



Employment integration of Lebanese immigrants and Canadians of Lebanese origin in Quebec's labour market

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INTRODUCTION

Historical background

Immigration to Canada is a continuing phenomenon. Canada is an increasingly multiethnic country. According to Statistics-Canada, the proportion of the population born outside the country reached its highest point in 70 years in 2001 (18.4%, a 1% increase from 1996¹). In Quebec, immigration acquires a particular importance considering the increasing number of immigrants received every year. In 2004, Quebec is expecting to receive 44,400 new immigrants and up to 48,000 in 2007² in order to compensate for the low birth rate and the ageing population in the province. Most of these immigrants were and will be established in the large Canadian cities such as Toronto, Vancouver and Montreal. The Lebanese community does not make an exception to these rules and according to statistics Canada following the census of 2001, about 100,000 individuals living in Canada identified themselves of Lebanese origin (Appendix I; Table 1). Among these, more than 45% live in the province of Quebec, more precisely in Montreal, and 21% live in Ottawa (Figure 1)³.

Table 1. Number of individuals identifying themselves of Lebanese origin in major Canadian cities. Single and multiple responses correspond to one (e.g. Lebanese) and multiple (e.g. Lebanese and Canadian) ethnic origins respectively as declared by the census respondents.

City	Total responses	Single responses	Multiple responses
St. John's	230	40	190
Halifax	3,995	2,575	1,415
Saint John	885	210	675
Saguenay	85	40	40
Québec	595	280	315
Trois-Rivières	120	70	50
Montreal	43,740	32,405	11,330
Ottawa-Gatineau	21,115	16,280	4,830
London	4,025	2,575	1,445
Windsor	6,985	5,015	1,970
Calgary	7,405	5,170	2,235
Edmonton	7,845	5,700	2,140
Total	97,025	70,360	26,635

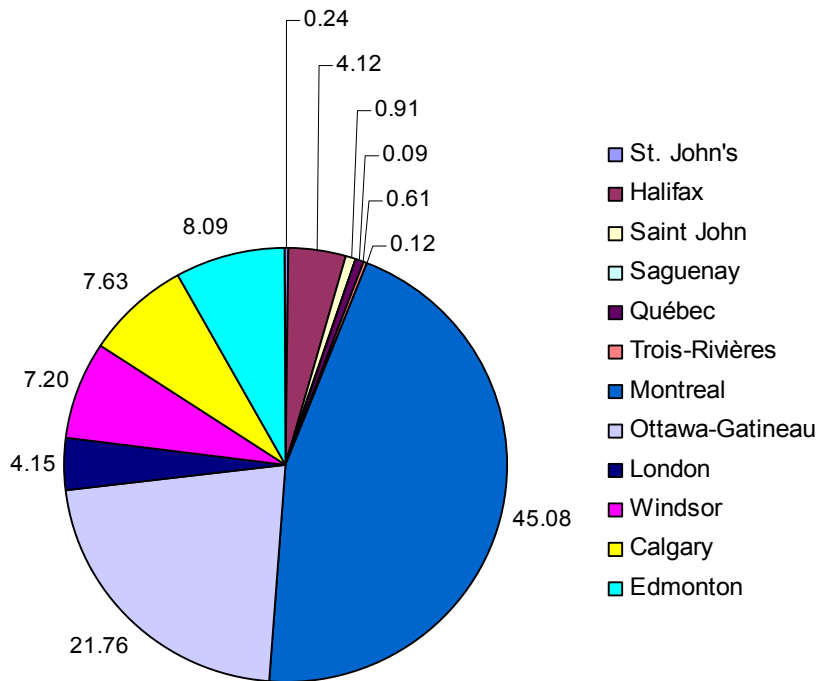
(Source: Statistics Canada, *Census of Population. Population by selected ethnic origins, census metropolitan areas (2001 Census)*, <http://www.statcan.ca/english/Pgdb/demo27y.htm>).

¹ Statistics Canada (2004). Canada's ethnocultural portrait: The changing mosaic, http://www12.statcan.ca/english/census01/products/analytic/companion/etoimm/canada.cfm#proportion_foreign_born_highest, last modified: 2003-01-21, accessed 22/10/2004.

² Delisle N. (2004). Québec souhaite un accroissement de l'immigration, *Canoe infos*, 26/5/2004, <http://www.infinet.com/infos/quebeccanada/archives/2004/05/20040526-152657.html>, accessed 22/10/2004.

³ The General Consul of Lebanon in Montreal estimates that about 250,000 Lebanese live in the province of Quebec, mostly in Montreal (150,000), and the total number of Lebanese in Canada is about 400,000 (personal communication).

Figure 1. Geographic distribution (%) of individuals of Lebanese origin in major Canadian cities.



(Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population. Population by selected ethnic origins, census metropolitan areas (2001 Census), <http://www.statcan.ca/english/Pgdb/demo27y.htm>).

When considering Montreal alone, the Lebanese community appears to rank 9th in the list of ethnic communities in Montreal (i.e. after excluding those of Canadian, French and English origin). It also has the highest proportion compared to other middle eastern ethnicities and is nearly equal to that of Quebecers (44,965 vs 43,740)⁴. In 1997, a study considering only the age class 18 to 44 identified 4% of the population in the Montreal Centre as of Lebanese origin, therefore classifying them among the largest 4 communities in Montreal Centre along with the Chinese, Greek, and Haitian communities⁵.

The immigration of Lebanese nationals to Canada has started in 1882 and continues to the present. For a variety of reasons, immigration is an appealing option for many Lebanese. Whether as a result of social turmoil, economic disaster, political trouble or a simple desire to explore new

⁴ Statistics Canada (2004). Population selon certaines origines ethniques, par régions métropolitaines de recensement (Recensement de 2001), http://www.statcan.ca/francais/Pgdb/demo27h_f.htm, accessed 22/10/2004.

⁵ Direction de la santé publique de Montréal-Centre (1997). Qui sont les jeunes qui résident dans la région de Montréal-Centre <http://www.uqac.ca/jmt-sociologue>, accessed 22/10/2004.

horizons, it is clear that immigration to Canada is on the rise. In general, we notice 6 major waves of immigration of Lebanese⁶:

- 1) 1882-1936: mostly from the rural areas in the Bekaa Valley and worked as peddlers then as merchants and manoeuvres in Montreal;
- 2) 1962 –1974: mostly students who established in Quebec;
- 3) 1975 – 1978: mostly refugees. Many came also for economic reasons and for family reunification and had either a high level of education or technical skills;
- 4) 1987 – 1991: more than 50% of the immigrants were above 15 years old and workers were generally educated. More than 4/5 were within the economic category and toward the end of this period the number of refugees increased;
- 5) 1991 – 1996: most of the immigrants did not come from Lebanon directly but from other countries where they took refuge such as Cyprus, France and US. At that time, more than 505 of the immigrants born in Lebanon were accepted within the economic category. Refugees constituted more than 1/5 of the accepted applications;
- 6) 1997 – 2001: the number of Lebanese immigrants increased again with more than 6/10 of accepted application fitting within the economic category.

Integration of Lebanese immigrants in the labour market

Information about the integration of individuals of Lebanese origin in the labour market is mostly known from the surveys carried out by Statistics Canada at the country scale.

In general, Lebanese immigrants are proportionately less employed than either immigrants as a whole, or Canadian-born citizens. In 1991, 68% of male Lebanese-born immigrants aged 15 to 64 were employed, compared to 78% of all immigrant men and 76% of Canadian-born men of the same age group. Similarly, 43% of Lebanese-born women aged 15 to 64 were employed, compared to 62% of all immigrant women and 63% of Canadian-born women of the same age group.

Lebanese immigrants are also proportionately less represented than the other two groups in full-time employment. Among working men, 51% of Lebanese immigrants – compared to 63% of all working immigrant men and 59% of Canadian-born working men – worked full-time in 1990. A similar tendency exists among working women, where 37% of Lebanese immigrants work full-time, compared to 50% of all working immigrant women and 45% of Canadian-born working women.

On the other hand, Lebanese immigrants are proportionately far more likely to be self-employed than the other two groups. In 1991, 22% of working men of Lebanese origin were self-employed, compared to 16% of all working immigrant men and 12% of working Canadian-born men. Similarly among women, 10% of Lebanese-born working women were self-employed, compared to 8% of all working immigrant women and 6% of all Canadian-born working women. The

⁶ Ministère des Relations avec les Citoyens et Immigration Québec (2004). Communautés culturelles du Québec, http://www.mrci.gouv.qc.ca/quebecinterculturel/fr/com_libanaise_2.asp, accessed 22/10/2004.

Lebanese, here as elsewhere, display a special talent in commerce. In Montreal, they have already transformed the dining and fast-food landscape.

In Quebec, many studies have been carried out to follow the socio cultural evolution of ethnic communities, but little was done to follow the integration of the Lebanese community in the labour market. The only information we found come from Statistics Canada Census 1991 and from other few studies that reported different results. On one hand, the Census of 1991 indicated that Lebanese immigrants have an income of less than 19,000\$, lower than the Canadian average (23,700\$) and almost similar to the average of all immigrants (25,300\$). Also, Fortin (1995)⁷ reported that 83% and 60% of Lebanese families are under an acute poverty level. On the other hand, a major study lead by Renaud et al. (2001)⁸ that followed 1900 individuals originating from 78 different countries (including Lebanon) during their 10 years of residence in Quebec reported that for most immigrants, employment becomes less of a problem in the 10 years following their arrival to Canada. In fact, 75% of immigrants reported finding work equivalent or superior to what they did at home. And like everybody else in Quebec, Lebanese immigrants enjoy widening social resources both within and outside the heart of the Lebanese community. This corroborated with another recent study for Lebnan (2003)⁹ who demonstrated that Lebanese immigrants are continuously influenced by the social, legal, cultural and political environment in which they are enmeshed. Since the income is directly related to job integration, it appears that these information reflect different trends in terms of integration in the labour market. Furthermore, since each ethnic communities have its particular background and characteristics, a better understanding of the specific problems encountered by Lebanese immigrants and Canadians of Lebanese origin appears necessary in order to shed some light over these contrasting results. This will also provide an update of the evolution of the Lebanese community in the most recent years.

In the present study, our objective is to identify the main problems faced by Lebanese immigrants and Canadians of Lebanese origin in order to integrate the labour market in Quebec. This would allow us to suggest specific recommendations to the Ministère des Relations avec les citoyens et de l'Immigration who will be releasing his report and recommendations about the best ways to facilitate the participation of cultural communities in the development of Quebec next year.

⁷ Fortin S. (1995). Les Libanais d'immigration récente à Montréal : insertion ou exclusion, Mémoire de Maitrise, Université de Montréal, Montréal., Québec.

⁸ Renaud J., Gingras L., Vachon S., Blaser C., Godin J.-F., Gagné B. (2001). *Ils sont maintenant d'ici! Les dix premières années au Québec des immigrants admis en 1989*, Collection Études, recherches et statistiques, Les Publications du Québec 236 p.

⁹ Lebnan K. (2003). Itinéraires identitaires chez des immigrants libanais de Montréal:le cas de l'identité confessionnelle. Mémoire de Maitrise, Université de Montréal, Montréal., Québec.

METHODOLOGY

In order to achieve our goals, we conducted a survey that was widely distributed within the Lebanese community in Montreal. A copy of this questionnaire is attached in Appendix II. The survey was performed in the form of a 2 pages questionnaire where questions aimed at identifying the major categories of immigration within the Lebanese community, the date of arrival, fluency in French and English, education level, professional experience, income, the major problems faced to integrate the job market and their general opinion about their experience in Canada. These questions were mostly objective where respondents had to choose the best answer (in some cases, they had the opportunity to add another option). This was done in order to allow a coherent evaluation of all answers. For questions about problems faced to integrate the labour market, we have identified 6 major problems and asked respondents to rate them according to three possible levels of intensity: inexistent, moderate and serious. The same way was used to assess language fluency and overall experience rating. Later these data were converted into ordinal data (1,2,3,4, etc...) for data analysis. At the end, respondents were given the opportunity to write down their general comments.

We hypothesized that education level upon arrival, time spent in Quebec and gender might affect the integration process of Lebanese immigrants in the labour market in Quebec. For this, we performed a Pearson correlation to identify the relationship between these factors and each of the following variables: current job type, current income, unemployment period, lack of the Canadian experience, difficulty in finding a job, racial discrimination, cultural integration problems, legal problems, and financial problems. This correlation analysis was performed for the whole sample as well as for women and men separately in order to identify potential differences in the evolution path of each group separately. Another comparison between men and women was performed on the means for each variable in each group by using the t- tests and F- tests. Fluency in French could have been theoretically also a problem for employment integration, but since most Lebanese speak French very well, we considered that this factor can be eliminated especially that descriptive analysis demonstrated that more than 73% of the Lebanese speak French fluently and only 2% had a serious problem with this language as will be explained later. Furthermore, age was discarded as a possible factor although we had a wide range of age (17-76), because for all possible population groups (pooled population, women alone, men alone) we found that there was no major difference in age: the mean age and the median were very close (31 vs 33 or 35 vs 36) with a relatively small standard variation within each of these groups.

The fact that Montreal contained the highest proportion of Lebanese in Canada facilitated our task as to the representation of the community. Sampling was done in a random manner and through personal interviews. The questionnaire was posted on the RCPL website, an advertisement was placed in the newspaper, and most Lebanese community groups (including religious associations and companies with Lebanese employees) were contacted to solicit their members' participation. In sum, we received 135 responses: 68 men, 61 women, and another 6 individuals who did not specify their gender. Respondents ranged in age between 17 and 76 years old, with an overall average age of 36.

RESULTS

General overview

Reasons for immigration

By compiling all the questionnaires we received, we noticed that more than half of our respondents were relatively young with 53.33 % being 35 years old or less. Most of them were within the age class 26-35 years old (38%) followed by those within 36 to 46 years old (29%). The overall average age was 36 (Table 2). Furthermore, about 43% of our respondents were in Quebec for 10 years or less, and about 53% were in Quebec for more than 10 years. The largest two proportions of respondents were in the year span 0 to 2 years (21.48%) and 11 to 15 years (34.07%) (Table 3). In general, the three major reasons for immigration of Lebanese were: family reunification (33.3, economic immigration seeking a better life quality and job (27.4%), and escape from war (18.5%). Students did not form more than 8.9% of the 135 respondents, while business people did not exceed 5.9% and only 4.4 % came for temporary work (Table 4).

Table 2. Number and percentage of respondents in each age class

Age class (yrs)	Number	Percentage
17	1	0.74
18-25	20	14.81
26-35	51	37.78
36-46	39	28.89
47-53	9	6.67
60-64	4	2.96
71-76	3	2.22
Unidentified	8	5.93
Total	135	100.00

Table 3. Percentage of respondents in each category of immigration

Reason for immigration	Percentage
Family reunification	33.3
Ordinary immigration (economic, better life quality, etc...)	27.4
Escape from war	18.5
Student	8.9
Business/investment	5.9
Temporary work	4.4

Table 4. Number and percentage of respondents in each category of years spent in Quebec

Years in Quebec	Number	Percentage
0-2	29	21.48
3-5	19	14.07
6-10	11	8.15
11-15	46	34.07
16-20	10	7.41
21-30	15	11.11
31-35	3	2.22
Not identified	2	1.48
Total	135	100.00

Our data indicated that most people of Lebanese origin are fluent in French (82 % fluent) and more than half (56%) in both French and English. It is noteworthy that many respondents considered the Lebanese as their mother tongue and not Arabic. In general, 14% speak one or more additional languages to French or English (Table 5).

Table 5. Percentage of respondents in each level of language fluency

Language	Fluent	Intermediate	None
French	82	18	0
English	56	33	11
Other	93	5	1

Education level upon arrival to Quebec/present

Similar to previous reports, our data revealed that the third of Lebanese immigrants (33%) had at least a high school level upon their arrival to Quebec, another third was highly educated with a university degree (27%) or post university degree (4%), while the last third was distributed among other categories, mainly technical (23%) and college (7 %). After many years in Quebec, we noticed that most people worked to get higher degrees with the largest concentration being in the category of those holding a university degree (from 27% to 39%) and post graduate degree (from 4% to 15%) (Table 6).

Table 6. Percentage of respondents in each category of the education level upon arrival to Quebec and at present.

Education level	Upon arrival to Quebec	Current
High school	33	17
College	7	5
Technical	23	23
University	27	39
Post graduate	4	15

Unemployment

The unemployment rate was relatively high with a percentage of 28.1%. Among these, 63.2% declared being without work for over a year (17.8% of all respondents). No significant difference was observed in this regard between men and women (t -test = 0.30), but a significant difference was observed between men and women as to the variance from the mean of the unemployment rate.

Income upon arrival to Quebec / Present income

The income presented one of the variables that changes the most with time spent in Quebec. Upon arrival, 56% of the respondents had an annual income equal or lower than 15,000\$, but 20% of the respondents have seen their income change to increase above 15,000\$ since their arrival to Quebec. This change appears to occur mostly toward the middle class category with an annual income between 25,000-50,000\$ (from 9% upon arrival to 30% at present). Most of those who already had an income between 15,000 and 25,000\$ upon arrival did not know an important change. Only 6% of the people who belonged to this category have seen their income increase or decrease. The percentage of people with an annual income of more than 50,000\$ has also increased by 13%. Nonetheless, more than third of the Lebanese immigrants (36%) remained under the level of poverty with an annual income equal or less than 15,000\$ (Table 7).

Table 7. Percentage of respondents in each category for the annual income level upon arrival to Quebec and at present.

Annual Income (\$)	Upon arrival to Quebec	Current
<15,000	56	36
15,000-25,000	18	12
25,000-50,000	9	30
>50,000	3	16

Problems encountered by Lebanese immigrants

Lebanese immigrants do not seem to have a major problem with French language (73% speak it fluently and only 2% have a serious problem with it), thus supporting our previous assumption about discarding this as a major factor influencing employment integration of Lebanese immigrants. The most three important problems encountered by Lebanese immigrants were: the lack of a professional Canadian experience (31% serious, 21% slightly), followed by difficulty in finding work (28% serious, 26% slightly) and then racial discrimination (14% serious, 36% slightly). The recognition of academic credentials and the financial problems were at the same level with a total of 43% (serious and slightly). All details are listed in table 8.

Table 8. Percentage of respondents who declared facing the problems mentioned in the table in each level of difficulty: not at all, slightly, seriously.

Problem	Not at all (%)	Slightly (%)	Seriously (%)
Difficulty with French	73	24	2
Difficulty with English	59	29	11
Recognition of academic credentials	56	27	16
Lebanese Lack of Canadian experience	47	21	31
Difficulty finding work	45	26	28
Racial discrimination	50	36	14
Difficulty with cultural integration	61	32	7
Legal problems	88	7	4
Financial problems	56	30	13

Overall satisfaction with the experience of immigrating to Quebec and respondent commentary

Respondents were given the opportunity to rate their overall experience in Canada as immigrants and to write short additional comments explaining their responses. The overall results expressed a general satisfaction with only 11% qualifying it as a bad experience, 31% as OK, 28% as good, and 25% as excellent. By far, the most common complaint was the difficulty in securing work.. Many pointed to the dilemma faced by immigrants who are unable to find employment due to the lack of Canadian experience; some felt this requirement is specifically discriminatory against immigrants. Others pointed to what they described as the absurdity of having their foreign academic credentials and work experience discredited upon their arrival to Quebec. A relatively smaller number complained of racial, cultural or linguistic discrimination.

Numerous positive comments cited Quebec’s tolerant culture, political freedom, and respect for human rights and the rule of law. Positive conceptions of Quebec in general and complaints about job-seeking difficulties were not mutually exclusive. Several respondents expressed disappointment that immigrating to Quebec did not live up to their expectations, which were based on the stories they had heard from other Lebanese immigrants to Quebec. This could indicate that the experience, although positive overall, still fell short of immigrants’ even higher expectations.

ANALYSIS

Impact of languages, education level and time since arrival to Quebec

As stated before, almost all Lebanese who were surveyed were fluent in both of Canada's official languages, and most hold Quebec's society and system in moderate to high regard. They also tend to be well-educated and eager to work. Their difficulties are therefore not cultural, linguistic, educational or political. Our results show that, on average, Lebanese immigrants to Quebec were able to significantly improve their financial status. Yet, overall satisfaction ratings with the immigration experience were mixed. When asked to give the overall experience a rating between 1 (Bad) and 4 (Excellent), the average response was a 2.7, indicating ambivalence among the Lebanese community.

On one hand, increase in the education level upon arrival does not seem to necessarily lead to an important increase in income and does not considerably affect financial problems or the overall rating of the immigration experience as shown by correlation analysis (Table 9). However, it does contribute to improving job type to a slight extent ($r= 0.24$), and to diminishing difficulty with cultural integration and legal problems ($r= - 0.17$) but may contribute to the creation of other problems, namely the increase in the unemployment period ($r= 0.16$), difficulty in finding work due to lack of Canadian experience ($r= 0.20$) and the chances of finding a job ($r= 0.30$). On the other hand, the longer people remain in Quebec, the better their situation. The overall rating of the immigration experience appears to be the variable that benefits most as time passes ($r= 0.48$), followed by increase in income ($r= 0.37$), the chances of finding a job ($r= -0.34$), racial problems ($r= -0.31$) and then integration problems ($r= -0.12$).

Table 9. Pearson correlation for the pooled population between education level and time since arrival to Quebec and each of the variables considered as potential problems for integration in the labour market.

Correlation (pooled groups)	Education	
	level upon arrival	Arrival time
Job type	0.243	-0.154
Current income	0.080	0.371
Unemployment period	0.161	0.136
Canadian experience problems	0.203	-0.271
Difficulty in finding a job	0.308	-0.343
Racial discrimination problems	0.095	-0.307
Integration problems	-0.175	-0.116
Legal problems	-0.177	0.041
Financial problems	-0.088	-0.080
Overall experience rating	-0.045	0.479

The difficulty in finding work was cited as a slight or serious problem by 54% of respondents, including some whose overall ratings and written comments indicate they are otherwise largely satisfied with their experience immigrating to Quebec. More specifically, the most significant problems faced by Lebanese immigrants are the "Canadian experience" requirement (faced either

slightly or seriously by 52%), and the recognition of foreign academic credentials (faced with slightly or seriously by 41%).

Differences between women and men

Although most t- tests and F- tests indicated no significant differences between men and women in the mean values and variances of most variables mainly the education level, income and problems encountered (Table 10), we observed however some differences related to gender as to the factors that affect these variables. For instance, women appear to have more problems in finding a job appropriate to their education level than men (correlation is $r= 0.11$ vs 0.32). This does not seem to improve with time since arrival to Quebec. The correlation between women education level and their income was even much lower than that of men ($r= 0.07$ vs 0.25) indicating more serious problems encountered by women to be financially recognized for their education level. Nonetheless, women appear to have a lower rate of unemployment than men as time passes since their arrival ($r= 0.11$ vs 0.26). This is confirmed by the higher correlation between women's arrival time to Canada and the reduction in the job-finding difficulties compared to men ($r= - 0.27$ vs -0.21). Apparently, men have less problems in finding a job adequate to their education but face more difficulty in the long term. One possible explanation is the higher rate of integration of men in Quebec's culture. Surprisingly, women appear to have a very slow integration rate relative to men ($r= -0.05$ vs -0.15). Another explanation is that women seek lower profile jobs they tend to maintain with time. The very low correlation between the job type combined with the low correlation between the job type and the education level upon arrival support this hypothesis.

Another important difference between men and women is the difference in the degree of racial discrimination problems encountered. Men seem to face an increasing racial problems as their education level increases and these problems do not seem to diminish as they spend more time in Canada ($r= - 0.17$). At the same time, women declare facing no serious problems of racial discrimination relative to their education level and these problems appear to diminish with time ($r= -0.26$). Overall ratings for the immigration experience improve with time since arrival for both genders. In fact, this variable presented the highest correlation ($r= 0.41$ for women and 0.37 for men) with time spent in Canada, compared to the other variables. All these results are shown in tables 11 & 12.

Table 10. t- tests and F- tests for testing significant differences between variables mean and variances respectively between men and women (significance level $p = 0.05$).

Women / Men	T- Tests	F tests
Age	0.031	0.092
Arrival time	0.497	0.008
Citizenship time	0.049	0.042
Immigration category	0.995	0.761
Years in Lebanon	0.081	0.127
Years in the Arab world	0.938	0.473
Years in EU	0.455	0.000
Years in US	0.671	0.089
Number of country before Canada	0.837	0.857
Fluency in English	0.818	0.640
Fluency in French	0.018	0.019
Fluency in other languages	0.639	0.028
Education level upon arrival	0.200	0.897
Current education level	0.383	0.698
Unemployment period	0.318	0.000
Job type	0.699	0.182
Income upon arrival	0.862	0.890
Current income	0.398	0.619
Difficulty with French	0.060	0.094
Difficulty with English	0.776	0.936
Difficulty with academic credentials recognition	0.819	0.583
Lack of Canadian experience	0.605	0.818
Difficulty in finding a job	0.383	0.535
Racial discrimination	0.703	0.510
Integration problems	0.375	0.604
Legal problems	0.251	0.117
Financial problems	0.217	0.111
Overall experience rating	0.358	0.951

Table 11. Pearson correlation for the women group between education level and time since arrival to Quebec and each of the variables considered as potential problems for integration in the labour market.

Correlation (women group)	Education level upon arrival	Arrival time
Job type	0.114	-0.078
Current income	0.074	0.286
Unemployment period	0.111	0.139
Canadian experience problems	0.272	-0.221
Difficulty in finding a job	0.296	-0.275
Racial discrimination problems	0.025	-0.266
Integration problems	-0.132	-0.153
Legal problems	-0.191	0.046
Financial problems	-0.016	-0.106
Overall experience rating	-0.110	0.413

Table 12. Pearson correlation for the men group between education level and time since arrival to Quebec and each of the variables considered as potential problems for integration in the labour market.

Correlation (men group)	Education level upon arrival	Arrival time
Job type	0.324	-0.261
Current income	0.254	0.267
Unemployment period	0.261	0.127
Canadian experience problems	0.235	-0.295
Difficulty in finding a job	0.194	-0.214
Racial discrimination problems	0.160	-0.175
Integration problems	-0.227	-0.052
Legal problems	-0.149	0.079
Financial problems	-0.034	-0.061
Overall experience rating	-0.029	0.368

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on our findings, we suggest the following recommendations:

- 1) Since most respondents expressed that one of the biggest problems they are facing is the lack of a Canadian experience, we believe it becomes very important to address this issue by creating employment placement programs geared specifically towards those who lack Canadian experience. Such programs exist, but more can be done to ensure that immigrants are employed within their own field and at an adequate level that takes their foreign work experience into account. It is demoralizing to be employed in a field outside one's expertise or to be demoted to a level below one's experience.
- 2) Another way is to establish a "Canadian equivalency" examination process, whereby candidates with foreign work experience or academic credentials are assessed for compatibility with Canadian requirements.
- 3) For professions where foreign experience or education is only partially relevant, one option would be to offer "Canadian training" programs to bring candidates up-to-date with Canadian requirements. Such a program would meet candidates at their own level and build on their prior knowledge, rather than rejecting their prior experience by requiring them to start afresh.
- 4) While cultural integration was not the most significant problem overall (perhaps because of Lebanon's francophone and relatively Western-oriented immigrant population, it should be noted that women experienced significantly more trouble in this regard. If this is true in our community, it might prove an even greater issue for women from cultures less compatible with Quebec's. This should be addressed with efforts at cultural integration geared specifically towards women.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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APPENDIX I

Population selon certaines origines ethniques, par régions métropolitaines de recensement (Recensement de 2001)

Définitions et notes	Total des réponses nombre	Réponses uniques	Réponses multiples
Montréal			
Population totale	3 380 645	2 473 370	907 270
Canadien	1 885 085	1 244 580	640 505
Français	900 485	293 185	607 300
Italien	224 460	154 050	70 405
Irlandais	161 235	27 295	133 945
Anglais	134 115	29 195	104 920
Écossais	94 705	14 420	80 290
Juif	80 390	52 090	28 300
Haïtien	69 945	61 930	8 010
Chinois	57 655	47 510	10 145
Grec	55 865	44 615	11 250
Allemand	53 850	13 180	40 675
Québécois	44 965	30 225	14 735
Libanais	43 740	32 405	11 330
Indien de l'Amérique du Nord	42 655	7 210	35 450
Portugais	41 050	31 550	9 500
Polonais	38 615	17 140	21 475
Espagnol	35 245	14 950	20 295
Indien de l'Inde	32 370	25 760	6 615
Vietnamien	25 605	21 650	3 955
Arabe, non inclus ailleurs	21 545	15 835	5 710
Russe	20 495	7 155	13 345
Ukrainien	20 050	8 035	12 010
Philippin	18 985	16 050	2 935
Belge	18 695	5 935	12 760
Arménien	18 445	13 710	4 735
Roumain	17 315	11 500	5 815
Marocain	16 130	10 495	5 640
Américain (É.-U.)	15 520	2 045	13 470

Source : Statistique Canada, Recensement de la population.

Dernières modifications apportées : 2004-04-28.

Source: Statistique Canada, Recensement de la population

(http://www.statcan.ca/francais/Pgdb/demo27h_f.htm)

APPENDIX II

Employment integration of immigrants and cultural communities in Quebec's labour market- Questionnaire

* Name (optional): _____ * Phone # (optional): _____

* City _____ * Sex: M F * Age _____

* Religious affiliation: _____ * Country of origin: _____

* Date of arrival in Canada (month/year): _____ / _____

* Date of obtaining Canadian citizenship (if applicable): _____ / _____

* Which category best describes your immigration reason:

- Student
- Family reunification
- Humanitarian
- Temporary work
- Business / entrepreneurial
- Other _____

* List the countries you have inhabited prior to Canada, and how many years you spent in each place, e.g.: Lebanon (10 yrs), United Arab Emirates (5 yrs).

* What languages do you speak, and how well? Check the appropriate box:

	Fluent	Conversational	None
English			
French			
Arabic			
Other (.....)			

* Educational level upon arrival to Canada:

- High school
- College
- Technical/craft
- University
- Post-graduate

* Present educational level:

- High school
- College
- Technical/craft
- University
- Post-graduate

* Are you currently unemployed? Y N If so, for how long? _____

* How many jobs have you had since arrival to Canada? Please enumerate the last 10, e.g. (mechanical, 10 months); customer service (2yrs).

*** What was your household annual income upon arrival to Canada?**

- < 15,000 \$ 15,000 – 25,000 \$
 25,000 – 50,000 \$ > 50,000 \$

*** What is your household annual income at present?**

- < 15,000 \$ 15,000 – 25,000 \$
 25,000 – 50,000 \$ > 50,000 \$

*** To what extent have you encountered the following problems since arriving:**

	Not at all	Slightly	Seriously	Description (optional)
Difficulty with French				
Difficulty with English				
Recognition of academic credentials				
Lack of Canadian work experience				
Difficulty with finding employment				
Racial discrimination				
Personal difficulty with integration into the Canadian culture				
Legal problems				
Financial problems				

Other (please describe):

*** Overall, how would you rate your experience immigrating to Canada?**

- Excellent Good OK Bad

Please explain:

Date (d/m/y): _____ / _____ / _____