Temporary foreign workers in rural centres: A case study of Brandon, Manitoba

Presented at the Annual Seminar for the Pan-Canadian Research Cluster on Immigration Outside of Major Metropolitan Cities (Observatory on Immigration Settlement in Rural and Small Urban Areas)
November 15, 2007

Presented by
Robert Annis, Ph.D.
Jill Bucklaschuk, B.A. (Hons), M.A.
Alison Moss, B.A. (Hons), M.R.D.
Rural Development Institute
Brandon University
Rural Development Institute (RDI)

RDI is a research unit of Brandon University that focuses on rural Community Development research, practice & policy.

How can rural communities & stakeholders ensure successful immigrant attraction, settlement and integration?
RDI Initiatives for Expanding Rural Immigration Discussions

- **2005** - CRRF-RDI National Rural Think Tank, *Immigration and Rural Canada: Research and Practice* in Brandon with 50 participants from policy, research, & communities across Canada.

- **2005** - Manitoba Rural Immigration Case Studies conducted in Steinbach, Winkler, Portage la Prairie, Parkland.

- **Currently** - Rural Immigration: Demographics & temporary foreign workers (TFWs) in Brandon & area.
Migration in Canada & Manitoba

Family Class
- Immediate Family
- Parents/Grandparents

Refugees
- Government Assisted
- Privately Sponsored

Economic Class
- Provincial
- Federal
  - Provincial Nominees
  - Business Immigrants
  - Skilled Workers
  - Skilled Worker
  - Entrepreneurs, Investors and Farmers

Priority Streams

General Stream

Prepared by Manitoba Labour and Immigration
Manitoba Immigration Levels

Source: Citizenship and Immigration Canada
Winnipeg and Rural Immigration

Source: Citizenship and Immigration Canada 2006

Prepared by: Manitoba Labour and Immigration

Source: Citizenship and Immigration Canada 2006
Temporary Foreign Workers, flow per year

Source: CIC, 2006: Facts and Figures
TFW Program – Manitoba, by program categories

Source: Human Resources and Social Development Canada
Brandon and southwest Manitoba
The Local Context

- Labour shortages = immediate need to recruit high and low skilled foreign workers
- Past, present, and future hiring practices of Maple Leaf Foods impact demographics in Brandon:
  - Approximately 44% of employees are foreign workers.
  - Anticipating approximately 1400 family member arrivals in the next 18 months.
Policy Implications

- Provincial (Manitoba)
  - TFWs as a source of permanent immigrants.
  - TFW process as a strategy for meeting immigration targets.

- Local
  - Address issues of declining population, labour shortages & community development.
  - Impacts on the operations of community service providers.
Our Current Research Goals

- Contribute to collaborative, local-level research on TFWs outside of major metropolitan regions.
- To better understand the existing and expected TFW populations in Brandon.
- Bridge knowledge gaps with regards to the TFW program, process, and population.
- Provide demographic analyses to inform forward-looking programs and policies.
Key Research Areas

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- Conduct a community scan to understand the scope & impact of TFWs.
- Provide a foundation to explore more specific topics & highlight what is & is not working in the community.
- Provide a history, context, & profile of immigration & foreign workers in the area.
- Focus on the worker & their experiences from home country to Brandon to Provincial Nominee.
Families

- Examine the situation of & issues related to families of TFWs, their employment experiences, & how or if they are considered in the TFW program.

Regional, local & community perspectives: Making the TFW Program work in local contexts

- Explore the impacts of TFWs on rural communities, community development, & planning.
- Understand the community’s influence & perspective on the retention of TFWs.
TFWs & the Provincial Nominee Program (PNP)

- Explore TFWs’ use of the PNP & clarify how they become landed immigrants.
- Develop the concept of transitional foreign workers.

Understanding retention rates of TFWs

- Examine the factors that lead to successful retention of TFWs both within the community and business.
- Explore the link between recruitment strategies / requirements & retention / settlement.
Understanding the Low-Skilled Pilot Program for TFWs

- Clarify & elaborate on the expectations, roles, & responsibilities of key stakeholders including government, community, employers.

Demographic Analyses & Population Projections

- Provide population projections for the next 5 – 10 years.
- Engage researchers from Canada, United States, & Europe on the topic of demographic modeling & rural immigration.
- Utilize STELLA for demographic modeling.
Government & Community Consultations

- Established a project steering committee including service providers, employers, & government representatives - May, 2007.
- Consultations have revealed a need for research on TFWs.

Discussions with Employers

- Identified industries & businesses with expected labour shortages.
- Purpose was to understand intended strategies to manage shortages.
Research Activities To-Date


Engage Canadian researchers in international rural immigration research

- Research team includes partners from:
  - Brandon University, Canada; University of Missouri-Columbia, USA; University of Highlands and Islands, United Kingdom; University of Guelph, Canada; Statistics Canada; Norwegian Agricultural Economics Research Institute.

- Proposal submitted- project will move forward upon funding.
  - *Rural Immigration: Rural Demographic Analysis of Temporary Foreign Workers*

- Utilize a demographic modeling program to assist with analyses and projections.
  - STELLA: *Structural Thinking Experimental Learning Laboratory* with Animation software uses a system dynamic approach to examine complex phenomena.
  - Modeling dynamic systems and examining change.
Emerging Focus

RDI TFW Dialogue Group

- Encourage multi-perspective & dynamic discussions amongst community, employers, government, & researchers.

- Topics for further discussion:
  - Roles & responsibilities of actors; implications for smaller centres & service providers; understanding the process of TFW to Provincial Nominees / landed immigrants; families; community preparedness; recruitment & retention.

- Dialogue topic for Nov. 8 meeting:
  - *Expectations, roles & perspectives of key stakeholders – governments, communities, & employers.*
RDI TFW Dialogue Group

- Products resulting from the discussions at each meeting:
  - Record of meeting notes
  - RDI TFW Discussion Paper Series
    - Summary of topic
    - Key issues
    - Challenges and/or barriers
    - What is working
    - Policy implications
    - Questions for further research
Anticipated Project Outcomes

- Clarity and increased knowledge regarding the TFW program and process in the context of rural immigration.
- Increased communication amongst all stakeholders to benefit those in positions of planning and policy making.
- Informed demographic analyses and population projections.
For Additional Information

Rural Development Institute
www.brandonu.ca/rdi

Robert Annis: annis@brandonu.ca
Telephone 204-571-8513

Jill Bucklaschuk: bucklaschukj@brandonu.ca
Telephone 613-729-7576

Alison Moss: mossa@brandonu.ca
Telephone 204-571-8553