

**THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT QUEBECERS**

A new book, *Cracking the Quebec Code*, delves deeply into our collective DNA with surprising results.

**1 JOIE DE VIVRE**

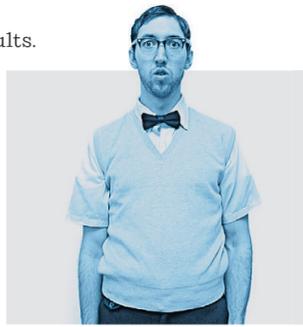
Despite having less income than other Canadians, 88% of Quebecers say they are happy while only 77% say the same in the rest of Canada.

**2 EASYGOING**

"Pas de chicane dans la cabane." Quebecers loathe the arguments and confrontation and prefer to resolve issues through consensus.

**3 NONCOMMITTAL**

Quebecers prefer not to choose and park themselves in the middle. "I'm not sure whether I'm undecided," one said to pollsters.

**4 VICTIM**

While Quebecers have an aversion to risk or taking in hand their destiny, they like to complain and play the victim. In other words, it's someone else's fault.

**5 VILLAGERS**

Quebecers have never shaken off their village mentality and identify more with their region or town than their province or country.

**6 CREATIVE**

Creativity is part of Quebecers' DNA. Starting back with the invention of the AM radio, Quebec has produced many world-class artists and entrepreneurs.

**7 PROUD**

While making money used to be seen as a sin, a new generation has a strong drive for success. 72% say they are ambitious.

**8 ANGLOPHONE HYBRIDS**

Anglophones have come a long way and tend to dip into the best of both worlds. They go to the dépanneur and not the convenience store.

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SUSAN FERGUSON/MONTREAL GAZETTE

# Quebec anglos creative, fun and distinct, book says

PHILIP AUTHIER

When it comes to living in Quebec, anglophones pick and choose from the buffet, a new book argues.

They'll indulge in the joie de vivre their francophone neighbours cherish — which includes more belly laughs and going out more than Canadians in other provinces — but they'll take a pass on the dressing when it comes to lavish spending.

Anglos are attached to having a good job and financial security, but they also want to be creative and happy — attributes the francos already have, which have leaped over the language fence over the years.

In fact, compared to the old days when some anglophones feared the new linguistic reality around them, today "they try and take the best from both worlds," the authors of a new book on the Quebec DNA, *Cracking the Quebec Code*, say.

"Anglo Quebecers form a distinct society unto themselves," the book published Tuesday says. "They're the only anglophones in Canada who go to the dépanneur instead of the convenience store and take the métro instead of the subway. But don't tell anglo Quebecers they are a distinct society because it will remind them of the failure of the Meech Lake (constitutional) Accord."

Three years in the making and co-written by respected pollster Jean-Marc Léger and two other experts, Jacques Nantel and Pierre Duhamel, the book says if Quebecers are generally hybrids of the French, English and American cultures, anglos are as well but to a different and somewhat entertaining degree.

Seventy-six per cent of Quebecers, for example, prefer pleasure over responsibility as opposed to 53 per cent of English Canadians. But Quebec anglos are right up there with their francophone neighbours with 60 per cent opting for pleasure.

And while 51 per cent of francophone Quebecers would rather reach a consensus on the issues of the day compared to 37 per cent of English Canadians, anglos (43 per

cent) have hopped aboard the same collegial bandwagon.

"It's like ordering the best but à la carte," Léger said in an interview about anglos cautiously dipping their toe into mainstream Quebec society and liking how it feels.

The anglo data popped up as a surprise in a book otherwise devoted to trying to get inside the heads of Quebecers and define who they really are.

Léger said he decided to produce the book to mark the 30th anniversary of his polling firm, but also because nobody has explored the theme since 1978 when advertising executive Jacques Bouchard's book, *Les 36 cordes sensibles des Québécois*, hit the street.

Launched in French and English, Léger's book clearly targets readers in other parts of Canada as well. It sets out again to answer the eternal question about the province of 8.3 million people: what does Quebec want?

The reason the answer has never been found is simple. Quebecers themselves don't know, the book says.

Whether it is a throwback to the conquest on the Plains of Abraham or a tendency to let others decide their fate, modern Quebecers like the middle road and prefer to wait for things to decide themselves, the authors say.

The first and only time they said yes to themselves was during the 1919 referendum on prohibition. To the question: "Should the sale of light beer, cider and wines be allowed," 79 per cent said yes. Prohibition was ultimately applied only to spirits.

There have been four referendums since 1942 and Quebecers have answered No each time.

"Not unfairly, this suggests that the only time Quebec said yes is when fun and festivities were on the table," the book says.

That joie de vivre attitude permeates Quebec society to this day. If you ask Quebecers, as the researchers did, if they are happy, 88 per cent will say yes. Only 77 per cent in the rest of Canada said yes to the same question.

The authors say that number in itself is surprising since Quebec's

economy is not among the strongest, its residents not among the wealthiest.

Yet the study reveals that unlike Canadians in other provinces who worry a lot about money, jobs and the future, Quebecers tend to live more in the present, take that hour for lunch (with dessert), or head out for an evening in a restaurant with a bottle of fine wine — French or Italian by preference — and live by the maxim "any excuse for a party."

While 70 per cent of Quebecers love shopping, only 45 per cent of anglophones in the rest of Canada feel the same way. Quebecers spend less on big houses because it's not a priority but won't compromise on clothing, food or going out.

Léger delved into areas of the Quebec psyche he admits some would rather not talk about. The book concludes Quebecers have seven main characteristics, some good, others bad. Besides joie de vivre, he adds into the mix these terms: easygoing, non-committal, victim, villagers, creative and proud.

The one that ruffled the most feathers — especially with the talk show crowd — was victim, a trait the book says is epitomized in Quebec by countless highly popular French advertising campaigns featuring happy male imbeciles or morons. A good example was the 1985 ad featuring a goofball hockey player played by Claude Meunier for Pepsi.

That ad alone helps explain why Pepsi still outsells Coke in Quebec.

Quoted in the book, historian Éric Bédard argues Quebecers often invoke the idea they feel victimized because they have never taken responsibility for their future — all the way from the rule of France to the Canada of today.

The result is they let someone else decide while at the same time complain loudly.

"If a youth doesn't succeed, we say it's the teacher's fault," Léger said. "If things are going bad in Canada, it's the fault of the English and federalism. It's always someone else's fault."

The "all talk, no action," trait stings, but it percolates through

all aspects of life. Quebecers claim to be most religious, but are the least practising among Canadians. They say education is a priority, yet have the highest dropout rate in the country. They are happier, yet have the highest suicide rates in the country.

They are the most worried about poverty, but give the least to charity in Canada. They are good at environmental rhetoric, but 92.5 per cent of them own cars. Even in fat cat Ontario the rate is 79.7 per cent.

And the book says you can't talk about victimization without talking about Quebecers' relations with immigrants. It's true statistically Quebecers are no more racist than other Canadians, the authors state, and are much less racist than the French and Americans report themselves to be.

Twenty-per cent of Quebecers say they are a bit racist, a rate that is slightly higher than the 16 per cent in English Canada but within the statistical margin of error. The level in France is 35 per cent and it's 51 per cent in the U.S.A.

Léger reveals foreigners are not the problem in Quebec. Religious accommodation is. For a people who lived so many years under the control of the Catholic Church, they fear religion and symbols of any kind.

"I am saying out loud what people know deep in their mind," Léger said. "It's a portrait that is provocative and abrasive and only a Quebecer could have written this. An English person writing the same things that I wrote would have been crucified."

Yet the book also concludes in many ways Quebecers and Canadians in other provinces are not so different. Of the 500 attitudes and behaviours tested, 71 per cent were identical from one solitude to the other. Quebecers, for example, harbour the same mistrust of Toronto that people on the Prairies do.

The one thing uniting Quebecers is no surprise. A whopping 94 per cent of Quebecers of all stripes root for the Montreal Canadiens. Only 58 per cent of Ontarians cheer for the Maple Leafs.

pauthier@montrealgazette.com  
Twitter.com/philipauthier

## Harder for Quebec immigrants to find jobs

### Discriminatory biases during hiring: report

Newcomers face discrimination in the job market, and the situation is worse in Quebec than elsewhere in Canada, according to a report published by the Institut de recherche et d'informations socioéconomiques (IRIS) on Tuesday.

"There are discriminatory biases during hiring and, when we compare the situation of immigrants in Quebec and in the other Canadian provinces, we see that it's here that their situation is the most difficult," Julia Posca, who authored the report, said in an interview.

Data from Statistics Canada show that from 2006 to 2015, the employment rate in Quebec reached a little more than 83 per cent for people age 25 to 54 and born in Canada, versus a rate of 72 per cent for immigrants.

The federal agency's 2011 numbers for the same age categories show that all the other provinces have employment rates for immigrants that surpass 75 per cent, with Manitoba and Alberta reaching 83 per cent.

"It may not be conscious on the part of employers, but many studies show that two identical CVs, one with Tremblay as the family name and the other with Trahoré or Bensahid as the family name, will not have the same chances to be called to an interview, and it's worse in Quebec than in Ontario," Posca said.

The researcher added a nuance, since Quebec has one of the highest proportions of very recent immigrants in the 25 to 54 age group. Data show the unemployment rates drop markedly for immigrants over time.

Most immigrants are hired for their professional competencies and nothing justifies such a gap in employment figures, she said.

Posca said that over-qualification and lower income also characterize the situation for immigrants.

She said 43 per cent of immigrants are over-qualified for the jobs they post for.

The IRIS report also shows a double discrimination faced by women immigrants.

In 2013, the median disposable income of immigrant women reached \$20,410, or 90 per cent of the revenue of women born here and 60 per cent of the revenue of men born here.



*We see that it's here that their situation is the most difficult.*

Posca says cuts by the Liberal government are affecting the integration of immigrants in Quebec. She points to a reduction in the availability of French courses, closing of immigration offices in the regions and cuts to community groups.

To end systemic discrimination, she suggests that diplomas and experience earned outside Quebec should be recognized.

Posca said she would also like to see an improvement in internships and training and a program for equal access to jobs in the private sector.

Presse Canadienne

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