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Six in Ten (58%) Believe Minority Groups Should be Encouraged to Change, Yet Most (82%) Agree that Canada's multicultural Make-up is one of the Best things about Canada

Toronto, ON – A new poll conducted by Ipsos Reid exclusively for CanWest News Service and Global Television finds that a majority (54%) of Canadians 'strongly' (17%) or 'moderately' (36%) agree that discrimination against minorities is a problem in Canada. While this might suggest that some tension exists among the multitude of ethnic groups that make up the diverse ethnic culture of Canada and those who were born here, fewer Canadians are of this opinion now than they were in the past. A similar study in 1993 revealed that seven in ten (70%) Canadians agreed that discrimination of minorities in Canada was a problem, while six in ten (60%) in 1998 agreed with that sentiment and 54% currently agree, showing a steady decline over the last 14 years.

Six in ten (58%) Canadians are of the opinion that the higher priority in Canada should be to encourage minority groups to change to be more like the rest of Canadians, compared to four in ten (38%) who believe that it is of a higher priority to encourage Canadians as a whole to try and accept minority groups and their customs and languages. In this regard, Canadians are consistent in their views of the past.

In 1990, Canadians were posed these same questions. Seventeen years ago, one third (34%) of Canadians believed that Canada should encourage the acceptance of minorities. This level

of opinion peaked at 43% in 1998, but has since come back down to 38%. On the flip side, 59% of Canadians in 1990 believed that Canada should encourage minorities to change to be more like the rest of Canadians. Support for this idea dipped to just over half (52%) in 1998, but has since rebounded to 58%.

Contradictorily, despite the fact that six in ten (58%) believe that minority groups should be encouraged to change, most (82%) Canadians agree that Canada's multicultural make-up is one of the best things about this country.

*These are the findings of an Ipsos Reid poll conducted exclusively for CanWest News Service and Global Television from June 12 to June 14, 2007. For the survey, a representative randomly selected sample of 1002 adults was interviewed by telephone. With a sample of this size, the results are considered accurate to within ± 3.1 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, of what they would have been had the entire adult population been polled. The margin of error will be larger within regions and for other sub-groupings of the survey population. These data were weighted to ensure that the sample's regional and age/sex composition reflects that of the actual Canadian population according to Census data. *Question 3 was fielded from June 5 to June 7 to 1005 adults.*

Majority (54%) Agree Discrimination of Minorities a Problem in Canada...

A majority (54%) of Canadians 'strongly' (17%) or 'moderately' (36%) agree that discrimination against visible minorities is a problem in Canada. A similar study in 1993 revealed that seven in ten (70%) Canadians agreed that discrimination of minorities in Canada was a problem, while six in ten (60%) in 1998 agreed with that sentiment and 54% currently agree, showing a steady decline over the last 14 years.

- Six in ten (59%) Ontarians believe discrimination against minorities to be a problem in Canada, compared to less than half (45%) of Quebecers who feel the same way. In fact, more people in Quebec disagree (54%) with this notion than agree (45%).
- Women (57%) are more likely than men (50%) to agree that discrimination of minorities is a problem in Canada.

Six in ten (58%) Believe Minority Groups Should be Encouraged to Change...

Six in ten (58%) Canadians are of the opinion that the higher priority in Canada should be to encourage minority groups to change to be more like the rest of Canadians. Canadians have not significantly changed their views on this topic, with a similar proportion (59%) in 1990 believing the same.

- Particularly interesting about this statistic is that it is driven higher by those in Quebec, where eight in ten (77%) agree that Canada should encourage minority groups to try to change to be more like most Canadians.
- Seven in ten (71%) older Canadians, aged 55 and over, believe that Canada should encourage minority groups to try to be more like most Canadians, compared to only six in ten (58%) middle-aged Canadians, aged 35 to 54, and less than half (44%) of younger Canadians, aged 18 to 34, who say the same.
- Individuals with a high school diploma or less education are also more likely (63%) to believe that minority groups should be encouraged to change compared to those who have a university degree (49%).

Interestingly, only four in ten (38%) Canadians agree that a higher priority would be to encourage Canadians as a whole to accept minority groups and their customs and languages. In this regard, Canadians are consistent in their views of the past.

- Residents of Saskatchewan and Manitoba (56%) are disproportionately more likely than Canadians in other regions of the country to believe that it is of a higher priority to encourage Canadians as a whole to try to accept minority groups and their customs and languages.
- Just two in ten (21%) Quebecers believe that instead of encouraging minority groups to change to be more like Canadians, a higher priority to should be placed with encouraging Canadians as a whole to try to accept minority groups and their customs and languages.
- Fully one half (50%) of younger Canadians, aged 18 to 34, believe that Canada should encourage Canadians as a whole to accept minority groups and their customs and languages.

Most (82%) Agree that Canada's multicultural Make-up is one of the Best things about Canada...

Reflecting on the sundry cultural and religious identities that comprise the Canadian population, most (82%) Canadians 'strongly' (43%) or 'moderately' (39%) agree that Canada's multicultural make-up is one of the best things about this country. This represents a 5 point increase from when Canadians were asked about their views on this topic in 1993.

Conversely, just 16% presently indicate that they 'moderately' (10%) or 'strongly' (6%) disagree with this notion.

- Urban Canadians (84%) are more likely than rural Canadians (75%) to agree with this sentiment.
- Nine in ten (88%) British Columbians agree that Canada's multicultural make-up is one of the best things about this country, compared to three quarters (74%) of residents in Saskatchewan and Manitoba who believe the same.
- Nine in ten (88%) younger Canadians, aged 18 to 34, are inclined to agree, while eight in ten (79%) older Canadians, aged 55 and over, indicate that they agree.

Two Thirds (66%) Agree that Treating Minority Groups with Generosity Part of Canadian Character...

Interestingly, Canadians are generally unified in their belief that treating minority groups with generosity is a special part of Canadian character, with two thirds (66%) indicating that they 'strongly' (24%) or 'moderately' agree with this thought. Conversely, three in ten (29%) 'moderately' (18%) or 'strongly' (11%) disagree.

- Seven in ten (70%) Atlantic Canadians agree, while six in ten (58%) Albertans believe the same.
- 69% of women agree, while just 63% of men agree.

Two Thirds (67%) Disagree that Canadian Social Fabric Threatened By Minorities...

Two thirds (67%) of Canadians 'strongly' (35%) or 'moderately' (31%) disagree that the fabric of Canadian society is being threatened by the influx of visible minority immigrants. On the

other hand, only three in ten (30%) 'strongly' (10%) or 'moderately' (20%) agree that this is the case.

- Older Canadians are more likely than younger Canadians (40% and 25% respectively) to agree that the fabric of Canadian society is being threatened by the influx of visible minority immigrants.
- Ontarians and Albertans (each at 34%) are more likely than residents in British Columbia, Manitoba and Saskatchewan (each at 25%) to agree.
- Three quarters (72%) of British Columbians and Quebecers disagree that Canada's social fabric is threatened in this way.

Six in Ten (60%) Disagree that Canada is Changing too Quickly Because of Minorities...

Six in ten (60%) Canadians 'strongly' (28%) or 'moderately' (33%) disagree that Canada is changing too quickly as a result of all of the minorities to whom Canada is now home. On the other hand, four in ten (38%) 'strongly' (16%) or 'moderately' (22%) agree with the notion that Canada is changing too quickly because of all the minorities who currently reside in Canada.

- Education appears to play a role in one's propensity to agree with this statement, with half (49%) of Canadians without a high school diploma agreeing that Canada is changing too quickly because of all the minorities in Canada, while just three in ten (29%) Canadians with a university degree feel the same.



- Older Canadians (46%) are more likely than middle aged Canadians (35%) or younger Canadians (32%) to agree that Canada is changing too quickly as a result of increased levels of minorities.
- 43% of Ontarians agree that Canada is changing too quickly, while just 27% of residents of Saskatchewan and Manitoba are in agreement.
- Seven in ten (70%) residents of British Columbia the Atlantic Canada (69%) disagree with this statement.

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The following questions were asked:

1) Some people believe that treating minority groups with generosity is a special part of the Canadian character. Do you personally agree or disagree with this statement?

2) I'm going to read you some different statements people might make about issues concerning life in Canada today. For each statement, please tell me whether you strongly agree, moderately agree, moderately disagree or strongly disagree.

-Canada's multicultural make-up is one of the best things about this country



-The fabric of Canadian society is being threatened by the influx of visible minority immigrants

-Canada is changing too quickly because of all the minorities we have here now

-Discrimination against visible minorities is a problem in Canada

3) Overall, what do you, yourself, think should be a higher priority for Canada: To encourage Canadians as a whole to try to accept minority groups and their customs and languages; To encourage minority groups to try to change to be more like most Canadians?