



WELCOMING
COMMUNITIES
INITIATIVE

Welcoming Communities Initiative



INITIATIVE DES
COMMUNAUTÉS
ACCUEILLANTES

The Welcoming Communities Initiative (WCI)

- a collaborative, multidisciplinary, province-wide network of university and community partners
- designed to develop, test, and assist in the implementation of strategies to promote the settlement of immigrants and minorities in cities across Ontario

Major Project Goals

- 1) Strengthen municipal capacity to attract and benefit from diversity
- 2) Strengthen the capacity of the voluntary sector to contribute to equitable and inclusive communities
- 3) Maximize the economic benefits of diversity
- 4) Contribute to policy and program development by federal and provincial ministries

- 5) Understand barriers to social cohesion, and test and support the implementation of strategies for creating and sustaining communities in which all members feel comfortable and valued
- 6) Work with the LIPs and other partners to interpret and incorporate research into policy design and action
- 7) Train highly skilled personnel: e.g., training opportunities for students, community personnel

Key Players

- Researchers at 17 Ontario Universities
- Immigrant-Serving and Ethnocultural Agencies and Associations
- Municipal and Regional Government Departments
- Universal Service Providers
- Federal Government Departments
- Provincial Government Departments
- School Boards
- Association of Municipalities
- Business and Employment Associations and Networks
- National Associations
- National Research Organizations

Research Strategies

- Comparative studies
- Multidisciplinary, multi-method
- Iterative process with continual refinement as new knowledge and questions are generated by the research process and by new interests and events
- Scholarship of engagement
- Started with CMAs outside of Toronto, and are now expanding

Current Projects

- City Profiles, and Inventories and Audits of Local Resources, Services, and Structures
- Making Ontario Home - Newcomer Settlement Services Needs and Use
- Minority Students' Postsecondary Experiences in Ontario Colleges and Universities
- Who is Running (in) our Diverse Cities? Ethnic and Visible Minorities in Ontario Municipal Elections

- WCI Action-Research on the Local Immigration Partnership Councils (LIPs)
- Organizational Best Practices for the Local Immigration Partnership Councils
- Sectoral Best Practices and Cross-Sectoral Best Practices for the Local Immigration Partnerships
- Assessment and Learning Dissemination Tool for the Local Immigration Partnerships

- Opinion Leader Interviews: Views on Cultural Diversity and Immigration
- Antiracism and Antidiscrimination Observatory
- Factors Affecting the Integration of Immigrants to Canada
- Characteristics of a Welcoming Community
- Tools to Assess Indicators of a Welcoming Community

- Newcomer Settlement Information Renewal Exercise
- Policing Newcomers: Policy, Training and Practice
- Perceptions of Discrimination in Health Services Experienced by Immigrant Minorities in Ontario
- Barriers to Health Service Utilization by Immigrant Families Raising a Disabled Child

Partnership with LIPs

- **Research arm of LIPs, contributing to evidence base**
- **Coordination of activities and resources**
- **Sharing of promising practices**
- **Research coordination and collaboration across LIPs**
- **Knowledge partnership**