

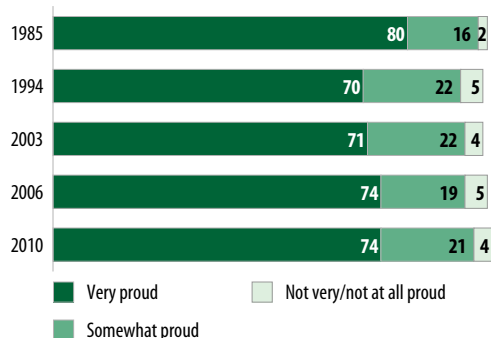
# Canadian Identity and Symbols

**PRIDE IN BEING CANADIAN.** Canadians have long expressed pride in their country, and this sentiment remains strong in 2010. Three-quarters (74%) say they are very proud to be Canadian, with most of the remainder (21%) somewhat proud. The level of pride expressed has remained notably consistent over the past 25 years.

As before, there continues to be notable difference in strong pride between Quebecers (43%; with another 43% somewhat proud) and those living elsewhere in Canada (84% very proud). Across the population, strong pride in being Canadian increases modestly with household income and with age (only 66% of those 18-29, compared with 80% who are 60 plus). Place of birth, however, does not seem to matter, as immigrants (76%) are as likely as native born (73%) to feel strong pride in being Canadian.

## How proud are you to be a Canadian?

1985 - 2010



What is it about Canada that gives people the greatest sense of pride? First and foremost, Canadians identify their country as being free and democratic (27%), consistent with what they have identified since 1994. Other reasons include the quality of life/standard of living (10%), Canadians being a humanitarian and caring people (9%), the health care system (6%) and multiculturalism (6%). These are essentially the same top reasons that Canadians have been giving since 1994. Since 2006, focus on quality life has increased (up 7 points) while multiculturalism has declined (down 5).

## Basis of pride in being Canadian

Top mentions 1994 - 2010

	1994	2003	2006	2010
Free country/freedom/democracy	31	28	27	27
Quality of life	5	6	3	10
Humanitarian/caring people	9	13	9	9
Multiculturalism	3	6	11	6
Health care system	—	3	2	6
Peaceful country	7	5	6	4
Beauty of the land	7	4	4	4
Born here/my country	5	4	2	3
Social programs	—	2	1	3

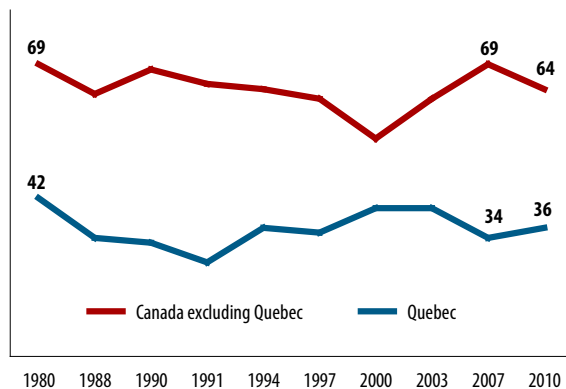
What do Canadians *like least* about their country? No one or two reasons predominate, but the most common complaints revolve around government and politics, including taxes (11%), poor government generally (9%), politics and politicians (8%), the current government or prime minister (5%), and Canadian foreign policy (2%). Others comment on Canada's climate/cold weather (9%), multiculturalism and immigration (4%), and a lack of social services (4%). One in five (19%) cannot identify anything they like least about Canada.

Opinions on this question are largely unchanged from 2006, except for a noticeable increase in mention of taxes (up 6 points), primarily in Ontario and B.C.

**ATTACHMENT TO CANADA.** Canadians are part of both a country and a province, and while these are not mutually exclusive, the question is to which jurisdiction people most closely identify. On balance, the Canadians are more likely to consider themselves a citizen of their country (57%) than their home province (39%), but somewhat less so than in 2007 (when the balance was 61% to 34%).

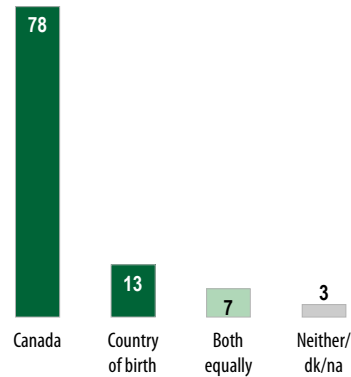
The shift to provincial loyalty since 2007 is evident in every province (except Quebec), As before, Quebecers are much less apt to identify with the country (36%) than are those living elsewhere (64%), but it is in the rest of Canada where the decline in national identification has taken place since 2007 (most notably in Alberta, Atlantic Canada and particularly in Saskatchewan, where residents are now more likely to relate to their province than the country (50% versus 43%). Identification with Canada is highest among Canadians with the most education and income, as well as among men and older Canadians.

Identify more with country than with province  
1980 - 2010



What about the one in five Canadians who were born in another country – where does their strongest attachment lie? Eight in ten (78%) say they feel a stronger attachment to Canada, compared with 13 percent who identify more closely with their country of birth. Another seven percent insist they feel equally attached to both.

Identification with Canada versus country of birth



Subsample: Those born outside of Canada

**CANADIAN SYMBOLS.** Every country has symbols that are key to national identity. The latest Focus Canada survey reveals that Canadians continue to place strong importance in a number of established symbols, and that the degree of importance placed on all but one has increased since 2007. At the top of the list continue to be the country's health care system (85% say very important), followed by the Charter of Rights and Freedoms (78%), the Canadian flag (73%), National Parks (72%) and the National Anthem (66%). Fewer than six in ten place such importance on the RCMP (57%), multiculturalism (56%), Canadian literature and music (54%), hockey (47%), bilingualism (46%), the CBC (42%) and the national capital in Ottawa (39%). Consistent with previous waves, Canadians are least likely to place great importance on the Queen (16%) as a symbol of Canadian identity, and this proportion has remained unchanged since 1997.

Quebecers are less likely than other Canadians to place strong importance on such symbols as the National Capital, the RCMP, the National Anthem and the Canadian flag. But they place equal importance on multiculturalism, and are more likely than others to identify strongly with bilingualism and the CBC/Radio Canada.

Across the country, there are generational differences in the importance placed on many Canadian symbols. Youth (aged 18 to 29) are less likely than older generations to identify strongly with such established symbols as the flag, the National Anthem, the RCMP, National Parks and the National Capital; this reverses the previous trend between 2003 and 2007. At the same time, youth are also more likely than older cohorts to place strong importance on bilingualism, multiculturalism, and the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

### Importance of symbols of Canadian identity

Very important 1997 - 2010

