

Immigration

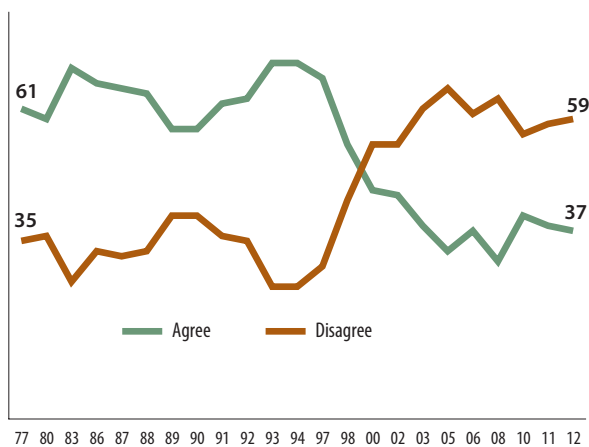
Canada has increasingly been defined (and has defined itself) as a nation of immigrants, and the country now accepts more than 250,000 newcomers each year. Canadians continue to be more positive than negative about immigration to this country. Opinions have held largely stable over the past year, but there have been notable shifts in some regions, and concern about newcomers fitting into Canadian society has inched upwards since 2011. The following “agree/disagree” statements serve as key indicators:

“Overall, there is too much immigration in Canada.” A majority (59%) of Canadians continue to disagree with this statement, compared with 37 percent who agree. These numbers are essentially unchanged since 2011, and generally reflect the balance of opinion over the past decade (and in sharp contrast to views in the 1980s and 1990s).

But this recent stability masks notable shifts across the country. Over the past year, concerns about the scope of immigration have increased in Atlantic Canada, the Prairies, and among rural residents and allophones, reversing a downward trend over the previous year. The opposite trend is evident in B.C. (also reversing a previous trend), and to a lesser extent Ontario, and residents of Canada’s largest cities.

Immigration levels too high

1977 – 2012



Q.35a

Do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree with each of the following statements...?

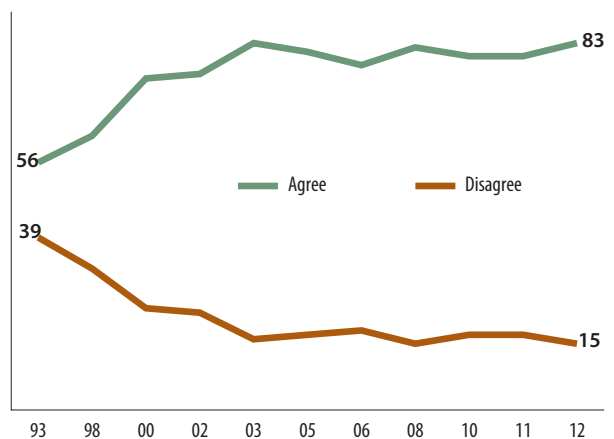
In 2012, the belief that immigration levels are too high is most widespread among Canadians without a high school diploma (59%, with 34% who strongly agree), allophones (50%) and federal Conservative supporters (47%), while this view is least apt to be shared by university graduates (23%), immigrants from the USA/Europe (23%), and supporters of the federal Liberals (27%) and NDP (28%).

“Overall, immigration has a positive impact on the economy of Canada.” More than eight in ten (83%) continue to agree with this statement, up three points since 2011 and matching the highest yet recorded (in 2003), compared with just 15 percent who disagree. This is a strong majority view across the country, and has increased over the past year in Ontario, Manitoba and Alberta, while declining only among rural residents (of whom 71% still agree that immigration is good for the economy).

Strong agreement with the positive economic impact of immigration is most widespread among university graduates, allophones and immigrants from the USA/Europe, while this view is least likely to be shared by Canadians from rural communities and those without a high school diploma (in each case, about one in four disagree with the majority opinion).

Economic impact of immigration is positive

1993 – 2012



Q.35g

Do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree with each of the following statements...?

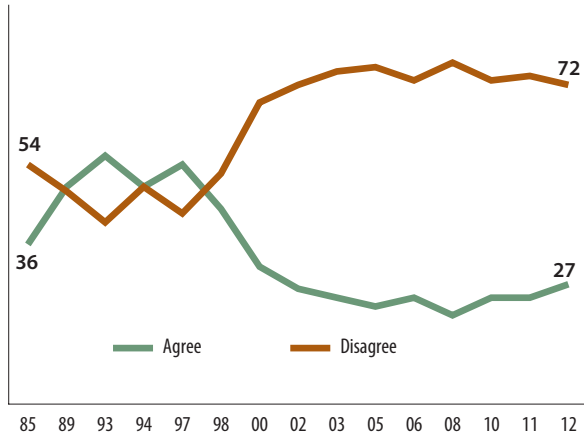
“Immigrants take away jobs from other Canadians.”

Consistent with the previous statement most (72%) Canadians continue to reject the idea that immigrants take jobs from other Canadians, although marginally less so than in 2011. This latest shift reflects increasing concerns about job impacts in Atlantic Canada, Saskatchewan and rural communities, and to a lesser extent in Alberta, Quebec and small towns.

Education continues to be the primary driver of opinions on this statement, and the gap in agreement with this statement between those with the least (53%) and most (12%) education has widened further over the past year.

Immigrants take away Canadian jobs

1985 – 2012



Q.35e
Do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree with each of the following statements...?

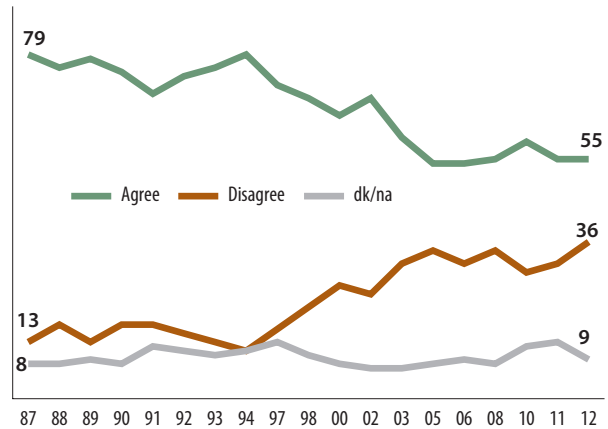
“Many people claiming to be refugees are not real refugees.”

A majority (55%) continue to agree with this statement (unchanged from 2011), but an increasing minority (36%, up 5 points) disagree, as fewer now have no opinion about the legitimacy of refugee claims. Over the past year, rejection of this statement is up mostly in B.C., as well as Ontario and Quebec, while the reverse trend is evident in Saskatchewan (where agreement is up 23 points).

Concern about the legitimacy of refugee claims is most widespread among residents of Ontario (especially Toronto, where 37% strongly agree with the statement) and Alberta, Canadians aged 60 plus, immigrants from outside the USA/ Europe, those with the least education and Conservative Party supporters. But this view is also expressed by at least four in ten Canadians from all provinces and demographic groups, and federal political party supporters.

Refugee claimants not legitimate

1987 – 2012



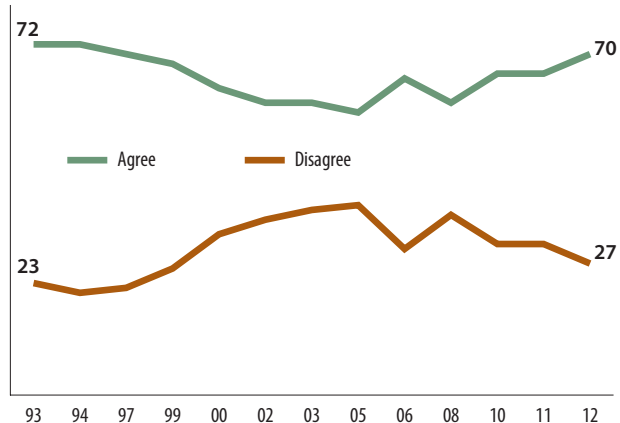
Q.35b
Do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree with each of the following statements...?

“There are too many immigrants coming into this country who are not adopting Canadian values.” Apart from the economic advantages of high levels of immigration, Canadians have been ambivalent about how newcomers are integrating into society, and concerns have increased over the past year.

Seven in ten (70%) now agree with this statement, up four points since 2011 and reaching its highest level since the 1990s. This upward trend has occurred everywhere except B.C. (where it is stable and down in Vancouver), but is most significant in Saskatchewan (up 20 points), and among immigrants from outside the USA/Europe (up 21).

Concerns about immigrants not adopting Canadian values continue to be most widespread among Quebecers (77%), rural Canadians (78%), those without a high school diploma (83%), and supporters of the Conservative Party (81%) and Bloc Québécois (80%), but this view is shared by at least six in ten across all groups within the population. As with other statements, strong agreement about immigrants not fitting in is most clearly delineated by education level.

Too many immigrants do not adopt Canadian values
1993 – 2012



Q.35f
Do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree with each of the following statements...?