

Quebec: Colonizer or Colonized?

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Introduction

September 30 marks the National Day of Truth and Reconciliation. For many Quebecers, the relationship between French and English, between Quebec and the rest of Canada, was the existential conflict that defined our society. And yet, the way we look at history seems to be changing. Today, many academics, members of civil society and politicians outside Quebec are increasingly defining Canada's historical narrative in terms of the relationship between indigenous and non-indigenous peoples and/or natives and settlers (colonizers), and efforts at reconciliation. Is there a gap between the historical narrative presented/proposed by many opinion leaders and the general public's acceptance and support of these changes? What do Quebecers think about viewing history through the prism of indigenous and non-indigenous and/or settler colonists and indigenous peoples?

On the occasion of the National Day of Truth and Reconciliation, Léger Marketing surveyed 1,000 Quebecers for the Association for Canadian Studies on the issue of historic colonization and its contemporary impact. The results reveal significant differences amongst Quebecers when it comes to the victims of colonization and the question of who founded Quebec. The survey was conducted during the week of September 18, 2023 by web panel among 1,000 Quebecers (798 francophones, 130 anglophones and 72 allophones). A margin of error cannot be associated with a non-probability sample in a panel survey for comparison purposes. A probability sample of 100 respondents would have a margin of error of $\pm 2.5\%$, 19 times out of 20.

Eight out of ten Quebecers agree that Indigenous people living in Quebec were victims of European colonization.

Indigenous peoples living in Quebec were victims of European colonization				
Quebec	Total	Francophone	Anglophone	Allophone
Weighted Total	1000	748	168	83
Unweighted Total	1000	798	130	72
TOTAL Agree	78%	79%	78%	78%
Strongly agree	47%	47%	48%	49%
Somewhat agree	31%	32%	30%	29%
TOTAL Disagree	9%	8%	12%	8%
Somewhat disagree	7%	7%	6%	5%
Strongly Disagree	2%	1%	5%	3%
I dont know	13%	13%	10%	14%
NET	100%	100%	100%	100%

More Quebecers agree than disagree with the assertion that French-speaking Canadians were victims of European colonization, but more Anglophones and Allophones in Quebec agree than disagree with that view

French speaking Canadians were victims of European colonization. - Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements				
Quebec	Total	Francophone	Anglophone	Allophone
TOTAL Agree	41%	45%	30%	32%
Strongly agree	13%	13%	11%	13%
Somewhat agree	29%	32%	18%	19%
TOTAL Disagree	37%	33%	50%	52%
Somewhat disagree	21%	21%	21%	22%
Strongly Disagree	16%	12%	29%	30%
I dont know	21%	22%	21%	16%
NET	100%	100%	100%	100%

A small minority of Quebecers believe that English-speaking Canadians were victims of European colonization

English speaking Canadians were victims of European colonization. - Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements	Total	Francophone	Anglophone	Allophone
TOTAL Agree	18%	16%	23%	20%
Strongly agree	5%	4%	8%	9%
Somewhat agree	13%	12%	14%	11%
TOTAL Disagree	62%	63%	59%	60%
Somewhat disagree	26%	26%	27%	21%
Strongly Disagree	36%	37%	32%	38%
I dont know	20%	21%	18%	20%
NET	100%	100%	100%	100%

The summary table shows the consensus regarding the colonization of indigenous peoples

	Total	Francophone	Anglophone	Allophone
Indigenous peoples living in Quebec were victims of European colonization	78%	79%	78%	78%
French-speaking Canadians were victims of European colonization	41%	45%	30%	32%
English-speaking Canadians were victims of European colonization	18%	16%	23%	20%
NET	82%	82%	81%	79%

A majority of Quebecers believe that the Indigenous population living in Quebec can still be qualified as victims of colonization.

Can Quebec's Indigenous population still be called a victim of colonization?	Total	Francophone	Anglophone	Allophone
Yes	55%	54%	61%	57%
No	33%	35%	24%	30%
I dont know	12%	12%	15%	13%
NET	100%	100%	100%	100%

There is an important difference between francophone and non-francophone Quebecers in the extent to which they respectively consider Quebec's francophone population as victims of colonization.

In your opinion, can Quebec's French-speaking population still be called a victim of colonization?	Total	Francophone	Anglophone	Allophone
Yes	37%	45%	16%	16%
No	49%	42%	68%	74%
I dont know	13%	13%	16%	10%
NET	100%	100%	100%	100%

Among Quebecers who believe that the French-speaking Canadian population living in Quebec has overcome colonization, they are slightly more likely to think that colonization took place in 1867 or earlier than after 1960

When do you think the French-speaking Canadian population living in Quebec overcame colonization?	Total	Français	Anglais	Autre
1774	7%	6%	9%	8%
1837	7%	7%	6%	2%
1867	18%	19%	15%	21%
1960	16%	20%	7%	9%
1976	8%	7%	8%	9%
1982	3%	3%	1%	3%
Other	1%	0%	4%	0%
I don't know	41%	37%	49%	49%
NET	100%	100%	100%	100%

Quebecers are sharply divided on the date of Quebec's founding

Please choose between the following statements	Total	Francophone	Anglophone	Allophone
The founding of Québec began with the arrival of Indigenous peoples on the territory	27%	27%	33%	22%
The founding of Quebec began with the arrival of the French peoples	34%	36%	28%	28%
Quebec was founded in 1867, when Lower Canada became the province of Quebec.	21%	20%	20%	31%
I dont know	17%	16%	19%	19%
NET	100%	100%	100%	100%