DOING IMMIGRATION DIFFERENTLY IN SECONDARY CENTRES

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Human capital, as the source of new ideas created, is necessary for the long-term economic growth of a country and it is equally important for smaller and secondary regions. However, the growth of human capital depends in large part on population growth. While the Canadian population has been experiencing a decline in its population growth for decades, this decline has been faster in secondary centres and rural areas and most pronounced in Atlantic Canada. To keep pace with the rest of the country in developing human capital, federal, provincial and municipal governments are responding by exploring how to promote immigration outside of the country's major cities and have been working to develop innovative new policies through Provincial Nominee Programs and experiments such as the Atlantic Immigration Pilot Program. It has meant that in recent years a greater share of immigrants are landing outside of Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver. In this issue of *Canadian Diversity* we explore immigration to non-traditional immigration centres, with a focus on Atlantic Canada, and examine what is working, what is not, and consider how to do immigration differently.

The issue begins with an examination of demographic trends in Canada and a focus on how they are most pronounced in Atlantic Canada. Barry Edmonston compares provinces in the region to national trends. In doing so he paints a picture of population change from 1971 to 2018 and also looks at birth rates and in- and out-migration. The picture is bleak, however, he concludes with optimism reminding readers that communities can make a difference as can policy makers to offset trends and change the pattern secondary centres are facing.

The situation is explored further by Michael Haan who analyzes the role of Provincial Nominee Programs (PNP) in redistribution of immigrants from larger provinces towards smaller ones and also from larger to smaller cities. He finds that PNP has done little to change provincial distribution of new arrivals, however, it has caused more newcomers to choose smaller cities instead of larger ones. Thus, while PNP does not affect choice of province, it does affect location within a province. Similar issues are examined by Lisa Kaida, Feng Hou and Max Stick who examine secondary migration of immigrants. That is, where immigrants move after they initially land in Canada. In doing so, they find that immigrants who initially settle in a

smaller city are likely to choose a smaller city, if they relocate within Canada. These are encouraging findings for municipal programs in smaller cities, such as those in Atlantic Canada, aimed at attracting immigrants.

Several economic and noneconomic factors account for why immigrants leave a community. Evie Tastsoglou and Seperi Sevgur analyze these factors through a survey they conducted of Middle Eastern immigrants to Atlantic Canada. They find that family and ethnic networks play important roles in mobility decisions. Networks provided settlement support and also information and connections in the job market. Tony Fang, Kerri Neil and Halina Sapeha explore similar issues in their reporting of their survey of Syrian refugees in St. John's Newfoundland. They found that most newly arrived Syrian refugees were uncertain about whether they would stay in St. John's or leave for other parts of Canada. Their desire to stay was largely based on the friendliness of local communities, feeling of safety and educational opportunities in St. John's. The intention to leave was largely based on lack of job opportunities.

The ability to examine these patterns on a broader scale, however, is dependent on the data we have to examine immigrants in Canada. Ted McDonald and Michael Haan outline data options and show the importance of administrative data in investigating questions of immigration and settlement in secondary centres. They also highlight the importance of linking provincial data to national administrative records and Statistics Canada surveys and Censuses. They do this by showing how New Brunswick health records can help better understand immigrant retention in that province.

The success of retaining and integrating immigrants in secondary centres is largely contingent on communities and service provider organizations. Nabiha Attalah shares her experience with the Immigrant Settlement Services Association of Nova Scotia's (ISANS) growth and history. In doing so, she highlights the "big enough/small enough" factor of organizations in secondary centres. Unlike in larger centres, those in smaller cities are often the only organization or one of a few organizations operating. This means they are tasked with offering a full range of services and play a core linking function across agencies and across the community. On this front they are big. But at the same time, they are small and tightly knit with many human connections that help ease immigrants into communities and which help the organization move quickly when unexpected opportunities and challenges arise. Jill Bucklaschuk, explores this further in her piece which discusses the Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization of Manitoba (IRCOM) and the services it provides. Its approach is to create an all-inclusive service system (wrap around supports) for newcomers that include affordable transitional housing and settlement services for three years. This is a great example of the big enough/small enough opportunities that secondary centres can offer. By providing all these services within a building, the system also promotes social inclusion.

Yet, at the same time, smaller centres also have barriers. Leyla Sall explores some of these as they pertain to international students in New Brunswick, highlighting that, in many smaller cities and secondary centres, there are a lack of institutional supports that help facilitate economic transitions and integration. International students pose a great opportunity for smaller cities to attract newcomers and transition temporary residents into new citizens. Chedly Belkhodja also explores how secondary centres often lack the cultural and institutional supports that newcomers need to fully participate in communities. He does this by looking at Muslim burial services and cemeteries in secondary cities in Ontario, Quebec, and the Maritimes. Through his work he shows that if communities aim to be welcoming, they also need to consider the full needs of newcomers and adapt to provide culturally relevant services.

As important as it is to focus on economic integration, it is clear that cultural factors are important, as are the relationships between children and parents and families vis-à-vis the rest of the community. Lloyd Wong and Howard Ramos suggest that hockey arenas and the game of hockey are key sites to assess whether communities are truly welcoming and multicultural spaces. They illustrate how this might be done by looking at Calgary and Halifax as cases and use them to show the kinds of questions researchers could examine if they broaden their analytic lenses to the cultural and social milieu and interactions in everyday settings.

The focus on the everyday is also stressed by Annick Germain in her piece looking at differences between national polls and everyday interactions in neighbourhoods in Montreal. She shows that in the quotidian most people get along and welcome one another, opposite to some of the trends one might find in polls. Even in areas with few newcomers, openness can be found in everyday interactions and lessons can be learned on how to facilitate those points of contact for smaller and secondary centres.

As issues of affordability and urban sprawl make Canada's largest cities less attractive, secondary centres and rural areas are increasingly sites of immigration and they are increasingly big enough and small enough to offer vibrant, engaged communities of settlement. Successful settlement is important to encourage greater participation at all levels. This special issue of *Canadian Diversity* explores how secondary centres are thriving sites for newcomers, and also stresses the obstacles and challenges they need to overcome in order to be successful in doing so. An understanding of these outcomes and challenges is important to help design complementary policies that ensure the full benefits of immigration and economic growth.