Antoine Bilodeau

Antoine Bilodeau is a full professor in the Department of Political Science at Concordia University. He is the director of the Immigration Research Initiative (IRI) and a member of the Centre for the Study of Democratic Citizenship (CSDC), the Équipe de recherche sur l'immigration au Québec et ailleurs (ERIQA) and the Groupe de recherche sur les sociétés plurinationales (GRSP. His research interests focus on the political integration of immigrants and on the dynamics of openness to immigration and ethnocultural diversity in Quebec and elsewhere in the world. His research has been published in the Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies, the International Migration Review, Ethnic and Racial Studies, Nations and Nationalism, the International Political Science Review, Publius, Democratization, the Canadian Journal of Political Science, Politics and Religion and Territory, Politics and Governance. In recent years, A. Bilodeau has received a Concordia University Research Award (2016/2017) and the John McMenemy Prize twice (in 2020 and 2011) for the best paper published in the Canadian Journal of Political Science.

"Overcoming Origin-Based Preferences by Selecting Skilled Immigrants? Preferences in Immigrants' National Origin and Social Classes in Quebec" Antoine Bilodeau (Concordia) and Audrey Gagnon (Oslo)

Although multiple liberal democracies have abandoned preferences for national origins in their immigrant selection policies, there is evidence that the public continues to express preferences for immigrants of certain origins over others. What remains unknown is whether a carefully selected set of immigrants based on skills and economic considerations can help overcome preferences of immigrants of certain origins over others. Can governments count on the promotion of successful economic integration to ensure acceptance of the greater ethnocultural diversity of immigrants that now settles in host-countries through the middle-class nation-building enterprise? Relying on an original survey experiment of 2,400 respondents in Quebec, this study assesses whether immigrant selection based on skills, and beliefs of a strong economic integration of immigrants, result in stronger acceptance of immigrants from less preferred national origins. We compare reactions to immigrants of different professional status and national origins to investigate if certain types of economic immigration can reduce origin-based preferences. Results show that origin-based preferences can be attenuated when immigrants are of the upper-social class, but not when they are of the middle-class. That said, anticipations that immigrants will contribute to Quebec economy translate into greater acceptance of immigrants of different national origins and social classes.

Thursday, March 9, 2023
4:00 pm, Social Science Centre, Room 5220
All Welcome!