

**A Scan of Settlement Programs and Services in Western Canada:**

**Integration of Newcomers in Prince George, British Columbia**

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**March 2020**

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## **Acknowledgments**

To my supervisor, Dr. Kimberley Speers, thank you for your valuable guidance, motivation, support, and insightful feedback. You provided me with keen and straightforward comments that were instrumental in restructuring my project. At times when I was unsure how to proceed, the guidance from you helped me to find a better direction. You always made time for my questions and concerns, and I appreciate all that you have done—from your exhaustive work in developing my writing skills to your simple reassurances.

To my mentor, Dr. Benjamin Onyenwosa, thank you for the time you took to read over my work as it progressed. You helped to crystallize my project in its earliest stages and, later, deepen my understanding and appreciation of qualitative research. I have learned so much from you.

To friends, cohorts, and acquaintances who have lent their time and support, I am overwhelmed by the generosity you have shown me both within and outside the context of this project.

Last but not the least, I would like to thank my family. My mum, my sisters, brother, brother-in-law, nephews, and niece for the unconditional love, steadfast support and for assisting in numerous ways during the process of writing this project until the end.

Thank you very much, everyone!

# Executive Summary

## Introduction

Canadian immigration settlement programs and services aim to support newcomers' successful settlement and integration so that they may participate and contribute to various aspects of Canadian life (Prince, 2019, p. 4). Through contribution agreements, the Department of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) funds service provider organizations (SPOs), such as immigrant-serving agencies, social service organizations and educational institutions to provide settlement services to newcomers under six main areas - Needs Assessments and Referrals, Information and Orientation, Language Assessments, Language Training, Employment-Related Services, and Community Connections. The Settlement and Integration Program also funds six support services - Care for Newcomer Children, Transportation, Translation, Interpretation, Disability Support, and Crisis Counselling. The IRCC also helps facilitate access to settlement programming and provide indirect services that support the development of partnerships, capacity-building, and the sharing of smart practices among settlement service providers (CIC: Funding Guidelines, 2015, pp. 5-13).

Furthermore, as an essential part of the Settlement and Integration Program, IRCC engages provinces/territories, civil society, businesses and other stakeholders such as employer associations, sector councils, and credentialing bodies, to mobilize resources to deliver responsive and coordinated settlement and non-settlement services to newcomers (IRCC; Call for proposals, 2019). Despite the vast array of resources and services available to newcomers, the extent to which immigrants can adequately access and make use of settlement services provided by government and settlement agencies to integrate into Canadian society is still partially unknown. Furthermore, it is difficult to find a central portal where all of the settlement and immigration services and programs are listed for each area in Canada.

## Methodology and Methods

The purpose of this Master Project was to identify what settlement and integration programs and services currently exist in the western provinces (Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba, and Saskatchewan) and particularly the Prince George area to help aid a newcomer's successful settlement. Also, when possible, the study identifies opportunities and strategies to improve the programs and services offered to newcomers.

The data collection approach for the Project included both the analysis of academic and grey literature (reports, organizational documents, and websites). The date range included literature from the last ten years; however, the researcher included older sources where there was a gap in recent literature or where the older source seemed to be relevant to current contexts. Search terms included 'immigrant,' 'refugee,' 'Temporary Foreign Worker (TFW),' 'newcomers,' 'as

well as terms that would surface information on the demographics and social and economic well-being of newcomers.

The scope of the study was focused on settlement services that support newcomer's integration to the twenty community in western provinces that were studied for this report and the five cohorts of immigrants: Permanent Residents; Government Assisted Refugees; Refugee Claimants; International Students; and Naturalized Canadian Citizens, that were also studied in this report.

The study involved the development of a research framework that included a definition of settlement and integration programs and services, a provincial settlement service scan of twenty local agencies serving newcomers, identification of key themes and issues developed through an analysis of the findings from the scan, and recommendations on how to improve settlement and integration services.

### **Summary of Findings**

'Settlement and integration' is a well-known concept within immigration studies and the term means, in the Canadian government context, that newcomers locate and use settlement services to address a variety of settlement needs to aid successful integration into a host society (IRCC, 2017f, p. 1). The research findings point to the heterogeneous nature of the literature on newcomers' settlement and integration practices. As found in the literature, the top settlement needs for newcomers are language information (including information about training, translation, and interpretation services, and ESL programs and materials), employment information (including job searching skills and special services to foreign-trained professionals), housing information, information about making connections in the community (including connections to professional associations, volunteer opportunities, mentoring, and community organizations), and information about the new culture and orientation to life in Canada.

To supplement these findings, the study also examined particular types of settlement needs and associated information including employment, housing, and health care services. Findings revealed that employment needs cut across all stages of settlement and the literature consistently points to the foreign credential recognition issue, the lack of Canadian job experience, and issues around familiarity with the workplace/occupation-specific language (Immigrant and Multicultural Services Society, 2019).

The scholarly and grey literature also found that the most accessible and frequented resource for newcomers is their immediate family, friends, and the network of volunteers that are organized around community-based settlement service agencies. In this respect, ethno-specific agencies are highly preferred by newcomers as more welcoming and accessible in terms of cultural appropriateness, and ability to compensate for language difficulties by providing translation and

interpretation. These services are, therefore, seen as relevant and effective; however, it was found that the resources of these ethno-specific settlement services and their volunteer corps are stretched out too far to meet the settlement needs of the target population consistently and adequately. Given limited resources (funding, staffing, and overall organizational capacity), there is a very wide gap between the service capability of these agencies and the settlement needs of newcomers (IRCC; Call for proposals, 2019).

### **Summary of Recommendations**

The following recommendations were made to assist the future development and implementation of settlement and integration policies and services in general and when applicable, to the Prince George area:

#### **Policies:**

- Build into policy a holistic understanding of immigration and settlement that takes families, rather than individuals, as the unit of analysis and practice.
- Ensure that the settlement services sector have a well-defined policy and strategy on how to integrate newcomers, and not assume that all clients' needs are the same.
- Enhance organizational capacity and funding at the agency level. More innovative and flexible policy and funding model is needed that can take into consideration the unique challenges of service delivery in remote communities like Prince George.
- Ensure that the voices of newcomers are heard by including them as active participants rather than recipients in the design of settlement and integration strategies and tools.
- Engage in trust-building with the service sector. Supporting the sector to develop professional development standards and offer professional development opportunities to its workforce may go a long way to build trust.
- Broaden the demographic coverage of the federal Settlement and Integration Program by relaxing its eligibility requirements to allow temporary migrants and recent citizens access.
- Relax the 10-year residency requirement for immigrant seniors to be eligible for old age security.

#### **Services:**

- Increase awareness processes of the services available to newcomers should be a major focus of service providers. This could be done by increased knowledge sharing and community resource information preferably offered in different languages. Community social events, for example, can be one such opportunity.
- Adopt a family-centered approach when conceiving, designing, and delivering settlement services.

- Expand services to help newcomers acquire “systemic” navigational skills ranging from learning about available services and resources to connecting with civic and occupational networks.
- Make language training more accessible and rewarding for immigrant women and seniors by expanding onsite childcare, providing transportation subsidies, reaching out to rural communities, and organizing flexible class schedules and locations.
- Expand community-based activities, including volunteering, to reduce social isolation among, and increase social support for newcomers.
- Adopt an accepting, even welcoming environment for newcomers and the opportunity to become active, contributing community members socially and culturally as well as politically and economically.

# Table of Contents

<b>Acknowledgments</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>Executive Summary</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>List of Abbreviations</b> .....	<b>10</b>
<b>1.0 Introduction</b> .....	<b>11</b>
<b>1.1. Background and Defining the Problem</b> .....	11
<b>1.2. Project Objectives and Deliverables</b> .....	13
<b>1.3. Research Questions</b> .....	14
<b>1.4. Organization of Report</b> .....	14
<b>2.0 Background and Context</b> .....	<b>15</b>
<b>2.1 Canadian Demographic Profile and Trends</b> .....	15
<b>2.2 Immigrant Population and Settlement Patterns: Canada and Western Provinces</b> . 16	
<b>2.3 Prince George Statistics</b> .....	17
<b>2.4 Overview of the Canadian Immigration Settlement System</b> .....	18
<b>2.5 Provincial Context: Focusing on Western Canada and Prince George</b> .....	19
<b>3.0 Methodology and Methods</b> .....	<b>20</b>
<b>3.1 Methodology</b> .....	20
<b>3.2 Methods</b> .....	21
<b>3.2.1 Document Review</b> .....	21
<b>3.2.2 Statistical Data</b> .....	22
<b>3.3 Limitations and Constraints for the Study</b> .....	23
<b>4.0 Literature Review</b> .....	<b>24</b>
<b>4.1 Immigration Settlement and Integration Services</b> .....	24
<b>4.1.1 Defining Settlement and Integration</b> .....	24
<b>4.1.2 The Need for Settlement and Integration Services</b> .....	25
<b>4.1.3 The Need for Settlement and Integration Services</b> .....	25
<b>4.2 Immigrant Settlement and Integration Support System: Current Problems and Issues</b> .....	27
<b>4.3 Structural Issues: Policies, Roles, and Coordination Mechanisms</b> .....	28
<b>4.4 Literature Review Summary</b> .....	28
<b>5.0 Findings: Provincial Services Scan</b> .....	<b>30</b>

5.1	Forms of Settlement and Integration Services in Western Canada .....	30
5.2	Service Provider Organizations (SPOs) in Western Canada.....	35
5.3	Service Provider Organizations Across Western Canada: Programs and Services	35
5.4	Umbrella Organizations in Western Provinces in Canada .....	36
5.5	Settlement and Integration Service Provider Organizations in Prince George: Programs and Services .....	39
5.5	Summary of Findings .....	42
6.0	Discussion and Analysis .....	45
6.1	Answering the Research Questions .....	45
6.1.1	<i>Clients Served</i> .....	45
6.1.2	<i>Resources Available</i> .....	46
6.1.3	<i>Governance</i> .....	46
6.1.4	<i>Measures Used by SPOs to Communicate to their Clients</i> .....	47
6.1.5	<i>SPOs Capacity for Delivering Services and Meeting Needs</i> .....	47
6.2	Other Findings and Themes.....	48
6.2.1	<i>Most Highly Demanded Settlement and Integration Services</i> .....	48
6.2.2	<i>Partnership and Collaboration Among the Pre-Arrival Services</i> .....	48
6.3	Main Settlement and Integration Challenges in Prince George.....	48
6.3.1.	<i>Credential Recognition and Canadian Experience</i> .....	49
6.3.2.	<i>Funding Instability</i> .....	49
6.3.3.	<i>Language Issues</i> .....	50
6.3.4.	<i>Partnerships and Other Start-up Issues</i> .....	50
6.3.5.	<i>Settlement Services Eligibility</i> .....	51
6.3.6.	<i>Policy Issues</i> .....	51
6.4	Limitations and Further Research.....	51
7.0	Recommendations.....	53
8.0	Conclusion .....	56
	References.....	58
	Appendix A: Most Populated Provinces of Immigrants in 2019 .....	66
	Appendix B: Numbers of Immigrants in Four Western Provinces in Canada 2019.....	67
	Appendix C: List of Western Provinces in Canada and Selected Service Provider Organizations (SPOs) .....	68
	Appendix D: Program or Agency Specific Services .....	70

## **List of Figures and Tables**

### **Lists of Figures**

Figure 1. Population Growth Rate, 1999 to 2019, Canada (p.16)

Figure 2. Population Growth Rate, 1996 to 2016, Prince George (p.18)

Figure 3. New Immigrants Distribution by Western Provinces, 1998/1999 to 2018/2019 (p.22)

Figure 4. Canadian Settlement and Integration Model (p.27)

### **Lists of Tables**

Table 1. Settlement Process Stages (p.26)

Table 2. Settlement and Integration Services Available in Western Canada (pp. 31-34)

Table 3. Number of IRCC funded settlement service locations in the western provinces (p. 35)

Table 4. Geographic Distribution of Programs and Services (p. 42)

## **List of Abbreviations**

CIC - Citizenship and Immigration Canada  
ESA - Ethno-Specific Agency  
ESL - English-as-a-Second Language  
GARS - Government Assisted Refugees  
IRCC - Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada  
ISA - Immigrant Serving Agency  
ISAP - Immigrant Settlement and Adaptation Program  
LINC - Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada  
LIPs - Local Immigration Partnerships  
NGOs - Non-Governmental Organizations  
RAP - Resettlement Assistance Program  
SPOs - Service Provider Organizations

## **1.0 Introduction**

The purpose of this research study is to identify the settlement and integration services available to newcomers in the Prince George area and other communities across western Canada. Specifically, the report examines the service gaps and opportunities to improve the overall effectiveness of immigrant settlement and integration in Prince George.

The settlement and integration of newcomers to Canada and the creation of an inclusive Canadian society is a complex undertaking that involves many actors working together in various formal or informal partnership arrangements. At the most informal level, family and friends play an important role in helping newcomers acclimatize; more formally, governments at all levels design and fund various programs to help immigrants embark on their new lives. Governments are also instrumental in formulating policies and programs to break down barriers and create a welcoming and inclusive society. Public, private and nongovernmental organizations then implement these programs (Prince, 2019, p. 4) in various ways to numerous communities.

There is no client for this project.

### **1.1. Background and Defining the Problem**

Immigration has been fundamental to the population growth and economic and social development of Canada (Wilkinson et al., 2016, p.2). With an aging population and low fertility rates, immigration has continued to play an important role in ensuring that Canada's population and labor force continue to grow. Given that immigrant newcomers are, on average, younger than the Canadian-born population, the federal government believes that immigration can help mitigate some of the challenges of an aging demographic (Statistics Canada, 2018). Yet newcomers are faced with multiple cultural, socioeconomic, and environmental problems when trying to adapt to living in Canada.

Language is one of the biggest barriers that newcomers face when resettling (Kaushik and Drolet, 2018, pp. 6-7). Trying to find a job, making friends, or even completing basic tasks like buying food or filling out forms can be frustrating and stressful if a person is not fluent in either of Canada's two official languages, which are English and French (Kaushik and Drolet, 2018, pp. 6-7). In Prince George, most people communicate in English, both in business and in everyday situations, so they need to know the English language if they expect to thrive in the area.

There are also other challenges newcomers face in finding jobs such as getting their credentials recognized and having relevant Canadian work experience. As noted by numerous authors, immigrants who are educated and have well-established careers back home find it frustrating that they cannot obtain the same jobs in Canada (Toronto Star, 21 Jan. 2019, J. Dietz et al, 2015,

Guo, 2009; Dietz, & Bhardwaj, 2006, Bauder, 2003). Employers also have their perspectives on the advantages and disadvantages of hiring newcomers. For example, as noted by Fetinko, some employers think it is more difficult for immigrants to integrate if they are not familiar with Canadian workplace culture (Sep 6, 2019, paras. 1-3).

Another challenge faced by newcomers to Canada is social isolation. Social isolation is an objective state and is commonly defined as a low quantity and quality of contact with others. It is regarded as an indicator of healthy aging; however, an increasing number of newcomers are at risk of being socially isolated (National Seniors Council, 2014a, p. 7). Immigrants and refugees are at a greater risk of social isolation because of risk factors such as cultural and language differences, racism and discrimination, poverty, limited access to transportation, and lack of settlement services (National Seniors Council, 2014a, pp. 8-9). It takes time for newcomers to get used to their new place and feel comfortable in it. It also takes time for locals to get used to them and to reach out (BC Centre for Disease Control, 2019, p. 7). Canada has a diverse population and a city such as Prince George has numerous cultural communities from many different countries, and this can make it difficult for newcomers to deal with the cultural differences (Statistics Canada: Prince George Population center, 2017).

The issue of weather cannot be ignored as a challenge for newcomers. Canada's climate varies wildly based on geography. For example, Prince George has a humid continental climate with warm summers and cold winters; however, most people who live in this city would say to 'predict the unpredictable.' In this case, there might be snow in the summer and mid-winter chinooks when the temperature climbs from freezing to warm in just a few hours. Newcomers never know what to expect from the weather in Prince George (LAKP-British Columbia, n.d, p. 58) and some have never experienced snowy weather before. Adapting to the climate becomes very challenging because, for many of them, this was not the norm back home and there is a learning curve, for example, on how to drive in such weather.

Arriving in a new country, given the above challenges, Canada can be a daunting place for new settlers. Hence, the issue of immigrant settlement becomes important because finding a new home is the first step towards integration and assists newcomers to overcome barriers related to the immigration experience so they can participate in social, cultural, civic and economic life in Canada. A strong settlement sector, especially in a remote urban area like Prince George, is a key asset for the community to attract, welcome, and retain newcomers (Shields, Drowlet, and Vanlenzuela, 2016, pp. 4-5).

In general, settlement and integration services provide various forms of support and assistance to immigrant populations that help newcomers get established in and meet their core needs/requirements for their adaptation into their new homeland, and ultimately to become citizens of that country. The literature on Canadian immigrant settlement and integration is vast and

varied, covering topics from employment to education, official language acquisition to entrepreneurship, sense of belonging to political participation, and housing to health (Murphy, 2010, p. 5). Much of the literature, as shown in the literature review, also focuses on the challenges immigrants have when adapting to their new home in Canada.

Despite the vast amount of research done on this topic, the settlement and integration of immigrant newcomers in Canada in the current socio-economic and political context remain challenging. Since Canada's Immigration and Refugee Protection Act in 2002, which replaced the 1976 Immigration Act, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have been used to deliver immigration settlement programs (IRCC; Annual Report to Parliament on Immigration, 2018, p. 5). The Settlement and Integration Program aim to support newcomers' successful settlement and integration. These federally-funded services are available to all newcomers up until they become citizens. Through the Settlement and Integration Programs in Prince George, IRCC funds SPOs to deliver language learning, community and employment services, pathfinding and referral services (IMSS website: Settlement Program Overview, 2019). These programs address some of the challenges and disadvantages faced by newcomers such as those stemming from language and culture differences, discrimination and racism, lack of access to income sources, situations of isolation and others that improve their awareness about their rights and responsibilities, healthy lifestyles, safety, available local resources and the opportunity to socialize and communicate with each other (Akkaymak, 2016, p. 9).

## **1.2. Project Objectives and Deliverables**

The underlying objective of this report is to assist the Prince George area to identify what potential opportunities there are in improving services to immigrant newcomers. At a broad level, the purpose is to identify what settlement and integration services and policies are in place in western Canada to identify smart practices and then apply these lessons learned to ways to improve services and policies specific to Prince George.

Specifically, this research project explored a sample of settlement and integration services available to newcomers across the four western provinces (i.e., British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba) and identified potential gaps and opportunities in programs and services offered in Prince George.

This research is not a comprehensive review of all the services offered in the twenty selected cities although attempts were made to identify the largest and most popular services. The project has also not attempted to evaluate the performance of settlement services.

### **1.3. Research Questions**

The primary research question for this report is: What type of settlement and integration services are available for newcomers in Prince George and across the four western provinces in Canada?

The primary research question for this review consists of five supplementary questions:

- How are services funded, organized, and governed, and by whom?
- How do existing settlement practices and policies support newcomers' integration in western Canada in terms of communication and marketing?
- What are the similarities and differences between services?
- What newcomer services are currently being delivered in Prince George?
- What are some smart practices and lessons learned from other organizations in western Canada that could be applied to the Prince George area?

### **1.4. Organization of Report**

This project report has eight chapters. It begins with this chapter, which outlines the objectives, purpose, and organization of the report. Chapter two provides background on the topic by exploring immigration and settlement policy framework and the role of NGOs in immigrant settlement provision in Western Canada and the Prince George area. The following chapter describes the methodology for the research, data collection methods, and project limitations. Chapter four delivers a literature review that identifies some key factors related to the strengths and challenges for NGOs in meeting the settlement and integration needs of newcomers.

Chapter five reports on the findings and chapter six deliver a discussion of the research findings. The following chapter offers recommendations for nonprofit organizations in Prince George. The final chapter provides some concluding observations regarding the requirements for making progress in building stronger capacity and partnerships and for the NGOs in Prince George to meet the settlement and integration needs of newcomers.

## **2.0 Background and Context**

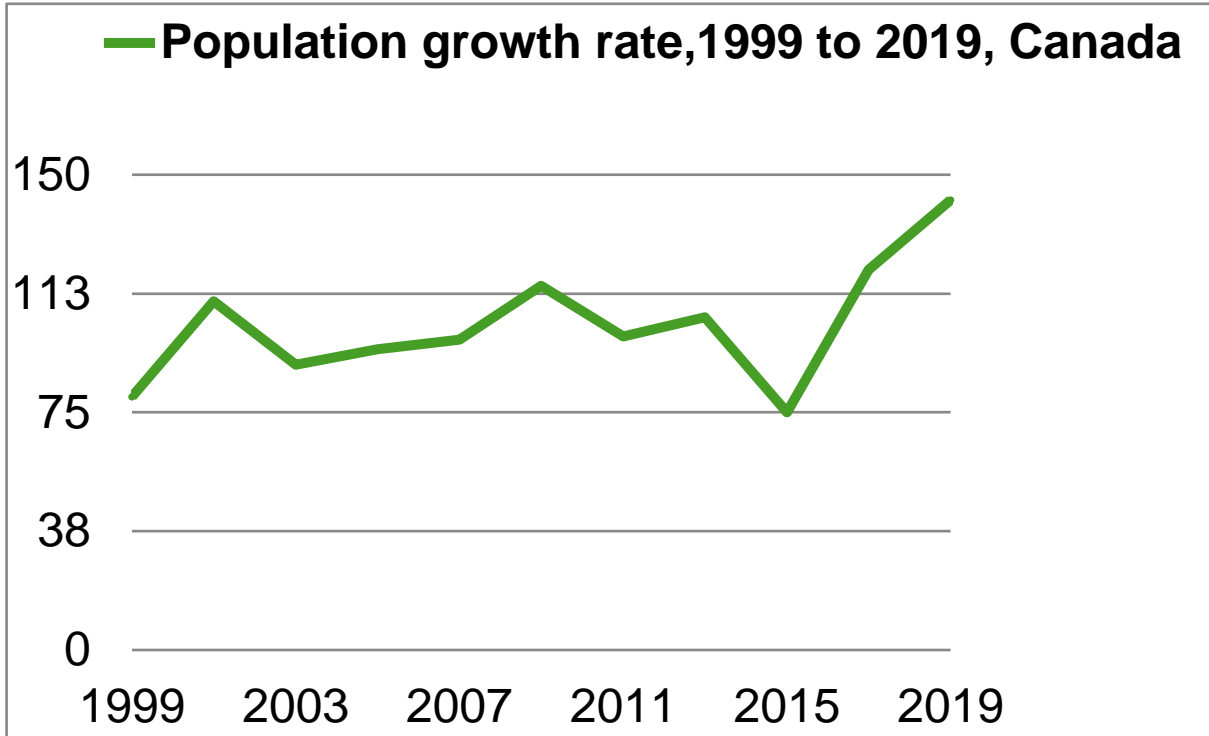
Immigration has been fundamental to the population growth of Canada and its history of achievement. From the earliest days through to the transformations of recent years, people and their families have come to Canada from all over the world. Collectively, they have made a significant contribution to the development of Canada's economy, society and culture (Statistics Canada, Centre for Demography, 2019, p.7).

This chapter is divided into five main sections. Section one provides an overview of the current Canadian demographic trends and their impact on population and section two offers a discussion on the immigrant population and settlement patterns in Canada and western provinces. The third section provides the demographic transformation of the Prince George area as the newcomers' population has increased and section four gives an overview of the Canadian immigration settlement system. The final section explains the reason behind focusing on western provinces and the Prince George area for this research study.

### **2.1 Canadian Demographic Profile and Trends**

In 2018/2019, Canada had the highest intake of newcomers of all G7 countries. As noted by Statistics Canada, the main reason for Canada's steady growth in population was its commitment to relatively high levels of immigration (Statistics Canada, Centre for Demography, 2019, p.7). Also, roughly two-thirds of Canada's population increase is due to international migration. In 2018/2019, international migratory growth accounted for more than 80% (82.2%) of Canada's population growth. This proportion has been increasing almost continuously since the early 1990s (40.4%) as seen in Figure 1, which means that one in five Canadians were born outside of Canada's borders, making effective settlement and integration services an important need for Canada's immigration system (Statistics Canada, Centre for Demography, 2019, p.7).

Figure 1: Population Growth Rate (Year Ending June 30)



Source: Statistics Canada, Centre for Demography, 2019

## 2.2 Immigrant Population and Settlement Patterns: Canada and Western Provinces

In 2016, there were 7,540,830 immigrants in Canada, representing 22.3% of the total population (Statistics Canada, 2017b, p. 1). Among immigrants living in Canada in 2016, 1,212,075 people arrived between 2011 and 2016. These recent immigrants made up 16.1% of Canada's immigrant population. Asia (including the Middle East) was Canada's largest source of immigrants during the past five years, although the share of immigration from Africa, the Caribbean, Central, and South America increased slightly. From 2000 to 2019, Canadian annual immigration figures ranged from a high of 205,710 in 2000 to a high of 313,580 in 2019 (Statista 2019). There was a shift of a wider distribution across Canada of newcomer populations, especially benefiting the Prairie and Atlantic regions as both have seen more than a doubling of the share of recent newcomers over the past 15 years (Statistics Canada, 2019). Yet most of the foreign-born population lived in four provinces: Ontario, British Columbia, Quebec and Alberta and of these immigrants, most lived in the nation's largest urban centers (Appendix A).

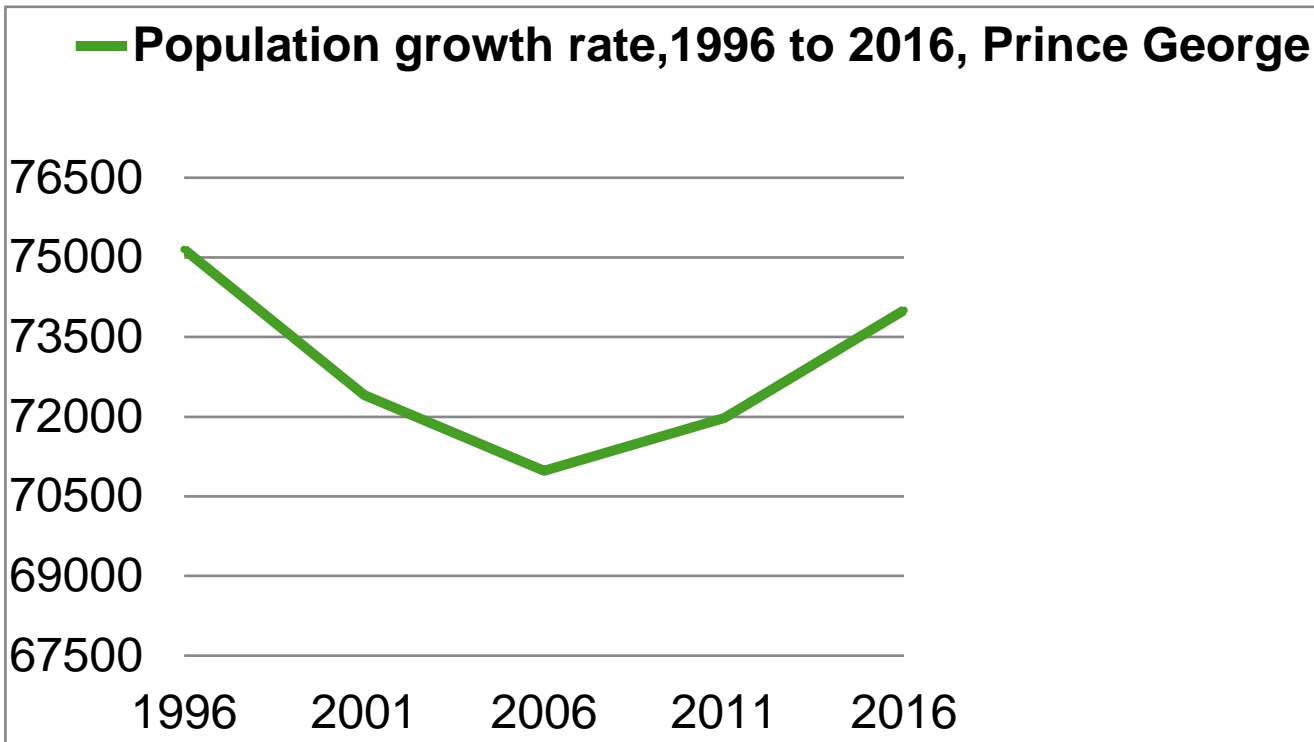
The western provinces (British Columbia, Alberta, Manitoba, and Saskatchewan) in Canada attract about one-third of Canada's new residents. These provinces became home to 113,704 of Canada's 313,580 new permanent residents in 2019 or 36.29%. British Columbia receives the most immigrants to the western provinces, with about 31% of the 2019 total settling there. Alberta attracted 29% of those who landed in western Canada, and Saskatchewan and Manitoba combined attracted about 40% (Appendix B). Western cities represent four of the top seven destinations for new Canadians. Between 2010 and 2016, 400,000 immigrants settled in Vancouver, 88,000 in Calgary, 55,000 in Edmonton and 40,000 in Winnipeg. Regina 7,000 and Saskatoon 9,000 (Statistics Canada, 2017b, p. 1).

### **2.3 Prince George Statistics**

Prince George is a Canadian city located in British Columbia. The city is one of the fastest-growing in the nation (Prince George Population, May 11, 2019, para. 1). Per estimates taken in 2016, the population of the city is 73,004, making it the largest city in northern British Columbia. Breaking down the population, about 90% of residents were born in Canada and 87% of residents speak English only (Prince George Population, May 11, 2019, para. 2). The city, when compared with others in the province, had a lower number of one-person households and a higher number of households with married couples with children (Prince George Population, May 11, 2019, paras. 3-4). According to the 2016 Census data, over 75% of residents are white and over 15% are of Indigenous origin. Minority groups that live in Prince George include South Asian (3.5% of the population), Chinese (1.3% of the population), Black (1% of the population), and Filipino (1.4% of the population). Minority groups that each total less than 1% include Latin American, Arab, West Asian, Southeast Asia, Korean, and Japanese (Statistics Canada, 2017).

Prince George's population of permanent residents grew by 25% in 2017 whereas most other towns in northern B.C. and the Central Interior saw these numbers either stay the same or drop. According to the most recent data from Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, Prince George's population of permanent residents grew from 255 in 2016 to 320 by the end of November 2017. In 2015, the population stood at 290. Over the last ten years, Prince George has seen its total number of permanent residents jump 129% (Statistics Canada, 2017).

Figure 2: Population Growth Rate (Year Ending December 31)



Source: Statistics Canada. 2016 Census

#### 2.4 Overview of the Canadian Immigration Settlement System

In Canada, the immigrant settlement is a substantial social service sector that includes an array of community-based voluntary organizations, agencies, and governmental programs. The sector provides services, resources, training, and support for immigrant newcomers across the country. In the early 2000s, the settlement sector grew in its capacity to support and deliver services for immigrant newcomers. The terms and conditions of funding changed to produce a more service-oriented sector that focused on immigrant labor market integration (IRCC; Annual Report to Parliament on Immigration, 2018, p. 5). An increase in funding to settlement enhanced the delivery of settlement services and new funding arrangements engendered professionalization and capacity building amongst settlement service providers, turning settlement into a "para-state system" (Acheson & LaForest, 2013, p.606).

'Welcoming Communities Initiatives,' funded by the IRCC (Immigrant Welcome Centre, 2019), was introduced in the mid-2000s to enhance and localize the co-ordination of settlement services and to encourage the settlement of new immigrants to mid-sized and smaller cities (Esses et al., 2010). Local immigration partnerships—community-based networks of organizations, agencies, and municipal, provincial, and federal governmental departments—emerged to coordinate these initiatives and to develop community capacity for immigrant settlement and integration across

the country. Through local immigration partnerships, a range of community stakeholders forged varied relationships to immigrant newcomers, settlement services, and the services and resources that permeate a specific locale. Thus, with the introduction of ‘Welcoming Community Initiatives,’ a complex, fluid, and shifting set of arrangements and resources across departments, agencies, and various levels of government brought a diversity of community experts to bear on the issue of welcoming immigrant newcomers (Prince, 2019, p. 4).

## **2.5 Provincial Context: Focusing on Western Canada and Prince George**

Western provinces in Canada have been chosen for this research study because more than any other area in Canada, these provinces have experienced significant increases in the arrival of new immigrants since the beginning of the current millennium (Figure 3). Furthermore, as mentioned above, Prince George’s population of permanent residents is on the increase over the last ten years jumping to 129% (Statistics Canada, 2016), yet we know very little about the types of services that are available and the extent to which settlement services are available to them. Therefore, these provinces are an appropriate region to explore immigrant settlement and integration programs/services (Statistics Canada, Centre for Demography, 2019, p. 14) given similar geographical, demographic, and cultural features.

British Columbia has also been a long-standing traditional location for newcomer settlement, particularly the metropolitan areas of Vancouver and Victoria, which continues to receive one of the largest shares of incoming immigrants. Approximately 15% of the foreign-born population in Canada is found in this province (Statistics Canada, Centre for Demography, 2019, p. 12). Over the last year, 22.5% of immigrants settled in one of the three prairie provinces. This proportion was almost two and a half times higher than that observed 20 years ago (9.4% in 1998/1999) (Statistics Canada, Centre for Demography, 2019, p. 13).

Although each of the three prairie provinces (Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba) has a different arrangement with the federal government in the management of settlement services, all three have taken an activist approach to the program in recent years. There is a significant level of provincial investment in newcomer settlement and inclusion in each of the regions, which has been increasing its share of the annual immigrant intake and settlement funding since the late 2000s (Statistics Canada, Centre for Demography, 2019, p. 13). In this research, settlement organizations, nonprofits, NGOs, and alternative service delivery are used interchangeably as they are discussed in a similar way throughout the literature although when relevant, distinctions will be made.

### **3.0 Methodology and Methods**

The purpose of this study was to identify the settlement services available to newcomers in the western region of Canada and the Prince George area, highlight any gaps in services in these areas, and explore the existing partnerships among Service Provider Organizations (SPOs). To fulfill this purpose, a jurisdictional scan approach was taken and twenty communities were selected across the four provinces in the western region (i.e., British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba).

The data collection consisted of identifying the availability of settlement services in the selected communities, the gaps in services offered, the barriers for newcomers to access services, and a newcomer's needs for settlement services. Additionally, research was collected about any current partnerships among SPOs, the SPO organizational capacity to deliver services, and the challenges newcomers face in trying to integrate into Canadian society. Data collection and the limitations and constraints for the study will be explained further in this chapter.

This project did not require ethics review because it uses exclusively publicly available and identifiable information, and for which there is no reasonable expectation of privacy (TCPS2, p. 17). Also, the project did not involve direct interaction between the researcher and individuals, but rather, used the Internet to source for data such as documents, records, performance reports, online archival materials, and published third-party interviews.

#### **3.1 Methodology**

To identify gaps in services and policies, a jurisdictional scan, the primary methodology in this project, examined online resources available for newcomers in the western provinces in Canada was conducted. As noted by Kilian et al. (2016), a jurisdictional scan is viewed to be a decision-making tool that examines how problems have been framed in other jurisdictions and “compares and evaluates options based on action take in other jurisdictions in response to similar problems” (slide 2). Sources utilized in this scan were drawn from provincial governments, the federal government, umbrella organizations, and nonprofit settlement and integration agencies in western Canada.

This scan consisted of identifying and summarizing the salient characteristics of the settlement and integration services that twenty cities in western provinces offer to assist newcomers to meet their needs along with tables containing information on settlement services and programs. Aiming to identify the themes, patterns in the data that were relevant, recurring and significant were identified and used to address the integration of newcomers. Therefore, the process employed reading, re-reading, comprehending contexts, synthesizing themes into new patterns, grouping or re-contextualizing. These themes have been generally accepted as indicators of

newcomers' integration success across governmental and non-governmental sectors, as well as used in numerous research projects (Shields, 2014).

## **3.2 Methods**

### **3.2.1 Document Review**

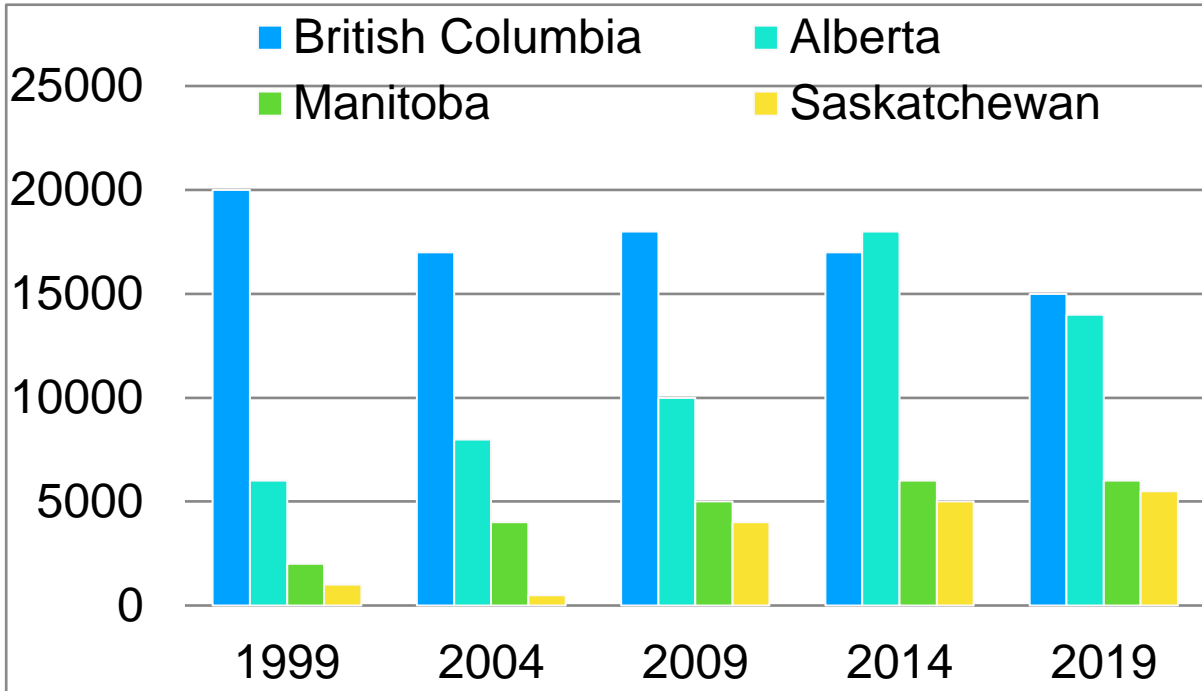
An online search of federal, provincial, territorial, and community-based programs and services for immigrant newcomers was conducted. Settlement and Integration criteria focused on programs and services specifically targeting immigrants, delivered in Prince George and the western provinces, described in English, with enough informational detail online, where immigration settlement and integration was a component, and it was offered during the scan's timeframe of 1995-2019. The search was completed using combinations of different key terms, including immigrant, newcomer, Canada, Western Provinces, Prince George, settlement and integration. The scan employed a broad method of data collection to answer the research questions:

- Statistical databases.
- Academic literature review.
- Grey literature review.
- Local, federal, provincial government and service provider organizations websites.
- Attending information sessions and symposiums related to immigration.
- Personal observation

The twenty NGOs that have been selected for this project are listed in Appendix C. These organizations have been selected based on their funding sources, the number of clients assisted, offering settlement and integration services and are in Western Canada. This is because settlement organizations operate differently from province to province. They also operate differently depending on the location in individual provinces. For example, settlement organizations in Prince George operate much differently when compared to settlement organizations in Vancouver. Differences result from the intake of clients (Atkinson et al., 2013, pp. 14–15).

To garner the best results for comparison, the organizations selected are all based in Western Canada, and the respective provincial umbrella organizations such as; The Affiliation of Multicultural Societies and Service Agencies of BC (AMSSA), Alberta Association of Immigrant Serving Agencies (AAISA), Manitoba Association of Newcomer Serving Organizations (MANSO), and Saskatchewan Association of Immigrant and Settlement Integration Agencies (SAISIA) will be analyzed in this project. This research study fills a gap as it focuses on immigration settlement programs in Prince George, and western Canada in general, something that is currently under-researched.

Figure 3: New Immigrants Distribution by Western Provinces, 1998/1999 to 2018/2019



Source: Statistics Canada, Centre for Demography, 2019

### 3.2.2 Statistical Data

To enhance the researcher's understanding of the current immigration context in the Prince George area and western provinces in Canada, several statistical databases were consulted. This data explains where, when and into which communities the immigrant population have settled along with details regarding the general Canadian population. These databases include:

- Citizenship and Immigration Canada - CIC ([www.cic.gc.ca](http://www.cic.gc.ca))
- MovingUp Prince George ([www.moveupprincegeorge.ca/work/employment-services-and-resources](http://www.moveupprincegeorge.ca/work/employment-services-and-resources))
- Western Provinces Statistics Agency ([www.stats.gov.ca](http://www.stats.gov.ca))
- Labor and Immigration Statistics Canada ([www.statcan.gc.ca](http://www.statcan.gc.ca))
- Statistics Canada (<https://www.statcan.gc.ca>)
- Canadian Settlement and Integration Model ([IRCC.gc.ca](http://IRCC.gc.ca))

CIC datasets give a snapshot of the immigrant population of Canada, Prince George, and the Western Provinces. While some data sets can also be found in the Statistics Canada and Community Accounts databases, which include the number of foreign-born residents in the specific communities, education level, religion, and language ability. Further, additional detailed data unique to the Prince George area were provided by MovingUp Prince George and Western Provinces Statistics Agency.

### **3.3 Limitations and Constraints for the Study**

The present study focuses on the Prince George area and twenty communities across Western Canada. Arriving at a common interpretation of the terms of reference for the project demanded additional time given that each of the jurisdictions did not always share the same definition and understanding of key terms related to immigration, settlement, and integration.

Further, although government departments may collect and have access to current information on immigrants and immigration, in some cases this was unavailable for the present research as this study is solely based on published materials. In some cases, 2018/2019 data was available at the time of this study and in other instances, 2015/2016 was the most recently available information.

Another limitation related to the reliance of this study on published information is that there have been a limited number of published research reports on immigration in Prince George and the western provinces in Canada.

## 4.0 Literature Review

The literature review consisted of five essential components that complemented and supported the research questions in this study. To develop a broad understanding of the general topic, academic and grey literature was reviewed related to developing an understanding of how settlement and integration have been defined and conceptualized. From there, the need for settlement and integration services was examined and then the current funding problems and issues and structural issues relating to policies, roles, and coordination mechanisms were explored.

### 4.1 Immigration Settlement and Integration Services

#### 4.1.1 *Defining Settlement and Integration*

As noted by the Government of Canada, immigration has been and will continue to be an essential tool for social, cultural and economic nation-building (Statistics Canada, 2016). With Canada's long-term plan of establishing immigration levels at approximately one percent of the total population (CIC: Performance Report, March 31, 2002, p. 8), the federal government recognizes that it faces a challenge in ensuring that all parts of Canada share in the benefits of immigration. Noting the trend for immigrants to concentrate in Canada's three major metropolitan areas (Toronto, Montreal, and Vancouver), the federal government points to the need for all levels of government to find innovative ways to attract and retain newcomers to non-traditional destinations (Vezina and Houle, 2017).

The provision of settlement and integration services is an important part of enabling immigrants to more successfully settle and integrate into Canada and much has been written about in the literature about this topic. A settlement is generally accepted to refer to the "long-term, dynamic, two-way process through which, ideally, immigrants would achieve full equality and freedom of participation in society, and society would gain access to the full human resource potential in its immigrant communities (IRCC, 2017f, p. 1). Similarly, integration is defined as the ability to contribute, free of barriers, to every dimension of Canadian life, that is, economic, social, cultural and political. Ultimately, the goal of integration is to encourage newcomers to be fully engaged in the economic, social, political, and cultural life of Canada (Weerasinghe et al. 2017; Li, 2003; Ager and Strang, 2008).

Governments in Canada at all levels have an important role in supporting immigrants in this settlement and integration process and in providing a welcoming environment in which newcomers are received by their host society through such services as general orientation, language training, information and referral services, and employment training. Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) funds settlement services through Immigrant and Settlement and Adaptation Program (ISAP), Language Instruction for Newcomers (LINC), and the HOST

Program. Various community and voluntary organizations also fund community services that immigrants use as well as settlement programs specific to newcomers (Shields et al., 2016, pp. 14-17).

The current approach to settlement service delivery in Canada can be characterized as a public-private partnership model. According to literature, the benefits of this type of model are that it reduces the size of government administration and allows the federal government to promote consistency of service delivery while still allowing for delivery flexibility based on needs determined at the local level. Also, since nonprofit agencies are often established in the immigrant communities they serve, they are often best qualified to provide services to immigrants due to the organizational skills and connections to communities that allow them to better identify newcomers' needs (Freeman and Mirilovic, 2016, p. 379; Gunn, 2012, p. 1-2). According to literature, the major downside to this public/private model of settlement service delivery is that it can foster a competitive environment among service providers that can hinder partnerships, coordination of service delivery and the sharing of information and best/smart practices (Trudeau, 2008).

#### ***4.1.2 The Need for Settlement and Integration Services***

The literature overwhelmingly notes that settling in a new country is not an easy endeavor. There are many needs that newcomers have and barriers that newcomers face throughout their ongoing settlement experience. Because of these barriers and challenges, settlement services are provided for newcomers and in some instances to longer resident immigrants to help them settle, adjust, adapt and integrate into Canadian society. The settlement process according to Richmond and Shields (2005), "is a lifelong journey that does not end once a newcomer has lived in Canada for a year, nor when a newcomer becomes a Canadian citizen" (p. 515). Yet, as noted by Richmond and Shields, it is helpful to conceptualize the settlement process in four general stages: pre-arrival, initial reception, intermediate stage, and the long-term stage (see Table 1).

Table 1: Settlement Process Stages

<b>Pre-Arrival</b>	<b>Initial Reception</b>	<b>Intermediate</b>	<b>Long-Term</b>
In this stage newcomers are preparing for their move to Canada. They are also setting their expectation for their lives in Canada.	Once newcomers arrive, they have immediate needs such as basic information and referrals, language training, and temporary housing.	Once newcomers have initially settled, they need securing longer-term employment, finding permanent housing, searching for education, etc., that establish them foothold in the country	In the long-term stage newcomers begin developing a sense of attachment or belonging in Canada, without giving up their attachment and belonging to their home countries. It is at this stage that the deeper forms of integration and inclusion should occur

Source: The initial reception, intermediate and long-term stages are cited from Richmond & Shields, 2005, p.515

During the integration process, immigrants often are confronted with structural obstacles such as credential recognition institutional barriers and discrimination. Richmond and Shields also noted that there are very often serious coordination challenges between levels of government and other public and private societal actors during the various phases of the immigrant settlement and integration experience (Richmond and Shields, 2005, p. 515).

#### ***4.1.3 Canadian Settlement and Integration Model***

Under Canada’s Constitution Act, both federal and provincial/territorial governments may make laws concerning immigration, but the federal role is paramount. The federal government is responsible for citizenship, multiculturalism, heritage, public health, public safety, income security, and justice; provincial/territorial governments are responsible for education, health, and social services; municipalities are conveners of federally funded local immigration partnerships; Educational institutions are partners in language training and other settlement services (e.g., Settlement Worker-in- Schools); employers are critical to labor market access for immigrants and are involved in local immigration partnerships and immigrant employment councils, and family and friends are the first points of contact for newcomers in trying to settle and integrate.

Figure 4: Canadian Settlement and Integration Model



Source: Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, 2018

#### 4.2 Immigrant Settlement and Integration Support System: Current Problems and Issues

The settlement policy consists of a "variety of programs and services designed to help newcomers become participating members of Canadian society as quickly as possible" (CIC, 2015, pp. 7-8). Different levels of government assume primary responsibility for programs in these areas. Traditionally, federal-level programs have been the most visible, but federal funding for settlement and language services has not increased reasonably over the past decade and in fact, there have been significant cutbacks (IRCC, 2017f, p. 20). Since 1995, the federal government has attempted to devolve responsibility for immigrant settlement to the private sector as well as to provincial governments, calling this "settlement renewal" (IRCC, 2017f, p. 20). Manitoba, Alberta, British Columbia, and Ontario have negotiated their agreements with the federal government. Quebec assumed responsibility for its settlement services in 1991. A comparative overview of current immigrant settlement programs across Canada documented the wide funding discrepancies between provinces (CIC, 2015, pp. 7-8). Settlement services differ not only between provinces but also from city to city. Municipal governments do not have a voice in the major settlement policy decisions, but services may vary due to local priorities and

programming funded by agencies such as S.U.C.C.E.S.S, ASSIST Community Services Centre, Westman Immigrant Services (WIS), and private foundations (IRCC, 2017f, p. 20). Settlement services are predominantly delivered by immigrant-serving agencies that rely heavily on government funding to provide these services. Their numbers reduced by funding cutbacks and increased competition for contracts (IRCC, 2017f, p. 20). Today immigrant-serving agencies tend to be large multi-ethnic agencies that lack the resources to engage in policy advocacy.

The eligibility criteria imposed by public funding requirements oftentimes forbids nonprofits from serving those newcomers who are most in need, migrants with less than full legal status (IRCC, 2017f, pp. 52-53). Furthermore, the nonprofit sector is driven to increase its professional competencies to compete more effectively for public funding. This tends to move nonprofit orientation away from its community roots toward business and managerial values that are more tailored to the efficiency and accountability ethics of neoliberal practices (CIC: Funding Guidelines, 2015, pp. 5-13). Additionally, as Richmond and Shields (2005) observe, government funding for settlement services is mainly for the first stages of settlement that concern immediate survival needs while neglecting other longer-term and more embedded problems in the integration process that need policy and programming attention. Budget cuts to immigrant settlement services, both at the provincial and federal levels, have had the most adverse impact on immigrants and refugees. Richmond also notes that “people who have lost the most in terms of access to services over the last two years of cuts have been immigrants and refugees” (p. 46).

### **4.3 Structural Issues: Policies, Roles, and Coordination Mechanisms**

Finally, the literature points to a lack of integration, consistency, and coordination among the various players in the settlement sector; for example, among and between various levels of government, mainstream or generic service institutions, and community-based immigrant settlement agencies (Shields, et al., 2016) The lack of a coherent policy framework prevents the effective integration of economic, social, and political development goals as they pertain to the domains of immigration, labor adjustment and training, human services, and newcomer settlement (Shields, et al., 2016).

### **4.4 Literature Review Summary**

This review of literature has provided an overview of the profile of newcomers settlement and integration in Canada, their challenges and needs, the funding landscape for newcomer programs and services and existing services offered by service provider organizations and community capacity in western provinces and the Prince George area to serve newcomers. This overview helps to build an understanding of the Canadian landscape as it affects and supports immigrants through the process of immigration, settlement, and integration across their life cycle.

It is clear from the literature that migration and settlement are changing as a result of demographic, economic, and technological factors. The characteristics, and hence the settlement needs of Canadian migrant intake have also changed dramatically in the last decades, principally as a result of selection policy changes (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2019). The challenge facing policymakers now is to continue to develop settlement policies that respond to these changes and that reinforce the overall objectives of immigration policy.

Importantly, it is evident that newcomers are by no means a homogenous group and that their past experiences, stage of life, gender and ethnocultural identity, among other factors, intersect to influence their needs and experience. Many of the issues and challenges facing newcomers that are outlined in this review do not exist in isolation. These factors interact and impact others, indicating a need for a more holistic response that is prioritized at the community, services and policy levels.

## **5.0 Findings: Provincial Services Scan**

Based on the methodology discussed in chapter three, a profile of settlement agencies, programs and services in some of the cities in British Columbia, Alberta, Manitoba, and Saskatchewan that assist in the settlement and well-being of newcomers are provided. The findings are presented in a tabulated form that shows the province's name, program and services offered, funding structures, location, and eligibility criteria. Subsequently, the range of available resources in these provinces is analyzed bearing in mind the research questions and the indicators of settlement and integration. Lastly, research methodology limitations are addressed, followed by the conclusion.

### **5.1 Forms of Settlement and Integration Services in Western Canada**

Many settlements and integration programs and services are available in the western provinces in Canada. These services could be direct or indirect. Direct services are provided directly to newcomers or have an immediate impact on services for newcomers, whereas, indirect services and supports are activities that indirectly support newcomer's settlement such as the coordination of service delivery, development of new services, enhancement of settlement service delivery training, and conducting research that informs services (CIC, 2015, pp. 7-8). These direct and indirect services can be broadly ordered into six categories: information and orientation, advice and guidance, employment services and support, settlement services and support, referral services, connecting with communities, and Local Immigration Partnerships (LIPs). Table 2 displays the services that fall into each category (CIC, 2015, p. 7, 8).

Table 2: Settlement and Integration Services Available in Western Canada

Type	Service	Explanation
Direct	Pre-Arrival Services	Pre-arrival services are settlement services delivered in-person, online or over the phone to help future newcomers prepare for their travels and settlement in Canada. Services include Needs Assessment and Referrals, Information and Orientation, Employment-Related Services and Support Services (which are described below). Some settlement providers in western Canada are in countries abroad while others are in Canada but deliver services virtually (IRCC, 2017a). Services are mainly funded by IRCC and are typically only available for those who have been approved to immigrate to Canada under a permanent residency category (IRCC, 2017a)
Direct	Needs Assessment and Referral Services (NARS)	Needs Assessment and Referral Services identify and assess newcomers need and determine which programs and services they are eligible for to make referrals. Commonly need assessments to include setting goals and developing realistic and personalized settlement plans. NARS may be conducted multiple times throughout a newcomer settlement journey (CIC, 2011, p. 8).
Direct	Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP)	The Resettlement Assistance Program is provided for Government Assisted Refugees (GARS) and includes two parts. The first part is income support for up to 12 months for GARS after they first arrive in Canada. The second part is the initial reception services needed for GARS in their first four to six weeks in Canada. These services include a reception at the Canadian port of entry, temporary housing, orientation and information, support finding permanent housing, applying for government benefits and programs and assessment and referrals. This program is funded by IRCC and delivered by settlement service providers (IRCC, 2016, pp.1-2).

Direct	Information and Orientation Services	Information and Orientation services provide newcomers with guidance, information, and resources. They are meant to help newcomers with their everyday needs, as well as understand their rights and obligations (CIC, 2011, p. 8). It includes the port of entry services; orientation services; settlement consultations; dissemination of information and referrals to community resources for such things as employment, healthcare, legal services, education, banking, and recreation (CIC, 2015, p. 8)
Direct	Employment Related Services	Employment-Related Services help newcomers gain knowledge and skills to enter the Canadian labor market (CIC, 2015, p. 10). Services include programs such as training and bridging programs, employment and credential assessment, work and volunteer placements, professional networking, mentoring, career pathways explorations, and programs incorporating interventions relating to resume writing, job search, interview preparation, networking skills, understanding Canadian workplace culture, and interpersonal skills (CIC, 2015, pp. 8, 10).
Direct	Language Training and Skills Development	Language Training services are focused on improving a newcomer's knowledge of English or French so they can participate in Canadian society (CIC, 2015, p.10). There are formal language training programs such as the Language Instruction for Newcomer to Canada (LINC) (English) and Cours de langue pour les immigrants au Canada (French) that can be focused on daily life, occupation-specific. There are also informal language training services such as conversation groups or on one conversation lessons that help newcomers practice their English or French and there is no formal testing. These can also be considered a community connection service type (IRCC, 2017c, CIC, 2015, p. 11). Language training services can take place in classroom settings, online, one on one, or a blended environment (IRCC, 2017f, p. 2).

Direct	Health	Health settlement services are healthcare services provided for newcomers. Newcomers can access traditional health services, but health settlement services are provided in a culturally sensitive manner and can include language supports. Settlement service health services can include anything from primary care, health education, illness and disease prevention, mental health supports, healthy eating, dental care, sexual health, etc. This is not a specific IRCC settlement category for settlement funding
Direct	Housing	Housing settlement services include both the supports to find temporary and permanent housing and housing that is only available for newcomers, such as multicultural subsidized housing. Housing settlement services can be a form of information and orientation settlement services as there are information sessions on how to rent or buy homes, as well as on one support to look for a home. This is not a specific IRCC settlement category for settlement funding.
Direct	Community Connections Services	Community connections are services that help newcomers connect with people, institutions, employers and organizations in their community (Government of Canada, 2017a; CIC, 2015, p.11). Some community connection activities include conversation circles, community activities, settlement supports in schools and libraries, mentoring, and cultural awareness and knowledge transfer activities and networking activities (CIC, 2015, p. 8). Host matching programs are also part of community connections services that match newcomers with volunteer Canadians. This is a mutually beneficial program that supports newcomers who learn about life in Canada from the volunteer, while the volunteer learns about a new culture from the newcomer (CIC, 2010, p. iv).

Direct	Support Services	Support services are meant to address barriers for newcomers to better access other settlement services. They typically include translation and interpretation services, transportation, childminding, crisis counseling, and disability support services (CIC, 2015, p. 8).
Indirect	Sector Associations	Sector associations are national, provincial, regional or service-specific representative bodies that coordinate with their respective settlement service providers and society at large to foster learning, exchange information and help to improve comparability of programming (CIC, 2015, p. 12). A list of the western provincial sector associations (umbrella organization) is provided in the following section of this report.
Indirect	Community Partnerships	Community partnerships foster welcoming communities and workplaces through increasing localized cross-sector engagement, coordination, and planning. Some examples include Local Immigration Partnerships and Immigrant Employment Councils (CIC, 2015, p. 12).
Indirect	Local Immigration Partnerships (LIPs)	Local Immigration Partnerships (LIPs) are a form of community partnerships that help to develop local partnerships and planning around newcomer needs. They coordinate with a variety of local stakeholders to work towards developing a more welcoming community. (CIC, 2013, p. 6). LIPs are guided by their partnership councils which include representatives from key stakeholders in the community. These councils develop local settlement strategies and action plans to develop more welcoming communities. LIPs can also have sub-committees and/or working groups and sector tables to focus on specific issues or themes. The long-term goal for LIPs is to help with the development of local multi-sectoral partnerships (CIC, 2013, p. 6). LIPs have been developed in a multitude of ways: through local governments, settlement agencies, economic development agencies, social planning councils and more (CIC, 2013, p. 7)

## 5.2 Service Provider Organizations (SPOs) in Western Canada

Service Provider Organizations make up the bulk of settlement service providers in western Canada. Federal funding, along with funding from other sources supports the delivery of these services. Table 3 presents the number of IRCC funded settlement service locations in the western provinces. These figures highlight that the greatest proportion of settlement service locations is in British Columbia. With the total number of settlement service locations being 994, BC has 50.8% of the total western Canadian locations. (IRCC, 2017f, p. 45). Itinerant services, as defined by IRCC, are those services that are provided in areas where the IRCC does not have an office (IRCC, 2017, first para) and tend to be offered quarterly (IRCC, 2017, third sect.). The difference between the permanent and itinerant service location is that the permanent locations are funded by federal and provincial governments and are services offered regularly to newcomers, while, itinerant locations are locations that are not funded by the federal but provincial government to specifically cater to the needs of temporary residents and international students. These itinerant service locations are mostly found in smaller communities where IRCC locations are not present (IRCC, 2017, third sect.).

Table 3: Number of IRCC funded settlement service locations in the western provinces

Province	Number of permanent service locations	Number of itinerant service location	Total number of service locations
British Columbia	361	633	994
Alberta	209	312	521
Saskatchewan	110	41	151
Manitoba	183	105	288

Source: Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, 2017f

## 5.3 Service Provider Organizations Across Western Canada: Programs and Services

The twenty communities were chosen based on the following criteria; the community receives newcomers annually (this statistical data was based on IRCC report of immigrants and refugees population of 2018/2019), there is at least one IRCC or provincial funded Service Provider Organization (SPO) in the community and the SPOs that perform key roles in the settlement and

integration of newcomers. While a large number of services are available in western Canada, services provided by individual provinces vary from one another. While services provided by agency programs (SPOs) have some common components, they also have some unique components. Appendix D specifies the services provided by individual programs across western Canada. As many SPOs provide more than one category of service, the sources adopted (SPOs websites) in this scan to gather information may not be able to capture the full range of services offered by each SPOs. An important note to make is that services seem to overlap and perhaps not all the services appear on the websites.

#### **5.4 Umbrella Organizations in Western Provinces in Canada**

A settlement and integration umbrella organization is an association of institutions or organizations, who work together formally to coordinate activities, pool resources and support the settlement services of newcomers in various provinces (Evans and Shields, 2014, pp. 118–119). Umbrella organizations in the western provinces included in this project are The Affiliation of Multicultural Societies and Service Agencies of BC (AMSSA), Alberta Association of Immigrant Serving Agencies (AAISA), Manitoba Association of Newcomer Serving Organizations (MANSO), and Saskatchewan Association of Immigrant and Settlement Integration Agencies (SAISIA). These Affiliations and Associations provide a holistic picture of settlement organizations in the target provinces, as they work closely with all settlement organizations and understand the strengths and weaknesses of the system. Their inclusion in this research study helps inform the recommendations section and provides additional information for improved service delivery of immigration settlement in Prince George.

- ***Organization: Affiliation of Multicultural Societies and Service Agencies (AMSSA)***

**Location:** Burnaby, British Columbia

**Background:** AMSSA is a unique province-wide association that strengthens over 70 member agencies as well as hundreds of community stakeholder agencies who serve immigrants and newcomers, and build culturally inclusive communities, with the knowledge, resources, and support they need to fulfill their mandates.

**Target Population:** Community agencies that work in the settlement and integration area as well as the diversity and inclusion sectors in BC.

**Description:** This organization provides ongoing support to British Columbia’s settlement and language community and offers a diverse range of capacity building services for Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) contract holders

**Funders:** AMSSA is funded by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) to provide support to IRCC contract holding agencies in British Columbia. AMSSA is also funded by the Province of British Columbia to provide support to BC Settlement and Integration Services funded organizations. AMSSA also relies on other funders, donations, and fundraising initiatives for projects and programming. Funding information can be found.

**Programs:**

- BC-IRCC Settlement, Integration and Language Services Support
- BC Settlement and Integration Services Support
- Diversity & Inclusion Training Workshops
- Diversity Awards

**Services:** Offers capacity building, knowledge, and informational services.

**Source:** Affiliation of Multicultural Societies and Service Agencies (AMSSA) website, 2020.

- **Organization:** *The Alberta Association of Immigrant Serving Agencies (AAISA)*

**Location:** Calgary, Alberta

**Background:** AAISA is a nonprofit organization representing agencies that provide resettlement, settlement, and integration services to newcomers in the province of Alberta.

**Target Population:** Settlement and integration agencies Alberta.

**Description:** To facilitate collaboration and leadership within the settlement serving sector and build an inclusive welcoming and engaged society.

**Funders:** AAISA is funded by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) and the Province of Alberta.

**Programs:**

- Settlement Practitioner Training Program
- Management training program

**Services:** Offers learning and professional development, engagement coordination and research and policy lead.

**Source:** The Alberta Association of Immigrant Serving Agencies (AAISA), 2020

- ***Organization: The Manitoba Association of Newcomer Serving Organizations (MANSO)***

**Location:** Winnipeg, Manitoba

**Background:** MANSO is a nonprofit organization that acts as an umbrella organization for settlement service providers in Manitoba. It acts as a voice for the Manitoba settlement and integration sector, as well as supporting its members through communication, networking and professional development activities.

**Target Population:** Settlement and integration agencies in Manitoba

**Description:** To facilitate newcomer integration by providing leadership, support and a unified voice for settlement and integration organizations.

**Funders:** MANSO is funded by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC).  
**Services:** Offers Information and Orientation Resources, Language Training, Employment, Needs Assessment, and Refugee Services.

**Programs:**

- Saskatchewan SWIS Professional Development
- Saskatchewan Small Centre Conference

**Services:** Offers Information and Orientation Resources, Language Training, Employment, Needs Assessment, and Refugee Services.

**Source:** The Manitoba Association of Newcomer Serving Organizations (MANSO), 2020

- ***Organization: Saskatchewan Association of Immigrant Settlement Integration Agencies (SAISIA)***

**Location:** Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

**Background:** SAISIA is a nonprofit umbrella organization established in 1987 for settlement and integration agencies in Saskatchewan to serve newcomers by providing settlement and integration agencies in Saskatchewan with access to professional development and opportunities to network, as well as links to resources they can use to strengthen and enhance their internal procedures, client programs, and services.

**Target Population:** Settlement and integration agencies in Saskatchewan

**Description:** To facilitate community advocacy, government engagement and public education activities geared toward collaborative partnerships, networking and community connections.

**Funders:** SAISIA is funded by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC).

**Programs:**

- Saskatchewan SWIS Professional Development
- Saskatchewan Small Centre Conference

**Services:** Offers Information and Orientation Resources, Language Training, Employment, Needs Assessment, and Refugee Services.

**Source:** Saskatchewan Association of Immigrant Settlement Integration Agencies (SAISIA), 2020

## **5.5 Settlement and Integration Service Provider Organizations in Prince George:**

### **Programs and Services**

- **Organization:** ACT Immigration Consulting

**Background:** Assisting with all immigration and citizenship processes in Canada.

**Target Population:** Permanent residents and temporary (students, workers, business people, and professionals)

**Funders:** Funded by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC).

**Programs:**

- The Provincial Nominee Program (PNP)
- Inter-company transfers

**Services:** Offers Information and Orientation Resources, Employment, Education, and Needs Assessment

**Method of service delivery:** ACT offers in-person immigration consultations and service in Prince George and area.

**Source:** ACT Immigration Consulting, 2020

- **Organization:** The Immigrant and Multicultural Services Society (IMSS)

**Background:** A nonprofit community serving agency providing settlement and integration services throughout Prince George and the northern region of British Columbia. It strives to promote multiculturalism and racial harmony and to eliminate racism in the pursuit of equality and social justice for all Canadians. Services are free.

**Target Population:** Immigrants and refugees

**Funders:** Funded by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), the government of British Columbia and donations

**Programs:**

- Women/Seniors program
- Settlement Worker in School (SWIS) program
- Anti-racism partnership and program
- Multiculturalism program
- Local Immigration Partnerships (LIPs)
- Youth program

**Services:** offers information and orientation resources, referrals, employment-related services, education services, community connections, language training, and needs assessment.m

**Method of service delivery:** IMSS offers in-person, E-mails website, and telephone immigration consultations and service in Prince George and area.

**Source:** The Immigrant and Multicultural Services Society (IMSS) website, 2020

- **Organization:** Immigrant Services Society of BC (ISSofBC)

**Background:** Since 1972, ISSofBC has been providing a variety of support services for immigrants and refugees to help them get settled, find employment and learn all they need to know about starting their new lives in Canada. Services are free.

**Target Population:** Immigrants and refugees

**Funders/Resources:** Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), government of British Columbia, WelcomeBC, Medical Services Plan (MSP), The Multicultural Mental Health Resource Centre (MMHRC), RCMP, The Justice Education Society, BC public school system, Translink, and donations.

**Programs:**

- HIPPY
- Immigration women peer support program
- MY (Multicultural youth) choice program

**Services:** offers first language settlement support, community connections, settlement orientation services (SOS), Child Education services, youth support services, and women/seniors services.

**Method of service delivery:** ISSofBC offers in-person, E-mails, website, and telephone immigration consultations and service in Prince George and area.

**Source:** Immigrant Services Society of BC (ISSofBC) website, 2020

- **Organization:** Northern Immigration Services (NIS)

**Background:** NIS offers free consultations to individuals who have inquiries about settlement and establishment in Canada. The organization works with the law corporation Chand & Company Law Corporation based in downtown Vancouver and will direct clients with immigration matters to Chand & Company for proper legal advice from an immigration lawyer.

**Target Population:** Immigrants, refugees, and Canadian citizens

**Funders/Resources:** Chand & Company

**Services:** offers business, skilled worker study/work permit, visitor's visa, Live-in Caregiver And Provincial Nomination Program (PNP) Applications. Also, make appeals to the Immigration and Refugee Board and Judicial Review Applications to the Federal Court.

**Method of service delivery:** NIS offers in-person, E-mails, website, and telephone immigration consultations and service in Prince George and area.

**Source:** Northern Immigration Services (NIS) website, 2020

## 5.5 Summary of Findings

The purpose of this scan was to provide an overview of programs and services developed and delivered individually or in partnership to prevent or reduce settlement and integration barriers for newcomers in the western provinces. It provides valuable insight into the organizational capacity and community resources currently available to support newcomers in the western region.

The services identified in the scan from the twenty communities are grouped into 35 programs and services (see Table 4). The geographic distribution of the 35 programs and services identified in this scan included 12 in British Columbia, 10 in Alberta, 6 in Manitoba and 7 in Saskatchewan. The majority of the programs and services were offered in large, urban centers such as Vancouver, Calgary, Edmonton, Victoria, Winnipeg and Saskatoon (CIC; Newcomer Services, 2019).

Table 4: Geographic Distribution of Programs and Services

<b>Province</b>	<b>Program/Service</b>
Alberta	10
British Columbia	12
Manitoba	6
Saskatchewan	7

Source: CIC; Newcomer Services, 2019

The nonprofit settlement agencies that are identified in this scan provide a range of services with most offering many similar services. Some services are offered by only a small number of agencies and have unique nuances geared to their specific client groups and locations (CIC; Newcomer Services, 2019). To understand the services offered, it is also important to remember that different organizations were created at different times, so they are at different stages of maturity in terms of organizational development. Therefore, the capacity to provide services differs from one organization to the other.

Among the most common services is first some form of language training tailored to the needs of immigrants and refugees. In some agencies, this is a formal, well-established program (such as ESL), while in others, it may be more informal. Language training tends to be offered in

languages other than English and offering programs and services free of charge when possible (CIC; Newcomer Services, 2019).

The second common type of service relates to employability. Here, services help with resume writing, job search and interview skills, and occasionally some job placement or internship programs, as well as entrepreneurship information. Less common are the programs or activities geared specifically to potential employers, although many agencies are trying to cultivate active contacts with local businesses in a variety of ways (CIC; Newcomer Services, 2019).

The third type of commonly found service includes standard settlement services, such as finding appropriate housing and furniture, providing help obtaining documents like driver's licenses and Medicare cards, filling out bureaucratic forms, and registering children in school. On the community education side, several agencies make presentations in schools and other venues to educate and sensitize the community on immigration issues (CIC; Newcomer Services, 2019).

Most agencies also organize social events, such as a short outing to a local park or a foreign film, where immigrants can both meet other newcomers and also be introduced to friendly Canadians. A few larger agencies such as Edmonton Immigrant Services Association (EISA), Immigrant Services Calgary (ISC), Archway Community Services, Westman Immigrant Services (WIS), and Saskatoon Open Door Society (SODS) have a wider offering of services, including life skills activities (such as computer classes), and also host various information sessions offered by another partner agencies (such as the RCMP). Finally, most of the agencies have started to offer services to seniors and youth, two age groups not usually well served by settlement services.

Technology appeared to play an important role in outreach, social support, and sharing knowledge and information. Some organizations used online webcasts, webinars, forums, online pamphlets, reports, and posters to share information in different languages. Technology such as telephones and the internet provided opportunities for social engagement and outreach to those who were unable to leave their homes. Another technological innovation included using teleconferences to provide social support for multiple newcomers at one time. In the future, it appears that technology will play an increasing role in overcoming barriers of limited physical mobility, inadequate public transportation, and geographical challenges.

A few organizations targeted resources towards a specific linguistic or cultural group such as South Asian or Chinese seniors. Some providers also offered their resources and services in a range of languages and employed multilingual staff. However, this level of multilingual support was often geographically limited to the large urban centers such as Vancouver, Calgary, and Edmonton.

Not surprisingly, what can be offered is what can be funded, and as such, funding is the limiting factor. Therefore, funders (mainly governments) have a considerable influence in defining the mandate of the agencies and what services they can offer (CIC: Funding Guidelines, 2015, pp. 5-13).

Service and program gaps were found for newcomers living in rural and remote areas. Few or no programs or services were identified in these areas, suggesting that newcomers would be relatively disadvantaged compared to those residing in urban centers. (CIC; Newcomer Services, 2019).

## **6.0 Discussion and Analysis**

In the previous chapters, an inventory of settlement and integration services was identified and highlighted those services frequently offered. When possible, service gaps in western Canada were also identified. As Hyndman et al. (2014) argue, the focus on these services is critical because newcomers have skills and capacities that can contribute to settlement, integration, and society at large. Unlike Canadian-born persons, immigrants and refugees experience settlement and integration difficulties such as language barriers and have a more difficult time finding jobs and housing in Canada that have been found to impede their health and well-being (Edge, Newbold, & McKeary, 2014, pp. 34-41). In the literature, it was found that newcomers need services that are responsive to their complex needs, such as depression, trauma and discrimination and that services address a wide range of issues related to the education, social, political, economic and cultural, and social aspects of their lives.

This chapter examines to what extent the research questions were answered and what issues remain as barriers to settlement and integration at large and specific to Prince George.

### **6.1 Answering the Research Questions**

#### ***6.1.1 Clients Served***

The immigrant settlement agencies listed in this study serve many categories of clients. Permanent residents constitute the largest group in most agencies, the major reason being that the federal funding by Citizenship and Immigration Canada is earmarked for permanent residents only (IRCC; Call for proposals, 2019). Other categories of clients include temporary foreign workers, who represent a large part of the clientele in a limited number of small agencies. They, like international students, receive services funded by the province (IRCC; Call for proposals, 2019). It is important to stress that the immigrant client composition differs from one city to another. As for refugees, they are essentially served by larger agencies mostly in the larger urban centers (Edge, Newbold, & McKeary, 2014, pp. 34-41) like the Edmonton Immigrant Services Association (EISA), The Victoria Immigrant and Refugee Centre Society (VIRCS), Alter Minds Inc (AMI), Saskatoon Open Door Society (SODS), etc.

Some people visiting Canada and doing an exploratory trip before immigrating are also among the clients served occasionally, while others may be in the country under a work permit and require some information. As with many other human services, or with casework in social work, the services generally are not limited to the primary client but extend to the client's entire family. Spouses, children and occasionally grandparents are also being served. Services are also received for various lengths of time, from a punctual once-only contact (to deal with a specific form) to a maximum of three years of service contact the period needed to obtain Canadian citizenship. But in most cases, clients receive services for one or two years (IRCC; Call for proposals, 2019).

### **6.1.2 Resources Available**

The federal and provincial governments are the main (and in some cases the only) funders of the province's settlement agencies. At the federal level, this funding is provided primarily by Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC), although other departments, such as Status of Women Canada or Human Resources and Skills Development Canada may fund certain activities in a few agencies (CIC: Funding Guidelines, 2015, pp. 5-13). At the provincial level, funding comes mainly through the provincial government.

Finally, various community partners also provide in-kind support to the work of the settlement agencies that can, in some cases, be quantified in monetary values and also be quite significant. For instance, some municipalities, as well as public services organizations like the Department of Post-Secondary Education, Training and labor (PETL), RCMP, and the Department of Wellness, Culture, and Sport may also provide some funding for specific projects or activities ((IRCC, 2017f, pp. 52-53).

To summarize, the resources used by the settlement agencies are not limited to the formal funding received by governments and a few other sources but also includes the time and support of dedicated individuals (volunteers) and in-kind support of partnering organizations in the community.

### **6.1.3 Governance**

As nonprofit organizations, the settlement agencies studied in this research are governed by volunteer boards of directors (hereafter referred to as the boards) of various sizes and composition that were formed at different times (depending on the age of the organization) following different procedures (IRCC; Call for proposals, 2019). In most cases, board members were selected through a very open process that included a call for interest made to the general public in the newspaper. Typically, these boards comprise 9 or 13 individuals (modal values) and, regardless of how and when they were constituted, generally adhere to what is often called a policy governance model, which clearly distinguishes between the leadership roles of the board and chief executive officer (called the executive director or the coordinator in these agencies) (Bradshaw, Hayday and Armstrong, 2007, pp.9-10).

This model has several strengths, such as clarity of roles and responsibilities, a focus on outcomes, connection to external stakeholders and empowering the executive director. Yet the potential drawback lies in its limited capacity to deal with evolution and change because it assumes one vision and perpetuates the status quo through its policy framework (IRCC; Call for proposals, 2019).

#### ***6.1.4 Measures Used by SPOs to Communicate to their Clients***

The target nonprofit settlement agencies use a large variety of measures to communicate with their clients. These include seeking cooperation from Canadian Embassies abroad and IRCC overseas offices for pre-arrival services (CREHS). (2007), partnering with other provider organizations, ethnocultural organizations and local educational institutions in the foreign nations, use of social media (Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter) and websites, circulation of posters and brochures, webinar presentations, presentations in job fairs and similar events, publishing newsletters, press release, and magazine articles, outreach activities (meeting with community groups, settlement and language services providers and ethnocultural groups) and words of mouth (Canadian International Development Platform, 2016).

Clients also provide feedback to the settlement agencies in a variety of formal and informal ways. For example, some agencies in Edmonton, Calgary and Winnipeg set up a “committee of newcomers” for that purpose. Another from Vancouver, Regina and Kamloops holds focus groups with clients twice a year to gather their suggestions and discuss their needs. Many agencies use anonymous evaluation forms to receive feedback on services such as language classes and to improve what they do and the way it fits clients’ needs. Some agencies also use exit interviews as clients approach the end of the time in which they receive services. The community at large, as well as stakeholders closer to the agencies, are kept abreast of their activities through the Annual General Meeting, the media, and some public events. All settlement agencies hold an AGM, where an annual report and audited financial statements are presented. Some AGMs are open to the general public or at least to a larger number of stakeholders, like client-members, funders and partner organizations.

#### ***6.1.5 SPOs Capacity for Delivering Services and Meeting Needs***

From the research findings, all four provinces look like they have adequate capacity to communicate with clients, stakeholders and meet reporting requirements. However, it is observed that the majority SPOs from the provinces, except British Columbia, have insufficient staff or staff skills to deliver services. British Columbia welcomes the largest number of newcomers out of the four provinces and perhaps their settlement services are more established and developed, compared to the Prairie Provinces. Although there were few cities in each province like Calgary, Edmonton, and Winnipeg with a more developed capacity.

There is also a lack of adequate capacity for all provinces to deliver settlement services in both official languages and all could use more financial support from both governmental and non-governmental sources. SPOs need core funding to have a stable financial base from which to develop programs and offer services effectively. Finally, the lack of capacity to offer services in both official languages may reflect the demand for this capacity in the rural and remote communities in these provinces, rather than a capacity deficiency.

## **6.2 Other Findings and Themes**

### ***6.2.1 Most Highly Demanded Settlement and Integration Services***

Services that immigrants are mostly interested in can be ordered into three categories: (1) settlement information; (2) employment-related information; and (3) language-related services. Among settlement, information includes information related to housing, daycare, schooling, banking, and family life. Among employment-related information include information about a job opportunity, preparation for employment, search strategies, professional communication, interview strategies, skill upgrading, professional accreditation, mentoring, competency assessment, assistance in network development, and career development training. Finally, among the language-related services that immigrants are mostly interested in including training in English.

### ***6.2.2 Partnership and Collaboration Among the Pre-Arrival Services***

Partnership and collaboration seem to be an important part of settlement and integration service operations by agencies located in western Canada. For this study, a partnership was broadly defined and meant working in cooperation with another stakeholder either formally or informally. Most organizations providing settlement and integration services do partner with other organizations. Three purposes of partnership can be identified: (1) pre-arrival client recruitment; (2) delivery of services; and (3) referral. For example, ISC and EISA partner with Alberta Gaming and Liquor Commission. Similarly, KCR Community Resources and Kamloops Immigrant Services (KIS) partner with United Way to ensure client-focused delivery. Most of the SPOs partners with the umbrella organizations for both recruiting clients and delivering information and training services. Again, some of these SPOs refer their clients to their Partners so that the partners can provide more localized information to their clients.

There were provincial differences in the SPOs propensity to partner. All SPOs (100%) from British Columbia reported working in partnership and nearly all (97%) of the participants from Alberta reported doing so. Manitoba (84%) and Saskatchewan (77%) had similar reports, with more than 75% of the participants reporting working in partnership. The most common partnerships were with other SPOs, school/school boards, libraries, and housing services. The partnerships reported the least often were with francophone organizations, the police force, and ethnocultural groups.

## **6.3 Main Settlement and Integration Challenges in Prince George**

This research study explored the main settlement and integration challenges in Prince George. These services are identified based on the researcher's own personal and work experiences when settling into Prince George, SPOs websites, statistical data and works of literature available

online. Some of these challenges are primarily those of the service provider organizations (like start-up issues); others are those of the newcomers themselves (like limited language proficiency), and yet others are more societal (like the need to be educated on immigration issues or the lack of public transit). In the end, however, it matters little where to locate these challenges because all have to be addressed to make the settlement experience succeed. That said, to make these challenges more tractable, when relevant to the discussion below the researcher discusses how the various issues affect organizations, the newcomers they serve, and the Prince George area of which they are both apart.

A large number of challenges were identified, but five surfaced repeatedly and will, therefore, be discussed. In alphabetical order, the five recurring challenges of immigrant settlement can be grouped under the following headings: credential recognition, funding, language, partnerships issues, and Settlement Services Eligibility.

### ***6.3.1. Credential Recognition and Canadian Experience***

The difficulties connected to the recognition of foreign credentials are among the most frequently identified barriers to newcomer settlement. The non-recognition of foreign diplomas and credentials by professional associations in Prince George does not help the integration of immigrants. There is a significant disconnect between the employment credential requirements set out for Canadian immigration, and the situation on the ground which they face once they enter the country. Some are finding that their credentials are not being recognized once they are in Canada, forcing them to go back to a Canadian educational institution for the sake of a Canadian degree, diploma or certificate. Others have added that without Canadian work experience, their resumes are not being valued and employers are being far from inviting. Without credential recognition, it is difficult for a newcomer to acquire the Canadian work experience employers often demand. Some progress has been made by offering apprenticeships to a certain category of newcomers, but many remain trapped in a vicious circle where the absence of recognized credentials prevents them from acquiring Canadian work experience and, thus, finding permanent employment, even if their skills are in demand (Immigrant and Multicultural Services Society, 2019).

### ***6.3.2. Funding Instability***

Governments have for decades now used the nonprofit and voluntary sector to download the delivery of some human services through a targeted approach, in which tightly regulated contracts constrain and influence all aspects of an organization's activities, structure, and decision-making. Many strings are attached, the funding time frames are short (e.g., a one-year basis), and the reporting requirements are cumbersome (CIC: Funding Guidelines, 2015, pp. 5-13). So, the funding problem is not simply that centers don't have enough money to do what they think they believe they need to. The relatively low funding is one aspect. Besides, the lack of stability in this funding is of great concern and brings with it uncertainty that makes strategic planning (even medium-term), as well as human resources recruitment and training, very

problematic. Some organizations have begun to look at diversifying their funding sources, but all remain largely dependent on governments when cuts at all levels are the order of the day to tackle budget deficits. Other organizations are considering mergers and economies of scale as potential solutions (Immigrant and Multicultural Services Society, 2019).

Multi-year funding agreements would be considered a major improvement by those who run these organizations; such agreements are not without precedent as governments have implemented them for other types of services in other jurisdictions (Voluntary Sector Initiative, 2002: 7). If they cannot be implemented, then organizations should at least receive more advance notice about funding renewal toward the end of the fiscal year. At the moment, some organizations report learning about their funding only a few weeks before March 31. Further, in at least in one case, the organization systematically issues lay-off notices to every employee each year before rehiring its personnel once it has received confirmation of its funding. One can understand how such a practice (while administratively justified) may have a chilling effect on personnel recruitment and retention, that is, staff always feeling as though their jobs were constantly in jeopardy.

### ***6.3.3. Language Issues***

Obviously from the findings, insufficient language proficiency is generally a barrier to employment and, thus, to a successful settlement. As mentioned previously, many of the settlement agencies are investing considerable effort into this issue. Language training for newcomers can be expensive because it is often delivered to very small groups of adults (especially outside the larger urban centers) who need a curriculum focusing on work and everyday situations. The context of western provinces as bilingual also presents specific challenges. For instance, some newcomers, when they arrive in Prince George, understand bilingualism to mean that they can choose to work in one or the other official language. The reality is different is the case they will need to speak both English and French to compete in some of the job markets. If they spoke neither language on arrival, the prospect of learning two new languages on top of whatever else is needed to settle can be overwhelming. Facilitating language integration and meaningful communication between immigrants and their host communities will only be resolved with the collaboration and co-operation of immigrants, their service providers, and the communities they join.

### ***6.3.4. Partnerships and Other Start-up Issues***

It was found in the scholarly and grey literature that a settlement agency cannot function effectively by itself; rather, it needs to establish partnerships and perform an exhaustive (albeit often informal) scan of the resources available in the community so the agency can better provide the information to newcomers and make appropriate referrals. Though well-established organizations in urban centers that serve newcomers connect regularly, the start-up organizations especially those based in the rural and remote centers are oftentimes not included. This necessary

accumulation of local knowledge is a key asset in serving clients. This information-gathering activity is intangible, and the costs and time to produce and maintain it are largely ignored and not captured by the matrix of the funders. Private sector partnerships and involvement are desired in Prince George. Most organizations from all provinces have expressed a desire to improve their involvement and coordination with local businesses and employers. This is one possible way to approach this challenge as well in Prince George.

#### **6.3.5. *Settlement Services Eligibility***

The needs of newcomers are similar across the western provinces. Extending service offerings to a broader range of newcomers in Prince George who currently do not qualify will benefit the community at large. This simply means that expanding services is needed across this area. Specific services need to be offered more often; the definition of who is eligible for services needs to be broadened, and services need to be located in more areas (Prince George and Northern BC).

#### **6.3.6. *Policy Issues***

Many issues mentioned in this report calls for a policy resolution. Some, like credential recognition, are macro-issues involving multiple stakeholders. Yet others are more limited in scope and directly related to the relationships linking the immigrant settlement agencies and their government funders (B. Evans, A. Wellstead, 2013, pp. 60-78). IRCC as a large is perceived as the somewhat distant bureaucracy that at times is a little overwhelmed by its mission (Immigrant Services Society of BC, 2019).

The most fundamental and immediate policy reform to be implemented, from the perspective of this research study, is to replace the year-to-year funding agreements with more stable multi-year funding and enabling measure that would provide more capacity to the agencies for strategic planning, building their organization, retaining their staff, and even signing multi-year leases to secure their office space.

### **6.4 Limitations and Further Research**

The findings of this scan are based on the search for English language websites and online resources. Likely, some programs and services were not identified in this scan. In particular, organizations without websites or online resources would likely have been excluded. Besides this obstacle, there are other challenges to the accuracy of the information provided in terms of how regularly the websites are updated. With this in mind, it is important to realize that this scan may not incorporate the full range of services offered by individual agencies in the studied areas.

Also, this scan only included resources in the English language, and likely, programs and services in some of these cities which are offered in French were excluded. It is unclear how many of these agencies had settlement and integration programs specifically targeting new immigrant and refugee seniors.

This scan was completed in November 2019, which offers a snapshot of the existing programs and services available at that time. The researcher is unable to comment on the sustainability of these programs and initiatives in the future. Lastly, based on the information from the websites and online sources, the researcher cannot comment on the effectiveness or reach of any of the programs (or their 'value for money'). As such, further evaluation research is needed to assess whether various initiatives prove to be successful and the factors contributing to the success or failure of the initiatives.

While this scan may not be able to adequately encapsulate all the settlement programs and services, it can still be used as a valuable resource in understanding and uncovering concerns for the settlement and integration of newcomers in western provinces in Canada.

## 7.0 Recommendations

The following recommendations are based on the findings from the scan. The recommendations have implications for policy formulation, program development and implementation, governance structure, and immediate next steps. They are therefore directed to policymakers at different levels of government, relevant agencies and institutions; program managers and direct service workers, both in the mainstream as well as ethno-specific agencies; as well as the members of the target population themselves, and the general public.

Settlement issues can not merely be left to government. It should be a co-operative effort of other agencies such as HRDC and Health Canada (Shields et al., 2016, pp. 14-17). Governments should work more closely with professional associations and the education system in western provinces to facilitate credential recognition for immigrants. On the other hand, newcomer settlement agencies should make a greater effort to engage and network with local employers as an integral part of their work to further help newcomers' work integration.

Ensure the active participation of the target group in all phases of policy development and program implementation. Effective consultation mechanisms should be developed to ensure the active participation of the target population in decision-making, especially on issues that directly affect their lives, but also on other issues in general, given their right to civic participation. One example of this consultation mechanism would be a series of discussions in different forums, with representation from various immigrant and refugee communities and settlement agencies that would explore issues and solutions.

At present, the Settlement Policy is seen as an adjunct of Canada's Immigration Policy. There should be a distinct and well-articulated Settlement Policy, with its legislative framework, strategic goals, and governance structure, which are linked but not subservient to Canada's Immigration Policy. Specifically, the settlement should not simply be a "program" but should have its separate Act. "A distinct and properly articulated immigrant settlement policy should (therefore) be defined, removed from the shadows of an immigration policy framework (that) is driven primarily by labor supply and demand considerations, and by a pre-occupation with enforcement and internal security issues."

Newcomers face external and internal barriers such as systemic discrimination and cultural barriers. Therefore, rigorous orientation on the legal system and the procedures of reporting is indeed helpful. The community at large, both within and outside the western region, has to see the value of newcomers in their respective communities and workplaces, which ultimately benefits the Canadian economy. Efforts to build receptive communities needs to be a priority.

Issues related to motherhood and childcare are not appropriately and adequately addressed in some of the cities in western provinces. More financial resources should be made available to

settlement agencies to spend on childcare to help newcomer women who have pre-school children to receive settlement services. Possibly reimbursing newcomers or paying for some of their childcare expenses could be limited to their first year in Canada.

More financial resources should be made available to allow settlement agencies to spend some on transportation so newcomers can receive settlement services. Some emergency-related transportations costs should also be eligible for reimbursement or payment under certain circumstances. Possibly reimbursing or paying newcomers for some transportation expenses could be limited to certain circumstances, which could be limited to their first year in Canada.

As the number of newcomers in the family category is increasing, a program in assisting elderly newcomers has also increased to aid their successful integration.

For the long-term success of immigration efforts, government funders should cease considering immigration only in economic terms and instead adopt a more holistic, long view that considers the individual immigrant worker as part of a family unit. Similarly, settlement services to be provided ought to be done using a client-centered approach, instead of being made available depending on status categories dictated by funding programs' eligibility rules.

In summary, the following recommendations were made to assist the future development and implementation of settlement and integration policies and services in general and when applicable, to the Prince George area:

**Policies:**

- Build into policy a holistic understanding of immigration and settlement that takes families, rather than individuals, as the unit of analysis and practice.
- Ensure that the settlement services sector have a well-defined policy and strategy on how to integrate newcomers, and not assume that all clients' needs are the same.
- Enhance organizational capacity and funding at the agency level. More innovative and flexible policy and funding model is needed that can take into consideration the unique challenges of service delivery in remote communities like Prince George.
- Ensure that the voices of newcomers are heard by including them as active participants rather than recipients in the design of settlement and integration strategies and tools.
- Engage in trust-building with the service sector. Supporting the sector to develop professional development standards and offer professional development opportunities to its workforce may go a long way to build trust.
- Broaden the demographic coverage of the federal Settlement and Integration Program by relaxing its eligibility requirements to allow temporary migrants and recent citizens access.

- Relax the 10-year residency requirement for immigrant seniors to be eligible for old age security.

**Services:**

- Increase awareness processes of the services available to newcomers should be a major focus of service providers. This could be done by increased knowledge sharing and community resource information preferably offered in different languages. Community social events, for example, can be one such opportunity.
- Adopt a family-centered approach when conceiving, designing, and delivering settlement services.
- Expand services to help newcomers acquire “systemic” navigational skills ranging from learning about available services and resources to connecting with civic and occupational networks.
- Make language training more accessible and rewarding for immigrant women and seniors by expanding onsite childcare, providing transportation subsidies, reaching out to rural communities, and organizing flexible class schedules and locations.
- Expand community-based activities, including volunteering, to reduce social isolation among, and increase social support for newcomers.
- Adopt an accepting, even welcoming environment for newcomers and the opportunity to become active, contributing community members socially and culturally as well as politically and economically.

## 8.0 Conclusion

Settlement and integration services have been said to be of key importance for the success of immigration in Canadian cities ((IRCC, 2017f, p. 1). Finding appropriate settlement services are a major obstacle newcomer encounter when considering relocating to Canada especially outside the large urban centers like Prince George. These services are critical to ensuring longer-term retention, and through positive experiences conveyed to other would-be migrants –future recruitment, which explains why the researcher undertook this examination of the resources, challenges, practices, and experiences of western provinces nonprofit agencies providing settlement and integration services to newcomers in the region.

It must be recognized that substantial progress has been made in western provinces with regard to immigrant settlement services compared to the situation just five years ago (IRCC, 2017f, p. 20). Settlement services are now accessible province-wide and offered on a bilingual basis majorly in the urban centers. The collaboration of government funders and nonprofit newcomer’s settlement agencies has rapidly developed into a working reality but is still fragile and evolving (IRCC, 2017f, p. 20)

What has been developed here is akin to what has been found elsewhere in Canada, that is, a model of government-funded settlement services provided through community-based, nonprofit organizations. The relative merit of using nonprofit and voluntary sector agencies to deliver settlement services is at the core of a crucial public policy debate. While this model is often celebrated for its flexibility and adaptability and said to be in tune with local realities, it has also been criticized strongly for providing uneven geographies of service provision (spatial mismatch) and for having robbed local community agencies of their capacity to innovate and advocate autonomously because of a deepening state penetration into their everyday operations (Shields, et al., 2016).

The researcher would argue that it is not the use per se of the nonprofit and voluntary sector that is most problematic but the attitude of funders who do not genuinely consider these agencies as true partners. To simply consider them as delivery agents for contracting out services is to fail, in the end, to truly benefit from many of the sector’s unique strengths and overall potential. The settlement agencies perform an intricate work that governments cannot do well because public services tend to be structured and captured into silos, while settlement services need to take the shape of transversal casework, tinkering and assembling a bundle of services from various sources as needed, given their assessment of the client’s need. Yet, paradoxically, this unique capacity of nonprofit settlement agencies can be stifled if funders maintain too short a leash over their operation. In particular, the reliance on a year-to-year funding model based on restrictive contracts for community-based settlement service delivery places enormous stress on the system and those involved in it. Add to this some onerous and burdensome accountability requirements,

and this leaves very little space for the much-needed innovation and planning needed to tackle future immigration challenges.

The results of this study demonstrate the need for more in-depth and thorough research, over a longer period where diverse groups of newcomers and service providers can be meaningfully engaged on what newcomer settlement channels exist, their roles, their outcomes, and overall impact.

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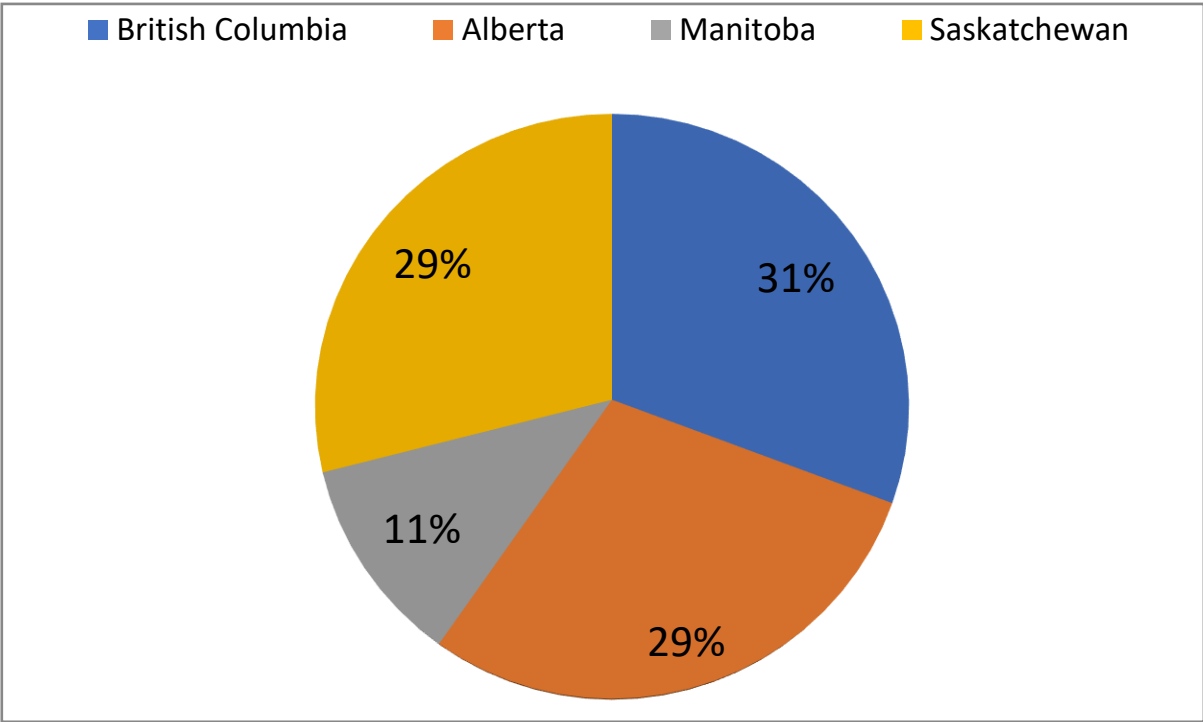
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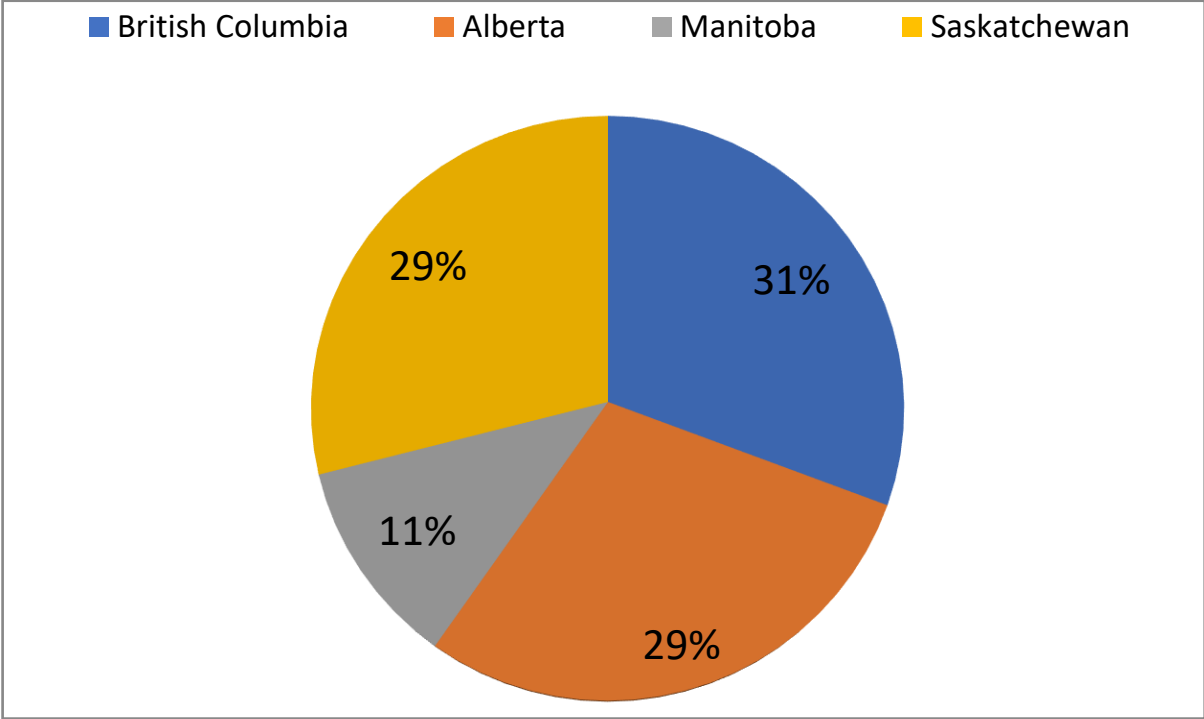
**Appendix A: Most Populated Provinces of Immigrants in 2019**



Source: Statistics Canada, 2019

**Appendix B: Numbers of Immigrants in Four Western Provinces in Canada  
2019**

Source: Statistics Canada, 2019



## **Appendix C: List of Western Provinces in Canada and Selected Service Provider Organizations (SPOs)**

### ***1) Alberta***

Calgary, Edmonton, Red Deer, Lethbridge, Wood Buffalo, Grande Prairie.

#### Service Provider Organizations

- Immigrant Services Calgary
- Edmonton Immigrant Services Association
- Central Alberta Refugee Effort (C.A.R.E.).
- Lethbridge Family Services.
- YMCA of Northern Alberta

### ***2) British Columbia***

Victoria, Vancouver, Kelowna, Kamloops, Abbotsford, Nanaimo

#### Service Provider Organizations

- The Immigrant Settlement & Integration Program (ISIP).
- The Victoria Immigrant and Refugee Centre Society (VIRCS).
- KCR Community Resources.
- Kamloops Immigrant Services (KIS)
- Abbotsford Community Services

### ***3) Manitoba***

Winnipeg, Brandon, Thompson, Steinbach, Portage la Prairie, Winkler

#### Service Provider Organizations

- The Manitoba Association of Newcomer Serving Organizations (MANSO).
- Westman Immigrant Services.
- Thompson Newcomer Settlement Services.
- The Portage Learning and Literacy Centre
- Regional Connections.

#### ***4) Saskatchewan***

Saskatoon, Regina, Prince Albert, Moose Jaw, Swift Current, Yorkton

##### Service Provider Organization

- Saskatoon Open Door Society.
- The Regina Open Door Society (RODS).
- Prince Albert Multi-cultural Council.
- Moose Jaw Newcomer Welcome Centre.
- The East Central Newcomer Welcome Centre Inc

## Appendix D: Program or Agency Specific Services

Province	SPOs	Program	Services	Funders/Resources	Location	Clients/Eligibility
Alberta	ASSIST Community Services Centre	Integrated Services Program Adult Learning English Courses and Children Youth, Family and Senior Services	Information & Orientation Counselling & Referrals Employment Related Services Awareness & Initiatives Language Education.	IRCC The city of Edmonton Alberta Health Services Government of Canada ECALA Donations	Edmonton	Immigrants and their families
	Edmonton Immigrant Services Association (EISA)	In-School Settlement Support Program. New Neighbors Program. Newcomer Community Integration Project (NCIP)	Information and Orientation. Library Settlement Services. Mentoring & Networking opportunities. Social/Multicultural activities. Translation & Interpretation. Supportive counseling. Youth Settlement Services. English as Another Language (EAL) Class.	CIC Canadian Heritage Alberta Employment and Immigration. City of Edmonton, Family, and Community Support Services. City of Edmonton, Community Investment Operating Grant. Edmonton Community Adult Learning Association. Alberta Human Rights, Citizenship and Multiculturalism Fund. Alberta Gaming and Liquor Commission	Edmonton. Red Deer Lloydminster.	New Immigrants, Refugees First generation Canadians

	Catholic Social Services (CSS)	Core skill program. Family sponsorship program. Learning and Community Enrichment (LACE) program.	Care aide training support. Language Assessment. Referral. Educational and cross-cultural counseling. Information. Employment services. Youth Settlement Services.	Agency Allocations. Lloydminster United Way. FCSS from County of Vermilion, the town of Vermilion, and the village of Kitscoty. Vermilion FCSS.	Red Deer and Central Alberta.	Immigrants Refugees
	Immigrant Services Calgary (ISC)	Parent and Child Enrichment Program. Healthy Start Calgary Program. Multicultural Intergenerational Life and Essential Skills (MILES) Program. Youth Inclusive Program (YIP). Community Initiatives for Immigrant Seniors Program (CISP). Living and Learning Foundational Life Skills Program Sustainable Neighborhood Access Program (SNAP).	Information, guidance and Information and Orientation. Referral services. Language Assessment. Translation and interpretation services. Career/Employment support. Children, parent and youth Counselling.	IRCC The public health agency of Canada. Employment and social development in Canada. Human Resources and social development in Canada. Alberta Government. United Way Calgary and Area. Alberta Gaming & Liquor Commission. Family and Community Support Services. Calgary Foundation. In-TAC	Calgary and Environs.	Immigrants Refugees
	Lethbridge Family Services (LFS)	Integrated Services Program (ISP) Settlement Support for Newcomers. Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP) for Refugees. Community Connections Volunteer Program. Community Support Services Program	Information and Orientation Sessions. Referrals. Social and personal support services. Enhanced Life Skills orientation. Interpretive language support. Health care assistance services. Networking. Support cross-cultural awareness of Informal language learning.	Citizenship and Immigration Canada and the Government of Alberta.	Northern and Southern Lethbridge.	Immigrants Refugees

British Columbia	The Immigrant Settlement & Integration Program (ISIP)	Language Instructions for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) programs. We Live Here program. Career Mentoring for SUCCESS Program.	Information and Orientation Sessions Labor Market and Employment Services. English Language Learning Services. Community Connections Activities. Career Mentoring.	Three levels of government. Donations Membership dues Cost recovery programs Corporate sponsorships S.U.C.C.E.S.S Foundation.	Burnaby and New Westminster Tri-Cities and Ridge Meadows. Vancouver Richmond Surrey and Fraser Valley Fort St. John	Permanent Resident. Work permit holder.
	The Victoria Immigrant and Refugee Centre Society (VIRCS).	Newcomer Wraparound Support Program Pathways 2 Professions & Trades (P2PT). Enable Program. BC Settlement and Integration Services Program (BC SIS). Immigrant Women's Project (IWP) Preventing & Responding to Domestic Violence Project.	Life and employability training for youth. Children and youth academic, social and emotional support. Labor market information and supports English Language Support. Domestic violence support	IRCC Ministry of Jobs Trade and Technology Donations	Victoria	Government Assisted Refugees Protected Persons Permanent Residents Refugees landed in Canada
	KCR Community Resources.	Career Paths for Skilled Immigrants Program Family Program. Community Connection Program Options 55+ program	Employment support Translation Services. information Referrals Assistance for Canadian Citizenship applications Community services workshops	United Way Southern Interior Central Okanagan Foundation Federal and BC Government	Kelowna Lake Country Vernon Salmon Arm Sicamous, Revelstoke Kamloops Peachland Summerland Penticton Princeton Osoyoos.	Permanent resident within the last 5 years. Canadian Citizen Permanent Residents Protected Person Entitled to Work in Canada Legally entitled to work in Canada Not a full-time student

	Kamloops Immigrant Services (KIS)	ESL Literacy (Tutoring) Program Settlement Counseling program LINC (Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada) SWIS – Settlement Worker in Schools Employment Readiness Program Community Connection Program	Child-Minding Community Connections English language support Interpretation and Translation Services Diversity Education, Information & Outreach	IRCC BC government Kamloops - Canada Tournament Capital United Way - Thompson Nicola Cariboo Donations Membership Fees	Kamloops and the surrounding areas.	Immigrants New Canadians Permanent residents Refugees Temporary foreign workers visitors First-generation Canadians Visible minorities
	Archway Community Services	Employment mentorship program Child and youth committee program Community connections Childcare resources and referral program	Information, Orientation Language assessment Referrals Education workshop Short-term adaptation counseling Guidance & support on personal and family adjustment issues Community connections	IRCC BC government Donations	Abbotsford Mission Chilliwack Langley International program in India.	Permanent residents Refugee claimants Refugees International students Temporary foreign workers Provincial nominees Naturalized Canadian Citizens
Manitoba	Westman Immigrant Services (WIS)	Family Programs Youth Programs Resettlement Assistance Program Settlement Workers in Schools Program Welcome to Brandon Program Volunteer program	Information, orientation, and settlement support English language services Employment support and referral Volunteer services Community outreach and education Interpretation services Skill development Family Literacy Cross-Cultural Adaptation Family time and activities	Government of Canada IRCC Government of Manitoba United Way - Brandon and District.	Brandon and the Westman area	Permanent Residents

	Thompson Newcomer Settlement Services.	Family Programs Youth Programs Employment program Advocacy program	Referrals, settlement and adaptation services Information and orientation Employment services Children and youth services Advocacy services Referral to English Language support	Government of Canada IRCC Government of Manitoba	Thompson	Permanent Residents Refugees Live-in Caregivers.
	Regional Connections.	Volunteer program Community Connection program LINC (ESL) and Literacy program	Need assessment Information, referrals, and orientation Employment Services Education Services Support services English language services Child & Family Services	IRCC Donations	south-central Manitoba: Winkler Morden Altona	Immigrants Refugees Canadians
	Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization of Manitoba (IRCOM)	Volunteer & Community Services Program Common Ground, Stronger Voices After School Programs Child Care program Community resource program Newcomer Literacy Initiative Early Childhood Development program	Referrals, settlement and adaptation services Information and orientation Employment services Children and youth educational services Childcare assistant services Community connection services English Language support	IRCC Government of Canada Government of Manitoba Rotary Clubs of Winnipeg City of Winnipeg United Way of Winnipeg The Winnipeg Foundation Donations	Winnipeg	Newcomer families for up to 3 years after their arrival.

	Alter Minds Inc (AMI)	Entry Program Entry Program Online (EPO) Living English for employment AMI Academy program Program SOPA – Settlement Online Pre-Arrival (With support from ISANS) Computers for life program	Information Orientation Needs assessment English language and literacy skills support services Individualized action plan Referral Settlement Economic integration courses pre-arrival services Employment services Pre-Arrival Services	IRCC Canadian Red Cross Spence Neighborhood Association (SNA) Manitoba Status of Women Communities for families Sports Programs in Inner-City Neighborhoods’ (SPIN).	Winnipeg	Immigrants Refugees
	Saskatoon Open Door Society (SODS)	Program for Adults Program for Parents Program for Youth and Students Translation, Interpretation and Notary program	Settlement and Employment Services Language Training and Translation Services Family, Youth and Childcare Services Community Programs and Events Local Engagement and Volunteering Pre-Arrival Services	Government of Canada Government of Saskatchewan City of Saskatoon	Saskatoon	Immigrants Refugees
	The Regina Open Door Society (RODS).	Conversation Circle - WCN Program Public Speaking Workshop Young Leaders Academy Career Bridging Program Youth Job Readiness Program	Settlement and Employment Services Language Training services Translation and interpretation Services Pre-Arrival Services	IRCC Government of Saskatchewan United Way Regina Kids First Regina Public Schools Regina Catholic Schools Community Initiatives Fund Service Canada Regina & District Chambers of Commerce Donations	Regina	Immigrants Refugees
	Prince Albert Multi-cultural Council.	Enhance career bridging program Employment Support program Language support program	Information Counseling and Referrals English language skills development Employment services Skills training	Government of Saskatchewan Settlement Employability Support Skills at Work	Prince Albert	Immigrants Refugees

	Moose Jaw Newcomer Welcome Centre.	Language Assessment program Employment program	Information English Language support services Employment services Translation or interpretation services Guidance and support	Government of Saskatchewan Moose Jaw Multi-Cultural Council Inc	Moose Jaw and the surrounding region	Immigrants Refugees
	The East Central Newcomer Welcome Centre Inc	Enhanced Settlement and Integration Supports Program Settlement Worker in Schools Program	Information Orientation Family and Student re-settlement services Employment services Community outreach Volunteer services	IRCC Government of Saskatchewan - Ministry of Immigration and Career Training	Yorkton and East Central Saskatchewan	Newcomers, Immigrants Refugees

