BRANDON UNIVERSITY

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

UNIVERSITY of MANITOBA

ALBERTA

Wood Buffalo Region

Grand Prairie
Fort Saskatchewan
Lloydminster
Red Deer
Brooks
Medicine Hat
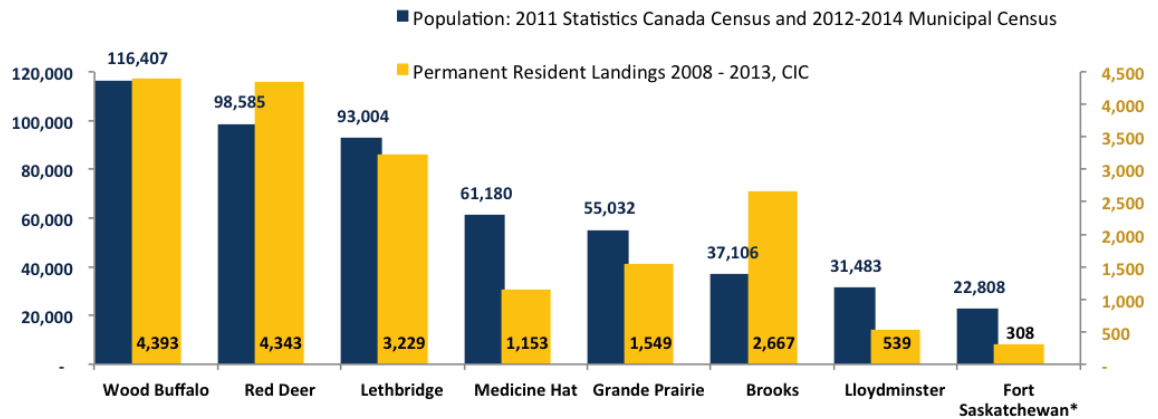Lethbridge

Immigration Settlement Services and Gaps in 8 selected rural communities in Alberta

This provincial report is part of the "Immigration Settlement Services and Gaps in CIC's Western Region" study.

Data Sources: 37 surveys completed with Service Provider Organizations; 23 participants validated findings with feedback

■ Population: 2011 Statistics Canada Census and 2012-2014 Municipal Census
■ Permanent Resident Landings 2008 - 2013, CIC

Community	Population	PR Landings
Wood Buffalo	116,407	4,393
Red Deer	98,585	4,343
Lethbridge	93,004	3,229
Medicine Hat	61,180	1,153
Grande Prairie	55,032	1,549
Brooks	37,106	2,667
Lloydminster	31,483	539
Fort Saskatchewan*	22,808	308

SETTLEMENT SERVICES†

Top services offered
- Language training (8)
- Information & Orientation (8)
- Help with daily life (7)
- Help finding housing (7)
- Social inclusion/integration support (7)
- Cultural events (6)
- Needs assessment & referrals (5)
- Interpretation services (5)
- Language assessment (5)
- Services for seniors and women (5)
- Child care (4)

Key gaps identified
- Job specific language and literacy training (6)
- Childcare (5)
- Legal services and referrals (4)
- Foreign credential recognition (3)
- Specialized programming for youth, women and seniors (3)
- Setting up a business and business mentorship (3)
- Welcoming & information services (2)
- Transportation support (2)
- Health/mental health (2)

Barriers to access services
- Language barriers/literacy (8)
- Ineligibility for services (7)
- Confusion where to get help/ Lack of information and awareness about services (6)
- Transportation (7)
- Financial difficulties (2)
- Hours of operation of programs and services (2)

Top services needed
- Language/work place training, assessment and support (7)
- Inclusion, welcoming communities (4)
- Childcare (3)   • Information and orientation (3)
- Interpretation/translation services (3)
- Housing; employment services/help with finding a job (2)
- Health and mental health services (2)
- Transportation (2)
- Needs/credential assessments, referrals (2)

Services needed by newcomers ineligible for CIC funded services
- Language training and assessment (8)
- Help finding housing (6)
- Help finding employment (6)
- Information and orientation (6)
- Health and mental health services (4)
- Legal and social support (3)

PARTNERSHIPS

All survey respondents reported that they partner formally and informally with other organizations.

51% of respondents provide settlement services in partnership, 77% provide welcoming services, and 80% provide integration support in partnership with other organizations. The top partnerships, in order of frequency of selection are with: Schools/School Boards, libraries, children/family Services, umbrella organizations, municipal offices, Chamber of Commerce, health services, and language training providers. Sustainable, long term funding within LIPs is desired by all 8 communities participating in this study.

INTEGRATION IN COMMUNITY

Perception: It is "somewhat" to "very" difficult for newcomers to settle in the communities due to English language proficiency, lack of public transit system/transportation, finding affordable housing and high cost of living are the most commonly cited barriers to successful settlement.

Perception: It is "somewhat" to "very" difficult for newcomers to and find employment due to lack of recognition of foreign credentials, lack of Canadian experience, and lack of English language proficiency.

† Number in parenthesis represents the number of communities
* Fort Saskatchewan PR landings are for 2009-2013

Table of Contents

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

Executive Summary

This study called "Immigration Settlement Services and Gaps in CIC's Western Region" was funded by Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) through Immigration Research West (IRW) at the University of Manitoba and was directed by the Rural Development Institute (RDI) of Brandon University. The objective of the study was to collect data on settlement services and gaps and examine the applicability of the Local Immigration Partnerships (LIP) model in rural communities in CIC's Western Region. Based on information gathered through a phone survey conducted with 37 immigrant service providing organization (SPOs) in October 2014, as well as additional feedback collected from 23 respondents in focus group meetings by teleconference and by email, this provincial report describes current capacities and gaps in settlement services in eight small urban centres and rural communities in Alberta. All respondents held executive positions within their respective organizations (i.e. executive director, senior program manager, team leader, coordinator, etc.).

Key findings from the survey (# 37 respondents) include:

- Almost all (94%) respondents believe that the number of newcomers living in or near their community has increased in the past five years.

- 75% of respondents report that newcomers face some challenges in accessing settlement services in their community including lack of a centralized place to get support and orientation about available services, lack of knowledge/information about services available in the community, difficulties reaching the services due to lack of transportation, not having a local settlement or CIC office, and not having sufficient resources to help the increased number of newcomers are the most commonly cited reasons.

- More than half (54%) of the respondents indicate that it is "somewhat difficult," or "very difficult" for newcomers to obtain employment in their community. Language and literacy barriers, lack of recognition of foreign credentials and Canadian work experience, lack of jobs above low/entry level, transportation, lack of awareness among employers and uncertainty about newcomers' credentials standards, affordable childcare are the most commonly cited challenges that newcomers face when seeking employment.

- More than half (58%) of the respondents indicate that it is "very difficult," "difficult," or "somewhat difficult" for newcomers to settle in their community. Lack of English language skills, transportation, affordable housing and child care are the most commonly cited challenges that newcomers face when trying to settle in the community.

- The 5 most needed services for all newcomers are, in order of frequency of selection: (1) language/work place training, assessment and support; (2) housing; employment services/help with finding a job; childcare; health and mental health services; (3) information and orientation ; (4) transportation; and (5) needs assessments; inclusion; interpretation/translation services.

- All participating SPOs provide services in the three main areas: Settlement, Economic and Social. 89% of all respondents believe these services need to be expanded.

- 91% of the participating SPOs provide services to newcomers who are ineligible for services (i.e. TFWs, refugee claimants, international students and new and returning Canadian citizens). The top three services needed by ineligible newcomers are, in order of frequency of selection: (1) Language training and assessment, (2) Help finding housing, and (3) Information and Orientation.

- In terms of organizational capacity, over half of respondents report inadequate current capacity in the following five key areas: (1) Provide services in both official languages; (2) Financial support to maintain services from other sources; (3) Staff to provide services; (4) Financial support to maintain current services from government sources, and (5) Mobilization of community to support and welcome newcomers. At the same time, over 80% of all respondents feel that they have adequate capacity in the following three key areas: (1) Communication with stakeholders; (2) Coordinating services with other service providers, and (3) Meeting reporting requirements.

- Most respondents report that they assess the service needs of newcomers in their community either internally (67%) or jointly with other service providers (14%). Commonly used methods of assessment are focus groups, surveys, community meetings, on-going feedback from the community, and meetings with other providers, settlement practitioners or client narratives. However, the frequency with which such assessments are conducted varies substantially from one SPO to another (i.e. ongoing, twice a month, monthly, once or twice a year, quarterly, or annually).

- 51.4% of respondents provide settlement services in partnership, 77.1% provide welcoming services, and 80% provide integration support in partnership with other organizations. The top seven partnerships, in order of frequency of selection are with: 1. Schools/School Boards 2. Children/Family Services 3. Umbrella organizations 4. Municipal offices 5. Chamber of Commerce 6. Health Services and 7. Housing Services.

In addition to validating the interpretation of the survey results, the 23 respondents who provided feedback on the draft community reports also contributed rich contextual information to aid in interpreting the findings. They emphasized that due to the Alberta's "booming economy", increased job opportunities related to growth in oil sands industry or expansion of other local employers (i.e. meatpacking industry), there is an increase in newcomers to the respondents' communities, including TFWs and secondary migrants from Eastern Canada for the same reasons.

Overall, the AB findings underline the need for greater support for collaboration among SPOs, as well as the development of a more centralized yet flexible model of service delivery that reflects the unique nature of needs and service provision in rural regions. As shown by the findings rural communities in Alberta are receiving an increased number of newcomers who enter Canada through diverse immigration streams, and who in spite of availability of low/entry level job opportunities are faced with very high cost of living and integration challenges due, in part to language training capacitates of SPOs, lack of affordable childcare and public transportation, and a lack of social acceptance in communities where ethnic diversity is still a novelty. The respondents in the feedback sessions indicated that many of the services in these communities are already offered in collaboration and pointed to the central role the municipalities can play in providing support to service providers and greater coordination among all three levels of government. Sustainable, long term funding within LIPs is desired.

Introduction

This study was funded by Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) through Immigration Research West (IRW) at the University of Manitoba and was directed by the Rural Development Institute (RDI) of Brandon University. It was aimed at examining gaps in settlement services and the applicability of the Local Integration Partnership (LIP) model in selected rural communities across the four western provinces (i.e., British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba). Five Co-Principal Investigators (Co-PIs) facilitated the planning and research activities. Based on information gathered through a phone survey, the project determined organizational capacities and gaps in settlement services in 29 small urban centres and rural communities, of which eight communities are located in Alberta. The Alberta findings underline the need for greater support for collaboration among service providing organizations (SPO) as well as the development of a more flexible model of service delivery which reflects the unique nature of needs and service provision in rural areas that are characterized by an increasing number of newcomers who entered Canada through diverse immigration streams and who, in spite of availability of low/entry level job opportunities are faced with very high cost of living and integration challenges due, in part to language training capacitates of SPOs, affordable childcare, public transportation challenges, and lack of acceptance within communities for which newcomers are still novelty. The respondents in the feedback sessions pointed to the central role the municipalities can play in providing support to service providers and greater coordination among all three levels of government. Given the level of already existing partnerships among the participating SPOs and other community and government partners in their respective communities, all eight communities are candidates for a LIP funding.

For the purposes of the study, "newcomers" are defined to include all Permanent Residents, Refugees, Refugee Claimants, Temporary Foreign Workers (TFW), Naturalized Citizens, and International Students that have been in Canada from one day to five years. "Newcomers ineligible for services" are defined as those newcomers who are generally ineligible for one or more of the settlement services funded by CIC, including TFWs, International Students, Naturalized Citizens, and Refugee Claimants.

Context

OVERVIEW OF IMMIGRATION TO ALBERTA

Alberta has a vibrant and expanding economy that attracts a growing number of newcomers to the province. Due in part to the province's economic and labour market strength Alberta's annual share of new immigrants arriving in Canada grew continuously from 2003 to 2013 (Figure 1). In 2013, Alberta's share of Canada's new immigrants was 14.1% and Alberta's share of Canada's total working age population was 11.1%. That same year, in Alberta immigrants accounted for 19.7 percent of the working age population, representing the third highest rate among provinces *(http://work.alberta.ca/documents/labour-profile-immigrants.pdf).*

Alberta's 2014 projected real GDP growth is 4.1% according to the Royal Bank of Canada, the highest rate among all Canadian provinces, and despite a precipitous drop in crude oil prices in the winter of 2014, is still expected to grow marginally in 2015 *(http://www.rbc.com/economics/economic-reports/pdf/provincial-forecasts/provfcst-dec2014.pdf)*

In total Canada admitted 258,953 permanent residents (all classes) in 2013. Of that total 36,636 or 14.1% of all permanent residents settled in Alberta, third most among provinces (Table 1). In 2013 Alberta received 22,645 economic class immigrants, again the third highest number among Canadian provinces after Ontario and Quebec. In addition, Alberta received the third highest number of refugees (2,751) and humanitarian and compassionate class arrivals (597). *(http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/resources/publications/annual-report-2013)*

The province is also home to a large number of temporary residents. Alberta saw an increase in the number of Temporary Foreign Worker (TFW) permit holders living in the province in 2013 (44,989) after a noteworthy drop off in permit holders between 2010-2012 (Table 2). In total Alberta was home to approximately 35% of all TFW permit holders in Canada in 2013. *(http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/resources/statistics/facts2013-preliminary/06.asp).*

International student numbers have remained steady in Alberta over the past four years with 16,946 present in the province by the end of 2103 (Table 3). These numbers represent roughly 5.5% of the national total. *(http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/resources/statistics/facts2013/temporary/4-3.asp)*

Figure 1: Proportion of New Immigrants in Canada arriving in Alberta (2003-2013)
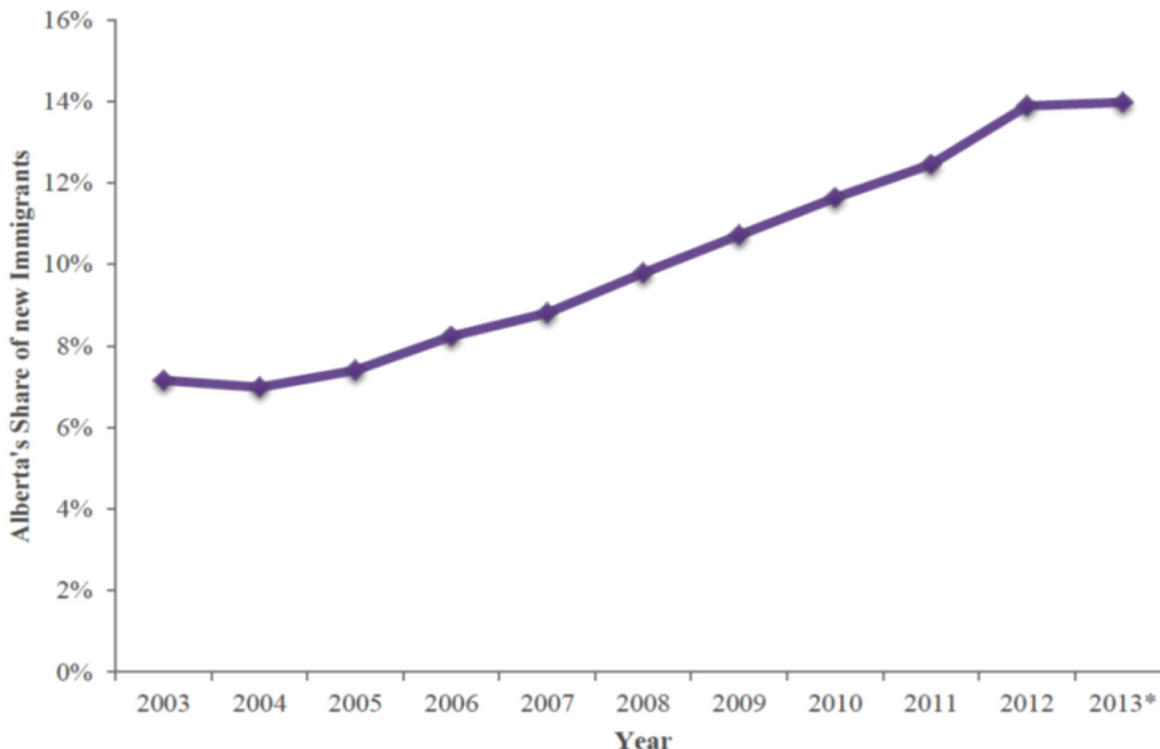
Source: Alberta Labour Force Profiles: immigrants in the labour force (http://work.alberta.ca/documents/labour-profile-immigrants.pdf)

Table 1: Permanent residents admitted by class to Alberta and Canada 2013

	Alberta	Canada
Economic	22,645	160,819
Family	10,632	81,831
Refugee	2,751	20,049
H & C	597	4,838
Other	11	54
Total	36,636	258,953

Source: CIC, Annual Report to Parliament on Immigration, 2014 (http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/resources/publications/annual-report-2014/)

Table 2: Temporary Foreign Worker permit holders present on December 31st, Alberta and Canada, 2009-2013

	Alberta	Canada (Total)
2009	43,605	142,209
2010	34,496	122,963
2011	30,519	108,313
2012	34,181	112,650
2013	44,989	126,816

Source: CIC, Preliminary tables – Permanent and temporary residents, 2013 (http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/resources/statistics/facts2013-preliminary/06.asp)

Table 3: International Students permit holders on December 31st, Alberta and Canada, 2009-2013

	Alberta	Canada
2009	15,100	204,052
2010	15,373	225,395
2011	15,756	248,827
2012	15,789	275,883
2013	16,946	304,876

Source: CIC, International students with a valid permit on December 31st by destination (http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/resources/statistics/facts2013/temporary/4-3.asp)

Note: 2013 only based on the first three quarters

PARTICIPATION AND EMPLOYMENT PATTERNS IN ALBERTA

CIC's Western Region has high labour force participation rate of immigrants. In 2013, immigrants in Alberta had the third highest participation rate among all provinces, at 68.2%, behind Saskatchewan's 71.0% and Manitoba's 69.7%. The Canadian rate for immigrants was 62.3%. British Columbia's immigrant participation rate in 2013 was 57.8%. However, the participation rate among all three categories of immigrants: very recent, recent and established was unevenly distributed with the participation of the recent immigrant category exceeding established immigrants by 14% and very recent immigrants by 4.7%. According to 2013 Government of Alberta Labour Force profiles *(www.work.alberta.ca/labour.html)*, at 78.3%, Alberta's recent immigrants had the highest labour force participation rate among the three immigrant categories in 2013. This rate was 14 percentage points higher than the participation rate of established immigrants and 5.2 percentage points higher than the provincial average. In 2013 recent immigrants also had the highest employment rate (73.5%), as compared to established immigrants (61.3%), and very recent immigrants (68.5%).

Employment of Immigrants in Alberta by Industry

According to 2013 Government of Alberta Labour Force profiles *(http://work.alberta.ca/documents/labour-profile-immigrants.pdf)*, in 2013, 75.6% of employed Alberta immigrants worked in the Services-Producing Sector. The provincial average for this sector was 71.7%. The top five industries in which immigrants were employed in 2013 were: Health Care and Social Assistance; Trade - Retail and Wholesale; Manufacturing; Professional, Scientific and Technical Services; and Accommodation and Food Services. Together, these five industries accounted for 55.1% of all employed immigrants in the province. The proportion of immigrants employed in the Goods-Producing sector was 24.4%, which was 3.9 percentage points lower than the proportion for the entire province.

Employment of Immigrants in Alberta by Occupation

In 2013, a higher proportion of Alberta immigrants were employed in four occupations compared to the provincial average *(www.work.alberta.ca/labour.html)*. These occupations were Natural and applied sciences and related, Sales and services, Unique to processing, manufacturing and utilities, and Health. Together, these four occupations accounted for 52.8% of employed Alberta immigrants compared to the provincial share of 40.5%. In 2013, the occupation that employed the highest proportions of very recent, recent and established immigrants was sales and service.

Average Hourly Wage of Immigrants in Alberta

In 2013 Alberta immigrants employed in the following four industries earned higher average hourly wages than the provincial average: Professional, Scientific and Technical Services; Public Administration; Information, Culture and Recreation; and Forestry, Fishing, Mining, Oil and Gas *(www.work.alberta.ca/labour.html)*. Overall, Alberta immigrants' hourly wages were $1.85 less than the Alberta average. The provincial average hourly wage by occupation was higher than the average for Alberta immigrants in all but two occupations: Natural and applied sciences and related; and Art, culture, recreation and sport. The three occupations with the largest difference between the provincial average and the average for Alberta immigrants were: Management, with a differential of $3.78; unique to processing, manufacturing and utilities, $3.68; and Trades, transport and equipment operators and related, $3.14.

Full-time/Part-time Employment of Immigrants in Alberta

In 2013 Alberta immigrants had a higher proportion of full time employment (84.5%) compared to the provincial proportion (84.1%). Established Alberta immigrants had the highest percentage of full-time employment, 85.0%; while very recent immigrants had the highest percentage of part-time employment, 16.7%. In 2013, Alberta immigrants had a lower proportion of 15 to 24 year olds employed full time compared to the provincial share; however a higher proportion of Alberta immigrants 55 years and over were employed full time *(www.work. alberta.ca/labour.html).*

Similar results were obtained through a telephone survey conducted in April-May 2013 of 2936 immigrants in the four western provinces in Canada regarding their settlement and integration experiences and outcomes (Esses, Hamilton, Wilkinson & Zong, 2013). In addition, that survey found that of the respondents who indicated that they were employed, 82% had a permanent job, while 17% had a temporary job and only 1% had an alternate arrangement. When, in the same study, the employed respondents were asked how satisfied they were with their current job, 70% of the respondents provided rating above the scale midpoint, and nearly 30% indicated that they were extremely satisfied. However, when the respondents were asked how difficult it has been to find a job in Alberta that makes use of their qualifications, immigrants in Alberta found it moderately difficult to find such jobs, with 46% of the respondents providing ratings above the scale midpoint of 4, and nearly one-fifth indicating that it has been extremely difficult to find jobs that make use of their qualifications.

Unemployment Rates of Immigrants in AB

In 2013, Alberta's unemployment rate of 4.7% is the second lowest among provinces. *(http://www.statcan. gc.ca/tables-tableaux/sum-som/l01/cst01/lfss01c-eng.htm)*. The unemployment rate of immigrants was 0.8 percentage points higher than the provincial unemployment rate for that year—4.6%, with the unemployment rate for very recent immigrants 2.3 percentage points higher than that rate of established immigrants (4.7%) *(www.work.alberta.ca/labour.html)*

The unemployment rate in AB in August 2014 was approximately 5.1%. However, rates vary by region (Table 4).

Table 4: Unemployment rates in Alberta by region

Region	Rate
Lethbridge-Medicine Hat	3.9%
Camrose-Drumheller	2.9%
Calgary	5.5%
Banff-Jasper-Rocky Mountain House	3.5%
Red Deer	3.7%
Edmonton	5.6%
Athabasca-Grande Prairie-Peace River	4.7%
Wood Buffalo-Cold Lake	5.3%

Source: Statistics Canada. Table 282-0054 – Labour force survey estimates (LFS), by provinces and economic regions based on 2006 Census boundaries, 3-month moving average, unadjusted for seasonality, monthly (persons unless otherwise noted) (http://www23.statcan.gc.ca/imdb/p3Variable.pl?Function=getStatDEDataList&DEItem_Id=48425&DECItem_Id=46280&Repclass=586&SurvId=3701&SurvVer=0&InstaId=13986&InstaVer=1&t=a&db=imdb)

Methods

DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

A provincial panel comprised of staff from CIC's AB office, the AB provincial government, Edmonton Municipal government, and members of the Alberta Association of Immigrant Service Agencies (AAISA) was set up for the purpose of this project. The provincial umbrella organization for settlement in AB played a key role in the selection of communities and development of the survey tool. Edmonton Immigrant Service Association (EISA) played an instrumental role in selecting and contacting survey respondents, and administering the survey. Initially, 10 communities were selected but two of these communities (i.e. Okotoks/High River and Banff/Canmore) already had a LIP. Cold Lake region was approached but there was no response, so finally eight communities that do not currently have LIPs in place were selected in AB. Fort Saskatchewan was one of the communities in the sample and although none of the participating SPOs received direct funding from CIC, the community was included in the provincial sample based on the recommendation of the Provincial Advisory panel. The following communities were selected based on CIC landings data from 2013-14 (Table 5).

 "Community" is conceptualized in geographic terms as a single municipality, or two or more neighboring municipalities and/or unincorporated areas. Participating SPOs who were chosen from within the selected communities include those funded by CIC as well as other organizations that perform key roles in the settlement of newcomers. Survey respondents were knowledgeable members of SPOs within each of the selected communities. In all, 37 surveys were completed in October-December of 2014. All respondents held executive positions within their respective organizations (i.e. executive director, senior program manager, team leader, coordinator, etc.).

Survey data were entered into Fluid Surveys and collated using Fluid Survey algorithms. Data for each community were compiled into eight Community Reports, drafts of which were submitted to survey respondents for feedback. Focus groups were held by teleconference in seven communities, and one community had the opportunity to provide feedback via email. During November and December of 2014, a total of 23 respondents provided feedback on eight draft community reports, which were revised accordingly (Table 5). Finally, information from the community reports was combined with the aggregated Fluid Survey data to create this provincial report. For specific information about each community, please refer to the relevant Community Report (Appendices A to H).

Table 5: Alberta Communities Sample Overview

Region	Community	Population 2011-2014*	PR Arrivals 2008-13	PR/year	Surveys completed	Feedback received
Southern Alberta	Medicine Hat	61,180**	1,153	less than 250	2	2
	Lethbridge	93,004****	3,229	250-550	4	4
	Brooks	23,430 *(including rural surroundings)	2,667	250-550	8	2
North-Eastern Alberta	Wood Buffalo/ Fort McMurray	72,944** (core) 116,407 (including rural surroundings)	4,393	more than 550	5	3
Western Alberta	Grande Prairie	55,032*	1,549	250-550	5	3
Central Alberta	Lloydminster	31,483***		less than 250	3	3
	Fort Saskatchewan	22,808****	308	less than 250	6	3
	Red Deer	98,585 9****	4,343	more than 550	4	3
*2011 Census, Statistics Canada **2012 Municipal Census *** 2013 Municipal Census, 2013. Including SK and AB sides ****2014 Municipal Census				**Totals**	**37**	**23**

The findings in this report are organized based on the number of Permanent residents per year in each of the communities:

- Communities receiving less than 250 newcomers per year
  - Medicine Hat
  - Lloydminster
  - Ft. Saskatchewan
- Communities receiving between 250-550 newcomers per year
  - Brooks
  - Lethbridge
  - Grand Prairie
- Communities receiving more than 550 newcomers per year
  - Red Deer
  - Wood Buffalo

Figure 2: Funding received by participating SPOs

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC)		51.4%	19
Other federal		16.2%	6
Private		21.6%	8
NGOs		10.8%	4
Provincial		83.8%	31
Other (municipalities, community grants & foundations, fundraising, United Way, business/corporate, Heritage Canada, donations)		45.9%	17
	Total Responses		**37**

STUDY LIMITATIONS

A number of challenges were associated with data collection. First, the project deadline was moved forward while the project was underway, leaving limited time for survey design, data collection, and analysis. EISA staff also experienced the pressure of a shortened timeline for contacting the available SPO executives and schedule the interviews, as well as the time each one of the staff took for training required to conduct the survey. A further difficulty arose in securing busy SPO executives to participate in the survey, which required approximately 45 minutes to administer, in addition to the preparation time before the phone call. Moreover, some of the SPOs in smaller communities found the detailed survey not applicable to their particular organization and circumstances. For example, the initial surveys (long version) categorized services offered into three areas: Settlement, economic and social. A few organizations felt that this trichotomy was problematic and arbitrary. (i.e., childcare, health services, mental health services). This was incongruent with the way settlement services are usually classified. Furthermore, there were organizations that reported offering academic supports to youth and these were not necessarily exclusive to the newcomers. One organization focused exclusively on immigration consultation services. Their services were accessed by both Canadian citizens and newcomers. Despite these difficulties, 22 surveys were conducted in the survey's original (long version) form.

After a consultation with the Provincial Advisory Panel, the Co-PIs of the project and the project's PI, a short version of the survey was developed and used for 15 of the remainder survey interviews conducted in Alberta. For data analysis purposes, the 22 long form surveys were converted to its short form and all data were presented in this report are based on the 37 short form surveys conducted in Alberta. This resulted in less detailed data on some questions (i.e. service availability and organizational planning). Therefore, the information about service availability and organizational planning should be interpreted with considerable caution.

All respondents appreciated the opportunity to take part in the research and welcomed the opportunity to help identify the gaps in services provided to newcomers in smaller, rural centres in Alberta, as well as possibilities for partnership among service providers in these centres.

Findings

COMMUNITY CONTEXT

Almost all (94.4%) respondents believe that the number of newcomers living in or near their community has increased in the past 5 years. They emphasize that due to Alberta's "booming economy", increased job opportunities in oil sands industry or expansion of other local employers (i.e. meatpacking industry) resulted in an increase of newcomers to their communities. The increase includes Temporary Foreign Workers (TFWs) and secondary migrants from Eastern Canada for the same reasons. Therefore, the available population figures from 2011 and 2012 census may not represent accurately the current populations (i.e. Brooks, Grande Prairie and Medicine Hat).

SETTLEMENT AND INTEGRATION

More than half (58.3%) of the respondents indicate that it is "very difficult," "difficult," or "somewhat difficult" for newcomers to settle in their community. Language acquisition is key to newcomers' settlement and integration. In elaborating on the English language and literacy barriers to newcomers, the participating SPOs point to such barriers leading to lack of success in job interviews, filling out application forms for housing, childcare, school registration, residency and citizenship exams. In addition, lack of public transit system/transportation, high cost of living, very limited affordable/low income housing and affordable child care are the most commonly cited challenges that newcomers face when trying to settle in the community. The high cost of living may lead to splitting a family—men go to live in "camps" where accommodation and food is free, and leave the rest of the family in a smaller, less expansive rental unit. Mental health issues associated with such occurrences should not be overlooked. Limited English language skills prevent newcomers to effectively communicate with healthcare professionals or teachers, and to participate in what is offered in the community, is also a barrier to successful integration to the community.

In addition, lack of a centralized place where newcomers can get supportive services and/or referrals, and find information about what is available in the community makes it hard for them to settle successfully. In some small rural communities in which having newcomers is still a new phenomenon, there is lack of acceptance or even "hostility" to newcomers; "there are individuals who are not welcoming as they should be," "there is lack of understanding/acceptance between those who are already settled and the newcomers," and some face "discrimination based on newcomer status and race or ethnicity".

41.7% of the respondents indicate that it is "somewhat easy" or "easy" for newcomers to settle in their community. These respondents indicate that the strong settlement services make newcomers feel welcomed and facilitate the settlement process. The length of time newcomers have been settling in a small rural community and have somewhat developed ethnic communities also plays a role in the ease with which newcomers settle. However, the SPOs don't necessarily or always have the most up-to-date information of which communities are already developed and do not always help newcomers connect with them. Lack of support from ethnocultural communities, and difficulties accessing settlement services located primarily in the centre/downtown area of the city/town can lead newcomers feel isolated and disconnected. Lack of ethnocultural communities where newcomers feel they belong, may result in some of the newcomers leaving the community. There is a need for volunteers in the cultural and immigrant organizations.

Settlement and integration issues in Medicine Hat, Ft. Saskatchewan and Lloydminster; receiving less than 250 newcomers per year

The communities of Medicine Hat, Ft. Saskatchewan and Lloydminster demonstrate some similar issues related to the settlement and integration of newcomers. As with all of the communities participating in the survey, language is also viewed as a primary barrier to the integration and settlement process of newcomers in these three communities. Other common concerns include access to public transportation, which is viewed as costly and/or inadequate in the communities. There are shared concerns over the availability and affordability of housing for newcomers, especially in relation to availability of rental properties in Lloydminster. Concerns over credential recognition, training and upgrading were cited in all three communities. Respondents in the Medicine Hat study noted that in some instances newcomers had to travel to larger urban centres in order to pursue upgrading of education and work related skills - often resulting in their relocation to those centres. A lack of familiarity with or awareness of diversity is seen as an issue for newcomers in Lloydminster and Ft. Saskatchewan.

Having noted these challenges, respondents in both communities believed that the relatively small size of the municipalities is an advantage to newcomers in that it allowed ready access to available settlement services. However, in Ft. Saskatchewan the absence of a centralized settlement service agency was identified as a significant gap in the service structure of the community.

Settlement and integration issues in Brooks, Lethbridge and Grand Prairie; receiving between 250-550 newcomers per year

There are several shared issues and challenges among Alberta's communities receiving a moderate level of newcomers per year. Again, a lack of English language proficiency is seen as a barrier to social and economic integration in Brooks, Lethbridge and Grand Prairie. Similarly, access to transportation is a shared issue among the three communities. Another common issue is foreign credential recognition. Respondents in Grand Prairie put a special emphasis on the problem of credential recognition and lack of job training which is seen as an impediment to accessing the sizeable skilled labour market in the municipality. Survey particpants in Grand Prairie also noted a signficant issue related to access to affordable rental prorperties for newcomers to the community.

A lack of cultural or "diversity awareness" among the established community, and associated issues with cultural integration is a problem for newcomers in Brooks and Lethbridge. Respondents in Lethbridge noted that some residents have found it difficult to adjust to the new ethnic diversity of the city.

Brooks and Lethbridge respondents identified unique challenges faced by communities based on the immigrant class and ethnic identity of arriving newcomers. For example Brooks receives higher numbers of TFWs, many from East African communities. This trend is attributed to the nature of the primary employer in the community (a meat packing plant) and an established existing ethnic community into which newcomers can readily integrate. Lethbridge too is home to a large-established ethno-cultural community (i.e., Bhutanese community) that draws in members of that community from around the country – many of whom are refugees.

Both Brooks and Lethbridge noted that these communities faced unqiue challenges. For example, in Lethbridge refugee newcomers face issues related to accessing health services – a trend that service providers linked to poor health literacy. In both Brooks and Lethbridge there is some confusion about how to access available services among newcomers. Confusion over how to access available services is also a cited issue in Grand Prairie.

Settlement and integration issues in Red Deer and Ft. McMurray; receiving more than 550 newcomers per year

As the two communities receiving the largest number of newcomers per year, Red Deer and Ft. McMurray share some common issues related to settlement and integration. Namely barriers to integration created by

low English language proficiency among newcomers and inadequate access to transportation represent shared concerns. The two communities cited specific inter-related issues for newcomer women, for instance their inability to access necessary childcare, counselling services and the labour market. In part these issues are linked to greater susceptibility to domestic abuse among some segments of newcomers. Respondents from both communities identified a lack of knowledge and ineligibility for services among newcomers as an impediment to the settlement process.

Study respondents in Red Deer believed that a lack of social integration among newcomers, and issues with discrimination in the community were negatively affecting the settlement process for some newcomers. A lack of civic engagement and civic awareness among newcomers was also seen as an impediment to integration in Red Deer. Service providers in the city noted that some newcomers who belong to ethnic communities that are underrepresented in the community find it more difficult to integrate.

Another issue identified by respondents in Red Deer, one also shared by several communities in the study, was that newcomers living in neighboring rural areas often rely on services in the municipality but find it difficult to access those services due to a lack of access to transportation. In some cases these centres represent the largest community of size for more than 100 kilometers – putting additional strain on settlement services.

Ft. McMurray faced some unique challenges in integrating and settling newcomers. Many of these challenges are linked to the booming economic climate found in the municipality / region. Subsequently, a significant barrier to settlement and integration is the high cost of living in the city and the lack of affordable housing and childcare options available to less well-off newcomers, many of whom may work in the service sector. There is also a noted lack of accommodation for francophones in Ft. McMurray.

EMPLOYMENT

Despite Alberta's "booming economy," more than half (54.3%) of the respondents indicate that it is "somewhat difficult," or "very difficult" for newcomers to obtain employment in their community. Language and literacy barriers, lack of recognition of foreign credentials and Canadian work experience, lack of jobs above low/entry level, transportation challenges, lack of awareness among employers and uncertainty about newcomers' credentials standards, as well as affordable childcare are the most commonly cited challenges that newcomers face when seeking employment.

Challenges in foreign credential recognition is commonly cited as the major reason for foreign trained professionals to be underemployed (i.e. manual/low/entry level jobs), which is "usually very frustrating and demoralizing". Waiting for their credentials to be recognized can be very long, the process of fulfilling the requirements "too onerous" and the need to take any job available can slow the process even more because talking ESL higher English language classes becomes impossible if one works full time. The level of English language classes offered in the community is also mentioned as a barrier to newcomers who are professionals and need their credentials upgraded in order to be recognized; they need higher level of English language classes not available in the community. Literacy clients can get low level/entry level jobs but without higher level of English, upward mobility within the job is impossible. The respondents pointed repeatedly that the hours English language classes are offered need to be more flexible to meet the different needs of the clients in general, and in some communities to accommodate shift work in particular (e.g. Brooks, Grande Prairie, Fort McMurray). The capacity to offer more classes at different levels and different focus (i.e. job-specific language training; educational upgrading/bridging language programs, etc.) is commonly seen as a need in the eight participating communities. In some cases Language assessment capacities were limited or very limited in some of the communities.

These issues, paired with the "lack of Canadian experience," are the most frequently cited reasons for foreign-trained professionals not finding jobs at "their level of expertise" or have a "hard time to be accepted in the "industry". In addition, employers' uncertainty about how to evaluate newcomers' credentials, or "preconceived notions" about newcomers of the people who are doing the hiring, may also lead to underemployment of foreign trained professionals.

The 45.8% of the respondents who indicate that it is "somewhat easy," "easy" or "very easy" to find a job in their community, made it clear that they are referring to a particular segment of the newcomers: skilled workers. "Newcomers with low level entries do not have challenges finding manual and low entry jobs." (e.g., Brooks). However, a need for "more workshops for new employees in order to get the skills needed for the more skilled level jobs" is identified.

75% of respondents report that newcomers face some challenges in accessing settlement services in their community including a lack of a centralized place to get support and orientation about available services, lack of knowledge/information about services available in the community, difficulties reaching the services due to lack of transportation, not having a local settlement or CIC office,

and not having sufficient resources to help the increased number of newcomers are the most commonly cited reasons.

According to the survey respondents, the five most needed services for all newcomers are, in order of frequency of selection: (1) language/work place training, assessment and support (72.9%); (2) housing; employment services/help with finding a job; childcare; health and mental health services (21,6%); (3) information and orientation (18.9%); (4) transportation (13.5%); and (5) needs assessments; inclusion; interpretation/translation services (8%).

Because of the growing population of newcomers, all participating SPOs provide services in the three main areas: Settlement, Economic and Social. In total 88.9% of respondents believe these services need to be expanded. In particular, the need to expand services for youth, women and seniors; job-specific language assessment and training; interpretation and translation services; foreign credential recognition; better funding for transportation, housing and childcare; legal support and referrals; social inclusion and integration, help with daily life; help with finding a job and setting up a business; occupational/business mentorship are cited most commonly.

Settlement services issues in Medicine Hat, Lloydminster and Ft. Saskatchewan ; receiving less than 250 newcomers per year

While Medicine Hat, Lloydminster and Ft. Saskatchewan receive fewer newcomers than other communities in the study, service providers in the three communities recognize the need for capacity building within the existing services. Medicine Hat and Lloydminster identified a need for the expansion of existing language training and literacy programs, and Ft. Saskatchewan and Lloydminster identified the need for better information and orientation services for newcomers.

Of note, the community of Medicine Hat demonstrated a high level of service delivery, partnering and leadership in integration and settlement services. Some executive members of SPOs in Medicine Hat have been meeting the needs of newcomers in the community for decades (including a large number of refugees), and have created a comprehensive network of services.

Service providers in Lloydminster also indicate that the community is able to provide a comprehensive level of settlement and integration services for newcomers. However, as the number of newcomers steadily grows in the community, providers recognize the need for greater financial support from all levels of government in order to maintain the existing level of service delivery. Study respondents in Lloydminster also recognized the need for

improved service capacity in areas such as social inclusion, and welcoming community initiatives. The unusual location of the community on the Alberta / Saskatchewan border complicates the work of these service providers – an issue that is attributed to the current CIC funding model.

The Ft. Saskatchewan's service provider network also faces unique challenges due to its geographic location close to the major urban centre of Edmonton. To date, the community lacks a centralized agency for settlement and integration support for newcomers. Service providers indicate service gaps related to information and welcoming services, services for youth, specifically mentoring, and a woman's shelter. Service providers also indicate issues with staffing /staff training, financial support, and offering services in both official languages.

Settlement services issues in Brooks, Lethbridge and Grand Prairie; receiving between 250-550 newcomers per year

The three communities receiving between 250-550 newcomers per year identified shared settlement service issues related to the need for improved capacity in interpretation and language training services. Service providers in Brooks and Lethbridge spoke of a well-developed existing network of settlement and integration services. Participating SPOs in the community of Brooks felt as though they have adequate capacity to communicate and co-ordinate within existing service networks. Study respondents in Lethbridge indicated adequate capacity in terms of skilled-staff, communication, reporting and co-ordination among the service provider network.

Despite these positive observations, Brooks and Lethbridge service providers indicated the need for capacity building. For example, respondents in Brooks indicated the need for improved mentoring services and better collaboration with employers in the city. Study respondents in Grand Prairie similarly indicate the need for better collaboration with employers in order to improve workplace "cultural competency."

Service providers in Brooks identify the need to offer services in both official languages, the need for more staff at settlement agencies, and increased financial support to effectively meet the needs of the community. Lethbridge respondents indicate the need for improved health and mental health services and services for youth. There are particular concerns among service providers in Lethbridge over a shortage of doctors and translators and the knock-on effect of this on the quality / availability of health services – especially for refugees.

Study respondents in Grand Prairie identified a more urgent need for expansion of existing services. This includes the need for improved language assessment and training,

interpretation services, and help with finding employment. Four out of the five SPOs in Grand Prairie that participated in the study identified a shortfall in necessary funding for settlement and integration services.

Settlement services issues in Red Deer and Ft. McMurray; receiving more than 550 newcomers per year

The two communities receiving the greatest number of newcomers spoke of some similar challenges in meeting the needs of newcomers. There have been large influxes of newcomers into Red Deer and Ft. McMurray in recent years. For instance, Ft. McMurray has seen its level of arriving newcomers double over the past five years.

Service providers in Red Deer and Ft. McMurray echoed similar sentiments – namely they face the challenge of delivering a similar level of services to what is found in larger urban centres but are not viewed as requiring the level of funding and capacity of those centres by government and non-government funding bodies.

Ft. McMurray and Red Deer study respondents indicate the need for expansion of existing language training programs, with respondents in Red Deer making special note of a shortage of ESL classes in the city. Service providers in both cities indicate that they have strong organizational capacity but lack the ability to offer services in both official languages. Additionally, both communities indicate the need for more staff at SPOs, expanded staff training and increased levels of funding. Service providers in these cities spoke of "overburdened" and "burnt out" staff.

Generally, study respondents that receive over 550 newcomers per year noted the need for increased capacity in order to meet the needs of a growing number of newcomers who face a host of challenges as they seek to integrate into the community and labour market of Red Deer.

Not surprisingly considering the level of growth in population, and number of newcomers coming to the community, respondents in Ft. McMurray indicate the need for expansion of most existing services. Generally, service providers spoke of a lack of financial resources within existing SPOs. Among the services identified as requiring expansion included affordable and flexible childcare, tailored services for women (domestic violence support), services for seniors and francophones, programs promoting greater social integration, and credential assessment and referral. Study respondents in Ft. McMurray also identify the need to mobilize long-term resident volunteers in the community to aid in welcoming and support services for newcomers.

Figure 3: Types of newcomers receiving settlement services from the participating organizations

Permanent resident	**97.2%**	**35**
Temporary foreign workers	75.0%	27
Refugees	61.1%	22
Refugee claimant	50.0%	18
International students	44.4%	16
New and returning Canadian citizens (Naturalized)	69.4%	25
None of the above	0.0%	0
Other (Canadian born citizens, visitors, live in caregivers	25.0%	9
High school upgrading (all Albertans that come through the door)		
	Total Responses	**36**

The majority of the participating SPOs provide services to newcomers who are ineligible for services, Figure 3 (i.e. TFWs, refugee claimants, international students and new and returning Canadian citizens). The top three services needed by these newcomers are, in order of frequency of selection: (1) Language training (37.8%), (2) Housing (27%), and (3) Employment (21.6%). Additional funding for services for these newcomers is required (Figure 3).

KEY GAPS IN SERVICES

Based on the survey results, the five most frequently identified gaps by the 8 communities were: (1) Job specific language and literacy training (75%); (2) Affordable childcare (62%); (3) Legal services and referrals (50%); (4) Foreign credential recognition; Specialized programming for youth, women and seniors; Help with setting up a business and business mentorship (37%); and (5) Welcoming & information services; Transportation support; Health/ mental health (25%). Filling these gaps requires increased funding.

In follow-up consultations with survey respondents service providers identified some gaps that are particular to the economic, social, cultural and geographic characteristics of the community. In Brooks, where many of the available jobs for newcomers are low-skilled, service providers identified the need for mentorship and assistance programs geared towards helping newcomers pursue entrepreneurial business ventures.

In Grand Prairie service providers identified how a rapidly growing economy was providing a great deal of economic opportunity for newcomers. However, many newcomers lack the English language skills that are necessary to attain required training for job advancement. More tailored alternative / online and workplace ESL services were seen as an important strategy in addressing this issue. Similarly, in Lloydminster, a community whose economy is also driven by rapid growth in the oil and gas sector, service providers suggested that alternative / workplace ESL programs would help to improve labour market outcomes. Respondents in Red Deer noted both a shortage of available ESL classes in the city and the need for alternative / workplace ESL services.

In Ft. McMurray, where a rapidly growing economy and municipality has put a strain on available housing stock the need for more temporary housing was seen as critical to helping newcomers to successfully integrate in the community. Service providers also identified the acute need for counselling and shelter services for newcomer women in Ft. McMurray.

As a community that lacks a CIC funded settlement agency Ft. Saskatchewan would benefit from the establishment of a centralized settlement service that can meet the needs of a growing bedroom community.

Service providers in Lethbridge were particularly concerned about a gap in health, mental health and translator services in the city and suggested that the city would benefit from the presence of a CIC office.

In Medicine Hat study respondents noted gaps related to job training and upgrading facilities. Newcomers in that city also had to travel to the city of Lethbridge in order to take citizenship exams. In the case of Medicine Hat the relative remoteness of the community was seen as creating some of the biggest hurdles for newcomer integration and retention in the community.

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY

In terms of organizational capacity, over half of respondents (Table 6) report inadequate current capacity in the following five key areas: (1) Provide services in both official languages; (2) Financial support to maintain services from other sources; (3) Staff to provide services; (4) Financial support to maintain current services from government sources, and (5) Mobilization of community to support and welcome newcomers. At the same time, over 80% of all respondents feel that they have adequate capacity in the following three key areas: (1) Communication with stakeholders; (2) Coordinating services with other service providers, and (3) Meeting reporting requirements.

Table 6: Organizational capacity

	Adequate Capacity Now? Yes	Adequate Capacity Now? No	Total Responses
a. Staff to provide services	17 (47.2%)	20 (55.6%)	36
b. Financial support to maintain current services from gov't sources	18 (52.9%)	18 (52.9%)	34
c. Financial support to maintain current services from other sources	15 (42.9%)	20 (57.1%)	35
d. Communication with stakeholders	29 (82.9%)	6 (17.1%)	35
e. Coordinating services with other service providers	29 (82.9%)	6 (17.1%)	35
f. Staff skills for delivery and maintenance of services	26 (72.2%)	12 (33.3%)	36
g. Mobilization of community to support and welcome newcomers	18 (51.4%)	18 (51.4%)	35
h. Creation of governing and strategic plan	21 (60.0%)	14 (40.0%)	35
i. Meet reporting requirements	29 (80.6%)	7 (19.4%)	36
j. Provide services in both official languages	14 (38.9%)	23 (63.9%)	36
k. Other (wrap around services, intercultural training)	1 (14.3%)	6 (85.7%)	7

PLANNING AND TRACKING

Most respondents report that they assess the service needs of newcomers in their community either internally (66.7%) or jointly with other service providers (13.9%). Commonly used methods of assessment are focus groups, surveys, community meetings, on-going feedback from the community, and meetings with other providers, settlement practitioner or client narratives. However, the frequency with which such assessments are conducted varies substantially from one SPO to another (i.e. ongoing, twice a month, monthly, once or twice a year, quarterly, or annually). (Table 7)

Table 7: Organizational Planning

	Yes, internally to your organization	Yes, Jointly with other service providers	No	Don't know	Total Responses
Does your organization regularly assess the service needs of newcomers in your community?	24 (66.7%)	13 (36.1%)	5 (13.9%)	1 (2.8%)	36

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

In total 51% of respondents provide settlement services in partnership, 77% provide welcoming services, and 80% provide integration support in partnership with other organizations. The top five organizations with which the participating SPOs partner, in order of frequency of selection, are: 1. Schools/School Boards (82%), 2. Public library/libraries (74%), (3) Children/Family Services (60%), Umbrella organizations (60%), (4) Municipal offices (48%), Chamber of Commerce (48%), Health Services (48%), Language training providers (48%), (5) Religious organizations (45%), Housing Services (42%), and other SPOs (40%). 28% of the participating SPOs also collaborate with ethno cultural groups.

However, the participating SPOs in both Medicine Hat and Red Deer indicated that existing partnerships are largely informal and carried out on an ad hoc, program-to-program basis. Moreover, as much of the partnerships and co-ordination has been ad hoc in nature – driven by the agency of an experienced group of service providers – more formal co-ordination and collaboration with CIC may improve an already impressive level of service delivery.

Ft. Saskatchewan's study respondents indicated that although they are actively engaging in co-ordination and partnerships through their "Building Bridges" program, without CIC funding SPOs are struggling to maintain or build capacity in settlement and integration services. Already, service providers in Ft. Saskatchewan have identified the local Public Library as a potential host for a more formal coordination program. Service providers in the community suggested that one avenue for increasing the efficiency of existing services would be to create a "landmark site" that could highlight and guide newcomers to available services.

Service providers in Ft. McMurray identified the need for a settlement agency committee or "backbone" agency that could help to facilitate co-operation and co-ordination among existing services. Respondents noted that such an agency could aid in avoiding service duplication and generally aid in improving the efficiency of settlement and integration services. Respondents in Ft. McMurray spoke of the need for better tailoring of services to meet the unique local challenges faced by the community. To this end improving information sharing among SPOs and the ability to maximize human and financial resources are seen as key to meeting these challenges.

Likewise SPOs in Grand Prairie and Lloydminster identified the need for an integrated document / information service that could inform newcomers about available services and thus improve partnerships and service delivery to clients. Of note in that community local SPOs have been engaging in partnering activities through the chamber of commerce with local businesses, activities which study respondents viewed as an important strategy in improving their service delivery model.

Service providers in the city of Lethbridge indicated their desire to engage in partnerships between existing labour services, businesses and the local chamber of commerce. Red Deer's respondents also identified the need for improved partnerships with members of the business community. This was seen as key to educating employers about the benefits of hiring newcomers and finding newcomers more highly skilled and paid jobs.

Study respondents in Brooks identified the possibility of the municipal government filling the role of coordinator for local integration and settlements services. Indeed, the idea of the municipal government playing a more central role in coordination of local services was cited by numerous community service providers. For example, respondents in Ft. McMurray, Red Deer, Grand Prairie, and Ft. Saskatchewan all believe that the municipality can play a greater role in supporting SPOs and their partnering activities. With all of these observations in mind, noting the considerable opportunities that exist for improved coordination and partnerships among service providers, all eight communities participating in the study would be candidates for long term funding within LIPs.

Sustainable, long term funding within LIPs is desired by all 8 communities participating in this study.

Conclusion

A number of key points that need further attention may be derived from the findings provided above.

First, the economic developments in Alberta in the last five years lead to an increase in number of newcomers to small, rural communities in the province, many of whom are ineligible (i.e. Temporary Foreign Workers in particular) for CIC-funded settlement services. This creates pressure on the SPOs; the vast majority of the participating SPOs provide services to all newcomers, and this stretches their available resources. As a result, over half of respondents report inadequate current capacity in the following five key areas: (1) Provide services in both official languages; (2) Financial support to maintain services from other sources; (3) Staff to provide services; (4) Financial support to maintain current services from government sources, and (5) Mobilization of community to support and welcome newcomers.

Second, despite the availability of low/entry level job opportunities in many communities newcomers are faced with challenges related to the very high cost of living and integration issues due, in part to language training capacitates of SPOs, affordable childcare, public transportation, and lack of acceptance within communities for which newcomers are still a novelty. More than half (58%) of the respondents indicate that it is "very difficult," "difficult," or "somewhat difficult" for newcomers to settle in their community, and 54% of the respondents indicate that it is "somewhat difficult," or "very difficult" for newcomers to obtain employment in their community. Language and literacy barriers, lack of recognition of foreign credentials and Canadian work experience, lack of jobs above low/entry level, transportation, lack of awareness among employers and uncertainty about newcomers' credentials standards, as well as affordable childcare are the most commonly cited challenges that newcomers face when seeking employment. However, the respondents pointed to the vast difference among the newcomers' employability based on their language skills, awareness of Canadian work place culture, and skill set desired by local employers, which in the case of the participating small rural communities, were usually at an entrance/low level. The issue of matching newcomers' qualifications and the level of their employability and job satisfaction was studied by Esses, Burstein, Ravaneva, Hallman and Medianu (2013). That study found that newcomers in Alberta with university degrees have "more difficult time obtaining a job that matches their qualifications, and report less job satisfaction" (p. 5), but if they do get hired, they "work at higher job skill level and have higher earnings than other immigrants" (p. 6).

A number of recent research studies (e.g., Dejardins & Cornelson, 2011; Alexander et al., 2012) suggest that service providers need to work closely with employers to help them recognize and value newcomers' skills, especially in the area of foreign credential recognition services that may not be known or easily accessible to employers. The respondents in this study indicated this may result in reduction of the overall numbers of foreign trained professionals. However, as also indicated by one-third of the participating SPOs in this study (i.e., Brooks, Red Deer, Medicine Hat), foreign credential recognition and credential upgrading services are a gap in their community. Supporting each community in providing and expanding such services to include credential and licenses evaluation, as well to promote greater employer participation in training services are essential to establishing and sustaining effective and productive relationships that can lead to better community outcomes. In addition, as indicated by the participating SPOs in this study, strengthening job/employment related language services is needed for successful employment and integration of newcomers to their communities. Such services can only be successful if they are developed and offered in close collaboration and full participation of both the SPOs and employers in the community.

Third, there is a need for the development of a more centralized yet flexible model of service delivery that reflects the unique nature of needs and service provision in rural regions characterized by the increased newcomer populations. As reported by 75% of the participating SPOs, newcomers face challenges related to accessibility of settlement services in their communities including, language/literacy barriers, lack of a centralized place to get support and orientation about available services, lack of knowledge/information about services available in the community, difficulties reaching the services due to lack of transportation, not having a local settlement or CIC office, and not having sufficient resources to help the increased number of newcomers. The reported challenges are supported by the findings of another survey of Western settlement outcome (Esses, Hamilton, Wilkinson & Zong, 2013) that showed that only 30% in the sample of newcomers from Alberta who have become permanent residents between 3 and 60 months prior to that survey, used settlement services. That survey's results also show

that three-quarters of the respondents in Alberta obtained services from immigrant-serving agencies, 16% stated that they received services from ethnocultural or religious organizations, libraries and community centres, and 15% from mainstream organizations and on-line. The reasons for such a low level of use of settlement services in Alberta by the participating newcomers in that study show that the greatest barrier to obtaining settlement services was lack of information or awareness of services (one-third of respondents), confusion about where to go for assistance (33%), language difficulties (24%) and financial difficulties (24%), and transportation (one in five respondents). A study conducted by Esses, Burstein, Ravaneva, Hallman & Medianu (2013) also found that the most frequently reported reasons for not using services reported by newcomers in Alberta are "not knowing who to go to in order to get help, lack of information or awareness of services, and language difficulties" (p. 4).

Creating a "one-stop" service and/or package will benefit not only the newcomers and potentially increase the use of available services in the community, but also potential employers in the community as found in a 2012 study commissioned by the Immigrant Employment Council in BC. "One-stop" resources and effective packaging and distribution of information to employers are critical-resources and packaging must be user-friendly and accessible" (as cited in Drolet, Sampson, Burstein, Smith, Gredling & Pasca, 2014, p. 30)

Accessibility can be increased by offering such packages not only in place but also online since about 50% of immigrants in Alberta who participated in a study conducted by Esses, Burstein, Ravaneva, Hallman & Medianu (2013) were found to obtain information about settling in Alberta from government websites" and that there is a strong preference among them "in receiving information about settling in Alberta from the government via internet websites" (p. 4).

Fourth, there is a need to fill the existing gaps in services provided in smaller rural communities in Alberta. Based on the survey results, the five most frequently identified gaps by the 8 communities were: (1) Job specific language and literacy training (75%); (2) Affordable childcare (62%); (3) Legal services and referrals (50%); (4) Foreign credential recognition; Specialized programming for youth, women and seniors; Help with setting up a business and business mentorship (37%); and (5) Welcoming & information services; Transportation support; Health/mental health (25%). Filling these gaps requires increased funding.

The findings of another survey of Western settlement outcome (Esses, Hamilton, Wilkinson & Zong, 2013) show that if newcomers were to identify one type of service they would need most if they were to use only one service in Alberta, half of the newcomers in Alberta (51%) indicated they would need employment services; only 13% indicated health and wellness services. This survey results emphasize the importance newcomers' place on the availability of economic services. However, the survey results presented in this report indicate that the SPOs place higher priority on language training/support services (73%) than on employment services/help with finding a job (22%). Although such discrepancy may be attributed to newcomers' lack of awareness of the need for them to have a certain level of English language proficiency in order to obtain employment in Canada, and/or overestimating their own level of English language proficiency, there is need for the SPOs to consider strengthening their economic services to newcomers. Thus, in addition to strengthening the relationships with the Chamber of Commerce that currently 48% of the SPOs in the study presented here reported, more support is needed for expanding and strengthening relationships with local business and other employers in the community.

Fifth, there is a need for greater support for collaboration among SPOs. The respondents in the feedback sessions pointed to the central role the municipalities can play in providing support to service providers and greater coordination among all three levels of government. However, a 2012 study of the role of municipalities in Alberta in immigration and settlement (Zenev & Associates Diversity and Equity Consultants) found that there is a challenge for smaller communities to access federal or provincial services and that such municipalities may "stay away from the area of immigration entirely, lest they are given more responsibilities than they can carry" (p. 23). Smaller municipalities in that study indicated that they need more accessible and timely information about immigration legislation or regulations, such as responsibilities of employers to newcomer workers, eligibility for Provincial Nominee Program or funding for language training. Small municipalities also indicated the need for more resources in order to effectively fill the gaps to ensure the wellbeing of residents but they "often compete for funding with larger centres" (p. 20).

The same study (Zenev et al, 2012) indicates that some municipalities are "engaged in discussions about housing and city planning—how to develop more affordable or rental housing, or how to create neighborhoods that are less spread out and hopefully more welcoming to newcomers" (p. 15) which would potentially address some of the challenges associated with the high cost of living in the communities in which the participating SPOs operate. Another example of municipalities' engagement provided in the same study, is serving as "catalysts for change in the wider community" by developing public education initiatives and/or building community capacity to become more welcoming by offering training to community service providers.

Participating SPOs stated that coordination among different service providers should eliminate competition for funding among existing service providers by both government and other funders. An agency committee or "backbone" agency that could help to facilitate co-operation and co-ordination among existing services could be developed if funding is available. Sustainable, long term funding within LIPs is needed and desired.

Addressing the above five points, an innovative approach to service delivery in smaller rural centers in Alberta is needed, based on LIP model. The Summit Report from Alberta Integration Summit, held in Edmonton on Oct. 30, 2014 (http://aaisa.ca/Summit/alberta-intgration-Summit/) is an excellent source of information about the direction such model needs to take in Alberta in order to be successful.

Research Team

Anna Kirova, Ph.D. *(Co- Principal Investigator)*
John McCoy, Ph.D. *(Co-author)*

University of Alberta
Tel: 780-492-0913, akirova@ualberta.ca

Bill Ashton, Ph.D. *(Principal Investigator)*
Rachael Pettigrew, Ph.D. *(Research Associate)*
Eleni Galatsanou, MSc *(Project Coordinator)*

Rural Development Institute, Brandon University
Tel: 204-571-8513, Ashtonw@brandonu.ca

Lori Wilkinson, Ph.D. *(Chair of Project Advisory Panel)*

University of Manitoba
Tel: 204- 474-8491, Lori.Wilkinson@umanitoba.ca

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Appendix A
Fort McMurray/Wood Buffalo Community Report

BRANDON UNIVERSITY

Immigration Settlement Services and Gaps in
Fort McMurray, Wood Buffalo region, Alberta

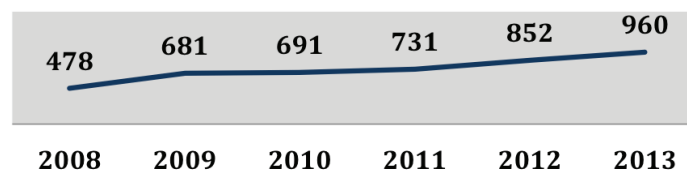**This community report is part of the "Immigration Settlement Services and Gaps in CIC's Western Region" study.**

Population (2011): 72,944 residents in urban service area and 43,463 in rural service area.
Source: www.woodbuffalo.ab.ca, Municipal census, 2012

Permanent Resident Landings Wood Buffalo 2008-2013
Source: Citizenship and Immigration Canada

2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
478	681	691	731	852	960

Data sources: 5 Service Providing Organizations (SPOs) receiving funding from CIC, Provincial, NGO, private, and various other sources.

- Findings validated locally

SETTLEMENT SERVICES

Top services offered
Fort McMurray has a relatively developed settlement service sector with all services listed (see appendix A) being offered by the participant organizations or someone in the community.

Key gaps identified
- Suitable language training for adults
- Affordable/temporary housing
- Services specifically tailored to women and seniors
- Legal services
- Inadequate financial support and personnel / training at SPOs
- Childcare

Barriers to access services
- English language proficiency
- Lack of childcare
- Ineligibility for services among some newcomers
- Transportation difficulties
- Lack of knowledge about existing services

Top services needed
- Improved language training
- Affordable and flexible childcare
- Services for women and seniors
- Social integration programs
- Credential assessment and referrals

Services needed by newcomers ineligible for CIC funded services
Needs assessment, language training, housing, community information and orientation, legal support, childcare, health services.

PARTNERSHIPS

Fort McMurray has a very well developed and diverse service provider partnership network. The most commonly identified partnerships exist with schools/school boards, umbrella organizations, settlement service providers (SPOs), civil society groups, municipal offices, universities/research networks, public library, and language training providers. Welcoming activities are mainly conducted in partnership.

INTEGRATION IN COMMUNITY

Fort McMurray is an affluent community with a vibrant labour market that attracts many newcomers seeking employment. The primary integrative barriers faced by newcomers are related to English language proficiency, a high cost of living and gaining accessing to affordable housing and child care. Gaining Canadian work experience and foreign credential recognition are seen as the main barriers to economic integration.

IMMIGRATION SETTLEMENT SERVICES AND GAPS IN CIC'S WESTERN REGION:

Fort McMurray, Wood Buffalo, Alberta

Introduction

The purpose of this project is to better understand the settlement and integration services available to newcomers and to explore the service gaps and opportunities in Fort McMurray, Alberta and 28 other rural communities across Western Canada. This research offers a current snapshot of Fort McMurray by providing information gathered from a sample of local service providers. It is not a comprehensive review of all settlement services in Fort McMurray. Data was collected in October and November 2014 from five organizations that serve newcomers in Fort McMurray through a telephone survey completed by a representative from each organization. Four of the organizations receive funding from CIC and the province, one from private and NGOs funding. In addition, two received funding from a variety of other funding sources. Three survey respondents participated in a feedback session on the primary survey findings via teleconference held in December 2014.

Background

Fort McMurray is located in the regional municipality of Wood Buffalo and is representative of one of the fastest growing economies in Canada. Wood Buffalo was formed as a result of the amalgamation of the City of Fort McMurray Improvement District No. 143 on April 1, 1995. Containing a number of remote rural communities and five First Nations, Wood Buffalo is a diverse and challenging environment for service providers to operate in. Due primarily to oil and gas development, the community has more than doubled in size since 1999. The Wood Buffalo region has a diverse population of roughly 74,631 permanent residents and an additional 41,476 non-permanent residents (shadow and project accommodated people). Since 2008, 4,393 newcomers have moved to the region: this represents 6.0% of the total population in the area. Not surprisingly, all of the service provider organizations reported a rapid increase in clients over the past five years.

Community Settlement Concerns

Almost all the respondents felt that the number of newcomers settling in Wood Buffalo had significantly increased in the last five years putting a strain on

necessary services. As indicated by particpants during the feedback session, the opening of the International Airport in 2013 has increased primary migration. In addition, a large number of migrants make their way to the city shortly after arrival in major municipal centres such as Edmonton. Typically thought of as a hub for secondary migration, in reality Fort McMurray is increasingly a site for primary migration – speaking to the need for greater support from CIC.

As indicated during the follow-up consultation, the majority of the participants felt settlement for certain groups of newcomers was especially difficult. In particular, women, seniors and foreign temporary workers lack access to essential services. There was an identified lack of accommodation for Francophones, largely because Alberta is not a bilingual province.

While access to labour, especially entry level jobs, is not an issue for newcomers, rapid economic growth has generated other challenges such as a high cost of living, associated financial difficulties, and poor access to affordable housing, temporary housing and childcare. More highly skilled newcomers struggle with a lack of recognition of non-Canadian work experience and credentials. In order to allieviate some of these issues particpants identifed the need for low cost skill training, lower cost legal services and improved accessing of foreign credentials during follow-up consultations. In short, despite the rapid growth in population and newcomers, available services do not match the needs of the community. Incerasingly the level of demand on SPOs reflects what is commonly found in larger urban centres.

Available Settlement Services

Despite the aforementioned limitations Fort McMurray has a relatively developed settlement and integration service sector with all services listed (27 key services – see appendix A) being offered by the participant organizations or someone in the community. Many services were identified as requiring expansion, which is not surprising given the recent growth in the newcomer population in the region. Among the services identified were language training and support, housing, affordable child care, live in care givers for seniors, and assessment and referral.

In regards to newcomers who are ineligible for CIC-funded services, participants indicated that temporary foreign workers (TFW), new and returning naturalized citizens, refugee claimants and international students were all in need of settlement services. The top services most needed by ineligible groups include needs assessment, language training, housing, community information and orientation, legal support, childcare, and health services. Participants indicated that TFWs (recognizing that service needs are less than what is required by permanent residents) and new and returning naturalized Canadian citizens had a greater need for settlement services than other groups.

Tracking and Planning

Two of the participating organizations indicated they had a strategic plan: one had their own plan while the other worked in partnership with another organization. All participating organizations worked with other units in the community to assist in the settlement of newcomers, including other settlement service providers, Francophone community organizations, school boards, ethno-cultural groups, and municipal libraries.

Specific Capacities

The majority of organizations in the regional municipality have reported lacking the financial support to maintain their current level of services. During the follow-up consultation a number of concerns were expressed over existing capacity among SP0s. One identified issue is adequate staffing. In a highly competitive labour market there is high turnover among staff members within service providers. Many staff members experience "burn out" due to the demanding nature of their work and large influx of newcomers.

Almost all participants reported good communication with stakeholders and other service providers in the area. Most, however, reported that although there are programs that support newcomers' transition and integration into the general community, it is difficult to mobilize the long-term resident community in Fort McMurray to welcome and support newcomers.

Low participation of newcomer women in programs offered by the ISOs is a concern of service providers and is primarily attributed to a lack of access to affordable and part-time childcare. Participants also noted during the follow-up that newcomer women were overrepresented in the municipality's only women's shelter, suggesting the need for more services for women suffering domestic abuse and financial distress. Finally, like other regions in Western Canada, service organizations report difficulty meeting the needs of Francophones, for instance in relation to bilingual health care providers.

Partnerships

All survey participants reported being engaged in partnerships with other community organizations and it is evident that Fort McMurray has a very well developed service provider partnership network. Participants indicated that they were in partnership with all 21 possible community partners listed in the survey (see appendix B). The most commonly reported partners were schools/school boards, umbrella organizations, settlement service providers (SPOs), civil society groups, municipal offices, universities/research networks, public library, and language training providers. The activities conducted in partnership were categorized into three groups; settlement (e.g., getting jobs and housing, daily functioning), integration (e.g., teaching labour rules and human rights), and welcoming (e.g., orientation to community, civic events). In Fort McMurray, integration and welcoming activities were more likely to be conducted in partnership than settlement activities.

However, among the participants significant emphasis was put on the need for an inclusive Settlement Agency Committee or "backbone" agency that could facilitate co-operation and co-ordination of services at the local level. There were notable concerns over duplication of services: the need to tailor services to local challenges; the need to facilitate better information sharing among providers; and a desire to maximize the benefit of limited human and financial resources. In addition, there was consensus that this committee could act as a more effective advocate for agencies among federal, provincial and municipal levels of government, and generally would build trust amongst service providers and government officials. There was particular concern expressed over the role of the municipality in terms of providing support to service providers and an expressed need for greater co-operation with that level of government. Given the level of partnering and number of partnerships that currently exists in Fort McMurray, this community would be a candidate for a LIP.

Research Team

Anna Kirova, Ph.D. *(Co - Principal Investigator)*
John McCoy, Ph.D. *(Co- author)*

University of Alberta
Tel: 780-492-0913, akirova@ualberta.ca

Bill Ashton, Ph.D. *(Principal Investigator)*
Rachael Pettigrew, Ph.D. *(Research Associate)*
Eleni Galatsanou, MSc *(Project Coordinator)*

Rural Development Institute, Brandon University
Tel: 204-571-8513, Ashtonw@brandonu.ca

Lori Wilkinson, Ph.D. *(Chair of Project Advisory Panel)*

University of Manitoba
Tel: 204- 474-8491, Lori.Wilkinson@umanitoba.ca

Appendix A – List of Possible Services

SETTLEMENT

- Greeting upon arrival/initial reception
- Information and orientation
- Needs assessment and referral
- Interpretation services
- Language assessment
- Language training
- Help finding housing
- Help with daily life (e.g., registering for school, getting a bank account)
- Transportation support

ECONOMIC

- Help finding a job
- Educational upgrading
- Recognition of foreign credentials
- Investment opportunities
- Job-specific language training
- Help setting up a business
- Occupational/business mentorship and networking
- Financial supports

SOCIAL

- Childcare
- Cultural Events
- Recreational services
- Legal support/referral
- Health Services
- Mental Health Services
- Social inclusion/ integration support
- Services for seniors
- Services for women
- Services for youth

Appendix B – Possible Organizational Partnerships

1. School/School Boards
2. Umbrella organizations
3. Newcomers (individuals)
4. Housing services
5. Settlement service providers
6. Health services
7. Municipal offices/EDO
8. Civil society groups
9. Francophone organizations
10. Language training providers
11. Children/Family services
12. Businesses
13. Chambers of Commerce
14. Police Force
15. Universities/Research Networks
16. Ethno-cultural groups
17. Religious organizations
18. Public libraries
19. Foundations
20. Labour market services
21. Other: Province of Quebec and Francophone Secretariat in Edmonton; Health Family Outreach; Santara Safe House.

Appendix B
Red Deer Community Report

BRANDON UNIVERSITY

Immigration Settlement Services and Gaps in
Red Deer, Alberta

**This community report is part of the "Immigration Settlement Services and Gaps in CIC's Western Region" study.**

ALBERTA

Wood Buffalo Region

Grand Prairie

Fort Saskatchewan

Lloydminster

Red Deer ★

Brooks

Medicine Hat

Lethbridge

Population (2014): 98,585 residents.
Source: 2014 Municipal Census

Permanent Resident Landings
Red Deer 2008-2013
Source: Citizenship and Immigration Canada
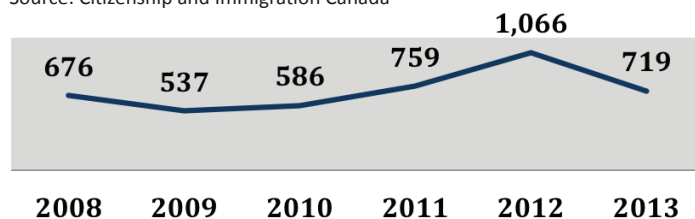
2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
676	537	586	759	1,066	719

UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

Data sources: 4 Service Providing Organizations (SPOs) receiving funding from CIC, Provincial, private, municipal, and other sources.

• Findings validated locally

SETTLEMENT SERVICES

Top services offered
Red Deer has a well-developed settlement service sector with all possible services listed (appendix A) being offered by the participant organizations or someone in the community.

Key gaps identified
• Interpretation services
• Shortage of available ESL classes
• Tailored language training
• Affordable child care and transportation
• Inadequate capacity at SPOs

Barriers to access services
• English language proficiency
• Lack of information/ confusion on how to access existing services
• Lack of affordable childcare
• Ineligibility for services
• Some clients live in nearby rural areas and lack transportation

Top services needed
• Language training and upgrading of schooling
• Job specific language training
• Help with setting up a business and finding a job
• Civic engagement and inter-cultural exchange

Services needed by newcomers ineligible for CIC funded services
Language training, information and orientation, mentorship and networking, social support, financial support (for refugee claimants and international students)

PARTNERSHIPS

Red Deer has a well-developed and diverse service provider partnership network. The most commonly identified partnerships exist with schools/school boards, municipal offices, and child and family services. There was an identified need to bring businesses and employers into consultation with settlement organizations.

INTEGRATION IN COMMUNITY

The perception among participants is that it is very difficult or somewhat difficult for newcomers to settle in Red Deer. This is mainly due to cultural barriers and problems accessing the labour market. Issues with language training, lack of Canadian work experience, and foreign credential recognition are seen as key barriers for newcomers to find a job in Red Deer. Service providers pointed to the need for greater civic engagement and social integration among newcomers.

IMMIGRATION SETTLEMENT SERVICES AND GAPS IN CIC'S WESTERN REGION:
Red Deer, Alberta

Introduction

The purpose of this project is to better understand the settlement and integration services available to newcomers and to explore the service gaps and opportunities in Red Deer, Alberta and 28 other rural communities across Western Canada. This research offers a current snapshot of Red Deer by providing information gathered from a sample of local service providers. It is not a comprehensive review of all settlement services in Red Deer. Data was collected in October and November 2014 from four organizations that serve newcomers in Red Deer through a telephone survey completed by a representative from each organization. Three of the four organizations received funding from CIC, in addition to a variety of other funding sources. Three survey respondents participated in a feedback session on the primary survey findings via teleconference held in December 2014.

Background

Red Deer is a city in central Alberta located near the mid-point of the Calgary-Edmonton Corridor. The economy in Red Deer is mainly focused on the oil and gas services sector and agriculture. Due to rapid economic development, the community has almost doubled in size since the 1980's. According to the 2014 municipal census, Red Deer has a diverse population of 98,585 residents.

Community Settlement Concerns

Service provider representatives felt that the number of newcomers settling in Red Deer had increased substantially in the last five years and now represents between 10-25% of the community's overall population. The main explanation for this growth in the newcomer population is rooted in employment demand and the substantial increase in the volume of temporary foreign workers (TFWs) entering the city, and an associated increase in permanent residents and family reunifications in the city. The majority of the participants felt newcomers faced a number of acute challenges. Some of these challenges were identified in the follow-up consultations and include limited access to the labour market, the need for more comprehensive settlement services and issues with social integration experienced

by some ethnic communities in Red Deer. It was noted that some minority communities arrive and do not find adequate inter- and intra-community networks and support systems. Two participants suggested it was difficult and two suggested it was somewhat difficult (for a total of four) for newcomers to get jobs. This difficulty was linked to English language proficiency and a lack of Canadian work experience / foreign credential recognition. In particular, more highly skilled newcomers find it difficult to locate suitable employment – often taking unskilled work out of economic necessity.

During the follow-up consultation participants noted the need for a municipal information hub where newcomers can access information on available services, improved domestic violence related services, and better job training for adults and youths looking for more skilled jobs. There was also a recognized need for better civic engagement among newcomers, non-volunteer-based translation services and improved counselling / mental services for women and children. Moreover, due to financial and transportation related limitations, newcomers based in rural areas have difficulty accessing necessary services, and service providers drew attention to the fact that a number of newcomers from surrounding communities use Red Deer as a hub for settlement services. As a result, their presence adds to the existing strain on service providers.

Available Settlement Services

Red Deer has a well-developed settlement and integration service sector with all services listed (27 key services – see appendix A) being offered by the participant organizations or someone in the community. All services listed were identified as needing to be expanded, which is not surprising given the growth in the newcomer population in Red Deer. In particular it was noted during the follow-up that there was a shortage of ESL classes in Red Deer.

Participants indicated that certain classes of newcomers did not have adequate access to CIC-funded services, such as temporary foreign workers (TFW). Other barriers to accessing services were identified by participants. During the follow-up consultations participants identified that among these groups there is a general confusion around how to access services. Limited hours of services and

transportation issues can also create barriers to access.

All participants indicated that they provide services to at least one group of newcomers who are ineligible for CIC-funded services. Ineligible groups include temporary foreign workers, new and returning naturalized Canadian citizens, refugee claimants, and international students. The top services most needed by ineligible groups include language training, information and orientation, mentorship and networking, social support, and financial support (for refugee claimants and international students).

Tracking and Planning

All four participating service providers reported that their organization was guided by a strategic plan and that they regularly, either independently or in partnership, assessed the service needs of the newcomers in their community. These needs assessments took a variety of forms (i.e., survey, community mapping, meeting, discussions with clients, focus groups, interviews, and review of client analysis records) and were conducted as frequently as monthly or annually.

Specific Capacities

In Red Deer, the SPOs that participated in the survey had strong organizational capacity. All organizations felt they had existing capacity to communicate with stakeholders, meet reporting requirements, and coordinate services with other stakeholders. However, three organizations identified that they did not have adequate capacity to provide services in both official languages. More capacity is needed to meet the needs of a growing client-base, and the following 3 needs were cited most often: more staff, financial support, and staff training for improved service delivery.

Partnerships

All participants reported being engaged in partnerships with other community organizations in providing settlement, integration and welcoming services. Although generally informal, and created on a program-to-program basis, it is evident that Red Deer has a well-developed service provider network. Participants indicated that there were existing partnerships among all 21 community partners listed in the survey (see appendix B). The most commonly reported partners were schools/school boards, municipal offices, and child and family services.

As indicated during follow-up consultations, some participants voiced concerns that governments at the provincial and federal level underestimate the needs of smaller cities when providing necessary services to newcomers. Service providers pointed out that both small and large cities deliver the same services on a different scale. There was also an identified need to bring businesses and employers into consultation with settlement organizations. This was seen as key to educating employers about the benefits of hiring newcomers and finding those newcomers better quality jobs.

Given the level of partnering and the number of partnerships that currently exist in Red Deer, this community would be a candidate for an LIP.

Research Team

Anna Kirova, Ph.D. *(Co - Principal Investigator)*
John McCoy, Ph.D. *(Co- author)*

University of Alberta
Tel: 780-492-0913, akirova@ualberta.ca

Bill Ashton, Ph.D. *(Principal Investigator)*
Rachael Pettigrew, Ph.D. *(Research Associate)*
Eleni Galatsanou, MSc *(Project Coordinator)*

Rural Development Institute, Brandon University
Tel: 204-571-8513, Ashtonw@brandonu.ca

Lori Wilkinson, Ph.D. *(Chair of Project Advisory Panel)*

University of Manitoba
Tel: 204- 474-8491, Lori.Wilkinson@umanitoba.ca

Appendix A – List of Possible Services

SETTLEMENT

- Greeting upon arrival/initial reception
- Information and orientation
- Needs assessment and referral
- Interpretation services
- Language assessment
- Language training
- Help finding housing
- Help with daily life (e.g., registering for school, getting a bank account)
- Transportation support

ECONOMIC

- Help finding a job
- Educational upgrading
- Recognition of foreign credentials
- Investment opportunities
- Job-specific language training
- Help setting up a business
- Occupational/business mentorship and networking
- Financial supports

SOCIAL

- Childcare
- Cultural Events
- Recreational services
- Legal support/referral
- Health Services
- Mental Health Services
- Social inclusion/ integration support
- Services for seniors
- Services for women
- Services for youth

Appendix B – Possible Organizational Partnerships

1. School/School Boards
2. Umbrella organizations
3. Newcomers (individuals)
4. Housing services
5. Settlement service providers
6. Health services
7. Municipal offices/ EDO
8. Civil society groups
9. Francophone organizations
10. Language training providers
11. Children/Family services
12. Businesses
13. Chambers of Commerce
14. Police Force
15. Universities/Research Networks
16. Ethno-cultural groups
17. Religious organizations
18. Public libraries
19. Foundations
20. Labour Market Services
21. Other: Immigrant Consultants

Appendix C
Lethbridge Community Report

BRANDON UNIVERSITY

Immigration Settlement Services and Gaps in
Lethbridge, Alberta

This community report is part of the "Immigration Settlement Services and Gaps in CIC's Western Region" study.

ALBERTA

Wood Buffalo Region

Grand Prairie

Fort Saskatchewan

Lloydminster

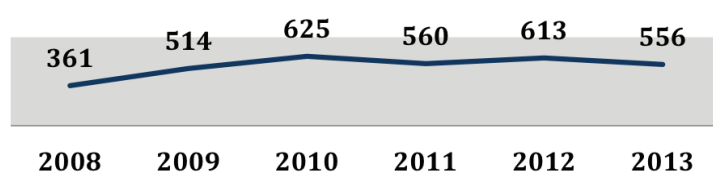Red Deer

Brooks

Medicine Hat

Lethbridge

Population (2014): 93,004 residents.
Source: City of Lethbridge Municipal Census, 2014

Permanent Resident Landings Lethbridge 2008-2013
Source: Citizenship and Immigration Canada

2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
361	514	625	560	613	556

UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

Data sources: 4 Service Providing Organizations (SPOs) receiving funding from CIC, Provincial, NGO, other federal, and various other sources.

• Findings validated locally

SETTLEMENT SERVICES

Top services offered
Lethbridge has a well-developed settlement service sector with 27 services (out of 27 possible key services listed in appendix A) offered by the participant organizations or someone in the community.

Key gaps identified
- Health and mental health services
- Affordable high-level language training
- Job-specific language training
- Affordable childcare
- Translation services
- Services for youth

Barriers to access services
- English language proficiency
- Financial difficulties of newcomers
- Ineligibility for services
- Low health and English language literacies, especially among refugees

Top services needed
- Health and mental health care
- Interpreters and translators
- Affordable childcare
- A local CIC facility
- Special needs and adaptation services

Services needed by newcomers ineligible for CIC funded services
Language assessment and training, social inclusion and integration supports, health and mental health care services, information and orientation, help with daily life, occupational and business mentorship, and employment services.

PARTNERSHIPS

Lethbridge has a well-developed and diverse service provider partnership network.

The most commonly identified partnerships exist with school and school boards, umbrella organizations, health services, Francophone organizations, language training providers, children and family services, police force, universities and research networks, ethno-cultural groups, businesses, and the public library. Desired partnerships include the Chamber of Commerce, foundations, and labour market services.

INTEGRATION IN COMMUNITY

Although there is no general consensus among service providers in Lethbridge about the level of difficulties newcomers face in integrating in the community, English language proficiency and foreign credential recognition were identified as the primary barriers to gaining employment. A lack of cultural understanding between newcomers and the host society was also identified as an impediment to integration.

Lethbridge, Alberta

Introduction

The purpose of this project is to better understand the settlement and integration services available to newcomers and to explore the service gaps and opportunities in Lethbridge, Alberta and 28 other rural communities across Western Canada. This research offers a current snapshot of Lethbridge by providing information gathered from a sample of local service providers. It is not a comprehensive review of all settlement services in Lethbridge. Data was collected in October and November 2014 from organizations that serve newcomers in Lethbridge through a telephone survey completed by a representative from each organization. All organizations receive provincial funding, two receive funding from CIC, one receives other federal funding, one receives private funding, and one receives funding from NGOs. In addition, two organizations receive funding from other sources. Four survey respondents participated in a feedback session on the primary survey findings via teleconference held in December 2014.

Background

As the largest city in southern Alberta, Lethbridge is the industrial and commercial hub of the region. It is the fourth-largest city in Alberta and is home to a growing population. Much of the city's population is employed in the service or public sector. Lethbridge has a university and two colleges, which meet the educational needs of the community. The city is home to a number of international students, permanent residents, and temporary foreign workers (TFW). Many TFWs are employed in the food processing industry.

Community Settlement Concerns

All participants felt that the number of newcomers settling in Lethbridge has increased over the past five years. They attribute this growth to arrivals of temporary foreign workers (TFWs), and a sizeable number of refugees. Of note, as indicated during follow-up consultation with service providers, Lethbridge is home to the largest Bhutanese community in Canada, roughly 1,000 individuals, and has become a popular destination for primary and secondary migrants from

that country. Refugees and other newcomers are attracted to Lethbridge's easily accessible settlement and employment services, and an attractive labour market. The immigration category of newcomers certainly influences the settlement experience in Lethbridge, with refugees facing more pronounced challenges related to language proficiency and access to health care.

Despite the accessibility of settlement services in the small city newcomers face a number of settlement challenges. Service providers noted during the follow-up consultation that there was good access to language assessment and training; however, access to more expensive higher level (post-secondary standard) language training was viewed as largely unaffordable for many newcomers. They also noted that the absence of a CIC office was seen as challenge in providing services to newcomers in Lethbridge. Newcomers may be able to locate services, but they do not necessarily receive quick access to the supports they require which leads to frustrations with long wait times.

Furthermore, although employment services in the city experience a remarkable level of success (95% of those who use the service find employment as indicated during the follow-up consultation), as in other Canadian labour markets some newcomers find it difficult to find a job due to problems with foreign qualification assessment and recognition. Language and transportation were also cited as barriers to finding employment.

Available Settlement Services

Lethbridge has a well-developed settlement and integration service sector with 27 services (out of 27 key services listed in appendix A) offered by the participant organizations or someone in the community. Participants feel that a number of services need to be expanded. These include language training, recreational services, health and mental health care services, social inclusion and integration support, and services for youth. Out of those services not currently offered to newcomers, participants feel that employment specific services such as investment opportunities, job-specific language training, and help setting up a business are most needed. Service providers in Lethbridge offer many supports and resources, but there is room for expansion.

All participants indicated that they provide services to at least one group of newcomers who are ineligible for CIC-funded services. Ineligible groups include temporary foreign workers, new and returning naturalized Canadian citizens, refugee claimants, and international students. The top services most needed by ineligible groups include employment services, language training and supports, help with daily life, information and orientation, health and mental health care services, and social inclusion and integration supports.

As indicated during the follow-up consultation, service providers noted that TFWs in particular face considerable confusion and anxiety over changes to the existing TFW program by the federal government.

Service providers in Lethbridge identified several issues as impediments to successful integration including language and financial difficulties, ineligibility, discrimination and a lack of understanding between citizens and newcomers, confusion about where to get help, and difficulties with health literacy. Another shared concern among SPOs cited during the follow-up was based on a shortage of doctors and translators in the community and the inter-related difficulties faced by newcomers as they attempted to access health and mental health services.

Tracking and Planning

All participating service providers report that their organization is guided by a strategic plan that has been developed within their organization or with other service providers. SPOs regularly, either independently or jointly with other service providers, assess the service needs of the newcomers in their community. These needs assessments took a variety of forms such as teacher observations, student evaluations, feedback from the community, and through settlement practitioner and client narratives. Needs assessment processes are completed on an on-going basis and often four times a year for most organizations.

Specific Capacities

In Lethbridge, the organizations that participated in the survey had strong organizational capacity. Most organizations seem to have adequate capacities in staff skills, communication, reporting, and coordination to maintain current services. However, there is a desire to increase capacity in financial support to maintain current services from government sources, communicating and coordinating with stakeholders, mobilizing community support and welcome newcomers, and creating a governing and strategic plan. Overall, there is a split amongst participants regarding the extent to which they feel current capacity within their organization is adequate to serve the newcomers arriving to their community.

Partnerships

All service provider participants report that they are engaged in partnership with other community organizations. Participants indicated that they were in partnership with all community partners listed in the survey (see appendix B). The most commonly reported partners include schools and school boards, umbrella organizations, newcomers, settlement service providers, health services, civil society groups, Francophone organizations, language training providers, children and family services, police force, universities and research networks, ethno-cultural groups, businesses and public libraries. There is a desire to partner with the Chamber of Commerce, foundations, and labour market services.

The activities conducted in partnership were categorized into three groups; settlement (e.g., getting jobs and housing, daily functioning), integration (e.g., teaching labour rules and human rights), and welcoming (e.g., orientation to community, civic events). In Lethbridge, integration and welcoming activities were more likely to be conducted in partnership than settlement services. Given the level of partnering and number of partnerships that currently exists in Lethbridge, this community would be a candidate for a LIP.

Research Team

Anna Kirova, Ph.D. *(Co - Principal Investigator)*
John McCoy, Ph.D. *(Co- author)*

University of Alberta
Tel: 780-492-0913, akirova@ualberta.ca

Bill Ashton, Ph.D. *(Principal Investigator)*
Rachael Pettigrew, Ph.D. *(Research Associate)*
Eleni Galatsanou, MSc *(Project Coordinator)*

Rural Development Institute, Brandon University
Tel: 204-571-8513, Ashtonw@brandonu.ca

Lori Wilkinson, Ph.D. *(Chair of Project Advisory Panel)*

University of Manitoba
Tel: 204- 474-8491, Lori.Wilkinson@umanitoba.ca

Appendix A – List of Possible Services

SETTLEMENT

- Greeting upon arrival/initial reception
- Information and orientation
- Needs assessment and referral
- Interpretation services
- Language assessment
- Language training
- Help finding housing
- Help with daily life (e.g., registering for school, getting a bank account)
- Transportation support

ECONOMIC

- Help finding a job
- Educational upgrading
- Recognition of foreign credentials
- Investment opportunities
- Job-specific language training
- Help setting up a business
- Occupational/business mentorship and networking
- Financial supports

SOCIAL

- Childcare
- Cultural Events
- Recreational services
- Legal support/referral
- Health Services
- Mental Health Services
- Social inclusion/ integration support
- Services for seniors
- Services for women
- Services for youth

Appendix B – Possible Organizational Partnerships

1. School/School Boards
2. Umbrella organizations
3. Newcomers (individuals)
4. Housing services
5. Settlement service providers
6. Health services
7. Municipal offices/ EDO
8. Civil society groups
9. Francophone organizations
10. Language training providers
11. Children/Family services
12. Businesses
13. Chambers of Commerce
14. Police Force
15. Universities/Research Networks
16. Ethno-cultural groups
17. Religious organizations
18. Public libraries
19. Foundations
20. Labour Market Services
21. Other: Flexibility Learning

Appendix D
Medicine Hat Community Report

BRANDON UNIVERSITY

Immigration Settlement Services and Gaps in
Medicine Hat, Alberta

This community report is part of the "Immigration Settlement Services and Gaps in CIC's Western Region" study.

ALBERTA

Wood Buffalo Region

Grand Prairie

Fort Saskatchewan

Lloydminster

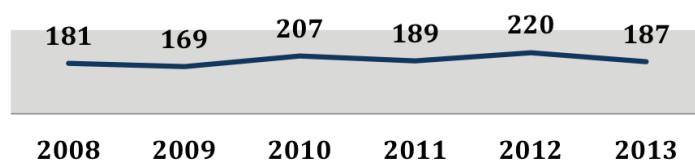Red Deer

Brooks

Medicine Hat

Lethbridge

Population (2012): 61,180 residents.
Source: Source: Municipal 2012 Census.

Permanent Resident Landings Medicine Hat 2008-2013
Source: Citizenship and Immigration Canada

2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
181	169	207	189	220	187

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Data sources: 2 Service Providing Organizations (SPOs) receiving funding from CIC, Provincial and other sources.

• Findings validated locally

SETTLEMENT SERVICES

Top services offered

Medicine Hat is home to a historically established and impressive network of settlement services, with all possible services listed (appendix A) being offered by the participant organizations or someone in the community.

Key gaps identified

- Access to affordable and convenient transportation
- Access to legal services and immigration lawyers
- Opportunities for volunteer contributions
- Access to citizenship testing facilities
- Access to credential upgrading

Barriers to access services

- English language proficiency
- Poor rates of literacy, especially among refugees
- Costly and inaccessible public transportation; and difficulty accessing the city from nearby communities
- Ineligibility of services

Top services needed

- Information and orientation
- More accessible mental health services
- Volunteer centre
- Transportation services
- Enhanced / longer term language and literacy programs

Services needed by newcomers ineligible for CIC funded services

Language assessment and training, job specific language training, information and orientation, assistance finding housing and with daily life, recognition of foreign credentials, legal support and referral.

PARTNERSHIPS

Medicine Hat has a well-developed and diverse service provider partnership network.

The most commonly identified partnerships exist with umbrella organizations, house services, health services, children/family services, language training providers, business, Francophone organizations, universities/research networks, labour market services and public libraries. Settlement, Integration and welcoming activities were all reported in partnership, but settlement was the least common activity.

INTEGRATION IN COMMUNITY

The perception among participants is that it is "easy to somewhat easy" for newcomers to settle in the community because of the small size of the community and accessibility of quality settlement services. One participant believed finding employment is "somewhat difficult" for newcomers in the community (due to language barriers and transportation) while the other participant described it as very easy.

Medicine Hat, Alberta

Introduction

The purpose of this project is to better understand the settlement and integration services available to newcomers and to explore the service gaps and opportunities in Medicine Hat, Alberta and 28 other rural communities across Western Canada. This research offers a current snapshot of Medicine Hat by providing information gathered from a sample of local service providers. It is not a comprehensive review of all settlement services in Medicine Hat. Data was collected in October and November 2014 from two organizations that serve newcomers in Medicine Hat through a telephone survey completed by a representative from each organization. The survey was followed by a telephone consultation with 2 participants which allowed them to offer feedback on the initial survey findings. Both organizations received provincial funding, one from CIC, one from a private fund, as well as from other funding sources. The survey respondents participated in a feedback session on the primary survey findings via teleconference held in December 2014.

Background

Medicine Hat is situated in south east Alberta, Canada. It is approximately 169 km (105 mi) east of Lethbridge and 295 km (183 mi) southeast of Calgary. This city and the adjacent Town of Redcliff to the northwest are surrounded by Cypress Country. The primary employers for newcomers in Medicine Hat are the oil and gas and service industries. Historically, Medicine Hat maintained stable population growth and the community has a diverse population of roughly 61,180. Landings of permanent residents reached its peak point in 2012.

Community Settlement Concerns

One participant felt that the number of newcomers settling in Medicine Hat had increased in the previous five years, whereas the other believed it had decreased during that same period. Both participants felt that it was somewhat easy for newcomers to integrate into Medicine Hat. The relative ease of this process was attributed to the fairly small size of the community and its excellent existing network of service providers.

As indicated in the follow-up consulation there were some concerns expressed by participants. For example, public transportation was viewed as expensive and inadequate, in terms of meeting the needs of newcomers. Public transportation services are unavailable to some shift workers due to operational hours, and newcomers based in nearby communities such as Redcliff find it difficult to access their place of work in Medicine Hat. Service providers noted the difficulties for working adults to find childcare for infants in the city.

There were also concerns expressed over credential recognition and jobs training / upgrading. Participants noted during the follow-up consultation that newcomers often have to leave the city in order to upgrade their education and skills at a university or technical college; often this results in a loss of skilled workers to major urban centres like Calgary. There were also identified issues with mental health services not providing non-English language services. As the community is a recipient of a significant number of refugees many of these individuals have acute mental health needs and in some instances suffer from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). These individuals have often had to seek treatment elsewhere in order to access treatment in their first language. Participants also noted that the naturalization process was challenging for newcomers in Medicine Hat, based on the fact that citizenship testing facilities are not available in the community (the closest is Lethbridge) thus travel can be costly and time consuming for working adults.

In regards to gaining employment, it is was viewed as somewhat difficult to very easy for newcomers to find a job in the community. English language proficiency, literacy rates, access to transportation and credential recognition were identified as important barriers to finding employment. During the follow-up consultation the need for improved local access to skills training was identified as a potential solution to newcomer employment challenges.

Available Settlement Services

Medicine Hat is home to a historically established and impressive network of settlement and integration services, with all services listed (27 key services – see appendix A) being offered by the participant organizations or someone in the community. The top services that were identified by participants as needed by newcomers were information and orientation, language assessment and training, assistance finding housing and a job, and mental health services.

In regards to newcomers who are ineligible for CIC-funded services, participants indicated that temporary foreign workers (TFW), new and returning naturalized citizens, refugee claimants and international students were all in need of settlement services. Language assessment and training, job specific language training, information and orientation, finding housing, assistance with daily life, recognition of foreign credentials, legal supports and referrals were all listed as the services most needed by newcomers who are ineligible for services.

Several barriers to accessing services were identified by participants. In Medicine Hat, key barriers for newcomers are English language proficiency, literacy rates, ineligibility for services, and transportation difficulties.

Tracking and Planning

All participating service providers reported that their organizations were guided by a strategic plan and that they regularly, either independently or in partnership, assessed the service needs of the newcomers in their community. These needs assessments took a variety of forms (i.e., survey, community mapping, meeting, discussions with clients, focus groups, and client analysis) and were conducted as frequently as every month or every year.

Specific Capacities

In Medicine Hat, the organizations that participated in the survey had very strong organizational capacity. All organizations felt they had adequate capacity to communicate with stakeholders, to meet reporting requirements, coordinate services among stakeholders, and adequate financial support from government sources to maintain current services. However, organizations identified that they did not have adequate capacity to provide services in both official languages. More capacity will be needed in the future to meet client needs.

Partnerships

The existing level of partnership among service providers in Medicine Hat is impressive. To date these partnerships have tended to be informal and ad hoc in nature. With many experienced service providers in the city, and a centralized settlement agency, the city demonstrates noteworthy levels of co-ordination and cooperation among SPOs. In short, it is evident that Medicine Hat has a very well developed service provider partnership network. Participants indicated that they were in partnership with all 21 possible community partners listed in the survey (see appendix B). The most commonly reported partners were umbrella organizations, house services, health services, children/family services, language training providers, business, francophone organizations, Universities/research networks, labour market services, churches, and public libraries.

The activities conducted in partnership were categorized into three groups; settlement (e.g., getting jobs and housing, daily functioning), integration (e.g., teaching labour rules and human rights), and welcoming (e.g., orientation to community, civic events). In Medicine Hat, integration and welcoming activities were more likely to be conducted in partnership than settlement activities. Given the level of partnering and number of partnerships that currently exists in Medicine Hat, this community would be a candidate for a LIP.

Research Team

Anna Kirova, Ph.D. *(Co - Principal Investigator)*
John McCoy, Ph.D. *(Co- author)*

University of Alberta
Tel: 780-492-0913, akirova@ualberta.ca

Bill Ashton, Ph.D. *(Principal Investigator)*
Rachael Pettigrew, Ph.D. *(Research Associate)*
Eleni Galatsanou, MSc *(Project Coordinator)*

Rural Development Institute, Brandon University
Tel: 204-571-8513, Ashtonw@brandonu.ca

Lori Wilkinson, Ph.D. *(Chair of Project Advisory Panel)*

University of Manitoba
Tel: 204- 474-8491, Lori.Wilkinson@umanitoba.ca

Appendix A – List of Possible Services

SETTLEMENT

- Greeting upon arrival/initial reception
- Information and orientation
- Needs assessment and referral
- Interpretation services
- Language assessment
- Language training
- Help finding housing
- Help with daily life (e.g., registering for school, getting a bank account)
- Transportation support

ECONOMIC

- Help finding a job
- Educational upgrading
- Recognition of foreign credentials
- Investment opportunities
- Job-specific language training
- Help setting up a business
- Occupational/business mentorship and networking
- Financial supports

SOCIAL

- Childcare
- Cultural Events
- Recreational services
- Legal support/referral
- Health Services
- Mental Health Services
- Social inclusion/ integration support
- Services for seniors
- Services for women
- Services for youth

Appendix B – Possible Organizational Partnerships

1. School/School Boards
2. Umbrella organizations
3. Newcomers (individuals)
4. Housing services
5. Settlement service providers
6. Health services
7. Municipal offices/EDO
8. Civil society groups
9. Francophone organizations
10. Language training providers
11. Children/Family services
12. Businesses
13. Chambers of Commerce
14. Police Force
15. Universities/Research Networks
16. Ethno-cultural groups
17. Religious organizations
18. Public libraries
19. Foundations
20. Labour market services
21. Other: Faith groups

Appendix E
Grande Prairie Community Report

BRANDON UNIVERSITY

Immigration Settlement Services and Gaps in
Grande Prairie, Alberta

This community report is part of the "Immigration Settlement Services and Gaps in CIC's Western Region" study.
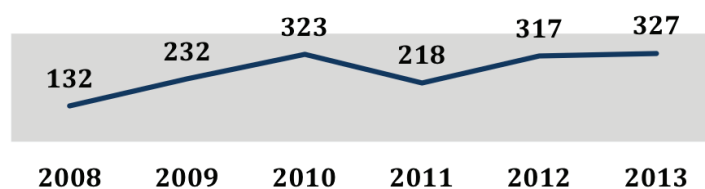
Population (2011): 55,032 residents.
Source: Statistics Canada, 2011 Census

Permanent Resident Landings
Grand Prairie 2008-2013
Source: Citizenship and Immigration Canada

2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
132	232	323	218	317	327

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Data sources: 5 Service Providing Organizations (SPOs) receiving funding from CIC, Provincial and other sources.

• Findings validated locally

SETTLEMENT SERVICES

Top services offered
Grande Prairie has a well-developed settlement service sector with all possible services listed (appendix A) offered by the participant organization or someone in the community.

Key gaps identified
- Inadequate language assessment and training
- Affordable child care
- Legal services referral
- Welcoming services
- Lack of funding at community SPOs
- All services need to expand

Barriers to access services
- English language proficiency
- Lack of child care
- Ineligibility for services among some newcomers
- Lack of awareness of services offered
- Transportation difficulties
- SPO hours of operations (for local shift workers)

Top services needed
- Help finding employment/credential assessment
- Improved language training and translation
- Welcoming services
- Assistance finding housing

Services needed by newcomers ineligible for CIC funded services
Assistance finding housing, health and employment supports, legal support, interpretation, language training and transportation.

PARTNERSHIPS

Grande Prairie has a very well developed and diverse service provider partnership network. The most commonly identified partnerships exist with schools and school boards, housing services, municipal offices, health services, police force, religious organizations, labour market services and the Chamber of Commerce. The municipality is seen as playing a key role in coordination of services.

INTEGRATION IN COMMUNITY

The majority of the study participants felt that it is somewhat difficult for newcomers to settle in Grande Prairie, mainly because of issues related to access to housing, inadequate available language training and access to transportation. On the other hand, labour market access is good, mainly because of opportunities in the oil and gas industry.

IMMIGRATION SETTLEMENT SERVICES AND GAPS IN CIC'S WESTERN REGION:

Grand Prairie, Alberta

Introduction

The purpose of this project is to better understand the settlement and integration services available to newcomers and to explore the service gaps and opportunities in Grande Prairie, Alberta and 28 other rural communities across Western Canada. This research offers a current snapshot of Grande Prairie by providing information gathered from a sample of local service providers. It is not a comprehensive review of all settlement services in Grande Prairie. Data was collected in October and November 2014 from five organizations that serve newcomers in Grande Prairie through a telephone survey completed by a representative from each organization. Two of the five organizations sampled received funding from CIC and the other organizations relied on the provincial and municipal governments for funding, in addition to other funding sources. Three survey respondents participated in a feedback session on the primary survey findings via teleconference held in November 2014.

Background

Grande Prairie is a growing city in northwestern Alberta, approximately 450 kilometers northwest of Edmonton. The city's economic growth is derived mainly from the oil and gas sector and agricultural industries. Grande Prairie reported a population of 55,032 residents in 2011 and has grown 4.95% since 2001. Grande Prairie is a young and prosperous community with an average age of 30.3 years and an average annual household income of $126,877.

Community Settlement Concerns

All the service provider representatives felt that the number of newcomers settling in Grande Prairie had increased in the last five years. This growth has been driven primarily by labour demand in the oil and gas sector. Participants' opinions related to the ease of the settlement experience in Grande Prairie was mixed, with two participants reporting that it was somewhat easy and three participants reporting that it was difficult or somewhat difficult for newcomers to settle. Four of the five participants reported that it was somewhat easy, easy or very easy for newcomers to get jobs, with only

one person reporting that it was somewhat difficult.

In the follow-up consulation study particapnats noted a lack of proximity to major urban centres, a severe lack of housing, and language competencies as impediments to newcomer integration in the community. Service providers made note of a lack of funding for ESL programs, particularly in the workplace. Participants felt that credential recognition was a key concern, as many available jobs do not match well with newcomers' education and training. It was suggested that the guidelines for credential recognition should be communicated clearly to prospective migrants prior to entry in Canada. English language skills were seen as a determining factor in influencing newcomer success in employment, since those with better language proficiency can more easily upgrade their education and job skills. For example, these language skills are a pre-requisite for testing for the various safety tickets required for oil and gas jobs that equate into higher wages for workers.

It was suggested that more funds could be allotted to providing more and better quality information to newcomers about the settlement services available in Grande Prairie.

Available Settlement Services

Grande Prairie has a well-developed settlement and integration service sector with all services listed (27 key services – see appendix A) offered by the participant organization or someone in the community. All services listed were identified as requiring expansion in Grande Prairie, with language assessment, more accessible language training (i.e. online/alternative delivery of the ESL classes), and flexible childcare to accommodate shift work identified as being in most need of expansion. The services that were identified as being most needed by newcomers were language assessment and interpretation, transportation, adequate housing, and help finding employment.

In regards to newcomers who are ineligible for CIC-funded services, participants indicated that temporary foreign workers (TFW), new and returning naturalized citizens, refugee claimants and international students were all in need of settlement services. Participants did not indicate

that one ineligible newcomer group was more in need than another. Housing, health and employment supports, legal support (especially for TFWs), translation, language training and transportation were all listed as the services most needed by Grande Prairie newcomers who were ineligible for services.

Tracking and Planning

Two of the five participating service providers report that their organization is guided by a strategic plan and independent assessment of service needs among newcomers on an annual basis. Other participants engage in more informal assessment of settlement needs. Surveys and questionnaires are common tools used by service providers in this assessment process.

Specific Capacities

In Grande Prairie, the organizations that participated in the survey had strong organizational capacity. However, four out of the five organizations felt that they did not have enough financial support from government sources to maintain their current level of service. Service providers were unanimous in their opinion that they did not have enough funding from funding sources external to governments. Limited staff capacity was cited as an issue that led to shortcomings in meeting clients' needs. This is especially true during the assessment stage that engages newcomers early on in their settlement process. Funding to develop projects to advocate for work training opportunities in the workplaces, promote workplace cultural competency training, and to educate the population on the different challenges faced by immigrants was identified as needed. All participants in the sample felt that their staff had the skills and experience to provide services. However, only three out of the five organizations identified that they were able to deliver services in both official languages. It was the general opinion of participants that more capacity will be needed in the future to meet client needs, including the hiring and training of staff.

Partnerships

All service provider participants in this sample reported being engaged in some form of partnership with other community organizations, and it is evident that Grande Prairie has developed an effective service provider partnership network. Participants indicated that partnerships exist within all 21 community partners listed in the survey (see appendix B). Four out of five participants reported partnerships with the following organizations:

schools/school boards, umbrella organizations, other service providers, language training centers, the chamber of commerce, housing services, municipal offices, health services, and public libraries. In addition, a partnership with the YMCA provided temporary housing for newcomers.

There were 24 possible partnerships that were identified as needed by the 5 participants, which indicates room for growth in partnership in Grande Prairie. The activities conducted in partnership were categorized into three groups; settlement (e.g., getting jobs and housing, daily functioning), integration (e.g., teaching labour rules and human rights), and welcoming (e.g., orientation to community, civic events). Participants reported offering integration, settlement, and welcoming services in partnership with others.

Creating an integrated document indicating all available services to newcomers was suggested. Partnerships with businesses and employers are seen as very important and have been developed through the chamber of commerce. The municipality is seen as playing a key role in coordination of services. Given the number of current partnerships and interest in future partnership development in Grande Prairie, this community would be a candidate for a LIP.

Research Team

Anna Kirova, Ph.D. *(Co - Principal Investigator)*
John McCoy, Ph.D. *(Co- author)*

University of Alberta
Tel: 780-492-0913, akirova@ualberta.ca

Bill Ashton, Ph.D. *(Principal Investigator)*
Rachael Pettigrew, Ph.D. *(Research Associate)*
Eleni Galatsanou, MSc *(Project Coordinator)*

Rural Development Institute, Brandon University
Tel: 204-571-8513, Ashtonw@brandonu.ca

Lori Wilkinson, Ph.D. *(Chair of Project Advisory Panel)*

University of Manitoba
Tel: 204- 474-8491, Lori.Wilkinson@umanitoba.ca

Appendix A – List of Possible Services

SETTLEMENT

- Greeting upon arrival/initial reception
- Information and orientation
- Needs assessment and referral
- Interpretation services
- Language assessment
- Language training
- Help finding housing
- Help with daily life (e.g., registering for school, getting a bank account)
- Transportation support

ECONOMIC

- Help finding a job
- Educational upgrading
- Recognition of foreign credentials
- Investment opportunities
- Job-specific language training
- Help setting up a business
- Occupational/business mentorship and networking
- Financial supports

SOCIAL

- Childcare
- Cultural Events
- Recreational services
- Legal support/referral
- Health Services
- Mental Health Services
- Social inclusion/ integration support
- Services for seniors
- Services for women
- Services for youth

Appendix B – Possible Organizational Partnerships

1. School/School Boards
2. Umbrella organizations
3. Newcomers (individuals)
4. Housing services
5. Settlement service providers
6. Health services
7. Municipal offices/ EDO
8. Civil society groups
9. Francophone organizations
10. Language training providers
11. Children/Family services
12. Businesses
13. Chambers of Commerce
14. Police Force
15. Universities/Research Networks
16. Ethno-cultural groups
17. Religious organizations
18. Public libraries
19. Foundations
20. Labour Market Services
21. Other: Workplace Revolution; The Centre for Newcomers

Appendix F
Brooks Community Report

BRANDON UNIVERSITY

Immigration Settlement Services and Gaps in
Brooks, Alberta

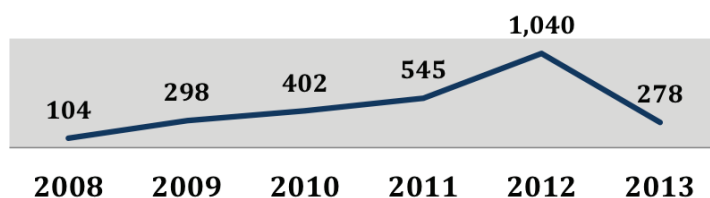**This community report is part of the "Immigration Settlement Services and Gaps in CIC's Western Region" study.**

Population (2011): 13,676 in the downtown core and 23,430 including rural surroundings
Source: Statistics Canada, 2011 Census

Permanent Resident Landings
Brooks 2008-2013
Source: Citizenship and Immigration Canada

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Data sources: 8 Service Providing Organizations (SPOs) receiving funding from CIC, private, and various other sources.

• Findings validated locally

2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
104	298	402	545	1,040	278

SETTLEMENT SERVICES

Top services offered
Brooks has a well-developed settlement service sector with all possible services listed (appendix A) being offered by the participant organizations or someone in the community.

Key gaps identified
- Foreign credentials recognition
- Assistance with setting up a business
- Business mentorship and networking
- Child care
- Access to housing

Barriers to access services
- English language proficiency
- Lack of access to child care
- Transportation
- Confusion among newcomers on how to access services
- Ineligibility for services among some newcomers

Top services needed
- Language training
- Interpretation services
- Mentoring / business partnership mentoring
- Information and orientation

Services needed by newcomers ineligible for CIC funded services
Housing, needs assessment, information and orientation, mental health services, social support and inclusion, and language training.

PARTNERSHIPS

Brooks has a very well developed and diverse service provider partnership network. The most commonly identified partnerships exist between schools/school boards, municipal offices, children/family services, umbrella organizations, SPOs. Settlement, Integration and welcoming activities were all reported in partnership, but settlement was the least common activity.

INTEGRATION IN COMMUNITY

The general perception is that it is relatively easy for newcomers to settle and find work in Brooks, mainly in non-skilled jobs.

English language proficiency was identified as the primary barrier for newcomer settlement in Brooks. Limited employment options, specifically the lack of available high skilled jobs, was also cited as a concern.

IMMIGRATION SETTLEMENT SERVICES AND GAPS IN CIC'S WESTERN REGION:

Brooks, Alberta

Introduction

The purpose of this project is to better understand the settlement and integration services available to newcomers and to explore the service gaps and opportunities in Brooks, Alberta and 28 other rural communities across Western Canada. This research offers a current snapshot of Brooks by providing information gathered from a sample of local service providers. It is not a comprehensive review of all settlement services in Brooks. Data was collected in October and November 2014 from eight organizations that serve newcomers in Brooks through a telephone survey completed by a representative from each organization. The survey was followed by a telephone consultation with 2 participants which allowed them to offer feedback on the initial survey findings. Five of the organizations received funding from CIC, in addition to a variety of other funding sources. Two survey respondents participated in a feedback session on the primary survey findings via teleconference held at the end of November, 2014.

Background

Brooks is a growing town in Southeastern Alberta that recently celebrated its 100-year anniversary. Brooks is the only community of this size within a 100 km radius. The economy of Brooks is mainly focused on the oil and gas sector and agriculture. The community has almost doubled in size since the 1980's. Today, Brooks has a diverse population of roughly 14,000 residents and an additional 7,000 people in nearby Newell.

Community Settlement Concerns

Almost all the service provider representatives felt that the number of newcomers settling in Brooks had increased in the last 5 years and now represents between 10-25 % of the community's overall population. The main driver of growth in the newcomer population is meeting demands in the labour market. Many new arrivals are temporary foreign workers (FTWs) some of whom have become permanent residents and brought their families to Brooks. The majority of the participants felt that newcomers found the settlement process in the community relatively easy. In part this was attributed to the size of the community and the accessibility of well-established settlement services.

Three participants suggested it was somewhat easy for newcomers to get jobs, but this is the case mainly for low skill workers.

There were some concerns expressed over barriers to newcomer integration in the community. For example, it was noted that the lack of a public transit system in the community creates limited transproration options for newcomers. There were also concerns expressed over the ability of newcomers in surrounding communities to access services. A lack of available housing was also cited as a barrier to integration.

As indicated in the follow-up consulation, the primary employer for newcomers is a large meat-packing plant. Consequently, higher skilled newcomers find it more difficult to find employment that matches their education and experience. The limited hours of operation for some settlement service providers was cited as a barrier to access services. English language skills were cited as a primary barrier, especially when trying to finding a job. Participants suggested a low cost job-training program could be helpful for newcomers. There was also an identified need for improved access to childcare and social / cultural integration among newcomers**.**

Available Settlement Services

Brooks has a well-developed settlement and integration service sector with all services listed (27 key services – see appendix A) being offered by the participant organizations or someone in the community. Many of the services listed were identified as needing to be expanded. The services that were identified as being most needed by newcomers include language training and supports, mentoring, including collaboration with businesses (developing on-site programming), interpretation, information and orientation and developing bridging programs.

In regards to newcomers who are ineligible for CIC-funded services, participants indicated that temporary foreign workers (TFW), new and returning naturalized citizens, refugee claimants and international students were all in need of settlement services. Participants indicated that TFWs and new and returning naturalized Canadian citizens had a greater need for settlement services than other groups. Information and orientation, needs assessments,

language training, mental health services, sports and recreation, and social inclusion were all listed as the services most needed by newcomers who are ineligible for services.

Tracking and Planning

All participating service providers reported that their organizations were guided by a strategic plan and that they regularly, either independently or through partnerships, assessed the service needs of the newcomers in their community. These needs assessments took a variety of forms (i.e., survey, community mapping, meeting, discussions with clients, focus groups, and client analysis) and were conducted as frequently as every month or every year.

Specific Capacities

In Brooks, the organizations that participated in the survey had strong organizational capacity. All organizations felt they had capacity to communicate with stakeholders, to meet reporting requirements, and coordinate services with other stakeholders. However, three organizations identified that they did not have adequate capacity to provide services in both official languages. More capacity will be needed to meet the needs of clients in a growing community. In addition, the following capacities were most often cited as requiring development: more staff; ability to offer services that reflect clients' shift work, which is particular to the major employer of the town; increased government financial support to meet the needs of the community; and staff training.

Partnerships

All service provider participants reported being engaged in partnership with other community organizations and it is evident that Brooks has a well-developed service provider partnership network. Participants indicated that there are partnerships among all 21 community partners listed in the survey (see appendix B). The most commonly reported partners were schools/school boards, municipal offices, child and family services, the umbrella organization and SPOs. The activities conducted in partnership were categorized into three groups; settlement (e.g., getting jobs and housing, daily functioning), integration (e.g., teaching labour rules and human rights), and welcoming (e.g., orientation to community, civic events). In Brooks, integration and welcoming activities were more likely to be conducted in partnership than settlement activities. The municipality is seen as playing a key role in coordination of services. Given the level of partnering and number of partnerships that currently exists in Brooks, this community would be a candidate for a LIP.

Research Team

Anna Kirova, Ph.D. *(Co - Principal Investigator)*
John McCoy, Ph.D. *(Co- author)*

University of Alberta
Tel: 780-492-0913, akirova@ualberta.ca

Bill Ashton, Ph.D. *(Principal Investigator)*
Rachael Pettigrew, Ph.D. *(Research Associate)*
Eleni Galatsanou, MSc *(Project Coordinator)*

Rural Development Institute, Brandon University
Tel: 204-571-8513, Ashtonw@brandonu.ca

Lori Wilkinson, Ph.D. *(Chair of Project Advisory Panel)*

University of Manitoba
Tel: 204- 474-8491, Lori.Wilkinson@umanitoba.ca

Appendix A – List of Possible Services

SETTLEMENT

- Greeting upon arrival/initial reception
- Information and orientation
- Needs assessment and referral
- Interpretation services
- Language assessment
- Language training
- Help finding housing
- Help with daily life (e.g., registering for school, getting a bank account)
- Transportation support

ECONOMIC

- Help finding a job
- Educational upgrading
- Recognition of foreign credentials
- Investment opportunities
- Job-specific language training
- Help setting up a business
- Occupational/business mentorship and networking
- Financial supports

SOCIAL

- Childcare
- Cultural Events
- Recreational services
- Legal support/referral
- Health Services
- Mental Health Services
- Social inclusion/ integration support
- Services for seniors
- Services for women
- Services for youth

Appendix B – Possible Organizational Partnerships

1. School/School Boards
2. Umbrella organizations
3. Newcomers (individuals)
4. Housing services
5. Settlement service providers
6. Health services
7. Municipal offices/EDO
8. Civil society groups
9. Francophone organizations
10. Language training providers
11. Children/Family services
12. Businesses
13. Chambers of Commerce
14. Police Force
15. Universities/Research Networks
16. Ethno-cultural groups
17. Religious organizations
18. Public libraries
19. Foundations
20. Labour market services
21. Other: Province of Quebec and Francophone Secretariat in Edmonton; Health Family Outreach; Santara Safe House.

Appendix G
Lloydminster Community Report

BRANDON UNIVERSITY

Immigration Settlement Services and Gaps in
Lloydminster, Alberta

This community report is part of the "Immigration Settlement Services and Gaps in CIC's Western Region" study.

ALBERTA — Wood Buffalo Region, Grand Prairie, Fort Saskatchewan, Lloydminster, Red Deer, Brooks, Medicine Hat, Lethbridge
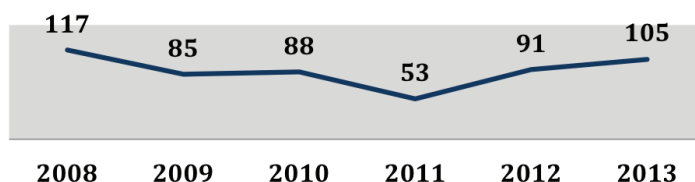
Population (2013): 31,483
Source: Municipal Census, 2013, including SK and AB sides.

Permanent Resident Landings Lloydminster 2008-2013
Source: Citizenship and Immigration Canada

2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
117	85	88	53	91	105

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Data sources: 3 Service Providing Organizations (SPOs) receiving funding from CIC, NGOs, Provincial and private sources.

• Findings validated locally

SETTLEMENT SERVICES

Top services offered
A variety of services offered including information and orientation, needs assessment and referrals, interpretation and language assessment and training, help finding housing and with daily life, business mentorship and networking, mental health services, and social inclusion and integration support.

Key gaps identified
- Expansion is needed in the following areas: language training and assessment
- Programs for women and seniors, business mentorship, mental health services, social integration
- Inadequate financial resources among existing SPOs

Barriers to access services
- English language proficiency
- Poor access to public transportation
- Hours the services are offered
- Ineligibility for services
- Confusion about where to get help
- Financial difficulties of newcomers
- Discrimination

Top services needed
- Language training
- Information and orientation
- Social inclusion services
- Affordable childcare
- Welcoming community initiatives

Services needed by newcomers ineligible for CIC funded services
Language assessment and training, help finding affordable housing, welcoming and social inclusion, and information on immigration issues.

PARTNERSHIPS

Service provider organizations in Lloydminster partner with a diverse network of other community organizations. The most commonly identified partnerships exist with school and school boards, umbrella organizations, SPOs, health services, municipal offices, language training providers, children and family services, Chambers of Commerce, universities and research networks, ethno-cultural groups, and public libraries. Integration and welcoming activities are conducted in partnership.

INTEGRATION IN COMMUNITY

Service providers have a varied understanding of newcomers' settlement experiences and ability to find a job in Lloydminster, ranging from quite difficult to easy. Difficulty is attributed to lack of housing, transportation challenges, and foreign credential recognition issues. However, it may be somewhat easy to integrate based on a vibrant labour market and a number of organizations that can help with settlement such as ethno-cultural groups that extend support in languages other than English.

Lloydminster, Alberta

Introduction

The purpose of this project is to better understand the settlement and integration services available to newcomers and to explore the service gaps and opportunities in Lloydminster, Alberta and 28 other rural communities across Western Canada. This research offers a current snapshot of Lloydminster by providing information gathered from a sample of local service providers. It is not a comprehensive review of all settlement services in Lloydminster. Data was collected in October and November 2014 from three organizations that serve newcomers in Lloydminster through a telephone survey completed by a representative from each organization. The survey was followed by an electronic consultation with 3 participants which allowed them to offer feedback on the initial survey findings. One organization receives provincial funding, one receives CIC funding, one receives NGO funding, and one receives private funding.

Background

Lloydminster is located on the provincial border between Saskatchewan and Alberta, with part of the city located within each province, but amalgamated as one municipality. The city's economy is driven primarily by the petroleum industry and secondarily by agriculture. The population continues to grow as employment opportunities in agriculture and energy industries attract new residents every year. Lloydminster has a growing population of over 31,000 residents in the municipality, with the majority of residents residing on the Alberta side of the border.

Community Settlement Concerns

All three service provider representatives feel that the number of newcomers settling in Lloydminster has increased in the last 5 years. This growth is attributed to employment opportunities resulting from economic growth and a demand for lower skilled labour. Many temporary foreign workers (TFWs) have been hired to work in Lloydminster, eventually applying for permanent residence and bringing their families to the community. Lloydminster is also experiencing secondary migration from Ontario and Eastern Canada.

There is a mixed view regarding the settlement experience of newcomers. One participant feels that it is very difficult, one feels that it is somewhat difficult for newcomers to settle in Lloydminster due to language barriers, a lack of housing (number of rental units available), high cost of living, poor public transportation, and lack of affordable childcare. The third participant feels it is easy for newcomers to settle because there are plenty of sources for support through community organizations and ethno-cultural groups.

One participant thinks it is somewhat difficult for newcomers to find a job in Lloydminster because of foreign credential recognition difficulties (i.e. employers are uncertain about the foreign credentials of the newcomers), and language and cultural barriers.

As indicated by participants during follow-up consultations, knowledge of the Canadian workforce culture and pragmatics, as well as unfamiliarity with the community are seen as barriers to employment and integration. Employers' lack of diversity awareness and cultural competence and newcomers' lack of "soft" skills are identified as other barriers. One participant feels that newcomers face discrimination based on newcomer status, race or ethnicity. The newcomer phenomenon is new to the community. The other participant feels it is easy for newcomers to find a job because there are plenty of low skill or trade jobs in the community and supports to assist in finding work, including assistance from the many ethno-cultural communities in Lloydminster.

There is also a concern that TFWs face many challenges such as long hours and on-the-job abuses, which are only compounded by the constant changes to the Temporary Foreign Worker Program and associated policies.

Available Settlement Services

The most needed services in Lloydminster include language training, information and orientation, childcare and social inclusions and welcoming community initiatives. The three organizations provide an array of services (12 of the 27 listed in appendix A) to newcomers including assistance with immigration applications, information and orientation, needs assessment and referrals, interpretation and language assessment and training, help finding housing and with daily life, women and seniors' programming, occupational and business mentorship and networking, mental health services, and social inclusion and integration support. One participant feels that such service need to be expanded, while the others feel they are currently adequate.

Participants say they provide services to at least one group of newcomers who are ineligible for CIC-funded services. Ineligible groups include TFWs, new and returning naturalized Canadian citizens, refugee claimants, and international students. The most needed services for ineligible groups include language training and assessment, help finding housing, social inclusion support, and addressing immigration issues.

Several barriers to accessing services were identified by participants. In Lloydminster, important barriers include ineligibility, language, transportation and financial difficulties, discrimination, the hours of the day that services are offered, and confusion about where to get help.

Tracking and Planning

One participating service provider's services conducts regular assessment of service needs for newcomers in Lloydminster, either independently or in partnership with other service providers. These needs assessments are conducted during intake of clients and annually in consultation with the community through surveys.

Specific Capacities

In Lloydminster, the three organizations surveyed struggle with organizational capacity. All participants feel that the financial support from government and other sources is not adequate to maintain current services. In addition, all three participants indicate that they do not have the capacity to provide services in both official languages and to mobilize the community to support and welcome newcomers. The unusual location of the community (between Alberta and Saskatchewan) puts additional pressure on the service providers' ability to provide adequate services to all newcomers including TFWs, and Canadian citizens from Quebec. These difficulties can be tied to the CIC funding model. Only one participant feels that their agency has staff to provide services. Two of the participants feel that they have adequate capacity to communicate with stakeholders, coordinate services with other service providers, have staff skills to deliver and maintain services, create a governing and strategic plan and meet reporting requirements.

Partnerships

Two service providers report being engaged in partnership with other community organizations. The two participants indicated that they are in partnership with 14 of the community partners listed in the survey and other local organizations (see appendix B). These partners include school and school boards, umbrella organizations, settlement service providers, health services, municipal offices, language training providers, children and family services, Chambers of Commerce, universities and research networks, RCMP, Parent-Link Centers, Early Years coalition, Literacy Alberta, Community Learning Network, Regional Learning Council, Alberta works, Instructional Association, Community Future, Sexual Assault Centre, ethno-cultural groups, and public libraries.

The activities conducted in partnership were categorized into three groups; settlement (e.g., getting jobs and housing, daily functioning), integration (e.g., teaching labour rules and human rights), and welcoming (e.g., orientation to community, civic events). In Lloydminster, integration and welcoming activities are most likely to be conducted in partnership. One participant's feedback indicates that a clear understanding of different agencies' mandate and willingness among the agencies to collaborate and share resources will help serve all newcomers, including TFWs and Canadian citizens, better. Given the level of partnering and number of partnerships that currently exists in Lloydminster, the community would be a candidate for a LIP.

Research Team

Anna Kirova, Ph.D. *(Co - Principal Investigator)*
John McCoy, Ph.D. *(Co- author)*

University of Alberta
Tel: 780-492-0913, akirova@ualberta.ca

Bill Ashton, Ph.D. *(Principal Investigator)*
Rachael Pettigrew, Ph.D. *(Research Associate)*
Eleni Galatsanou, MSc *(Project Coordinator)*

Rural Development Institute, Brandon University
Tel: 204-571-8513, Ashtonw@brandonu.ca

Lori Wilkinson, Ph.D. *(Chair of Project Advisory Panel)*

University of Manitoba
Tel: 204- 474-8491, Lori.Wilkinson@umanitoba.ca

Appendix A – List of Possible Services

SETTLEMENT

- Greeting upon arrival/initial reception
- Information and orientation
- Needs assessment and referral
- Interpretation services
- Language assessment
- Language training
- Help finding housing
- Help with daily life (e.g., registering for school, getting a bank account)
- Transportation support

ECONOMIC

- Help finding a job
- Educational upgrading
- Recognition of foreign credentials
- Investment opportunities
- Job-specific language training
- Help setting up a business
- Occupational/business mentorship and networking
- Financial supports

SOCIAL

- Childcare
- Cultural Events
- Recreational services
- Legal support/referral
- Health Services
- Mental Health Services
- Social inclusion/ integration support
- Services for seniors
- Services for women
- Services for youth

Appendix B – Possible Organizational Partnerships

1. School/School Boards
2. Umbrella organizations
3. Newcomers (individuals)
4. Settlement service providers
5. Health services
6. Municipal offices/ EDO
7. Language training providers
8. Children/Family services
9. Businesses
10. Chambers of Commerce
11. Police Force
12. Universities/Research Networks
13. Ethno-cultural groups
14. Public libraries
15. Other: Parent Link Centers, Early Years Coalition, Literacy Alberta, Community Learning Network, Regional Learning Council, Alberta Works, Instructional Association, Sexual Assault Centre

Appendix H
Fort Saskatchewan Community Report

BRANDON UNIVERSITY

Immigration Settlement Services and Gaps in
Fort Saskatchewan, Alberta

This community report is part of the "Immigration Settlement Services and Gaps in CIC's Western Region" study.

ALBERTA

Wood Buffalo Region

Grand Prairie

Fort Saskatchewan

Lloydminster
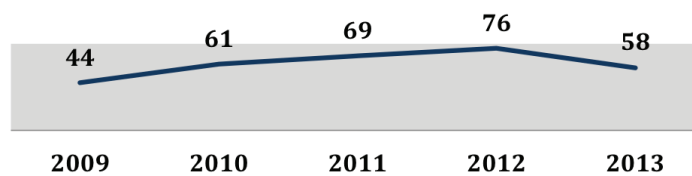
Red Deer

Brooks

Medicine Hat

Lethbridge

Population (2014): 22,808 residents.
Source: City of Fort Saskatchewan Municipal Census, 2014

Permanent Resident Landings Fort Saskatchewan 2009-2013
Source: Citizenship and Immigration Canada

2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
44	61	69	76	58

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Data sources: 6 Service Providing Organizations (SPOs) receiving funding from Provincial, NGO, other federal, and various other sources.

• Findings validated locally

SETTLEMENT SERVICES

Top services offered
• ESL language training
• Needs assessment and referrals
• Multicultural programming

Key gaps identified
• Affordable childcare
• Welcoming and information services
• Legal services and general advice
• Services for youths
• General lack of capacity among existing SPOs
• Women's shelter

Barriers to access services
• English language proficiency
• No local/centralized settlement agency
• Access to transportation
• Lack of knowledge among newcomers of existing services
• Foreign credential recognition

Top services needed
• Academic and after school tutoring
• Information and welcoming services
• Help finding skilled jobs and job training / upgrading
• Transportation

Services needed by newcomers ineligible for CIC funded services
Language training, low cost housing and furnishing, information and orientation and transportation.

PARTNERSHIPS

Fort Saskatchewan has a well-developed and diverse service provider partnership network. The most commonly identified partnerships exist with child and family services, civil service groups, religious associations, multicultural associations, police, the municipality, welcoming services, schools and school boards, and the public library.

INTEGRATION IN COMMUNITY

The general perception is that it is somewhat difficult for newcomers to settle and find a job in Fort Saskatchewan, although some say it is somewhat easy. Language, transportation, childcare and a lack of centralized services were identified as the main barriers to settlement and integration in the community. Foreign credential recognition was also identified as a barrier to finding work.

IMMIGRATION SETTLEMENT SERVICES AND GAPS IN CIC'S WESTERN REGION:

Fort Saskatchewan, Alberta

Introduction

The purpose of this project is to better understand the settlement and integration services available to newcomers and to explore the service gaps and opportunities in Fort Saskatchewan, Alberta and 28 other rural communities across Western Canada. This research offers a current snapshot of Fort Saskatchewan by providing information gathered from a sample of local service providers. It is not a comprehensive review of all settlement services in Fort Saskatchewan. Data was collected in October and November 2014 from six organizations that serve newcomers in Fort Saskatchewan through a telephone survey completed by a representative from each organization. All six organizations receive provincial funding, one receives other federal funding, one receives private funding, and one receives funding from NGOs. In addition, three participants receive funding from other sources. Three survey respondents participated in a feedback session on the primary survey findings via teleconference held in December 2014, and one provided feedback via email.

Background

Fort Saskatchewan is located in close proximity to a major urban centre, Edmonton. In recent years it has experienced steady growth in its population. Growth is attributed to labour needs in local heavy industries primarily related to petrochemical and resource extraction sectors. As a growing satellite community, Fort Saskatchewan has also recently attracted many large commercial businesses, adding another layer to the local economy.

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1. Although none of the participating SPOs received direct funding from CIC, the community was included in the provincial sample based on the recommendation of the Provincial Advisory panel and after there was no response from the Cold Lake community to participate in the study, and the fact the Okotoks and High River communities were excluded from the study since they already had LIP funding.

Community Settlement Concerns

All SPO representatives feel that the number of newcomers settling in Fort Saskatchewan has increased in the last five years. The main driver of this trend is economic growth and associated labour needs. Inter- and intra-provincial mobility and the Temporary Foreign Worker Program have contributed to a growing newcomer population.

Half of the participants felt that it is very difficult for participants to settle in Fort Saskatchewan, due in part to a lack of cultural and religious awareness in the community, as well as public misconceptions about the Temporary Foreign Worker program. Some, however, felt that it is somewhat easy to settle. Participants were divided on how easy it is for newcomers to get jobs; half felt it is somewhat to very difficult, while half felt it was somewhat easy to easy. Some participants noted that jobs were available to newcomers; however, those jobs often did not fit with the experience, education or set of job skills possessed by newcomers. Furthermore, it was noted that due to a lack of access to affordable childcare and transportation, newcomers found it difficult to access job training and upgrading of existing skills. Therefore, language and transportation barriers were identified as negatively affecting outcomes in the labour market.

In follow-up consulations with service providers a lack of English language proficiency, a lack of a centralized settlement agency, access to affordable child care and access to transportation were cited as common barriers to settlement. In particular, partcipants highlighted the acute need for a dedicated, formal and professional information and welcoming service that could inform newcomers about available services. Service providers noted that most newcomers who seek out their services are informed through word of mouth, rather than receiving direction from officials. Service providers also noted in the follow-up that while counselling and intervention services are available for women who suffer domestic abuse, there is no local women's shelter. Based on this shortcoming local newcomer women must travel to the community of Sherwood Park where there is an existing shortage of shelter space.

Available Settlement Services

Fort Saskatchewan has a developed settlement and integration service sector with at least 12 services (out of 27 key services listed in appendix A) offered by the participant organizations or someone in the community. During follow-up consultations one organization explained that they offer a holistic range of support and services through a co-operative referral system. Yet, participants noted a need for improvement or expansion of services related to language training, transportation, affordable and safe housing, affordable childcare, academic tutoring and school service supports, general services for youth, and mentoring.

Nearly all participants say they provide services to at least one group of newcomers who are ineligible for CIC-funded services. Ineligible groups include temporary foreign workers (TFWs), new and returning naturalized Canadian citizens, refugee claimants, and international students. It should be noted that none of the participating service providers received CIC funding. Participants indicated that all ineligible groups are in need of settlement services. Language training and resources, information and welcoming, affordable housing and furnishings, and transportation are listed as the services most needed by ineligible newcomers. In the follow-up consultations participants suggested that their current funding levels do not meet the level required to provide necessary services to newcomers.

Tracking and Planning

Nearly all participants engage in regular assessment of newcomers' needs; half conduct assessments with other service providers, two do so within their organization - one does not conduct regular assessments. Needs assessments take a variety of forms such as: one-on-one conversations, community meetings, and talks with other community organizations. One organization conducts such activities through a yearly community survey and quarterly meetings with service providers. One participant identified a need to better develop assessment tools.

Specific Capacities

As previously indicated service provider organizations that participated in the survey and follow-up consultation feel they do not have the necessary capacity to serve newcomers. Staffing, financial support, offering services in both official languages, and staff training were identified as areas where capacity needs to be improved. Organizations noted that existing coordination among services is satisfactory. In some areas, such as developing support groups for newcomer women and developing multicultural programs, services are growing. However, as the newcomer population expands, more capacity will be needed to meet future needs.

Partnerships

All service provider participants report being engaged in partnership with other community organizations. Participants indicate that they are in partnership with 14 of the 21 possible community partners listed in the survey (see appendix B). The most commonly reported partners include child and family services, ethno-cultural associations, municipal government, religious organizations, civil society groups, schools and school boards, and police. As outlined in the follow-up consultation, service provider organizations are actively seeking greater co-ordination of services through an existing program (Building Bridges). It was suggested that the Fort Saskatchewan Public Library could host a settlement practitioner, similar to the partnered services provided at area libraries. It could also act as a resource centre for print and online information. The main partnerships to promote and ensure high use of these services are the Families First Society, Multicultural Association and Kabisig Society. In addition, it was suggested that one way of reaching each partner's full potential is to create a "landmark site" that would highlight the services offered by each provider and that would guide both the clients and other service providers in making connections.

The activities conducted in partnership were categorized into three groups; settlement (e.g., getting jobs and housing, daily functioning), integration (e.g., teaching labour rules and human rights), and welcoming (e.g., orientation to community, civic events). In Fort Saskatchewan, activities conducted in partnership are mainly welcoming (mentioned by all participants) and integration activities (mentioned by half of the participants).The city of Fort Saskatchewan was identified as a key agent in establishing and supporting partnerships in the community. Given this preexisting level of partnering, and number of partnerships that currently exist in Fort Saskatchewan, the community would be a candidate for a LIP.

Research Team

Anna Kirova, Ph.D. *(Co - Principal Investigator)*
John McCoy, Ph.D. *(Co- author)*

University of Alberta
Tel: 780-492-0913, akirova@ualberta.ca

Bill Ashton, Ph.D. *(Principal Investigator)*
Rachael Pettigrew, Ph.D. *(Research Associate)*
Eleni Galatsanou, MSc *(Project Coordinator)*

Rural Development Institute, Brandon University
Tel: 204-571-8513, Ashtonw@brandonu.ca

Lori Wilkinson, Ph.D. *(Chair of Project Advisory Panel)*

University of Manitoba
Tel: 204- 474-8491, Lori.Wilkinson@umanitoba.ca

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- Transportation support

ECONOMIC

- Help finding a job
- Educational upgrading
- Recognition of foreign credentials
- Investment opportunities
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6. Francophone organizations
7. Language training providers
8. Children/Family services
9. Businesses
10. Police Force
11. Ethno-cultural groups
12. Religious organizations
13. Public library
14. Other: Building Bridges, Family First group, Boys and Girls club, Careers Under Construction, Parent Link Centres.

BRANDON UNIVERSITY   rdi RURAL DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE

Lower Concourse, McMaster Hall Complex
270-18th Street, Brandon, MB R7A 6A9