

ENVIRONICS
RESEARCH

CONTENTS

OBJECTIVE.....	4
METHODOLOGY.....	5
ABOUT THIS REPORT.....	6
IMMIGRATION ATTITUDES.....	7
DEMOGRAPHICS.....	23

INTRODUCTION



IMAGE CREDIT:
UNSPLASH

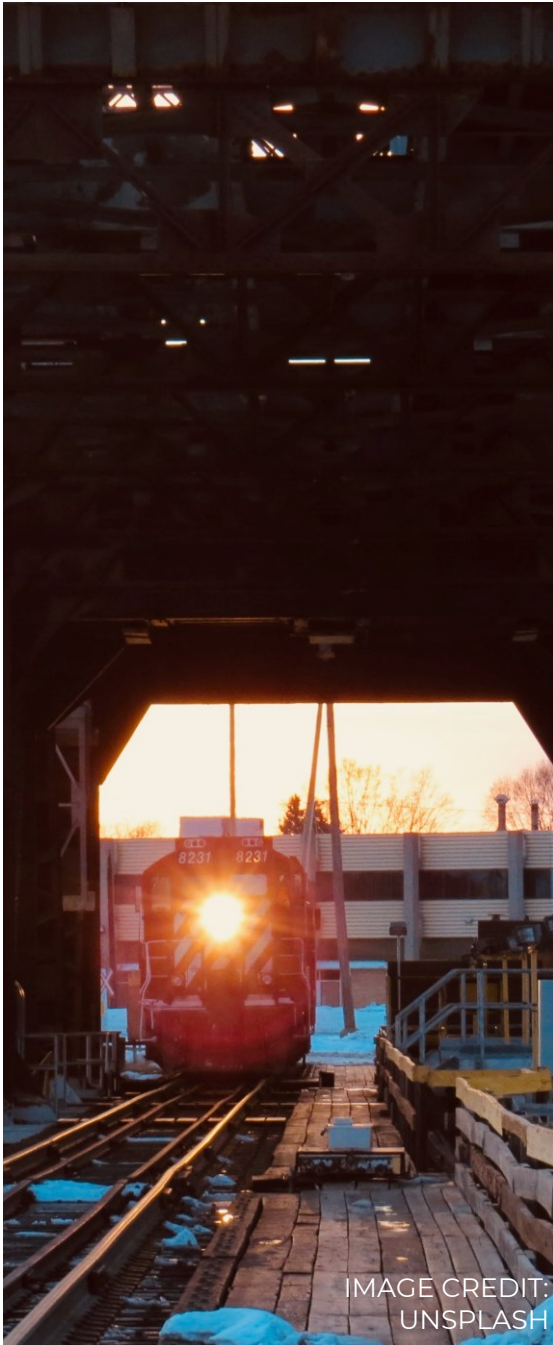


IMAGE CREDIT:
UNSPLASH

Objectives

The Northern Policy Institute (NPI) engaged Environics Research to gather opinions from residents in the 'Big Five' Northern Ontario communities: Thunder Bay, Sault Ste. Marie, Sudbury, Timmins, and North Bay. These communities were selected to participate in the Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada (IRCC)'s Rural and Northern Immigration Pilot project, and they are expected to see an influx of new skilled immigrants over the next several years.

This is the first study in a series to be conducted over the next six years, to measure resident attitudes toward immigration and immigrants. Along with telephone surveys conducted by Environics Research, NPI is conducting its own additional research to complement these findings.



IMAGE CREDIT:
UNSPLASH

Methodology



Type: 7-minute random telephone survey, landline and cellphone.



Respondents: Adults aged 18+ living in the geographic areas of interest: Thunder Bay, Sault Ste. Marie, Sudbury, Timmins, and North Bay. Quotas of n=250 were set in each of the 5 cities. Data were weighted by city, age, and gender according to 2016 Census figures.



Total Sample Size: n=1,250



Timing: Data collected between June 11 – July 1, 2021.



Comparison: Where applicable, results are compared with the [Environics Institute's Focus Canada 2020](#) data. This was a survey of 2,000 Canadians conducted by telephone in fall 2020.



IMAGE CREDIT:
UNSPLASH

About This Report

This report shows results for the 2021 Immigration Attitudes in Northern Ontario survey, broken down by city and key demographics.

Due to rounding, results may not add up to 100%. Additionally, data points equal or less than 3% are not labelled.

Statistical testing is indicated with green and orange ovals. A green oval indicates a result that is significantly higher than other groups, while an orange oval indicates a significantly lower result. Differences between groups are only noted when statistically significant.

Complete data tables with further breakdowns are provided under separate cover.

IMMIGRATION ATTITUDES



IMAGE CREDIT:
UNSPLASH



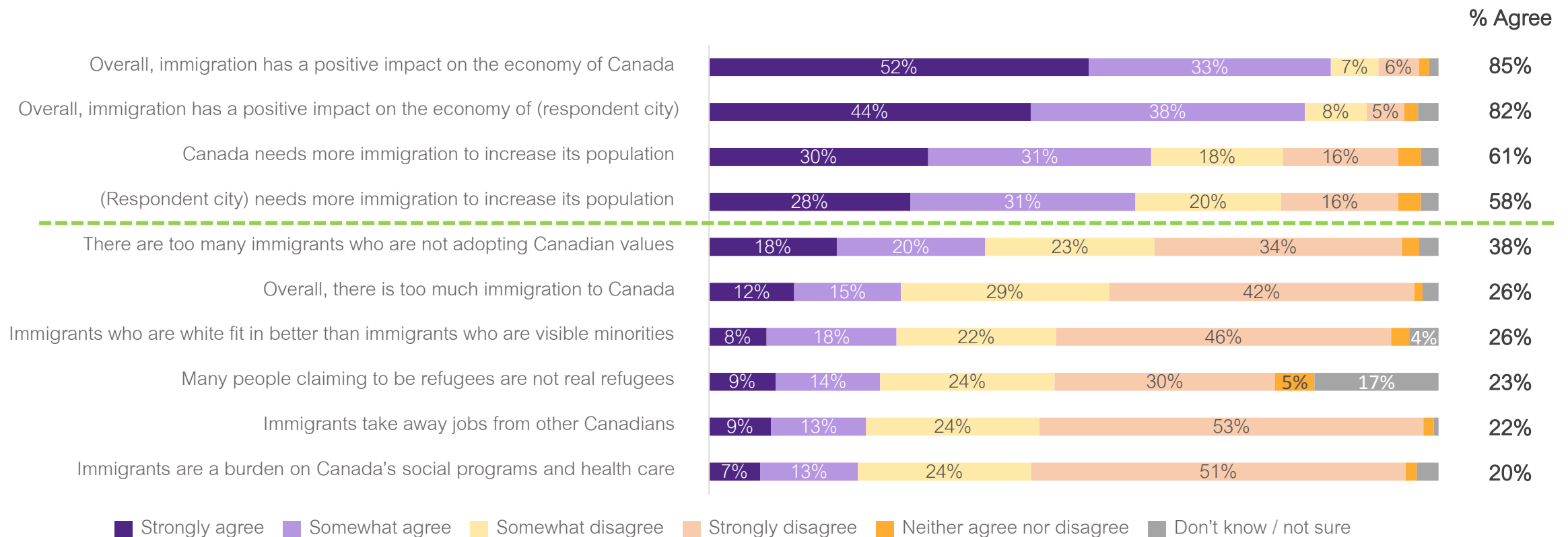
General views on immigration

- Northern Ontario residents were asked to state their agreement with ten different attitudinal statements about immigration; six of these had been asked in Focus Canada 2020. The statements, shown at random, contain a mix of positive and negative sentiments about immigration.
- There is a clear demarcation between the positive and negative statements when they are ranked by overall agreement (page 9). Majorities of Northern Ontario residents (ranging from 58% to 85%) agree with the positive statements about immigration's benefits. Topping the list, 85 percent of residents agree that immigration has a positive effect on Canada's economy, and a similar proportion (82%) agree it benefits the economy in their own city. Statements that are more negative or critical toward immigration and immigrants find agreement with smaller proportions of residents (between 20% and 38%).
- Few differences are noted between cities or demographic groups. While Timmins residents, men, and those age 55+ are more likely to express agreement with some negative statements, these views are still in the minority within these groups.
- While there are some statistically significant differences between Northern Ontario residents and Canadians overall (when compared to Focus Canada 2020), at a high level the comparison suggests that residents of Northern Ontario's biggest cities have a similar outlook on immigration as those living in other parts of the country.

General views on immigration

Northern Ontario residents are generally positive toward immigration, with strong majorities agreeing it has a positive economic impact on Canada and their home community, and more than half agreeing more immigration is needed to increase the population in Canada and in resident cities. Negative statements about immigration find agreement with fewer than half of residents.

Q4. Do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree with each of the following statements:



Base: All respondents (n=1,250).

General views - by city

Across the five cities views are mostly consistent, with a handful of statistically significant differences. Thunder Bay and Sudbury residents are more likely than those in other cities to agree Canada needs more immigration to increase its population. Timmins residents are more likely to agree there are too many immigrants not adopting Canadian values, that there is too much immigration, or that some refugee claimants are not real refugees.

Q4. Do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree with each of the following statements:

% Agree (Strongly/Somewhat)	Total	Thunder Bay	Sault Ste. Marie	Sudbury	Timmins	North Bay
Overall, immigration has a positive impact on the economy of Canada	85%	82%	86%	87%	87%	85%
Overall, immigration has a positive impact on the economy of (respondent city)	82%	78%	82%	84%	81%	81%
Canada needs more immigration to increase its population	61%	63%	59%	62%	53%	60%
(Respondent city) needs more immigration to increase its population	58%	60%	59%	59%	58%	55%
There are too many immigrants who are not adopting Canadian values	38%	33%	38%	41%	46%	34%
Overall, there is too much immigration to Canada	26%	25%	28%	27%	32%	22%
Immigrants who are white fit in better than immigrants who are visible minorities	26%	26%	27%	23%	27%	28%
Many people claiming to be refugees are not real refugees	23%	20%	28%	24%	31%	20%
Immigrants take away jobs from other Canadians	22%	21%	22%	21%	24%	22%
Immigrants are a burden on Canada's social programs and health care	20%	18%	25%	20%	21%	21%

Base: All respondents (n=1,250)

Note: Green ovals denote results that are significantly higher than other groups.

General views - by age and gender

While older residents are more likely to agree with the more negative statements about immigrants and immigration, they are generally in line with other age cohorts when it comes to the more positive statements. Men and women are generally similar in their views, but men are more likely to agree that there are too many immigrants not adopting Canadians values and that many refugee claimants are not real refugees.

Q4. Do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree with each of the following statements:

% Agree (Strongly/Somewhat)	Total	<35	35 to 54	55+	Male	Female
Overall, immigration has a positive impact on the economy of Canada	85%	84%	88%	84%	85%	85%
Overall, immigration has a positive impact on the economy of (respondent city)	82%	82%	85%	79%	81%	83%
Canada needs more immigration to increase its population	61%	57%	62%	61%	62%	60%
(Respondent city) needs more immigration to increase its population	58%	54%	63%	58%	58%	58%
There are too many immigrants who are not adopting Canadian values	38%	28%	31%	49%	42%	34%
Overall, there is too much immigration to Canada	26%	27%	21%	30%	29%	24%
Immigrants who are white fit in better than immigrants who are visible minorities	26%	25%	23%	28%	24%	27%
Many people claiming to be refugees are not real refugees	23%	13%	15%	36%	29%	18%
Immigrants take away jobs from other Canadians	22%	18%	20%	25%	21%	22%
Immigrants are a burden on Canada's social programs and health care	20%	15%	16%	27%	22%	19%

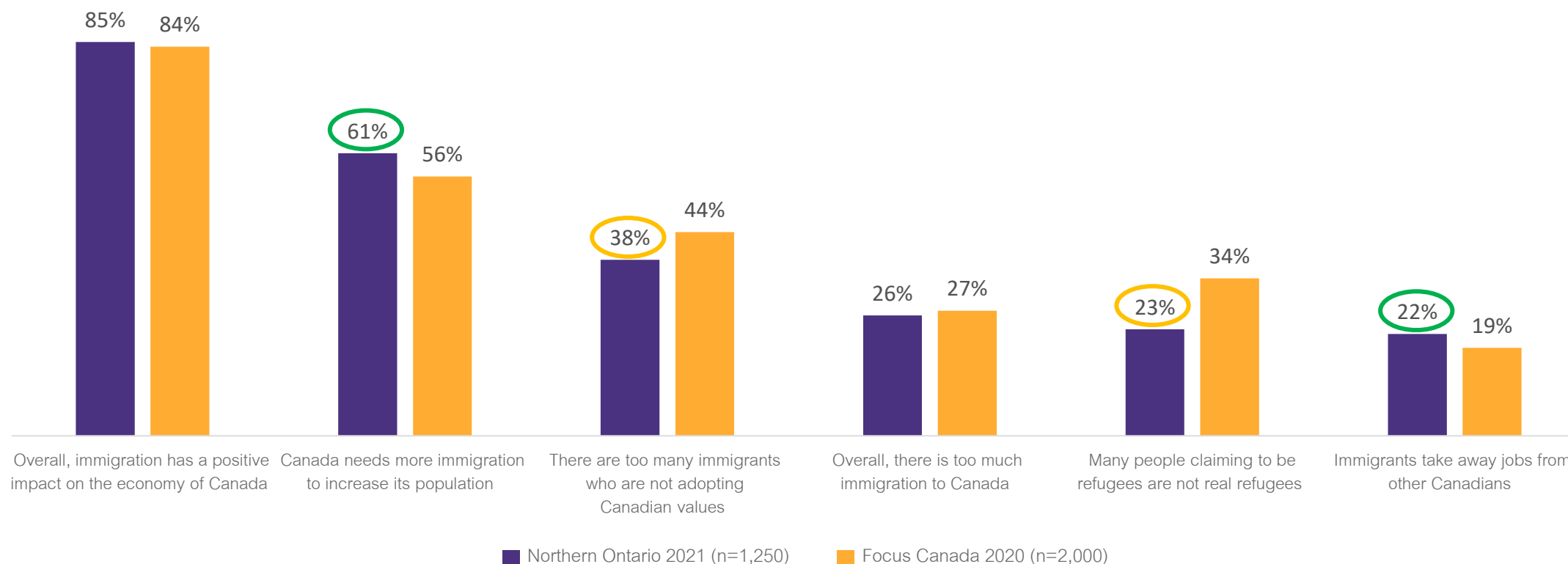
Base: All respondents (n=1,250)

Note: Green ovals denote results that are significantly higher than other groups.

General views – national comparison

Compared to national results from Focus Canada 2020, Northern Ontario residents are more likely to agree Canada needs more immigration to increase its population, but also more likely to agree that immigrants take away jobs. Northern Ontarians are less likely than Canadians as a whole to agree there are too many immigrants not adopting Canadians values, or that many people claiming to be refugees are not real refugees.

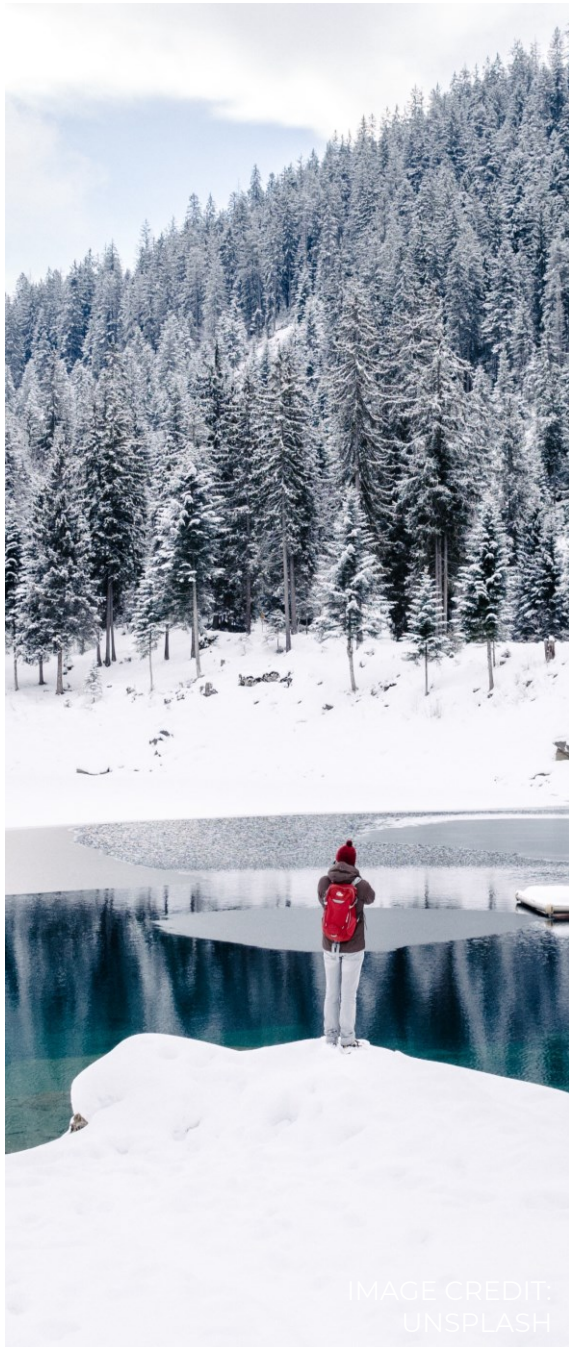
Q4. Do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree with each of the following statements:



Base: All respondents (n=1,250)

Note: Green ovals denote results that are significantly higher than national results, orange ovals significantly lower.

% Agree (Strongly/Somewhat)



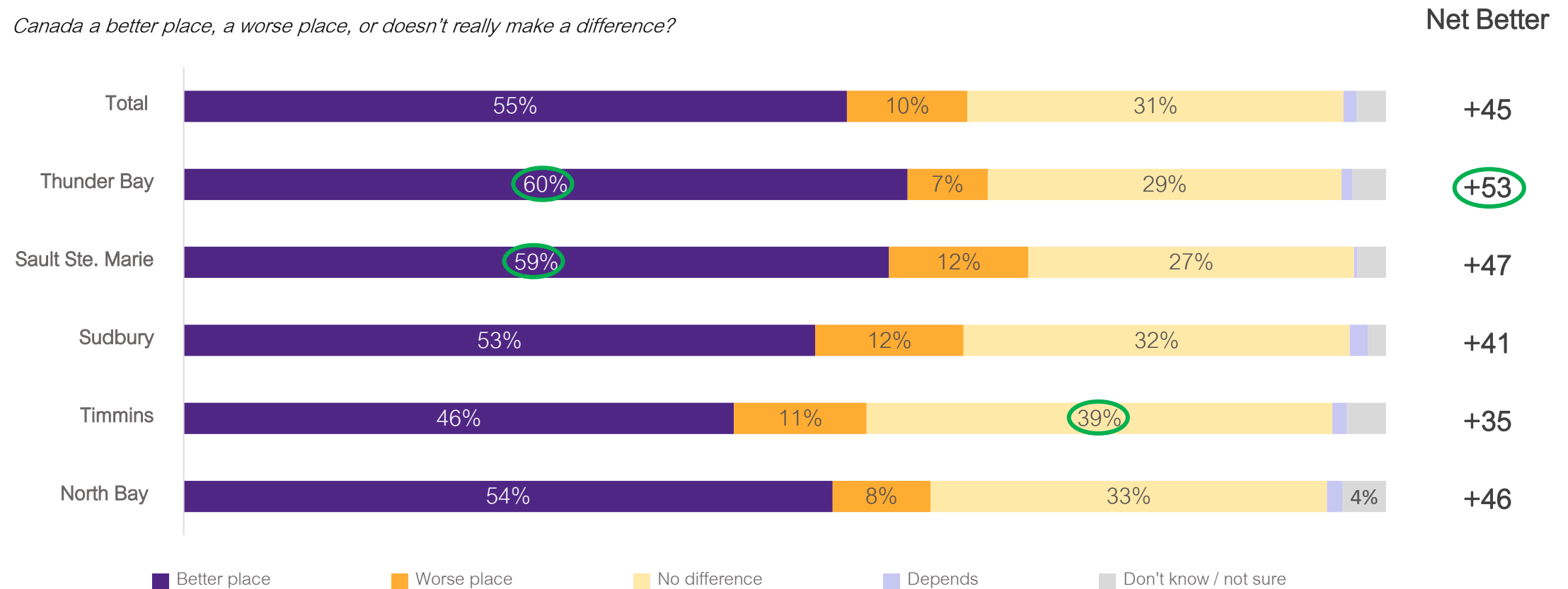
Immigration Perceptions

- Overall, Northern Ontario residents see immigration as a net positive, with a majority saying that, on balance, Canada is a better place for it; at 55 percent, this is statistically higher than the national average from Focus Canada 2020 (50%). Timmins is the only city where this view was not held by a majority.
- Timmins also stands out from other cities when it comes to perceptions of immigration to the community over the past three years: nine in ten residents (89%) said they have noticed an increase in this time period, while in other cities this ranges from 70 to 77 percent. Notably, a two-thirds majority of Timmins residents (69%) say immigration has increased a lot in this time, nearly double the average for the other four cities.
- While strong majorities favour skilled and unskilled immigrants moving to Northern Ontario to fill jobs, support for skilled immigrants (89%) is 11 points higher than support for the unskilled (78%). Views about skilled and unskilled immigrants are uniform across cities and demographic groups.
- Overall, about three in ten (28%) Northern Ontario residents say they interact with new immigrants often; at 37 percent, this is significantly higher among Timmins residents.
- When it comes to cultural or ethnic events in the community Thunder Bay stands out, with 55 percent of residents saying they have attended such an event in the past three years; in the other cities such attendance ranges from 35 to 43 percent.

Perceived impact of immigration

Most Northern Ontario residents say that, on balance, new immigrants make Canada a better place. Timmins is the only city where fewer than half of residents say immigration made Canada a better place; residents in Thunder Bay and Sault Ste. Marie are the most positive about the impact of immigration in Canada.

Q5. Canada accepts about 300,000 new immigrants each year. Do you think that on balance the effect of these individuals coming to the country is making Canada a better place, a worse place, or doesn't really make a difference?



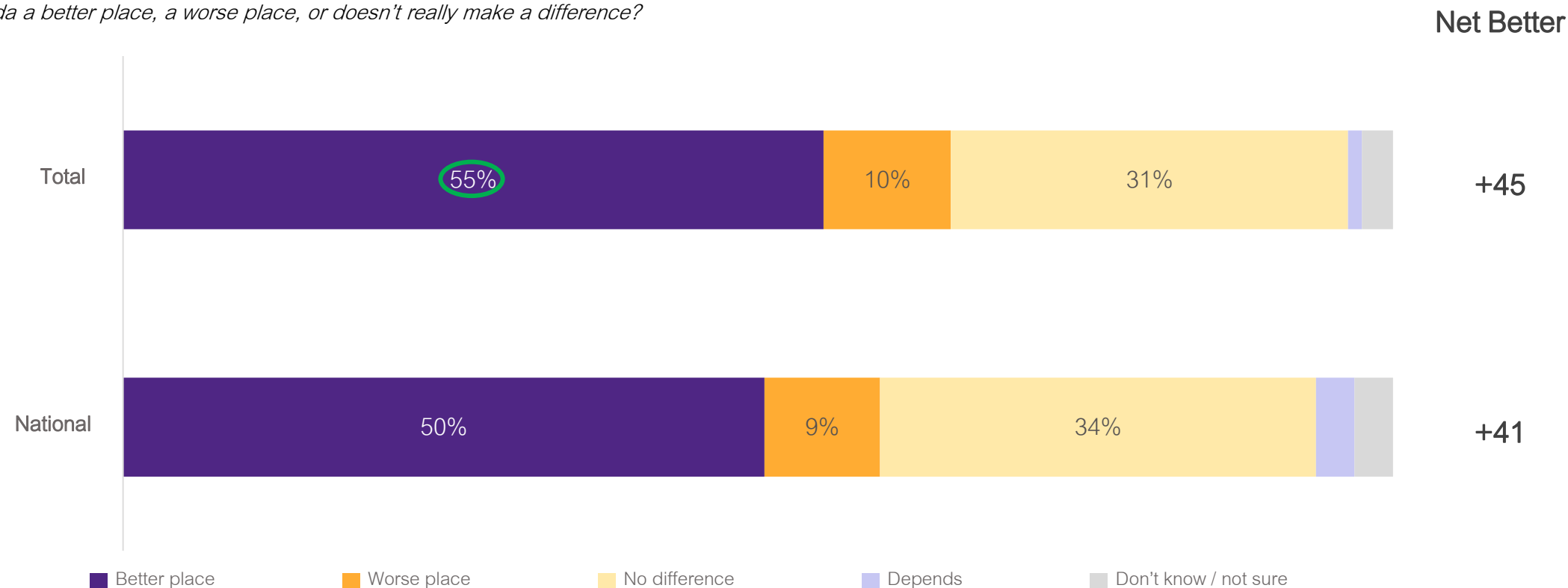
Base: All respondents (n=1,250)

Note: Green ovals denote results that are significantly higher than other groups.

Perceived impact of immigration – national comparison

Compared to national results from Focus Canada 2020, Northern Ontario residents have generally similar views to Canadians overall. Northern Ontarians are somewhat more likely to say immigrants make Canada a better place, on balance.

Q5. Canada accepts about 300,000 new immigrants each year. Do you think that on balance the effect of these individuals coming to the country is making Canada a better place, a worse place, or doesn't really make a difference?



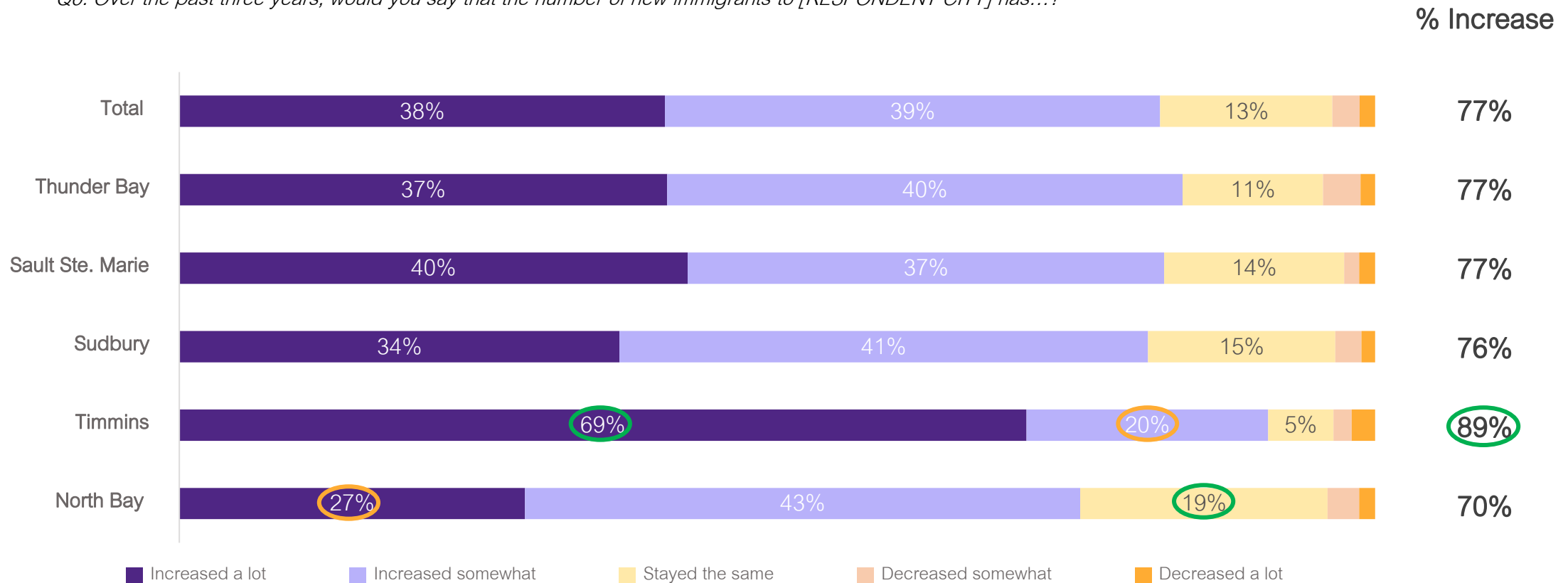
Base: All respondents (n=1,250)

Note: Green ovals denote results that are significantly higher than national results.

Perceived influx of new immigrants

Overall, more than three-quarters of Northern Ontario residents have noticed an increase in the number of new immigrants to their city in the past three years. Timmins residents in particular are more likely to indicate an increase in newcomers, with nine in ten saying the number of new immigrants has increased somewhat or a lot. Just seven in ten North Bay residents have noticed an increase, a significantly lower proportion than in other cities.

Q6. Over the past three years, would you say that the number of new immigrants to [RESPONDENT CITY] has...?



Base: All respondents (n=1,250)

Note: Green ovals denote results that are significantly higher than other groups, orange ovals significantly lower.

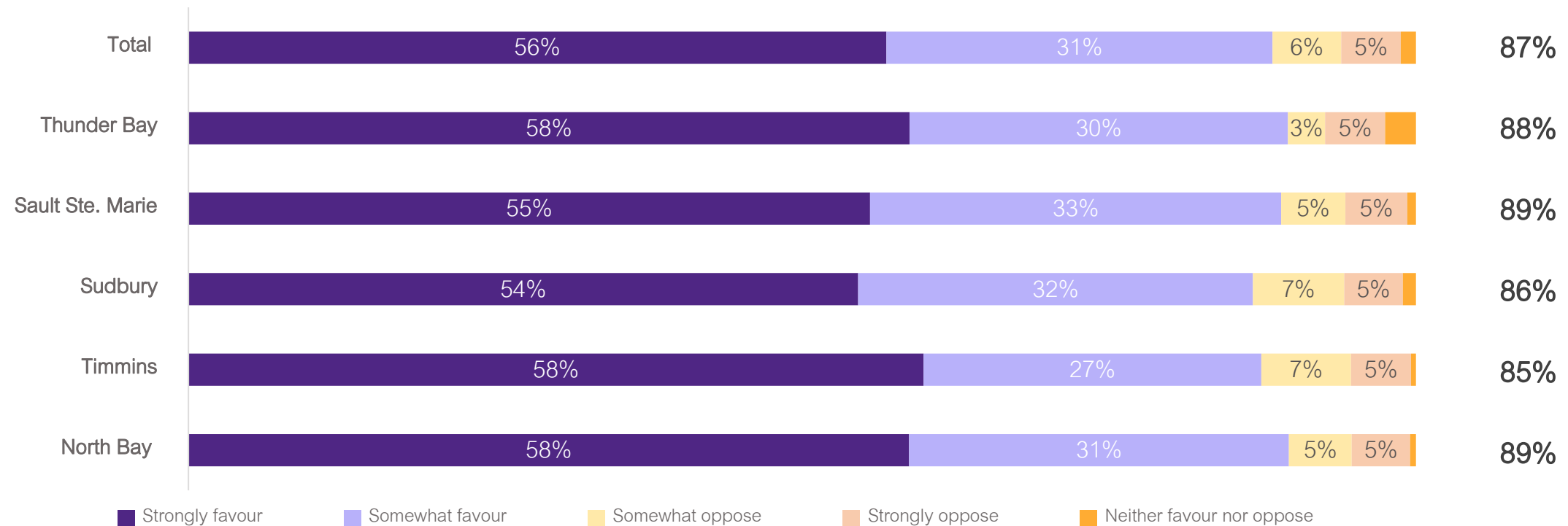
Views on skilled immigrants

Strong majorities of residents in all five cities are in favour of skilled immigrants moving to Northern Ontario to fill jobs where qualified workers are in short supply. Results on this questions are nearly uniform across cities.

Q7A. Do you favour or oppose skilled immigrants moving to Northern Ontario to work in jobs where it is hard to find qualified workers?

Is that strongly or somewhat [favour/oppose]?

% Favour



Base: All respondents (n=1,250)

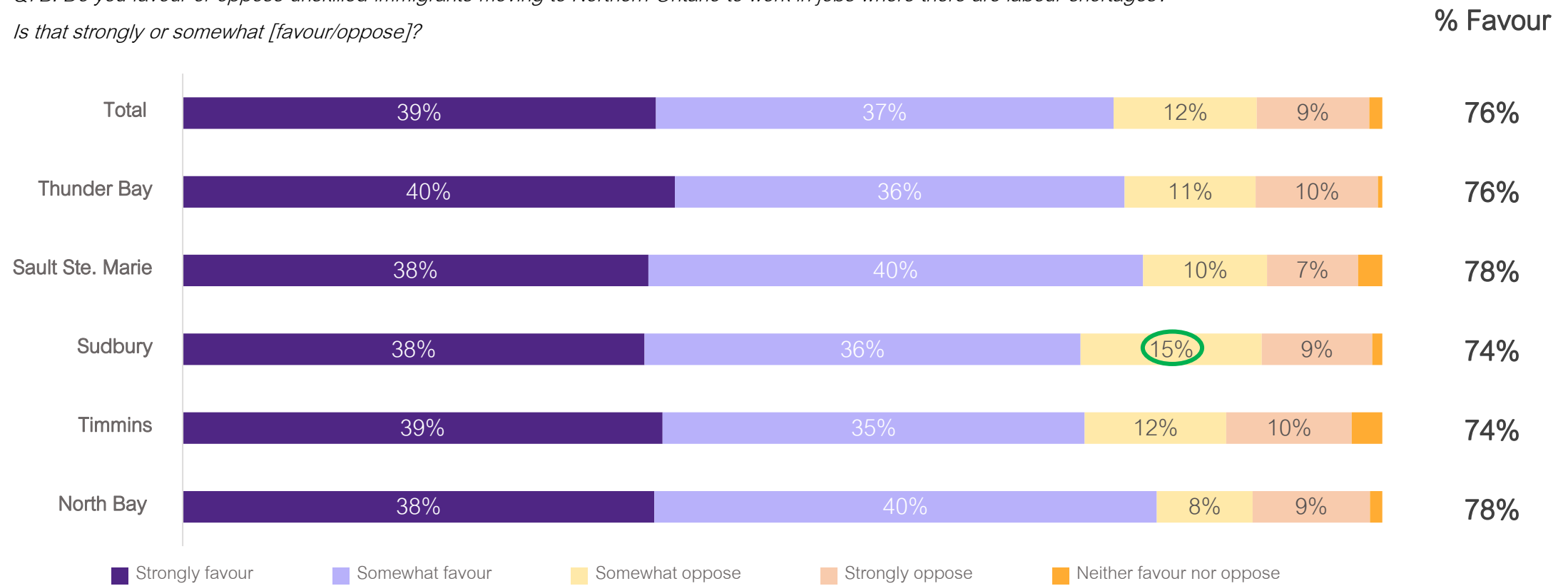
Note: Green ovals denote results that are significantly higher than other groups.

Views on unskilled immigrants

About three-quarters of Northern Ontario residents favour unskilled immigrants moving to Northern Ontario to help with labour shortages. While this is a strong majority, it is 11 points lower than support for skilled immigrants. Again, results are mostly consistent across cities.

Q7B. Do you favour or oppose unskilled immigrants moving to Northern Ontario to work in jobs where there are labour shortages?

Is that strongly or somewhat [favour/oppose]?



Base: All respondents (n=1,250)

Note: Green ovals denote results that are significantly higher than other groups.

Views on skilled/unskilled immigrants - by city

Comparing levels of support for skilled and unskilled immigrants moving to Northern Ontario, the difference in support ranges from 8 to 13 points in each city. Still, support for bringing either type of immigrant to Northern Ontario is very high across all cities.

Q7A. Do you favour or oppose skilled immigrants moving to Northern Ontario to work in jobs where it is hard to find qualified workers?

Q7B. Do you favour or oppose unskilled immigrants moving to Northern Ontario to work in jobs where there are labour shortages?

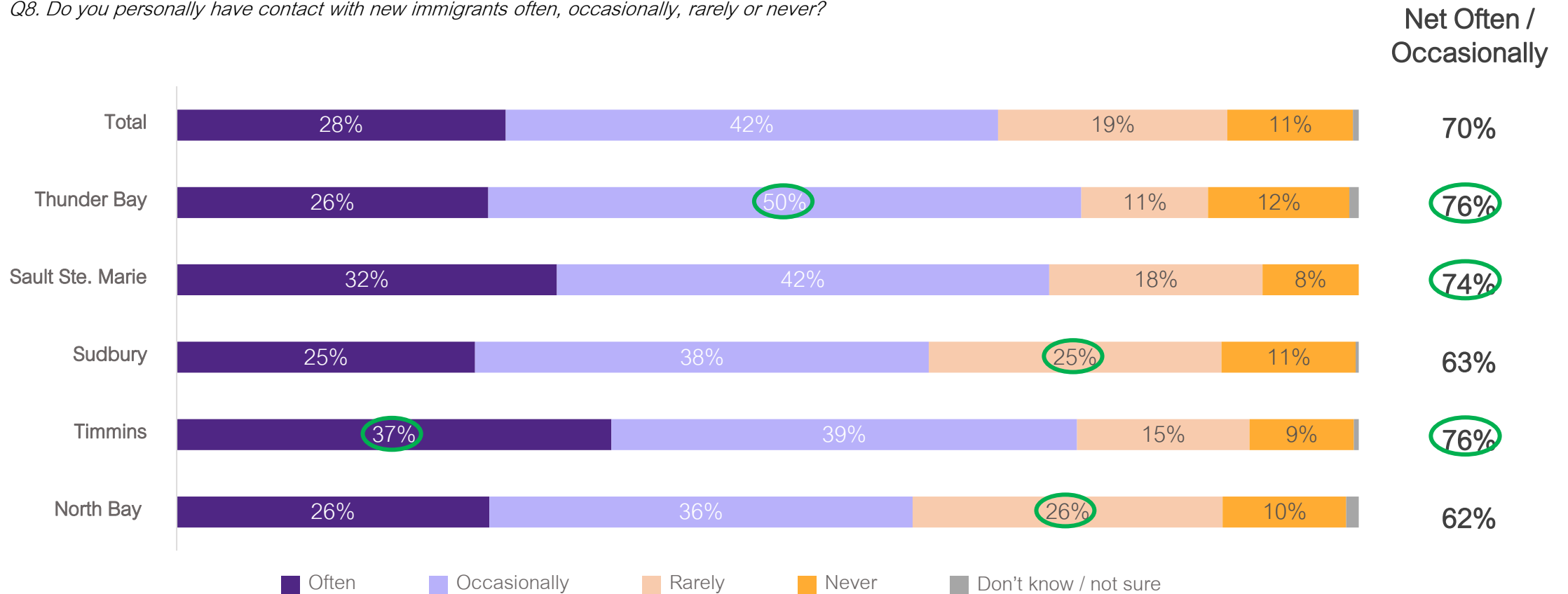
<i>% Favour (Strongly/Somewhat)</i>	Total	Thunder Bay	Sault Ste. Marie	Sudbury	Timmins	North Bay
% Favour skilled immigrants moving to Northern Ontario	89%	92%	90%	88%	88%	90%
% Favour unskilled immigrants moving to Northern Ontario	78%	79%	82%	75%	77%	82%
Difference	11 points	13 points	8 points	13 points	11 points	8 points

Base: All respondents (n=1,250)

Relationship/contact with new immigrants

Seven in ten Northern Ontario residents overall say they often or occasionally have contact with new immigrants, ranging from a low of 62 percent in North Bay to 76 percent in Timmins and Thunder Bay.

Q8. Do you personally have contact with new immigrants often, occasionally, rarely or never?



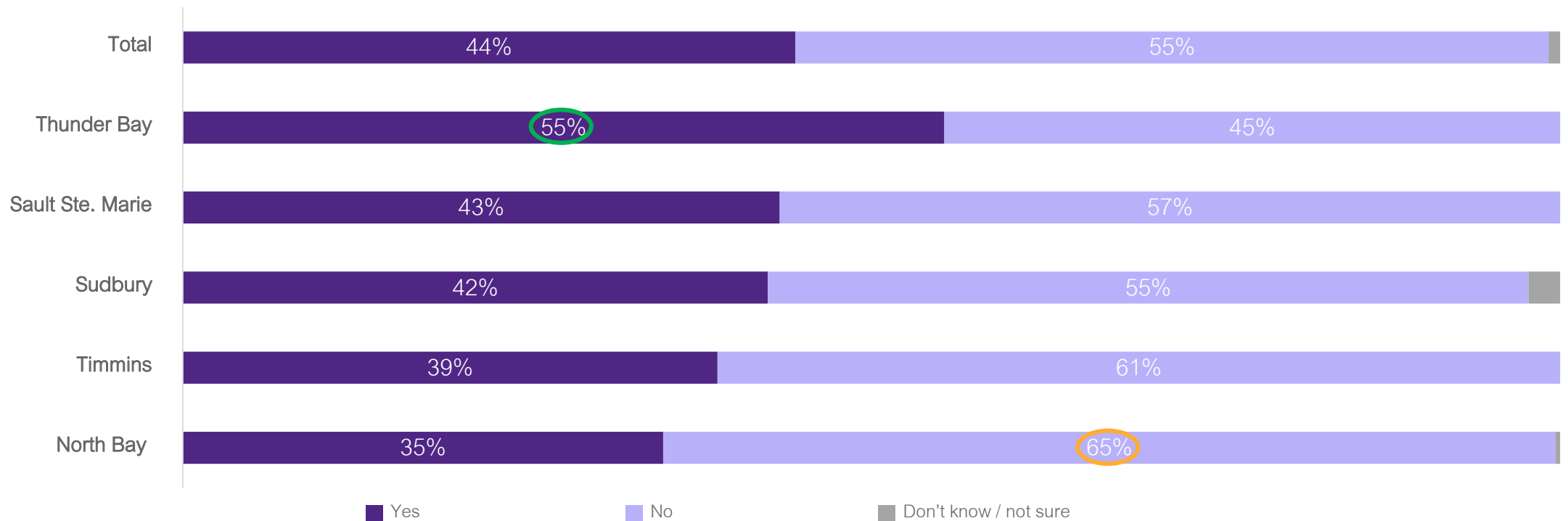
Base: All respondents (n=1,250)

Note: Green ovals denote results that are significantly higher than other groups.

Attendance at cultural events

Four in ten Northern Ontario residents say they've attended an ethnic or cultural event in the past three years. This is fairly uniform across cities with the exception of Thunder Bay, where a majority of residents have attended this type of event.

Q9. In the past three years, have you attended an event celebrating a different ethnicity or culture, such as a festival, music or dance performance, or holiday celebration?



Base: All respondents (n=1,250)

Note: Green ovals denote results that are significantly higher than other groups, orange ovals significantly lower.

Immigration perceptions by age and gender

Across major demographic groups, there are few differences in overall perceptions about immigration. The only group standing out from others is the age 55+ cohort. Northern Ontario residents in this age category are less likely to say immigration makes Canada a better place, or that immigration to their community has increased recently. They also less likely to indicate contact with new immigrants, and less likely to have attended ethnic or cultural events.

	Total	<35	35 to 54	55+	Male	Female
Q5. Impact of immigration (% Better place)	55%	63%	57%	49%	55%	55%
Q6. Influx of immigrations to community (Net % Increased a lot / some)	77%	79%	82%	71%	75%	79%
Q7A. % Favour skilled immigrants moving to Northern Ontario	87%	85%	90%	86%	87%	87%
Q7B. % Favour unskilled immigrants moving to Northern Ontario	76%	73%	79%	75%	73%	78%
Q8. Contact with new immigrants (Net Often)	28%	31%	31%	23%	29%	27%
Q9. Attended cultural event in past 3 years (% Yes)	44%	56%	50%	34%	41%	47%

Base: All respondents (n=1,250)

Note: Green ovals denote results that are significantly higher than other groups, orange ovals significantly lower.

% Agree (Strongly/Somewhat)

DEMOGRAPHICS



IMAGE CREDIT:
UNSPLASH

Demographics at a glance

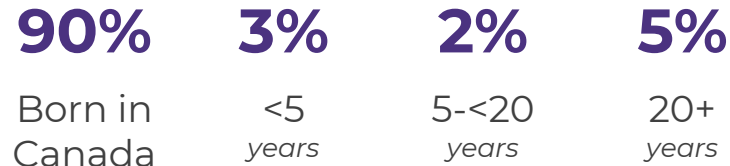
AGE



GENDER



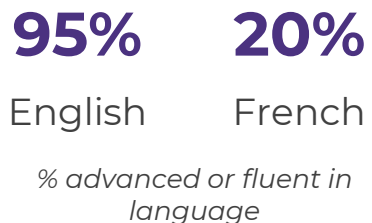
YEARS IN CANADA



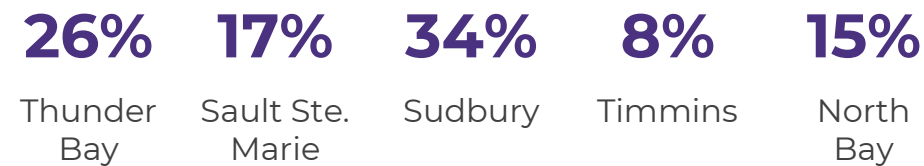
HOUSEHOLD INCOME



LANGUAGE



LOCATION



Note: Data are weighted by city, age, and gender according to 2016 Census figures.

ENVIRONICS
RESEARCH

