

# Temporary migration in rural centres: The case of 'transitional' foreign workers in Brandon, Manitoba

## The context:

Brandon is a rural city located in southwestern Manitoba, with a population of 41,511 (2006 Census). Economic growth coupled with labour shortages has forced industries such as Maple Leaf Foods (MLF) to re-evaluate recruiting and hiring practices, extending employee searches beyond local, provincial, and national labour pools to other countries.

## The issue:

In Brandon, where hundreds of low-skilled temporary foreign workers (TFWs) have and are anticipated to arrive, there is an expressed desire to better understand this phenomenon. In Manitoba, these migrants come as temporary workers and, after working in the province for six months, are encouraged to apply to the Provincial Nominee Program (PNP). In this sense, temporary is not always temporary as these migrants become 'transitional' foreign workers rather than 'temporary' foreign workers. The recent influx of newcomers is having dramatic impacts on the demographics of Brandon and poses challenges for provincial and municipal governments.

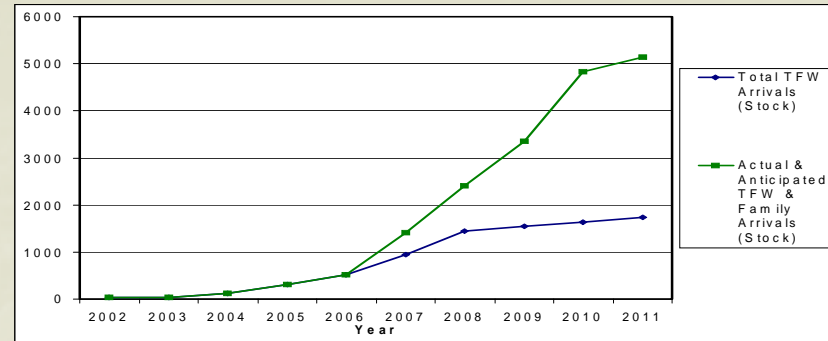
## Project Objectives:

- To inform federal and provincial immigration policy and local service provision strategies.
- To encourage and foster multi-level engagement, cooperation, and collaboration amongst policy-makers, researchers, and community stakeholders.
- To better understand the existing and expected TFW populations in Brandon and area and the impacts of an influx of newcomers on the community.
- To utilize and further develop demographic projection and analysis tools within a regional rural context and fully explore the strengths and weaknesses of engaging in such research.

## Recent Project Activities:

- Consultations and collaboration with government and industry.
- TFW Dialogue Group – includes representatives from Brandon Regional Health Authority, Citizenship and Immigration Canada, City of Brandon, Westman Immigrant Services, Manitoba Labour and Immigration, Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives, Maple Leaf Foods, Rural Secretariat, Service Canada.
- Discussion Paper series
- 10<sup>th</sup> National Metropolis Conference in Halifax
- Rural Matters! in Edmonton

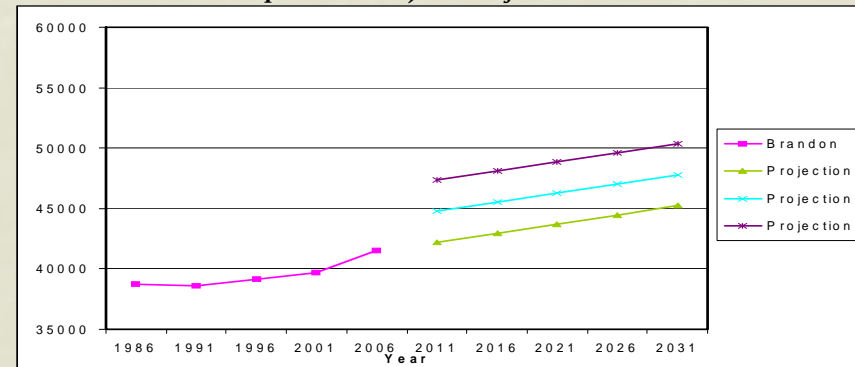
Actual & Anticipated TFW and Family Arrivals in Brandon



• If all TFWs and their families stay in Brandon, by 2011 there will be an addition of about 5,100 residents. This addition represents approximately 12% of Brandon's 2006 population.

- Initial estimates from MLF indicate that over 90% of TFWs apply for Provincial Nominee (PN) status.
- Family reunification started in the fall of 2007 and will continue as TFWs receive PN status. The actual number of family members is an approximation.

Population Projections for Brandon

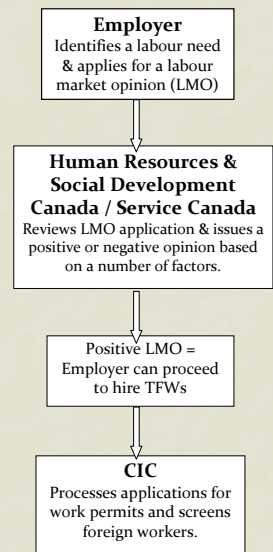


• The pink line represents the average five-year population growth rate (1.73%), based on 1986-2006 data.

- **Projection 1** continues the average growth rate without taking into account TFWs and their families.
- **Projection 2** illustrates the average growth rate plus a 50% retention of TFWs and their families.
- **Projection 3** illustrates the average growth rate plus a 100% retention of TFWs and their families. This is the highest estimated population for Brandon between 2011-2031.



## The Process of Hiring TFWs



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Data Sources: Economic Development Brandon (March 2008), Maple Leaf Foods (January 2008), Statistics Canada (2006).