
PLAYING SPORTS IN CANADA & IMMIGRANT SENSE OF BELONGING

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INCLUSION FORUM
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**PART I:
SPORTS AS A SYMBOL OF CANADIAN IDENTITY**

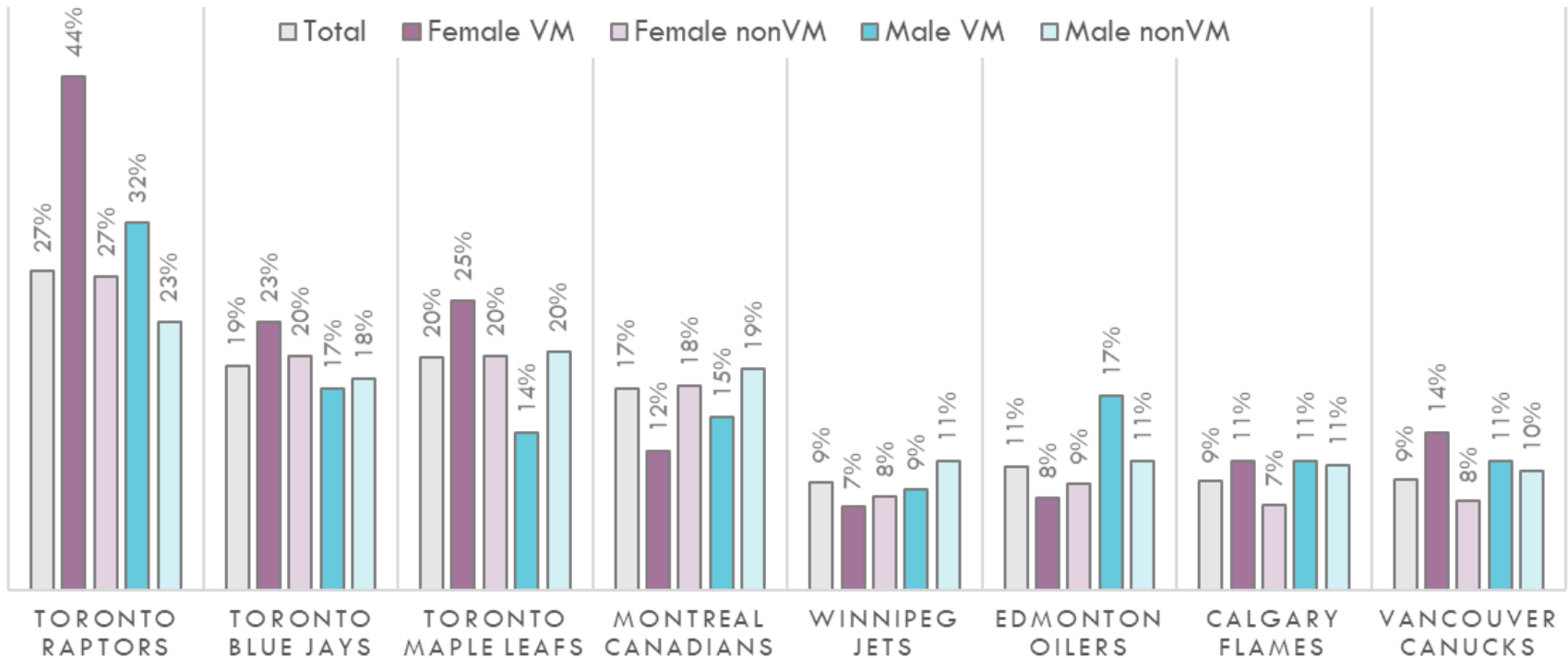


Are Sports Part Of Canada's National Identity?

- Sports have the ability to generate national pride and a more intense connection to Canada and being Canadian.
- Sports are a natural – or “universal” – connection point between people, helping [recent immigrants] feel at home in their new country.
- 95 percent of newcomers surveyed believe that sports are an important part of Canadian culture (Institute for Canadian Citizenship 2014) .
- According to a Leger/ACS survey of the Canadian public conducted in 2010, 88% of respondents agree (strongly or somewhat) that playing a Winter Sport is an important part of Canadian Identity.
- The 2013 General Social Survey reveals that 77% of Canadians view Hockey as a very or somewhat important national symbol.

Visible minority females most likely to view teams in Toronto as important sources of pride in Canada

% VIEWING SPORTS FRANCHISES AS A "VERY IMPORTANT" SOURCE OF PERSONAL OR COLLECTIVE PRIDE IN CANADA



Source: Association for Canadian Studies / Leger Marketing National Survey (June 2019; n=1545 respondents)



“The Toronto Raptors are an important source of personal or collective pride in Canada” by key sociodemographics (somewhat or very important source of pride)

Age						
18 to 24	25 to 34	35 to 44	45 to 54	55 to 64	65 to 74	75+
168	255	249	278	271	243	83
69.6%	65.1%	56.6%	57.6%	55.0%	52.3%	72.3%
Sex		Immigrant Status		Generation Status		
Males	Females	Immigrant	Canadian-born	1st Gen	2nd Gen	3rd Gen+
751	795	330	1216	225	209	486
59.0%	60.0%	68.2%	57.2%	68.2%	63.7%	54.7%
Annual Income		University Degree		Employment Status		
Under \$60k	Over \$60k	Yes	No	Employed	Unemployed	Student
623	763	477	1042	1365	60	105
52.8%	66.2%	64.4%	57.8%	58.5%	51.7%	74.3%
Province or Region						
Atlantic	Quebec	Ontario	Manitoba	Saskatchewan	Alberta	BC
105	360	594	55	47	173	210
62.9%	42.8%	71.9%	49.1%	59.6%	57.8%	55.7%
Mother Tongue				Urbanicity		
English	French	English & French	Non-official language	Urban	Suburban	Rural
970	327	43	187	693	545	283
63.2%	43.1%	55.8%	68.4%	58.0%	64.2%	55.8%
Race / Ethnicity						
White	Black	Latin American	Chinese	South Asian	Filipino	Other
1202	23	22	69	60	25	106
56.5%	69.6%	68.2%	84.1%	76.7%	92.0%	59.4%



PART II:
NEWCOMER PARTICIPATION IN SPORTS

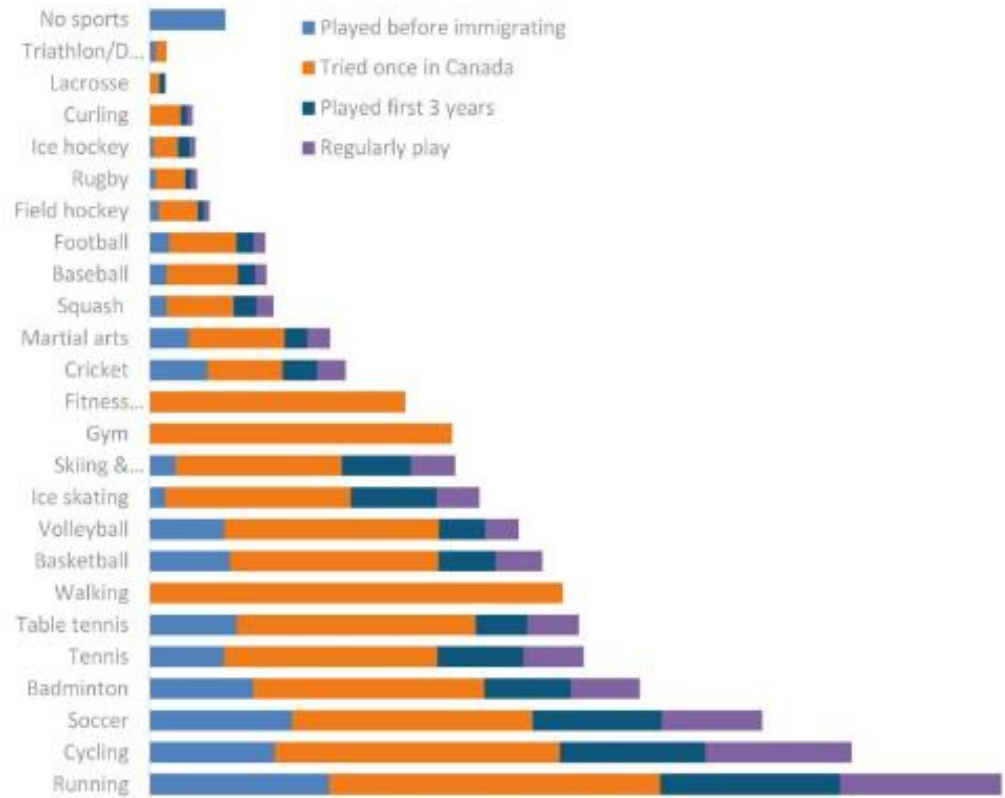


What Sports Do Newcomers Play?

- Newcomers often start with sports popular in their countries of origin, and in Canada those sports (e.g., table tennis, badminton, cricket and soccer) tend to be dominated by particular immigrant groups. They also appear to be **attracted to “active leisure” activities rather than organized sports.**
- When asked what physical activities they had tried at least once, walking (72%), swimming (64%), running (58%), working out at the gym (53%), cycling (50%) and fitness classes (45%) topped the list – **all relatively inexpensive activities.**
- A significant number tried ice skating (32%) and skiing and snowboarding (29%) at least once. **Only 4%, however, had given hockey a shot.**
- These trends also apply to sports new citizens play regularly. Running (39%), swimming (32%) and cycling (26%) are the most popular.
- In terms of more organized sports, the most popular are soccer (18%), badminton (12%), tennis (11%), table tennis (9%) and basketball (8%).

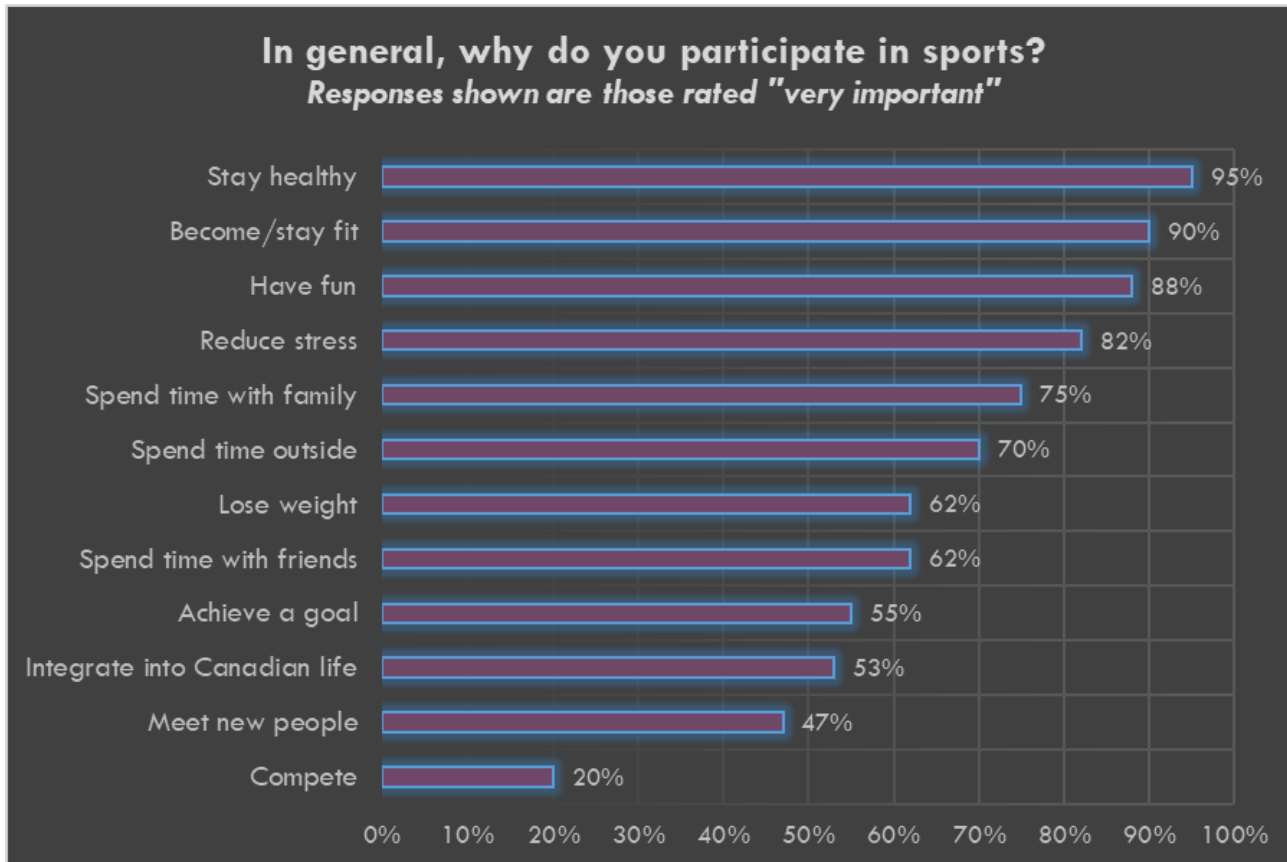
Sports Participation Trends Among Newcomers In Canada

Sports	Played before immigrating	Tried once in Canada	Played first 3 years	Regularly play
Swimming	32%	64%	35%	32%
Running	31%	58%	31%	39%
Cycling	22%	50%	25%	26%
Soccer	25%	42%	23%	18%
Badminton	18%	40%	15%	12%
Tennis	13%	37%	15%	11%
Table tennis	15%	42%	9%	9%
Walking	n/a	72%	n/a	n/a
Basketball	14%	36%	10%	8%
Volleyball	13%	38%	8%	6%
Ice skating	3%	32%	15%	7%
Skiing & snowboarding	5%	29%	12%	8%
Gym	n/a	53%	0%	0%
Fitness classes	n/a	45%	n/a	n/a
Cricket	10%	13%	6%	5%
Martial arts	7%	17%	4%	4%
Squash	3%	12%	4%	3%
Baseball	3%	13%	3%	2%
Football	3%	12%	3%	2%
Field hockey	2%	7%	1%	1%
Rugby	1%	5%	1%	1%
Ice hockey	1%	4%	2%	1%
Curling	0%	5%	1%	1%
Lacrosse	0%	2%	1%	0%
Triathlon/Duathlon	1%	2%	0%	0%
No sports	13%	n/a	n/a	n/a



Source: Institute for Canadian Citizenship, "Playing Together – New Citizens, Sports & Belonging" (July 2014)

Why do Canadian Immigrants Participate in Sports?



Source: Institute for Canadian Citizenship, "Playing Together – New Citizens, Sports & Belonging" (July 2014)

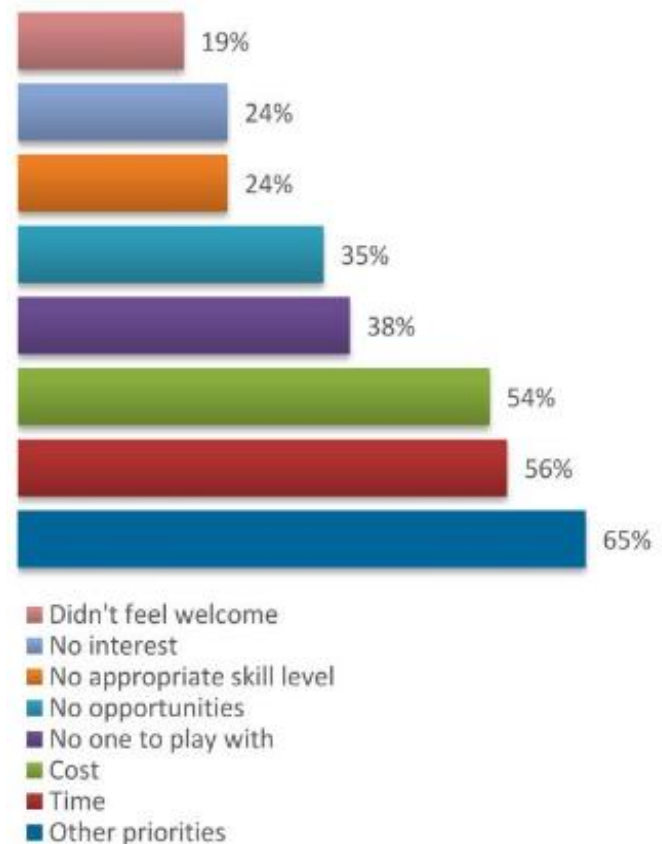
Sports As An Integrator Into Canadian Society

- When asked why they participate in sports, 53% of newcomers surveyed by ICC said integrating into Canadian society was an important or very important factor in their decision to play.
- 69% stated that **sports helped them learn about Canadian culture** during their first three years here—either through their own participation or their children's.
- By participating in sports, new Canadians meet others who share their interests and speak the same 'language' (sports).
- Sports can be the starting point for deeper discussions about Canadian politics, culture and history: “[The] locker room is a great place to learn about Canada!” (ICC survey respondent).

Some Barriers To Participation In Sports

- **Financial barriers.** Expensive equipment and fees in sports (especially hockey).
- **Time commitment.** Sports can demand too much time for many working families to manage, especially those adapting to life in a new country. Only 26% of immigrants played sports regularly (at least once per week) in the first three years they lived in Canada.
- **Lack of sufficient information on how to get involved** and lack of information on the assistance programs that exist.
- **Insufficient language capability**, which prevents some parents from being able to get their children registered.
- **Racism** – or a feeling of not being welcome – particularly in sports where there are few immigrant participants.

Barriers to participation in first three years in Canada
(Responses are those rated important & very important)





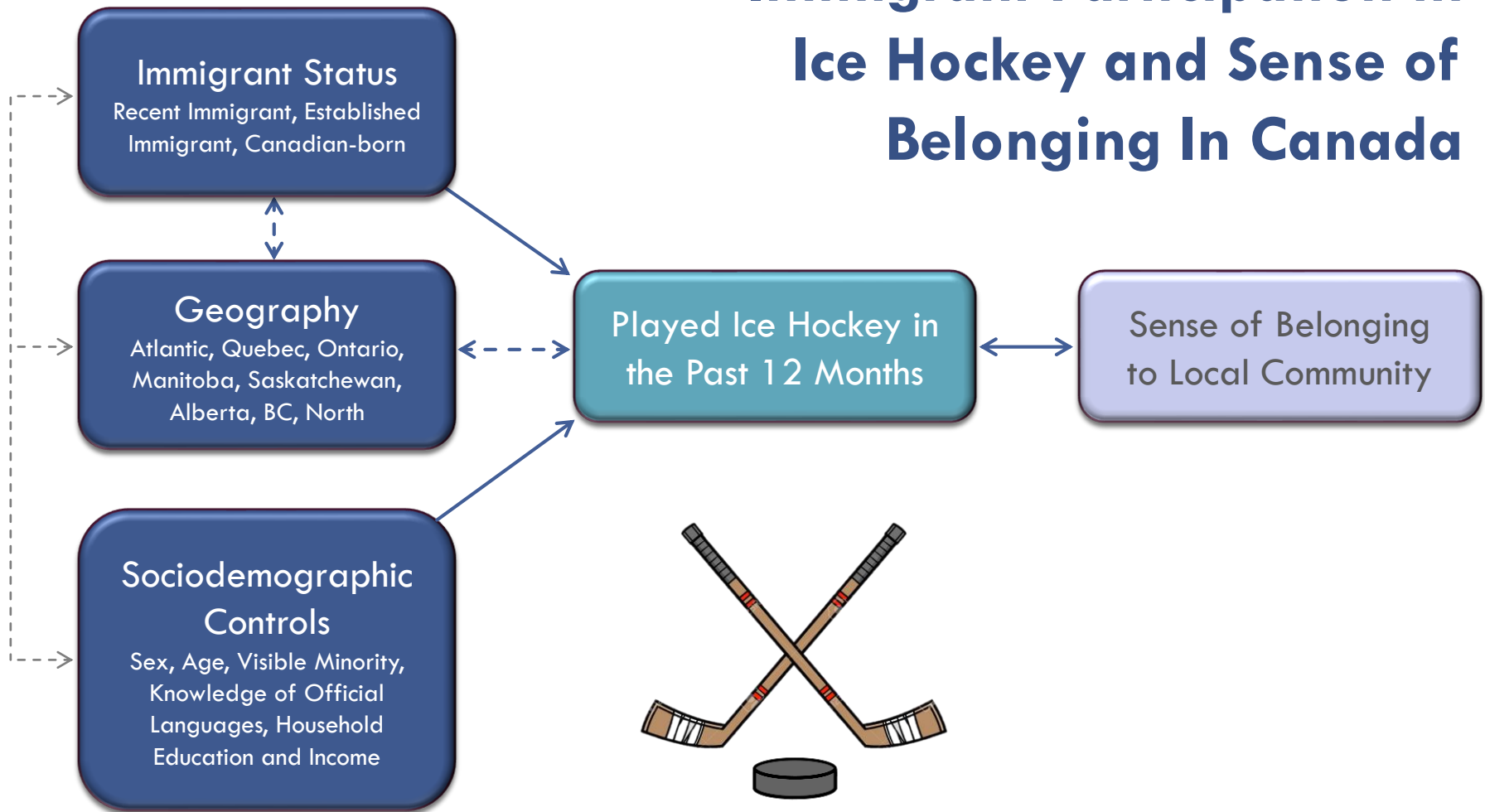
**PART III:
IMMIGRANT PARTICIPATION IN HOCKEY &
SENSE OF BELONGING**



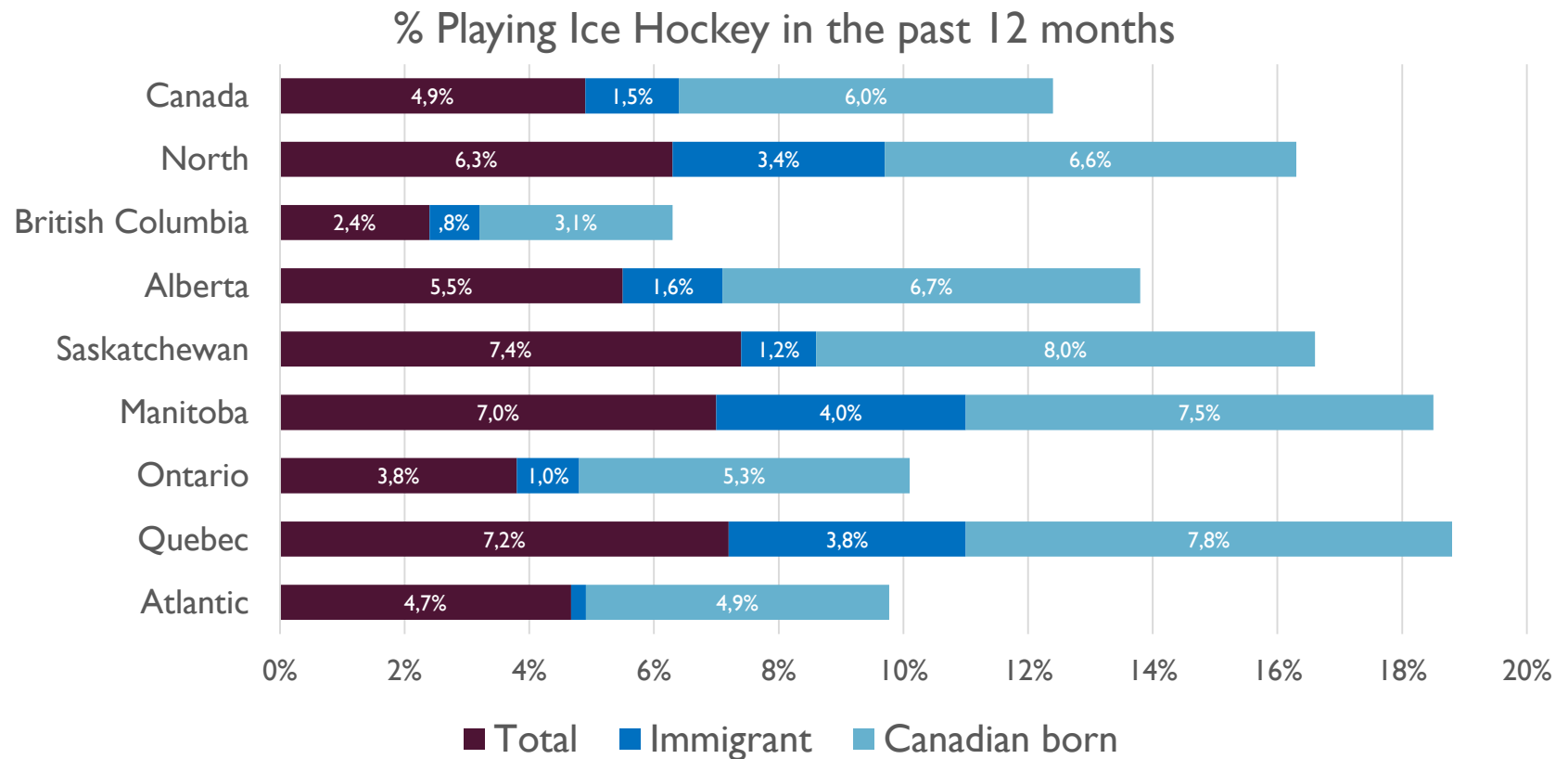
Newcomers Views On Hockey, Canada's National Sport

- Sports are more than just sports. They're part of the culture.
 - “Sports have the ability to connect people from different backgrounds and provide safe spaces for them to explore different cultures.”
- For new citizens, **Canadian sporting culture is synonymous with HOCKEY.**
- ICC focus group participants talked about how they felt compelled to show interest in hockey to be a part of mainstream Canadian society.
 - “Especially during game season, everyone wears jerseys and it seems like a big festival.... It makes me feel like I have to know hockey, otherwise I won't join their conversation. Like my husband, he doesn't know anything about hockey, but he got himself a Canucks jersey.”

Immigrant Participation in Ice Hockey and Sense of Belonging In Canada



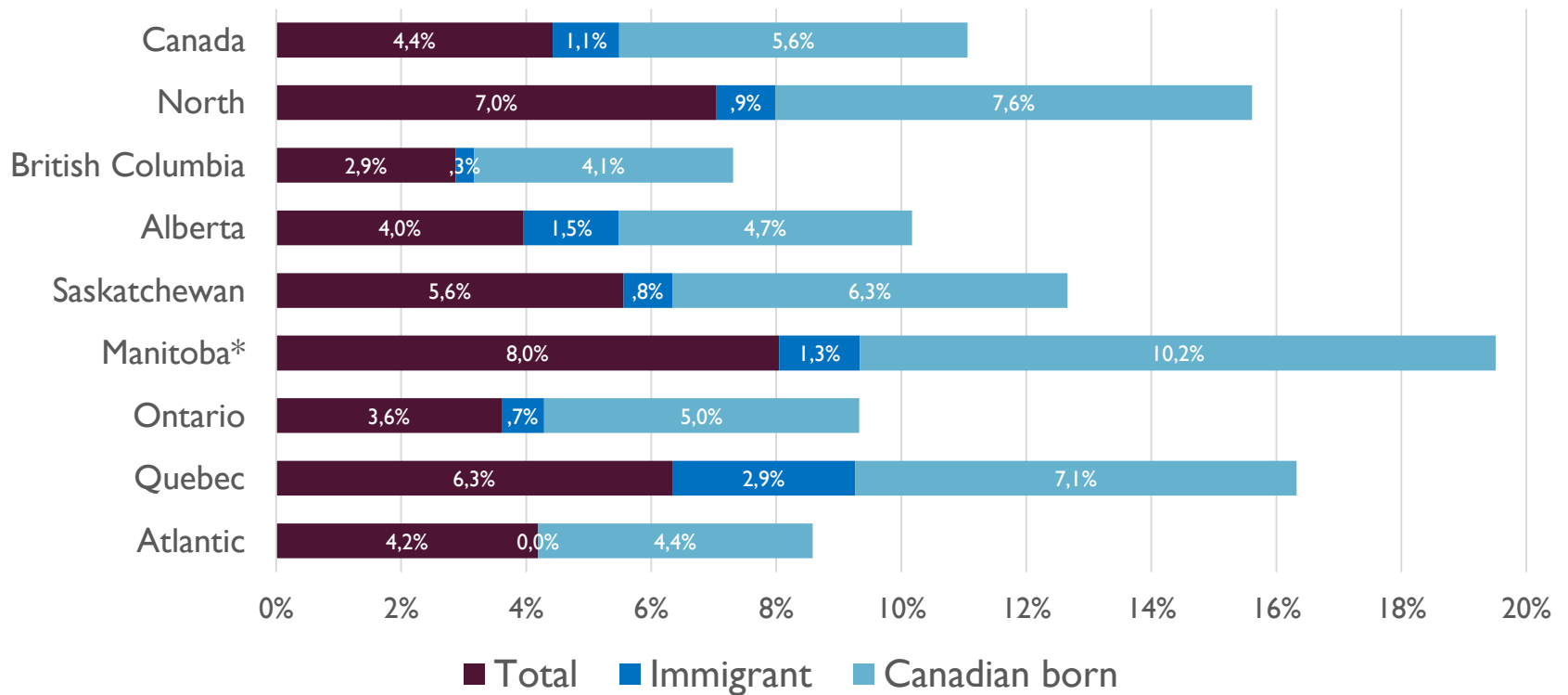
2010: Immigrants in Quebec, Manitoba, and the North most likely to play Ice Hockey; Canadian Born more likely to play in Saskatchewan, Quebec and Manitoba



Source: CCHS 2010. Population aged 12-64

2014: Immigrants in Quebec most likely to play ice hockey; Canadian Born more likely to play in Manitoba and the North

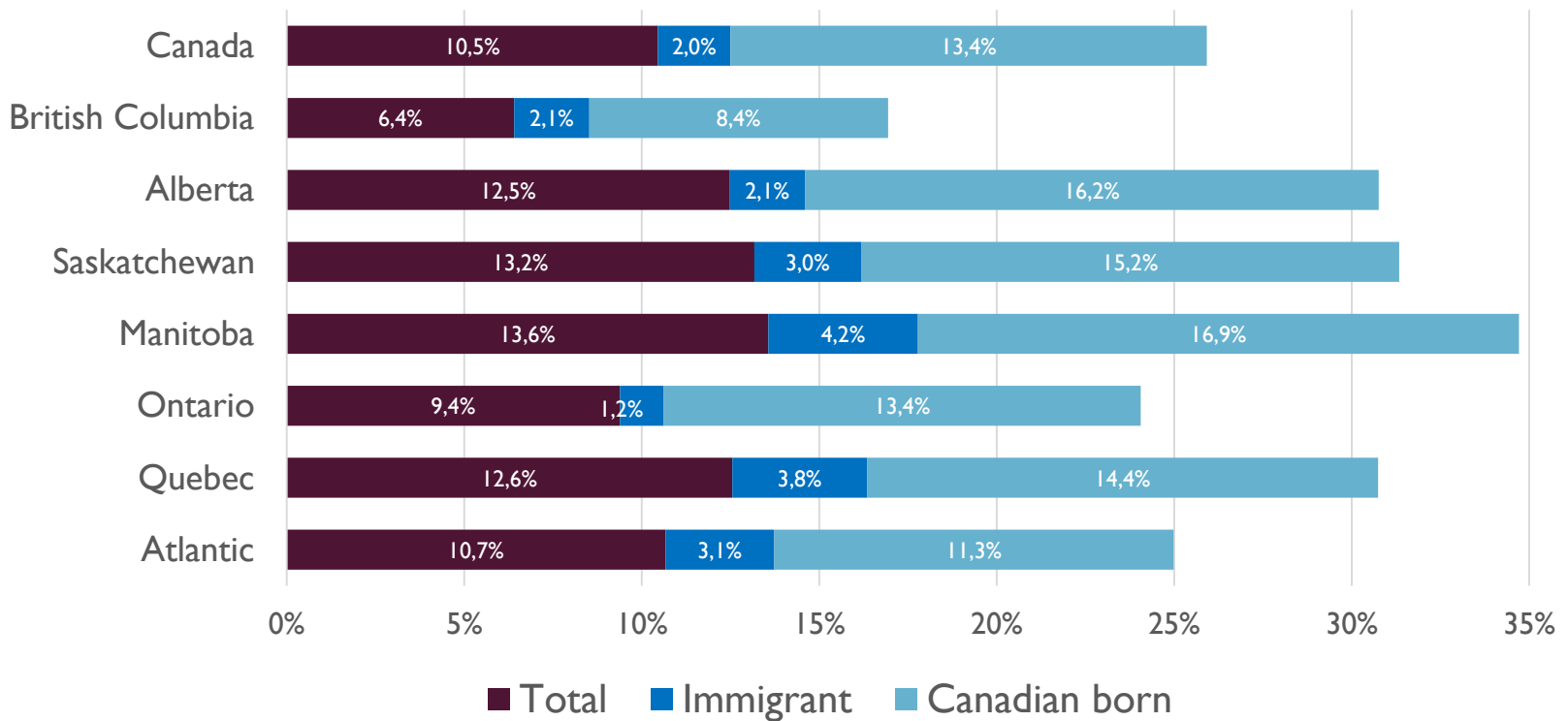
% Playing Ice Hockey in the past 12 months



Source: CCHS 2014. Population aged 12-64

2017: Immigrants in Quebec and Manitoba and Canadian Born in the Prairies most likely to play ice hockey

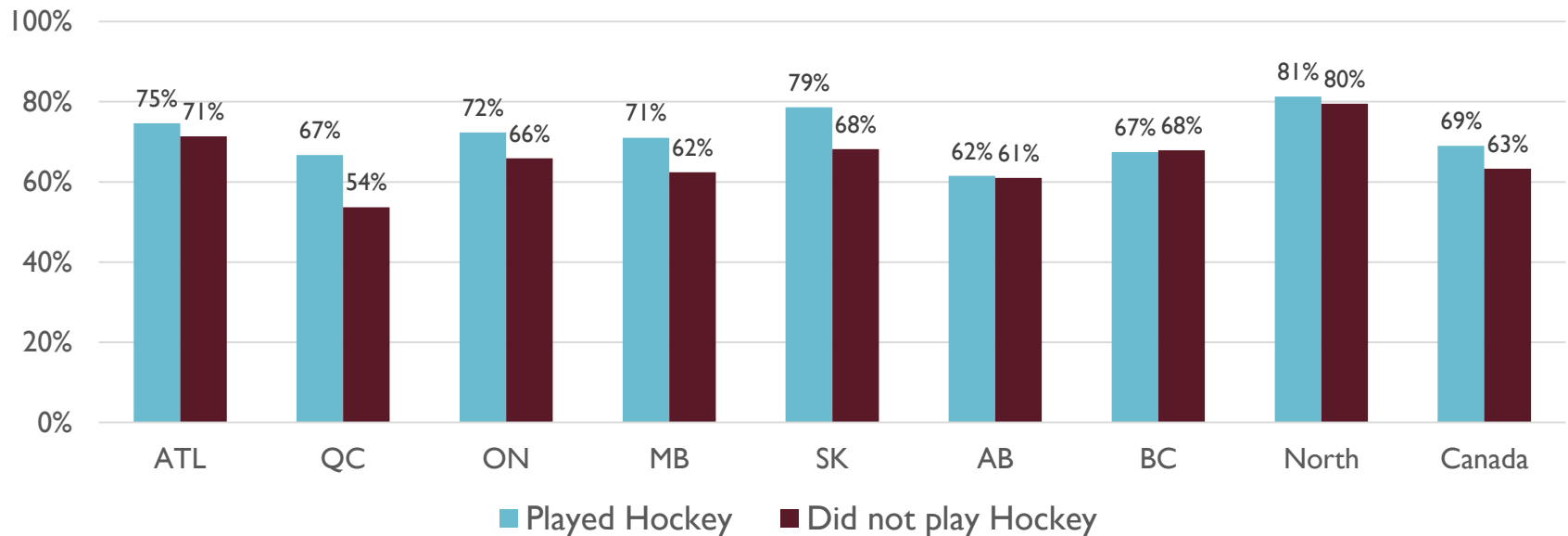
% Playing Ice Hockey in the past 12 months



Source: CCHS 2017. Population aged 12-64

Does Playing Hockey Affect Sense of Belonging to Local Community?

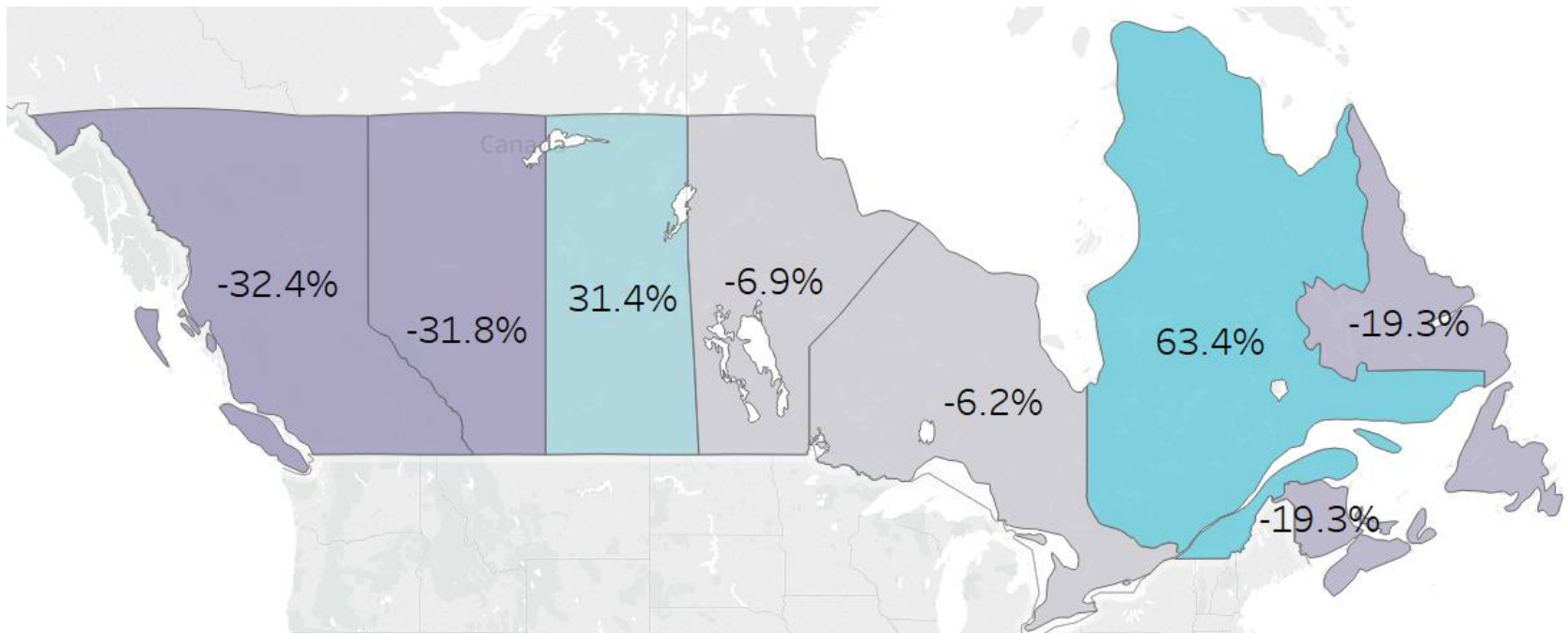
Sense of Belonging to Community for Hockey Players and Non-players (2010)



→ In 2010: Hockey Players consistently have higher sense of belonging to their local community than Non-players across Canadian provinces.

Source: CCHS 2010. Population aged 12-64.

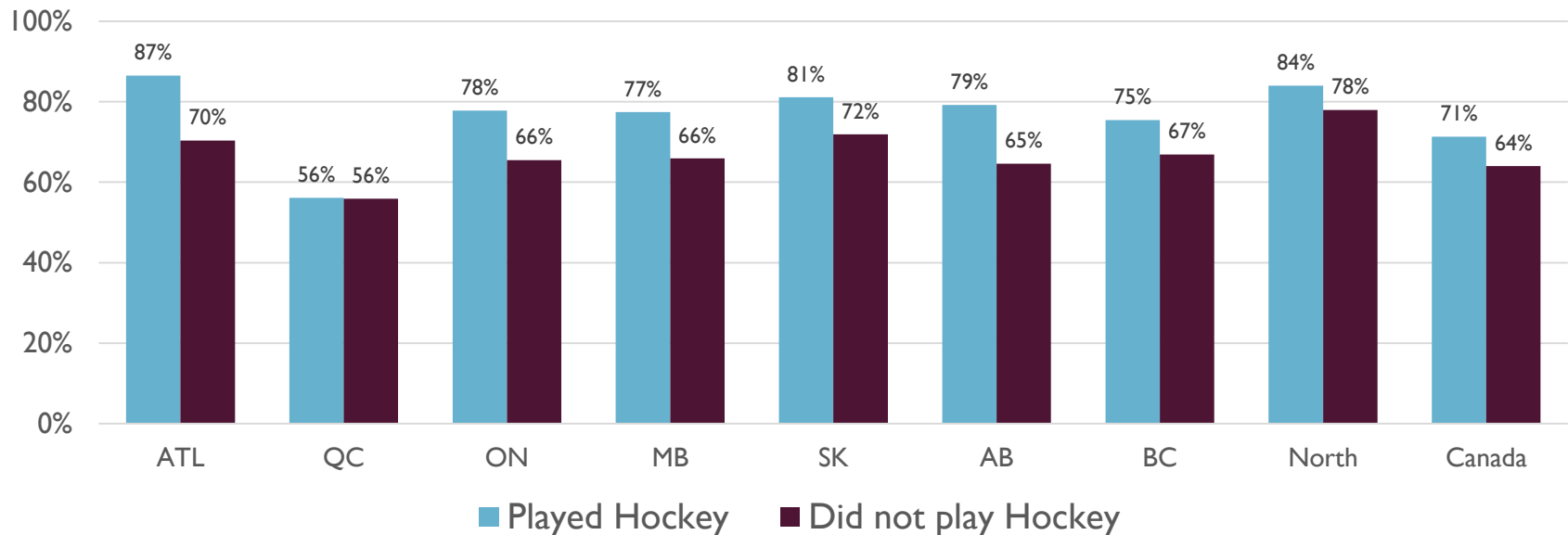
Gap in Sense of Belonging to Community among Hockey Players and non-Players by Province or Region in 2010 (with controls*)



**Socio-demographic controls include the respondents age, sex, visible minority status, knowledge of official languages, education and income.*

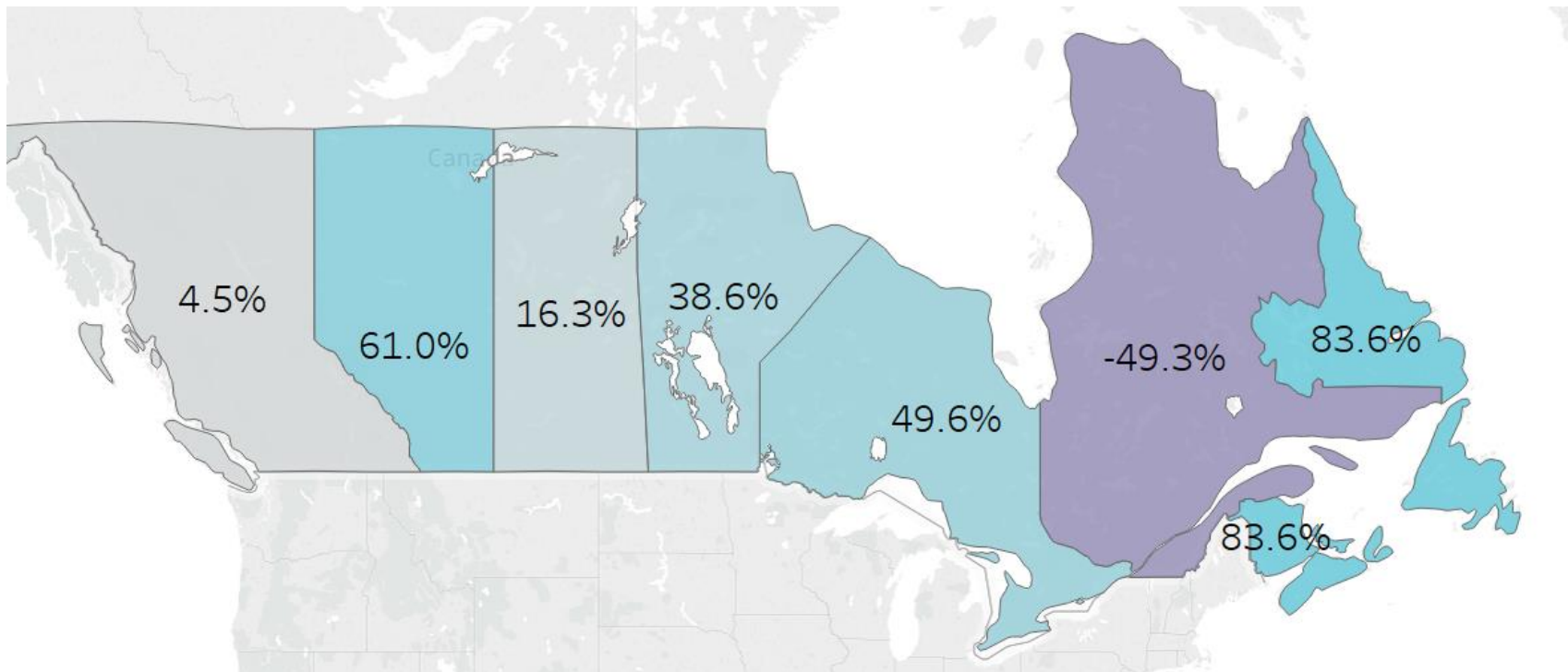
Does Playing Hockey Affect Sense of Belonging to Local Community? (cont.)

Sense of Belonging to Community for Hockey Players and Non-players (2014)



→ In 2014: Hockey Players in the Atlantic Region really benefit from a strong Sense of Belonging to Local Community, as do players in Saskatchewan, Alberta and the North.

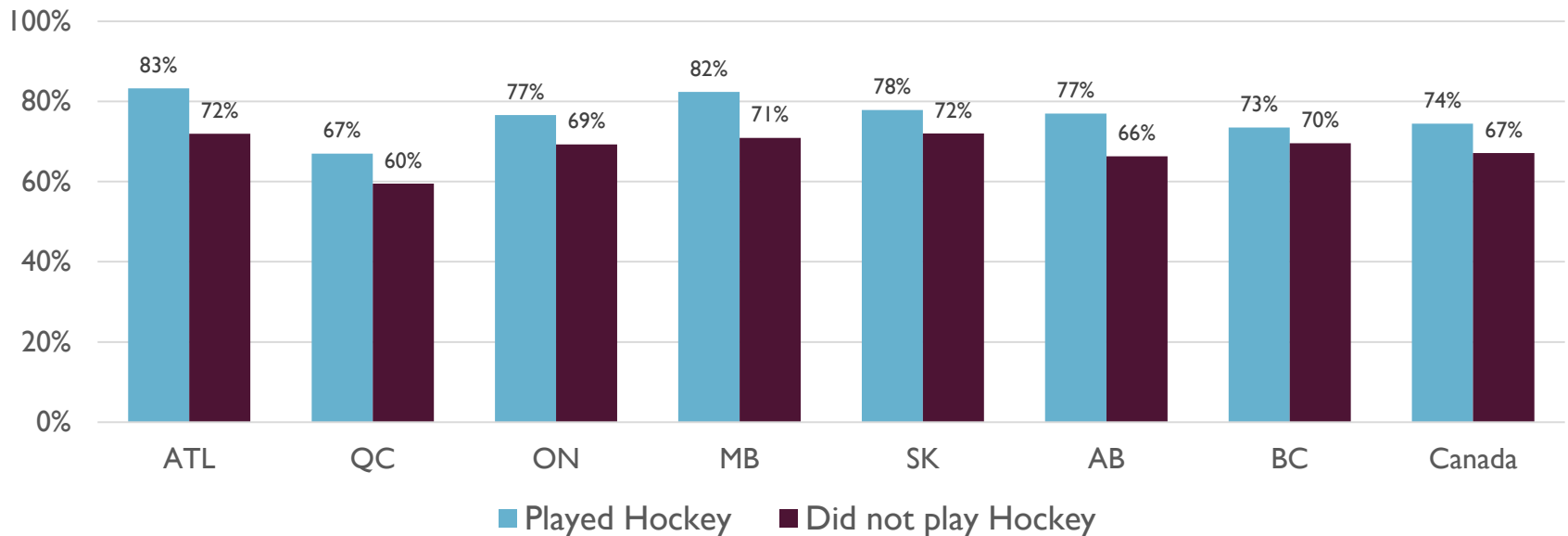
Gap in Sense of Belonging to Community among Hockey Players and non-Players by Province or Region in 2014 (with controls*)



**Socio-demographic controls include the respondents age, sex, visible minority status, knowledge of official languages, education and income.*

Does Playing Hockey Affect Sense of Belonging to Local Community? (cont.)

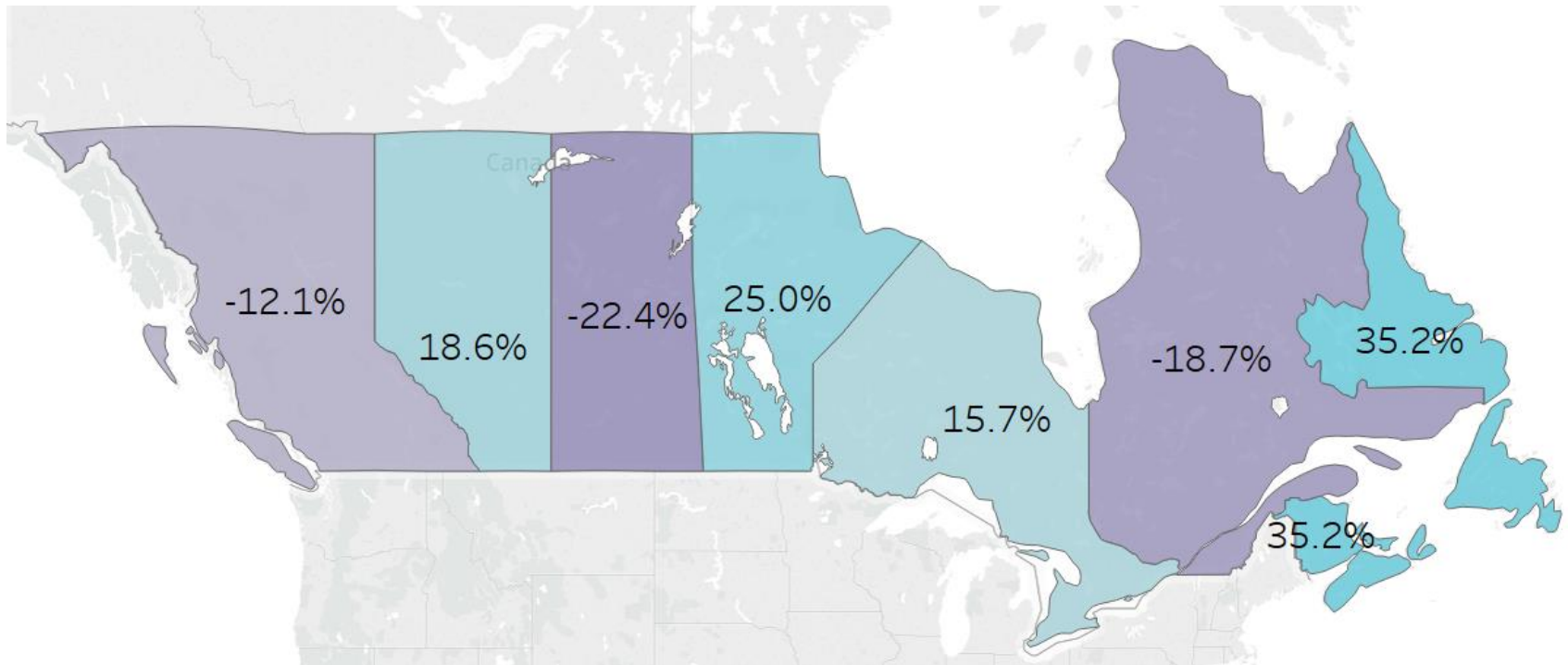
Sense of Belonging to Community for Hockey Players and Non-players (2017)



→ In 2017: Hockey Players in the Atlantic Region, Manitoba and Saskatchewan benefit from a strong Sense of Belonging to Local Community.

Source: CCHS 2017. Population aged 12-64.

Gap in Sense of Belonging to Community among Hockey Players and non-Players by Province or Region in 2017 (with controls*)



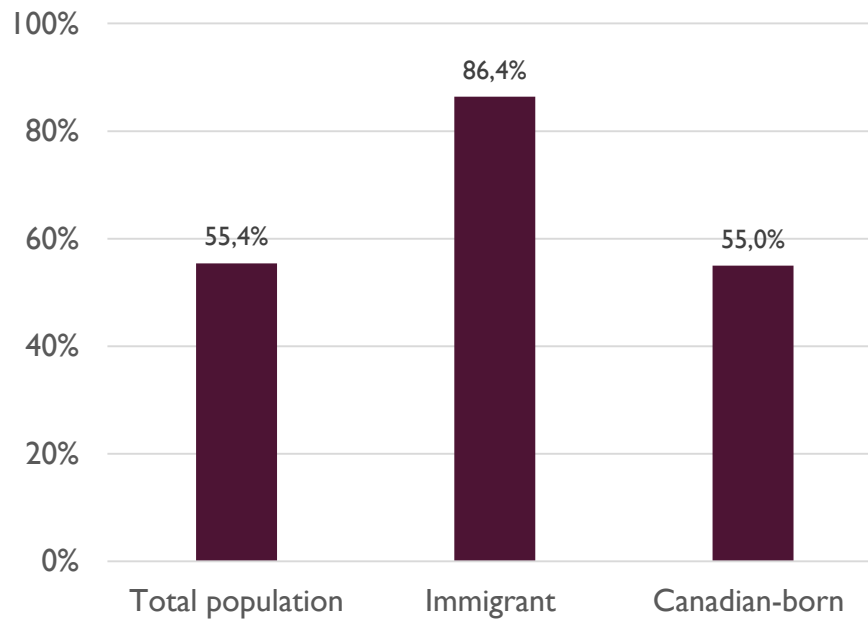
*Socio-demographic controls include the respondents age, sex, visible minority status, knowledge of official languages, education and income.

2014: Sense of Belonging to Local Community for Hockey Players x Immigrant Status by Region

DV = Sense of Belonging (strong or very strong)	Total	Canadian- born	Immigrant
Hockey Players	71.2%	70.7%	78.4%
...in Quebec	54.9%	53.3%	73.3%
...in Ontario	78.1%	76.9%	96.4%
...in Prairies	79.0%	80.4%	58.1%
...in British Columbia	75.5%	74.9%	91.3%
non-Hockey Players	65.7%	64.4%	69.5%
...in Quebec	57.5%	55.6%	66.6%
...in Ontario	67.2%	66.1%	69.4%
...in Prairies	67.4%	66.8%	69.7%
...in British Columbia	68.9%	67.2%	72.1%
Total	65.9%	64.7%	69.6%

After controlling for socio-demographic differences, does playing hockey still increase immigrants' sense of belonging to their local community?

Gap in Sense of Belonging to Local Community
between Hockey Players and non-Players
(2014)



IMMIGRANT vs. CANADIAN-BORN HOCKEY PLAYERS

- After controlling for socio-demographic differences, hockey players (*regardless of immigrant status*) still show a stronger SOB to their local community compared to non-players (55% more likely).
- For immigrants, this trend is much more pronounced: immigrant hockey players are 86% more likely to have a strong SOB to their community compared to immigrant's who do not play hockey.

Some Other Key Findings...

VISMIN vs. NON-VISMIN HOCKEY PLAYERS (in 2014)

- **Visible minority** hockey players were about **48%** more likely to have a strong SoB to their local community compared to VM non-players.
- **Non-visible minorities** who played hockey were about **57%** more likely to have a strong SoB to their local community compared to NVM non-players.

MALE vs. FEMALE HOCKEY PLAYERS (in 2014)

- **Male** hockey players were about **63%** more likely to have a strong SoB to their local community compared to male non-players.
- **Females** who played hockey were about **51%** more likely to have a SoB to their local community compared to female non-players.

YOUTH vs. ADULT HOCKEY PLAYERS (in 2014)

- **Youth** hockey players were about **15%** more likely to have a strong SoB to their local community compared to youth who did not play hockey.
- **Adults (18+)** who played hockey were about **57%** more likely to have a strong SoB to their local community compared to adults who did not play hockey.

KEY MESSAGES

- Hockey Players consistently have higher SOB to their local community compared to non-players and this trend holds true for all groups (immigrants and Canadian-born, visible minorities and non-VMs, both males and females, youth and adults).
- This trend is most pronounced for immigrants, females and adults, but less significant for youth hockey players.
- Playing hockey in the past year is a promising indicator that can facilitate immigrant integration and a sense of belonging to the local community.
- Future studies should look at collecting more reliable data, with oversamples of immigrants and other diverse populations, so that we can further explore how sports is an integrator into Canadian society.

**Hockey Program Introduces Syrian Children To Canada's Game:
Recent Immigrants Ages 5 To 13 Take Their First Hockey Lessons In Halifax
([CBC News, 3 Mar 2018](#))**



Kenya's Only Hockey Team Comes To Canada To Play First-ever Game ([Huffpost, 15 Oct 2018](#))

