

What Keeps Canada Together?

No clear majority, but Charter of Rights and Healthcare still tops

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When asked what keeps the country united no single issue (of the several examples provided to respondents) draws a majority. That said, the Charter of Rights and Universal Health Care emerge well ahead of the rest.

These findings arise from a survey commissioned by the Association for Canadian Studies of 1509 Canadians conducted online by Leger Marketing during the period of June 24th to June 26th, 2014 (the margin of error for an equivalent telephone survey would be 2.9 percentage points 19 times out of 20).

The survey reveals certain noteworthy differences across demographics, testifying to the multiple visions of the country.

Amongst Canada's youth (18-24 age group) hockey and health care take the dominant spot. Amongst Canada's Francophones, somewhat more select respect for provincial jurisdiction and transfer payments as key national unifiers.

Indeed the combination of the two responses (14 + 8 = 22%) would put "federalist governance" ahead of the Charter of Rights amongst the Francophone population. Canadians under age 35 rank multiculturalism quite strongly as well. Indeed, the elements that offer the biggest contrast between the 18-24 group and the 65+ group are multiculturalism and hockey. Examples of potential unifiers, such as the threat of Americanization and the presence of the monarchy, once considered important dimensions of Canadian unity, now appear near insignificant.

What keeps Canada united?												
Rank in Order	Total	Men	Women	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	French	English	Other
Weighted Totals	1509	731	778	175	246	255	303	249	281	322	866	316
Unweighted Totals	1509	844	665	128	189	213	330	305	344	367	969	170
Canadian Charter of Rights	25%	23%	27%	17%	21%	31%	27%	27%	26%	20%	26%	29%
Universal Health Care	22%	21%	23%	20%	21%	22%	23%	21%	26%	13%	28%	15%
Hockey	12%	16%	9%	20%	16%	13%	13%	12%	4%	14%	11%	17%
A Shared History	11%	10%	11%	5%	11%	9%	12%	11%	12%	12%	11%	7%
Multiculturalism	9%	8%	10%	16%	15%	8%	6%	6%	5%	5%	8%	16%
Respect for Provincial Jurisdiction	6%	6%	6%	4%	3%	5%	6%	6%	10%	14%	4%	3%
Official Languages Law Bilingualism	4%	4%	4%	8%	2%	2%	5%	4%	4%	9%	3%	3%
Equalization Transfer Payments	4%	4%	3%	5%	3%	4%	1%	4%	6%	8%	2%	3%
National Transportation Network	3%	3%	3%	2%	4%	3%	2%	3%	3%	4%	2%	3%
The Threat of Americanization	2%	3%	2%	1%	2%	2%	4%	2%	3%	1%	4%	1%
The Monarchy	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	1%	3%	2%	2%	2%	3%