

FACT SHEET : 2013 General Social Survey on Social Identity

SHARED VALUES

What is the General Social Survey?

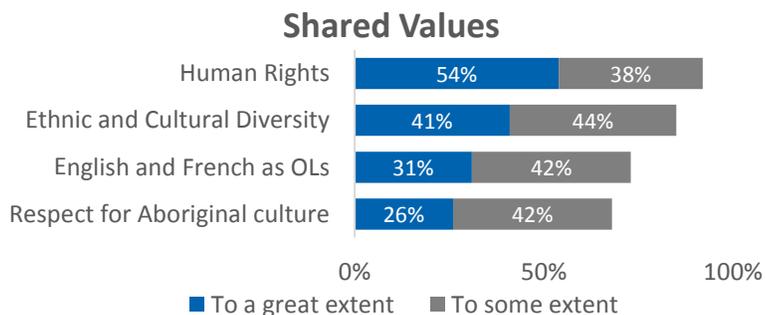
- The General Social Survey (GSS) is Statistics Canada's primary social survey. It seeks to gather data on social trends in order to monitor changes in the living conditions and well-being of Canadians over time, and to provide information on specific social policy issues.
- The GSS is a reliable, trusted and credible data source for performance measurement and policy research. The 2013 GSS on Social Identity used a sample of 27,695 Canadians.
- The target population includes all persons 15 years and older living in the provinces of Canada, excluding full-time residents of institutions.

Social identity and shared values

- Every culture or system has its own internal coherence, integrity, and logic. Every culture is an intertwined system of values and attitudes, beliefs and norms that give meaning and significance to both individual and collective identity.¹
- It is important to keep in mind when interpreting these results that, for this block of questions, respondents were not asked to provide information about their own adherence to values, but instead to extrapolate on the extent to which they consider that Canadians collectively share a set of values.

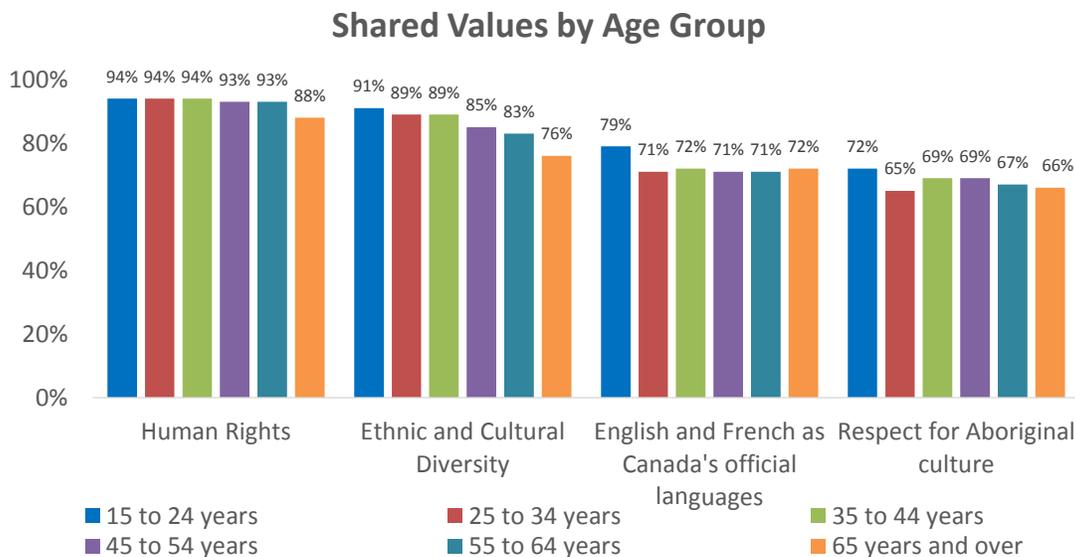
Most Canadians believe that Canadians collectively share key values

- A majority of Canadians reported believing that Canadians collectively share the values of human rights (92%), ethno-cultural diversity (85%), English and French as Canada's official languages (72%), and respect for Aboriginal culture (68%), at least to a moderate extent.



Younger Canadians are more likely to believe we share key values

- 15 to 24 year olds (79%) were more likely than any other age group to consider that Canadians share, at least to a moderate extent, the value of English and French as Canada's official languages.
- The older the age group, the less the respondents were likely to consider that Canadians share the value of ethnic and cultural diversity (ranging from 91% for 15 to 24 year olds to 76% for those 65 years and over).



¹ Peter Adler (2002) Beyond Cultural Identity: Reflections on Multiculturalism.

Results vary by region

- The proportion of Quebec residents who considered that Canadians share these values, at least *to a moderate extent*, was considerably lower than among residents of other Canadian provinces. This was especially the case for respect for Aboriginal culture (55%) and English and French as Canada's official languages (65%).
- Residents of Eastern Canada were more likely to consider that Canadians collectively share the value of English and French as Canada's official languages than residents of Western Canada.

Other noticeable trends: English and French as Canada's official languages

- 15 to 24 year olds (79%), visible minorities (82%) and first generation Canadians (80%) were more likely than other groups to believe that Canadians share the value of English and French as Canada's official languages.
- The following groups showed lower proportions than the Canadian average: individuals with French as their only first official language spoken (65%), individuals who are not visible minorities (70%) and individuals with a university certificate or diploma below the bachelor's levels (70%).

Other noticeable trends: Ethnic and cultural diversity

- Younger age groups were more likely to consider that Canadians share the value of ethnic and cultural diversity (91% of 15 to 24 year olds versus 82% of those 65 years and over).
- First Nations² (79%) and individuals with French only as their first official language spoken (76%) had lower proportions believing that Canadians share this value at least *to a moderate extent*.
- The higher the educational attainment of the respondents, the more likely they were to consider that Canadians share this value.

Other noticeable trends: Respect for Aboriginal culture

- First Nations (62%) were less likely than the general population to consider that Canadians share the value of respect for Aboriginal culture. This should not be interpreted to mean that First Nations themselves do not respect Aboriginal culture, but rather that they are less likely than other Canadians to *perceive* that the Canadian population shares this value, at least *to a moderate extent*.
- Residents of Quebec (55%) and individuals with no religious affiliation (63%) had lower proportions believing that Canadians share this value, at least *to a moderate extent*.
- Those with higher educational attainment were also less likely to consider that Canadians share this value.
- There is an important gap between visible minorities (75%) and those who are not visible minorities (66%) on this value. Close to double the proportion of visible minorities (40%) considered that Canadians share this value *to a great extent*, compared to those who are not visible minorities (22%).

Other noticeable trends: Human rights

- First generation Canadians (64%) were more likely than those of third generation or more (50%) to consider that Canadians share this value *to a great extent*.
- The higher the educational attainment, the more likely the respondents were to believe that Canadians share this value *to a great extent*.
- First Nations (82%), individuals from an Aboriginal ethnic origin only (83%), Jehovah's Witnesses (84%) and individuals with less than a high school diploma or its equivalent (85%) had lower proportions believing that Canadians share this value at least *to a moderate extent*.

The present analysis represents a partnership between Strategic Policy, Planning and Corporate Affairs Sector, Citizenship, Heritage and Regions Sector, and Sport, Major Events and Commemorations Sector.

For more information, please e-mail: pch.spc-prc_pch@canada.ca

² It should be noted that the survey excluded residents of the Northwest Territories, Nunavut, and Yukon.