

Residents of Taschereau are less satisfied with their leaders than people in other NRE communities

During the summer of 2001, the survey on the New Rural Economy studied the style of leadership in twenty Canadian communities. Questioned on this subject, 50% of the respondents from Taschereau stated that their community is administered by a small group of individuals, while 26% of them believed that leadership is exerted by several people and 13% by several groups. These data stand out from those collected in the other NRE sites because, elsewhere in the province as in the rest of the country, less respondents associated the leadership of their community to a small group of individuals (Quebec, 32% and Canada, 40%), and they were more numerous to report that their community is managed by several people (Quebec, 41% and Canada, 35%).

The number of people managing a community does not constitute the key element in the question of leadership. Indeed, one cannot describe good or bad leadership based only on the number of individuals or groups involved in the decision-making process. A truer measure of leadership is the level of appreciation citizens have for the work of their leaders. With this in mind, Taschereau respondents evaluated, on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 is "very ineffective" and 5 is "very effective", the work of various groups and individuals mandated to lead the community. Community and voluntary organizations obtained the highest level of satisfaction with an average of 3.86, followed closely by business leaders (3.70). Then came the mayor (3.39), the town council

(3.10), provincial politicians and administrators (3.03), and finally, federal politicians and administrators (2.90). In terms of all the evaluated leaders, the appreciation of Taschereau residents always remained lower than that of the other Québec and Canadian respondents.

Finally, the opinion of citizens in response to certain statements made it possible to better understand how leadership operates in Taschereau. On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 "agrees strongly" and 5 is "strongly in disagreement", Taschereau residents rated 3.29 on average on the question of women having the opportunity of occupying leadership positions in the community. Their average was 3.38 in regard to the access of young adults (less than 35 years) to the same type of positions.

The opinion of the other Québec and Canadian respondents is appreciably the same concerning younger leaders, but it seems that women have more opportunities of occupying positions of leadership in the other consulted NRE sites (Quebec, 3.67 and Canada, 3.74).

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