Regional Immigration Strategies: A Policy-Research Perspective

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CIC’s regional immigration strategy

• Commitment to work in partnership to share the benefits of immigration more evenly across the country by testing new approaches:
  – in the short-term, to examine possibilities for adapting existing programs
  – in the longer-term, to explore creating new programs or approaches based on community interest and initiative
What is Known

• Immigration is the primary driver of population and labour force growth
• About 75% of all immigrants go to Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver
• The Prairies’ share of immigration dropped steadily from:
  – 21% in 1982 to
  – 10% in 1992 and
  – 9% in 2002
What are the Challenges?

- The draw to bigger cities
- Competitive services & infrastructure
- Development of community capacity
- Need for partnership
- Need for information, promotion
- Need to dispel “myths” about communities smaller than 1 million
What are the Opportunities?

• Commitment from Minister and Federal Government
  – building capacity within CIC to help facilitate pilot projects
• Interest from many provinces
  – Manitoba, NB, Alberta, Saskatchewan, NS
• Emerging regional or local skills shortages
The Federal Government’s Role

• Facilitator
  – Facilitating provincial and community-led initiatives through processing and removal of policy and procedural impediments

• Promoter
  – Going to Canada web portal
  – Missions abroad
  – Publications (e.g. the Tool Box for Smaller Communities)

• Partner
  – Working with provinces and territories, other federal departments (e.g. IC, HRSD), NGOs, to remove barriers
Guiding Principles for Action

• Respect for mobility rights of all residents
  – Increase choices for settlement in Canada
  – Increase information for intending immigrants

• Flexible approaches and arrangements to meet diverse regional needs
  – Provincial Nominees
  – Francophone initiatives
  – Student and Temporary Worker initiatives
  – Municipal involvement (e.g. Winnipeg Agreement)
Have we turned the tide?

- In 2003, immigration to Canada declined by 8,000 from 229,000 in 2002 to 221,000 in 2003.
- But in 2003 the Prairies received 24,100 immigrants, an increase of 3,000 over 2002.
- The Prairies share rose to 10.9% - the first relative increase since 1988.
Perhaps

- Immigration to the Prairies increased again in 2004 to 26,000 or 11% of Canada’s total of 235,824
- This represented an increase of 7.58% over 2003
- Also more are going to more destinations
## The Data*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alberta</td>
<td>15,834</td>
<td>16,468</td>
<td>+ 4.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saskatchewan</td>
<td>1,668</td>
<td>1,941</td>
<td>+16.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manitoba</td>
<td>6,500</td>
<td>7,426</td>
<td>+14.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>City</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calgary</td>
<td>9,153</td>
<td>9,307</td>
<td>+ 1.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edmonton</td>
<td>4,566</td>
<td>4,810</td>
<td>+ 5.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winnipeg</td>
<td>5,126</td>
<td>5,890</td>
<td>+14.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Canada*
## The Manitoba Data*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>2001</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Altona</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>+ 800%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brandon</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>+ 88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morden</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>+ 711%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steinbach</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>310</td>
<td>+ 106%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Winkler</td>
<td>259</td>
<td>465</td>
<td>+ 80%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Winnipeg</td>
<td>3,715</td>
<td>5,890</td>
<td>+ 59%</td>
</tr>
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### The Data* (con’t)

**Francophone & Bilingual Immigration**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alberta</td>
<td>491</td>
<td>846</td>
<td>+ 72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saskatchewan</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>+194%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manitoba</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>231</td>
<td>+ 44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>705</td>
<td>1236</td>
<td>+ 75%</td>
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</table>

* Provisional Data for 2004
What does all this mean?

• We need to look at “what’s hot” for policy makers.
• Regionalization of immigration is “hot!”
• Policy makers need to know what works:
  – Compare Provincial nominees programs
  – Compare student pilots
  – Assess effectiveness of municipal initiatives
  – Examine Francophone pilot projects
  – etc.
Conclusion

• This is new territory but early results are encouraging, especially in Manitoba.

• We need to evaluate programs and pilot projects, act on recommendations and share what works.

• Practitioners and researchers have a real opportunity to help to define future regionalization policy.