

(Comm)Unity Living: How to Strengthen Shared Priorities and Amplify the Collective Voice of the Settlement and Integration Sector

November 2024





As a provincial umbrella association, AMSSA acknowledges that B.C. is on the unceded homelands of First Nations who have stewarded this land since time immemorial. We recognize the privilege that we have as settlers on this land and acknowledge that AMSSA's operations is on the unceded traditional territories of the x^wməθkwəy'əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and Səl'ílwətaʔ/Selilwitulh (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations. As an organization, AMSSA is committed to creating a safe space for Indigenous voices.

.....

About AMSSA

The Affiliation of Multicultural Societies and Service Agencies of British Columbia (AMSSA) is the provincial umbrella association for agencies serving newcomers. The organization strengthens over 90 member agencies, as well as hundreds of community organizations agencies that serve newcomers and build culturally inclusive communities, with the knowledge, resources, and support they need to fulfill their mandates.

AMSSA provides support by:

- Building knowledge and resources based on current research and policy trends
- Expanding partnerships and networks
- Developing and facilitating training events

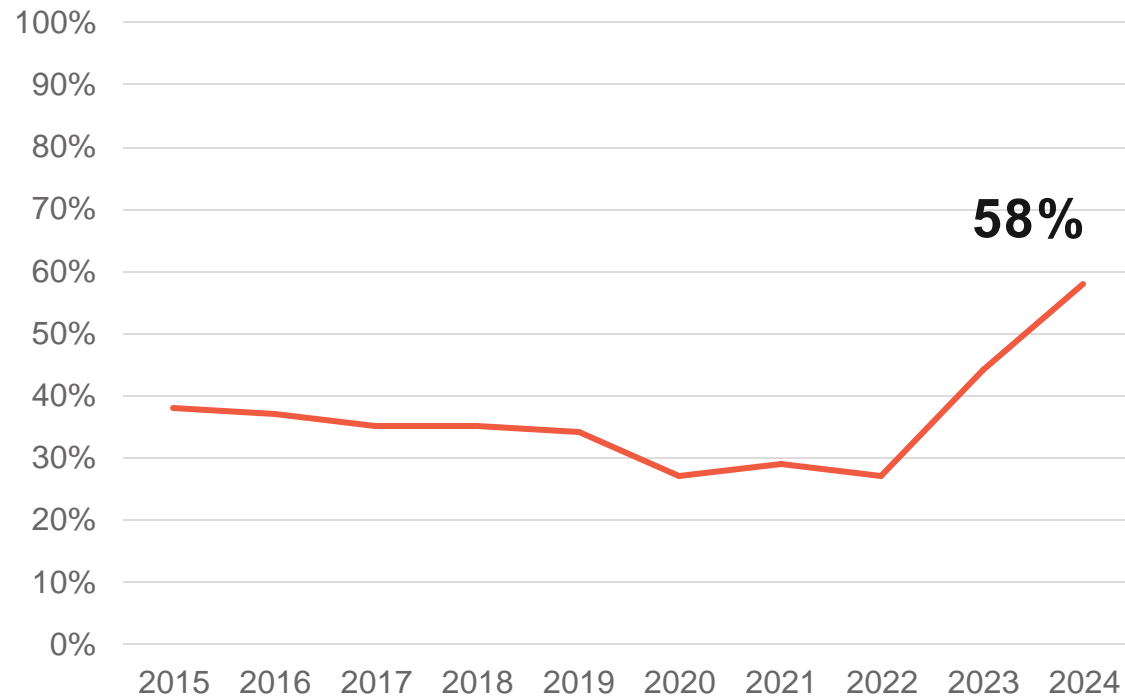


AMSSA: Countering Negative Rhetoric in British Columbia



Rising Public Anti-Immigration Sentiment

Percentage of Canadians who think there is too much immigration to Canada, 2015-2024



Source: Focus Canada Opinion Research Poll

78%

of Canadians believe current immigration rates are contributing to the current housing availability and affordability crisis

76%

of Canadians believe current immigration rates are contributing to stresses on healthcare services

54%

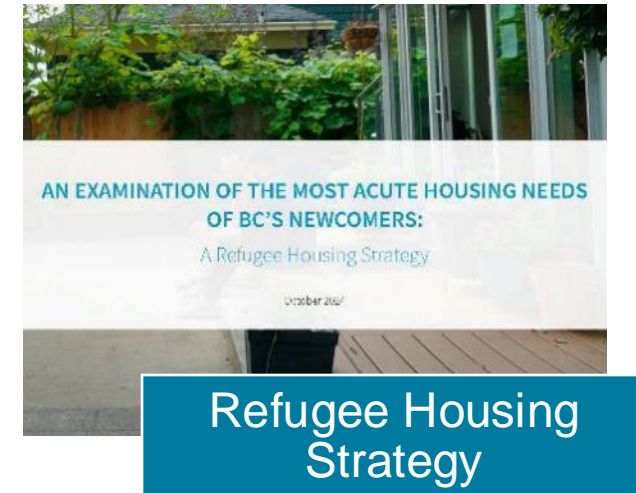
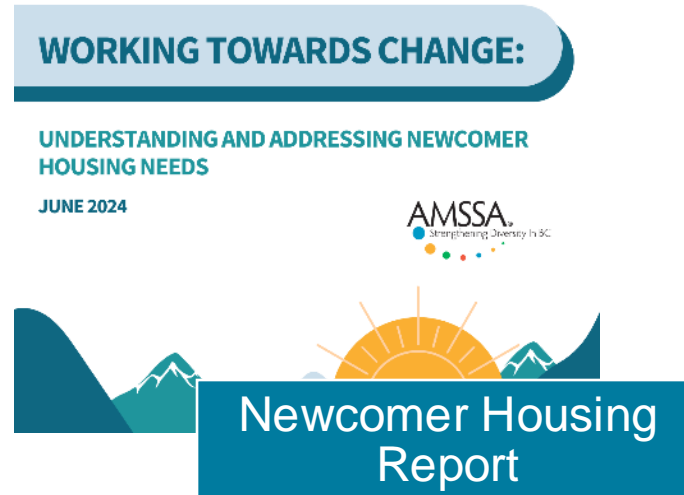
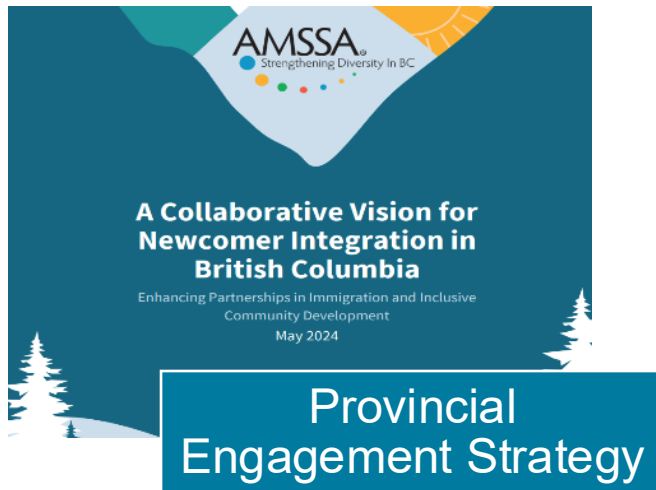
of new Canadians believe immigration is being unfairly blamed for the housing crisis

69%

of new Canadians believe immigration is being used as a "red herring"

Source: Leger Polling (2024)

Overview of AMSSA's 3 Key Reports



A Collaborative Vision for Newcomer Integration in British Columbia



The report **delivers key** messages and **evidence-backed insights** to aid organizations in newcomer services with their outreach and partnership initiatives.

It has three main priorities:

1. Promoting Informed Public Perception of Immigration Realities
2. Strengthening Local Communities as Key Contributors to and Participants in Newcomer Integration
3. Enhancing Settlement Sector Visibility in Provincial Government Relations

Working Towards Change: Understanding and Addressing Newcomer Housing Needs



- A year-long housing research project conducted by AMSSA, funded by the United Way BC
- **Explores:** the intersectionality of settlement of newcomers and housing with a specific focus on the role of the settlement sector in addressing newcomer housing needs
- **Focus:** a broader group of newcomers, including: permanent residents, protected persons and temporary residents (international students, refugee claimants and CUAET visa holders) and focuses on the initial settlement period (first 5 years in Canada)

Research Question: What is the role of the settlement sector in the housing conversation and how can the settlement sector participate in addressing the housing crisis?

An Examination of the Most Acute Housing Needs of BC Newcomers: A Refugee Housing Strategy



Focus: Highlighting the housing challenges experienced by refugees and refugee claimants over the last few years in BC and offering potential solutions, strategies and recommendations to address some of these challenges.

The strategy recommends the following actions:

- Design and Build Housing Connection Centres
- Expand Rental Subsidy Programs
- Increase Capital Investments

Media



Shelter for 'everyone': Richmond calls on Ottawa to fund designated spaces for asylum seekers in B.C.

“It’s not about refugee claimants taking away those shelter spaces from Canadian-born residents — it’s that there needs to be shelter and supports for everyone and different folks have different needs,” Dumitra said.

Vancouver's emergency shelters feel the squeeze as refugee claims nearly double in B.C.

“Addressing asylum seekers’ needs with specific supports, including help with a language barrier or filing their claim of refugee status, would free up shelter spots quicker for those who are homeless and have other needs,” said Sabrina Dumitra, acting CEO for the Affiliation of Multicultural Societies and Service Agencies of B.C.

Newcomers to B.C. struggling to find housing and stability

JUNE 28, 2024

A new report is shedding light on the struggle newcomers face when trying to find housing in British Columbia. It found intersecting factors like employment and language barriers, limit the ability to find housing for refugees and immigrants. As Travis Prasad reports, this is an all too common issue.



AMSSA
Interview of Katie Crocker - On the Coast - CBC News

Copy link

Katie Crocker | Affiliation of Multicultural Societies and Service Agencies

MORE VIDEOS
Bringing in newcomers into the conversation around the housing crisis

ON THE COAST ■ 604-662-6979 / onthecoast@cbc.ca

CBCNEWS



Resources

Examples of Resources



REGIONAL/RIDING	CONSERVATIVES	NDP
North Mission	Reann Gasper Party Mailing Address: 327 - 1434 Ironwood Street Campbell River, BC V9W 5T5 Email: rreann.gasper@conservativebc.ca Party Phone: 604-330-3554	Pam Alexis Address: 33058 First Ave. Mission V2V 1G3 Email: pam.alexis@bcndp.ca Phone: (604) 820-6203 (constituent) (250) 387-1023 (minister)
South	Bruce Banman Address: 2031 McCallum Rd #304, Abbotsford, BC V2S 3N5 Email: bruce.banman@conservativebc.ca Phone: 604-744-0700	Sarah Kooner Party Office Address: #320 - 34 V Ave., Vancouver, BC V5Y 1L6 Email: sarah.kooner@bcndp.ca Party Phone: 604-430-8600
West	Korky Neufeld Party Mailing Address: 327 - 1434 Ironwood Street Campbell River, BC V9W 5T5 Email: korky.neufeld@conservativebc.ca Party Phone: 604-330-3554	Graeme Hutchinson Party Office Address: #320 - 34 V Ave., Vancouver, BC V5Y 1L6 Email: graeme.hutchison@bcndp.ca Party Phone: 604-430-8600
Similkameen	Donegal Wilson Party Mailing Address: 327 - 1434	Roly Russell Address: PO Box 1592

BC Electoral Districts Map



AMSSA
Strengthening Diversity in BC

AMSSA Public Policy Brief No. 24-11
October 4, 2024
Supporting the settlement and integration sector's understanding of public policy discourses and changes

This brief focuses on the **rhetorical framing of immigration within US and Canadian political discourse**. Both settler colonial countries use immigration to shape national narratives, and both populations hold **relatively favourable** attitudes towards immigrants. However, some important contextual differences are at play.

	US	Canada
Global rank as a destination country (2020)	1	8
% of total population foreign born (2021)	14%	22%
Naturalization rate (2020)	66%	90%
Migrant Acceptance Index (2019)	7.95 out of 9 (ranked sixth among 145 countries)	8.46 out of 9 (ranked first among 145 countries)
Geographical impact on immigration	Long land border with Mexico;	Buffered from humanitarian flows due to oceanic geography

Policy Briefs

AMSSA
Strengthening Diversity in BC

B.C. Provincial Election Tracker - Highlights Document #7
October 2024

Background and Objective

With the B.C. Provincial Election taking place on October 19, 2024, our sector is gearing towards an important time in which decisions made will have an impact on the future of the Settlement and Integration in British Columbia. Leading up to this, AMSSA aims to support our members' access to the most up-to-date information and analysis of the current political climate impacting our sector.

Through these bi-weekly highlights of the provincial election, we aim to share current polling stats, party highlights, media sentiments, relevant connections to the U.S. election, as well as key messaging and facts addressing some of the false rhetoric out there surrounding immigration.

Disclaimer: Please note this is an evolving situation and things are subject to change. The information shared in this document is accurate as of the date of the release.

Summary and Analysis of the 'B.C. Provincial Elections Tracker - Highlights Document'

Polling continues to show a lead for the Conservative Party, however, with B.C. undecided voters released on Sept 11, the race remains tight.

Provincial Election Trackers