



# Promoting positive opinion about refugees: Identifying your audiences

To win more support for refugees, we recommend focusing on the ‘persuadables’: people who are neither strongly supporting refugees, nor strongly opposed to refugees. Polls tell us that the ‘persuadables’ represent approximately 39% of the Canadian public. ‘Persuadables’ are people who can be persuaded to support better and more generous refugee policies – but they could also go the way of the opposition. Some call them the ‘anxious middle.’

The messages and activities in this toolkit are designed with the ‘persuadables’ in mind.

Addressing those who strongly and directly oppose refugees requires a different set of strategies and messaging. It also likely requires more work with less chance of success.

## a. Overview of reachable audiences

Who in our communities might be within reach and open to listening to our messages? Who might be allies in connecting you with the ‘persuadables’? What types of considerations might seem most relevant to them?

<p><b>Faith Communities</b></p> <p>Members in churches, mosques, synagogues and other faith communities are often open to our cause because of the principles of their faith.</p> <p>Some in the community are likely actively involved through sponsoring, volunteering with or otherwise supporting refugees.</p>	<p><b>Community Members (non-religious)</b></p> <p>They are active building your community. From local parents associations or other informal groups, such as local moms’ groups, reading groups, employee clubs, sports clubs.</p> <p>They are an integral part of building community, which means there are opportunities to connect with them about building local community.</p>
<p><b>Business</b></p> <p>People active in the business sector want to see a growing economy: this means bringing in new customers or attracting new talent.</p> <p>Local business owners, the Chamber of Commerce, specific sectors (such as technology, banking, credit unions) may be ready audiences.</p>	<p><b>Local Institutions</b></p> <p>Local institutions such as municipal councils, libraries, schools, museums and galleries, recreational and community centres have an interest in building a strong community.</p> <p>They are looking for ways to connect their institution with the community at large.</p>

## b. Questions to identify audiences

Think about the people in your community who might be open to productive messaging and conversations about all the benefits to communities when refugees are welcomed and supported. Do they match any of the categories of audiences in the chart above? Or are they part of another category of audiences?

Once you have thought of general audience categories, brainstorm with your team about the questions below.

**Describe their demographic background:** (age, race, socio-economic background / work and occupation)

### Values - Think / Feel / Do

- What do they care most about? Do their values overlap with your organization or groups work?
- Do you know what their day-to-day lives look like?
- What might be some barriers to them supporting better refugee policies?
- Who influences them and who do they trust? (In the community, family, media).

### Where do they get their news and information?

- Local paper's columnists?
- Church newsletters and bulletins, faith magazines and newspapers?
- News outlets (print, digital, radio, tv)

All of these questions will help you draw a better picture of the 'persuadables' in your community.

The answers should also help you craft messages and deliver them in more effective ways. Your messages should:

- speak to your audience's concerns and values (**what** the message says)
- be communicated by people they value and trust (**who** brings the message)
- be disseminated to where your audiences are at (**how** the message reaches your audience).