



## TRU researching immigration to communities across Canada

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Researchers at Thompson Rivers University are playing an important role in a federally-funded research network aimed at fostering welcoming communities and supporting the integration of immigrants into communities across Canada, including small and medium-sized centres.

Julie Drolet, associate professor at TRU's Faculty of Human, Social and Educational Development, is leading the BC node of the project with co-investigator Paul Bramadat of UVic. The Pathways to Prosperity Partnership involves 50 universities and over 100 partner organizations across five regional nodes. The Partnership will research and support policy development on immigration to communities across Canada.



"Historically most of the research on immigration has considered the role of newcomers in metropolitan cities of Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver," says Drolet. "With secondary migration we need to know more about the experiences of immigrants and newcomers in smaller communities. This project addresses the urgent need to understand the social and economic issues faced in these communities and we are pleased that we are able to play an important role in this kind of research initiative."

Drolet says that work during the first year of the Partnership includes developing the infrastructure of the nodes and consultation with immigrant-serving organizations, community groups, and all levels of government. The BC node is planning to take the lead in developing one or two proposals for pan-Canadian projects, and will also have opportunities to engage in local research of specific interest to communities in BC. Drolet notes that this kind of research will be of benefit to both immigrants and the communities they enter. "Newcomer integration is a two-way process," she explains. "Newcomers are adapting and Canadian residents are also adapting."

While issues such as the economic impact of immigration are often considered, Drolet says that it is also important to consider the social dimensions of immigration. "Many small communities in BC have declining populations, so it's important to ask how immigrants can be attracted to small communities, and how well they are able to integrate into these communities."

Drolet notes that TRU researchers will be working collaboratively with researchers from other universities and also with local stakeholders such as Kamloops Immigrant Services. "This is a great opportunity for TRU," she explains. "Research we conduct here will develop new knowledge about immigration, and we can share practices with other parts of the province and nationally."

**MORE INFORMATION**

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