

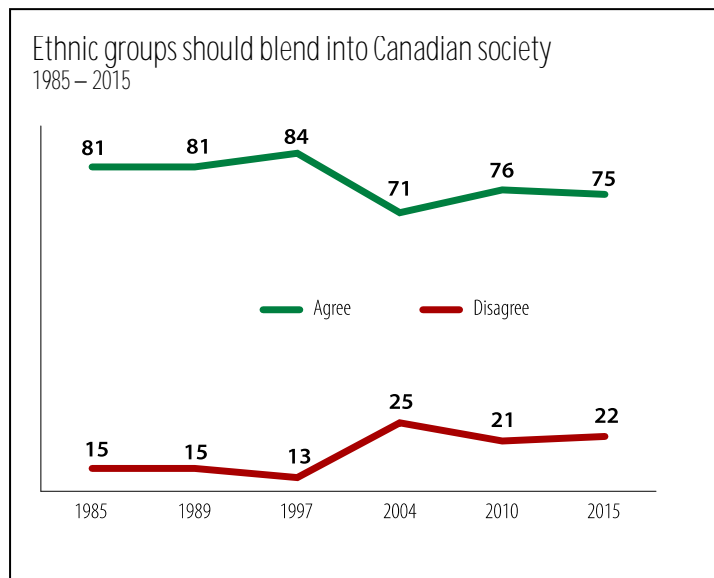
Integration of Ethnic and Cultural Groups

Most Canadians continue to believe that ethnic and racial groups should blend into Canadian society, but they increasingly acknowledge there are systemic barriers facing visible minorities that require a societal response. There is now a broad consensus that immigrants are as likely as native born to be good citizens.

While multiculturalism is considered to be among the most important symbols of Canadian identity, it is by no means fully embraced by everyone. The latest Focus Canada survey shows that the public continues to be divided on several key issues about the place of ethnic/racial groups in society, although attitudes have held steady or improved since 2010.

“Ethnic groups should try as much as possible to blend into Canadian society and not form a separate community.” Three-quarters (75%) of Canadians agree with this statement, unchanged since five years ago after having increased between 2004 and 2010. As before, this view is most prevalent among older Canadians (especially those 60 plus), Quebecers (but holding steady since 2010), and those with less education (although the gap across education levels has shrunk over the past five years).

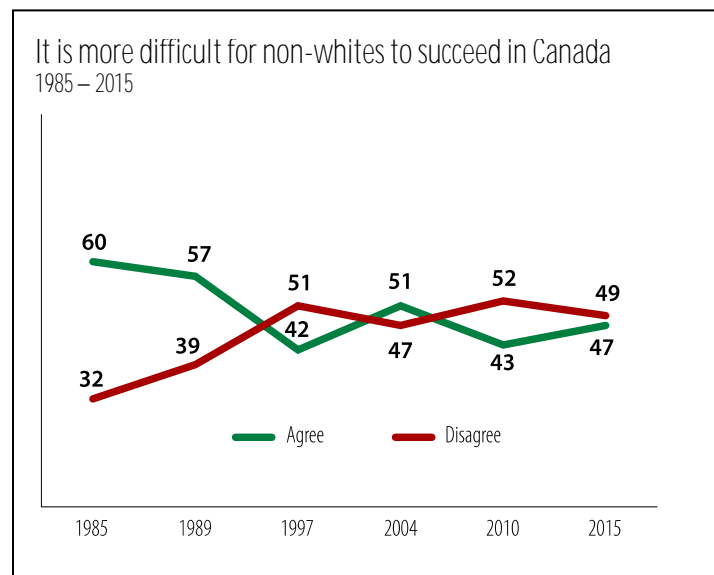
Opinions vary significantly across the political spectrum, with agreement on this statement most pronounced among supporters of the Bloc Quebecois (94%) and Conservative (84%) parties, and least evident among those who would vote NDP (72%).



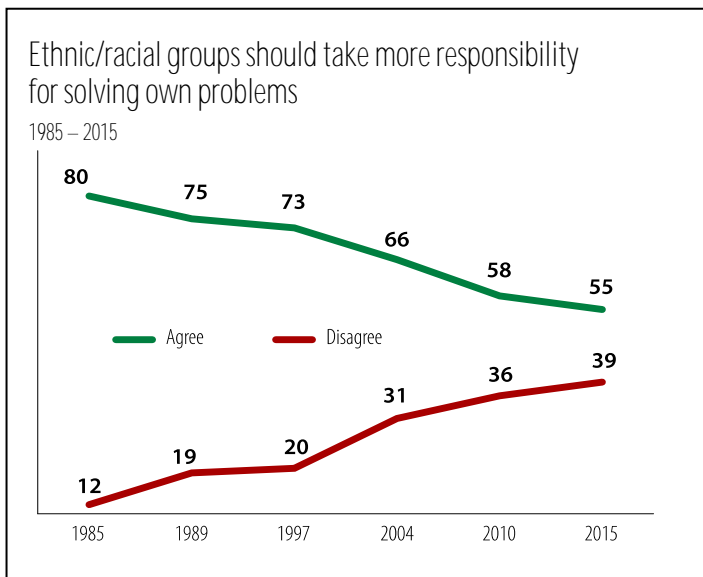
“It is more difficult for non-whites to be successful in Canadian society than it is for other groups.” The public-at-large is more evenly divided on acknowledging the systemic barriers facing non-white Canadians, although the last five years have seen a modest shift in the affirmative. Just under half (47%) of Canadians now agree with this statement (up 4 percentage points from 2010), compared with a slightly higher proportion (49%) who disagree. This reverses the trend recorded between 2004 and 2010, although the level of agreement remains lower than the 1980s.

Increased acknowledgment of systemic barriers is evident across much of the population, but noticeably among Canadians 60 and over, residents of Atlantic Canada, Ontario, Alberta and rural communities, while declining in Quebec, Manitoba and Saskatchewan.

Agreement is highest among Canadians 60 plus, Torontonians, and NDP supporters (all at 54%), and lowest among Manitoba/Saskatchewan (36%) and BC (40%) residents, as well as among Conservative Party supporters (40%).



“Ethnic and racial groups should take more responsibility for solving their own economic and social problems.” The most notable trend in public opinion is on the importance placed on self reliance in resolving the problems facing the country’s ethnic and racial minorities. In the 1980s and 90s, strong majorities of Canadians voiced the opinion that these groups should take more responsibility for solving their problems, but this view has been steadily declining. In 2015, a bare majority (55%) now agree with this statement, compared with four in ten (39%) who disagree.



Agreement with this statement has declined most significantly since 2010 among men, Canadians aged 30 to 44, residents of Ontario, Manitoba and Saskatchewan, urban dwellers and those with more education and income. This sentiment remains most prevalent among older Canadians, rural residents, those with no more than a high school education and Conservative Party supporters. By comparison, disagreement now outweighs agreement among Torontonians, Canadians under 45, and NDP supporters.

Can someone born outside Canada be just as likely to be a good citizen as someone born here? On this question (first posed on the Environics Institute survey on citizenship in 2011), there is now a clear public consensus in the affirmative.

Almost all (95%) Canadians now say that immigrants are just as likely to be good citizens as native born individuals, up from 89 percent who expressed this view in 2011. This view is now held consistently across the population, voiced by more than nine in ten from every identifiable group.

