Settlement Services in Western Canada: Results from 29 Rural and Small Centres

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Newcomers Living outside Big Cities

More immigrants are choosing to migrate to rural areas in Canada yet we know very little about the extent to which settlement services are available to them.

Percentage of Permanent Residents in BC, AB, SK, MB living outside the big cities, 2004-2013

Source: CIC Facts and Figures 2013
## Permanent Residents Living outside Big Cities

### Table 1. Permanent Residents living outside the big cities in British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba, 2004-2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Permanent Residents living outside the big cities</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Manitoba (less Winnipeg)</td>
<td>1,517</td>
<td>1,905</td>
<td>2,327</td>
<td>2,468</td>
<td>3,065</td>
<td>3,547</td>
<td>3,462</td>
<td>2,560</td>
<td>2,236</td>
<td>1,986</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saskatchewan (less Regina &amp; Saskatoon)</td>
<td>485</td>
<td>646</td>
<td>739</td>
<td>988</td>
<td>1,368</td>
<td>2,268</td>
<td>1,872</td>
<td>1,957</td>
<td>2,790</td>
<td>3,286</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alberta (less Calgary &amp; Edmonton)</td>
<td>1,970</td>
<td>2,203</td>
<td>2,449</td>
<td>3,071</td>
<td>3,642</td>
<td>4,799</td>
<td>5,533</td>
<td>5,441</td>
<td>7,293</td>
<td>6,176</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British Columbia (less Vancouver &amp; Victoria)</td>
<td>3,262</td>
<td>4,067</td>
<td>4,518</td>
<td>4,735</td>
<td>5,035</td>
<td>5,331</td>
<td>5,332</td>
<td>4,541</td>
<td>5,371</td>
<td>5,511</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>7,234</td>
<td>8,821</td>
<td>10,033</td>
<td>11,262</td>
<td>13,110</td>
<td>15,945</td>
<td>16,199</td>
<td>14,499</td>
<td>17,690</td>
<td>16,959</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cumulative total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>131,752</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: CIC Facts and Figures, 2013
Research Objectives

- Inventory settlement services across Western Canada and to identify gaps, barriers and needs.
  - Determine existing partnerships and applicability of the Local Immigration Partnership (LIP).
- Newcomers 1) Permanent Residents, 2) Refugees, 3) Refugee Claimants, 4) Temporary Foreign Workers, 5) Naturalized Citizens, 6) International Students in Canada from 1 day to 5 years.
  - Newcomers ineligible for services - no access to CIC funded settlement services
Research Governance Structure

Project Advisory Panel
Chair: Dr. Lori Wilkinson, University of Manitoba, IRW
PI (RDI)
4 Co-PIs
Service Provider Umbrella Organizations representatives
CIC members
Provincial Gov. members

Dr. Miu Chung Yan
University of British Columbia

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Prov.Gov.
Municipal / regional IRW

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University of Alberta

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University of Saskatchewan

Saskatchewan Project Advisory Panel
Representatives from:
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SAISIA
Prov.Gov.
Municipal / regional IRW

Dr. Bill Ashton
RDI, Brandon University

Manitoba Project Advisory Panel
Representatives from:
CIC
MIRSSA
Prov.Gov.
Municipal / regional IRW
Sampling Criteria

29 communities
Total Pop. 1,191,228
Total PRs: 37,330 (2009-2013)

Criteria for selection:
- Receive newcomers
- No LIP
- 1+ CIC funded SPO
- No metro centre
- Full spectrum of rural, remote, small cities
- New & established SPOs

“Local Community” or “Regional Community”
Broader regional community approach in SK.
Sample: Rural and Small Centres

**Max diversity** of communities

- **Pop.** 1,761 in Arborg – Ashern, MB to 104,109 in Langley, BC.
- **Permanent Residents** (2009-2013) 88 Virden, MB to 4,320 in Brandon, MB.
Sample: Key informants

**147 SPO senior managers interviewed**

- Available settlement and integration services
- Gaps in services
- Barriers to access services
- Newcomer needs for services
- Ease of newcomer settlement and finding employment
- Organizational partnerships
- Organizational capacity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>Number of surveys completed</th>
<th>Number of people providing feedback</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BC</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AB</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SK</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MB</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>147</strong></td>
<td><strong>80</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Limitations of the Design**

- **Not all communities** selected. Communities purposely selected to maximize diversity using criteria;
- **No newcomers included.** Focus on SPOs
- **Reduced complexity of survey.** Challenges with long survey in BC, shifted to shorter version. More data on BC but same topics. Longer BC case studies.
Reasons of Increasing Newcomers

1. Settlement: a challenge across much of Western Canada
2. Small rural communities: Benefits versus lack key services
3. Employment: Harder in the regions that are farther west
4. Challenges to employment: Language, Foreign credential, transportation, childcare

Figure 8. Reasons related to the increase of newcomers living in the communities as mentioned by participants.
Reasons for Not Accessing Services

Services and Gaps

1. Newcomer needs: similar across western region and for either eligible or ineligible
2. Expanding services: increase offering; eligibility; locations
3. Range of language services can be quite limited
4. Integration services are needed
5. Secure funding critical for SPOs in rural areas
6. Remote communities face additional challenges
7. Language a barrier to accessing services
**SPOs Capacity**

- The majority of respondents from all four provinces felt they had *adequate capacity to communicate* with stakeholders and meet reporting requirements, all but BC, felt that they had *insufficient staff or staff skills to deliver services*. All provinces reported a *lack of adequate capacity* to deliver settlement services in both official *languages* and the need for *more financial support* (i.e., governmental and non-governmental), especially *core funding*.

- Working within rural communities can be a challenging and it is clear that a *one size fits all policy for settlement service delivery is not effective*. To improve this situation SPOs desire a closer relationship with CIC, more professional development opportunities accessible by rural communities, and a means for knowledge dissemination among communities to share best practices and success stories.
Community Partnership

1. Healthy partnership
2. Desire to improve coordination with local businesses and employers
3. Provincial differences towards LIP which may eliminate competition and improve coordination, but BC respondents favour an organic approach
Conclusion: Strategic Directions

1. Expand services – available and accessible

- More locations within geographic regions
- Existing services
- Integration services
- CIC’s eligibility criteria
Strategic Directions

2. Enhancing SPO capacity and funding

- More flexible policies which consider rural issues
- Sharing beneficial practices Improving communication with CIC
- Core funding is needed for SPOs
Strategic Directions

3. Increase SPO capacity of Partnership

- LIPs build upon existing partnerships
- LIPs vary with local SPO capacity
- LIPs different based on provincial practices
- LIPs engage employers in region
Acknowledgement

Information including some graphics materials are from the presentation done by Bill Ashton, Director of Rural Development Institute, Brandon University, at Metropolis Conference 2015 and the Project’s Final Report: downloaded from https://www.brandonu.ca/rdi/publications/immigration-services-and-gaps/ and http://umanitoba.ca/reports_RIW.html.

Also, I would like to thank


Provincial Panel members:


AB: Anna Kirova (chair), John Biles, Alice Wong, Jennifer Fowler, Shahriyar Khan, Christina Nsaliwa, Mohhamed Y. Idriss, Sarah Amies, Abdie Kazemipur, Lori Wilkinson.

SK: Joe Garcea (chair), Beulah Ghana, Sean McKenzie, Tim Helfrich, Carol Oliver, Lori Wilkinson.


All Research Participants