Characteristics of a Welcoming Community

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Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background and Purpose

This report provides a review of the current state of knowledge concerning welcoming communities and a description of key characteristics of a welcoming community. It is based on an extensive survey of the relevant scholarly literature, government (federal, provincial/territorial, and municipal) and community reports, and descriptions of best practices and case examples from the public and private sectors. There are many gaps in this literature that need filling, and this report does not attempt to speculate on these issues. Instead, it describes the current consensus regarding characteristics and indicators of a welcoming community based on the current state of knowledge in this area, while acknowledging the many gaps in supporting evidence. Then, in the concluding section on Policy Implications, it proposes a strategy for filling these gaps by using the indicators described in this report to develop baseline snapshots of communities, and to implement and conduct research to evaluate targeted programs and policies that build on these indicators.

Why it is important to identify key characteristics of a welcoming community:

- Growing awareness by the Government of Canada that more attention needs to be paid to both communities' receptivity to and long-term integration of immigrants
- A focus on outcomes rather than solely inputs and activities is a critical feature of Citizenship and Immigration Canada's modernization initiative
- Government's increasing focus on regionalization requires defining and identifying key indicators of a welcoming community

What is a Welcoming Community?

Conceptualizations of a welcoming community:

- Spatial dimension - a physical location in Canada – a town, city, or region – in which newcomers feel valued and their needs are served
- Discourse dimension - a community having agency and engaging in actions that facilitate the integration of newcomers
- A collective effort to create a place where individuals feel valued and included
- A location that has the capacity to meet the needs and promote inclusion of newcomers, and the machinery in place to produce and support these capacities; includes both outcomes, and processes that work toward producing and maintaining these outcomes

Characteristics of a Welcoming Community

Rank-ordered list of characteristics of a welcoming community reviewed in this report:

1. Employment Opportunities

2. Fostering of Social Capital

3. Affordable and Suitable Housing

4. Positive Attitudes toward Immigrants, Cultural Diversity, and the Presence of Newcomers in the Community

5. Presence of Newcomer-Serving Agencies that Can Successfully Meet the Needs of Newcomers

6. Links between Main Actors Working toward Welcoming Communities

7. Municipal Features and Services Sensitive to the Presence and Needs of Newcomers

8. Educational Opportunities

9. Accessible and Suitable Health Care

10. Available and Accessible Public Transit

11. Presence of Diverse Religious Organizations

12. Social Engagement Opportunities

13. Political Participation Opportunities

14. Positive Relationships with the Police and the Justice System

15. Safety

16. Opportunities for Use of Public Space and Recreation Facilities

17. Favourable Media Coverage and Representation

Framework utilized to review the literature on each characteristic:

a. Outcome indicators

b. Key processes and structures that produce and sustain these outcomes

c. Examples of best practices

Provisos in relation to the use of this information:

- The importance of each characteristic to any given community will vary depending on a number of factors (e.g., community history, location, existing population characteristics)

- Important to understand what each indicator means and what accounts for its level in a particular context

- Measurement of outcomes is complex and meaningful comparisons are required

- Essential to examine multiple indicators within and across characteristics

An Evidence-Based Agenda for the Future

Identifying characteristics of a welcoming community and assessing best practices:

- A systematic, sustained program of research examining each of the characteristics identified, the presumed indicators of each characteristic, and the outcomes associated with their presence in a community, alone and in concert with other characteristics, is required

- We must first identify the end state we are aiming for and then put into place a systematic program of research to examine the extent to which each of the characteristics contributes to this desired end state, and the dynamic process by which the characteristics mutually reinforce and support each other

- Systematic research on programs that have been identified as best practices is essential, with a focus on identifying their key ingredients

- To date, a number of the initiatives identified as best practices do not have strong empirical support for the claims made on their behalf, and little attention has been paid to the specific features that contribute to their possible success

Five stage approach to working toward a welcoming community based on the identified characteristics:

1. Assessment of the current state of the community at a global and specific level

2. Creation of short-term and long-term goals

3. Implementation (adjustment) of policies and programs that are designed to target gaps and weaknesses and work toward these goals

4. Systematic research to evaluate the effectiveness of these policies and programs

5. Ongoing assessment of community outcomes, and feedback to stage 2

INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

The timing of this report on the key characteristics of a welcoming community is not incidental. It coincides with a growing awareness by the Government of Canada that more attention needs to be paid to both communities' receptivity to and long-term integration of immigrants. There is an awareness that the provision of basic settlement services is not sufficient for promoting inclusive communities, and that we must also be concerned with achieving higher level objectives, including social engagement, sense of belonging, social cohesion, and strong citizenship. To achieve these objectives requires moving beyond measuring inputs to measuring outcomes and results. In addition, a focus on outcomes rather than solely inputs and activities is a critical feature of Citizenship and Immigration Canada's modernization initiative. This initiative, to be fully implemented by 2012, aims to increase accountability by, among other things, putting into place a performance measurement framework that will assess the relations between programming activities and outcomes for immigrants and society.[130] To do so requires specific indicators of success. That is, in order for the government to move from intention to well-developed programs to support its goals, it needs to be able to target its initiatives, conduct research to evaluate their effectiveness, and guide them forward. This requires identifying the key indicators and benchmarks to be examined, targeted, and tracked. This report is a first step in that process.

The need to define and identify key indicators of a welcoming community also obtains urgency with the government's increasing focus on regionalization.[126] If immigrants are to be encouraged to settle in smaller centres in Canada outside of the traditional immigrant-receiving metropolises, these centres must establish themselves as welcoming communities that actively work to attract and retain these immigrants. To do so requires an assessment of their current situation using specific measurable indicators, an identification of targets for change based on this assessment, consideration of the optimal strategies for promoting this change, and subsequent research to evaluate the success of these strategies.

This report, commissioned by Citizenship and Immigration Canada, Integration Branch, provides a review of the current state of knowledge concerning welcoming communities. In order to prepare the description of key characteristics of a welcoming community and indicators of these characteristics, we conducted an extensive survey of the relevant scholarly literature and government (federal, provincial/territorial, and municipal) and community reports, and examined descriptions of best practices and case examples from the public and private sectors. It is important to note, however, that there are many gaps in this literature that need filling, and we have not attempted to speculate on these issues in this review. Instead, we describe the current consensus regarding characteristics and indicators of a welcoming community based on the current state of knowledge in this area, while acknowledging the many gaps in supporting evidence. Then, in the concluding section on Policy Implications, we propose a strategy for filling these gaps by using the indicators described in this report to develop baseline snapshots of communities, and to implement and conduct research to evaluate targeted programs and policies that build on these indicators. In this way, we can systematically and efficiently work toward developing truly welcoming communities.

WHAT IS A WELCOMING COMMUNITY?

The term "welcoming community" came into use during the 1990s and was originally used in the context of diversity management. It became a popular term which appealed to, and was often used by, governments, consultants, and most other parties with an interest in immigration.[13] Despite the popularity of the term and its continued usage more than 10 years on, its definition remains vague and elusive. In addition to referring to a specific location – in the context of immigration, a location seeking to attract and retain immigrants – the term welcoming communities has also become synonymous with a policy approach,[13] and has been described as a "focus of work."[11]

In an analysis that may make the term easier to understand, a welcoming community is presented as having two dimensions: a spatial dimension and a discourse dimension.[11] Defining the spatial dimension of a community has become challenging at a time when globalization, media, and the internet have made borders very fluid.[11] Nonetheless, in assessing the strength of a welcoming community, it is important to think of a community in a geographical sense as the location where newcomers may decide to settle. In that sense, when we speak of a welcoming community, we are referring to a physical location in Canada – a town, city, or region – in which newcomers feel valued and their needs are served. The second dimension of a welcoming community has been described as representing a discourse on responsibility, that is, the responsibility of the host community in the settlement process.[11] Based on this dimension, a welcoming community is defined as having agency and engaging in actions that facilitate the integration of newcomers. The notion of responsibility need not imply that a welcoming community is solely responsible for the outcomes of newcomers' relocations, but rather that being part of a welcoming community implies a partnership among all parties involved.

Despite the complexities of defining a welcoming community - as a characteristic, a policy, a focus, and a place - a common understanding is that a welcoming community is a healthy community. In the disjointed literature on welcoming communities, we found one definition that seems to capture the dynamic nature of a welcoming community: it is a place where there is "a strong desire to receive newcomers and to create an environment in which they will feel at home" (p. 65).[94] A welcoming community can therefore be conceptualized as a collective effort to create a place where individuals feel valued and included. Ultimately, a welcoming community attracts and retains newcomers by:

- Identifying and removing barriers
- Promoting a sense of belonging
- Meeting diverse individual needs
- Offering services that promote successful integration, with successful integration defined as the "ability to contribute, free of barriers, to every dimension of Canadian life – economic, social, cultural and political."[93]

Thus, we define a welcoming community as a location that has the capacity to meet the needs and promote inclusion of newcomers, and the machinery in place to produce and support these capacities. This indicates that in defining the key characteristics of a welcoming community and specific indicators for assessing these characteristics, we

must consider both outcomes, and processes that work toward producing and maintaining these outcomes.

CHARACTERISTICS OF A WELCOMING COMMUNITY

Working toward welcoming communities requires identification of the key characteristics of such communities. Based on our complete review of the literature in this area, we have identified the following 17 rank-ordered characteristics of welcoming communities:

1. **Employment Opportunities**

2. **Fostering of Social Capital**

3. **Affordable and Suitable Housing**

4. **Positive Attitudes toward Immigrants, Cultural Diversity, and the Presence of Newcomers in the Community**

5. **Presence of Newcomer-Serving Agencies that Can Successfully Meet the Needs of Newcomers**

6. **Links between Main Actors Working toward Welcoming Communities**

7. **Municipal Features and Services Sensitive to the Presence and Needs of Newcomers**

8. **Educational Opportunities**

9. **Accessible and Suitable Health Care**

10. **Available and Accessible Public Transit**

11. **Presence of Diverse Religious Organizations**

12. **Social Engagement Opportunities**

13. **Political Participation Opportunities**

14. **Positive Relationships with the Police and the Justice System**

15. **Safety**

16. **Opportunities for Use of Public Space and Recreation Facilities**

17. **Favourable Media Coverage and Representation**

In developing this rank-ordered list, we found considerable consensus on the importance of the top three characteristics of welcoming communities, some consensus

that the next seven characteristics are also important, and sporadic discussion of the final seven characteristics of welcoming communities. Thus, the ordering of these three clusters of characteristics is quite clear, making it easy to make these distinctions in broad terms, while the ranking within clusters is more speculative. In addition, although the characteristics are presented in order of relative importance, the importance of each characteristic to any given community will vary depending on a number of factors. Each community in Canada has unique characteristics, created in part by its location (e.g., urban vs. rural), history, and existing population (e.g., diverse vs. relatively homogenous). These – and other – factors will influence the approach communities take in their efforts to become more welcoming.

The list of characteristics provides the starting point for the analysis that follows. As the review of definitional issues makes clear, in order to assess the degree to which a particular community fits the criteria of a welcoming community, two categories of indicators for each characteristic must be examined: (i) key outcome indicators, and (ii) key processes in place to produce and sustain these outcomes. Based on this two-pronged analysis, our review of the literature uses a taxonomy of processes versus outcomes. For each characteristic, we also provide examples of best practices identified in the literature. It is important to note, however, that many of these examples have not been systematically evaluated, nor have the specific dimensions or qualities that may make them successful been thoroughly investigated. We will return to this issue in the concluding section on Policy Implications.

In describing the outcomes, processes, and best practices for a particular characteristic, we have presented information in subsections that briefly review the relevant literature, as well as in information tables that summarize and display the links between outcomes, processes, and best practices. For example, in Table 1, which summarizes this information for Employment Opportunities, programs that seek to create inclusive workplaces are linked to reduced perceptions of employment discrimination; the practices put in place by the City of Winnipeg have been identified as best practices.

In considering outcomes, several interesting issues arise. As will be evident, some outcomes are at the institutional or societal level (e.g., availability of media for newcomer groups), whereas others are more individual in focus (e.g., positive perceptions of the police). Some are seemingly more objective (e.g., low unemployment rates), whereas others more subjective (e.g., satisfaction with health care services). And finally, some of the outcomes are framed in terms of presence of positive outcomes (e.g., newcomer friendly municipal features), whereas others are framed as an absence of negative outcomes (e.g., absence of discrimination in access to housing). Together these indicators provide a picture of how welcoming a community may be.

Nonetheless, knowing how a community sits in terms of each indicator is not sufficient to judge whether it is a welcoming community. Before this judgement can be made, it is important to understand what the indicator actually means and what accounts for its current level in a particular context. For example, positive attitudes toward immigrants may exist in a particular community because previous waves of immigrants to that community were not racial or religious minorities, but that does not mean that positive attitudes will exist toward a new wave of racial and religious minority immigrants. Similarly, the presence of many culturally sensitive health care services may

seem to be a positive outcome, but it may indicate that newcomers in particular are in need of health care services because of life stresses.

The measurement of outcomes is similarly less straight-forward than it may initially seem. In order to assess each indicator, meaningful comparisons are required. Comparisons may be made to outcomes for non-immigrants, for immigrants in other communities in Canada, or to outcomes in previous years. While all are valid and should be used in conjunction where possible, the selection of specific comparisons will depend on the issue under consideration and the purpose of the comparison. For example, if one wants to know whether different communities in Ontario have more or fewer structures in place to support a welcoming community, a cross-community comparison would seem appropriate. In contrast, if a particular community wishes to determine whether it is making progress in working toward building a welcoming community, a time series analysis within the community would seem most useful, while potentially taking into account the regional, national, and global context (e.g., economic recession).

A crucial issue in measuring and working toward welcoming communities that we would like to highlight is that **it is essential to look at multiple indicators within and across characteristics** in order to gauge the strength of the welcome**.** Within characteristics, an assessment of multiple indicators will provide a much fuller and, we would argue, more accurate depiction of the state of that characteristic. For example, knowing that unemployment rates <u>and</u> underemployment rates within a community are low paints a much different (and rosier) picture than knowing that unemployment rates are low without any information on underemployment. In addition, for a community to be welcoming, it must be successful not just on one characteristic but on many. Indeed, little is currently known about what constitutes a critical mass or what a minimum set of favourable characteristics might be for promoting a sense of welcome and inclusion. Little is also known about how the various characteristics may interact in building upon or reducing the impact of each alone.

With these provisos and cautions in mind, we now proceed to a discussion of the essential characteristics of a welcoming community.

1. EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

There is wide agreement among stakeholders that the presence of suitable employment opportunities is one of the most important characteristics of a welcoming community. Indeed, evidence suggests that the prospect of employment opportunities is one of the key factors that determine newcomers' destination choices.[109]

Employment opportunities are important for several reasons. First, employment represents the primary source of income through which most individuals meet their basic needs for housing and food. Second, many skilled workers come to Canada with the expectation that they will be able to obtain employment commensurate with the education and work experience that helped them to immigrate under the Skilled Worker and Professional category. When these expectations are not met, incentives to remain in Canada are reduced. Third, the prospect of a shrinking domestic labour pool combined with an increasing demand for skilled workers in our knowledge-based economy enhances the need to integrate newcomers into the Canadian labour market in a timely fashion.

In what follows, we present a summary of key outcomes, processes and structures, and examples of best practices associated with employment opportunities for newcomers (for a summary, see Table 1).

Table 1: Summary of Outcomes, Key Processes and Structures, and Examples of Best
Practices Associated with Employment Opportunities

Outcomes	Key Processes and Structures	Examples of Best Practices
o Low unemployment rates o Adequate wages (income) o Low underemployment rates	• Immigrant employment councils/networks, including specific programs that: ➢ provide timely information to newcomers prior to their arrival ➢ raise awareness among employers about the advantages of hiring immigrants ➢ provide information and employment counselling to job seekers (e.g., information about job search programs) ➢ increase professional networking opportunities ➢ connect job seekers to mentors in their occupational fields ➢ support internship programs that provide immigrants with Canadian work experience ➢ provide workplace language training	✓ Waterloo Region Immigrant Employment Network (WRIEN) ✓ London-Middlesex Immigrant Employment Council (LMIEC) ✓ Skills International (based out of London, Ontario)

	• Credential recognition and bridging programs	✓ Veterinary Skills Training and Enhancement Program (University of Guelph)
		✓ International Pharmacy Graduate Program (University of Toronto)
	• Programs that valorize foreign work experience	✓ Workplace Integration of Newcomers (WIN)
	• Programs that support entrepreneurial opportunities	✓ Business Immigration Section of the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade (Ontario)
		✓ Passport to Business Success (Ontario)
o Lack of employment discrimination	• Programs that seek to create inclusive workplaces[a]	✓ City of Winnipeg
		✓ Alberta Human Rights and Citizenship Commission
		✓ For private organizations, see *Canada's Best Diversity Employers and Best Employers for New Canadians*

[a] While efforts to create inclusive workplaces can directly reduce perceptions of employment discrimination, additional processes and structures – such as immigrant employment councils that seek to raise awareness among employers about the benefits of hiring immigrants – may also affect this outcome.

Key Outcome Indicators

Low unemployment rates

Extensive research has shown that many newcomers experience multiple difficulties when seeking employment upon arriving in their new Canadian communities. In the Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Canada, nearly 50% of newcomers cited finding an adequate job as one of the greatest difficulties they have faced since arriving in Canada.[159] In large part, these difficulties are apparent in mounting immigrant unemployment rates. Currently, the employment rate for working-age immigrants is well below that of their non-immigrant counterparts. In 2007, the unemployment rate was 6.6% for immigrants and 4.6% for non-immigrants.[73] Evidence suggests that this employment gap is widening.[73]

It is important to note that the unemployment rate among immigrants varies as a function of a variety of factors, including length of time in Canada, geographical location (at both the provincial/territorial and municipal levels), as well as immigrant demographic characteristics such as educational attainment, region of origin, and sex. Notably, in 2007, the unemployment rate among immigrants who had been in Canada for less than five years was more than double that of non-immigrants (while those who had been in Canada for more than ten years had unemployment rates similar to non-immigrants).[73]

While examining unemployment rates taking into account the abovementioned factors may provide a more accurate picture of the actual state of affairs, it is important to remember that unemployment rates are influenced by a number of additional forces. For instance, immigrant unemployment rates in one particular community may be low not because the community provides adequate employment opportunities but rather because newcomers who cannot find jobs simply leave the community.

Adequate wages (income)

Discrepancies between immigrants and non-immigrants exist not only in employment rates, but also in the suitability of jobs among those who are employed. Traditionally, when comparing the employment quality of immigrants and non-immigrants, researchers placed a focus on wages (or income).[72] Extant evidence has shown that, in Canada, immigrants make less money than non-immigrants. Wage gaps are particularly pronounced among immigrants who have lived in Canada for less than 10 years (i.e., recent immigrants). In the most recent report on immigrants' experiences in the Canadian labour market, the following results emerged.[72] In 2008, the average Canadian-born employee earned $23.72 per hour while the average immigrant employee earned $21.44 (a gap of $2.28 per hour).[b] This gap was wider among immigrants who had been in Canada for five years or less ($5.04) and narrower among immigrants who had been in Canada for more than ten years ($1.32). In addition, wage gaps were more pronounced among university-educated employees. On average, immigrants with university degrees made $5 less than their Canadian-born counterparts.

Looking at differences in the wage distribution of immigrant and Canadian-born employees provides further insight into wage discrepancies. Immigrants were almost

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[b] Analyses compared employees of core working age (25 to 54 years).

twice as likely as Canadian-born workers to earn less than $10 per hour. They were also less likely to make more than $35 per hour.[72]

When assessing outcomes associated with employment opportunities, we caution against focusing solely on wages and income. In part, this stems from the fact that focusing on average wages can mask important differences in the wage distribution of immigrants and Canadian-born employees. In addition, many wage comparison statistics – including those mentioned above – do not control for factors such as industry or length of job tenure, which are known to influence earnings. Ultimately, a more telling picture of immigrants' employment situations emerges when we use a broader framework of employment quality, rather than solely focusing on income. To illustrate, in 2008, immigrants were more likely to be involuntarily employed in part-time work, and had lower shares of union coverage and employer-sponsored pension plans.[72] These outcomes are of interest because they can affect current health (e.g., dental coverage) and job security, as well as future financial security (e.g., pension plans).[72]

Low underemployment rates

Employment quality is closely linked to the concept of underemployment. Recent estimates indicate that over 50% of recent immigrants (those in Canada for 10 years or less) with a university degree are overqualified for their jobs (i.e., underemployed), and of those, 72% will remain in positions for which they are overqualified for the duration of their lives in Canada.[113] In contrast, only 28% of non-immigrants with university degrees are overqualified, and only 36% of those individuals will remain in jobs for which they are overqualified.[113]

Underemployment may take several forms. Immigrants may possess more formal education or work experience than the job requires.[66] Alternatively, they may be involuntarily engaged in part-time work or employed in an industry outside their area of formal education or prior work experience.[66] In addition, underemployment may manifest itself in a lack of income. Research suggests that, upon finding a job in Canada, immigrants experience a significant decline in earnings (compared to their pre-migration earnings).[173]

The phenomenon of being overqualified for one's job – or underemployed – is important because it is associated with negative outcomes such as job dissatisfaction[18,105] and lower levels of physical[101] and psychological well-being.[100] There is also evidence to suggest that these effects may spill over to underemployed individuals' family members.[54] Research has shown that, ultimately, underemployment has a significant detrimental effect on immigrants' career trajectories because immigrants have a more difficult time than non-immigrants moving into adequate employment once underemployed.[190]

Lack of employment discrimination

In addition to experiencing underemployment, many immigrants report that they have been discriminated against either in their search for employment or on the job.[159] Not surprisingly, experiencing discrimination is associated with negative outcomes such as detriments to individuals' sense of personal well-being.[55] As such, the perception of discrimination is an important outcome to consider when assessing employment opportunities in a given community.

In sum, outcomes such as unemployment and underemployment rates, as well as perceptions of employment discrimination, have been examined when assessing the extent to which a community offers employment opportunities for newcomers. When assessing these outcomes, it is important to make meaningful comparisons. As noted earlier, data regarding immigrant unemployment rates can be compared to non-immigrant unemployment rates, unemployment rates from previous years, and/or unemployment rates in other communities in Canada. In addition, combining data on multiple outcomes can provide a more accurate depiction of the employment situation. To illustrate, a gradual reduction in unemployment rates coupled with persistent high underemployment rates among immigrants may suggest that employment councils are succeeding in their efforts to connect newcomers to job opportunities but that these job opportunities are not commensurate with newcomers' skills and credentials.

Key Processes and Structures for Supporting these Outcomes

Immigrant employment councils/networks

There are numerous processes and structures that promote the successful integration of immigrants into the Canadian workforce, thereby influencing the aforementioned employment outcomes. Regional immigrant employment councils (or networks) are one of the best ways that communities can assist immigrants in finding suitable employment and integrating into the Canadian labour market. Typically, these networks sponsor programs that provide training and information to both employers and job seekers. Other services may increase professional networking opportunities, help newcomers to effectively search for Canadian jobs, and connect internationally trained professionals to mentors.

Credential recognition and bridging programs

Many regional immigrant employment councils link both newcomers and their prospective employers to credential assessment services.[c] This is an important service, because lack of accreditation of foreign education and training is one of the largest obstacles preventing immigrants from successfully integrating into the Canadian labour market. Communities seeking to help internationally trained professionals to obtain credential recognition or enrol in credential bridging programs can partner with existing credential assessment services. This has been made easier via steps taken by the federal government (working in partnership with provincial and territorial governments) to improve the credential recognition process in Canada: The Government of Canada's Foreign Credential Recognition Program is a $68 million project designed to improve the process of recognizing international qualifications.[87] The Program works with partners across the country to ensure that foreign credential recognition processes across Canada are fair, accessible, coherent, transparent, and rigorous.

Programs that valorize foreign work experience

In addition to the difficulties they face with foreign credential recognition, newcomers also encounter barriers in the form of non-recognition of foreign work

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[c] Such as the International Credential Assessment Service of Canada (http://www.icascanada.ca/)

experience. While increasing attention has been given to the issue of foreign credential recognition described above, considerably less attention has been devoted to understanding the devaluation of non-Canadian work experience.

To date, programs that valorize foreign work experience exist on a much smaller scale than foreign credential recognition programs. Such programs seem limited to individual companies and to efforts undertaken by a number of immigrant settlement agencies (e.g., the Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers). A recent report published by the Canadian Council on Learning suggests that most programs fall into two broad categories.[111] The first involves assisting newcomers to explain (typically during the interview process) how their foreign work experience fits into the Canadian labour market. Some programs in this category also include efforts to train recruiters and managers in cross-cultural awareness and interview techniques that are useful for understanding how applicants' past experiences relate to the jobs for which they are applying.

The second category involves techniques that bridging programs use to assess and understand the knowledge, skills, and competencies newcomers acquired via their foreign work experiences, and then using this knowledge to customize internships and work placements, as well as to match newcomers to positions for which they are qualified.[111]

Programs that support entrepreneurial opportunities

The focus on newcomer labour market integration should not be solely about connecting newcomers to jobs that already exist in the labour market. Rather, many newcomers come to Canada with investment capital and entrepreneurial skills that enable them to create new businesses.[109] Communities can play a large role in welcoming and supporting immigrant entrepreneurship either by offering services directed at entrepreneurs or by linking entrepreneurs to existing networks.

Programs that seek to create inclusive workplaces

In addition to promoting employment and entrepreneurial opportunities, the absence of employment discrimination and a commitment to fostering inclusivity are important characteristics of a welcoming community. Municipalities can start by committing to equity and diversity in their own workforces. Steps can be taken by municipalities and other institutions to increase representation of the populations they serve, and to educate employers about how to ensure that their hiring practices are equitable (e.g., through barrier-free job advertisements).

Ultimately, even when communities try to foster workplace inclusivity, some newcomers may experience discrimination. In these cases, communities can partner with service providers such as regional immigrant employment councils to offer counselling and support.

Examples of Best Practices

Immigrant employment councils/networks

Waterloo Region Immigrant Employment Network (WRIEN)

One noteworthy immigrant employment network is the Waterloo Region Immigrant Employment Network (WRIEN).[d] A partnership of stakeholders (including employers, immigrant-serving agencies, governments, educational institutions and foreign trained professionals), WRIEN aims to: 1) attract foreign trained professionals to the Waterloo region, 2) ensure that these professionals are successful in obtaining employment that fully utilizes their education, skills, and work experience, and 3) support regional employers in their efforts to attract, hire, integrate, and retain foreign trained professionals.[191] Recently, WRIEN and its partners supported the New Canadian Employment Connection Program, a community collaboration created to provide employers with a single point of contact to help with their immigrant employment needs.[191] The Program leverages all available immigrant employment and support services, and advises employers on the best way to attract, hire, integrate, and retain skilled and professional immigrants.

London-Middlesex Immigrant Employment Council (LMIEC)

Like WRIEN, the London-Middlesex Immigrant Employment Council (LMIEC) engages employers "in the delivery of strategies that facilitate the recruitment and retention of internationally trained individuals in regional employment opportunities" that match their qualifications.[118] One LMIEC program that warrants attention is Mentorship for Newcomer Success. In this program, local mentors help internationally trained professionals to learn more about sector-specific language and professional practices in Canada, while gaining a better understanding of the regional job market.

Skills International

LMIEC also works closely with Skills International, an online, searchable database that unites Canadian employers with internationally trained, pre-screened professionals who meet their recruitment needs. Skills International enables more than 79 immigrant-serving agencies across Ontario to post résumés of qualified, screened job applicants. At the same time, employers can use Skills International to search for candidates with requisite skills, experience, and education.[166]

Credential recognition and bridging programs

Veterinary Skills Training and Enhancement Program

There are many success stories that have resulted from community efforts to reduce barriers associated with credential recognition. The University of Guelph's Veterinary College teamed with the College of Veterinarians of Ontario and the Ontario Veterinary Medical Association to create the Veterinary Skills Training and

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[d] Others include Niagara Immigrant Employment Council, Toronto Region Immigrant Employment Council, London-Middlesex Immigrant Employment Council, Edmonton Region Immigrant Employment Council, Immigrant Employment Council of British Columbia.

Enhancement Program.[185] This joint venture offers education and re-training for internationally educated veterinarians who wish to qualify for employment as veterinarians in Ontario. Likewise, the Faculty of Pharmacy at the University of Toronto provides an International Pharmacy Graduate Program, a bridging program that assists internationally trained pharmacists in meeting Canadian entry-to-practice requirements.[112] In addition to its structured curriculum, the program boasts a solid mentorship network that helps students link with practicing pharmacists. Similar programs exist in various communities across the country for internationally trained optometrists,[182] engineers,[156] teachers,[181] and other professionals. Ultimately, such programs seek to enhance the labour market outcomes of individuals with international training and qualifications.

Programs that valorize foreign work experience

Workplace Integration of Newcomers (WIN)[111]
WIN works with both employers and newcomers. First it engages employers to identify the technical and language competencies a job requires. Next, experts assess newcomers' skills using hands-on methods that allow newcomers with limited language skills to fully demonstrate the skills that they acquired during their work experience abroad. Once newcomers' skills have been identified and compared with job requirements, any outstanding skill gaps are closed using customized training. Ultimately, training institutions provide newcomers with certificates listing the specific technical and language skills they have demonstrated.

Programs that support entrepreneurial opportunities

Business Immigration Section of the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade
In Ontario, the Business Immigration Section of the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade provides an array of services to business immigrants both before and after their arrival in Ontario.[96] For instance, trained consultants provide advice regarding immigration procedures and help newcomers prepare for doing business in Ontario by providing them with information and introducing them to persons who assist immigrants to establish businesses.

Passport to Business Success
Smaller communities are able to link up with existing programs such as Passport to Business Success – an initiative of the federal, provincial, and municipal governments in Ontario that is designed to ensure that business immigrants have access to local solutions and contacts.[97] Passport to Business Success holds networking sessions in which newly landed entrepreneurs can gain knowledge of Canadian business practices and network with other entrepreneurs. It also organizes community tours in which participants have the opportunity to meet with local economic development staff and small business centres.

Programs that seek to create inclusive workplaces

City of Winnipeg

Efforts to create inclusive workplaces have been undertaken by all levels of government, as well as private organizations. At the municipal level, in 2002, the City of Winnipeg (the second largest employer in the city) created an Action Plan for Creating a Diverse Workforce. Since that time, it has produced an annual Diversity Report Card that describes each municipal department's progress toward the Action Plan.[78]

Alberta Human Rights and Citizenship Commission

At the provincial level, the Alberta Human Rights and Citizenship Commission has undertaken several initiatives to reduce discrimination, foster equality and build inclusive workplaces.[74] For example, to support organizations that wish to foster inclusivity, the Commission offers employers a series of six workshop modules on key human rights topics.

Canada's Best Diversity Employers and Best Employers for New Canadians

In addition to public efforts, many private organizations are recognizing the need to provide cultural diversity training in order to create inclusive workplace environments. For a list of companies and best practices that support diversity, see Canada's Best Diversity Employers and Best Employers for New Canadians.[124] These designations recognize employers that have exceptional workplace diversity programs to assist recent immigrants in making the transition to the workplace.

2. FOSTERING OF SOCIAL CAPITAL

There is a growing recognition of the important role that social capital plays in immigrants' employment, integration, and emotional well-being. Social capital refers to the connections within and between individuals' social networks, and highlights the value of social contacts and connections. The gap between immigrants' and Canadians' economic and psychological outcomes can be partly attributed to differences in the quality and extent of their social capital.[103] The existence of networks, along with the prospects for building them, is instrumental in newcomers' decisions on where to settle in Canada.[94] Primary networks represent close relations, including family and friends, while secondary networks represent acquaintances, co-workers, neighbours, and loosely knit relations. Upon their arrival, newcomers tend to rely on primary networks such as friends and family in their ethnocultural groups. These connections help them with early settlement stages, but as time goes by, they start establishing ties with mainstream society and with locals outside their close-knit groups. The ability to develop both types of networks is important for the development of a sense of belonging.[155] Both types of networks have been ranked as instrumental for coping and for social and economic integration.[120]

Table 2: Summary of Outcomes, Key Processes and Structures, and Examples of Best Practices Associated with Fostering of Social Capital

Outcomes	Key Processes and Structures	Examples of Best Practices
o Fostering of social capital within newcomer groups	• Programs that help immigrants develop networks with other immigrants in the community	✓ Collaboration between Baha'i community and Citizenship and Immigration Canada
o Strong connections between newcomers and host society	• Programs that encourage local community members and newcomers to reach out and connect with one another	✓ Host Program ✓ Job Mentoring Program ✓ The Somali-Jewish Canadian Mentorship Project
	• Language training	✓ LINC (Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada)
	• Newcomer-serving agencies	

Key Outcome Indicators

Fostering of social capital within newcomer groups

Communities with easily accessible networks facilitate newcomer integration and act as a means of attracting and retaining newcomers.[71] While the existence of connections can encourage newcomers to settle in certain locations, it is also the case that establishing new connections within the local community improves newcomer outcomes and encourages newcomers to remain.[102] One of the reasons social capital can facilitate integration is its role as an informal route for accessing information. For example, it was found that newcomers are more likely to seek health services after speaking with a family member or friend about accessing such services.[120]

The development of strong connections within newcomer groups does not imply social isolation from the larger community or Canadian society. Instead, enclaves serve as a means of getting established. Enclaves primarily exist in large urban areas and one paper points out that the 'exclusion' often associated with the term 'enclave' is not representative of the Canadian experience.[53] In their analysis of Vancouver, Toronto, and Montréal, researchers noted that enclaves represent high concentrations of specific minorities but are not indicative of social exclusion. While a Chinese enclave in Toronto has a high proportion of Chinese-Canadians and newcomers from China, members of this group are also likely to be spread out throughout the city and are not segregated into Toronto's Chinatown. Another piece of evidence supporting the value of networks within newcomer communities is the finding that there is no association between the extent of segregation by ethnicity and levels of poverty in major Canadian cities. In fact, areas with higher segregation of specific groups were found to have average or above average income. The conclusion was that enclaves do not seem to be uniquely associated with poverty and are a means by which newcomers fight isolation.

Strong connections between newcomers and host society

Newcomers usually develop a number of ways to access social capital in their new community, including religious connections, workplace networks, volunteer networks, and gender networks. Some connections are established between newcomers, but others are developed with local groups. Such networks not only improve outcomes, but also reduce the chances of social isolation. In the absence of connections with other newcomers and members of the local community, newcomers often face feelings of rejection.[155]

Urban centres are more likely to have a greater level of diversity, and therefore an increased likelihood that newcomers can establish and access pre-existing social capital. That is one of the reasons why newcomers to Canada predominantly choose to settle in Vancouver, Toronto, or Montréal. Networks in rural areas or smaller communities are more difficult to facilitate, but of greater importance in convincing newcomers to settle in these communities.

Key Processes and Structures for Supporting these Outcomes

Programs that help immigrants develop networks with other immigrants in the community

In addition to the psychological and social benefits produced by networking, research on Filipino social ties has shown that intra/inter-community networks can help newcomers secure employment. It was also found that networks with other Filipinos and locals in the community significantly increased newcomers' ability to find suitable housing, get timely access to health services, and find jobs. It was reported that 65% found jobs through networks.[120]

A series of focus groups were set up in the Atlantic region for the purpose of interviewing newcomer women about their relocation experiences. Most of the women participating in these interviews expressed a motivation to establish networks with other women of similar cultural backgrounds, and emphasized the value of these networks as sources of support in their settlement efforts.

Programs that encourage local community members and newcomers to reach out and connect with one another

In addition to seeking out networks with women from the same cultural background, women who participated in focus groups saw parental school meetings as an important opportunity to get involved in the community. Although the primary purpose of the school meetings was to learn about their children's performance, the meetings were also seen as an important source of information on the "Canadian way of life," and a means of connecting with other parents in the community.[56]

The benefits of networking also apply to youth who relocate to educational institutions in Canada and may be isolated from their peers. In such settings, teachers can play a significant role by providing meaningful experiences that allow newcomer youth to connect with others, forming satisfying relationships with their peers.[106]

Language training

Language is essential for meaningful communication, but it often a barrier for newcomers whose first language is neither English nor French (in Francophone communities).[62] Giving newcomers the opportunity to communicate in the dominant local language is a prerequisite for facilitating the development of networks with members of the larger community.

Newcomer-serving agencies

Newcomer-service organizations provide opportunities for networking either directly through programs that facilitate connections or indirectly through their role as a point of inter-connection between newcomers and established residents. We will be discussing settlement agencies and the important role they play in the settlement process when considering the characteristic, "Presence of Newcomer-Serving Agencies."

Examples of Best Practices

Programs that foster networks within newcomer groups

Collaboration between Baha'i community and Citizenship and Immigration Canada[183]

A partnership between the Baha'i community and the Canadian government led to the development of an immigration program geared toward increasing the number of Baha'i newcomers in Canada. One element of this program included the facilitation of networks within the community whereby newcomers were received by local Baha'i members and given strong guidance on resettling. Newcomers and members of the local community describe the program as a success, and highlight its capacity to speed up integration and community involvement. Assistance included greeting newcomers at the airport or train station, having them spend the first few nights with someone in the community, and providing assistance with grocery shopping. Unlike other examples listed below, these practices illustrate the potential for organizing service delivery outside bureaucratic and mainstream newcomer-serving organizations. They also suggest that involving ethno-specific organizations and co-ethnic peers in the settlement process can provide valuable support.

Programs that encourage local community members and newcomers to reach out and connect with one another

Host Program[38]

The Host Program is a federally-funded program that connects newcomers with volunteer members of the community (families or individuals). Program goals include helping newcomers practice English or French skills, learn about the local community, and participate in the community. An evaluation of this program by Citizenship and Immigration Canada found it to be an essential part of settlement services and instrumental in the success of the relocation process. The majority of clients in this program reported satisfaction with the service and considered it to be helpful in terms of improving language skills, learning about the Canadian way of life, learning about job requirements, and learning about how to access community and public services.[40]

Job Mentoring Program[64]

The Job Mentoring Program promotes the development of professional networks and seeks to facilitate the integration of skilled workers into the Canadian labour market. Through the program, skilled newcomers are matched with members of the community who share a common professional background. In addition to fostering skills, the mentoring program helps newcomers to develop professional and business networks that enhance access to employers and business opportunities.

The Somali-Jewish Canadian Mentorship Project[29]

The Somali-Jewish Canadian Mentorship Project is a new initiative led by the Canadian International Peace Project and funded by Canadian Heritage with the participation of Jewish and Somali organizations across the country. The goal is to connect young Canadian-Somali university and college students and professionals with

established Jewish mentors in the community who will assist them in pursuing their chosen professions. One anticipated benefit of the initiative is the establishment of strong networks for Somali mentees. It is also expected that the program will help to develop an informed leadership for the Somali community and stronger connections with Canadian society, as well as promoting cross-cultural understanding and dialogue between Jewish and Muslim groups.

Language training

LINC (Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada)[38]
     Newcomers can sign up for classes on basic language instruction in English and/or French through school boards, newcomer-serving agencies, colleges, and other venues. Language instruction is part of the settlement services funded by the federal government and includes a conversational skills component that allows students to develop the ability to engage in social interactions with members of the larger community.

3. AFFORDABLE AND SUITABLE HOUSING

Finding affordable and suitable housing is a major concern for newcomers upon their arrival to Canada. In addition to being an essential need, housing is important because it affects newcomers' ability to access schools, jobs, and key services such as health care. Ultimately, securing affordable and suitable housing is vital for successful integration into Canadian society. In addition, in a recent analysis of the Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Canada, access to housing was found to be an important determinant of immigrants' satisfaction with life in Canada.[85] Evidence also suggests that housing ranks as a crucial factor when newcomers are deciding where in Canada to settle.[94] Thus, the presence of affordable and suitable housing can be used as a tool for attracting and retaining newcomers, including skilled professionals who may have employment opportunities in several communities.[82]

Table 3: Summary of Outcomes, Key Processes and Structures, and Examples of Best Practices Associated with Affordable and Suitable Housing

Outcomes	Key Processes and Structures	Examples of Best Practices
o Access to suitable housing o Affordable housing o Absence of homelessness among newcomers o Absence of discrimination in access to housing	• City planning that seeks to address newcomers' housing needs	✓ Immigrant and Refugee Housing Committee (IRHC)
	• Services that collect and disseminate housing information pertaining to newcomer needs • Information-sharing that facilitates newcomers' access to shelters	✓ Information Portals
	• Temporary shelters sensitive to the needs of newcomers	✓ Catholic Immigration Centre of Ottawa-Maison Thérèse Dallaire ✓ London Cross Cultural Learner Centre-Jeremiah's House and Joseph's House

Key Outcome Indicators

Access to suitable housing

Housing has been gaining importance as a public policy issue as vacancy rates tighten in urban centres like Toronto, Vancouver, and Montréal. Research points to a number of important factors affecting housing among newcomers. The first is the support that newcomers receive upon arrival, which includes access to information and assessment of newcomer housing needs.[82] The type of information newcomers need includes proximity to the workplace, availability of certain services nearby, and access to transportation.[94] In addition to deciding on where to settle, newcomers need support with familiarizing themselves with their rights and responsibilities as tenants, which can be an especially daunting task since Canada's laws may be completely new to them.

In addition to access to information, newcomers may have unique needs and require housing that suits these needs. For example, refugees tend to have larger families[32] and are more likely to suffer from crowding in living quarters.[107] Data also show that when comparing categories of newcomers, refugees often emerge as significantly more disadvantaged on housing outcomes in comparison to other newcomer groups (skilled immigrants and family-category immigrants).[19,107] These differences are most likely rooted in the circumstances surrounding the arrival of refugees in Canada, in which they face greater financial difficulties, have to deal with traumatizing events leading up to their relocation, and often need language assistance.

Affordable housing

The availability of affordable housing is important to newcomers because many face financial challenges. Newcomers spend an average of 30% of their income on housing while the average for Canadians is 23%.[31] In addition, many newcomers continue to face challenges with securing affordable housing up to 10 years after relocating to Canada.[192] When thinking about affordable housing, the quality of such housing should be considered. That is, it is important to strike a balance between affordability and quality in housing.

Absence of homelessness among newcomers

Closely linked to access to affordable housing is the problem of homelessness. Research has found that foreign-born individuals are vulnerable to homelessness to a greater extent than Canadian-born individuals, with refugees being particularly at risk.[192]

Absence of discrimination in access to housing

Evidence of discrimination has also been found in the housing market, whereby ethnicity plays a role in landlords' decisions for allocating housing space.[82] In one study, immigrants from Poland were more able to procure and upgrade housing in Toronto in comparison to Jamaican and Somali newcomers.[192] This discrimination is best understood within overall attitudes toward newcomers and immigration.

Key Processes and Structures for Supporting these Outcomes

City planning that seeks to address newcomers' housing needs

There has been considerable variation in the extent to which cities have been able to provide suitable and affordable housing, and in their efforts to engage in urban planning that anticipates the future needs of newcomers. Communities that have been successful in both planning and delivery have tended to be smaller, such as Steinbach, Manitoba[139] and Sherbrooke, Québec.[94] In contrast, newcomers to Toronto have seen severe challenges in securing adequate and/or affordable housing.[3] Vancouver and Montréal have also been experiencing challenges in providing affordable housing to newcomers.[82] City planning for housing of newcomers, investing in subsidized housing, expanding infrastructure, and making sure to include larger spaces for families are all steps that a city should take in its effort to welcome newcomers and address their needs. The absence of such services has detrimental consequences, and can contribute to homelessness, problems with integration, instability at home, and health problems.[32]

Services that collect and disseminate housing information pertaining to newcomer needs

The responsibility of providing newcomers with information about housing is shared by multiple parties including municipalities, the province, and newcomer-serving agencies. Information provision is recognized as a core settlement service and a determinant of access to housing.[82] As such, all parties have put a significant amount of work into providing portals for information, as is evident by the multitude of websites that offer information on housing for newcomers.

Information-sharing that facilitates newcomers' access to shelters

Despite the individual effort by multiple parties to provide information, there has been a lack of information-sharing and resources-sharing when it comes to addressing homelessness among newcomers. Circumstances leading up to homelessness differ between those who are foreign-born and those who are Canadian-born. Those born in Canada are more likely to be homeless due to illness and drug problems, and foreign-born homelessness is more likely to be rooted in financial problems and family conflict. This means that the traditional mechanisms for addressing homelessness may not work with newcomers and foreign-born individuals. As such, cooperation between multiple levels of government, newcomer-serving agencies, shelters, and drop-in centres is necessary for meeting the unique needs of those who are foreign-born and homeless, and is essential for ensuring that clients are being served in the most useful, up-to-date, and efficient way. Despite the importance of coordination efforts, they are lacking in many cities, including Ottawa and Toronto.[3]

Temporary shelters sensitive to the needs of newcomers

A study in Toronto found that shelters are ill-equipped for working with refugees and newcomers. Discrimination and unfamiliarity with the unique backgrounds of refugees and newcomers leading up to homelessness adversely affect newcomers' access to services. The report recommends that shelters should engage in diversity training, providing access to language interpretation services, and increasing staff's familiarity

with the immigration process.[3] The conclusion to this report acknowledges the need for additional resources for such preparations.

Examples of Best Practices

City planning that seeks to address newcomers' housing needs

Immigrant and refugee housing committee[47]

The City of Toronto has created a committee to deal with housing challenges that face immigrants and refugees. This committee is made up of community members, individuals who are closely involved with newcomers, academics, and city staff; the diversity of its members is expected to give the city multiple perspectives on what the challenges are and how they can be addressed. In addition to looking into obstacles to housing, the committee meets bimonthly to suggest solutions to these problems and follow up on the implementation of existing projects.

Services that collect and disseminate housing information pertaining to newcomer needs

Information Portals

A standard search on housing and recent settlement across Canada yields a vast amount of information across different levels of government (e.g. Ontario[e], Manitoba[f]) and non-profit organizations (e.g. www.settlement.org). In the phase when they are seeking information regarding housing, newcomers are offered a multitude of sources. As mentioned above, the importance of information has been confirmed by multiple sources, although, to our knowledge, the means by which information is disseminated has not been evaluated for its contribution to easing the housing process.

Temporary shelters sensitive to the needs of newcomers

Catholic Immigration Centre of Ottawa- Maison Thérèse Dallaire[34]

The Catholic Immigration Centre of Ottawa operates Maison Thérèse Dallaire, a short-term settlement house where arrivals to Canada can stay for up to a month while they search for temporary housing options. All rooms at the settlement house are fully subsidized. Citizenship and Immigration Canada covers the fees for individuals who arrive under the Refugee Assistance Program, and joint funding provided by the city and the province covers fees for other newcomers who are temporarily homeless.

This operation is not without its challenges, including the fact that all units have single-occupancy capacity and the centre needs a 50% increase in capacity to meet the current needs of temporary housing. The project has been successful so far mostly due to the strong support that it has received from the City of Ottawa, implying that for similar programs to function, there will be a similar need for support from the municipality as well as all other levels of government.

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[e] www.ontarioimmigration.ca/english/after_housing.asp
[f] www2.immigratemanitoba.com/browse/preparetomove/settle-arrival.html

London Cross Cultural Learner Centre- Jeremiah's House and Joseph's House[117]

Refugees who arrive in the City of London may be housed in one of two locations set up by the London Cross Cultural Learner Centre as short-term shelters. The purpose of these houses is not restricted to providing a temporary living space, but extends to providing refugees assistance with securing permanent housing solutions. The assistance they receive includes providing information about the housing market, assistance with apartment/house viewing, orientation to the Canadian way of life, and basic settlement services such as opening a bank account and enrolling children at school.

4. POSITIVE ATTITUDE TOWARD IMMIGRANTS, CULTURAL DIVERSITY, AND THE PRESENCE OF NEWCOMERS IN THE COMMUNITY

Positive attitudes can be seen in feelings, opinions, and/or behaviours toward newcomers. They are important to consider because attitudes can determine the public's reactions toward newcomers, and affect their reaction to Canada's immigration policy. It is also easy to see how positive attitudes are closely related to other characteristics and indicators such as lack of discrimination in the workplace, social engagement, and relationships with the police and justice system. This is of importance because a recent analysis of the Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Canada found that perceived discrimination had a strong negative impact on immigrants' reported satisfaction with life in Canada.[85]

While positive attitudes represent an important characteristic of a welcoming community in themselves, their presence can also act as a facilitator for other characteristics within welcoming communities.

Table 4: Summary of Outcomes, Key Processes and Structures, and Examples of Best Practices Associated with Positive Attitudes toward Immigrants, Cultural Diversity, and the Presence of Newcomers in the Community

Outcomes	Key Processes and Structures	Examples of Best Practices
o Support for immigration o Support for newcomers and diversity o Social cohesion	• Programs that build an understanding of factors affecting attitudes toward immigrants and diversity • Initiatives promoting positive relations between immigrants and local communities	✓ Federal Level: Canada's Action Plan Against Racism ✓ Provincial Level: Welcome BC Anti-Racism Programs/Initiatives ✓ Municipal Level: Windsor joins the Canadian Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism and Discrimination

Key Outcome Indicators

Support for immigration

When compared to other countries, Canadians' overall attitudes toward immigration are more positive, and Canadians are more likely to value the social and economic contributions of newcomers. In addition, polls have found that the majority of

Canadians think the level of immigration is "about right," although those who think that there is "too much" immigration are higher in number than those who believe there is "too little."[99]

Support for newcomers and diversity

In the study of attitudes and immigration, it is important to differentiate between opinions on immigration versus opinions on diversity since they are not synonymous, and knowing one may not necessarily help to predict the other. Canadians who think that there are too many newcomers entering Canada are more likely to support assimilation practices, to think that Canada is too welcoming, and to believe that immigrants have a negative impact on local communities. Those who see levels of immigration as about right, in addition to those who state that levels are too low, express support for integration practices. In other words, despite modest differences in their perceptions of immigration levels, those who see levels as about right and those who see them as too low both support the process of integration, whereby Canadians are encouraged to appreciate and celebrate cultural differences.[99] A comprehensive review of attitudes would consider Canadians' attitudes toward newcomers in addition to their opinions on immigration policy and Canada's diversity strategy.

Social cohesion

Generally speaking, social cohesion can be thought of as community connectedness or the glue that connects individuals within a given community. It includes individuals' sense of belonging, attachment to the community, and willingness to participate in the community, as well as shared values and mutual respect between members of the community.[122] Social cohesion is an important outcome to consider when thinking about attitudes toward newcomers and diversity because more positive attitudes are typically associated with higher levels of social cohesion.

Key Processes and Structures for Supporting these Outcomes

Programs that build an understanding of factors affecting attitudes toward immigrants and diversity

A number of factors have been shown to predict Canadians' attitudes toward newcomers, including education, age, and gender. These factors have often been used in public polling research. However, sociologists and psychologists have been studying additional predictors that may be part of social phenomena and may assist in the development of interventions to improve general attitudes. For instance, the "self-interest" hypothesis states that Canadians' opinions on immigration policy and their attitudes toward newcomers may be rooted in self-serving motivations. It has been found that perceiving a relation between immigration and concerns about one's own economic status is associated with support for decreasing immigration.[68] Similar research from psychology shows that when Canadians perceive high competition for jobs, they are more likely to exhibit negative attitudes toward immigrants and immigration.[63] This focus on immigrants as competitors in the job market may be especially important considering Canada's reliance on immigration for skilled workers.

Initiatives promoting positive relations between immigrants and locals communities

How can we promote integration and encourage communities to see the benefits of and welcome newcomers? Practical strategies for communities include engaging local leaders as well as the public and private sectors in an effort to promote positive attitudes.[144] Other solutions that have been implemented in the past include diversity training[20] and cross-cultural education programs.[10] Input from newcomers in the development of these strategies is important because it can provide them with a sense of empowerment and can make planned diversity programs more representative of their cultures.[120]

Examples of Best Practices

Programs that build an understanding of factors affecting attitudes toward immigrants and diversity

Federal Level: Canada's Action Plan Against Racism[75]

At the national level, the Canadian government has an action plan aimed at reducing hate and bias, with a five-year, $56 million commitment. A Canada For All: Canada's Action Plan Against Racism is a cross-government initiative with actors including Citizenship and Immigration Canada, Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, and Justice Canada. The objectives of the plan include strengthening social cohesion, promoting human rights, and demonstrating initiative in the global fight against racism. The plan recognizes that discrimination against immigrants and minorities needs to be combated outside a legal framework, which can be done through "building partnerships between governments and society" (p. 11). The plan focuses on six priority areas including assistance to victims of prejudice, the development of innovative approaches to promote diversity, and educating children and youth on anti-racism and diversity. The plan outlines extensive programs for addressing racism against linguistic and ethnic minorities in addition to immigrants, and proposes over two dozen initiatives for combating racism. These include supporting victims of racism through legal aid, providing diversity training for the RCMP and the public service, and reporting to Canadians on research about racism as a means of ensuring accountability and transparency.

Provincial Level: Welcome BC Anti-Racism Programs/Initiatives[194]

The government of British Columbia has developed a number of initiatives to create welcoming communities for newcomers and minorities, including anti-racism artwork for schools, funding for multiculturalism programs, developing response strategies to reports of hate crimes, and designating businesses as 'safe harbours' where people subjected to racism can seek assistance.

Municipal Level: Windsor joins the Canadian Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism and Discrimination[131]

The city of Windsor decided to become part of the Coalition of Municipalities against Racism and Discrimination, thereby signing up to 10 commitments including monitoring discrimination in the municipality, involving residents in anti-racism

initiatives, and supporting measures that promote equity in the labour market. In a brief evaluation a few months after signing the coalition, it was noted that the city was developing a number of measures. For example, the city's Race and Ethnocultural Relations Committee developed a Diversity Plan to coordinate municipality policies promoting inclusion. The Mayor also became involved in developing a Taskforce on Workforce Development with particular attention on immigration and skills recognition. There were a number of programs listed, but it has been suggested that there is a disproportionate focus on anti-racism in comparison to the other part of the mandate, discrimination. Recent reviews of Windsor's program were not found, but an update would be interesting in light of the encouraging initial developments.

5. PRESENCE OF NEWCOMER-SERVING AGENCIES THAT CAN SUCCESSFULLY MEET THE NEEDS OF NEWCOMERS

Not only are immigrant-serving agencies the primary point of contact for many newcomers upon their arrival to Canada, they provide an integrative function for service provision, concentrating services at a specific location, strengthening communities, and promoting links between institutions. Indeed, in a 2007 survey of 6,300 newcomers across British Columbia, 81% indicated that their agency was very helpful in providing them with assistance and information. In addition, over 87% indicated that they would recommend these agencies to other newcomers, suggesting satisfaction with the kind of support they had been receiving. The majority (between 52%-68%) stated that the services they received at the agency had permitted them to achieve a better life in Canada, feel comfortable with Canadian customs, plan for future jobs/schooling, and feel better prepared to make plans and set goals.[172]

Table 5: Summary of Outcomes, Key Processes and Structures, and Examples of Best Practices Associated with the Presence of Newcomer-Serving Agencies that Can Successfully Meet the Needs of Newcomers

Outcomes	Key Processes and Structures	Examples of Best Practices
o Access to newcomer-serving agencies and their services	• Innovative partnerships designed to locate services where they are especially likely to be accessed	✓ Settlement Workers in Schools (SWIS)
o Satisfaction with newcomer-serving agencies and their services	• Assessment of agencies and their services	✓ Calgary Immigrant Services Evaluation and Systems Overview
o Effectiveness of newcomer-serving agencies and their services in achieving their aims	• Funding from government and other sources	✓ Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF)
	• Community engagement through volunteerism and support	
o Access to specialized services aimed at meeting the needs of particularly vulnerable groups	• Presence of specialized services for vulnerable groups	✓ Immigrant Women Services Ottawa ✓ Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture (CCVT) ✓ Partners in Caring

Key Outcome Indicators

Access to newcomer-serving agencies

Considering the importance of newcomer-serving agencies, easy access to such organizations is essential for the promotion of welcoming communities. While bigger immigration destinations have multiple service organizations, other regions suffer from a shortage of services, and in some cases, the absence of such organizations altogether. Prince Edward Island has been struggling to keep up with the pressures of immigration to the province despite the fact that PEI is currently developing a provincial immigration strategy. For example, the number of clients using the Student Liaison Program (where settlement workers help students transition into schools in Canada) has increased six-fold between 2006 and 2008 but financial support has not been able to keep up.[8] New Brunswick faces similar problems,[26] while Newfoundland and Labrador has to meet the needs of increasing immigration despite having one federally-funded service provider for newcomers.[69]

A review of services across provinces and cities indicates a common set of services revolving around a number of goals.[134] Orientation services within the local community and guidance on how to obtain government assistance are among the most common services that are offered. So too is assistance with employment. This covers help with putting together a résumé, development of skills for job interviews, tips for job hunting, and mentoring programs whereby newcomers are mentored by Canadians with similar professional backgrounds, allowing them to obtain information about the job market and establish networks. Another primary service is English language training for newcomers and information about further education. Additional settlement services that are common to many communities include networking with other newcomers, assistance with obtaining housing and translation services. Refugees arriving in Canada are also offered extensive counselling and direct supports.

Satisfaction with newcomer-serving agencies and their services

In recent years, there has been a growing interest in customer satisfaction among customer-focused businesses, agencies, and services. In part, this is due to an increased recognition that satisfaction is associated with the propensity to use a given service again and to word-of-mouth communications to other potential users.[174] In the context of welcoming communities, satisfaction is important because it can affect newcomer service utilization and, ultimately, retention and, through word of mouth, further immigration.

Evidence has consistently found that several factors are linked to service satisfaction. These include expectations (e.g., does the outcome or service meet expectations?) and performance (e.g., does the outcome or service meet a need, want, or desire?).[174] Service satisfaction should be assessed along multiple dimensions, such as timeliness, efficiency, and ease of access.[15]

When assessing satisfaction, it is important to note that satisfaction is not synonymous with effectiveness. That is, newcomers may be satisfied with a service they receive at a newcomer-serving agency despite the fact that their experience at the agency did not result in key outcomes such as employment opportunities or obtaining adequate housing. Thus, satisfaction is best considered in conjunction with other outcomes.

Effectiveness of newcomer-serving agencies and their services in achieving their aims

An important outcome in assessing newcomer-serving agencies and their services is their effectiveness in achieving their aims. These aims may be broad, such as improving immigrant integration, life satisfaction, and sense of inclusion, or may be quite specific, such as increased employment rates for newcomers, improved language skills, and improved access to housing. As a result, it is important to assess the effectiveness of newcomer-serving agencies and their services by specifically determining whether they are achieving their stated aims. In addition, goals that are quite specific may be easier to assess than the broad goals of an agency, and may be easier to assess in an objective manner (e,g., language proficiency vs. social inclusion).

Access to specialized services aimed at meeting the needs of particularly vulnerable groups

While many needs are common to all newcomers, some groups of newcomers – such as youth and women – may have specialized needs. Youth are a major focus for newcomer-serving agencies because of the special difficulties associated with moving while still in the process of attaining pre-secondary education. In addition to help with English, youth often require trained agency employees (sometimes called "liaison officer') to act as career and education counsellors, while assisting their parents to navigate the Canadian school system.

Evidence suggests that female newcomers are especially vulnerable to violence and often face barriers in trying to access services. One study from Newfoundland and Labrador found that newcomer women often felt judged and discriminated against, and that the agencies in the province were not equipped to deal with their special needs.[51] In another example of the need for group-specific services, a three-year project conducted by Human Early Learning Partnership, UBC, and S.U.C.C.E.S.S. found that newcomers face significant barriers when trying to access early childhood development services for their offspring in the Tri-Cities area (Coquitlam, Port Coquitlam, Port Moody) in British Columbia.[149] Other examples of specialized needs include the need for additional refugee services in the Kitchener-Waterloo region due to the higher concentration of refugees in that region.[2] These cases suggest that in addition to the basic services that immigrants receive upon arrival, service efficiency and effectiveness would be advanced by a needs assessment process, carried out by local agencies to address the particular challenges faced by particular groups of newcomers.

Key Processes and Structures for Supporting these Outcomes

Innovative partnerships designed to locate services where they are especially likely to be accessed

In recent years, there has been a growing awareness that in order to best meet the needs of newcomers, it is important to locate services where they can be easily accessed and utilized. Lack of transportation and childcare may mean that even when a variety of services are available, newcomers can not easily reach and utilize them. Thus, increasingly, service providers are going out into the community and partnering with facilities likely to be frequented by newcomers (e.g., schools, libraries) in order to provide easily accessible services.

Assessment of agencies and their services

In order to function most effectively and ensure that newcomer needs are being met, it is essential that agencies and the services they offer be assessed on a regular basis. This assessment may involve an evaluation of the number of clients served, satisfaction with services, and effectiveness of services.

Funding from government and other sources

The ability of agencies to continue providing services rests on several factors. The most practical one is funding, and agencies have to access multiple sources to ensure adequate financial support. These include the federal and provincial governments, municipalities, United Ways, and foundations such as the Trillium Foundation.

Community engagement through volunteerism and support

There are also non-tangible factors that are needed in order to establish and maintain ethnocultural and newcomer-serving organizations, with the most important one being community engagement. A number of programs depend almost entirely on the presence of volunteers and the engagement of locals. The host family program is common to most if not all agencies, whereby newcomer families are connected with families from the local community to guide them through the process of resettlement. Another important service is the professional mentors program, which allows newcomers to be matched with similarly qualified Canadians to help them gain employment through one-on-one job mentoring, providing them with information about the profession, and helping them to establish professional networks. Both of these programs depend on volunteers who sign up to be hosts or mentors. Without their support, these services would not be available. Volunteers are also important on agency boards and for an array of services that help organizations significantly to offset operational costs. The volunteers, many of them from the communities they serve, also increase trust between service providers and immigrant clients. Many ethnocultural organizations also rely on financial contributions by members of their communities.

Examples of Best Practices

Innovative partnerships designed to locate services where they are especially likely to be accessed

Settlement Workers in Schools (SWIS)[163]

The SWIS program, initiated in BC and Ontario, is a partnership between Citizenship and Immigration Canada, provincial government departments, boards of education, and local settlement agencies. Based on the idea that schools are one of the first services that newcomers connect with in a community, the goal is to reach out to as many newcomer families as possible during their first years in Canada in order to provide orientation information and to connect them with services and resources in the school and community. The SWIS is considered to be an entry point for newcomers to the range of settlement services available in the community. A manual of best practices for school settlement workers is available and provides information on strategies for connecting with and serving the needs of newcomers.[164]

Assessment of agencies and their services

Calgary Immigrant Services Evaluation and Systems Overview[86]

The City of Calgary commissioned a third-party evaluator to examine the services being offered to newcomers by the city's various agencies. The evaluator conducted a system overview of available newcomer services and examined whether settlement needs are being met. The evaluation was conducted between May 2000 and March 2001, and its "purpose was to assess the efficiency and effectiveness of overall service delivery to immigrants and refugees within the City of Calgary" (p. 3). After conducting the evaluation at three levels (agency-level, program-level, system-level), the evaluator found that clients were generally satisfied with the services. These services were being run efficiently, and at times, exceeded expectations given the available resources. The final report also listed a number of gaps that could be filled including the need to tailor services to particular challenges, such as providing assistance for homelessness and trauma counselling.

Funding from government and other sources

Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF)[138]

In addition to government funding for service provision, agencies serving immigrants rely on a variety of other sources. The Ontario Trillium Foundation is an agency of the Ontario Ministry of Culture, and is considered to be one of Canada's leading grant providers for not-for-profit and charitable organizations, including those providing social services to newcomers.

Presence of specialized services for vulnerable groups

Immigrant Women Services Ottawa[89]

This organization was established in 1988 with a mandate to serve immigrant and visible minority women and provide customized services to victims of abuse. These services include culturally-sensitive counselling and translation services, with the ultimate goal of empowering victims of abuse and helping them toward independence. This organization is funded by donations and the Ontario Trillium Foundation.

Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture (CCVT)[27]

This Toronto-based organization meets the unique needs of newcomers who have been the victims of torture. Services focus on mental health through counselling and support groups, and aim to coordinate the efforts and resources of multiple refugee- and immigrant-serving organizations. This centre offers the standard services that refugees receive through newcomer-serving agencies; it also provides art therapy and crisis intervention for adults and youth. In addition to educating the public on the presence and effects of torture through public lectures and research, members of the CCVT try to use the popular media to raise awareness of the experiences of torture victims.

Partners in Caring

The Cross Cultural Learner Centre in London runs Partners in Caring, a program that addresses unique needs associated with refugee trauma. Partners in Caring offers a range of services including on-site medical evaluations, referrals to specialized community agencies, and emotional and psychological support. In addition to working directly with refugees, Partners in Caring also seeks to educate the community on issues such as refugee trauma and health.[116]

6. LINKS BETWEEN MAIN ACTORS WORKING TOWARD WELCOMING COMMUNITIES

Links refer to connections that involve cooperation, information, and resource sharing.[165] Main actors who can shape a welcoming community include community members, service providing organizations, regional governments (e.g., municipalities), and provincial and federal governments. Because services are generally organized in a 'vertical' manner while integration is holistic, creating and maintaining links between these actors should facilitate the settlement of newcomers and increase the likelihood of successful integration within the community.

Table 6: Summary of Outcomes, Key Processes and Structures, and Examples of Best Practices Associated with Links between Main Actors Working toward Welcoming Communities

Outcomes	Key Processes and Structures	Examples of Best Practices
o Links between local actors within the community	• Structures that promote cooperation and reduce competition between agencies	✓ Ottawa Inter-Agency Forum ✓ Welcoming Cultural Diversity in London ✓ Local Immigration Partnership Initiative
o Links between different levels of government and community organizations	• Structures that promote cooperation between different levels of government and community agencies	✓ Canada-Ontario-Toronto MOU ✓ Canada-Ontario Immigration Agreement ✓ Voluntary Sector Initiative (VSI) ✓ Settlement and Integration Joint Policy and Program Council (SIJPPC)

Key Outcome Indicators

Links between local actors within the community

When examining links and existing cooperation strategies, it is helpful to think of two types of links, those between local actors within a community, and those between different levels of government and community organizations. At a local level, newcomer-serving agencies may compete with each other for resources or may cooperate in order to obtain resources, depending on the local culture and on the structure of government funding. In some parts of the country, agencies must form consortia in order to enter successful bids for funding, whereas in other locations agencies compete for limited resources, and this competition can jeopardize their ability to work together and cooperate.

Links between different levels of government and community organizations

Links between the local community and other decision-making bodies (e.g., different levels of government such as municipalities, provincial/territorial governments, and the federal government) are also of importance. The value of local newcomer-serving agencies cannot be understated; they are in the best position to assess newcomer needs and are generally responsible for providing front-line services. While their involvement is key, they must link with different levels of government in order to access resources and implement federal and provincial policies. For example, in rural Manitoba, communities have been struggling with serving an increasing number of newcomers, and the province has needed to quickly respond to these needs by broadening the support provided. A call for greater coordination between municipalities, the provinces, and the federal government has been echoed numerous times.[110,165]

Key Processes and Structures for Supporting these Outcomes

Structures that promote cooperation and reduce competition between agencies

It has been suggested that the best way to deal with the challenge of securing resources while finding a way to avoid undue competition is for agencies to coordinate service provision while retaining specialized skills.[196] To facilitate this, organizations need to share experiences and challenges. Coordination is essential for freeing up capacity.[169]

Structures that promote cooperation between different levels of government and community agencies

Across Canada, there are a range of federal-provincial arrangements in place for selecting and integrating newcomers. In Quebec, Manitoba and British Columbia, full responsibility for integration has been devolved to the provinces (some aspects of refugee services are excepted). In other provinces, such as Alberta and Ontario, interesting co-management arrangements are being tried. All provinces and territories now operate under federal-provincial agreements that spell out these, and other, arrangements. Despite occasional hiccups, the general direction has been in favour of increasing coordination in most areas of the country. Future arrangements are likely to promote more emphasis on co-management. A particular advantage flowing from greater

provincial involvement has been greater participation by cities as well as a facilitation of federal-municipal engagement.[148]

Despite increased attention to policy harmonization, integration continues to throw up challenges. Further synchronization is needed in the areas of employment, housing, health, education, and social services. As well, mainstream organizations need to become more sensitive and better tuned to newcomer needs.[110] This is particularly important in respect of policies to promote welcoming communities.

Examples of Best Practices

Structures that promote cooperation and reduce competition between agencies

Ottawa Inter-Agency Forum[110]

A forum was organized in Ottawa in 2001 by a multitude of organizations in an effort to organize resources and address newcomer diversity. These organizations were: Local Agencies Serving Immigrants, Metropolis, the Ottawa Community Immigrant Services Organization, the Social Planning Council, and the National Capital Alliance on Race Relations. They evaluated pressing community needs and discussed strategies for dealing with these needs. The forum was successful in promoting cooperation between these organizations and raising awareness of the increasing importance of ethnocultural diversity in Ottawa.

Welcoming Cultural Diversity in London[44]

In response to a report in 2005 calling on London to become more welcoming of newcomers and to begin a series of strategies to reach out and attract immigrants, a group of community service providers, local government, and other stakeholders came together under the leadership of the United Way of London and Middlesex and the City of London to identify local issues and opportunities related to cultural diversity in the community. In 2006, this Welcoming Cultural Diversity steering committee developed a community action plan to make a positive difference in supporting newcomers in London. In addition to engaging in specific actions designed to improve newcomer inclusion, this committee has effectively promoted cooperation between immigrant-specific and universal service providers, and local government.

Local Immigration Partnership Initiative[135]

Citizenship and Immigration Canada has funded organizations across the province to develop Local Immigration Partnership Councils within their communities. The goal of these councils is to provide a collaborative strategy for coordinating and enhancing services that facilitate immigrant settlement and integration, broadening the range of institutions that contribute to newcomer integration. Given that the stated aim of these councils in the call for proposals for their establishment was to "coordinate the enhancement of community partnerships to increase the participation of multiple stakeholders in the planning and coordinating of the delivery of integration services," it is possible that the councils may enhance cooperation and reduce competition among organizations. The councils are still in their early stages and it is too early to determine their effectiveness though initial measures appear promising.

Structures that promote cooperation between different levels of government and community agencies

Canada-Ontario-Toronto Memorandum of Understanding on Immigration and Settlement[135]

Acknowledging the large number of newcomers arriving in Toronto each year, this agreement was signed in 2006 and promotes coordination between all levels of government with respect to immigration and settlement issues in Toronto. The MOU provides a framework for the federal, provincial, and municipal governments to discuss mutual interest in policy directions, share information and data, and coordinate research activities. The focus is on improving outcomes for immigrants through issues concerning citizenship and civic engagement, and facilitating access to employment, educational and training opportunities, and services.

Canada-Ontario Immigration Agreement[136]

This agreement was signed in 2005 and aimed to give Ontario greater input in the development and implementation of settlement strategies and language training for newcomers within the province. An important goal of this agreement was to enhance coordination between federal and provincial actors. In addition, the agreement allows the provincial government to take the lead in identifying unmet needs, exploring opportunities for funding, and developing and delivering services. An additional feature of this agreement is that it involves a provision to encourage municipalities to take part in immigrant service planning, allowing all three levels of government to work together to meet the needs of newcomers.

Voluntary Sector Initiative (VSI)[188]

This was a five-year initiative set up between the Government of Canada and the voluntary sector (2000-2005). The VSI "focused on strengthening the relationship between the voluntary sector and the government, and enhancing the capacity of the voluntary sector" and consisted of two phases. In the first phase, the work of VSI was carried out through seven roundtables; this included drafting a joint working agreement, developing recommendations on how to build the voluntary sector's capacity, and planning how to raise awareness about the sector's contribution and the need for greater community involvement. The second phase consisted of following up on the recommendations and monitoring their implementation.

Settlement and Integration Joint Policy and Program Council (SIJPPC)

The SIJPPC was established in 2004 to follow on the Voluntary Sector Initiative. The purpose of this council is to promote cooperation between the federal and provincial governments and the settlement sector on issues of policy, planning and implementation. The work that SIJPPC has done includes consulting with the key players on principles behind settlement funding and promoting an understanding of those principles by all parties.[39]

7. MUNICIPAL FEATURES AND SERVICES SENSITIVE TO THE PRESENCE AND NEEDS OF NEWCOMERS

The role of municipalities in creating welcoming communities takes place through city planning, the provision of services and the provision of information.

Table 7: Summary of Outcomes, Key Processes and Structures, and Examples of Best Practices Associated with Municipal Features and Services Sensitive to the Presence and Needs of Newcomers

Outcomes	Key Processes and Structures	Examples of Best Practices
o Newcomer-friendly municipal features	• Structures that ensure that cities are responsive to the needs and interests of newcomers	✓ Toronto's Race and Ethnic Relations Committee and the Roundtable on Access, Equity and Human Rights
o Availability of infrastructure to welcome newcomers	• Holistic planning • Stability of funding	

Key Outcome Indicators

Newcomer-friendly municipal features

In recent years, municipal governments have become more responsive to the needs and interests of newcomers. They have recognized that this is an increasingly important component of their mandate, and have worked to ensure that municipal operations and services are newcomer-friendly, removing barriers to access and utilization. This is important in encouraging communities to be more welcoming, and in promoting immigrant integration.

Availability of infrastructure to welcome newcomers

In addition to promoting newcomer-friendly municipal features, there is a need for cities to ensure that they have the necessary infrastructure to welcome newcomers. Housing, transportation, and services are very important for newcomers, and city planning is key for ensuring a community's ability to meet these needs. The region of Peel has expressed a need for developing a vision of immigrant settlement, and has recognized that early planning for newcomers is essential in anticipating challenges and addressing any problems that may arise early on following their arrival.[144] The arrival of newcomers represents change for many communities, and Ontario municipalities have

responded in various ways, including by promoting awareness of cross-cultural differences and providing race relations sensitivity training to their employees.[10]

Key Processes and Structures for Supporting these Outcomes

Structures that ensure that cities are responsive to the needs and interests of newcomers

Many cities have been proactive in the creation of committees for cultural diversity. In general, these committees aim to ensure that the needs and interests of diverse groups are taken into account in city planning and service delivery, promote harmony with communities, and facilitate cultural events. It should be noted that there is large variance in the level of activity of these committees, and in the way in which they are structured and operate. In addition to promoting newcomer-friendly services, cities have been active in providing information to newcomers and directing them to services within the community. The websites for the top 10 destination cities for immigrants to Canada offer a great deal of information for newcomers on topics ranging from housing to transportation.[43,45] In addition to guides on how to settle in these communities, many websites refer newcomers to organizations that are able to help with service provision.

Holistic planning

Holistic planning is vital for addressing the needs of newcomers. This requires coordination by all the main actors in the community, including social services, newcomer-serving agencies, and community leaders. Place-based approaches to meeting the needs of local communities have been gaining in popularity; municipal engagement is essential in giving these processes legitimacy.[144]

Stability of funding

Regardless of the planning phase, the ability of cities to execute plans is constricted by financial considerations, and reliable assistance from provincial and federal governments is vital in making sure that they are ready to plan ahead of time in anticipation of newcomers' needs.[7]

Examples of Best Practices

Structures that ensure that cities are responsive to the needs and interests of newcomers

Toronto's Race and Ethnic Relations Committee and the Roundtable on Access, Equity and Human Rights[49]

Toronto's Race and Ethnic Relations Committee has had numerous responsibilities including the promotion of diversity, working with community organizations and businesses on cross-cultural awareness, and diversity advocacy. In addition, the committee has provided input into the city's budgeting process. The mandate of the Race and Ethnic Relations Committee has now been transferred to the Roundtable on Access, Equity and Human Rights. This roundtable serves in an advisory role to the mayor with regards to diversity, equality, and anti-racism issues. Its mandate is to ensure that the contributions, interests and needs of all sectors of Toronto's diverse

population are reflected in the City's mission, operations and service delivery. It is important to note that the progress and work of such municipal committees is difficult to track. The majority do not publicize the outcome of the projects in which they have been engaged, how often they meet, or instructions on how to get involved. Without more transparency regarding their activities, it is difficult to assess the actual value of these committees and their contribution to making cities newcomer-friendly.

8. EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

There is a consensus among welcoming communities initiatives and governmental agencies across the nation that the presence of educational opportunities is a key characteristic of a welcoming community. Evidence also suggests that newcomers place weight on the presence of educational opportunities. In the Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Canada, when respondents were asked what they like most about living in Canada, opportunity for education was one of the top five factors cited.[159] Likewise, approximately one in four immigrants who planned to settle in Canada permanently indicated that access to education was one of their main reasons for wanting to stay.[157] In addition, access to education was found to be an important determinant of immigrants' satisfaction with life in Canada.[85]

When thinking about the presence of education and training opportunities, it is important to consider the needs of both adults and youth. Because these two groups tend to have different needs, they will be considered in turn.

Table 8: Summary of Outcomes, Key Processes and Structures, and Examples of Best Practices Associated with Educational Opportunities

Outcomes	Key Processes and Structures	Examples of Best Practices
For Adults		
o Language skills that support social and economic integration	• Comprehensive language assessment and instruction systems	✓ Pembina Valley Language Education for Adults (Winkler, Manitoba)
o Enrolment in high school equivalency courses and post-secondary institutions	• High-school equivalency training and post-secondary institutions	✓ Adult High School (Ottawa) ✓ Satellite campuses ✓ Credential bridging programs

For Children and Youth		

o Academic engagement
 	
o High secondary school completion rates
	• Integration programs, including:
	
	   ➢ initial assessment and grade placement
	
	   ➢ after-school academic bridging programs
	
	   ➢ English and French language training
	
	   ➢ translation services that facilitate communication with parents and guardians.
		✓ Toronto District School Board (e.g., Newcomer Reception Centres)
		
		✓ Garden Valley School Division (e.g., prioritizing English as an Additional Language training)

	• Inclusive education programs	✓ Educational integration and intercultural education policy (Québec) ✓ Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy (Ontario)

Key Outcome Indicators

Although stakeholders place weight on the presence of educational opportunities for newcomers, with the exception of language skills and training, there is little information about outcome indicators associated with these opportunities or the processes and structures that should be put in place to support them. Despite this gap in the literature, many communities and organizations have taken steps to promote educational opportunities among newcomers. Accordingly, this characteristic is more heavily weighted toward the identification of best practices.

Adults

Language skills that support social and economic integration
The Canada-Ontario Immigration Agreement lists language skills that support social and economic integration as a key outcome of the Strategic Plan for Settlement and

Language Training.[37] In part, this is due to the understanding that lack of proficiency in English or French limits newcomers' ability to secure employment that requires advanced language skills.

Enrolment in high school equivalency courses and post-secondary institutions
For adults, an additional outcome of educational opportunities is enrolment in high school equivalency courses and post-secondary institutions.

Youth

Academic engagement
Engagement is a motivational construct that refers to active, goal-directed behaviour in the classroom[70] Engagement is reflected in classroom behaviours such as completing assigned work, showing enthusiasm for learning, and contributing to classroom discussions and activities.[76] Although academic engagement is an important outcome in its own right, it is also associated with other outcomes that may be of interest, such as long-term academic performance and school completion.[167] In the case of newcomers to Canada, engagement may be a more appropriate outcome measure than performance because performance is affected by factors such as language ability, which should have less of an effect on engagement.

High secondary school completion rates
Secondary school graduation rate is considered a key outcome of educational opportunities. The federal and provincial/territorial governments place importance on secondary school completion rates because secondary school graduation is a prerequisite to post-secondary education, and also due to increasing labour-force entry-level requirements.[50]

Key Processes and Structures for Supporting these Outcomes

Adults

Comprehensive language assessment and instruction systems
Many newcomers state that learning English or French is a challenge they face in Canada. Accordingly, approximately one out of every four newcomers takes at least one language course during their first two years in Canada.[159] In order for newcomers to acquire language skills that promote their successful economic and social integration, communities need to offer effective pre- and post-arrival language assessment, and accessible language training (including work-related language training).[37]
Time constraints and financial constraints are the two biggest barriers immigrants encounter when trying to access language training, with availability of courses not too far behind.[159] To maximize newcomer participation, language training institutions offer their courses at various times, and provide subsidies for transportation and childcare. Where available, newcomers can also benefit from access to language instruction at a variety of levels, from beginner English and French to Enhanced Language Training (ELT) and workplace communication skills.[57]

Ultimately, the success of language assessment and instruction programs will depend on their ability to link with existing educational institutions, regional immigrant employment councils, and government-funded language training programs (e.g., Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada).

High school equivalency training and post-secondary institutions

Outside of language training, newcomers may need high school equivalency training and/or a post-secondary education. Most school boards offer high school classes for adults seeking to obtain high-school equivalency (e.g., General Educational Development). Information about such courses should be widely distributed via newcomer service providers.

Newcomers may also be attracted to a particular community due to the presence of post-secondary educational institutions. Evidence suggests that universities generate, attract, and retain highly skilled talent.[187] Post-secondary institutions may be particularly successful in their efforts to attract newcomers to the extent that they actively reach out to international professionals in an effort to bridge the gap between international credentials/work experience and Canadian employment.

Youth

Integration Programs

Integrating youth into the Canadian school system begins with the provision of timely, accessible information about the Canadian (and relevant provincial/territorial) education system and educational facilities in the community. Upon entry into the school system, integration can be facilitated via assessment of students' skills and placement into appropriate courses, including English or French language training courses when needed.

Inclusive Education Programs

Inclusive education programs seek to create learning environments in which all students can succeed. Programs support and welcome diversity while identifying and eliminating barriers to learning. While research has shown that inclusive education programs have positive effects on students with disabilities, comprehensive evaluations of inclusive education programs catered to newcomers are lacking.

Examples of Best Practices

Adults

Comprehensive language assessment and instruction systems

Pembina Valley Language Education for Adults (PVLEA; Winkler, Manitoba)

In many communities, newcomers have access to free language training via arrangements between the Government of Canada, provincial/territorial governments, school boards, educational institutions, and newcomer-serving agencies. One such community is Winkler, Manitoba, which has been recognized as a leader among small

Canadian cities in attracting and retaining immigrants.[109] Given that less than 50% of Winkler's residents report English as their mother tongue, the community recognized the importance of providing language training. As outlined by Kukushkin, the language training needs of Winkler's newcomers are served by the Pembina Valley Language Education for Adults (PVLEA), funded by Manitoba Labour and Immigration. PVLEA provides free education, literacy, and language training to all newcomers. In order to accommodate students' work schedules, courses are offered in both the daytime and evening, as well as on a full- and part-time basis (each student receives anywhere from 4 to 24 hours of training per week).

Because many of Winkler's newcomers work full-time, the community created an English at Work program. This program requires collaboration from employers, who are responsible for financing half of the training (while the employees cover the other half). The content, timing, and length of courses vary according to workplace needs. This program has been received favourably by both employers and employees alike.

High school equivalency training and post-secondary institutions

Adult High School (Ottawa)

Adult High School is a full-time secondary day school for over 1300 adults in the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board. It is the only "regular" high school for adults in the province of Ontario. Part of Adult High School's success stems from its efforts to cater to its multicultural student base. Adult High School offers ESL credit courses in subjects as diverse as science and drama, and bridging credit courses designed to help students move from ESL to non-ESL classes. In addition, the school has a full-time Multi-Cultural Liaison Officer and a full service day care for its students with young children.[4]

Satellite campuses

Regarding post-secondary education opportunities, while it is not feasible for all communities to house universities or colleges, there has been an increasing trend among community colleges to open satellite campuses in smaller communities. In 2004, the Town of Orangeville approached Humber College with an offer to establish a partnership to build a new Humber College campus in Orangeville. Since that time, the Town of Orangeville has donated a 28 acre building and Humber has committed to developing a full-service regional campus. At this time, Humber Orangeville Campus offers five full-time programs including Business Administration and Police Foundations.[88]

Credential bridging programs

To promote the integration of immigrants in the labour market, many post-secondary institutions now offer credential bridging programs. As mentioned under the characteristic Employment Opportunities, institutions such as University of Guelph and University of Toronto have created bridging programs for internationally trained veterinarians and pharmacists, respectively. Community colleges have followed suit. Fanshawe College now offers four bridging programs (e.g., Bridge to Accounting Credentials). In addition, Fanshawe offers Occupation Specific Language Training for individuals with international training in health care, business, and technology.[65]

Youth

Integration programs

Toronto District School Board

In 2008, the Toronto District School Board received an international award – the Carl Bertelsmann Prize – to recognize its commitment to equity in education, specifically in the form of providing immigrant children with fair opportunities for their education. As one of the most multicultural and multilingual school boards in the world, the Toronto District School Broad has introduced many programs to facilitate newcomer integration. At the Toronto District School Board, integration begins at one of four Newcomer Reception Centres, staffed by a group of multilingual employees who assist newcomers and their families. All students eligible for secondary school visit a Reception Centre for a full day that includes an assessment of English language skills and mathematics skills that help to ensure placement in appropriate courses.[177]

Garden Valley School Division

In Winkler, Manitoba, the Garden Valley School District introduced home liaison workers into each school.[109] The liaison workers are responsible for helping newcomer families adapt to the Canadian school system, by helping with school registration and arranging tours of local schools. All liaison workers serve as ongoing links between the school and students' parents, in part by frequently serving as interpreters during parent-teacher interviews and meetings.

In Winkler, the proportion of non-native English speakers approaches 50% in many classrooms.[109] In response, the school division considers English as an Additional Language (EAL) training a top priority. The division considers every teacher an EAL teacher and takes steps to incorporate language training into all learning activities. Although most newcomers are enrolled in integrated classrooms, they also receive language training of between one and four sessions per day.[109]

Inclusive education programs

Educational integration and intercultural education policy (Québec)

In 1998, the Department of Education in Québec released a policy statement, 'Educational integration and intercultural education,' with two main purposes: 1) to facilitate the integration of immigrant students into the Québec school system, and 2) to educate all students in intercultural relations.[129] The policy includes three guidelines for the implementation of the first part of the policy: educational integration. As outlined by Rimok and Rouzier (2008)[154], the first guideline states that integrating students who are newcomers to Québec is the joint responsibility of all school staff (even in schools that do not provide transition classes to help newcomers learn French). As such, training staff in ethnocultural diversity is seen as important. The second guideline states that timely intervention should be provided to students experiencing difficulty with integration into the school system. The third guideline specifies that family and community involvement should be incorporated in order to help educational institutions fulfill these goals. The second part of the policy – intercultural education – includes guidelines for promoting

openness to ethnocultural, linguistic, and religious diversity (which should be reflected in curricula and school life) and for promoting ethnocultural diversity in school staff.[154] In an effort to help educational institutions to implement the policy, the government also released a Plan of Action that highlights principles and defines guidelines for the educational community's actions.[128]

Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy (Ontario)

   Similarly, Ontario's (2009) Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy seeks to make Ontario's education system "the most inclusive in the world."[137] Recognizing that newcomers may be at risk for lower academic achievement, the Strategy helps educational institutions identify and remove barriers to student success.[137]

9. ACCESSIBLE AND SUITABLE HEALTH CARE

Although Canada ranks above most other countries in the world when measuring population level indicators of health, there are widely acknowledged inequities in health status and access to services.[81] For instance, findings from the 2007 Canadian Community Health Survey indicate that recent immigrants are considerably less likely to have a regular medical doctor compared to more established immigrants and Canadian-born individuals.[170]

As outlined by Health Canada, while newcomers experience considerable diversity in health status and access to health care, immigrants and refugees are considered an underserved population, mainly because they experience barriers to presentation of need.[170] That is, immigrants may be unfamiliar with Canada's health care system, and may not understand their rights to service and the role of health care providers. For some individuals, these barriers are further exacerbated by a difficulty in communicating in one of Canada's official languages.

In order to reduce inequities in the health care system, communities can take steps to provide newcomers with adequate access to health care. Indeed, health care is widely recognized as a key characteristic of welcoming communities, and access to health care was found to be an important determinant of immigrants' reported satisfaction with life in Canada in a recent analysis of the Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Canada.[85]

Table 9: Summary of Outcomes, Key Processes and Structures, and Examples of Best Practices Associated with Accessible and Suitable Health Care

Outcomes	Key Processes and Structures	Examples of Best Practices
o Good health status o Satisfaction with health care services	• Services that remove financial barriers to health care	
	• Services that remove linguistic barriers to health care	✓ Calgary Health Region's Interpretation and Translation Services Unit ✓ Centre for Addiction and Mental Health's multilingual resources
	• Services that remove information barriers to health care	✓ Brooks Community Health Services' Newcomer Health Liaison

		✓ Guelph Community Health Centre's Multicultural Outreach Worker
	• Health care facilities that provide culturally sensitive care	

Key Outcome Indicators

Good health status

      There are two main outcome indicators associated with health care. The first is health status. This refers to the state of health of a person, group, or population. It includes traditional measures of morbidity (incidence of diseases) as well as individuals' subjective assessments of their own health. Research suggests that measures of health status should not be based solely on markers of physical health. Mental (or emotional) health should also be taken into consideration, as it is an important component of well-being.

Satisfaction with health care services

      The second outcome that communities may wish to consider is satisfaction with health care services. In recent years, patient/client satisfaction with health care services has become recognized as an important outcome associated with health care. In part, this is because obtaining feedback about satisfaction with various aspects of health care services is an important way to determine inadequacies in the system.

Key Processes and Structures for Supporting these Outcomes

      Below, we review processes and structures that influence health status and satisfaction with health care services. While these processes are important, we must note that the use of health care services is only one determinant of health. Other factors such as nutrition, poverty, lifestyle, and environment also influence health outcomes. As such, characteristics such as housing, employment, and social networks may play an important role in influencing the health status of newcomers.

Services that remove financial barriers to health care

      In their framework for describing access (and access barriers) to health care, Health Canada lists financial barriers as one of its key categories.[85] As outlined in their report on Access to Health Services for Underserved Populations in Canada,[85] financial barriers exist when a health service is available, but there are financial costs associated with its use. Financial services may be either direct or indirect. On the one hand, there may be direct costs associated with using uninsured services. In Canada, approximately 70% of health care services are subsidized by the government (exact percentages vary by province/territory). Canadians must pay for services such as drugs, dental care, and vision

care either out-of-pocket or with private health insurance plans. On the other hand, there may be indirect costs related to health care use. These include transportation and childcare costs, as well as unpaid time off work.

Costs associated with health care represent a large access barrier among newcomers to Canada. In the Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Canada, among newcomers who reported experiencing difficulties accessing health care services, high cost was a commonly cited problem (cited by approximately 30% of individuals who reported problems).[171] Financial barriers to health care are even more pronounced among refugees.[171] As such, structures and services that remove the direct and indirect financial barriers to health care are likely to have an impact on newcomers' health outcomes.

Services that remove linguistic barriers to health care

Evidence suggests that language is one of the most significant barriers to accessing health care in Canada.[57] When health services are provided in the absence of trained interpreters, distorted communication often results in lower quality of care.[57] In contrast, the provision of qualified interpreters who have training in medical terminology can enable patients to communicate their health concerns, ask questions, and follow important verbal and written instructions. There is a growing recognition in Canada that effective health care requires the provision of interpreters in all health care settings.[1] Whenever possible, this includes providing access to basic medical information in multiple languages (e.g., through a website and through printed materials).[95]

Services that remove information barriers to health care

In addition to financial and linguistic barriers to health care, newcomers may be confronted with information barriers. Simply stated, newcomers may not be aware that a health care service is available, that they have rights to access a service, or how to go about actually accessing a given service. Removing information barriers to health care starts by providing newcomers with accurate, detailed, and timely information about health care and the Canadian (and relevant provincial or territorial) health care system.[95] For instance, prior to their arrival in Ontario, newcomers should be given clear information about the 3-month waiting period for the Ontario Health Insurance Plan (OHIP) and the documents that may be required to obtain it. They should also be provided with information about what is (and is not) covered and how to get outside medical coverage.

After newcomers have arrived in Canada, community outreach programs can be excellent resources for removing information barriers. By explaining how to access various health care services (including preventive and emergency services), outreach programs help to promote the health and well-being of newcomers.

Health care facilities that provide culturally sensitive care

Access to adequate health care can also be affected by cultural differences. Drastic differences between what is acceptable in a health care setting may exist between cultures.[193] As such, good health care service involves the provision of culturally sensitive care. Typically, this begins with cultural sensitivity and cultural competence training for health care and medical service providers. Such training teaches health care providers about cultural practices that may be pertinent to their patients' health.[193] These

practices may range from dietary practices and contraceptive use to beliefs regarding blood transfusions and rituals performed during end-of-life care. Not only should health care professionals be sensitive to cultural diversity, but service provision itself must be offered in a culturally sensitive manner (e.g., patients should be consulted when being prescribed medications that contains animal products).[95]

Examples of Best Practices

Services that remove linguistic barriers to health care

Interpretation and Translation Services Unit (Calgary Health Region)
      Calgary Health Region developed an Interpretation and Translation Services Unit – the first of its kind in Canada – that seeks to address communication needs between Calgary Health Region's patients and their health care providers. Calgary Health Region Certified Health Care Interpreters are available free of charge to ensure that patients (and their families) receive high quality health care and accurate information.[22]

Centre for Addiction and Mental Health's multilingual resources
      In the field of mental health, the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health provides many resources in 18 different languages on their website. These include pamphlets about general mental health issues, and specific information about understanding addiction and coping with stress.[35]

Services that remove information barriers to health care

Brooks Community Health Services' Newcomer Health Liaison
      Although Brooks, Alberta, is only home to approximately 13,000 people, nearly 18% are immigrants. Thus, Palliser Health Region decided to create the position of Newcomer Health Liaison within Brooks Community Health Services.[109] In an effort to reach out to newcomers, the Newcomer Health Liaison organizes workshops and information sessions, assisting newcomers with referrals and adaptation to Canada's health care system.

Guelph Community Health Centre's Multicultural Outreach Worker
      Similarly, Guelph Community Health Centre (the city's leading health outreach organization) employs a Multicultural Outreach Worker who seeks to improve access to services among low-income families, newcomers, and women.[77]

10. AVAILABLE AND ACCESSIBLE PUBLIC TRANSIT

The availability and accessibility of public transit are vital characteristics of a welcoming community.[g] Public transit is important because it affects people's ability to get to work, access services (e.g., healthcare) and meet daily needs (e.g., shopping for food). Importantly, evidence suggests that the use of public transit in Canada is on the rise. In 2008, Canada's transit ridership hit a sixth consecutive all-time high, once again breaking the previous year's record.[30] This record marked a 16% increase over a five-year period (since 2003).[30]

Recognizing ridership trends and the general importance of public transit, *Building Canada* is committed to helping Canadian communities meet public transit demands. A seven-year (2007 to 2014), $33 billion infrastructure plan, *Building Canada* is committed to improving the day-to-day lives of Canadians by supporting a stronger economy, cleaner environment, and better communities.[92] Building Canada acknowledges that public transit is a key part of urban transportation infrastructure and that sound investments in public transit systems can benefit the economy and quality of life in communities.

In large part, the role of public transit in increasing quality of life is a result of the broader access it provides to jobs, educational facilities, health care, and recreational facilities.[91] This is particularly true for newcomers, many of whom are unable to purchase a car upon first arriving in Canada.[119] Indeed, evidence suggests that, compared to earlier immigrants or non-immigrants, recent immigrants (i.e., those that have lived in Canada for less than ten years) are more likely to use public transit (e.g., to commute to work).[140] Accordingly, a lack of public transit poses significant barriers to immigrants' successful labour market integration. In addition to limiting actual work opportunities (e.g., due to inaccessibility), it may limit access to employment-based services (such as professional training).[119] Ultimately, public transit systems can reduce the relative degree to which non-drivers are disadvantaged (compared to drivers).[5]

In what follows, we provide a summary of outcomes and key processes and structures associated with available and accessible public transit. Due to a paucity of literature in this area, we do not cite best practices associated with transit systems.

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[g] Public transit includes various services that provide mobility to the general public. Services may include shared taxis and shuttle vans, local and intercity buses, streetcars, subways (metros), light rails, and ferries.

Table 10: Summary of Outcomes and Key Processes and Structures Associated with Available and Accessible Public Transit

Outcomes	Key Processes and Structures
o High ridership among newcomers o Positive perceptions of transit service quality, including factors such as: ➢ availability ➢ coverage ➢ frequency ➢ travel speed ➢ reliability ➢ integration ➢ price structure ➢ comfort ➢ accessibility	• Readily available information about service (and in multiple languages) • System that is easy to understand (e.g., effective signage at bus stops) • System that provides access to key needs and services • Affordable transit (e.g., availability of subsidies) • Presence of multi-mode approaches • Transit is considered when developing new public facilities and commercial projects • Infrastructure supports transit between cities

Key Outcome Indicators

High ridership among newcomers

Ridership – or the number of people who use the public transit system in a given time period – is a basic outcome indicator of a public transit system. Examining ridership may be particularly useful when communities wish to examine the impact of a particular enhancement to their public transit system.

Positive perceptions of transit service quality

While it is important to have basic information about ridership, examining perceptions of transit service quality – how a public transit system is perceived by users (and/or nonusers) – may provide a more complete picture of a community's public transit system. Based on their thorough review of the literature, the Victoria Transport Policy Institute suggests that transit service quality can be assessed along the following dimensions:[115]
- Availability (when and where transit is available)
- Coverage (the portion of common destinations in a community that are located within a reasonable distance of the transit system)
- Frequency (the number of trips that are made within a given time period)
- Travel speed (both absolute and relative to travel by car)
- Reliability (extent to which transit service follows published schedules)

- Integration (extent to which individuals can transfer between public transit and other modes of transportation)
- Price structure and payment options
- User comfort and security (including walking to, waiting for, and riding on transit)
- Accessibility (ease of reaching transit stops)
- Universal design (ability to accommodate diverse users, including individuals with disabilities)
- Affordability (user costs relative to income and other travel options)
- Information (extent to which it is available and easy to understand)
- Aesthetics (appearance of transit vehicles, stations, and stops)

Key Processes and Structures for Supporting these Outcomes

Readily available information about service (and in multiple languages)

In order to successfully serve all community members, information about the transit system should be readily available to newcomers (preferably in a variety of languages). To ensure newcomers have access to the information they need, communities can disseminate key information widely via the internet and newcomer service agencies.

System that is easy to understand

While providing information about the transit service to newcomers is necessary to promote ridership, use of the system is further facilitated when the system is easy to understand. Understanding can be increased via clear timetables, descriptive maps, and effective signage at route stops and stations.

System that provides access to key needs and services

Importantly, public transit needs to service a variety of residential and commercial areas, providing access to key needs and services (e.g., health care, educational institutions and training programs, employment, childcare, places of worship and social activity, shopping, and recreation).

Affordable transit

With single fares hitting the $3 mark in some of Canada's larger cities, cost is one of the biggest barriers to the use of public transit. This is particularly true for newcomers who may be living on reduced incomes as they search for employment. The availability of subsidies (e.g., at language/training programs and from employers) and reduced fares for seniors, children, and families can help to offset the costs associated with using public transit.

Presence of multi-mode approaches

Recently, transit systems have recognized a growing demand for multi-mode transit that accommodates diverse needs. Many transit systems (e.g., in Edmonton, Regina, and Thunder Bay) have implemented initiatives such as 'bikes on buses' that allow cyclists to combine cycling with public transit in order to make their travel around the city more convenient. 'Bikes on buses' provides cyclists with the option of either

taking their bike with them (via easy-to-use bike racks placed at the front of buses) or leaving their bike at conveniently located bicycle parking stations. Such multi-mode transportation systems reduce barriers by allowing people to cycle to a convenient public transit stop if they live or work in an area that is infrequently serviced.

Transit is considered when developing new public facilities and commercial projects
Just as public transit systems must ensure that their routes provide access to public facilities and services, when developing new public facilities and commercial projects, transit should be taken into consideration.

Infrastructure supports transit between cities
Finally, while transit infrastructure within communities is important, whenever possible, infrastructure should also support public transit between cities.

11. PRESENCE OF DIVERSE RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS

In Canada, "religious diversity is growing at a breakneck pace."[16] Between 1991 and 2001, the number of people identifying as Buddhist, Sikh, and Hindu each increased by over 80%, while the Muslim population increased more than two-fold.[98] More than ever, the presence of religious organizations should be considered when describing the characteristics of a welcoming community.[h] In fact, in a recent analysis of the Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Canada, participation in religious services was found to be an important predictor of whether immigrants indicated that their expectations had been met in Canada, and whether they would make the decision to come to Canada again.[85]

Table 11: Summary of Outcomes, Key Processes and Structures, and Examples of Best Practices Associated with the Presence of Diverse Religious Organizations

Outcomes	Key Processes and Structures	Examples of Best Practices
o Increased social networks	• Faith-based programs that assist newcomers with the settlement process	✓ Catholic Immigration Centre of Ottawa
o Presence of diverse religious organizations	• Strong relationships between municipalities and religious organizations	
	• Collaboration between religious organizations	✓ St. Patrick's Roman Catholic Church (Yellowknife)

Key Outcome Indicators

Increased social networks

By providing opportunities for fellowship, involvement and celebration, religious organizations facilitate the development of social networks and friendships.[153] These social networks can become the primary social groups through which people exchange childcare, rides, job referrals, and business opportunities.[197] In addition to connecting individuals to other members within their congregation, religious organizations can help

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[h] While we focus here on diversity among religious organizations, it is important to keep in mind that religious diversity can exist within a single religious denomination or even within a congregation.

to connect people to members of the broader community. Thus, they can contribute to social capital.

Presence of diverse religious organizations

Providing individuals with a place to practice their religion is important because religion forms a large part of many people's identity. In a sample of 2000 randomly selected Canadians who were asked about different factors that contribute to their personal sense of identity, religion was considered important by 54% of respondents.[142] Indeed, research has shown that religion can help newcomers to reinforce and maintain their ethnic identities, in part by helping them to preserve ethnic traditions and customs.[58]

Key Processes and Structures for Supporting these Outcomes

Faith-based programs that assist newcomers with the settlement process

For many years, religious communities and organizations have been helping immigrants adapt to their new communities, directly providing a range of services that help them throughout the settlement process.[58,59] Some of these formal services help to support newcomers' material needs (e.g., finding adequate housing) while others help more broadly in the process of successfully integrating into Canadian society (e.g., help with learning French or English).

Religious organizations often have many formal and informal programs in place that support social integration and networking, key components of the settlement process. By providing volunteer opportunities (e.g., supporting local food drives) and connecting people to local forms of community service, religious organizations can help newcomers integrate into the larger society in which they live.

Strong relationships between municipalities and religious communities

Because religious organizations can play a major role in meeting newcomers' short- and long-term settlement and integration needs, they represent an important local resource and an alternative to services offered through formal immigrant settlement agencies. Service provider organizations and religious organizations can foster valuable partnerships that are mutually beneficial.

In addition to streamlining the newcomer settlement process, strong relationships between municipalities and religious communities can help to address basic land use issues such as parking and traffic issues associated with inner-city religious organizations.[84] Moreover, when municipalities foster relationships with religious communities it will help them to understand and facilitate groups' diverse needs and practices. General needs include affordable, appropriately zoned properties, while unique needs may include burial preparation rooms or capacity for using elements such as loud music or drumming.[84]

Just as municipalities can assist diverse religious organizations with meeting their needs, in turn, religious organizations can help municipalities with planning and implementation in broad areas including public health and the use of public space and recreation facilities.[84]

Collaboration between religious organizations

Religious organizations require resources to operate, and many are beginning to realize that they need to collaborate with one another in order to secure funding and space. In smaller communities in which congregants may lack a dedicated space to meet, having to meet at shared public spaces or in members' homes often causes members to meet infrequently. To counteract this, some faith-based communities and organizations have begun to share space or to help each other informally. Other organizations have turned to hosting inclusive, multi-faith events.

Examples of Best Practices

Faith-based programs that assist newcomers with the settlement process

Catholic Immigration Centre of Ottawa

In 1953, the Archdiocese of Ottawa began offering basic support to immigrants and refugees.[33] As the demand for services increased, Catholic Immigration Services – Ottawa was created in 1976, followed by the Catholic Immigration Centre – an autonomous, community-based non-profit organization – in 1985. Today, the Catholic Immigration Centre of Ottawa has a strong presence in the community, offering a number of free services to help newcomers to the Ottawa-Carleton region. Services include: supportive counselling; practical advice and guidance on things like transportation, housing, and education; referrals to other resources and services in the community; and translation services. As mentioned in our earlier discussion of housing, the Catholic Immigration Centre runs Maison Thérèse Dallaire, a residential facility that provides temporary accommodation to newcomers to Canada.

Collaboration between religious organizations

St. Patrick's Roman Catholic Church

In Yellowknife, St. Patrick's Roman Catholic Church has opened its doors, letting community members hold Armenian-rite religious services and baptisms.[109]

12. SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Social engagement opportunities are closely linked to social networking because they represent connections with community members. In the absence of family or friends, two types of connections serve as primary sources of assistance – social engagement and networking – providing informal access to information and social support. While agencies can provide settlement services, they may not be able to address the isolation that newcomers may feel in the absence of social ties and connections within the community.

Table 12: Summary of Outcomes, Key Processes and Structures, and Examples of Best Practices Associated with Social Engagement Opportunities

Outcomes	Key Processes and Structures	Examples of Best Practices
o Increased involvement between newcomers and the community	• Programs that promote newcomer volunteerism in the community	✓ Supported New Canadian Program for New Canadians ✓ Pillar Nonprofit
	• Awards that recognize the contribution of immigrants to the community	✓ RISE Community Awards
o Increased intercultural understanding	• Programs that facilitate opportunities for engaging in cultural celebrations	✓ Culturama ✓ Culture Capital of Canada

Key Outcome Indicators

Increased involvement between newcomers and the community
The social engagement of newcomers takes place by presenting them with opportunities to be part of the local community (or collective). The absence of social engagement can occur when newcomers and locals live within the same geographical area but lead separate or segregated lives. It is pertinent to point out that social engagement of newcomers within a community does not function in isolation of the locals' willingness to explore the lives of newcomers in return. As such, the two types of social engagement are interdependent.

Increased intercultural understanding

In addition to social engagement, meaningful contact between newcomers and members of the local community can lead to increased intercultural understanding and respect. It can also increase a sense of inclusion and common identity for both immigrants and members of the established community.

Key Processes and Structures for Supporting these Outcomes

Programs that promote newcomer volunteerism in the community

Volunteering has often been cited as a means by which newcomers can be exposed to the labour market and build social connections.[44] Newcomers themselves have described volunteerism as a means of being part of a cause or organization they care about while allowing them to use their skills and experience. Benefits of volunteerism for newcomers include improving language skills, developing social networks, increasing knowledge of Canadian culture, feeling more connected to other residents, and increasing a sense of identification with the local community.[123]

Awards that recognize the contribution of immigrants to the community

It is estimated that 41% of immigrants are volunteers, and they hold 200,000 of the 1,000,000 full-time volunteer positions in Canada. In addition to taking on volunteer positions, immigrants also take on missions to improve the lives of Canadians and other immigrants through business initiatives, the arts, and community involvement.[9] Research on perceptions of volunteerism has found that immigrants are often inspired by stories of previous newcomers who enjoyed volunteering and had been successful at using that experience to integrate into society and improve their outcomes.[9]

Many organizations and governmental programs have started acknowledging the value of these contributions through various awards. Most of these award programs, which run in many cities, are similar in their goal: to publicly thank a newcomer who has shown dedication to the community. In his announcement of the Immigrant Contribution Awards, MP Peter Milliken pointed out that immigrants have made valuable contributions through a variety of endeavours, "and in so doing, helped to create a more prosperous country and a stronger society."[127] Recognizing the ways in which immigrants improve and enrich communities can be an important way to show immigrants that they are welcome, valued, and part of Canadian society. The importance of acknowledgement can also lead to greater involvement, as with the case of Body Ngoy. After being awarded a 2009 Top 25 Canadian Immigrants award, Ngoy left his full-time job to dedicate all his efforts toward community initiatives, and spoke of his love for the community and the personal sense of accomplishment he received after being recognized for his work.[175]

Programs that facilitate opportunities for engaging in cultural celebrations

While volunteering allows newcomers to engage with their communities and learn about Canadian culture and Canadian communities, cultural celebrations can be learning opportunities for the host society and represent an opportunity for them to become engaged with the lives of newcomers. Through celebrating newcomers' backgrounds, locals are not only exposed to information about other cultures; they become a part of something that is important to newcomers. While the celebration of culture is often

framed as a means of helping communities appreciate newcomers and become involved in their lives, cultural celebrations can be a tool for engaging newcomers too and allowing them to deal with existing frustrations and feelings of exclusion.[157] Cultural events can cover an array of activities including art, food, entertainment, and games, and can therefore create a positive medium for all groups to come together. In the case of rural communities where there may be a certain degree of cultural isolation due to the dominance of the main culture, setting up events celebrating newcomers' diverse backgrounds may be one of the few opportunities for these communities to engage with newcomers and learn about who they are.[165]

Examples of Best Practices

Programs that promote newcomer volunteerism in the community

Supported New Canadian Program for New Canadians

Many communities try to provide newcomers with information about volunteering. One organization in Ottawa offers a program named "Supported New Canadian Program for New Canadians." This support program is aimed at helping immigrants find volunteer opportunities that match their skills. The program provides them with information on the responsibilities and rights of volunteers, the benefits of volunteering, and how to search for volunteering positions.[189]

Pillar NonProfit

London is another city in Ontario that has seen the development of a service encouraging newcomers to volunteer. Pillar is a non-profit organization that has developed information packages for new Canadians on how to volunteer in London, and the benefits they can expect from doing so.[146] This service in London is in line with WCDLSC's (Welcoming Cultural Diversity in London Steering Committee) recommendation that the City of London put resources into facilitating volunteering among newcomers as a means of increasing their social inclusion and civic participation. Services similar to this are available in a number of cities across Canada, indicating that communities across the country have been active in their efforts to engage newcomers in this manner.

Awards that recognize the contribution of immigrants to the community

RISE Community Awards[61]

The Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Welcoming Newcomers administers several awards to newcomers. These awards target immigrants who have made significant contributions to the communities they live in, and the categories of awards include artistic contribution, promotion of a culture, innovation in business, leadership, and youth engagement. These awards show an appreciation of immigrants' contributions to local communities and highlight the benefits of social engagement.

Programs that facilitate opportunities for engaging in cultural celebrations

Culturama [169]

       The city of Steinbach, Manitoba decided to organize a day titled Culturama, where newcomers and community members come together to participate in an array of activities. The event, which was originally planned to be a one-time occurrence, proved to be so popular that it has now turned into an annual celebration. In a city where Mennonites have been a dominant group, holding this event was seen as a positive step toward minimizing intercultural misunderstandings while allowing all community members (including newcomers) to celebrate the city's growing diversity and engage with the influx of newcomers who are making Steinbach their home.

Culture Capital of Canada

       The Ministry of Canadian Heritage has been helping communities celebrate cultures by annually designating different cities as the "Culture Capital of Canada." This program allows for the creation of inclusive identities for cities and communities, and offers the additional benefit of providing a financial grant for hosting events and programs celebrating diversity and culture. In many cases it is awarded to smaller cities that benefit greatly from the funding they receive (e.g. Coquitlam, BC).[42] This designation is meant to promote the celebration of cultures and traditions, and is an engagement opportunity for newcomers and locals.[145]

13. POLITICAL PARTICIPATION OPPORTUNITIES

Political participation is considered to be a form of civic participation and engagement. An important part of participation is knowledge about one's rights and responsibilities. This is particularly important for newcomers who may be arriving from countries with different civic participation expectations, and who may therefore lack an understanding of how to become engaged in Canada's political landscape and why such engagement is important. Through providing opportunities for political participation, communities can help newcomers become politically-empowered citizens.

Table 13: Summary of Outcomes, Key Processes and Structures, and Examples of Best Practices Associated with Political Participation Opportunities

Outcomes	Key Processes and Structures	Examples of Best Practices
o Increased newcomer involvement in political participation such as: ➢ electoral participation ➢ political activism o Increased political representation among newcomers	• Political empowerment	✓ City for All Women
	• Direct assistance with political mobilization	

Key Outcome Indicators

Increased newcomer involvement in political participation
Political participation represents one form of involvement in the community[57] and encompasses a wide array of activities including electoral participation (primarily through voting) and political representation. Upon their arrival, newcomers have very few opportunities for participating in the political sphere and often have limited rights regarding participation prior to their naturalization. Not surprisingly, newcomers report being less informed about the political process in Canada and are generally not as politically active in comparison to native-born Canadians. As more time passes the electoral participation of newcomers increases such that they exhibit higher turn out rates in elections than their native-born counterparts. However, other forms of political engagement such as political activism, demonstrating, and signing up for political parties

are all activities that newcomers exhibit at lower rates than native-born Canadians.[6] This may be based on newcomers' lack of feeling of ownership over political issues.

Increased political representation among newcomers

Political representation is another form of political engagement, and the consensus is that minorities continue to be underrepresented in all levels of government, whether municipal, provincial, or federal.[6] However, some researchers have found that the municipal level represents the medium where historically marginalized groups have been able (relatively speaking) to make the most strides in seeking representation. Unlike provincial and federal elections, running for municipal positions requires fewer resources and the absence of party-line divisions makes the process less complicated.[57] When it comes to political representation at the provincial and federal level, the underrepresentation of recent newcomer groups is also reflected in their underrepresentation in the nomination process.[6]

Key Processes and Structures for Supporting these Outcomes

Political empowerment

Empowerment – ensuring that newcomers feel that they have the information and ability to participate – may be an effective way of promoting political participation among newcomers. While education, political interest, and socioeconomic status are all predictors of electoral participation among established Canadians, this is not the case with newcomers. Instead, voting behaviour among newcomers is associated with learning, access to information, and political awareness. In other words, education on political involvement and awareness regarding the process are responsible for increasing levels of voting among newcomers.[6]

Direct assistance with political mobilization

Sikh MPs and MPPS represent one of the few minority groups who have been able to mobilize politically; while they make up 1% of the Canadian population, they make up 2% of representatives in the House of Commons. This unique phenomenon is hypothesized to be rooted in strong connections within the Sikh community along religious, ethnic, and social lines. These connections are seen to provide strong support for members and to assist mobilization. Thus, local communities and governments should try to engage newcomers and minority individuals and promote ethnocultural mobilization in an effort to make sure that they have a voice in decision-making.

Examples of Best Practices

Political empowerment

City for All Women

This was an initiative put forth by the City of Ottawa. The purpose was to provide hands-on training and mentoring for minority and newcomer women by giving them the opportunity to become involved in municipal activities. Participants were encouraged to take part in the city's budgeting process, which was seen as a chance for them to get

involved in the political process at the municipal level, thus empowering them.[132] According to the organizers, "our aim is to strengthen the capacity of the full diversity of women and the City of Ottawa to work in partnership so as to create a more inclusive city and promote gender equality."[41]

14. POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE POLICE AND JUSTICE SYSTEM

Compared to other characteristics (e.g., employment opportunities and housing), the literature is less clear about the role of the justice system and police in welcoming communities. Although some agencies fail to mention it, this characteristic is deemed important by several sources, including Calgary's Innovation in Integration Steering Committee.[21]

Table 14: Summary of Outcomes, Key Processes and Structures, and Examples of Best Practices Associated with Positive Relationships with the Police and the Justice System

Outcomes	Key Processes and Structures	Examples of Best Practices

o Positive perceptions of the police, including factors such as:
  ➢ trust in police
  ➢ confidence in police
  ➢ satisfaction with police
  ➢ low levels of fear of police
  ➢ equity of policing services across different neighbourhoods and/or groups of citizens
  ➢ comfort in working with the police
  ➢ beliefs that the police work cooperatively with citizens to reduce crime
 	
o Police understanding of diverse communities
	• Processes that facilitate wide distribution of public legal education and information	✓ Chatham-Kent's guide 'Know Your Rights! Community and Police Relations'
		
		✓ Toronto Police Service's 'A Guide to Police Services in Toronto'

	• Newcomer outreach programs that educate immigrants about their rights and responsibilities in Canada	✓ Toronto Police Service's Newcomer Outreach Program ✓ Calgary Police Service's liaison officers
	• Community-police advisory committees	✓ Ottawa Community and Police Action Committee

	• Cultural sensitivity/diversity training provided to members of the legal community and law enforcement	✓ Calgary Police Service's Diversity Education Portfolio
	• Increased representation of newcomers in legal and policing professions	✓ Toronto Police Service
o Effective communication with police and in the justice system	• Availability of interpreters for police and in various aspects of the justice system	

Key Outcome Indicators

Positive perceptions of the justice system and police

Typically, when researchers or evaluators measure outcomes related to police services, they do so in one of two ways. In certain situations, it may be necessary to measure "objective" indicators of police services, such as local crime statistics and police response times. At other times, it may be important to measure more "subjective" indicators such as citizens' attitudes toward (e.g., satisfaction with) the police and justice system. In the context of fostering positive relationships between citizens and the police, the focus is almost always placed on the latter.

Traditional research examining perceptions of police services typically focused on citizens' global views of police services (e.g., by asking individuals about their overall satisfaction with the quality of police services in their communities).[158] More recently, researchers have recognized the limitations of such an approach and have begun to take a more multi-dimensional approach by measuring perceptions of various aspects of police services.[157] Depending on a community's existing services and policing initiatives, evaluators may also try to measure:[158,161,168]

- Trust in police
- Confidence in police
- Satisfaction with police
- Low levels of fear of police

- Equity of policing services across different neighbourhoods and/or groups of citizens
- Comfort in working with the police
- Beliefs that the police work cooperatively with citizens to reduce crime

Effective communication with police and in the justice system

An additional important outcome to assess in this context is effective communication, both between newcomers and the police and within the justice system. Effective communication ensures that newcomers' views are heard and understood, and that newcomers understand what is being conveyed to them. As such, effective communication helps to build trust and increase comfort levels.

Key Processes and Structures for Supporting these Outcomes

Research has consistently shown that factors such as direct experiences with police, neighbourhood context (e.g., relative economic disadvantage), and demographic characteristics influence citizens' attitudes toward police services.[161] The literature is less clear, however, on the processes and structures that create more favourable attitudes toward police services. That said, a close examination of the initiatives taken by some of Canada's most diverse communities (e.g., Toronto and Calgary) suggest that the following processes may help to foster positive relationships between community members and the local police and justice system.

Processes that facilitate wide distribution of public legal education and information

At a minimum, service providers and municipalities should take steps to provide all community members with access to public legal education and information.[21] As newcomers adjust to life in Canada it is important that they understand their legal rights regarding issues such as tenancy and employment. To ensure that all newcomers are provided with clear and concise information about their rights and the resources available to them, materials should be widely distributed and available in a variety of languages.[57]

Newcomer outreach programs that educate immigrants about their rights and responsibilities in Canada

In addition to providing easily accessible information on websites, outreach programs should seek to increase communication between the justice system and members of the community. Oftentimes, outreach may involve partnerships between police services and newcomer-serving agencies.

Community-police advisory committees

Community-police advisory committees can help to ensure that police services and the diversity of communities they serve work together to create safe communities. Such committees provide opportunities for discussing common challenges, for promoting increased understanding of community histories and concerns, and for open dialogue.

Cultural sensitivity/diversity training provided to members of the legal community and law enforcement

Just as newcomers need to be educated about their rights and responsibilities under Canadian law, it is important to educate the legal community and law enforcement about cultural sensitivity and newcomers' needs. Organizations that are part of the justice system need to be able to respond to incidents involving ethnic, religious, and linguistic minorities, as well as to newcomers who may be unfamiliar with the Canadian justice system.

Increased representation of newcomers in legal and policing professions

Another way to increase cultural sensitivity is to encourage members of organizations that are part of the justice system to be representative of the communities they are serving – for example, including minorities on their boards. This can help to foster awareness, trust, and understanding between the justice system and the diverse cultural groups that it serves.[21]

Availability of interpreters for police and in various aspects of the justice system

In the absence of effective communication, police and the justice system cannot effectively serve and protect the public.[184] As such, in order to serve newcomers to Canada, it is vital that interpreters be available in various aspects of the justice system (e.g., to help crime victims throughout an investigation).

Examples of Best Practices

Processes that facilitate wide distribution of public legal education and information

Chatham-Kent's guide 'Know Your Rights! Community and Police Relations'

Several Canadian Police Services have taken steps to educate immigrants about Canadian law and the legal system. Chatham-Kent has put together a guide, 'Know Your Rights! Community and Police Relations,' that informs citizens about police procedures and suggests ways of interacting with police in order to create positive interactions.[36] The guide also includes broader discussions about building an inclusive community, awareness of human rights, and identifying and addressing hate crimes.

Toronto Police Service's 'A Guide to Police Services in Toronto'

Similarly, the Toronto Police Service's website offers 'A Guide to Police Services in Toronto' in twelve languages including Farsi, Tamil, and Vietnamese.[178] The guide offers basic information about emergency services (such as 9-1-1) and answers common questions such as 'What should I do when a police officer stops me while I'm driving?' and 'What are my rights if I am arrested?' A DVD version of the guide is available in many languages at the Toronto Public Library.

Newcomer outreach programs that educate immigrants about their rights and responsibilities in Canada

Toronto Police Service's Newcomer Outreach Program

Toronto Police Service instituted a Newcomer Outreach Program[178] designed to provide new immigrants with information about police services in Toronto and on how to access those services, and to explain some of the rights and responsibilities under Canadian law. One of the primary means by which the Police Service connects with newcomers is through LINC and other ESL programs. In conjunction with the Toronto Police Service, the Toronto Catholic District School Board's Adult Education Program developed five language lesson plans for instructors who teach English as a Second Language to newcomers to Canada.[180] The lesson plans are based on Canadian Language Benchmarks (CLB) and cover a range of CLB levels. Lesson topics include 'Contacting the police' and 'Being stopped by the police.'

Calgary Police Service's liaison officers

Calgary Police Service has liaison officers who provide vital links between police and various immigrant/cultural communities. For instance, their South Asia liaison officer helps newcomers from South Asia adjust to the police and law in Canada, while working to increase cultural awareness among other members of the Calgary Police Service.[25] To foster a relationship with the South Asian communities in Calgary, the liaison officer meets with community members to learn more about their culture, religion, and customs. In addition, the officer participates actively in cultural events and celebrations. Similarly, the Caribbean/Latin Americas liaison officer participates in the African and Caribbean Advisory Council and the Hispanic Community Advisory Council.[23] Participation in these councils provides an opportunity to discuss community issues while fostering trust between police and the community.

Community-police advisory committees

Ottawa Community and Police Action Committee

The Ottawa Community and Police Action Committee was established in 1999, and includes representatives of the police service and visible minority and Aboriginal community members. The goal of the committee is to provide "an opportunity to interact on a level playing field and define common challenges and solutions."[141] Through representation on this committee, communities have a voice within the police service, and police gain insight into challenges and concerns from the community. The committee meets on a regular basis and meetings are open to all.

Cultural sensitivity/diversity training provided to members of the legal community and law enforcement

Calgary Police Service's Diversity Education Portfolio

Many organizations that represent the Canadian justice system have already introduced diversity as an important component of their employee training programs. For instance, Calgary Police Service created a Diversity Education Portfolio to ensure that

their members understand diversity and can provide fair and effective service to all members of their diverse community.[24] Through the Diversity Education program, Calgary Police officers and recruits learn cross-cultural and non-discriminatory communication. They also learn how to identify and respond to prejudice, discrimination, and hate crimes.

Increased representation of newcomers in legal and policing professions

Toronto Police Service
       Toronto Police Service has a recruitment strategy specifically designed to hire from underrepresented groups. To recruit new officers from various cultural and ethnic groups in Toronto, recruitment officers from the Police Service regularly attend job fairs and community events. In addition, the Toronto Police Service created a recruiting coalition comprised of employees from Somalian, Asian, Black, Jewish, and LGBT groups to recruit new officers in their respective communities. In 2009, Toronto Police Service was selected as one of Canada's Best Diversity Employers.[125]

15. SAFETY

One of the main objectives of Canada's justice system is to promote and maintain safety. Safety in our homes and on our streets is a vital part of the quality of Canadian life.[28] In fact, many people decide to make Canada their home because of its international reputation as a safe, peaceful country.

Although safety is not typically cited as a primary characteristic of a welcoming community for newcomers, the National Working Group on Small Centre Strategies[94] lists safety as a factor needed to create welcoming communities, as does Peel Region's Newcomer Index of Community Excellence.[144]

Table 15: Summary of Outcomes, Key Processes and Structures, and Examples of Best Practices Associated with Safety

Outcomes	Key Processes and Structures	Examples of Best Practices
o Low crime rates o Perceptions of safety	• Injury and crime prevention efforts at the community level	✓ Block Parent
	• Programs that target and promote safety for high-risk and vulnerable groups (such as youth)	✓ Public Safety Canada's National Crime Prevention Centre
	• Programs that seek to reduce the incidence of hate crimes	✓ Toronto Police Service's Hate Crime Unit ✓ Canada's Action Plan Against Racism
	• Support services for crime victims	✓ Victim Services Program of Toronto
o Low injury rates	• Public safety programs	✓ Passport to Safety

Key Outcome Indicators

Low crime rates

When thinking about safety, one of the most salient outcome indicators is crime rate. It is important to examine rates of various types of crime (e.g., violent, property, hate) and how these rates differ depending on factors such as location (e.g., residential neighbourhoods vs. city centres). Additionally, pertinent information may be gleaned by examining characteristics of both victims and offenders. Because they are considered a high-risk group, stakeholders should evaluate rates of youth involvement in crime (both as victims and offenders).

Perceptions of safety

While crime rates provide an objective indicator of safety, it is also important to examine citizens' subjective perceptions of safety, which may not directly correspond to objective indicators. Perceptions of safety are important because they can influence people's use of public spaces (e.g., parks and nature trails) and willingness to engage in physical activities.[14,80]

Low injury rates

When evaluating safety, it is common to examine injury incidence rates. Incidence rates typically consider preventable injuries such as those resulting from traffic collisions, drowning, poisoning, falls, and burns. Injury rates can be documented and studied in order to understand their causes and to target areas for community safety interventions.

Key Processes and Structures for Supporting these Outcomes

Below, we review several processes and structures that are expected to affect the aforementioned outcomes. While the relation between some crime prevention programs and crime rates has been studied, the effects of factors such as public safety programs and hate crime prevention programs on crime rates and perceptions of safety have not been clearly established. Ultimately, research has shown that poverty[150] and income inequality[104] are among the strongest and most stable predictors of crime.

Injury and crime prevention efforts at the community level

Safety begins with injury and crime prevention at the community level. Often, this takes the form of programs that involve concerned citizens who work cooperatively with the police and educators to prevent crime in residential neighbourhoods. Likewise, care can be taken to design (or modify) parks and other public spaces using environmental design standards that focus on safety and crime prevention (e.g., Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design).

Programs that target and promote safety for high-risk and vulnerable groups (such as youth)

Programs that seek to reduce crime and victimization often do so by targeting high-risk and vulnerable groups. Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness Canada (PSEPC) provides project funding, knowledge, and expertise to improve the

circumstances affecting at-risk children and youth (including members of ethno-racial, ethnocultural, and visible minority communities). Similarly, the National Crime Prevention Centre's *Crime Prevention Action Fund* provides funding to assist communities in developing and implementing crime prevention initiatives aimed at reducing offending among at-risk populations (including children and youth).[151]

These organizations are willing to fund community crime prevention efforts because a large body of evidence suggests that well-designed interventions can reduce crime and have a positive effect on behaviour.[152] For instance, research has shown that offering a variety of community-based opportunities and programs for youth (e.g., job training and placement, access to recreational facilities) is an effective way to reduce youth involvement in crime.[52]

Programs that seek to reduce the incidence of hate crimes

Evidence suggests that immigrants and other ethnic, religious, and linguistic minority groups are at increased risk of being victims of prejudice and discrimination. Among the most extreme forms of prejudice are hate propaganda and crimes motivated by hatred/bias. Hate-motivated crime results in extensive harm to both individuals and entire groups associated with the victim.[75] As such, when thinking about community safety, programs that aim to reduce the incidence of hate crimes in the community should be prioritized.

Support services for crime victims

While many communities seek to prevent and reduce crime and injury, they also recognize that, at times, incidents will occur. In these cases, it is important that victims be encouraged to report incidents, because accurate reporting can help agencies to further understand and prevent crime. In addition to encouraging reporting, it is vital that communities provide support (e.g., individual counselling, protection services) for crime victims (including victims of hate and racially-motivated crimes).

Public safety programs

Ultimately, safety is more than the absence of violent crime. It is also about the presence of public safety programs that target bicycle and road safety, water and fire safety, and emergency management (e.g., what to do in the case of a natural disaster). Research has provided evidence that safety interventions can reduce injuries.[195] These include seat-belts that prevent traffic injuries, child-resistant containers that prevent poisoning, and pool fencing that reduces the risk of drowning.[195] Community safety interventions can greatly assist in reducing preventable injuries.

Examples of Best Practices

Injury and crime prevention efforts at the community level

Block Parent

The Block Parent Program of Canada is a nation-wide, volunteer-based safety and crime prevention program.[17] By place a distinctive red and white Block Parent sign in a

home's window, community members know that help is available if they are lost or in distress.

Programs that target and promote safety for high-risk and vulnerable groups (such as youth)

Public Safety Canada's National Crime Prevention Centre

Extensive research has been conducted in the area of crime prevention programs targeted at high-risk groups. As a result, the National Crime Prevention Centre promotes the use of certain crime prevention practices, based on positive results from rigorous evaluation studies.[152] For information on specific crime prevention practices based on the best available evidence, please see the following resources available from Public Safety Canada's National Crime Prevention Centre: http://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/prg/cp/ncpc-pubs-eng.aspx

Programs that seek to reduce the incidence of hate crimes

Toronto Police Service's Hate Crime Unit

At the community level, several police departments have created task forces specifically dedicated to preventing, monitoring, and identifying hate crimes (e.g., Toronto Police Service's Hate Crime Unit).[179]

Canada's Action Plan Against Racism

The Action Plan seeks to eliminate racist behaviours and attitudes while promoting an inclusive and equitable society.[75] One of the Action Plan's priority areas involves countering hate and bias and assisting victims and groups vulnerable to racism and discrimination (see Positive Attitudes section).

Support services for crime victims

Victim Services Program of Toronto[186]

Funded by the Ontario Ministry of the Attorney General, the City of Toronto, and the Ontario Trillium Foundation, Victim Services Program of Toronto is a non-profit organization dedicated to helping victims of crime. Victim Services Program of Toronto works in partnership with Toronto Police Services to ensure that victims have immediate access to help.

Public safety programs

Passport to Safety

Passport to Safety is a national health and safety awareness program that seeks to eliminate workplace deaths and injuries.[143]

16. OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE USE OF PUBLIC SPACE AND RECREATION FACILITIES

Public spaces and facilities – such as parks, town squares, public libraries, and public community/recreation facilities – are areas that, by definition, are open and accessible to all community members. Use of public space and participation in community/recreation centres are important because they provide opportunities for newcomers to become integrated into the community.[176] Such participation may be particularly important for youth, as evidence suggests that recreation helps to facilitate positive social and physical development, as well as identification with peer groups.[60]

Although use of public space and recreation centres is not considered a primary characteristic of welcoming communities, various organizations and levels of government are beginning to note its importance. For instance, the National Working Group on Small Centre Strategies considers leisure a key factor needed to create welcoming communities[i] and the Building Canada Fund now considers recreation an eligible category of infrastructure for funding.[90]

Table 16: Summary of Outcomes, Key Processes and Structures, and Examples of Best Practices Associated with Opportunities for use of Public Space and Recreation Facilities

Outcomes	Key Processes and Structures	Examples of Best Practices
o High usage rates among newcomers o Satisfaction with programs and facilities o Newcomer sense of inclusion	• Presence of inclusive public spaces	
	• Diversity of recreational opportunities	✓ Cricket Canada Scotiabank School Program
	• Culturally sensitive programs and services	✓ Intercultural relations action plan (SSLDS, Montréal)
	• Structures that reduce financial barriers	✓ City of Toronto's Welcome Policy ✓ Positive Recreation Opportunities for Kids (Thunder Bay)

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[i] Availability of green spaces and parks, as well as accessible recreational facilities, are considered indicators of community excellence by the Peel Newcomer Strategy Group Consultation Framework.[144]

Key Outcome Indicators

There is not an extensive body of literature on the importance and use of public space and recreation facilities among newcomers to Canada. As such, more research is needed before outcome indicators and the processes and structures that support them can be considered evidence-based. Despite this lack of empirical evidence, we would suggest that usage rates are a basic indicator that can be used to evaluate programs and services associated with use of public space and recreation facilities. Rates can be measured by recording the number of people who use a given facility or program within a period of time, or by examining attendance at events that occur in public spaces (e.g., festivals). Stakeholders may also wish to examine participants' satisfaction with various programs or aspects of public spaces and recreational opportunities. At a broader level, an additional outcome indicator of recreational opportunities may be perceived sense of inclusion among newcomers, particularly among newcomer youth for whom recreation is especially important.

Key Processes and Structures for Supporting these Outcomes

Presence of Inclusive Public Spaces

In theory, public spaces and recreation facilities are created to be inclusive of all members of a given community. As such, they should be designed in a manner that facilitates a sense of inclusion in diverse individuals. This is particularly important in light of recent evidence suggesting that people feel better in environments that reflect their identities and make them feel socially included.[108] Indeed, social inclusion is a basic human need.[12]

In practice, one primary means by which individuals feel included (or, conversely, excluded) is through the presence of symbols or displays. The presence of symbols that represent the dominant culture (and the norms of that culture) may remind individuals who do not represent the dominant culture that they are "different." In contrast, the absence of such symbols – or the presence of diverse symbols – may help these individuals to feel included. [160]

Diversity of recreational opportunities

Newcomers require a variety of recreational opportunities, particularly newcomer children and youth. The relatively recent increased popularity of soccer in Canada has made it easier for newcomers to participate in Canadian sports and on sporting teams. Compared to other sporting activities such as hockey, soccer is relatively inexpensive and newcomers are more likely to have familiarity with this sport. In addition, the introduction into Canadian schools of sports not typically played by Canadian children and youth but popular in other countries may promote a sense of inclusion for newcomers and increase opportunities for social interactions with members of the larger community.

Culturally sensitive programs and services

Another way to reduce barriers to newcomers' use of public space and facilities is to offer culturally sensitive activities and services at public recreation and community centres. In a series of consultations with both newcomers to Canada and service provider

organizations, the provision of culturally sensitive recreational opportunities was noted as a key method of promoting social interaction within local communities.[95]

Structures that reduce financial barriers

Although all citizens have the right to access and use public spaces and recreational facilities, actual or perceived barriers may prevent certain individuals or groups from doing so. One of the biggest barriers to the use of public space and recreational facilities is a lack of financial resources. To make participation affordable, municipalities may want to consider revising their payment systems or offering financial subsidies to those in need. They may also consider ways to reconfigure regulations in respect of facilities that are underutilized.

Examples of Best Practices

Diversity of recreational opportunities

Cricket Canada Scotiabank School Program

The Cricket Canada Scotiabank School Program was introduced in 2009 to teach and promote cricket to elementary school children across Canada.[162] Popular in a variety of other countries, cricket has not traditionally been played by Canadian youth but is popular in many newcomer communities. By introducing cricket to elementary students across the country, opportunities for newcomer children and youth to participate in recreational activities with which they are familiar and to bond with other youth may be facilitated.

Culturally sensitive programs and services

Intercultural relations plan (SSLDS)

In Montréal, Service des sports, loisirs et développement social (SSLDS) created an intercultural relations action plan to respond to the recreational needs of ethnoculturally diverse citizens.[147] The action plan seeks to develop programs for adapting to diversity and providing intercultural training to employees.[147] For instance, when religious and cultural values led to frequent requests for separate pool hours for men and women, the City of Montréal created such sessions and took means to ensure that participants have enough privacy to feel comfortable participating.

Structures that reduce financial barriers

City of Toronto's Welcome Policy

The City of Toronto's Welcome Policy enables families and individuals experiencing financial difficulties to join Toronto's recreation programs via Welcome Policy memberships that waive program fees.[48] To facilitate the Welcome Policy membership application process, the City provides application forms in 18 languages.

Positive Recreation Opportunities for Kids

Similarly, Positive Recreation Opportunities for Kids, a service provided by the City of Thunder Bay's Recreation and Culture Division, matches children and youth in need with community-based recreational activities.[46]

17. FAVOURABLE MEDIA COVERAGE AND REPRESENTATION

"Media" is best described as a medium where information is shared and communicated, and includes radio, television, newspapers, and internet sources. The media is also used for the purpose of disseminating (and not just exchanging) information. The power of mass media rests in its ability to (1) influence recipients' perceptions of newcomers and immigration, and (2) act as a tool that immigrants and refugees can use to gain information and to gauge society's perceptions of newcomers (i.e., an indicator of how welcoming a community is).

Evidence suggests that the extent to which immigration issues are politicised and depicted in the media impacts attitudes toward immigrants and immigration intake. For instance, in Australia, attitudes toward immigrants became less favourable in the mid-1980s during a debate on the supposed 'Asianization' of Australia.[122]

Table 17: Summary of Outcomes, Key Processes and Structures, and Examples of Best Practices Associated with Favourable Media Coverage and Representation of Newcomers

Outcomes	Key Processes and Structures	Examples of Best Practices
o Positive portrayals of newcomers in the media	• Processes that encourage communities to challenge negative media coverage of newcomers • Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission guidelines and regulations	
o Availability of media for newcomer groups	• Programming in a variety of languages	✓ OMNI Television

Key Outcome Indicators

Positive portrayals of newcomers in the media

As a source of information for many Canadians, the media has the power to shape social issues, affect the way individuals understand the world, and significantly influence how Canadian society views Canadian identity.[121] The media therefore holds a certain degree of power in shaping public discourse, and this carries implications for how

Canadians react to, and behave toward newcomers. This is especially the case when there is a story receiving attention from multiple media outlets. An example is the arrival of undocumented migrants on the coast of British Columbia in 1999, which was often framed as an issue of national security.[83]

In addition to specific stories, there are certain targets who receive disproportionate attention from the media, most notably Muslim newcomers and Muslim Canadians, who have been linked to terrorist activities due to the salience of stories about particular members of these groups.[121] A regional roundtable set up by Policy Research Initiative discussed the issue of diversity in Canada, and concluded that poor knowledge of religion among the media and key players in local communities weakened Canadians' ability to address the challenges of religious accommodation in an open manner.[110] An iconic example is provided by Hérouxville, Québec, where local residents decreed that women could not be burned or stoned to death. Too often, the media covers such incidents without addressing the lack of support for such activities among the majority of Muslims.[114] More importantly, the town adopted these rules despite the absence of any record of such activities or endorsements from Muslims in Canada. Outside the scope of specific incidents, immigrants continue to be portrayed as different in terms of their values and behaviours, and are too often depicted by the media as failing to fit in with the rest of Canadian society.[67]

As targets of bias in the media, newcomers can be affected beyond having to deal with negative attitudes or discrimination. Negative media coverage has been shown to affect newcomers' sense of well-being, self-esteem, and identification with their new country. It can also lead to depression and a sense of isolation.[79]

Availability of media for newcomer groups

So far we have addressed the media as a source of negative outcomes for newcomers, but recent research has also found that, as an information tool, the media can help newcomers with their relocation and adjustment. Research looking at Chinese language media suggests that Chinese newcomers greatly benefit from having such media available due to the abundance of information presented and its presentation in forms with which they are familiar. Chinese-language media – particularly as it deals with national, provincial, and local issues – facilitates integration through promoting home ownership, educational options, and entrepreneurship.[79] While Toronto provides media presentations on national, regional, and local issues in a multitude of languages, this is not the case in many other cities. The positive influence of this tool and its ability to improve access to information suggest that cities and communities should do more to provide this type of service to newcomers as a way of easing their transition and facilitating their integration.

Key Processes and Structures for Supporting these Outcomes

Processes that encourage communities to challenge negative media coverage of newcomers

Negative portrayals of newcomers in the media decrease the likelihood of making them feel welcome in the communities in which they live. In addition to the standard media regulation that exists in Canada, it would also be useful to raise awareness of the

importance of challenging the media (or a narrow portion of the media) as the ultimate source of information, and broadening the sources of information available to local residents and local elites. This is especially important for people who live or work in areas with little diversity, where the media has been found to hold particular sway in locals' perception of newcomers and immigration.[121]

Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission

The Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunication Commission (CRTC) is the regulatory body that monitors all media and telecommunications activities and ensures that any occurrence of hate speech is penalized. As such, it plays an important role in shaping media content, particularly when it comes to the portrayal of newcomers and minorities.

Programming in a variety of languages

By providing programming in a variety of languages, media outlets can ensure that they are reaching newcomer communities. As such, they can reduce immigrants' experience of isolation and provide them with valuable information to assist in the integration process.

Examples of Best Practices

Programming in a variety of languages

OMNI Television[133]

OMNI Television is a free over-the-air multilingual/multicultural television network, owned by Rogers Communications and currently available in Toronto, Vancouver, Calgary, and Edmonton. This television station offers newscasts in a wide variety of languages (depending on location), and the content usually consists of Canadian news translated into one of these languages, in addition to news updates from countries in which the languages are commonly spoken. It also broadcasts documentaries and movies in these languages.

AN EVIDENCE-BASED AGENDA FOR THE FUTURE

As this review of the literature makes clear, there is still much work to do in understanding the characteristics of a welcoming community. In this section, we consider what strategies should be followed to move this agenda forward. First, we outline the type of work that is required in order to further our ability to define the key characteristics of a welcoming community and the indicators that can be used most effectively to assess such characteristics. We then propose a framework for working toward more welcoming communities in which these indicators form the basis for systematically introducing and then conducting research to evaluate the effectiveness of new policies and programs.

Identifying Characteristics of a Welcoming Community and Assessing Best Practices

A major limitation of the current literature on welcoming communities is that there has not been a systematic, sustained program of research examining each of the characteristics identified above, the presumed indicators of each characteristic, and the outcomes associated with their presence in a community, alone and in concert with other characteristics. To do so requires first identifying the end state we are aiming for - Successful attraction and retention of immigrants in a community? Inclusion of these individuals in the full life of the community and of Canada? High levels of life satisfaction by both immigrants and members of the established community? All of these goals? Once this end state is identified and operationalized, a systematic program of research can be put into place to examine the extent to which each of the characteristics identified as part of a welcoming community contributes to this desired end state, and the dynamic process by which they mutually reinforce and support each other. For example, it may be the case that employment opportunities are particularly effective in attracting new immigrants to a community when that community also has a reputation for widespread positive attitudes toward immigrants and cultural diversity.

Similarly, a number of the initiatives identified as best practices do not have strong empirical support for the claims made on their behalf, and little attention has been paid to the specific features that contribute to their possible success. Thus, systematic research on programs that have been identified as best practices is also essential, with a focus on identifying their key ingredients.

Working toward Welcoming Communities

In order to work systematically toward creating a welcoming community, we propose a five stage approach:

1. **Assessment of the current state of the community at a global and specific level**
2. **Creation of short-term and long-term goals**
3. **Implementation (adjustment) of policies and programs that are designed to target gaps and weaknesses and work toward these goals**

4. **Systematic research to evaluate the effectiveness of these policies and programs**
5. **Ongoing assessment of community outcomes, and feedback to stage 2**

To begin to work toward creating a welcoming community, it is necessary to know where a community currently stands and the gaps and weaknesses that may exist. Though such an assessment may include an investigation of the global state of the community in terms of the possible desired end states described above (e.g., number of immigrants arriving each year, number who remain in the community, life satisfaction of residents), it is especially important to assess the specific indicators associated with the characteristics of a welcoming community. This assessment provides an essential baseline as a point of comparison against which later progress can be measured, with the indicators also pointing to specific targets for intervention.

Next, it is necessary to create short- and long-term goals that the community can realistically pursue. Once again, it is especially important to focus on indicators at this stage because they provide concrete information about the types of policies and programs that are likely to be successful in reaching these goals. For example, the goal of retaining more of the immigrants who come to a community does not tell us how to go about doing so, whereas the goal of reducing the unemployment rate and improving access to suitable and affordable housing for immigrants suggests the types of policies and programs that should be implemented. Indeed, in categorizing the indicators in our tables above as outcomes vs. processes and structures, we suggest what types of processes and structures might be put into place to achieve particular outcomes.

Although we have suggested that it is useful to assess the current state of the community before creating goals, it is important to note that these two stages are likely to be interactive, influencing each other in a variety of ways. For example, although an assessment may highlight gaps and weaknesses that need to be addressed in the goals for the community, it is also the case that the goals are likely to drive the key indicators that are measured during the assessment stage. Thus, the first two stages may well involve an iterative process, with the initial assessment driving the establishment of goals, and these goals subsequently driving further, more detailed, assessments.

Following the completion of the first two stages, it is appropriate to systematically introduce targeted programs and policies (or to adjust existing policies and programs). As mentioned previously, using specific indicators to assess the strength of the welcome of a community as well as to set community goals facilitates the identification of policies and programs that specifically target these indicators. Of course, policies and programs may be introduced at the local, regional, or national level. Irrespective of which level of government introduces the policies and programs, on-the-ground work conducted at the local level is essential for identifying needs and determining the measures that will most effectively achieve desired outcomes.

This is the stage at which the process often breaks down. Without further research to assess the effectiveness of policies and programs, money may be spent on interventions without knowing whether they are indeed achieving desired outcomes or are responsible for outcomes that can be observed. Thus, it is essential to go beyond merely implementing new policies and programs that address gaps and weaknesses to systematically evaluating their effectiveness. Such evaluation can, once again, make use

of the indicators associated with particular characteristics of a welcoming community in order to provide a metric for success. Further adjustments can then be made to improve the quality of these programs and policies and to eliminate those that are falling far short of the mark. Repeated assessments over time are also useful for determining whether policies and programs are continuing to be effective despite changing circumstances and conditions in the community.

While evaluation of specific programs and policies is essential, it is also the case that ongoing assessments of community outcomes are a crucial component of working toward welcoming communities. By comparing such assessments to initial baseline conditions, it is possible to determine whether short and long term goals are being met, whether new goal-setting is required, and the overall extent of progress that has been made. An iterative process may then be established in which the various stages of working toward a welcoming community are revisited.

CONCLUSIONS

This report has provided a review of the current state of knowledge concerning welcoming communities, and has sought to identify the gaps in the literature and the work that needs to be done to fill these gaps. It has also provided a framework for a five stage approach to working toward a welcoming community. Such work is essential as the proportion of immigrants in Canada continues to grow and we consider how best to extend the warmth of our welcome across the nation.

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APPENDIX A:
EXAMPLES OF BEST PRACTICES FOR EACH CHARACTERISTIC OF A WELCOMING COMMUNITY

This table presents a summary of examples of best practices for each of the characteristics of a welcoming community. No specific examples were available in the literature for *10. Available and Accessible Public Transit*, and it has thus been omitted. More information on each example is available from the source indicated.

Characteristic	Best Practices
1. Employment Opportunities	**Immigrant employment councils/networks** • Waterloo Region Immigrant Employment Network (WRIEN)[191] • London-Middlesex Immigrant Employment Council (LMIEC)[118] • Skills International[166]
	Credential recognition and bridging programs[156,181,182] • Veterinary Skills Training and Enhancement Program (University of Guelph) [185] • International Pharmacy Graduate Program (University of Toronto) [112]
	Programs that valorize foreign work experience • Workplace Integration of Newcomers (WIN)[111]
	Programs that support entrepreneurial opportunities • Business Immigration Section of the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade (Ontario)[96] • Passport to Business Success(Ontario)[97]
	Programs that seek to create inclusive workplaces • City of Winnipeg[78] • Alberta Human Rights and Citizenship Commission[74] • Canada's Best Diversity Employers and Best Employers for New Canadians[124]

2. Fostering of Social Capital	**Programs that foster networks within newcomer groups**
	• Collaboration between Baha'i community and Citizenship and Immigration Canada[183]
	Programs that encourage local community members and newcomers to reach out and connect with one another
	• Host Program[38,40]
	• Job Mentoring Program[64]
	• The Somali-Jewish Canadian Mentorship Project[29]
	Language training
	• LINC (Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada)[38]
3. Affordable and Suitable Housing	**City planning that seeks to address newcomers' housing needs**
	• Immigrant and refugee housing committee[47]
	Services that collect and disseminate housing information pertaining to newcomer needs
	• Information Portals
	Temporary shelters sensitive to the needs of newcomers
	• Catholic Immigration Centre of Ottawa- Maison Thérèse Dallaire[34]
	• London Cross Cultural Learner Centre- Jeremiah's House and Joseph's House[117]
4. Positive Attitudes toward Immigrants, Cultural Diversity, and the Presence of Newcomers in the Community	**Programs that build an understanding of factors affecting attitudes toward immigrants and diversity**
	• Federal Level: Canada's Action Plan Against Racism[75]
	• Provincial Level: Welcome BC Anti-Racism Programs/Initiatives[194]
	• Municipal Level: Windsor joins the Canadian Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism and Discrimination[131]

5. Presence of Newcomer-Serving Agencies that Can Successfully Meet the Needs of Newcomers	**Innovative partnerships designed to locate services where they are especially likely to be accessed** • Settlement Workers in Schools (SWIS)[163,164]
	Assessment of agencies and their services • Calgary Immigrant Services Evaluation and Systems Overview[86]
	Funding from government and other sources • Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF)[138]
	Presence of specialized services for vulnerable groups • Immigrant Women Services Ottawa[89] • Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture (CCVT)[27] • Partners in Caring[116]
6. Links between Main Actors Working toward Welcoming Communities	**Structures that promote cooperation and reduce competition between agencies** • Ottawa Inter-Agency Forum[110] • Welcoming Cultural Diversity in London[44] • Local Immigration Partnership Initiative[135]
	Structures that promote cooperation between different levels of government and community agencies • Canada-Ontario-Toronto MOU[135] • Canada-Ontario Immigration Agreement[136] • Voluntary Sector Initiative (VSI)[188] • Settlement and Integration Joint Policy and Program Council (SIJPPC)[39]
7. Municipal Features and Services Sensitive to the Presence and Needs of Newcomers	**Structures that ensure that cities are responsive to the needs and interests of newcomers** • Toronto's Race and Ethnic Relations Committee and the Roundtable on Access, Equity and Human Rights[49]
8. Educational Opportunities	*Adults*
	Comprehensive language assessment and instruction systems • Pembina Valley Language Education for Adults[109]

	High school equivalency training and post-secondary institutions • Adult High School (Ottawa)[4] • Satellite campuses (e.g., Humber Orangeville Campus[88]) • Credential bridging programs (e.g., Fanshawe College[65])
	Youth
	Integration programs • Toronto District School Board[177] • Garden Valley School Division[109]
	Inclusive education programs • Educational integration and intercultural education policy (Québec)[128,129,154] • Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy (Ontario)[137]
9. Accessible and Suitable Health Care	**Services that remove linguistic barriers to health care** • Interpretation and Translation Services Unit (Calgary Health Region)[22] • Centre for Addiction and Mental Health's multilingual resources[35]
	Services that remove information barriers to health care • Brooks Community Health Services' Newcomer Health Liaison[109] • Guelph Community Health Centre's Multicultural Outreach Worker[77]
11. Presence of Diverse Religious Organizations	**Faith-based programs that assist newcomers with the settlement process** • Catholic Immigration Centre of Ottawa[33]
	Collaboration between religious organizations • St. Patrick's Roman Catholic Church (Yellowknife)[109]

12. Social Engagement Opportunities	**Programs that promote newcomer volunteerism in the community** • Supported New Canadian Program for New Canadians[189] • Pillar Nonprofit[146]
	Awards that recognize the contribution of immigrants to the community • RISE Community Awards[61]
	Programs that facilitate opportunities for engaging in cultural celebrations • Culturama[169] • Culture Capital of Canada[42,145]
13. Political Participation Opportunities	**Political empowerment** • City for All Women[41,132]
14. Positive Relationships with the Police and the Justice System	**Processes that facilitate wide distribution of public legal education and information** • Chatham-Kent's guide 'Know Your Rights! Community and Police Relations'[36] • Toronto Police Service's 'A Guide to Police Services in Toronto'[178]
	Newcomer outreach programs that educate immigrants about their rights and responsibilities in Canada • Toronto Police Service's Newcomer Outreach Program[178] • Calgary Police Service's liaison officers[23,25]
	Community-police advisory committees • Ottawa Community and Police Action Committee[141]
	Cultural sensitivity/diversity training provided to members of the legal community and law enforcement • Calgary Police Service's Diversity Education Portfolio[24]

	Increased representation of newcomers in legal and policing professions • Toronto Police Service[125]
15. Safety	**Injury and crime prevention efforts at the community level** • Block Parent[17]
	Programs that target and promote safety for high-risk and vulnerable groups (such as youth) • Public Safety Canada's National Crime Prevention Centre[152]
	Programs that seek to reduce the incidence of hate crimes • Toronto Police Service's Hate Crime Unit[179] • Canada's Action Plan Against Racism[75]
	Support services for crime victims • Victim Services Program of Toronto[186]
	Public safety programs • Passport to Safety[143]
16. Opportunities for Use of Public Space and Recreation Facilities	**Diversity of recreational opportunities** • Cricket Canada Scotiabank School Program[162]
	Culturally sensitive programs and services • Intercultural relations action plan (SSLDS)[147]
	Structures that reduce financial barriers • City of Toronto's Welcome Policy[48] • Positive Recreation Opportunities for Kids (Thunder Bay)[46]
17. Favourable Media Coverage and Representation	**Programming in a variety of languages** • OMNI Television[133]