Understanding how service providing organizations and provincial associations support meaningful community engagement for immigrants and refugees

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Land acknowledgement

Overview of workshop presentations

Fostering cohesion in diversifying Francophone minority communities: the pivotal role of provincial advocacy associations

- ◦ Suzanne Huot & Anne-Cécile Delaisse

Using creativity to contend with uncertainty: providing opportunities for social participation in a context of austerity

- ◦ Atieh Razavi Yekta & Suzanne Huot

Producing inclusive community spaces: Community representatives' conceptions of Metro Vancouver's Francophone minority communities

- ◦ Anne-Cécile Delaisse & Suzanne Huot

Fostering cohesion in diversifying Francophone minority communities: the pivotal role of provincial advocacy associations

Pathways to prosperity workshop series, March 2021

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Community cohesion

- Individuals in a locality getting on well together

- Concept of community cohesion has been widened to include:

  - shared identity, respect, cultural differences, high levels of social interaction, civic engagement & people having similar opportunities

- One key aspect of community cohesion is integration, including specific factors enabling newcomers and established community members to adapt to each other

Methodology

- **4 key informant interviews**:
  - Representatives from provincial stakeholder organizations

- Data collected in **4 provinces**:
  - British Columbia (Western region)
  - Manitoba (Prairie region)
  - Ontario (Central region)
  - New-Brunswick (Atlantic region)

Results

- Contextual considerations
- Conceptualizations of community cohesion
- Barriers to participation & challenges to reception, integration & inclusion
- Community relations
- Challenges for diversifying communities
- Role of community spaces & networks/social media

Contextual considerations

- **Different geographies & histories**

- **Shifting demographics**

- **Politics and jurisdictional responsibilities**

- **Contemporary challenges**

Immigrant and official language minority populations in the 4 study regions

Statistics Canada, 2016 Census	Vancouver (CMA)	Winnipeg (CMA)	Ottawa-Gatineau (Ontario part) (CMA)	Moncton (CMA)
Total population	2 463 431	778 489	991 726	144 810
% immigrants	40	24	22	6
Official language minority (Number)	32 940	27 785	173 050	50 125
Official language minority (%)	1.3	3.6	17.7	35.2

Conceptualisations of community cohesion

- **2 central notions**:

  - Coalescing around common objectives

  - Openness to, and inclusion of diversity

«l'entraide, la collaboration, la participation, qu'on a une seule voix, qu'on se concerte et que on définit nos enjeux et on est tous d'accord sur ce qu'on a à accomplir.»

Key informant 1

Barriers to participation and challenges to reception, integration & inclusion

«Je pense qu'on vit dans une société où on a énormément de choix de choses qu'on peut faire, et nous on est dans, je dis ça entre guillemets, « dans cette compétition-là », au niveau d'offre de produits ou de services ou d'activités de nos communautés. Alors c'est un peu dans ce sens-là, puis aussi c'est d'encourager une participation active, c'est pas juste d'avoir des consommateurs, c'est aussi d'avoir des participants qui vont vouloir justement faire partie de cette solution-là .»

Key informant 2

Community relations

«Je sens une certaine tension entre les gens qui sont ici depuis plus longtemps puis les gens qui sont plus des nouveaux arrivants. […] Avant on a survécu en se cachant dans nos villages. C'est difficile de faire ce changement-là à être ouvert à des nouveaux arrivants rapidement pour une communauté. Mais on le voit, ça devient de plus en plus normal au sein de la communauté francophone que ça l'était avant.»

Key informant 3

Challenges for diversifying communities

Role of community spaces & networks/social media
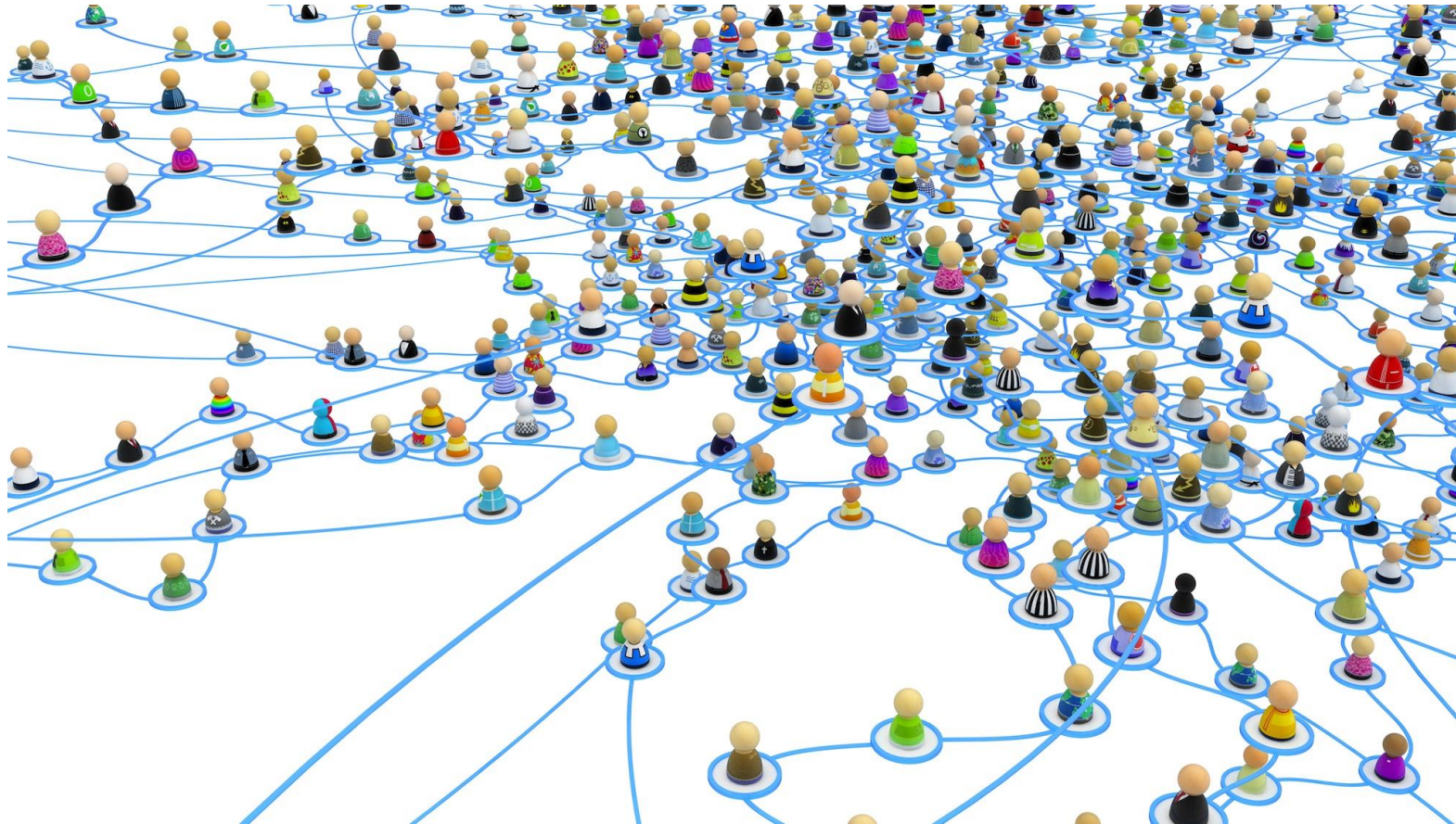
«Les organismes porte-parole dans les communautés, je pense qu'on a tous un rôle à jouer, mais je pense que c'est la responsabilité de tous et nous, comme organisme porte-parole, notre rôle c'est d'assurer que tous les organismes sont conscients qu'ils ont un rôle à jouer. Ce n'est pas juste une affaire [organisme porte-parole], ce n'est pas juste une affaire FCFA, c'est une affaire de tout le monde.»

Key informant 2

Conclusion (1 of 2)

- Promote reception & community supports for immigrants

- Encourage further openness, inclusion & intercultural exchanges

- Support economic integration & recognition of foreign credentials

- Foster networking in the Francophone community

- Improve representation of & discourses about immigrants

Conclusion (2 of 2)

- Enhance the dissemination of & access to information

- Diversify the range of activities to meet everyone's needs

- Promote the visibility of FMCs

- Increase the representativeness of leadership & decision making positions

- Foster collaboration between the various organizations of the local and global Francophonie around common objectives

Favoriser la cohésion communautaire dans un contexte de diversité

Rapport, février 2020

Préparé par : Suzanne Huot [1], Luisa Veronis [2], Leyla Sall [3], Nathalie Piquemal [4] et Faiçal Zellama [5]

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2. Université d'Ottawa
3. Université de Moncton
4. University of Manitoba
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https://immigrationfrancophone.ca/images/documents/Bibliotheque/Favoriser-cohesion-identitaire.pdf

Using creativity to contend with uncertainty: providing opportunities for social participation in a context of austerity

Pathways to prosperity workshop series, March 2021

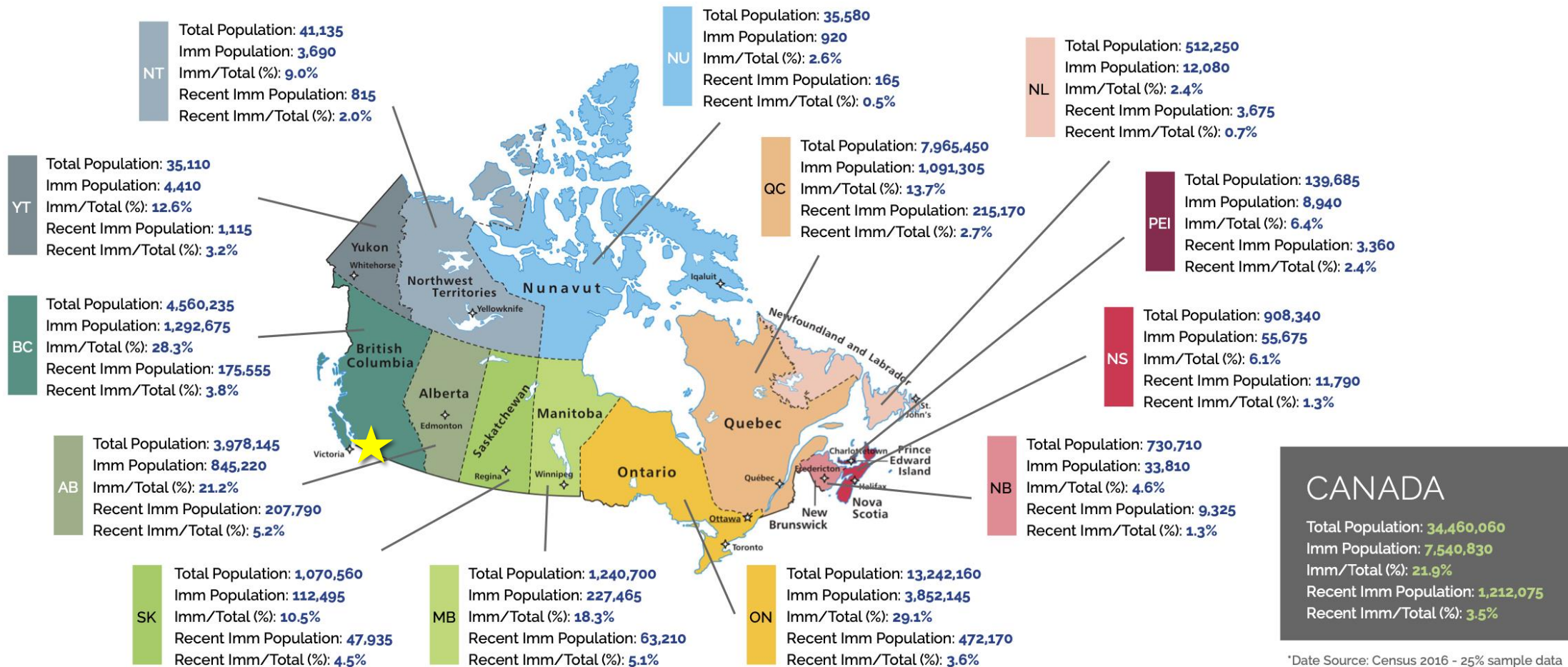**Atieh Razavi Yekta**– PhD student
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THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy

NT
Total Population: 41,135
Imm Population: 3,690
Imm/Total (%): 9.0%
Recent Imm Population: 815
Recent Imm/Total (%): 2.0%

NU
Total Population: 35,580
Imm Population: 920
Imm/Total (%): 2.6%
Recent Imm Population: 165
Recent Imm/Total (%): 0.5%

NL
Total Population: 512,250
Imm Population: 12,080
Imm/Total (%): 2.4%
Recent Imm Population: 3,675
Recent Imm/Total (%): 0.7%

YT
Total Population: 35,110
Imm Population: 4,410
Imm/Total (%): 12.6%
Recent Imm Population: 1,115
Recent Imm/Total (%): 3.2%

QC
Total Population: 7,965,450
Imm Population: 1,091,305
Imm/Total (%): 13.7%
Recent Imm Population: 215,170
Recent Imm/Total (%): 2.7%

PEI
Total Population: 139,685
Imm Population: 8,940
Imm/Total (%): 6.4%
Recent Imm Population: 3,360
Recent Imm/Total (%): 2.4%

BC
Total Population: 4,560,235
Imm Population: 1,292,675
Imm/Total (%): 28.3%
Recent Imm Population: 175,555
Recent Imm/Total (%): 3.8%

NS
Total Population: 908,340
Imm Population: 55,675
Imm/Total (%): 6.1%
Recent Imm Population: 11,790
Recent Imm/Total (%): 1.3%

AB
Total Population: 3,978,145
Imm Population: 845,220
Imm/Total (%): 21.2%
Recent Imm Population: 207,790
Recent Imm/Total (%): 5.2%

NB
Total Population: 730,710
Imm Population: 33,810
Imm/Total (%): 4.6%
Recent Imm Population: 9,325
Recent Imm/Total (%): 1.3%

SK
Total Population: 1,070,560
Imm Population: 112,495
Imm/Total (%): 10.5%
Recent Imm Population: 47,935
Recent Imm/Total (%): 4.5%

MB
Total Population: 1,240,700
Imm Population: 227,465
Imm/Total (%): 18.3%
Recent Imm Population: 63,210
Recent Imm/Total (%): 5.1%

ON
Total Population: 13,242,160
Imm Population: 3,852,145
Imm/Total (%): 29.1%
Recent Imm Population: 472,170
Recent Imm/Total (%): 3.6%

CANADA
Total Population: 34,460,060
Imm Population: 7,540,830
Imm/Total (%): 21.9%
Recent Imm Population: 1,212,075
Recent Imm/Total (%): 3.5%

*Date Source: Census 2016 - 25% sample data

NEOLIBERAL GOVERNANCE OF THE SETTLEMENT SECTOR

Under neoliberal governance, the settlement sector, for the most part, suffered:
- changing funding regimes (i.e., "contract funding regime")
- budget cuts
- administrative burden (i.e., "administrative reporting"/"accountability requirements")
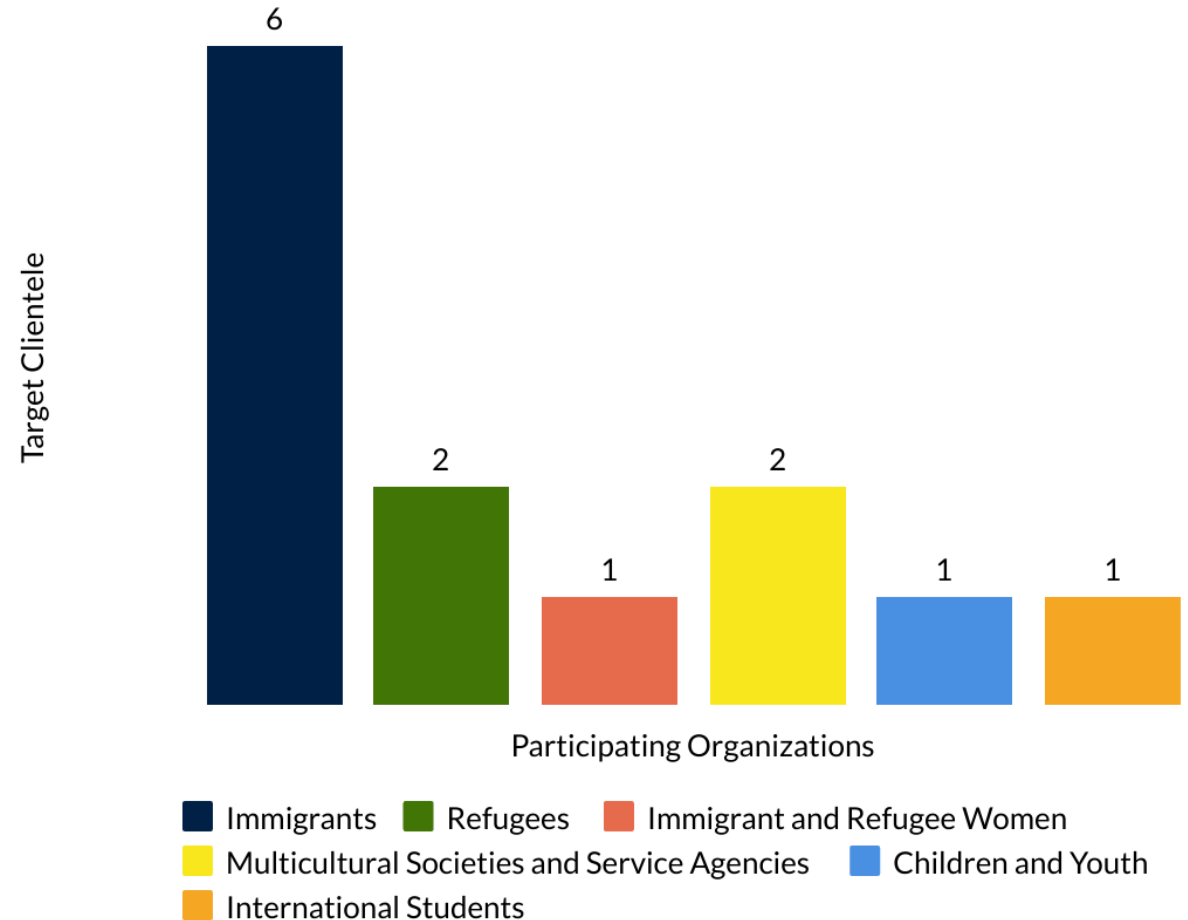- increased competition

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

Examining the lived experiences of settlement workers in terms of planning and implementing programs in a neoliberal policy and funding environment in Metro Vancouver, Canada.

METHODOLOGY:

> **20 key informant interviews** were conducted with people who had first hand knowledge about the immigrant and settlement integration sector (i.e., community leaders, professionals, settlement workers, and public servants)

Target Clientele

Participating Organizations

■ Immigrants ■ Refugees ■ Immigrant and Refugee Women ■ Multicultural Societies and Service Agencies ■ Children and Youth ■ International Students

THREE KEY THEMES

1. Affective Commitment

2. Continuance Commitment

3. Normative Commitment

(Meyer and Allen, 1996)

AFFECTIVE COMMITMENT

Affection for supporting others and connecting by identifying with another person (i.e., lived experience of migration; language)

AFFECTIVE COMMITMENT EXAMPLES

"… many settlement workers that we work with, … they get hired for their **language expertise but also for their knowledge of the settlement journey and experience itself**. So many who we work with are former refugees…. they've come as … permanent residents and they've come as immigrants to Canada as well…" *(Interview 4)*
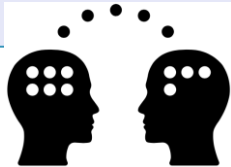
"...[on] our staff, we have 10 **different languages**… we have this five former clients on our staff team now." *(Interview 7)*

"…we work from the community perspective and... because we are … **newcomers ourself, or with [lived] experiences**…Then it's much easier for us to understand the issues and to be able to work with [youth immigrants]." *(Interview 2)*

CONTINUANCE COMMITMENT

The need to stay connected with the organization because of:

- **Social cost:** he/she/they perceive high cost of losing friendship ties with co-workers

- **Economic cost:** fear of losing employment

CONTINUANCE COMMITMENT EXAMPLES

"We had federal funding, and then when federal funding was pulled on … we weren't resilient…. And had to shut down and then, you know, had basically no staff for a while…" *(Interview 7)*

"…we partner with several agencies to provide **networking nights** … where groups of people come together… they generally have a format where there's some learning involved and then **there's a chance for people to connect and network**." *(Interview 20)*

"Our numbers are going up but our funding is going down, so that just mean fewer staff, for example the francophone settlement worker that we would have loved to keep we weren't able to keep her around, yeah that's always a challenge." *(Interview 1)*
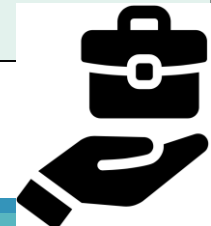
NORMATIVE COMMITMENT

Feelings of obligation: these feelings may derive from an individual experience before joining the organization (i.e., personal experience with the organization; volunteer work that leads to employment)

NORMATIVE COMMITMENT EXAMPLES

I remember …12 years ago, I also was an immigrant… I came here with my husband and my two daughters. And I know what is being new in a country …how is to start from a scratch…how hard you have to work…. when I was new here, I had people who were very supportive, who were all the time consider ... talking to me, calling me and letting me know about the benefits that I can apply, resources that I can …find … and that sense of community that I felt at that time, I really fell in love with that…That's when I decided to work in this field. Although it's not my background, but,… I experienced that... based on that, **I feel more empathy, for migrants, for refugees** … I know how hard it is [to] leave your country…" *(Interview 17)*

"…our volunteer coordinator… she was a **newcomer herself from Pakistan**…and she went through ... some of our programs.... she's now the coordinator of volunteer programs here." (Interview 9)
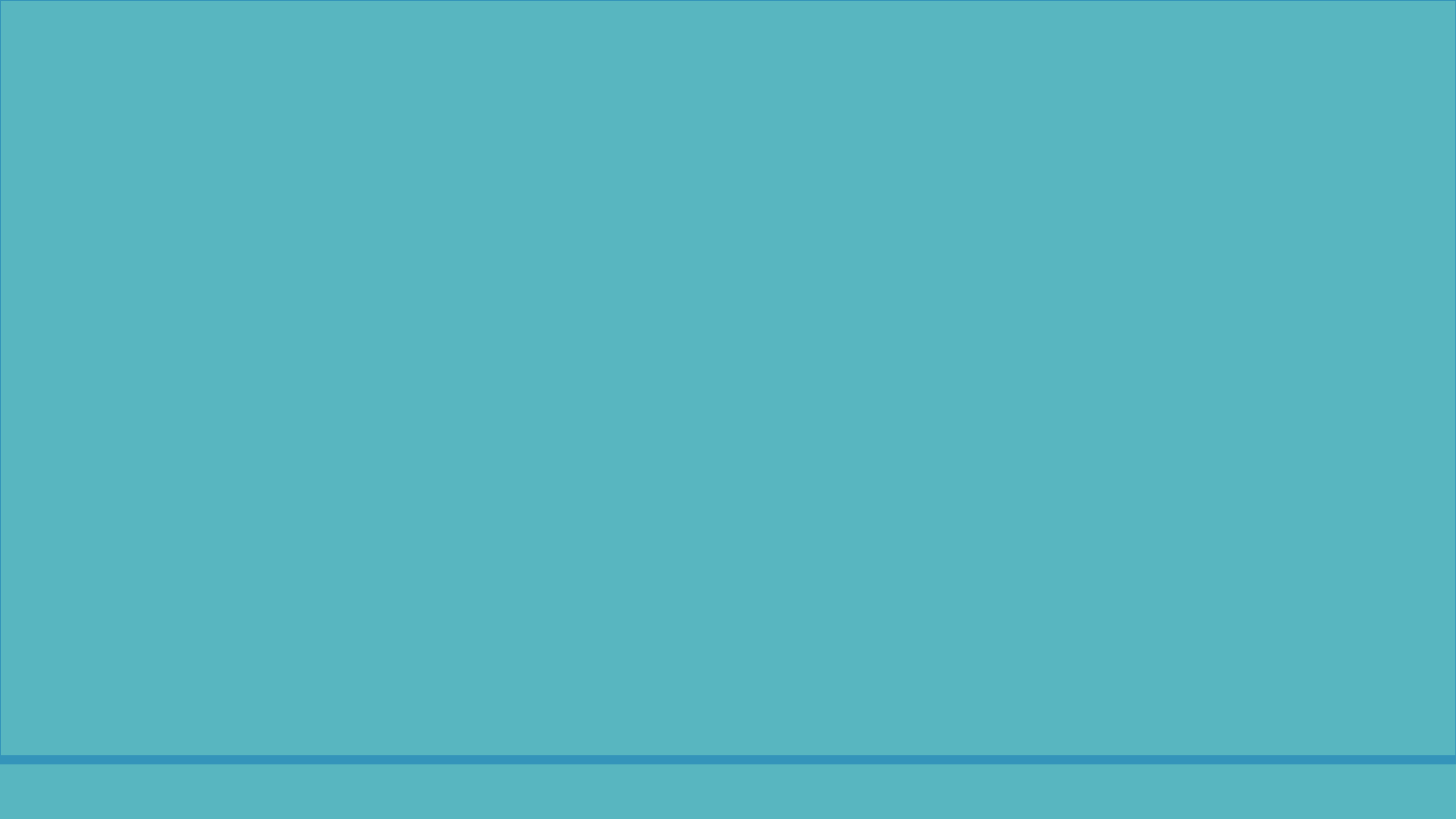
DISCUSSION

The study findings indicate that employees in the settlement sector are likely to show high level of commitment to an organization when the organization:

- Commit to people-first values
- Mission-driven
- Value teamwork
- Promote developmental activities

Producing inclusive community spaces: Community representatives' conceptions of Metro Vancouver's Francophone minority communities
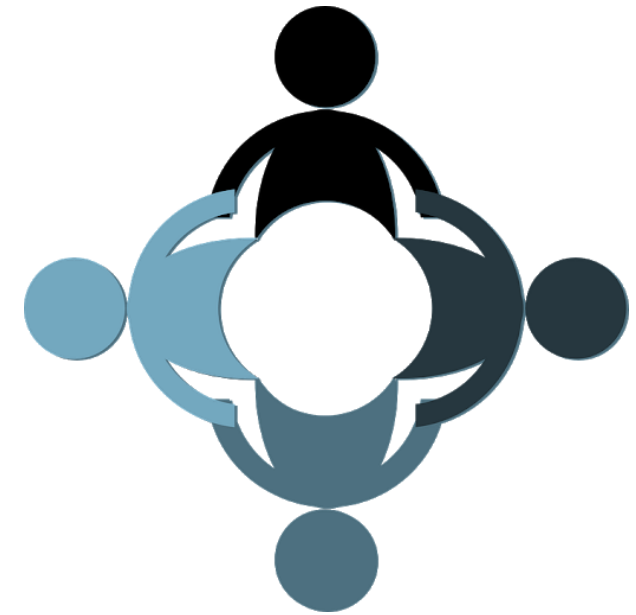
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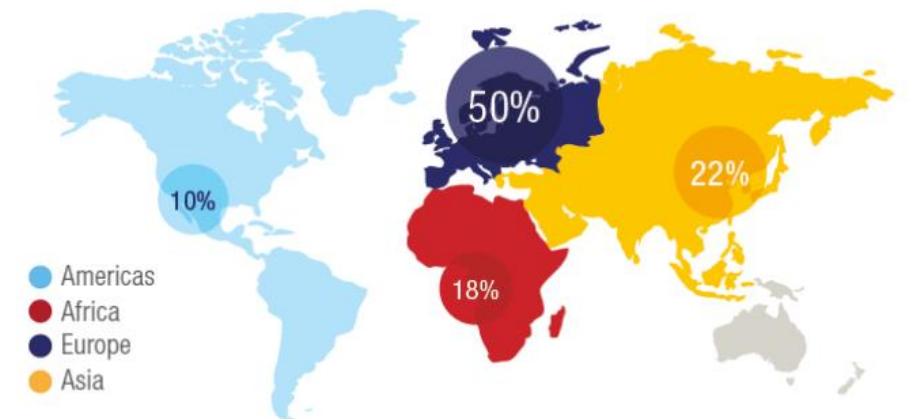University of British Columbia

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Context

- **Francophone immigration** to support the vitality of Francophone Minority Communities (FMC)

- In B.C., immigration is key to the FMCs as the province has **the highest proportion of immigrants in its French-speaking population** as compared to other Anglophone provinces

- **How do Francophone community sites include and serve such a diverse population in a minority context?**

WHERE WERE THEY **BORN?**

Elsewhere in Canada: **59%**

In British Columbia: **12%**

Abroad: **28%**

WHERE WERE **FRENCH-SPEAKING IMMIGRANTS BORN?**

10%

50%

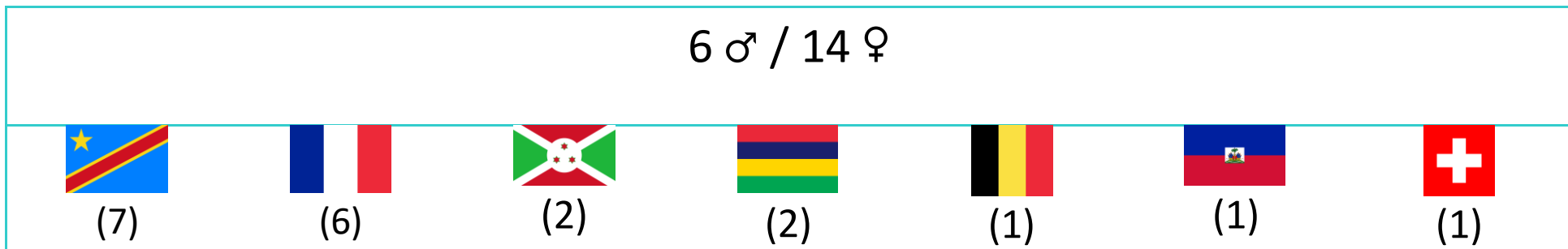22%

18%

- Americas
- Africa
- Europe
- Asia

Methodology

Critical ethnography in partnership with 3 community sites
- **Methods**
  - **Observations** of activities/events organized by partnering community sites
  - **Personal & optional 'go along' interviews** with 20 French-speaking immigrant & refugee participants

6 ♂ / 14 ♀						
(7)	(6)	(2)	(2)	(1)	(1)	(1)

  - **Key informant interviews** with 6 representatives from the partnering sites & relevant community organizations

3 partnering community sites

	Church	**Community association**	**Provincial organisation**
Type of mandate	Religious	Social gathering + Services	Social gathering + Services
Targeted population	Christians	Francophones of a specific municipality	Francophones with specific intersecting identity markers and interest
Geographic scope	City-wide	City-wide	Provincial
Public funding	No	Yes	Yes

3 additional community sites

	Organisation A	Organisation B	Organisation C
Type of mandate	Services	Services	Social gathering + Services
Targeted population	Francophone immigrants	Francophone immigrants	Francophones with specific intersecting identity markers and interest
Geographic scope	Provincial	Provincial	Provincial
Public funding	Yes	Yes	Yes

Findings

- Envisioning diverse and inclusive community sites : three different approaches
- Reaching beyond boundaries

Envisioning diverse and inclusive community sites : Three different approaches

- IN THE CHURCH
  - The faith as uniting factor
  - Regular meetings, in intimate spaces
  - Informal but broad range of services

« For me I believe that people come to church, as I said, from different origins, from different educational backgrounds, different nationalities, different races, different ages […] when people come here, each have their way of doing things but what unites them, bring them closer, it is the vision of the church, what brings them closer it is the church.»

Church key informant

Envisioning diverse and inclusive community sites : Three different approaches

- IN THE PROVINCIAL ORGANISATION
  - Inclusion and participation of Francophone immigrants expected to happen organically; as a natural outcome of the increasing arrival of immigrants to the community
  - Keeping associations open by not imposing specific requirements to participate
  - Cultural sensitivity training for the employees

"Researcher: so you find a mix [between people born in Canada and abroad] in your participants and in the employees of the association and the board of directors

Informant: absolutely, absolutely, yeah, because I have to say that there, at the level of the boards of directors, uh it's the members in fact, they have to be a member, one of our members, so this way [...] it is representative of what - maybe not statistically, but certainly in terms of numbers uh yes we are representative in this regard, yes"

Provincial organisation key informant

Envisioning diverse and inclusive community sites : Three different approaches

- IN THE COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION
  - Proactive attitude to bring diverse Francophones together (the presence of immigrants implies the transformation of the association itself)
  - The French language as a uniting factor
  - Organizing activities appealing to diverse audiences

"My strategy is really, I am a facilitator [...] and so I ensure that this workshop or this activity is really interesting for everyone; [...] so everyone will participate and there will be all sorts of activities so that everyone can be here. [...] Did you notice during our picnic that was amazing, so we had people from 8 to 80 years old. [...] The goal is for everyone to participate, everyone was playing, it is wonderful."

Community association key informant

Reaching beyond boundaries

- Challenges to reach :
  - People who are not already participating in the community
  - People who do not know about the community
  - People who live further away from big urban centers

"Could you describe an overview of the migrants who participate in your organisation […] ?

So, I would say, women, women that are quite educated, in terms of social milieu, because feminism – there are women whom we have a hard time to reach […] because our organisation has referencing that might be scary, feminism is not – for some people who are in the community or who orient people in the community – we started to work on our visibility regarding this […] we don't use the word feminism because the word feminism has a lot of connotations which could make us, which actually make us currently lose a lot of Francophone women

Organisation C key informant

"A big challenge that we are facing […] in general the lack of visibility, the lack of renown of the settlement services […] we are equipped to provide this kind of services to newcomers but unfortunately we are a bit lost in the crowd. The Francophone community and its organisations do not have the same communication budget than big Anglophone settlement agencies, so when new comers land at the airport, immediately people like SUCCESS, MOSAIC, ISSofBC are much more visible […] it is still a battle we are fighting to make ourselves more visible."

Organisation A key informant

"the other thing, that is maybe a problem for participation, it is the locations [...] Francophone organisations are in urban centers like Vancouver. Vancouver attracts a certain type of immigrants. [...] Young temporary residents, they like to come settle here. Thus, you can see them, they can participate here, but if you are looking for permanent residents [...] you won't find them here. They will be in the suburbs where it is cheaper [...] so for us, settlement services are mostly centralized in Vancouver [...] maybe we should decentralize community services as well. But I think if you have to call them in Maple Ridge to come watch a movie at the [Francophone cultural center in Vancouver] it's a long distance so it can maybe discourage them [...] but I can tell you that distance can be limiting."

Organisation B key informant

Conclusion

The way forward

- A proactive attitude to unite the diversity of the community
- More representativity in the organisations to better attract and meet the needs of the diversity of the community
- Taking into account the geographic dynamics and decentralizing community services and activities

Acknowledgements

Study participants

Co-investigators: Luisa Veronis, Gillian Creese

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