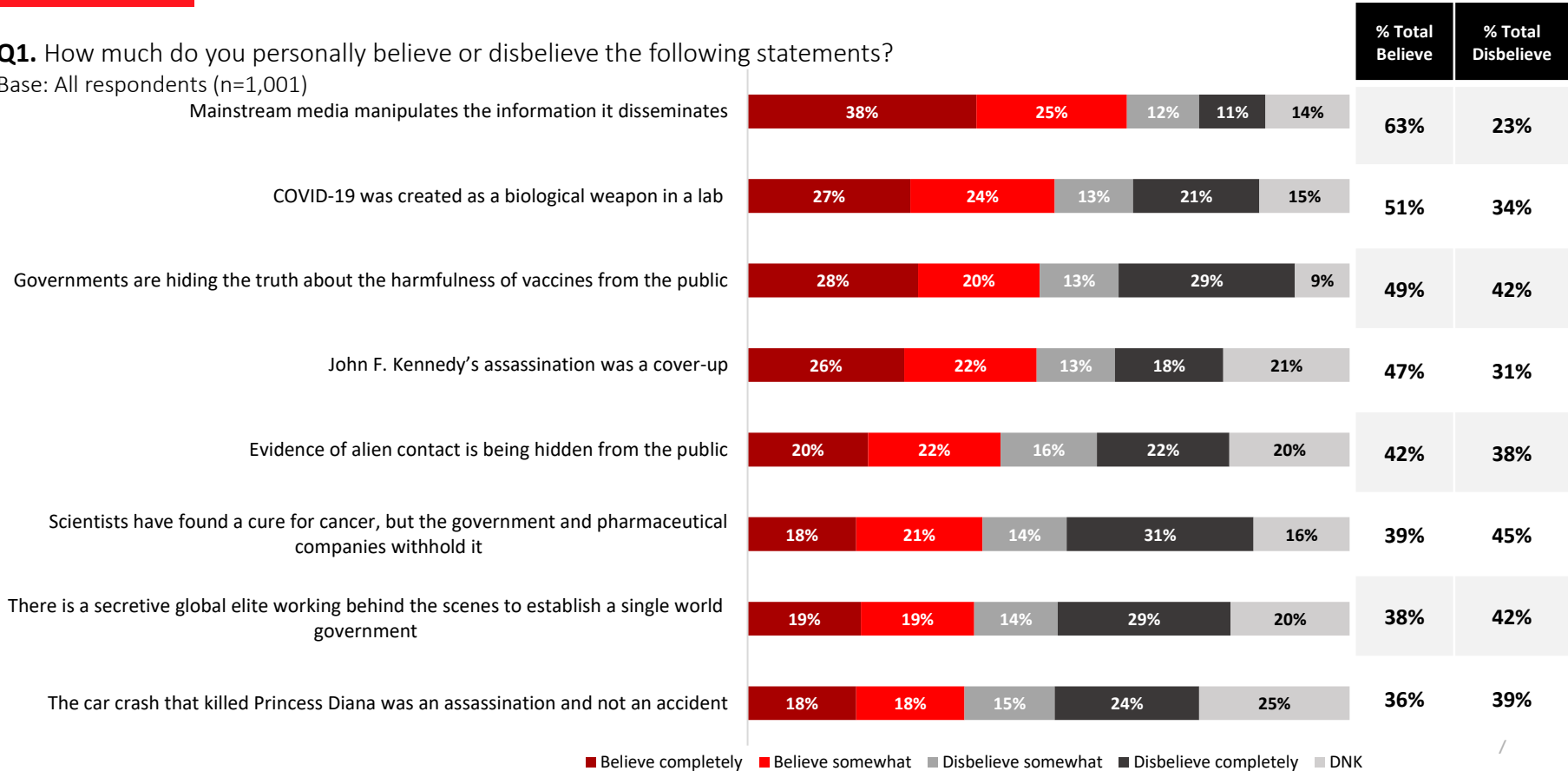- The less widely believed theories are the lunar landing being a hoax (17%) and the earth is flat (9%).

Detailed Results

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Belief in Conspiracy Theories (1/2)

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Q1. How much do you personally believe or disbelieve the following statements?
Base: All respondents (n=1,001)

Statement	Believe completely	Believe somewhat	Disbelieve somewhat	Disbelieve completely	DNK	% Total Believe	% Total Disbelieve
Mainstream media manipulates the information it disseminates	38%	25%	12%	11%	14%	**63%**	**23%**
COVID-19 was created as a biological weapon in a lab	27%	24%	13%	21%	15%	**51%**	**34%**
Governments are hiding the truth about the harmfulness of vaccines from the public	28%	20%	13%	29%	9%	**49%**	**42%**
John F. Kennedy's assassination was a cover-up	26%	22%	13%	18%	21%	**47%**	**31%**
Evidence of alien contact is being hidden from the public	20%	22%	16%	22%	20%	**42%**	**38%**
Scientists have found a cure for cancer, but the government and pharmaceutical companies withhold it	18%	21%	14%	31%	16%	**39%**	**45%**
There is a secretive global elite working behind the scenes to establish a single world government	19%	19%	14%	29%	20%	**38%**	**42%**
The car crash that killed Princess Diana was an assassination and not an accident	18%	18%	15%	24%	25%	**36%**	**39%**

■ Believe completely ■ Believe somewhat ■ Disbelieve somewhat ■ Disbelieve completely ■ DNK
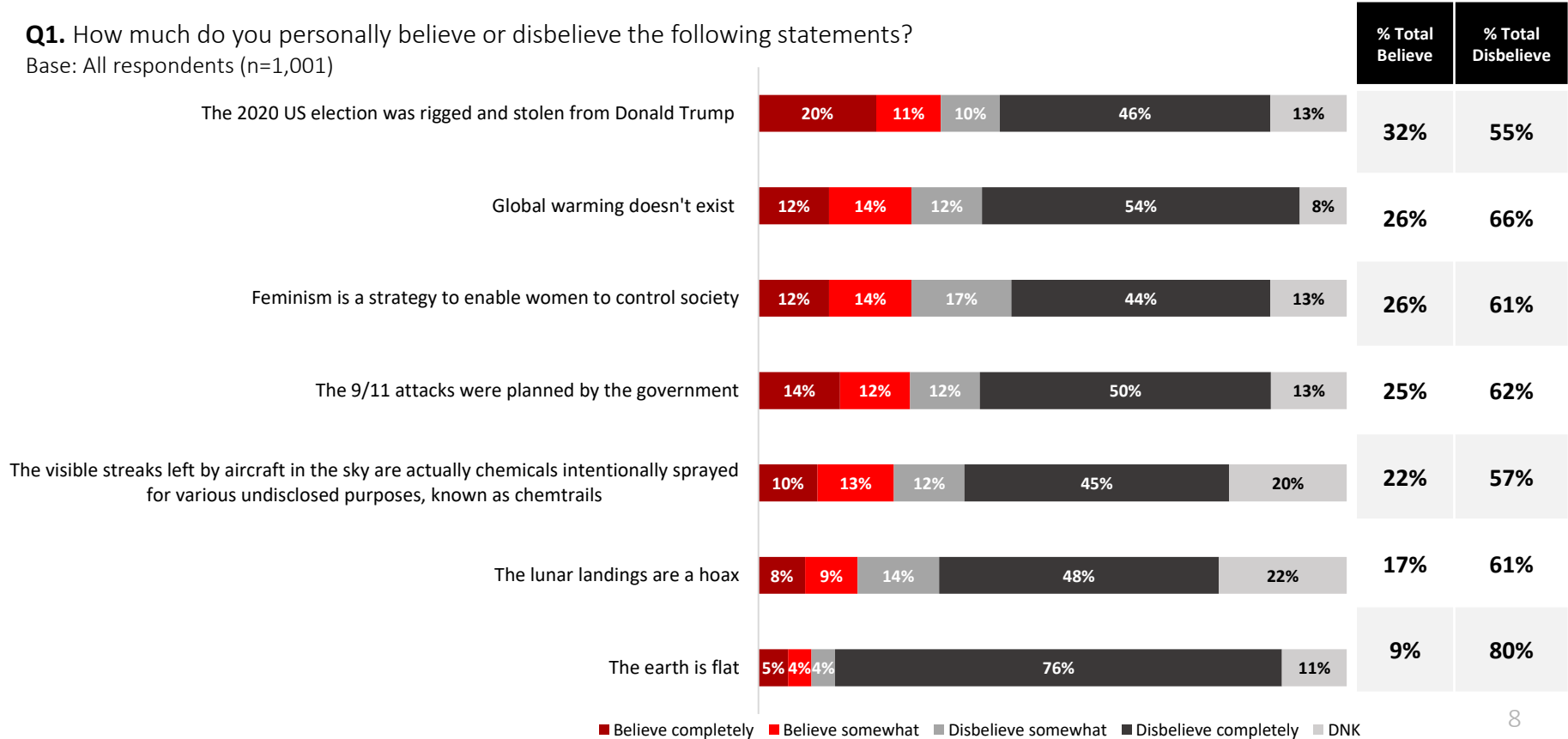
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Belief in Conspiracy Theories (2/2)

Q1. How much do you personally believe or disbelieve the following statements?
Base: All respondents (n=1,001)

Statement	Believe completely	Believe somewhat	Disbelieve somewhat	Disbelieve completely	DNK	% Total Believe	% Total Disbelieve
The 2020 US election was rigged and stolen from Donald Trump	20%	11%	10%	46%	13%	**32%**	**55%**
Global warming doesn't exist	12%	14%	12%	54%	8%	**26%**	**66%**
Feminism is a strategy to enable women to control society	12%	14%	17%	44%	13%	**26%**	**61%**
The 9/11 attacks were planned by the government	14%	12%	12%	50%	13%	**25%**	**62%**
The visible streaks left by aircraft in the sky are actually chemicals intentionally sprayed for various undisclosed purposes, known as chemtrails	10%	13%	12%	45%	20%	**22%**	**57%**
The lunar landings are a hoax	8%	9%	14%	48%	22%	**17%**	**61%**
The earth is flat	5%	4%	4%	76%	11%	**9%**	**80%**

■ Believe completely   ■ Believe somewhat   ■ Disbelieve somewhat   ■ Disbelieve completely   ■ DNK

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Belief in Conspiracy Theories – *Detailed Results (1/2)*

Q1. How much do you personally believe or disbelieve the following statements?
Base: All respondents

% Total Believe Presented	Total U.S.	North-East	Mid-West	South	West	18-34	35-54	55+	Male	Female	Republican	Democrat	Independent
Weighted n=	1,001	181	210	376	234	229	368	404	485	516	306	352	274
Unweighted n=	1,001	224	240	280	257	130	371	500	470	531	285	369	301
Mainstream media manipulates the information	**63%**	67%	63%	61%	60%	65%	61%	63%	66%	60%	**77%**	**45%**	**70%**
COVID-19 was created as a biological weapon in a lab	**51%**	49%	48%	56%	47%	46%	54%	51%	**56%**	**47%**	**70%**	**35%**	51%
Governments are hiding the truth about the harmfulness of vaccines from the public	**49%**	48%	46%	**55%**	41%	54%	**55%**	**40%**	50%	48%	**63%**	**34%**	50%
John F. Kennedy's assassination was a cover-up	**47%**	45%	52%	48%	45%	43%	51%	47%	**52%**	**43%**	**56%**	**40%**	47%
Evidence of alien contact is being hidden from the public	**42%**	41%	43%	41%	43%	**53%**	44%	**33%**	44%	40%	39%	44%	40%
Scientists have found a cure for cancer, but the government and pharmaceutical companies withhold it	**39%**	39%	38%	40%	37%	40%	**46%**	**32%**	38%	40%	43%	34%	38%
There is a secretive global elite working behind the scenes to establish a single world government	**38%**	**29%**	38%	**44%**	35%	37%	**43%**	34%	**46%**	**31%**	**49%**	**26%**	39%
The car crash that killed Princess Diana was an assassination	**36%**	36%	37%	34%	37%	40%	**45%**	**26%**	32%	39%	41%	34%	**29%**
The 2020 US election was rigged and stolen from Donald Trump	**32%**	31%	34%	32%	29%	29%	31%	34%	34%	29%	**57%**	**12%**	33%

Belief in Conspiracy Theories – *Detailed Results (2/2)*

Q1. How much do you personally believe or disbelieve the following statements?
Base: All respondents

% Total Believe Presented	Total U.S.	North-East	Mid-West	South	West	18-34	35-54	55+	Male	Female	Republican	Democrat	Independent
Weighted n=	1,001	181	210	376	234	229	368	404	485	516	306	352	274
Unweighted n=	1,001	224	240	280	257	130	371	500	470	531	285	369	301
Global warming doesn't exist	**26%**	22%	31%	27%	24%	28%	21%	30%	33%	20%	41%	13%	28%
Feminism is a strategy to enable women to control society	**26%**	30%	27%	28%	20%	36%	32%	15%	31%	21%	35%	20%	25%
The 9/11 attacks were planned by the government	**25%**	25%	24%	25%	27%	37%	32%	12%	28%	23%	22%	28%	23%
The visible streaks left by aircraft in the sky are actually chemicals intentionally sprayed for various undisclosed purposes, known as chemtrails	**22%**	21%	21%	24%	21%	24%	32%	12%	24%	21%	24%	20%	20%
The lunar landings are a hoax	**17%**	19%	15%	15%	22%	27%	20%	10%	21%	14%	16%	22%	10%
The earth is flat	**9%**	7%	7%	9%	12%	17%	12%	1%	10%	8%	8%	15%	3%

Belief in Conspiracy Theories (U.S. vs. Canada)

Q1. How much do you personally believe or disbelieve the following statements?
Base: All respondents

% Total Believe Presented	Total U.S.	Total Canada	Gap
Weighted n=	1,001	1,529	
Unweighted n=	1,001	1,529	
Mainstream media manipulates the information	63%	55%	8
COVID-19 was created as a biological weapon in a lab	51%	32%	19
Governments are hiding the truth about the harmfulness of vaccines from the public	49%	30%	19
John F. Kennedy's assassination was a cover-up	49%	30%	19
Evidence of alien contact is being hidden from the public	42%	33%	9
Scientists have found a cure for cancer, but the government and pharmaceutical companies withhold it	39%	34%	5
There is a secretive global elite working behind the scenes to establish a single world government	38%	28%	10
The car crash that killed Princess Diana was an assassination	36%	34%	2
The 2020 US election was rigged and stolen from Donald Trump	32%	17%	15
Global warming doesn't exist	26%	16%	10
Feminism is a strategy to enable women to control society	26%	13%	13
The 9/11 attacks were planned by the government	25%	16%	9
The visible streaks left by aircraft in the sky are actually chemicals intentionally sprayed for various undisclosed purposes, known as chemtrails	22%	12%	10
The lunar landings are a hoax	17%	11%	6
The earth is flat	9%	5%	4

REPORT

Detailed methodology

Weighted and Unweighted Sample (1/2)

The table below presents the American geographic distribution of respondents before weighting.

	Unweighted	Weighted
US Region	**1,001**	**1,001**
NorthEast	224	181
MidWest	240	210
South	280	376
West	257	234

Weighted and Unweighted Sample (2/2)

The following tables present the demographic distribution of respondents according to gender and age for the United States.

	Unweighted	Weighted
Gender	**1,001**	**1,001**
Male	470	485
Female	531	516
Age	**1,001**	**1,001**
Between 18 and 29	60	104
Between 30 and 39	153	271
Between 40 and 49	183	155
Between 50 and 64	345	247
65 or older	260	224

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Leger is a member of the Canadian Research Insights Council (CRIC), the industry association for the market/survey/insights research industry.

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