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Local responses to Syrian Refugee Resettlement: A Comparison of Three LIPs

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Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada
Conseil de recherches en sciences humaines du Canada

Immigration, Refugees
and Citizenship Canada

Immigration, Réfugiés
et Citoyenneté Canada

1. The Local Immigration Partnerships (LIPs) in Canada
2. Key Concepts
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The Local Immigrant Partnerships (LIPs) in Canada

- Introduced by Citizenship and Immigration Canada (now IRCC) in 2008 as part of the Canada-Ontario Immigration Agreement

- "living experiment in the new public governance–embracing collaboration, responding to community rhythms, and forging relationships across levels of government and public, private, and voluntary sectors" (Bradford and Andrew, 2010; 2)

- Few studies have covered the impact of the LIPs (Burstein et al. 2012)

Neoliberal Policy & Settlement

The "roll-back" of government expenditures on various social welfare programs driven by economic restructuring and state reform had aligned discourses and policies that have reshaped the state-citizen relationship
(Peck & Tickell, 2002; Wolch, 2006; Mukhtar et al., 2016)

The Third Way

The voluntary and community sector serve as a punitive solution to several governing dilemmas that offer the government the prospect of addressing, and being seen to address, intractable problems through welfare services provided beyond the state, which are thought to involve lower cost while being effective and innovative
(MacMillan & Townsend, 2006:15)

The Shadow State

The shadow state is "a para-state apparatus comprised of multiple voluntary sector organizations, administered outside of traditional democratic politics and charged with major collective service responsibilities previously shouldered by the public sector, yet remaining within the purview of state control" (Wolch, 1990: xvi)

Research Context

- Lack of research focusing on resettlement system in a holistic localized manner (Yu et al. 2007)

- Local context + resettlement resources available = resettlement process, community integration & long-term settlement outcomes (Sherrell et al., 2005; Hynie & Hyndman, 2016)

- The Liberal Government's 2015-16 Resettlement Plan

- A comparative case study on LIPs' impact during the Syrian refugee resettlement (SRR) process

	LIP Est.	Total CMA Pop. (2015)	% of Immigrants (2011)	#GARs	#PSRs	#BVORs	Total
Hamilton	2009	771,700	24.5	982	79	16	**1077**
Ottawa	2009	904,905	24.5	1152	227	175	**1554**
Waterloo Region	2011	511,300	22.3	794	138	94	**1026**

Table 1: **Three Ontario Reception Centres. Source IRCC.**

Research Questions

1. What was the level of involvement of the LIPs in the Syrian refugee resettlement process (including the LIPs role in the resettlement of the three different refugee streams; PSRs, GARs, and BVORs)?

2. How did the regional context structure the nature and extent of the LIPs' involvement?

3. How effective were the LIPs in terms of coordinating, mobilizing, communicating and managing public and immigrant and refugee serving sector responses to the resettlement process?

4. What were the strengths and weaknesses of the LIP's structure in light of the Syrian refugee resettlement process, and how and why might these reflect differences in community context?

5. What policy lessons can we learn from the role of the LIPs in the Syrian refugee resettlement process in these communities; what were the most effective strategies, structures and practices used and how can these lessons be scaled up nationally and even internationally?

Stage 2/5: September-December 2016

Key Informant Interviews

- Semi-structured, 1 hour in length

- Interview questions:

  – help map the structures, networks and resources

  – identify the level of involvement of LIPs and/or other local stakeholders

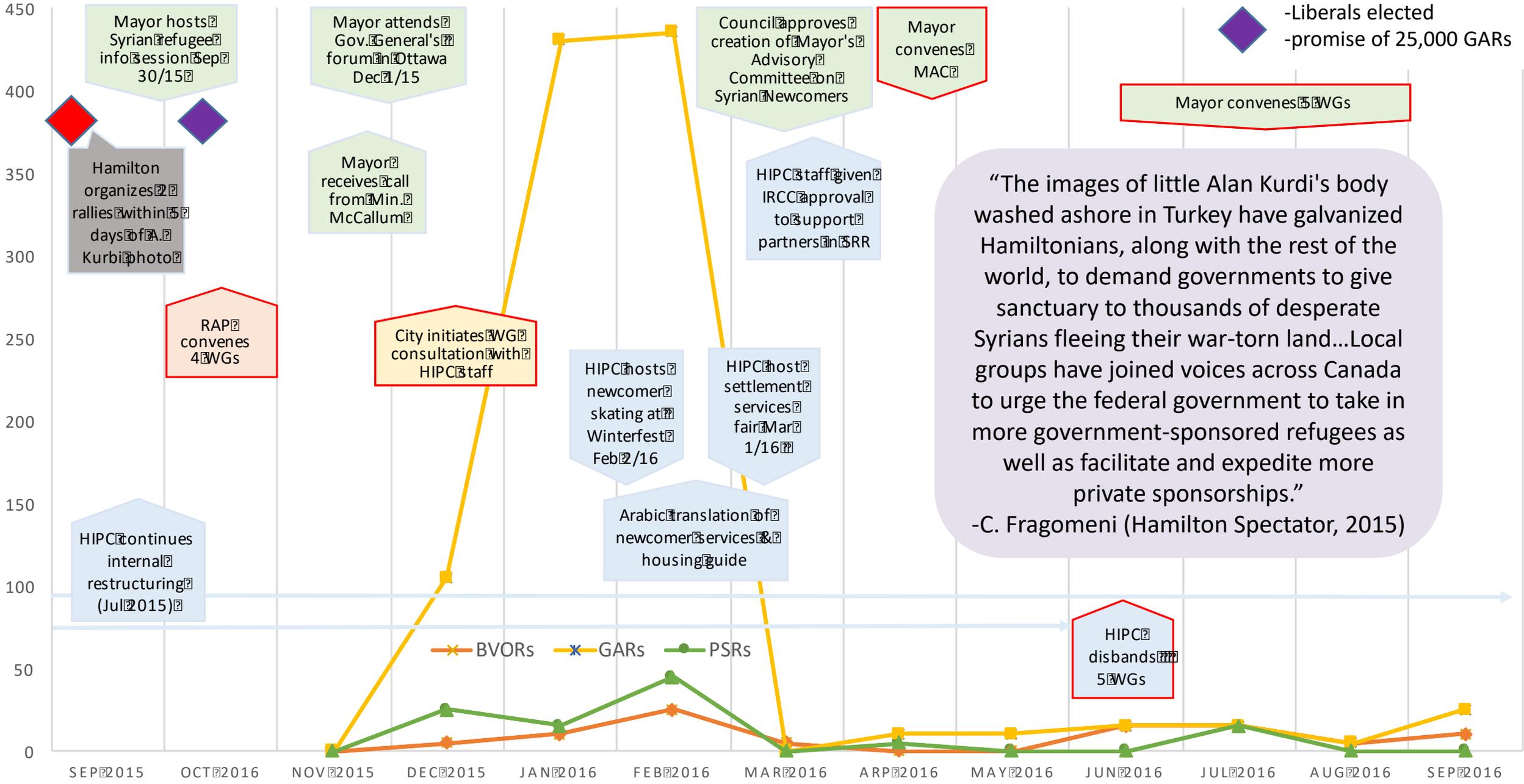 – identify the perceived effectiveness of LIPs in facilitating resettlement during the SRR process in each community

Interview List

- Collaboratively developed

Study Sample in Hamilton	N=11
Service Provider Organizations	✓
HIPC Delegates	✓
Mayor's Office Representative	✓
HIPC Historical Expert	✓
IRCC Representative	✗

Hamilton Timeline

Legend:
- Image of Alan Kurdi / increase interest in SRR
- Liberals elected / promise of 25,000 GARs

Mayor hosts Syrian refugee info session Sep 30/15

Mayor attends Gov. General's forum in Ottawa Dec 1/15

Council approves creation of Mayor's Advisory Committee on Syrian Newcomers

Mayor convenes MAC

Mayor convenes 5 WGs

Hamilton organizes 2 rallies within 5 days of A. Kurbi photo

Mayor receives call from Min. McCallum

HIPC staff given IRCC approval to support partners in SRR

"The images of little Alan Kurdi's body washed ashore in Turkey have galvanized Hamiltonians, along with the rest of the world, to demand governments to give sanctuary to thousands of desperate Syrians fleeing their war-torn land...Local groups have joined voices across Canada to urge the federal government to take in more government-sponsored refugees as well as facilitate and expedite more private sponsorships."
-C. Fragomeni (Hamilton Spectator, 2015)

RAP convenes 4 WGs

City initiates WG consultation with HIPC staff

HIPC hosts newcomer skating at Winterfest Feb 2/16

HIPC host settlement services fair Mar 1/16

Arabic translation of newcomer services & housing guide

HIPC continues internal restructuring (Jul 2015)

HIPC disbands 5 WGs

Legend (chart): BVORs — GARs — PSRs

X-axis: SEP 2015, OCT 2016, NOV 2015, DEC 2015, JAN 2016, FEB 2016, MAR 2016, ARP 2016, MAY 2016, JUN 2016, JUL 2016, AUG 2016, SEP 2016

Findings: Strength & Weakness

Strengths Prior to SRR

- Community histories of helping refugees
- LIPs were long established (2009)
- LIPs engaged multiple sectors
- Established working groups/ sector tables & relationships, even trust, among LIP members

Challenges Prior to SRR

- Unequal partnerships
- Key players absent from LIP
- Decreases in budget & staffing
- Conflicting interpretations of LIP

"So we have done what we always do, we acted as catalysts, we connected, we supported, we raised awareness, we mobilized engagements."
(Ottawa #2)

	Frequency of Communication	SRR Funding
Unfunded IRCC Agencies	never	no
Municipal Government	very rarely	no
LIP	rarely	no
Funded IRCC Agencies	occasionally	yes
RAP Agency	frequently	yes

"We've always had a good relationship with IRCC. We work at the local level...they have weekly visits to the hotel...it's one of the things that we proud ourselves on. They are our funder, we have a good relationship with them. They were responsive. They had limitation just like we did... we were all stretched."

- Waterloo: Resettlement Steering Committee

- Hamilton: Mayor's Advisory Committee on Syrian Newcomers

- Ottawa: {REFUGEE}613

"OLIP was embedded in the formation of Refugee 613 in that the people forming Refugee 613 all knew about the LIP, and what its work was and were active participants in it... I think you could argue that because of some of the ground work, there's a foundational piece done by OLIP over the years to improve collaboration across sectors that made it easier at the start and it gave us a good foundation and then the work of being together at the Refugee 613 tables kind of pulled those relationships onto a whole other level. (...)" [Ottawa 6]

- Catalyst (Waterloo)
- SRR built upon pre-existing LIP relationships (all)
- provided support role within municipal government (Waterloo & Hamilton)
- LIPs lacked capacity and membership to take on entire coordination of SRR, would need to 'scale up'

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