



Institute for
Research on
Public Policy

Institut de
recherche
en politiques
publiques

For immediate distribution – June 22, 2010

NEWS RELEASE

Multiple citizenship benefits Canada

Study says global trend in accepting dual citizenship is irreversible

Montreal – Canadian policy should not discourage multiple citizenship. Indeed, Canada has been at the forefront of the global trend toward the recognition and acceptance of multiple citizenship and is a model for the rest of the world, according to a new study published by the Institute for Research on Public Policy (IRPP).

“Multiple citizenship is here to stay. It reflects the growing diversity of our populations, as well as the changing nature of identity,” says author Audrey Macklin. “It may also be an asset for the country in terms of better understanding the world and being able to maintain strong trade and cultural links with numerous other countries.”

The study, “Multiple Citizenship, Identity and Entitlement in Canada,” which Macklin co-wrote with François Crépeau, examines recent instances of popular anxiety in Canada around multiple citizenship. It maintains that settler societies have operated on the rationale that immigrants will be more likely to naturalize and integrate into the Canadian mainstream if doing so doesn’t require severing connections to their past. “Multiple citizenship does not undermine Canadian citizenship and, as a matter of public policy and legal regulation, should not be restricted,” says Macklin.

According to the authors, changes made to the *Citizenship Act* in 2009 have indirectly struck at multiple citizenship by limiting the transmission of birthright by descent. “In practical terms, the law reduces the number of people who will be dual citizens by shrinking the category of people eligible to claim Canadian citizenship by descent,” notes Crépeau.

However, the authors support the amendment to the *Citizenship Act* included in the government bill tabled in the House of Commons on June 10, 2010, that makes it clear that candidates for naturalization must be physically present in Canada for three years before becoming Canadian citizens. They reject the proposal to impose a Canadian tax obligation on nonresident citizens solely on the basis of citizenship, and they are critical of discriminating against nonresident dual or multiple citizens in the context of consular assistance.

“Multiple Citizenship, Identity and Entitlement in Canada,” by Audrey Macklin and François Crépeau, can be downloaded free of charge from the Institute's Web site (www.irpp.org).

-30-

To receive our monthly bulletin *Thinking Ahead* via e-mail, please subscribe to the IRPP e-distribution service by visiting our Web site.

Media Contact: Kate Shingler

Tel: 514-787-0737

Cell: 514-235-8308