

Diversity, Recognition and Shared Citizenship in Canada

Presentation to roundtable
“The Future of
Multiculturalism – A
Canadian-German Debate”
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Reasons to take stock

- Diversity issues have raised tensions in several European countries; some major policy changes to encourage integration -- language and citizenship tests, restrictions on wearing religious symbols, etc.
- Some tensions reinforced by linkage with international terrorism
- Canada so far spared such sharp tensions, but recent incidents cause concern – debates over reasonable accommodation in Quebec; *sharia* debate in Ontario; arrest of suspected terrorists in Toronto, racial profiling (e.g. police), First Nations protests

Structure of the presentation

- Two agendas
- No single Canadian model
- Achievements and warning signs
- Strengthening shared citizenship
- The three equalities

Canada's Diverse Diversity

- Two official languages, English (59 % of population) and French (23%) [2001, based on mother tongue]
- 18% of Canadians have another language as their mother tongue
- Quebec: French - 82% mother tongue, English - 8%, other - 10%
- In 2001, 18% of Canadians were foreign born
 - Toronto 44% foreign born, Vancouver 38%
 - Higher proportion than Sydney, Los Angeles, New York
- Aboriginal people - First Nations, Inuit and Métis - represented 3% of Canadian population in 2001; speak more than 50 languages

The Two Diversity Agendas

Recognition agenda:

Recognize cultural differences, help minorities express distinct identities and practices, build accommodation

Integration agenda:

Bring minorities into mainstream, strengthen mutual support and solidarity, reinforce bonds of a common community

No Single Canadian Diversity Model

- Diversity policies have been pursued in three ‘silos’: francophones (mainly in Quebec), immigrants and ethnocultural minorities, Aboriginal peoples (Kymlicka)
- Each silo has different history; corresponding rights and recognitions found in different parts of Constitution, legislation and programs
- Provincial and big city governments play important role, again with considerable variation (e.g. ‘interculturalism’ in Quebec)

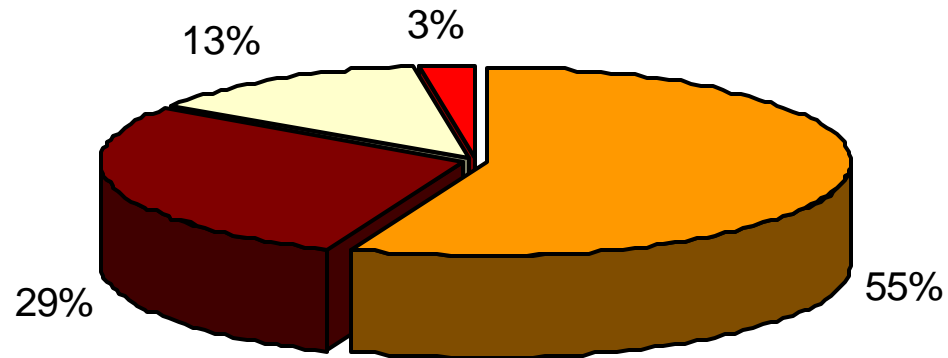
Achievements





- Francophone Quebecers: dramatic equalization with English-speaking Canadians -- protection of French language rights, enhanced presence in public- and private sector institutions
- Aboriginal peoples: rights entrenched in 1982, some progress on land claims (mainly in the North)
- Immigrants and ethnocultural minorities: greater equality through multiculturalism, employment equity and other policies

A Country of Immigrants

- Target for 2006-07: 240,000 - 265,000 immigrants (highest level in 25 years)
- Net international migration accounted for two-thirds of Canada's population growth between 2001 and 2006; Canada had highest population growth rate of G-8 countries during that period
- Vast majority from India, Pakistan, China and Philippines
- Two-thirds settle in three largest cities, 48% in Toronto

Canadian Immigration by Category, 2005



 Economic	 Family
 Refugee	 Other

Canadian Immigration by Source Region, 2005

Source Region (2005)	
Africa and the Middle East	18.8%
Asia and Pacific	52.6%
South and Central America	9.4%
United States	3.5%
Europe and the United Kingdom	15.6%
Source area/category not stated	0.04%

Unresolved Issues and Warning Signs (1)

- Quebec's distinctiveness not yet recognized in Constitution, unresolved demands for greater constitutional powers
- Progress on First Nations' land claims and self government "very slow and uneven"
- Unacceptable gaps in life chances between Aboriginal and other Canadians persist, increased residential segregation in some Western Canadian cities

Unresolved Issues and Warning Signs (2)

- Since 1980s immigrants' relative economic outcomes less favourable than earlier cohorts
- Sizable numbers of visible minorities, especially Blacks and South Asians, report discrimination and unfair treatment
- On some measures, second generation may be less well integrated socially than their immigrant parents
- Religion a more salient - and divisive - factor in various quarters

Shared Citizenship

- Social integration in Canada cannot demand adherence to a single culture and identity.
- Strengthening shared citizenship: sense of belonging to a broader community, sense of civic engagement, pursuit of common projects
- Shared citizenship flows from the values of a liberal-democratic state and three equalities: human rights; socioeconomic equality; political equality
- “When multiculturalism is unhinged from equality, it tends to careen off in unpleasant directions.” (p. 653)

(1) Human Rights and the Justice System

- Justice system - police forces, courts - must better reflect society as a whole, reinvestment in legal aid required
- Human rights protection and promotion through commissions and tribunals should not be weakened
- Antiracism initiatives will require concerted action and partnerships within/between governments and with NGOs
- Parliamentary bill to ensure that human rights legislation applies on reserves

(2) Socioeconomic Equality

- Political will and resources required to improve conditions of Aboriginal people
- Steps underway to improve recognition of immigrants' credentials, but emphasis also needed on professional language skills
- Address relative exclusion – sometimes inadvertent – of newcomers from social programs (e.g., EI, training)
- Varying outcomes among visible minorities suggests the concept “visible minority” is too blunt. Need for more targeted conceptions of disadvantage

(3) Political and Civic Participation

- Electoral participation: targeted information and outreach, consider allowing permanent residents to vote in municipal elections
- Representation of minorities: various electoral reforms offer potential, political parties have key role to play through nomination process
- Initiatives to increase the representation of Aboriginal people
- Civic participation: NGOs can play greater role in immigrant integration, building bridges and enhancing civic knowledge of both minorities and other Canadians.

Concluding Observations (1)

- Canadian approach to diversity not broken, no justification for a U-turn comparable to major changes in some European countries
- No reason to assume the recognition and integration agendas are in conflict, but warning signs cannot be ignored
- Progress on economic integration is essential. However, “economic success does not guarantee social integration. Feelings of belonging and engagement, a sense of mutual support and commitment, and participation in a common political community require separate attention and support.” (p. 681)

Concluding Observations (2)

“We build respect by respecting difference; we build tolerance by resisting discrimination; we build trust by being trustworthy; we build belonging by drawing people into the mainstream of civic and political life; we build solidarity by supporting all Canadians in need. Building shared citizenship is an ongoing task, especially in a diverse society, but there is good reason to hope that these fundamentals will sustain this distinctive Canadian project in the future.” (p. 682)