



MEDIA RELEASE

CANADIAN CONSENSUS: SURVEY REVEALS CITIZENSHIP IS MORE THAN YOU THINK

TORONTO, ON – February 16, 2012 – New national public opinion research reveals Canadians believe citizenship is more than having a passport and obeying the law.

While these things are important, when asked what makes someone a good citizen, Canadians also emphasize: treating men and women equally (95%); accepting those who are different (82%); protecting the environment (80%); respecting other religions (65%); and, actively participating in one's local community (51%).

Canadians on Citizenship is the first national survey to ask what it means to be a Canadian citizen, polling 2,376 Canadians from across the country.

It reveals that most Canadians (89%) believe that everyone – regardless of whether they're Canadian or foreign-born – can be a good citizen. This reflects the experience of newcomers: foreign-born citizens are as likely as native-born citizens to fully feel like a good citizen in this country (75% versus 78%), and are even prouder to be Canadian (88% versus 82%).

"The results couldn't be more *Canadian* - we share an overwhelming consensus of what it means to be a good Canadian citizen," said Michael Adams, President, Environics Institute. "Obeying the laws and paying taxes are important, but they're not enough. All Canadians are embracing active participation in the community, simple acts of kindness, respect, openness, compromise and environmental stewardship are fundamental components to today's current definition. This is why the world wants the Canadian experiment to succeed."

Other key findings from the survey:

- A majority are comfortable with citizenship requirements, with most endorsing the current residency (69%) and language (86%) requirements.
- Two-thirds (65%) believe citizenship in Canada today strikes the right balance between rights and responsibilities.
- Canadians expect newcomers to adapt to become good citizens (obeying the law, learning about history and culture, accepting Canadian values), but many (44%) also believe society needs to do more to help newcomers.
- Most do not feel Canadian citizenship is threatened by globalization. Clear majorities believe living abroad is good thing (64%), and that dual citizenship should be allowed (70%).

"Our work with Canada's newest citizens allows us to hear their views on Canada and feeling Canadian firsthand," said Gillian Hewitt Smith, Executive Director & CEO, Institute for Canadian Citizenship. "We're excited by the fact that [what we hear](#) is reflected in the survey: a Canadian population united by a commitment to community and to Canada. It's a powerful statement about the nation we've become, and our potential for future success."

Ratna Omidvar, President, Maytree, agrees. "Canadians can be proud of what these results say about us as a society. We know that by treating each other with respect and participating in our communities we can make the country stronger."

Canadians on Citizenship is the result of a collaboration between the Environics Institute, the Institute for Canadian Citizenship, the Maytree Foundation, the CBC and RBC to further the national dialogue on citizenship (join the conversation on Twitter [#goodcdncitizens](#)).

[More information about the survey, including a summary report and an infographic illustrating key insights, can be found here.](#)

ABOUT THE ENVIRONICS INSTITUTE

The Environics Institute for Survey Research was established by Michael Adams in 2006 to promote relevant and original public opinion and social research on important issues of public policy and social change. The focus of the Institute's mandate is to survey individuals and groups not usually heard from, asking questions not normally asked. The Institute pursues this mission by: a) sponsoring survey research on issues of public importance not being addressed by other organizations; b) actively disseminating its sponsored research to encourage informed public discourse and policy impact; c) promoting the role of survey and social research in public policy and democracy through outreach activities (e.g., publications, public commentary); and d) serving as a centre of excellence for responsible public opinion research methods and application, through education, training and consulting. For more information, see environicsinstitute.org.

ABOUT THE ICC

The Institute for Canadian Citizenship is a national, non-profit organization that engages Canadians in citizenship through innovative programs, campaigns and partnerships designed to ensure new citizens are welcomed and included as equals, to create meaningful connections among all Canadian citizens, to foster a culture of active, engaged citizens and to celebrate what it means to be Canadian. Our Building Citizenship program brings together new and established Canadians at community citizenship ceremonies; our Cultural Access Pass (CAP) offers new citizens the chance to visit more than 1,000 attractions across Canada for free for a full year from the time they're sworn in; and our annual LaFontaine-Baldwin Symposium fosters a debate on the future of Canada's civic culture. The ICC was founded and is co-chaired by the Right Honourable Adrienne Clarkson and John Ralston Saul. The ICC is supported by Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC). For more information, visit icc-icc.ca.

ABOUT MAYTREE FOUNDATION

Established in 1982, Maytree promotes equity and prosperity through its policy insights, grants and programs. The organization has gained recognition for its expertise in developing, testing and implementing programs and policy solutions related to immigration, integration and diversity; maytree.com.

ABOUT RBC

Royal Bank of Canada (RY on TSX and NYSE) and its subsidiaries operate under the master brand name RBC. One of the largest banks in the world, based on market capitalization, the company offers personal and commercial banking, wealth management services, insurance, corporate and investment banking and transaction processing services on a global basis. RBC employs approximately 74,000 full- and part-time employees who serve close to 15 million personal, business, public sector and institutional clients through offices in Canada, the U.S. and 56 other countries. As one of Canada's largest corporate donors, RBC supports a broad range of community initiatives, through donations, sponsorships and employee volunteer activities. In 2011, RBC contributed more than \$98 million to community causes worldwide, through donations of more than \$64 million, and an additional \$34 million in sponsorship of community events and national organizations.

ABOUT CBC NEWS

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