

The ties that bind: Canadian connections across a vast country are strong

For many Canadians, Ontario is the “centre of the universe”, and Quebec is a close second

September 2, 2016 – The 13 million Canadians who live outside central Canada may chuckle – or kvetch – about Ontario being the centre of the universe, but a new poll from the Angus Reid Institute suggests Canada’s most populous province appears to live up to this billing, at least in terms of personal connections to the province and its people.

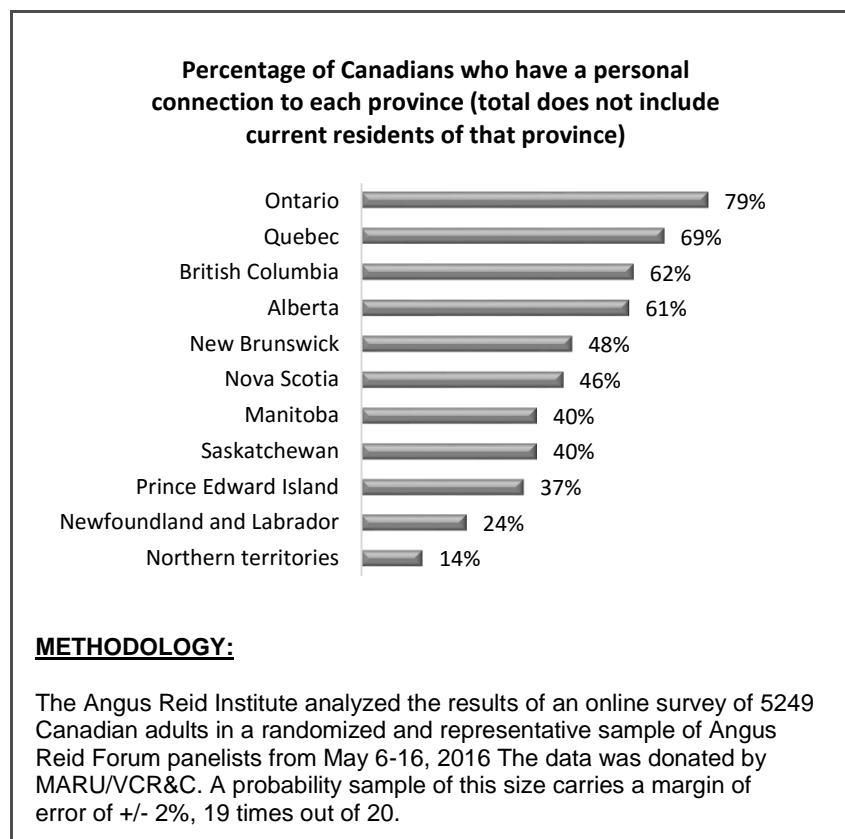
Asked whether they have ever visited, lived in, or had family or friends in Ontario, some eight-in-ten who don’t live there report at least one of these ties to that province.

Then there’s Quebec: Seven-in-ten Canadians have some personal connection to la belle province – though this is predominantly due to visitation, rather than having lived there or having friends and family in the province.

On the opposite end of the spectrum, fully three-in-four Canadians report have no personal connection to Newfoundland and Labrador.

Key Findings:

- The vast majority of Canadian adults (86%) have visited at least one other province, and two per cent have been to every province and Canada’s north
- Eight-in-ten Canadians who live outside of Ontario (79%) have either lived there in the past, visited, or have friends or family living there. The same is true of 69 per cent of non-Quebecers’ relationships to la belle province



- By contrast, Canada's north is the least-connected region of the country, with only one-in-seven (14%) saying they have visited or lived there, or have friends and family living there

PART 1: Which provinces are most and least connected?

Just about everyone has a connection to Ontario

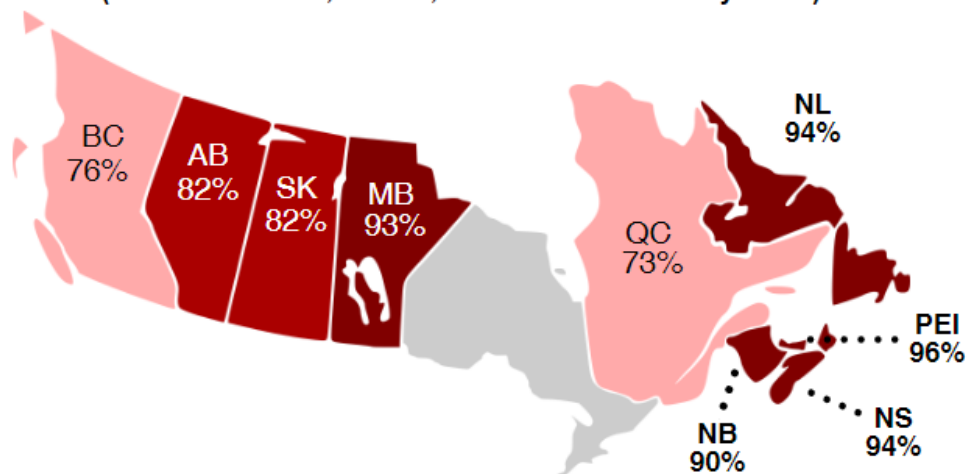
In many ways, Ontario is the social and cultural core of Canada. The province is home to the country's capital, its largest city, its news and entertainment media, and roughly 40 per cent of its population.

So it's little wonder, then, that even those Canadians who make their homes elsewhere across the Great White North are likely to have visited Ontario (61% have), or to have close friends or family living there (36% do), or to have lived there themselves at some point in their lives (19%).

Indeed, just one-in-five (21%) say they have none of these personal connections to Ontario.

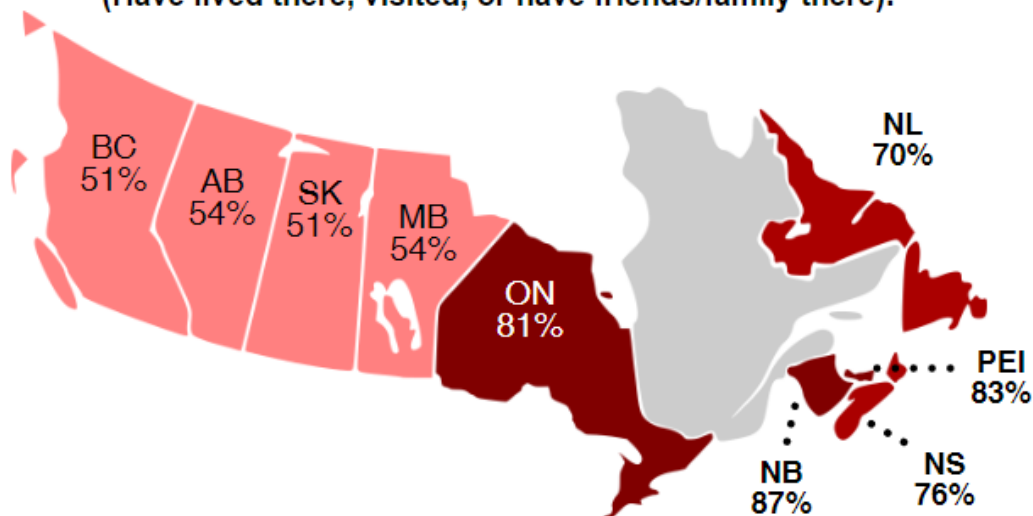
Remarkably, it is residents of neighbouring Quebec – rather than provinces at either end of the country – who profess the least personal affiliation to next-door Ontario:

**Percentage of Canadians with a personal connection to Ontario
(Have lived there, visited, or have friends/family there)**



Likewise, if Ontario is the centre of the universe, Quebec is a very old star near the origin point. At least half of the residents of each province express some personal bond with la belle province:

Percentage of Canadians with a personal connection to Quebec (Have lived there, visited, or have friends/family there):



These two regions – the historical Upper and Lower Canada – are responsible for much of the foundation of Canadian society, and their high levels of connectedness with the rest of the country follow logically from this position.

Canadians ties to these two key regions manifest themselves in different ways, however.

Connections to Quebec are driven by visitation, not relationships

As mentioned, almost seven-in-ten non-Quebecers express some personal affiliation with Quebec – either because they’ve visited (61% have), or used to live there (9%), or have friends or family there (19%).

However, while Quebec and Ontario are equally likely to be a destination for out-of-province visitors, Canadians are considerably more likely to say they have close friends or family in Ontario (36% of non-Ontarians do) than in Quebec (19% of non-Quebecers).

To compare, 35 per cent of non-British-Columbians have friends or family in B.C., and 34 per cent of non-Albertans have friends or family in Alberta. This, despite the fact that those provinces have populations considerably smaller than that of Quebec.

Perhaps this speaks to Quebec’s traditional position as a distinct linguistic society within Canada. It’s a place lots of surveyed Canadians from predominantly English-speaking regions say they have visited, but not a place to which they report stronger personal or familial ties.

In turn, Quebecers themselves report relatively few out-of-province friendships or family members. One-in-four (24%) have friends or family in Ontario, and the total is one-in-six or lower for every other region ([see comprehensive tables for greater detail](#)).

The road less-traveled: Provinces claiming fewer connections to Canadians

While Ontario and Quebec are 1 and 1A for Canadians, the interconnectedness of other regions of the country should not be diminished. The table that follows shows the high degree of connection between Canadians from each province – even ones on the other side of the country, in many cases.

Note: To properly interpret the table, read from top to bottom. For example, the column labeled “BC” indicates personal connections held by British Columbians with other regions of the country.

Percentage of Canadians who have a personal connection to each province, by province. (Have lived in, visited, or have friends/family there)										
	Province of residence									
	BC	AB	SK	MB	ON	QC	NB	NS	PEI	NFL
BC	X	97%	96%	89%	63%	37%	68%	72%	77%	62%
AB	90%	X	99%	93%	62%	31%	77%	78%	84%	82%
SK	60%	86%	X	93%	33%	15%	38%	42%	48%	37%
MB	53%	70%	91%	X	39%	17%	41%	46%	53%	37%
ON	76%	82%	82%	93%	X	73%	90%	94%	96%	94%
QC	51%	54%	51%	54%	81%	X	87%	76%	83%	70%
NB	30%	37%	37%	35%	49%	54%	X	92%	96%	77%
NS	37%	42%	45%	41%	51%	34%	93%	X	96%	88%
PEI	25%	29%	31%	28%	40%	32%	90%	88%	X	65%
NFL	20%	25%	21%	19%	38%	11%	55%	64%	65%	X

Perhaps predictably, the regions Canadians are least likely to have a personal experience with tend to be more geographically remote.

At the top of this list is the country's north (asked about as a single region for the purposes of this survey). More than eight-in-ten Canadians (86%) have never been to or lived in any of the northern territories, and have no friends or family there.

Among the provinces, Newfoundland and Labrador is least well-connected to Canadians from elsewhere. Indeed, three-quarters (76%) of non-residents say they have no personal link to it.

Prince Edward Island (63%) and the Prairie provinces of Saskatchewan and Manitoba (60% each) hold the next lowest levels of connectedness.

Each of these geographically remote regions is also socially remote – at least in terms of the number of people from elsewhere in Canada who express a personal connection to it. That said, as the table

presented earlier highlights, residents of neighbouring regions are more likely to have connections in these less well-known parts of the country.

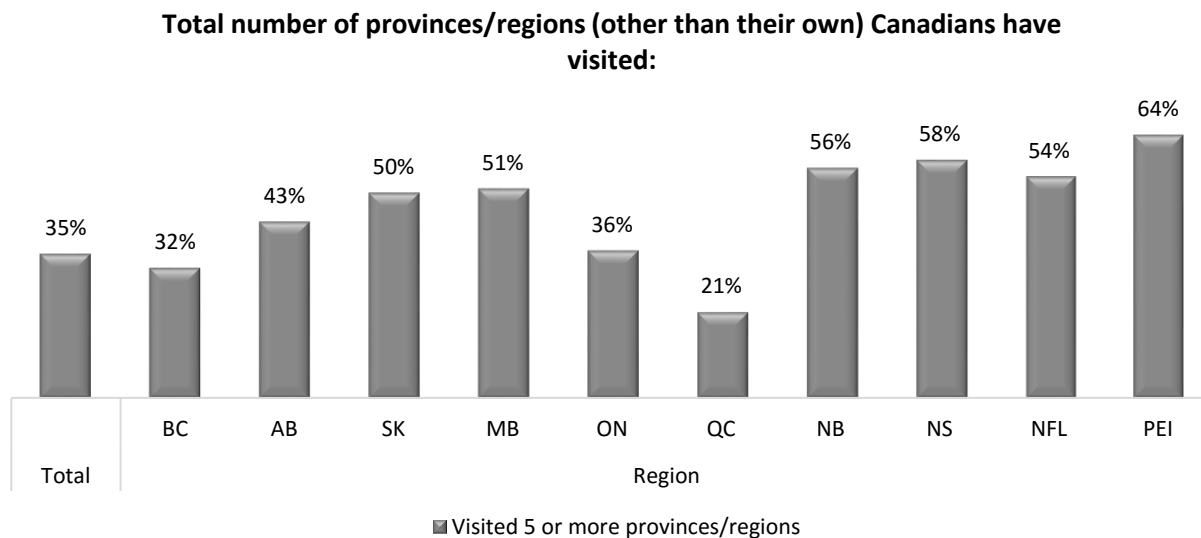
Newfoundland, for example, may be poorly integrated into the lives of Canadians who live elsewhere in the country, but most residents of other Atlantic provinces profess some connection to Canada's easternmost jurisdiction.

Alberta also holds a uniquely strong relationship with the nation's largest maritime province, likely due to a [history of commuting workers](#). Eight-in-ten Newfoundlanders/Labradorians (82%) say they have a connection to Alberta, compared to 62 per cent who have a connection to B.C. and just 37 per cent to Saskatchewan.

PART 2: Which Canadians are most well-traveled?

Regionally, it is residents of Atlantic Canada who tend to have visited a larger number of provinces than other Canadians. This is likely attributable to the relative size of the provinces in the region. It's easier to visit another province when your home is, by definition, just a few hundred kilometres from a provincial border, at most.

Outside of the Atlantic region, it is Prairie residents – those from Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and, to a lesser extent, Alberta – who are most likely to have visited five or more provinces other than their own. Canadians from British Columbia, Ontario, and especially Quebec, meanwhile, are more likely to stay home:



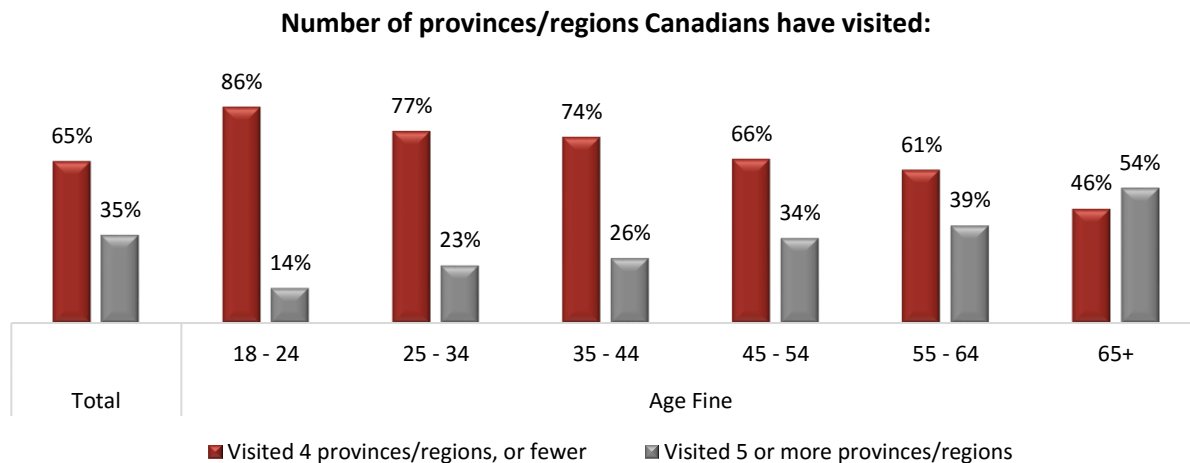
Looking at Canadians' domestic travel experiences in greater detail, it becomes apparent that – despite the country's vastness – Canadians are a well-traveled bunch:

Note: This table should be read in the same way as the previous one. For example, the column labeled “BC” indicates the percentage of British Columbians who have visited other regions of the country.

Percentage of Canadians who have visited each province, by province.										
	Province of residence									
	BC	AB	SK	MB	ON	QC	NB	NS	PEI	NFL
BC	X	79%	79%	75%	43%	26%	44%	43%	55%	35%
AB	67%	X	79%	78%	41%	21%	46%	47%	52%	39%
SK	47%	71%	X	80%	25%	11%	29%	32%	38%	26%
MB	41%	55%	80%	X	31%	14%	31%	34%	45%	30%
ON	54%	60%	68%	77%	X	60%	70%	66%	68%	68%
QC	43%	46%	46%	49%	72%	X	74%	64%	71%	65%
NB	25%	28%	32%	31%	42%	49%	X	79%	84%	66%
NS	29%	30%	37%	33%	43%	30%	79%	X	81%	75%
PEI	21%	22%	29%	26%	35%	29%	83%	78%	X	60%
NFL	15%	15%	16%	16%	19%	8%	43%	50%	50%	X

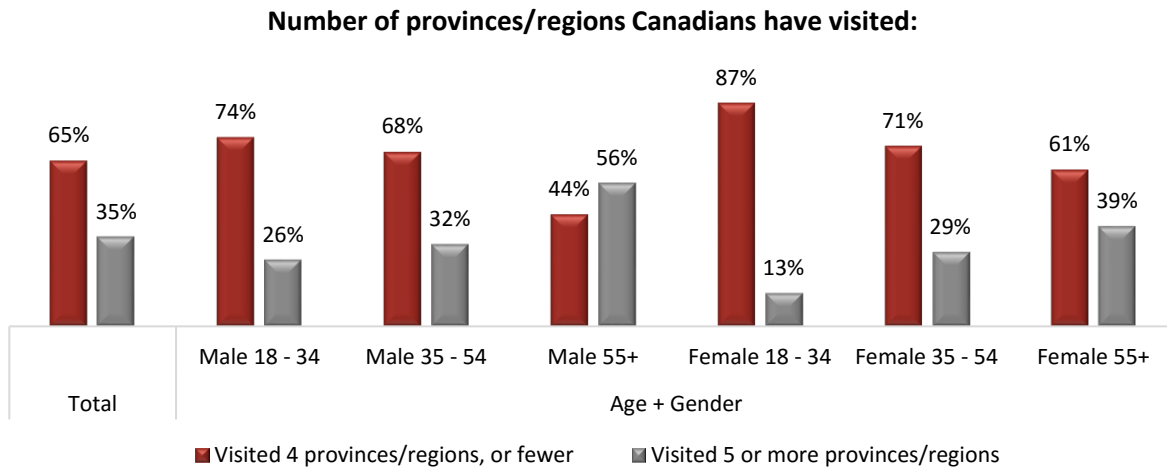
As might be expected, those Canadians who have lived longer – and thus had more opportunity to travel their country – are more likely to have visited at least half of the nation’s provinces.

Indeed, among respondents aged 65 and older, a majority (54%) have visited at least five provinces other than the one in which they currently reside. Among Canadians under age 25, meanwhile, the vast majority (86%) have visited four regions or fewer:



Income and education also correlate to greater rates of domestic travel. Canadians with lower levels of each tend to have traveled less, while those with university degrees and those with household incomes of \$100,000 or more tend to score higher ([see comprehensive tables](#)).

Another group more likely to be possessed by wanderlust? Men. Four-in-ten men (41%) have visited 5 or more provinces, compared to three-in-ten women (30%). This is driven, in large part, by older men, as seen in the graph that follows:



*The **Angus Reid Institute (ARI)** was founded in October 2014 by pollster and sociologist, Dr. Angus Reid. ARI is a national, not-for-profit, non-partisan public opinion research organization established to advance education by commissioning, conducting and disseminating to the public accessible and impartial statistical data, research and policy analysis on economics, political science, philanthropy, public administration, domestic and international affairs and other socio-economic issues of importance to Canada and its world.*

Summary tables follow. For detailed results by region, age, gender, education, and other demographics, [click here](#).

Canadians' personal connection to provinces/territories. Note: Sample size for each is total sample (5,249) minus respondents who currently live in that province

	BC (4580)	AB (4705)	SK (5084)	MB (5062)	ON (3291)	QC (3937)	NB (5138)	NS (5114)	NFL (5114)	PEI (5205)	North (5249)
Personal connection (Have lived there, visited, or have friends/family there)	62%	61%	40%	40%	79%	69%	48%	46%	24%	37%	14%
No personal connection	38%	39%	60%	60%	21%	31%	52%	54%	76%	63%	86%