

# Study: Perceptions of shared values in Canadian society among the immigrant population

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A new study, entitled "[Perceptions of shared values in Canadian society among the immigrant population](#)," published today in *Economic and Social Reports*, compared the proportions of immigrants and Canadian-born people who believed that Canadians share values to a great extent. This provides a subjective assessment about how immigrants view Canadian society with regard to values that enable their integration. These values represent the democratic norms or standards that provide a basis for social inclusion in a diverse society.

The 2020 General Social Survey (GSS) included a series of questions about people's perceptions of shared values in Canadian society. The GSS asked respondents to rate the extent to which they believed that Canadians shared values on human rights, respect for the law, gender equality, linguistic duality, ethnic and cultural diversity, and respect for Indigenous cultures. The ratings ranged from a belief that Canadians share values "not at all" to a belief that Canadians share values to "a great extent."

## Proportionally, almost twice as many immigrants believed in Canadian shared values on diversity compared with Canadian-born people

Nearly double the proportion of immigrants as Canadian-born people believed that Canadians share values on ethnic and cultural diversity (47% of immigrants compared with 24% of Canadian-born people), linguistic duality (42% compared with 23%) and respect for Indigenous cultures (37% compared with 18%) to a great extent. Over three-fifths of immigrants (62%) and two-fifths of Canadian-born people (40%) said that Canadians share values on respect for the law to a great extent. Half of immigrants (50%) and under one-third (30%) of Canadian-born people had a similar perception of the extent to which Canadians share values on gender equality. Two-thirds of immigrants (67%) believed that Canadians share values on human rights to a great extent, compared with over half of Canadian-born people (55%).

## In every province, immigrants were more likely to believe that Canadians shared values compared with Canadian-born people

In all provinces, a larger proportion of immigrants than Canadian-born people believed that Canadians share values to a great extent. The only exceptions to this case were for perceptions of shared values on human rights and linguistic duality in the Atlantic provinces, where the differences between immigrants and Canadian-born people were statistically non-significant. For most values, the differences between the perceptions of immigrants and Canadian-born people were smaller in the Atlantic provinces and larger in Saskatchewan and Manitoba.

## Recent immigrants had more favourable perceptions than established immigrants

Recent immigrants had particularly favourable perceptions, but smaller proportions of established immigrants believed that Canadians share values to a great extent. However, immigrants landed in Canada for 20 years or longer had more favourable perceptions of shared values than Canadian-born people. While immigrants who arrived in Canada as adolescents or adults had more favourable perceptions of shared values than Canadian-born people, those who came to Canada as children had perceptions similar to those of people born in Canada.

## About three-fifths of South Asian, Southeast Asian and Black immigrants believed that Canadians shared values on ethnic and cultural diversity to a great extent

Immigrants from all selected population groups had consistently more favourable perceptions of shared values compared with all Canadian-born people. Particularly noteworthy were perceptions of shared values on ethnic and cultural diversity. About three-fifths of South Asian, Southeast Asian and Black immigrants and half of Chinese,



Arab and West Asian and Latin American immigrants believed that Canadians shared values on ethnic and cultural diversity to a great extent. This is compared with one-third of White immigrants and one-quarter of all Canadian-born people.

Among recent immigrants, perceptions of shared values appear to be based on comparisons with conditions in their country of origin, but this frame of reference is less salient for long-term immigrants and those who arrived in Canada as children. Consequently, immigrants' perceptions of shared values become less favourable over time and with greater exposure to Canadian society at younger ages.

For more information on other articles released today, please see the *Daily* release "[Economic and Social Reports, December 2022](#)."

The research article titled "[Perceptions of shared values in Canadian society among the immigrant population](#)" is now available in the December 2022 online issue of *Economic and Social Reports*, Vol. 2, no. 12 ([36280001](#)).

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact us (toll-free 1-800-263-1136; 514-283-8300; [infostats@statcan.gc.ca](mailto:infostats@statcan.gc.ca)) or Media Relations ([statcan.mediahotline-ligneinfomedias.statcan@statcan.gc.ca](mailto:statcan.mediahotline-ligneinfomedias.statcan@statcan.gc.ca)).