

PUBLIC TRUST AND SOCIAL COHESION

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Overview

Canada and Australia are well positioned to embark upon a joint discussion of emerging trends and opportunities for further government action

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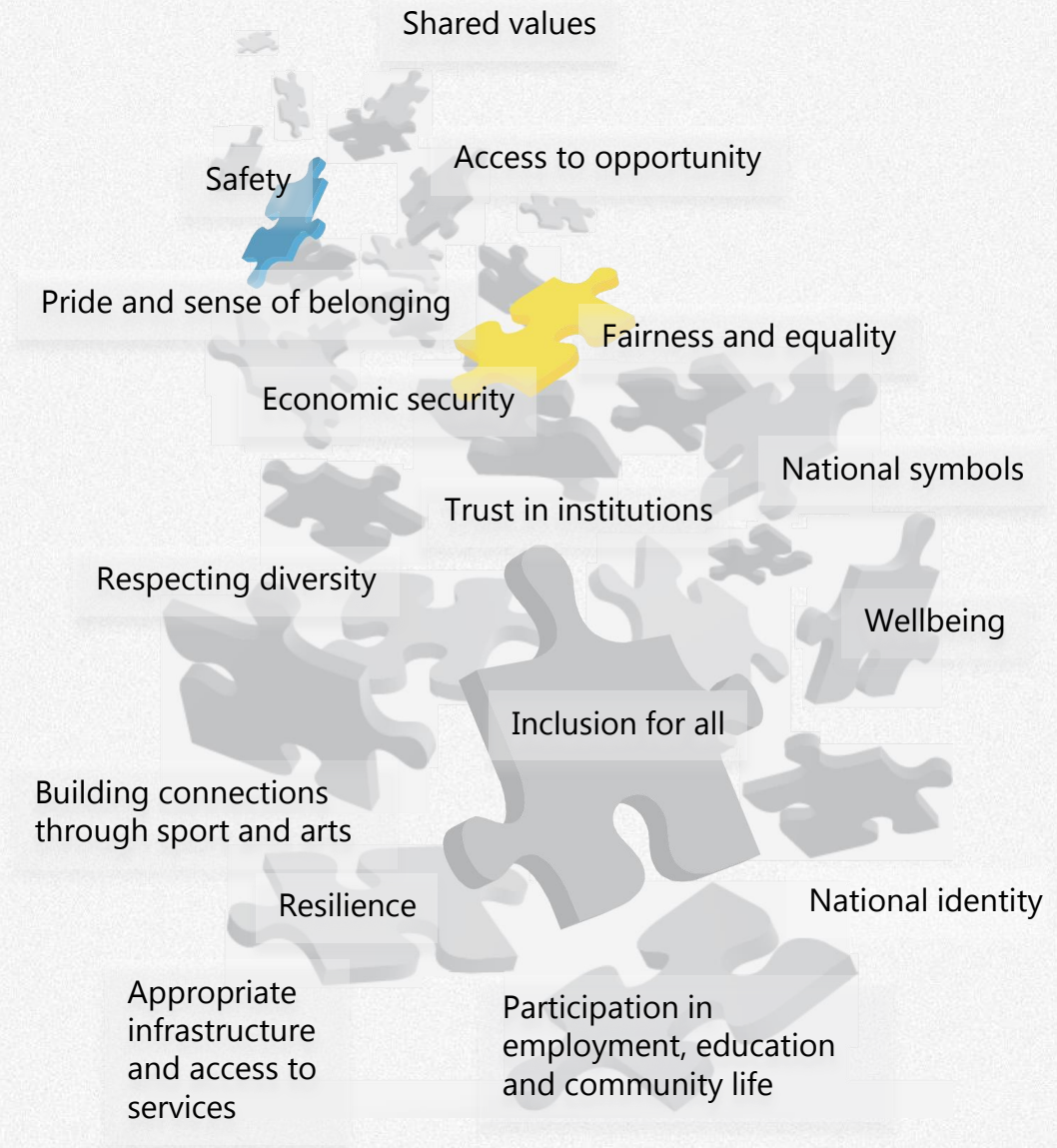
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Discussion

What is social cohesion?

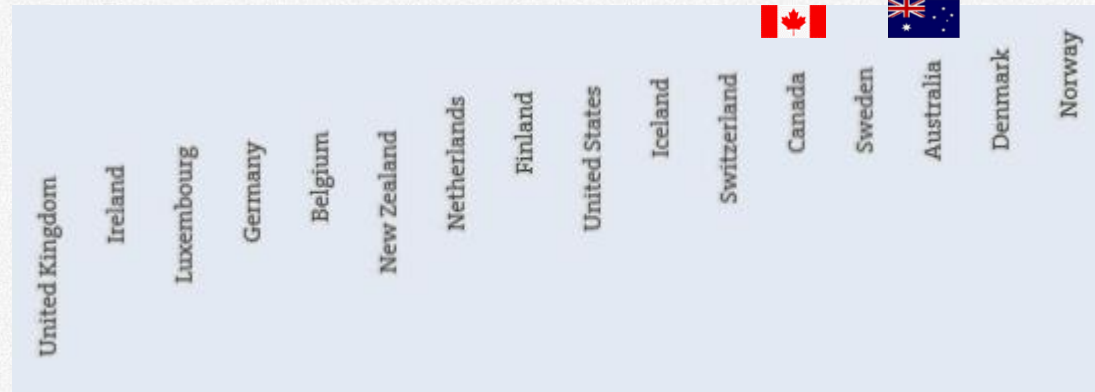
A community that sticks together, where people connect, share resources, support each other and work together to achieve collective goals



Social cohesion in Canada and Australia – at a glance

Both countries fare well on a range of aspects of well-being and social cohesion

However, we are also affected by disruptive trends around the world



OECD 2017 Better Life Index

Risk	May lead to
Decreased sense of belonging	Lower participation Increased marginalization
Increase in fear of individuals/groups Discrimination and racism	More marginalized and segregated communities or 'enclaves'
Continued decline of trust in government and other institutions	Lack of engagement in and with government and its services
Increase in perceptions that some are deserving/undeserving of government support	Grievances, disputes and divisions in community

Public trust and perceptions



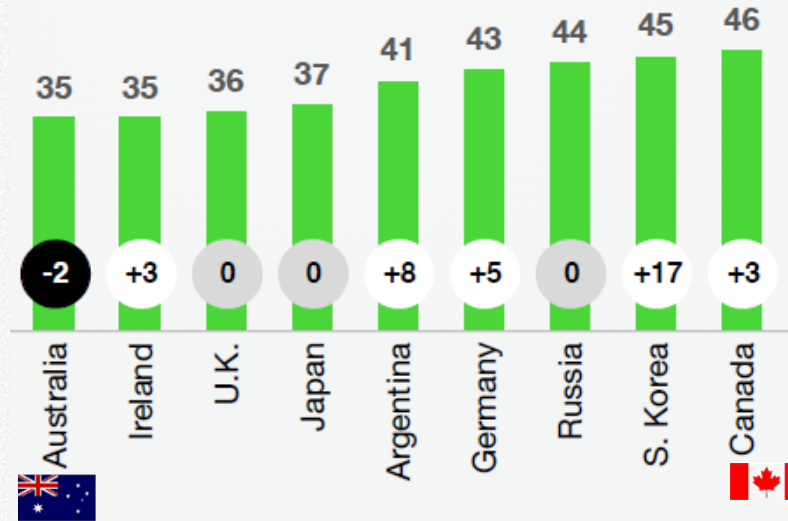
Public trust

Canadians and Australians trust their governments and other institutions less than they did previously

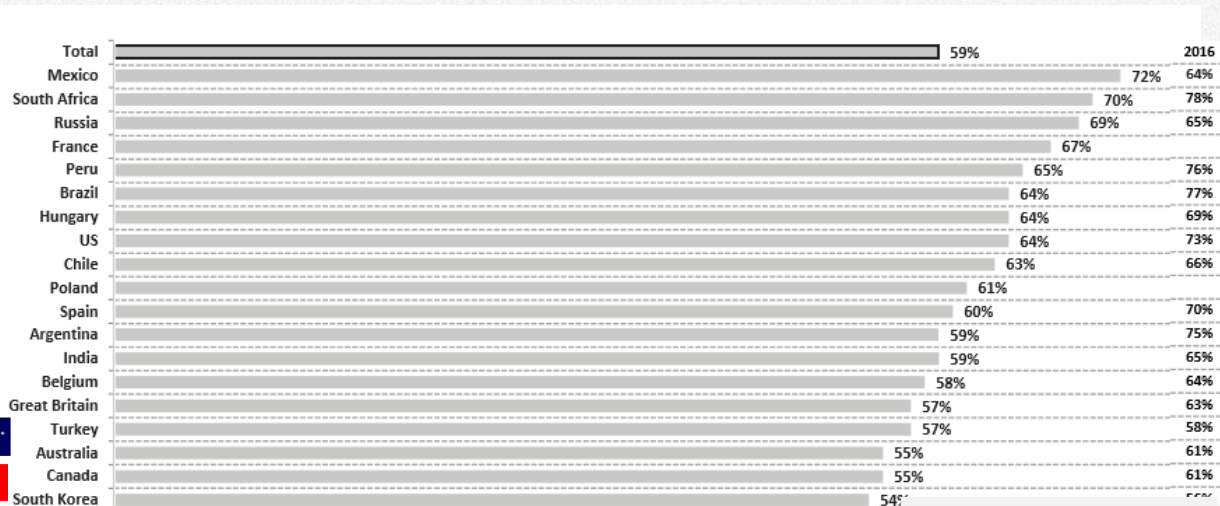
When governance is failing and people lose trust in institutions, the whole community feels the impact



Public trust in government



Edelman, 2018



Ipsos, 2018

Public trust and perceptions (cont.)



Economic security

Canada and Australia rate well on the economic growth front

However, some people are increasingly anxious about a comparable future and opportunities



58% of Canadians feel the next generation would have a lower standard of living than they presently do
Ekos, October 2017

88% of Canadians are concerned or somewhat concerned about the affordability of housing
2017 Nanos



60% of Australians agree that 'getting ahead is becoming harder'

2017 Building and Fostering Community Cohesion

1 in 4 Australians believes the great Australian dream of owning a home is over
2018 Salvation Army

Public trust and perceptions (cont.)



Diversity and immigration

Public support for the value of immigration and the importance of diversity remain strong in both countries

However, some negative trends have started to emerge



80% of Canadians believe that immigration is good for the country's economy
2018 Environics Institute

54% of Canadians agree 'there are too many immigrants coming into this country who are not adopting Canadian values'
2017 Environics Institute



66% of Australians believe that 'accepting immigrants from many different countries makes Australia stronger'
2018 Scanlon Foundation

41% of Australians are questioning if Australia is too open to people from all over the world, and therefore, at risk of losing Australia's identity as a nation
2018 Lowy Institute

Public trust and perceptions (cont.)



Discrimination

Many Canadians and Australians still report that they have faced discrimination at some point in their life



63% of visible minority respondents believed their experience was based on their race or skin colour, while 21% of visible minority females reported being a victim of discrimination
2014 General Social Survey

Most Canadians believe there is on-going discrimination against ethnic and racial groups, especially Muslims and Indigenous People
2014 Environics



Proportion of Australians indicating experience of discrimination because of skin colour, ethnicity or religion has **more than doubled**, from 9% in 2007 to 19% in 2018
2018 Scanlon Foundation

46% of Indigenous people reported experiencing prejudice, (39% two years before)
2016 Reconciliation Australia

Public trust and perceptions (cont.)



Pride and national identity

Both Canada and Australia are fortunate to be countries rich in expressions of national pride, sense of belonging, and participation rates



87% of Canadians are proud to be Canadians
90% of Canadians feel strong sense of belonging to Canada
Canada 150 Surveys



85% of Australians have high sense of belonging, identification with Australia and happiness
2018 Scanlon Foundation

6 in 10 Canadians and Australians have undertaken some voluntary work in the past
2013 General Social Survey
2016 Australian Bureau of Statistics

Actions underway



*Canada and Australia
each have wide-ranging
foundation policies and
frameworks to support
cohesion*



- Whole-of-government sustained focus on gender equality
- The Accessible Canada Act legislation
- A new Federal Anti-Racism Strategy
- The Poverty Reduction Strategy
- The reconciliation agenda with Indigenous peoples

- Reforms to strengthen the requirements for Australian residency and citizenship to support social cohesion
- Developing a national policy framework on community cohesion
- Multicultural Australia statement
- Closing the Gap initiative
- National Disability Insurance Scheme

Challenges and opportunities



Several common challenges have begun to emerge

- External forces and actors such as disinformation and cyberattacks
- The breadth of the concept makes it difficult to focus action
- Lack of strategic coordinated national policy frameworks
- Strong and consistent measurement frameworks have been elusive
- Cohesion initiatives cut across all tiers of government and are 'program rich and policy poor'

Areas for government action

Canada and Australia are well-positioned to embark upon a joint discussion of emerging trends and opportunities for further government action



Social cohesion = whole-of-community matter



Whole-of-government response



Engagement and partnership inside and outside of government



Long-term investment



Developing and collaborating on social cohesion frameworks



Collaboratively encouraging discussions in international fora

Discussion

1. What is the role of the national government in fostering social cohesion (as opposed to sub-national governments and other actors)?
 - 1a. What is the role of other actors such as individuals, business, philanthropy, civil society in building social cohesion and how do we talk about it?
2. Could there be more focus on the role for public sector professionals in improving the trust relationship with citizens, for example, in the delivery of services?
3. How might countries further collaborate with each other (beyond exchanging assessments and experiences)?
4. What steps can be taken to formulate a bias-free social cohesion evidence base?