

Quebec prefers “le Statut quo” : When it comes to the desired numbers of immigrants Quebec is not distinct in its aspirations (though it might be support slight increase)

-Over the past year Reasonable Accommodation Debate had little impact on desired immigration levels

-Quebecers and other Canadians favor family reunification

-Employers, Immigrants Themselves and other communities should have more responsibility for adaptation to life here

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Selon les medias, le chef de l'Action démocratique du Québec veut maintenir le niveau actuel d'immigrants reçus, soit autour de 45 000 nouveaux arrivants par an et refuse de l'augmenter comme le suggèrent les libéraux. Le seuil a déjà été considérablement augmenté il y a quelques années, et on l'avait alors approuvé. Mais il faut être prudent.»

Pour sa part le premier ministre **Charest accuse Mario Dumont de vouloir fermer la porte à l'immigration et « isoler » le Québec, une vision « à l'opposé » de celle proposée par le Parti libéral.**

Lors du 25e congrès des jeunes libéraux, le chef du Parti libéral insisté sur l'ouverture sur le monde et la nécessité de faire face aux défis démographiques qui se dessinent, notamment par l'apport des immigrants.

« Vous avez proposé d'augmenter les niveaux d'immigration, a lancé le premier ministre aux jeunes militants dans son discours de clôture. Pour faire ça, il faut comprendre et avoir cette confiance dans notre capacité d'accueil et bien saisir les enjeux pour l'avenir du Québec. Ce que vous proposez, c'est une composante incontournable de la solution aux défis démographiques. »

Pour sa part, Pauline Marois **souhaite que tout ce qui relève de l'immigration au Québec soit complètement sous la responsabilité du gouvernement québécois.**

The Quebec Parliamentary Commission which will hold hearings this fall has invited participants to comment on five scenarios. La commission parlementaire étudiera les cinq scénarios suivants pour la période allant jusqu'à l'année 2010:

- le scénario 1 est une réduction de l'immigration à 40 000 admissions en 2010;
- le scénario 2 est la stabilisation de l'immigration à son niveau actuel, soit 46 000 admissions par année;
- le scénario 3 est une croissance légère de l'immigration à 50 000 admissions;
- le scénario 4 est une croissance moyenne de l'immigration à 55 000 admissions annuelles;
- enfin, le dernier scénario 5 est une croissance élevée, pour au moins 60 000 admissions par an.

That which follows examines three national surveys on desired immigration levels conducted between October 2006 and June 2007. Since these are national surveys the assumption that the rolling up of the three samples for Quebec will increase their reliability. The first survey was conducted by the firm Environics in October 2006, the second by Ipsos for Citizenship and Immigration Canada in November 2006 and the third by Ipsos in June 2007. Question formulation differs slightly but the conclusion is inescapable-like other Canadians most Quebecers are comfortable with the status quo when it comes to levels and when they find out what the numbers are support drops slightly.

Following the examination of opinion on levels we go on to examine detailed findings from the Ipsos survey conducted for Citizenship and Immigration Canada to provide insight into how those who feel that there are too many immigrants, those who feel there are the right number and those who feel that there are too few feel about various immigration issues.

Results

On the basis of the three aforementioned surveys it is relatively safe to conclude that most Quebecers like Canadians on the whole are comfortable with the current levels of immigration and hence there appears neither to be a sufficiently strong movement for either a reduction in numbers or an increase. Public opinion has shifted little in the past decade when it comes to the numbers of immigrants that are received and the gradual increases in immigration to Quebec over the past five years have seen resulted in no significant shifts in opinion. Indeed this has been the case despite the emotional debate over "reasonable accommodation" in Quebec.

		Ipsos June 2007		November 2006		October 2006	
		Canada N=1005	Quebec N=252	Canada N=1200	Quebec N=250	Canada N=2021	Quebec =502
Overall, there is too much immigration to Canada	Agree					43	44
	Disagree					54	51
Too many (Take in fewer immigrants than other developed countries our size do)		24%	23%	28%	17%		
Too few (Take in more immigrants than other developed countries our size do)		23%	16%	15%	22%		
About the same/right number		49%	59%	48%	57%		
Don't know/Refused		4%	2%	8%	10%	2	2

In your opinion, do you feel there are too many, too few, or about the right number of immigrants coming to Canada?

	Canada	BC	AB	Ontario	Quebec
Too many	339	50	34	158	52
	28%	32%	29%	35%	17%
Too few	186	19	16	53	64
	15%	12%	13%	12%	22%
About the right number	577	74	55	197	168
	48%	47%	48%	43%	57%
Don't know/Refused	98	15	11	47	12
	8%	9%	10%	10%	4%

In the results below we provide more detailed analysis of trends in opinion on immigration based on the Ipsos survey for Citizenship and Immigration Canada done in November of 2006 (in the very midst in Quebec of the debate on reasonable accommodation)

If the shifts in public opinion have not been significant some might argue that it is due to lack of knowledge about the numbers of new arrivals annually. In 2006 Canada received just over 250 000 immigrants. It is in Quebec where the somewhat higher percentage feels that we receive less than 150 000 immigrants per year. Nearly two-thirds of Canadians are in the 150 000 to 500 000 range in terms of their estimates.

In total, approximately how many new immigrants do you think that Canada allows into the country each year?

	Canada	BC	AB	Ontario	Quebec
Less than 150,000	258	26	24	74	89
	22%	17%	21%	16%	30%
150,000 to 249,000	469	72	43	185	105
	39%	46%	37%	41%	36%
250,000 to 499,000	282	36	33	116	63
	24%	23%	28%	25%	21%
500,000 or more	76	11	4	30	19
	6%	7%	4%	6%	7%
Don't know/Refused	114	13	12	51	20
	10%	8%	10%	11%	7%

A majority of Canadians feel that immigration has a positive impact on their communities.

In general, what effect does immigration to this country have on your community? Is the effect very positive, somewhat positive, neither positive nor negative, somewhat negative or very negative?

	Canada	BC	AB	Ontario	Quebec
Very positive	172	27	15	75	29
	14%	17%	13%	17%	10%
Somewhat positive	462	62	31	172	132
	38%	39%	27%	38%	45%
Neither positive nor negative	333	34	34	120	92
	28%	22%	29%	26%	31%
Somewhat negative	149	26	27	47	32
	12%	17%	23%	10%	11%
Very negative	61	3	6	33	11
	5%	2%	5%	7%	4%
Don't know/Refused	23	5	3	9	0
	2%	3%	3%	2%	-

As to which categories of immigrants it is felt priority should be given in the selection process the highest priority should be given to those reuniting with immediate family members and skilled workers.

	Canada	BC	AB	Ontario	Quebec
The immediate family of people already in Canada, like children and spouses	656	90	66	250	158
	55%	57%	57%	55%	53%
The extended family of people already in Canada, like grandparents	321	47	28	122	82
	27%	29%	25%	27%	28%
Refugees escaping persecution	467	55	47	188	108
	39%	35%	40%	41%	36%
Skilled workers	645	85	64	269	146
	54%	54%	55%	59%	49%
Investors and entrepreneurs	454	58	29	185	122
	38%	36%	25%	41%	41%
Foreign students	378	45	37	145	97
	32%	28%	32%	32%	33%

As to responsibility for immigrant settlement issues when it comes to those in the worker categories, Canadians feel employers followed by the individuals themselves should take on greater responsibility for helping new arrivals adapt to life in Canada. In Quebec there is a somewhat greater tendency to assign such responsibility to communities than is the case elsewhere in the country.

If someone comes to Canada to work permanently, who should be most responsible in helping them adapt to life in Canada? Should it be...?

	Canada	BC	AB	Ontario	Quebec
The federal government	197	26	14	79	44
	16%	17%	12%	17%	15%
Provincial governments	114	17	10	33	42
	10%	10%	9%	7%	14%
Communities	196	19	11	72	69
	16%	12%	9%	16%	23%
Employers	301	49	35	123	49
	25%	31%	30%	27%	17%
Themselves	291	34	35	110	68
	24%	22%	31%	24%	23%
All	89	11	10	34	20
	7%	7%	9%	8%	7%
Don't know/Refused	12	3	0	3	3
	1%	2%	0	1%	1%

Immigration: What does Quebec Want?

In the Ipsos November 2006 survey when correlating the opinion of Quebecers on the levels of immigrants with the numbers they think we take in, each segment has a fairly good idea of the numbers although those who already feel we take in too many tend to think to a greater degree that there are less than 150 000 and also are slightly overestimated on the high end of the scale.

In total, approximately how many new immigrants do you think that Canada allows into the country each year? * 1. In your opinion, do you feel there are too many, too few, or about the right number of immigrants coming to Canada?

In your opinion, do you feel there are too many, too few, or about the right number of immigrants coming to Canada?

Quebec	Too many	Too few	About the right number
Less than 150,000	20.0%	34.0%	29.6%
150,000 to 249,000	37.8%	41.5%	33.8%
250,000 to 499,000	20.0%	20.8%	23.2%
500,000 or more	11.1%	3.8%	7.0%
Don't know/Refused	11.1%		6.3%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

When presented with the actual numbers as done below Quebecers opinions are further confirmed though more of the people who initially felt we receive the right number shift to the too many than the too few and those thinking their were too few shifted disproportionately to agreement that we are at the right number.

Do you feel there are too many, too few, or about the right number of immigrants coming to Canada? * 1. In your opinion, do you feel there are too many, too few, or about the right number of immigrants coming to Canada? * Province: Crosstabulation

	Too many	Too few	About the right number
Too many	80.0%	9.4%	17.6%
Too few	8.9%	62.3%	4.2%
About the right number	11.1%	28.3%	77.5%
Don't know/Refused			.7%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Not surprisingly those who feel that we have too many are least likely to think that immigrants have a positive effect on the community compared with those who feel there are too few. Still those who feel we have the right number agree in the majority that immigrants have a positive effect on the community.

In general, what effect does immigration to this country have on your community? * 1. In your opinion, do you feel there are too many, too few, or about the right number of immigrants coming to Canada? * Province: Crosstabulation

In general, what effect does immigration to this country have on your community?

	Too many	Too few	About the right number	
Very positive	4.4%	24.5%	4.9%	9.6%
Somewhat positive	13.3%	50.9%	51.4%	44.4%
Neither positive nor negative	31.1%	18.9%	36.6%	31.2%
Somewhat negative	35.6%	3.8%	5.6%	10.8%
Very negative	15.6%	1.9%	1.4%	4.0%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

As to the issue of which immigrants should be given priority when it comes to selection those who feel that we have too many favor skilled workers over other categories while those who feel we have the right number prefer reunifying immediate family members and those who feel there are too few favor refugees and immediate family members.

In your view, what priority should be given each of the following categories of immigrants and in your opinion, do you feel there are too many, too few, or about the right number of immigrants coming to Canada?

Crosstabulation

6 and 7 High Priority on a 7 pt scale	Too many	Too few	About the right number
The immediate family of people already in Canada,	31.1	51	61.2
The extended family of people already in Canada, like grandparents	13.1	34	26.8
Refugees escaping persecution	20.0	49	37.3
Skilled workers	40.0	45.3	51.4
Investors and entrepreneurs	31.1	35.9	43.3
Foreign students	28.8	24.5	35.2