



Canadian Race  
Relations  
Foundation

Fondation  
canadienne des  
relations raciales

## NEWS RELEASE

### **National survey reveals the Canadian public opinion about immigration has remained stable or grown more positive over the past year.**

**For Release: 6:00 am EDT, October 25, 2016**

A new national survey conducted earlier this month shows that public attitudes about immigration have held steady or have grown noticeably more positive over the past 15 months. Most Canadians continue to believe that immigration is good for the economy, and there is growing confidence in the country's ability to manage refugees and potential criminal elements.

The survey, released today by the Environics Institute for Survey Research, in partnership with the Canadian Race Relations Foundation, shows that:

- Eight in ten (80%) Canadians believe that immigration has a positive impact on the economy, and a majority (58%) disagree that immigration levels are too high; in both cases opinions have held steady over the past several years.
- The public expresses increasing confidence that the government is doing a good job keeping criminals out of the country (65%, up 6 percentage points from 2015), and that fewer now believe that most people claiming to be refugees are not legitimate (39%, down 8 points).
- A declining majority of Canadians believe that too many immigrants are not adopting Canadian values (54%, down 11 points from 2015, and now at the lowest level recorded since 1993).
- A near majority (48%) believe the 31,000 plus Syrian refugees being accepted into Canada this year is about the right number. One-third (36%) say this number is too high, primarily because of concerns about the country's capacity to support them or because it is diverting resources from other priorities (relatively few say it is because refugees will not fit well into Canadian society or pose a security threat).
- Nine in ten (91%) Canadians continue to express the opinion that someone born outside the country is just as likely to be a good citizen as someone born in Canada.

“These results demonstrate that the growing anti-immigrant sentiment evident in the USA and many European countries has not taken hold in Canada”, comments Environics Institute Executive Director Keith Neuman. “Considering the survey results as a whole, one would have to conclude that Canadian public opinion about immigration is the most positive it has been in the past several decades.”

"CRRF is very pleased that Canadians in general expressed much more positive attitudes towards immigrants and refugees than in the past," said Rubin Friedman, Official Spokesperson of the Foundation. "We will continue to monitor this progress as it is also essential to address the perspectives of those who still have concerns on the issue."

The survey examined public opinion on immigration and citizenship as part of the Environics Institute's ongoing Focus Canada public opinion research program, which began in the 1970s. The previous Focus Canada survey on immigration was conducted in June 2015 ([see report here](#)). The current survey was conducted in partnership with the Canadian Race Relations Foundation.

This survey is based on telephone interviews conducted with 2,000 Canadians between October 3 and 16, 2016. One-third (35%) of the interviews were conducted via respondent's cell phone. A sample of this size drawn from the population produces results accurate to within plus or minus 2.2 percentage points in 19 out of 20 samples.

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### **For more information:**

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