

Immigration and Multiculturalism

Attitudes towards immigration

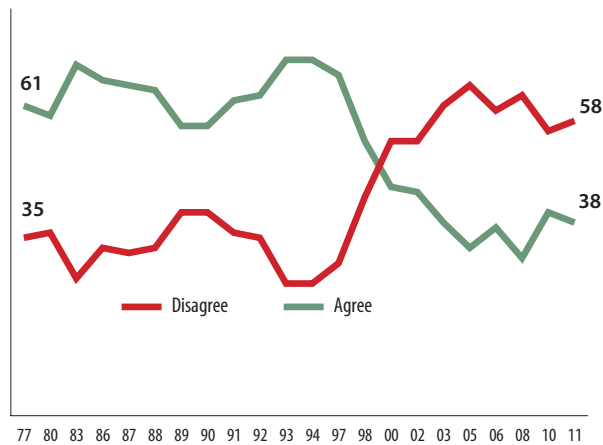
Environics' studies over the past few decades have documented how Canadians are increasingly viewing the country's multicultural mix as a positive aspect of the country (in sharp contrast to the experience in many other developed countries). While this issue has become increasingly politicized over the past year, Canadian public attitudes remain largely positive, after having softened somewhat between 2008 and 2010. The following "agree/disagree" statements serve as key indicators:

"Overall, there is too much immigration in Canada." A majority (58%) of Canadians continue to *disagree* with this statement, up marginally (up 2 points from 2010). This trend is most noticeable in Atlantic Canada, Saskatchewan and Alberta, as well as among rural residents, while the opposite view (agreement there is too much immigration) has increased over the past year in Vancouver and Manitoba.

Belief there is too much immigration is most evident in Ontario and Vancouver, among Conservative supporters, and especially among Canadians without a high school diploma (61%).

Immigration levels too high

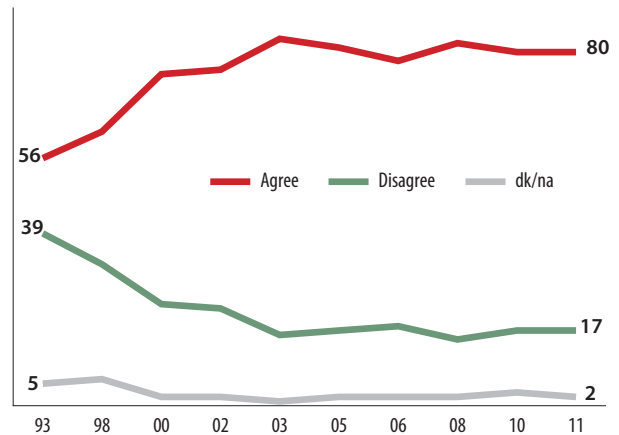
1977 - 2011



"Overall, immigration has a positive impact on the economy of Canada." A strong majority (80%) continue to agree with this statement, essentially unchanged over the past eight years. Opinions are similar across the country, but a positive view about the economic impact of immigrants is most widespread among Canadians with the most education and income.

Economic impact of immigration is positive

1993 - 2011

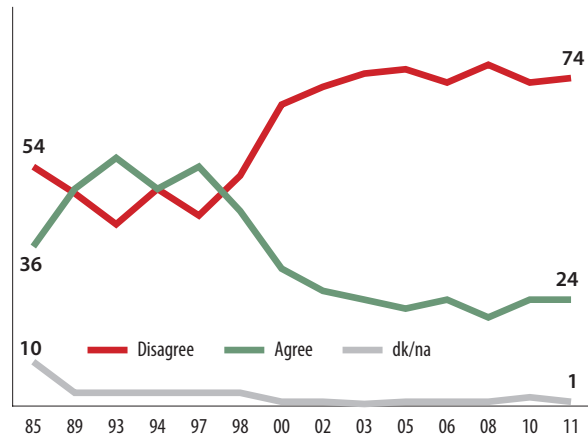


“Immigrants take away jobs from other Canadians.”

Consistent with the previous statement, most (74%) Canadians continue to reject the idea that immigrants take jobs from other Canadians (essentially unchanged from 2010). Rejection of this statement is expressed across the country, but most widely by Quebecers, immigrants, and Canadians with higher levels of education (by comparison, those without a high school diploma are evenly split on this statement).

Immigrants take away Canadian jobs

1985 - 2011



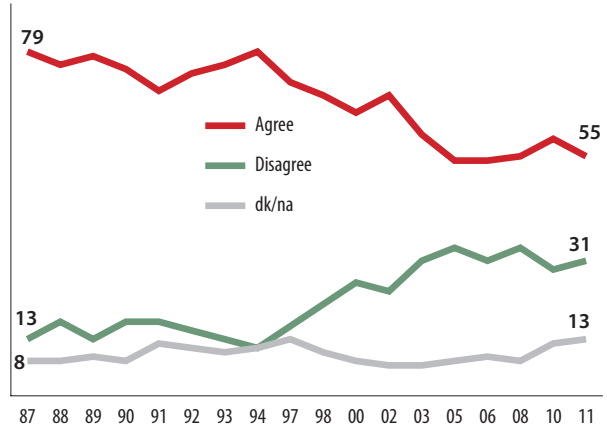
“Many people claiming to be refugees are not real refugees.”

Canadians have consistently been more likely than not to believe that many ostensible refugees to this country are not legitimately fleeing persecution in their home country, but this view has declined over the past year. A modest majority (55%) now agree with this statement (down from 59% in 2010), reversing the previous trend.

This latest downward trend is most evident in Atlantic Canada, Saskatchewan and Alberta, while rising marginally in Quebec. Agreement with the statement continues to be most widespread in Ontario, among Canadians aged 60 plus and Conservative supporters, although it has not strengthened in any of these groups since 2010.

Refugee claimants not legitimate

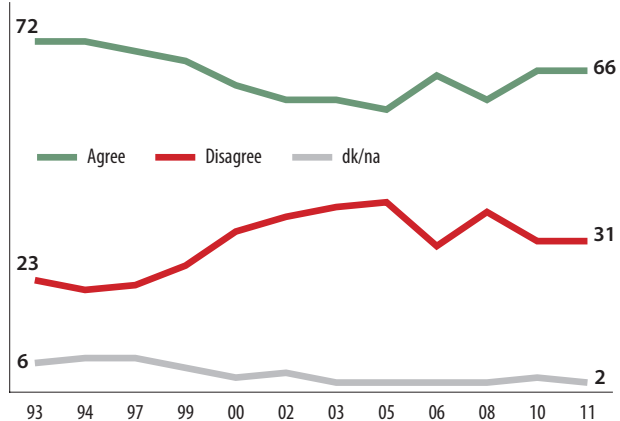
1987 - 2011



“There are too many immigrants coming into this country who are not adopting Canadian values.” Despite generally positive attitudes about immigration, Canadians remain ambivalent about the extent to which newcomers are integrating culturally into the country. As before, a majority (66%) agree with this statement (unchanged from 2010, following an increase over the previous two years).

Across the country, agreement has declined in Atlantic Canada and Saskatchewan, while increasing in Quebec (at 71%, now the highest of any province) and among Canadians in the top income bracket. Concerns about adoption of Canadian values remains higher among older Canadians, the less educated and Conservative supporters, and is also now highest among Bloc supporters (85%, up 14 points from 2010).

Too many immigrants do not adopt Canadian values
1993 - 2011



Contact and perceptions of minority groups

As the country's population continues to accept an increasing number of immigrants from outside its borders, Canadians are coming into contact with a more diverse range of fellow citizens than ever before. Moreover, this trend is also apparent with respect to other minority groups, based on language and sexual orientation.

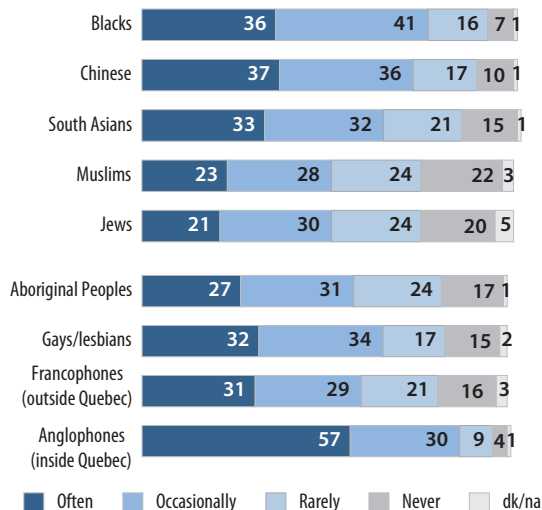
PERSONAL CONTACT WITH MINORITY GROUPS.

Canadians' personal contact with individuals from *other ethnic groups* has increased since 2006, and is now at the highest levels recorded on Focus Canada (dating back to the 1980s). Three-quarters report having personal contact often or occasionally with others who are Black (77%, up 8 points) or Chinese (73%, up 8). A smaller but faster growing majority report such contact with individuals from South Asian origin (e.g., India and Pakistan) (65%, up 11). By comparison, about half report often or occasional contact with Jews (51%, up 1) or Muslims (51%, up 5).

Contact with ethnic groups varies somewhat across the country in a predictable pattern. Frequent contact with Jews, Blacks and Muslims is most widely reported in Toronto, while South Asians and Chinese are most likely to be encountered often in Vancouver. Across all ethnic groups, frequent contact increases with education and income, while decreasing with age. In all cases, frequency of contact is higher in urban areas, but increases since 2006 are mostly in smaller communities.

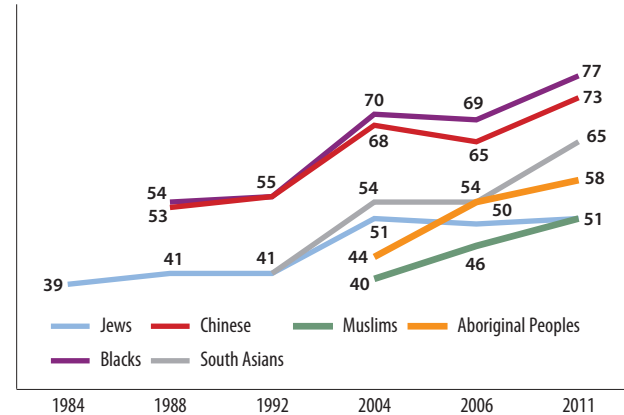
Contact with minority groups

2011



Contact with minority groups

Often/occasionally 1984 - 2011



In terms of *non-ethnic minorities*, most Canadians say they have frequent or occasional contact with individuals from the "other" linguistic minority, although this is much more apt to be the case among anglophones living in Quebec (87%, up 8 points since 2006) than among francophones elsewhere in Canada (60%, down 2).

The past four years have seen a modest increase in frequent/occasional contact with Aboriginal Peoples (58%, up 4 points). Frequent contact with Aboriginal Peoples is most common in the West, especially in Manitoba (57%, up 9 points since 2006).

In 2011, Focus Canada included the gay and lesbian community in this set of questions. Two-thirds of Canadians say they often (33%) or occasionally (34%) have contact with members of the gay and lesbian community, with frequent contact most widely reported by residents of Toronto and Montreal, top income earners, Canadians under 30, and those who are not Christian. No more than one-quarter of any group say they have *never* had contact with members of this community, with the notable exceptions of allophones (46%) and those without a high school education (39%). (Note: the survey did not also ask respondents to identify their own sexual orientation.)

DISCRIMINATION AGAINST MINORITY GROUPS.

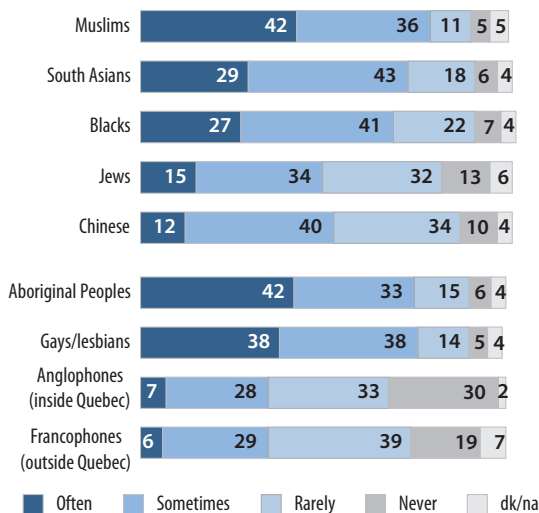
While most Canadians take pride in their country as a place that accepts people from all countries and cultures, many also believe individuals from minority groups in Canada experience discrimination on an ongoing basis, with opinions notably unchanged over the past five years.

Perceptions about the frequency of discrimination against *ethnic groups* have changed little since 2006, although Canadians are now somewhat less likely to say this happens “often” as opposed to “sometimes.” As in 2006, Canadians are most likely to say Muslims in this country experience discrimination often (42%, down 2 points), followed by South Asians (29%, down 7), Blacks (27%, down 5), Jews (15%, down 2) and Chinese (12%, down 1).

Perceptions vary modestly across the country. Quebecers are most likely to see frequent discrimination against Blacks, Jews and Muslims, while it is Vancouverites who are most apt to be sensitive to the experience of the Chinese community. Ontarians are most likely to identify discrimination against South Asians – but in Toronto, perceptions of discrimination against the Black community has declined noticeably since 2006 (down 11 points to 32%).

Perceptions of frequent discrimination tend to increase with education level and decline with age. The influence of personal contact appears to have limited influence on perceptions of discrimination, except as it applies to the Black community (the more frequent the contact, the more

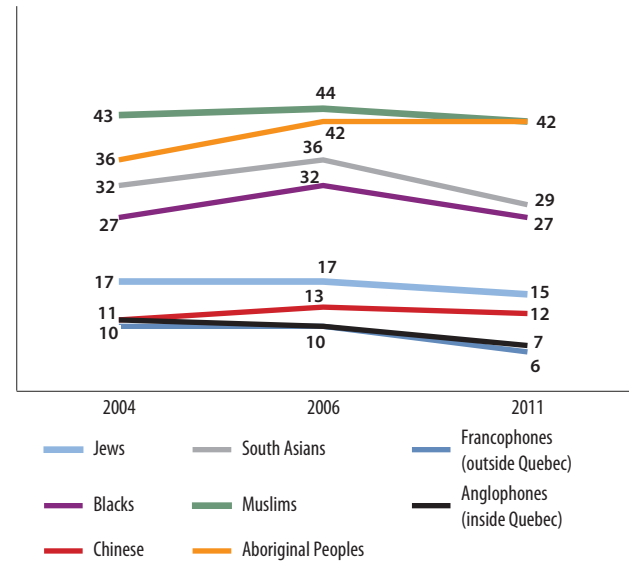
Perceived frequency of discrimination in Canada 2011



common discrimination). Finally, views about the extent of discrimination against ethnic groups are not related to opinions about the level of immigration or the extent to which immigrants are adopting Canadian values.

Groups often subject to discrimination

2004 - 2011



Among *other minorities*, four in ten (42%) continue to say that Aboriginal Peoples experience frequent discrimination (unchanged from 2006), while a slightly smaller proportion (38%) believe this also happens to gays and lesbians in Canada, with another 38 percent saying this occurs at least sometimes. In terms of linguistic groups, few (6%, down 4 points) believe that Official Language minorities experience frequent discrimination from the majority, with this perspective essentially the same in Quebec and the rest of the country.

Perceptions about discrimination against Aboriginal Peoples have declined in Manitoba, Alberta and B.C. since 2006, although this view remains more prevalent in the west, as well as among university-educated Canadians, NDP supporters, and those who report frequent contact with this community.

Perceptions of frequent discrimination against gays and lesbians is most widespread in Manitoba, among women and Canadians 18 to 29 years old, while least evident among non-European immigrants and allophones. In this case, personal contact is closely linked to opinions about discrimination.