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Ensemble Montréal's official campaign launch



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From the left, Ensemble Montréal candidates Mary Deros (Parc Extension), Effie Giannou (Bordeaux-Cartierville) and Lemonia Strapatsas (Mile-End) were among those who attended the municipal party's official campaign launch last week. (Photo: Martin C. Barry, Nouvelles Parc Extension News)



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Ensemble Montréal's Soraya Martinez Ferrada is focused on winning November 2

'It's not normal to have a city where citizens don't feel safe,' says mayoralty candidate

MARTIN C. BARRY

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter
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On opening day last week of the campaign for the City of Montreal's municipal elections scheduled around a month from now, Ensemble Montréal mayoralty candidate Soraya Martinez Ferrada took the high road when asked during an interview with Nouvelles Parc Extension News whether she thought it might be easy to defeat the incumbent Projet Montréal party.

Martinez Ferrada was the main speaker at an Ensemble Montréal launch held at a former church converted into an events venue on Adam St. in the Hochelaga-Maisonneuve district in east-end Montreal.

She's focused on the task

"I don't take into account what my adversaries are doing, I only take into account where I am at," said the former federal Liberal Minister of Tourism and Economic Development Quebec, who was also the city councillor for Saint-Michel from 2005 to 2009.

While saying that her team of candidates was nearly complete, she continued, "I'm not only offering Montrealers myself as mayor, but a full team behind me that is ready to serve Montrealers

and ready to govern. So, I don't do politics on the backs of my rivals. I only do politics for Montrealers."

That said, Martinez Ferrada didn't deny that Projet Montréal had committed a good number of gaffes during the eight years they've been in power at Montreal City Hall.

Not a normal state of affairs

Among the issues she raised in a pep talk to an audience of loyal supporters and invited guests were basic things Projet Montréal seemingly forgot, especially in the last four years, such as street repairs, efficient garbage removal and rats proliferating in neighbourhoods.

"What I'm saying is that it's not normal to have a city where citizens don't feel safe – especially in a city like Montreal," she said. "And it's not normal to have people sleeping on the streets. And it's not normal to have a city that's so dirty that you see rats on the street."

"So, what I'm saying is that because all these things aren't normal, we need an administration that will tackle these issues and offer a new perspective, new ideas. And that is us," she added.

Meets blue collar workers

Among the issues Soraya Martinez Ferrada may find herself addressing if she becomes Montreal's



Ensemble Montréal mayoralty candidate Soraya Martinez Ferrada was the main speaker at an Ensemble Montréal launch held at a former church converted into an events venue in Hochelaga-Maisonneuve. (Photo: Martin C. Barry, Nouvelles Parc Extension News)

next mayor is her administration's relationship with the city's unionized blue-collar workers, who currently are in an unresolved contract negotiation dispute with the city.

She got a preview of things that may come when a delegation of blue collars turned up for the Ensemble Montréal campaign launch. They lingered peacefully with placards outside where Martinez Ferrada met them and listened patiently.

The November 2 election will mark the eighth time incumbent Parc Extension city councillor Mary Deros runs for Montreal City Council. She first won the seat in 1998. Among the candidates who also turned up at the campaign launch were Villeray-Saint-Michel-Parc-Extension borough mayor candidate Sylvain Gariépy, Effie Giannou (Bordeaux-Cartierville) and Lemonnia Strapatsas (Mile-End).

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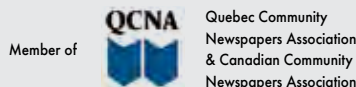
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OPINION & Editorial



AI is making students smarter cheats, not better thinkers

Some educators think AI can replace memorization, but that's a shortcut to ignorance

A few weeks into the school year, Canadian teachers are seeing firsthand how quickly artificial intelligence is changing the classroom—and not always for the better.

Technology has always been a mixed blessing in schools. For example, while calculators made it easier to solve advanced math problems, they also gave students a ready-made excuse for not learning their multiplication tables. This created a problem for classroom teachers who knew the importance of these skills.

Of course, it would have been a mistake to stop teaching basic math to students just because calculators were available. Good teachers know that calculators are a tool, not a replacement for memorization and critical thinking. More recently, the internet has made it much easier for students and teachers to access specific information from anywhere around the world.

Now teachers must deal with the growing use of AI.

Not only can AI programs, such as ChatGPT, write formal essays, create original stories and craft elegant poetry, they are getting better at it every day. It's becoming increasingly difficult for teachers to distinguish between assignments written by AI and those written

by students.

ChatGPT-5 is the latest version of this evolving chatbot. It's designed to learn your habits and anticipate your latest needs. Instead of just drafting a letter when you ask it to, ChatGPT-5 suggests that it's time to send a letter before writing it for you. It really does seem designed to take the place of human thinking.

Unsurprisingly, the growing popularity of AI has led to many educators suggesting that there's no need to have students memorize facts or commit historical events to memory. Rather, they argue that it's time to move away from so-called rote learning and embrace creativity and critical thinking instead.

While this argument has a certain amount of intuitive appeal, it is dead wrong. The reality is that it's impossible to think critically about something you know nothing about. There's a huge difference between a student who knows by memory the factors that led to Canadian Confederation in 1867 and students who need ChatGPT to tell them the names of the provinces involved.

One of the most essential concepts in education is cognitive load theory. Cognitive load theory says that because our working memory

is limited, it's important to transfer as much knowledge as possible into our long-term memory. This is why it's nearly impossible for someone to solve a multi-step algebraic equation if they don't know basic math facts such as the order of operations.

In addition, there is a strong correlation between background knowledge and reading comprehension. Simply put, the more you know about the topic of an article or book, the higher your ability to understand what it means. This is why students usually have no trouble reading complex books and articles about topics that they have studied and are interested in, because they already possess considerable background knowledge.

Thus, while AI is having an undeniable impact in classrooms, it's crucial that we remain focused on the things that matter most. Students need to continue learning their math facts, and they also need to memorize plenty of historical and scientific facts. The use of these basic skills will never change.

Good teachers, of course, will focus on these basics, and their students will be thankful.

Michael Zwaagstra

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A mural to celebrate the 100th anniversary of Parc Jarry

Civic significance at the heart of art and community

DIMITRIS ILIAS

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On September 16, 2025, the borough of Villieray-Saint-Michel-Parc-Extension unveiled a monumental mural to mark the centennial of Parc Jarry. The project transforms the “pavillon des baigneurs,” which houses the pool at the center of the park, into a living canvas. More than an aesthetic gesture, the mural stands as a symbol of community pride, shared heritage, and the ongoing dialogue between nature and urban life.

The work was entrusted to MU, the Montreal non-profit known for turning public space into a vibrant, open-air museum. The artist chosen, Italian multidisciplinary creator Gola Hundun, has gained international recognition for his ecological vision. His mural in Parc Jarry flows across three façades, with vegetal and organic forms evoking harmony between people, fauna, and flora. It is a celebration of the living world,

right at the heart of the city, transforming the pool pavilion into a meditative landmark.

The project extended beyond paint on walls. A community workshop invited local residents to create clay bird nests, a symbolic act that echoes the themes of the mural. By shaping nests with their own hands, citizens contributed to a collective reflection on the ways urban life and biodiversity intersect. The involvement of community members ensured that the centennial was not just commemorated but lived and shared, rooting the project in the daily reality of the neighbourhood.

The civic importance of this initiative lies in its ability to connect art with everyday life. Public art democratizes access to culture, offering moments of beauty to anyone who walks by. In celebrating the park's hundred years, the mural reinforces a sense of shared identity and belonging, reminding residents that the park is not simply a green space but a place of memory,



encounters, and civic life. It also serves as a call to awareness, urging passersby to reflect on their relationship with the natural world and to recognize the ecological responsibilities embedded in urban living.

The mural was made possible through a wide network of partners, including the borough, the City of Montréal's Service des grands parcs, the Italian Cultural Institute of Montréal, Benjamin Moore, the Conseil des arts de Montréal, and the Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec. This collaborative framework underscores that civic culture thrives when municipalities, cultural institutions, and citizens work together.

For MU, this project continues a long tradition of integrating art into the fabric of the

city. Since 2007, the organization has produced over 300 permanent murals while maintaining a strong educational mission. Their work has turned Montreal into a vast gallery under the open sky, where art does not belong to a select few but is woven into the streets, schools, and public parks.

The centennial mural of Parc Jarry is, above all, a civic act. It honours the past century of community life in the park, enriches the present with beauty and reflection, and offers future generations a renewed sense of belonging. In doing so, it reminds us that public spaces are not neutral backdrops but living places where culture, history, and ecology meet and flourish together.

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Montreal judge rules man not criminally responsible in park assault case

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A Quebec judge has ruled that Sergio Yanes Preciado, the 23-year-old man accused of attacking a father in Parc-Extension this summer, was not criminally responsible for his actions due to a mental disorder. The decision means Preciado will not face a conventional trial or sentence, but instead will remain under psychiatric care and the supervision of a provincial review board.

The ruling stems from an incident on August 8 at Dickie Moore Park, where a 32-year-old father was spending the afternoon with his two young children. A video that quickly spread on social media showed the victim being sprayed with water, pushed to the ground, and struck several times. The clip also appeared to capture a kippah being thrown toward a splash pad. Police later confirmed the man's injuries were not life-threatening, but the footage drew wide condemnation and reignited concerns about public safety and antisemitism in the city.

After his arrest, Preciado underwent a 30-day psychiatric evaluation at the Philippe-Pinel Institute, where experts concluded he had been in the midst of a psychotic episode and

unable to understand the wrongfulness of his behaviour. The assessment also found no indication that the attack was motivated by hate, noting that his actions were not tied to the victim's religion.

With those findings in hand, the court declared Preciado not criminally responsible (NCR). In Canadian law, such a decision is distinct from an acquittal. It acknowledges that the act occurred but recognizes that the accused was incapable, at the time, of forming criminal intent. Instead of a sentence, Preciado's case will now be overseen by Quebec's Mental Disorders Examination Commission, which will determine the conditions of his detention, treatment, and any future release. For now, he remains hospitalized at Montreal General Hospital and has been ordered to have no contact with the victim or his family.

The assault and the widely shared video provoked strong reactions when they first came to light, with both provincial and federal leaders denouncing the attack. While the ruling has clarified the legal outcome, it leaves open broader questions about mental health, community safety, and how society should respond when violent acts intersect with psychiatric illness.



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Canadians enter the fall with heightened anxiety about stability and the future

BY EDDIE SHEPPARD & DAVID COLETT

For many Canadians, September is a time to reset. Kids and students head back to school. Parliament resumes after the summer break, and now troubling headlines about a slowing economy and rising unemployment fill news reports. These moments, while familiar, feel different this year. They come against a backdrop of deepening uncertainty, where families are being forced to make harder choices and where even small disruptions can create cascading effects on household budgets and future plans.

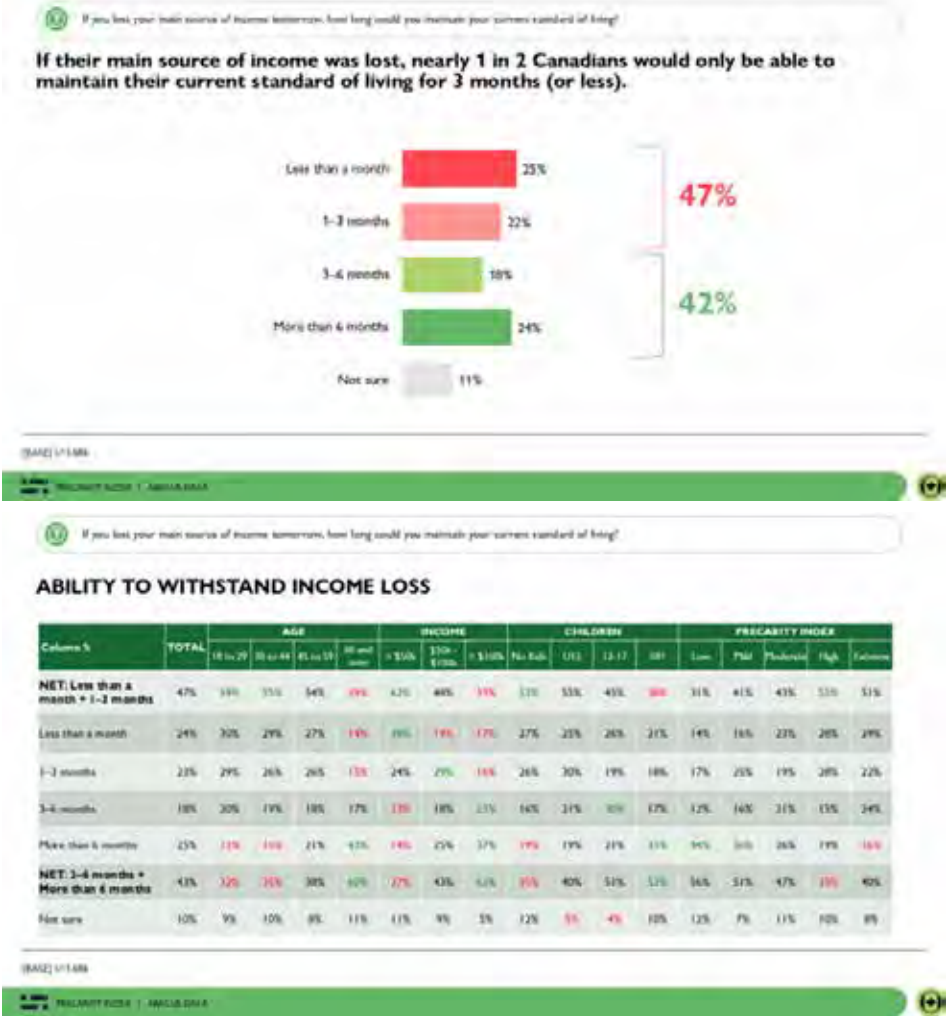
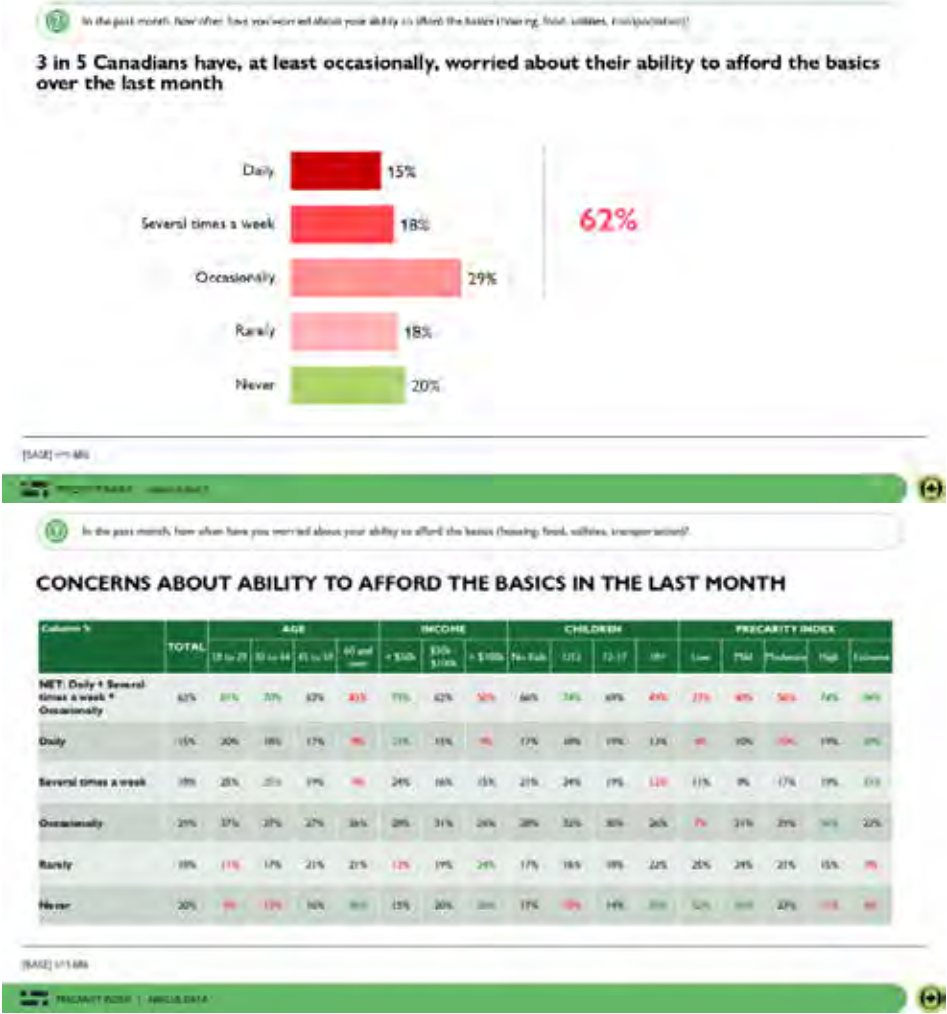
Earlier this year, we introduced the concept of a precarity mindset: a growing feeling that stability is fragile and the next disruption always feels close at hand. Our recent release revealed how this mindset has taken root, showing a sharp rise in the number of Canadians reporting high and extreme levels of perceived precarity.

This follow-up looks at how that growing sense of precarity is playing out in the day-to-day lives of Canadians. It explores what families are feeling as back-to-school costs pile up, how financial fragility is forcing people to delay major life milestones, and how anxiety about the future is leaving many feeling emotionally exhausted as the fall political season begins.

What we find is clear: precarity is no longer just a set of economic indicators or a mood in the polling numbers – it is a lived, daily reality for millions of Canadians. And as Parliament returns, leaders will face the challenge of not just managing short-term crises, and building for the long-term, but rebuilding confidence that the systems Canadians depend on are strong enough to weather what comes next.

Affording the basics

For many Canadians, precarity isn't an abstract concept, it's a lived, daily reality that shows



up every time they open their wallets. Nearly two-thirds (62%) report worrying, at least occasionally, about their ability to afford the basics in the past month, and one in three (33%) say this worry strikes several times a week.

This anxiety cuts sharply across age, income, and family life. It's highest among younger Canadians – 81% of those 18–29 and 70% of those 30–44 worry regularly about covering essentials. Families with children under 12 are also deeply affected (74%), especially during back-to-school season when added costs for supplies and activities spike stress. Lower-income households (73%) face similar strain, highlighting how financial pressure hits hardest for those already struggling.

The link to precarity levels is unmistakable. Among Canadians with a high level of perceived precarity, nearly three-quarters (74%) worry about affording the basics, while that figure jumps to 84% among those in feeling extreme

precarity. These numbers reveal how economic unease is concentrated most heavily among those already living closest to the edge, where even small disruptions, like a missed paycheck or unexpected expense, can quickly spiral into crisis.

Fragile financial security

When asked how long they could maintain their current standard of living if their main source of income was lost, almost half of Canadians (47%) say less than three months. This financial fragility is greatest among younger Canadians – 59% of those 18–29 and 55% of those 30–44 say they could not sustain their lifestyle beyond that window. Lower-income households earning under \$50,000 are even more exposed, with 62% reporting they could not last three months.

► Continued on page 9

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Here again, the precarity lens sharpens the picture. Those in our high precarity (55%) and extreme precarity groups (51%) are far more likely to acknowledge their limited financial runway, showing how precariousness translates into an immediate sense of insecurity about the future.

This financial fragility underscores how precarity is not just about attitudes – it reflects a very real vulnerability to economic disruption.

Life on hold: how precarity delays major decisions

The current economic, political, and social climate is causing many Canadians to put their lives on pause. Across the country, 27% say they've avoided making a major purchase, 12% have delayed buying a home, and 11% have postponed changing jobs or careers due to uncertainty.

However, a closer look at the data reveals that younger Canadians and young families are feeling this pressure most acutely. Among those aged 18–29:

- 23% have postponed starting or growing their family.
- 23% have postponed moving to a new city or province.
- 21% have delayed buying a home.
- 21% have held off on changing jobs or careers.

- 19% have delayed pursuing higher education or skills training.

The same trend is seen among households with young children, highlighting how today's environment is disproportionately impacting those at pivotal life stages. For young adults and parents alike, precarity isn't just about day-to-day stress – it's reshaping the milestones that define adulthood, forcing many to hold off on decisions that could shape their futures.

What keeps Canadians up at night

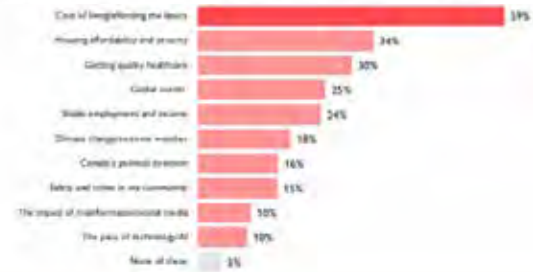
When Canadians think about their family's future, cost of living looms largest – 59% cite it as their greatest source of anxiety. Housing affordability and security follows at 34%, alongside concerns about access to quality healthcare (30%), global events (25%), and stable employment or income (24%).

Demographic divides show how different generations process risk. Canadians aged 45–59 are most likely to worry about the rising cost of living (66%), while those 60+ are significantly more concerned with healthcare (44%) and global instability (34%). By contrast, younger adults (18–29) express higher levels of concern about employment and income security (36%).

Overlaying the precarity index reveals sharper differences. Canadians in high precarity are most likely to highlight cost of living (66%) and housing affordability (40%) as pressing issues. Those in extreme precarity are distinct: along-side cost of living, they express significantly

What you think about your family's future, what causes you the most anxiety? (Select up to three)

Cost of living is the biggest cause of anxiety when considering one's family's future, along with housing affordability/security, and getting quality healthcare.



(BASE) n=1,000

PRECARITY INDEX | ANXIETY

What you think about your family's future, what causes you the most anxiety? (Select up to three)

CONCERNS ABOUT YOUR FAMILY'S FUTURE

Column %	TOTAL	AGE				INCOME			CHILDREN				PRECARITY INDEX			
		18 to 29	30 to 44	45 to 59	60 and over	< \$10k	\$10k-\$19k	\$20k+	0 to 4	5 to 12	13+	Low	PM	High	Extreme	
Cost of living affecting the family	59%	55%	57%	66%	55%	40%	59%	48%	59%	50%	52%	62%	85%	80%	57%	50%
Housing affordability and security	34%	41%	31%	30%	37%	40%	34%	33%	35%	30%	37%	30%	40%	33%	30%	33%
Getting quality healthcare	30%	28%	33%	33%	44%	29%	28%	30%	27%	30%	32%	28%	31%	27%	30%	30%
Global events (wars, U.S. elections, etc.)	25%	28%	21%	24%	34%	20%	24%	11%	31%	18%	31%	30%	31%	28%	28%	27%
Stable employment and income	24%	36%	27%	22%	14%	20%	22%	24%	20%	21%	20%	14%	20%	24%	27%	32%
Climate change/natural disaster	18%	15%	15%	16%	32%	15%	18%	18%	16%	17%	13%	22%	18%	14%	20%	11%
Canada's political direction	16%	14%	16%	19%	18%	17%	16%	17%	16%	18%	15%	17%	17%	15%	15%	19%
Safety and crime in my community	11%	20%	18%	17%	12%	14%	16%	19%	17%	17%	12%	13%	14%	14%	19%	20%
The impact of misinformation/social media	10%	9%	10%	9%	13%	10%	9%	13%	9%	12%	14%	11%	13%	14%	10%	13%
The pace of technological change	10%	10%	7%	8%	9%	10%	11%	9%	10%	12%	8%	9%	10%	8%	11%	12%

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PRECARITY INDEX | ANXIETY

heightened concern about climate change (33%), reflecting how their anxieties extend beyond immediate economic stress to broader long-term risks.

The emotional toll of precarity

This climate of insecurity leaves a heavy emotional mark. Most Canadians report feeling worried about the year ahead (43%), while roughly a quarter say they feel exhausted (27%) or powerless (27%). Yet there is still resilience – 29% say they feel hopeful about what's to come.

These emotions map closely to levels of precarity. Those in extreme precarity are most likely to feel worried (55%) and powerless (39%). Canadians in high precarity mirror that worry (55%) but are also more likely to report exhaustion (36%). By contrast, those in low precarity are significantly more optimistic, with 36% saying they feel hopeful about the year ahead.

The balance between worry and hope is defined by how secure – or exposed – Canadians feel in today's uncertain climate.

The upshot

As Parliament prepares to resume, kids head back to school, and headlines about a slowing economy dominate the news, Canadians are entering the fall with a growing sense of uncertainty. What began as concern over rising prices and was disrupted by fears of Trump's tariffs, has evolved into something deeper: a precarity mindset, where stability feels fragile and the

next disruption always seems close at hand.

For households, especially those with young children, precarity has become part of everyday life. Rising costs and fragile finances are forcing families to make difficult trade-offs, while even small disruptions can quickly throw carefully balanced budgets into chaos. This uncertainty goes beyond day-to-day stress; it is reshaping the milestones that define adulthood. Many young adults and families are putting their futures on pause, delaying decisions about buying a home, changing careers, or growing their families because the future feels too unpredictable.

For the economy, this creates a ripple effect. When households focus on survival rather than growth, they spend less, take fewer risks, and hold back on investments, slowing recovery and deepening the very vulnerabilities that caused the hesitation in the first place.

Taken together, these forces signal a pivotal moment. The return to Parliament comes at a time when Canadians are not just grappling with temporary shocks, but with a deeper question: whether the systems they rely on – housing, healthcare, jobs, and education – are strong enough to withstand what comes next. How leaders respond in the months ahead will shape whether this period of heightened precarity becomes a lasting source of division and distrust, or a turning point that restores confidence and stability.

One quarter of Canadians have delayed making a large purchase in the past year due to the economic, political, or social environment.



(BASE) n=1,000

PRECARITY INDEX | ANXIETY

In the past year, have you delayed or decided against any major life decisions because of the current economic, political, or social environment? (Select all that apply)

One quarter of Canadians have delayed making a large purchase in the past year due to the economic, political, or social environment.

Column %	TOTAL	AGE					CHILDREN				PRECARITY INDEX					
		18 to 29	30 to 44	45 to 59	60 and over	No kids	1 to 3	4 to 5	6+	Low	Mid	Plausible	High	Extreme		
Making a large purchase (e.g., car, renovations)	24%	28%	20%	20%	12%	25%	34%	32%	25%	11%	18%	25%	18%	19%		
Buying a home	12%	21%	10%	10%	3%	13%	11%	16%	3%	3%	14%	10%	13%	12%		
Changing jobs or careers	11%	21%	17%	11%	1%	14%	16%	14%	4%	22%	10%	6%	13%	13%		
Moving to a new city or province	11%	22%	13%	10%	0%	12%	10%	8%	4%	4%	6%	3%	12%	12%		
Starting or reducing work hours	10%	18%	11%	10%	0%	10%	10%	11%	1%	8%	2%	8%	7%	12%		
Pursuing higher education or skills training	9%	18%	12%	7%	1%	10%	10%	4%	4%	2%	7%	7%	12%	11%		
Starting or growing a family	8%	23%	11%	4%	0%	11%	10%	4%	3%	4%	4%	7%	11%	11%		
Getting married or entering a long-term relationship	6%	18%	11%	2%	0%	9%	11%	10%	1%	3%	3%	6%	8%	7%		
Starting or expanding a business	6%	11%	11%	3%	1%	3%	14%	7%	3%	3%	3%	3%	6%	11%		
Other reasons to say	3%	3%	4%	2%	3%	3%	4%	1%	2%	4%	4%	4%	4%	2%		
None of these	45%	20%	20%	30%	10%	44%	18%	40%	30%	20%	15%	40%	30%	37%		

(BASE) n=1,000

PRECARITY INDEX | ANXIETY



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Canadian smaller businesses pay between 20-23 per cent more taxes than the U.S., claims CFIB report

Trump's 'Big Beautiful Bill' will make things worse, says Canadian Federation of Independent Business

MARTIN C. BARRY
Local Journalism Initiative Reporter
marty@newsfirst.ca

To improve Canada's tax competitiveness and boost economic productivity, the Canadian Federation of Independent Business is calling on the federal and provincial governments to lower corporate income tax rates for small firms, and increase the small business deduction threshold while indexing it to inflation.

Quebec businesses overtaxed

The motion comes after the CFIB recently issued a report that compared business tax loads in Canada and the U.S., concluding that small businesses in Quebec and Atlantic Canada were among the most overcharged in the ten provinces.

A Canadian microbusiness (which the CFIB defines as being made up of four employees) pays on average a whopping 20% more in taxes than a similar firm in the United States, stated the report which compared tax loads in 10 Canadian provinces and 20 U.S. states.

By comparison, a small business (25 employees) pays 23% more in taxes than its U.S. counterpart, the CFIB found. But even the most competitive provinces (B.C. for micro businesses, Saskatchewan for small firms) had an average tax burden higher than the vast majority of U.S. states.



"We can't ignore the widening gap between Canadian small firms and their U.S. competitors," said Juliette Nicolaj, the CFIB's policy analyst for national affairs and the report's other co-author.

Trump's 'Big Beautiful Bill'

The CFIB notes that recent pro-small business changes in the United States through the "Big Beautiful Bill" driven through by President Donald Trump made the tax gap between the two countries even wider.

The conclusion the federation came to? "Canada needs to lower taxes or risk driving investment south of the border," they said in a September 11 statement.

"U.S. tariffs are not the only competitive issue facing Canadian small businesses," said Bradlee Whidden, a CFIB senior policy analyst and the report's co-author.

"When you look at the numbers, it's crystal clear: smaller businesses in Canada are already at a serious tax disadvantage, which was just made permanent by recent pro-small business changes in the United States through the Big Beautiful Bill.

"If Canada wants to compete and raise our standard of living, we need to cut taxes," added Whidden. "Payroll taxes are heavy on both sides of the border, but the real gap is in corporate and property taxes. Here in Canada, that gap means less money going back into wages, business operations and growth."

Quebec's poor tax performance

On a province-by-province level, Quebec and Atlantic Canada

performed the poorest, the CFIB said, while western Canadian provinces ranked a bit higher, but still significantly below the average of U.S. states that were analyzed.

However, even the most competitive provinces (B.C. for micro businesses, Saskatchewan for small firms) had an average tax burden higher than the vast majority of U.S. states, the CFIB concluded.

Among microbusinesses, the five best (1 – 5) and worst (26 – 30) jurisdictions in the report were:

1. South Dakota (USA)	26. Newfoundland and Labrador (CAN)
2. North Dakota (USA)	27. Prince Edward Island (CAN)
3. Wyoming (USA)	28. Nova Scotia (CAN)
4. Florida (USA)	29. New Brunswick (CAN)
5. Texas (USA)	30. Quebec (CAN)

Among small businesses, the five best (1 – 5) and worst (26 – 30) jurisdictions are:

1. South Dakota (USA)	26. Nova Scotia (CAN)
2. Wyoming (USA)	27. Prince Edward Island (CAN)
3. North Dakota (USA)	28. Newfoundland and Labrador (CAN)
4. Florida (USA)	29. New Brunswick (CAN)
5. Texas (USA)	30. Quebec (CAN)

In addition to the recommendation to the federal and provincial governments, the CFIB is also suggesting that municipalities, working in conjunction with provincial governments that oversee them, should reduce property taxes and close the property tax gap between commercial and residential properties.

"Trade disruptions have put the spotlight on Canada's uphill battle to remain competitive with the United States," said Juliette Nicolaj, the CFIB's policy analyst for national affairs and the report's other co-author.

Gap can't be ignored, says analyst

"While we can't control what other countries do, we can't ignore the widening gap between Canadian small firms and their U.S. competitors," she added. "It's time for governments to step up with policies that lower the cost of doing business in Canada."



"U.S. tariffs are not the only competitive issue facing Canadian small businesses," says Bradlee Whidden, a CFIB senior policy analyst and the report's co-author.



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Montréal's new ÉDI & Anti-Racism Policy: what it could mean for Park-Ex

DIMITRIS ILIAS

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter for Parc-Extension News
dimitri@newsfirst.ca

The City of Montréal has just adopted a new Equity-Diversity-Inclusion (ÉDI) and Anti-Racism Policy. Big words, yes — but behind them are commitments that could have a direct impact on neighbourhoods like Park-Extension.

Why Park-Ex matters in this conversation

Park-Extension has always been one of Montréal's most diverse areas. Families here come from everywhere: South Asia, the Middle East, Africa, Latin America, Europe — and many households have been here for decades. The mix of languages, shops, faiths, and cultures is what gives Park-Ex its energy. But residents also know the challenges: overcrowded apartments, rising rents, fewer resources compared to other parts of the city, and the sense that services don't always reflect the community's realities.

This is exactly why a city-wide policy on equity and anti-racism is relevant here.

The five promises — in plain language

The City has outlined five main goals. Here's what they could mean if taken seriously in Park-Ex:

FAIRER MUNICIPAL SERVICES

City workers and offices should reflect the people they serve. That means more staff who speak the languages of Park-Ex, better cultural understanding, and workplaces free of discrimination.



SAFETY WITHOUT PROFILING

The City pledges public security that does not rely on racial or social profiling. For Park-Ex, where many residents worry about being singled out unfairly, this could mean real change if backed with accountability.

SUPPORT FOR CULTURE

Cultural equity isn't just for downtown institutions. It means local festivals, artistic projects, and community initiatives in Park-Ex should receive recognition and support equal to other neighbourhoods.

RESOURCES WHERE THEY'RE NEEDED

Equity in services and infrastructure means more than just equal distribution — it means fair distribution. For Park-Ex, that could translate into better housing protections, improved public spaces, and stronger support for families who need it most.

A VOICE IN DECISIONS

The City promises more inclusive participation in municipal decisions. For Park-Ex residents,

that means consultations in the languages spoken here, meetings held at times and places that are accessible, and making sure people without perfect French or English still get heard.

From policy to reality

Of course, residents of Park-Ex have seen policies come and go. The challenge is whether

these commitments will lead to actual changes on the ground: fewer evictions, more affordable housing, more services in multiple languages, better treatment from public authorities, and genuine inclusion in city planning.

The neighbourhood is watching — because for Park-Ex, equity and anti-racism are not abstract ideas. They're daily life.

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Nearly 430,000 Quebecers left an emergency room without treatment last year, finds the MEI

EMMANUELLE B. FAUBERT

Across Canada, over 1.2 million patients left emergency rooms untreated last year.

Economist at the MEI

The number of patients leaving Quebec's emergency rooms without being treated is rising, reveals a report published this morning by the MEI.

"These patients are not leaving because they feel better, but because the system is failing them," says Emmanuelle B. Faubert, economist at the MEI and author of the report. "Thousands of Quebecers are being denied access to care each year."

In 2024, Quebec recorded over 3.7 million emergency room visits. Of these, 428,676 ended

with a patient leaving before receiving treatment, representing 11.6 per cent of all visits.

This marks a worsening trend, with the ratio of patients leaving increasing by 8.8 per cent since 2019.

Patients in Quebec walk away from emergency rooms without receiving care at a rate that is higher than the national average of 7.8 per cent.

Across Canada, 16.3 million emergency room visits were made last year, and 1,267,736 patients were left untreated—around one in every thirteen visits. This data doesn't include patients living in Saskatchewan, or those covered by New Brunswick's Vitalité Santé health network, those health authorities having both failed to provide the requested 2024 data in time for publication.

The deterioration is observed nationwide, as rates of premature departures have risen

significantly since 2019. Last year the number of Canadian patients leaving without treatment increased by 35.6 per cent.

Most patients leaving an emergency room untreated in Quebec are classified as either P4 or P5, representing semi-urgent and non-urgent cases. Because they are deemed low priority, these patients are pushed to the back of the line and face some of the longest ER waits. This testifies to a lack of access to primary care.

The MEI researcher emphasized that patients forced to delay or forgo care often end up suffering from worsening conditions, which lead to more complex cases.

In a U.S. study conducted between 2019 and 2020, researchers found that 55 per cent of patients who left an emergency room before being treated ended up consulting a healthcare professional within three weeks of their initial

visit.

The MEI recommends increasing access to upstream care, which includes:

- Increasing the use of specialized nurse practitioner clinics;
- Granting the broadest scope of practice to pharmacists; and
- Allowing for the creation of non-governmental Immediate Care Medical Centres, based on the French model, to treat non-life-threatening emergencies.

"Solving the crisis in primary care is essential if we want to keep patients from continuing to fall through the cracks," says Ms. Faubert. "Policymakers must find the political courage to open up healthcare delivery to independent and alternative providers, or else this crisis is bound to get worse."

Crime and safety rise as top issue as parliament resumes

1. Affordability still dominates, but crime is rising fast

57% of Canadians say the rising cost of living is a top issue. But the most notable movement is around crime and public safety: now 20% put it in their top three issues, up from 16% just two weeks ago. This is one of the fastest-rising

issues we've tracked all year. Concern is highest among older Canadians, Ontarians, and Conservative voters.

2. Liberals and Conservatives are tied

If an election were held today, both parties would receive 40% of the vote. The Liberals are down slightly since earlier this month, the Conservatives are holding steady, and the NDP has edged up to 8%. Regionally, the Liberals lead in Ontario, Quebec, and Atlantic Canada, while the Conservatives are strong in the Prairies and slightly ahead in BC.

3. Seniors show signs of shifting

Perhaps the most important demographic movement we see is among Canadians 60 and over. Liberal support has dipped to 42%, down from 45% earlier this month, while Conservative support has inched up to 40%. That narrows what was a 7-point Liberal lead among seniors to essentially a tie.

4. Leaders' images are stable

Prime Minister Mark Carney's approval remains at 50%, with a net favourability of +18. Pierre Poilievre's ratings have also held steady at -1 net. Both leaders remain competitive as the fall session begins.

The big picture

This wave underscores a political environment that is both competitive and unsettled. Affordability continues to dominate public concerns, but the rise in crime and safety as a priority issue could shape the debates this fall. At the same time, small shifts among seniors—an important part of the Liberal coalition—signal potential vulnerabilities.

You can read the full analysis and detailed numbers online at abacusdata.ca.

FEDERAL VOTE INTENTION

	CURRENT VOTE SHARE	SEPTEMBER 2, 2025	CHANGE
LIBERAL	40%	43%	-3
CONSERVATIVE	40%	40%	NC
NDP	8%	6%	+2
BQ	7%	7%	NC
PEOPLE'S	1%	1%	NC
GREEN	3%	2%	+1
OTHER	1%	1%	NC

BY DAVID COLETTA

From September 12 to 17, 2,230 Canadian adults were surveyed. Here are the results.

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FROM WAYNE & TAMARA

MOTHER AND CHILD

Q I have always valued my relationship with my mother-in-law. We typically get along well. However, now that I am pregnant, she has become very forceful with "suggestions" regarding the baby and has said some pretty hurtful things. It is getting to the point I do not want to answer the phone because I am tired of arguing about things I do not feel are her decisions to begin with.

She will argue with me about everything from breastfeeding to circumcision to how I decorate the nursery. My husband has been understanding because she acts that way to him all the time. But I don't want to put him in a position where he has to side against his mother.

I feel like saying, "You got to raise your two sons the way you wanted, now please let me raise my children the way I want!" Any advice on how I can nicely tell her to back off without damaging my relationship with her or further involving my husband?

Tisha

A Tisha, today the word "nice" means agreeable, but the original meaning of the word "nice" is foolish or stupid. Sometimes in our attempt to be nice we let a veneer of politeness triumph over what is important. That is foolish.

You are carrying a new life. You are the mother bear willing to protect her cub against all comers. Being nice should not outweigh that deeper sense of what you are doing. You don't have to tell off your mother-in-law, but you can treat her opinions like elevator music. They are just background noise.

An election has been held, and you've been voted mommy. You've won. It is your breast and your baby and the final decisions are yours. When we fulfill our legitimate roles in life, we never have to justify ourselves to others. When we sacrifice the roles in life we are entitled to play, we sacrifice our life itself.

Wayne & Tamara

HUSBAND AND FATHER

Q Even if I don't write English too good, I will try to be as clear as possible. My wife and I have been married a year and a half, and we have a baby five months.

My mother-in-law came to take care of our baby. She puts her opinion like orders and thinks she is the one who knows everything. She takes decisions which are not her part. When I try to speak to her about the baby, she orders me what to do. But if I don't speak up, that is offensive to her too.

This is killing me. Every morning when she arrives or when I come back from work, she is like the manager of the house. This is hard to say but I even have problems with her as role model. She thinks she is 20 or 25 when she is actually more like 60.

I spoke millions of times to my wife, but she says her mother is trying her best. She says the one who should change is me. That is something I am not willing to do because I cannot lose my

place inside the place I live.

Luis

A Luis, when you are able to act like a husband and father, then you know why you get up in the morning and go to work. But if someone interferes with your normal rituals and role, it disturbs the rhythm and purpose of your life.

Your marriage is between you and your wife, not between your wife and her mother. It cannot be any other way. In the years that follow, how will you explain what decisions were made to your child? Well, grandma decided that...

You need to have one very important conversation with your wife. She must understand if you don't get to be husband and father, then there is no place for you in this house.

Tamara

WAYNE & TAMARA MITCHELL are the authors of YOUR OTHER HALF (www.yourotherhalf.com)

Send letters to: Direct Answers, PO 964 Springfield, MO 65801-0964

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- Cantaloupe (Quebec)
- Fresh Green Beans (Quebec)
- Peppers (pack of 4) (Quebec)
- Mushrooms (Quebec)
- Corn (3) (Quebec)
- Bananas (4-5)
- Golden Apples (3) (Quebec)
- Oranges (3)
- Lettuce (Quebec)
- Cucumbers (organic) (Quebec)
- Avocados (2)
- Tomatoes (flavor minis) (3) (Quebec)
- Potatoes (~3lbs) (Quebec)
- Nappa Cabbage (Quebec)

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The luckiest signs this week:
PISCES, ARIES AND TAURUS



ARIES

Change can be scary, but it can lead to incredible opportunities. You'll find balance in your home, work and love life, enabling you to resolve conflicts and achieve happiness.



TAURUS

Rushed agreements often lead to problems. To avoid future complications, take the time to discuss and clearly define all terms. Focus on the details to significantly increase your chances of success.



GEMINI

Prepare for a busy week on the job! Meticulous organization and efficient work methods will boost your income and increase your likelihood of receiving a promotion. You'll inspire your team as you lead by example.



CANCER

Your hard work will finally pay off. You'll be applauded for your achievements. Expect to receive a medal to symbolize your victory. You'll hear the word "respect" uttered about you frequently, which will boost your self-esteem.



LEO

Now is an excellent time to consider buying a property, and you have the resources to do so. Your family will support you, both financially and emotionally. If you're in a new relationship, you'll seriously consider moving in together quite soon.



VIRGO

Take some time to treat yourself and relax. If you want to travel somewhere new, plan your route carefully with a GPS app to save time and avoid getting lost.



LIBRA

Take the leap and apply for your dream job at that amazing company. This bold move will resolve your financial worries and set you on the path to achieving your goals. Action is the key to your success.



SCORPIO

It's time to make some changes in your life. Doing so will help you find the tools you need to take your journey in a more fulfilling direction. The law of attraction is on your side.



SAGITTARIUS

Great opportunities await you, both professionally and personally. Before making any decisions, analyze each situation carefully. Seek advice from trusted sources who can help you see things from a different perspective.



CAPRICORN

Let the warmth of your loved ones envelop you and bring you peace. By tapping into your creativity and following your heart, you'll create something exceptional. Every great project starts with a dream; don't be afraid to dream big!



AQUARIUS

Your hard work will pay off and could even lead to an unexpected promotion. If you adopt a healthier lifestyle, you'll see visible results in no time. Don't forget to embrace joy and harmony in your love life.



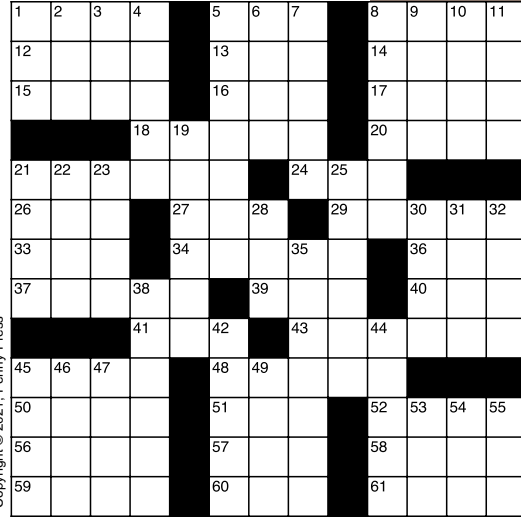
PISCES

Explore your inner self through a spiritual practice. This will bring unexpected richness into your life. You'll find your place within a group, forging strong bonds. Get ready to go on an exciting getaway planned by your significant other.

Coffee Break

CROSSWORDS

PUZZLE NO. 288



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ACROSS

- Small dispute
- Hooter
- Actor Pickens
- Yearning
- Garden buzzer
- Tortilla dish
- "The Raven," e.g.
- Fancy resort
- Afresh
- Treaties
- G-men
- Slumber
- Santa's worker
- That guy
- Picnic intruder
- Daisylike bloom
- High card
- Wary
- Keats work
- Therefore
- Focus
- Hinged top

DOWN

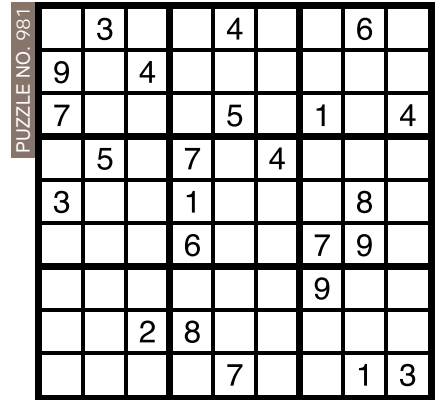
- Talk over
- Safes
- Purpose
- Hymn finales
- Salad fish
- Excavation
- Sound gear: hyph.
- Elemental part
- Lemony drink
- Equal
- Holds up
- British title
- Bar orders
- Frosted
- Cuts the grass
- Flowering shrub
- Persian king
- Agreeable
- Harbinger
- Nonprofessional
- Steepled brew
- Road tax
- Prepare for press
- Crimson hues
- "Rosie the ____"
- Lotions
- Mamas' mates
- Bridegroom's attendant
- "____ Wars"
- Station wagon, e.g.
- Door handle
- Wailed
- ____ skirt
- ____ League school
- Charge for service
- Winners

Sudoku

HOW TO PLAY:

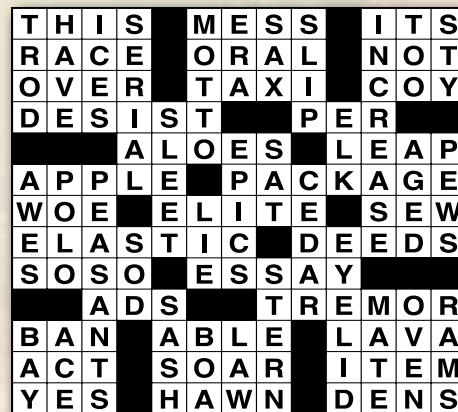
Fill in the grid so that every row, every column, and every 3x3 box contains the numbers 1 through 9 only once.

Each 3x3 box is outlined with a darker line. You already have a few numbers to get you started. Remember: You must not repeat the numbers 1 through 9 in the same line, column, or 3x3 box.

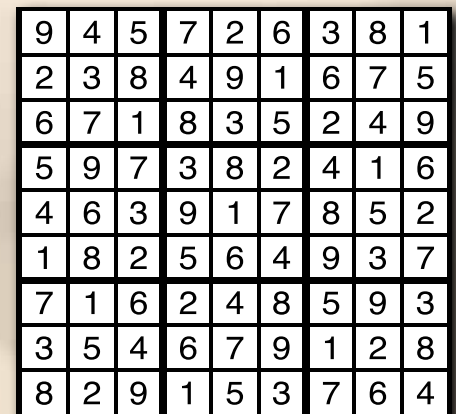


Last Issue's Answers

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Sudoku



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