



The Integration of Newcomers on the Canadian Prairies

The Integration of Newcomers on the Canadian Prairies project builds on fourteen years of immigration and integration work by the Rural Development Institute (RDI)—from 2005's Manitoba Rural Immigration Community Case Studies to 2019's Exploring Employers' Motivations to Hire Newcomers on the Canadian Prairies.

Immigrants to Canada diversify Canadian society and grow the economy, and so it is no surprise that key government policies aim to increase and control immigration. But it is not enough just to have newcomers arriving in Canada, with no plan for helping them to settle in their new home. The integration of newcomers into society is a critical element of nation building as well as community building. The Integration of Newcomers project aims to enhance integration activities in rural areas by examining the key factors and processes involved in successful integration.

This one-year project will examine integration by comparing the lived experiences of immigrants with the experiences of those who are new-to-town (intra or interprovincial migrants) in rural communities (communities with a population below 100,000 inhabitants) in the Prairie provinces. Two communities in each province—Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta—will be investigated, one with a Local Immigrant Partnership (LIP) and one without. LIPs bring together key public, private, and NGO-sector stakeholders in their region to facilitate two-way change—newcomer integration into the community and community

adaptation to newcomers. In each community, researchers will interview three participants in each of four categories: immigrants, representatives from welcoming organizations that work with immigrants (for example, Settlement Provider Organizations [SPOs]), non-immigrant newcomers, and representatives from welcoming organizations (for example, Welcome Wagon). In order to appreciate the dynamic nature of integration over time, one immigrant and one non-immigrant newcomer will be selected to be interviewed from each of the following three categories: those who arrived within the last two years, between two and five years, and those who arrived longer than five years ago.

Data will be assembled into two case studies: one that looks at immigrants and respective welcoming organizations and the other that looks at non-immigrant newcomers and respective welcoming organizations. The case studies will be analysed in order to identify possibilities for strengthening integration models and practices in rural communities for both immigrant and non-immigrant newcomers. The project will produce a publically available report as well as an article in a scholarly journal.

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