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NEWS RELEASE

Canadians support high immigration levels

Montreal – A majority of Canadians continue to support high levels of immigration, a trend that has been stable over time and relatively unaffected by recessions, threats of terrorism or other related events, according to a new study published by the Institute for Research on Public Policy (IRPP).

In *Pro-immigration Canada: Social and Economic Roots of Popular Views*, author Jeffrey Reitz examines recent trends in public opinion and takes a closer look at the social and economic sources of support for high immigration, based on an Environics Focus Canada opinion survey conducted in November 2010.

The survey findings suggest that two important sources of pro-immigration views are the belief in immigration as an economic benefit to Canada, and pride in Canadian multiculturalism. These two pillars reinforce each other, says Reitz, and they provide broad support for immigration as an important nation-building strategy.

This support has been consistently high over the past 15 to 20 years when immigration levels have also been high. It is particularly strong among more educated Canadians, the young, the fully employed and men.

According to the Focus Canada survey, 58 percent of Canadians support current immigration levels. Regionally, Atlantic Canada, Quebec and the Prairies show the highest rates of support, at 63 percent, 62 percent and 63 percent, respectively, compared with 54 percent and 57 percent in Ontario and British Columbia. There is also majority support in Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver, where a high concentration of new immigrants settle.

“Canada is distinct from other immigrant host countries, such as the Netherlands and Germany, which are latecomers to immigration and have tended to see immigration as an unwelcome occurrence,” adds Reitz.

Pro-immigration Canada: Social and Economic Roots of Popular Views can be downloaded free of charge from the Institute's Web site (www.irpp.org).

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For more details or to schedule an interview, please contact the IRPP.

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