

Attitudes towards Immigration in Canada What's Going On?

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Retirees' Association Queen's

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Image of Canadian exceptionalism 2015



Other voices



PUBLIC ATTITUDES TO IMMIGRATION

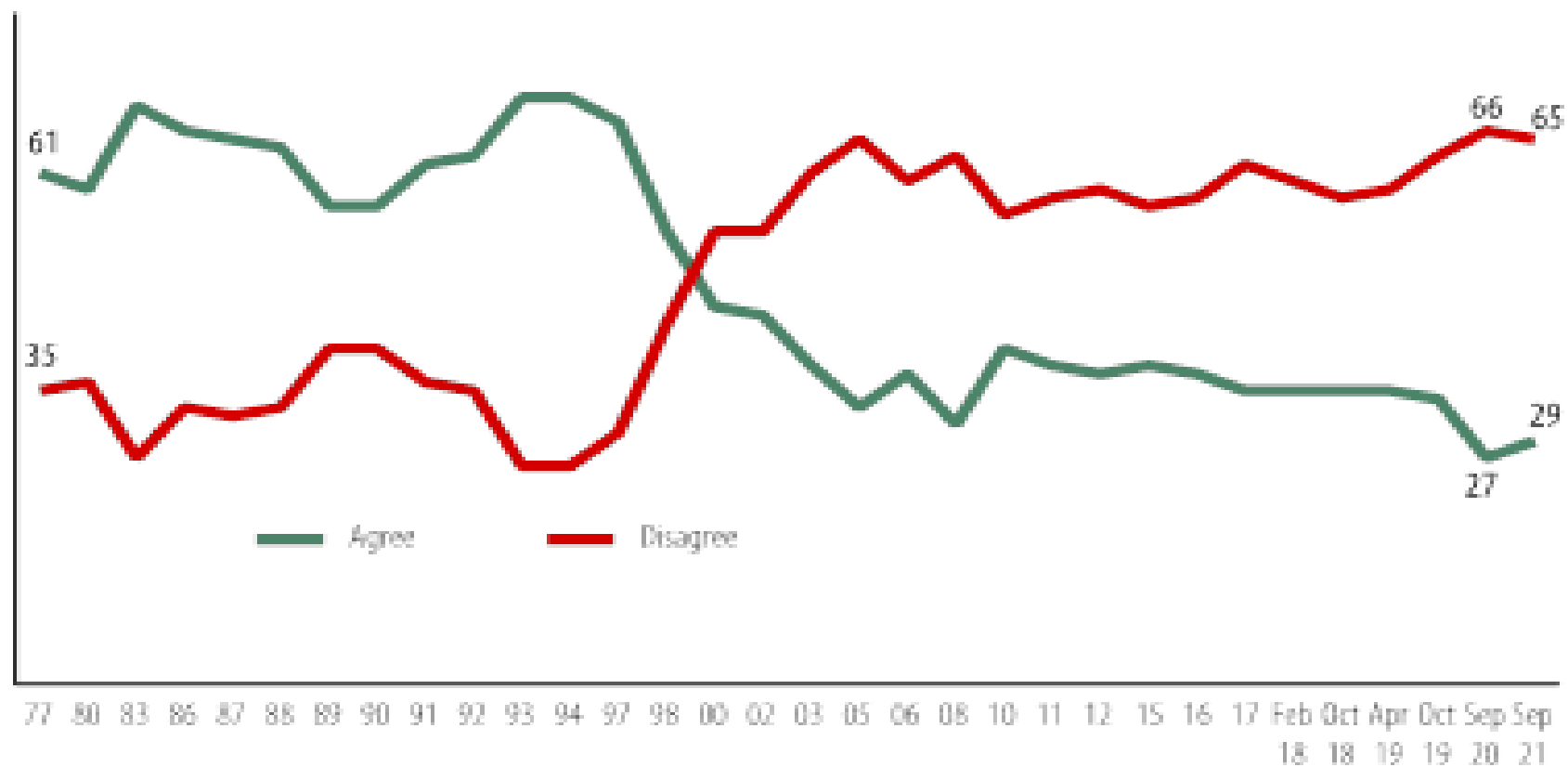


Traditional interpretation

- Distinctive culture
 - Country of immigration
 - Comparatively secure borders
 - Adoption of point system in 1967
 - Multiculturalism policy 1971
- But
 - What about recent changes in public attitudes?
 - Environics Focus Canada data

Public support for immigration

Immigration levels are too high
1977 - 2021



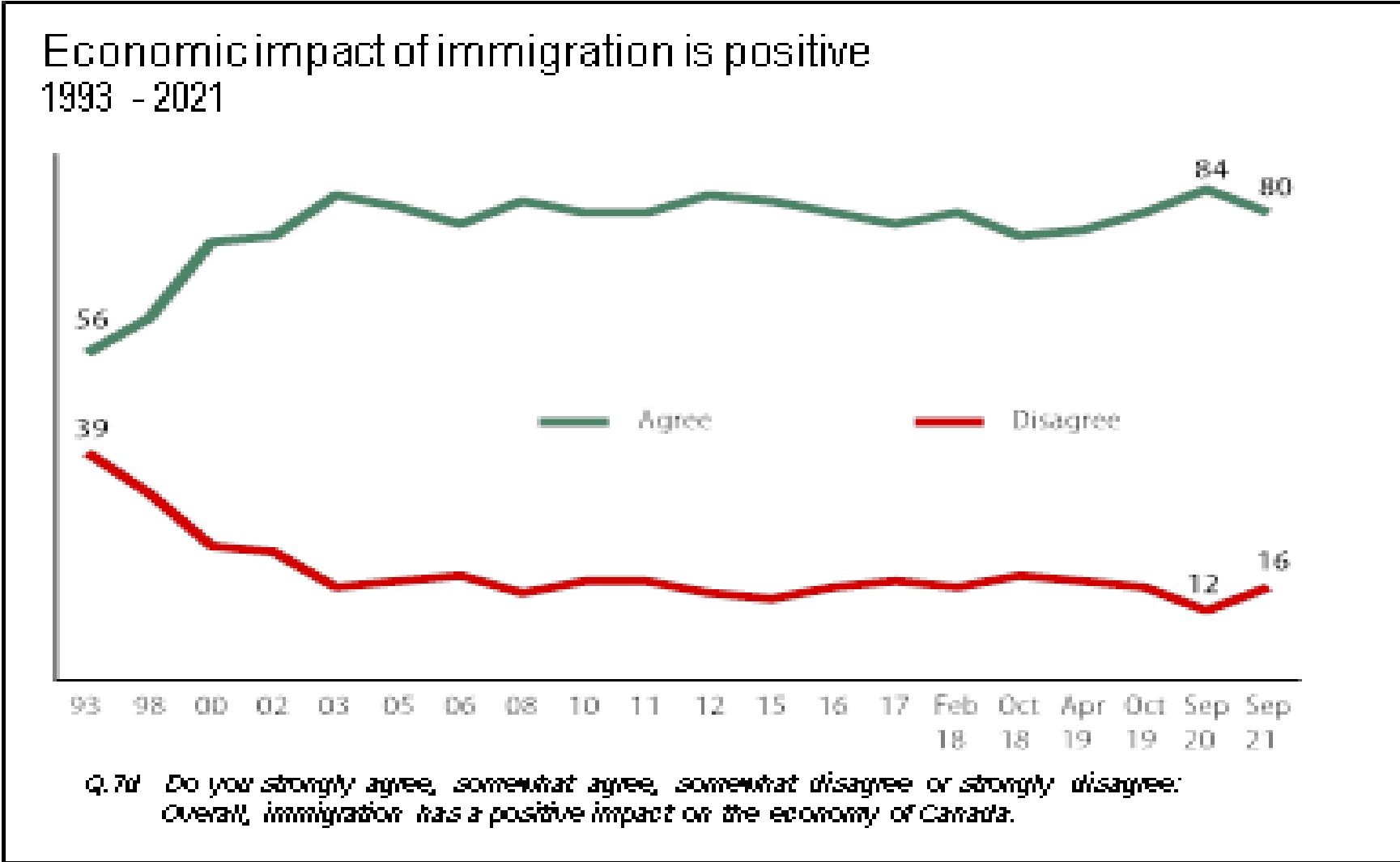
Q.7a Do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree:
Overall there is too much immigration to Canada

What is going on? A deeper look

Factors shaping attitudes to immigration

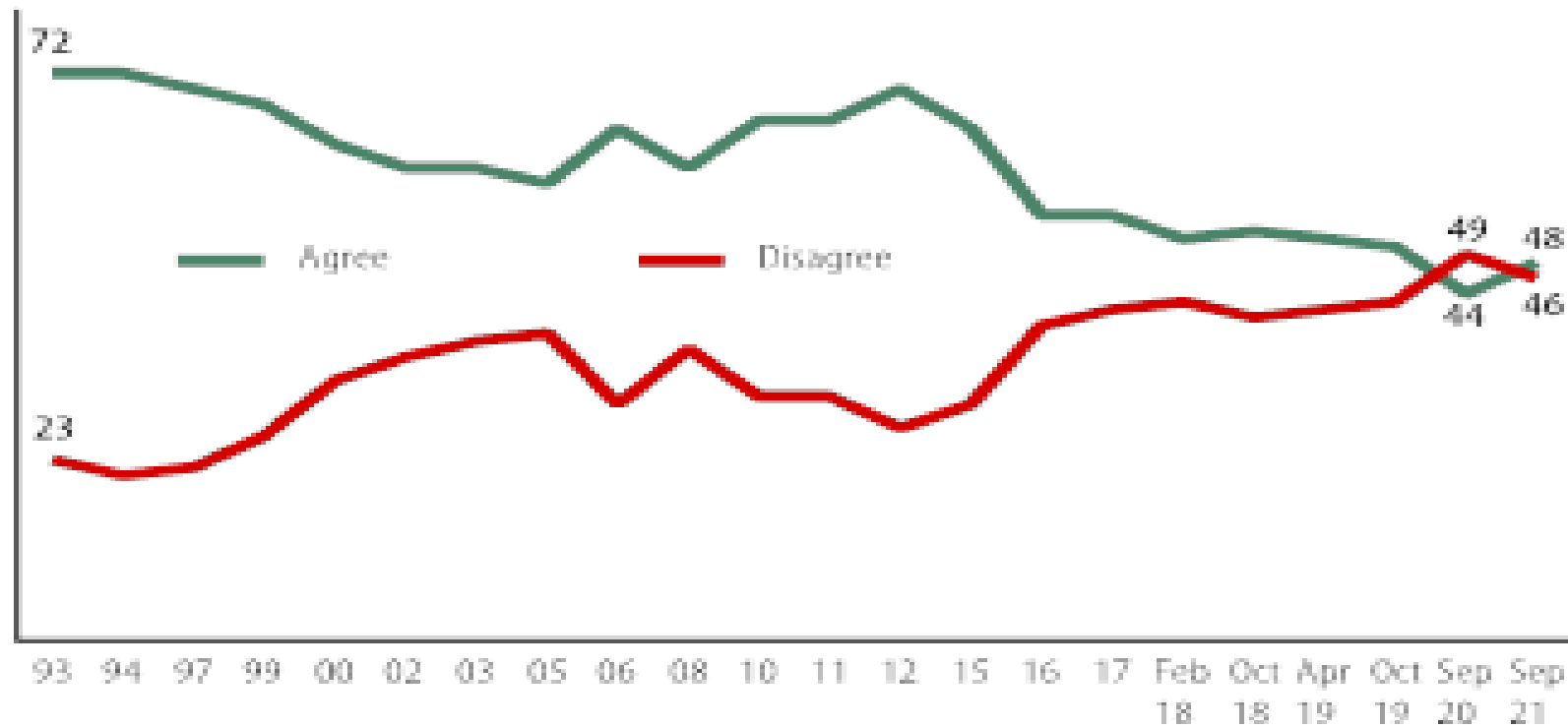
- Country context
 - Surges/stability in number of immigrants
 - State of economy/unemployment rate
- Individual Canadians
 - Personal characteristics: age, education, gender, language
 - Sense of economic anxiety
 - Sense of cultural anxiety
 - Political partisanship

Economic anxiety and immigration?



Cultural anxiety and immigration?

Too many immigrants do not adopt Canadian values
1993 - 2021



Q.7c Do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree:
There are too many immigrants coming into this country who are not adopting Canadian

Offsetting effects

- Backlash elsewhere
 - Economic and cultural anxiety reinforce each other

- Canada
 - Economic and cultural off-set each other

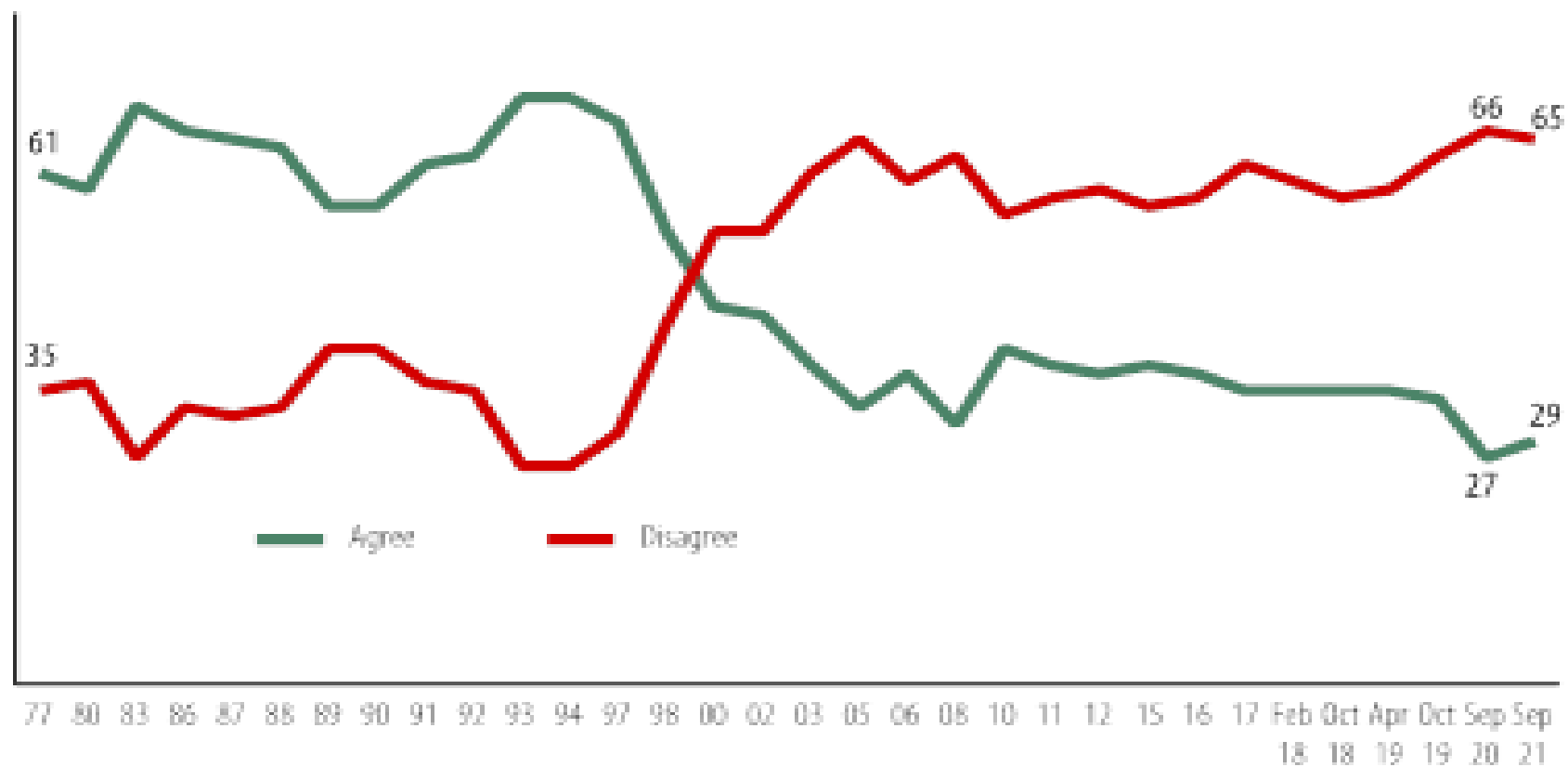


POLITICS AND IMMIGRATION



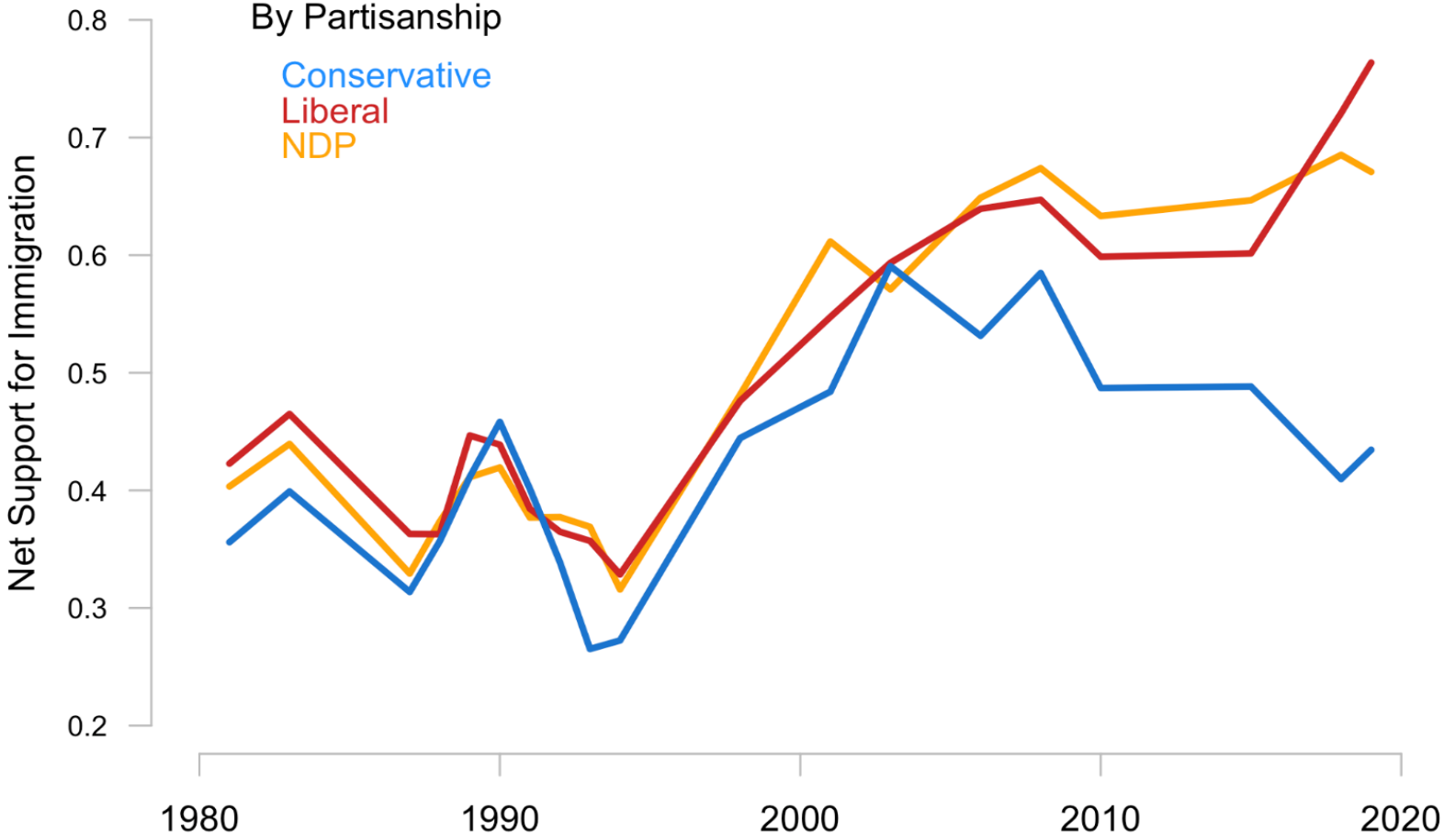
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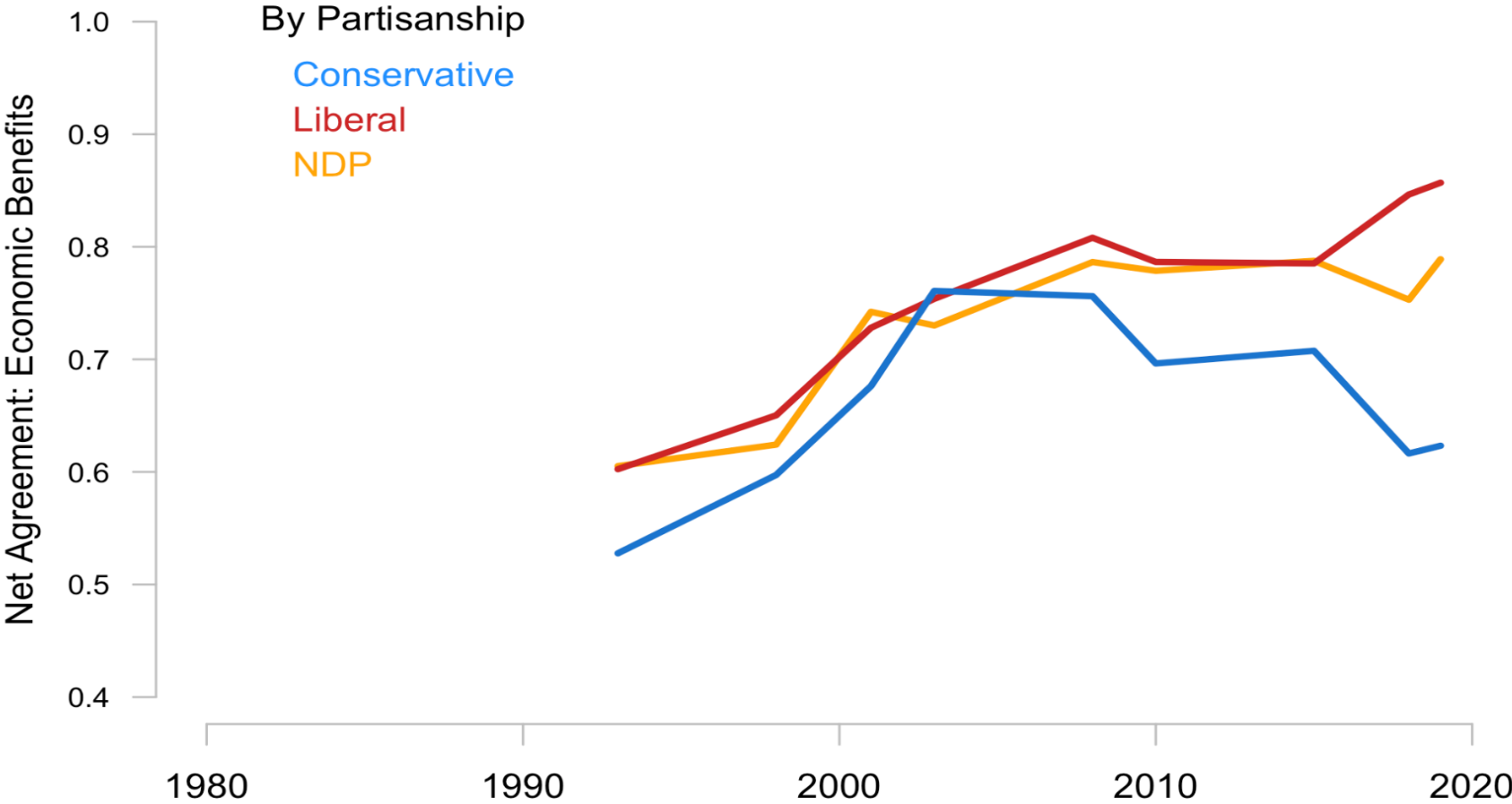


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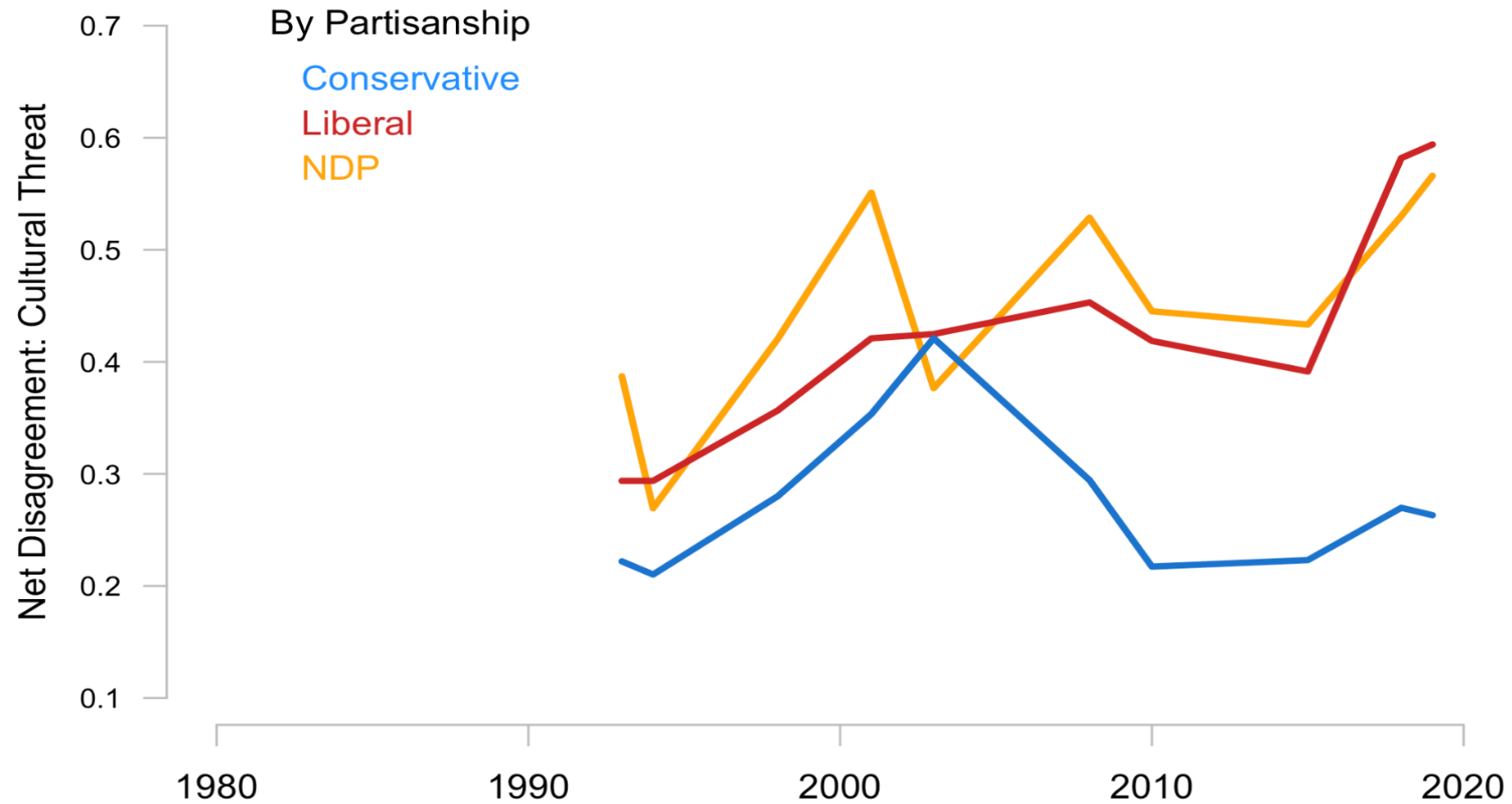
Support for immigration by partisanship



Economic impact by partisanship



Cultural anxiety by partisanship



Polarization and the future

- Support for immigration

- Overall, stable support for an ambitious immigration program
- For decades, stable support was based on a strong multiparty consensus
- Consensus has given way to greater polarization
- Stable overall support reflects declining support on the right and rising support on the centre-left.

- Question

- Is this a durable foundation for stability in the politics of immigration in the years to come?