



# *Welcoming Communities Action Research on the Local Immigration Partnerships: Setting the Scene*

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# *A Changing Policy Context*

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**Immigration policy: “A period of challenge and change”**

- ***Evidence of low incomes/poverty for immigrants and risks of social exclusion***
- ***Recognition of more complex, specialized newcomer needs amidst economic recession and restructuring***
- ***Recognition of need to connect short term immigrant settlement with longer term societal integration and civic engagement***
- ***Growing interest in attracting and retaining newcomers in smaller cities, towns and rural communities***
- ***Concern about effectiveness of existing settlement and integration programming in new conditions***

**These trends/pressures call for new structures, relationships, and delivery vehicles (and several high level policy reviews now underway in the sector)**



# *LIPs: A Promising Social Innovation*

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**Social Innovation: bringing new ideas and partnerships to solve complex social problems**

**2010 Parliamentary Committee: *"The Committee believes the LIPs have great potential. They could bring together diverse parties who might otherwise not collaborate on immigrant settlement initiatives"***

## **The LIPs as a Social Innovation?**

- 1. Bottom-up, community driven ("grounded in real life immigrant circumstances")**
- 2. One size does not fit all ("tailored to diversity of places from metropolitan centers to rural communities")**
- 3. Holistic intervention ("cohesive supports along the settlement-integration continuum")**
- 4. Bridging and Linking: ("joining newcomers and mainstream institutions, leveraging economic, social, cultural interactions")**
- 5. Resilient and Responsive: ("adapt to local priorities, meet the pressure points and crises")**



# *Making Connections: Community Practitioners, Policy Makers, Academic Researchers*

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**Transformational Change: not always easy and evolves collaboratively**

**All parties must:**

- *recognize each other's perspectives/assets/constraints*
- *respect different forms of valuable knowledge – tacit/experiential and formal/theoretical*
- *address possible tensions in collaboration and make these learning opportunities*

**Requires a “common strategic platform”:**

- *for trust relations and a system wide capacity for innovation*
- *for a robust “community of learning and practice” that continuously leverages its collective assets*
- *LIPs are this platform and our workshop is an opportunity to connect, share, and learn as we move forward together*