

# Integration and Cultural Identity of Refugees in Canada: An Analysis of the 2013 General Social Survey on Social Identity

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## Data and Measurement

### 2013 General Social Survey on Social Identity

- Extensive data on social engagement and social networks
- Oversampled immigrants
  - Total respondents: 27,530
  - Immigrant respondents: 9700
  - Refugee respondents: 970
- Focus: Refugees aged 25-64
  - Respondents aged 25-64: 750

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## Integration and Cultural Identity

### Measure of Cultural Identity

and Percentage Distribution of Refugees by Cultural Identity

| Sense of belonging to Canada | Sense of belonging to people with same ethnic / cultural background |                           |
|------------------------------|---|---------------------------|
|                              | Weak  | Strong                    |
| Strong                       | Assimilated 39%   | Culturally Integrated 31% |
| Weak                         | Weakly Attached 23%   | Mainly Segregated 7%      |

Adapted from Berry (2008), though we use "Culturally Integrated", "Mainly Segregated" and "Weakly Attached" in place of "Integrated", "Separated" and "Marginalized" respectively, the labels used by Berry.

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## Demographics and Integration

### Demographics and Integration Differences

- Recent refugees (2005-2013 arrivals) less integrated than established refugees
- Women less integrated than men
- Refugees from Africa less integrated than refugees from other world regions
- Refugees in the Prairies better integrated than those in other regions; refugees in Quebec, the least integrated
- University graduates better integrated than lower educated
- Compared to Christians, Muslims less integrated; followers of Other religions more integrated

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## Conceptual Framework and Indicators

### Conceptual Framework of Integration

| Type / Dimension | Economic           | Social          | Political                   |
|------------------|--------------------|-----------------|-----------------------------|
| Basic            | (1) Inclusion      | (4) Recognition | (7) Citizenship             |
| Formal           | (2) Parity: Income | (5) Connection  | (8) Organization Membership |
| Substantial      | (3) Parity: Wealth | (6) Belonging   | (9) Civic Involvement       |

#### Indicators from 2013 General Social Survey

- |                         |  |                           |
|-------------------------|--|---------------------------|
| (1) # of weeks employed | (4) # reasons for discrimination             | (7) # of times voted      |
| (2) household income    | (5) # of neighbours known                    | (8) # of org. membership  |
| (3) home ownership      | (6) strength of belonging to local community | (9) hours of volunteering |

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## Refugee Integration by Cultural Identity

- *Assimilated* – most integrated
- *Culturally Integrated* – equally integrated economically and politically as the *Assimilated*
  - Also the most socially integrated
- *Mainly Segregated* – highly politically integrated
  - Equally integrated economically and socially as the *Assimilated*
- *Weakly Attached* – least integrated overall

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### Compared to Point System, Family Reunification, and Other Program Immigrants ...

- Refugees have the lowest scores in economic, social, and political dimensions, and thus, the lowest integration score
- Of the 9 indicators, refugees have the lowest scores in 5: Household Income; Dwelling Ownership; Knowledge of Neighbours; Organization Membership; and Volunteering
- About the same scores as other immigrants in 2: Employment; and Discrimination
- And somewhat high scores in 2: Sense of Belonging to Local Community; and Voting Behaviour

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## Some concluding remarks ...

- Attachment to one's ethnic group does not hinder participation in the economic, social, and political life in the communities
- Refugees weakly attached to Canada and their ethnic group have lowest integration; but may also be low integration leads to weaker attachments
- Longer stay in Canada leads to better integration; however, refugees have more difficulties, possibly requiring more specific intervention in service provision
- Methodology could be useful in measuring integration of
  - Individual immigrant integration in communities
  - Ability of communities to welcome and integrate immigrants

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|  | Economic   |       | Social     |       | Political  |       | Integ. Index |       |
|--|------------|-------|------------|-------|------------|-------|--------------|-------|
|  | Coeff.     | Sig.  | Coeff.     | Sig.  | Coeff.     | Sig.  | Coeff.       | Sig.  |
| <b>Model 2</b>                         |            |       |            |       |            |       |              |       |
| <b>Cultural Identity</b>               |            |       |            |       |            |       |              |       |
| Assimilated (Ref.)                     |            |       |            |       |            |       |              |       |
| Weakly Attached                        | -0.206     |       | -0.898 *** |       | -0.278 *   |       | -1.190 ***   |       |
| Mainly Segregated                      | -0.079     |       | -0.137     |       | 1.253 ***  |       | 0.719 *      |       |
| Integrated                             | 0.021      |       | 0.519 ***  |       | -0.147     |       | 0.311        |       |
| <b>Year of Arrival</b>                 |            |       |            |       |            |       |              |       |
| Before 2005 (Ref.)                     |            |       |            |       |            |       |              |       |
| 2005 - 2013                            | -1.296 *** |       | -0.482 *** |       | -1.040 *** |       | -3.086 ***   |       |
| <b>Gender</b>                          |            |       |            |       |            |       |              |       |
| Male (Ref.)                            |            |       |            |       |            |       |              |       |
| Female                                 | -0.559 *** |       | 0.125      |       | -0.046     |       | -0.779 ***   |       |
| <b>Age Group</b>                       |            |       |            |       |            |       |              |       |
| 25-44 (Ref.)                           |            |       |            |       |            |       |              |       |
| 45-64                                  | -0.270 **  |       | 0.148      |       | 0.442 ***  |       | 0.038        |       |
| <b>Region of Birth</b>                 |            |       |            |       |            |       |              |       |
| Americas (Ref.)                        |            |       |            |       |            |       |              |       |
| Europe                                 | -0.021     |       | 0.642 ***  |       | -0.251     |       | 0.262        |       |
| Africa                                 | -1.181 *** |       | 0.096      |       | 0.244      |       | -1.517 ***   |       |
| Asia                                   | -0.053     |       | 0.249      |       | -0.771 *** |       | -0.470       |       |
| <b>Region of Residence</b>             |            |       |            |       |            |       |              |       |
| Ontario <sup>a</sup>                   |            |       |            |       |            |       |              |       |
| Quebec                                 | -0.348 **  |       | 0.020      |       | -0.679 *** |       | -1.016 ***   |       |
| Prairies                               | 0.514 ***  |       | -0.044     |       | -0.148     |       | 0.627 **     |       |
| British Columbia                       | 0.261      |       | 0.065      |       | -0.250     |       | 0.253        |       |
| <b>Education</b>                       |            |       |            |       |            |       |              |       |
| Less than HS (Ref.)                    |            |       |            |       |            |       |              |       |
| High School Graduate                   | 0.145      |       | 0.292      |       | -0.773 *** |       | -0.143       |       |
| Post-Secondary Diploma                 | 0.517 **   |       | 0.142      |       | -0.463 **  |       | 0.535        |       |
| University Degree                      | 1.178 ***  |       | 0.147      |       | -0.121     |       | 1.787 ***    |       |
| <b>Household Language</b>              |            |       |            |       |            |       |              |       |
| English Only (Ref.)                    |            |       |            |       |            |       |              |       |
| French Only                            | 0.072      |       | 0.953 ***  |       | 1.005 ***  |       | 1.576 ***    |       |
| Other Languages                        | -0.200     |       | 0.724 ***  |       | 0.226      |       | 0.413        |       |
| Multiple Languages                     | -0.110     |       | 0.516 ***  |       | 0.130      |       | 0.320        |       |
| <b>Religion</b>                        |            |       |            |       |            |       |              |       |
| Christian (Ref.)                       |            |       |            |       |            |       |              |       |
| Muslim                                 | -0.831 *** |       | -0.130     |       | 0.368 **   |       | -1.068 ***   |       |
| Other                                  | 0.214      |       | 0.283 *    |       | 0.796 ***  |       | 1.131 ***    |       |
| No religion                            | -0.181     |       | -0.155     |       | 0.194      |       | -0.243       |       |
| <b>Constant</b>                        | 6.795 ***  |       | 4.856 ***  |       | 5.649 ***  |       | 18.07 ***    |       |
| <b>Number of Cases / R<sup>2</sup></b> | 689        | 33.4% | 689        | 21.3% | 689        | 23.2% | 689          | 33.6% |

Significance levels: \* p<.10, \*\* p<.05, \*\*\* p<.01

<sup>a</sup> includes 7 residing in Atlantic Region