

# Canadians' take on immigration:

*Public opinion today, social norms and what's to come*

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# What I will cover

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- How Canadians view immigration today, and how this has changed
- What we can learn from public opinion surveys; and what we cannot
- What might we expect in the near-term future



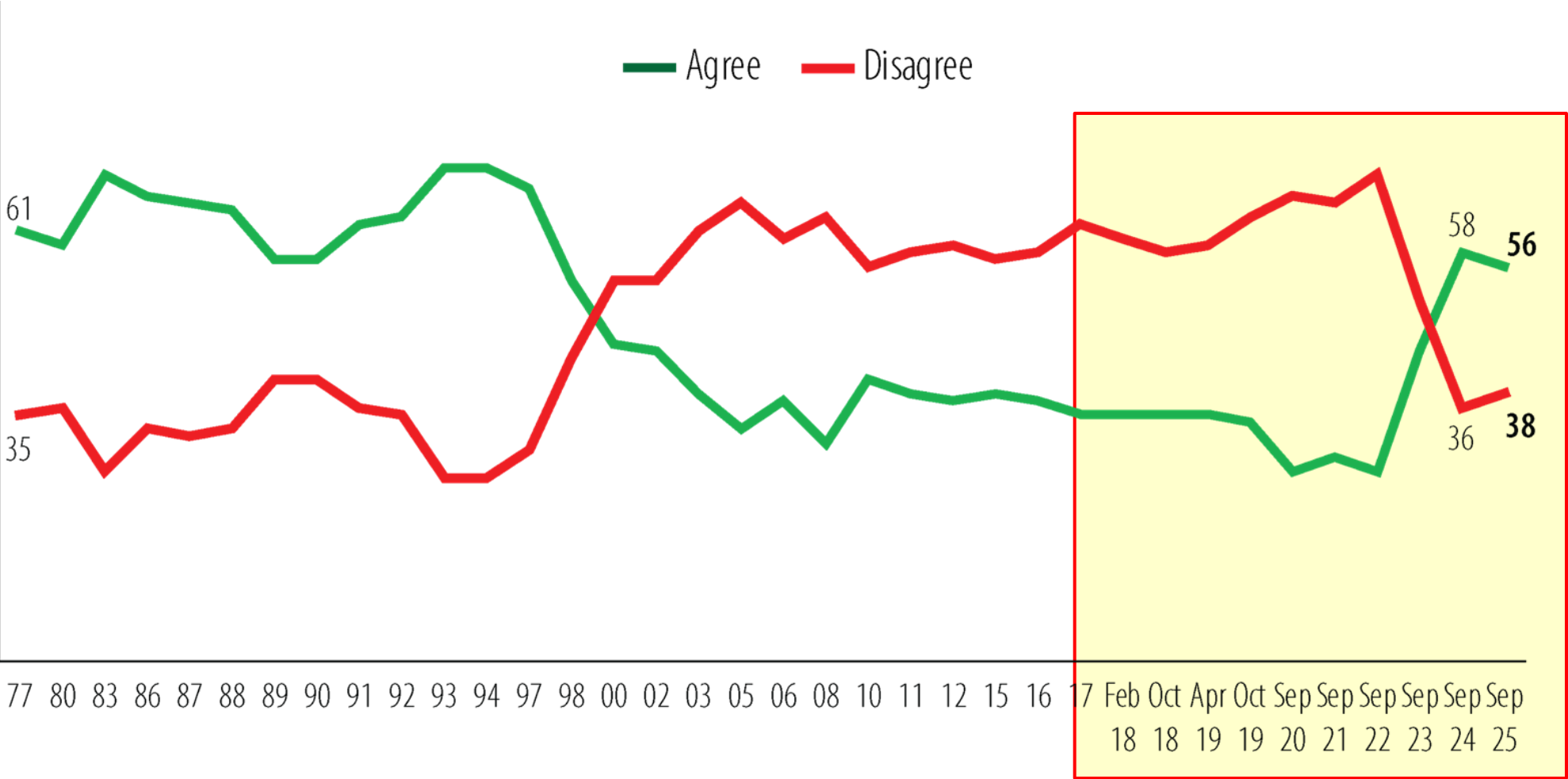


# Canadian public opinion on immigration: 2017 - 2025

# A majority of Canadians continue to worry about immigration levels

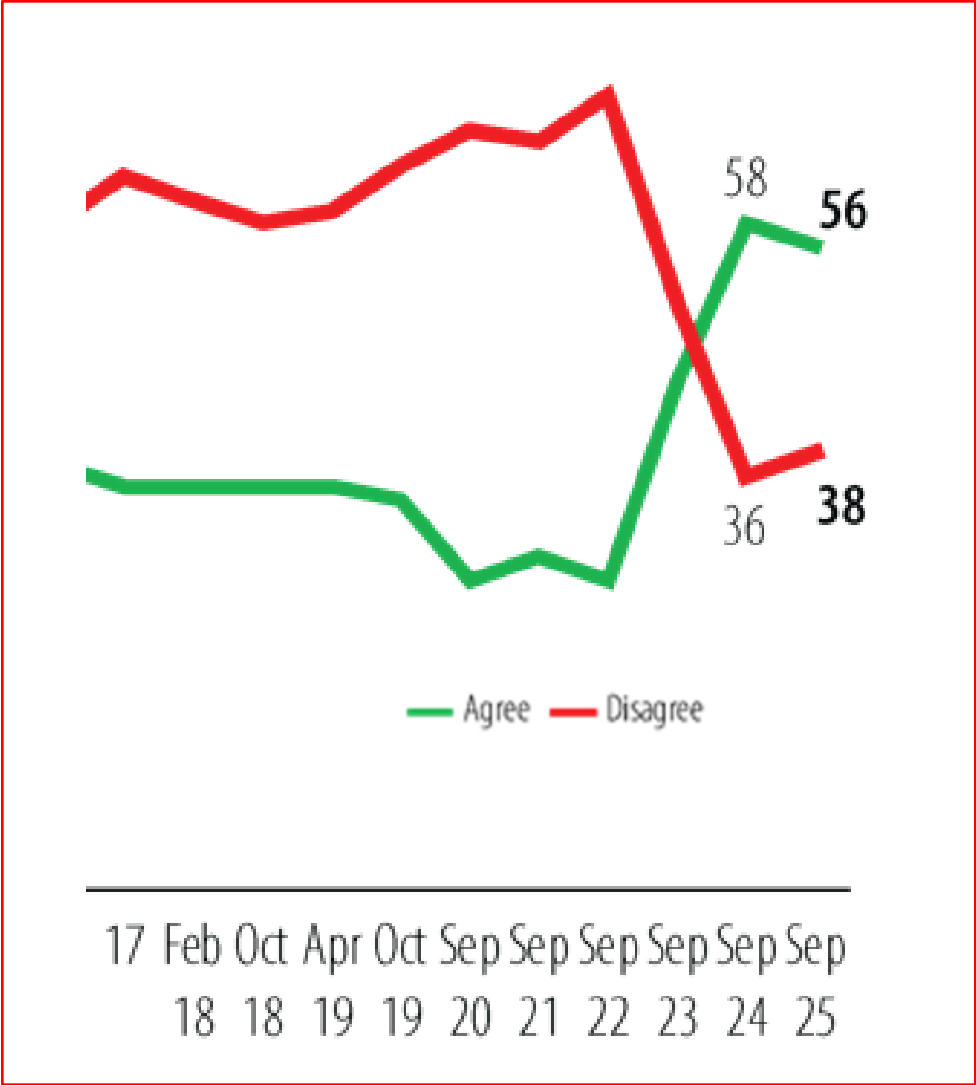
Agree – Disagree: Overall, there is too much immigration in Canada

1977 – 2025



Agree – Disagree: Overall, there is too much immigration in Canada

2017 – 2025



# Public concerns focus increasingly on how gov't is managing the system

*Why there is too much immigration to Canada?*

2022 – 2025

Those who agree with statement

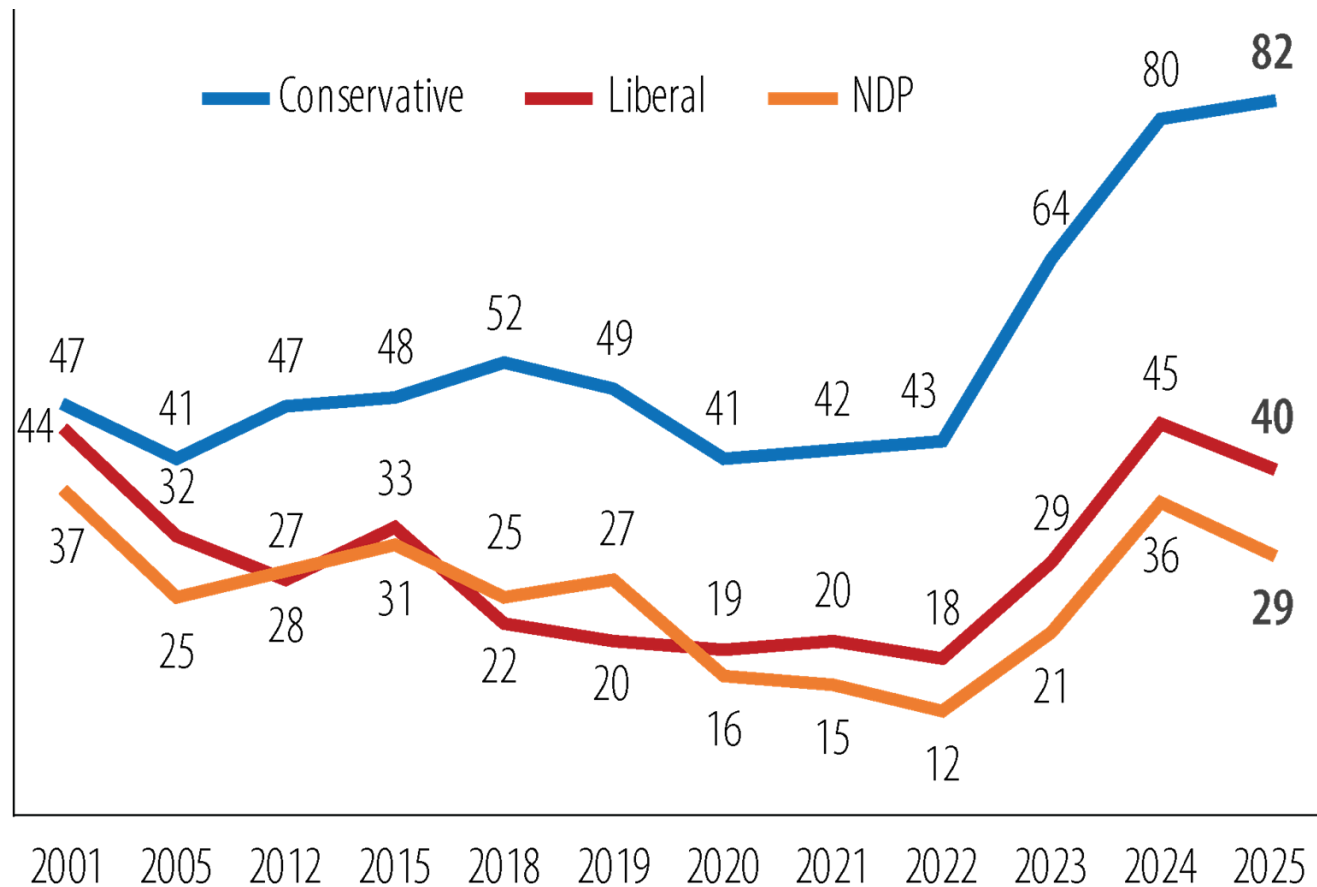
	2022	2023	2024	2025
Immigration is poorly managed by government / lack of screening	13	10	21	<b>33</b>
Bad for the economy / take jobs from other Canadians	21	25	29	<b>31</b>
Immigrants place pressure on housing prices / supply	15	38	33	<b>27</b>
Over-population / already too many people in Canada	19	19	25	<b>22</b>
Immigrants are a drain on public finances / cost too much	23	25	20	<b>20</b>
Threat to Canadian / Quebec culture (identity / language / values)	24	8	10	<b>13</b>
Immigrants are a public health risk / COVID-19 threat	1	1	4	<b>5</b>
Immigrants are a security risk / risk of terrorism / extremism	3	4	3	<b>5</b>
Too many foreign students	*	4	3	<b>4</b>
Other reasons	5	3	5	<b>5</b>



# Opinions have become more politically polarized over the past year

Agree – Disagree: *Overall, there is too much immigration in Canada*

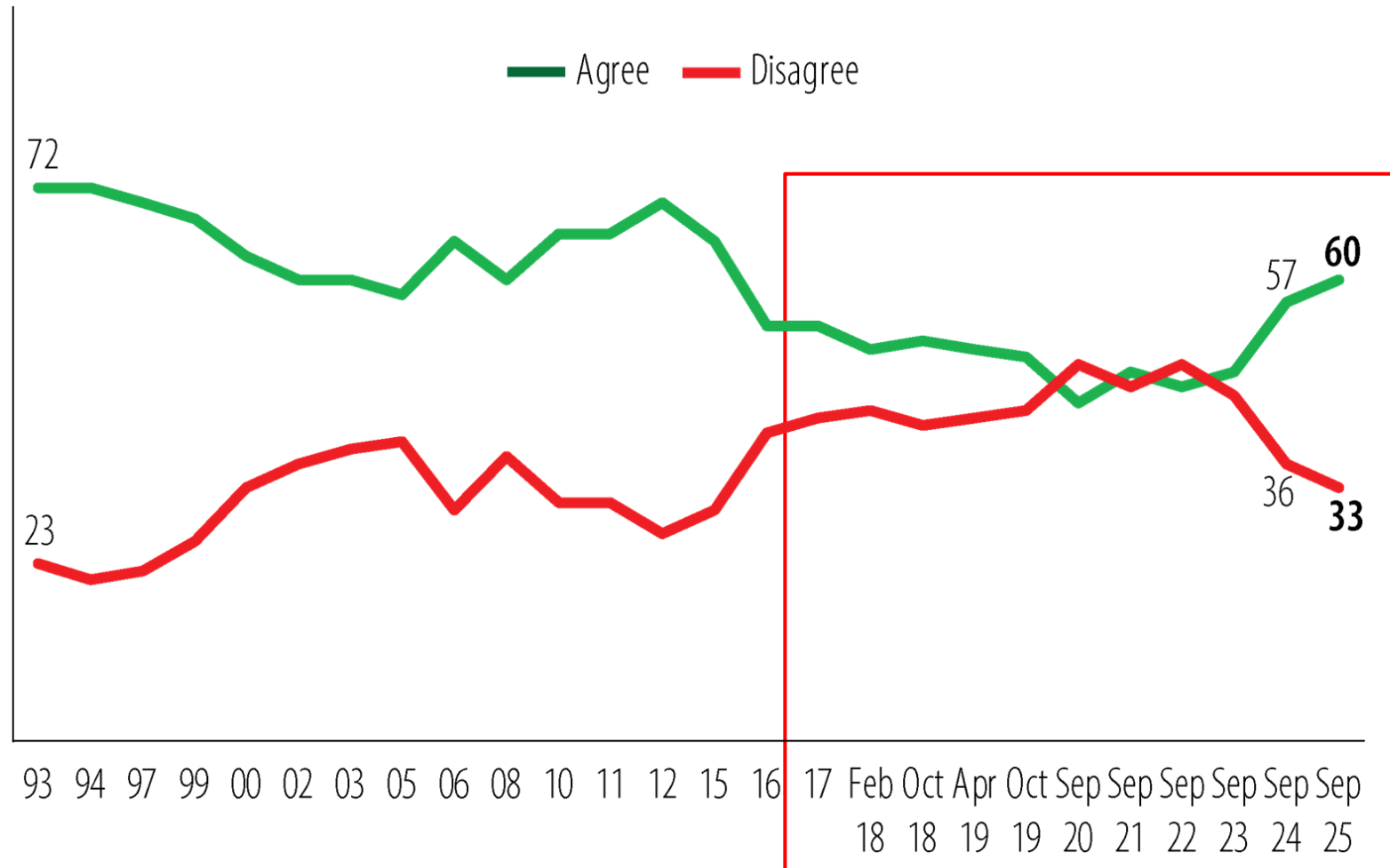
2001 – 2025 By political party support



## Also growing are concerns about newcomer integration

Agree – Disagree: *Too many immigrants do not adopt Canadian values*

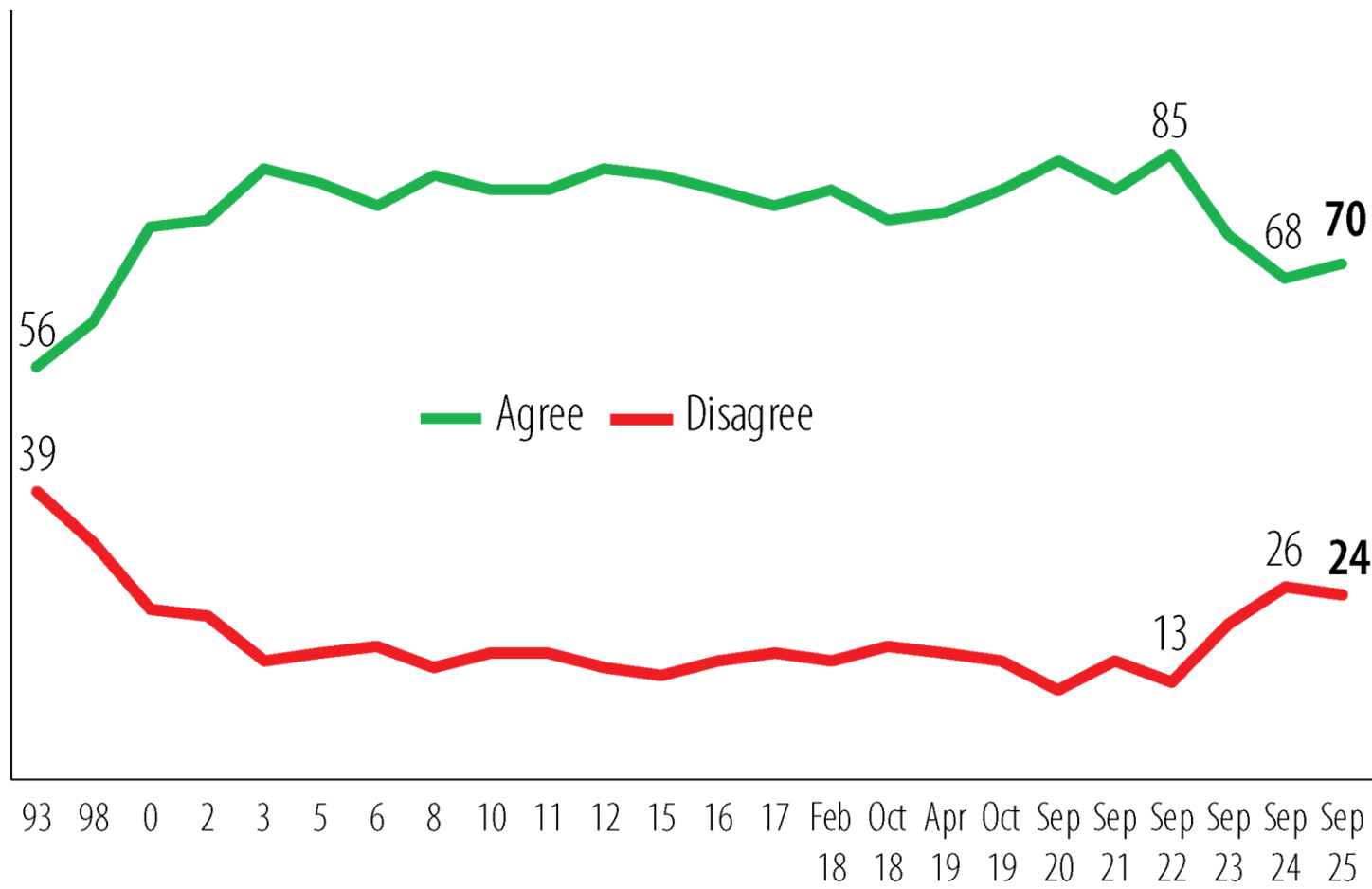
1993 – 2025





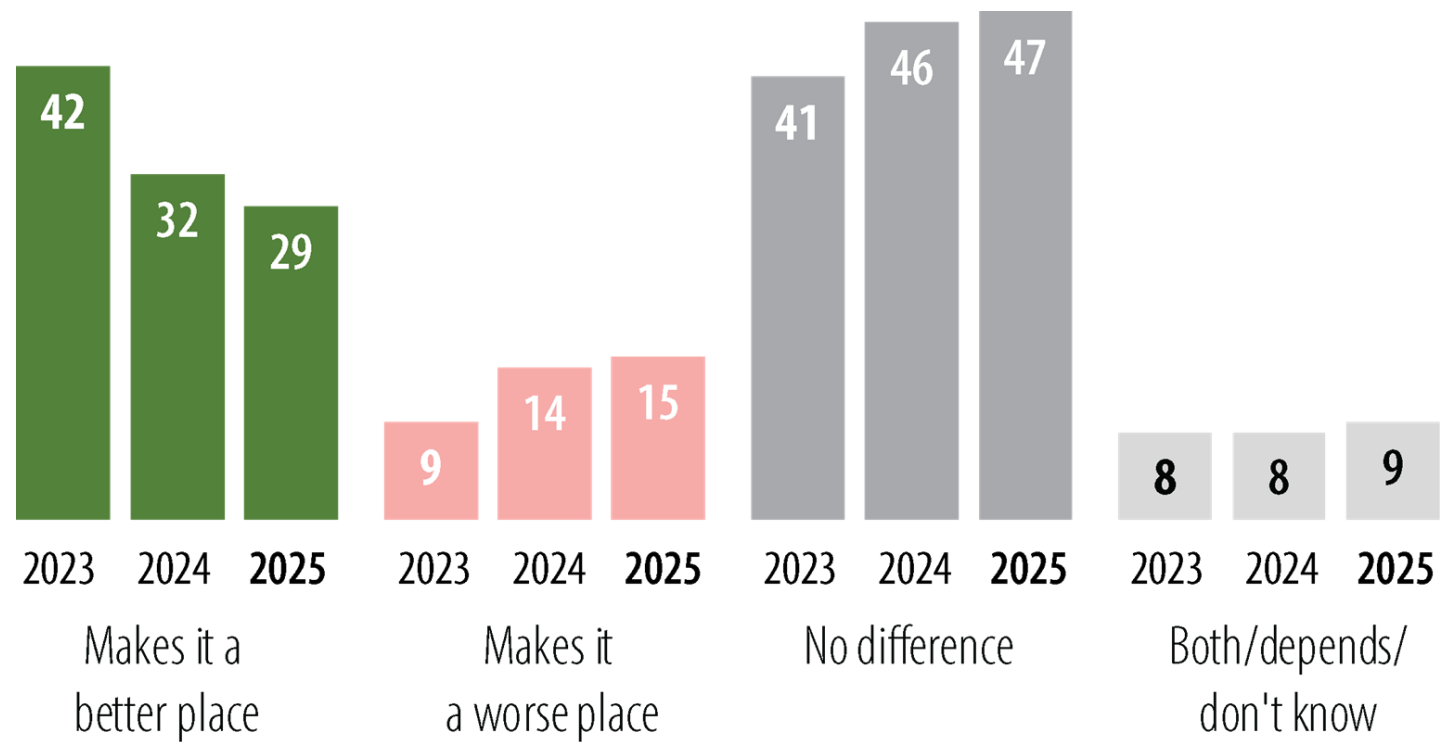
# Most Canadians continue to acknowledge the economic benefits of immigration

Agree – Disagree: *Economic impact of immigration is positive*  
1993 – 2025



# Few believe immigrants are a problem where they live

Net effect of immigration on your community  
2023 – 2025



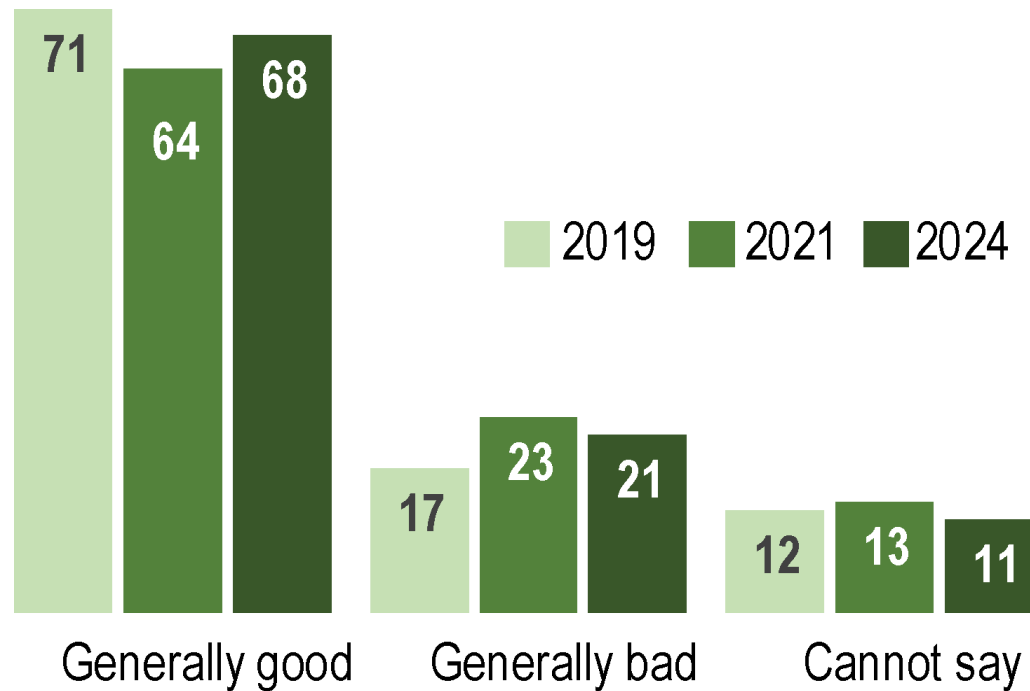
Multiculturalism & diversity  
continue to be a leading  
attribute of Canadian identity

<i>What makes Canada unique?</i>	2021 %	2025 %
Multiculturalism / identity / inclusive (net)	46	<b>36</b>
Multiculturalism / diversity	31	<b>23</b>
Accepts immigrants / refugees / everyone	9	<b>8</b>
Indigenous Peoples / culture	3	<b>2</b>
Tolerance	3	<b>3</b>
The people (humble, nice)	15	<b>22</b>
Land / geography	12	<b>15</b>
Freedom / democracy / political systems	17	<b>11</b>
Natural resources	5	<b>10</b>
Universal health care	7	<b>5</b>
Peace / peacefulness	4	<b>5</b>
Bilingualism / English and French	3	<b>2</b>
Values	3	<b>4</b>
Good quality of life / standard of living	2	<b>3</b>

# Race is not a dividing line in Canadian society

How well people from different races get along in Canada

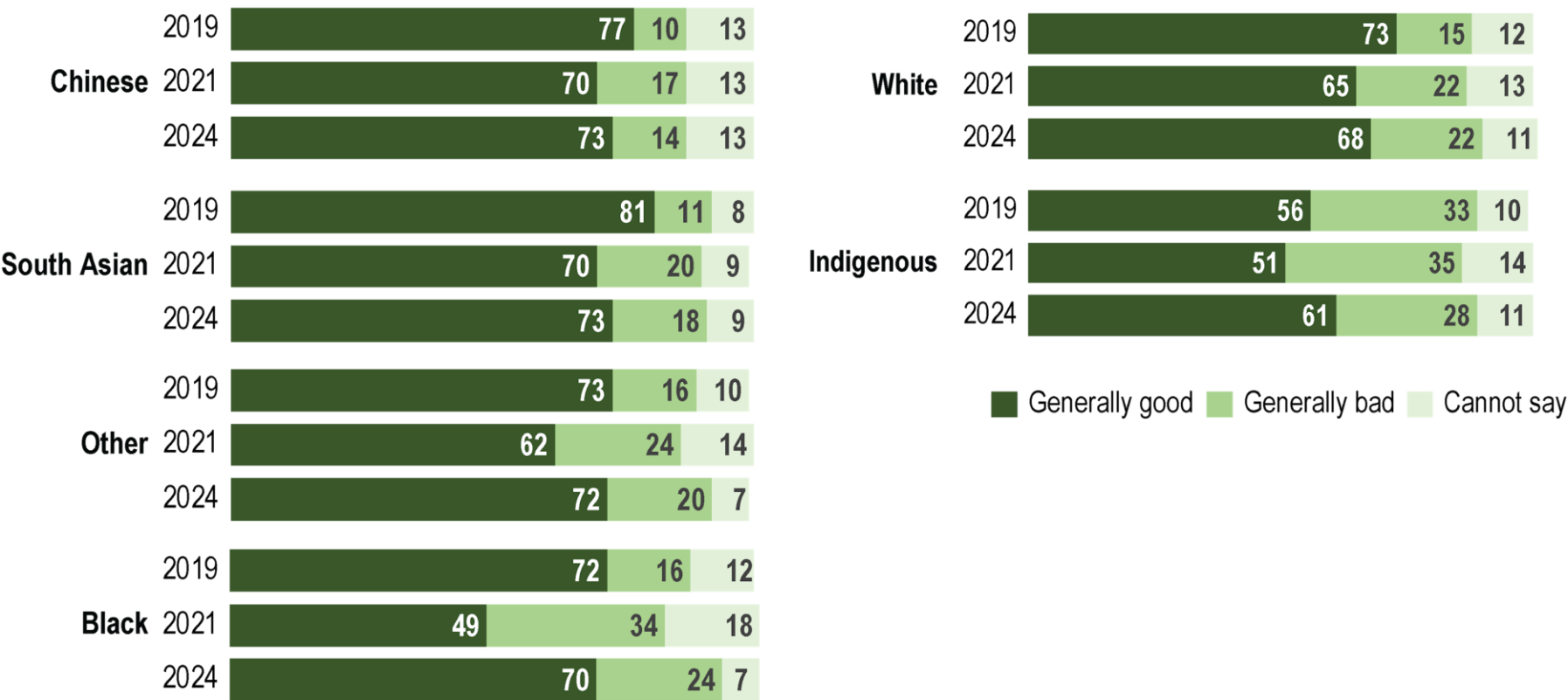
% 2019 – 2024



# Perspectives are notably consistent among Canadians across racial groups

## How well people from different races get along in Canada

% 2019 – 2024 By racial group responding







**Does this research accurately capture what we see happening in our communities?**



## National surveys show us what's happening at 30,000 ft

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- National and regional level data is instructive -- but doesn't capture what's happening locally or with specific groups
- Every community has distinctive characteristics and circumstances
- Need to understand public perspectives and experience at the local and group level

# Public opinion research measures opinions – not behaviour

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- Opinions matter – but how people act is mostly about situation and context
- We all have troublesome opinions – but most of the time we don't act on them
- Social norms – *how we act or don't act based on social group pressure* – are key to understanding what's changing in society today





**What is to come?**

# We are not going back . . .

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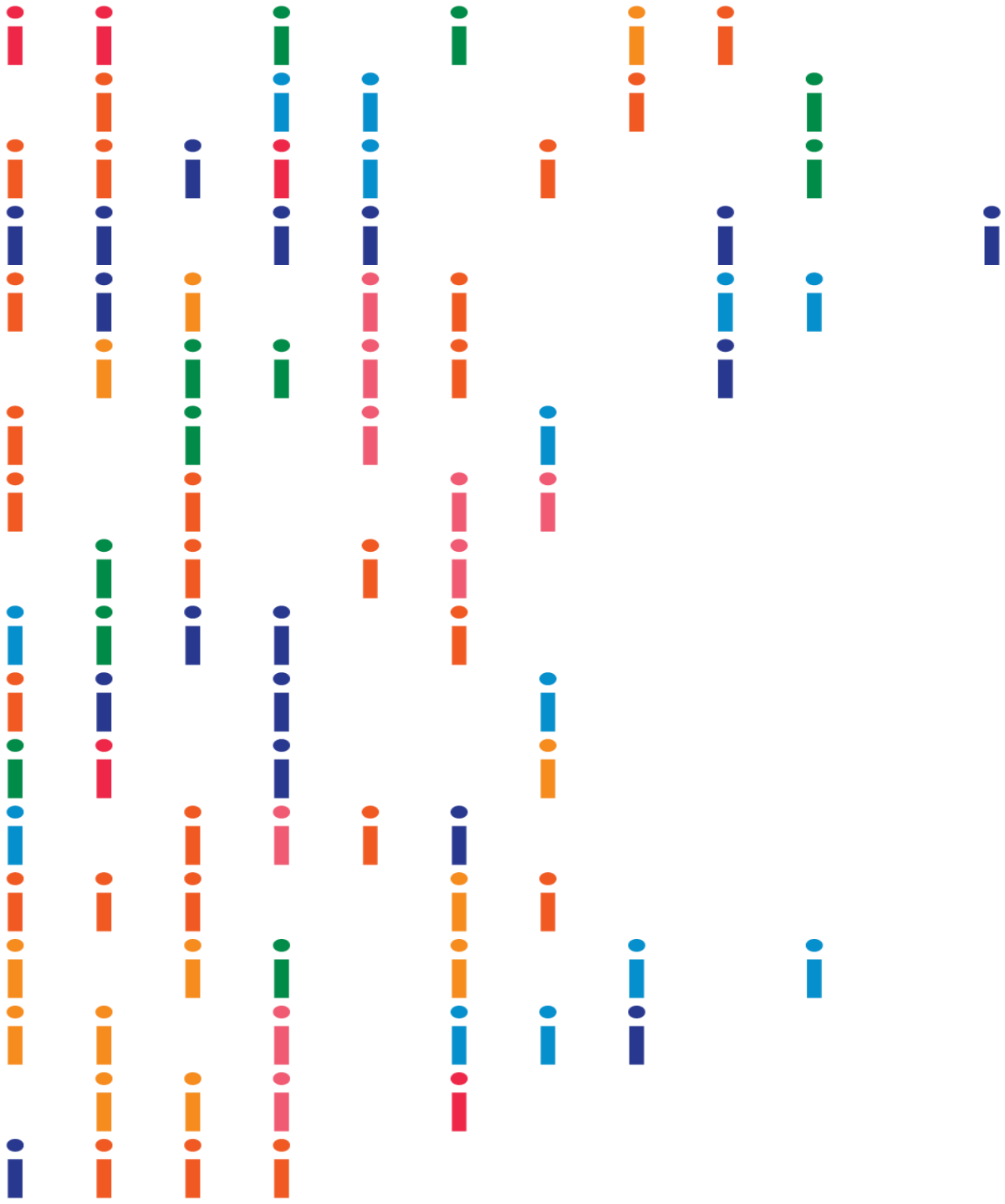
- The world is changing rapidly, and Canada is along for the ride
- Canadian story on immigration has changed and there is no going back – a new chapter is now being written
- Public and political support rests on balancing the immigration inflow with the country's capacity (housing, employment, infrastructure)



## . . . but we are still an exceptional place

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- Canada faces global challenges, but we are not like other countries
- Unique attributes are strengths to withstand the worst happening elsewhere: geography, history, demography, institutions, culture
- Global conflict and external threats serve to remind us what we want to avoid, and what we aim to be



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