



Immigration Brief: A Way Forward

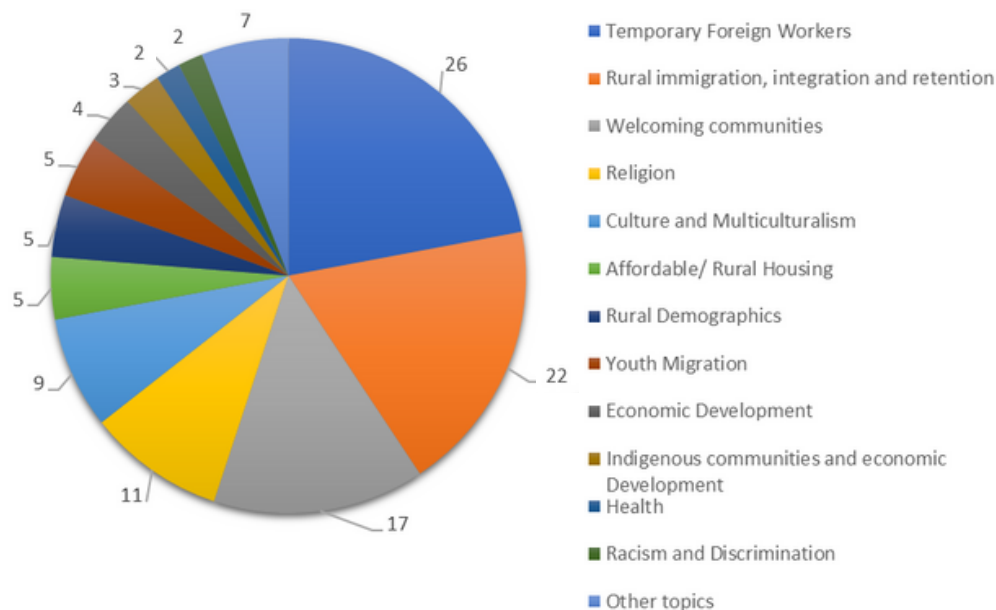
BASED ON THE REPOSITORY ON IMMIGRATION IN MANITOBA

Author: Shirlyn Kunaratnam

The Rural Development Institute has centralized and disseminated research and resource materials related to immigration with a collaborative effort with the Brandon Local Immigration Partnership (BLIP), and the Interdisciplinary Immigration Research Network (IIRN) in 2021, which seeks to address the complex landscape of immigration in the Westman region. The initial repository research project was to create a comprehensive, publicly accessible knowledge platform. This platform houses an extensive collection of research and resource materials, ranging from academic inventories to non-academic sources.

In the early part of 2023, RDI invested time to delve deeper into research areas of the immigration repository to identify gaps in knowledge relating to research on immigration in the Westman region. This assessment was focused on disseminating the findings to service organizations working with immigrants and newcomers in the Westman Region. Overall, 118 research publications and resources, spanning from 2003 to 2021, were analyzed. The key topics identified throughout these publications and resources are highlighted in Figure 1.

This immigration brief serves as an introduction to the repository analysis by providing a glimpse of specific subjects, challenges and initiatives taken to mitigate some of the challenges of rural immigration.



Rural Development Institute
Brandon University
270-18th Street,
Brandon, MB R7A 6A9
204-571-8515
brandonu.ca/rdi

KEY ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

Throughout the creation of the repository, 19 major subjects were identified. Subjects 1-12 demonstrated key challenges faced by immigrants when settling in rural Manitoba. These subjects are exemplified below, as they connected to a variety of complex factors.

- 1. Religion** 

 - Integration Support Through the Church^{xi}.
 - Muslim Anti-Racism Movements to Combat Islamophobia^{xii}.
 - Bayanihan ritual as a Tool for Cultural Integration^{xiii}.
 - Religion is a form of culture in Canada^{xiv}.
 - Faith and Family bond to Navigate Challenges^{xv}.
 - Religious Organizations as mediators to overcome Racism and Discrimination^{xvi}.
- 2. Culture and Multiculturalism** 

 - Immigration Counters Population Decline^{xvii}.
 - Bringing the "Right" Voices to the Table^{xviii}.
 - Volunteer Burnout in Ethnocultural Organizations
 - Lack of Funding and Coordination among Service Organizations^{xix}.
 - Lack of Community Gatherings Online Culture^{xx}.
- 3. Affordable/ Rural Housing** 

 - Providing Subsidies for Newcomers to access Affordable Housing^{xxi}
 - Increasing Number of Affordable Housing.
 - Lack of Support Services to find Housing.
 - Cost Effective Housing^{xxii}.
 - Financial and Tax Benefits to Builders^{xxiii}
- 4. Indigenous Communities & Economic Development** 

Several projects implemented by RDI in Rural Manitoba among indigenous and other rural peoples^{xxiii}.

 - Indigenous contribution to Rural Economy
 - Food Processing Innovation Commercialization
 - Soybean Supply Chain Analysis
 - Rural Broadband Impact Assessment.
- 5. Health** 

 - Cultural Beliefs and Social Stigma affects Newcomers from Accessing Health Support^{xxxiv}.
 - Cultural Adjustment and Isolation
 - Interpretation services and Cultural Sensitive Care for immigrants^{xxxv}
 - Financial and Practical Barriers in Accessing Health support^{xxxvi}
 - Lack of Transportation access to Health and Childcare Support^{xxxvii}.
 - Undocumented Immigrants' Rights and Safe Access to Health^{xxxviii}.
- 6. Racism & Discrimination** 

 - Racism and Discrimination Challenges faced by Chinese Immigrants^{xxxix}.
 - Negative Perception of Chinese due to Language Barrier
 - Discrimination against Muslims due to their Religion^{xl}.
 - Community Togetherness among Filipinos to overcome challenges^{xli}.

7.

Temporary Foreign Workers



- Limited Social and Economic Integration ⁱⁱ.
- Labour Market Distortion ⁱⁱⁱ.
- Struggles at work due to language barriers.
- Skill Mismatch.
- Workers Exploitation Vulnerability ^{iv}
- Complex Hiring Regulations

8.

Rural Immigration, Integration and Retention



- Balancing stakeholders' interest for effective implementation of policies.
- Integration Challenges due to culture, and language ^v.
- Lack Of Understanding and Negative Perceptions about Newcomers.
- Social Support Deficiency.
- Limited Essential Services ^{vi}.

9.

Welcoming Communities



- Awareness and Tailored Strategies among the Rural communities regarding Newcomers ^{vii}.
- Addressing Prejudice and Discrimination through knowledge sharing.
- Resource Collaboration among Stakeholders ^{viii}.
- Lack of Political Commitment ^{ix}.
- Lack of Job Opportunities ^x.
- Promoting Distinctive Qualities of Rural Areas

10.

Rural Demographics



- Rural Immigrant and Low paying jobs ^{xxiv}.
- Population Decline and Aging (1970s-present) affect the Rural Economy ^{xxv}.
- Lack of Attractive Job Opportunities for youths and Economic Impact ^{xxvi}.
- Social and Governance Challenges.
- Climate Change Vulnerability ^{xxviii}.

11.

Youth Outmigration



- Lack of Facilities for youth in Rural Areas ^{xxviii}.
- Rural Youth's Perception and Lack of Employment
- Loss of Culture due to outmigration
- Lack of Access to Services due to Decline in Population
- Negative Perception of Rural Education ^{xxix}

12.

Economic Development



- Role of Small Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in Immigration Support ^{xxx}.
- Immigrants to boost Rural Economy ^{xxxi}.
- Lack of Economic Diversification in Rural Areas ^{xxxii}.

The following is the list of subjects 13-19 identified throughout the creation of the repository.

These subjects explored pilot programs related to immigration in rural Manitoba.

13. The Role of Recreation in Immigration- Neepawa xlii
14. Immigration Research xliii
15. The Migration in Remote and Rural Areas (MIRRA) Project xliv
16. Newcomers Serving Organizations – Immigrant Center xlv
17. Brandon Immigration Pilot xlvi
18. Rural and Northern Immigration Pilot (RNIP) xlvii
19. Manitoba History xlviii

AVENUES OF FUTURE RESEARCH:

The creation of this repository has highlighted a variety of topics unexplored in relation to immigration in rural Manitoba, and the findings of this project have demonstrated a multitude of avenues for future research in addressing this gap in knowledge.

1. Exploring the Realities of Rural Communities: In recent years, rural communities have been receiving a significant influx of immigrants. Numerous initiatives have been undertaken to welcome these immigrants, with the government and other stakeholders focusing on facilitating comfortable settlement in rural areas for newcomers and immigrants. However, it is important to take a step back and evaluate:

- Whether these identified challenges are still persisting among newcomers and immigrants.
- Whether the existing rural communities are comfortable in welcoming immigrants. Are there any grievances among existing rural that need to be addressed?
- The level of transparency of the government and other stakeholders in integrating newcomers into rural communities, ensuring that programs and immigrants do not create tensions among the existing residents.

2. Exploring Gender and Immigration: With regard to gender and immigration, researchers have largely overlooked the challenges that immigrant and newcomer women encounter when settling in rural Canada. Women and single mothers who arrive in a new country without extended family support face numerous difficulties, such as finding suitable childcare services and securing a flexible job opportunity, and managing work-life balance. These factors often result in significant mental stress. It is crucial to ensure that these individuals are not excluded from the integration process.

3. Fostering Entrepreneurial Skills: Newcomers who come to rural areas often possess valuable entrepreneurial skills that could be utilized for the benefit of rural Canada. It would be interesting to explore the range of entrepreneurial skills these immigrants possess and determine how best to leverage them for the improvement of rural communities.

4. It is crucial to tailor programs and services to meet the specific needs of different immigrant groups, such as refugees, skilled workers, and international students. This could involve collaborating with community

organizations and service providers to develop targeted initiatives that address the unique challenges faced by each group. As well, these groups may come to rural Canada with different expectations. For example: skilled workers want jobs that are suitable for their qualifications and experience. But most of the time they don't find suitable jobs in rural Canada and are forced to work as laborers or low-paying jobs to take care of their family's needs. Refugees want safe spaces to live and look for opportunities to enhance their skills to find suitable jobs in Canada.

5. Retaining Rural Youth and Newcomers in Rural Canada: The lack of job opportunities, recreational activities, and lack of recognition often leads rural youth and new immigrants to migrate to urban areas. To encourage long-term residency in rural regions, it is important to identify strategies to make these areas more appealing. This could include creating more job opportunities that are attractive to youth, enhancing recreational offerings, and fostering a sense of belonging and building second-layer leadership.

6. Creating a Welcoming Community: Despite the efforts made to promote multicultural environments and acceptance of new immigrants, it is important to continue nurturing a welcoming atmosphere. The newcomers often struggle with a lack of knowledge in accessing support services that are already established to support newcomers by service organizations. Therefore, it is important to establish links to guide the newcomers.

7. Enhancing Skills: Providing Short courses to build the skills related to Canadian jobs among newcomers were provided as recommendations in many researches. Therefore, it is important to see whether these are skill mismatches still as a challenge or not.

8. Work-Life Balance: Well-being is one of the hot topics in Canada. Both physical and mental well-being are essential for the overall welfare of families. It is worth noting that both locals and immigrants often find themselves juggling multiple jobs to make ends meet, which can significantly reduce their quality time with their families. Therefore, it is important to see the underlying challenges that affects the quality of life.

RDI has great experience in working closely with universities in Manitoba and other parts of Canada, and has actively partnered with organizations that focus on serving the needs of immigrants through research. These collaborations involve joint research projects, sharing resources, and leveraging academic expertise to address issues relevant to rural communities and immigrants. With this, RDI will continue facilitating partnerships with academic institutions and organizations in addressing complex challenges faced by immigrants, and shaping policies and practices that positively impact immigrants and newcomers' lives. For more information, please see RDIs [Immigration Initiative](#) and [publications on the topic of immigration](#).

References

- i Brandon and Westman Immigration Research Repository Project, RDI, 2021.
- ii Matters, R., & Annis, R. (2007). Labour Issues: The Use of Temporary Foreign Workers in Western Canada. https://www.brandonu.ca/rdi/files/2015/09/The_Use_of_Temporary_Foreign_Workers_in_Western_Canada.pdf
- iii Shangvi, I. (2012). Retaining Immigrants in Rural Communities: Employee Retention Strategies. In Rural development Institute. https://www.brandonu.ca/rdi/files/2015/09/Employee_Retention_Strategies.pdf
- iv Annis, R. C. (2008). Temporary migration and regional economic development: The case of Brandon, Manitoba. <https://www.brandonu.ca/rdi/files/2016/01/TemporaryMigrationRegionalEconomicDevelopment.pdf>
- v Ashton, B.W., Miu, Y.C., Francis, J., Galatsanou, E., Garcea, J., Kirova, A., McCoy, J., Pettigrew, R., L. W. (2015). Immigration Settlement Services and Gaps in Citizenship and Immigration Canada's Western Region. <https://www.brandonu.ca/rdi/files/2015/09/Western-Canada-report.May-2015.pdf>
- vi Ashton, W., Kelly, W. Galatsanou, E., Zarry, X. (2014). Integrated community adjustment: rapid population growth. <https://www.brandonu.ca/rdi/files/2016/01/Integrated-Community-Adjustment.pdf>
- vii, viii, & x Rural Development Institute (2011). An RDI Project Review: Sustaining communities: opportunities, challenges and immigration in rural Manitoba. https://brandon-music.ru/rdi/files/2015/09/Sustaining_Communities_Opportunities_Challenges_Immigration_RuralMB.pdf
- ix Gibson, R., Bucklaschuk, J., & Annis, R. (n.d.). Creating a welcoming prairie community through community partnerships. <https://www.brandonu.ca/rdi/files/2016/01/CreatingaWelcomingPrairieCommunity.pdf>
- xi Dupuis, L. (2015). Catholics celebrate centennial. <http://www.mywestman.ca/component/content/article/14-faith/3818-catholics-celebrate-centennial>
- xii Marshall, A. (2013). (1) (PDF) The Living and the Dead_ an Ethno-history of Islam and Identity in Winnipeg and Beyond 1 _ Alison Marshall - Academia. 27–32. https://www.academia.edu/25392091/The_Living_and_the_Dead_an_Ethno_history_of_Islam_and_Identity_in_Winnipeg_and_Beyond_1
- xiii Marshall, A. (2015). Stories of Bayanihan and Belonging: Filipinos in Manitoba, Part 2 (pp. 161–171). https://www.academia.edu/30859184/Stories_of_Bayanihan_and_Belonging_Filipinos_in_Manitoba_Part_2
- xiv Marshall, A. (2016). Religion as Culture. *Studies in Religion/Sciences Religieuses*, 45(4), 476–494. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0008429816659096>
- xv Alison R Marshall. (n.d.). (5879) Cultivating Connections: The Making of Chinese Prairie Canada - YouTube. Retrieved April 9, 2021, from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AY4zYe1sLgc>
- xvi Bucklaschuk, J. (2008). Mapping Ethnocultural Communities and Organizations in Brandon and the Westman Region Project Report. https://www.brandonu.ca/rdi/files/2015/08/Mapping_Ethnocultural_CommunitiesOrganizations_in_BrandonWestman_Region.pdf
- xvii Annis, R. C., Gibson, R., & Berry, J. (2011). Intercultural Relations in a Prairie City (Issue June). https://www.brandonu.ca/rdi/files/2011/08/InterculturalRelationPrairieCity-CPA_MAY2011.pdf
- xviii Gibson, R., Annis, C. R., Berry, J. (2011). Understanding welcoming communities and multiculturalism. <https://www.brandonu.ca/rdi/files/2011/08/UnderstandWelcomCommAndMulticulturalism.pdf>
- xix Bucklaschuk, J. (2008). Mapping Ethnocultural Communities and Organizations in Brandon and the Westman Region Project Report. https://www.brandonu.ca/rdi/files/2015/08/Mapping_Ethnocultural_CommunitiesOrganizations_in_BrandonWestman_Region.pdf
- xx Trudel, S. (2012). Brandon's Evolving Cultural Landscape (Issue November). https://www.brandonu.ca/rdi/files/2015/09/Brandons_Evolving_Cultural_Landscape.pdf
- xxi Carter, T. (2010). Housing strategies for immigrants in rural southern Manitoba report prepared for rural development institute by professor of geography university of Winnipeg. September 1–48. <https://www.brandonu.ca/rdi/files/2015/08/housing-strategies-for-immigrants-in-southern-manitoba.pdf>
- xxii Cosgrove, C. (2010). A rural housing story November 2010 (Issue November). https://www.brandonu.ca/rdi/files/2015/08/A_rural_Housing_Story_by_Colleen_Cosgrove.pdf
- xxiii Carter, T. (2010). Housing immigrants in on the bright side: Rural Canada Works. https://www.brandonu.ca/rdi/files/2015/09/Housing_Immigrants_in_Small_Communities.pdf
- xxiv Vineberg, R. (2010). Immigration and Demographic Change in Canada and Manitoba. 1–28. https://www.brandonu.ca/rdi/files/2015/09/ImmigrationDemographic_Change_in_CanadaManitoba.pdf
- xxv Annis, R., & Bucklaschuk, J. (2006). Rural Demographics & Immigration in Canada file:///C:/RDIPROJECT/RDIRESOURCES/2007/Rural_DemographicsImmigration_in_Canada.pdf
- xxvi Bollman, R. D. (2012). Manitoba Rural Demography in the Canadian Context: An Update Webinar https://www.brandonu.ca/rdi/files/2015/09/Manitoba_Rural_Demography_in_the_Canadian_Context_An_Update.pdf
- xxvii Vineberg, R. (2010). Immigration and Demographic Change in Canada and Manitoba. 1–28. https://www.brandonu.ca/rdi/files/2015/09/ImmigrationDemographic_Change_in_CanadaManitoba.pdf
- xxviii Moss, A., Rushton, P., & Patterson, L. (2008). Youth mobility in Manitoba: Voices from the Parkland and North. *Development*, December, 1–50. <https://www.brandonu.ca/rdi/publication-interest/rural-immigration/>
- xxix Moss, Alison., Laurie Unrau, R. C. A. (2008). Youth Migration in Francophone Manitoba. 1–17. https://www.brandonu.ca/rdi/files/2015/09/Youth_Migration_in_Francophone_Manitoba.pdf
- xxx Mikaël, A., Salmon, S. (2018). Motivation of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) in hiring Newcomers (Issue August). https://www.brandonu.ca/rdi/files/2018/10/SMEs_Newcomers_Factsheet.pdf
- xxxi Block, L. (2010). Regional Approaches to Immigration Half the Story: The Southwest Regional Immigration Committee. <https://www.brandonu.ca/rdi/files/2011/08/RegionalApproachestoImmigration-HalftheStory.pdf>

- xxxii Aston, W. (2013). Discerning growth strategies: Neepawa and area report February 2013 discerning growth strategies: Neepawa and area report (issue February). https://www.brandonu.ca/rdi/files/2015/09/Discerning_Growth_Strategies_NeepawaArea_Research-Report.pdf
- xxxiii Coueslan, A. (2019). RDI Research Update – Spring 2019. Www.brandonu.ca. <https://www.brandonu.ca/rdi/publication/rdi-research-update-spring-2019/>
- xxxiii Reimer, B., Ashton, W., Kelly, W. (2016). Activities Update Examining Broadband with Rural Communities Innovation in the Manitoba Agri-Food Sector. 1–10. <https://www.brandonu.ca/rdi/files/2016/11/RDI-Newsletter-Fall-Nov17-Final.pdf>
- xxxiii Ashton, B. W., Coueslan, A., Gary, M. (2018). Research Activities Update. Rural Development Institute. <https://www.brandonu.ca/rdi/publication/rdi-research-update-fall-2018/>
- xxxiv Kruth, M., Herron, R., Waddell, C., Allan, J. & Roger, R. (2020). Newcomer men’s mental health in Brandon, Manitoba: experiences, perceptions, and recommendations. <https://www.brandonu.ca/research-connection/article/newcomer-mens-mental-health-in-brandon-manitoba-experiences-perceptions-recommendations/>
- xxxv Trudel, S., & Bucklaschuk, J. (2008). ‘Transitional’ foreign workers in the community: Facilitating settlement needs in Brandon, Manitoba. <file:///C:/RDIPProject/RDIRESOURCES/2008/TransitionalForeignWorkersintheCommunity.pdf>
- xxxvi & xxxvii Urquia, M. L., Walld, R., Prior, H. J., Detillieux, G., Eze, N. D., & Koseva, I. (2020). The Diversity of Immigrants to Manitoba, Migration Dynamics and Basic Healthcare Service Use. <http://mchp-appserv.cpe.umanitoba.ca/deliverable.php?referencePaperID=88204>
- xxxviii Marshall, A. R. (2013). “Railways, Racism and Chineseness.” In Place and Replace, ed., Leah Morton, Elyllt Jones, and Adele Perry. Winnipeg: University of Manitoba P., 2013, chapter 6. | Alison Marshall - Academia.edu. https://www.academia.edu/4261017/_Railways_Racism_and_Chineseness_In_Place_and_Replace_ed_Leah_Morton_Elyllt_Jones_and_Adele_Perry_Winnipeg_University_of_Manitoba_P_2013_chapter_6
- xl Marshall, A. (2013). (1) (PDF) The Living and the Dead_ an Ethno-history of Islam and Identity in Winnipeg and Beyond 1 _ Alison Marshall - Academia. 27–32. https://www.academia.edu/25392091/The_Living_and_the_Dead_an_Ethno_history_of_Islam_and_Identity_in_Winnipeg_and_Beyond_1
- xli Marshall, A. (2015). Stories of Bayanihan and Belonging: Filipinos in Manitoba, Part 2 (pp. 161–171). https://www.academia.edu/30859184/Stories_of_Bayanihan_and_Belonging_Filipinos_in_Manitoba_Part_2
- xlii <http://www.mywestman.ca/sports/1793-needpawa-filipino-basketball-league-gaining-momentum.html>
- xliii Ashton, W., Bhattacharyya, P., Galatsanou, E., Ogoe, S., & Wilkinson, L. (2016). Emerging Uses of Big Data in Immigration Research. 22. <https://www.brandonu.ca/rdi/files/2017/01/Emerging-Uses-of-Big-Data-in-Immigration-Research-SSHRC-421-2015-2036-synthesis-Final-Report-Oct-13-2016-Brandon-University.pdf>
- xliv Silvius, R. (2017). Migration in Remote and Rural Areas. <https://www.brandonu.ca/rdi/publication/migration-in-remote-and-rural-areas/>
- xlv Immigration Centre Manitoba. (2021). Newcomer Serving Organizations | Immigrant Centre Manitoba. <https://www.icmanitoba.com/resources/newcomer-serving-organizations/>
- xlvi Levant, R. M. personality E. (2019). Immigration pilot will strengthen our community - Brandon Sun. The Brandon Sun, 1. <https://www.brandonsun.com/opinion/editorials/Immigration-pilot-will-strengthen-our-community-566483161.html>
- xlvii Canada visa .com. (2020). Canada Rural and Northern Immigration Pilot | Canadavisa.com. https://www.canadavisa.com/canada-rural-and-northern-immigration-pilot.html?_ga=2.192142762.1875106622.1615324379-114555138.1614994716#gs.v8co98
- xlvi Mitchell, T., & McKee, S. J. (2007). Brandon’s 125. The Journal of the Manitoba History, 56, 69. http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/mb_history/56/mh56web.pdf

Acknowledgements

RDI would like to thank and recognize Glenice Deterville, Shumaila Qurashi and Michael Asante for all of their work creating the Research Repository throughout 2021.

Contact Information:

Shirlyn Kunaratnam | RDI Researcher | Brandon University | kunarasm72@brandonu.ca
Dr. Wayne Kelly | RDI Director | Brandon University | kellyw@brandonu.ca

Rural Development Institute

Brandon University established the Rural Development Institute in 1989 as an academic research centre and a leading source of information on issues affecting rural communities in Western Canada and elsewhere.

RDI functions as a not-for-profit research and development organization designed to promote, facilitate, coordinate, initiate and conduct multi-disciplinary academic and applied research on rural issues. The Institute provides an interface between academic research efforts and the community by acting as a conduit of rural research information and by facilitating community involvement in rural development. RDI projects are characterized by cooperative and collaborative efforts of multi-stakeholders.

The Institute has diverse research affiliations, and multiple community and government linkages related to its rural development mandate. RDI disseminates information to a variety of constituents and stakeholders and makes research information and results widely available to the public either in printed form or by means of public lectures, seminars, workshops and conferences.

For more information, please visit www.brandonu.ca/rdi

Copyright © January 2024

