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THE CRIC PAPERS

# Portraits of Canada 2005



Centre for Research and  
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# Portraits 2005 – A Conversation with Canadians

For eight years, the Canadian Unity Council's Centre for Research and Information on Canada (CRIC) has conducted *Portraits of Canada*, an annual national survey of Canadians' opinions about government, each other, and the country's future. *Portraits* is more than a poll; it is a vehicle to start a conversation with Canadians. We want to hear what they have to say – what you have to say – about what is going on and what the future holds. This is in keeping with the CUC's mandate to inform and to engage all Canadians in building and strengthening Canada.

In the 2005 edition of *Portraits*, we once again track how Canadians' attitudes have evolved on a range of issues relating to the nature and well-being of the country. Some of the questions that we asked this year included:

- Do they consider a balanced budget as all that important?
- How do they rate their leaders?
- How do they feel about minority government?
- Are they prepared to make trade-offs on civil liberties to ensure their security?

Every year *Portraits* asks roughly 50 questions, a significant proportion of which have been asked in the past. This allows us to track which views are changing with time, and which remain fairly constant. The sample size of our survey is large. Quite often the polls that you see in the news have about 1,000 respondents throughout Canada. By contrast, our sample of 3,201 Canadians is large enough to ensure that opinions in all regions of the country, including the three Northern Territories, are accurately reflected. Two separate surveys are carried out, one in Quebec (conducted by CROP) and one in the rest of Canada (conducted by Environics Research Group). The results are then combined. The survey's Quebec component was conducted September 13-26, 2005 while the rest of Canada was done September 12-28, 2005. As with any survey, there is a margin of error. In this case it is plus or minus 1.7%, 95% of the time.

Once the information is analyzed and released at a major news conference, Council staff and supporters fan out across the country to present the results to groups ranging from young leaders, community groups, Rotary Clubs, high school, and university students to business associations, municipal, provincial, and federal officials, as well as politicians. This is where we start conversations with Canadians. These aren't just dry presentations; we want to hear the thoughts of those in our audiences on the issues in the poll. More importantly, we want them to continue these conversations at the supper table, around the water cooler, and at the local store. We invite you to do the same. We welcome comments and suggestions because they are often fed back into our research planning. If, after reading this document, you would like to contribute your suggestions, please email us at [webmaster@cucweb.ca](mailto:webmaster@cucweb.ca).

# Portraits 2005 @ a Glance – National Highlights

- Here is a summary of the major national findings from *Portraits 2005*. Those interested in more detail are encouraged to read the entire document. Further breakdowns, including additional graphs, can be accessed at [www.cric.ca](http://www.cric.ca).
- Maintaining a balanced federal budget is among the top three priorities for Canadians. On the basis of a list of 12 policy choices, the environment came first with support from 78%, increased health spending came second with backing from 74%, while keeping the budget balanced came a close third; it rallied 73% support.
- The lowest priority for Canadians among the 12 choices was closer relations with the United States. Only 31% rated it a high priority. This marked a decrease of six percentage points from 2004 and a drop of 11 percentage points from 2003 when it stood at 42%.
- Fifty-three percent of Canadians agree that political parties should be required to nominate a specific percentage of women candidates for election campaigns, and 46% say that political parties should be given financial incentives to increase the number of women candidates running for election.
- Forty-nine percent of Quebecers say they would vote YES if a referendum on sovereignty-partnership were held using the same question as that asked in 1995 (this is identical to the *Portraits 2004* finding). This year, *Portraits* asked four different questions on constitutional choices for Quebec. The results showed support for sovereignty, after redistribution of the undecided, declined the more unambiguous the question became.
- Significant majorities of Canadians feel that medicare (85%), two official languages (73%), peacekeeping (69%), and the CBC (60%) are essential characteristics of the country, and that their disappearance would fundamentally alter Canada's nature. However, less than half (43%) believes that cutting Canada's ties with the monarchy would result in fundamental change to the country's nature.

*"The top three choices and the fact that they are so close together in terms of the numbers provide an interesting insight. What this tells us is that Canadians are acutely conscious of environmental issues, want to maintain a health care system that serves all, but want political leaders to manage priorities and achieve objectives in a fiscally responsible manner,"*  
says Dr. Donna Dasko, Vice-President of Environics Research, which did the polling for *Portraits* outside Quebec.

- A majority (66%) is of the view that creating tighter rules with regard to ethics for governments and parliaments should be a high priority for the federal government.
- More than eight out of ten Canadians (82%) judge the integrity of their leaders harshly, taking the view that most political decision-makers do not tell the truth or keep their promises. This is an increase of nine percentage points over 2002 when 73% held this view.
- A majority (54%) would rather safeguard than sacrifice civil liberties in the fight against terrorism, even if that means accepting a lower level of public security. However, 42% think it will be necessary to give up civil liberties to curb terrorism.
- Two out of three Canadians say noncitizens who promote terrorist activity should be deported, even at the risk of facing mistreatment. Only 33% feel that noncitizens who promote terrorist activity should be dealt with in a Canadian court of law and not be deported.

# Canada's Priorities – Environment, Health, and Fiscal Responsibility

Public policy is about setting priorities. Every year, we ask Canadians where the federal government should focus its attention.

Given that *Portraits* is a national poll with a large sample size, this allows comparisons of priorities among age groups, provinces, and regions.

We asked what the federal government's priorities should be to make the country work better. Across Canada, the top three choices were:

- Protecting the environment (78%)
- Spending more money on health care (74%)
- Maintaining a balanced budget (73%)

There should be no surprise in seeing environment and health at the top of the list, but **maintaining a balanced budget**, which was included in the choices this year, registered among the top three. After a generation of deficit financing, Canadians appear to be on the fiscal wagon. Do the roots of this concern lie in a period when the country ran regular deficits and economic growth was slow? Today, many Canadians may be pleased that the country is showing annual surpluses, the only G-8 country to do so.

Regardless of the reasons, an interesting fiscal theme runs through Canadians' priorities this year. Consider their ranking of the following priorities: **maintaining a balanced budget** was among the top 3, followed by the **spending more money on education and training** (4<sup>th</sup> overall). Then come the remaining finance-related priorities – **paying down the debt** (8<sup>th</sup>) and **cutting taxes** (9<sup>th</sup>).

This provides a possible insight as to general fiscal policy:

- maintain a balanced budget;
- within that larger framework, devote more resources to education and training;
- pay down the debt but not at the expense of the preceding priorities;
- lastly, if any fiscal room is left, cut taxes.

**FIGURE 1** MAKING THE COUNTRY WORK BETTER, "HIGH PRIORITY"

Items	2003	2004	2005
1. Protecting the environment	Not asked	76% (1)	<b>78%</b>
2. Spending more money on health care	73% (1)	75% (2)	<b>74%</b>
3. Maintaining a balanced budget	Not asked	Not asked	<b>73%</b>
4. Spending more money on education and training	69% (3)	Not asked	<b>70%</b>
5. Increasing cooperation between the federal and the provincial / territorial governments	70% (2)	74% (3)	<b>66%</b>
5. Tighter ethics rules for governments and parliaments	Not asked	Not asked	<b>66%</b>
7. Protecting Canadians against terrorist threats	Not asked	Not asked	<b>55%</b>
8. Paying down the national debt	Not asked	Not asked	<b>48%</b>
9. Cutting taxes	41% (6)	48% (7)	<b>47%</b>
10. Reducing regional economic inequalities	40% (7)	Not asked	<b>45%</b>
11. Transferring more powers from the federal to the provincial / territorial governments	32% (9)	Not asked	<b>36%</b>
12. Having closer relations between Canada and the United States	42% (5)	37% (8)	<b>31%</b>

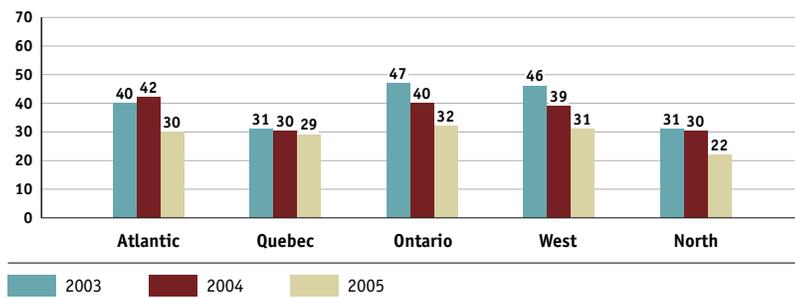
Another point of interest revealed in the **Making the Country Work** table is that Canadians have consistently rated **spending more on education and training** as a high priority. This may be evidence that the public has understood the ongoing debate regarding the importance of economic productivity.

Dead last among the twelve priorities is **having closer relations between Canada and the United States**. Only 31% rated it a high priority. This marks the third consecutive year that support has declined in this area. During this period it has fallen by 11 percentage points. This may be explained by a series of disagreements that have affected both countries since 2003: The Iraq War; debate on the proposed anti-ballistic missile defence shield; the mad cow crisis and associated border closures; not to mention the ongoing and acrimonious softwood lumber dispute.

## Canada's Priorities – Environment, Health, and Fiscal Responsibility

**FIGURE 2 PRIORITIES**  
CLOSER RELATIONS BETWEEN CANADA AND THE UNITED STATES  
"HIGH PRIORITY",  
BY REGION (2003-2005)

When it comes to improving the country, please tell me if you think each of the following should be a high priority, a medium priority or a low priority for the federal government:  
c) Having closer relations between Canada and the United States.



Historically, relations between both countries, which share the longest undefended border in the world, tend to run hot and cold. Living next to a colossus is not an easy thing. That being said, Michael Adams in his book, *Fire & Ice*,<sup>1</sup> provides another, more abstract perspective to explain the deterioration in relations. He argues that the values of each country, traditionally assumed to be similar and converging, are in fact diverging. Put simply, we have less in common and, therefore, disagreements become more likely. Recent findings of an SES Research poll, conducted with the University at Buffalo, indirectly reinforced Adam's view. The focus of the poll dealt mostly with the cooperation between both countries on trade and terrorism<sup>2</sup>. What emerged was a situation in which Canadians were saying: Let's trade with the U.S. but not become more like them.

### UNDER THE MICROSCOPE...

**Protecting the environment** was Canadians' top priority for the second year in a row. Support, broken down by province, reveals that support was lowest in Manitoba (69%). However, of the 12 policy choices, protecting the environment was Manitobans' second highest priority. **Maintaining a balanced budget** was their first.

### FOOD FOR THOUGHT

- ✳ Canada and the United States are neighbours and each other's biggest trading partners. Recently though, relations between the two countries have become somewhat strained and our *Portraits* results have revealed that few Canadians appear to be in a mood to invest much time or effort in repairing them. What are the broader implications of this attitude? What, if any, will be the effects on our economy? Should Canada's foreign policy seek to strengthen ties with other countries, or should we focus more on re-establishing the traditionally strong ties with our neighbour?
- ✳ For the second year in a row, the environment ranks as the top priority for Canadians. Are Canadians prepared to make personal sacrifices to help the environment? Would they be willing to pay more for gas (prices in North America are below those in Europe)? Is public transportation becoming an alternative or will Canadians, in spite of good intentions, continue to rely on their cars?

### UNDER THE MICROSCOPE...

The policy choice of **having close relations with the U.S.** resonated most strongly in P.E.I. where 49% viewed it as a high priority. The lowest level of support was recorded in the Yukon (15%). Saskatchewan (25%) edged out, by one point, two other provinces and the remaining territories, as the province the least interested in closer relations with America.

1. Michael Adams, *Fire and Ice: The United States, Canada and the Myth of Converging Values*, Penguin, 2004.  
2. *Maclean's*, "Closer than you think", October 17, 2005, p. 16.

# Canada's Political Landscape

For the first time since 1979 Canadians have experienced minority government. The 10-year anniversary of the 1995 referendum has just passed. The Quebec sovereignty movement is once again stirring, western discontent is simmering. Many Canadians feel that their province/territory does not get the respect it deserves within Confederation. Feelings are running high in several regions, so we looked at Canadians' feelings on a variety of issues.

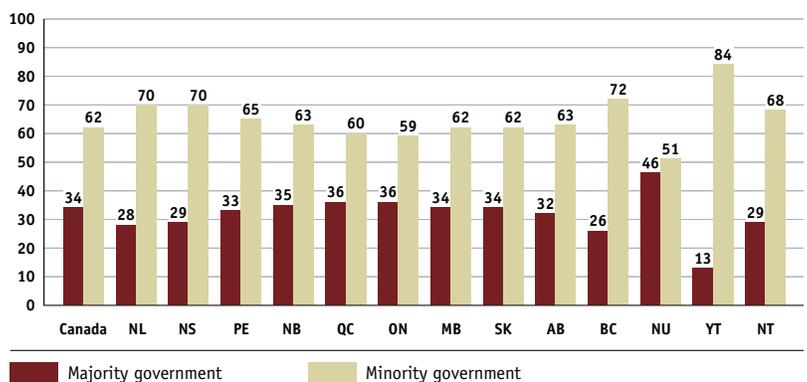
For much of last spring the media was consumed with the Gomery inquiry. What came to light further fuelled public cynicism. That cynicism, however, is somewhat tempered. While more than eight out of ten Canadians believe that most political leaders do not tell the truth or do not keep their promises, two thirds concede that the job political leaders have to do has become much more difficult in recent years, and that the politicians who are elected in their area do a good job of serving community interests. Also, among political leaders as a group, it is those at the local or municipal level that fared best with close to half of Canadians saying that they would give a high rating to their honesty and ethical standards.

Federal political leaders were seen as least trustworthy among a list of eight types of leaders. Less than a quarter of Canadians give their honesty and ethical standards a high ranking. Those considered most trustworthy are reporters and newscasters, followed by public servants and religious leaders.

Yet, despite the disenchantment expressed, Canadians do feel confident in the ability of the political system to correct abuses of power. When asked whether the Gomery inquiry is proof that abuses of power in government are investigated and corrective measures taken, 55% said yes. In Quebec, where the inquiry received greater media coverage than in the rest of the country, almost two thirds were of that opinion – a significant finding because it suggests that Quebecers make a distinction between trust in elected officials and trust in the political system.

**FIGURE 3** MAJORITY GOVERNMENTS VS. MINORITY GOVERNMENTS BY REGION

Which of these views is closer to your own?  
 1) Majority governments are preferable because the government does not have to negotiate with other political parties and can carry out its plans more easily.  
 2) Minority governments are preferable because they force the government to negotiate with other political parties and adjust its plans.



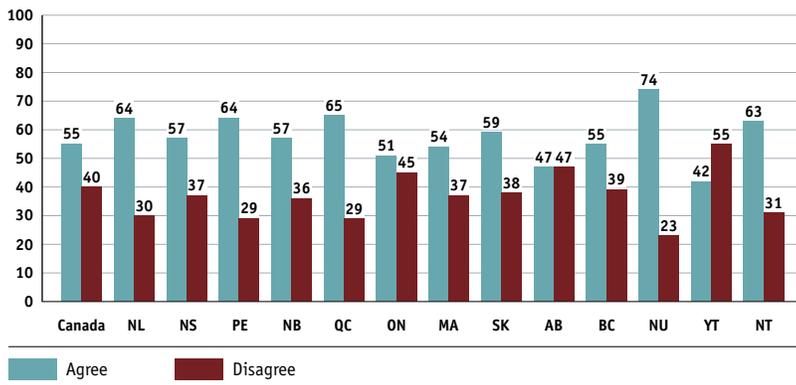
*Portraits* also found that Canadians are not averse to change in their political system and that the raucous and, at times, ill-tempered Spring session in Parliament did not leave them yearning for majority government. We asked respondents to pick one of two options: **Do you prefer majority government because the government does not have to negotiate with other political parties and can carry out its plans more easily. Or, would you rather see minority governments because such a situation forces the government to negotiate with other political parties and adjust its plans?** More than 6 out of 10 opted for minority government.

A number of reasons might explain this. In spite of the high drama of the spring session, Canadians saw a government that did act but was constrained by a need to negotiate with other parties in order to implement its agenda. The idea that the governing party's agenda is open to compromise seems to have appeal. Also, minority government may be seen as a check on executive power.

## Canada's Political Landscape

**FIGURE 4 THE GOMERY INQUIRY BY REGION**

Thinking about the Gomery inquiry into the federal sponsorship program, please tell me if you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree with the following statement: The Gomery inquiry shows that when abuses of power happen in government, they are investigated and corrective measures are taken.



Canadians still may be hesitant about electoral system reform, as suggested by two failed referendums this year in B.C. and P.E.I., where voters were asked if they wanted to exchange first-past-the-post voting for a form of proportional representation. However, they are not daunted by the idea of compromises and coalitions between parties, traditionally the hallmark of proportional representation government.

Openness to change was manifested in reactions to questions on whether specific measures should be taken to ensure greater representation of women in politics. Fifty-three percent of Canadians feel that political parties should be required to nominate a specific percentage of women candidates for election campaigns and 46% believe that parties should be given financial incentives to increase the number of women candidates they put forward.

### FOOD FOR THOUGHT

- ✦ Is the current support for minority government a fad? Or is it simply the result of long simmering discontent with national politics?
- ✦ Politicians at all levels do not get high marks for honesty from Canadians. Perhaps scandals, such as the one investigated by Justice Gomery, offer some explanation for this. And yet, politicians are not the only ones to make mistakes. Do you believe that the actions of other leaders in society, whether they be journalists, business leaders, union leaders or religious leaders, receive adequate critical attention from the media? Who watches the media watchdog?

### UNDER THE MICROSCOPE...

The idea that political parties be required to nominate a specific percentage of women candidates for election campaigns rallied the highest level of support in Newfoundland and Labrador (72%). Furthermore, that province (at 63%) was second only to Nunavut (69%), in its support for giving political parties financial incentives to increase the number of women candidates that they nominate. Alberta scores lowest in both cases (38% and 40% respectively).

# Quebec

Quebec's place in Confederation has consumed much political attention and energy for close to half a century. A decade after the latest referendum, support for sovereignty, once again, is rising. While the federalist Quebec Liberal Party currently forms the government, the Parti Québécois promises a third referendum should it regain power. Any truly national survey must focus on Quebec and the state of the sovereignty movement.

This year, *Portraits* asked four different questions on constitutional choices for Quebec. The results showed that support for a sovereign/independent Quebec declined the clearer and less ambiguously the question is worded.

For example, 49% of Quebecers said they would vote YES if a referendum on sovereignty-partnership were held using the same question as that asked in 1995. (At 49%, voting intentions in support of a sovereign Quebec in a partnership with Canada are at the same level as in the 2004 *Portraits of Canada*.)

When we presented Quebecers with the PQ's new referendum strategy, that is, Quebec becoming a "sovereign" country without an offer of political partnership but with a free trade deal to be proposed to the rest of Canada, 47% responded they would vote YES.

We then asked the same question but replaced "sovereign country" with "independent country", YES support fell to 40%.

The last question asked Quebecers if they would vote YES to their province becoming a completely independent country. Only 34% answered that they would vote YES.

**FIGURE 5** CONSTITUTIONAL OPTIONS

	% who would vote "yes"	
	2001 / 2004	2005
If a referendum were held today on the same question that was asked in 1995, that is, <b>sovereignty with an offer of partnership</b> with the rest of Canada, would you vote yes or would you vote no?	39% / 49%	<b>49%</b>
If a referendum were held today asking you if you wish Quebec to accede to the status of a <b>sovereign country</b> , without the offer of a partnership but with a free trade agreement to be subsequently proposed to the rest of Canada, would you vote YES or would you vote NO?	June/August 2005*	<b>2005</b>
	47%	<b>47%</b>
If a referendum were held today asking you if you wish Quebec to accede to the status of an <b>independent country</b> , without the offer of a partnership but with a free trade agreement to be subsequently proposed to the rest of Canada, would you vote YES or would you vote NO?	<b>2005</b>	
	<b>40%</b>	
If a referendum were held on the following question: "Do you want Quebec to become a <b>completely independent country</b> , would you vote or be tempted to vote YES or NO?"	2001 / 2004	<b>2005</b>
	27% / 35%	<b>34%</b>

\* Average of two CROP polls, June and August, 2005.  
All data reflect decided voters, with undecided redistributed on a pro rata basis.

In short, phrasing of the question has an impact on levels of support. Quebecers are less inclined to support options that call for a complete break with Canada, such as outright independence, or options that propose only weak links such as offering a free trade agreement.

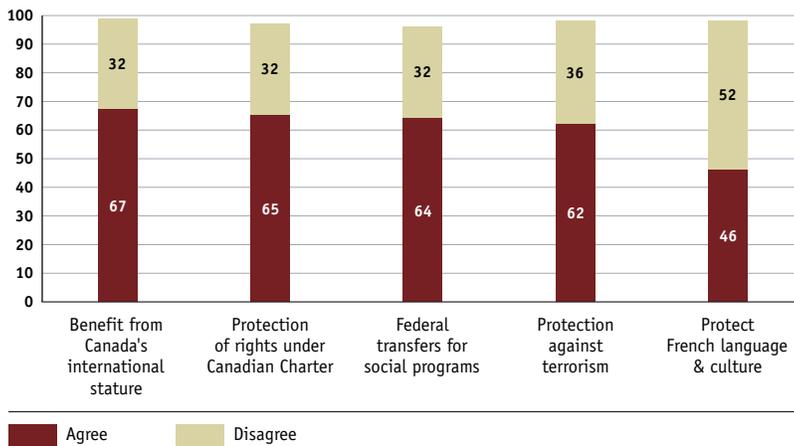
These findings give rise to two related questions: Who exactly are these YES voters for whom the word sovereignty is crucial to gain their support? What type of political arrangement do they think they are voting for?

To shed some light on this, consider that seven out of ten Quebecers report being very or somewhat attached to Canada. This number has remained stable since 1998. Much, then, depends on what sovereignty is actually understood to entail, an independent country or a redefined Canadian framework.

## Quebec

**FIGURE 6 IT IS AN ADVANTAGE FOR QUEBEC TO BE PART OF CANADA**

Please tell me whether you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree with the following statements:  
It is an advantage for Quebec to be part of Canada...



### UNDER THE MICROSCOPE...

Sixty-eight percent of Quebecers are tired of hearing about referendums and the constitution. In the rest of Canada, 70% of respondents felt the same way.

### ADVANTAGES OF CANADA

Identity and attachment are useful tools in establishing the big picture. This edition of *Portraits* broke things down a bit to get a more detailed idea as to whether or not certain things foster attachment. We found that Quebecers do believe that there are benefits to belonging to Canada.

Among the characteristics of Canada that are particularly appreciated by Quebecers are Canada's international reputation, the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms* (of particular interest here is the fact that those Quebecers aged 18-24 expressed the highest level of agreement that the Charter was an advantage), federal transfers for social programs, and protection against terrorism. Even among those who would vote YES on the 1995 question on sovereignty-partnership, a sizable proportion (45%) feels that Canada's international reputation is a benefit to Quebec.

### FOOD FOR THOUGHT

✳ Support for sovereignty generally goes up when the federalist Liberal Party of Quebec is in power and it is unlikely there will be a referendum. Yet, when the Parti Québécois forms the government and chances of a referendum increase, support for sovereignty usually declines. What do you think this means?

### UNDER THE MICROSCOPE...

In Quebec, 63% of 18-24 year olds would vote YES in a referendum using the 1995 question. This is the highest result of all age groups. The 18-24 year olds also scored the highest (59% in agreement) when asked if the federal system is sufficiently flexible to allow the Quebec government to respond to the priorities of its population.

# Nature of Canada

As a country, we grapple continually with questions of identity. What does it mean to be Canadian? Who are we? What are some of the touchstones of our national identity? This year, a section of *Portraits* probed into what Canadians see as things that define the country, things that, in many cases, if they were changed, would alter the country's nature.

We used the following concepts:

- abandoning Canada's two official languages
- cutting ties with the monarchy
- eliminating public health care
- getting rid of the CBC
- ceasing to engage in peacekeeping operations
- having more visible minorities in the Canadian population
- establishing closer ties with the U.S.

Those who said "yes" to any of these were then asked whether the resulting change would be positive or negative.

**Official languages** – Three quarters of Canadians believe that abandoning Canada's official languages policy would be a fundamental change and if that were to happen, it would be a negative. Those aged 18-34 were most likely to see the policy's elimination as negative.

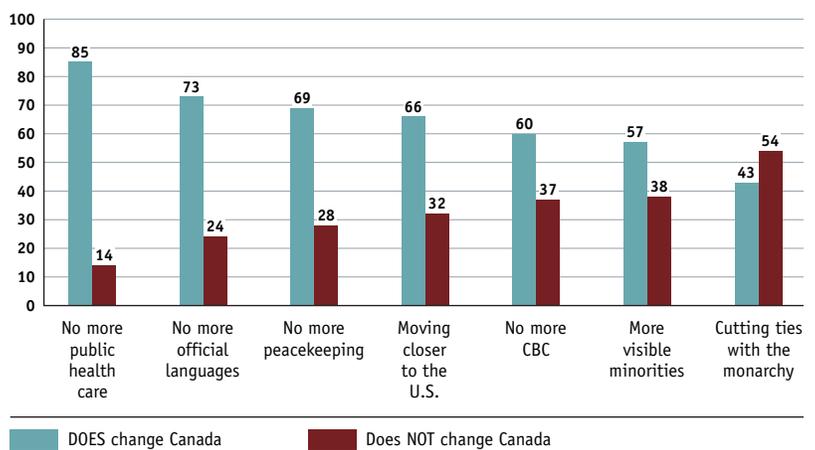
Support for official languages is highest in Quebec, but every other region follows closely behind. These findings are consistent with past polls showing widespread support for bilingualism in Canada. When it became law in 1968, some areas of the country were vocally opposed to the *Official Languages Act*. Now, more than a generation later, there is widespread support for official bilingualism.

**Cutting ties with the monarchy** – There is an entirely different story when it comes to cutting ties with the monarchy. Fifty-three percent said it would not alter the country's nature while 43% said it would. Among those who think it would change the country's nature, 53%, thought the change would be negative.

**FIGURE 7** NATURE OF CANADA FUNDAMENTAL CHANGE?

For each of the following items, do you tend to agree or disagree that they would result in a fundamental change to the nature of Canada?

- Cutting ties with the monarchy.
- Growing proportion of visible minorities.
- Canada becoming closer with the U.S. than it is now.
- Eliminating public health care.
- Abandoning English and French as Canada's two official languages.
- Not having a national, publicly financed broadcaster like the CBC.
- Eliminating peacekeeping operations for the Canadian military.



*"These findings are consistent with past polls showing widespread support for bilingualism in Canada. What is encouraging is that Canadians rank our official languages as vital in defining the nature of the country. Clearly, there is a deeply felt recognition that linguistic duality is part of being Canadian and people are very attached to it,"*  
*says Michel Desjardins, President and Chief Executive Officer of the Canadian Unity Council (CUC).*

## Nature of Canada

**Eliminating public health care** – If there is one area in which Canadians are united, it is public health care. Eighty-five percent consider it an essential characteristic of the country. Of this group, almost 90% say if it were to disappear, it would be a negative change.

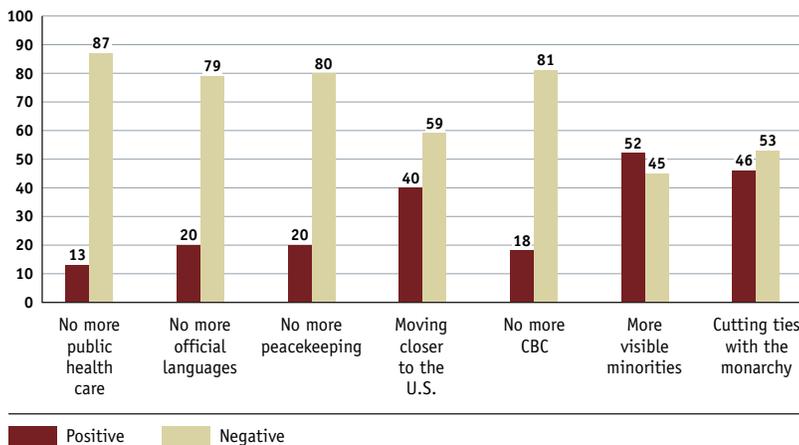
**Getting rid of the CBC** – Symbolically, the CBC was to play a role in the 20<sup>th</sup> century like that played by the Canadian Pacific Railway in the 19<sup>th</sup> – to stitch together a far-flung population spread over a vast territory. *Portraits* findings make it clear that at the dawn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the CBC is firmly anchored in the national psyche. In fact, six out of ten Canadians say its disappearance would alter Canada.

**FIGURE 8** NATURE OF CANADA  
DIRECTION OF CHANGE?

For each of the following items, do you tend to agree or disagree that they would result in a fundamental change to the nature of Canada?

- a) Cutting ties with the monarchy.
- b) Growing proportion of visible minorities.
- c) Canada becoming closer with the U.S. than it is now.
- d) Eliminating public health care.
- e) Abandoning English and French as Canada's two official languages.
- f) Not having a national, publicly financed broadcaster like the CBC.
- g) Eliminating peacekeeping operations for the Canadian military.

**Ceasing to engage in peacekeeping operations** – Canadians value the heroism and sacrifice associated with our role as a peacekeeper on the world stage. That deep appreciation continues today. Almost 70% of Canadians consider this function a defining national characteristic. An overwhelming majority considers it to be a positive aspect of the nation's nature.



**Having more visible minorities in the Canadian population** – Canada is a country of immigrants and immigration has played an important role in its settlement, social composition and political development. Through the active promotion of multiculturalism, Canada has adopted a different philosophy in terms of integrating immigrants, who today overwhelmingly come from non-European countries, into society; they are encouraged to maintain some of the cultural and linguistic characteristics of their homeland. Diversity is not viewed as “difference” but as “richness”.

By 2017, visible minorities will account for one in every five people in Canada and more than half of Torontonians and Vancouverites. *Portraits* reveals that nearly 60% of Canadians feel this changes the nature of the country. Among this group just over half saw the development as positive. These findings are comforting but they also point out the need for Canada not to take its openness to diversity for granted.

## Nature of Canada

**Moving closer to the U.S.** – The desire to maintain an arms-length relationship with the U.S., first observed in the Priorities section (it was rated as the lowest of twelve priorities) reappeared in this section. Two-thirds of Canadians believe that closer relations with our southern neighbour would change Canada’s nature. Furthermore, among those who felt this way, a majority believes that moving closer to the U.S. is negative.

### FOOD FOR THOUGHT

- ✦ The *Official Languages Act* was not greeted with universal acceptance when it was first enacted. Now, just over a generation later, Canadians embrace it. Will the acceptance of Canada’s increasing diversity (greater variety of origins of immigrants, more visible minorities) follow the same path?
- ✦ Canada has a proud history of peacekeeping operations. In fact, it was a Canadian, Prime Minister Pearson (1963-68), who conceived of the idea. Yet, the Canadian Forces budget was cut in the late 1990s, thereby affecting its ability to carry out such operations, and Canadians consistently rank increased military spending as a low priority. How can this be explained?

### UNDER THE MICROSCOPE...

Canada is a country of immigrants. Before 1961, by far and away the vast majority (roughly 90%) of those who came to live in Canada were born in Europe. By the last decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, there had been a profound shift. From 1991-2001, more than half of all immigrants to Canada came from Asia, a touch under 20% came from Europe and just over ten percent from Central and South America.

*“We know from past surveys that there is strong support among Canadians for multiculturalism and immigration, but this survey cautions us not to assume that all Canadians are equally happy about some of the demographic changes occurring. The variations across regions point to a public sentiment that is complex and needs to be more closely scrutinized to ensure that the diversity of our country is embraced by as many Canadians as possible,”*  
says Dr. Carsten Quell, CRIC’s Director of Research.

# Civil Liberties

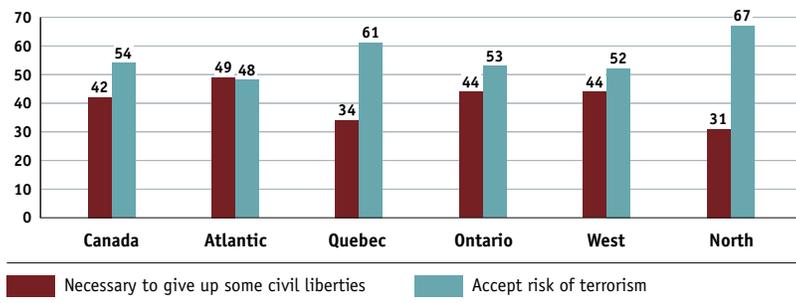
*“Against the background of 9/11 and the more recent terrorist bombings in London, Canadians are looking for the right balance in terms of trade-offs between civil liberties and greater security. This poll tells us that Canadians recognize that some risk of terrorism may have to be accepted to safeguard freedoms. It is encouraging that young Canadians – especially our Charter Generation – value our rights so strongly. But there is also a streak of law-and-order sentiment expressed in the majority view that when foreigners promote terrorist activity here, they should be deported,” says Rebecca Low, CRIC’s Director General, Research and Regional Operations Outside Quebec.*

While Canada has escaped the kind of terrorist attacks that have occurred in the U.S., Spain, Indonesia and Great Britain, Canadians still worry about terrorism. Protection against terrorism tied for fifth place among twelve policy priority choices for the federal government.

Nonetheless, a majority (54%) would rather safeguard than sacrifice their civil liberties, even if that means accepting a lower level of public security. This support was most pronounced among young Canadians (18-34), that is, the Charter generation, and, in regional terms, among Quebecers.

**FIGURE 9 PUBLIC SAFETY AND CIVIL LIBERTIES**  
GIVE UP CIVIL LIBERTIES / ACCEPT TERRORIST RISK

Next I am going to read you a series of two statements. Please tell me which one you agree with most. 1) In order to curb terrorism in this country, it will be necessary to give up some civil liberties. 2) We should preserve our civil liberties above all, even if some risk of terrorism remains.



Breaking down the notion of “protection” into specific measures affords a view on the dividing line Canadians draw between preserving civil liberties and promoting safety. Canadians strongly favour civil liberties when it comes to police searches without a warrant and monitoring of communications between private citizens. Nearly two out of three (65%) agree with the statement that “protection against searches without a warrant is a basic right that should not be given up for any reason”.

Surveillance cameras proved an important tool in several of the arrests made in London following the July 7, 2005 bombings. This has not been lost on Canadians. Over 70% think that more security cameras should be installed in public places so that police can monitor potential terrorism suspects.

There is strong support (two out of every three Canadians) for the view that when noncitizens abuse Canada’s open society by promoting terrorist activity, they should be deported, even if they risk mistreatment where they are sent.

These findings make it clear that Canadians want law enforcement to use existing legal options, such as security cameras, in the fight against terrorism. However, they are concerned about government possibly stepping on their rights and privacy as citizens.

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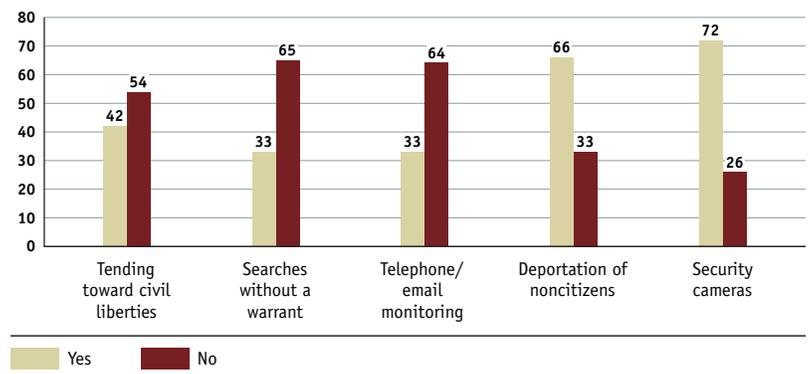
### FOOD FOR THOUGHT

✦ Canadians have displayed a remarkable commitment to civil liberties, but if a bomb were to explode on a subway or a bus in Canada, how do you think that would affect their views on the balance between civil rights and public safety?

**FIGURE 10 PUBLIC SAFETY AND CIVIL LIBERTIES**

Next I am going to read you a series of two statements. Please tell me which one you agree with most.

- 1a) In order to curb terrorism in this country, it will be necessary to give up some civil liberties. 1b) We should preserve our civil liberties above all, even if some risk of terrorism remains.
- 2a) Police should be free to search a property without a warrant solely on the suspicion that a terrorist act is being planned there. 2b) Protection against searches without a warrant is a basic right that should not be given up for any reason.
- 3a) Governments should be given greater powers to record telephone calls and monitor email in order to prevent people from planning terrorist acts. 3b) People's conversations and e-mail are private and there should be strict limits on giving governments access to them.
- 4a) Noncitizens who promote terrorist activity should be deported from Canada even if they might face mistreatment. 4b) Noncitizens who promote terrorist activity should be dealt with in a Canadian court of law and not deported.
- 5a) More security cameras should be installed in public places so that police can monitor potential terrorism suspects. 5b) More public security cameras will make everyone a suspect and undermine our civil liberties as citizens.



# Annexes

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 To see highlights for different areas of the country,  
click on the province or territory of your choice.



## FOCUS ON THE NORTH

Residents of the three Northern Territories (89%), when compared to Canadians in other regions, are the most supportive of making protection of the environment the first priority for the federal government. Nationally, the figure is 78%. Thus, while the environment is the first priority for all Canadians, it rallies the most impressive support in the North.

Northerners are also the most likely to agree that Canadians should preserve their civil liberties above all, even if some risk of terrorism remains (67%), compared to 54% nationally.

Northerners, particularly in Nunavut and in the Northwest Territories, are also relatively pleased with how the political system is working. It is in the Northwest Territories where Canadians are most likely to say that politicians from their area do a good job of serving voters' interests (79%).

Residents of Nunavut are the most likely to agree that the Gomery inquiry demonstrates that abuses of power in government are investigated and corrective measures taken (74%). They are also the least likely to believe that most political leaders do not tell the truth or keep their promises (66%). They also give the most positive ratings in the country for the honesty and ethical standards of provincial and federal political leaders (67% and 50% respectively).

At other end of the spectrum, Yukon residents are the least likely by far to give a high rating of honesty and ethical standards to their local or municipal political leaders. Only 23% give a high rating to municipal leaders, and only 16% give the same rating to provincial political leaders.

## FOCUS ON BRITISH COLUMBIA

Sixty-six percent of British Columbians believe that politicians are serving voters' interests, marking a significant increase in this sentiment since 2002 when the figure was 49%.

On the question of balancing civil liberties with greater public safety, 56% of British Columbians think that preserving civil liberties should be the priority, even if some risk of terrorism remains, while 42% say that in order to curb terrorism, it will be necessary to sacrifice some civil liberties. The respective national figures on this question are 54% and 42%.

Seven out of 10 British Columbians say that noncitizens who promote terrorist activity should be deported from Canada, even if they might face mistreatment. This figure was slightly higher than the national average of 66%.

## FOCUS ON ALBERTA

Albertans are among the least likely to believe that Canadian federalism has more advantages than disadvantages for their province. Sixty-two percent of Canadians think federalism has more advantages than disadvantages for their province. Among Albertans, the figure drops to 52%.

Albertans (80%) also are among those who give the lowest marks to federal political leaders for honesty and ethical standards.

On the possible trade-offs between civil liberties and fighting terrorism, Albertans are close to evenly divided with 49% in favour of preserving civil liberties, even if some risk of terrorism remains, and 46% who feel that in order to curb terrorism, it will be necessary to give up some civil liberties.

Albertans (70%) are among the most likely to believe that noncitizens who promote terrorist activity should be deported from Canada even if they might face mistreatment, and to agree that more security cameras should be installed in public places so that police can monitor potential terrorism suspects (74%).

## Annexes

### FOCUS ON SASKATCHEWAN

Eighty-three percent of Saskatchewan residents believe that most political leaders do not tell the truth or keep their promises. Only in Quebec do more people (88%) share this view.

Saskatchewanans (62%) are also the least likely to agree that politicians from their area do a good job of serving the interests of the community.

Only 26% believe that their province is treated with the respect it deserves in Canada. The only province less satisfied with the level of respect it receives is Newfoundland and Labrador where only 18% believe that their province gets the respect that it deserves.

Forty-four percent of Saskatchewan residents agree with the statement “the federal government has become virtually irrelevant to me”, up from 42% in 2003. Only in Nunavut (53%), New Brunswick and in Newfoundland and Labrador (45% and 44% respectively) is the federal government perceived as more irrelevant.

### FOCUS ON MANITOBA

Manitobans, along with Albertans, are the harshest judges of the honesty and ethical standards of federal leaders. Eighty percent of people in both provinces give them a low rating on both points. Still, Manitobans are among the most likely to say that Canadian federalism has more advantages than disadvantages for their province (73%, up from 70% in 2003).

Manitobans and Albertans (60%) are the most likely to oppose giving political parties financial incentives to increase the number of women candidates. Manitobans (57%) and Albertans (60%) are also the most opposed to requiring political parties nominate a specific percentage of women candidates.

When it comes to the war against terrorism, Manitobans (46%) are among the least likely to say that civil liberties should be preserved. They are also the least likely among Canadians to say that protection against searches without a warrant is a basic right (58%), and the least likely to believe that there should be strict limits on giving government access to people’s private conversations and e-mail (57%).

### FOCUS ON ONTARIO

Ontarians are feeling a little less secure about their place in Confederation. While a majority (62%) feel that their province is treated with the respect that it deserves, this represents a drop of 10 percentage points over 2004 when 72% felt this way.

Like Canadians in all regions, Ontarians expressed a preference for minority instead of majority government. Comparatively, however, their support was the lowest among the major regions of the country (59%).

### FOCUS ON QUEBEC

More than two-thirds of Quebecers – 67% – agreed that being part of Canada allows Quebec to benefit from the country’s international stature.

Sixty-five percent agreed that protection of rights under the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* is an advantage for Quebec. Sixty-four percent said that benefiting from federal transfer payments for social programs is an advantage, followed by protection against terrorism – 62%.

*Portraits* asked also four different questions on constitutional choices for Quebec. These were the results, after redistribution of the undecided by CROP:

- 49% Would vote YES in a referendum on **sovereignty-partnership**;
- 47% Would vote YES to Quebec becoming a **sovereign country, with a free trade agreement to be proposed to the rest of Canada**;
- 40% Would vote YES to Quebec becoming an **independent country, with a free trade agreement to be proposed to the rest of Canada**;
- 34% Would vote YES to Quebec becoming a **completely independent country**.

If a referendum on sovereignty-partnership were held now, 63% of Quebecers aged 18 to 24 would vote YES. In contrast, 39% of Quebecers aged 55 or older would vote YES. 51% of those aged 25-34 would support the YES, 52% of those aged 35-44 would vote YES, as would 52% of those aged 45-54.

When asked about their attachment to Quebec, 58% of Quebecers say they are very attached and 35% say they are somewhat attached for a total of 93%. In 1998, a total of 92% of Quebecers said they were very or somewhat attached to Quebec.

On attachment to Canada, 71% of Quebecers are very or somewhat attached to Canada in the 2005 survey, compared to 72% in 1998.

In response to a question about whether their country would change fundamentally if a number of public policies or institutions were ended or altered significantly, Quebecers ranked ending the official languages policy as the most negative potential change, followed by closing the CBC.

#### **FOCUS ON NEW BRUNSWICK**

Sixty-seven percent of New Brunswickers feel that their provincial/territorial government has too little revenue to fulfill its responsibilities, up from 62% in 2004 and far above this year's Canadian average (44%). Only residents of Newfoundland and Labrador (82%), Nunavut (71%), and Prince Edward Island (70%) are more likely to take this view.

Forty-five percent of New Brunswickers also agree with the statement "the federal government has become virtually irrelevant to me", a jump of 13 percentage points since 2003. Only in Nunavut is the federal government perceived as more irrelevant (53%).

However, New Brunswickers make a distinction between the relevance of the federal government and Canadian federalism. Fully 73% say that Canadian federalism has more advantages than disadvantages for their province, up from 62% in 2003. Only in Nova Scotia do more Canadians share this view (79%).

Sixty percent of New Brunswickers give provincial/territorial political leaders a low rating for honesty and ethical standards, putting them just behind Quebec where 66% take this view and Yukon where the figure is 82%.

#### **FOCUS ON PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND**

Prince Edward Islanders are among the most likely to say their province is treated with the respect it deserves (51%), behind only Nunavut (52%) and Ontario (62%). Yet, they are also among the most likely to believe their provincial government has too little revenue to fulfill its responsibilities (70%), up from 62% in 2004.

Among Canadians, Prince Edward Islanders are by far the most likely to give a high rating to the honesty and ethical standards of religious leaders (77%, up from 63% in 2004). They are also the most likely to give high ratings to the honesty and ethical standards of public servants (70%).

P.E.I. residents (34%) and Quebecers (33%) are the least likely to believe that cutting ties with the monarchy would result in a fundamental change to the nature of Canada.

## Annexes

### FOCUS ON NOVA SCOTIA

Among Canadians, Nova Scotians (79%) are the most likely to agree that Canadian federalism has more advantages than disadvantages for their province/territory, up nine percentage points from 2003. Quebecers and Albertans are least convinced of the advantages of federalism (51% and 52% respectively).

There are significant differences in perception among Canadians about the respect accorded to their province. The biggest change occurred in Nova Scotia where 43% currently feel their province gets the respect it deserves – a jump of 16 percentage points since last year.

Across Canada, minority government was preferred to majority government. Seventy percent of residents in Nova Scotia and in Newfoundland and Labrador preferred minority government, making these two provinces the strongest supporters of minority government in the Atlantic region.

In the Atlantic Provinces, 50% said abandoning the monarchy would change Canada. In Nova Scotia, 56% took that view. Of those Nova Scotians who believed that abandoning the monarchy would fundamentally change Canada's nature, 73% felt it would be negative. This was the highest figure in the country for those who took this view.

The Atlantic region (81%) led the way in saying that more spending on education and training, as well as cutting taxes (57%), should be high priorities for the federal government.

### FOCUS ON NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR

Support for cutting taxes is higher in Newfoundland and Labrador (65%) than anywhere in the country, as is support for protecting Canadians against terrorist threats (71%).

Of the Atlantic Provinces, Newfoundland and Labrador expressed the highest level of support for incentives to promote the participation of women in elected politics:

- 72% support the idea that political parties be required to nominate a specific percentage of women candidates for election campaigns; and
- 63% support the notion that political parties be given financial incentives to increase the number of women candidates that they put forward during election campaigns.

The province also registered the highest level of support for increased cooperation between the federal and provincial/territorial governments (75%), compared to 67% support throughout the Atlantic Region.

As for protecting the environment, which 78% of Canadians picked as the top priority for government, 91% of people in Newfoundland and Labrador, and the Northwest Territories, put that priority first. The only place where such sentiment was higher was in Nunavut (92%).

The Atlantic Region (81%) led the way in wanting more spending on education and training. Within the region, it was Newfoundland and Labrador (91% - high priority) where support was highest.

## Also Available from CRIC

### CRIC RESEARCH: DIVERSITY, CIVIC ENGAGEMENT, AND THE WORKING OF THE FEDERATION

All of our research falls into three themes: diversity; civic engagement; and the working of the federation. Below you will find the research that we have conducted over the past few years. To view this information please go to [www.cric.ca](http://www.cric.ca).

#### CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

##### ★ **The Civic Interest and Engagement of Canadians**

CRIC Survey  
August 2005

Most Canadians believe that civic engagement is more a matter of choice than a responsibility of citizenship, and 59% of Canadians say they feel the need to make a difference in the world around them. In fact, 61% believe that when people act together, they can change things for the better. And almost three of every four Canadians agree that by acting together, they can have at least some impact in making their community a better place to live.

★ **Civic Engagement in Canada.** (PowerPoint Document - Slide package)

##### ★ **Women, Public Service and Politics**

CRIC Report  
July 2005

Women make up more than half of Canada's population. Yet, in the last federal election, they accounted for little more than two of every 10 candidates. Why have women not made more progress in holding elected office in the past few decades?

##### ★ **Youth, Leadership, Engagement Project**

Over the past few years, CRIC's research has examined the attitudes and values of young leaders toward the political process to gain insight into the factors affecting their political participation and engagement.

★ **Youth and Leadership: A CRIC Study of the Values and Priorities of the Next Generation of Community Leaders in New Brunswick.**  
April 2004

★ **Youth and Leadership: A CRIC Study of the Values and Priorities of the Next Generation of Community Leaders in Ontario.**  
February 2003

##### ★ **Citizen Participation and Canadian Democracy: An Overview**

CRIC  
August 2003

This report summarizes the findings of a number of studies on citizen participation and Canadian democracy. The first section considers voter turnout in Canada and the particular reasons why people choose not to vote. In the 2000 federal election voter turnout was 61%, which is significantly lower than the 75% voter turnout Canada experienced during the 1988 federal election. The trend in declining voter turnout is also evident in most provincial elections as well.

## Also Available from CRIC

### DIVERSITY

★ **Regional and Multicultural Diversity in Canada**

CRIC Survey  
October 2005

Multiculturalism has a moderating effect on extremist influences in the view of 68% of Canadians. However, 58% expressed concern that the loyalty of immigrants may suffer if they maintain too strong an attachment to their countries of origin while becoming Canadian.

★ **Regional and Multicultural Diversity in Canada.** (PDF Document - Slide package)

★ **Decline in Number of Canadians Who Believe Religious Practice is Important**

CRIC Survey  
September 2004

A poll by CRIC shows that 61% of Canadians believe that religious practice is an important factor in the moral and ethical lives of Canadians while 36% say it is not.

★ **Religion in Canada.**

★ **Imminent Terrorist Attack Not a Fear for Most Canadians**

CRIC Survey  
September 2004

Three years after the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Centre in New York, most Canadians (56%) think possible terrorist attacks on Canada in the next two years are unlikely, but a sizable minority (42%) thinks the country could be the target of a major terrorist attack within that period.

★ **9-11: Three years later.**

★ **New Canada Revisited**

CRIC Survey  
July 2004

The survey revisits the findings of the 2003 "New Canada" study, which CRIC conducted in association with *The Globe and Mail*.

★ **CRIC Survey : New Canada Revisited.**

★ **Bilingualism Retains Strong Appeal Among Canadians -  
French Remains Second Language of Choice for Most Anglophones**

CRIC Survey  
February 2004

Bilingualism's appeal remains high among Canadians. It has special meaning for new Canadians, and is popular among younger Canadians. In the context of the country's deepening multiculturalism and its position in the global economy, Canadians are convinced of the importance of speaking more than one language.

★ **CRIC Survey on Official Languages.**

★ **A New Canada? The Evolution of Canadian Identity and Attitudes to Diversity**

CRIC Survey/Presentation  
April-May 2003

The CRIC, in partnership with *The Globe and Mail*, has conducted an in-depth national public opinion survey focusing on the way Canada is changing.

## Also Available from CRIC

★ **Canadians Differ from Americans on Iraq, United Nations**

CRIC Survey  
April 2003

There does not appear to be a rise in anti-American feeling among Canadians, despite Canada's difference of opinion with the U.S. over the war in Iraq.

★ **CRIC Survey on International Affairs.**

★ **CRIC FACTSHEET on Bilingualism**

CRIC  
March 2003

★ **A Majority Says Racism is a Big Problem in Canada**

CRIC Survey  
March 2002

59% of Canadians feel that racism is a big problem in Canada while 40% disagree.

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**WORKINGS OF THE FEDERATION**

★ **CRIC Borderlines 2005: Canadians Say Canada Leads U.S. on Quality of Life but Not Jobs for Best Educated**

June 2005

Seventy-seven percent of Canadians think that their country does a superior job of providing citizens with a better quality of life than does the United States. However, among Americans, only 50% think that the U.S. tops Canada in this area.

★ **CRIC Borderlines 2005: Survey Results from Canada and the United States.**

★ **Most Canadians Prefer a Federal System**

CRIC Survey  
October 2004

Three out of four Canadians, including a significant majority of Quebecers, prefer a federal system to any other kind.

★ **Canada-U.S.-Mexico Comparative Federalism Survey.**

★ **Attitudes to Federalism**

CRIC Survey  
August 2003

A majority of Canadians (56%) believes the federal government has too much power and a plurality (45%) wants local governments to have more influence, according to a new poll that examines attitudes to federalism in Canada, the United States, and Mexico.

★ **2003 Comparative Federalism Survey.**

★ **CRIC Borderlines Survey – 2002**

October 2002

★ Most Canadians remain confident of their independence but there has been some slippage.

★ Canadians are protective of their way of life and consider their values distinct from those of their U.S. neighbours.

## Also Available from CRIC

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★ **Canadians and Americans Agree on Common Border Policy**

CRIC Survey

June 2002

While Canadians and Americans have similar views on border security, there is a big difference in levels of confidence in government in both federations with Canadians clearly less trusting of government than their U.S. neighbours.

- ★ Press release.
- ★ Graphics.

★ **The Charter: Dividing or Uniting Canadians?**

The CRIC Papers

April 2002

The *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* is viewed favourably by large majorities in all regions, with the highest rate of approval in Quebec (91%), and the lowest in the West (86%). Approval of the Charter is higher than in previous years.

★ **Greater Support Among Canadians for Activism in World Affairs**

CRIC Survey

February 2002

As 2002 opens with a focus on international efforts to combat terrorism and the conditions that breed it, an increased number of Canadians think the country should become more active in military alliances such as NATO, and in delivery of foreign aid.



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The Canadian Unity Council

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# Canada

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The Canadian Unity Council



Centre for Research and Information on Canada

Centre for Research and Information on Canada (CRIC)  
2000 McGill College Avenue  
Suite 250  
Montreal, Quebec H3A 3H3  
1-800-363-0963  
Fax: (514) 843-4590  
www.cric.ca