

Canadian immigration: why does quebec ignore the central canadian immigration pol...

[Sociology](#), [Immigration](#)



Introduction

As my current job is providing UKimmigrationand welfare advices to international students, looking at the current UK immigration climate, UK Border Agency is becoming stricter when selecting the migrants. I wanted to find out what immigration situation is like in Canada and when I was doing the research, I found that Quebec in particular has a different immigration system when choosing its migrants. Specifically, I have found that the reasons behind this are that there are historical perspectives, different legislation, cultureand language utilised in Quebec and in the rest of Canada. This written project will explain the rationale of this using a variety of literatures and combined with some personal experiences from Quebec with the aim of finding a close answer to ‘ why Quebec has its own immigration system when choosing the migrants rather than using the central Canadian immigration policies’

1. Findings

There are many reasons determining Quebec to have its own immigration systems and also owns many French characteristics and in the following paragraphs, I will demonstrate how history, culture and language play an important part of influencing Quebec to have its own immigration systems.

1. 1 Immigration legislations

According to Young (1998), since 1971, Quebec and Canada had an agreement towards the immigration and Quebec has its own immigration system in selecting the migrants. However Canada has theresponsibilityfor establishing the levels of immigration by taking Quebec’s advice and it also

has the control of the admission of the immigration to central Canada and Quebec areas. The Canada-Quebec Accord is known as the most comprehensive of the provincial agreement. This agreement also allows Quebec to have exclusive responsibility of selecting migrants and refugees who are wishing to move to Quebec. After migrants being selected, Citizenship and Immigration Canada issues the actual visa to them.

Young (1998) also pointed out that Quebec should be getting the same portion of immigrations as of the Canadian numbers. Yolande (2010) presents in a news programme called ' Immigrant Policy in Quebec: Successes and Lessons Learned', she stated that Canada has a very good reputation of its immigration systems however Canada also encountered a lot of difficulties such as making sure the migrants have the language skills they need to survive in the community. And Quebec is being able to design its own immigration policies and select its own migrants due to different historic reasons which will be discussed in the following paragraph.

1. 2 History

In 1763, Quebec was created by the residents of New France and it leads to the French Canadian who lives in Quebec's rights of the language and religious. Kosel (2009) states that at that time there are around 70, 000 Frenchmen lived in Quebec, mainly in Montreal and Quebec City.

In Canada, it is always a difficult task to increase the number of French-speaking migrants to Canada. Quebec is a French-speaking province, therefore in Quebec, most of the people speak French and the culture and life style in Quebec is tends to be more like that of a francophone

community. Quebec set up its own Department of Cultural Communities and Immigration in 1968 with the purpose of bringing more French-speaking migrants and the migrants who have understand more about French to make sure they can easily settle down in Quebec and get used to the local French-speaking community. (<http://answers.yahoo.com>) Therefore, with the great need of French-speaking migrants to Quebec, it decided to separate from the general Canadian immigration system and to choose its own migrants so that they can set the language requirements.

Moreover, Wikipedia states that Quebec has a mixture of a lot of different cultures such as Canada, America, France and United Kingdom, therefore Quebec always considered as a meeting points for different cultures and it provides a platform for people to experience a taste of European and American cultures. (<http://en.wikipedia.org>)

1.3 Culture

Wikipedia describes how Quebec's culture has formed over a few hundred years. Quebec is the only area in North America where the most of the population speaks French. (<http://en.wikipedia.org>)

In view of my personal perspectives, when I travelled to Quebec in September 2009 and October 2010, I visited Montreal which is located in southwest of Quebec and has the nickname of ' Paris in North America'. In the following sections, I am going to discuss the impact of the culture to Quebec's immigration from my personal insights based on when I visited Quebec in the last two years.

I went to Saint Joseph's Oratory of Mount Royal. Please take a look at the following picture taken in October 2010 at Saint Joseph's Oratory, you can tell that there are a lot of French elements in the design of the church.

Picture One: Saint Joseph's Oratory of Mount Royal (outside and inside)

In addition, I went to Basilique Notre-Dame Cathedral located in Montreal's old city centre, and it is known as the largest church in North America. It was built in 1829 and it is a neo-Gothic Catholic Church which can accommodate 5000 people. If we look at picture two as follows: the fascinating blue ceiling and the new representative of Gothic architecture - stained glass, we can tell that decorative details are full of art and according to Bony (1983), Gothic architecture originated from France. Therefore, we can tell that there are few French elements in the Quebec architecture.

Picture Two: Basilique Notre-Dame Cathedral

Behind the church, the chapel as below (Sacre-Coeur Chapel) is magnificent, the locals nicknamed it the wedding hall, the famous Canadian singer Celine Dion's wedding was held here.

Picture Three: Sacre-Coeur Chapel

I also went to the Quebec City centre and experienced the true feeling of being in France.

There is a famous Hotel called Chateau Frontenac located in Quebec and it was built in 1893 and it is near the St. Lawrence River shore.

Picture Four: Chateau Frontenac

There are a lot of tourists all year around here. Most of the shops here are all named in French and I had a chat with a shop owner and being told that all the commercial signs must be in French only. However, when looking into the literature, I found out that this is not true, as long as the French is marked bigger, it can be in both French and English. (<http://www.travelexpertguide.org>)

Picture Five: ' Little French Street' in Quebec

I noticed that a lot of architecture and the living style there are quite similar to France. In fact, there is a street located in Montreal is called little French street as above picture five and it owns similar culture to France. At night, we also had our French dinner in Quebec and they served all sorts of different French cuisines and also French red wines as well.

Picture Six: Dinner @ Quebec

1. 4 Language

Recent statistics show that 82% of the people living in Quebec speak French as their first language and French is also the official language in Quebec and more than 95% of the people in Quebec use French in their daily life. Please see the below chart adapted from the Statistics Canada.

Province	Total population	English	French
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Quebec	7, 435, 905	787, 885 (10. 6%)	6, 085, 152
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(81. 8%)

Ontario 12, 028, 8959, 789, 937(81. 4%) 304, 727(2. 5%)

Canada 31, 241, 44620, 840, 74366. 7% 6, 691, 928(21. 4%)

Source: Statistics Canada, 2006 Census Profile of Federal Electoral Districts (2003 Representation Order): Language, Mobility and Migration and Immigration and Citizenship.

The situation of English and French in Quebec is very special, people lives in Quebec stressed the importance of speaking French and in fact it is governed by law. According to Boberg (2010), the impact on supporting French in Quebec had badly influenced Quebec's English Speaking Community. Edwards (1998) also adds that English speakers in Quebec find it difficult to get a job in Quebec and many graduates end up leaving Quebec and go to other places in Canada to seek work.

I have been to Quebec twice and both of the time I noticed that most of the people are speaking French only. Whether it is to order food in a restaurant or asking directions on the street, the people of Quebec are speaking French and I tried to ask them do they speak English and their responses are always they can only speak French.

In Quebec, most educational institutions give instruction in French. The children of immigrants must attend a francophone school. According to Government du Quebec (2006), Quebec chooses its own migrants and the government also offering French courses to help the immigrants to integrate into their new environment.

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Conclusions

In Conclusion, due to the long French dominated history in Quebec and the French language popularity in Quebec as well as its cultural similarities to France, Quebec has its own immigration policies but under the tight control of Central Canadian government. From the literature and the personal perspectives, it clearly shows that Quebec's immigration situation is becoming better and better and it will attract more immigrants to migrate to Quebec and to continue its unique style in Canada.

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ALL PICTURES USED IN THIS WRITTEN PROJECT WERE TAKEN BY THE
AUTHOR WHEN SHE WAS IN QUEBEC IN SEPTEMBER 2009 AND OCTOBER
2010

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