

# **Federal-Provincial-Municipal Relations in Immigration and Settlement<sup>1</sup>**

Conference on Federal-Municipal-Provincial Relations

Institute of Intergovernmental Relations, Queen's University, May 9-10, 2003

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## **Introduction**

It is now well known and recognized that large Canadian cities are more and more multicultural. The processes of cultural diversification of the Canadian population are, in large part, the result of explicit policy choices on the part of the federal and provincial governments to strongly encourage immigration for reasons that are both demographic and economic. These two levels of government have developed, over time, specific policies aimed at the integration of immigrants and the management of diversity. But we know far less about the political and policy role played by municipalities in this area and the intergovernmental relations involved in the process.

Research on immigration issues necessarily gets involved in constitutional issues and this, too, often marginalizes the local level. Clearly, the question of the management of diversity is

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<sup>1</sup> This paper is part of a broader research which received financial support from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada and the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies, University of Ottawa. Some sections are based on Poirier, Christian and Andrew, Caroline, "Cities and the management of ethno-cultural diversity : Comparing Montreal and Ottawa", Paper submitted to the *Journal of Canadian Studies*, 2003.

one where federalism and intergovernmental issues become extremely important. Immigration is, according to the BNA Act, an area of shared jurisdiction (Article 95). Many provinces, like Quebec, play an active role in this area and, through a series of agreements with the federal government, they select the candidates (with the exception of refugees and family reunification which are federal responsibilities) and are responsible for their integration. They try, like Ontario, to attract qualified immigrants and reduce the barriers to a full participation in the social, economic and political life of the provinces. And since immigrants settle mainly in urban areas, municipal governments are increasingly involved, particularly those large cities that are receiving the vast majority of recent immigrants. Approximately 220 000 immigrants and refugees enter Canada each year and 85 % of them come into urban centres (Statistics Canada, *2001 Census*). In 1996, 85% of all immigrants and 93% of those who arrived in Canada between 1991 and 1996 were living in a census metropolitan area, compared to 57% of people born in Canada (Statistics Canada, *1996 Census*). The policies for the management of diversity that have been adopted by the different levels of government are sometimes harmonious and sometimes contradictory.

This paper will compare the policies dealing with the management of ethno-cultural diversity in Montreal and Ottawa and the impact of the intergovernmental factor on them. The choice of these cities is based on two criteria : existence of diversity and significant intergovernmental relations. First of all, both are clearly influenced by ethno-cultural diversity. From 1997 to 2001, 78,3% of the immigrants that came to Quebec settled in Montreal (Ministry of Relations with Citizens and Immigration, 2002). Overall, 13% of new immigrants to Canada chose Montreal. In 2002, the new City of Montreal (the new City of Montreal came into being on January 1, 2002, as the result of legislation by the Quebec government, amalgamating the 28 municipalities of the former Montreal Urban Community), with a total population of 1,8 million (the second largest in Canada) is made up of 26% immigrants. 35% of the overall population is of origins other than Canadian, Quebecois, French, British or Aboriginal and 19% are of a visible minority. In Ottawa (the new city of Ottawa came into being on January 1, 2001 amalgamating the eleven local municipalities that had made up the former Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton), immigrants made up, in 2002, 21% of the population. Nearly 30% of the population is of origins other than Canadian, Quebecois, French, British or Aboriginal while 15% are of a

visible minority. The total population of Ottawa is 791, 300, making it the fourth largest city in Canada.

The second reason for choosing Montreal and Ottawa is that both cities constantly position themselves in the complex sets of interrelations, both conflictual and harmonious, that exist between the different levels of government - federal, Quebec and Ontario. In Montreal the relationship of the local political elites to the Quebec government has always been one of ambivalence, feeling both distance and connection. Often thinking themselves “abandoned” or misunderstood by the Quebec government, they have argued for greater understanding of the importance of the social, cultural and economic role of Montreal, the metropolis of Quebec. Indeed, the Quebec government did react favourably, at least in part, and the Ministry of Municipal Affairs became, during the second half of the 1990's, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and the Metropolis.

However, the fact that the Quebec government imposed the municipal amalgamations, even if these goals were shared (and even proposed) by some parts of the Montreal elites, created considerable discontent at the municipal level and this discontent was further fuelled by the wide-spread feeling that these changes were being unilaterally imposed upon an unwilling population. If relationships between Montreal and the federal government are somewhat more distant, the recent proposals by the federal government<sup>2</sup> that indicate a more active federal role in urban issues have been generally well received by the Montreal political leadership and this could eventually have an impact on relations between the Quebec government and Montreal.

The politics of intergovernmental relations is very different in Ottawa. As the national capital and the seat of the federal government, it is the federal government that is very close and the province more distant. Relations with the federal government are, however, ambivalent. The city has had a problem of developing an autonomous local identity, independent from that of the capital. The strong role played by the National Capital Commission (NCC) has certainly complicated the role for the city. As part of its mandate, the federal agency has had as an

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<sup>2</sup> Infrastructure program, Agreement with the provinces on low-cost rental housing, National Homelessness Initiative, Canadian Fund for Strategic Infrastructure, Throne Speech of October 2002, etc. See also: Prime Minister's Caucus Task force on Urban Issues, *Canada's Urban Strategy. A Vision for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, 2002.

objective the development of the image of the capital and making the capital a meeting place for all Canadians. The NCC has therefore been a creator of identity for Ottawa, and not necessarily the identity that the City of Ottawa would like to have. However, as in Montreal, the recent federal statements about interest in urban affairs have met with general approval.

Relations between Ottawa and the Ontario government are more distant but more clearly antagonistic. There is a partisan overlay to these relations with the Ontario Conservative government seeing Ottawa as a bastion of the opposition, owing in part to the mayor's previous role as a Liberal MPP but also to the City's near defiance of the province on the implementation of Ontario Works. These relations were not improved during the period of the Transition Team as the Team was clearly seen to be dominated by Conservatives and determined to implement a conservative agenda. Since then the downloading of activities (social, housing, public transportation, etc.) has certainly fuelled the feelings of frustration on the part of the municipal council. The last conflict emerged when the province blocked the municipal decision to restructure the ward boundaries, a decision that was seen as having been motivated by partisan goals, those of protecting rural councillors more sympathetic to the neo-liberal views of the provincial Conservatives.

In order to analyse the nature and dynamics of the intergovernmental factor regarding immigration and settlement, we need to tackle four elements. First, it is important to consider the impact of federal immigration policies on municipalities. Are immigration and settlement an issue on the local political agenda ? If so, How cities got involved in this field ? Especially regarding settlement, was there a downloading of previous activities undertaken by the other levels of government ? Was there invitations, incentives, negotiations from these governments to get involved ? In other words, we will look at the development of municipal involvement in this policy area.

Second, we need to assess how local policies are linked to policies developed or promoted at the provincial and federal levels. We will look at both the discursive (the models for the management of ethno-cultural heterogeneity that lie behind government actions) and practical (policies, programs, administrative and political mechanisms) aspects. A city involves a sphere of discourse as well as institutional mechanisms through which a local community can

express its identity and collective interests. And both models and mechanisms imply intergovernmental relations.

Third, we will examine if there are formal partnerships or agreements, formal two-level or tri-level relations and formal consultations. We will then be able, in the concluding part, to consider more generally the role of the city as political actor and producer of identity and we will examine the extent of local autonomy on this issue. Our intent will be to understand to what extent municipal actors are autonomous and to what extent they are influenced by the policies and/or the activities of the Quebec, Ontario and federal governments. We will attempt to show that the management of diversity reveals a great deal about the state of local governance, the development of local identities and the evolution of intergovernmental relations in Canada at the present time.

### **The development of questions of migration as issues for local public policy**

The issue of immigration has evolved substantially in relation to its policy context in Canada (Berthet and Poirier, 2000). Immigration was first seen as a question relating to the work force and public policy was situated between international relations and economic development. Without entirely losing this focus, immigration policy became, in the period after the 1960's and 1970's, associated with social and cultural policy. This implies that, in addition to attracting immigrants that will contribute to Canadian economic growth, public policy must also look at the issues of managing interethnic cohabitation.

It is only fairly recently that municipalities have entered the field of managing ethno-cultural relations, initiatives that were not the result of formal agreements about decentralization and which are not traditional areas of local jurisdiction. An analytic tool that is useful in the analysis of this political development is the notion of a policy window, as developed by John W. Kingdon in his analysis of political agenda-setting (Kingdon, 1995). In distinction to a formal process of decentralization which generally implies the exercising of central authority - local collectivities having little choice in whether they accept or refuse what is being decentralized -, a policy window implies that local authorities take up an issue because of their perception that there are advantages to be gained. This window can be seen as the combined presence of three

elements : problems (a social issue becoming a political problem) ; solutions (the existence of models and tools able to be applied to the problem) and politics (political entrepreneurs willing to exercise leadership).

More precisely, three series of factors can illustrate the reasons for municipal action : pressure coming from associations defending and promoting ethno-cultural groups, relations between the provincial and municipal levels encouraging the municipal role and, thirdly, the encouragement and support of other public and para public bodies.

### *Organization and mobilisation of interests*

In all the municipalities that have developed initiatives relating to the integration of immigrants, considerable numbers of ethno-cultural associations exist, most of them bringing together people of the same ethno-cultural group but also associations organized around anti-racism, human rights and anti-discrimination bringing together people from a variety of ethno-cultural groups. Many municipalities have supported the work of these associations either in order to facilitate service delivery that is more culturally sensitive or in order to prevent conflicts from arising ; municipal action can therefore be seen as a mixture of strengthening the groups and of trying to avoid a radicalization of their discourse and their actions. A number of local elected officials have been particularly sensitive to the demands of these groups and, as part of the recognition of their demands, have included the issue of cultural diversity in the construction of local identities and in the political legitimation of the municipal level of government.

It would seem that community-based groups, rather than incitations from other levels of government, have been extremely important in pushing both cities to take more account of ethno cultural diversity. For example, in Ottawa, a forum was organized by Local Agencies Serving Immigrants (LASI), the Ottawa Community Immigrants Services Organization (OCISO), the Social Planning Council (SPC) and the National Capital Alliance on Race Relations (NCARR) in April 2001 to evaluate community needs in order to better recognize diversity. The forum was extremely successful and made the point that this was an issue of increasing saliency in Ottawa.

The federal policy on multiculturalism however clearly had an impact on the mobilization of ethno-cultural communities. Particularly in the period after the 1970's and 1980's, the

Secretary of State for multiculturalism (now part of Canadian Heritage) wanted to build the capacity of the immigrant community to take collective responsibility for dealing with the causes of inequality and for developing mobilization strategies - including judicial recourse - in order to be able to exercise their rights at all levels of government.

*The local level and its capacity for coordinated action*

During most of the twentieth century relations between provincial and municipal governments evolved in the direction of increasing centralization on the part of provincial governments, centralization that was, for the most part, not only accepted but sought out by the municipalities. In general, municipal officials were pleased to have responsibilities move to the provincial level and therefore no longer represent financial commitments on the part of the municipal level.

But this situation began to change towards the end of the 1970's and 1980's, driven by a number of factors. The major reason relates to the crisis of the welfare state and the downloading from federal to provincial governments and from provincial to municipal governments (Germain and Harel, 1985). The provincial governments accompany this decentralization with discourses stressing either provincial partnership with the local level (for example, the Quebec Immigration policy of 1990 (Ministry of Cultural Communities and Immigration, 1990)) or municipal autonomy and the importance of local action. A clear example of this latter can be seen from Quebec's regional development policy which speaks of moving from a welfare state to a state supportive of regional and local actions. In addition, provincial governments, starting with Alberta but followed by many of the other provinces, have amended their municipal legislation to give municipal governments broader definitions of their capacity to act.

It is also true that some municipalities initiated action in areas that had not been traditionally those of municipal governments and, in this way, illustrated a greater will to be an autonomous level of government. The creation of regional governments in Canada, starting with Toronto in 1954 but accelerating during the 1960's and 1970's (the Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton was created in 1968 and the Montreal Urban Community in 1969), was also significant in the evolution of the municipal capacity to act. The regional governments, because

of the growing ethno-cultural diversity in the large cities, began to take initiatives in this area. In Montreal the actions taken by the Montreal Urban Community were clearly motivated by the attempt to reduce tensions stemming from crisis situations between the police, the public transit commission and ethno-cultural communities. Indeed, in many municipalities including Ottawa, some of the first actions relating to the management of diversity are linked to the police, often arising from specific incidents. The municipal responsibility for police is therefore an important element in the movement towards municipal activity in the area of managing diversity.

The strength of municipal government is not so much its direct capacity to act but its capacity to bring the full range of social actors to the table to act together. Municipal governments are key actors in local governance systems and it is this capacity to network and to convene that is their strength in this period of decentralized action from senior levels of government. In reducing the size of senior levels of government some activities were decentralized to municipal governments but also many activities were privatized to organisations of civil society. Concerted action at the local level must involve these organisations and, once again, it is the convenor and networking capacity of local government that will determine its capacity to act.

#### *Encouraging action and proposing solutions*

In Kingdon's analysis of policy windows, he emphasizes the importance of having solutions for the identified problems as a factor in explaining policy initiative. The actions of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) can be seen as facilitating municipal action for the management of diversity in that the FCM identified not only problems, but also solutions. The FCM, the spokesperson for Canadian municipalities at the federal level, adopted in 1986 its first policy statement on interracial relations (FCM, 1986). As a way of sensitizing its members and facilitating their work, the FCM published a series of pamphlets starting in 1987. The first of these underlined the necessity for municipal action and argued that, despite existing laws and policies (such as the federal policy on multiculturalism, the Charter, provincial laws, etc.), discrimination on the basis of race and unequal access to institutions remained significant problems (FCM, 1987). The FCM proposed a program that has been used by a number of

municipalities interested in the management of diversity. The program was in three phases : creation of festivals and multicultural celebrations ; consultation with ethno-cultural groups in order to adapt municipal services ; adoption of programs and policies by municipal councils to promote increased participation of ethno-cultural minorities in the social, economic, cultural and political life of the community. The FCM's basic argument was that good interracial relations can translate into greater economic development and an enhanced quality of urban life and this argument has been taken up and integrated into municipal discourse. Cities should be leaders in this area, argued the FCM, because they are the first point of contact for citizens and for ethno-cultural communities but also because they are major employers and major funders of community action. For the FCM, the improvement of interracial relations is clearly a municipal responsibility (FCM, 1988 ; FCM, 1990 ; FCM, 1991 ; FCM, 1992).

Recently the FCM has reiterated its position in arguing that ethno-cultural diversity is one of the major challenges facing Canadian municipalities : "A major part of the impact of immigration is felt at the local level, and it is the local initiatives and programs that assure the success of our national immigration policies" (FCM, 2002, p. 2). This led the Federation to call for official recognition of the increased municipal responsibility in the area of immigration : "The municipal governments should be at the table with the federal and provincial governments when decisions are being made about immigration and refugee policies and programs" (FCM, 2002, p. 2). The FCM discourse has gone from one of encouraging municipalities to become involved in this policy area (in the 1980's and 1990's) to one of insisting upon intergovernmental recognition of the municipal role (in the 2000's). In both periods the FCM has acted to put forward solutions that can be picked up and adopted by their member municipalities, in this way opening policy windows for municipal governments.

### **Policies, mechanisms and discourse : the links between the local and the provincial-federal levels**

Federal and provincial immigration policies have greatly affected both Montreal and Ottawa. If municipalities are legally subordinate to the provinces, they are also influenced in many ways by the federal government which put forward an active policy of attracting

immigrants since the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Therefore, cities have had to find innovative ways - not always provided by the upper governments - to manage the increasing diversity of the Canadian population (Poirier and Andrew, 2003). As we saw in the previous section, if immigration policies (the number of people allowed each year, the types of people wanted, the acquisition of citizenship, etc.) are mainly influenced and determined by the federal and provincial levels (we must however notice that large Canadian cities are more and more involved in the business of attracting immigrants), settlement policies are mainly left in the hands of municipalities.

### *Policies and administrative-political mechanisms regarding immigration and settlement*

In Montreal, the regional level (the former Montreal Urban Community) started activities in the mid 1980's with the City of Montreal following in the early 1990's. In the case of Ottawa, it is the former City of Ottawa that initiated activity and this was slowly picked up by the former Regional Municipality of Ottawa - Carleton. However, in both cases, it is the former central city that was the most active in issues relating to diversity.

The Montreal Urban Community created an advisory Committee on Intercultural and Interracial Relations in 1985 and, in 1990, put forward a Declaration on intercultural and interracial relations. The public transportation agency (La Société de transport de la CUM) provided intercultural training to its drivers and established a program of employment equity in 1987. The police of the CUM did likewise. The City of Montreal created its Advisory Committee on Interracial and Intercultural Relations in 1990 (in 1995, the name changed to the Advisory Committee on Intercultural Relations), with a mandate to advise and make recommendations to City Council. The Committee created sub-committees in the following areas : economic development and employment, social development, institutional action plan, community relations and promotion of cultural diversity. The City of Montreal also established an Office of Intercultural Relations charged with implementing recommendations and ensuring follow-up (the City of Toronto also have an Office of Diversity Management). The office was responsible for the coordination of activities across the municipal administration as well as assuring the coordination of relations between the City and its ethno-cultural communities. Selected elected

representatives were also given responsibility for the area of intercultural relations, particularly at the level of the executive committee.

The principal activities undertaken by the City of Montreal are the following : establishment of a programme of employment equity for municipal employees ; financial and technical (largely space) support for ethno-cultural associations ; information and translation/interpretation services ; activities to raise awareness (workshops, intercultural days, debates, publicity campaigns, information in local newspapers, displays in libraries, visit to schools, work with media) ; financing festivals and multicultural celebrations ; consultations with ethno-cultural communities about ways of adapting municipal services, participation in municipal coordinating activities ; integrating multiculturalism into leisure and sports activities ; adoption of a Declaration on Intercultural and Interracial Relations and a Declaration against Discrimination and Racism. Montreal's civic parties have also incorporated a concern for this issue, presenting candidates coming from ethno-cultural communities. There are currently some 20 municipal councillors (out of 73) who declare themselves to be origins other than Canadian, Québécois, French or British.

The new City of Montreal intends to make the management of diversity and the elimination of barriers one of its priorities. The City will create in 2003 an Intercultural Council which will replace the Advisory Committee on Intercultural Relations. This Council will have the responsibility of advising the City Council and the execution committee - either on its own initiative or by request from the city - on services and policies designed to facilitate the integration and the participation of members of ethno-cultural communities in the political, economic, social and cultural life of the city (City of Montreal, 2001, p. 1). In addition the Intercultural Council will hear delegations, solicit opinions and undertake, or be responsible for, studies.

The Montreal Summit, held in June 2002 in order to define the principal orientations that will guide the city in its first years of existence also discussed the issue of ethno-cultural diversity. The report from the Summit session on diversity argued that the City of Montreal should play a very strong role as a catalyst for activity and as a creator of links between different actors (City of Montreal, 2002, p. 23).

In the case of Ottawa, the former City of Ottawa first set up an advisory committee on visible minorities in 1982 (Andrew and Rajiva, 1996, p. 36-37). The committee was composed of 14 voting members from the community and two non-voting members of City Council. The City also had an administrative structure in the early 1990's that dealt with human rights and employment equity. This structure has originally been set up in 1976 to deal with equal employment opportunities for women but its mandate was changed in 1990, strongly influenced by the Ontario legislation on employment equity, to include all the groups designated by the Ontario legislation of that period ; the Aboriginal population, people with disabilities, members of racial minorities and women.

The question of the recognition of diversity entered the regional level during the transition year to the new city of Ottawa (Gervais, 2001). Diversity, along with the role of the voluntary sector and the representation of youth, emerged relatively late in the transition process as part of the community driven concerns about the narrow definition the transition team was giving to the question of public participation and the role being seen for civil society in the new City of Ottawa. The Diversity and Community Access Project Team presented two reports in December 2000, *Diversity makes Sense* and *Diversity and Community Access*. These reports emphasized issues of access to services and of the responsiveness of services to a diverse population, as well as the issue of equitable municipal employment. The reports stated clearly that the population of Ottawa was in the process of changing rapidly and that the new City must ensure that all services and programs should be responsive to the changing population of the City, from health services to recreation and from social issues to emergency services.

The new City of Ottawa set up an enlarged network of advisory committees, including one on Equity and Diversity (EDAC). The Committee, which met for the first time in August 2001, covers a number of dimensions of diversity. It also deals with issues relating to the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered community, to the Aboriginal population and to issues of gender equality. But, if one judges by the composition of the Committee, ethno-cultural diversity is the principal focus of the Committee. The Committee's terms of reference include working towards the elimination of discrimination within the City of Ottawa, advocating on behalf of racially and ethnically diverse groups, developing a strong lobbying network with other organizations and promoting a better understanding of different cultures (EDAC, 2002).

The City of Ottawa is currently involved in an extensive planning process and this, as with the documents from the Montreal Summit, offer a useful illustration of the extent to which the issue of diversity is visible on the public agenda. The City's official plan is being revised and, along with this, the City is developing a Human Services Plan, an Arts and Heritage Plan, an Economic Strategy and a Corporate Strategic Plan. The preliminary draft of the Ottawa 2020 Official Plan gives limited visibility to the issues of diversity. Six general principles guide the revisions and the second of these principles, "Ottawa as a caring and inclusive community", has diversity as one of its sub-goals (City of Ottawa, 2002a, p. 3).

The Human Services Plan took diversity into consideration in drawing up the draft plan. A consultant was hired to write a report, drawing on the results of a round table, on phone consultations and on a literature review. The report argued that the Human Services Plan (HSP) represents an opportunity for the City of Ottawa "to address diversity in a responsive and meaningful way" (Kwan, 2002, p. 1). It is said that, in the past, the City of Ottawa has responded to diversity only in an ad hoc manner. The Draft Human Services Plan gives a higher visibility to the issues of diversity than did the Draft Official Plan. The Plan outlines five major policy themes that "Ottawa must address to progress towards its vision for the year 2020" (City of Ottawa, 2002b, p. 8) and the first of these is diversity and inclusion. The definition given to diversity is large, but the description makes it clear that the priority is ethno cultural diversity. The document celebrates diversity but also recognizes inequalities and barrier.

Within the administrative structure of the City, the Ottawa Police have been relatively active on issues of diversity. In 1993 a hate crimes unit was established and in 1995 a unit dealing with diversity and race relations. In march 2000 a Community and Police Action Committee was established in order to improve relations between the police and visible minority communities by creating intervention teams made up of police officers and members of ethno-cultural communities. The Chair of the Equity and Diversity Committee is also chair of this Committee. The Ottawa Police have also undertaken a very active campaign to recruit more members of ethno cultural communities as members of the police. This campaign includes extensive use of the media but also direct contacts with ethno-cultural communities.

By analysing the ways in which Montreal and Ottawa describe their policy objectives and activities, it is possible to understand the fundamental approach that each takes in relation to the management of diversity. Broadly speaking, we can identify three models : civic universalism, multiculturalism and interculturalism. In the model of civic universalism, the public sphere is seen as an area where all citizens should be on an equal footing in relation to the rules and values of collective life, differences are tolerated and even encouraged in the private sphere, if necessary even with the support of public institutions (for example in encouraging ethno-cultural groups to become more aware of their own culture). Difference (in moral choices, religious beliefs, behaviours, tastes) is not denied but is confined to private space. This model operates on a clear distinction between public and private space, on a separation between the dimensions of the political status of individuals and the question of identity and by an opposition between the host culture and the culture of origin. Multiculturalism represents a political project that takes the point of view that the search for the common good and for social justice must take account of the cultural conceptions of all the minorities living in the same space. The richness of cultural diversity is affirmed and valued, as is cultural relativity (no culture can pretend to be superior to others). The multicultural ideal aims to take difference into account in the political sphere, in ways including the granting of collective rights to specific minorities.

The intercultural model emerged as a result of the criticism that was levelled both at the universalist model and at the multicultural model. The central question was : how can we remain different while sharing certain common reference points? Universalist models were criticized for trying to ignore difference and for proposing the homogenization of ideas and life styles in the name of an abstract citizenship whereas multiculturalism was criticized for producing communities and groups totally separated from one another, without any common space having been constructed. The intercultural model was seen as being half way between civic universalism and multiculturalism. Interculturalism is multiculturalism with the construction of strong common reference points. Working from the objective of constructing ways of negotiating and mediating shared spaces, interculturalism implies, and this stems from the “inter”, interaction, exchange, reciprocity and the elimination of barriers. It also implies, and here the reference is to

the “cultural”, recognition of identities, of life styles and of symbolic representations. Public leaders, according to this model, neither attempt to oblige minorities to live in the same way as others, nor to live on the margins of society. Taking account of ethno-cultural diversity and identities should not be to the detriment of shared references. The immigrant and the host society should both adapt to each other.

Montreal’s model is closer to that of interculturalism whereas Ottawa’s is closer to multiculturalism. In both cases the model is not pure and there are traces of different approaches that coexist within each city. But despite the fact that it is possible to find references to almost all the models in both cities, there are clear differences between the dominant approach in Montreal and in Ottawa. During the Montreal Summit, the description of the city’s policy emphasized intercultural relations and links between the ethno-cultural communities and the city as a whole

The interculturalist model is also present in the publicity campaign “Nous sommes tous Montréalais”. The visual representation shows a variety of people representing different ethno-cultural communities, with the idea that all of those groups share a common Montreal identity. The links between them are what forms their commonality. Montreal is the strong common reference point ; it provides the link between the different groups.

At the same time, the Montreal discourse also contains universalist references. The documents prepared for the Montreal Summit dealing with diversity refer to citizenship and universal rights. All sectors of the population must be able to exercise fully their citizenship. The policies for managing diversity are only one part of a broader policy aimed at creating a universal citizenship. There is no longer a conception of the individual as being a member of a specific culture ; the reference is to citizens having the same rights and duties as other citizens.

Multiculturalism references are also present, although less strongly. The session on diversity at the Montreal Summit recommended the creation of activities “for social groups having specific needs” (City of Montreal, 2002, p. 20). Indeed, the decentralizing tendencies towards the arrondissements mean that policies tend to become varied ; the city can be simultaneously putting toward intercultural, universalist and multicultural policies. For example, certain arrondissements have developed policies for separate homes for hours for swimming for Muslim women, a policy clearly influenced by multiculturalism.

In both cases it is the provincial level of government that is the dominant influence, not surprisingly given the provincial jurisdiction over municipal institutions. The Government of Quebec has had a strong influence on Montreal on the level of discourse. Traditionally, Quebec has articulated a very clear intercultural discourse. However this intercultural discourse is in the process of evolution. Already in 1991 with the establishment of the moral contract and the importance given to the common public culture, a movement towards a universalist approach is apparent and this is intensified in 1996 when the Quebec government stops using the term “cultural communities” introduced in the 1970's. The Ministry of Cultural Communities and Immigration becomes the Ministry for Relations with Citizens and Immigration and the Intercultural Week become the Quebec Citizenship week. The multiethnic orientation of associations is encouraged, rather than the promotion of single ethno-cultural groups. According to the Ministry for Relations with Citizens and Immigration, government policy is to promote the understanding of the rights and responsibilities of all citizens without discrimination (Ministry of Relations with Citizen and Immigration, 2001, p. 20). The discourse is of civic participation and good civic relations, rather than intercultural relations. As was discussed earlier, this evolution from interculturalism to universalism has influenced the Montreal discourse.

The influence of the federal government, and its policies of multiculturalism, is extremely limited in Montreal. Heritage Canada and the Canadian Human Rights Commission are occasionally mentioned as playing a role in local activities but, generally speaking, the federal government is relatively discrete in the area of the management of diversity in Montreal.

Ottawa's discursive universe plays on two registers, one universalist and one more multicultural. The Draft Official Plan, as we indicated earlier, included a commitment to diversity but this coexists with a description that insists on the equality, and identity, of all the citizens. At the same time, the Draft Human Services Plan is influenced more by a multicultural approach : “The City and its people have identified an opportunity to build on the City's diversity by welcoming difference in the City's citizens, communities and neighbourhoods and by making changes to allow difference to flourish” (City of Ottawa, 2002b, p. 10). The document of the Equity and Diversity Committee also reflect a multicultural approach, arguing for financial and other support to specific ethno-cultural groups, and for the creation of a Multicultural Day. The Ottawa Police refer to a “cultural mosaic”, clearly a multicultural approach with the idea of

communities coexisting side by side. Ottawa's *Draft Official Plan* builds on the idea of a city of distinct liveable communities each with its own identity and pride of place.

There are also intercultural references in the Ottawa discourse. The Draft Human Services Plan refers to the importance of links between the various ethno-cultural communities. 'The City must provide active support for diversity through strategies which: built inclusion, create shared points of contact, and build a shared commitment to the City as a place in common - in other words, a home' (City of Ottawa, 2002b, p. 11). And the Equity and Diversity Committee also talks of encouraging formal and informal contacts between community groups in order to promote a better understanding of different cultures. But despite these references, the dominant approaches in Ottawa are those of multiculturalism and of universalism. In the case of the universalist references, Ottawa and Montreal are somewhat different ; in the case of Ottawa the references appear to be without any recognition of ethno cultural diversity whereas in the case of Montreal, the references are how to recognize diversity while creating public space defined by a common citizenship. The recognition of diversity takes a variety of forms in the two cities but the dominant approach is interculturalism in Montreal and multiculturalism in Ottawa.

The Ontario legislation of the 1990's on employment equity was a major influence on the activities of the former city of Ottawa. Given that the present Ontario government abolished the legislation on employment equity and has given little or no priority to the recognition of diversity, it is not surprising that there is little influence from the provincial level at the current time. However, this does not mean that provincial policy has no influence on the approach adopted at the municipal level ; the previous New Democratic government in Ontario did use a multicultural approach and certainly this did correspond to the municipal approach. There may also be some influence from the federal government in terms of its multicultural approach. However, it is difficult to distinguish between provincial and federal influences, given that both use an approach dominated by multiculturalism. The most obvious examples of influence are those of the previous provincial government.

### **Formalized intergovernmental relations ?**

In the case of Montreal, there are a number of joint activities that relate to ethno-cultural diversity. There are agreements between the Government of Quebec, specifically with the

Ministry of Relations with Citizens and Immigration and the City of Montreal for activities relating to the integration of new immigrants, agreements that will soon be extended to the arrondissements. There is also an intergovernmental agreement for support to interculturalism in the area of cultural activities. In addition, Montreal participates in the coordinating activities organized by the Quebec government, notably those bringing together agencies working with refugees and immigrants and those dealing with visible minority youth. The new city contract signed in January 2003 between the Quebec government and the city of Montreal recognizes that Montreal plays and must play an important role in various areas such as the management of ethnic diversity, housing, transit, community development, tourism, etc. It recognizes that the city is not only a service deliverer but an important political agent and it gives political and financial autonomy accordingly.

In Ottawa, there are no formal agreements between the City and the government of Ontario. Through the Newcomer Settlement Program, the ministry of Citizenship supports community-based delivery of settlement services. Funding is provided to community agencies working directly with newcomers and providing project support to the settlement sector. The main impact of the provincial government on the City of Ottawa is perhaps the equal opportunity program which promotes the elimination of barriers in the private as well as the public sector. It provides organizations (in the case here, the municipality) with access to information, resources and role models that may help with the implementation of own equal opportunity initiatives.

The federal government is far less visible in both cities. Formal agreements are with the provinces, not cities. They have, however, an important indirect impact on them. The Canada-Quebec Accord is the most comprehensive of the agreements signed between the federal government and the provinces. It gives Quebec selection powers and control of the settlement services. Canada keeps responsibility for the definition of immigrant categories, the levels of immigration and the refugee as well as family categories. There are also agreements with British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Newfoundland, Prince Edward Island and Yukon. The agreements with BC and Manitoba gives them responsibility and funds for settlement services and the power to attract business immigrants. Other agreements generally imply the selection by the provinces of immigrants to meet specific labour-market needs. There are no agreements with Ontario.

The department of Citizenship and Immigration has some settlement and language programs but there are no formal agreements between them and the city. The same applies for the multiculturalism programs from the department of Canadian Heritage (Secretary of State for Multiculturalism). The targets of all these programs are community-based groups or private organizations, not cities. There are some partnerships between Montreal, Ottawa and the department of Human Resources Development to operate "Partners for Jobs", an employment program helping immigrants find work. The Prime Minister's Caucus Task Force on Urban Issues recently called for a more active involvement of the federal government in the management of ethnic diversity at the local level. It reported that current programs are sometimes too short term to be effective and that municipalities must often fill in the gaps with their support programs (Prime Minister's Caucus Task Force on Urban Issues, 2002, p. 23). The Task Force is also calling for the enactment of formal tri-level relations in the field of immigration and settlement. More specifically, it recommends the following (p. 24) :

- Develop a cohesive approach that involves the coordination between orders of government and non-governmental organizations that offer settlement services, language training and cultural resources ;
- Review with provincial and municipal governments the formula for funding settlement, integration programs and services in urban centres ;
- Consult and work with urban regions on immigration policies and programs ;
- Increase the resources to non-government organizations and community groups ;
- Convene a bi-annual Conference on Immigration with all orders of government ;
- Continue negotiations with provincial governments that have not yet signed the bilateral agreement on immigration policies.

It is also important to note that the federal government created, in 1996, the Canadian Metropolis project and linked it to the international Metropolis project, a forum for research on public policy relating to migration, cultural diversity and the integration of immigrants in cities. There are four Metropolis-funded research centers in Canada (in Montreal, Toronto, Vancouver and the Prairies) and the Metropolis website gives references to much of the research that has been generated from these four centers.

The Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) is currently calling for an intergovernmental approach, including the federal government, to the management of ethno-cultural diversity. In June 2002 the FCM encouraged its members, the provincial and territorial associations, as well as the provincial and territorial governments to work with the federal government in order to support municipal committees on interracial relations, employment equity, training programmes for intercultural sensitivity as well as other initiatives in interracial relations (FCM, 2002, p. 4). This would indeed be a change from current practice, involving a much stronger role for the federal government and therefore a shift in existing intergovernmental relations.

So the federal government is involved in the determination of the levels of immigration, on a few settlement programs, on the development of a model to integrate immigrants (multiculturalism) and on research. The provincial government is more involved in settlement and the models to manage diversity (interculturalism or universalism). Cities are also involved in settlement, in the development of specific models and in the implementation of various administrative and political mechanisms to deal with diversity. In retrospect, we can say that it is presently the provincial governments, when they have clear policies on diversity, that influence the municipal approaches. Whether this present situation could evolve is the subject of our concluding section.

### **The management of diversity and the place of local governance in the Canadian intergovernmental system**

Several lessons can be drawn from our comparison of the ways in which Montreal and Ottawa think about, and act on, the management of ethno-cultural diversity. The first, and somewhat obvious lesson, is that concern for this issue is very much related to the extent of diversity in the population. Ottawa is only just beginning to take this issue seriously and this clearly corresponds to the recent rapidly increasing diversity of the population.

If municipal interest in Montreal and Ottawa relates to demographic reality, this should lead to increasing municipal action and, indeed, to increasingly autonomous municipal action as the large cities in Canada are considerably more diverse than the provincial populations.

However, this is not necessarily the conclusion that emerges from our comparison and, indeed, Montreal would seem to continue to be heavily influenced by the Quebec government policies and discourse as was Ottawa when the Ontario government was interventionist in the area of diversity.

It may well be that the recent municipal amalgamations will change the political dynamics with its limited municipal autonomy, that are now at work. There are hints of this in the Montreal experience where the decentralizing to the arrondissements may lead to more varied policies in regards to ethno-cultural diversity and therefore to policies less influenced by the orientation of the Quebec government. However, the impact of amalgamation on the management of ethno-cultural diversity is ambiguous ; on the one hand it creates a larger municipal administration that must deal with the full range of diversity present across its territory but, on the other, the politics of the amalgamated areas may be more dominated by suburban interests, less likely to be committed to the active recognition of diversity.

Both our cases are difficult to interpret from this point of view, although for different reasons. The Montreal amalgamation is difficult to analyse as both decentralizing to arrondissements and centralizing to the new city and to the urban region are simultaneously taking place. This is not true in Ottawa where the amalgamation is more clearly centralizing to the level of the new city. However, given that the issue of ethno-cultural diversity is only just beginning to be dealt with seriously by the Ottawa municipal government it is almost impossible to evaluate the impact of amalgamation on the way in which the issue is being dealt with.

This leads to another conclusion : the municipal activity in this area relates to the general level of municipal capacity and organization. It is therefore necessary to look more broadly at the evolution of the place of municipal government in the Canadian intergovernmental system if we are to understand the likely evolution of the capacity of municipalities, even those as large as Montreal and Ottawa, to create effective systems of governance of ethno-cultural diversity. The Montreal Summit called for the City of Montreal to be a catalyst and animator of networks, and so do the Ottawa draft plans. Montreal is one of the five Canadian cities along with Vancouver, Calgary, Winnipeg and Toronto that have been meeting as the C5 groups of Mayors to lobby for a stronger role for municipal government. They have argued for more federal support for urban issues, and these arguments have had some weight. They have not been alone in making these

arguments ; the TD Bank, the FCM, the Liberal caucus through the Task Force chaired by Judy Sgro as well as a variety of university-based researchers have also called for greater federal activity in urban issues. The City of Toronto has played a particularly active role, adopting a document “Towards a New Relationship with Ontario and Canada”, developing a Charter for Toronto and a Model Framework for a city charter, establishing a web site as part of a national campaign (with Vancouver, Winnipeg, Saskatoon, Ottawa and Halifax) entitled “Canada’s Cities: Unleash Our Potential” and working with the Association of Municipalities, both directly and through the FCM Big City Mayor’s Caucus.

But playing this kind of governance role requires a stronger place in the Canadian intergovernmental context than that which currently exists for municipalities (Cameron, 2003). In fact, there is a contradiction between the discursive environment putting the emphasis on the political role of municipalities and the unchanged intergovernmental context in the actual Canadian political system. Even if there are some improvements<sup>3</sup>, the provincial and federal governments have not yet symbolically and practically recognized the political and fiscal importance of cities. Both Montreal and Ottawa are asking, with the FCM and the Canadian Association of Municipal Managers, for a formal and official recognition of the political role they play and a renewal of the fiscal and political relations between the three levels of government. They ask that Canada fully implement the Déclaration mondiale sur l’autonomie locale adopted in 1993 by the Union internationale des villes et pouvoirs locaux. They ask that the local level be recognized as a legitimate order of government, that it be autonomous with broadly defined powers and larger fiscal resources, that it be consulted if policies from other levels affect them and that decisions taken at the local level be not unilaterally modified by other levels. These changes are important if we want that cities be not only service providers but be a truly political space and the extension of the local community (Tindal, 2000, p. 249).

There is a discursive will expressed by cities to take a more active role but, concretely, things are changing more slowly. So there is a paradox : amalgamations and the downloading of various services give the impression that the local level is now extremely important and that

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<sup>3</sup> A Protocol of Recognition was signed by the Union of British Columbia Municipalities and the British Columbia Minister of Municipal Affairs in 1996 (partnership, information sharing, consultation on future legislative changes, joint council for reviewing legislation, policies and programs). The Alberta Municipal Government Act of 1994 defines broad spheres for municipalities and gives them natural persons power.

citizens will at last be able to organize themselves and fully participate in the elaboration of public policies but the financial resources are very limited (Fenn, 2002 ; Kitchen, 2002).

A reorganization of the intergovernmental relations would accelerate the coming into effect of these changes. It is as if cities were waiting for such a reorganization before assuming completely their new political role. The images that citizens, elected representatives and municipal employees have recently developed regarding the role of the local level must be translated into political recognition as well as fiscal autonomy from the other levels of government.

It is not yet clear whether there will be any change, much less a major change, in intergovernmental relations and in the financial support to municipal governments. There are, however, some encouraging signs. The last city contract signed between the Quebec government and the City of Montreal is very promising (political recognition of the City, decentralization of some services, complete autonomy in some fields, formal dialogue between the two levels of government, revision to come of the fiscal system, possibility to enter into agreements with the federal government). But even if we can say that urban affairs in Canada are on the political agenda, the agenda of the local, provincial and federal governments, there is still a lack of real political will in the sense of an intergovernmental will, which we think is linked to three features of the current Canadian federalism, a federalism that we can say is a very conflictual one : the executive federalism, the fiscal federalism and the symmetrical federalism.

First, we have in Canada, contrary to the United States, what I call a “blurred” and mixed federalism, not a clearly defined one. If the 1867 Canadian constitution establishes a separate list of powers for the federal government and the provinces, very broad spending powers were given to Ottawa (a political scientist said that the 1867 Constitution was a quasi-federal one meaning that there was some elements of a unitary system) and the Canadian government used it abundantly during the last century and today to implicate itself in provincial spheres of jurisdiction like welfare, social programs, education, culture, health and now urban issues. The problem is that at the moment, excepted for the recent negotiation between the federal and the provincial governments regarding the health system and its financing, we have an adversarial way of doing what is known as executive federalism, that is the concrete negotiations between political representatives as well as bureaucrats from the various levels of government. There is

not much cooperation right now, at least if we compare to the 1980's. Also, there is a strong tendency since 1982 and the new Canadian Constitution towards centralization of the political system into the hands of the federal government. So the provinces are not likely to accept without negotiations the involvement of the federal government into municipal affairs. Ottawa also has a tendency to consider the other political levels as sub-national ones rather than equal partners. This is very problematic if we want a trilateral political recognition of the local level.

This is also linked to a second element, the fiscal federalism, which is a fiscal imbalance between the revenues of the federal government and the limited ones of the provinces which face growing needs in public health, education and urban issues like transit, housing, the environment, infrastructures, etc. So the provinces ask that they levy more income taxes while the federal government would reduce its revenues, instead of always being in the position to ask Ottawa to spend in these areas. Since 1995, total revenues to the federal government increased 21 %, to the provinces 13 % and to municipalities only 6 %. This is why a redefinition of the fiscal autonomy of the cities is closely linked to a redefinition of the fiscal relationship between the federal and provincial governments.

Finally, Canadian federalism evolved as a symmetrical rather than an asymmetrical one. Asymmetry means that various parts of a federation possess different and varying powers since they have different interests and that the federal policies may be different from one place to the other. Quebec and also, from time to time, some Western provinces, have asked for this kind of flexible federalism. But Ottawa has a very different vision and sees Canada as a symmetrical federation, each province having the same powers and mainly that federal policies and programs are similar from coast to coast with national objectives and means. This is very problematic regarding urban issues since the needs and priorities of Montreal may be very different from those in Vancouver. So a stronger involvement of the Canadian government in urban issues would necessitate a redefinition of its way of conceiving the federation. This is not evident but there is some hope as the agreement regarding the health system demonstrated with the federal government giving money to the provinces and setting national goals while the provinces will concretely decide in which areas they will spend the money, in accordance with their specific needs and interests.

So the challenge will be to keep a flexible approach that recognizes that cities do not have the same needs and interests and therefore do not need the same powers and the same level of political as well as fiscal autonomy. The greater empowerment of municipalities must be flexible. There must be a set of custom-built powers, responsibilities and capacities that match the city's particular needs and aspirations. There needs to be a policy in this field sensible to local variations : "The services which must logically belong under municipal jurisdiction are those which can vary in their provision and their standards from place to place." (Tindal and Tindal, 2000, p. 224). In the field of immigration and settlement, there needs to be some national standards (especially regarding discrimination) but, since immigration issues are closely linked to identity questions, there are various ways to integrate immigrants and the task of building some models and defining the mechanisms to do so must be left to the different local communities.

## **Conclusion**

Our conclusions on the likelihood of truly active local systems of governance of ethno-cultural diversity, with municipal governments playing central roles as catalysts and animators of networks must therefore be tentative, at least for the short term. Meanwhile Montreal will probably continue to evolve along the lines of the Quebec model of universalism but very likely with increasing variations on this policy if the arrondissements evolve towards an increasingly active role in the management of diversity. Ottawa will struggle with the recognition of diversity and, with this, between approaches based on multiculturalism and those giving more emphasis to links between ethno-cultural groups or to the articulation of common reference points for the entire community. And this remains the final lesson of our comparison : municipalities are taking a role in the management of ethno-cultural diversity and their actions relate to models that differ in their objectives and in their approaches. Municipal officials have to manage access to services, equipments and facilities in order to ensure that they are inclusive of different ethno-cultural minorities.

Our study of the field of ethnic diversity management illustrates that cities are not only services providers (which is their traditional role and defined the nature of intergovernmental

relations up to the present) but a real political agent considered as the extension of the local community. Most importantly, this field is a revealing of the changes currently affecting the distribution of federal-provincial-municipal responsibilities and intergovernmental relations in Canada.

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