

Media Portrayals of Immigrants and Refugees

What is the issue?

- Media portrayals of immigrants and refugees may influence attitudes and beliefs within a community
- Media may also be seen as reflecting the attitudes of the community and thus reflecting whether the community is welcoming of newcomers
- Effects on warmth of the welcome, attraction and retention, integration and social cohesion

Premise

- Inducing the media to frame immigration-relevant stories in a more positive light and getting rid of myths will promote more welcoming communities

Goal

- Develop, test, and assist in the implementation of strategies for improving the accuracy and framing of immigrant and refugee issues portrayed in local media

Research Plans

- Testing in 4 cities, differing in size and immigration history (London, Ottawa, North Bay, St. Catharines)
- 3 Steps:
 - 1) Baseline content analysis of coverage of immigration-relevant issues in local print media
 - 2) Interventions
 - **creation of a repository of information on immigration: briefing reports to be brought to the attention of relevant journalists**
 - **situating journalists in settlement agencies to develop relevant media content**
 - 3) Tracking of local print media over the course of the project (articles, letters to the editor)

Key Outcome

Tools to improve media depictions of immigration-relevant issues, creating more welcoming communities