

Society

Summary

Social trends continue to illustrate complexity and constant evolution of global societies. Issues are increasingly interconnected as globalization erases borders and bridges communications.

However, history also demonstrates that there are still vast differences – some extremely divisive and others healthy components of diversity. Understanding these dynamics, how key issues affect people and how populations respond continues to be critical.

In this section

- increased attention to world religion is revealing how much we don't know and how rapidly environment is changing
- health of populations and how nations foster and manage health continue to be of paramount concern
- responses to key social issues like drug addiction and sexual abuse under increasing scrutiny
- renewed thinking about what defines quality of life in Canada
- Canadian public opinion consistent on government priorities, divisive on immigration issues and privacy/security trade-off notion



Society - Global



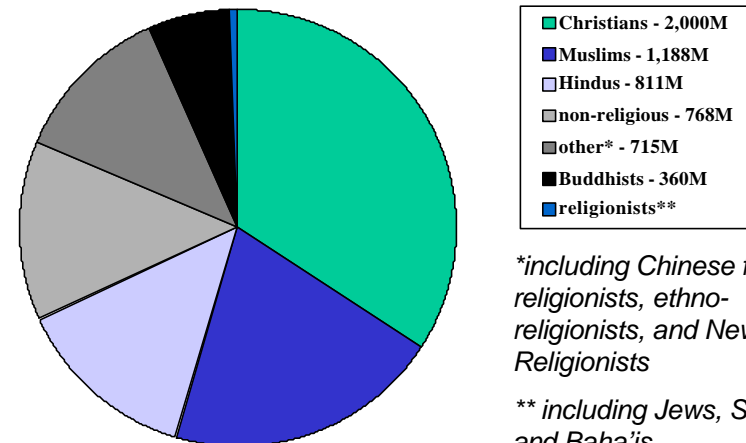
- education in KBSE holds powerful influence on societal outcomes
 - **OECD reinforces education as critical to quality of life - not equally accessible**
 - positive to those with access - increasingly negative for those who miss out
 - multiple factors determine inclusion and participation across OECD nations - socio-economic background, gender, culture, age and physical ability
 - over 60% of working age population in OECD nations have at least upper secondary education - less than 10% of adults in Italy, Portugal and Turkey have university diploma

- global religious change expected to intensify in coming decades

- **world's religious composition neither few in number nor static**

- Christianity practiced in hundreds of divergent forms
- in 2001 - close to 1.2B Muslims globally - at least 70M belong to groups outside more commonly known Shia or Sunni
- Buddhism comprises over 200 distinct bodies - many do not concur on key issues
- Pentecostalist affiliation predicted at 1B by 2050

The World's Major Religious Blocs, 2000



*including Chinese folk-religionists, ethno-religionists, and New Religionists

** including Jews, Sikhs and Baha'is

Source: 2001 World Christian Trends

...there is enormous religious change going on across the world, all the time. It's massive, it's complex, and its continual. We have identified 9900 distinct and separate religions in the world, increasing by three new religions every day. What this means is that new religious movements are not just a curiosity...they are a very serious subject.

~ David B. Barrett, Editor, *World Christian Encyclopedia*, 2001

Society – Global...



- renaissance of Islam predicted to look more - not less - like America
 - **renaissance led by “revivalists”** - not fundamentalists
 - younger generations know more about West than their ancestors
 - deplore many things about western life - moral decay and materialism - but also seek to adopt elements like democracy and free-market economy
 - **Muslim world’s existing structures of power key barrier to progress**
 - significance of Mid-east conflict and link to public opinion/behaviour intensifying in some regions
 - **Information Age enabling majority of Arabs to access media** outlets outside borders
 - exposing uncensored imagery/commentary on conflict
 - fuelling frustration with governments’ seeming inability to stem the violence
 - **France**, with largest Muslim and Jewish populations in Western Europe, **witnessing increasing incidences of anti-Semitic attacks in the last year**
- citizens likely to exert increasing pressure on Arab states to take significant steps to redress matters, despite lack of military muscle

For a long time there has been a pervasive assumption ... that Arab public opinion doesn't really affect the behavior of Arab states... those leaders have the power to shape and manipulate the opinions of the public, the analysts believed... This view was always exaggerated. All governments, even authoritarian ones, must pay attention to their public. Public discontent can be contained only by straining the governments' security and economic capacities.

~ Shibley Telhami
The Brookings Institute

Society – Global...



- analysis of New Religious Movements ("NRMs") - growth industry
 - law enforcement asking NRM scholars for advice
 - police seek assistance on distinguishing real from perceived threats associated with NRMs - Heaven's Gate and Solar Temple suicides still fresh in memory
 - leadership of women critical to the rebuilding of Afghanistan
 - global community unite to fight gender apartheid
 - 5 years of work by US-based Feminist Majority Foundation in advance of 9/11 provided solid foundation for major international human rights efforts to end oppression of Afghan women
 - UN World Food Program, led by executive director Catherine Bertini, leveraged critical support of 157 bakeries in Kabul to ensure aid workers were permitted to work – closing down operations when challenged by Taliban
 - Dr. Sima Samar, an activist and doctor, ran clandestine hospitals and schools for women and children in Pakistan and Afghanistan for over 10 years - appointed Afghanistan's new Minister for Women's Affairs
- legislative responses emerging to deal with NRMs with illicit intentions
 - May 2001 France became the first country to pass specific legislation against sects, creating a new offence, the "fraudulent abuse of a state of ignorance or weakness", which carries a prison sentence of up to three years and a maximum fine of £250,000

... Practicing medicine in [rural Afghanistan] demonstrated brutally that the lives of women were nearly unbearable... and that the lack of education was a direct cause of the turmoil the country was in.

~Dr. Sima Samar, Deputy Prime Minister (Minister for Women's Affairs), Afghanistan interim government

Society – Global...



- international study positioned to exert pressure on OECD nations in management and delivery of health care
 - **OECD undertaking broad, 3-year study** of member states' health care systems to respond to key policy challenges
 - rising demand - aging populations and technological innovation
 - concerns about efficiency in provision
 - continuing health inequalities
 - **building integrated information on measuring performance**
 - development of evidence-based policy options for improved health care systems

➤ international comparative analysis of key service delivery sectors - may exert global pressure to integrate international standards and frameworks

Health systems are an important element in social cohesion and represent the largest service sector in many OECD countries. Their efficiency, effectiveness and equity consequences, their impact on public finances, and their ability to meet the challenges of medical advances, ageing populations and rising expectations require creative policy approaches.

OECD Council at Ministerial Level, May 2001

- court ruling on anti-AIDS drug - dramatic shift in outlook for children and pregnant women in South Africa?
 - April 2002 - South Africa's Constitutional Court ordered anti-retroviral drug Nevirapine to be provided to all HIV-infected pregnant women despite government resistance
 - health ministry argues infrastructure insufficient for distribution
 - President Mbeki questions validity of and necessity for anti-AIDS drug
 - studies suggest Nevirapine can reduce the transmission of HIV from mother to child by 50%
 - estimates - effective use of the drug could save 10 babies a day

Society – Global...



- labour market pressures present challenges - pose tough questions
 - **unemployment-related protest intensifies in China's north-east**
 - recent large scale, integrated protests mark a significant departure from traditional labour unrest patterns and signal the potential for a worker's movement
 - Communist Party appears more tolerant than in Tiananmen Square days, accepting it as an unavoidable component of economic progress
 - critics suggest the party under-reports unemployment rates and seeks to foster worker disunity and ensure grievances remain targeted away from it and toward local government
- shrinking labour force + economic slump = retirement delays in Britain
 - Britain's Institute for Public Policy Research - **proposes raising standard retirement age to 67**
 - % of men aged 60-64 **employed full time has decreased nearly by half since 1970s**
 - raises key questions from both supply and demand sides of labour market
 - ability and capacity of older workers to do job and willingness of employers to hire them
 - agism and desires for early retirement not likely to disappear
 - analysts predict recent economic turndowns and demographic pressures will draw potential employers and aging workers together

UK studies suggest older workers (defined as over 50) perform worse than younger ones in tests of working memory and ability to process complex new information rapidly, but also demonstrate less absenteeism, lower turnover, fewer accidents, higher job satisfaction and more positive work values than younger workers.

Society – Global...



- increased awareness about social harm and public cost exerts pressure for change in dealing with key issues

- **Britain’s growing drug problem one of the worst in Western Europe**

- more using hard drugs than in any other European country
- addicts getting progressively younger – atypical trend
- rate of drug related deaths - high and rising

- **government, police consider radical action**

- scaling back penalties for possession - minimize drain on police resources
- Swiss trial program of prescribing heroin to addicts in controlled environment seeks to minimize drug related crime and help kick addictions – being considered by Britain

- **80% of drug expenditures in Britain are estimated to be financed by crime – largely mugging, burglary, robbery, shoplifting and car theft**
- **Britain imprisons higher proportion of population than almost anywhere else in Western Europe**
- **estimates are that Britain’s drug problem costs government £10 billion a year**

- Swiss prescription program may signal a shift in approach to war on drugs
- British study confirms direct correlation between addiction levels, prison populations and property crime rates in Britain

- **“pass the trash” response to child sex offence cases** under increasing scrutiny

- some institutions, fearing legal liability and damage to reputations have dealt with sexual abuse cases by discreetly arranging for accused to continue working elsewhere – contributing to veil of secrecy
- increasing publicity of cases adding pressure on institutions to deal with offenders effectively/openly

Society – Canada



- religious renewal predicted on the horizon – may take new forms
 - vast **majority of Canadians surveyed (85%) associate themselves with a religious denomination** - despite record low attendance levels
 - majority (55%) attending church sporadically or not at all express **desire to actively engage** with respective faiths, but with assurance of meaning – described as “inactive affiliates”
 - some **increases in teen attendance** levels
 - **new interpretations of “spirituality”** emerging – e.g. more time with family & friends
 - 21% of Canadians attend religious services weekly – down from 31% in 1975 and 60% in 1945
 - exodus from church particularly apparent among Quebec Catholics – from 90% in 1945 to 20% in 2000
 - 81% attest to a belief in God
- new thinking on what *really* indicates quality of life levels in Canada
 - Canadian Policy Research Networks ongoing Quality of Life Indicators Project reaches **major milestone - unveils mixed preliminary findings**
 - improving trends in physical and mental health status - eroding quality of health care and fairness of waiting times
 - world-class performance on educational attainment and university enrolment - rising costs of university education and lack of evidence about quality of education
 - strong economic indicators - deterioration in social conditions, programs and personal well-being
 - improvement in waste management - worsening air and water quality
 - right to vote highly valued - declining voter turnouts prevail

Society – Canada...



- measuring quality and availability of health care
 - **Maclean's 2001 survey used 15 system indicators** - varied results
 - tele-health services applauded by some for cutting down on unnecessary hospital visits - others suggest they are luring talented nurses away from staff-strapped hospitals
 - **access to services remains key issue**
 - of 54 regions measured, communities with medical schools continue to dominate best overall scores
 - the majority of the rural regions surveyed rank in the lower half in terms of access scores
 - prohibitive training costs continue to dictate profiles of medical students
 - **majority of students come from wealthy urban backgrounds** – not representative of socio-economic, geographic, ethnic diversity
 - about 10% from rural areas and most likely to consider practice in those regions
 - disproportionately low enrolment of black and aboriginal students
 - under-representation could lead to language / cultural barriers between doctor and patient
 - **communities race to conceive of ways to keep medical talent**
 - hope is that more students will practice locally with 2004 opening of northern medical school (campuses in Sudbury and Thunder Bay) – studies suggest 60% of doctors practice close to where they studied
 - Wallaceburg Ontario - offered to subsidize 7 medical students in exchange for commitments to practice in area as response to an urgent shortage
- Canada confronting shortage of doctors – particularly acute in rural areas
- according to the CMA - 900,000 Ontario residents lack a general practitioner
- rural depopulation trends may necessitate rethinking of service delivery models on wide range of public services

Society – Canada...



- developments and pressures continue to colour Canadian health care context
 - Canada's WorldHeart among key contenders in North American race to develop artificial heart
 - highly competitive R&D environment and aging population contributing to **rising cost and demand for prescription drugs**
 - National Population Health Survey - confirms **Canadian adults and children have been getting increasingly overweight** since 1981
 - **steady declines in infant mortality** and premature mortality (pre-75) continue
 - **smoking**, while on the decline, continues to be a **key avoidable health issue**
- information lacking on what actions are taken and why
 - key knowledge gap – research on treatment usage and corresponding impact on one-year survival rates – require “cost-benefit analysis”

Canadians and Prescription Drugs

- In 2001, Canadians spent an estimated \$15B on prescription drugs – an average of approximately \$360 each
- More drugs are being prescribed now than ever before – **25% more per capita in 2001 than in 1995**
- The nation's drug costs represent approximately 15% of the nation's \$100M overall healthcare bill
- Canada's \$100M healthcare expenditures represents close to 9.4% of its GDP – **Canada thus spends more on healthcare relative to its GDP than any other country in the world, with the exception of the US and Germany**

*“Drug Habits: Behind Canada's Giant Rx Bill”
Andrew Duffy, Ottawa Citizen, January 19, 2002*

Romanow Commission on the Future of Healthcare, established in April 2001, is undertaking an extensive, two-phased study aimed at strengthening and renewing Canada's health care system. Final report, scheduled for Fall 2002 is expected outline a concrete action plan to put the system on sustainable, long-term footing.

Society – Canada...



- Canada's 15 year olds perform well in key academic areas
 - testing among G8 countries - **Canadian kids rank 1st in reading, 2nd in math and 3rd in sciences**
 - among those with least variation in terms of performance relative to socio-economic effects – implying **secondary education system is a leveller**
- rates of participation in education increasing
 - **high school drop-out rate declined in all provinces** between 1990-1999 – with some persistent problematic areas
 - Prince Edward Island, Quebec and Alberta had the three leading rates in 1999
 - **university participation rate of 18-24 year olds gradually increasing** over past 20 years
- shifting concepts of equality and disparity
 - **inconsistent attitudes toward income gaps/economic experience**
 - majority of Canadians indicate income gaps are unacceptable - majority also indicate a person's overall performance or output should be key outcomes determiner
 - mixed responses to notion of people with resources having access to better/ faster service
 - only 26% deem it acceptable in the case of quicker security lines at airports and customs
 - strong division in case of higher quality private education
 - more palatable in case of protection and security services in one's neighborhood – 45% indicate ability to buy better/faster service is acceptable
 - majority of Canadians (61%) still agree with statement "I really worry that we are moving to a more divided society of haves and have-nots" - steady decline over last 6 years – 81% agreed in 1996

(Source: EKOS Research Associates, 2001/2002)

Society – Canada...



- evolving scope of corporate social responsibility
 - **roles of public, private and not-for-profit sectors in communities continue to change** as we move from period of spending cuts to a more fiscally prudent era
 - **business sector faces unique trends**
 - dramatic communications changes affecting how business connects with stakeholders
 - more sophisticated consumer base, demonstrating increasing activism, with higher expectations of quality service delivery
 - increased focus on accountability
 - increasing media attention on corporate citizenship
 - **revised approaches to how business views and plans for its role in community**
 - moving from ad hoc models of donations to strategic integration of social responsibility into business planning
 - increased recognition of need of, and training for, internal champions to manage corporate social responsibility
 - growing involvement of employees in corporate responsibility – support for employee choice (e.g. giving funds, matching funds, etc.) and employee volunteerism programs
 - continued investment in community outreach programs - improved tracking and accountability measures
 - majority surveyed agree **business is making an effort – but more could be done**
 - 64% of Canadians surveyed gave Canadian companies a positive rating on efforts to “support community sports, arts and culture, charities and other community causes”
 - 32% were critical of companies overall community support efforts

Corporate social responsibility is commonly considered to mean the relationship of corporations with stakeholders – elements include:

- **financial and ethical performance**
- **environmental stewardship**
- **employment creation and maintenance**
- **investment in community outreach**
- **human resource management**

Source: Conference Board of Canada

(Source: Angus Reid Consumer Confidence Monitor, January / February 2002)

Society – Canada...



- public confidence in police relatively high but experiencing decline
 - World Values Survey analysis reveals **overall high levels of confidence in police**
 - high and stable although a slight overall decline since 1980
 - high when compared to other public organizations – e.g. armed forces, civil service, etc.
 - consistent with trends in comparable countries
 - regional data underscores **variances in BC and Quebec**
 - slight increases in confidence levels in Atlantic and Alberta
 - modest declines in Ontario (3%) and Prairies (1%)
 - significant drops in Quebec (11%) and B.C. (12%)
 - **shifting values predictors of key behaviours** and expectations of Canadians
 - citizens are increasingly post-materialistic (i.e. preoccupied with the need for belonging, self-esteem, values relating to quality of life rather than "material goals" such as money, physical security)
 - increased expectation of governments to be more responsive
 - increased inclination to engage in protest behaviour
 - declining levels of deference to authority
 - community standards for acceptable behaviour have changed

Canadians exhibiting low confidence in police tend to:

- be younger
- be left-oriented politically
- have low levels of life satisfaction
- have lower levels of church attendance
- have high propensity for civil permissiveness
- have high propensity for protest behaviour

➤ predictors of low public confidence in police help to identify segments of population with which law enforcement could seek to improve relations

Society – Canada...



- public fairly divided on proposed security/privacy tradeoffs
 - 43% of Canadians **confident Government of Canada can be trusted to strike right balance of security and civil liberties**
 - 48% indicate they are comfortable with police having increased powers to ensure security even at expense of some personal privacy safeguards – steadily declining post 9/11 (from 64%)
- Canadians varied perceptions of immigration and refugee policies
 - on number of immigrants coming to Canada:
 - 45% indicate the number is about right
 - 34% indicate there are too many
 - 12% indicate there are too few

(Source: EKOS Research Associates, 2001/2002)

- demographic trends indicate the country is and will continue to be dependent on immigration for population and economic growth – public opinion on this matter is to become a key issue