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## Put a Cap on Immigration Levels: Poll

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As a multicultural nation, most Canadians see immigration as a positive feature and a benefit to the country. However, they also believe immigration levels should be maintained at the current rate of 250,000 per year or even decreased, according to a new poll.

The poll, conducted by Nanos Research, found that although 65 percent agree that immigration is a "key positive feature of Canada as a country," just 21 percent thought immigration levels should be increased.

"These conflicting findings might appear counterintuitive. However, they are logically consistent with the current economic cycle," Nik Nanos, CEO of Nanos Research, said in a press release.

"In the present economic cycle, coming out of a severe recession, Canadians are more supportive of the status quo. In other words, immigration is a good thing, but we don't want too much of a good thing," he said.

One in three (32.4 percent) respondents believes immigration level should be decreased, while 38.9 percent say they should be maintained where they are now.

As well as seeing immigration as positive for Canada, respondents recognize that immigrants play a vital role in maintaining a strong economy. Over 70 percent agree (51.8 percent) or somewhat agree (18.5 percent) that immigration is "one of the key tools Canada can use to strengthen the economy."

Known for their kindness, Canadians also have a high degree of sympathy for the challenges immigrants encounter when relocating to a new country. Nearly two in three respondents agree (45.8 percent) or somewhat agree (19.9 percent) that governments should do more through language and labour market support to help immigrants settle in Canada.

In addition, 55.4 percent agree and 15.7 percent somewhat agree that temporary foreign workers should enjoy the same rights as other workers, such as employment insurance benefits and workers' compensation.

"Overall the results of this poll are very positive on immigration and related issues, subject only to the caution that, in difficult times, such as those we have recently experienced, Canadians generally do not have an appetite for immigration levels to be increased," said Nanos.

Among all the regions surveyed, Quebec had the highest number of respondents (78.9 percent) saying that immigration should be maintained or decreased, followed by Ontario at 73.9 percent.

The random telephone survey was conducted with 1,008 Canadians between May 29 and June 3, 2010. The margin of error is 3.1 percentage points.



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