

Services and programs for young adult immigrants: how to better reach them from an intersectoral perspective? Best practices for community and institutional actors

Research

Montreal/Quebec context: strong increase of immigration, particularly temporary statuses. Provincial/city/country level sometimes contradictory policies and receptivity

Main research question: how young adult immigrants make their socio-professional choices, how they navigate the system, and their experiences of seeking support. Ultimately, the project aims to address the challenges/best practices for social services to respond to young adult immigrants' needs.

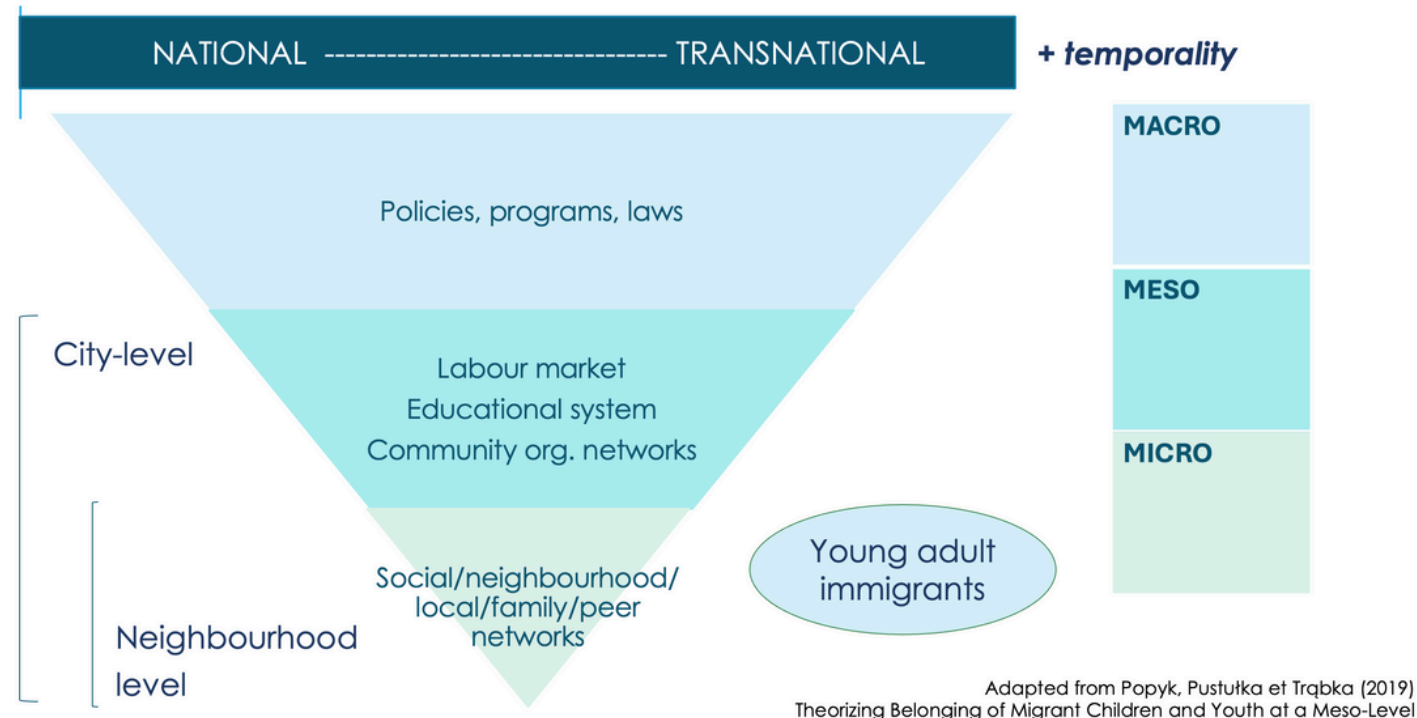
Fieldwork

Autumn 2021 to Autumn 2023, individual qualitative interviews (60 min. to 180 min.), 3 discussion groups (120 min)

Socio-demographic data

- 29 young adult immigrants, 18-25 years old. 12 on temporary statuses, 9 refugees, 2 citizens, 6 other permanent status. 24 countries
- 17 social workers/counsellors/community organisation directors or administrative team (education, employment, health and social services...)

Theoretical Framework: adapted Ecosystemic approach



Quel futur professionnel pour les jeunes adultes récemment immigré(e)s à Montréal? Identité, projets professionnels et expériences d'accès aux services ? Blain et al. 2021-2024

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Best Practices - as told by young adult immigrants and practitioners

Macro-Level

- Promote universal access to services regardless of status
- Reduce delays in bureaucratic and institutional processes (eg. immigration, education, financial support, psycho-social support..)
- Fund intersectoral initiatives to support inter-organisation collaborations
- On arrival to Canada, distribute a document outlining various types of assistance available, for different statuses
- Ameliorate government funding for grassroots community organisations
- Providing technology to bridge the digital divide
- Ameliorate public transport and their accessibility
- Adopting a holistic and generous policy to allow young adult immigrants to reach their full potential, regardless of status:
 - Easier access to higher education for young asylum seekers
 - Removing the legal ceiling for international students' working hours
 - etc

Meso-Level

- Adapted services: multiple languages/levels of literacy/disability accessibility
- Shared information and referral policies amongst practitioners of different sectors
- Creating spaces for informal exchanges between practitioners of different sectors (eg. community of practice)
- Foster mobile services that go between different organisations to better reach young adult immigrants where they are
- Prioritising outreach in a way that makes sense for them: digital outreach, in spaces that they frequent (eg. bus stops), through third parties (eg. religious leaders)
- Programs that answer concrete needs (eg. How does the education system work? How to manage personal finances ?...) and informal needs (eg. identity, socialisation, empowerment through collaborative decision-making...)

Micro-level

- Fostering mutual aid between peers (young adults)
- Creating informal free spaces specifically for information sharing and socialisation
- Bridging the gap towards institutions (accessibility/representation/trust)
- Holistic approach to information and general needs
- Importance of a practitioner offering individualised help -beyond their role in the institution (feeling like the door is always open, "not just another number", "somebody cares for me")