



Canadian Defence  
& Foreign Affairs  
Institute

*Canadian Defence and Foreign Affairs Institute* ▶▶

# Threat perceptions in Canada



*January 2010*



# Attribution

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- The survey was commissioned by the CDFAI ([www.cdfai.org](http://www.cdfai.org)). The Canadian Defence & Foreign Affairs Institute is a charitable, independent, non-partisan, research institute with an emphasis on Canadian Foreign Policy, Defence Policy and International Aid. The CDFAI provides Canadians with factual and comprehensive policy analysis to promote their understanding of Canada's foreign affairs and aid policies and the state of our military preparedness by developing and sponsoring authoritative research and education programs.
- The survey was conducted by Innovative Research Group, Inc., a national research and strategy firm ([www.innovativeresearch.ca](http://www.innovativeresearch.ca)).
- The first instance of this survey should be attributed as a "CDFAI survey conducted by the Innovative Research Group". All subsequent attributions can use the shorter convention of: "CDFAI poll".
- The lead spokesperson for this CDFAI poll is **Lieutenant General (Ret'd) Michael K. Jeffery CMM CD**. He is available for comments at **613-592-5758** or at **mkjeffery@rogers.com**.
- Greg Lyle, from INNOVATIVE, is also available to answer questions about methodology at 416-642-6340.



# Methodology

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- The online survey was conducted among current members of INNOVATIVE's Canada 20/20 panel from December 22nd, 2009 to January 4th, 2010.
- The Canada 20/20 Panel is recruited from a wide variety of sources to be representative of the known distribution of Canadians by age, gender, region and language.
- Each survey is administered to a series of randomly selected sub samples of the panel and weighted according to Census data to ensure that the sample is representative of the age, gender, region and language breakdown of the Canadian population to provide results that are intended to approximate a probability sample.
- Each panellist is provided with a unique URL in their invitation so that only invited panel members are able to complete any specific survey. Each URL can only be used to complete one survey.
- The weighted total sample included 1,229 responses eligible for inclusion in our analysis. There were over samples in BC, Alberta and Ontario which bring the total sample of 1,877.
- An unweighted probability sample of 1,229 would have an estimated margin of error of  $\pm 2,8$  percentage points, 19 times out of 20.
- The margin of error will be larger within each sub-grouping of the sample
- *Note that the 2004 tracking data comes from a telephone survey of 500 Canadians conducted from October 21st, 2004 to October 28th, 2004. An unweighted probability sample of 500 would have an estimated margin of error of  $\pm 4,4$  percentage points, 19 times out of 20.*



# Climate change still a critical threat, but Canadians less concerned with terrorism and epidemics

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- Perceptions have shifted a great deal in the minds' of Canadians when it comes to threats to the vital interests of Canada in the next 10 years. Climate change now dominates the agenda, while terrorism and potential epidemics have almost disappeared from Canadians' radar screen.
  - Half of Canadians say *Climate change* is a critical threat to the vital interests of the country in the next 10 years (49% in 2010 vs. 52% in 2004), making climate change the most important threat in the views of Canadians. Concern in Québec (62%) is remarkably high while it is particularly low in Alberta (28%).
  - About one in four (28% in 2010 vs. 49% in 2004) now say *International terrorism* is a critical threat, a level well below what was being observed in 2004. Canadians in BC (22%) and Atlantic provinces (25%) are least likely to believe international terrorism is a critical threat to Canada.
  - Concern over the *number of immigrants and refugees* has grown since 2004, with more than one in four saying it is a critical threat (27% in 2010 vs. 21% in 2004). This concern is strongest in Alberta (35%) and weakest in Atlantic provinces (15%).
  - Overall, perceptions of *globalization* as a critical threat to the country have receded compared with 2004 (19% in 2010 vs. 28% in 2004). Concern in the Prairies (16%) is particularly low.
  - Although *potential epidemics* dominated the list of critical threats in post-SARS 2004 (60% of Canadians said it was a critical threat in 2004), only 16% of Canadians now say it is a critical threat. Note that Quebeckers (19%) and Ontarians (17%) were slightly more likely to think *epidemics* are critical threats.



# Detailed results

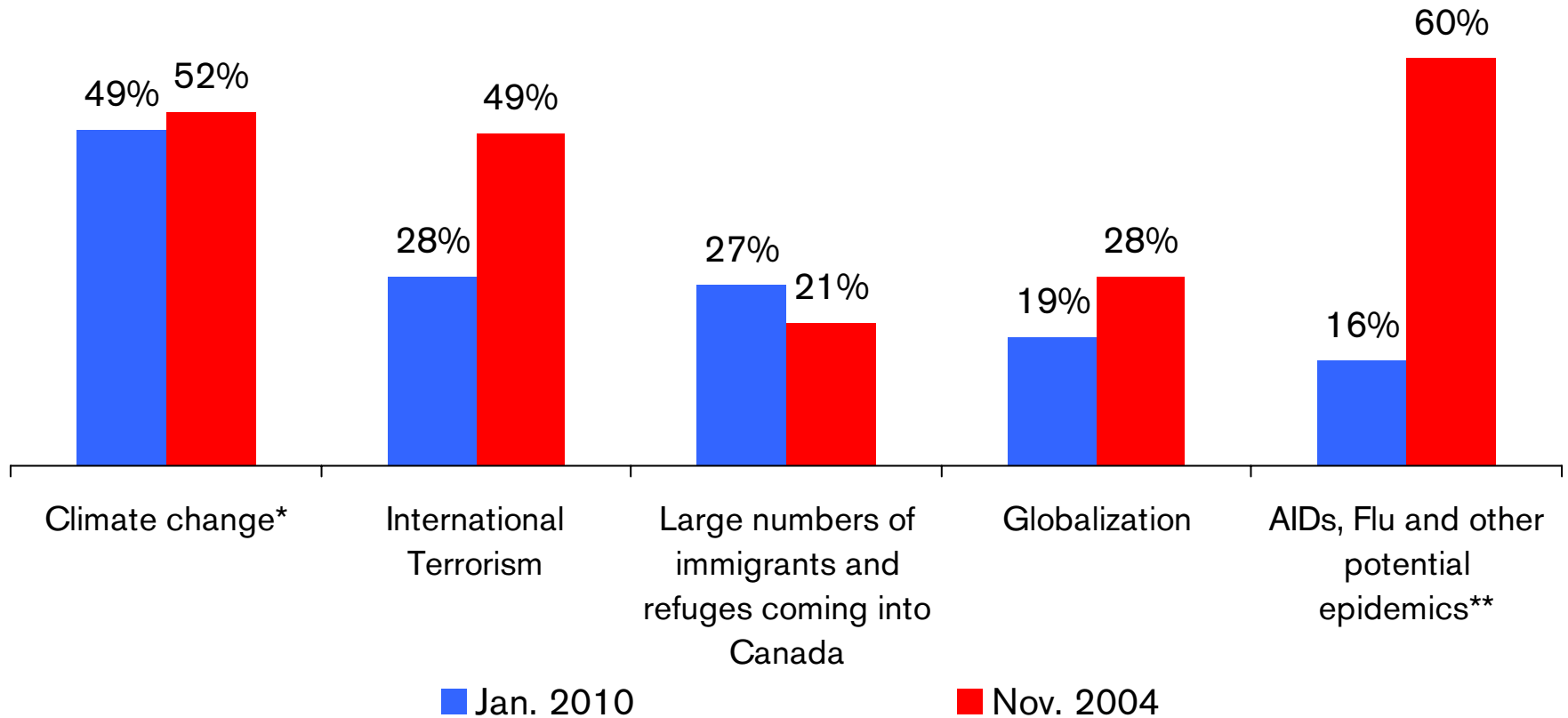
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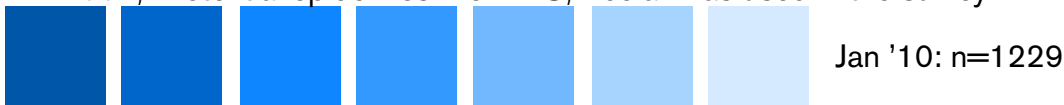
# Climate change still a critical threat, but Canadians less concerned with terrorism and epidemics

**Q** Below is a list of possible threats to the vital interests of Canada in the next 10 years. For each one please indicate whether you see this as a critical threat, an important but not critical threat, or not an important threat at all. **Those who said critical threat**



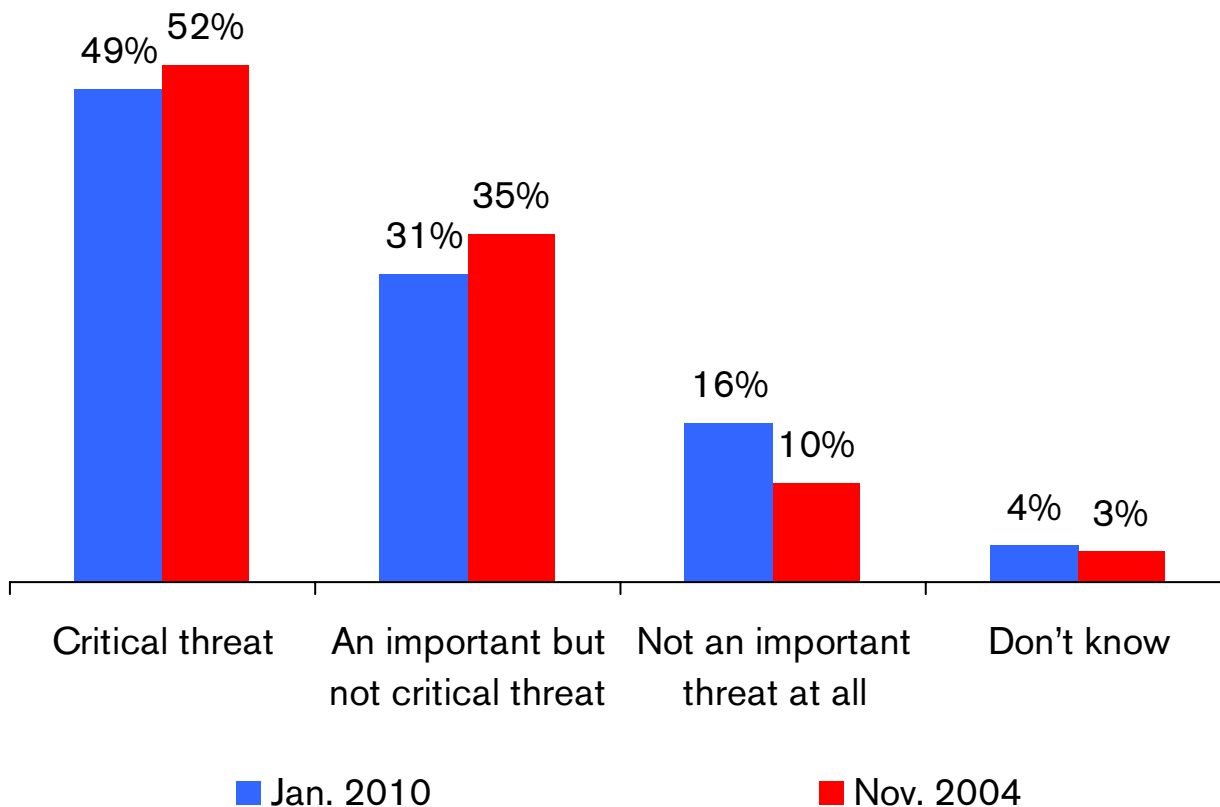
\*In 2004, "Global Warming" was used in the survey

\*\* In 2004, "Potential epidemics like AIDS, Ebola" was used in the survey



# Concern over climate change stable since 2004

**Q** Below is a list of possible threats to the vital interests of Canada in the next 10 years. For each one please indicate whether you see this as a critical threat, an important but not critical threat, or not an important threat at all. **Climate change\***



\*In 2004, "Global Warming" was used in the survey



## Those that responded 'Critical threat'

Region	Percentage
BC	48%
Alberta	28%
Prairies	45%
Ontario	49%
Quebec	62%
Atlantic	44%

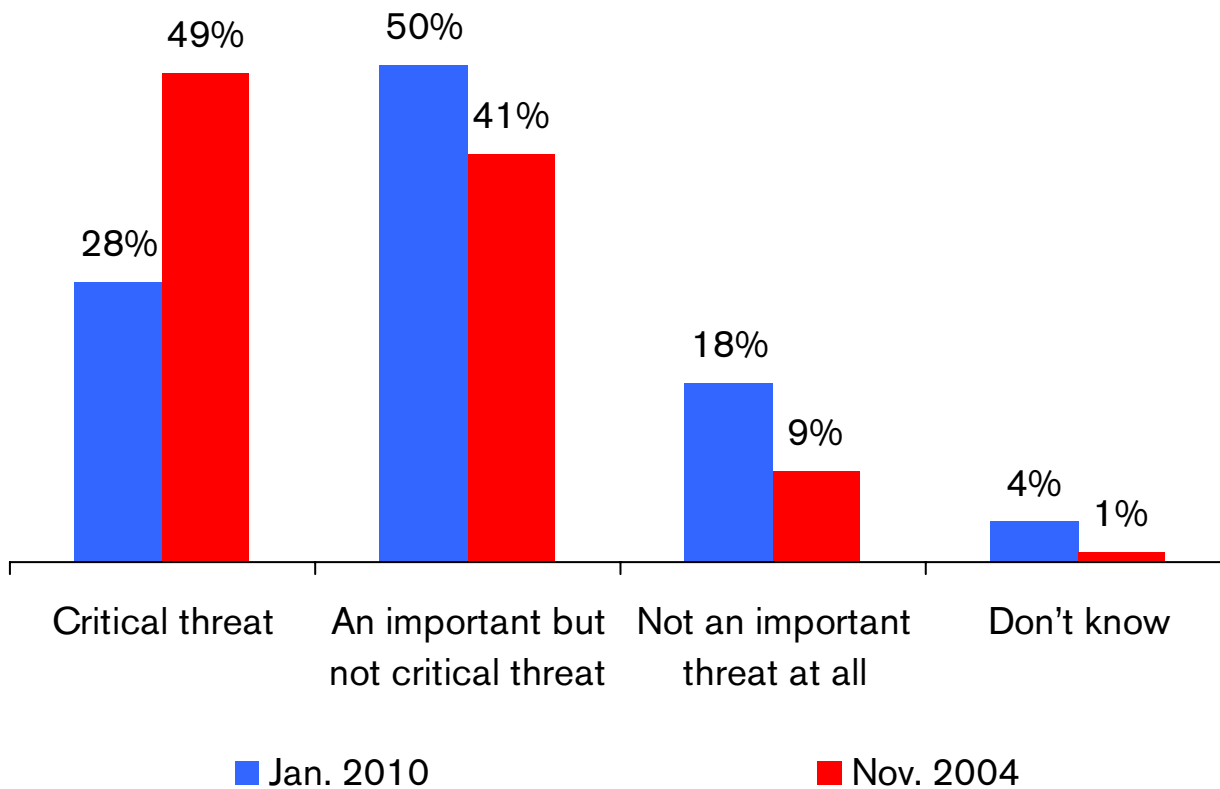


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# Canadians less worried with International terrorism in 2010

**Q** Below is a list of possible threats to the vital interests of Canada in the next 10 years. For each one please indicate whether you see this as a critical threat, an important but not critical threat, or not an important threat at all. **International terrorism**



Those that responded 'Critical threat'

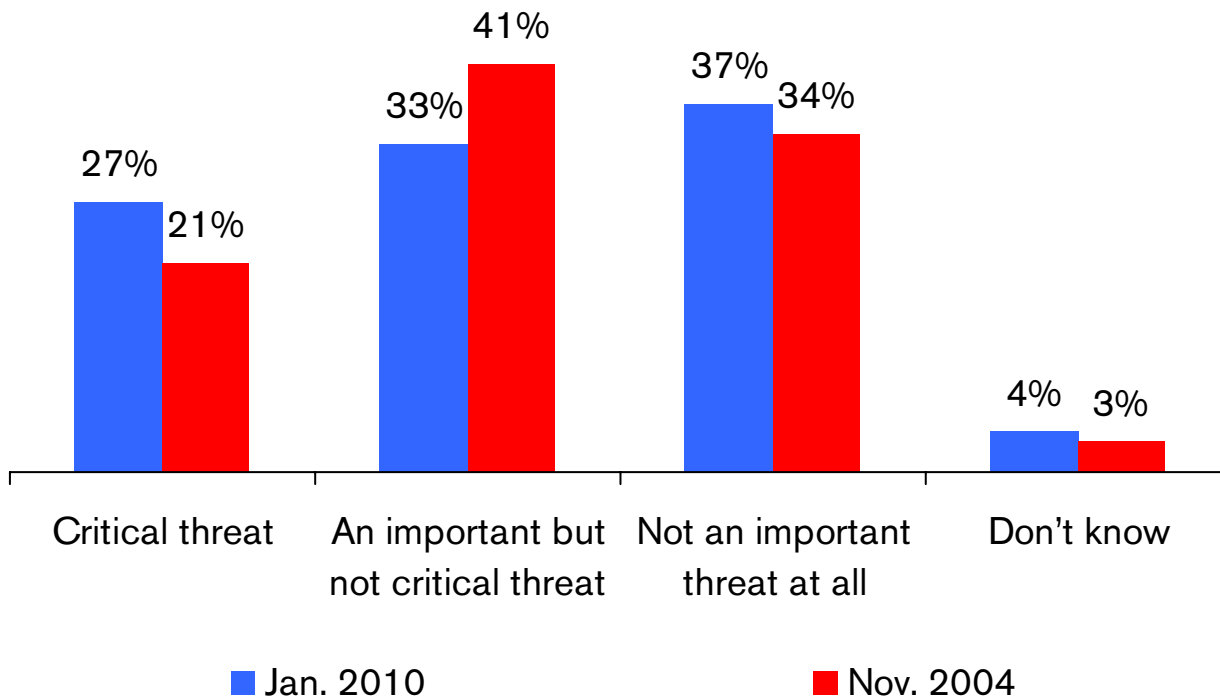
Region	
BC	22%
Alberta	29%
Prairies	29%
Ontario	28%
Quebec	32%
Atlantic	25%





# Canadians slightly more likely to perceive immigration as a critical threat

**Q** Below is a list of possible threats to the vital interests of Canada in the next 10 years. For each one please indicate whether you see this as a critical threat, an important but not critical threat, or not an important threat at all. **Large numbers of immigrants and refugees coming into Canada**



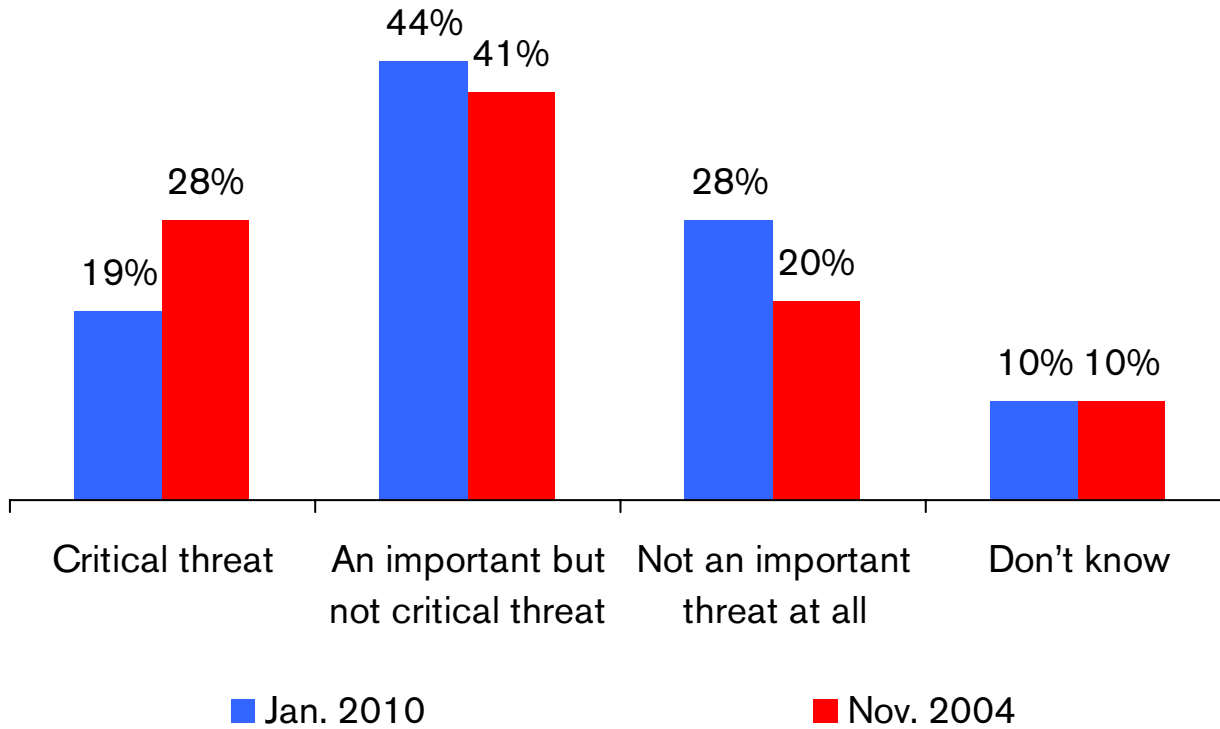
Those that responded 'Critical threat'

Region	Percentage
BC	27%
Alberta	35%
Prairies	19%
Ontario	28%
Quebec	27%
Atlantic	15%



# Fewer Canadians perceive globalization as a critical threat for Canada

**Q** Below is a list of possible threats to the vital interests of Canada in the next 10 years. For each one please indicate whether you see this as a critical threat, an important but not critical threat, or not an important threat at all. **Globalization**



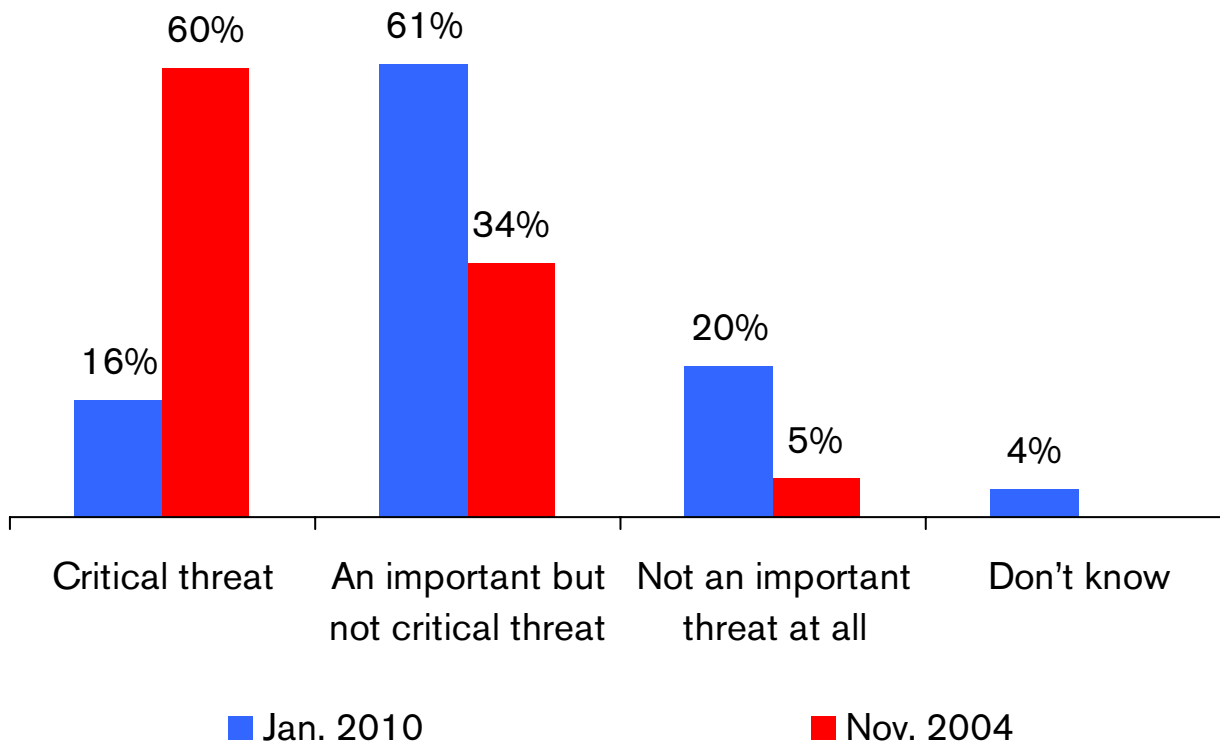
### Those that responded 'Critical threat'

Region	Percentage
BC	21%
Alberta	19%
Prairies	16%
Ontario	20%
Quebec	19%
Atlantic	17%



# Potential epidemics much less likely to be perceived as a critical threat

**Q** Below is a list of possible threats to the vital interests of Canada in the next 10 years. For each one please indicate whether you see this as a critical threat, an important but not critical threat, or not an important threat at all. **AIDs, Flu and other potential epidemics\*\***



Those that responded 'Critical threat'

Region	Percentage
BC	9%
Alberta	15%
Prairies	11%
Ontario	17%
Quebec	19%
Atlantic	15%

\*\* In 2004, "Potential epidemics like AIDS, Ebola" was used in the survey





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