**Western University – Press Release**

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**New *Pathways to Prosperity* *Partnership* Awarded $2.5-Million Grant to Support**

**Settlement and Integration of Immigrants across Canada**

**London, ON –** In 2001, more than three quarters of immigrants to Canada settled in one of only three cities: Toronto, Vancouver or Montreal. A decade later, an ever-increasing number of newcomers are finding homes in smaller communities across the country.

Now, a new community-university research partnership will help facilitate this transition.

Awarded $2.5 million over seven years by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC), the *Pathways to Prosperity* *Partnership* will bring together researchers, government departments, and community partners from coast to coast to improve policies and practices that help attract, settle and integrate newcomers in communities across Canada – particularly in medium-sized and small cities and towns.

“We plan to equip community organizations and governments, including municipal governments, with the tools they need to devise and implement evidence-based strategies that promote inclusion, local development and economic and social sustainability,” says project founder **Victoria Esses**, who is Professor of Psychology and Director of the Centre for Research on Migration and Ethnic Relations at Western University.

The network of researchers, policymakers and practitioners will involve itself in analyses of promising and effective practices as well as evaluative studies of policies and programs, with a view to driving innovation in the integration field. The network will also focus on the sustainability of Francophone minority communities and the particular challenges of Northern and remote communities.

The Partnership has obtained solid commitments of support from Citizenship and Immigration Canada and partnering provincial immigration ministries. Its work will complement the efforts of federal, provincial and territorial governments working to improve the settlement and integration outcomes of newcomers to Canada. As part of this effort, the network will contribute research expertise to the development of Local Immigration Partnerships as they are established across the country.

“As an increasing number of newcomers to Canada choose to settle in small and remote communities, this national network will focus on improving the policies and practices to help attract and integrate newcomers in these under-studied communities,” says Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism Minister Jason Kenney. “It will also contribute to Canada’s ability to avoid a patchwork approach to the important work of settling newcomers, as we strive to create a faster, more flexible and balanced immigration system.”

The Initiative is deeply committed to training the next generation of researchers, practitioners and policy-makers. This will be achieved through the provision of education and training opportunities, including a proposed joint Master’s program in migration and settlement featuring distance education, student exchange programs offered by participating Canadian universities, and field placements.

The partnership will be supported by a strong secretariat led by Meyer Burstein, former Director-General responsible for strategic planning, research and analysis at Citizenship and Immigration Canada and former head and co-founder of Metropolis.

Additional financial and in-kind support from more than 100 partners, and the participation of over 180 collaborators from more than 50 universities, will help foster research and policy development across five regional nodes: Atlantic, Quebec, Ontario, Prairies and British Columbia.

An important partner is the *Canadian Immigrant Settlement Sector Alliance / Alliance canadienne du secteur de l’établissement des immigrants (CISSA- ACSEI).* “CISSA-ACSEI’s goal of ensuring the full participation of immigrants and refugees in all aspects of Canadian life while building more welcoming and inclusive communities is fully captured in the objectives of the *Pathways to Prosperity* Initiative,” said Chris Friesen, CISSA-ACSEI’s chair. “Members of the Initiative have, in the past, conducted important studies on behalf of CISSA-ACSEI and we are excited about the prospect of being able to expand our working relationship.”

**Additional Information:**

**Principal Investigator – *Pathways to Prosperity*: Victoria Esses**

The partnership lead, Victoria Esses, Professor of Psychology and Director of the Centre for Research on Migration and Ethnic Relations, Western University, has a stellar record of leadership in the area of collaborative multidisciplinary research. She is the Co-Chair of the Welcoming Communities Initiative (WCI) – a multidisciplinary alliance of universities, colleges, and community organizations dedicated to promoting the integration of immigrants and minorities across Ontario. Under her leadership, the WCI has successfully conducted high quality research on key policy and practice concerns, and has captured the attention of policy makers at all levels. Victoria is also the founding director of the Centre for Research on Migration and Ethnic Relations at Western University. In 2010, she was awarded the Harold Crabtree Foundation Award in Public Policy Research and the Faculty Scholar Award for her work in this area.

**Co-investigators – *Pathways to Prosperity*:**

**Atlantic Node**:

* Michael Haan, Department of Sociology and Economics, and Canada Research Chair in Population and Social Policy, University of New Brunswick
* Terry Murphy, Department of Religious Studies, former Vice President Academic and Research, St. Mary’s University, and former Chair of the Atlantic Metropolis Centre
* Abdie Kazemipur, as of July 2012, Department of Sociology, and Stephen Jarislowsky Chair in Culture Change and Immigration, Memorial University
* Carlo Lavoie, Coordinator of Acadian Studies, University of Prince Edward Island

**Quebec Node**:

* Michèle Vatz-Laaroussi, Department of Social Work, Université de Sherbrooke, and founding member of Le réseau international de recherche sur l’immigration en dehors des grands centres
* Bill Reimer, Department of Sociology, Concordia University, board member of the Canadian Rural Revitalization Foundation, and member of the Roundtable for the Canadian Rural Research Network

**Ontario** Node

* Caroline Andrew, School of Political Studies and Director of the Centre on Governance, University of Ottawa
* Victoria Esses, Principal Investigator on the Partnership Grant

**Prairies Node**:

* Marc Arnal, Dean of the Saint-Jean Campus, University of Alberta
* Harley Dickinson, Vice-Dean, Social Sciences, with responsibility for the International Centre for Northern Governance & Development, University of Saskatchewan
* Tom Carter, Senior Scholar and former Canada Research Chair in Urban Change and Adaptation, University of Winnipeg

**British Columbia Node:**

* Paul Bramadat, Director of the Centre for Studies in Religion and Society, University of Victoria
* Julie Drolet, School of Social Work, Thompson Rivers University

**Chair of the Standing Committee on the Sustainability of Francophone Minority Communities:**

* Chedly Belkhodja, Department of Political Science, Université de Moncton, and Former Director of the Atlantic Metropolis Centre

**Head of the Secretariat– *Pathways to Prosperity*: Meyer Burstein**

Meyer Burstein has an extensive background in conducting strategic assessments, policy and program analyses, evaluations, and operational studies in the area of immigration and diversity. He also has considerable experience in connecting research with policy and practice. Meyer served as the Director-General responsible for strategic planning, research and analysis at the Department of Citizenship and Immigration Canada; he is also the co-founder and former Executive Head of Metropolis, at one time, the pre-eminent, international policy-research project in the area of migration. He has advised governments and numerous domestic and international institutions on policy, research and organizational issues. Currently, Meyer heads the WCI’s Secretariat and advises the project on policy and strategic matters.