



A national study that explores how new citizens participate in Canada's sporting culture, and how sports can help new citizens successfully integrate. *Playing together* captures firsthand accounts from 4,000 new Canadian citizens across the country — a group that has chosen Canada and simply wants an invitation to play.

### NEW CITIZENS ARE NOT NEW CANADIANS



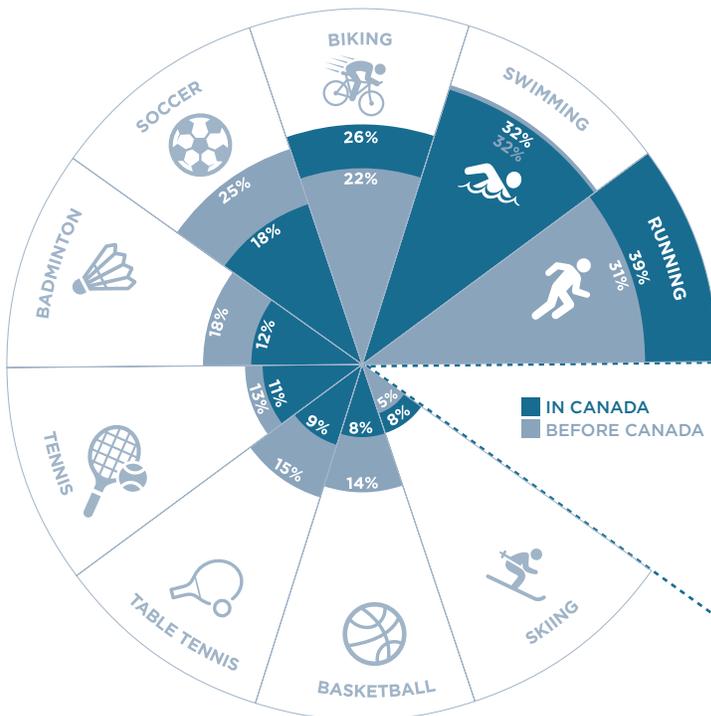
A minor distinction, with major implications: new citizens are immigrants who have been in Canada for at least three years (usually five to six) and have attained Canadian citizenship. They're at a different stage of their Canadian journey.

## THE NEW CITIZEN FAN

We asked about interest in Canada's professional sports. Not surprisingly, soccer is the overwhelming favourite, followed by hockey — a sport new citizens identify as being a key part of Canadian culture; only **34% have never watched a hockey game on TV**. Focus group participants joked about "scoring points" with Canadians by knowing something about hockey.

### INTEREST IN CANADA'S PROFESSIONAL SPORTS

Sport	Some Interest	No Interest
Soccer	80%	20%
Hockey	71%	29%
Basketball	66%	34%
Football	46%	54%
Baseball	42%	58%



## THE NEW CITIZEN PARTICIPANT

Similar to the rest of the country, new citizens are more attracted to activities classified as "active leisure" than organized sports; they're easy to do alone or with family, and are relatively inexpensive. This chart compares the sports new citizens played before coming to Canada with what they play now.



## BARRIERS TO PARTICIPATION

**GOOD NEWS!** We're not dealing with systemic cultural issues. Barriers are mainly structural challenges that can be solved.

### THE TOP 3 BARRIERS ARE FAMILIAR to almost all Canadians



OTHER PRIORITIES  
65%



TIME  
56%



COST  
54%

### BARRIERS UNIQUE TO NEW CITIZENS



NO ONE TO PLAY WITH



NO OPPORTUNITIES



NO APPROPRIATE SKILL LEVEL



NO INTEREST



DID NOT FEEL WELCOME

More meaningful social interactions occur **in the stands and on the field** than at work

**BREAKING THE ICE**

**69%** of newcomers who play sports within the first 3 years believe it helps them **learn about Canadian culture**

**BREAKING THE ICE**

**87%** feel more connected to their community watching their kids play or volunteering with the team

**BREAKING THE ICE**

Sports can teach elements of Canadian culture not learned in books or online:

- jargon and slang
- humour
- how to handle conflict
- acceptable behaviours or gestures

INSTITUTE FOR CANADIAN CITIZENSHIP



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**NEW CITIZENS LOVE TEAM CANADA!**

**51%** WATCH THE WINTER OLYMPICS

**54%** WATCH THE SUMMER OLYMPICS



# PUT ME IN, COACH!

New citizens share recommendations to get them into the game

Offer me free tickets

Share how to get discounted tickets

Develop a tiered pricing structure

Create a tax benefit for adults

Let me try winter sports for free

Go right to the source - I'm more than happy to tell you!

Recruit my community leaders as ambassadors

Create a Canadian sports welcome package

Provide a fun booklet at games that introduces me to your team and explains the rules

Offer locker room tours and meet-the-athlete events

**LET ME TRY BEFORE I BUY**

**ASK ME; WORK WITH ME**

**WELCOME ME**

**MEET ME HERE**

**TEACH ME THE RULES**

**PROMOTE NEW CANADIAN SPORTS**

Create partnerships with groups already connected to me

Send professional athletes to my community events and festivals

Find creative ways to give me the play-by-play; if I can follow the game, I'm more likely to watch and play

Help me encourage all Canadians to try a new sport, like cricket

**THANK YOU!** A first for Canada, this study was made possible through the generous support of Bouygues Building Canada and Doug & Lois Mitchell.