

## IMMIGRATION AND MULTICULTURALISM

# Canadians Are Divided on the Actual Effect of Immigration

*Younger respondents endorse the concept of the “mosaic” while middle-aged and older Canadians prefer the “melting pot”.*

[VANCOUVER – Jan. 31, 2012] – People in Canada are split when assessing immigration, and only three-in-ten believe the country should continue to be a mosaic, a new Angus Reid Public Opinion poll has found.

In the online survey of a representative sample of 1,005 Canadian adults, 39 per cent of respondents believe that immigration is having a positive effect in Canada, while 39 per cent think it is having a negative effect.

### Views on Legal and Illegal Immigration

Since September 2010, the proportion of Canadians who think immigration is having a positive effect in the country has increased by five points. Respondents aged 18-to-34 are more likely to regard immigration in a positive light (48%) than middle-aged Canadians (33%) and those over the age of 55 (39%).

Two-in-five Canadians (41%) think the number of legal immigrants who are allowed to relocate in Canada should decrease, including almost half of respondents aged 35-to-54 (46%).

The views of Canadians on illegal immigration have hardened over the past 14 months. Half of respondents (50%, +6 since September 2010) believe illegal immigrants in Canada take jobs away from Canadian workers. In addition, only 23 per cent of respondents would allow illegal immigrants to stay in

### KEY FINDINGS

- **39% believe that immigration is having a positive effect in Canada; 39% think it is having a negative effect**
- **41% think the number of legal immigrants who are allowed to relocate in Canada should decrease**
- **50% want illegal immigrants to leave their jobs and be deported**
- **58% prefer the melting pot as a model; 30% endorse the mosaic**

*Full topline results are at the end of this release.*

*From January 26 to January 27, 2012, Angus Reid Public Opinion conducted an online survey among 1,005 randomly selected Canadian adults who are Angus Reid Forum panellists. The margin of error—which measures sampling variability—is +/- 3.1%, 19 times out of 20. The results have been statistically weighted according to the most current education, age, gender and region Census data to ensure a sample representative of the entire adult population of Canada. Discrepancies in or between totals are due to rounding.*

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Canada and eventually apply for citizenship, while 50 per cent think illegal immigrants should be required to leave their jobs and be deported.

### **Multiculturalism**

Three-in-five Canadians (62%) think multiculturalism has been good for the country, including 72 per cent of respondents aged 18-to-34. However, more Canadians (58%) are likely to endorse the concept of the melting pot—immigrants assimilating and blending into Canadian society—than the mosaic (30%), where cultural differences within society are valuable and should be preserved.

At least one-in-four respondents believe Canada is an intolerant society towards Muslims (33%), Aboriginal Canadians (28%) and immigrants from South Asia, such as India and Pakistan (25%). A third of Canadians (32%) believe that racism is a significant problem in Canada, while 55 per cent disagree with this view.

### **Analysis**

The proportion of Canadians who believe immigration is having a negative effect in the country is the lowest in the past four years. The main source of hostility appears to be illegal immigration, with half of Canadians calling for unlawful workers to return to their country of origin. This level of support for the deportation of illegal immigrants is 11 points lower than what was observed [in Britain in December 2011](#), but seven points higher than [in the United States in December 2010](#).

Younger Canadians are more likely to back the idea of a “path to citizenship” for illegal workers, but sizeable majorities of middle-aged and older respondents reject this idea.

The positive views on multiculturalism drop markedly with age, from 72 per cent for those aged 18-to-34, to 63 per cent among those aged 35-to-54, and to 50 per cent for those over the age of 55. Middle-aged and older Canadians are also more likely to support the concept of the melting pot than the mosaic.

Review our [September 2010](#) and [November 2010](#) surveys on immigration and multiculturalism.

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### **About Angus Reid Public Opinion**

*[Angus Reid Public Opinion](#) is a public affairs practice headed by Dr. Angus Reid: an industry visionary who has spent more than four decades asking questions to figure out what people feel, how they think and who they will vote for. A team of talented and experienced practitioners with a unique and profound understanding of global issues conduct high quality research throughout the world on a daily basis for corporations, governments, academic researchers, and non-profit organizations.*

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**For more information, please contact  
our spokesperson listed in the footnote.**

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**Immigration and Multiculturalism**

Next, we'd like to ask you some questions about immigration. All things considered, do you think immigration is having a positive effect or a negative effect in Canada?

	Age			
	Canada	Age 18-34	Age 35-54	Age 55+
<b>Positive effect</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>48%</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>39%</b>
<b>Negative effect</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>42%</b>	<b>45%</b>
<b>Not sure</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>17%</b>

**Immigration and Multiculturalism**

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	August 2009	September 2010	January 2012
<b>Positive effect</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>39%</b>
<b>Negative effect</b>	<b>41%</b>	<b>46%</b>	<b>39%</b>
<b>Not sure</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>22%</b>

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### Immigration and Multiculturalism

From what you have seen, read or heard, do you think the number of legal immigrants who are allowed to relocate in Canada should increase, remain the same, or decrease?

	Age			
	Canada	Age 18-34	Age 35-54	Age 55+
<b>Increase</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>15%</b>
<b>Remain the same</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>40%</b>
<b>Decrease</b>	<b>41%</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>46%</b>	<b>41%</b>
<b>Not sure</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>4%</b>

### Immigration and Multiculturalism

From what you have seen, read or heard, do you think the number of legal immigrants who are allowed to relocate in Canada should increase, remain the same, or decrease?

	August 2009	September 2010	January 2012
<b>Increase</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>15%</b>
<b>Remain the same</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>37%</b>
<b>Decrease</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>41%</b>
<b>Not sure</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>8%</b>

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### Immigration and Multiculturalism

There are between 35,000 and 120,000 illegal immigrants in Canada right now. Which of these statements comes closest to your own point of view?

	Age			
	Canada	Age 18-34	Age 35-54	Age 55+
<b>The illegal immigrants in Canada take jobs away from Canadian workers</b>	50%	45%	52%	53%
<b>The illegal immigrants in Canada are employed in jobs that Canadian workers do not want</b>	34%	37%	30%	35%
<b>Not sure</b>	16%	18%	18%	12%

### Immigration and Multiculturalism

There are between 35,000 and 120,000 illegal immigrants in Canada right now. Which of these statements comes closest to your own point of view?

	August 2009	September 2010	January 2012
<b>The illegal immigrants in Canada take jobs away from Canadian workers</b>	43%	44%	50%
<b>The illegal immigrants in Canada are employed in jobs that Canadian workers do not want</b>	40%	38%	34%
<b>Not sure</b>	17%	18%	16%

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### Immigration and Multiculturalism

Which of these statements comes closer to your own point of view on the status of illegal immigrants who are currently working in Canada?

	Age			
	Canada	Age 18-34	Age 35-54	Age 55+
They should be allowed to stay in Canada, and eventually apply for citizenship	23%	32%	17%	21%
They should be allowed to work in Canada on a temporary basis, but they should not become citizens	15%	19%	15%	13%
They should be required to leave their jobs and be deported from Canada	50%	33%	57%	58%
Not sure	12%	15%	12%	8%

### Immigration and Multiculturalism

Which of these statements comes closer to your own point of view on the status of illegal immigrants who are currently working in Canada?

	August 2009	September 2010	January 2012
They should be allowed to stay in Canada, and eventually apply for citizenship	22%	23%	23%
They should be allowed to work in Canada on a temporary basis, but they should not become citizens	21%	17%	15%
They should be required to leave their jobs and be deported from Canada	46%	47%	50%
Not sure	11%	13%	12%

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**Immigration and Multiculturalism**

Thinking now about the policy of multiculturalism, do you personally think multiculturalism has been good or bad for Canada?

	Age			
	Canada	Age 18-34	Age 35-54	Age 55+
Very good / Good	62%	72%	63%	50%
Bad / Very bad	28%	21%	26%	39%
Not sure	10%	7%	11%	11%

**Immigration and Multiculturalism**

Thinking now about the policy of multiculturalism, do you personally think multiculturalism has been good or bad for Canada?

	November 2010	January 2012
Very good / Good	55%	62%
Bad / Very bad	30%	28%
Not sure	16%	10%

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**Immigration and Multiculturalism**

Which of these statements comes closest to your own point of view?

	Age			
	Canada	Age 18-34	Age 35-54	Age 55+
Canada should be a melting pot—immigrants should assimilate and blend into Canadian society	58%	40%	60%	72%
Canada should be a mosaic—cultural differences within society are valuable and should be preserved	30%	45%	28%	19%
Not sure	12%	15%	12%	9%

**Immigration and Multiculturalism**

Which of these statements comes closest to your own point of view?

	November 2010	January 2012
Canada should be a melting pot—immigrants should assimilate and blend into Canadian society	54%	58%
Canada should be a mosaic—cultural differences within society are valuable and should be preserved	33%	30%
Not sure	13%	12%

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### Immigration and Multiculturalism

Overall, would you say Canada is a tolerant or intolerant society towards each of these groups?

	Tolerant	Intolerant	Not sure
<b>Muslims</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>12%</b>
<b>Aboriginal Canadians</b>	<b>61%</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>10%</b>
<b>Immigrants from South Asia (such as India and Pakistan)</b>	<b>62%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>13%</b>
<b>Gays and lesbians</b>	<b>74%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>9%</b>
<b>Immigrants from Africa</b>	<b>69%</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>15%</b>
<b>People with disabilities</b>	<b>73%</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>11%</b>
<b>Immigrants from Asia (such as China and Hong Kong)</b>	<b>80%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>10%</b>
<b>Immigrants from Latin America</b>	<b>79%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>13%</b>
<b>Immigrants from Europe</b>	<b>89%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>7%</b>

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**Immigration and Multiculturalism**

Would you say that racism is a significant problem in Canada?

	Age			
	Canada	Age 18-34	Age 35-54	Age 55+
<b>Yes, it is</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>34%</b>
<b>No, it is not</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>52%</b>	<b>57%</b>	<b>54%</b>
<b>Not sure</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>12%</b>

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