

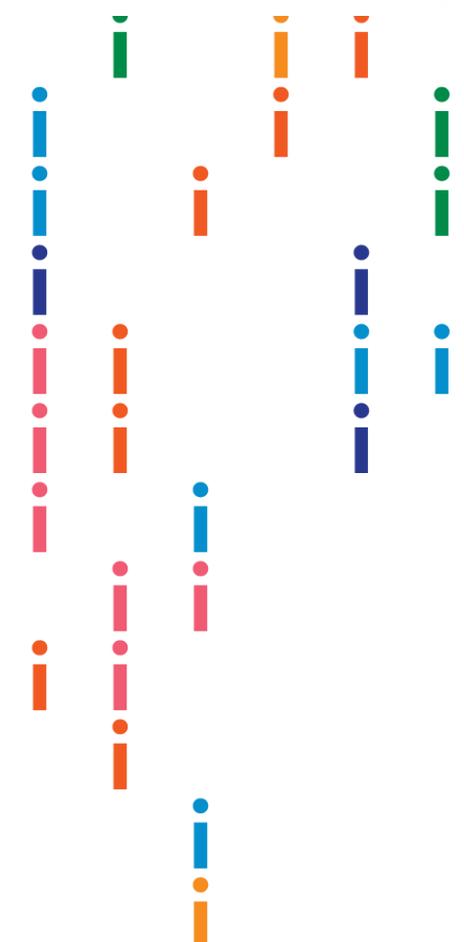


## *Canada as a beacon for migrant acceptance*

### *Is this reputation still deserved?*

Keith Neuman, Ph.D  
Environics Institute for Survey Research

Pathways to Prosperity 2019 National Conference  
Toronto ON  
November 1, 2019



A diverse crowd of people is shown at an outdoor event, likely a festival or community gathering. In the foreground, a man with grey hair and sunglasses is clapping. To his right, a man in a suit is also clapping. The background is filled with other people, some wearing hats, and colorful tents under a clear sky.

**How accepting are Canadians of immigration and our growing diversity?**

**Has public opinion changed noticeably given recent events in Canada and elsewhere?**



ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE  
W. LAMBERT  
N. KENNEDY  
S. BURNHAMTHORPE  
W. CANADA  
WELCOME TO CANADA

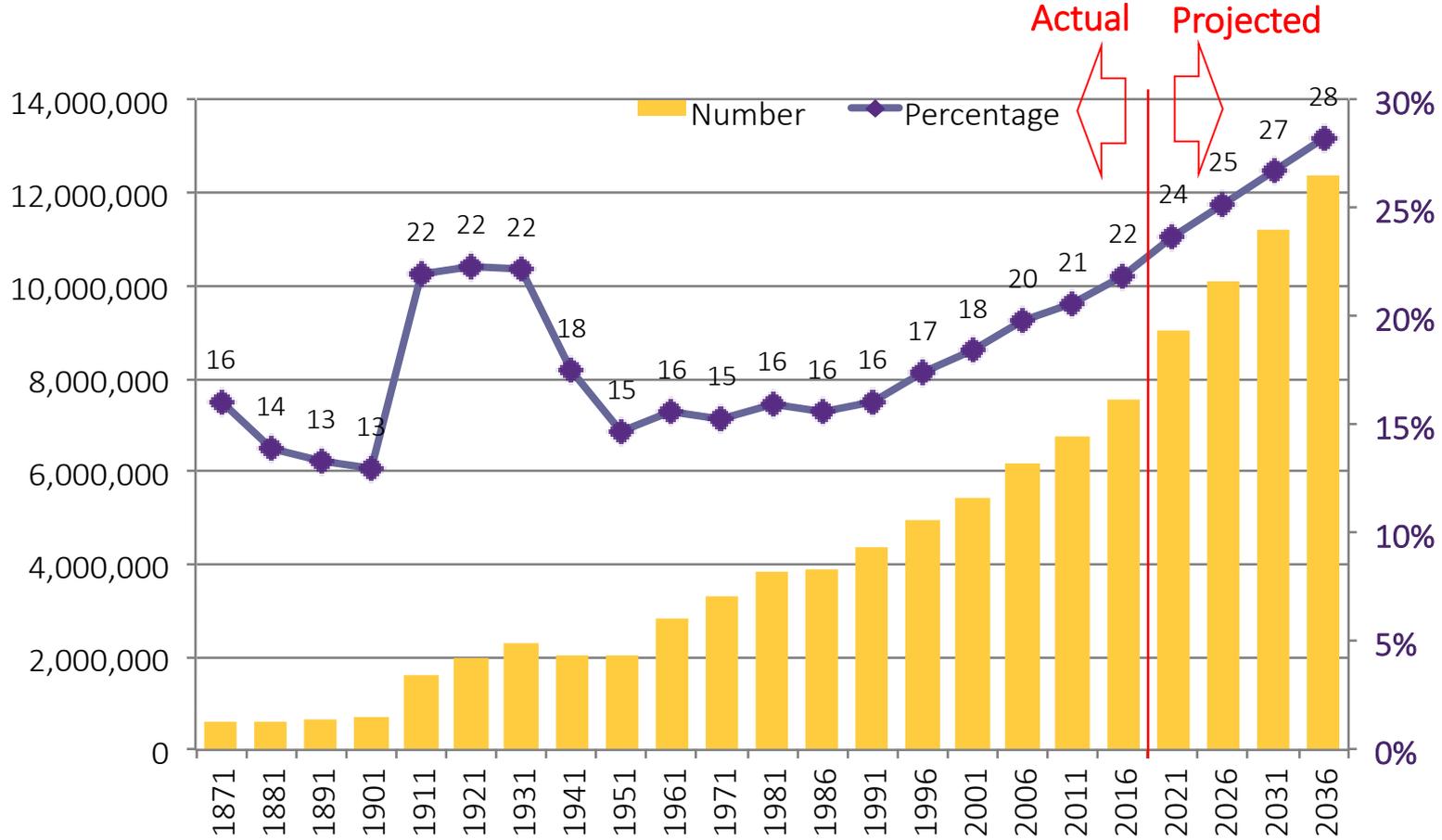


CANADIAN IMMIGRATION



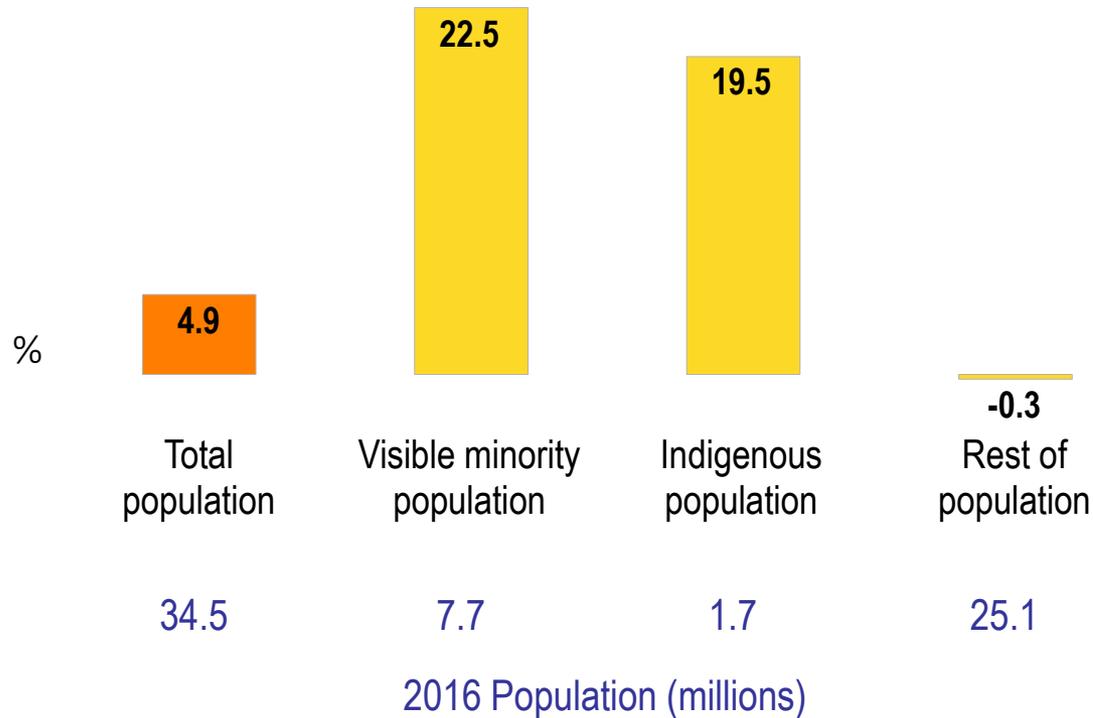
# More than one in five Canadians is now foreign-born, and this proportion will continue to rise

1871 - 2036



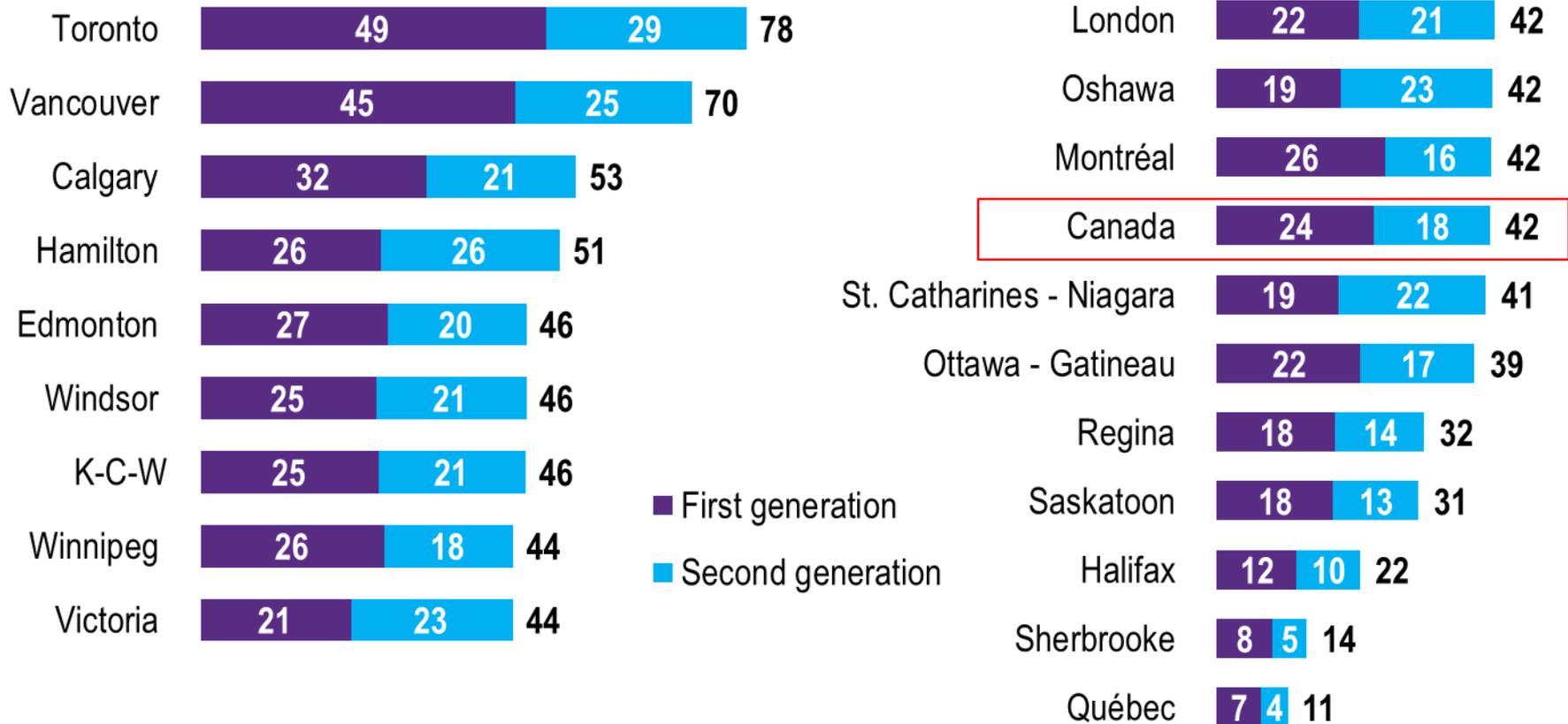
# Since 2011, visible minority and Indigenous populations account for **all** of Canada's total population growth

% Population Growth 2011-2016, Canada



# Four in ten Canadians are first or second generation -- and now the majority in Toronto, Vancouver and Calgary

Percent of population by generation, Canada, 2016



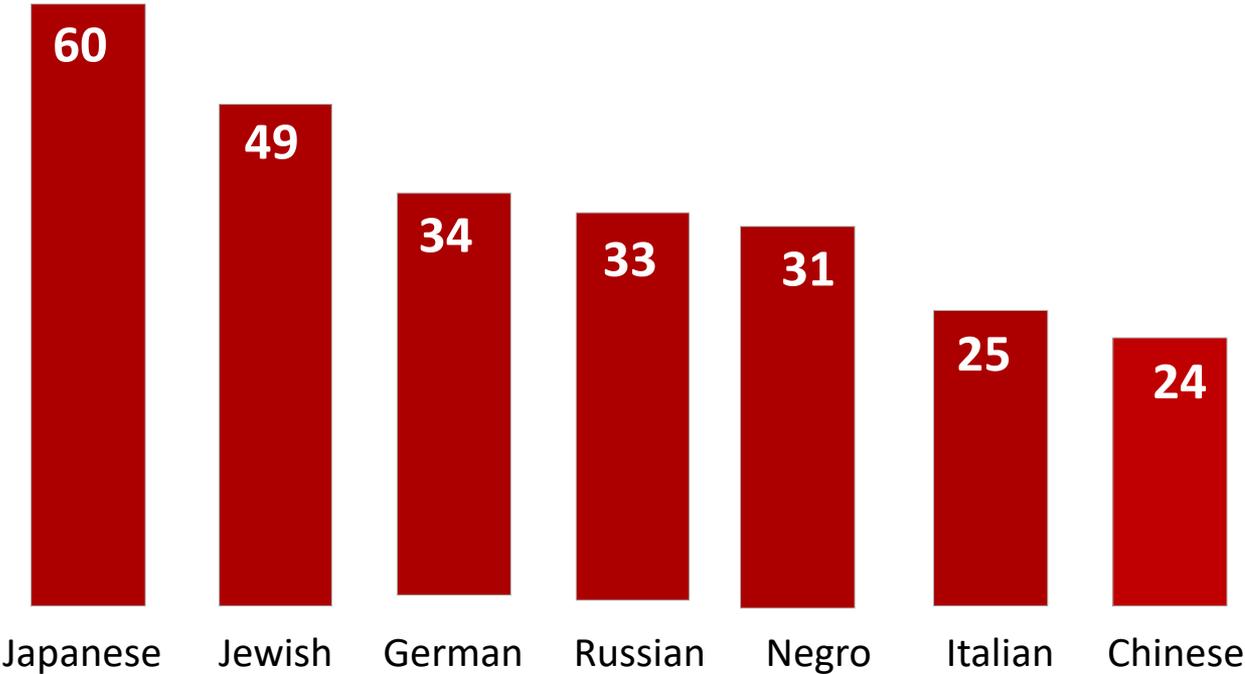


**Public opinion about  
immigration and refugees**

# Canadians' views about immigrants in 1940s reflected the racist culture and policies of the day . . .

1946

*If Canada does allow more immigration, are there any of these nationalities which you would like to keep out?*

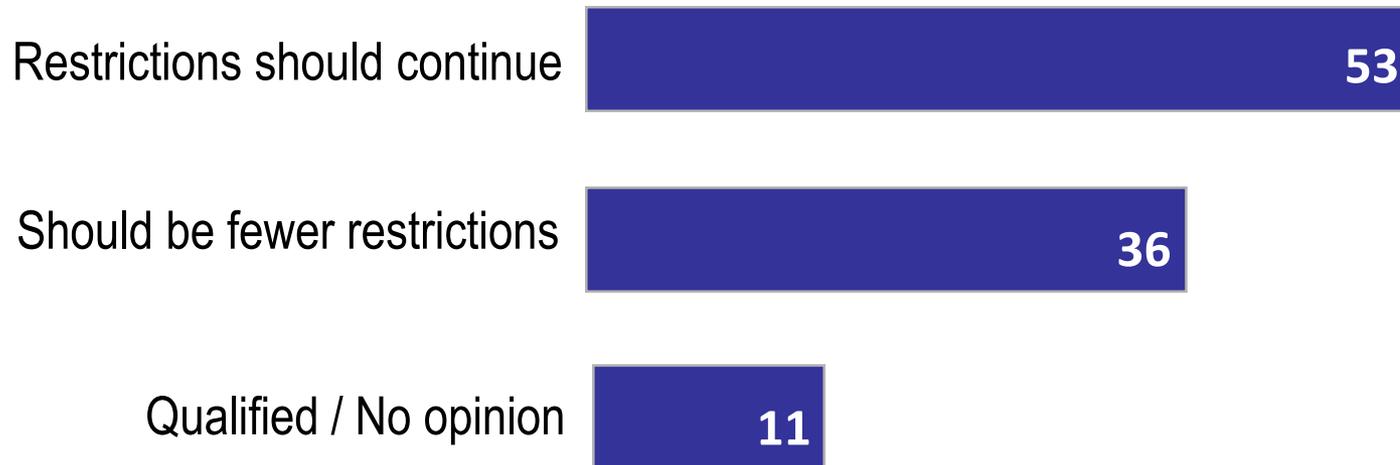


## . . . and continuing into the early 1960s

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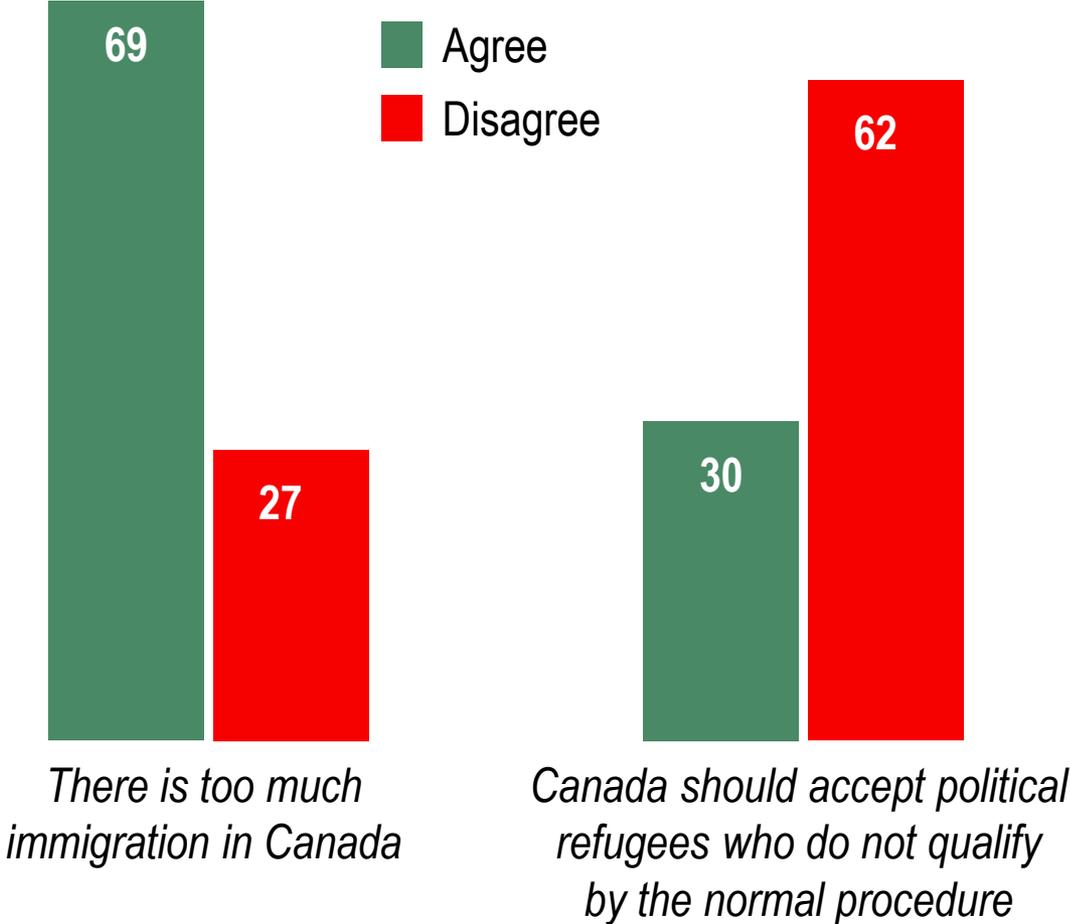
1961

*As you know, Canada restricts the admission of non-whites to this country.  
Do you think this should continue, or do you think there should be fewer  
restrictions on non-whites?*



# In even into the 1980s, most Canadians opposed immigration levels and admitting political refugees

1983



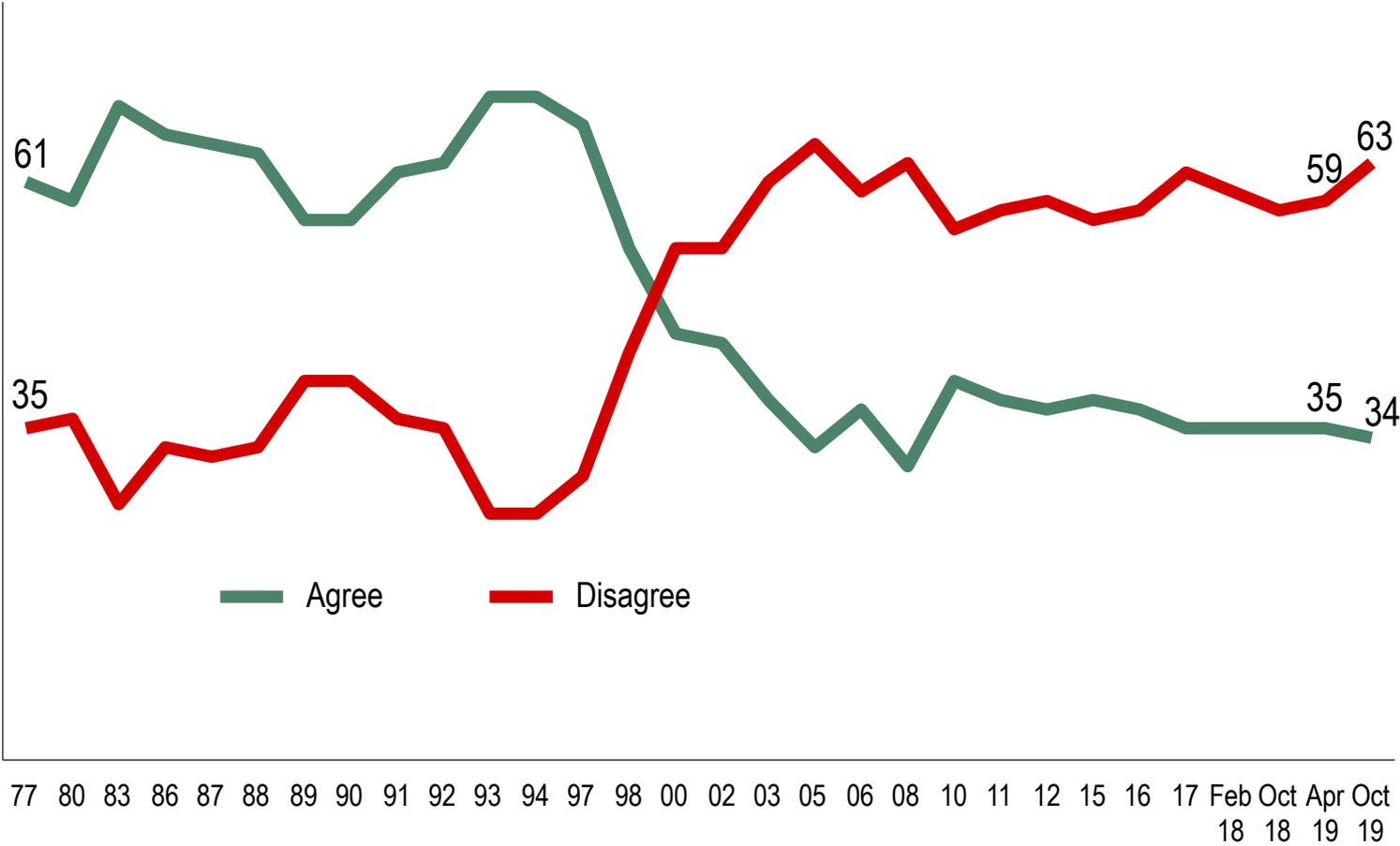
And then it changed . . .



# In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, a defining majority of Canadians have come to accept, if not actively support, the number of immigrants joining them

1977 - 2019

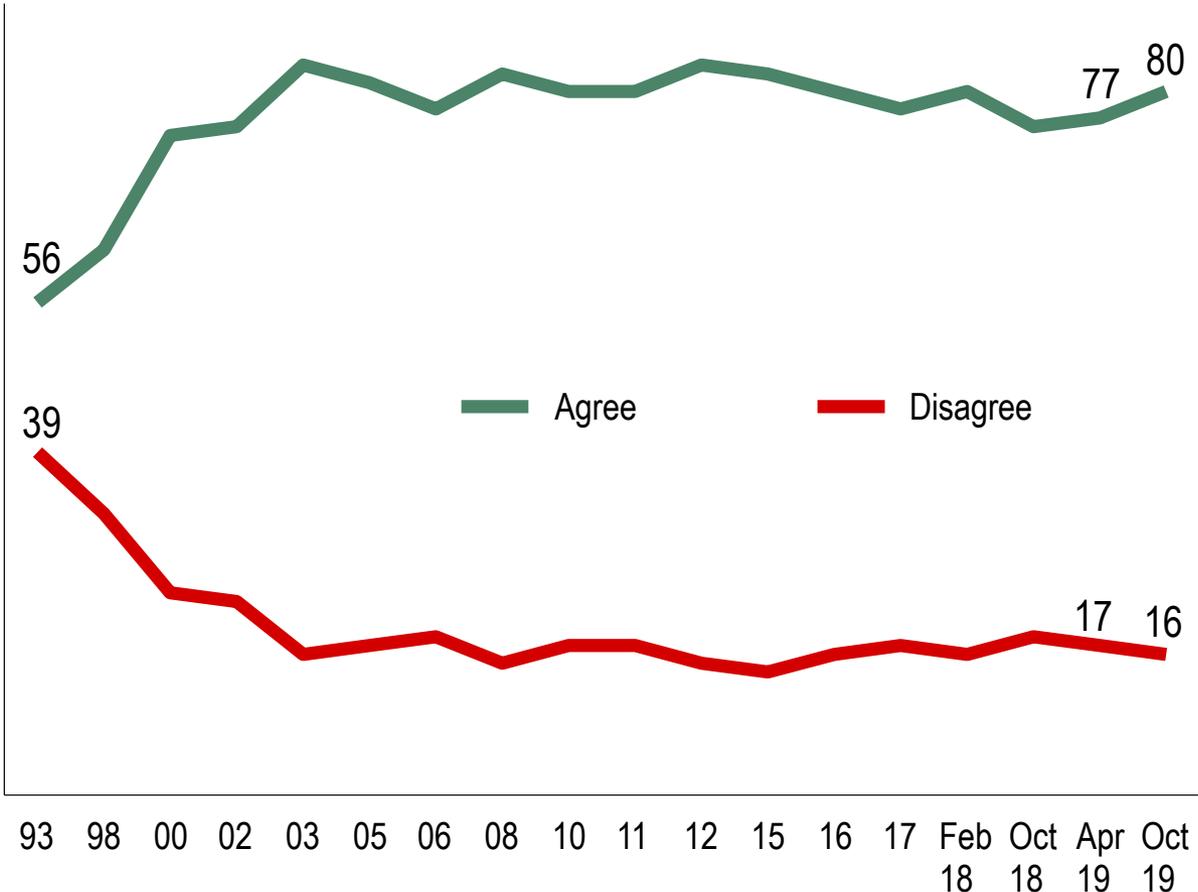
*Agree or disagree: "There is too much immigration in Canada"*



# Most Canadians consistently believe that immigrants help rather than hurt the economy and job creation

1977 - 2019

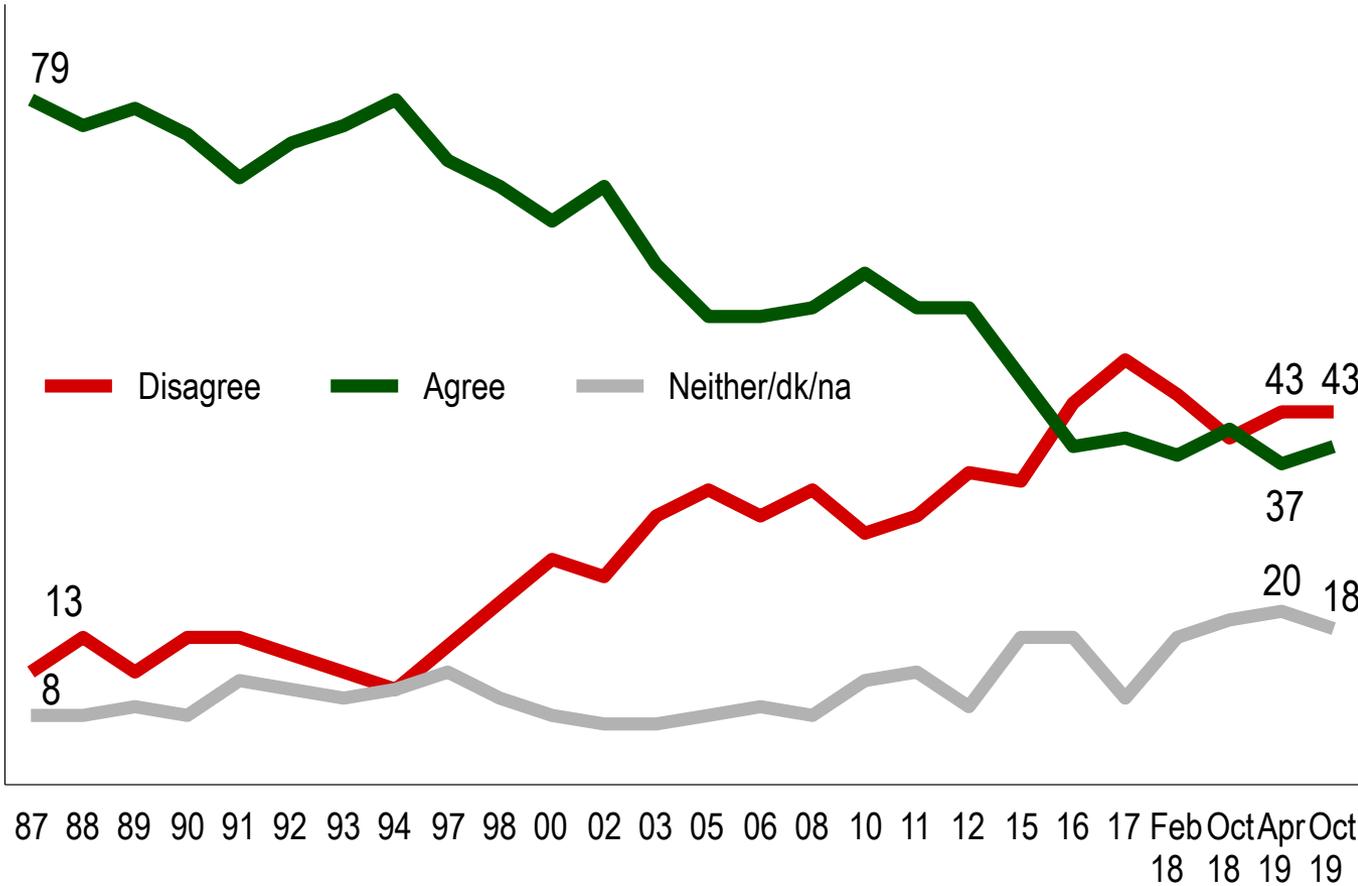
*Agree or disagree: "The economic impact of immigrants is positive"*



# There is no agreement on whether too many refugee claimants are not legitimate, but views are much more positive than in the past

1987 - 2019

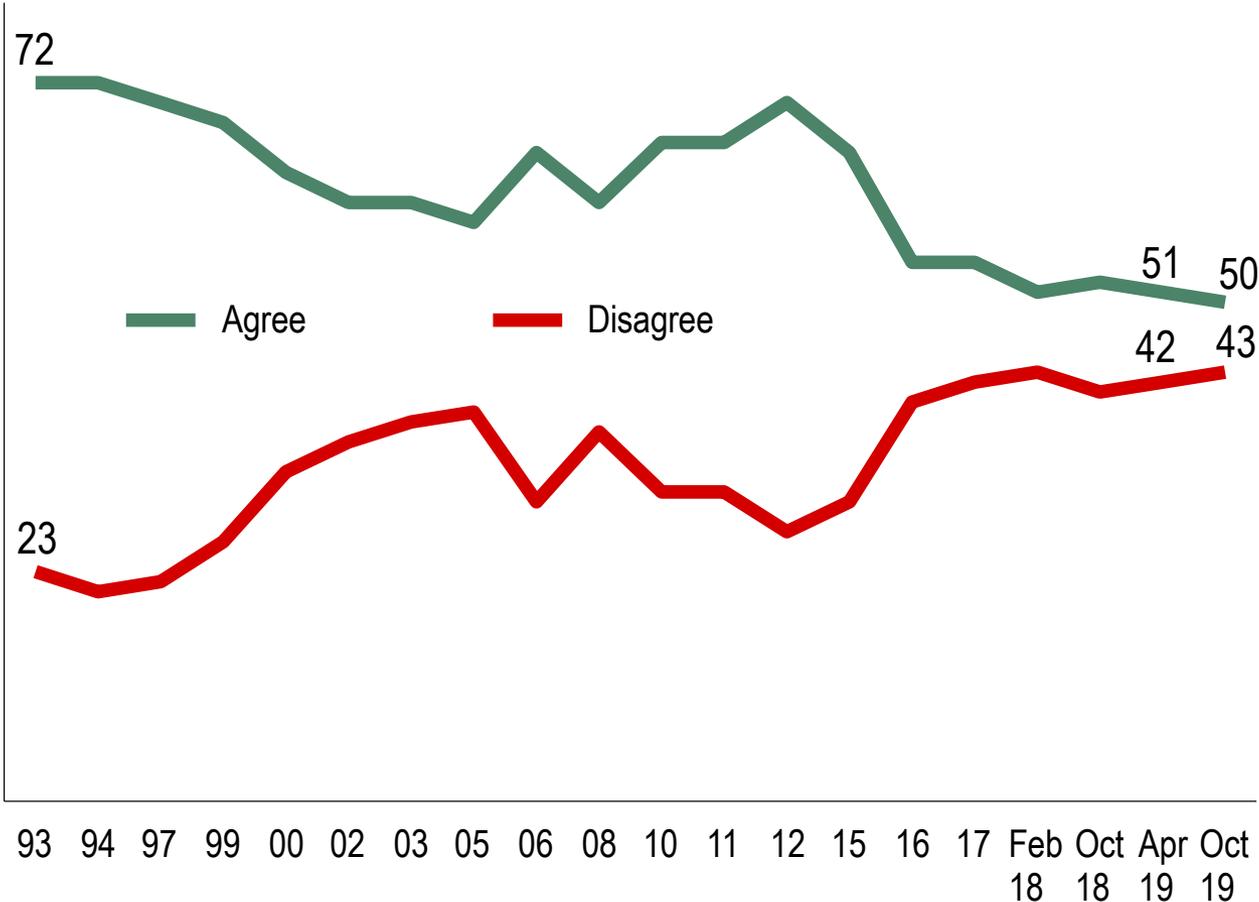
Agree or disagree: "Too many refugee claimants are not legitimate"



# The greatest public concern is that some newcomers are not sufficiently integrating into Canadian society

1993 - 2019

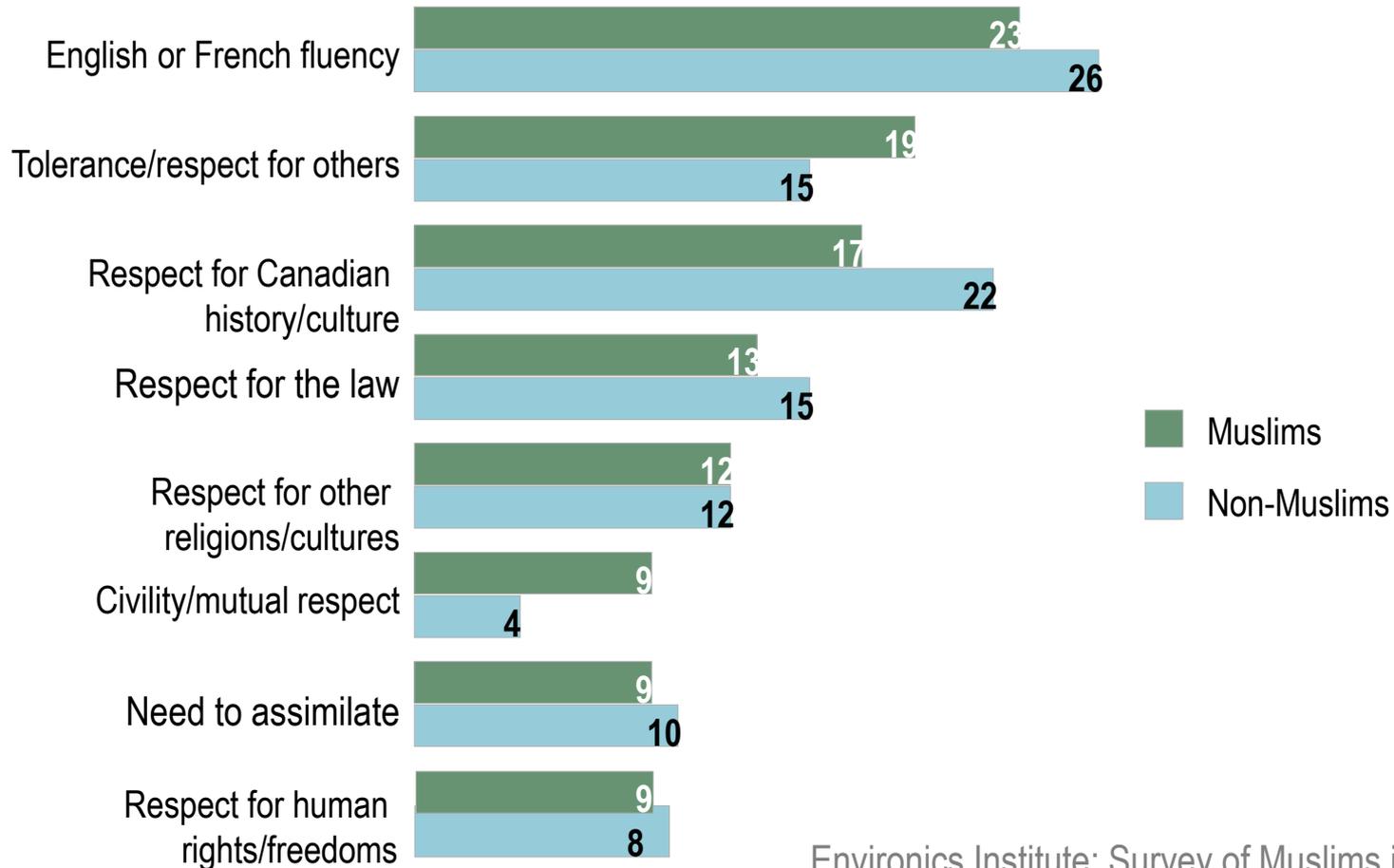
Agree or disagree: "Too many immigrants do not adopt Canadian Values"



# And yet - Muslims & non-Muslims generally agree on the important values which immigrants to Canada need to adopt

2016 Surveys of Muslims and non-Muslims

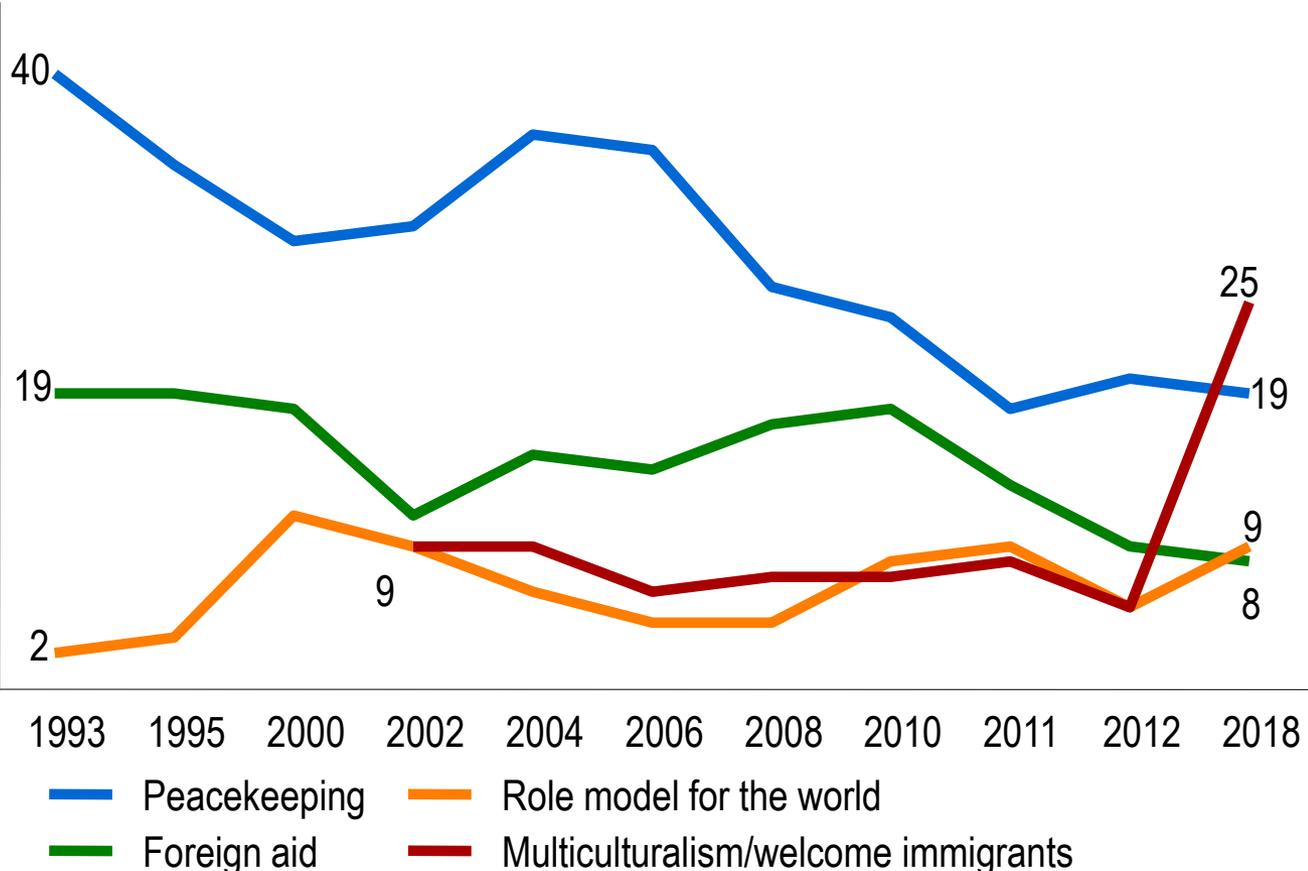
*What values are most important for immigrants to adopt? (unprompted mentions)*



# Canadians now see their country's global image is more about multiculturalism & welcoming migrants than peacekeeping & foreign aid

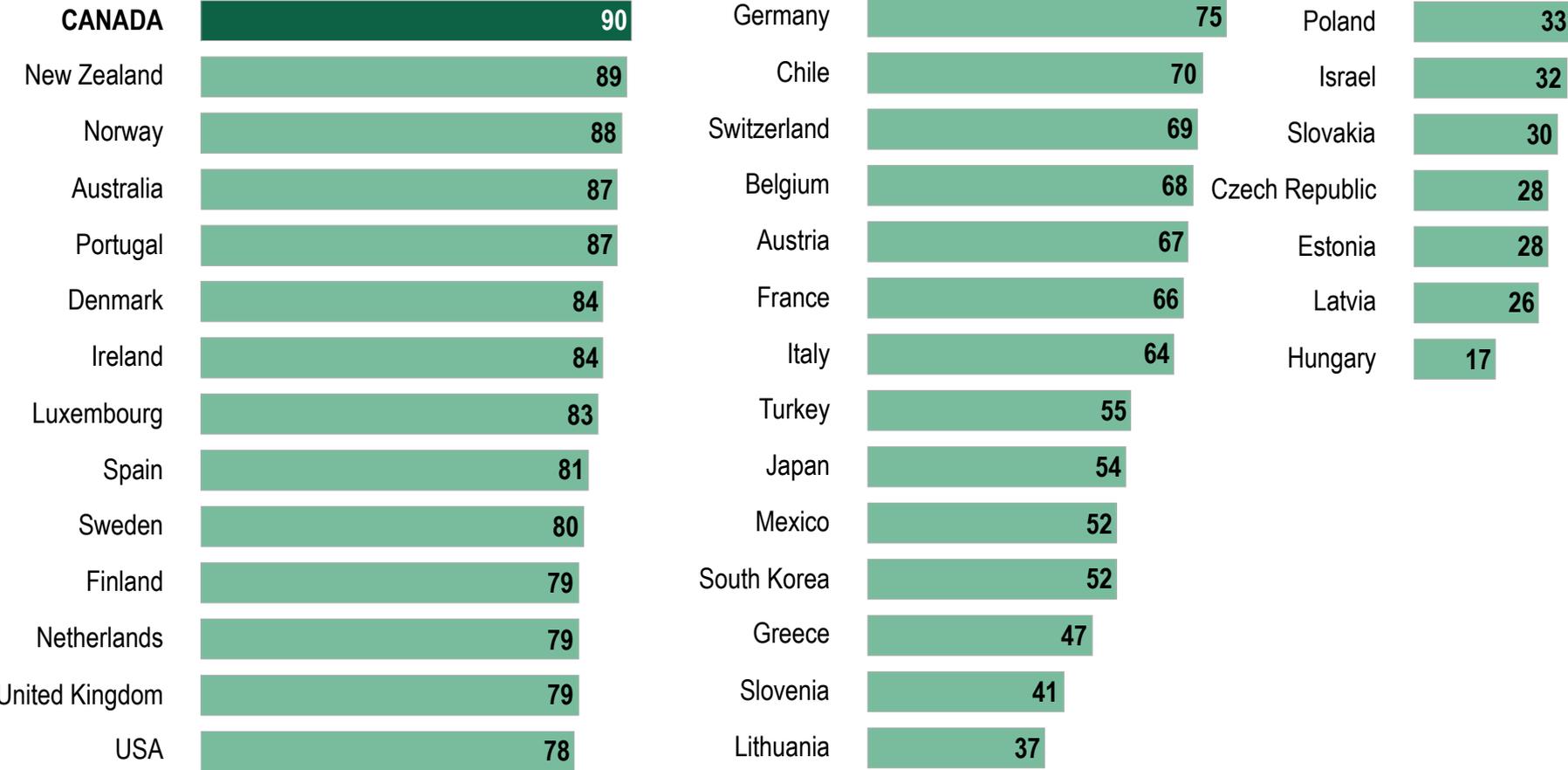
1993 – 2018 Top mentions (unprompted)

*What is the most important contribution that Canada makes to the world today?*



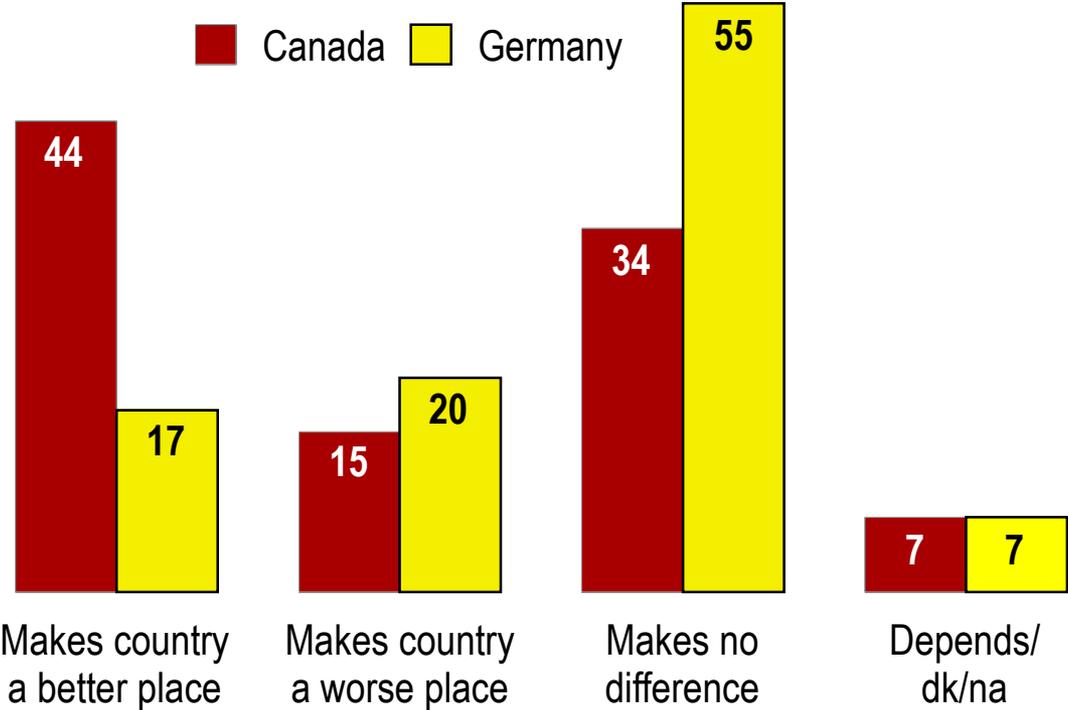
# In 2018, Canada ranks first among OECD countries in terms of public sentiment about one's city being a good place for immigrants

Gallup World Poll 2018   OECD   City/area is a good place for immigrants to live



# Canadians are much more likely than Germans to see immigration as benefitting their country

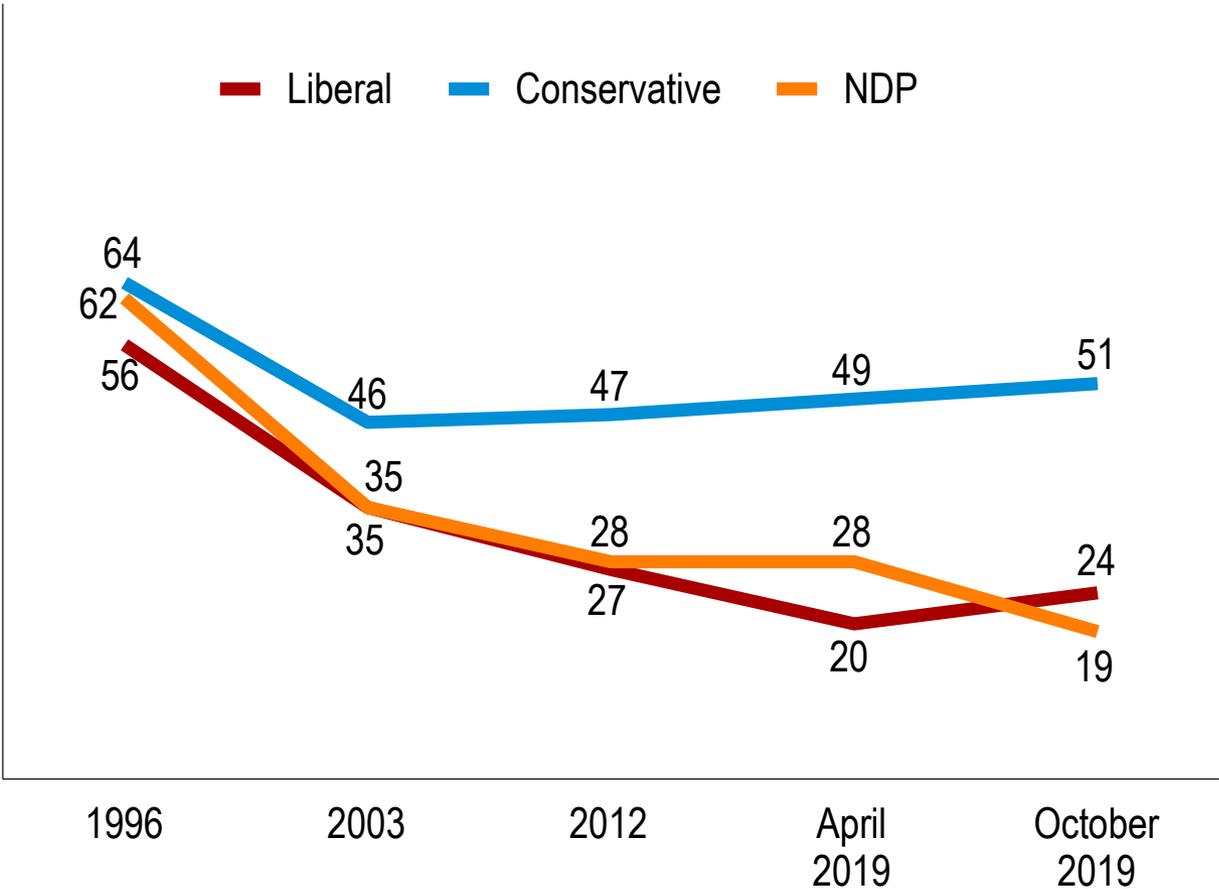
April 2019 Canada & Germany



# Over time there has been a growing political polarization in Canada around the number of immigrants being accepted each year

1996 - 2019 By political party support

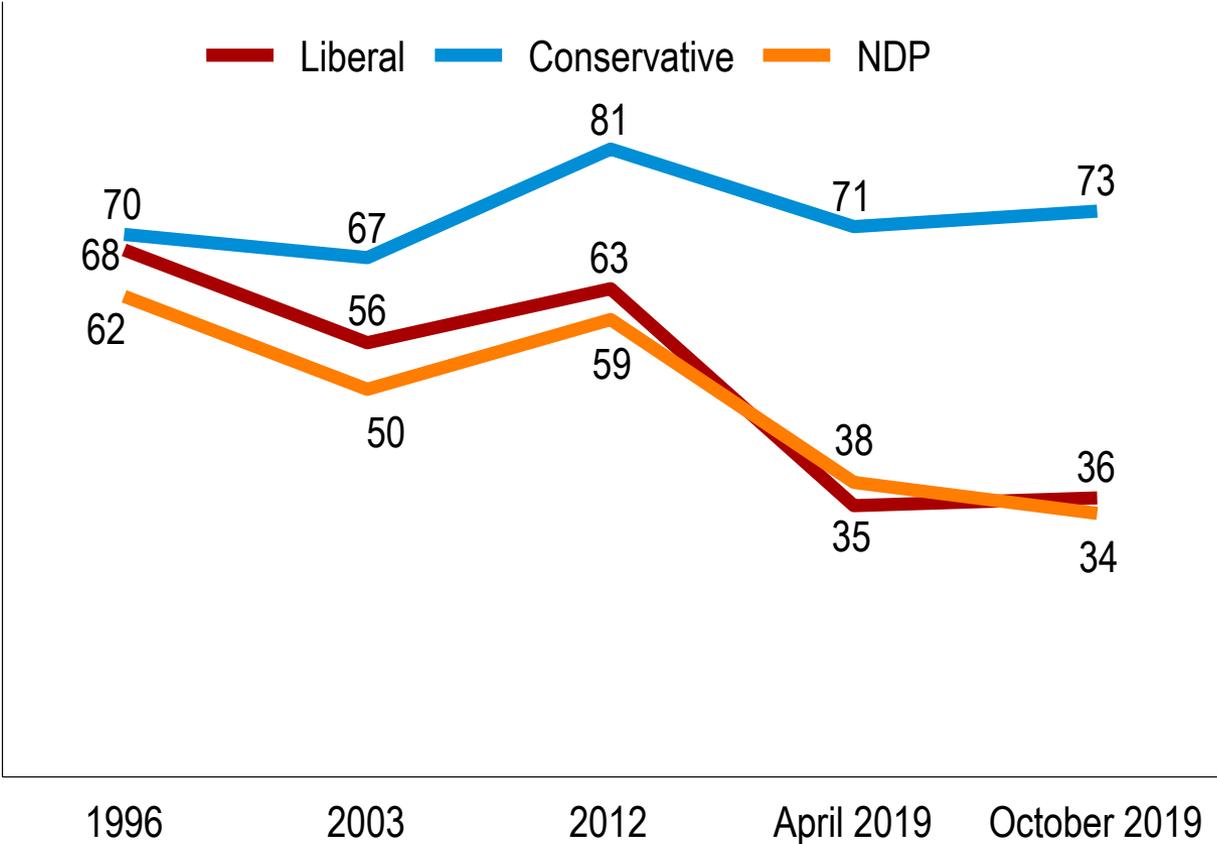
Agree or disagree: "There is too much immigration in Canada"



# And a similar trend for concerns about the lack of integration by some newcomers

1996 - 2019 By political party support

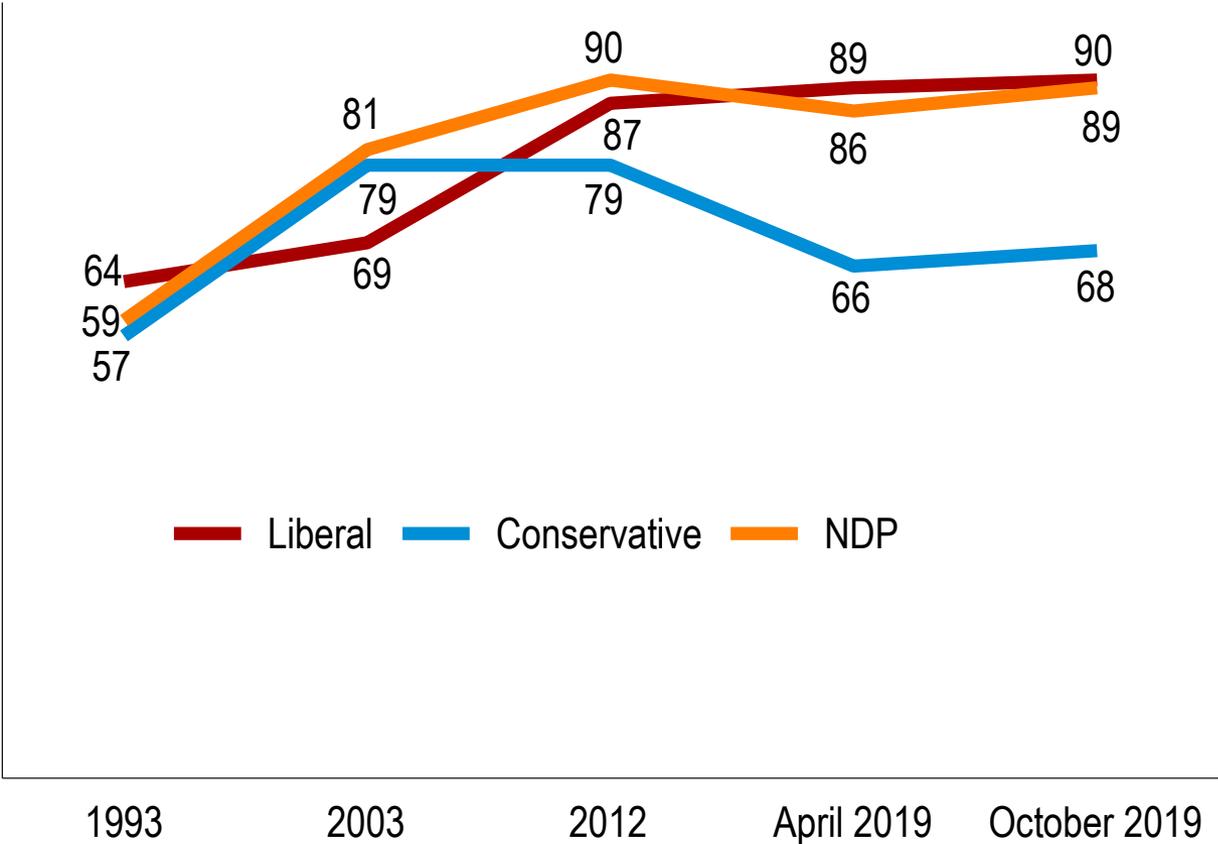
*Agree or disagree: "Too many immigrants do not adopt Canadian values."*



# And the growing political divide extends to views about the impact of immigration on the Canadian economy

1993 - 2019 By political party support

*Agree or disagree: "The economic impact of immigrants is positive"*



# Concluding insights

IMMIGRANT  
ADMISSION  
08  
JUL 19  
A.I. EDMONTON I.  
3421  
EXPIRATI  
16 JUL

# Canada today – from the research

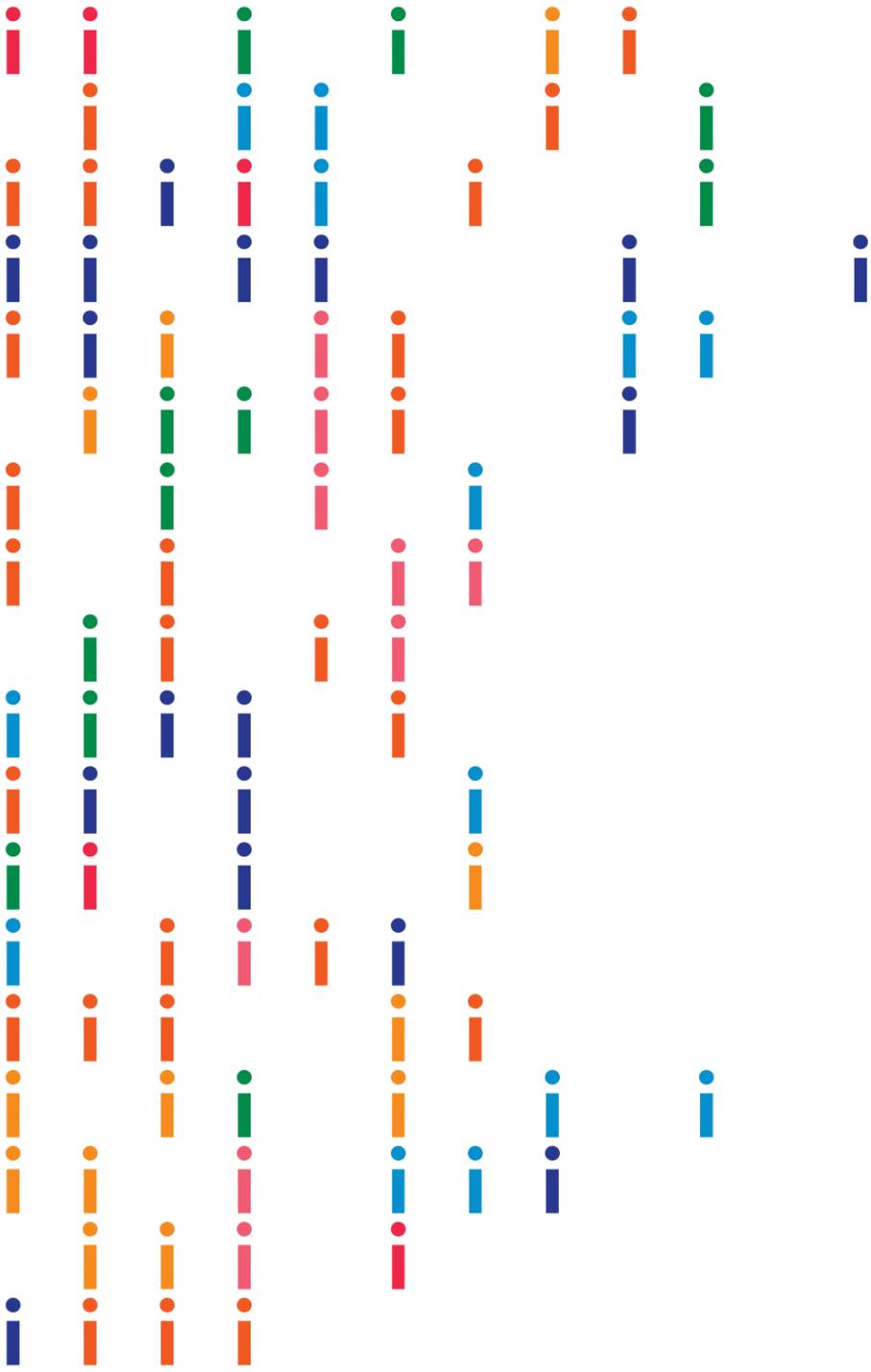
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- Newcomers have always been a contentious issue in this land and country
- There is no public consensus on immigration and refugee issues, but we have passed a critical threshold of acceptance, reflected in our social norms, political discourse and public policy
- The 2019 Federal Election provides a revealing litmus test
- Canada stands out among western nations in providing little space for anti-immigrant political movements

# What we can take away

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- The research does not provide the basis for complacency; problems and challenges on the ground are very real and persistent
- But the bigger picture is essential to keep in mind – to balance against the prevalence of negativity pervading the media and public discourse that threatens to distort our thinking and understanding
- We have a great foundation on which to build – and a well-deserved international reputation for acceptance in a world beset by growing intolerance



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