

# PUSH-PULL FACTORS RELATED TO STUDENT RETENTION AND INTEGRATION IN QUÉBEC

ASSOCIATION OF CANADIAN STUDIES AND CANADIAN INSTITUTE OF IDENTITIES AND MIGRATION

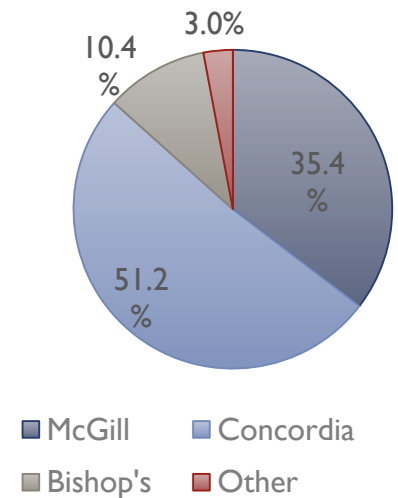
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# OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

- **Objective:** To identify the principal factors that drive English-speaking youth to remain in or leave the Quebec upon the completion of their university education.
- **Approach:** Examine English-speaking students' initial motivation for studying and living in Quebec, what kind of support they obtained both upon arrival and across their period of study, and the conditions that might motivate them to remain in the province upon the completion of their studies.
- **Context:** What are the socioeconomic and linguistic factors that attract students to Quebec and contribute to the retention of these youth in the English-speaking community?

# MÉTHODOLOGIE

- On-line survey and focus groups with English-speaking students (Canadian and Foreign-born) from Quebec's three English-language universities: McGill, Concordia and Bishop's.
- Total of 502 survey responses (445 valid)
- 404 responses with student's place of birth:
  - 143 Quebec-born (35%)
  - 109 from the Rest of Canada (ROC) (27%)
  - 152 international students (38%)
- In-depth qualitative information gathered from 25 focus group participants across the three universities.



# STUDENT SAMPLE & SATISFACTION WITH LEARNING/LIVING EXPERIENCE

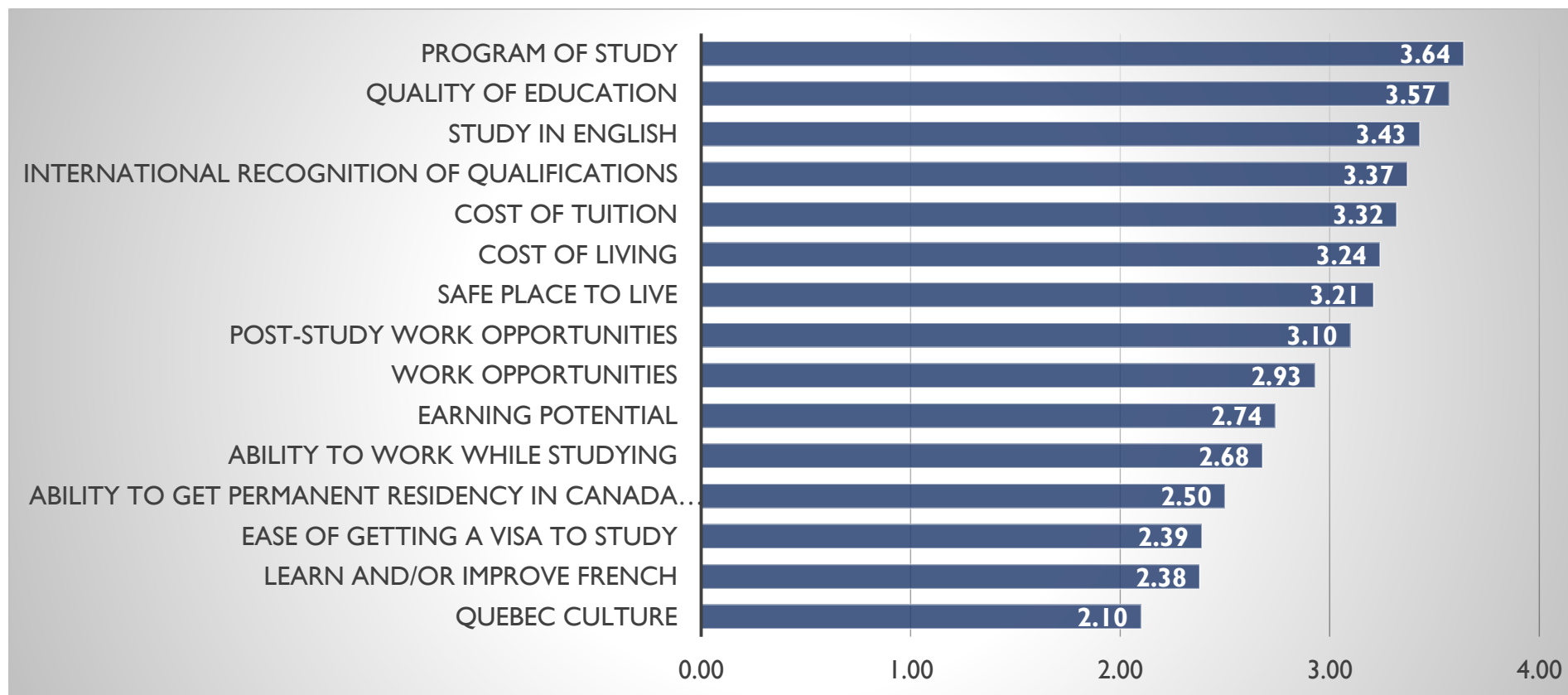
- Majority of students studying full-time (83%) at time of the survey.
- Mix of undergraduate (45%) and graduate students (55%).
- Univ. Programs: Education (28%), Business (14%), Social Sciences (12%), STEM(12%), Visual & Performing Arts (6%), Languages & Linguistics (6%).
- 62% non-Quebec students (recent immigrants) arrived to the province in the past five years.
- The majority of the sample was: Female (73%), under 30 years (71%), White/Caucasian (62%) and working at least part-time (64%).
- English was first language learned in childhood for most participants (44%), followed by other/multiple languages (Allophones - 29%).
- Students were generally satisfied with their university learning and community living experiences, but least satisfied with the availability and accessibility of English-language support services in their city.

# PUSH AND PULL FACTORS

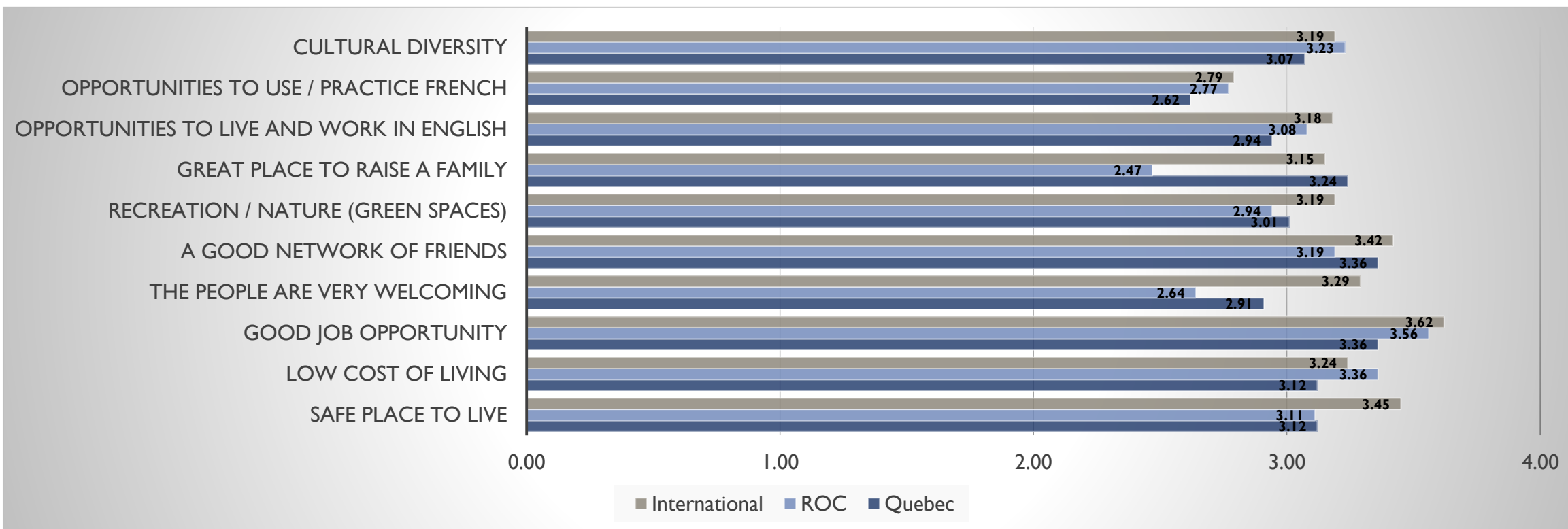
- What factors pushed students to decide where to live and study?
  1. Program of study
  2. Quality of education
  3. Studying in English
  4. Cost of tuition
- International students also identified the following factors:
  1. Cost of living
  2. Safe place to live
  3. International recognition of qualifications
  4. Post-study work opportunities
- What factors will keep students in Quebec after graduation?
  1. Good job opportunity
  2. Good network of friends
  3. Safe place to live
  4. Low cost of living
- Quebec-born students were also concerned with cost of living and having a good network of friends
- Other Canadians focused on good job opportunities and a low cost of living
- International students also looking for good jobs, a safe place to live, and network of friends

# HOW IMPORTANT WERE EACH OF THE FOLLOWING FACTORS WHEN DECIDING WHERE TO LIVE AND STUDY?

0 = NOT IMPORTANT AT ALL ... 4 = VERY IMPORTANT



# LES NIVEAU D'IMPORTANCE ACCORDÉ AUX FACTEURS QUI INFLUENCENT LES ÉTUDIANTS À DEMEURER AU QUÉBEC SUIVANT LEURS ÉTUDES? THE



# PLANS AFTER GRADUATION

- Over 1 in 4 students surveyed (26.7%) plan to seek employment in Quebec after studies (35.0% of Quebec-born students).
- Over 1/3 of students (34.7%) will look for find employment elsewhere in Canada (48.6% of students from ROC).
- 5.9% of students will seek employment in the U.S. or some other country (11.2% of international students).
- 16.1% of all students surveyed will pursue further education.

What do you plan to do after completing your current program of study?	ALL	QC	ROC	INT
<b>Answer Options</b>	%	%	%	%
<b>Employment in Quebec</b>	26.7	35.0	19.3	24.3
<b>Employment in Canada</b>	34.7	28.0	48.6	30.9
<b>Employment in United States</b>	2.7	0.7	0.9	5.9
<b>Employment in home/other country</b>	3.2	2.1	1.8	5.3
<b>Migration</b>	1.5	2.1	0	2.0
<b>Further study</b>	16.1	16.1	19.3	13.8
<b>Other (please specify)</b>	5.9	5.6	3.7	7.9
<b>Unknown / No response</b>	9.2	10.5	6.4	9.9
<b>Sample</b>	404	143	109	152



# SHOULD I STAY OR SHOULD I GO?

- Quebec-born most likely to stay in the province after graduation but at least 1 in 5 still likely to leave.
- 46.4% of students sampled are likely to stay in Quebec after they graduate. 19.1% of students are on the fence (neutral or don't know).
- Retention rates are somewhat higher for Quebec-born students (68.9% are somewhat or very likely to stay) compared to international students (43.0%) and students from other provinces (35.2%).

How likely are you to stay in Quebec after you graduate?	ALL	QC	ROC	INT
<b>Answer Options</b>	%	%	%	%
<b>Very unlikely</b>	17.0	11.6	23.8	16.8
<b>Somewhat unlikely</b>	13.7	10.1	18.1	13.9
<b>Neutral</b>	13.2	12.4	9.5	16.8
<b>Somewhat likely</b>	18.6	24.0	16.2	15.3
<b>Very likely</b>	27.8	34.9	19.0	27.7
<b>Don't know</b>	5.9	4.7	6.7	6.6
<b>Other (please specify)</b>	3.8	2.3	6.7	2.9
<b>Sample</b>	371	129	105	137

# POST-STUDY DESTINATION (LEAVERS)

If they were to leave their current place of residence in the next 5 years:

- Around half of all students would go to another province or territory in Canada (51.5%), including 70.6% of students from the ROC.
- 11.1% of students will move to another community in Quebec (18.2% of Quebec-born students).
- 11.2% of international students will return to their country of origin.

If you were to leave your current place of residence in the next five years, where would you most likely go?	ALL	QC	ROC	INT
<b>Answer Options</b>	%	%	%	%
<b>Another community in Quebec</b>	11.1	18.2	10.1	5.3
<b>Another province or territory</b>	51.5	39.9	70.6	48.7
<b>United States</b>	9.7	11.2	2.8	13.2
<b>Country of origin / birth place</b>	5.0	2.1	0.0	11.2
<b>Other country</b>	12.6	16.1	11.0	10.5
<b>Unknown / No response</b>	10.1	12.6	5.5	11.2
<b>Sample</b>	404	143	109	152

# LES CONCLUSION DE GROUPES DE DISCUSSION; L'APPRENTISSAGE ET L'ARRIVÉE, L'EXPÉRIENCE, LA SATISFACTION

- The most common reasons why students come to Quebec to live and study:
  1. To learn and/or practice a second language (French)
  2. The quality of the university or academic program.
- Other important “pull” factors included:
  1. “Vibe” of the city (Montreal)
  2. Low cost of living
  3. Living close to a beautiful, natural environment (e.g., green spaces)
  4. Friends and family
  5. Ease of applying to the university
  6. Ease of getting a visa (immigration)
- When asked about their arrival experience to the university, many recalled a warm welcoming from their peers, professors and academic supervisors.
- Some students felt less welcomed by the school’s administration, claiming that they had little or no guidance in navigating the university “system” when the first arrived.
- Students were generally satisfied with their university learning experiences, especially their professors and academic supervisors, their friends and peers, and their city of residence (Montreal/Sherbrooke).
- Students from Concordia and McGill were generally dissatisfied with access to health care services in the university setting.

# LES CONCLUSION DE GROUPE DE DISCUSSION; LANGUE, SITUATION D'EMPLOI & TENTATIVE POSTSECONDAIRE

- Second Language Learning:
  - Many students come to Quebec with the intentions to learn French, study and practice it, but as the focus group findings reveal, the reality is that there is not enough time or resources to sufficiently learn and practice the language at university or in the surrounding community.
  - Often students must choose between concentrating on academic performance (GPA) or learn the French language.
- Good Jobs:
  - The unanimous retention factor across all three focus groups was *employment*.
  - Students are willing to stay if they have good job opportunities lined up.
  - However several students commented that they would chase job opportunities, be they available in Quebec or elsewhere.

# RECOMMENDATIONS POLITIQUE

1. Improve access to French-language instruction for English-speaking students.
2. Create social networking opportunities for English-speaking students.
3. Improve student's welcoming experience with the university's administration.
4. Develop/improve foreign credential recognition program for newcomers.
5. Make getting permanent residency after studies easier for international students.

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Paul Holley | Push and Pull Factors Related to Student Retention and Integration in Quebec

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